

REPORT ON

Generation equality: Realising women's rights for an equal future



Cape Peninsula
University of Technology

creating futures

“A civil society consultative forum celebrating and reflecting on the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action”

HELD BY



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



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REPORT ON GENERATION EQUALITY: REALISING WOMEN'S RIGHTS FOR AN EQUAL FUTURE

AWIF	AWIF African Women Independent Forum
AU	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officers
COGTA	Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Union
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DLG	Department of Local Government
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
FCS	Family violence, child protection and Sexual offences
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GGEO	Global Gender and Environment Outlook
GNC	Gender Non-Conforming
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HRT	Hormone Replacement Therapy
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IDPs	Integrated development plans
LGBTIQIA+	Lesbian, Gays, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer, Asexual
MTSF	Medium-Term Strategy Framework
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Government Organisations
NPO	Non-Profit Making institutions
PEP	Post-exposure prophylaxis
PEPUDA	Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act
Prep	Pre-exposure prophylaxis
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SANCO	South African National Civic Organisation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRC	Student Representative Councils
SMMEs	Small, medium and micro-enterprises
UNSCR	UN Security Council Resolution
VAW	Violence Against Women
VPN	Virtual Private Network
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing

PREFACE

PROF DRIEKIE HAY-SWEMMER

Executive Director: Office of the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Chris Nhlapo

It gives me great pleasure to write the preface to this report. The year 2020 is certainly not an easy year with so many challenges we had to face across the globe as a result of the COVID19 pandemic. And yet, how proud can women be that countries known for having success in containing the Virus, were led by women!

The year 2020 is also heralding the twenty-fifth celebration since the signing of the Beijing Declaration on gender equity. Since then, significant progress was made as women and organisations across the world joint hands to advance the goals of equality, development and peace for women in the interest of humanity. However, while recognising this progress, we are acute aware of inequalities that still access, that gender based violence is still a harsh reality. We furthermore acknowledge the many obstacles women are still facing globally.

Therefore, it is vital that we all will keep on working hard to end the multiple forms of gender based violence and to secure equal access to quality education and health, economic and technology resources, and participation in political life for all women across the world. It is also essential to achieve equal opportunities for women to positions of leadership and decision-making at all levels and particularly in higher education.

At the Civil Society Consultative Forum held during 10 – 12 February at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, participants dedicated themselves once again wholeheartedly to addressing the constraints and obstacles that women are still facing - not only in South Africa but all over the world, realising that it will require urgent action, characterised by determination, hope, cooperation and solidarity. We need to give young women and girls hope and dreams to chase as “...all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” and that “everyone is entitled to all human rights without distinction of any kind, such as race,



ethnicity, disability, sex, language, religion, ... birth or other status.”

Let us all endeavour for the empowerment and advancement of women, including their right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief, give voices to those women who are yet to be heard.

May we, as thoughtful female leaders, continue having tough conversations, knowing that it will be the only way to create an equal society in which women will be able to realize their full potential and to shape their lives in accordance with their own aspirations.

And lastly, may we keep on advocating for a gender-inclusive language as we know that gender-inclusive language is a powerful way to promote gender equality and eradicate gender bias. Let our voices be heard!

1 INTRODUCTION¹

SUMMARY OF SESSION

Key participants: Ntuntu Mntwana (Chairperson: Ilitha Labantu), Mandisa Monakali (President: Ilitha Labantu), Nonkosi Tyolwana (Cape Peninsula University of Technology) and Azwinndini Sekoba (Regional Chairperson: Gauteng ANC).



Delegates at the CSW64/Beijing+15 at CPUT

A civil society consultative forum celebrating and reflecting on the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was held from 10-12 February 2020 at the Bellville Campus of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). The consultative Forum was held by *Ilitha Labantu* in collaboration with the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), African Women Independent Forum (AWIF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-

Women) and the *Bambanani for Social Development*. The consultative forum entitled “*Generation Equality: Realising Women’s Rights of an Equal Future*”, brought together more than 100 women activists, think-tanks, private sector, faith-based organisations, academic institutions, Student Representative Councils (SRCs) youth organizations, UN entities, independent experts and other key stakeholders:

- to share their experiences of the struggle for gender equality across generations;

¹ This section is based on remarks and speeches presented by Ntuntu Mntwana, Chairperson, Ilitha Labantu; Mandisa Monakali, President, Ilitha Labantu; Nonkosi Tyolwana, Transformation Director, Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT); and Azwinndini Sekoba, regional chairperson of the African National Congress (ANC) Gauteng women’s desk, at a civil society consultative forum on “Generation Equality: Realising Women’s Rights for an Equal Future” held by Ilitha Labantu at CPUT, Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

- to reflect on the goals established to achieve such equality at a World Conference for Women held by the United Nations (UN) in Beijing in 1995 and the extent to which these had been achieved; and
- to prepare for the sixty fourth session of the United Nation's Convention on the Status of Women (UNC64).

This Beijing review, which also looked at how the political and socio-economic context for this struggle had shifted and also remained similar in the intervening 25 years, was held in the context of a forthcoming session of the UN's Commission on the Status of Women which was scheduled for March 2020. However, as the global Covid-19 crisis spread, the two-week meeting in New York, which would have been the 64th session of the commission (CSW64) and was set to be attended by about 10,000 women, was shortened to one day on 9 March and a follow-up event on 13 March. The only significant items of business at the conference, which would have celebrated the 25th anniversary of the "Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace" which was held in Beijing, China, were a political declaration, a consensus document on gender equality which had been pre-negotiated by national governments before the conference, and a number of procedure-related decisions.

1.1 SETTING THE AGENDA



Mandisa Monakali: Founder of Ilitha Labantu setting the agenda

In seeking to set an agenda for CSW64 and more widely for the women's movement globally, in Africa and in South Africa, the civil society consultative forum

convened by Ilitha Labantu was structured to consider the progress that had been made to promote gender equality in five main areas:

- The effectiveness and ineffectiveness of efforts to implement the recommendations of the 1995 Beijing meeting, including what kinds of issues have not been considered but have become priorities in the meantime, such as land, as well as the priorities for the next 25 years;
- The lessons learnt and what has been achieved in relation to preventing violence against women, including how the issue of gender-based violence has been used by those in power, such as within the South African government, to divide and rule the women's movement;
- How governance structures particularly at the municipal level may be transformed to promote gender equality;
- The role of women in peace and security, including in relation to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 has been delivered; South Africa's role at the African Union (AU), particularly in relation to implementing the UN's Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); and how the international peace and security agenda can be owned by civil society locally, for example, in relation to the deployment of the army on South African streets; and
- How innovation, technology and the fourth industrial revolution (4IR) may be leveraged for women's economic empowerment.

As Ilitha Labantu approaches its 30th anniversary in 2021, it also held the consultative forum, which was attended by more than 100 civil society stakeholders, UN representatives, academics and senior government figures from South Africa and the rest of the continent, to forge respect and a mutual agenda among older and younger generations of women activists. Through open, respectful and honest debate, the meeting sought to produce equal partnerships across generations and among civil society organisations, with the youth gaining greater understanding from the experience of the elders – and young and old learning from each other. In the spirit of a motto which emerged from the build-up to the Beijing conference that "no one will be left behind", the consultative forum sought to produce a new, age-appropriate narrative for the women's movement in South Africa, signifying unity and commitment to the cause of gender equality across generations.

REPORT ON GENERATION EQUALITY: REALISING WOMEN'S RIGHTS FOR AN EQUAL FUTURE

In order to build on and contribute to the UN's "generation equality" initiative, breakaway groups at the consultative forum considered and reported back on themes which have been chosen as the focus for six "action coalitions" which will be established as part of the world body's programme. The breakaway groups considered the achievements that had been recorded in these areas, the challenges that continued to be faced and the shorter- and longer-term kinds of action that may be prioritised to address these. The recommendations of the consultative forum were derived from these breakaway discussions. The six topics were: gender-based violence; economic justice and rights; bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights; feminist action for climate change; technology and innovation for gender equality; and feminist movements and leadership.

The consultative forum, which built on Ilitha Labantu's history of engagement in gender equality work at the international level, including in Beijing and as the host of a women's stand at a World Summit on Sustainable Development held by the UN in Johannesburg in 2003, reflected on the importance of global, African and South African efforts to liberate women since 1995 and the lessons that may be learnt from these.

Prior to the Beijing conference, men in South Africa called women who were preparing to go there "witches". If this was the case, they returned with even greater power and commitment to the cause of women's rights. However, it is also important to acknowledge that African women have struggled to ensure that their voices are heard and their concerns are addressed at international women's meetings, which have historically tended to be dominated by white people. In addition, as was shown on the road to China, the process of raising the required funds and permission to attend such international meetings can be arduous.

