

**The experiences of women senior
managers within local government-
A case study of a District
Municipality in KZN**

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Structure of the presentation

1. Objective of the research.
2. Research questions.
3. Methodology applied.
4. Common Themes from the stories told.
5. Findings.
6. Conclusion and Recommendations.

Objective of the research

... is to assess the extent to which the 2007 Gender Policy Framework for Local Government has been complied with by the District Municipality.

The presentation will look into the measure of adaptability of the nine female managers interviewed to establish their challenges, accomplishments and frustrations.

Research questions

Section A – Biographical info & academic qualifications.

Section B – Work experience.

Section C – Senior management evaluation .

- 1) Why did you choose to work in local government?
- 2) What do you understand by gender equality?
- 3) What do you like the most about your job? Describe your best/'wow' moments at work.
- 4) If you were given the opportunity to change the gender status quo, what would you do differently?

Methodology

- Both qualitative and quantitative research approaches used after ethical clearance.
- Participative action research using some principles of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI).
- In-depth semi-structured one-on-one elite interviews conducted.
- Nine (9) non-randomly selected senior women managers.

Common Themes

1. Learning under very rough, demanding, tough and impersonal situations.
1. Highly politicised administration.
1. Commitment to improve the lives of communities.
1. Challenging work.

Common Themes (cont'd)

- 5. Skills development opportunities available.
- 5. Fear of the unknown.
- 5. Working conditions unfriendly to women with young children.

Findings

- There are few women in senior management. In four municipalities, there are only three Section 57 female employees. One municipality does not even have a female senior manager!
- Most senior managers are in the Finance Section (78%).
- Younger (24 – 46 years), graduates (78%).

Findings (cont'd)

- Lack of awareness of the various gender mainstreaming initiatives in local government by most interviewees (only 11% has some idea).
 - No gender equality policy exists in the four participating municipalities.
- * Only 33% of the interviewees know about the iLGM!

Conclusion and Recommendations

- It is not too late to start with the vigorous implementation of the Gender Policy Framework for Local Government (2007).
- District municipalities are to be assisted in developing and implementing gender mainstreaming. The iLGM among other key stakeholders can assist in this regard.
- Learning from other countries will enable local government to set realistic standards and meet them; avoid the mistakes made by the pioneers.

THANK YOU !

Questions and open discussion.