



NEWSLETTER



11 FEB: CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE



8 MARCH: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



5 APRIL: SCIENTIFIC WRITING WORKSHOP



31 MAY: HATCLIFFE 2 PRIMARY SCHOOL SCIENCE OUTREACH

NATIONAL CHAPTER CHAIR FOREWORD



FORTUNATE FARIRAI OWSD ZIMBABWE NATIONAL CHAPTER NATIONAL CHAPTER CHAIR.

My vision is to unite women in all science disciplines in Zimbabwe locally, regionally and nationally. The organisation objective is to increase the participation of women in science, facilitate research collaborations between women both nationally and internationally. Women also need to initiate projects that are relevant to the development of Zimbabwe and to also generate scholarship funding for girls to study sciences.



Let us eradicate Silo mentality. No to competitions and yes to collaborations

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE 2019



The International Day of Women and Girls in science celebrated every year on the 11th of February was adopted by Zimbabwe for the first time. It is a day that reminds women and girls that they play a pivotal role in science and technology and their involvement in these activities should be recognised and supported. The

celebrations were running under the theme “Equality and Parity in Science for peace and development #IADMIRE.”

The event was sponsored by Organisation for Women in Science for the Developing World Zimbabwe National Chapter (OWSDZNC) and TECHWOMEN Zimbabwe and their aim was to increase women’s access to the benefits of science. Lillian Mapuranga gave the welcoming remarks observing all organisations who had joined in the celebrations. These included The Ministry of Women Affairs, Community Small and Medium Enterprise, Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development, representatives of FAWEZI, Elevate



Trust, LEC BIOTECH, HIT, Netro Electronics and number of schools and university students participated in the celebrations. Chipso Shonhiwa lecturer at Bindura the University of Science Education, Physics and Maths Department facilitated the students quiz with winning

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students receiving prizes. Students received an inspirational talk from Sicelo Dube (STEMLADY), Director of Elevate Trust and LEC BIOTECH, ZSLT Trustee and teacher at Hellenic Academy mentioned that the event was aimed at providing mentors for the student scientist. She explained the importance of science and gender equality as

they are both vital for sustainable development therefore enhancing women and girl's participation in science improves and ensures development in the country.

Fortunate Farirai OWSD Zimbabwe National Chapter (Chair), Director of Wise Petroleum and PhD candidate in Chemical Engineering at the University of Witwatersrand addressed the students elaborating on the aims of the organisation. Among its objectives the organisation aims



to provide networking, advocacy and information sharing between similar institutions and individuals for promoting increased participation of women in science and technology professions, initiate relevant science based activities that address national concerns with all levels of the society.

Olubukola O. Babalola Vice President for Women in Science for the Developing World, Africa, Director of Food Security and Safety Niche Area gave a speech honouring the International day of Women and Girls in Science. The day as she highlighted was to encourage greater participation of women and girls in science and providing coaching, mentoring, counselling and being role models for the students. Professor Olubukola O. Babalola stated that, the UN reports less than 30 per cent of the world's scientists as women and that just 30 percent of female students get into science and engineering. Most

girls are underrepresented in STEM subjects. The jobs of the future are driven by technology and innovation, and if the gender divide in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics is not bridged, the gap of gender inequality widens. The celebration was a call to change the narrative

A programme launch was facilitated by Ms. R Mlambo introducing the Robogirls, Girlstars/Taungana and Technovation challenge. The programme was closed by Reverend Marima in prayer.



INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY CELEBRATIONS 2019

The International Women's Day held on the 8th of March, globally is a celebration which commemorates international efforts to reduce gender disparity. The day recognises imbalance with respect to education system, political affiliation and employment opportunities for women. Zimbabwe addresses gender inequality through the National Gender Policy (2013-2017) that places strong emphasis on gender equality and equity, visualising a gender just society in which men and women are equal partners in the development of the countries and communities. The 2019 theme for the International Women's Day was #BalanceForBetter which seeks to address gender inequality and the empowerment of women. The theme also seeks to build courage and determination in women to be innovative.

A commemorative event for women scientist in Harare, Zimbabwe was hosted by the Australian Embassy. The Organisation for Women in Science for the Developing World Zimbabwe National Chapter members were invited to the event by TECHWOMEN Zimbabwe and STEMFEM Zimbabwe. The Australian Ambassador, Ms. Bronte Moules gave the welcoming remarks and expressed her deep concern towards the gender disparity women continue to face globally in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) fields. The Ambassador encouraged Zimbabwean women to come out of their shells and make their presence felt. She stated that women should enter male dominated institutions, and use STEM solutions.

Women shared their experiences, encouraging and inspiring other women to use STEM for the development of the nation. Ms. Dube (STEMLADY), Director of Elevate Trust and LEC BIOTECH, Zimbabwe Science Laboratory Technicians Trust Trustee and teacher at Hellenic Academy mentioned that empowering a woman, empowers the world and stressed that science pays. She advised scientists to break out of their cocoons and turn their projects into innovative ideas, marketing their ideas to change and develop Zimbabwe.

