Gender Toolkit for Educators

“Making every voice count, and counting that it does”

(GEMSA)
A Gender Toolkit for Educators

Techniques to assist educators in mainstreaming gender

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by Emily M. Brown

May 2010
A GENDER TOOLKIT FOR EDUCATORS

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The value of partnerships was evident yet again in the realisation of this project namely, the Gender Toolkit for Educators. A project proposal which was initially submitted to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), gave rise to the involvement of another UN Agency, UNESCO because of the curriculum development focus of this Project. It underscored the significance of a multi-disciplinary team approach that saw experts representing various institutions and organisations working towards the same goal. Funding for the Project came from the MDG-F Achievement Fund “Setting things right towards gender equality and equity in Namibia”. This is in keeping with the Joint Programme Output of “Increased awareness and capacity for protecting the rights of women and girls, nationally, through the enactment and enforcement of existing legislation.

It is always gratifying when students can play a role in research that would have a bearing on the curricula being applied in their field of study. One post-graduate and five undergraduate Polytechnic of Namibia journalism students selected as interviewers, were focused and diligent in terms of adhering to the conditions stipulated for the survey as well as acquiring the necessary information. Each of the students was responsible for completing 20 questionnaires, resulting in a sample size of 120. Bearing in mind that they had conducted this survey while also having to attend to their course work, speaks of their tenacity and commitment to a sound work ethic.

With regard to curriculum-related discussions, Windhoek-based academics and media experts made an invaluable contribution. Much of what had been identified as key areas of focus during the consultative meetings became evident in the research findings. Such brainstorming sessions often afford an opportunity to gain insight into the approach to be adopted as well as providing clarity with regard to outcomes expected.

Involvement in a project of this nature requires access to materials which had been developed elsewhere in the region as well as locally produced publications. In this regard the Gender Links-commissioned research projects on gender, as well as Inter Press Service (IPS) Africa’s publications, have been invaluable. Furthermore, the Ministry of Gender and Child Welfare’s various initiatives such as the Girl-Child Conference of 2009, also served to inform the content of the toolkit. It needs to be mentioned that Namibia has a wonderful track record of undertaking gender-related research, and this should serve to increase the relevance of the Gender Toolkit for educators in Namibia and the region.

Since the Study was conducted amongst educators in Senior Secondary Schools, Colleges, an Institute and Universities, we remain mindful of the spirit of collegiality and the awareness of the need to mainstream gender into Namibia’s various education programmes. The student interviewers were well received, and experienced a willingness on the part of the interviewees to be available for the interviews. This resulted in boosting their confidence and belief that what they were doing was of the utmost importance.
# TABLE OF CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreword</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1: Understanding Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2: Gender and Training</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: Gender in Curricula – adding value</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: Towards a Gender Policy</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FOREWORD

In an attempt to mainstream gender into especially journalism curricula, various partners in the field of education met at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Windhoek to discuss the approach to be adopted to accomplish this task. Facilitated by UNESCO, the representatives of the Namibian Chapter of the Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA), the University of Namibia (UNAM), the International University of Management (IUM), the Ministry of Education and the Polytechnic of Namibia (PoN), agreed that a gender toolkit be developed for educators in Namibia. While gender toolkits exist within the region, in order to devise a gender toolkit that is responsive to the needs of educators in Namibia, it was agreed that a Survey on Gender Awareness be conducted. The findings of such a survey served to inform the content of this Toolkit.

Ms Emily Brown, Head of the Media Technology Department at the Polytechnic of Namibia, as Project Coordinator, drafted the survey and recruited six PoN journalism students to conduct the survey amongst educators in Okahandja, Rehoboth and Windhoek. Valuable information became available through the responses to the survey, and these findings have informed the approach subscribed to in this Gender Toolkit.

