

PLANTING A SEED FOR TRANSFORMATION

KAGISANO SOCIETY WOMEN'S SHELTER PROJECT, BOTSWANA

LORATO MOALUSI-SAKUFIWA, DIRECTOR



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Director at Kagisano Society Women's Shelter Project, Botswana

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When the African Women's Development Fund invited Lorato Moalusi-Sakufiwa to the CEO Forum's Leadership and Governance programme, a Capacity Building initiative, it would plant a small seed that would bear fruit over a broad reach of the organisation's programmes.

“For me gaining leadership skills and then leading this organisation so that, in turn, it can start building the capacity of other organisations, was a big impact,” said Moalusi-Sakufiwa. “There was value in being in a partnership with the leadership programme

because we were able to support the leadership of other organisations.”

Moalusi-Sakufiwa is the director of the Kagisano Society Women's Shelter in Botswana and, in 2013, the organisation received USD 20,000 from the AWDF, under their Women's Human Rights thematic area, in order to keep the organisation's shelter running through the provision of adequate bedding, cooking utensils and improved safety measures.

The Kagisano Society Women's Shelter was established in 1998 in response to violence against women (VAW) in Botswana. Their vision is to be a leading



organisation for ending violence against women in the country. The shelter does so by providing temporary shelter, counselling, community education and outreach, and completing advocacy on critical issues connected to the security of women.

It first heard of AWDF when a partner organisation recommended that they reach out to the fund.

The CEO Forum on Leadership and Governance



“We searched on the Internet and then applied for funding to give the shelter a basic facelift and to get a camera so that the women could see who was at the gate,” she recalled. “That was also how we got to the CEO Forum - we were invited because we were project participants at the time.”

The shelter is a safe haven for women and children who are survivors of violence in their communities. At the time of the grant, Kagisano Society was a home to 35 women and children.

The aim of the project was to improve the living conditions at the shelter, provide better safety, support VAW knowledge training, and provide positive perception programmes for the children at the shelter.

Moalusi-Sakufiwa said the renovations and improvement was an immediate morale boost for the women at the shelter, who reported an increased sense of safety with the implementation of CCTV for security. In addition, the funding allowed the shelter to purchase

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The housemothers were given additional training to provide improved support and a shelter manager was appointed.

The children began to show improved behaviours following specific support for their wellbeing including creating a more child-friendly environment, procuring child therapy materials and setting up a therapy space for them.

Moalusi-Sakufiwa reported that at the time the funding came



through, it “transformed the shelter into a totally therapeutic environment and the project participants were very pleased as the materials gave colour and meaning to the shelter”.

Transformation on the Rise

That transformation was further enhanced when she was invited to join the AWDF CEO Forum, a Capacity Building programme, in 2015.

Today the Kagisano Society Women's Shelter has expanded to work with 34 organisations in 12 health regions to provide capacity building. It is a partner organisation in providing capacity building training to multiple non-governmental organisations in Botswana.

“We divide these different districts among ourselves. We do a RAPID assessment to see what and where the needs are as well as a competency assessment. We then provide capacity building support that responds to the needs of the organisation,” explained Moalusi-Sakufiwa.

“We don't just do training and then walk away. If they need strategic planning, we would help them draft a strategic plan and then help them to finalise it.”

Moalusi-Sakufiwa said the organisation has grown significantly since AWDF first provided funding in 2013.

“By the beginning of 2013, we only had two sites. We now have nine sites including some outside Gaborone. We conduct basic counselling around issues of violence against women in relation to HIV and AIDS,” she said.

The organisation provides integrated services for clients



and the VAW outreach has increased by more than “60 percent because we have created different forums for people to reach us,” she added.

In the aftermath of AWDF's CEO Forum with the extended leadership coaching programme, Moalusi-Sakufiwa said the organisation increased their reach on radio.

“We now have staff members who go out on radio to speak to the public every Thursday. We also work closely with The Voice newspaper and have grown our outreach on Facebook,” she added.

The organisation uses innovative ways to reach different target groups. Their work with The Voice, for example, includes doing quizzes on violence against women.

Significant Impact

The AWDF CEO Forum and leadership mentorship programme, said Moalusi-Sakufiwa, had a significant impact on her.

“It had a professional impact but it also impacted me on a personal level. In Nairobi, the forum stressed that the most important thing was self-care

... that even while I give, I need to take care of myself. Even as I care for others, in order to be effective, I need to take care of myself,” she recalled.

“I made an effort to take time out, to do more exercise, to think about my needs,” she added. “As a care giver, it's so easy to think about other people and to run with thinking about other people's needs. I really appreciate the time they spend on helping us with that,” said Moalusi-Sakufiwa.

The mother of two teenagers who has also enrolled for her Masters in Development Practice, Moalusi-Sakufiwa knows that she pushes hard “but now I also know that it is okay to take a break; to take a Sunday afternoon and spend time with my children.”

The leadership coaching also helped her manage her staff more effectively.

“My delegation skills have greatly improved,” she said, laughing. “I've seen that while I have trusted them, they have done great things. We have created a strong team and because of this I can take time off. I know that even if I am not there, the work gets done.”

This is a far cry from the time when Moalusi-Sakufiwa would

take work with her while she was on holiday and would continue to keep in contact with the office during her break.

“I learned to create space for them,” she said, adding that this, too, is leadership training for staff members.

She wishes she had taken advantage of the fellowship's networking opportunities but even then “just hearing about the experiences of others, talking to the coach and discussing how to support our governance structures has given me tools to use,” she added.

“For example, talking to (AWDF CEO) Theo Sowa about governance and getting advice from her to talk to my chairperson really had the biggest impact for me. That information helped me and now when I work with other organisations that are facing real challenges, I am also able to help them to work with their boards.”

Moalusi-Sakufiwa said creating an effective board was a critical shift forward.

She was not the only shelter staffer to get new skills as a result of AWDF's interventions. Moalusi-Sakufiwa noted that the organisation was able to send a staff member to attend an AWDF Resource Mobilisation bootcamp in South Africa.

“That was a plus as our funding has continued to grow,” she added. “What it is has done is to help us think outside the box – to think about a wider base and to look at other avenues for funding.”

“As a result, we have been able to start new projects. Just

Grantee Information

The Kagisano Society Women's Shelter (KSWS) is a non-profit organisation which aims to raise awareness about violence against women in Botswana. It is the first and one of the only two shelters in Botswana that are a refuge for women survivors of violence and their children. KSWS strives to be a leading organisation for ending violence against women and girls in Botswana.

Kagisano Society Women's Shelter was established by the Kagisano Society in 1998. The Mission of KSWS is to end violence against women and girls in Botswana through the provision of the following: Temporary shelter; Counseling; education, outreach and Advocacy.

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