

Annual Report



GENDER LINKS
FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE



2024 - 2025



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FOREWORD



As we reflect on the past year, we acknowledge the profound changes and challenges that have shaped our world. In 2024-2025, [Gender Links](#) (GL) operated at the nexus of accelerating backlash and inspiring resilience across the gender justice landscape, with profound geopolitical shifts, including the global impact of shrinking U.S. funding for women and LGBTQI rights.

Despite intensifying threats, GL responded with innovation and unity, leading transformative programmes from grassroots action to global advocacy. GL's presence expanded with the reactivation of offices in six Southern African countries, marking advances in gender-responsive local governance. Zimbabwe's model stood out for institutionalising Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and peer learning. Over 400 local authorities now implement gender action plans, directly integrating gender equality into policy and resource allocation.

Through the Women of the South Speak Out (WOSSO) Fellowship GL and its partners supported 97 young feminist leaders globally, channelled substantial funds to grassroots movements, and strengthened the capacity of over 48 women's rights organisations. RWVL and VCSA programmes drove organisational growth, championed LGBTQI+ and sex worker rights, and catalysed landmark policy advances, including the advancement of abortion rights in Zimbabwe and discussions on the decriminalisation of sex work in South Africa.

We continue to advance economic empowerment. GL's renowned Sunrise Campaign and local economic development collaborations

have lifted thousands of GBV survivors from crisis to self-sufficiency, more than doubling the average participant's income and reducing their vulnerability. In partnership with local authorities, 844 jobs were created in Zimbabwe alone, underscoring the connection between economic independence and the reduction of gender-based violence.

Strategic media and advocacy platforms further amplified GL's impact, with more than 75,000 participants directly engaged, the website reaching nearly half a million page views, and the social media following rising to 54,000. Media monitoring and capacity building established new benchmarks for representation, while the Learning and Sharing Summit fostered collaboration among 100+ organisations, energising regional movements for change.

Internally, GL achieved robust governance reforms, decentralising boards to three countries (Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Mauritius) and streamlining operations. The GL Future Fund regained lost ground, securing future sustainability through prudent investment. Partnerships with donors, government, and civil society scaled up outcomes and sustained momentum.

We look forward to our 25th anniversary in 2026 with confidence and resolve. Thank you to our Association, country boards, regional board, staff and partners for your hard work and belief in our shared goals. No looking back as we are carrying on!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Emily Brown'.

Emily Brown
Chairperson, Gender Links



HIGHLIGHTS



Debrah Mukuku
Director, GL Regional Hub



Colleen Lowe Morna
Special Advisor, GL Services

Gender Links (GL), a leading women's rights organisation in Southern Africa, continues to break new ground in the fight for gender equality. Despite the dwindling donor funding, GL has demonstrated resilience and innovation. The 2024/25 Annual Report, covering the period from 1 April to 31 March, showcases GL's progress through strategic transformation and its far-reaching impact on governance, policy, advocacy, grant-making, gender justice, and women's economic empowerment.

Context

Our world in 2024-2025 is experiencing profound geopolitical changes that are shaping the social, political, and economic landscapes - especially within the global South. A pivotal moment has been the re-election of Donald Trump as U.S. President in 2024, which ushered in policies in 2025 that have significantly intensified backlash against women's and LGBTQI rights, not just within the United States, but with cascading effects worldwide.

U.S. government foreign aid for women and LGBTQI organisations and programs has been drastically cut or frozen, forcing many organisations to shut down. Programs supporting sexual and reproductive health, gender equity, and LGBTQI rights in developing countries face severe funding gaps. This has

resulted in reduced access to healthcare, increased unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions, and worsened human rights conditions for women and LGBTQI people globally. Other governments have been emboldened to adopt similar rollback policies, amplifying the global backlash against these rights. According to the *2025 Women's Rights in Review - 30 Years After Beijing Report*, almost one-quarter of countries reported that backlash against gender equality is hampering the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

The broader international context is shaped by heightened militarisation, as countries increase defence spending due to ongoing conflicts and a perceived need to protect their territorial sovereignty. These factors collectively mean that resources are diverted away from social programs into military budgets, placing additional pressure on rights-based initiatives.

2025 is also significant for women's rights, for several reasons. It is the 30th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action served as the global blueprint for achieving gender equality, guiding many countries toward more equitable and just societies. It is also just five years to the deadline for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the SADC Gender Protocol targets. The Sustainable Development Goals 2024 Report paints a bleak picture, with the latest data showing that progress has either stopped or regressed across various areas despite renewed commitments.

This annual report follows GL's Theory of Change, that informs our 2020 to 2025 strategy.



Vision	Gender Links (GL) envisions an inclusive, equal and just society for women and girls in all their diversity.				
Outcome areas	SRHR	GBV	Economic justice	Women's Political Participation	Gender, Media and ICTs
Pathways to change	Global advocacy through Action Coalition six of gender equality - Feminist leadership and Movement Building; WOSSO				
	Regional advocacy through coordinating the Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance				
	Local Action for Gender Justice through Centres of Excellence for Gender in Local Government in 10 SADC countries				
	Empowering partners thorough feminist sub-granting donor funds				
	Demand driven training and advisory services				
Foundational pillars	People and partnerships	Good governance	Results for change	Communicating results	Sound financial management, sustainability

Gender Links envisions an inclusive, equal and just society for women and girls in all their diversity. We strive to achieve this through Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for all; an end to Gender Based Violence; Economic justice; women's equal and effective participation in political decision-making; as well as gender equality in and through the media.

We act local, think global. Our pathways to change include local action for gender justice; regional advocacy through the Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance; global advocacy through our co-leadership of Action Coalition Six: Feminist leadership and movement building. GL delivers directly through its programmes, but also increasingly does so through our feminist grants and fellowships: acting as an intermediary between donors and smaller women's rights organisations. As part of our sustainability, we also offer demand-driven training and advisory services. Our home base is Southern Africa. But through our advisory services and the Women of the South Speak Out fellowships, GL increasingly has an African and global footprint.

Key highlights of this annual report include:

- In Zimbabwe, the **Local Action for Gender Justice programme** works with all 92 local authorities. The programme has evolved into a dynamic hub-and-spoke system with Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) as the central intervention. In 2025, 7% (USD 90.9 million) of Zimbabwe's council budgets were allocated to gender programmes (gender-

specific programmes and gender management systems).

- GL Zimbabwe is pioneering innovative work on **economic justice**, linking women entrepreneurs to local economic development. The average monthly income of participants rose from US\$152 to US\$245. The entrepreneurs reported a significant decrease in GBV among participants, with a notable link to improved safety through economic empowerment. Gender attitude scores improved, reflecting changing social norms. The program also created 844 jobs, primarily for women, and is progressing toward its goal of supporting 1,800 entrepreneurs.
- GL has emerged as a leader in **feminist grant-making in Southern Africa**. In the year under review, GL managed the Amplify Change Voice and Choice Fund Southern Africa (VCSA), the UKAID-funded Women of the South Speak Out (WOSSO) consortium, and the second phase The organisation employs strong oversight to enhance capacity in governance and advocacy, fosters regional alliances for collective action, and leads intergenerational, survivor-led initiatives that reach marginalised communities and thousands of individuals across regions.
- The **Renewed Women's Voice and Leadership South Africa** fund is a feminist funding initiative supported by Global Affairs Canada, promoting the full enjoyment of human rights and gender equality for women and girls in South Africa, regardless of their identity. The

fund supports 48 Women's Rights Organisations (WROs) across all nine provinces, enabling grassroots organisations to deliver survivor-centred interventions. 1000 Women Trust's Project Orange stands out: it established 24-hour GBV advice offices in high-risk townships, trained 117 "GBV Warriors," and reached over 11,900 people via WhatsApp-based support.

In its second year, the **Women of the South Speak Out (WOSSO) Fellowship Programme** cemented its role as a catalyst for feminist advocacy from the Global South. The initiative supported **97 Fellows** across Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and Latin America and the Caribbean (LATAC).

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Economic Empowerment



Funding from the Irene M. Stahler Foundation programme bolstered the **GL's Sunrise Campaign**. From March 2024 to April 2025, the project supported 200 women survivors across ten municipalities in South

Africa. The campaign was also integrated into the Municipal GBV and Local Economic Development (LED) Plans.

A beacon of hope for individuals in need of support and guidance as they navigate their journey towards independence and resilience, Gender Links Mauritius **Safe Haven Halfway Home** (SHHH) established in 2017 provides a safe, inclusive and empowering environment. Our halfway home serves as a sanctuary for those seeking refuge, recovery and empowerment. Between January 2024 and March 2025, SHHH has been a refuge and a safe place for a total of 71 residents: 35 adults, 19 girls, and 17 boys.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

GL advances **Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights** (SRHR) in SADC by bridging policy gaps, strengthening legal frameworks, and empowering marginalised groups, especially women and LGBTIQ+ individuals. Our 15th SADC Gender Protocol Barometer, focusing on SRHR, tracks over 100 indicators across health and rights issues, including menstrual care, maternal health, HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, and sexual diversity. Despite growing anti-gender backlash in 2024, GL's research and advocacy highlight the need to protect and advance women's rights in the region.



GL drives change through advocacy, such as hosting the Voice and Choice Learning and Sharing Summit, which convened 36 organisations and celebrated notable achievements in SRHR. Campaigns in Swaziland and the DRC

provided reproductive health education, resources, and advocacy training to hundreds of girls. GL's partners collectively influenced 123 policies and laws, including legal advancements for safe abortion and sex work rights in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Movement-building has expanded with the **Safe Abortion Alliance of Southern Africa** (SAASA), now active in eight countries and engaging in dialogues to improve access to safe abortion services. GL reached over 62,000 individuals directly through mobile clinics and social media outreach and further supported LGBTIQ+ communities with new partnerships and dedicated funding. Through these efforts, GL remains committed to ensuring that all women and girls can make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.



Women's Political Participation

GL produced the second WPP Africa Barometer, which analyses quantitative data on women's political participation in Africa using ten key indicators. The [Barometer](#), and regional fact sheets - [Central](#), [East Africa](#), [Horn](#), [North Africa](#), [Southern Africa](#), and [West Africa](#) are tools that politicians and women's rights activists can use to advocate nationally and to energise fifty-fifty campaigns across the region. The Barometer was presented at high-level meetings, including at CSW69 and the

Gender and Media

Gender Links works to promote gender equality in Southern African media, challenging stereotypes and increasing women's representation. Their new Media Parity Capacity Building Programme, in partnership with CFI Media Development, involves 22 outlets across five countries and aims to equip journalists to better include women's perspectives in news.

Reach and impact

In 2024-2025, **559** events engaged **75,651** participants, with 93% of these interactions being face-to-face. The Voice and Choice Southern Africa program contributed the majority of participants, reflecting its central role in outreach. Women comprised 61% of the participants, men 38%, and individuals who identified as gender non-conforming 1%. The majority (72%) of participants were under 18

Looking to the future

As we look to the future, Gender Links stands stronger than ever-anchored by hard-won lessons, growing partnerships, and a resilient, region-wide community for gender justice. The next five years will demand renewed creativity, deeper collaboration, and courageous advocacy as we push forward amidst global uncertainty. Our priorities are clear: championing the rights of women and LGBTQI+ people, expanding our reach and impact, and driving progress on the unfinished business of SDGs.

Women's Caucus session at the Pan-African Parliament in September 2024.

The initiative also promoted mentoring and skill-building by linking experienced women politicians with young aspirants and boosting media engagement to help women gain visibility and confidence. Strategic media coverage cemented Gender Links and its partners as respected sources on women's political involvement and related issues.

Despite long-standing advocacy, women's representation in the media remains low, as highlighted by a monitoring project conducted during Botswana's 2024 elections, which found that only 4% of news sources were led by women. These results show that progress is slow and uneven, underscoring the need for continued advocacy, partnerships, and support for inclusive reporting.

years old, highlighting strong engagement with youth, particularly through school-based programs. During this period, the website attracted a total of 103,464 unique visitors, resulting in 312,789 visits. These visitors viewed a substantial 987,532 pages and generated 1,745,982 hits. GL has 54,030 followers across all social media platforms.

Looking ahead, as we move toward 2030, the deadline for the SDGs and the SADC Gender Protocol, as well as Gender Links and women's and LGBTQI rights NGOs, will have to navigate this turbulent context with resilience and strategic innovation. Despite setbacks, emerging legal advances in countries such as South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana demonstrate significant regional leadership, underscoring that progress is possible even in the face of resistance.