Four world conferences on women have been held. The first in Mexico City in 1975 declared a decade for women. The second in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1980 promoted CEDAW as a means of bridging the gap between the aspiration to women's rights and their implementation. The third in Nairobi in 1985 emphasised participation in political processes. The fourth in Beijing involved two processes – one among non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the other

for governments. The overall goal established by the conference was to advance the status of women by 2000, with particular reference to 12 areas of concern: poverty; education; health; violence against women; armed conflict; the economy; women in power; institutional mechanisms; the media; the environment; human rights; and the girl child.

Although the Beijing declaration seeking to empower women, and thus humanity, continues to resonate, it is important to take stock of the progress made on implementing the conference's platform for action, to consolidate the hard-won gains that have been made by women in South Africa; and to identify where insufficient progress has been made, where the ground has shifted as a result of emerging issues; and where efforts may be reinforced.

In South Africa, the process may even entail a re-evaluation of some of the overall objectives in order to address the present situation facing women today, which has, in many ways, deteriorated. In this context, the relevance and the meaning of the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2016 need to be considered, as well as the pertinence of the country's National Development Plan (NDP) adopted in 2012.

Although gender equality, non-discrimination and equal rights for women before the law are enshrined in South Africa's Constitution; although the country has signed the key international and continental protocols on gender; and although the NDP seeks to reduce gender inequality by 2030, violence against women remains widespread and extreme across the country and women are still not valued as equal members of society. Indeed, the NDP contains just one paragraph about women, although they are in the majority nationwide, which is symptomatic of a broader official disregard.

At the same time, the space for NGOs is shrinking, not only in South Africa but across the world – which makes it increasingly important for civil society actors to unite and forge a common purpose in their activism. In this regard, the Beijing declaration along with the MDGs and SDGs offer an effective means of making governments accountable to women. As such, all these documents have been translated into South Africa's local languages by Ilitha Labantu, and have informed its daily work for the past 25 years.

1.2 PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS TO DRIVE TRANSFORMATION



Nonkosi Tyolwana: Director: Transformation and Social Cohesion: CPUT

The higher education landscape is now in the midst of a social awakening as workplace equality, academic equality, career equality, gender based violence and sexual harassment as well as implicit biases becomes critical issues in the university. This partnership consultation is being held at a time in our country when there is an explosion of violence every day that is being experienced by women, girls and members of the LGBTQI communities in our universities. The frequency and brutality of such violence is extremely difficult to understand. Partnering with NGOs and civil society in advancing women's issues is critical because university students and staff are members of society. Again, universities are located within communities and therefore they should not be abstract from the community that surrounds them.

Looking to the future, a new generation of leaders is needed to take responsibility for this work. Such leadership should be built on learning the lessons of the past, including appreciating what has been achieved and the importance of forging effective strategies and tactics to reach goals. So, for example, direct action that destroys libraries at universities, which happened as part of the nationwide #FeesMustFall student protests that

erupted in 2015, should be seen as counter-productive and condemned by the leaders of student representative councils (SRCs).

Young women who arrive in cities to attend universities, but instead become the wives of, and dependent on, young male university students for want of accommodation derive no benefit from such protest actions. In this regard, the universities themselves, which are microcosms of society, also have a duty to transform to promote gender equality, the impacts of which extend beyond the campus gate. For example, 90% of the students at CPUT stay in local informal settlements and townships such as Gugulethu, Bonteheuwel, Khayelitsha, Delft.. The university also stand in loco parentis for students from across Africa. In this context, academics, administrators/support staff, students and NGOs or civil society must work closely with universities to achieve transformation both within and beyond the actual university. For, unless broader social inequalities are addressed, young women who may have struggled financially to graduate will continue to face discrimination. For example, women with construction, engineering and science qualifications may find it difficult to find appropriate work. In this regard, it is also incumbent on universities to deploy their scholarly expertise to solve the challenges faced in transforming society itself.

The overall goal at universities and across all sectors must be to create a genuinely fair, equal society. This entails producing and supporting processes to compensate women for the historical disadvantages which exclude them from opportunities and access to resources, thus preventing them from enjoying socially valued goods on an equal basis. Greater investment in women and girls to empower them would lead to growth of the gross domestic product (GDP); higher living standards; and more stable communities. It would further improve levels of decision-making, healthcare and skills. This goal may be achieved through greater solidarity among women and the understanding that the path to liberation does not require men's approval. Women can rise together, empowering and helping each other to grow and flourish. Therefore this partnership will support the empowerment of our students as our youth and our future leaders and also enhance our partnership towards "Youth Engagement for Global Action"

KEYNOTE SPEAKER 1

Gender equality challenges in South Africa²

SUMMARY OF THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Honorable Sylvia Lucas: Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Province (NCOP): Parliament of South Africa



Persistent inequality and poverty continue to hamper gender equality within society, as has been acknowledged by the national executive committee of the ruling African National Congress (ANC). In this regard, although civil society groups stepped back after the introduction of democracy in 1994 to allow the new dispensation the space to implement change, too few people have subsequently benefitted from actions taken by the government since then despite the rights to equality promoted by the Constitution of 1996.

In response, the trajectory for the campaign to achieve real gender equality should be shifted to focus on a number of key issues, including: the need to incorporate the issue in the curriculum at schools to change the thinking of young men and women in equal thinking;

and the importance of taking effective action against the prevalence and persistence of violence against women and children across society. Analysis of the progress made in meeting the demands made in the Beijing Declaration can provide an indication of the steps that still need to be taken to promote gender equality.

In the legislative sector, the South African government has, on the face of it, responded positively to the Beijing Declaration, implementing a range of progressive legal instruments in support of women's rights including the: Choice of Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1996; National Education Policy Act of 1996; Domestic Violence Act of 1998; Employment Equity Act of 1998; Maintenance Act of 1998; and Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (PEPUDA) of 2000.

However, significant challenges remain in implementing the legislation and in costing and funding these laws to promote gender equality. There is a need to replace those which are failing and to provide an adequate budget for their implementation. Official neglect can take the form of incorrect figures – the government has repeatedly noted that men comprise 51% of the national population when 2011 figures indicate that, in fact, women comprise almost 52%. It can also take the form of insufficient funding. The budget for the National Department of Women is the same as that for a provincial directorate of women; while the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) has one of the smallest budgets of the Chapter 9 institutions.

In relation to education, there have been achievements since 1995, including a continuing national literacy campaign and the government's efforts to reverse

² This section is based on a speech made by Sylvia Lucas, Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

discrimination against girls which previously denied them educational opportunities. Previously, many families did not believe in sending girls to schools. Now, there is almost universal access to education and parity among boys and girls at schools. In addition, more young women than young men now enrol at higher education institutions, comprising 58% of the cohort as a result. However, poverty among women has remained a persistent challenge since 1995, which can only be addressed through education, training and other efforts to capacitate them. The challenge stems from continuing unacknowledged forms of gender equality within the school system, which need to be addressed by a women's research institute.

In relation to health, there have been significant achievements for women since the introduction of free healthcare after the introduction of democracy in 1994. There is equality of access to health services for women, with access to primary healthcare at a high level (although communities bear responsibility for burning down local clinics). South Africa has additionally implemented the most ambitious HIV/AIDS programme in the world. In addition, a focus on pregnant women and children under the age of six has significantly improved health outcomes among this group. However, concerns persist around infant deaths caused by dirty conditions; and making the country's hospitals safe in this regard is a priority. Teenage pregnancies and death rates among teenage mothers are also a matter of concern.

In addition, notwithstanding the successes of the HIV/AIDS programme, many people are resistant to the idea of prevention and there has been a resurgence of the virus and AIDS among those aged between 18 and 24, despite the prevalence of anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs). There is a need to boost public health education programmes to promote preventative sexual practices among young people. Similarly, the issues of teenage pregnancy and unwanted pregnancy in young women may be addressed not only through the provision of improved health services, including readily available, safe abortions, but also by addressing the underlying social and psychological dynamics – for example, in relation to issues of mental wellness among young women, as well as the ways in which society sexualises girls.

Access to housing, health, schools and other services in South Africa depends on the establishment of peace and security for all. The National Development Plan launched in 2012 speaks of an ideal society and the creation of a prosperous, safe and empowered citizenry. However, recent reports of young women who are

exploited and assaulted by men upon arriving in the big city to attend higher education institutions, and the case of Shongile Nkhwashu, a 25-year-old intern doctor who was allegedly murdered by her boyfriend in January 2020, indicate that even as women seek to improve their lives through education they face male violence. Possessive men with the mindset that they will kill women if they cannot control them pose a lethal threat. The issue of gender-based violence (GBV) may be addressed through the school curriculum, which could educate male pupils that women are not there for men's pleasure. In this regard, unless men change, they will not be able to benefit from the support that educated women are able to offer in society more broadly.

