

**REPORT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION'S  
PARTICIPATION AT THE 56<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED  
NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN:  
2012**

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women, children &  
people with disabilities  
Department of  
Women, Children and People with Disabilities  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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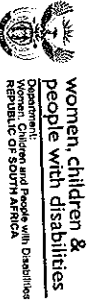
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# Overview of the Country Report

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# Overview of the report

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SECTION 5: SUMMARY OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR  
SOUTH AFRICA'S GENDER PROGRAMME:  
5.1 THE EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN

**Summary of Discussions on Priority Theme**

- They constitute a sizeable share of the global population, and are important actors for economic and social development at the local and national levels.
- They remain disadvantaged in many areas compared to rural men and boys, and to urban women and girls, with poverty continuously being a predominantly rural phenomenon and being victims of various forms of violence.
- Lack of and limited access to land and other productive resources and lack of land ownership remains an obstacle to overcoming poverty and hunger for rural women.
- Women continue to face limited access to markets, inadequate health services.
- Lack of public infrastructure, including roads and public transportation, water and sanitation facilities, modern energy sources also hinder rural women's opportunities for empowerment.
- Rural organizations, including farmers' organizations and cooperatives, play an important role in giving rural women a voice, advancing their rights and promoting rural development and therefore capacity-building for these women is essential

## SECTION 5: SUMMARY OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S GENDER PROGRAMME:

### 5.1 THE EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN

#### Summary of Discussions on Priority Theme

- The intervention programmes that South Africa has are really global attempts yet contextualised, proving once again that we are part of the global village.
- Many of both developing and developed countries have prioritized economic empowerment as the major toll in ensuring that rural women are able to eradicate poverty and hunger. This happens through:
  - ✓ gender-biased economic policies, growth and equality such as prioritising decent work, increased infrastructure investment, Equal access to and control of land and rural productive resources, e.g water
  - ✓ Promoting the establishment of women's organisations, women's participation in planning, implementation and monitoring of policies and programs
  - ✓ Leadership and decision making, e.g. gender-responsive accountable mechanisms to influence policy formulation and M&E at all levels, quota system in decision making, as the establishment of gender units and strengthening them
  - ✓ Strengthen Agricultural Research women's economic empowerment for promoting food security and nutrition by supporting subsistence farming and the development of markets to ensure communal availability of affordable food

## SECTION 5: SUMMARY OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S GENDER PROGRAMME:

### 5.1 THE EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN

#### Recommendations on Priority Theme

- Development of appropriate training and capacity building to be conducted where they reside / own villages.
- Ensure that data collection is disaggregated according to sex, age, socio-economic status etc.
- National economic policies, budgets and planning, M& E process should also take into account the situation of rural women and respond accordingly.
- Facilitate the effectiveness of community structures: Nothing about ourselves without ourselves, through strong campaign programmes for encouraging women to vote for women electoral candidates.
- Pilot the model of Kenya Micro finance Enterprise fund for Micro Finance/ Women Entrepreneurs fund, operated by the Kenyan Women, Children and Disability ministry. This is the fund specifically aimed at assisting women entrepreneurs by offering them financial assistance at 0% interest rates, and negotiating and facilitate local marketing for their goods. Support is given by volunteers to all rural entrepreneurs.

## SECTION 5: SUMMARY OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S GENDER PROGRAMME:

### 5.1 THE EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN

#### **Recommendations on Priority Theme**

- Another good model of practice implemented by Maldives is that one called “The Window model” which is located in the Prime Minister’s office. The model has all entrepreneurial services needed by women under one roof. This is beneficial for women in accessing services even those in deep rural areas.
- South Africa need to ensure that government programme does not include women by default but that they are inbuilt gender indicators for strategic implementation, monitoring their impact and allowing effective evaluation. These include Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), Land Reform and different financial services.
- Government should continue conducting consultations and summits with rural women to provide them with a platform and opportunity to voice out their challenges, needs and to collaboratively and jointly find ways to address these concerns as well as influence put them on government’s agenda.
- RSA gaps in the area of the GR governance and institutions, mechanisms and tools with gender neutral targets, e.g. the National Planning Commission, Budget (National Treasury).