PushForward 4Equality

FaireProgresser
L'égalité

AvançarPela
Igualdade

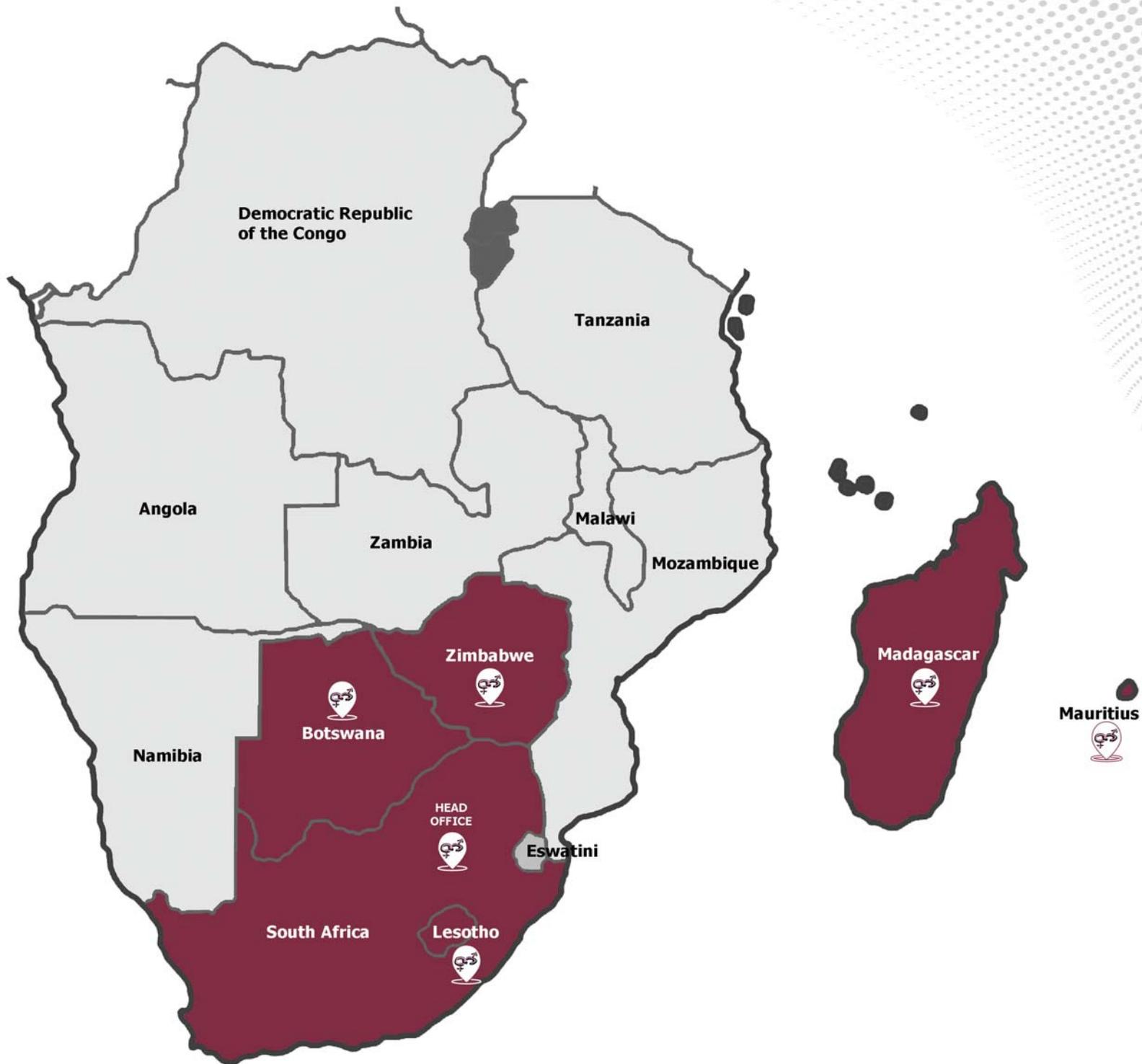
Phambili
Ngamalungelo

We will build on our reputation for innovation and amplify the voices of those most excluded, guided by evidence, learning, and a commitment to solidarity. By harnessing technology, expanding our local-to-global partnerships, and centring the lived realities of Southern Africa's women and girls, we are poised to support lasting systemic change. Together, with our supporters and partners, we reaffirm our commitment to a world where gender justice is non-negotiable and equality is within everyone's reach.

The journey to 2030 and beyond calls us to be bold, hopeful, and united as we [#PushForward4Equality](#). The future demands strengthening coalitions, amplifying grassroots activism, advocating for inclusive policies, and securing sustainable resources to defend hard-won freedoms and expand justice. We will need to address backlash head-on, leveraging global solidarity and adaptive strategies that centre the voices and experiences of marginalised communities to uphold dignity, safety, and autonomy for all women and LGBTQI individuals.



WHERE WE WORK



[To read more, click on a country](#)

HOW WE WORK

Local Action for Gender Justice



The Local Action for Gender Justice Programme remains the cornerstone of Gender Links' work in Southern Africa, transforming gender mainstreaming in local authorities across the region. Guided by the Southern

African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development, the Centres of Excellence (COE) programme has endured as a flagship initiative, embedding gender-responsive policies into local governance since its inception.

has been most successful in Zimbabwe, local authorities have allocated budgets for gender-related activities, developed and implemented gender policies, issued directives mandating gender mainstreaming, and introduced performance targets for senior officials. In Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, and South Africa, the COE programme has reinforced other Gender Links initiatives, such as the Sunrise Campaign.

Zimbabwe continues to strengthen its collaboration with local governments through a robust partnership with the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works. Zimbabwe's model has evolved from a six-stage approach to a more dynamic hub-and-spoke system, with Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) as the central intervention. This model has enhanced sustainability and peer-to-peer learning while embedding accountability.

Some of the direct outcomes of the Zimbabwe country offices' work with local government over the last year include:

- In 2025, 7% (USD 90.9 million) of Zimbabwe's council budgets were allocated to gender programmes (gender-specific programmes and gender management systems).
- Local authorities' Gender Progress Scores improved from 63% in 2023 to 65% in 2024.
- Media reporting on GRB initiatives in local authorities increased, raising awareness and visibility.
- Supporting junior councillors' advocacy for youth service delivery needs.

As the Local Action for Gender Justice programme continues to evolve, it offers renewed opportunities for scaling up across the SADC region. With its proven record of innovation and impact, the COE remains a powerful model for promoting gender equality, accountability, and sustainable growth.

"In budget consultations, residents pointed out the need for the recognition of the children with special conditions to be allocated a classroom in the new schools. The council has also adopted policies that promote and consider assistance to vulnerable members of the community, such as Pro-poor policy, Education Policy, Disability and Urban Agriculture Policy".

Excerpt from Mutare City Council 2024 GRB Summit case study

Over the years, the COE has achieved notable successes. These include building the capacity of councillors and officials in over 400 local authorities, developing and implementing gender action plans, and establishing gender management structures, such as gender committees and focal persons. Platforms for peer learning and exchange, primarily through regional summits, have further strengthened collaboration and innovation in advancing gender equality.

Implementation of the programme has varied across countries, contingent on the level of support from the government. The programme



Murewa Rural District Council: A Beacon of Excellence in Gender Mainstreaming

In the heart of Mashonaland East, the Murewa Rural District Council (RDC) in Zimbabwe has emerged as a shining example of gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. This transformation did not happen overnight; it was the result of years of dedication and innovative approaches that have now set a benchmark for other local authorities in the region. Murewa RDC's journey towards gender equality began several years ago with a vision to create a gender-sensitive organisational culture. The council recognised the importance of integrating gender perspectives into its policies, programs, and services to ensure that the needs of both men and women were addressed.



Murewa RDC SDGs awareness campaigns.

Photo: Murewa RDC

Innovative Hub and Spoke Activities

As a hub council for Mashonaland East local authorities, Murewa RDC played a pivotal role in bringing together councils for peer learning and sharing of gender best practices. The Hub and Spoke model facilitated knowledge sharing, capacity building, and collaboration among local authorities, enabling them to learn from each other's experiences and successes. Through this model, Murewa RDC became a centre of expertise, providing guidance and support to other councils in the province.

Pioneering Gender Responsive Budgeting

One of the council's most significant achievements was the successful integration of Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) into its enterprise resource management system. This innovation enabled the council to produce auto-generated gender reports that informed the council's gender-responsive budgeting report. By doing so, Murewa RDC ensured that gender-specific projects and programs received adequate funding, promoting transparency and accountability.

The council's commitment to gender mainstreaming and GRB yielded significant results. The allocation for gender-specific programming increased from 2% of the total budget (USD 293,000) in 2024 to 4% of the total budget (USD 677,000) in 2025. This increase in funding supported various initiatives, including gender training workshops, junior council activities, and the commemoration of international days. The council's gender-sensitive approach to service delivery improved the quality of services, ensuring that they met the needs of both men and women. Additionally, the GRB framework promoted transparency and accountability, enabling the council to track the impact of its budget on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Murewa Rural District Council's gender interventions have positioned it as a model Centre of Excellence in gender mainstreaming. The council's innovative approaches to GRB and gender mainstreaming have set a high standard for other local authorities to follow.

From Local Action to Global Advocacy



In its second year, the [Women of the South Speak Out \(WOSSO\) Fellowship Programme](#) cemented its role as a catalyst for feminist

advocacy from the Global South. The initiative supported [97 Fellows](#) across Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and Latin America and the Caribbean (LATAC). Together, these young feminist leaders bridged grassroots struggles with global decision-making, ensuring that the lived experiences of women and girls shaped policies at every level.



WOSSO Southern Africa Fellows during their onboarding session in Harare, Zimbabwe. Photo: Gender Links

Fellows attended **355 advocacy events** and organised **88 of their own**. Their interventions influenced **18 official outcome documents** at national, regional, and international forums. From the SADC Heads of State Summit to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), the Conference of the Parties (COP29), and the Beijing+30 reviews, WOSSO Fellows contributed not as observers but as agenda-setters, calling for structural reforms on sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender-based violence, climate justice, and inclusion.

[97 Fellows](#) across Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa

(MENA), and Latin America and the Caribbean (LATAC).

Fellows have participated in 137 advocacy engagements at national, regional, and global levels, reaching over 4,500 community members through 88 impactful events.

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WOSSO's advocacy model emphasises “local-to-global” linkages. In Zimbabwe, [Nothabo Sibanda](#) advanced safe abortion advocacy despite restrictive contexts, while in Kyrgyzstan, a young leader, [Aizhan Dzhanayeva](#), reframed climate change and reproductive justice as interconnected struggles for rural women. In Egypt, [Yasmine Aburaya](#) transformed community-based awareness into a national campaign for comprehensive sexuality education, bringing these demands to the 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69). LATAC Fellows injected Indigenous and ecofeminist perspectives into international debates on extractive industries and care economies, expanding the policy lens beyond traditional frameworks.

Diplomatic engagement further amplified these efforts. Fellows held bilateral meetings with British High Commissioners, UN representatives, and regional bodies, demonstrating the credibility of youth-led feminist leadership. At CSW69, their dialogue with Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Edinburgh underscored the growing recognition of WOSSO's contribution to global advocacy.

Cross-regional collaboration proved equally powerful. Fellows co-authored a joint submission to the UN Women CSW Revitalisation process, calling for greater inclusion and accessibility in global spaces. Linking and Learning Hubs enabled peer exchange across six themes,



including monitoring and evaluation, digital advocacy, and self-care. These structures deepened solidarity and ensured that diverse feminist realities informed advocacy. WOSSO's global advocacy story is one of transformation. By investing in grassroots

feminists, the programme not only amplifies voices from the margins but also reshapes the centre of power. It shows that when women of the South speak out, they do not echo; they redefine.



Dismantling Silence around Disability, Rights, and Reproductive Justice in Nigeria

In many communities across Nigeria, the rights of women with disabilities are buried beneath layers of stigma, silence, and systemic neglect. As a WOSSO Fellow, I set out to change that. My journey began by listening, not assuming.



I convened a focus group with 20 women with disabilities and their caregivers to understand the barriers they face in accessing sexual and reproductive health and rights services.

What I uncovered was harrowing. One young woman with a disability shared her failed attempt to access a safe abortion. Despite being an adult, the hospital refused to provide care unless she brought someone to sign on her behalf. Her autonomy, her bodily rights, were stripped away, not just by discriminatory laws, but by a healthcare system that views disability through a lens of incapacity.

Yet, something powerful happened in that moment. In our newly formed safe space, she felt seen. She felt safe enough to speak her truth, something she had never done before. That moment confirmed that my advocacy was not only necessary but urgent.

Beyond community engagement, I carried this mission to regional platforms. At the African Women in Dialogue (AfWID) Conference, I spoke publicly for the first time about the exclusion women with disabilities face in health systems, policy spaces, and society. That experience gave me visibility and validation. I was no longer just a community advocate; I had become a regional voice for disability inclusion.

My advocacy extended to strategic partnerships. I led an advocacy visit to the British High Commission in Nigeria, building international awareness of the intersectional barriers faced by women with disabilities. Each engagement, whether local or regional, became a stepping stone to greater impact.

WOSSO's learning and sharing spaces helped me think in a different way. I learned from other Fellows how to use digital platforms more effectively, a skill I now plan to integrate into my work, especially since many of the women I serve live far from urban centres.

Through this fellowship, I've grown in more ways than I imagined. I've developed the confidence to speak in high-level spaces, the courage to ask difficult questions, and the conviction to keep creating spaces where women with disabilities can lead, not just survive.

My story is one of transformation from invisibility to influence, from fear to voice. And it is only just beginning.

Story of Change - Jennifer Abomnger, Nigeria

Feminist grant-making

Over the past six years, Gender Links (GL) has established itself as a leading [feminist grant maker](#) in Southern Africa, transforming the funding landscape for women's rights through inclusive and responsive approaches. Initially serving as an intermediary for the Global Affairs Canada-funded Women's Voice and Leadership South Africa (WVL-SA) programme in 2019. GL's feminist grant-making model centres on shifting power to grassroots women's rights organisations (WROs), particularly those led by and serving structurally excluded groups such as LGBTQI+ communities, persons with disabilities, sex workers, and rural women.

GL has since expanded its Grant Management Unit (GMU) to manage multiple funds, including the [Renewed Women's Voice and Leadership South Africa](#) (RWVL-SA), Amplify Change's Voice and Choice Fund (VCSA), and the [Women of the South Speak Out](#) (WOSSEO) consortium.



The [Renewed Women's Voice and Leadership South Africa](#) fund is a feminist funding initiative supported by **Global Affairs Canada**, promoting the full enjoyment of human rights and gender equality

for women and girls in South Africa, regardless of their identity. The fund supports **48 Women's Rights Organisations (WROs)** and movements working to empower women, amplify their voices, and advance the protection of their rights, especially those from marginalised communities.



The Fund aims to build strong, sustainable feminist movements that can drive lasting change. Grants are tailored to organisational maturity, ranging from Opportunity

Grants for emerging WROs to Multi-Year Core (MYC) Grants for established organisations. GL employs a rigorous due diligence process and uses its Organisational Development Scorecard (ODS) to track growth in governance, financial management, and advocacy.

Voice and Choice Southern Africa, part of the **AmplifyChange Partnership Grant**, thrust GL into the role of a regional grant maker for the first time. Previously, we implemented networking and strategic grants, collaborating with downstream partners.



The GBP 1.5 million Amplify Change Partnership Grant elevated GL to a grant maker in the SADC region. Managing the partnership grant opened the door to a connected, inclusive movement. Through coalition-building, regional alliances, and digital engagement, organisations are no longer working in isolation; they are part of a coordinated effort to shift norms, reform policy, and hold duty-bearers accountable. This transformation from fragmented efforts to a collective, strategic movement is the most powerful legacy of the AmplifyChange grant.



Women of the South Speak Out was initially a five-year project funded by the **Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)**. Launched in April 2024, this initiative has united 97 Fellows from 43 ODA-eligible countries-spanning Africa, Asia-Pacific, MENA, and LATAC regions. The program is intergenerational, survivor-led, and grounded in evidence-based approaches. Fellows have participated in 137 advocacy engagements at national, regional, and global levels, reaching over 4,500 community members through 88 impactful events.





