

THE GAMBIA TEACHERS UNION

WOMEN'S WING

(GTUWW)

MID-TERM REVIEW CONGRESS- CAUCUS

(24TH – 25TH)

DESK OFFICER'S REPORT

By: JANET A MANSAL

PARADISE SUITES HOTEL

24TH AUGUST 2012

INTRODUCTION

- Madam Chairperson,
- National Executive Committee Members present,
- Women's Executive Committee of the Wing,
- Board of Directors of the GTU Credit Union,
- GTU Staff,
- Distinguished Guests,
- Delegates,
- The Press and all other protocols respectfully observed.

Madam Chairperson, The promotion of women and girls in education is very crucial to the Gambia Teachers Union thus warranting it to establish the Wing to:

- ✓ Further closer cooperation with stakeholders in education with the view to protecting and advancing the rights and interests of female teachers in particular and girls in general on issues directly affecting their development and lives.
- ✓ Increase women's awareness of their rights and responsibilities
- ✓ Be a vehicle for professional and personal development with emphasis on building members self- esteem and confidence.
- ✓ Provide guidance and counseling services to girls, to name a few.

Madam Chair, during the last National Women Caucus held on the 7th August 2009, the following were elected as executive members to the Wing's executive positions:

- ❖ Fatoumatta I A Jarju – Khan as the Chairperson of the Wing
- ❖ Amie Faye Sagnia; Vice Chairperson
- ❖ Nyima A Jallow ; Treasurer
- ❖ Emily M Gomez; Secretary
- ❖ Majula Touray; Organizing Secretary
- ❖ Fatou Jobe Mboob; Regional Representative Region 1
- ❖ Adama Sowe; Regional Representative Region 2
- ❖ Fanna K A Saine; Regional Representative Region 3

- ❖ Sainabou L Sanneh; Regional Representative Region 4
- ❖ Yassin Touray Jallow; Regional Representative Region 5 North
- ❖ Amie B Jobarte; Regional Representative Region 5 South
- ❖ Geita Jeng; Regional Representative Region 6
- ❖ Kombah Touray; Member
- ❖ Tida Willan; Member
- ❖ Mariama Makalo; Member
- ❖ Mariama Lisa Camara
- ❖ Fatou Jobe Manneh; Member and
- ❖ Haddy S Njie; Member

Madam Chair, the names mentioned above and the following: Rohie A Silla GTU 1st Vice President, Marie Antoinette Corr; GTU General Secretary, Lamin K Marong GTU President and, Janet A Mansal GTUWW Desk Officer; serving in the executive as Ex- Officio members, form the present WEC.

On Saturday 14th November 2009 the handing over of offices of the previous executives was done, followed by the inauguration and an induction session for the newly elected WEC at the GTU Hall.

During the period under review, the following were undertakings of the GTUWW.

➤ ***TRAININGS/SEMINARS***

1. Training of Trainers and Step down Trainings on the AU Protocol

The Gambia Teachers Union Women's Wing through the Gender Action Team (GAT) under the Raising Her Voice Project secured funding of One Hundred and Twenty – Four Thousand, Five Hundred and Fifty Dalasi (D124,550) from the African Center for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS) and with the center conducted a 3 - days TOT and 3 step- down trainings/ "Bantabas" in regions (2,3,5) on the Provisions of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

The TOT comprised twenty – five (25) participants; nineteen females and six (6) males representing members in all the regions. This was conducted from the 28th – 30th December, 2009 at the GTU Hall.

Objectives

Among others, were meant to:

- Empower women on their rights by raising awareness on the AU Protocol
- Equip members (particularly female teachers) with life skills especially self esteem and assertiveness so that they can further mentor the girls in the schools and regions they serve
- Opportune participants form a pressure group in advocating for the rights of women and girls in their communities.
- Raise awareness of the Regional Education Directorate staff on issues affecting female teachers and students in schools.

The step-down trainings /Bantabas were conducted in Regions 2, 3, and 5 on these respective days; Friday 24th September, Tuesday 12th and Wednesday 13th October, 2010. In each of these step down/ bantabas, participants were drawn from all the clusters and they include: Female and male teachers, head boys and girls PTA member, Regional Education Staff and GTU Officials. In all, female teacher participants were 60, males 17, head boys and girls each 15, Education staff and PTAs each 9 and 8 GTU officials.

2. GTUWW/FLAG TOT ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

A One-Day Training of Trainers Workshop on Violence against Women and Girls funded by the US Embassy under the Women in Action Project was held on 11th August 2011 at The Paradise Suites Hotel by the GTUWW in collaboration with FLAG (Female Lawyers Association Gambia)

Fifty participants representing the 7 Education Regions were trained. They comprised: 30 GTU National Officials, 7 Human Resource staff of the Regional Education Directorates, 10 Education Cluster Monitors and 3 GTU staff.

