

# TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY



## Insights from Full Council Learning Forums held in Insiza and uMzingwane

Emthonjeni Women's Forum in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government and Insiza and local district councils conducted Full Council Learning Forums in Insiza Ward 9, and uMzingwane wards 14 and 19. The primary goal of these forums is to equip women with knowledge and skills to actively engage in decision-making processes as well as have an appreciation of local Council processes towards women participating in decision making processes. 140 women participated in the learning forums.

The District Development Coordinators, took participants through an appreciation of local level governance structures offering valuable insights into the country's political decision making landscape.

The Social Services Officer who doubles up as the Gender Focal Person, focused on empowering women to take up leadership positions and influence decision-making processes. The session offered effective strategies and valuable insights to inspire and encourage the attendees to embrace leadership roles. The strategies include:

### 1. Formation of Women's Groups:

- Encourage women to form associations or groups to collectively consolidate their voices and advocate for their needs.
- Foster networking, skill-sharing, and solidarity among women within the community

### 2. Education and Awareness Campaigns:

- Educate women on their rights and on available opportunities for participation in local level governance, and how to engage with local councils effectively.
- Raise awareness in the broader community on gender equality and the importance of women's involvement in decision-making.

### 3. Mentorship Programs:

- Establish mentorship programs that pair experienced women leaders with aspiring ones to guide and support them in navigating the political landscape.
- Provide mentorship to build confidence and enhance leadership skills among women.

### 4. Leadership Training Workshops:

- Conduct workshops and seminars tailored for women to enhance essential skills such as public speaking, negotiation, and conflict resolution.
- Focus on empowering women with the tools needed for leadership roles.

### 5. Promoting Self-Advocacy:

- Encourage women to confidently assert their opinions, needs, and goals, breaking traditional barriers.
- Promote self-advocacy as a means for women to ensure their voices are heard in decision-making spaces.

### 6. Creating Safe Spaces and Forums:

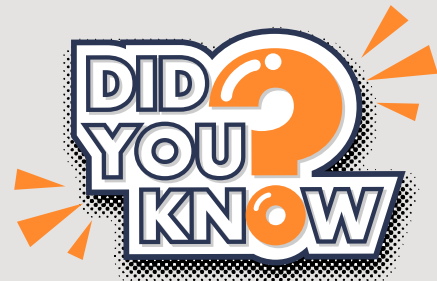
- Establish safe spaces and forums exclusively for women to openly discuss experiences, challenges, and potential solutions on issues related to gender equality.
- Provide a supportive environment for women to share insights, learn from each other, and strategize on effective ways to engage with local councils.

The learning forums have been an empowering platform for women, who have been equipped with tools they need to enhance their capabilities and become influential voices within their communities



VOLUME 4

“I raise up my voice—not so I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard... we cannot succeed when half of us are held back.” — Malala Yousafzai



The Labour Amendment Act 2023 defines gender- based violence and harassment which encompasses violence and harassment directed at individuals based on their sex or gender or disproportionately affecting individuals of a particular sex or gender. **Maternity leave:** The amendment grants employed women three months of paid maternity leave for each pregnancy removing the one year qualification period and their limit of three terms of paid maternity leave. *For more visit*

[https://www.veritaszim.net/sites/veritas\\_d/files/Labour\\_Amendment\\_Act%2C\\_Act\\_11\\_2023.pdf](https://www.veritaszim.net/sites/veritas_d/files/Labour_Amendment_Act%2C_Act_11_2023.pdf)





## Emthonjeni Women's Forum (EWF) Empowers Women Farmers through ISALs Training

Emthonjeni Women's Forum (EWF) recently concluded its Internal Savings and Lending Training (ISALs) activity, aimed at enhancing the livelihoods and entrepreneurial skills of women rural farmers while contributing to household food security.

A total of 60 women from Insiza Wards 7, 10, and 8 participated in this training, enhancing their capabilities to improve their livelihoods and contribute to food security in their communities. The ISALs Training strengthening has equipped them with the knowledge and skills needed to propel growth and prosperity. This marks a major milestone for empowered women farmers, boosting their confidence and resilience for the future.

The program sought to strengthen ISAL group members in wards of operation. The objective was to create a network of empowered women capable of managing ISAL groups effectively and fostering collaboration and support.

### Building the Foundations for Financial Literacy

The training also focused on financial literacy, as an important component to women to financial independence and also towards improving household food security through better management of finances. Additionally, a clear and comprehensive ISAL group Constitution template was introduced, to assist women to manage their ISAL groups effectively and efficiently.

### Capturing Essential Aspects for Growth and Success

Group fund development was explored to establish innovative methods of building financial resources within ISAL groups. Responsible access and management of loans were emphasized and meticulous record-keeping was taught as a tool for monitoring progress and decision-making.