From Grassroots to Powerhouse: FEW's transformation

The Forum for the Empowerment of Women (FEW), a dynamic black lesbian, bisexual, and queer (LBQ) feminist organisation in Johannesburg, has undergone a remarkable transformation through the Women's Voice and Leadership - South Africa (WVL) programme. Rooted in advocating for the rights and dignity of Black LBQ women, FEW has always held a bold vision. Yet, before it engaged with RWVL, FEW struggled with structural and operational barriers, hindering its ability to grow and meet evolving donor criteria.



Nomsa Manzini presenting FEW's organisational development case study during the RWVL summit.

Photo: Thandokuhle Dlamini

At the outset, FEW's operations were in a formative stage: clear in mission but lacking foundational policies, comprehensive financial management, and robust governance. Through the course of the RWVL programme, FEW has institutionalised critical aspects of its work. Today, the organisation thrives with a dedicated finance team-comprising a Finance Manager, Finance Administrator, and Grants Manager-led by a Logistics Coordinator to ensure compliance and efficient resource management.

FEW now boasts a five-member board providing strategic oversight and accountability. The organisation is registered with the South African Revenue Service (SARS) and maintains a compliant bank account, as well as a formal financial policies manual-key to donor credibility.

A pivotal milestone was the 2024 formation of an Operations Unit, created to tackle previous challenges in programme coordination and donor relations. This unit now anchors smooth operations, effective donor communications, and timely reporting. Simultaneously, FEW began building its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capability, moving from relying on in-house methods to recruiting a dedicated M&E consultant for more effective, data-driven impact assessment.

FEW's safeguarding practices have evolved significantly, with the introduction of new policies, including the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH) and Anti-Bribery regulations. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are also being finalised.

Recognising the risks associated with project-specific funding, FEW, with RWVL's guidance, has developed a two-year fundraising strategy and is launching income-generating ventures, such as delivering diversity and inclusion training, targeting the mining and rural sectors. This growth has yielded tangible results in the real world. As Grants Manager, Nomsa Manzini wrote in a letter of appreciation: *"The Gender Links grant and accompanying structures broadened our perspective on leadership and governance. Due diligence processes have become a best practice for engaging new donors. Importantly, leveraging these insights, we secured new funding of R4.5 million from The Other Foundation to expand our SADC work and Soweto Pride initiatives. The support from Gender Links was instrumental."*

This testimony affirms how RWVL's support catalysed FEW's internal governance and external growth, unlocking substantial funding and enabling regional expansion. FEW's ongoing commitment to leadership development, capacity building, and strategic planning anchors its sustainability. Regular stakeholder updates, a growing social media presence, and plans for a monthly newsletter reflect increased engagement.

Through RWVL, FEW has evolved from a grassroots organisation with operational hurdles into a resilient, donor-ready feminist institution. This transformation underscores the crucial role of feminist funding and mentorship, proving that targeted capacity-building aligned with feminist principles empowers organisations like FEW to amplify the voices of LBQ women and drive lasting regional change.

Advisory Services

In 2024-2025, [GL Advisory Services](#) advanced critical gender equality initiatives by spearheading the final phase of the Gates Foundation Africa Office (ARO) program and delivering transformative gender workshops in collaboration with its long-time partner, WaterAid Southern Africa.



GL's important partnership with the **Gates Foundation** came to an end in March 2025. This period focused on reviewing the achievements made, measuring the long-term impact, and strengthening the gender integration frameworks that GL has developed since June 2022. Thanks to GL's

strategic guidance, ARO's commitment to gender equality became embedded in its DNA. The office established itself as an internal pioneer by making gender integration a non-negotiable step for every new investment—an unprecedented shift. By the end of 2024, this move had propelled 39 out of 50 new investments to address gender impactfully, sharply steering ARO toward its ambitious 70% target and setting a new standard for the sector.

“Before the training, we did not see the need to be gender intentional. We assumed everyone fit into the spectrum, but with the training, much intention has been put into gender selection.”

The closing effort was a rigorous, multi-pronged evaluation, including advanced Gender Marker ratings, AI-powered document analysis, and wide-ranging feedback from 33 investment owners and grantees, supported by ten key informant interviews and six insightful case

studies. This in-depth process resulted in a comprehensive final report filled with actionable insights, urging the formalisation of the Gender Task Team, the full integration of gender metrics into performance management, and harnessing the Foundation's significant influence for system-wide gender advocacy.

[Read the reflection report](#)

Since 2022, GL has been driving change alongside **WaterAid Southern Africa** Regional Office (WA SARO), beginning with a groundbreaking assessment of gender in the WASH sector. This year, GLS delivered its final training in Zambia, following successful, hands-on workshops in Mozambique, Malawi, and Madagascar - each lauded for its practical focus and immediately applicable content.



On the strong recommendation of WA SARO's Gender Coordinator, the WaterAid West Africa office brought GLS on board for a vital GESI assessment across six country offices: Liberia, Nigeria, Ghana, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali. GLS assessed and analysed how well each program was delivering real progress on gender

equality and inclusion - and tailored recommendations to help every office strengthen its transformative impact.

“Attending the gender training workshop was an eye-opening and enriching experience. It provided a deeper understanding of gender dynamics, biases, and inequalities, particularly in relation to everyday life and professional settings.”

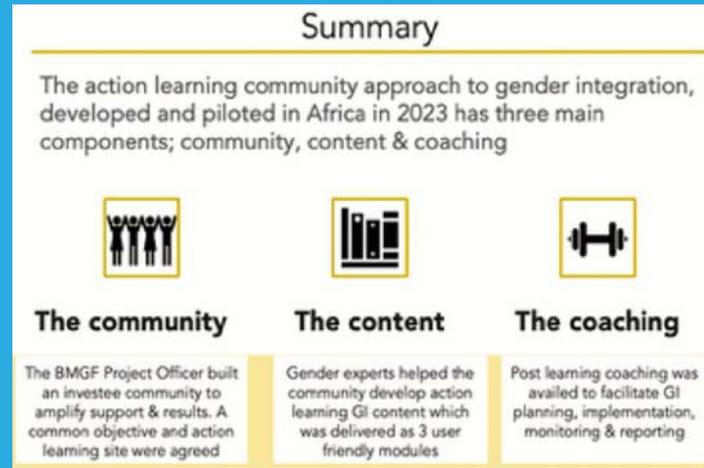
Evaluation comment





The Action Learning Community (ALC) approach to gender integration

Gender Links has played a pivotal role in formulating the gender integration Ways of Working (WOW). This particular approach, known as the action learning community (ALC) approach, is based on the collaborative experience of four Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) supply chain partners in East and Southern Africa during 2023/2024. Supported by Gender Links' partner in East Africa, Dr Khetsiwe Dlamini, the BMGF Primary Health Care Program Strategy Team (PST) collaborated with Africa Resource Centre (ARC), Chartered Institute for Procurement & Supply (CIPS), inSupply Health Limited, and THINKWELL to promote gender-inclusive health supply chains in Kenya, with projects running from 2022 to 2027.



These partners, each with distinct expertise, including ARC in supply chain transformation, CIPS in procurement, inSupply in workforce development, and THINKWELL in health reforms, collaborated to make health products and services more accessible. The ALC began its gender integration journey by setting three learning questions: understanding BMGF's gender integration expectations, increasing gender integration and resourcing, and harmonising efforts across investments for greater impact. The ALC approach centres on three components: community, content, and coaching. Building a community involved aligning on shared goals, coordinating knowledge exchange, and meeting quarterly to share lessons. This series, delivered over three months, introduced gender concepts, workplace skills, and strategy development, culminating in a face-to-face session. Participants reported increased confidence and competence in gender integration.

Post-training, Gender Links provided coaching to help partners set gender goals, prioritise activities, and establish baselines for tracking progress. The approach led to a shift from viewing gender as an add-on or encountering roadblocks to seeing gender as central, applying a gender lens, and setting actionable goals.

The investment owner's reflection distinguishes between the "How" (process-driven, externally catalysed support) and the "What" (content-driven, program-based activities), emphasising structured collaboration through joint assessment, planning, and monitoring. Outcome tracking after the training showed significant progress: partners hosted gender training content on the CIPS website, conducted monthly sessions with the inSupply team, and empowered gender champions to integrate gender into project implementation.

These ripple effects extended to other projects, such as Workforce Development and Optimising Pharmacy Channel, with ongoing efforts to embed gender strategies and training. The WOW series, an initiative of the BMGF Africa Regional Office, demonstrates how a community-based, action learning approach can foster gender intentionality and transformative change in health supply chains, with guides developed collaboratively for project teams to maximise impact and sustainability.

SCORING GOALS FOR EQUALITY

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)

GL advances Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) across Southern Africa through advocacy, research, movement building, and local governance initiatives. Our work bridges policy gaps, strengthens legal frameworks, and amplifies the voices of marginalised communities, particularly women and LGBTIQ+ individuals, in SRHR decision-making.

Research



GL produced the 15th edition of the SADC Gender Protocol Barometer, the sixth edition to focus specifically on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). It measures 100 indicators covering menstrual health, maternal health, family planning, adolescent

sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), HIV and AIDS, GBV, harmful practices and sexual diversity. The Barometer was launched chapter by chapter during the [Sixteen Days of Activism 2024](#), against the backdrop of a significant rise in backlash and the strengthening of the anti-gender rights movement following the US elections. Now more than ever, we need to protect the fragile gains made for women's rights.

Download the [Barometer Executive Summary](#).

Advocacy and campaigning

A highlight of the period was the Voice and Choice Learning and Sharing Summit, held in March 2025 in Johannesburg, which featured 36 organisations from six SADC countries. The summit celebrated 22 award winners and facilitated the exchange of successes and challenges in SRHR work. Several initiatives successfully empowered women and girls. Some include The Swaziland Network Campaign for Education for All (SWANCEFA), which educated girls on repro-

ductive health in rural schools, provided dignity packs, and established girls' clubs. The "Initiative des Jeunes Filles en Action" in the DRC trained over 600 girls and young women in advocacy, building their confidence to challenge harmful socio-cultural norms.

The past year also witnessed groundbreaking policy changes. GL grantee partners collectively influenced 123 policies, laws, and frameworks. In Zimbabwe, advocacy led to a landmark ruling expanding access to safe abortion for minors and survivors of marital rape, along with raising the age of consent to 18. In South Africa, discussions led by grantees like Sisonke National Movement advanced the decriminalisation of sex work.

Movement Building

The Safe Abortion Alliance of Southern Africa (SAASA), launched in December 2023, has grown from 27 to 43 members across eight SADC countries, advocating for decriminalisation and access to safe abortion. On International Safe Abortion Day, SAASA hosted a dialogue focusing on improving women's access to safe abortion services.



Innovative outreach strategies directly engaged **62,790 individuals**, using mobile clinics and social media to connect with remote communities.

GL also strengthened support for LGBTIQ+ communities through a partnership with the Botswana Network on Ethics, Law and HIV/AIDS, launching the Marang fund.

Through these multifaceted efforts, GL remains dedicated to fostering a future where all women and girls can make safe, informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.



Lobbying for law reform on safe abortion in Tanzania



Imelda Ilomo's two daughters were raped by their father leading to unsafe termination of pregnancy, receives an award presented by Swiss Embassy Ambassador to Tanzania Didier Chassot for defending rural communities sexual rights during validation of SRHR.
Photo: Aidan Chesco

In the heart of Tanzania, a transformative movement is taking shape, driven by the Coalition for **Women Human Rights Defenders Tanzania (CWHRDs TZ)**. This coalition is dedicated to building a vibrant reproductive rights movement, aiming to reduce discrimination, stigma, and legal barriers to safe abortion and post-abortion services. Their mission is to save the lives of women and girls by revitalising the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) movement, fostering a sense of ownership over a shared agenda, and promoting cross-generational feminist solidarity and knowledge transfer.

The advocacy journey of CWHRDs TZ began with heightened efforts by SRHR stakeholders to position SRHR as a fundamental human right for women and girls. A pivotal moment in this journey was the filing of a public interest litigation (PIL) case against the Tanzanian government by the Safe Abortion Movement. This legal action aimed to prompt a review of the penal code, seeking to remove restrictions on safe abortion for victims of sexual violence.

In November 2023, the Safe Abortion Movement filed a case against the government of Tanzania, asking for a review of the penal code to remove restrictions on safe abortion for victims of incest, rape, and sexual assault. CWHRDs TZ joined the case as an interested party, providing expert opinions and documentation of cases of incest, rape, and sexual assault as evidence. This case has garnered significant attention from authorities and the public, particularly women and girls who are survivors of sexual violence.

The coalition's efforts have led to a transformative shift in attitudes towards abortion rights. By sharing and disseminating documented cases, they have increased understanding and transformed the attitudes of many stakeholders, particularly towards victims of incest and rape. The coalition's work has contributed to the collection and compilation of evidence-based information to advocate for safe abortion as a health and reproductive right in Tanzania.

The significance of legalising safe abortion cannot be overstated. It acknowledges the autonomy of women and girls over their bodies and reproductive health, affirming their right to make informed decisions free from coercion or discrimination. Access to safe abortion services reduces the risk of maternal mortality and morbidity associated with unsafe procedures, promoting better health outcomes for individuals and communities. Legalisation also helps dismantle the stigma and discrimination surrounding abortion, fostering a more compassionate and understanding societal attitude towards reproductive healthcare.

CWHRDs TZ's strategic documentation of cases and dissemination of evidence has strengthened the case for safe abortion rights and added momentum to the movement. Their efforts have not only heightened understanding of safe abortion but also catalysed a transformative shift in attitudes among stakeholders, particularly towards victims of incest and rape.

The coalition's work is a testament to the power of advocacy and the importance of fighting for reproductive rights. By empowering women and girls to make informed choices about their reproductive lives, they contribute to gender equality and societal progress in Tanzania.

Gender Based Violence

Gender Links has always worked at the intersection of GBV and economic empowerment. It achieves this through the Sunrise Campaign and community responses facilitated by the Renewed Women's Voice and Leadership South Africa (RWVL-SA) programme.

The **Sunrise Campaign** is a flagship initiative of Gender Links, empowering survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) by combining economic empowerment with gender justice and social healing. It is built on the belief that financial independence provides survivors with the tools to break cycles of violence and reclaim their dignity. Since its inception in 2013, it has reached over 3,000 women across ten countries, linking economic empowerment directly to GBV prevention and sustainable change. The campaign partners with local authorities to strengthen municipal GBV action plans, integrate survivors into Local Economic Development (LED) strategies, and promote community resilience.

From March 2024 to April 2025, the **Irene M. Stahler Foundation (IMS)** programme supported 200 women survivors across ten municipalities in Gauteng, Limpopo, the Western Cape, and the Northern Cape. The project provided financial start-up capital, connected survivors to government initiatives, and advocated for survivor-centred policies. It also aimed to enhance Gender Links' monitoring and evaluation systems for more effective, evidence-based programming.