The training was on the: Women's Act 2010, Domestic and Sexual Violence and Harmful Practices and Sexual Violence in Schools.

Objectives

- To increase members' awareness on the provisions of the Women's Act 2010 and other instruments governing women and children's rights
- To empower participants with the knowledge and enable them contribute in all ways possible to the reduction or elimination of all forms of violence in the schools and communities they serve.
- Provide each participant with copies of the Women's Act 2010 to serve as reference materials in their advocacy work.

The activity was facilitated by Resource Persons from FLAG, Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) and GTU.

3. GTU WOMEN EXECUTIVE SEMINAR

A seminar was held for 35 executive members (mostly women) of the GTU on Tuesday 20th September, 2011 at The GTU Secretariat. All the 7 Education Regions were represented.

Presentations were on:

- *The Role of Teacher Unions in the Prevention of Violence against Female Teachers and other education staff; by Fatou Kinteh UNFPA.*
- *Advancing Gender Equality in Teacher Unions ; by Amie Silla Sarr WODD*
- *SWOT Analysis of GTUWW by Essa Sowe DGS.*

➤ FEMALE TEACHER RECRUITMENT DRIVE

The Desk Officer of the Gambia Teachers Union Women's Wing was invited to join the team of officers of the Gender Unit of The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education on an eleven- Day Female- Teacher- Recruitment Drive for senior secondary schools in Regions 3 – 6. The team comprised the Senior Education Officer; Mustapha Drammeh, Education Officer; Maget Njai, PEO Senior

Secondary Schools; Alagie Bun Njie; the driver; Lamin Darboe and the Desk Officer GTUWW; Janet A Mansal.

Forty- Seven schools (Basic Cycles, Upper and Senior Secondary Schools) were visited. The Recruitment Drive was conducted for the girls in the SSS and the impact assessment was done for girls in the Upper and Basic Cycle schools.

In Region 3; the schools are: Barra/ Essau UBS, Essau SSS, St Michael's BCS, Fass Basic Cycle, Mbulum UBS, Berending SSS, Kuntaya UBS and SSS, Aji Fatou Bojang SSS, Kerr Chernon Basic Cycle, Kerewan UBS and SSS, Njaba Kunda UBS, Farafenni UBS, SSS and Anglican and Ngayen Sanjal UBS and SSS.

In Region 4; schools visited were Pakaliba UBS, Soma UBS, Pakalinding UBS, Tahirr SSS, Kiaf UBS and SSS, Kwinella UBS and Nioro Jataba SSS.

In Region 5, the schools are: Kaur SSS, Niani UBS Panchang UBS, Nyangabantang UBS, Jarumeh Koto UBS, Jangjanburay UBS, Armitage SSS, Bansang UBS and SSS, Boiran UBS, Brikamaba SSS, Kudang, Jareng and Bureng UBSs.

In Region 6: St Georgers UBS, Nasirr SSS, Sabi, Badari, Nyakoi and Suduwol UBSs, Fatoto UBS and SSS and Diabugu UBS and SSS

The visit enabled the GTUWW Desk Officer to meet the girls and hear some of their problems. It also privileged her to confirm the number of female teachers in each of the schools visited at the time; a good point to advocate for fairly distribution of female teachers in the regions.

➤ ***SENSITISATION CAMPAIGN/ADVOCACY***

(a) Popularization of the GTU Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics

The GTUWW with funding from MoBSE conducted a country wide popularization of the GTU Code of Conduct and Ethics from the 6th to the 28th June, 2011 among teachers, students and other stakeholders in education at the Regional Education Directorates in all the regions. This project was meant to be in 3 phases (2011 – 2013) targeting 1500 participants altogether; 500 per phase.

As a strategy to ensure continuity and sustainability in the context of limited resources the 'bantabas' held drew participants from each of the Clusters including members of their Training Teams and the GTU Regional Representatives in each region. Two participants were drawn from each cluster in each region along with the Regional Human Resource focal persons. In all, 150 took part.

Objectives

- To raise awareness on HIV/AIDS among school going girls and young teachers- females in particular
- Raise awareness on the need to uphold Professional Ethics and Conduct among young teachers; females in particular and school going girls as contained in the GTU Code of Professional Ethics and Conduct.
- To equip young teachers and girls with life skills such as self assertiveness and esteem with the view to encouraging them serve as an advocacy group on issues that affect their lives
- To curb the rising incidence of teenage pregnancy and its associated ills
- To contribute to the reduction of the number of girls dropping out of school as a result of teenage pregnancy.

(b) Sensitizations on Basic Information on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse

The GTUWW spearheaded a nationwide sensitization on Basic Information on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse to enhance Equitable Access and Quality Education in Basic and Secondary Schools.