It was decided to survey teachers at Senior Secondary Schools in Windhoek and Rehoboth, the professional staff at the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) in Okahandja, teaching staff at colleges in Windhoek as well as academics at IUM, the PoN and UNAM. The responses to the questionnaire were often detailed, which increased the likelihood of the toolkit being a relevant resource. Having entered the last quarter of work aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), such a resource becomes even more meaningful. Not only would it be of benefit to Namibian organisations and institutions, but also for educators in the SADC region. Launching the toolkit during the 2010 World Press Freedom Day event adds to its impact as we take cognizance of the theme ‘Access to Information’.

As educators become equipped to mainstream gender in education, it is believed that the effects would become more evident in research being conducted and materials developed and published in Namibia. In addition to the realization that the adoption of gender policies would enhance the impact of the gender toolkit, there is also the will to improve the quality of curricula, publications and training programmes. A concerted effort towards mainstreaming gender is what needs to be accomplished through the gender toolkit, and the research findings have shown that Namibia is ready to do just that.

Prof. Alaphia Wright (Director of the UNESCO Windhoek Office, and UNESCO Representative to Angola, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland)
INTRODUCTION

What the Gender Awareness Survey Reveals

As found in previous studies (Gender in Media Training, edited by Colleen Lowe Morna, 1992), the recently completed Gender Awareness Survey findings show that not only is the term ‘gender’ still associated with women’s issues, but much confusion still prevails when having to define ‘gender’. Invariably, gender has been defined as being synonymous with ‘sex’ – the biological distinction between being male or female. Even though all the respondents claimed to be aware of the term ‘gender’, the overwhelming majority indicated that they hadn’t recently participated in a discussion on gender. A heartening fact about the survey findings is that over 60% of the respondents revealed that they either needed more information about gender or training on gender.

With regard to whether the respondents were aware of a gender policy within their respective institutions, 33% stated that their institutions had a gender policy in place, but 60% said that they did not know whether a gender policy existed within their institution or organization. This finding reveals something about the organisation’s approach to developing policies – it indicates that the approach is not a consultative one, and the review of the policy is either infrequent or it is also done in a non-consultative manner. Furthermore, the lack of awareness of a gender policy on the part of educators could be connected to the fact that gender is mostly absent from curricula.

In response to a question about whether gender is incorporated in training curricula, 24% of the respondents said they did not know, 27% said ‘no’, and 49% responded in the affirmative. This means that more than half of the respondents did not encounter gender in their curricula. Of importance, however, is that most of the respondents recommended some form of training or that gender be mainstreamed into curricula.

Because of the inclusion of schools in the Study, more women than men were surveyed. A total of 55% women and 45% men were interviewed. Both women and men have, therefore, advised on the nature of training that could assist them in their approach to gender. Therefore, the gender toolkit for educators stems from a need to learn more about gender, and to be guided in terms of how to mainstream gender into course content as well as curricula.

In the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, all decision-making bodies in the region are encouraged to achieve gender parity by the year 2015, it also calls for the mainstreaming of gender in all media laws, policies and training.

Why educators ought to incorporate Gender into curricula

The National Gender Policy of Namibia has been revised and is currently with Parliament for discussion and approval. Chapter 4 of the Policy, which focuses on ‘Gender Balance in Education and Training’, states in clause 4.13.1 that the government “shall ensure that curricula, textbooks and all teaching/learning materials are free from gender-biased stereotype references and illustrations for all levels of education, including teacher training programmes”. It goes without saying, therefore, that gender has to be mainstreamed into education. For example, five SADC countries held national elections during 2009. In the SADC region, while women comprise approximately 20% of parliamentarians, they constituted only 14% of the politicians quoted (Gender and Media Baseline Study, 2003).

Quality curricula ought to be responsive to the developments and significant changes in our society. The year 2010 has, for example, because of a major sport event to be hosted in the SADC region, necessitated an assessment of issues such as human trafficking. Governments have been proactive in
terms of assessing the implications of such an event – especially for women and children – and in the region we've started to see a great deal more coverage of human trafficking and gender violence. Namibia, for example, is one of the countries to have ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, as well as the additional Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Humans, especially women and children, in 2003. Act No. 29 of 2004 – The Prevention of Organised Crime Act (POCA) – which criminalises trafficking in persons was also enacted. In a US Department of State Report entitled “Trafficking in Persons’ (TIP) (June 2008), Namibia has been designated a “Special Case” because there is insufficient reliable information on the country’s trafficking circumstances, even though a trafficking problem is suspected.