At the **policy level**, the Sunrise Campaign was integrated into Municipal GBV and LED Plans. Workshops were convened with Municipalities to review and update their GBV & LED Action Plans, ensuring that survivors were recognised as active participants in local economies. These engagements were followed up during the 16 Days of Activism, when Gender Links supported Municipalities in monitoring the implementation of GBV and LED commitments. Furthermore, ten human rights workshops were held across all Municipalities, enabling survivors to

gain knowledge of their legal and human rights, building resilience, and enhancing their journey toward independence. In total, 110 events were conducted across the four provinces, with 11 events each in the Municipality.

Sunrise Campaign personal testimonies

"My mentor guided me to register my bakery business and manage my finances. Today, I employ two women from my community. We are growing together."

Grace Khungwane from Greater Tzaneen Municipality

"I didn't know I had rights. Now I can stand up for myself and teach my children that abuse is not normal."

Keamogetse Siyeni from Northern Cape, Sol Plaatjie Municipality

"The program exposed me a lot, the trip to Johannesburg will always remain memorable because it was for the first time in my life leaving my area Platfontein, to go to another Province and sleep in a hotel, where you don't have to cook or make up your bed."

Christina Jackson from Platfontein

"For the first time in years, I feel proud of myself. I no longer depend on anyone, and I can send my children to school with dignity."

Refilwe Mofokeng from Emfuleni Municipality

The **campaign's outcomes have been significant**. Survivors reported increased confidence, improved resilience, and a greater sense of self-worth. Women demonstrated enhanced entrepreneurial and digital skills, which improved their ability to sustain businesses and access new opportunities. Survivors were integrated into municipal LED strategies, gaining recognition as contributors to local economic growth. Gender Links also strengthened its monitoring and evaluation systems, ensuring evidence-based programming through the GEI baseline. Mentorship and business verification processes fostered accountability and reinforced sustainability.

One of the primary objectives of the project was to enhance **survivors' personal agency**, and many have reported positive changes in their relationships as a result.



"Since doing the Gender Links training, I can now sit down with my husband, talk about any issue, and he does not get angry like he used to. The family is happy that I persevered through difficulties, and they have learned from my new way of dealing with problems: to talk to people and not bottle problems inside. I am managing to raise my children while running my small business, and I am proud of the person I have become. My training has also given me the confidence to help others. I created a support group where women share their problems and give each other advice of how to work through their problems."

**Vuyela Khomo from Blouberg*



Participants in Midvaal Municipality learning to use computers during the training.
Photo: Ntombi Mbadlanyana



"I am a 37-year-old mother of a 12-year-old son; raised by a single mother; married off traditionally at the age of 16 to a man 22 years my senior. I suffered physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and financially. I could not even choose what TV programmes to watch. He ordered me to take off a summer dress because he said it was too short to be worn by a married woman."



I suffered from low self-confidence; I felt worthless. When I told my mom about what was happening, she would tell me a woman must keep her household problems to herself. I died alone, in silence, as my husband carried out so many extramarital affairs. In March 2024, I joined the Sunrise Campaign. The sun started shining again. I felt like a new creature. When I received the R20 000 from GL, nearly fainted because I had never had that amount of money in my entire life. I bought a deep freezer and stuff to start my braai business. I am a new person."

Issie Marena, Platfontein, Northern Cape, Kimberly



Women's Voice and Leadership South Africa (RWVL-SA)

Forty-eight grants were awarded across all nine provinces, enabling grassroots organisations to deliver survivor-centred interventions. 1000 Women Trust's Project Orange stands out: it established 24-hour GBV advice offices in high-risk townships, trained 117 "GBV Warriors," and reached over 11,900 people via WhatsApp-based support. The initiative also launched the #Victim2Warrior campaign, where survivors mentor one another on their healing journeys. GL has also contributed to shaping national GBV policy frameworks.

Collectively, GL and its partners supported advocacy efforts that led to the enactment of 16 laws and policies, including those addressing LGBTIQ+ rights and the decriminalisation of sex work.

A Safe Haven for Survivors of GBV in Mauritius

A beacon of hope for individuals in need of support and guidance as they navigate their journey towards independence and resilience, Gender Links Safe Haven Halfway Home (SHHH) was established with the mission of providing a safe, inclusive and empowering environment. Our halfway home serves as a sanctuary for those seeking refuge, recovery and empowerment.

The vision is to create a supportive and nurturing environment where individuals can heal, grow, and build the skills and confidence necessary for successful reintegration into society. SHHH is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive space for individuals experiencing transition or crisis, offering holistic support, empowerment and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Since the opening of SHHH in 2017 to March 2025, we have accommodated 347 residents, among whom 172 were children (83 Females and 89 Males).

Out of the 347 residents, 217 were domestic violence cases (92 adults, 125 children), 17 came from children shelters, 96 instances of

Homelessness, and two women came from Women's prison.

Who we served: Between January 2024 and March 2025, SHHH has been a refuge and a safe place for a total of 71 residents: 35 adults, 19 Girl children, and 17 Boy children.



Getting out of the shadow of fear and violence

“At that moment, I asked myself: why should I accept to be hit?”

My name is Evelyn, and I am 43 years old with six children. I came to Safe Haven Halfway Home in October 2021 after enduring years of normalised violence. My husband, an alcoholic, frequently fought with me and our children, especially when I returned from work. He was coercive and controlling, disliking even my use of the phone. To avoid his anger, I would leave the house around 6:00 p.m. The constant stress led to insomnia, and I was exhausted from being the sole breadwinner.

The turning point came when my daughters' academic performance declined, and one of them experienced hair loss due to stress. A caring teacher introduced us to Safe Haven Halfway Home after realising our chaotic situation. Despite the lack of space at the shelter, I continued to look for other houses to rent, but people turned me down because of my many children. I had accepted the physical and mental violence as normal and even justified my husband's behaviour. I once lodged a complaint with the police but withdrew it when I became pregnant, wanting to stay on good terms with my husband.

At Safe Haven, I was warmly welcomed and finally got a good night's sleep. Anushka Virahsawmy's words touched me, reminding me that it is not normal to be insulted or hit. My children and I discovered a safe and peaceful space where we could spend quality time together. I continued to work and save money. In my free time, I enjoyed sewing, cooking, and reading romantic novels. I also planted chilli, basil, tomatoes, and pepper in small pots.

I aspire to have my own house, where I can create a peaceful environment without constant quarrels. I explained to my husband that I want to stay on good terms for the sake of our children, but I am firm about not returning to him. I also want to learn to drive formally, as having my own car would save on travel costs and avoid long walks to work.

Today, I am grateful to have a safe environment in which to express my emotions and thoughts. I have told my children that if their partners ever hit them, they should return home. Seeing my son play football freely makes me happy that I did not give up hope.



Economic justice

Building Resilient Local Economies from the Ground Up

In Zimbabwe, efforts are underway with local councils to promote gender-inclusive local economic development programmes, which have demonstrated that financial empowerment is a powerful catalyst for reducing vulnerability to violence and fostering climate-resilient, inclusive local economies.

Collaborations with local councils are driving innovative, gender-inclusive economic development programmes. These initiatives have powerfully shown that equipping women and marginalised groups with financial resources not only breaks cycles of vulnerability to violence but also ignites the creation of climate-resilient and truly inclusive local economies. Data-driven results, including Midline assessments, reveal compelling evidence of dual impact:

- **Enhanced financial resilience:** The average monthly income of participants rose from US\$152 to US\$245, while the average surplus more than doubled from US\$57 to US\$133, indicating significantly stronger profitability and financial resilience.
- **Reduced GBV impact:** The severity of GBV's impact on participants plummeted from 15.09 to 6.25, demonstrating economic empowerment as a critical pathway to safety.
- **Shifted social norms:** Participants' Gender Attitude Scores improved from 58.13 to 61.31, indicating a positive move towards more equitable norms.
- **Job creation and inclusion:** The programme created 844 jobs, 66% of which were held by women, directly boosting local livelihoods and putting it on track to reach 1,800 entrepreneurs.



Thandokuhle Cooperative Arts and Crafts members at the Bulawayo Women's Investment Conference. Photo: Bulawayo City Council

The work extended beyond direct beneficiaries to strengthen the economic systems themselves. In Zimbabwe's 12 partner local authorities, this translated into tangible infrastructure, including greenhouses, biogas digesters, and market stalls, as well as strategic policy integration. This systemic approach ensured that 6% of council budgets were allocated to Local Economic Development initiatives, benefiting a population of 2.2 million.

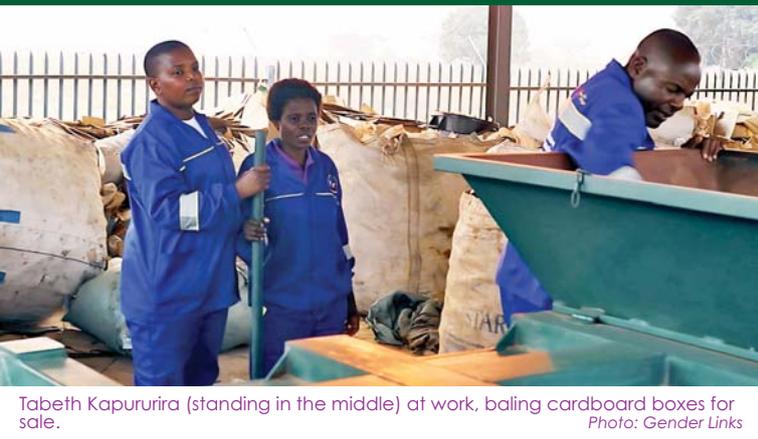
The programme's transformative impact in 12 councils directly influenced a major national policy shift: The Ministry of Local Government and Public Works mandated all 92 local authorities in Zimbabwe to allocate a minimum of 10% of their annual budget to Local Economic Development, ensuring the sustainability and scale of the inclusive economic model.



Empowering Communities: Making money from waste

Tabeth Kapururira, a committee supervisor at the Kadoma Waste Management Cooperative, has undergone a profound transformation in her life and business thanks to the Promoting Gender-Inclusive Local Economic Development in Zimbabwe programme. Implemented by Gender Links in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, and supported by the Embassy of Sweden in Zimbabwe, the programme provided Kapururira with the skills and knowledge she needed to succeed.

"Before joining the programme, I was just picking waste and selling it without keeping any records," Kapururira said. "I had no idea how much I was earning or how to manage my finances. The programme came at the right time and empowered me with business management skills."



With her newfound skills, Kapururira now tracks her finances, keeps accurate records, and manages her business effectively. She opened a bank account, keeping her money safe and secure. *"The banking and finance training was a game-changer for me," Kapururira said. "I used to keep my money in unsafe places, but now I know the importance of keeping it in a bank."*

The programme has also changed the way Kapururira's community perceives waste management. *"Before, people thought I was going*

insane, but now they understand that there is money in waste," Kapururira said with a smile. "Waste is money, and I am determined to make the most of it."

Kapururira's income has increased significantly, with an average monthly income of \$200. She's able to support her family, paying school fees for her siblings and even helping her brother acquire a driver's license. *"I am proud to say that I can now support my family and make a difference in my community," Kapururira said.*

The programme has also given Kapururira a new vision for her business. She is no longer just focused on waste picking, but plans to process waste and produce finished products, such as packaging materials and buckets. *"I am determined to go far and make a success of my business," Kapururira said.*

Kapururira's story is a testament to the impact of the Promoting Gender Inclusive Local Economic Development programme. The programme empowers women to take control of their lives and create a better future for themselves and their families by providing them with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.

"I am advising other women and youths not to be idle but to join the waste management value chain and make money for a living," Kapururira said. "There is money in waste, and with the right skills and training, anyone can succeed."

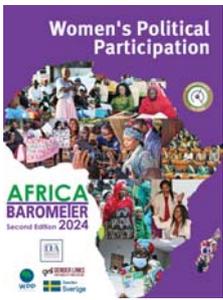
Women's Political Participation

Through the International IDEA-led consortium of six organisations, a three-year project is being implemented to *Enhance the Inclusion of Women in Political Participation (WPP) in Africa*.

Research and knowledge creation

Gender Links has contributed to knowledge creation regarding women's full and effective participation, as well as equal opportunities for leadership, at all levels of decision-making and in political and public life.

WPP Africa Barometer



The WPP Africa Barometer is the first of its kind in terms of the breadth and depth of information it includes compared to other Africa Barometers. It analyses quantitative data on WPP in Africa using ten key indicators by country and region, and it provides case studies and interviews to illustrate what works to enhance women's political representation and participation. The [Barometer](#), and regional fact sheets - [Central Africa](#), [East Africa](#), [Horn of Africa](#), [North Africa](#), [Southern Africa](#), and [West Africa](#) are tools that politicians and women's rights activists can use to advocate nationally and to energise fifty-fifty campaigns across the region. The Barometer was presented at high-level meetings, including at CSW69 and the Women's Caucus session at the Pan-African Parliament in September 2024.

Elections audits

As part of its watchdog role, GL has conducted gender audits of two significant elections in SADC in 2024 - [Botswana Elections 2024](#) and [South Africa: Gender and Elections](#) to assess the extent to which electoral processes, policies, and institutions are inclusive and responsive to gender equality. Notably, the reports highlight the progress and regression of women in leadership positions following elections.

This initiative enabled GL to deepen its ongoing work on increasing WPP across the SADC region. We have worked to achieve this goal through:

Capacity strengthening: Peer-to-peer exchanges and mentorships

Through upgrading the skills and capacity of seasoned and aspiring women politicians, including a younger generation of women, to advocate more effectively and confidently for enhanced political participation by women, the project created a space for women to unite, transcend age barriers between younger and older generations, and promote cross-generational dialogue and debate. Aspiring young women politicians were paired with seasoned politicians to provide mentorship and support to young women who wanted to enter the political sphere. Other outcomes of the upskilling include direct engagement and exposure to the media, which increases their exposure and confidence in speaking to the press and public.

"Past academies empowered women and in particular those wishing to stand for elections. Self-branding is one of the takeaways that I will use as I position myself for the 2024 election. Gender Links builds a lot of confidence in us, especially during live interviews with Gabz FM and a political rally mock. She said it is fundamental to take resolutions to their upcoming party congress this year to be implemented; otherwise, next year we would be singing the same song of increasing women's participation in politics. What we want to see happening in the Botswana Constitution must start at the party level to be gender sensitive and have gender equality clauses."