Advocacy materials such as T- Shirts, stickers, posters and brochures were produced and distributed during bantabas which were held at the REDs in all the regions. Participants comprised, GTU REC, Cluster Monitors, REC Staff, Mothers Club and students (head boy/ girl/ councilors). In all 50 GTU members, 60 students, 30 Cluster Monitors, 30 Mothers Club members and 10 RED staff took part.

➤ **CAREER FAIR**

The GTUWW participated on a career fair organized by FAWE- GAM at the GTU Secretariat on 2nd November 2011. The Wing's shed had on display a variety of GTUWW work (supplementary readers, T- Shirts, posters, brochures, flyers ...etc).

➤ **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS 2010/11/12**

Madam chair, in 2010, the GTUWW in collaboration with AAITG observed IWD on 7th April, 2010.

This was done in a parade of about 300 people led by the Gambia Police Band from the Post Office Junction to the GTU Secretariat. A symposium where the Guest of Honor was the Regional Education Director One; Madam Anna B John followed.

Presentations were made by: Njundu Drammeh of Child Protection Alliance; who led discussions on Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children; Madam Yamundow Jagne of Child Welfare Unit, who led the discussions on The Role of the Police in Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children and Amie Silla Sarr; of WODD leading the discussions on Democratic Governance.

In 2011, under the *Theme: Enhancing Equity of responsibility in Education Service Management* a message/ Press Release was sent to 3 Media houses; (Observer, Foroya and The Point) for publication in observance of the day.

In 2012, under the *Theme: Connecting Girls, Inspiring Futures:* a joint celebration of a women's conference was planned by GTUWW, FAWE and EFA with hope of getting funding from AAITG. This didn't happen as AAITG's funds for IWD were re-directed to Food Security. Hopefully come 2013 the three institutions will come up with something as planned.

➤ **MEETINGS**

Madam Chair, during the period under review the following meetings were held:

- **WEC; 18th September 2009:** An emergency meeting held to plan for the SUDES Women's Wing Caravan Visit from the 23rd -30th Sept.

- **GTUWW Technical Committee meeting:** 11th November, 2009
- **GTUWW Technical & General Purpose:** 6th Feb. 2010 among other issues discussed, the meeting took a decision that the Wing take a loan of One Hundred Thousand Dalasi from the GTU Credit Unit as loan and buy ash obi and sell it out to raise funds.
- **GTUWW Technical Committee:** Thursday 25th March, 2010 to discuss IWD 2010 and Senegambia Brotherhood Day celebrations
- **WEC; 10th November, 2010** among other things discussed were: to inform members of the work on H E's farm and the Wing's contribution, The Step-down trainings on the AU Protocol in Regions 2, 3 and 5 and the ash obi.
- **WEC Meeting April 19th 2011**
- **GTUWW Planning Committee meeting** 20th August 2011for World Teachers Day
- **WEC; Tuesday 20th September,2011:** Among other things: Inform WEC that World Teachers Day 2011 Celebration will be spearheaded by the Wing; plans to have a parade and conference, the planned Caravan to Senegal didn't happen, Regional Representatives on Management course to temporarily hand over their positions to someone decided by their REC in writing.
- **WEC Meeting Friday 9th March 2012:** Among others; information on activities since last WEC meeting, at this meeting a decision was taken by the meeting to suspend all Regional Allowances for Regional Representatives until money is available hence there are no fund raising activities done.

➤ **PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION**

Madam Chair, the Wing continued strong collaboration and partnership with sister organizations and Associations listed below:

National

- MoBSE (Gender Education Unit)
- AAITG
- FAWE-GAM
- Women's Bureau
- FLAG
- GAMCOTRAP
- Gambia Women's Federation

International

- **AWEN** (WAWEN)

As could be recalled, one of GTUWW's main International sponsors was Promotion of Women in Education (PWE). As a pilot project, it ended in 2006 and gave rise to African Women Education Network (AWEN). This network is divided into five networks of which the GTUWW belongs to the West Africa Women in Education Network (WAWEN).

Madam Chair, WAWEN continues to support the Wing on the Gender and Development Training Program at the MDI. During the period under review, Two Executives were sponsored: Fatou Jobe Mboob and Tida Willan.

- **SUDES**: SUDES means Syndicats Unique ET Democratic des Enseignants du Senegal. (one of the Teacher unions in Senegal) which signed a memo with GTU on 5th December,2007 to reinforce the existing South – South Cooperation within Zone II of EIRAF and Education International on Professional and Cultural, Technical and Institutional Development. SUDES

serves as a link between GTU and Francophone Unions and GTU in the case of Anglophone Unions.

