

Let's think, talk – and do! – sustainability

While the current funding environment appears to be drying up, there in fact are boundless opportunities for the sustainability of NGO programmes, argues MICHAEL HANDS (right). In this article he discusses how NGOs can come to grips with the sustainability of their programmes and organisations.



South African non-governmental organisations are not-for-profit, development organisations that are contributing immensely to the betterment of civil society and the lifestyles of both local and global communities. Perhaps the most publicised of these success stories was the support the Treatment Action Campaign gave the SA government in the court case drama against the international pharmaceutical conglomerates. Many say with justification following continued inaction from the government that without the presence and influence of the TAC during the court case proceedings, the government would have lost the case. The victory was a global victory for a moral society where generic drugs may be legally used to treat the poorest of the poor. It also affirmed the need for sustained existence of NGOs.

The challenges

The dynamics of the competitiveness that is becoming paramount through globalisation together with shrinking public asset bases



The TAC campaign is a good example of NGOs' indispensable contribution to society.

Photograph: Wayne Conradie

throughout the world, is forcing the development sector to rethink its operational activities in order to attain a sustainable programme. International funders are slowly passing their assumed, partial responsibility for funding local development back to the people of South Africa. Bilateral agreements have redirected international funding from NGO recipients to government.

External alternatives

Despite all these present difficulties, economists do acknowledge

the simple economic principle that the more people involved in an economy, the stronger that economy will be. As a result of this principle corporations with sustainable agendas of their own are including more substantial social responsibility elements in their budgets. Sound corporations are attempting to contribute to their income through direct or indirect funding of developmental issues. Training telephone technicians in rural areas, for example, will help maintain those rural telephones to continue generating long distance telephone call income.

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Everyone thus becomes a winner. Whether these shifts are a result of the declining bottom line (financial profit) or the interest in the triple bottom line (environmental, financial and social profits) remains to be seen.

Lateral thinking is often required to link existing resources to funding opportunities. The mass of civil society, no matter how poor, must not underestimate their internal economic clout, however latent that may be.

There is recognition from international funders that developmental models used in South Africa can be used in other parts of the world, particularly in Africa. NGOs therefore have a responsibility to consider marketing their services to set up or at least begin a dialogue about similar models of development in more needy countries. Funding could be sourced either from the foreign NGOs themselves or their funders. Some of the foreign

NGO funders would need no introduction and may be the same funders that have previously supported the SA organisational activities. The partnership is already established but needs to be nurtured. The growth of our neighbouring states and continent will have mutual benefits for quality of life. More importantly, the local pilot activity will gain more status, and therefore should gain support.

The government has facilitated the formation of the National Development Agency and the National Lottery which will also help the local funding scenario. These organi-



This was how cartoonist Tony Grogan saw the NGO funding crisis in the mid-90s

sations have been very slow in getting started, and perhaps as slow in distributing funds, but the signs are there that things can only improve from here.

The suggested “sale” of service should be conducted with little adjustment and without compromising the nature of the developmental delivery. This is an important issue because while recommendations to generate more income through sale of expertise are becoming paramount for financial sustainability, some developmental services may be almost impossible to sell. These “unsaleable” services are often the very essence of the organisational activities, they should never be compromised, and should be proudly financed by SA taxpayers. NGOs should lobby their existing government partners to budget for programmes that can be fairly tendered for, rather than assume that the vital NGO services are for free.

Development is not always measurable but where possible these measured successes need to make headlines. The media too have a responsible role to play in development, but it is the individual organisation’s responsibility to inform journalists. Pride makes great reading if it is expressed with belief, confidence and

envisaged sustainability. It’s time to make some positive noise. There are successes in every organisation, and by documenting the obvious the knowledge of success is shared with potential sources of support. Suppliers of development initiatives, including government, need to be lobbied to commit to the betterment of their constituencies.

These trends suggest that a more marketable approach is required by the development sector. There is no reason why it cannot adopt a more competitive approach in order to secure the sale of its services. They are leading experts in their respective fields and have pricing structures that no private sector company can match. Generally there is no competition and, staying with economic terms, development organisations could probably be pleasantly accused of monopolising their fields of expertise. So why not add a price tag to this service?

Internal yardsticks to sustain

Internally, sustainability requires a solid organisational infrastructure, and, like any structure, continued human resource expertise in forecasting trends for at least a

- Development has to be sustained in order to achieve ultimate empowerment.
- Infrastructure is useless without sustained management.
- Training is ineffective without the trainees practising their newly discovered skills; follow-up support; and measurement through accountability structures.

three-year period. These trends are both organisational, taking into consideration the broad development environment, and operational trends. Many organisations incorrectly perceive sustainability to be pertaining to finance only. Finance is largely dependent on the organisational activities and cannot be viewed in isolation. Sustainability, in turn, is integrally linked to the organisation's programmes, of which the financial aspect is a major component. Ultimately NGOs are in the service industry and while sound organisational structures must be put in place to ensure uninterrupted delivery the human resource element cannot be neglected. All those service delivery complaints we all experience must now be in the forefront of our minds when we render our own development service. The beneficiaries are our clients even though they may not always part financially for the service.

The internal systems have to be the result of a strategic vision; a well-documented and well-planned (achievable) programme; a solid financial department to meaningfully cost that programme; and excellent accountability structures to facilitate transparency in measuring both the programme activities and the financial activities. The financial activities should mirror the programme activities. Transparency with integrity is a formula for success and developing partnerships.

The costing of services should provide for an element of "surplus", for both contingencies and organisational reserves. Reserves contribute to securing sustainability and commitment to sustainability.

Streamlining activities through standardised reporting and governance helps to keep costs down. Meaningful partnerships – both in sharing ideas and responsibilities – contribute to a more efficient and wider service delivery.

Programme activities are often easier to sell to funders than organisational administrative costs. Without reducing the real value of organisational reserves, NGOs should attempt to first sustain the core administration costs with income-generation activities.