The guest speaker, Mrs. Mangwengwende, a former director of Proweb –forum for 12 years, who is now a farmer gave an inspirational talk on the theme #BalanceForBetter. Her speech encouraged women to unleash their potential and how they should use STEM to solve country's problems. She expressed how gender inequality impacted her entrepreneurial journey and

encouraged women to be more factual than emotional in debates and board rooms. The gender imbalance in the government needs to be addressed with gender-friendly protocols being operationalized. Women should stay focused and their attitudes should be excellent because according to her “Attitude determines Altitude”. She encouraged women to use the bottom- up approach when providing solutions to community problems. The women were encouraged to strike a balance in their lives and be passionate go getters.

Chinhoyi University student, Jessica Jore gave a talk on how she used STEM to produce an innovative solution. She developed an ointment from natural herbs driving home the idea that science pays. The ointment is for joint aches, muscle pains and back pains for the elderly and for highly active people such as: farmers. In her journey she experienced stigma for using traditional solution, which might make it difficult for her to penetrate the market, but she was happy with her progress so far.

Another young woman scientist, Mossy Muchena shared her story about living her own dream. She started university as a medical student, to fulfil her father’s dream but later changed to computer science, which was more her own passion. She developed a mobile app called “Order Now” used to improve services in the catering industry. As a result, she was also accorded “The Most Promising Innovator under 35 in Southern Africa” award. She is now the Head for an Australian computer based company. She encouraged women to take up their passions and to never give up. The programme was closed by Professor Mutambanengwe, thanking the guests.



SCIENTIFIC WRITING WORKSHOP

Students are facing a lot of challenges pertaining to scientific writing and mentorship in career development. This has been evidenced by the number of student proposals which have been rejected when applying for scholarship, very few students qualify for the scholarship funding. The success of the project will depend on both

the quality of the project and the quality of the presentation in the proposal. The Organisation for Women in Science for the Developing World Zimbabwe National Chapter (OWSD-ZNC) on the 5th of April 2019, held a workshop at the University of Zimbabwe (Science Centre) addressing this predicament. The workshop was aimed at equipping students with necessary skills on how to write a convincing proposal for post graduate education, also adequate for grant application. OWSD-ZNC is one of many organisation to hold a scientific writing workshop in the academic field

Zviregei Jiri a university lecturer in the department of Biological Science from Bindura University of Science Education. Vice chair for OWSD Zimbabwe National Chapter gave the opening remarks highlighting the accomplishments of organisation. OWSD Zimbabwe National Chapter celebrated International day of women and girls in science for the first time on the 11th of February 2019.



The day was sponsored by STEMLADY, together with TECHWOMEN, LEC BIOTECH and Elevate Trust. She encouraged women and man to join OWSD ZNC and promote the recognition of women in science in Zimbabwe. The organisation is hosted by Zimbabwe Academy of Science (ZAS). OWSD Zimbabwe National Chapter fully supports the objectives and activities of OWSD International who aim to enhance the female participation in science and technology regionally and internationally.

The presenters at the workshop were ladies who had successful applications for their grants funding, and they gave tips and hints on proposal writing. They addressed the issue of stiff competition when applying for OWSD fellowship or any other grants thus researchers need to prepare themselves. Catherine Kazunga a lecturer at Bindura

University of Science Education gave a lesson on proposal writing. She gave an in-depth presentation using the research proposal chart flow on how to organise and develop a research paper. The need for a research proposal is to present and justify the need to study a research problem.

The presenter also identified the qualities of a good proposal in her presentation. She advised researchers to use templates if given any. The research question should be clear in an engaging manner. The proposals are not about the researcher but the idea should sell how it is relevant to the development of the community. Spoon feed the reader, try by all means to give essential detail of the research problem. The proposal should be brief but informative, avoid unnecessary explanations it becomes monotonous. Outline the objectives and state how you as the researcher try to tackle each objective. State the expected results or finding.



Danai Zhou also added information on proposal writing focusing on medical research. The presentation emphasised on what research question to pursue. The research question should show the following characteristics: relevance, feasibility, avoidance of duplication, political acceptability, applicability, interest, theoretical and time value.

Natasha Mavengere, lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe, presented on formatting and referencing of the word document. She emphasised that the most annoying thing to the reader is a word document which is not formatted and referenced correctly. Formatting documents will help in organising ideas and the proposal is arranged in a professional way. Referencing is also important as it allows the researcher to



acknowledge ideas from other writers and avoid plagiarism of work which is a criminal offence. Referencing is also providing evidence to support your ideas in the research question and it should be accurate so that the reader can trace the references. On formatting, the researcher should always make sure the font size and style is consistent throughout the document. The spacing should be appropriate so that the document is appealing. There are different referencing software's in which students can use and these include Mendley, Endnote and Zotero. The software's make it easier for the researcher to reference their work. The researcher was advised to use mostly pdf documents for citation.