When gender is effectively mainstreamed into curricula, it is likely that there would be an increase in quality educational outputs in our country. It would be described as quality because the content would be pertinent to women and men, it would link content to the appropriate Protocols/laws.

While only the third Millennium Development Goal addresses gender directly, gender applies to all the MDGs. In September 2000, Heads of State saw it fit to become signatories to the UN Millennium Declaration which sets out their development aspirations in a framework of action. Why is it not evident in our curricula and study materials that as a signatory nation we are committed to the targets as set out in the MDGs? Training with regard to gender mainstreaming would serve as the stimulus that would drive gender-aware education. If we’re in the business of transferring skills, then gender awareness is an essential skill. By mainstreaming gender we nurture a sense of the importance of gender, and thus avoid sporadic reference to a concept that lies at the heart of an inclusive approach to learning.

Emily M. Brown

Department Media Technology, Polytechnic of Namibia
CHAPTER 1

UNDERSTANDING GENDER

INTRODUCTION

In most parts of Namibia gender inequality remains evident. Women are often stereotyped in terms of being caregivers or for their domestic and reproductive roles. On the other hand, men are also seen as 'control figures' who are responsible for making key decisions, as well as being portrayed as the head of the household. These socially constructed roles assigned to women and men serve to exacerbate gender inequality. Such disparities have contributed to especially men perceiving gender as pertaining to women only. This is of course a misconception.

Article 23 of the Namibian Constitution, for example, recognises that women in Namibia “have traditionally suffered special discrimination” and that efforts should be made to encourage and empower them to play a full, equal and effective role in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the nation. However, the Constitution also requires the creation of laws aimed at providing equal opportunities for men and women.

This Chapter is aimed at facilitating insight into the difference between sex and gender, by defining the two terms. Furthermore, concepts such as gender stereotypes, gender bias, gender-aware as opposed to gender-blind language and gender mainstreaming will be defined to eliminate misconceptions about gender.

Defining Sex

Sex entails the biological difference between men and women. For example, men produce sperm; women become pregnant, bear children and breastfeed them.

Defining Gender

Among the more widely used definitions of gender are the following:

Gender refers to the roles assigned to men and women within a particular society.

“Gender describes the socially constructed differences between men and women, which can change over time, and which vary within a given society from one society to the next.” (Watching the Watchdogs: A Gender and Media Literacy Toolkit for Southern Africa, 2008).

Our gender identity speaks to how we behave as women and men, and how others in our society expect us to behave. Therefore, our gender attributes and relationships are socially constructed and we learn these through the socialisation process within our respective societies.

AN ACTIVITY:

Ask students to group into pairs or buzz groups and then they should tick (/) whether the following functions are associated with sex or gender, based on the definitions given above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breastfeeding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menstruation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ploughing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growing a beard or moustache</td>
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<td>Boxing</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Voice-breaking</td>
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<td>Sewing and Knitting</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from “A Southern African Toolkit”, edited by Colleen Lowe Morna, 2002)

Gender Stereotypes

- A stereotype is a generalisation about a group of people or events, and a particular individual is then judged in terms of the generalisation which may or may not be appropriate or accurate for that person.

- It has to do with an individual not being judged on his or her own merits.

- Gender stereotypes are “socially constructed beliefs about men and women” (Watching the Watchdogs: A Gender and Media Literacy Toolkit for Southern Africa, 2008).

- A stereotype entails “reducing a person to a mere instance of a characteristic” (Oxford English Dictionary).