Gaolatlhe Mosaba,
Botswana WPP Academy participant

Gender Links successfully leveraged various media platforms to promote the reports, attracting attention from both television and print media outlets. This strategic approach not only increased visibility but also engaged a wider audience with the content. As a result of these efforts, the reports have solidified the reputations of Gender Links and Internal IDEA as reliable and authoritative sources of information on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS). Their commitment to providing credible data and insights has positioned them as go-to organisations within this crucial field.



Participants from the Palapye WPP Academy displaying their certificates.
Photo: Mboy Maswabi



From Nurse to Deputy Speaker in Botswana Parliament

On 28 November 2025, the parliament of Botswana elected Helen Pushie Manyeneneng as the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament. Manyeneneng is only the second woman to hold the position since independence in 1966, after the late Gladys Kokorwe. Manyeneneng, the ruling Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) Member of Parliament (MP) for Mmopane Metsimotlhabe, won the seat with 43 votes against 21 of Dr Unity Dow of the main opposition Botswana Congress Party (BCP). The highest-ranking woman in the current Parliament, Manyeneneng, is one of the more than 100 women who participated in the International IDEA-supported Gender Links Women's Political Participation (WPP) Academies, which have been running since 2021.

A nurse by profession, Manyeneneng entered active politics after being sacked, along with hundreds of other health workers, for participating in Botswana's longest public servants' strike of 2011. A notable gender activist, Manyeneneng was part of a panel that drafted the Women's submission to the Presidential Commission on Constitutional Review, titled 'Molao-motheo, Bua Mme'. She is also a successful businesswoman, driving the women's business advocacy program.



Helen Pushie Manyeneneng Deputy Speaker Botswana.

Photo: Mboy Maswabi



Gender and Media

Gender Links continues to champion action to promote gender equality in and through the media across Southern Africa. Recognising that the media remains a powerful force in shaping public opinion, GL's work seeks to challenge entrenched gender stereotypes, increase women's voice and visibility, and undertake media monitoring to build evidence that drives policy and practice change across the media landscape.

Building on nearly two decades of work to advance gender-aware journalism, in this period, Gender Links began a new partnership with CFI Media Development to undertake the Media Parity Capacity Building Programme. Despite decades of advocacy, women still account for just 21% of news sources across SADC - a marginal 4% increase since 2003. The [Media Parity Programme](#) is a collaboration with 22 media outlets across Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia to accelerate change by equipping journalists with practical skills to mainstream gender across all

reporting beats, centre women's lived experiences, and amplify voices often left out of the news. Implementation commenced in early 2025 with the selection of national facilitators, media outlets, and participating journalists. Planned activities for 2025 include national-level workshops, tailored mentorship, and small grants to support the production of compelling, inclusive stories that better reflect the diversity of Southern African societies.

Another major highlight was GL's media monitoring of Botswana's 2024 general elections, conducted as part of a broader Women's Political Participation (WPP) audit with International IDEA. Covering six weeks from 1 October to 15 November 2024, the monitoring exercise was the only comprehensive media audit of the elections. It included public and private media across print, broadcast, and digital platforms. The [findings were striking](#): only four percent of news sources in election coverage were women, a significant variation from the last Media Progress Study (GMS) conducted by GL, which showed that women's news sources in Botswana comprised 26%, higher than the 21% recorded in the media across the Southern African region.

These findings underscore the urgency of GL's work. While representation of women in media has inched forward, progress remains slow and uneven. The 2024-2025 period reinforced the importance of sustained advocacy, strategic partnerships and hands-on capacity building to ensure the media serves as a force for inclusion and gender justice in Southern Africa.

[See the full results here](#)



Group Work: Media monitoring training workshop at the Protea Hotel in Gaborone, Botswana. Photo: Mboy Maswabi



WHO WE REACHED

Who we reached directly

Gender Links and partners expanded their reach and participation across Southern Africa in 2024-2025, conducting 559 events with over 75,000 participants. Their work focused on empowering communities through direct engagement, particularly with women and youth, across various programs, including the Voice and Choice Southern Africa Fund and Entrepreneurship initiatives.

Event reach and participation

In 2024-2025, 559 events engaged **75,651** participants, with 93% of these interactions being face-to-face. The Voice and Choice Southern Africa program contributed the majority of participants, reflecting its central role in outreach.

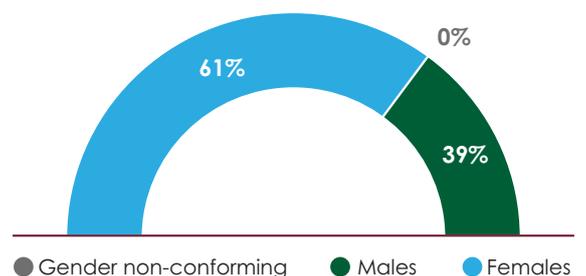


Participants by programme

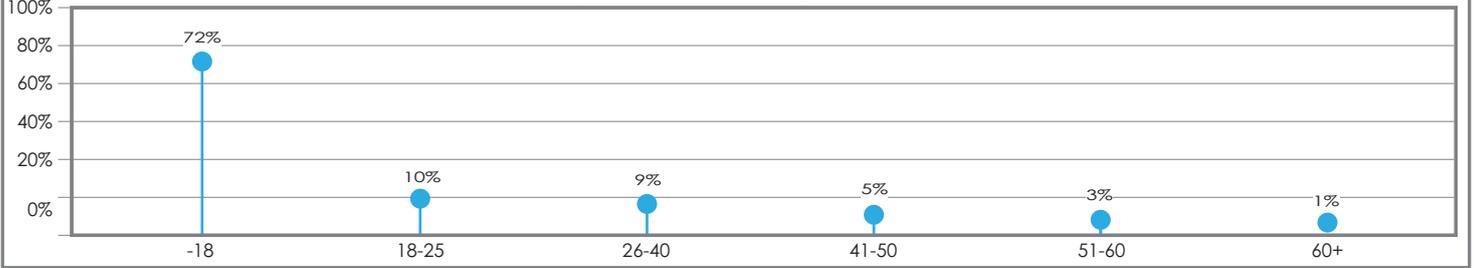
Programme	Events	Women	Men	Gender non-conforming
BMGF	1	14	10	0
Entrepreneurship (Sunrise Campaign)	172	2 607	326	4
Local Action for Gender Justice	42	1 438	861	0
Policy and Movement Building (Alliance)	8	75	13	0
Voice and Choice Southern Africa Fund (VCSA Fund)	310	41 582	27 686	313
WOSSO - Women of the South Speak Out	13	191	14	0
WVL-SA	13	346		0
Grand Total	559	46 253	29 081	317

Participant demographics: Women comprised 61% of the participants, men 38%, and individuals who identified as gender non-conforming 1%. The majority (72%) of participants were under 18 years old, highlighting strong engagement with youth, particularly through school-based programs.

2024/25 participants by sex

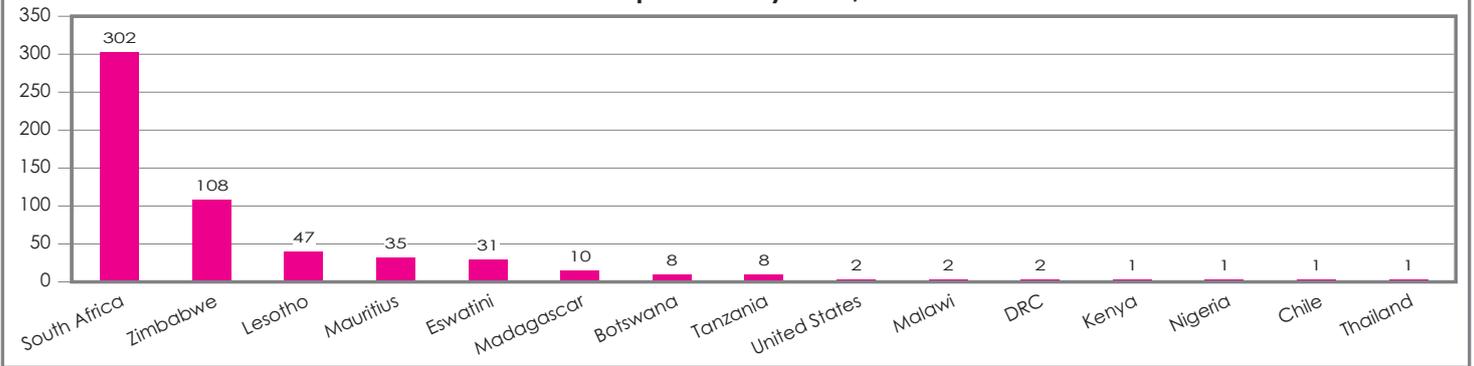


Event participants by age 2024/2025

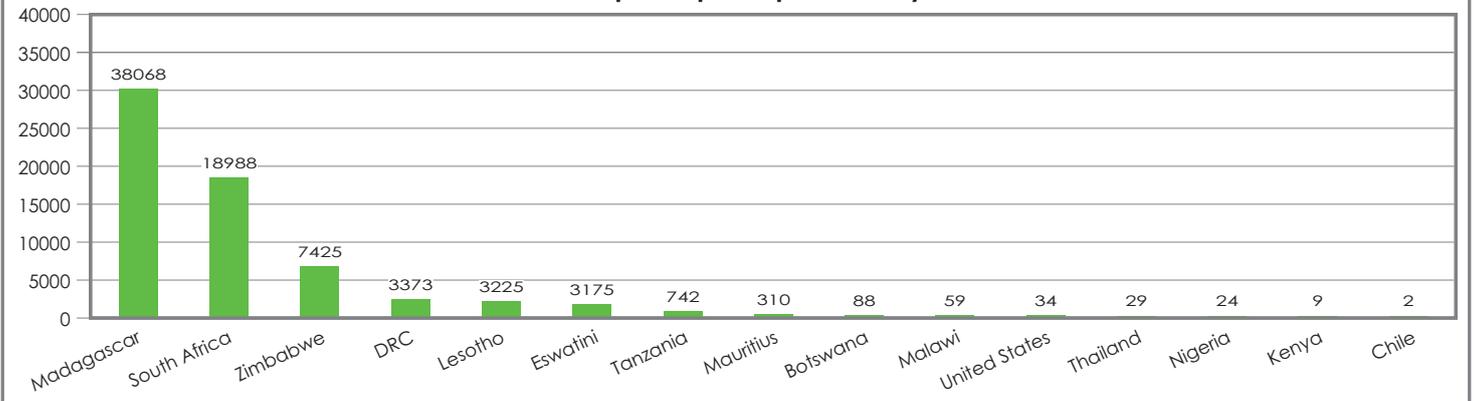


Country contributions: South Africa led with 302 events (54%), followed by Zimbabwe with 108 events (19%), while other countries contributed smaller proportions. The IMS Sunrise project notably boosted South Africa's event count.

Events per country 2024/2025

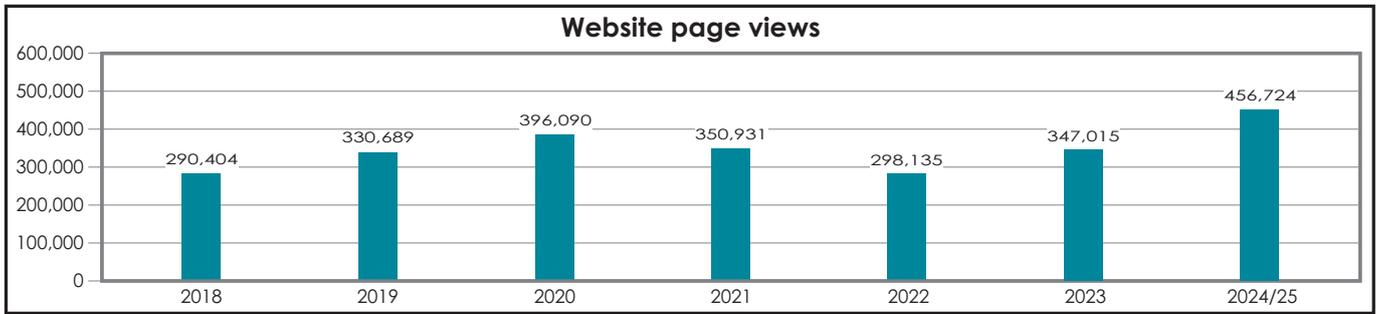


Total participants per country



Who we reached through the media

The Gender Links website, genderlinks.org.za, has shown significant reach and engagement over the period from April 2024 to March 2025. During this period, the website attracted a total of 103,464 unique visitors, resulting in 312,789 visits. These visitors viewed a substantial 987,532 pages and generated 1,745,982 hits.



GL, combined with WOSSO and WVW websites, received nearly 450,000 website page views in the period from April 2024 to March 2025. This is an increase of over 100,000 visits compared to the previous year. This increase is attributed to the Grant-making unit websites gaining viewership over the past year.

The top ten countries contributing to the website's traffic include South Africa with 152,000 visits, followed by the United States (42,000), the United Kingdom (31,000), and India (21,000). Other notable contributors were Germany, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Canada, Australia, and Nigeria.

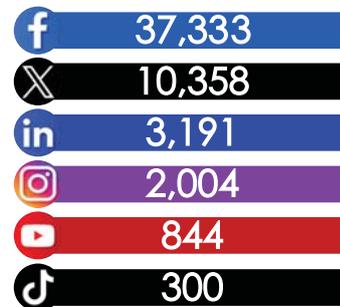
Social Media Outreach: A Year of Growth and Engagement

Over the past year, GL has made significant strides in expanding its social media outreach, leveraging various platforms to amplify its voice and engage with a broader audience.



Total Social Media Following: **54,030**

GL's social media strategy has been particularly effective on Facebook, which remains the dominant platform, accounting for 70% of the total social media reach with 37,333 followers. The organisation's active presence on X (formerly Twitter) has also been noteworthy, with 10,358 followers, making up 19% of the total.



Platform	2023/24	2024/25	Variance
Facebook	32 747	37 330	4 586
X (formerly Twitter)	10 200	10 385	158
LinkedIn	1 898	3 191	2 021
Instagram	1 398	2 004	606
TikTok	240	300	60
YouTube	578	844	266
TOTAL	45 163	54 030	7 697

In terms of expanding our reach, we saw a 7,697-follower increase across all platforms from the previous year. Facebook and LinkedIn show the most substantial gains. Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, and YouTube have increased GL's reach slightly.