A topic on mentorship was presented by Sicelo Dube (STEMLADY), who gave a clear on what mentorship entails. Mentorship is a relationship created between people as a guiding principle.



A mentor is a leader who knows more than the other and have a skill they possess. She emphasised on the mentorship basics, proposing on the steps mentors and mentees should take into consideration. Mentees should know what they want and work towards attracting the right mentor. The mentee should also research on the mentor and

perceive a common ground. They should also value the time of their mentors. She also advised mentees to know their objectives and listen to the mentor to create good relations. The mentee needs to go beyond expectations. Both the mentee and mentor should benefit from the relationship. She advised women to take up the challenge to be mentors, scientists need to mentor each other. Mentors need to commit and give critical constructive feedback to their mentees.

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The guest of honour Professor Maud Muchuweti, Executive Dean of Science at the University of Zimbabwe delivered a speech on the importance of science and technology in the development of the nation and also to encourage young girls and women to take up science related subjects. She appreciated OWSD Zimbabwe National Chapters work in hosting the scientific writing which created a powerful network of scientists who are able to deliver quality work showing excellence in their academic fields. She advised successful women in science to take up the challenge and encourage young girls to take up science related subjects. Women in science have a great potential in contributing to the economic development of the country in the areas of water and sanitation, agriculture, housing, climate change, health just to mention a few using science and technology to alleviate poverty and achieve sustainable development.

Innovation is at the heart of our ability to find solutions to our problems. The economic powerhouses depend on the ability to grasp and apply insights from science and technology and use them creatively. The closing remarks were given by Bertha Ndlovu.



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HATCLIFFE 2 PRIMARY SCHOOL SCIENCE OUTREACH

Organisation for Women in Science for the Developing World Zimbabwe National Chapter (OWSDZNC) together with TECHWOMEN Zimbabwe and LEC BIOTECH organised a science outreach at Hatcliffe 2 Primary School on the 31st of May, 2019. The primary

school is situated in Harare. The science outreach was aimed at creating a love for science within the primary school students. The programme also connected professional scientists with primary school students to develop future leaders in science.



Bertha Ndlovu, TECHWOMEN Zimbabwe trustee and Stem women business incubator programme director gave a motivating career guidance talk preparing the primary school leavers (that is from grade five to seven) for their transition to secondary school. She mapped key actions towards discovering who you are, making an informed personal, educational and career decisions. The students were encouraged to

consider their passion when looking for a career. Passion was defined as the spark in an individual, that enables them to be adventurous and innovative thus leading them into doing what they love. The students were taught on planning daily activities, monthly and yearly goals in order to have direction in life and set targets the individual targets need to meet. They were also encouraged to nurture their talent and to choose careers that excite them for example if one is talkative that talent can be moulded to become a journalist, those who are into technology can be computer scientists and engineers of the future. The students were also trained on having an investigative mind, that is to have a critical mind-set and be open-minded.

The programme also engaged the students through fun science experiments to entice the students and motivate them. Shanon Chinamo a student at Harare polytechnic and an intern at

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LEC BIOTECH conducted the science experiments. She is a student studying towards a diploma in applied Chemical Technology. She conducted an experiment called the Elephant toothpaste and volcano. This was in bid to nurture the children’s natural sense of adventure and discovery. The students showed positive energy towards the experiments and they were motivated to become scientists.



To also entice the students, Laura Kasipo an OWSD Zimbabwe National Chapter member showcased her profession. She is a transmission chemist at ZETDC in the energy industry. She explained her responsibilities to the students which include analysing oil samples for the whole of ZETDC throughout Zimbabwe, insulating oils condition

monitoring, quality assurance and environmental control. The information helped the students relate well with the Environmental Science part of their curriculum.

A talk on drug abuse was also conducted by Yvette Chahwanda, OWSD Zimbabwe National Chapter Treasurer. She mentioned that most youths are caught up in the cycle of abusing drugs



at a very tender age, starting from primary level. The talk was to caution the students about the dangers of abusing drugs. She gave reference to different types of drugs and their health effects for example broncleer, a cough mixture which has been overdosed by youths, cannabis which youths smoke to get high and crystal meth. These drugs have a detrimental effect towards the youth’s health and social life. The abused drugs have caused lung

cancer, mental illness, heart attack, high blood pressure and HIV/AIDS. Drug abuse also has an

effect on the social well-being of youths as most youths end up being engaged in violence, crime and they end up breaking family ties.

The event was closed by a question and answer session whereby the students were given small gifts like exercise books, pens and pencils upon getting answers right. This was to motivate them to learn more.

PREPARED BY: AMANDA MUZA

EVENTS IN PICTURES

11 February: Celebrating International Day for Women and Girls in Science



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8 March: International Women's Day



5 April: Scientific Writing Workshop



31 May: Hatcliffe 2 Primary School Science Outreach



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