The civil mind-set

The gap between development organisations and the corporate sector is therefore partly bridged through a similar approach to costing and service delivery efficiency. An additional bridge would be that of sound financial investments. The longer the term of the financial investment, the more committed the organisation is to sustainability. The dynamics of sustainability therefore need to incorporate both financial investment and human resource investment plans. Professional advice should be sought for financial investments. What may appear to be exceptional returns to an inexperienced investor may indeed turn sour, but if organisations do believe they can invest for themselves, sound advice would be not to put too many eggs in one basket.

The government continues to assist the development sector through reviewed tax laws for local corporate funders, reviewed VAT statuses on an individual organisational basis, and by providing income tax exemptions for the development organisations them-

selves. With the statutory laws falling into place the organisations can concentrate on using their funding most effectively, knowing that the law is supporting their cause.

Not only governments should be lobbied for considering NGOs for their service delivery – corporations also must be made aware that NGOs are not just there for funding but can be contracted for service delivery as well.

Summary

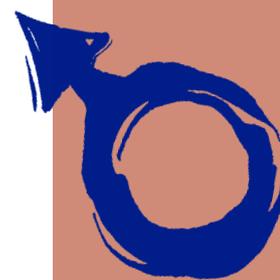
While the current funding environment appears to be drying up, there are boundless opportunities. These opportunities have always been available but have never been conceptualised as such by either the development sector or potential funders of the sector, be they corporate, international or local funders, or the government.

Development organisations must not forget that it is their programmes that need to be sustained and that it is those programmes that will facilitate financial sustainability.

Capitalising on opportunities requires a more marketable and proactive approach as well as some lateral thinking. In many ways developmental work has always been sold, but perhaps to more "approachable clients" such as international funders. Success stories need to captivate the new stakeholders and now is the time to spread the organisational client base. This challenge must be met without compromising operational activities – and with pride, belief, and confidence to

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Will the funding ever dry up – is there a drought at all?

The decade of uncertainty is still with us – can NGOs get out of survival mode and become part of a healthy civil society with a proactive outlook on issues of the day? WILLEM DU TOIT reviews the topic.

NGOs have been shouting the odds on sustainability and survival since 1994, the issue of funding being at the centre of this chronic need to bemoan the lack of support for the good work NGOs are doing.

The reality is that access to foreign donor support has become more complicated and complex, and despite the cry of NGOs that funders are withdrawing from the South African development scene, substantial amounts are still being made available by a wide range of foreign sources. Local grant funding in our new democracy has been gradually redirected to more grassroots type initiatives and generally an emphasis is being placed on the need to fund initiatives rooted in the community.

Direct funding from government (grants-in-aid) has become more problematic because of the ever-changing policy environment, but this remains a solid chunk of sup-

port to social purpose organisations in general. Social investment and corporate giving has also made an ongoing contribution to social projects. Public giving and fundraising has been contributing substantially to social and voluntary initiatives and will remain a vital source of revenue for many small organisations.

Diversification of income stream

Although spoken about and debated at length, the issues involved in the diversification of NGO income have remained relatively undeveloped and rather unsophisticated¹. Self-sufficiency is still not seen as crucial to survival and therefore dependence on fewer donors makes it difficult to really move out of survival mode.

Some potentially important vehicles for the diversification of the revenue stream have been given some attention in the past, but have not been

driven successfully to ultimate conclusive advantage for non-profit excellence. These, among others, are:

- In the area of tendering and procurement for public services the policy debate has fizzled out. This is because legal and financial requirements remain mostly prohibitive. Procurement in general has not transformed adequately, so there still is a need to engage in the ongoing debate.

- Cost recovery and payment for services is another area for improving the income of NGOs which has not been pursued to any great extent, the main reason being the argument that most beneficiaries are too poor to be expected to contribute to a life-saving service or product.

- Changes in tax legislation, fiscal relations and financial relations (i.e. preferential investment rates and special bulk discount rates and bargaining power on services)

have not been successfully taken up, at scale, by NGOs.

- The tax reform initiatives undertaken by the NGO sector in the new decade have been a general disappointment to date. Concessions made

Think, talk, do sustainability

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ensure a stronger civil society and a brighter life for all. Sustainability must be on the agenda of every organisation's strategic planning workshop. The effects of sustainable development will result in compounded growth and contribute to positive mind-sets in South Africa.

Michael Hands is an accountancy and financial services consultant. He is based in Cape Town.





Local grant funding in our new democracy has been gradually redirected to more grassroots type initiatives. Photograph: Linda Vergnani, Leading Edge

Public sector funding constitutes 42 percent of all non-profit cash revenue. Service fee dues and self-generated income make up only 34 percent and South African businesses contribute 25 percent. Private philanthropy and Government Overseas Development Aid contribute only 10 percent to the revenue of the non-profits. Furthermore the financial value of volunteer work contributes significantly to this sector and can be calculated as a 48 percent contribution in kind.

There were 98 920 non-profit organisations

in existence in South Africa, as at 1998 figures², including 12 000 religious organisations. Other countries exclude religious organisations from the definition of non-profit organisation. These organisations employ 328 326 full-time, paid workers and 316 991 full-time equivalent volunteers. Significantly, non-profit organisations are less formalised: up to 53 percent of them operate as voluntary associations and do not have a formal structure and only a small number of these voluntary associations are also registered under the Non-Profit Organisations Bill. The important thing about these organisations is that they are working predominantly in recreation, sport and culture and are mostly located in poor communities.

and maintained see only a handful of organisations able to gain financial benefits because they can demonstrate to their donors that there are substantial tax concessions for social purpose giving.

- Working with local government on a partnership basis has not been pursued as a basis for sustainability, mostly because of fear of losing independence as well as a lack of capacity to structure effective partnerships, especially on the side of local government structures.

- Project funding from government remains an ambiguous source of revenue because funding received on this basis requires NGOs to remain uncritical of the policies and approaches of the government.