Meanwhile, the country remains riven by a kind of perpetual low-intensity war, with martial law even being declared in the Western Cape to prevent gangsterism and crime. In this context, there can be no real protection for women and children from the violence that is threatening them. Indeed, it is often argued that girls must stay at home, otherwise they will be raped. In this regard, widespread GBV is clearly detracting from the existence of gender machinery and resources that have been provided to protect women and from the achievements of the new, democratic dispensation more broadly. Accordingly, the government should not say it lacks the funds to reintroduce gender-offences courts, which has been supported by President Cyril Ramaphosa. It should back the establishment of such courts and then address the issue of raising the required funds.

A further key issue that should be addressed is that of economic empowerment, which enables women to access freedom, dignity, their own houses and the ability to leave abusive relationships. It also enables families to exit poverty, since women look after families. At present, more women than men are looking for employment, but more men than women are in employment due to segregation in the job market. Given that there is a big gap in the middle of the employment market since South Africa is the most unequal country in the world in relation to income, empowering women, who can leverage significant benefits from their tendency to work collectively, has great economic potential. In general, the current democratic dispensation offers many opportunities for women. However, much of the legislation that has been introduced to empower women could be used better. As West African revolutionary Amilcar Cabral said: "Always bear in mind that the people are not fighting for ideas, for the things in anyone's head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children."³

3 Amilcar Cabral, *Revolution in Guinea: An African People's Struggle, Stage 1*. (London: 1974), pp. 70-72.

PANEL DISCUSSION 1

Reflections on Beijing +25⁴

SUMMARY OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION:

Key participants: Prof. Getrude Fester (UCT and former Commission for Gender Commission, Thabisile Msezane (Sithabile Child and Youth Care Centre), Dr Litha Musiyimi-Ogana (NEPAD), Zoe Kota (former Deputy Minister of Human Settlements)

Inclusivity has been an issue in the struggle for gender equality for many years. Previously, during the campaign against apartheid in the Western Cape, many men objected to the establishment of a separate woman's organisation, arguing that it would divide the Struggle. More recently, the issue of inclusivity has focussed on the need to respect the fact that there are individuals who don't identify as men or women, which the state has been slow to recognise. For example, the Commission for Gender Equality rebuffed an appeal made by intersex activist Sally Gross seeking official acknowledgement of intersex and trans people, indicating flaws in the country's so-called "advanced" gender machinery despite South Africa taking pride in its transformation and equality efforts.⁵

At the same time, the national government seems to under-prioritise gender work. CGE commissioners are paid less than human rights commissioners; and the gender equality portfolio committee in Parliament is neglected relative to the other committees. A strategic approach is required to address the de-prioritisation of women's issue and create change in this area. For example, ANC member of parliament Lydia Kompe identified the issue that was of the greatest concern to women in her constituency – traditional practices that were prejudicial to women – and pushed for academic research on the issue. This was then presented to the portfolio committee with the result that the government engaged civil society to produce change in this area.

In this regard, solidarity among women is crucial. It helped to produce the women's charter at the African Union despite the efforts of national governments to marginalise those seeking to forge the agreement; and it drove the political education of women during the Struggle against apartheid. Without solidarity among women for change, South Africa's national gender machinery is useless. Accordingly, women who have achieved some position of power should always seek to leverage their privileges for change, rather than resting on the laurels and becoming gender divas and conference hoppers.

In addition, it is important to acknowledge the mechanisms for co-opting those seeking change in South Africa, which remains the world's most unequal society as measured by people's relative incomes. For example, some white companies responded to the perceived threat of the new democratic dispensation after 1994 by handing out shares to members of the new ruling party, including to members of the ANC Women's League who subsequently became Rand billionaires.

Under such conditions, the powerful may pay only lip-service to the idea of inclusivity as fundamental challenges, such as the exploitation of labour and discrimination, including in relation to race, class, gender and disability, remain unaddressed; and the fine legislation produced by the government lacks effective

⁴ This section is based on remarks made by Professor Gertrude Fester, former commissioner of the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE); Dr Litha Musiyimi Ogana, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) gender advisor; Zoe Kota, former deputy minister of water and sanitation; and Thabisile Msezane, Sithabile Child and Youth Care Centre, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

⁵ This paragraph and the next five are based on remarks made by Professor Gertrude Fester, former commissioner of the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE), as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

implementation. So, for example, firms which are required to hire at least 2% of their staff from among people with disabilities, instead set aside a portion of their budget to pay the fines incurred by failing to fulfil this obligation. Meanwhile, at universities, although women are in the majority at the undergraduate level; men continue to dominate positions of power among the academic staff.

Meanwhile, in a society that remains patriarchal, women on the ground continue to experience widespread violence, psychological oppression and constrained life opportunities. For example, high pregnancy rates among schoolgirls in the Northern Cape indicate that these young women lack the negotiating power to insist on safe sex. Indeed, many of these young women would never say that they had been raped by their boyfriends; but rather that they were simply responding to their boyfriends' requests to prove their love. At the same time, preachers in churches, mosques and temples rarely decry patriarchy. To address discrimination, women in government need to negotiate their spaces more effectively, including by engaging religious and traditional leaders to confront prejudice, and by leveraging the power of mothers within the family for change.

The women's activism that culminated in the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 stemmed from earlier engagements in international UN meetings involving among others the Kenyan social campaigner Wangari Maathai. This group decided that the general absence of women at such meetings was unacceptable and so started to make their presence felt, at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992; at the UN's World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, Austria, in 1993; and at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, Egypt, in September 1994. At the 1992 meeting, the intervention led to the acceptance of the principle that there can be no sustainable development without women; at Vienna, it was agreed that women's rights are human rights; and the Cairo document emphasised the importance of gender equality and reproductive rights. It was subsequently agreed by the UN that there can be no peace without women. These in-principle declarations were reached in the teeth of significant opposition.⁶

Similarly, at the national level in Kenya, much civil-society activism for women emanated from the national government's inaction. For example, direct action was required to prevent and treat sexually transmitted diseases and support the establishment of small businesses among women in Nairobi's slums. When this was revealed in the international press it proved a source of embarrassment, producing resistance from the regime.

Against this background, fundraising to ensure representation at the Beijing conference, including from rural women in Africa, was difficult, with the United States (US) vacillating between deciding not to attend the meeting and offering support. As a result, a number of delegates from the continent attended the NGO conference that was held in Beijing in parallel with the official meeting of national governments. In addition, there was a significant backlash after Beijing. Media described the delegates as "lesbians"; marriages were broken.

In Kenya, the national government was presented with a draft report for implementation from the Beijing meeting but did nothing. However, returning delegates and civil society refused to take "no" for an answer, instead seeking to raise funds to address women's issues. By the time of the five-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+5) held in New York in 2000, the government in Nairobi acknowledged the women's agenda.

Throughout this period, it became evident that the solidarity forged among women around the Beijing conference made them a force that could not be easily divided. Deploying a number of strategies, including the production of shadow reports in the face of official intransigence and apportioning their efforts to introduce women's issues in a wide range of policy documents, these women became increasingly visible, even being approached by governments as experts. Hundreds of women were trained to stand for office in the Horn and eastern Africa, including in Kenya, where activists won representation on key government committees and ensured that the new 2010 constitution being drafted represented their issues.

In addition, former president of Mali and chairperson of the AU Commission from 2003 to 2008, Alpha Konaré,

⁶ This paragraph and the next five are based on remarks made by Dr Litha Musiyimi Ogana, NEPAD gender advisor, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

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recruited Kenyan activist Litha Musiyimi Ogana to the continental body with a mandate to implement women's rights, in particular through the The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, known as the Maputo Protocol, which came into force in 2005. Within a decade, this instrument had been ratified by 36 countries; 49 countries had signed up to the 2004 Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa and 31 countries had legislated against genital mutilation. In addition, the establishment of a women's ticket helped lead to the appointment of Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma as the chairperson of the AU Commission from 2012 to 2017.

It is important to note that government representatives also attended the Beijing conference in 1995. For example, the delegation from South Africa, which had just returned to the UN, was led by Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi and included representatives from government departments and all the provinces. Winnie Madikizela-Mandela was there and the reception afforded the contingent was warm. In addition, one of the legacies of the 2000 review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which provided a comprehensive agenda for women's emancipation, has been that an increasing number of women occupy positions of authority in parliaments and cabinets.⁷

There has also been growth in the number of women Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), although monitoring of women's representation in positions of authority in the private sector has been relatively haphazard. In addition, although there has been progress in relation to women's access to finance and education, the political empowerment of women after Beijing has not been matched by equivalent economic empowerment. For example, there is no development agency for women; and while there is wider provision of loans, most ordinary people lack the knowledge and collateral to access these. In this regard, the development of township economies, in which women play a crucial role, should be a priority. This would enable women to translate their leadership positions in the informal sector into greater influence in the formal sector. In support of greater economic empowerment,

a women's budget needs to be agreed at the national level. In addition, in pursuing the mandate produced in Beijing and to implement CEDAW, gender focal points to promote women's programmes need to be established across all government departments.