**SECTION 5: SUMMARY OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S GENDER PROGRAMME:**

**5.2 FINANCING FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN**

**International organizations and multilateral development partners in the implementation of the agreed conclusions**

- The agreed conclusion for the 2008 CSW made a call for increasing investments in gender equality and the empowerment of women and this has resulted in a range of responses from international and multilateral organizations to expand resources committed to gender equality, increase capacity to track such resources and strengthen the impact of such financing, as well as to strengthen the scope of policy and advocacy, and partnerships among a range of stakeholders. The following progress has been made in implementation:
  - ✓ Positioning gender equality as an institutional priority and increase investment in gender equality and the empowerment of women;
  - ✓ increase in the amount of bilateral aid focused on gender equality, which reached 31 per cent of sector allocable aid in 2011.
  - ✓ The development and use of tracking systems for financing for gender equality has enhanced and contributed to the availability of sex-disaggregated data and gender-specific information.

**SECTION 5: SUMMARY OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S GENDER PROGRAMME:**

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**International organizations and multilateral development partners in the implementation of the agreed conclusions for the 2008 CSW**

- The Gaps and challenges in implementation include the following:
  - ✓ Over the past four years, access by women's organizations to funding from bilateral and multilateral partners has remained limited. Funding for UN-Women remains significantly below the target, almost two years after its establishment.
  - ✓ Tools that can effectively measure the quality and impact of development assistance, including evaluations, audits and reviews, are lacking.
  - ✓ Reporting, monitoring and tracking systems adopted by bilateral and multilateral donors and by United Nations entities remain largely isolated from national systems, thus increasing the burden on reporting by recipients.
  - ✓ Many women's organizations, especially small grass-roots organizations and service providers, lack the technical capacity to comply with the complex requirements for accessing the usually large grants offered by different donors.

SECTION 5: SUMMARY OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR  
SOUTH AFRICA'S GENDER PROGRAMME:  
5.2 FINANCING FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

**International organizations and multilateral development partners in the implementation of the agreed conclusions for the 2008 CSW**

- On the basis of experience and good practices, participants recommended:
  - ✓ Ensure funding for UN-Women to enable it to fulfill its mandate effectively;
  - ✓ Set measurable targets for financing for gender equality as a share of official development assistance;
  - ✓ Invest in the development and use of tools to assess the impact and results achieved in gender equality through support provided by United Nations programmes and multilateral support;
  - ✓ Explore innovative approaches to financing for gender equality such as taxation on financial transactions or public-private partnerships that are balanced and centred on gender equality goals;
  - ✓ organizations and multilateral and bilateral donors to reduce the burden of monitoring and reporting on recipient Governments and civil society organizations;
  - ✓ Austria, Cambodia and Morocco presented good models of implementing the agreed

SECTION 5: SUMMARY OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S GENDER PROGRAMME: . 5.3 ENGAGING YOUNG WOMEN AND MEN, GIRLS AND BOYS, TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY

- The responsibility of involving youth and making them part of the planning process, for the successful development of a country, lie on the shoulders many parties that include the government, the private sector and the civil society to help the youth get evolved into a gender sensitive, nationally responsible group of economically productive people.
- It is very important for political parties to give special attention to involving youth and women in order to promote gender equality. This is because a political party is able to provide a lot of experiential opportunities such as giving public speeches, actively participating in decision making, travelling and meeting people, being involved in campaigns etc.
- Increasing gender awareness within political parties, especially at the leadership level, is also equally important. Sensitizing parliaments to gender related issues is another way in which more opportunities can be provided for both women and youth through the legislative process.
- Inclusion of a clause insisting the existence of a women's wing in each political party, in the Political Party Act, will ensure women a more active role within political parties; as well as Forming youth committees and women's committees

## SECTION 5: SUMMARY OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S GENDER PROGRAMME:

### 5.2 FINANCING FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

South Africa's progress in financing the implementation of national priorities for

the empowerment of women is visible in some of the following areas:

- **Policy Environment**
  - ✓ National Development Agency Act - contribute towards the eradication of poverty and its causes by providing funds to civil-society organisations to carry out the project to meet the development needs of the poor communities with a focus on vulnerable groups such as women.
  - ✓ Basic Conditions of Employment Act which guarantees full pay for the duration of four months maternity leave. The Domestic Violence Act, the Policy Framework on Trafficking, the Sexual Offences and Related Matters Act which protect women against abuse and promote women's respect and human dignity.
- **Programmes and Projects**
  - "Education for All Children" Most of the schools in the rural areas are classified as the "no fee schools" which means that government has allocated financial resources for this purpose. Rural girls are also participants in the Techno-Girl programme, a budgeted partnership programme between government and private sector.

## SECTION 5: SUMMARY OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S GENDER PROGRAMME:

### 5.2 FINANCING FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

South Africa's progress in financing the implementation of national priorities for the empowerment of women is visible in some of the following areas:

- **Programmes and Projects**

- ✓ Other programmes that serve to mobilise women include the National and International Women's Day, Pan African Women's Day, National Women's Day, International Rural Women's Day. During these social campaigns, attended by policy makers get to hear from women about issues affecting women. This indeed has further spin offs as the Social security assistance in the form of social grants.