Taking a closer look

Against all the odds, the broad non-profit sector seems to be thriving in the current

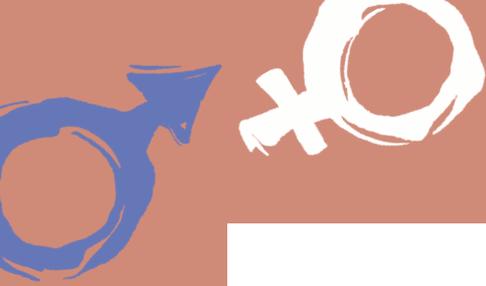
climate, despite the fact that funding has been drying up. And maybe funding has not dried up at all. Work undertaken recently by the Wits Graduate School of Public and Development Management and Johns Hopkins University provide some interesting detail about the sector².

The sector is and remains a major contributor to socio-economic development. In itself the sector is a major economic force mobilising significant resources and social capital – and the contribution to the GDP is much greater than thought before.

Despite the message from NGOs, the amount mobilised in the sector is substantial and growing. Non-profit organisations raised R14 billion in 1998, with grants from government and contracts awarded forming the basis of this sizeable total. This against the background of a general cry from NGOs that they are not surviving.

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“ The non-profit sector is a major economic force mobilising significant resources. Despite the message from NGOs the amount mobilised in the sector is ”



Another revealing fact is that South Africa has a relatively large non-profit sector and that it is comparable to most developed countries.

Statutory funding creaks into action

Signs of statutory funding are slowly becoming visible in a space where for a long period very little has happened. The NDA (National Development Agency) has been able to open its doors for support to non-profit initiatives and has concluded a transfer process from the previous TNDT (Transitional National Development

Trust). It has disbursed funding historically allocated to the TNDT and is gradually putting in place its own processes and priorities for funding.

A total of R104 million has been disbursed from April 2000 to the end of March 2001. This funding has been awarded to generally over-traded sectors. The NDA is now in the process of developing critical priority areas and have made commitments

in excess of its available funding³.

The National Lotteries distribution agent, Uthingo, has also finally entered the scene and started transferring funds to the NLDTF (National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund) with a contested allocation to a wide variety of organisations. On the basis of proposals from organisations for deserving initiatives the

amount of R78,4 million was allocated but not finally disbursed by September 2001⁴.

Previously in December 2000, R4,1 million was allocated and in July 2001, R7,8 million was allocated but not finally disbursed. However, in stark contrast is the figure accumulated at the end March 2001 – R439,2 million, and interest is accumulating! The ratio of allocation is weak and the speed of making money available on the basis of good proposals needs to be seriously scrutinised⁴.

What needs to be highlighted, however, is that money is getting to the non-profit sector. Looking at the profile of funding allocations it is clear that the bulk of the money is going to the less formal, voluntary grassroots organisations. Resources are therefore not really in such short supply as previously intimated.

Upon reflection

There are three basic conditions for successful development: grassroots actors and self-organisation; resources and technical support; and societal support for initiatives. Reflecting on the practice over years NGOs face the challenge of not speaking on behalf of others, and not with a hollow voice⁵.

Furthermore in the decade of democratisation thus far, competition for resources has been fierce and covert. NGOs increasingly have worked in isolation and as individual organisations, refusing to share “communities” and territory. Difficulties and challenges have marked the attempts of organising the sector and establishing Sangoco as an effective social

movement. Effectively the grassroots organisations remain largely excluded from some of these initiatives and access in future remains only a remote dream of support to many organisations who do not have mobility, the need, or resources to “network”.

The response of the structures that support relations between civil society organisations and the state has been clearly in the direction of direct funding to local or grassroots organisations. Only the future will tell whether this is wise and sustainable.

The notion of sustainability therefore takes on different meanings as the landscape of development changes in South Africa. NGOs have to consider a critical number of issues in this evolving sector and, like all other institutional dimensions, critically adjust its pitch of development, or slowly lose its relevance in making a real difference in sustainable poverty eradication. Survival is not only about funding.

1. *Development Update. Vol 2 No 1, 1998.*
2. *Johns Hopkins University; Institute for Policy Studies and Graduate School of Public and Development Management, University of Witwatersrand. Social Surveys, 2001.*
3. *NDA The Voice. October, 2001.*
4. *Mail & Guardian. September 28-October 4, 2001.*
5. *NGO Week Report, 2000.*

Willem du Toit is the Director of Pele Development Service, which provides institutional development support for non-profit excellence.



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Facing the challenges of sustainability: a Getnet response

By PETHU SEROTE &
PETER JORDAAN

The sustainability of our organisation and its work has preoccupied us for a while now. When Getnet was established in 1995, the NGO sector was experiencing an unprecedented decline in more than two decades. Many explanations were advanced for this decline, some of which blamed it on the brain drain (from NGOs into government) and others blamed it on the NGOs' loss of a valid agenda; and yet others blamed it on the inability of NGOs to readjust themselves back to development, after being in a struggle mode for decades. Whatever the reason, the NGOs were closing their doors in large numbers – quite an alarming situation for those interested in promoting a vibrant civil society.

An additional pressure on the sector came from donors. As the funders withdrew most of their support for NGOs and placed it in the newly elected democratic government, the cyclical lifespan of organisations, determined by funding arrangements, was laid bare to increased vulnerability. There were more demands on the NGOs to “professionalise” their operations and become more accountable. This was necessary and meant to consolidate the sector, but the timing, dictated by the context, was unfortunate. The NGOs were thrown into a state of disarray. The result was that morale and produc-



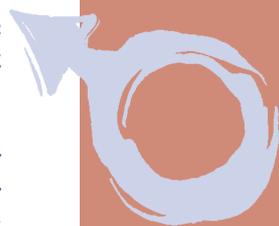
At Getnet's office in Athlone, Cape Town: Director Pethu Serote (right) with board members, from left: Geoffrey Mamputa, Mihloti Mathye, Kaizer Thibedi and Ngoato Takalo.