The delegates to Beijing in 1995 were charged with the responsibility of emancipating women and girls, which entailed giving voice to the challenges they faced in their struggles on the ground, including in relation to the violence that they suffered. The delegates took with them everyday stories, such as the emotional blackmail perpetrated by men refusing to wear condoms to stop the spread of HIV; the hardship of bringing up a family without access to electricity; how women's efforts to grow vegetable gardens and make money through sewing were seen by men as a threat, undermining their male role as the provider. In taking these stories to Beijing, the delegates were helping to change their own lives and those of their peers; and when they returned from China prepared to act to implement the Beijing Plan for Action, many marriages fell apart in the face of women's new empowerment.⁸

Twenty-five years later, young women face different challenges, particularly in relation to the threat of gender-based violence and being killed for their sexuality. In this regard, it seems that men are no longer prepared to change for the better as they once used to be.

7 This paragraph and the next are based on remarks made by Zoe Kota, former deputy minister of water and sanitation, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

8 This paragraph and the next are based on remarks made by Thabisile Msezane, Sithabile Child and Youth Care Centre, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

PANEL DISCUSSION 2

Voices of youth – a new generation's engagement in gender equality⁹

SUMMARY OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION

Key participants: Nonele Ganyile (SG: SRC:CPUT), Skhumbuzo Mazibuko (Student: Stellenbosch University), Christabella Zenzile (Disabled People of South Africa), Ludwe Nkomo: Youth desk: ILitha Labantu

Women continue to face the same challenges, as marginalised, weak members of society without a productive role, that were faced by previous generations. In the present patriarchal society, women are silenced, objectified and taught to be submissive; and men are taught to dominate and retain power. LGBTQI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex) issues remain taboo; young women students may be able to express sexualities that defy heteronormative expectations at university, but when they return to their home spaces, they must wear long skirts and change their hairstyles for fear of being rejected by their families and communities there. Meanwhile, in political organisations, men whose sense of their own masculinity may be fragile tend to oppose the election of women to positions of power, arguing that they may be less capable and too emotional – while men, it seems are never emotional and always capable.¹⁰

In order to change this situation, women need to be increasingly included on public platforms and encouraged to build on the legacy of previous women activists. They must also act in solidarity and stop opposing each other. They must also realise that it is

fruitless to continue electing men to power. After all, men, as the beneficiaries of women's suffering, are unlikely to be first in line to liberate them. Above all, it is crucial to look at the world through women's eyes and ask whether this is the kind of world in which you, as a woman, would want to live and in which you would want to raise children. If the answer is "no", then action must be taken to change it.

Young, black women at university and in broader society face a number of different forms of discrimination on the grounds of gender, race and sexuality, which can produce violence and deny them opportunities. However, the impacts, which may include sexual assault and rape, are generally swept under the rug at the country's higher education institutions. Women students may be advised by the university authorities to exercise and eat healthily and the trauma of the violence that they have suffered will dissipate. The government also falls short in responding adequately to GBV. As a result, many cases of sexual harassment go unreported.¹¹

The violence against women is in many ways a product

⁹ This section is based on remarks made by Nonele Ganyile, Secretary-general, Student Representative Council (SRC), CPUT; Skhumbuzo Mazibuko, student, Stellenbosch University; Christabella Zenzile, Senior Administrator, Disabled People of South Africa; and Ludwe Nkomo, youth development officer, ILitha Labantu, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

¹⁰ This paragraph and the next are based on remarks made by Nonele Ganyile, Secretary-general, Student Representative Council (SRC), CPUT, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

¹¹ This paragraph and the next two are based on remarks made by Skhumbuzo Mazibuko, student, Stellenbosch University, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

of generational trauma among black and coloured communities, where the children's depression and emotional and psychological pain can be left untreated and unacknowledged due to a lack of widely available support. Against this background, women may be made to suffer and even killed by men who feel stripped of their masculinity in a society which offers them nothing. Women also have to shoulder the burden of providing the emotional, and often material, support required at home, for which they are underpaid if at all. They are in effect raising the nation, although this is not acknowledged by men. Meanwhile, men in the grip of a toxic masculinity both claim victim status and deny it as an affront to their self-image, indicating a profound need to start talking about the actual validity of their emotional responses. Within higher education institutions, the discrimination against black women is not only expressed in the form of violence. Universities, which have transformed only partially, may allow more women to enter as students but they continue to block their efforts to achieve larger academic success. Black women academics are generally under-represented and the competition for tenure, which is tough, continues to be decided within closed circles. This has created a toxic atmosphere at a number of universities about which the black academic caucuses have complained. Other forms of discrimination at universities also persist. For example, lecturers at Stellenbosch University can send their offspring to the university for free, although the black and coloured cleaners who are also staff at the institution are denied this privilege. At the same university, researchers published a study of coloured women that sought to identify intelligence as a product of race and gender.

There continues to be a general lack of inclusivity for people with disabilities. The NDP takes little account of people with disabilities and there are few figures on the percentage of South Africans and of pupils at school with disabilities. Such exclusion, which was also experienced at the Ilitha Labantu consultative forum due to the lack of accessible bathrooms and the use of an inaccessible podium for speakers, must come to an end. In this regard, it is not disabilities that exclude people, but wider social norms and society's

fear of including those with disabilities that sets them apart. People with disabilities are not looking for some form of social welfare, just inclusivity.¹²

Men, as well as women, should listen to and learn from the generation of women activists who went to Beijing as the mothers of a struggle for emancipation who should be honoured. In this regard, men also have a responsibility to change the minds of boys, so that the foundations underpinning patriarchy can be dismantled. Without changing the youth, nothing will change. A national campaign should be launched engaging both young men and young women to bring an end to patriarchy and, as a matter of urgency, to GBV.¹³

4.1. DISCUSSION ¹⁴

It is argued by some women activists that prostitution, which is supported by patriarchy, capitalism and misogyny, essentially constitutes a form of unwanted sexual intercourse, or rape. Under this view, the idea of prostitution as a form of sex "work" is challenged, given the fundamental inequality in the so-called "employment relationship", in which sex workers cannot refuse to render their services; and given the coercive nature of their work environment, which is often controlled by abusive men and in which decent conditions cannot be guaranteed. The view is supported by research indicating that most prostitutes are pimped, and are often denied food and plied with alcohol so that they keep working. It has been found that a great number of women are trafficked to become sex workers and are forced into prostitution. In South Africa, such trafficking not only takes place across borders, it also operates internally along the N1 in the Western Cape led by farmworker parents and is big business in the Eastern Cape under the control of pimps.

At the same time, women may engage in sex work and become prostitutes for a number of reasons – including, for some unemployed women, in order to earn money to buy food and raise a family. Notwithstanding the degradation that work in this field may entail, some women who have chosen to

12 This paragraph is based on remarks made by Christabella Zenzile, Senior Administrator, Disabled People of South Africa, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.
13 This paragraph is based on remarks made by Ludwe Nkomo, Youth Development Officer, Ilitha Labantu, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.
14 This sub-section is based on remarks made by panellists and comments from the floor at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

become sex workers have organised themselves into unions and are pushing for decriminalisation of prostitution in an effort to remove the pimps and others who may exploit them, so that they can work in this industry with some dignity and greater autonomy. Decriminalisation may also produce a safer, healthier working environment – a large percentage of new sexually transmitted diseases are contracted between sex workers and their clients.

At present, the law penalises only the sex worker and not the, often middle-class and otherwise “respectable”, client – an arrangement, which insofar as it penalises one party to the contract and not the other, is fundamentally unjust. Decriminalisation is also viewed as a preferable option to legalisation, which would only further encourage human trafficking. Given the lack of choice that drives many women into prostitution and traps them in this industry, abolition represents one form of decriminalisation proposed by the non-profit organisation (NPO) Embrace Dignity to the Ministry of Justice.

In relation to sex education, it is important that women are taught to take responsibility for their own sexual health and contraception – although more could be done by the authorities to provide support, particularly by providing free sanitary pads. However, the responsibility for preventing rape and violence against women lies beyond those who suffer such violence, with the perpetrators who gain pleasure from the feelings of dominance that they derive from this; and with the mothers at home and sanctimonious church leaders who may promote prejudiced views of women's place in society and the kinds of sexuality that they should adopt, which prepare the ground for such violence.