Platform	Gender Links	Country offices	WVL	WOSSO	GL Cottages	TOTAL
Facebook	9 622	24 252	1 066	282	2 111	37 333
X(formerly Twitter)	9 218		846	186	108	10 358
Instagram	1 238		296	343	127	2 004
LinkedIn	1 160			2 031		3 191
TikTok	244			56		300
YouTube	844					844
TOTAL FOLLOWING						54 030

The table presents the social media reach figures across various platforms, highlighting the extensive engagement and presence in different regions and categories.

GL administers several accounts on various social media platforms. The most followed page is the GL regional page, with 9,622 followers. Meanwhile, country pages, such as those for Mauritius, Madagascar, and

Botswana, have also seen substantial followings. The analytical data reveal that 64% of GL's Facebook followers are women, with the majority of followers coming from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Mauritius.

Notable figures from WVL, WOSSO, and GLC. This indicates a strong and widespread presence on Facebook, making it a key platform for engagement.

559

Events

75,651

Participants

54,030

Social media followers

37,333

FaceBook

10,358

X

2,004

Instagram

844

YouTube

300

TikTok

3,191

LinkedIn



Learning and sharing

In March 2025, GL reaffirmed its commitment to movement building and collaborative learning by hosting the Joint Voice and Choice Learning and Sharing Summit. This event brought together over 100 grantees, partners, and stakeholders from Southern Africa, uniting participants from the Renewed Women's Voice and Leadership South Africa (RWVL) programme and the Voice and Choice Southern Africa Fund (VCSAF).

Under the banner "Linking and Learning", the two-day summit created a dynamic platform for advocates, innovators, and grassroots

leaders to share strategies, showcase achievements, and strengthen partnerships. It featured more than 60 presentations spanning gender-based violence prevention, economic empowerment, and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

The key statistics include:

A total of 26 awards were presented across five categories: Stories of Change, Drivers of Change, Organisational Growth, Movement Building, and Communications and Reach - recognising outstanding contributions to gender equality.

Category	RWVL Winner	RWVL Runner-up	VCSA Winner	VCSA Runner-up	Special commendation	Total
Movement Building	2	1	2	1	0	6
Organisational Growth	1	2	1	2	1	7
Story of change	1	1	1	1	0	8
Communications and reach	1	1	1	1	0	3
Driver of change	1	0	1	0	0	2
TOTAL AWARDS	6	5	6	5	1	26

A central highlight was the unveiling of the 15th edition of the SADC Gender Protocol Barometer, with a special focus on SRHR. This flagship publication provides a robust evidence base for advocacy, tracking progress on key gender indicators, including access to safe abortion, adolescent health, and the response to GBV. It equips organisations with up-to-date data to align their strategies with regional trends and policy developments. Case studies from the VCSAF grantees can be found throughout the barometer.

Another milestone was the official launch of the Southern Africa Safe Abortion Alliance. This Voice and Choice Fund initiative aims to strengthen cross-border advocacy and service delivery in advancing safe abortion rights. This alliance unites grassroots actors, medical professionals, and policy advocates in a coordinated effort to challenge restrictive laws, expand access to safe abortion, and protect women's autonomy over their bodies.

At the heart of the 2025 Learning and Sharing Summit was the formation of networking and advocacy groups that will serve as engines for sustained collaboration beyond the event. Grantees self-selected into thematic groups aligned with their strategic priorities, from gender-based violence prevention and SRHR advocacy to economic empowerment, land rights and media engagement.

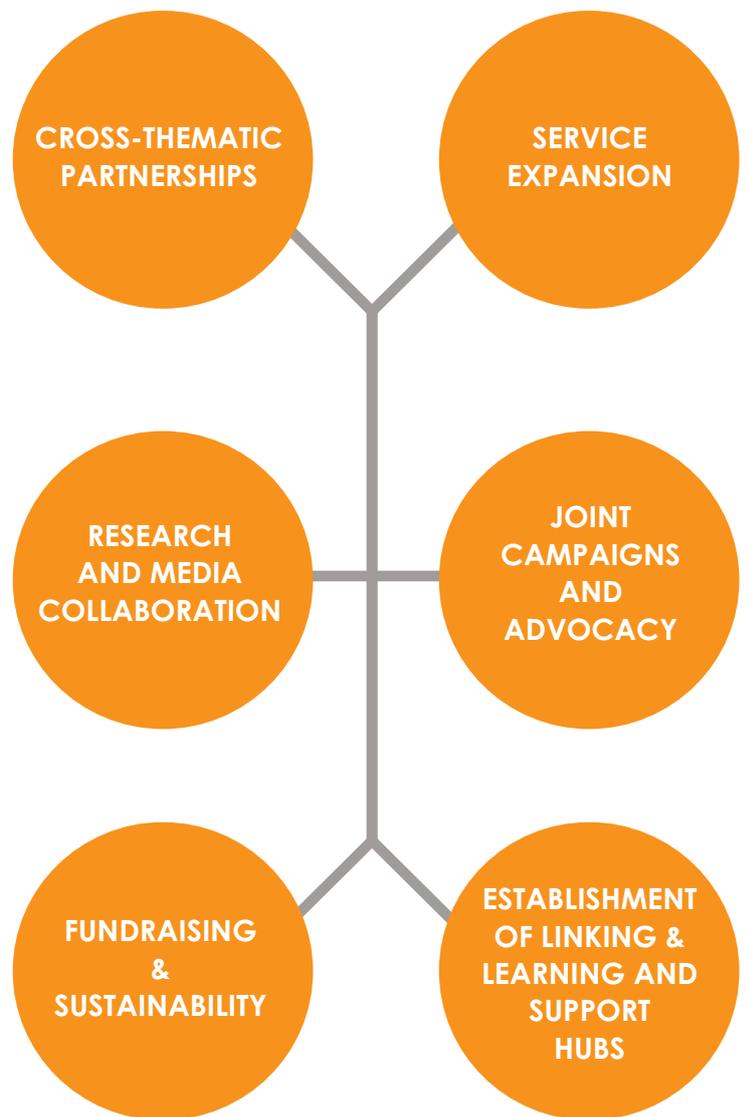
These groups are designed to function as Learning and Support Hubs, facilitating regular thematic webinars, peer mentorship, joint campaign planning, and the sharing of resources. By fostering trust, pooling expertise,



and leveraging each organisation's strengths, the hubs will enable more coordinated advocacy at local, national, and regional levels. This bottom-up, peer-led structure ensures that strategies remain relevant to community needs while building the collective power necessary to influence policy and shift social norms across Southern Africa.

The Learning and Sharing Summit produced actionable and strategic impacts for gender justice work in Southern Africa. Outcomes included broad knowledge exchange on SRHR and GBV prevention, expanded networking among over 100 organisations, the formation of new collaborative advocacy groups, presentations of innovative community solutions, participant-driven improvements for future events, and motivational speeches that energised advocacy efforts.

Gender Links will continue to host Learning and Sharing summits with Marang Fund grantees to boost networking across civil society in South Africa and SADC, maintain WhatsApp groups for ongoing grantee collaboration, support thematic advocacy groups with regular virtual engagement and campaigns, and keep developing evidence-based advocacy tools like the SADC Gender Protocol Barometer while promoting regional policy initiatives such as the Southern Africa Safe Abortion Alliance.



Company Secretary

GENDER LINKS REGIONAL BOARD

AUDIT COMMITTEE Internal Audit

Zimbabwe Board

Lesotho Board

Botswana Board

Mauritius Board

Madagascar Board

GL Regional Hub

GL Services

Zimbabwe

Madagascar

Lesotho

South Africa

Botswana

Mauritius



Debrah Mukuku
Director



Colleen Lowe Morna
Special Advisor



Priscilla Maposa
Country Director
GL Zimbabwe



Iailfine Papisy
Country Facilitator
Marang Fund



Mabetha Manteboheleng
Country Director
Marang Fund



Naledi Masipa
Local Action for
Gender Justice
Facilitator
Associate



Keabonye Ntsabane
Project Assistant
Marang Fund



Anushka Virahsawmy
Director, GL Mauritius



Raymond Muchemwa
Chief Finance Officer



Tapiwa Zvaraya
Local Action for
Gender Justice
Country Coordinator



Zotonantenaina
Razanandrateta
Finance Assistant
Marang Fund



Ntolo Mary Lekau
Finance Assistant
Marang Fund



Neo Bridgette
Ntshapha Kitso
Project Assistant
Marang Fund



Devan Saittee
Senior Finance
and Programme
Officer



Diksha Purmessur
Programme
Officer



Sarah Tshabala
Finance Officer



Vivien Bakainaga
HR Support

Grant Making Unit



Lusanda Mamba
Programme Manager
Marang Fund



Nomthandazo
Mankazana
WVL SA Manager



Fikile Maviya
Grants and
Compliance Manager



Nolwazi Mbutse
Finance Officer
Marang Fund



Thenjiwe Ngcobo
WVL Grants and
Networking
Coordinator



Veronika Hambili
Programme Assistant
Marang Fund



Thuthukani Dlomo
Grants Associate



Susan Mogari
Programme Associate

WOSSO



Tabettha Kanengoni-Malinga
Programme Manager
WOSSO



Michelle Mutogo
Programme Officer
WOSSO

M and E



Fanuel Hadzizi
M and E Coordinator



Monica Bandeira
M and E Associate

GL Advisory Services Associates



Kevin Chiramba
Gender Justice
Associate



Susan Tolmay
Gender and
Governance Associate



Khetsiwe Dlamini
GLS Associate



Simone Shall
Web Associate



Debi Lee
Publications and
Productions Associate

Safe Haven



Annabelle Pierre
Safe Haven Coordinator



Kelly Figaro
Safe Haven Assistant



Minal Virahsawmy
Safe Haven M and E

GL Cottages



Ayodeji Majekodunmi
IT Associate



Antoinette Ferreira
Manager

Communications Team



Deborah Walter
GL Media and
Communications Manager



Thandokuhle Dlamini
Communications
Officer



Nokukhanya
Khumalo
Intern



Gugu Nyoni
Website
Administrator



Nancy Padare
House Manager



Trevor Tangadza
Events Co-ordinator



Thembi Moyo
Administrative Assistant



Khensani Zabala
Head Chef



Chukele Baloyi
Security Officer



Naume Zinengeya
House Assistant



Rose Mazinyi
House Assistant

SUSTAINING CHANGE

People

At Gender Links (GL), people remain at the centre of our work-both internally and externally. The HR function for 2024-2025 successfully balanced compliance, efficiency, and employee well-being. By fostering a culture of accountability, professionalism, and care, HR made significant contributions to organisational performance and staff morale. The focus for the coming year will be to further strengthen systems, expand training and wellness initiatives, and maintain compliance across all operational contexts.

Flexible work arrangements: GL has fully embraced a hybrid working model that combines virtual and in-person engagement. This arrangement has proven to be a win-win for both staff and the organisation. GL has expanded its reach by connecting with leading experts and specialists from around the world, thereby overcoming traditional geographic barriers. This enhanced capability allows GL to draw on a wide range of international knowledge, skills, and perspectives, thereby enriching its projects and initiatives with diverse insights.

Employee contractual strategy and institutional memory: In response to the precarious funding environment, GL has moved away from traditional, standardised contracts and adopted a flexible contractual system.

Programme-specific experts are engaged on a consultancy basis, ensuring cost-effectiveness and delivery-focused outputs. This model enables GL to access high-level expertise without incurring long-term financial risks, while also providing flexibility to scale down when funding ends abruptly - thus avoiding exposure to legal costs or terminal benefits. GL has also retained institutional memory by engaging former employees as GL Associates, who contribute flexibly to both operational and programmatic work.

HR Policies and Procedures

GL's policies and procedures are regularly reviewed to reflect a dynamic and evolving organisation. To strengthen staff engagement with all GL HR procedures and policies, online quizzes were introduced for both existing and new employees, ensuring that staff not only read but also interact with these policies.

HR Systems

The GL recruitment process is well-structured and highly competitive, enabling us to attract the best talent. Practical exercises have been incorporated into the process, providing a clear assessment of candidates' knowledge, skills, and potential contributions. The Performance Management system has been improved with clear, detailed performance contracts. The supervisors take ownership of the process and achieve a shared understanding with their supervisees. The Employee Self-Service (ESS) has streamlined leave management, making it easy to monitor and accurately record leave.

Diversity and Inclusion

GL remains deeply committed to intentionally recruiting individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and experiences to build a truly diverse workforce. By widening the range of perspectives represented within the organisation, GL actively works to foster inclusivity and belonging in every aspect of its operations - from team collaboration to decision-making processes.



GL Human Resource Breakdown 2024/25

Unit	Full-time	Associates	Interns	Total	Female	Male
Head Office - South Africa	11	8	1	20	13	7
GL Services	1			1		1
GL Cottages	10			10	4	5
Botswana	1			1		1
Eswatini	1			1		1
Lesotho	1			1	1	1
Mauritius	7			7	6	
Zimbabwe	6			6	4	2
TOTAL	38	8	1	47	28	19

Partnerships

Gender Links' impact in 2024-2025 was driven by a network of strategic partnerships spanning government departments, development partners and the private sector. These partnerships enabled Gender Links to scale up its programme and sustain results across local, national and regional programming.

Development partners played a critical role in enabling advisory, research and programme work. Notable engagements included the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, whose support ended in March 2025, with a focus on critical research on gender integration in investment.

WaterAid Southern Africa supported gender integration training in Zambia, as well as Gender and Social Inclusion assessments in WaterAid West African country offices, including Burkina Faso, Ghana, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria and Mali. The Irene M. Staehelin (IMS) Foundation supported the scaling of the Sunrise Campaign and other women's economic empowerment activities in South Africa.

Our grant-making and programme partnerships amplified reach and learning. The Women's Voice and Leadership (WVL), supported by Global Affairs Canada, underpinned learning summits, fellowships and grants to grassroots organisations. GL's Women of the South Speak Out (WOSSO) consortium supported multiple grassroots organisations and fellows in Africa, the Middle East and the Americas, amplifying the voices of young women. The first cohort of African fellows will graduate in the second half of 2025, opening the doors for future young leaders to spread their wings and make an

impact in the development sector in Southern Africa and beyond. Regional alliances and networks, notably the SADC Gender Protocol Alliance, have sustained cross-border monitoring, electoral observation, and policy advocacy, thereby strengthening best practices across the region.