- **North Yorkshire Teachers** (Marion Casson)

Recently, under the leadership of Marion Casson, the North Yorkshire Teachers; UK have partnered with GTUWW. As I speak to you, plans for a Two- days Training in Leadership, Roles and Responsibilities in early October for Twenty –Five GTUWW executives are on the way.

- **MIC**

Mary Immaculate College for Eight years now has been in partnership with the Gambia Teachers Union. Every year students come to the Gambia as guests of the GTU on Teaching Experience. Given the nature of the students (female dominated), this program has been coordinated by the Desk Officer.

➤ ***OTHER ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATED BY THE WING:***

- ✓ In November, 2009 The Wing was invited by the Women’s Bureau to send 2 representatives to the Opening and Closing ceremonies of the 8th African Regional Conference on Women(Beijing + 15 Review Meeting) the Chairperson and Desk Officer attended the opening ceremony at Jerma Beach Resorts.
- ✓ 10 February, 2010 D/O attended a Regional Conference on Generating Alternatives against FGM organized by GAMCOTRAP at Baobab Resort and Spa.
- ✓ 3rd May, 2010 D/O attended a Second Gender Taskforce Meeting where a TOT was developed to recruit a consultant to conduct a Gender Assessment Study which will help highlight the retention and performance of girls in schools, Gender sensitivity of the Education Budget and other opportunities of girls in the job market. This was organized by EFA at TANGO.

- ✓ 28th – 30th April 2010 D/O participated in Validation of Curriculum Framework organized by CREDD at RED 1
- ✓ 15th July 2011, REC 1 organized a Workshop for Kanifing Cluster at St Therese'LBS and invited the D/O as the GTU representative of the Region to make presentations on GTU Operational structures and other matters. Fatou Jobe R/R also presented on GTUWW structures, roles and responsibilities.
- ✓ August 1st 2011 D/O attended a meeting of Civil Society Organization and UNICEF Internationals on Election Observation conducted at WANEP office.
- ✓ August 24th 2011 D/O took part in a Sensitization of Political Party leader on women representation at political level under the **Theme:** Temporary Special Measures to Ensure Women's Political Participation (in line with Women's Act 2010) organized by FLAG at Paradise Suites Hotel.
- ✓ September 7th 2011 D/O participated in a validation Review of Input Tracking Research Report by EFA
- ✓ September 8th 2011 D/O took part in a National Civil Society Education Fund Research Validation (on the establishment of a national civil society education fund in the Gambia) organized by EFA at NaNa Building.
- ✓ September 12th 2011 GTUWW Treasurer took part in a Consultation workshop on The Draft Domestic Violence, Sexual Offences and Abolition of FMG bills organized by the Women's Bureau at Paradise Suites Hotel.
- ✓ 12th January, 2012 D/O participated in discussions on the Draft Constitution and Strategic Plan of the Network on Gender- Based Violence- the Gambia organized by the Network Forum at NaNa Building.

- ✓ February 1st 2012 D/O participated in a Review of the Women's Act 2010. This is mandatory of the Bureau and National Women's Council according to Section 66 sub- section 1 to monitor the compliance of the Act through annual reports for its implementation from all Government, public and private institutions.
- ✓ 22nd May 2012 D/O took part in a validation workshop on Research Report on Gender Analysis of Political Party Manifestos and other Documents organized by ACDHRS at Paradise Suites Hotel.
- ✓ In May 2012 D/O contributed to the Review of the GTUWW/PWE Training Manual
- ✓ 13th to 15th June 2012 D/O participated in the 4th Annual Conference of African Women in Leadership Conference (AWLC) organized by African Women in Leadership Organization (AWLO) in partnership with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and in collaboration with the Gambia Women's Federation. This took place at the Sheraton Hotel Resort and Spa. The idea behind these organizations is to advance the status of women in Africa and advocate for and safeguard their rights.
- ✓ 17th July 2012 D/O took part in a planning meeting (with Mame Codou; Campaign Officer ANCEFA; Dakar, Senegal) on evaluation process of the interventions on the Inclusive Education Project implemented by EFA and other partners since 2009. Partners of EFA who participated in the meeting were asked to submit a list of activities conducted by their organizations from 2009 to date (which I did for the Wing) so that they will be synergize and map the way forward.

➤ **CHALLENGES**

Madam Chair, the biggest challenge of the GTUWW is inability to raise funds to conduct more activities for members.

During the last caucus, resolutions were passed for National and Regional Bantabas to be conducted annually to opportune members to highlight issues affecting their profession and general wellbeing this had not happened.

As at now even The Regional Allowances and WEC sitting fees are put on hold all due to lack of funds.

➤ **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion Madam Chair, I want to assure all members that the Wing will continue it's strive towards promoting the general welfare of members through more collaboration and partnership building.

I THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION