

# The Centres of Excellence (COE) for Gender in Local Government:



## What we have learned in Zambia OCTOBER 2020



Women council chairs at the Local Government Association of Zambia Annual Conference.

Photo: Albert Ngosa

The Centres of Excellence (COE) for Gender in Local Government is a visionary programme run by Gender Links (GL), a Southern African NGO, in partnership with local government associations across Southern Africa. In Zambia, GL partners with the Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ). The programme aims to ensure women's equal and effective participation in decision-making, and to translate this into gender responsive governance through gender action plans whose progress is measured by the Gender and Local Government Score Card.

The COE programme in Zambia has been running since 2009 and covers 43 councils, 15 urban and 28 rural. Due to funding constraints there was a hiatus in the programme from 2017 to 2018. This

analysis compares progress across eight councils (Chipata, Kabwe, Kitwe, Lusaka, Rufunsa, Ndola, Luanshya and Kasama) for which GL has comparative data for the period from 2016 to 2020. Eleven councils are implementing the *Sunrise Empower Women, End Violence Campaign*. Ten are implementing Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRHR) campaigns. The COEs cover a population of 3,535,569 which represents 19% of the total population. The programme reached 1265 direct beneficiaries directly between 2016 and 2020. Zambia has started implementing the "hub" and "spoke" programme. Hub councils comprise the more seasoned COE which mentor nearby spoke councils. There are six hub councils and two spoke councils in this sample (please see table overleaf).

## Key indicators of the eight councils (2016 - 2020)

INDICATORS				
Outputs				
No. of COE's Baseline 2016		8 of 43		
No. of COEs follow up in 2020		8 of 43		
No. of Gender Action plans		8		
No. of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Action Plans		8		
No. of councils supporting the entrepreneurship programme		3		
No. of SRHR Action Plans		8		
Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Other	Total
No. of beneficiaries - 2016	101	361	0	462
No. of beneficiaries - 2017	4	13	0	17
No. of beneficiaries - 2018	27	76	0	103
No. of beneficiaries - 2019	241	442	0	683
Total				1265
Outcomes		Baseline (2016/17)	Follow up (2019/20)	Variance
Women's political representation				
% women in local government overall		9%	8%	-1%
% women councillors in COEs		16%	15%	-1%
Political and public participation				
% women mayors		0%	0%	0%
% women chairing committees		3%	10%	7%
% junior councils		1%	0%	0%
Gender Progress Scores - attitudes (%)		64%	58%	-6%
Gender management system and budgeting				
Gender and Local Government Score (%)		64%	53%	-11%
Community Citizen Score (%)		54%	0%	0%
Highest score (%)		75%	70%	-5%
Lowest score (%)		39%	19%	-20%
Gender responsive budgeting				
Total contribution by councils to gender work		USD\$50,342		
Workplace policies and practise				
% women employed in COE councils (2016)		30%	32%	2%
% women managers in COE councils		42%	41%	-1%
% councils that provide maternity leave		100%	100%	0%
% councils that provide paternity leave		100%	100%	0%
%councils with sexual harassment policies		33%	25%	-6%
Infrastructure and social development				
% women accessing land		45%	48%	3%
% women allocated housing		17%	53%	36%
% councils with streetlights		22%	28%	6%
% women on water/sanitation committees		0%	82%	82%
% of water and sanitation committees chaired by women		54%	52%	-2%
Economic power to end violence		2015		
Total number of women at the start of the course		188		
No. of women who completed the course		133		
% women that completed the course		71%		
% women completed a business plan		98%		
% women implemented a business plan		87%		
Monthly income in USD		\$105		
Relationship control score (%)		60%		
% women experiencing less or much less violence		97%		
% women using a computer		71%		
% women that have an email address		48%		
% women surfing the Internet		36%		
% women that have a Facebook account		30%		
% women that have a Twitter account		12%		
% women that have a website		5%		

## Key results

- **Women's political representation and participation in Zambia is low** with women constituting just 8% of councillors. In the COE councils, this proportion is slightly higher (15%). As a result of the low representation of women councillors, there is also low representation of women mayors and council chairpersons. There are no women Mayors. Women comprise only 7% of those chairing committees in the eight councils.
- **The Gender Progress Score which measures gender attitudes of citizens** has decreased from 64% to 58% across the sampled councils. The decrease could be attributed to the hiatus in programme implementation due to the temporary closure of the GL Zambia office in 2016, indicating the need for ongoing support and backstopping.
- **The Gender and Local Government score which measures 25 indicators for gender responsive governance** has decreased by 11 percentage points; also possibly a reflection of the hiatus in the programme.
- **Councils are allocating budget for gender responsive budgeting** - A positive sign for the future is that COE councils have allocated USD\$ 50,342 to gender specific programmes such as formulation of gender structures in councils, implementation of the gender and HIV/AIDS action plans and the 16 days of activism activities.
- **The proportion of women employed by councils increased** from 30% to 32%. The councils have recorded a minor decrease in the proportion of women in management from 42% in 2016 to 41% in 2019.
- **All COEs provide for both maternity and paternity leave** - Zambia is one of only four COE countries where all COEs provide for paternity leave. Only two out of the eight COEs have sexual harassment policies.
- **Councils continue to provide infrastructure and social development services** - Land allocations to women increased from 45% to 48% indicating the commitment of councils to ensuring that women have access to land. Councils have put in place deliberate policies to ensure that at least 30% of any land being allocated is reserved for women. Councils providing street lighting increased from 28% in 2016 to 50% in 2020. This will contribute to the goal of halving Gender Based Violence.
- **Economic power to end violence** - In 2015 GL trained 188 survivors of GBV on entrepreneurship in ten COE councils in



Zambia. Of these, 133 (71%) successfully completed the training. The 28% drop-out rate is largely attributed to pressure from spouses. Ninety seven percent of the participants recorded experiencing less or much less violence as a result of the programme. As a

result of the programme, 71% women are now using a computer; 48% have an email address; 48% are surfing the Internet, 36% have a Facebook account and 30% have a Twitter account.