In Zimbabwe, Gender Links strengthened partnerships with government departments, local authorities, the Office of the President and Cabinet and the private sector. All these key partnerships were central to shaping gender policy and programming in Zimbabwe's 92 local authorities. With support from the Embassy of Sweden in Zimbabwe through the Local Economic Development programme, multiple partnerships have been established at the local level, driven by the local authorities.

These multi-level partnerships were instrumental in the successes witnessed in 2024-2025. Although there were some challenges with certain partnerships, we are grateful for their collaboration and support. We remain committed to deepening these alliances to sustain progress toward achieving gender justice and localising the Sustainable Development Goals.



GOOD GOVERNANCE

Good governance remains one of the key pillars that contribute to the long-term success, sustainability and viability of Gender Links as an organisation. During the 2024/5 financial year, Gender Links undertook a comprehensive exercise of downsizing and right-sizing its Regional Board, reducing the total number of members from 12 in 2023 to 7 in 2024, as registered with the Companies & Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) in South Africa. At the August 2024 AGM, the GL Board bid farewell with gratitude to two long-serving members: Adrian Dowie, Chair of the Audit Committee, and Emma Kaliya, Chair of the Organisational Development Committee. Both members had completed their full nine years of service, three terms, as per the GL MOI.

At the same time, Gender Links took a great leap of faith and initiated a major decentralisation process, creating local boards in

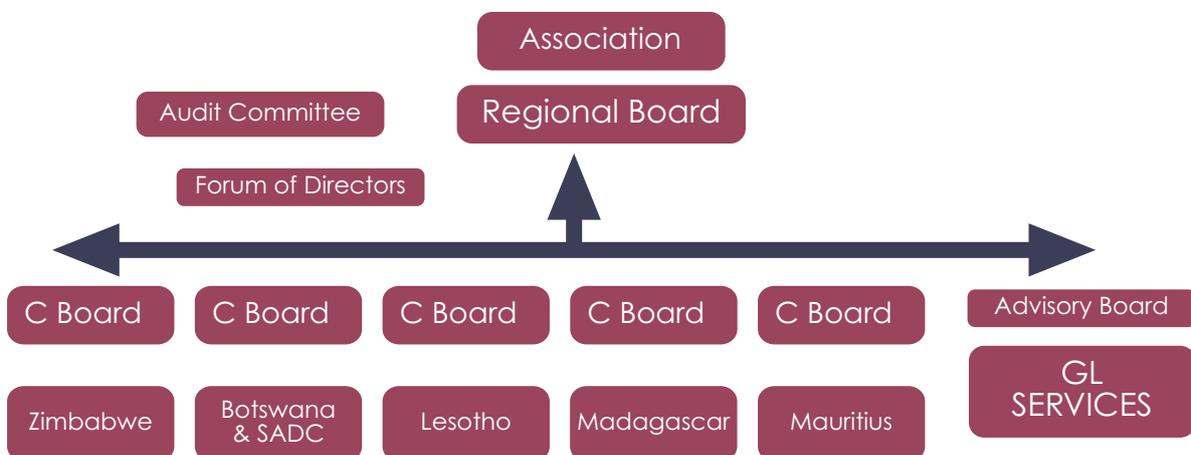


Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius and Zimbabwe. This process yielded very fruitful results within GL country offices, aligning with one of GL's objectives of becoming an agile organisation. The Chairs of each of these local country Boards have cross membership on the Regional Board.

Gender Links generally has a strong governance board with clear decision-making frameworks and policies. Key strengths include active regional board and country levels, and well documented functional policies and frameworks for governance and operations.

Comments from a recent Organisational Assessment on Gender Links GOVERNANCE by AXUM Director

Governance: Decentralisation (2023)



Decentralisation is delivering results, including:

- Relief to executive management to focus on more strategic organisational goals.
- Development of managerial talent for the future as part of succession planning.
- Quick decision-making on day-to-day operational issues at the country level.
- Increased Accountability and shared risk management between local and Regional Boards.
- Effective engagement by Country Directors and their local board members yields good country-specific outcomes.
- Improved statutory compliance with each country's legal regulations.
- Joint fundraising efforts in countries arising from board participation.

Statistics below reflect some of the governance areas that have evolved over the past year.

GOVERNANCE AREA	2023	2024/25
Number of physical offices	4	7
Number of independently registered country offices	1	3
Number of country offices with local boards	0	4
Number of Regional Board members	12	7
Number of Male Regional board members	3	0
Number of Female Regional Board members	9	7
Percentage Female to male Board members	75%	
Independent Audit committee members	4	5
Average length of service board members	5 years	2,5years

Four of the seven operating GL offices now have their local country Boards, with three being fully registered independently. Zimbabwe recently received its Private Voluntary Organisation (PVO) Registration, a significant milestone. The average length of service for the new GL board members is just two and a half years, such a great story of a complete Board overhaul! Cheers to new brooms and fresh minds, with a variety of skill sets ranging from Legal expertise, financial acumen, program experts, entrepreneurial knowledge and organisational development experts. This new Board has been instrumental in exercising oversight on GL's financial outlook, contributing to key decisions on property investments, reviewing and strengthening organisational integrity policies.

Maintaining good governance will be a key success indicator for the future of Gender Links. The next few years will see several transitional changes in the Organisational design of GL. The GL Regional Board oversight will be fundamental in ensuring smooth change management in GL country offices as new Boards start exercising more authority locally on the ground. Strict adherence to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) drawn between the Regional and Country Boards will be key. GL will conduct ongoing annual governance assessments to track progress and maintain the synergies.



GL COTTAGES AND CONFERRING

2024/25 has been a year of growth for GL Cottages. We began with the inauguration of our new Ubuntu conference centre, which increases our capacity for hosting conferences and, consequently, our revenue. This has reduced the costs of outsourcing events to external venues due to space constraints.

We have invested in an alternative energy supply, including solar installations for conferencing equipment, backed up by our generator, to minimise disruptions due to load shedding and reduce electricity usage. Furthermore, as part of our aggressive marketing campaign, we have revamped our website to be more SEO-efficient, aiming to drive bookings. This has enabled us to establish extensive networking, and GL Cottages has now diversified its market reach beyond the usual civil society organisations, extending its offerings to workers' unions, school sporting groups, and climate change advocacy and mining groups.

GLC has embarked on a renovation project, updating rooms and outdated communal areas.

For the year ahead, we look forward to obtaining our new zoning and consolidating both 28 & 30 Gill Street, which has been approved, to enhance our sustainability further and reduce utility costs. This will also include

obtaining a liquor license to increase our beverage sales.

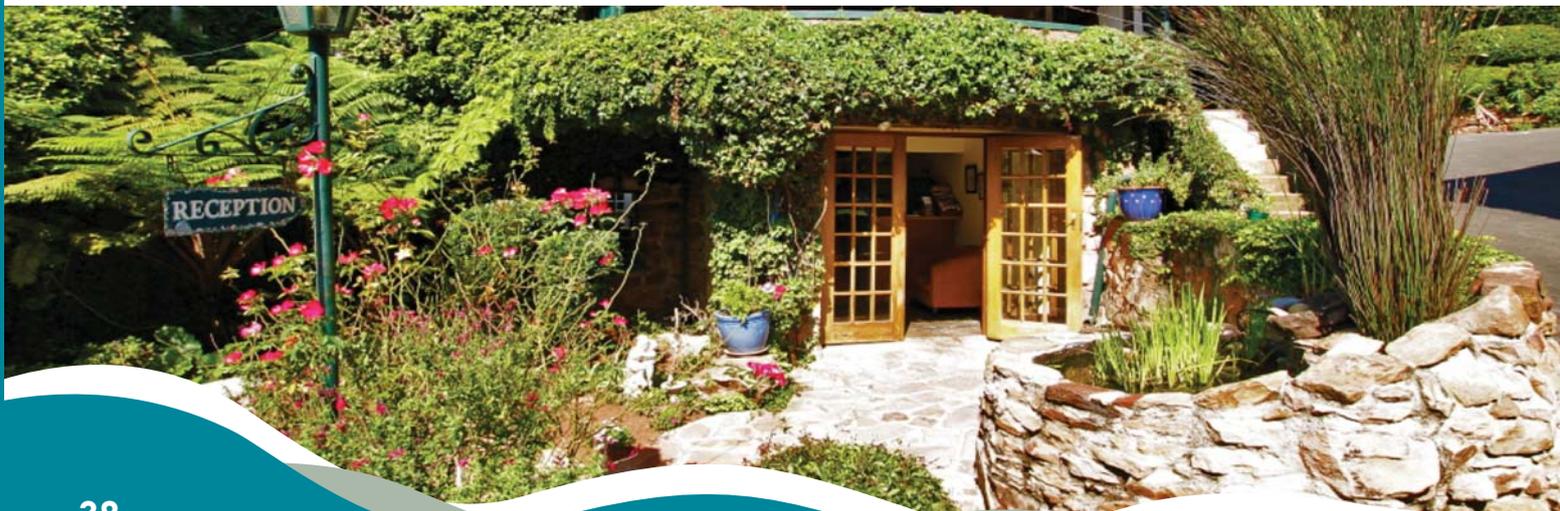
To become more sustainable, the entire property is now powered by borehole water, rather than relying on the local municipal water supply. Guests are commenting on the improved water pressure compared to their previous stays. The aim is to distribute the borehole water to GL HQ by the end of 2025, further reducing costs.

GL Cottages has also diversified its product offering, including Sip & Paint Events, Arts & Crafts children's parties, external catering, and the launch of its new Spa Centre in partnership with a Mobile Spa. We were proud to host a diverse group of customers in 2024. From our biggest supporters, such as AFWID, RWVL, and The Sunshine Campaign, to hosting the Marang Onboarding, and working with customers including The Shine Collab, African Climate Alliance, Canon Collins Trust, Fastenaktion, Groundwork, Casual Workers' Association, and more.

What our guests are saying:

"I love GLC. It's a hidden oasis in the city. Cool amongst the trees and there is also a crystal clear pool for swims. Food is good and generous, and rooms are comfy and clean. This is not a luxury hotel - it's a homely space close to nature and for that I love it."

Margie Pretorius



GL FUTURE FUND (GLFF)



FUTURE FUND for GENERATION EQUALITY

The Gender Links Future Fund has been one of the major highlights as GL celebrates its Jubilee milestone!

This fund comprises surpluses generated by the organisation through consulting work, interest earned, rental income from office and conference facilities, sales of publications, and maximising operational savings from our unrestricted reserves. The Financial year 2024/25 saw a positive performance from this investment portfolio, closing at an overall 46% growth since inception, despite several withdrawals that were critical to facilitating major property purchases.

During the period under review, the Fund continued to be managed by a reputable financial advisor and invested with Allan Gray, a reputable financial institution, as approved by the Board. A report on the fund's perfor-

mance is presented at each Annual General Meeting, fostering a spirit of transparency and accountability.

The Allan Gray portfolio is a low-risk, yet high-return portfolio, featuring a combination of different "flavours" of investment pots that create a balanced mix. For the 2024 period, the annualised return on this investment was about 25%, three times higher than the average return on any fund invested in a market call account with the bank, for example. Thanks to the experienced investment manager entrusted with this fund, the investment carefully navigated the markets and produced a good yield. Some of the specific asset classes that contributed to the fund's growth were foreign-based, benefiting from exchange gains. The fund closed the financial year at approximately R24 million.



ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Gender Links NPC

(Registration number 2001/005850/08)

Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

Directors' Responsibilities and Approval

The directors are required by the Companies Act of South Africa, to maintain adequate accounting records and are responsible for the content and integrity of the annual financial statements and related financial information included in this report. It is their responsibility to ensure that the annual financial statements fairly present the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and the results of its operations and cash flows for the period then ended, in conformity with the basis of accounting described in Note 1. The external auditors are engaged to express an independent opinion on the annual financial statements.

The annual financial statements are prepared in accordance with the basis of accounting described in Note 1 and are based upon appropriate accounting policies consistently applied and supported by reasonable and prudent judgements and estimates

The directors acknowledge that they are ultimately responsible for the system of internal financial control established by the company and place considerable importance on maintaining a strong control environment. To enable the directors to meet these responsibilities, the board sets standards for internal control aimed at reducing the risk of error or loss in a cost effective manner. The standards include the proper delegation of responsibilities within a clearly defined framework, effective accounting procedures and adequate segregation of duties to ensure an acceptable level of risk. These controls are monitored throughout the company and all employees are required to maintain the highest ethical standards in ensuring the company's business is conducted in a manner that in all reasonable circumstances is above reproach. The focus of risk management in the company is on identifying, assessing, managing and monitoring all known forms of risk across the company. While operating risk cannot be fully eliminated, the company endeavours to minimise it by ensuring that appropriate infrastructure, controls, systems and ethical behaviour are applied and managed within predetermined procedures and constraints.

The directors are of the opinion, based on the information and explanations given by management, that the system of internal control provides reasonable assurance that the financial records may be relied on for the preparation of the annual financial statements. However, any system of internal financial control can provide only reasonable, and not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss.

The directors have reviewed the company's cash flow forecast for the year to 31 March 2026 and, in light of this review and the current financial position, they are satisfied that the company has or has access to adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

The external auditors are responsible for independently auditing and reporting on the company's annual financial statements. The annual financial statements have been examined by the company's external auditors and their report is presented on pages 6 to 7.

