



Gender & Inclusivity

A PROJECT OF THE SCIENCE GRANTING COUNCILS INITIATIVE



FUNDO NACIONAL DE INVESTIGAÇÃO, MOZAMBIQUE

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The Gender & Inclusivity Project, a component of the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI), is led by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) of South Africa in partnership with Gender at Work (G@W), Jive Media Africa and the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). G@W's unique methodology, Gender Action Learning (GAL), together with the Targeted Technical Assistance (TTA) process designed by the HSRC, supports a unique participatory process that responds to councils' needs, builds partnerships and encourages ownership of the change process.

Team work boosts 'women in research' initiatives aimed at development

The formation of a stronger gender team, including people from different sectors, has facilitated a common vision on gender and inspired a range of strategies to raise women's participation levels in research.



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As a national research funding agency, the Fundo Nacional de Investigação (FNI) recognised the need not only to increase the participation of women in research but to increase the number of women leading research teams. It was understood that greater equity in the science space would also mean improvements in the range and quality of research being conducted, with benefits for national socio-economic development.

Gender strategy

Determined to shift the gender balance, the council, using a gender strategy developed before the project, aimed to ensure that more women applied for research projects and grants. The council also held workshops with women scientists to better understand the barriers behind their low participation in calls for proposals and established quotas for women in the calls for proposals.

When the quota system did not produce the

desired results, the council reviewed its strategy, determined to find the means to encourage more women to apply for research funding.

Incentives in the form of prizes for research targeting women scientists were introduced.

Challenges

Unfortunately, a proposal for a specific funding instrument aimed at women researchers could not be trialed because of a lack of funds – a larger challenge which affected the team's efforts on a broader level.

The team also realised there was a need to harmonise gender activities with the council's existing daily activities.

Successes

The council succeeded in reaching some women researchers with training on scientific writing, the results of which will be evident in the next call for applications, and ongoing efforts are underway to offer training on gender issues to all FNI staff.