Intergenerational conversations have a crucial role to play in producing effective campaigning for women's emancipation. These conversations should recognise the mistakes of the past – such as, for example, how sexual violence in the United Democratic Front (UDF) was covered up in the name of solidarity in the Struggle against apartheid. At the same time,

the virtues of earlier women activists, who came from a generation that prized the public good and viewed work to improve society as a calling, should be recognised. Accordingly, mentoring across generations, which does not have to be structured to be effective and may take place in a physical space or via social media, should be productive not antagonistic and should empower both parties.

In carrying forward the struggle for women's emancipation, the younger generation should be strategic in its approach and efforts; and should seek to lead the reporting to the UN's Commission on the Status of Women. As members of civil society, young women may also help to set the agenda by producing “shadow” reports. These can inform and place useful pressure on senior elected officials, such as ministers. However, they have clear limitations as a mechanism for change – most notably that they have no implementation power without a government budget behind them.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER 2

Gender Equality and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) for young women¹⁵

SUMMARY OF THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Dr NomaFrench Mbombo (MEC: Health: Western Cape Provincial Government)



According to a report produced by the World Economic Forum, which measured gender inequality in terms of economic opportunity; political empowerment; educational attainment; and health and survival, it will take it will take 108 years to close the overall gender gap and 202 years to bring about parity in the workplace. The Global Gender Gap Report 2018 also found that it will take more than 50 years for the gap between men women in political leadership to be eradicated.

The report further found that the endpoint at which the overall gender gap would be closed was receding in time. These findings come despite increasingly democratic access to new information and communications technology through the wide availability of cell phones with wireless connectivity to apps and the internet. So, the question arises: Why is the girl child still being left behind?

However, it is also clear that there has been progress. In South Africa, the evidence indicates that gender equality is a goal that can be effectively promoted by adopting a human rights approach. There are now more girl children at the primary level of education than previously, although the issue of predatory teachers at schools has been flagged as a matter of great concern. In the field of health, maternal mortality rates have dropped and HIV/ AIDS treatment has improved, with reduced waiting times for those living with the virus. In the Western Cape, the lion's share of the health budget is spent on women. The next step is to reduce dependence on external funding, which, in relation to HIV/AIDS has historically been provided by the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and move more generally to a universal health system in South Africa. It is also important to address new life-threatening illnesses and conditions, such as diabetes and obesity, which are killing an increasing number of young women in the Western Cape.

15 This section is based on a speech made by Dr NomaFrench Mbombo, MEC (Member of the Executive Council) of Health, Western Cape government, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

At the same time, there are significant challenges in the field of reproductive and sexual health, particularly in relation to public education on these issues. Simply advising young women not to become pregnant is ineffective. A more holistic approach needs to be adopted towards sex education, which, for example, talks about sexual pleasure points and acknowledges sexual desire as an important aspect of life, although not the be-all and end-all. Such education should also consider stereotypes around this topic such as that sex is necessarily about making babies. In this way, some of the prejudices against LGBTQI people can be dismantled.

The issue of terminating pregnancies also needs to be talked about more openly and addressed comprehensively in terms of health provision. The Constitution makes it clear that women have an absolute right over their own bodies; but the enabling environment in which young women can make more informed choices about sexual activity and pregnancy is lacking. The situation has been exacerbated by a lack of family planning, the unavailability of certain contraceptive products and delays in providing abortions. Against this background, young women are using abortion as a form of contraceptive; illegal abortions and quack treatments to terminate pregnancies are prevalent; and babies are abandoned.

These issues on sexual and reproductive health also need to be placed in the context of women's experience of male domination and GBV in South Africa. In a patriarchal society riven by unemployment and inequitable distribution of resources, the poverty trap and hunger leave young women, including university students, vulnerable to exploitation by men. It has been estimated that about 2,000 girls a year are being infected with HIV by so-called "blessers" – older men with money – which has sustained the spread of the virus and AIDS.

Women may also cling to abusive relationships in order to access the wherewithal to feed their children. Meanwhile, the perpetrators of sexual abuse, rape and violence against women are someone's sons: boys who used to be loved by their mothers. In this regard, in seeking to break the cycles of violence which perpetuate the power dynamics inherent to patriarchy, it is important that the perpetrators should not be left behind and the

boys also are educated. Such education should teach young men to understand that women's bodies are their own and that their consent to sex is required and theirs only to give.

In this way, South Africa may move away from the prevalent performance of patriarchy, helping young women and men make informed decisions about their personal sex lives and addressing the anger that seeks to find expression by burning the local clinic.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER 3

From Beijing to Beijing +25¹⁶

SUMMARY OF THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Utamuriza- Nzisabira (UN Women)



A UN Women review of the success or otherwise of efforts to achieve greater gender equality from 2009 to 2019 in the eastern and Southern Africa regions found that significant progress had been made in the fields of education and health. For example, there was now almost universal access to primary education and improved access to secondary schools, although equitable access to universities remained a challenge. In relation to women's role in power and decision-making, only three countries in Southern Africa had made significant steps – South Africa, Namibia and Burundi – while the outcomes in the other countries remained unacceptable. At the same time, there has been much policy reform and development work at the African Union to establish new norms for gender equity in a number of areas, although significant challenges persist across the continent in relation to implementing such norms and in combating violence against women, patriarchy more generally and a relative lack of economic empowerment for women. In this regard, the priorities for Southern Africa for 2020-2025,

which are also in line with those at the continental and global levels, are to ending violence against women and eradicate poverty, which disproportionately affects women. Underpinning these priorities is the key goal to change social norms.

At the continental level, African governments agreed a Political Declaration on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at a 2019 meeting in Addis Ababa, which established nine priorities for Africa. Informed by priorities set by the Southern African Development Community (SADC), these were to:

1. Eliminate all discriminatory laws, practices, negative stereotypes and social norms that are based on culture and not aligned to international and constitutional commitments to human rights;
2. Invest in education, training, science and technology for women and girls to promote their equal access to employment and eliminate occupational segregation;
3. Strengthen and reposition gender machineries as key drivers for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action with appropriate capacity and resources to deliver on their mandates;
4. Improve and scale-up social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;
5. Implement the women, peace and security agenda, UN Security Council resolution 1325 and related resolutions;
6. Eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls as a prerequisite for gender equality and women's empowerment;
7. Invest in and ensure meaningful participation of women and girls in productive sectors, particularly agribusiness and agricultural value chains, to increase wealth and reduce poverty;
8. Close sex-disaggregated and gender-sensitive statistical and analytical gaps to ensure gender-responsive planning, budgeting and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063; and

9. Accelerate the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 3 on universal health and well-being for all, to reduce the prevalence of disease in women and girls, and to mitigate the disproportionate burden of care affecting women.

Having established the continental priorities, the plan was to hold a two-week meeting in New York, which would have been the 64th session of the UN's Commission on the Status of Women. This was set to be attended by about 10,000 women, but, in the wake of the Covid-19 crisis, was shortened to one day on 9 March and a follow-up event on 13 March. The only significant items of business at the conference, which would have celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Beijing conference, were a political declaration, a consensus document on gender equality which had been pre-negotiated by national governments before the conference, and a number of procedural-related decisions.

The aim had been to incorporate significant civil society contributions at this meeting, which was to consider the agreements that had already been reached on the issue of gender equality at national, regional and continental levels around the world. In this regard, CSW64 was to have been a crucial meeting and a major opportunity for civil society to shape the agenda and help sketch the blueprint for the actions to be taken over the next 10 years with the goal of ending gender inequality by 2030.

CSW64 was to have been followed by two meetings in Mexico City on 7-8 May and in Paris on 7-10 July. The plan was that a global Generation Equality Forum would be established and finalised at these two large-scale meetings, with the event in Paris also featuring wirelessly connected meetings being simultaneously held in a number of countries around the world, including South Africa. The idea behind creating this forum was that all women, young and old alike, should come together on this intergenerational and intersectional body in pursuit of gender equality. No women were to be left behind.

A key aspect of the UN's planning process for the Generation Equality Forum, which seeks to produce actions and accountability to ensure the implementation of the Beijing Declaration, has been the inclusion of mechanisms to ensure the engagement of civil society in both setting and enacting the agenda for this initiative. Both the planned March meeting in New York and the May meeting in Mexico City were to have provided opportunities for civil society to affect the agenda – before this was formalised in Paris.

In particular, civil society was to have played a key role in producing the roadmaps for six “action coalitions” to be established as triple-helix partnerships with

government and business partners, as well as other stakeholders, to accelerate action in critical areas of concern. Specifically, these coalitions are supposed to mobilise governments, civil society and the private sector to catalyze collective action and spark global conversations among generations, drive increased public and private investment accordingly and thus deliver concrete, game-changing results to advance equality for women and girls. It has been proposed that two of these six coalition may be rolled out in Africa, in Senegal and South Africa.