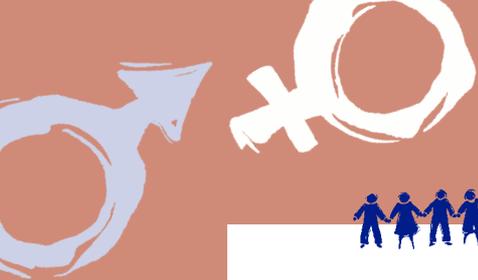
tivity were negatively affected, with NGO employees anxious and feeling insecure about the following year's prospects of employment and salaries. It is against this backdrop that concern over the issue of sustainability for both Getnet and its work began to occupy our minds. In order to put action to our thoughts, we decided to test the environment to see if we could mediate this development.

As from 1996, we decided to charge a small fee for our programmes. This was a symbolic amount that hardly covered the costs of running the programmes. Yet it enabled us to generate small amounts that we used for costs not met by funding from our donors. In 1997 we increased our services to paying clients alongside the small fee. By 1998, we had registered enough to invite one of our donors, Hivos, to enter

into a partnership with our organisation, for the purpose of purchasing an office building for Getnet. In this partnership, Getnet was able to match the donor's contribution by 38 percent of the total price. The acquisition of property meant that we were no longer overcharged by unscrupulous landlords/ladies and no longer under the threat of eviction for rent defaults. The biggest reward was the sense of security that this achievement gave us.

This small move, that might seem insignificant to those organisations who've always owned their offices, motivated us to realise that sustainability in the NGO sector was an achievable goal. Following on the results of our strategic planning held in 1999 and the evaluation of our organisation in 2000, the Board of Getnet decided that the organisation





should embark on a well-planned and coherent sustainability strategy, with timelines and determined targets.

During the second half of 2001 Getnet has worked on this strategy and its components. The elements of the strategy are:

- a conceptual stage that includes an environmental scan
- drawing up a business plan and an implementation strategy
- an implementation plan that include targets

This has been both exciting and challenging for us. It has challenged us to make a sound analysis of the context and locate Getnet and its work. It has challenged us to make

really bold moves that require a lot of courage. The final test, though, will be the implementation process. Some of the challenges have been related to statutory issues. We undertook an extensive investigation into tax registration and related statutory requirements. With regard to the sustainability of the work, our experience in the last six years will undoubtedly stand us in good stead. Through delivering gender training and related interventions to government, NGOs and other institutions in South Africa and the SADC region, we have built up a thorough understanding of the expectations and demands related to the products and methods of delivery.

A major concern has been the fact that the work of the NGO sector is mainly value-based. Some of the values that have characterised this sector are in contradiction with the values entrenched in “the world of business”. This continues to be a subject of debate in the organisation. As we end 2001 and count our gains for this year, we cannot but think that the biggest achievement for Getnet was confronting the challenge of sustainability and putting it at the centre of our operations.

Pethu Serote is the Director of Getnet. Peter Jordaen is a member of Getnet's Panel of Trainers.



Reflections on the NGO Forum at Wcar

AN EXCERPT FROM A COMMENTARY
BY KUMI NAIDOO, SECRETARY
GENERAL OF CIVICUS

A few days after the end of the Civicus World Assembly in Vancouver, I arrived in Durban, the city in which I grew up and one in which I first learnt about the pain of racism. Mercia Adams, president of Sangoco, told the opening session of the NGO Forum that the forum would not be dictated to by governments but would talk, among others, about the Roma people (often referred to as Gypsies and Travellers), the situation with millions of Dalits (often called untouchables) in South Asia, reparations for colonialism and slavery, and the Palestinian question.

Perhaps the one sentiment that united all delegates was that even though the struggle against racism was still a very

high mountain to climb, it was remarkable that this conference was happening in the country which once had the most systematic and explicit form of racial and social engineering.

I found myself involved very quickly in some of the most thorny and complex proceedings, facilitating the final plenary to adopt the NGO declaration). The most well-organised constituency in my estimation was undoubtedly the Dalit delegation from India. They stated their case with passion and dignity and laid the basis for strong global solidarity.

It was heartening to witness the myriad dimensions of citizen participation, especially the mobilisation of citizens experiencing racism and their quest to fight for full citizen participation. It also provided a useful reference point for

activists to look at their own context afresh.

Things came to a head with the plenary discussion to adopt the declaration of the NGO Forum. The first explosive conflict was language proposed by the Asia Pacific caucus criticising China on the situation in Tibet. Chinese delegates were enraged but the motion to include language critical of China's record in Tibet received majority support. Another conflict came with a proposal by the Ecumenical caucus to delete a substantive part of text previously proposed by the Jewish caucus. The proposal carried, causing extreme disappointment and frustration to the Jewish caucus.

Many delegates said that the opportunity to network with colleagues working on similar issues during conference had been invaluable.

WHAT THE GENDER SUMMIT MEANT

The Gender Summit was not a much-publicised event but MOHAU PHEKO believes it asked challenging questions about the collective response that women – and others – have been able to muster in relation to structural gender inequality in South African society.

The gender summit convened by the Commission on Gender Equality in August was an opportunity to reflect on some critical issues confronting women at the beginning of the 21st century. I think this initiative presented a critical opportunity to revisit and delve into some of the most profound challenges facing women.

The significance of the summit was that it highlighted the need to revisit the manner in which the women's movement has challenged structures and ideologies that privilege gender inequality. On the other hand, the summit exposed our inadequacy in maintaining a collective response to these issues.

The summit has shown that our analysis, attention and engagement with globalisation and economic structures have been minimal to weak. We are not posing the important questions about the implications of globalisation for gender equality and the solidarity of women. How is globalisation impacting on our activism and production of knowledge?

The summit gave us the opportunity to pause and start rethinking new equal gender relations and what these should look like. Can we envision this? Are we able to manage the power relations it encompasses? The summit also revealed the need for us to

build tools to respond to the backlash on the issue of violence against women. The growing conservative consensus both within and outside the state are colluding to trade women's rights away.