AN ACTIVITY:

Below follow a few true stories for group discussion or debate:

(i) The infuriated mother of a South African schoolboy lodged a complaint with the President when her son was forced to wear a dress for the day as punishment for his shirt that had hanged out. (Citizen Newspaper, 26 March 2001)

(ii) Research in the United Kingdom has revealed that four out of ten schoolgirls are so ignorant about cooking that they can’t boil an egg. The research, which apparently focused on girls only, concludes that there is an “alarming lack of domestic and social expertise in girls aged between eight and fifteen.” (The Star Newspaper, Friday 08 February 2002)

(iii) In a debate following the Beijing Conference, a Zimbabwean male Member of Parliament (MP) declared: “Man is the head of the family, and there will never be a time when a woman is the head.” Another declared: “Women must be wary of bringing too many women to parliament. There will not be balanced thinking in parliament because of the irrational thinking of women.” (The Herald, 1995)

(Adapted from "A Southern African Toolkit", edited by Colleen Lowe Morna, 2002)
Gender Bias

Gender bias refers to unfair treatment because of perceived differences between women and men. Such biased attitudes, practices and beliefs occur in the home, educational institutions and in society at large. For example, there was a time when the school system decided that girls do not require a subject such as Mathematics at high school, but boys did not have this choice.

Gender bias, therefore, is associated with:

**Double standards:** for example, asking women students why they believe they would be successful at becoming a pilot, but not asking male students the same question.

**Blaming:** When, for example, a woman is raped, the fact that she had worn a short dress with a low neckline might be used as extenuating circumstances, or this might be used to suggest that she had “asked” to be raped.

**Moralising:** It is often associated with speculation or unsubstantiated claims. In the Zamcom guide on ‘Reporting Gender in Southern Africa’ (1999: 56), reference is made to a story which appeared in a Tanzanian newspaper, in which a bus crashed into a tree. According to the newspaper report the accident – in which the driver of the bus died – happened because a girl wearing a mini-skirt had walked past just prior to the accident. Bearing in mind that the driver was killed in the accident, and none of the passengers made any comments regarding the accident, it was merely speculation on the part of the reporter.

**AN ACTIVITY:**

Collect copies of either the day’s newspapers or backdated copies of various newspapers. Divide students into groups and give each group a newspaper to analyse. They should be asked to analyse the pictures with regard to the percentage of women versus men in the pictures. Group photos should also be analysed including advertisements. If boys appear in the pictures, they would count as men, and girls as women. Record the role – if possible – of the women and men in the pictures, for example, a picture of a woman who is a truck driver. Use the following table to record your findings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Medium</th>
<th>%Women</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>%Men</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*(Adapted from “A Southern African Toolkit”, edited by Colleen Lowe Morna, 2002)*

Gender Awareness

Gender Awareness refers to considering the needs of both women and men when discussing a project, programme or an issue. For example, what are the views of women and men over the fact that HIV and AIDS caregivers are predominantly women? How would this situation impact on the development of women or men?

**AN ACTIVITY:**

Organise a debate for students on why Mathematics is important to both boys and girls.

Gender Blindness

Gender blindness is often based on the assumption that views expressed by men on a topic such as employee assistance programmes (EAPs), would hold for women as well. The views of both women and men must be sourced in order to create the desired balance. Often talk shows discussing, for example, access to insurance for persons living with HIV or AIDS, would have an all-male panel, and then the moderator might also be male. It could either imply that women can’t speak for themselves, or that men know what women would want to say on the topic.

**AN ACTIVITY:**

Divide the class, based on sex, into two groups. Ask both groups to identify a rapporteur and a presenter. Thereafter, ask the two groups to debate the topic in the example cited under ‘gender blindness’, and see whether the two groups raise the same or similar issues.

Gender Mainstreaming

The mainstreaming of gender is a process of identifying gender gaps and making the concerns and experiences of women, men, girls and boys integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all spheres, so that they can benefit equally.

Gender mainstreaming has as its goal equality between women and men. It seeks to address discrepancies in societies where cultural norms and practices served to favour the male in that society. By mainstreaming gender into course materials, curricula, policies, projects and presentations, a human rights approach is upheld. With this perspective in mind, it should ensure that gender mainstreaming is continuous rather than sporadic or ad hoc.