Six themes with the highest potential to be achieved have been selected as the focus for these coalitions, which will develop and seek to implement a set of concrete, ambitious and transformative actions to achieve immediate and irreversible progress towards gender equality in these areas. These themes are: gender-based violence; economic justice and rights; bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights; feminist action for climate change; technology and innovation for gender equality; and feminist movements and leadership, including a handing over of the reins and intergenerational mentoring. All six themes centre on the life opportunities of adolescent girls, although they also have clear impacts for all women.

In pursuing their particular goals, the action coalitions may need to: leverage financing for maximum impact; attend to issues of intersectional discrimination; transform gender norms; reform laws and policies; produce gender data for accountability; and foster systemic change. The plan is further that the Generation Equality Forum will cost the blueprints that are developed for each of the action coalitions and make resources available accordingly.

It is crucial that South African women ensure that their reality is reflected in the blueprints adopted for the Generation Equality Forum and its action coalitions, particularly if they are seeking funding for their work. In this regard, South Africa should be more than the planned site of one of the satellite conferences to the proposed meeting in Paris, it should shape the agenda for that meeting and the action coalitions which will be approved there. For example, the SADC presence at the AU meeting last year at which the Political Declaration was produced ensured that health and HIV/AIDS would be on the agenda and in the document – none of the other regions mentioned this issue.

Accordingly, women in civil society in South Africa need to know the timelines for the Generation Equality process; strategise on how to leverage this new opportunity to bring change; and assign roles among themselves for how they will seek to shape the initiative. It is important that they influence the blueprints for the action coalitions findings, particularly if they are

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interested in taking the lead in one of them; and ensuring that these blueprints are formalised properly at the final, launch meeting in Paris. Work to influence the development of the Generation Equality Forum should become part of the everyday advocacy work of women's civil society organisations in South Africa, since such agenda-influencing is a crucial part of effective activism.

6.1 DISCUSSION ¹⁷

Only a few South African organisations outside the government were accredited to attend the CSW meeting in New York in March. In addition, completing the paperwork to attend such international conferences, which is necessary in order to obtain visas and other permissions to access such event, can be onerous. Against this background, Ilitha Labantu is campaigning to ensure that civil society voices are represented and heard at such meetings; and offers support to organisations that are attending in terms of reporting back, which entails taking notes and pictures at such events, as well as mentorship to conscientise young women, including those from rural areas, so that they can make their cases more effectively at these large-scale conferences.

It is important that those civil society representatives attending such meetings take their responsibilities seriously and hold themselves accountable to their peers back home. If they are not prepared to accept accountability, they should not argue for greater accountability from others, such as government officials. It is also important that civil society co-ordinates among itself in advance to agree its agenda and the strategies it may deploy to promote this; and that it demonstrates solidarity as a delegation, as well as loyalty to the country. This does not mean that there will not be differences among the representatives, but just that these should not be aired and that the delegates from South Africa should support each other in public. Otherwise, divisions may not only represent an embarrassment, they may be exploited by other parties who do not have South Africa's best interests at heart.

The South Africa government can support civil society's efforts at the forthcoming meetings to establish a Gender Equality Forum by sharing the national report that has been prepared to be presented at these

events; as well as by reporting back on the progress made on implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in relation to women's issues. The government should also pare down its own representation at such international meetings and not waste taxpayers' money on taking additional officials and other favoured stakeholders who do not have an actual role to play at these events.

Greater efforts should be made to ensure popular engagement with the forthcoming meetings to establish a Gender Equality Forum by arranging to broadcast the main and satellite events live for civil society stakeholders to ensure the participation of communities on the ground. UN Women is planning a number of TED talks, festivals and other public activities with a particular focus on seeking to engage young women in the initiative and the strategic discussions around it.

It is also important to promote South Africa as the site for one of the six action coalitions under the Gender Equality Forum. The country can boast a number of advantages, compared with other African states, in support of such a bid: it is a liberal, secular state with freedom of speech and a vibrant Fourth Estate; it has adopted an enlightened approach to acknowledging and protecting the rights of LGBTIQ people; and it has eradicated child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) as normative practices. In addition to seeking to become one of the action-coalition lead countries, South Africa should also seek to adopt a larger role on women's issues at the AU.

Globally, there have been a number of successes in advancing women's rights, but much has been left undone – and, at the present rate, the date by which the targets set by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals will be achieved is actually receding into the future. It was recently estimated that it will take 257 years for the world to get there. In this regard, the catalytic nature of SDG 5 on gender equality and women's empowerment and thus the importance of investing in its achievement should be acknowledged. Unless this goal is fully realised, the other SDGs will remain little more than unfulfilled promises. In helping to achieve SDG 5 and the other targets, women have a crucial role to play in promoting positive norms, particularly within the family, in order to restore foundational integrity to social value systems which have been degraded and depleted.¹⁸

¹⁷ This section is based on a speech made by Jacqueline Utamuriza-Nzisabira, UN Women East and Southern Regional HIV/AIDS Specialist, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

¹⁸ This paragraph is based on a message of support from Dr Nardos Bekele-Thomas, UN Resident Coordinator in South Africa, presented at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

PANEL DISCUSSION 3

Violence against women; and creating peaceful, just and secure societies¹⁹

SUMMARY OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION

Key participants: Dr Nardos Bekele-Thomas (UN Resident Coordinator), Phelisa Mashiyi: Social Worker: Ilitha Labantu), Adv. Pumla Dwane-Alpman (Executive Director designate: Embrace Dignity), Ntutu Mntwana (Chairperson: Ilitha Labantu)

There remains a stigma attached to issues relating to women – although society should know better – which continues to prevent them from being treated fairly. So, for example, fear of prejudicial reactions from the police prevents many women from reporting cases of Violence Against Women (VAW). In the absence of effective action by the government to address such stigma and to end the violence against women which communities continue to suffer, civil society is increasingly seeking to partner with local people to mobilise and educate them about the reality of VAW. This work entails creating understanding that it is OK to talk about this issue and to explain the importance of, and ensure, access to appropriate psycho-social services, which should be available in local languages. It is crucial that such services are made available in the communities where women and children suffer the most, including in townships and informal settlements. Collective efforts taken by civil society and local communities to address the issue of violence and discrimination against women and often prove more effective than the promise of more funding to combat VAW. In this regard, with the issue receiving greater political attention, it is important that new organisations being established in response learn from and build on the knowledge and experience of

organisations such as Ilitha Labantu, which have been in the forefront of the struggle to end VAW for some time.²⁰

A lack of gender-responsiveness and accountability in institutions and sectors presents particular challenges that should be addressed in the fields of policy-making, higher education and youth employment, as well as supporting the production of a socio-cultural structures that foster violence against women. In relation to policy-making, women were only mentioned in one paragraph of the NDP Vision 2030 launched in 2012, although subsequent engagement by the Commission of Gender Equality (CGE) and the national Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation led to this section being extended and formulated in terms of gender rather than sex. The lesson that must be learned is that civil society activists have a responsibility to address the shortfalls in official planning in relation to gender, including in the NDP, and align policies with the 12 priorities established by the Beijing Plan for Action, as well as the rubric of South Africa's Constitution. Such reformed policy should also be cascaded to provincial and municipal levels, where greater engagement by civil society is also required.²¹

¹⁹ This section is based on remarks made by Phelisa Mashiyi, social worker, Ilitha Labantu; Advocate Pumla Dwane-Alpman, executive director designate, Embrace Dignity; and Ntutu Mntwana, Chairperson, Ilitha Labantu, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

²⁰ This paragraph is based on remarks made by Phelisa Mashiyi, Social Worker, Ilitha Labantu, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

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In relation to higher education, it is important that tertiary institutions should be involved in producing the research and supporting the campaigns that can ensure effective implementation of key legislation, such as PEPUDA and the Employment Equity Act, and produce other programmes to foster greater gender equity across society. Tertiary – and primary and secondary – education also has a key role to play, as a legacy of liberation, in producing educated women who can further the cause of gender emancipation. Accordingly, it is crucial that bursaries, including from NSFAS, are received on time by young women students. In the absence of such financial support, these women are exposed to the risk of human trafficking, exploitation and prostitution. The NSFAS, the relevant government departments and schools and teachers have a particular duty of care in this regard, ensuring that pupils are aware of their rights to bursary support, helping them to apply for this and delivering it to students in a timely fashion.

In relation to youth employment, civil society organisations can offer internships, that offer experience and capacity-building for young women graduates and should forge partnerships with tertiary institutions to create such programmes while ensuring that they are not used to create alternative, unpaid forms of employment. In addition, an employment vacancy tracking system could be established to match women graduates to work opportunities. However, it is also important to acknowledge the importance of education in capacitating individuals to find a job and in the absence of steady work to demonstrate flexibility and, as required, create employment for themselves – for example, as consultants or running their own businesses.