Progress in women-targeted programmes with International organizations and multilateral development partners in areas of technical and financial support.

- ✓ **Women in Water** partnership with funded by European Union, **UNDP** with UNiTE Campaign, an advocacy programme on Gender-Based Violence, **World Bank** on institution building which promotes women participation in government processes
- ✓ **UN FAO** which funds women farming projects in rural areas, and many others. These partnerships as they ensure development for rural women

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- All stakeholders should take concrete measures to accelerate prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, and monitor and evaluate the impact of measures taken and of results achieved in the areas of both service provision and of primary prevention.
- Ending violence against women and girls must be addressed in a dedicated manner through holistic and multi-sectoral approaches
- Notable progress has been made in providing support services to women and girls victims/survivors of violence. However, service provision often receives inadequate support and funding, and as such, services remain limited in quality, scope and coverage. A rights-based and gender-sensitive approach to the provision of support services is required. Services should respond to different manifestations of violence.
- Participants raised a number of additional issues to be considered in preparation for the priority theme in 2013, e.g. the need to address new forms of violence against women and girls, resulting from migration, and organized crime in particular trafficking in persons; effective measures and approaches to reconcile customary laws and practices with the human rights of women, and with formal legal and policy frameworks.



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- Responses to GBV:** As prejudice-based violence towards Lesbians and Bisexual women and Transgender persons increases, for example, homosexuality is criminalized in 76 Countries and punishable by law in 5 countries. South Africa was able to share best practices with other countries in the area of securing the rights of LGBTI groups as well as involving men and boys in gender equality programmes. Many of these are through policy environment such as in:
- Section 9 (3) of South Africa's Constitution expressly prohibits unfair discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and the legislation against discrimination on sexual orientation in a work environment.
  - In 1999, same-sex couples began to receive legislative recognition as *de facto* couples. In the same year, the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 came in, and endorsed the right to legal protection of the same sex persons by classifying the same sex relationship as a 'domestic relationship'.
  - In the year 2000, the country legislated against discrimination in the provision of goods and services, and this liberated homosexuals against social perceptions that restricted them from working in environments that exposed them to children.

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- **Responses to GBV:** In 2002, another progressive step in the South African legislative framework when both joint and step adoption by same-sex couples was authorized.
- The Marriage Act of 2006, revealed the determined commitment of South Africa to ensuring that homosexuality enjoys equal protection of the law reached its climax, when South Africa became the fifth country internationally and the first nation on the African continent to grant official recognition to same-sex marriages.
- In 2008, gay men and lesbians began to serve openly in the military to stamp the historical discrimination on sexual orientation that existed in this work environment.
- The government is strengthening the institutionalisation of the fight against GBV with the installation on the National Council Against Gender Based Violence which will be ably chaired by the Deputy President of South Africa, Mr Kgalema Motlante.

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- **Responses to GBV:** RSA has led initiatives on the recognition and protection of the LGBTI community. During the 17<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in June 2011 South Africa championed and led a Resolution on sexual orientation and gender identity, which called for the high commissioner on human rights to convene a panel discussion on violence against LGBTI persons. The session was the first initiative of this level to pass in the UN on LGBTI.
- In March 2011, government agreed to set up a national working group to address the so called “corrective rape” to meet the demands and plea made by numerous South Africans in support of the lesbian and gay community. In addition to this, begun work on a national strategic framework to address the protection of gays and lesbians holistically. The NCAGBV and the DoJCD’s National Strategy will make significant inroads towards proactive interventions in building a socially transformed, tolerant, inclusive and cohesive South Africa.
- Whilst HIV and AIDS remained a major challenge to many of the participating countries, South Africa was able to share how through intense advocacy campaign launched by government we have halved PMTCT and we are committed to ZERO PMTCT and ZERO new infections.

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**Prejudice-based violence towards Lesbian & Bisexual women and**

**Transgender persons Good practices of governmental policies**

- ✓ South Africa became the fifth country in the world, the first in Africa, to allow legal marriages between same-sex couples, after a historic vote in Parliament on 14 November, followed by the signature of Acting President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka on 30 December, passed the Civil Union Bill into law.
- Parliament and the Presidency on 1 December 2006 met the deadline set by the Constitutional Court in 2005 for the country's Marriage Act to be amended, or for new legislation to be passed to allow gays and lesbians to enter into legal marriages.