The annual audited financial statements set out on pages 8 to 25, which have been prepared on the going concern basis, were approved by the board of directors on 10 December 2025 and were signed on their behalf by:

Approval of financial statements



Morna Colleen Anne



Brown Emily May



MIDDEL & PARTNERS

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS (SA) • REGISTERED AUDITORS

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Shareholder of Gender Links (Non-Profit Company)

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Gender Links (Non-Profit Company) (the company) set out on pages 8 to 25, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 March 2025; and the statement of comprehensive income ; the statement of changes in equity; and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended; and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Gender Links (Non-Profit Company) as at 31 March 2025, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with IFRS for SMEs® Accounting Standard as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board and the requirements of the Companies Act of South Africa.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors' Code of Professional Conduct for Registered Auditors (IRBA Code) and other independence requirements applicable to performing audits of financial statements in South Africa. We have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the IRBA Code and in accordance with other ethical requirements applicable to performing audits in South Africa. The IRBA Code is consistent with the corresponding sections of the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including International Independence Standards). We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the document titled "Gender Links (Non-Profit Company) financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025", which includes the Director's Report as required by the Companies Act of South Africa and the supplementary information as set out on pages 26 to 29. The other information does not include the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express an audit opinion or any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Middel & Partners Johannesburg: Partnership
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Carletonville | Polokwane
www.middel.co.za

Directors:
AM Fourie CA(SA), MTR(SA) | GFA Froneman CA(SA) | Firdaus Jeeva CA(SA)

Independent Auditor's Report

Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Statements

The directors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the IFRS for SMEs Accounting Standard as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board and the requirements of the Companies Act of South Africa, and for such internal control as the directors determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intends to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

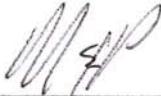
Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the director's use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



Middel & Partners
Gabriel Francois van Lingen Froneman
Partner
Chartered Accountants (SA)
Registered Auditors

10 December 2025
Johannesburg

Middel & Partners Johannesburg Partnership
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Directors:
AM Fourie CA(SA), MTR(SA) | GPA Froneman CA(SA) | Firdaus Jeevan CA(SA)

Gender Links NPC

(Registration number 2001/005850/08)

Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

Statement of Changes in Equity

Figures in Rand	Operational reserve	Accumulated surplus	Total equity
Balance at 01 January 2023	322 608	37 540 006	37 862 614
Deficit for the period	-	(1 376 878)	(1 376 878)
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-
Total comprehensive deficit for the period	-	(1 376 878)	(1 376 878)
Balance at 01 April 2024	322 608	36 163 129	36 485 737
Surplus for the year	-	(132 494)	(132 494)
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-
Total comprehensive surplus for the year	-	(132 494)	(132 494)
Opening accumulated surplus difference	1	-	1
Total contributions by and distributions to owners of company recognised directly in equity	1	-	1
Balance at 31 March 2025	322 609	36 030 635	36 353 244

Gender Links NPC

(Registration number 2001/005850/08)

Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

Notes to the Annual Financial Statements

Figures in Rand	12 months ended 31 March 2025	15 months ended 31 March 2024
6. Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash and cash equivalents consist of:		
Bank balances	69 654 394	33 579 242
7. Funds received in advance		
Funds Received in Advance comprise:		
Amplify Change Partnership Grant	(344 127)	5 600 814
Amplify Change SG2	(4)	-
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	2 579 436	2 144 106
CIM Finance - Mauritius	(22 646)	(22 646)
Colleges and Institutes Canada	101 873	-
Common wealth foundation Mauritius	140 949	323 023
Corporate Social Responsibility Donors Mauritius	1 731 680	587 228
Diakonia Zimbabwe	904 935	950 905
European Union - Regional	20 759 913	-
European Union - Mauritius	(2 130 637)	(484 196)
European Union - Zimbabwe	616 098	511 548
Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office	(26 970)	53 883
Fund for the International Development of Archives (FIDA) Lesotho	2 964	2 964
German Society for International Cooperation - HQ	25 475	25 475
Global Affairs Canada - Women Voice and Leadership Project	13 249 946	10 487 977
Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation - Mauritius	13 550	25 416
International IDEA	871 787	2 236 233
Irene M. Staehelin Foundation	2 528 620	2 266 195
Kaleidoscope	395 346	311 644
Kaleidoscope Trust 2	121 476	115 103
Safe Haven Mauritius	2 597 331	3 160 325
OIF	1 482 970	-
Canal France International	458 080	123 209
State Bank of Mauritius	-	(64 906)
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) Zimbabwe	15 850 316	(758 659)
The African Women's Development Fund: Leading From The South	310 880	1 076 768
URGENT Action Fund-Africa	(4 264)	(4 264)
Water Aid	119 825	(11 149)
	62 334 802	28 656 996
Split between non-current and current portions		
Non-current liabilities	62 334 802	28 656 996
8. Other financial liability		
Other financial liability	1 707 551	960 831

Solar system right of use asset which is a project asset and will remain property of the relevant project till ownership transfers or the asset is disposed, usually at the end of the project arrangement.

Gender Links NPC

(Registration number 2001/005850/08)

Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

Detailed Income Statement

Figures in Rand	Notes	12 months ended 31 March 2025	15 months ended 31 March 2024
Revenue			
Donor funds		86 172 772	90 959 336
Revenue from Gender Links Cottages		4 176 731	5 037 149
Revenue from Gender Links Services		1 899 175	2 899 018
	10	92 248 678	98 895 503
Cost of sales			
Cost of sales - Gender Links Cottages		(2 205 469)	(2 455 224)
		90 043 209	96 440 279
Gross surplus			
Other income			
Recognition of operational reserve		1 404 228	1 098 612
Other operating losses			
Losses on disposal of assets		(495 796)	(427 587)
Impairment losses		-	(454 064)
Foreign exchange gains		3 398 869	999 857
Fair value gains		870 929	5 479 154
		3 774 002	5 597 360
Expenses (Refer to page 27)			
		(96 855 485)	(104 962 063)
Operating deficit			
Investment income	13	(1 634 046)	(1 825 812)
Finance costs	14	1 581 065	562 013
	15	(79 513)	(113 078)
		(132 494)	(1 376 877)
Deficit for the period			

Gender Links NPC

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Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

Detailed Income Statement

Figures in Rand	Note(s)	12 months ended 31 March 2025	15 months ended 31 March 2024
Operating expenses			
Administrative Expenses: Auditors remuneration		291 784	22 790
Administrative Expenses: Bank charges		30 236	77 540
Administrative Expenses: Operational costs		13 718 697	11 764 180
Administrative Expenses: Planning		110 708	141 184
Administrative Expenses: Utilisation of reserve operations		-	2 783 799
Other Expenses: CAPEX		21 455	1 703 553
Other Expenses: Depreciation, amortisation and impairments		321 434	362 610
Other Expenses: Human resources		28 654 724	26 282 398
Other Expenses: Repairs and maintenance		455 371	380 580
Programmes: Economic Power to End Gender Violence		8 965 082	1 227 728
Programmes: Women of the South Speak Out		11 582 446	5 627 126
Programmes: Fifty Fifty Women's Political Participation		685 435	798 698
Programmes: Gender and Media		-	264 737
Programmes: Gender-based Violence Advocacy		427 558	785 519
Programmes: Local Action for Gender Justice		17 437 885	37 726 378
Programmes: SADC Gender Protocol Alliance		240 998	371 994
Sub-Granting: Voice and Choice Grants		12 820 087	12 342 631
Sub-Granting: Voice and Choice Capacity Building		1 091 585	1 379 949
Sub-Granting: Women Voice and Leadership WVL Grants		-	918 669
		96 855 485	104 962 063

Gender Links NPC

(Registration number 2001/005850/08)

Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

Supplementary Information

1. Donors - Actual Receipts

Donor	Funds Received in advance - opening balances 31 March 2024	Actual fund received in March 2025	Total Funds Available in 31 March 2025	Total expenditure	Funds moved to general income	Total funds available (deferral)
African Woman Development Fund - LFS	1 076 768	-	1 076 768	765 885	-	310 883
Amplify Change - Partnership Grant	5 600 814	4 109 468	9 710 282	10 054 408	-	(344 126)
Bill and Melinda gates Foundation	2 144 106	2 334 505	4 478 611	1 899 175	-	2 579 436
Colleges and Institutes Canada	-	430 799	430 799	328 926	-	101 873
CIM Finance - Mauritius	(22 646)	-	(22 646)	-	-	(22 646)
Common wealth foundation Mauritius	323 023	(5 727)	317 296	176 348	-	140 948
Corporate Social Responsibility Donors Mauritius	587 228	1 144 451	1 731 679	-	-	1 731 679
Diakonia Zimbabwe	950 905	2 151 685	3 102 590	2 188 762	8 893	904 935
European Union - Mauritius	(484 196)	-	(484 196)	1 646 441	-	(2 130 637)
European Union - Zimbabwe	511 548	1 145 448	1 656 996	1 036 795	4 103	616 098
European Union - Regional	-	20 759 913	20 759 913	-	-	20 759 913
FIDA Lesotho	2 964	-	2 964	-	-	2 964
Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office	53 883	21 016 100	21 069 983	21 096 953	-	(26 970)
German Society for International Cooperation - HQ	25 475	-	25 475	-	-	25 475
Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) - Mauritius	25 416	-	25 416	11 865	-	13 551
International Idea	2 236 233	2 177 797	4 414 030	3 542 244	-	871 786
Irene M Stahler Foundation	2 266 195	11 501 215	13 767 410	11 238 791	-	2 528 619
Kaleidoscope	311 644	162 828	474 472	79 125	-	395 347
Kaleidoscope 2	115 103	164 763	279 866	158 389	-	121 477
NSIF Safe Haven Mauritius	3 160 325	829 636	3 989 961	1 392 630	-	2 597 331
Canal France International	123 209	658 583	781 792	323 712	-	458 080
State Bank of Mauritius (SBM)	(64 906)	-	(64 906)	-	(64 906)	-
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) Zimbabwe	(758 659)	34 531 615	33 772 956	17 937 008	(14 368)	15 850 316
Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF),	-	1 482 970	1 482 970	-	-	1 482 970
The Water Aid Project	(11 149)	240 973	229 824	110 000	-	119 824
URGENT Action Fund-Africa	(4 264)	-	(4 264)	-	-	(4 264)
Women, Voice and Leadership	10 487 977	17 747 754	28 235 731	14 985 796	-	13 249 935
	28 656 996	122 584 776	151 241 772	88 973 253	(66 278)	62 334 797

Gender Links NPC

(Registration number 2001/005850/08)

Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

Supplementary Information

2. Donor Funds Spent

Donor	Donor Funds	Donor Funds
	Spent 31	Spent 31
	March 2025	March 2024
African Women's Development Fund	765 885	809 340
Amplify Change Partnership Grant	10 054 408	19 362 933
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	1 899 175	3 013 298
Civicus - Lesotho	-	184 375
Climate Justice Resilience Fund	-	386 296
Common wealth foundation Mauritius	176 348	9 325
Corporate Social Responsibility Donors Mauritius	328 926	-
Diakonia Zimbabwe	2 188 762	2 392 163
European Union - Lesotho	-	678 142
European Union - Mauritius	1 646 441	2 125 659
European Union - Zimbabwe	1 036 795	1 015 100
Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office	21 096 953	11 583 360
Freedom House - ARISA	-	24 257
Global Affairs Canada - Women Voice and Leadership Project	-	2 523 235
Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) - Mauritius	11 865	131 917
International Idea	3 542 244	3 349 149
Irene M Stahler Foundation	11 238 791	733 805
Kaleidoscope Trust	79 125	6 932
Kaleidoscope Trust	158 389	670 328
MITSUI O.S.K - MOL	-	458 763
NSIF Safe Haven Mauritius	1 392 630	1 873 077
State Bank of Mauritius (SBM)	-	137 187
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) Zimbabwe	17 937 008	42 117 809
The French Media Development (CFI)	323 712	-
The Water Aid Project	110 000	552 621
URGENT Action Fund-Africa	-	186 264
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	-	264 738
Women, Voice and Leadership 2	14 985 786	-
	88 973 243	94 590 073

2024 - 2025 PUBLICATIONS

GENDER LINKS
FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

Annual Report
2023-24

Participation politique des femmes

BAROMETRE AFRIQUE
2024 Deuxième édition

International IDEA
GENDER LINKS FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE
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Sweden Sverige WPP International IDEA GENDER LINKS FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

Gender audit of the 2024 Botswana elections

WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

TOGETHER WE CAN

THE IMPOSSIBLE IS NOW POSSIBLE

By Phanyela S. Dube and Colleen Louise Morris

GENDER LINKS
FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

A HANDBOOK ON
GENDER-RESPONSIVE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES
IN ZIMBABWE

Providing unbiased procurement assistance for accessible and accessible

To ensure that women-owned enterprises have access to council procurement including tenders

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Gender Integration Reflection Report
Gates Foundation Africa Team
June 2022- March 2025

SADC GENDER PROTOCOL 2024

BAROMETRE

Voice + Choice

Editor in Chief: Colleen Louise Morris

International IDEA Voice + Choice GENDER LINKS FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE WPP

#VoiceandChoice
Gender Audit of the South African National and Provincial Elections
May 2024

By Susan Torkey, Susan Mogan and Colleen Louise Morris

Wosso Voice + Choice SAASA

Voice and Choice: A Safe and Productive future for young women in SADC

Today we are here to represent Women of the South-South. Our (WOSOS), the Voice and Choice Southern Africa Fund (VCAF), and the Safe Abortion Alliance of Southern Africa (SAASA). WOSOS is a partnership across the global south that amplifies grassroots voices to inform the decisions and policies that affect our lives. We strive to create a more equitable future for all, driven by a commitment to inclusivity and shared strength. The VCAF aims to achieve sexual and reproductive health and rights for all. SAASA is a growing and dynamic coalition of individuals and organizations from across SADC who are working together to advance women's reproductive rights, particularly the right to access safe and legal abortion.

We are:
• Winika Nyika - Programmes Officer at Women's Action Group (WAG) Zimbabwe, who is working on awareness raising on SRHR, mental health and gender equality.
• Uthini, Hlonhlo Komongo - a researcher, lecturer in law at the University of Malawi and the founder of the Young Feminists Network, an organisation which advocates for women's rights.
• Mavrika Hombani - A Health Advocate and Communications Specialist who is serving at the Ministry of Health and Social Services, Namibia, as a consultant.
• Refiloe Harris - who works at She-Hive, an organisation that promotes adolescent sexual and reproductive health in Lesotho.

In a landmark ruling in 2024, *She-Hive Lesotho*, a Voice and Choice Southern Africa Fund grantee, succeeded in obtaining a court order allowing the termination of a pregnancy which resulted from rape of a sixteen year old girl whom we shall call Lerato, as we cannot name her for legal reasons. Lesotho's Penal Code of 2012 allows abortion in compliance with the provisions of the Maputo Protocol, including in instances of rape. However, it is not easy to prove and families seldom pursue cases within the short timeframe which is granted for legal and safe abortions. The court issued the order towards the end of the first semester, just in time for the legal termination to be conducted.

Lerato's aunt first referred her to She-Hive, due to her paternal grandfather with whom she lived, abusing her. Lerato's mother passed on when she was only 3 months old. Her father is working in South Africa. She-Hive's investigation confirmed the aunt's concerns. She-Hive arranged for Lerato to be removed from her home and placed in the Department of Gender's emergency shelter, to receive psychosocial support (PSS) pending prosecution of the grandfather.

WOSOS is a consortium between GENDER LINKS SERVICES arrow md manson darvets funded by International IDEA WPP Sweden Sverige

Women's Political Participation

AFRICA BAROMETRE
Second Edition 2024

International IDEA GENDER LINKS FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE WPP Sverige

HOW YOU CAN HELP US



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