Structural reforms can create greater participation for women in society, but it is also important to address underlying norms, such as those produced by patriarchy and other forms of oppression forged on the basis of race, age, home space, disability and sexual orientation. In this regard, certain cultural forms and the structures that support them need to be challenged. For example, the tradition of circumcision excludes women but affects them – for example, initiate may be advised to sleep with the

first woman or girl that they encounter after emerging from the rites. Such cultural instruction encourages a rape culture and a sense of entitlement among young men over women's bodies. The Commission for Gender Equality needs to raise this issue with traditional leaders and the government structures with responsibility for traditional systems of governance.

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 urges increased participation of women and a greater incorporation of gender perspectives in peace and security efforts. UN Security Council Resolution 1820 opposes the use of violence against women as a tool of war. In relation to these resolutions, it is important to make reference to the general lack of peace in many societies, noting that peace should not merely be defined as the absence of war, but more broadly as an absence of safety which leads to fear and insecurity.

In this regard, peacebuilding entails more than just preventing war among soldiers – it entails identifying the root causes of conflicts within and among communities which may be expressed as violence – including against women and children. In effective peacebuilding, systems to address these root causes in a comprehensive fashion are then forged so that the conditions for sustainable peace and development can be produced. In a society riven by violence such as South Africa, peacebuilding is required to ensure security for women. In this regard, a number of peacebuilding efforts need to be made to ensure that women's rights and dignity are promoted and to improve access to justice.²²

States are required to pass and enforce laws prohibiting violence. Governments should also seek to increase the participation of women in decision-making, including as officials and in the judiciary; and should provide services that address women's needs. In its legislation, oversight of policing and judicial processes, recruitment to official positions and service provision the government should ensure that it is responding effectively to violence against women. For example, it should monitor the number of women in the judiciary, as well as the extent to which the legal system and the police are actively protecting women. Civil society has a crucial role to play in holding

21 This paragraph and the next three are based on remarks made by Advocate Phumla Dwane-Alpman, executive director designate, Embrace Dignity, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

22 This paragraph and the next are based on remarks made by Ntutu Mtwana, Chairperson, Ilitha Labantu, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

the government to account in its efforts to protect women and children across the country. It must work to ensure that laws and statutes are preventative and act as deterrents; and that justice is universally applied in the interests of survivors and victims. Civil society should also engage in training efforts to help organisations protect individuals in vulnerable groups for whom they have responsibility.

7.1 DISCUSSION²³

Civil society has an important role to play in forging partnerships with those in government to produce policies that address community interests and in holding officials to account for effective implementation of these. In this regard, the non-profit sector has a responsibility to represent the broader society properly and effectively, putting personal and parochial community agendas and the competition for influence and funding to one side. Such competition can lead to the demise of valuable community organisations while larger, English-speaking ones are preferred. Instead, the non-profit sector should seek to foster partnerships to promote activist, community-based civil society organisations (CSOs) which provide the kinds of support and access to services that local people need. Broadly, civil society may need to adopt more creative approaches to equip communities not only to meet their own needs but to take the state to task. For example, parents and youth may be encouraged to develop conversations around the detrimental impacts of alcohol consumption on families and to take greater responsibility for addressing this issue.

In order to increase their influence at the political level, communities and CSOs need to learn about the structures that exist for providing input. For example, local forums have been established to facilitate local participation in the forging of annual municipal integrated development plans (IDPs) – submissions for inclusion in these plans may be made directly or via not-for-profit organisations which specialise in advocacy work. Community policing forums offer another avenue for producing local impacts. At the national level, representations may be made at a range of parliamentary portfolio committees; as well as by exercising one's individual democratic right to

petition the local member of parliament or councillor. As a last resort, individuals and institutions which are failing in their responsibilities may be taken to court. Meanwhile, some progress has been made in holding the government to account at the national and local levels on gender issues. For example, an amended and expanded section on gender in the NDP was used by Stats SA to report on national progress towards meeting SDGs in 2019, represented an improvement on the reporting in 2017. In addition, there is an increasing gendered focus at the highest levels of government with support from the Presidency and the Department of Women. At the local government level, the Commission for Gender Equality has co-ordinated with the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) and the Department of Local Government (DLG) since 2016 to bring gender into the integrated development plans through more meaningful public participation. Previously, such participation entailed little more than official reading out passages to community members detailing what was being done for them. Now, the idea is that participation should enable local people to reflect on their lived experiences so that these are integrated into the plans.

At the same time, more resources should be made available to Chapter 9 institutions to strengthen their mandates to protect human and women's rights. At present, the Human Rights Commission has a broader mandate than CGE and the cultural and religious commissions – leading, for example, to it, rather than CGE, being approached to address the issue of human trafficking. At the same time, such work is under-resourced. For example, there is no money for human rights training at the provincial level, with only one officer assigned to build capacity in this area for the whole of the Western Cape.

²³ This sub-section is based on remarks made by panellists and comments from the floor at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER 4

Addressing inequality more broadly²⁴

SUMMARY OF THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Masingita Masunga (Managing Director: Masunga Media)



denying this is as if you have loaded a gun, placed it in someone's hand and then acted shocked when they shoot. Humans have a superiority complex – people are always looking for someone to feel better than. But just because someone is different from me, doesn't make them less human or unworthy of respect.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that life is not fair. People want to be given equal opportunities; but the reality is that people don't pay you what you are worth. For example, although we all pay the same price when we go to the shop, there is great inequality in earnings. This is an issue for the government and the private sector to address – and, in the end, it can only be resolved through implementation – actions on the ground – rather than high-minded policies. Actions that we as black people and as women should take together.

It is normal for Sotho people to wear a woollen blanket during the day, but not for other South Africans. "Normal" is a relative concept; it is impossible to say who is normal and who isn't, particularly since we are all the products of different social and cultural environments. In this regard, prejudice about who is considered normal and who is not is learnt as a child from others – from relatives, from the broader society, from the media. And there is a conspiracy of silence around this, as well as the adoption of the pose of being shocked when other people express or act on their prejudices. But prejudice and its spread are everyone's fault as members of society. Hypocritically

I am still treated like a second-class citizen. I have a double disability: I am a black woman, which means I am treated as disabled, and I have a disability. As women, we must look to our own resources to challenge patriarchy – men will not be doing this on our behalf. However, this requires solidarity, which is often lacking. Crabs cannot escape a container because when one seeks to escape, the others pull them back. Similarly, black people and as women can have a tendency to pull each other down, crowing over their imagined advantages over each other: "At least I don't have a disability"; "At least, I have a car". One of the most famous sayings attributed to Indian

²⁴ This section is based on a speech made by Masingita Masunga, Managing Director, Masunga Media, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

liberation leader Mahatma Gandhi is: Be the change you want to see. We must be the change that we want to see. We must stop playing the victim. So, I tell people with disabilities the lesson I learnt from climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, which is that the sun is going to rise, it is not going to wait for you so there is no point in complaining. If it is going to take you longer to climb, you just have to start earlier. In the struggle, if the conditions are not on our side, we need to work harder so that we don't give anyone any opportunity to oppress us.

In this regard, my parents can be thanked for instilling me with a sense of determination. I remember when I was eight years-old, my Dad asked me: "Please make me a cup of tea." Now, this may be considered a crazy request, if your child has cerebral palsy. So, I did what I could, bringing the cup and the spoon, tea and water to him. He knew that it was mad to ask me to do this but said: "I wanted to see what you would do; and you did what I expected – you found a way to do it." Similarly, in my whole life, I have always tried to find a way.

When we are born, we are given two dice – and those are cast and a number comes up. One dice is nature: you are black, a woman and have a disability. The other is the conditions which you experience: your family background, the historical experience of oppression under apartheid. Some people get a double one; others get a double six. But the rules of the game are the same. It doesn't matter what number you get, you have to play the game, and you have to play it as well as possible. However, the playing field is not level. Accordingly, I decided I am not going to play fair. And, in fact, you can break the rules, just as long as you don't break the law. People say that I don't conform. I reply by asking: "How do you expect me to fit in to a system that was not tailored to fit me?" The only strategy that makes sense is to try and alter it. However, to do this, the victim mentality must be jettisoned. Rather understand that the system is not on our side and start playing the game in our own way with our own rules – because if we don't break the rules, the rules will break us.