**AN ACTIVITY:**

Ask the students to comment on the percentage of boys and girls in their class as opposed to the percentage of women and men who teach them. Their comments should focus on how examples given in the various subjects would be different if gender had been mainstreamed. For example, the students may be asked to analyse a chapter in their Science or Geography textbook and see whether gender had been mainstreamed. They would have to comment on the text in terms of whether examples referred to give the views of both women and men, as well as whether both women and men are featured in the images or pictures used. If a section in the particular chapter is not gender aware, students could give examples of how it could be done differently. For example, is the language used inclusive of women and men?
CHAPTER 2

GENDER AND TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

It was in 2004, in partnership with Gender Links Southern Africa, that the Department Media Technology at the PoN saw the need to mainstream gender in the Journalism curriculum. While it took a great deal of planning, training (mostly in-house), workshops and various activities that would facilitate understanding on the part of the students, it was do-able. Today, the publication “Gender in entry level Journalism: Lessons from the Polytechnic of Namibia’s Department Media Technology/Gender Links Pilot Project”, edited by Colleen Lowe Morna and Pauliina Shilongo, 2004, is a record of how the aforesaid Department approached the mainstreaming of gender into the journalism curriculum. Subsequent to the documentation of the mainstreaming process, many trainers and educators have taken various lessons from it as a training resource. Of significance is that by agreeing to replicate this project, implies that yet another group of staff and students could experience the impact of a well-designed, responsive training programme.

Even though the curriculum was practice-oriented, it was to a large extent also quite technical. But, like most training programmes, this training project was also founded on the components of skills, knowledge and attitudes. Much literature on gender has been generated since the Department decided to undertake the gender-mainstreaming project with Gender Links. The relevant research projects served to make available results which could then serve as the basis for projects. For example, since a media baseline Study showed that the voices of women living with HIV or AIDS are never heard in the media, the students produced four short films in which the main character is a woman living with HIV, relating her own experiences and action taken. These films were subsequently telecast by the NBC-TV. Therefore, what was shown to be missing from the mass media through research findings was rectified because of new skills which had been acquired, new knowledge gained on gender, and the attitudinal change which occurred and prescribed the action required.

The Gender Awareness Survey: A Needs Assessment

Through the Gender Awareness Survey, it became evident that opportunities to discuss or unpack gender are few and far between. It showed also that trainers needed guidance in terms of how to go about mainstreaming gender in the curriculum. However, meaningful suggestions were provided to improve curricula by including gender-aware concepts and assessing language usage for inclusiveness.
WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER?

Gender can be addressed in curricula in two ways:

(i) Opting for a free-standing course on gender or a seminar/workshop on gender. For example, ‘Gender and Care-giving’, or ‘Gender and Human Trafficking’ could be the title of the course or the subject for the seminar. The free-standing course would require a specified period, such as a three-week long course during which, for example, an engendered approach to care-giving or human-trafficking would be adopted.

(ii) Mainstreaming gender into the curriculum

When gender is mainstreamed, it means that gender is integrated into various aspects of the curriculum or training units, for example. This approach allows for exploring the subject fully, where an engendered approach often necessitates considering gender-disaggregated data, for example.

AN ACTIVITY:

An icebreaker can be considered to get the workshop started. Ask the participants to either agree or disagree with the statement “Girls who fall pregnant during their studies should be allowed to proceed with their education, normally.” Students may be asked to make one-minute impromptu speeches on the subject. Such an activity would serve to highlight gender biases, gender awareness and gender stereotypes, for example.

(Adapted from “A Southern African Toolkit”, edited by Colleen Lowe Morna, 2002)

(iv) Training-of-Trainees: building capacity

Positive learning experiences have shown that when an educator is passionate about the course content, it impacted positively on the student exposed to such teaching. Educators who realise the value of adopting an engendered approach to teaching, is perceived as being balanced, objective and fair. Mainstreaming gender into course examples and class activities gives rise to a sense of inclusion which, in turn, stimulates the need amongst students to participate. A former editor (also a student) in the Echoes newsroom at the Polytechnic of Namibia had this to say after having participated in an intensive training programme focusing on integrating gender into practice: “As editor I constantly had to remind our reporters and myself to get an equal number of men and women sources, to the layout person to be aware of the sex of the people in the pictures when cropping and preparing pictures for layout, sometimes leading to great frustration. Sometimes we had to drop a quality picture for one of inferior quality to ensure gender balance.” (Gender in Entry-Level Journalism, 2004: 90).

(iv) Institutional Policies and the Assessment of gender

When institutional audits and the evaluation of study programmes are done, it is from the perspective of the policies which exist in the institution. This underscores the importance of a gender policy or gender-aware institutional policies. When a directive regarding gender is explicitly stated in a policy, the integration of gender in the curriculum could be expected. If this were the case, when staff members are being evaluated, gender would be a component of such an evaluation. This describes a process where gender is central to the teaching environment, and indicates the value that the institution places on gender.

(v) Materials development

Educators and trainers have often bemoaned the fact there is a dearth of locally produced course material, and that teaching materials relevant to the subject often did not integrate gender. Therefore, when planning workshops or conferences where research papers on gender would be presented, budgets must include a publishing component in order to increase capacity with regard to training materials.

APPROACHES TO MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN CURRICULA

(i) Research

Organisations such as Gender Links, the Namibia Institute for Democracy (NID), the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) and the Ministry of Gender and Child Welfare, have all been involved in conducting gender-based research. Research could pertain to ‘Gender Stereotypes in Study Material’ or ‘The representation of women in Science’, as examples of research topics that would serve to inform study material, group discussions or curriculum review.
CHAPTER 3

GENDER IN CURRICULA: ADDING VALUE

INTRODUCTION

At the heart of our success as educators is not so much how we teach or transmit our course materials, but what such materials entail and incorporate. It is the nature of the curriculum that sets one institution apart from another. This is so because it relates directly to the outcomes which can be expected. Students who have the desire to work in a field that is practice-oriented, have been found wanting because of not having sufficient practical skills. In Namibia, for example, a higher value is placed on students who are ready for the workplace, which often translates into having the necessary skills in communication (especially those who write and use language well), and technological skills. However, of importance is the extent to which the curriculum stimulates critical thinking and makes an impact on the attitude of the student with regard to, especially, gender.

One of the questions in the ‘Gender Awareness Survey’ which had been conducted by Journalism students at the PoN in 2010, focused on the curriculum. In response to the question “Do any of your training curricula include aspects of gender?” 49% of the respondents answered ‘yes’, 28% said ‘No’, while 23% said they “Don’t know”. The findings with regard to this question highlight once again the importance of integrating gender overtly rather than implying it. In the case of the latter, even educators or trainers could overlook its importance.

CURRICULUM COLLABORATION

The consultative approach to curriculum development has shown to be far more effective than having one or two persons draft a curriculum. Institutions such as the Polytechnic of Namibia require proof of such consultation and collaboration whenever new curricula are submitted to the Institution’s Senate for approval and adoption. If the consultation is truly in the spirit of learning more, then invaluable information could still be incorporated into the draft curriculum. For example, when the Department Media Technology had the first draft of the Diploma curriculum in Journalism and Communication Technology ready, a consultative meeting was organised just prior to the Windhoek +10 meeting in 2001. Trainers in the region were invited to this meeting, including development partners such as The Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NIZA), UNESCO (Paris) and Gender Links. Not only were a wealth of comments generated on the draft curriculum, the need was also expressed by the participants to have a similar gathering of trainers and development partners the following year. Such sharing during collaboration around curricula could focus on: Information-Sharing (study materials) and Networking; Quality Assurance and Accreditation; Curriculum Development Methodology and Review.

The Consultation/Collaboration Model

(Adapted from Figure 6 in “Media Training Needs Assessment for Southern Africa”, 2001: 71)

The above Model shows that if curricula subscribe to an engendered approach from the outset, such thinking would continue until the assessment and review phase.