The summit was a space to examine the women's movements and the state, as well as the demobilisation of organisations that convened at the former World Trade Centre to establish gender machinery. In their place many social movements around land, housing and unemployment are emerging. Many of these are dynamic organisations but somehow have no links to the organisations of the past. We need to question why? What are the emerging class issues between women?

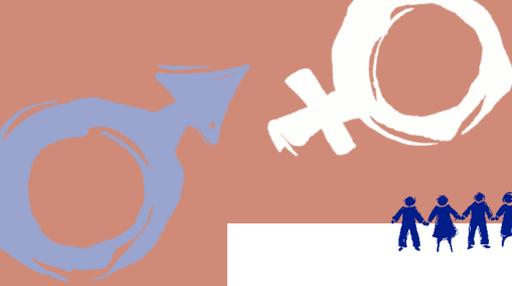
One of the key challenges the summit posed was the need to decipher the difference between gender mainstreaming and institutionalising gender. Mainstreaming is limited and only assists us in placing women's interests on the agenda at government level. Institutionalising goes beyond creating our own spaces or room, it takes us further into



having many rooms and spaces. In addition, the summit was a challenge to examine and transform power relations in all these spaces and rooms.

It is obvious that women are grappling with how to engage the changing state. The Gear economic policy increasingly is making a call for whittling away the role of the state, yet the summit showed the gains that women have been able to make were possible because of the existence of a strong state. The summit brought home the reality that we cannot afford a weak state, but where are the new spaces and strategies we need in order to engage the state to make our demands?

‘ The growing conservative consensus both within and outside the state are colluding to trade women's rights away. ’



Women's economic choices consistently are being marginalised: as subsidies on foods, healthcare and housing are being phased out women's situation is one of fewer resources and less safety. What does this mean for women's citizenship? The summit posed the fundamental question of alliance building in order to strengthen our concerted efforts. How do we build consensus? How do we share information effectively? One of our strengths has been our capacity to achieve consensus on issues concerning gender inequality.

The challenge now is to rebuild consensus across political, social, cultural and class differences.

The summit posed the challenge of how we influence

public opinion. The media is crucial for raising public awareness. Do we need new ways of working with media?

It also was an occasion for the vital exchange of knowledge, for learning networks, as well as for theoretical and political discourse – which has not been vibrant in women's organisations for a long time.

The summit's most exciting moments was the process of making visible new leaders and welcoming them. Their presence forecast the possibility of questioning untenable fundamentalist thinking as well as infusing and rooting a new dimension of feminist thinking which can no longer remain divorced from broader perspectives of leadership and social and political transformation.

It is evident that the biggest challenge posed by the summit, is the need to move away from just watching, knowing and criticising towards thinking, reintroducing debate and making alternative proposals that confront structural gender

inequality. The question is: will we have a different nuance to our approach to leadership – the kind that does not subordinate and co-opt us into safeguarding patriarchy and gate-keeping for it? Can we create a new discourse that raises varied and sometimes opposing opinions and create new tools for engagement?

Before such engagement with the state, ourselves and a whole range of processes can happen effectively we need to analyse power relations in every sphere. The summit produced an opportunity to further build our analysis, to reach consensus on it and to act together and transform ourselves and society more profoundly towards gender equality.

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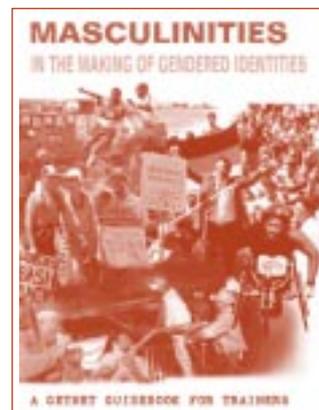


A new gender training resource on masculinities

Hot off the press

Getnet has published a cutting-edge guidebook for trainers in the masculinities field.

The 72-page book draws on the work of international and local theorists and practitioners and assists trainers to put together workshops on emancipatory masculinities. Selected readings, case studies and pathways for change promote understanding of gender power relations and give insight into how different masculinities (and femininities) come about.



Call Elizabeth Schutter at Getnet to order your copy!

Integrating the 'important' other half

By JOHANN MAGERMAN

What does a forester, an administrator, a trade unionist and a theologian have in common? To add to the puzzle, let's throw in an organisational consultant, a human rights lawyer and an unemployed human rights activist. For starters, they are all men. Besides that, they all participated in a Getnet men's training workshop held in Durban in October with the theme "Integrating the Other Half". When I first heard the theme, I thought that we should go out and integrate the other half!

Anyway, the training got off to a somewhat frantic start with Telkom making oodles of money, considering the number of calls to and from Durban. The reason: only four participants pitched and there were three facilitators. Talk about individualised education! And that is exactly what happened. Teaching occurred in the most phenomenal way as barriers were broken down far more easily compared to having a relatively large group of people. Interaction thus became more dynamic and a healthy balance of familiarity and respect prevailed throughout the training period. Hats off to the facilitators who could easily have become despondent and presented a watered down version of the programme. Their attention to detail and openness to questioning made attending all the more worthwhile.

Halfway through the programme I had an amazing experience. Not quite a moun-



Photograph: Benny Gool, Leading Edge

tain top one, yet significant enough to signal the promise of a new start. It started off with a very simple question: What the hell are we doing here? More pertinently, what the hell am I doing here? I knew that it had nothing to do with the fact that I had encountered most of the theoretical stuff before. Nor did it have to do with the fact that this opportunity provided a welcome break from the otherwise day-to-day running around. I somehow knew that this programme presented a unique opportunity to synchronize theory with praxis. The theoretical knowledge and understanding of gender issues I had gained in my life as a black working class male who participated in the liberation struggle. Could it be then that I am a closet misogynist?

In that very instant, I had a clear insight into why so few (I almost said good) men attended this programme. Is it because organisations, men and the powers-that-be, hide behind statements like "this is not important enough"? Is it that we are still trapped in the phased approach to our liberation? First political emancipation, then economic upliftment, followed by the

provision of housing, education and health care. Then there's the need for poverty alleviation and the project of transforming civil society at large. Then – and only then – when these (and other) struggles had been won, will we begin to address the issue of gender equality.

