THE “WEAKER” SEX

AN AFRICAN VIEW

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NAMIBIA DEFENCE FORCE
HISTORY

- Weaker sex due to physical abilities.
- Yet, God entrusted the woman with giving birth.
TODAY, WOMEN ARE FOUND AS PRESIDENTS, CABINET MINISTERS, NASA TEAMS ETC

SINCE INDEPENDENCE, WOMEN ARE DEPLOYED IN ALL SECTORS OF THE NDF.
PRIOR TO INDEPENDENCE

UNTIL 1974. NO BLACK WOMEN
VOLUNTARY WORK FOR WHITE WOMAN IN SUPPORT SERVICES
WOMEN JOINED THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE VOLUNTARY IN ALL FIELDS
IN THE 23 YEARS OF WAR, SPORT WAS NOT A PRIORITY
JUNGLE GYM
POST INDEPENDENCE

WOMEN BECAME PART OF THE NDF AND MADE A CAREER FROM IT
RESTRICTIONS AFTER INDEPENDENCE

- Resistance to change
- Traditional misconceptions
- Increased work load
- Single parenthood
- Deployment away from home
- Foreign mission deployment
- Sport career vs motherhood
- Sexual harassment
- Restrictions after independence
RESISTANCE TO CHANGE DUE TO TRADITIONS

- 13 ETHNIC GROUPS WITH OWN TRADITIONS
- WOMEN EXPECTED TO STAY HOME
- INCREASED DEMANDS FOR EQUAL RIGHTS ARE CHANGING THE PICTURE
- CHANGES HAVE NOT LIFTED THE BURDEN
MISCONCEPTIONS BY TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES

- Traditional authorities are well respected
- Very influential
- Negative Western influence on traditions
- See day care as a negative influence
- Community must understand the concept of working mothers - contributing
INCREASING WORK LOAD AT WORK AND HOME

- TRADITIONAL MEN SELDOM ASSIST AT HOME
- WORKING WOMEN DO HOME WORK AFTER WORK
SINGLE PARENTHOOD

MANY NAMIBIAN HOUSEHOLDS HAVE A SINGLE PARENT DUE TO:

– DIVORCE
– UNPLANNED PREGNANCY
– LOSS OF A PARENT
– HUSBAND DEPLOYED AWAY FROM HOME

WOMEN HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO WORK
DEPLOYMENT AWAY FROM HOME

NDF WOMEN MOSTLY DEPLOYED AWAY FROM FAMILIES

CHILDREN’S DILEMMA
- WITHOUT PARENTS
- RAISED DIFFERENTLY
DEPLOYMENT IN FOREIGN MISSIONS

FOREIGN MISSIONS, TRAINING, PEACE KEEPING OPERATIONS

- SAME DILEMMAS
SPORT CAREER VS MOTHERHOOD

FEW WOMEN WITH HIGH LEVEL SPORT CAREER AND BEING A MOTHER

- WAIT FOR SPORT CAREER TO FADE

- REASON: CANNOT COPE WITH ALL THE DEMANDS
SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- Traditionally a man’s world
- Acceptance of women is growing
- Perceptions of women for sexual pleasure
- Sexual harassment in the force is international
- Our duty to root out this harassment
WOMEN ACCEPTED THE CHALLENGE OF EQUAL RIGHTS AND ARE DETERMINED TO MAKE A SUCCESS OF IT.
TIME: Time needed for communities to understand the role of sport and mother

UNDERSTANDING: Understanding why women want a career and be a mother and wife

SUPPORT: Support from all role players to create normal happy family units

THIS SITUATION CAN CHANGE WITH

TIME: NEEDED FOR COMMUNITIES TO UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF SPORT AND MOTHER

UNDERSTANDING: WHY WOMEN WANT A CAREER AND BE A MOTHER AND WIFE

SUPPORT: FROM ALL ROLE PLAYERS TO CREATE NORMAL HAPPY FAMILY UNITS
THANK YOU