## Lusaka City Council winner at the SADC Protocol@Work Summit

Lusaka, the capital and largest city of Zambia, joined the COE programme in 2012. The council has since developed a gender action plan and a draft gender policy. The council has a gender focal person and has established a gender committee.

Six (18%) of the 34 councilors are women and of the ten committees only one is chaired by a woman. There is a Junior Council, in which there are equal numbers of young men and young women.

Of the total workforce, the council has employed 23% women and 35% youth. After the council became a COE, women have been employed in positions such as drivers, engineers and have been awarded contracts related with waste management and Community Development Fund (CDF) projects.

Young people, people with disabilities and community members participate in community-based planning projects and meetings. Former councilor, Maggie Zulu, initiated the funeral scheme in Chilenje with Madison insurance. This has helped the community members, especially women, to fund funerals. Management has been trained in gender and HIV/AIDS issues. Youth has also participated in projects planned during youth days.

As part of the economic development plan the council, through the (CDF), has supported women's groups and women entrepreneurs with training. A GBV survivor was given a shop. A group headed by a woman with disability (blind) was supported by the council and they have managed to grow capital for self-subsistence.



Lusaka city council Gender Committee during the 16 Days of gender activism. Photo: Albert Ngosa



Choolwe Lipenga  
Photo: Gender Links

***"Being a Gender Focal person, gave me a lot of exposure as I had to attend a number of trainings and also make presentations on behalf of my Local Authority."***

Choolwe Maunga Lipenga is former Gender Focal Point Person in Kitwe City Council and as an institution they worked to make infrastructure gender sensitive by considering the gender implications of road rehabilitation, construction of police posts, street lighting, street naming and tree-planting.

***"I believe that being gender aware helps to determine how social norms and power structures impact the lives of men and women."***

Councillor Mulenga Kateule from Kitwe city council became gender aware after she was elected as councillor in her ward and was later trained by Gender Links. She realised very few women take up positions in politics challenging her to lead by example and inspire other fellow women to take up such roles. "I am made to believe that both men and women should have equal opportunities."



Mulenga Kateule.  
Photo: Gender Links



Samuel Phiri.  
Photo: Gender Links

***"I have to believe and appreciate that women participation in development is very essential."***

Samuel Phiri is Councillor and Gender Champion in Chipata City Council. Through Gender Links training he has started conducting gender promotional projects and activities in his ward that contribute to gender equality. He meets women on their own to discuss matters that affect them in their communities. This has helped him understand gender concerns of every member of his community. He now ensures that the council budget and the ward fund are gender responsive.

## Lessons learned and way forward

- **Low representation of women should be addressed.** There is an urgent need for 50/50 campaigns to include electoral reform and a legislated quota, as well as public education campaigns on the importance of women's leadership at the local level. Political parties should be lobbied to adopt of female candidates ahead of the 2021 elections.
- **Gender structures and systems are essential for the COE process:** Ensuring that there are gender champions and gender focal persons and gender committees within COEs helps carry the process forward with fewer challenges.
- **Strengthening Gender Responsive Budgeting:** COEs still need more capacity building in gender responsive budgeting. It is evident that councils are still experiencing difficulties in resource allocation towards gender specific projects and activities.
- **Buy-in is key for the process:** Council chief executive officers, civic leaders and other senior management personnel need to be re-engaged on gender matters so that gender

mainstreaming is considered a priority. Finalising the MOU with LGAZ and Ministry of Local Government will ensure that the COE process continues within local councils.

- **Rolling out the Hub and Spoke Model will help to ensure sustainability:** The COE model is unique and appropriate for bridging gender gaps at local level. COEs need to embark on exchange visits to share and learn from each other.
- **Entrepreneurs require more support than just training.** Sources of financing for small and micro businesses is still a major challenge especially during the COVID 19 pandemic. Linking entrepreneurship and LG COE projects more will ensure sustainability since councils have formidable structures and requisite capacity.
- **There is need for a sustainability strategy** including a funding strategy to carry out ongoing training and mentorship. Councils need regular refresher courses especially for new councillors and staff.

## Indicators by Council

[Baseline is in brackets]

Council	Gender and Local Government Score	Community score card	Gender responsive budgets	Gender progress score	% Women employees	% Women in management	% land allocated to women
Chipata	19% (75%)	0%	0	No data (66)	30 (27)	38 (33)	40 (65)
Kabwe	40% (42%)	0%	10000	60 (0)	35 (31)	38 (50)	0 (45)
Kitwe	67% (64%)	60%	17413	No data (0)	34 (33)	34 (50)	53 (36)
Lusaka	70% (74%)	51%	8023	58 (56)	40 (35)	45 (44)	0 (0)
Rufunsa	60% (61%)	52%	806	70 (50)	14 (10)	20 (0)	30 (30)
Ndola	53% (39%)	0%	7140	65 (74)	26 (30)	22 (30)	30 (40)
Luanshya	54% (45%)	60%	0	79 (82)	30 (30)	40 (40)	30 (35)
Kasama	70% (51%)	0%	6960	37 (53)	40 (30)	50 (20)	30 (40)
<b>Zambia</b>	<b>53%</b> <b>(64%)</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>USD\$ 50 342</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>32%</b> <b>(30%)</b>	<b>41%</b> <b>(42%)</b>	<b>48%</b> <b>(45%)</b>

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