The process

So brother, what had you missed? The first few sessions concentrated on attitudes, socialisation patterns and commonly accepted myths and beliefs of gender roles. Other sessions focussed on the intersection of gender with race, class, culture and religion. During the final few sessions, participants were afforded the opportunity to plan how they would incorporate the learnings of the two and a half day programme in their respective work environments. The teaching methodology the facilitators used was experiential rather than a didactic approach to learning. This meant that most of the exercises focussed on the life-experiences of participants. Another helpful teaching aid was the use of case studies in analysing instances of gender-based discrimination.

And finally ...

The only question that remains centres on the support

Men and the powers-that-be don't attend gender workshops. They like to hide behind statements like "this is not important enough".



Agente van geslagsgelykheid vorder

MVULA YOYO (regs) skryf oor sy ervarings as lid van Getnet se Paneel van Opleiers. 'n Nuwe twee-jaar opleidingskursus vir aspirant paneellede is in 2000 ingestel en het pas geëindig.



Een van die vrae waarmee ek dikwels gekonfronteer word, sentreer rondom die betrokkenheid van mans in programme wat gemik is op geslagsverhoudinge (“gender relations”). Baie mans – en vroue – verkeer nog onder die indruk dat “gender ’n kwessie behoort te wees wat slegs die sogenaamde “skone geslag” raak.

Aangesien geslagsverhoudinge basies neerkom op magspel, is dit moontlik om genoemde verhoudinge met rassisme in verband te bring. Dit is nogal insiggewend hoe ons mans reageer as mens seksisme met rassisme vergelyk!

My eerste kennismaking met

Getnet dateer terug na Junie 1997 tydens ’n werkswinkel wat by die Universiteit van Wes-Kaapland gehou is. Dit was veral tydens ’n spesiale sessie vir mans dat die gender “gogga” my “gebyt” het. My latere betrokkenheid by soortgelyke werksinkels het alle agterdog en onsekerheid jeens die gender kwessie laat verdwyn, aangesien hierdie blootstelling my aangemoedig het om na die totale man-vrou verhoudinge vanuit ’n nuwe – hoewel bestaande! – perspektief te kyk.

Die meeste lede van die macho-geslag benader gender met agterdog en vrees omdat ons deels deur onkunde beïn-

vloed word en dit deels as ’n komplot belewe wat daarop gemik is om ons bestaan as “manlike” mans te ondermyn.

Die opleiding van opleiers

Na die UWK-ervaring en provinsiale werksinkels dwarsoor die land, is ’n TOT (training of trainers) werkswinkel op Langebaan deur Getnet aangebied. In die week wat ons aan die asemrowende Weskus deurgebring het, het dit vir my al hoe duideliker begin word dat die groepie mans wat daar byeengebring is ’n enorme verantwoordelikheid met hulle sou saamneem terug huis toe;

’n verantwoordelikheid ook teenoor die self. Die feit van die saak is dat gender nie ’n “issue” is wat daar buite bestaan nie, dit begin by die self. Die onmiddellike post-Langebaan fase was nogal moeilik aangesien ons maar almal binne ’n opset werk en bly waar seksisme in al sy (haar?) manifestasies hoogty vier. Dit is veral gedurende die periodes tussen werksinkels en ander Getnet-gedrewe aktiwiteite dat mens nogal kwesbaar sou voel. Dit was dan

Integrating the ‘important’ other half

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or rather lack of support for men to implement their plans. Too often they are treated with suspicion and disdain, and not only by their fellow men; they are also severely criticised by a seasoned gender activists for working with men. In this regard then, so-called liberated people display remarkable ignorance towards male gender activists. Projects and activities regarded as politically and economically expedient are undertaken instead of – or parallel to – implementing steps that will lead to the advancement of gender equality. In conclusion, what vision of the

new male did participants come up with at the end of the workshop? This ranged from becoming more caring human beings; men less obsessed with power, prestige and material wealth; men who are accommodative (for lack of a better word) of difference; to men who will blow the whistle on gender discrimination. The values espoused during this session are fully in line with the struggle for human rights and equality in all its forms.

Johann Magerman works for the Western Province Council of Churches.





Paneellede Mvula Yoyo en Pule Lonake tydens 'n opleidingsessie

veral my betrokkenheid by die Getnet-paneel wat as broodnodige versterking sou dien in moeilike tye.

Die paneel

Om deel te kon gewees het van die hierdie paneel beskou ek tot-nog-toe as 'n eer, en beslis nie 'n reg wat my toekom omdat ek betrokke was by vorige Getnet aktiwiteite nie.

Die oorhoofse visie van Getnet kan beskou word as die raamwerk waarbinne paneellede hul taak as agente van geslagsgelykheid ("gender equality") kan uitvoer. Getnet se bedrywighede is daarop gemik om genoemde gelykheid, met spesiale fokus op die bemagtiging van vroue binne die konteks van die demokratiese veranderinge in SA, te bevorder. Hierdie doelwit kan bereik word deur, onder andere, opvoeding, opleiding en konsultasiewerk oor aangeleenthede wat betrekking het op geslagsverhoudinge.

Die manier waarop Getnet te werk gegaan het om paneellede op te lei of voor te berei op hul baie belangrike taak was van so 'n aard dat dit moontlik was om individue uit verskillende

agtergronde te akkommodeer. Hierdie feit word gestaaf deur die uiteenlopende agtergronde van die huidige/uittrede paneel, nl van NRO's (NGOs) na die regspraktyk, akademië en kenners binne die menslike hulpbronne sektor van die staatsdiens.

Daar word gepoog om jaarliks 'n minimum van drie kontakssessies te reël waartydens 'n verskeidenheid aktiwiteite die paneel op hoogte hou van die jongste tendense en bedrywighede rondom aangeleenthede wat betrekking het op die bevordering van gesonde geslagsverhoudinge binne die breër gemeenskap; hier veral met betrekking tot beleid in die werkplek en in algemene sosiale verhoudinge. Tydens hierdie sessies is 'n besondere hoogtepunt vir my altyd die optrede van een van die senior/vorige paneellede. Aangesien hierdie individue almal aktief is in hul onderskeie hoedanighede as konsultante ens, lewer hulle 'n waardevolle bydra tot die ontwikkeling van die bestaande paneel (of paneel-inwording).

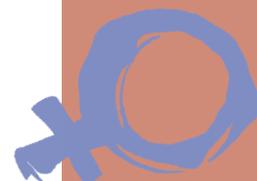
'n Ander hoogtepunt tydens hierdie byeenkomste is die kennisname van die bedry-

wighede van ander kollegas op die paneel. Benewens fasilitering van werksinkels, onder die vaandel van Getnet, word daar ook van lede verwag om aktief deel te neem aan programme of inisiatiewe wat gelykheid bevorder. Die daaglikse werkklas van sommige lede het dit moeiliker gemaak vir hulle om binne 'n gespesifiseerde tydperk veel te verrig. Dit is verder ook so dat sommige provinsies, via NRO's, die private sektor en staatsdepartemente, meer betrokkenheid moontlik maak as wat dit die geval is in ander "statiese" gebiede. Dit wek wel kommer dat baie lede nie hul geskrewe take suksesvol kon afhandel nie, en daar is verskeie redes hiervoor, soos werksomstandighede wat dit nie moontlik maak om op 'n gespesifiseerde taak te fokus nie en probleme rondom stabiliteit by sommige lede se werkplekke. Nouer samewerking tussen Getnet en die nuwe paneel behoort hierdie probleem op te los. Dit moet bv moontlik wees vir 'n lid om 'n taak te kies wat verband hou met haar/sy werk. Waar 'n lid wat by 'n NRO werksaam is met 'n gevalle studie vorendag kan kom, sou 'n akademikus baat vind by navorsingswerk rondom die een of ander tema binne die paneel se bedrywighede. Wat van kardinale belang is, is dat alle lede hul voorgeskrewe take suksesvol afhandel, nie slegs vir selfdissipline nie, maar ook om professionele redes – as ons nog steeds die akkreditering van die paneel op ons agenda wil behou.

Benewens die kontakssessies, wat weens 'n tekort aan fondse

Die meeste lede van die macho-geslag benader gender met agterdog en vrees ... as 'n komplot wat daarop gemik is om ons bestaan as manlike mans te ondermyn. »

Deur *tirisano* (samewerking) sal ons dit maak. »





Agente

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en skeduleringprobleme soms problematies kan wees, is daar vanjaar myns insiens 'n werk-bare kontakmeganisme ingestel. Die benutting van die e-pos het spesifieke voordele want hiermee kon paneellede nie slegs met mekaar kontak maak nie, maar kon daar gesprekvoering plaasvind. Deur lede die geleentheid te gee om hul gedagtes op skrif te stel, het hulle nie slegs die kans om helder daaroor na te dink nie, maar het die deelnemende leser ook meer tyd om daaroor te besin en as ingeligte te reageer – daar sal minder gevalle wees waar mense sal beweer: “but that is not what I said/meant.” Mens moet egter ook in gedagte hou dat nie almal altyd toegang tot die e-pos sal hê nie.

Samevattend

Alhoewel betrokkenheid by die paneel heelwat opoffering eis, kan die geleentheid om deel te kan wees van 'n groep gemotiveerde individue uit verskillende agtergronde slegs voordelig wees vir mense se professionele en persoonlike ontwikkeling. Dit is verder absoluut belangrik om telkens 'n groep byderhand te hê wat die stryd om gender gelykheid op hierdie vlak voortsit. Die uittredende groep moet ook betrek word in die bedrywighede van Getnet. Hulle sal beslis baat vind by 'n betrokkenheid wat die nuwe paneel bystaan as mentors op 'n individuele basis. Deur *tirisano* (samerewerking) sal ons dit maak.

Mvula Yoyo is senior lektor in Afrikaans aan Fort Hare Universiteit en 'n lid van die universiteit se Gender Forum.



Training creates campaigners

By WISDOM MALONGO

Gender in Malawi is more often than not seen as a woman's issue. So much so that every time there is a gender meeting close to 90 percent of those present will be women or the female folk. As if this is not enough, the majority of gender officers are women.

But is gender synonymous with women's issues? The fact that the disadvantaged position of women is addressed in gender meetings – does that necessarily make gender a woman's issue? How about feminism?

These are some of the issues that were tackled at the SADC Gender Co-ordinators' workshop facilitated by Getnet in Johannesburg from September 29 to October 4. As one of the participants, I was impressed by the workshop.

Firstly, it was well organised. The venue of the meeting was ideal. It was away from the hustle and bustle of city and town, but it was not a very isolated place – it was the right venue.

The course content too was impressive. I have attended two gender trainings before but this one was the best of all. The topics flowed logically and were well thought through. But the course content was good because of the facilitator, Getnet director Pethu Serote ... she was good, oh yes she was good! Maybe because she was a teacher once. Maybe because she was once a political activist. Maybe because she is a champion of human rights. Maybe because of her experience.

What impressed me most was how the facilitator talked with us through issues. Not shouting at us, not defensive – she had convictions, but this did not make her emotional.

As a male participant, I felt very much included and part of the proceedings. I found myself absorbed to the extent that I even forgot that there were only two males there. This, therefore, was a training. Yes, a training worth attending. It was a training which should be attended by gender officers. Every participant will get value for the participating fee.

Are there issues of concern, however? I suppose yes. The perception that gender is a woman's issue was once again given the said face. We must find ways to reduce this unfortunate perception. What with the old saying that it's “the little foxes that spoil the vines”.

We need to salute those who deserve salutation. Our colleague from Angola deserves the vote. Limited by language (speaks and hears more Portuguese than English), she was still able to effectively participate. How passionate she was. She deserves our moral support and she must certainly get it. Above all, let us hope the next meeting will have three women and 20 men. I am not talking of a gender training for men, or am I? I am on a campaign trail. Championing for more male gender officers. That is what the Getnet organised training has done to me.

And you the reader, welcome to this campaign. Invite three male against one female each time there is a gender meeting because gender is about social justice and fairness to all.

Interfund's NGO partners brought up to speed

By CELESTE FORTUIN
GETNET TRAINER

Gender awareness and mainstreaming within NGOs benefited from the hosting of two workshops to Interfund subsidiaries in September and October. Getnet facilitated three-day workshops in Cape Town and East London with the staff members of various NGOs funded by Interfund.

Both workshops were well attended, yet more women than men still turn up at gender awareness trainings – only four of the 32 participants were male. One participant remarked that “more men should be invited to the workshop ... especially men from the rural areas who don't want to change attitudes”.

The objectives of the workshops were to deepen participants' understanding of gender issues; to introduce them to gender planning frameworks and tools of analysis, and to assist them in developing plans for mainstreaming gender within their organisations and projects. The participants' evaluation indicated that these objectives had been achieved. Getnet trainers and two members of our panel of trainers, Peter Jordaan and Nomkhita Gysman, were the facilitators.

The fact that participants came from organisations with diverse focus areas, contributed to the learning of both participants and facilitators. The organisations that were repre-

sented work in areas such as Aids awareness, refugees, sex workers, organisational development, conflict resolution, violence against women, housing, media training and counselling services to specific target groups. The presence of baby Christel Festus, whose mother Anna travelled from Uptington to attend, contributed to the close relationship that developed between participants in Cape Town.

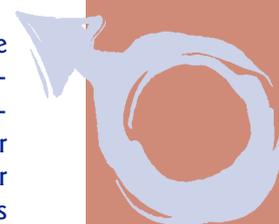
Both workshops were marked by lively discussion sessions. Participants were eager to learn more about gender issues and how gender impacts on the private and public areas of their lives. The workshops started off with building the framework of the social construction of gender, based on the participants' personal experiences of growing up as girls and boys. This led to much personal reflection, and participants shared their experiences with others as the programme progressed. This particular outcome can be attributed to the method of facilitation used in the workshops. Gender awareness training often leads participants to share personal experiences, and it is the facilitators responsibility to provide a suitable process and create a safe environment for this sharing to take place. After the framework was completed, one participant remarked that “... this workshop is very empowering as I thought when we talk about gender, we talked of or saw gender as one-sided”.



Participants found the various group exercises meaningful and the application of the Harvard Analytical Framework and Sarah Longwe's WEEF Framework very useful and relevant to their different areas of work. Many also found the input on the national and international machinery for mainstreaming gender very interesting, with some remarking that they had no knowledge of it before they came to the workshops.

The final session focused on developing strategies for intervention within participants' organisations. They were asked to assess their organisations' status in respect of gender issues and their ability to implement change in their organisations, and to identify structural constraints in their organisations that may hamper implementation. Participants were then asked to develop a plan for integrating gender in their organisations and their work.

Some participants have already started with implementation, and others have integrated their plans into their organisations' planning for 2002. Most of the participants from the Eastern Cape said it was their first workshop exposure to gender awareness, and that they would like to attend more workshops to consolidate their understanding of gender issues, as well as how to introduce gender planning strategies in their organisations.





BRIDGE THE GENDER GAP – USE GETNET'S SERVICES

How Getnet Works

• Getnet offers a set of workshop modules (listed under Regular Services below) for gender education and training. Programmes consist of combinations of these modules.

• Getnet also runs its own training programme every year. There are workshops for policymakers and policy implementers; a men's gender awareness programme; and developmental programmes for Getnet's own panel of trainers and prospective trainers. The workshops generally are open to all sectors.

• Getnet tenders for gender service contracts and responds to requests for specifically tailored training programmes or services (see Consultancy Service below).

Participatory, group-based training methods are used. Workshops last between one and six days. Reasonable rates are charged.

Regular Services

Workshop modules:

1. Gender education and awareness raising.

Identification of the links between social conditioning, power relations between women and men and culture and religion; skills in applying analytical frameworks to explain how social conditioning and power relations between men and women shape the allocation, co-ordination and control of resources in organisations and institutions; analysing the role of masculinities in shaping institutional power relations.

2. Organisational development and transformation

Skills in devising gender specific goals and strategies to improve the capacity of staff to address gender issues and women's empowerment in areas such as management, corporate culture and training; identifying policy practices and elements of organisational culture that require change; drawing up organisational profiles in order to make recommendations to correct existing gender biases in policy, structures and

organisational culture; designing strategies for partnerships between women and men in organisational development and change processes; developing briefings on the value of men's training in organisational development and change; designing strategies for employment equity.

3. Mainstreaming gender equality in institutions and organisations.

Skills in applying gender frameworks and gender sensitive analysis to policy formulation and planning; designing gender audits, monitoring and evaluation techniques; presenting briefings on:

- National and international instruments and strategies to improve the status of women, including follow up of the implementation of Cedaw and the Beijing Platform of Action in SADC
- Networking in the field of gender training
- Partnerships and co-operation between NGOs and between government and NGOs for interventions.

4. Gender analysis of policy.

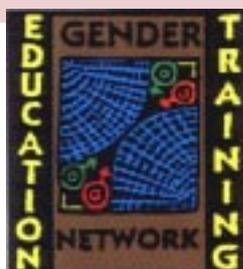
Skills in identifying gender issues in policy and challenges in the policy-making environment; applying gender analytical frameworks to development policies; designing research questions for assessing effectiveness of policy implementation; and presenting briefings on the national and international instruments and strategies to improve the position and status of women. These include follow-up of the implementation of Cedaw and the Beijing Platform of Action in SADC.

Consultancy Service

All the workshop modules above are available on a consultancy basis. Getnet responds to requests for specifically tailored programmes and services – including gender training and various aspects of gender analysis of policy, gender and organisational change projects, national and international instruments for gender equality and strategies for gender equality.

Costs and contracts are negotiated with individual clients.

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