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES

In Chapter 2 reference was made to the importance of the three elements of skills, knowledge and attitudes with regard to the planning of a curriculum. Especially in, for example, the training of journalists, the following Model.

Adapted from the publication ‘(Media Training Needs Assessment for Southern Africa’, 2001: 41) – is relevant:

Elements Informing Training Curricula

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SKILLS</th>
<th>ATTITUDES</th>
<th>KNOWLEDGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Critical for production; increasingly important in IT era</td>
<td>• Critical for improving the ethical and professional standards of a profession</td>
<td>• Essential for analysis, content, in-depth reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Immediate</td>
<td>• Often overlooked in assessments or evaluation</td>
<td>• Not as easy to qualify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tangible</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Required for planning research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Impact easier to measure</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Evaluating curricula through formal assessments (knowledge gained), performance of graduates in the workplace (the application) and whether the programme of study was considered to be value for money (results; promotion), serve to guide the educator in terms of review considerations. Such evaluation provides the trainer or educator with an opportunity to identify shortcomings as well as opportunities for mainstreaming gender and the value it brings once integrated into the curriculum.
CHAPTER 4

TOWARDS A GENDER POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Until a policy is adopted, the seriousness of purpose with regard to a cause or goal shall continue to be questioned. The same holds true for the mainstreaming of gender – the policy should spell out clearly what it seeks to accomplish, the aspects of gender to be addressed, and how it would guide and impact behaviour. Therefore, the more consultative the approach to policy, the better the policy would speak to what the contributors expect from a particular policy. The opposite of the consultative approach – which is the more familiar scenario – is to commission a consultant or senior expert to develop a policy on a particular subject.

In the Gender Awareness Survey, the responses to the question: ‘Does your institution have a gender policy?’ revealed yet again that policy is often devised by one person, rather than seeking the input of those who are within the organisation. For example, 33% of the respondents indicated that their institution has a gender policy, 7% said ‘no’, and the overwhelming majority (60%) said that they ‘don’t know’.

POLICY: THE APPROACH TO BE ADOPTED

The following approaches can be adopted once its been decided to devise a gender policy:

(i) A stand-alone gender policy.

Advantages

- This approach usually ensures maximum commitment to the intention of affording gender mainstreaming the seriousness it deserves.
- Buy-in because of having adopted the consultative approach.

Disadvantages

- Could be marginalised because of being one of many policies.
- It tends to be theoretical.

(ii) To mainstream gender into all the policies of the institution, for example, the Human Resource Policy, the Grievance Procedure, the Staff Development Policy and the Sexual Harassment Policy.

Advantages

- It becomes a living document.
- It nurtures a gender-aware approach to all rules and regulations.

Disadvantage

- Gender is one of many other considerations.

While policies are usually housed within the Human Resources Department, it might be of benefit to appoint persons who would enjoy championing the cause of either mainstreaming gender into policies and procedures, or to ensure that sufficient consultation would occur around the gender policy. Furthermore, such persons would also be proactive in ensuring that the policies are easily accessible, usually online, or as a hard copy.

A GENDER POLICY CHECKLIST

The following checklist was adapted from the one in the publication “Whose News? Whose Views? Southern Africa: Gender in Media Handbook”, 2001: S1:

☑ Does your organisation/institution have a gender policy?
☑ Does your Department have a gender policy?
☑ Does the policy cover ethical considerations, internal human resource issues?
☑ Is it a stand-alone policy? Is it integrated in all existing policy documents? Or both?
☑ Is the policy informed by consultation?
☑ Does the policy allow public access and involvement?
☑ How is the policy implemented? What are the outputs?
☑ Are resources (human? Financial? Technological?) allocated for the implementation of the policy?
☑ Is there a high level of commitment to the policy?
☑ How and where is this commitment articulated?

Note:

An invaluable resource for educators and trainers is the Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC). It provides an electronic helpdesk where queries are responded to within 48 hours – www.gmdc.org.za
REFERENCES


UNESCO Gender Awareness Survey Report. 2010. Windhoek