PANEL DISCUSSION 5

Participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions; and local government transformation²⁵

SUMMARY OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION

Key participants: Hon. Pat. Kumalo (Speaker: Ekurhuleni Metro), Bathabile Dlamini (former Minister of Women), Zingiswa Losi (President: COSATU), Nonkosi Tyolwana (CPUT)

In Ekurhuleni Municipality, there are moves to appoint more women to senior positions, for example, as heads of department, particularly in those areas previously dominated by men such as city planning, transport and environmental development. Some progress has been made; there is now a female city manager. It is also important to increase the number of female elected officials, since it seems that only when women are in the majority can their voices be heard at political meetings.²⁶

Meanwhile, on the ground significant steps have been taken to improve services for families in townships and informal settlements, although more needs to be done. The number of chemical toilets has been doubled in some areas and these are now serviced on a weekly basis to prevent waste overflow. Communal water taps have been brought closer to homes to prevent long, dangerous walks. Electrification continues. Accessible and emergency roads have been opened in informal settlements. However, the municipality's monitoring of women's safety remains weak and dependent on police reporting. In addition, there is insufficient lighting in many areas, which makes them more dangerous. In order to help determine the needs of women on

the ground more effectively and ensure that these are addressed in annual integrated development plans, inputs are sought from a multi-party women's caucus and from ward councillors, who are required to solicit input at local pre-IDP forums. However, it was found that women's voices were being suppressed at these meetings which are generally held and dominated by men. In order to address this problem, the municipality can reconvene such meetings to engage women and informal settlement communities fully in the consultative process.

Women's leadership is crucial at all levels, including in the workplace, among unions and in local government, which is the closest to communities on the ground. In establishing and promoting such leadership, women face many challenges, not least in terms of funding. However, they also enjoy significant advantages compared with their predecessors in the struggle against apartheid, such as modern communications technology. At the same time, the current political and socio-economic structures reflect male storylines and continue to fail to accommodate women and reflect their concerns. For example, although women

25 This section is based on remarks made by Pat Khumalo, speaker of Ekurhuleni Municipality; Bathabile Dlamini, former Minister of women ; Zingiswa Losi, President of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU); and Nonkosi Tyolwana, Transformation Director, CPUT, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

26 This paragraph and the next two are based on remarks made by Pat Khumalo, speaker of Ekurhuleni Municipality, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

play a key role in forging successful businesses in the informal economy, the national government fails to take proper account of this economy in its GDP estimates and women often lack start-up capital or the wherewithal to take their enterprises to the next level. Against this background, the engagement of the youth in women's struggle may bring significant change and valuable new approaches for liberation.²⁷

In local government, the representation of women in elected positions rose from 19% of the total in 1995 to 41% in 2015. However, greater efforts should be made to encourage women to vote for women and to ensure that women-oriented policies – such as those focussing on the multidimensional nature of the poverty in local communities – are actually consolidated in policy and implemented – and that such implementation is monitored to ensure that the individual benefits being sought are achieved. The monitoring and evaluation process should also lead to the introduction of new ideas to improve implementation and further advance the goals. In order to oversee such work on women's issues, structures may be established at a senior decision-making level in local government, for example, in the mayor's office. In addition, women must ensure that they are represented on all the key council committees – and networks of women need to be established linking this political work with monitoring and evaluation of impacts at the community level.

For local councillors, a particular area of focus in terms of policy development and implementation should be the first 1,000 days of the child. The country's future depends on fostering children who will contribute to development, which is the responsibility of all local women – and not just the mothers themselves. In this regard, a greater sense of communal accountability should be promoted. If a woman cries out, the neighbours should respond rather than closing the window. Local spaces should be made safer. Local councillors need to address the issue of women's safety more effectively and ensure the accountable provision of appropriate welfare services and social-work support.

The safety and sexual health of women at schools and universities is also crucial. The education of women who can lead the transformation of society and the economy must be supported, including through broader, more open conversations about sexual health and how men should respect women's rights. Women's roles as mothers, who accept and support all their children, should be leveraged in such efforts to empower men to acknowledge that violence against women is wrong and that they should accordingly be held accountable for their actions.

Despite the gains that have been made in women's representation politically and economically, the world of work remains male-dominated in terms of culture, outlook, opportunities and conditions. Women continue broadly to be confined to low-paid jobs. Notwithstanding advances in promoting gender equity in legislative processes, the machinery for promoting such equity in the workplace remains inadequately resourced and lack sufficient clout. The continuing discrimination against women in relation to work is part of a broader picture of unequal power relations and exploitation within the economy and society as a whole, which must be taken up at the political level. If women are to be properly included and represented in public policy, structural economic inequalities, which exclude the poor who are mainly black, working-class women, must be addressed.²⁸

Women's work, much of which is in the household and outside the formal economy, is generally unpaid and unacknowledged or undervalued. The right to collective bargaining – organising and empowering women to negotiate the terms and conditions of their employment – thus represents a crucial tool to redress this; as does the establishment of a national minimum wage of R20 an hour. In this regard, greater support should be offered to efforts being made by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) to include domestic workers in the national minimum wage provisions. Working women in particular should recognise the value of the help provided by domestic workers in looking after home and family and advocate for paying them at least R20 an hour.

27 This paragraph and the next two are based on remarks made by Bathabile Dlamini, former minister of women and people with disability, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

28 This paragraph and the next two are based on remarks made by Zingiswa Losi, president of COSATU, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

In the bigger picture, structural economic inequality may also be redressed by women coming together and insisting on their value as mothers – the people who biologically reproduce the country's labour force. Women bear and rear the children who will be exploited by the capitalist system. If this wealth is recognised then women will finally be economically included. In the meantime, women's issues should not be dealt with in isolation. They must be brought into the mainstream. So, for example, efforts being made by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) to engage civil society in support of using the Public Investment Corporation to invest in Eskom would, if successful, help women because otherwise the economy may collapse.

Universities play an important role in producing knowledge and research that meets local and broader African needs, including those of women. In this regard, CPUT, for example, sees itself as an African university. The kinds of experiences that are reflected and referenced in such knowledge production represents a crucial issue, particularly in relation to transformation efforts. Women in society hold much knowledge that can form the basis of applied research conducted at universities to address problems on the ground. So, for example, CPUT co-ordinates with organisations such as Ilitha Labantu and Rape Crisis, to identify women's experiences and issues that should be explored academically. CPUT also engages with a range of civil society, labour and private-sector organisations, as well as local government, to conduct applied research that has significant developmental benefits for broader society. In particular, it has engaged with the municipal government in Cape Town to help implement its Vision 2040, which includes a strong gender equality component.²⁹

Universities also have an important role to play in documenting and supporting women's continuing struggle against patriarchy and efforts to record and archive women's knowledge from all walks of life. In this regard, research, documentation and writing centres for women should be established in South Africa along the lines of those in Nigeria and Tanzania and Uganda. Such centres foster interaction between academics and researchers on women's issues, as

well as producing and storing rich histories of the women's movement.

In relation to gender issues on campus, CPUT has established a structure on its Mowbray campus to address LGBTQI issues. It has also responded to students protesting against gender-based violence by shutting down the university. In particular, it is seeking to offer counselling to students who have experienced harassment or violence in their mother tongue. Offering such culturally appropriate emotional support may reverse the under-reporting of cases caused by survivors who may feel intimidated by the institutional environment. In addition, there are plans to establish a safe space and resources for survivors on campus.

9.1 DISCUSSION ³⁰

It is important to address the issue of paying women for the unpaid work that they presently perform and to promote a national economic strategy that considers and supports the role of women as traders and local business owners in the informal economy, leveraging the capabilities that women already demonstrate as directors in their own households. It is also important to acknowledge that the exclusion of women in the economy prevents women from claiming political power. For example, without being liberated from domestic work and family responsibilities, it is difficult for women to become councillors. In Cape Town, one idea would be to hold an economic empowerment summit for women to address such issues.

To an extent the failure to implement progress on development and women's issues may be attributed to unelected officials rather than their political leaders. Rather than being guided by the principles of what is best for society, many officials pursue their own parochial interests. Elected representatives should monitor treatment meted out to local communities by unelected officials more closely in order to address the failure to provide adequate services. It is also important to acknowledge patriarchal pushback against efforts to increase women's political representation – patriarchal pushback.

²⁹ This paragraph and the next two are based on a presentation made by Nonkosi Tyolwana, Transformation Director, CPUT, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

³⁰ This sub-section is based on remarks made by panellists and comments from the floor at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

PANEL DISCUSSION 6

Interactive dialogue on funding³¹

SUMMARY OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION

Key participants: Sazini Mojapelo (Managing Executive of ABSA Group Citizenship and Community Investment); Rosieda Shabodien (The World for All Foundation – Women's Leadership Project); and Shoki Tshabalala (Acting Director General, Department of Women, Youth & People with Disabilities)

Banks seek to include the majority of the population, including, for example, youth and those working in the informal sector – and have produced a number of products for women in business. However, the banks have a set model underpinned by quite rigid terms and conditions for issuing credit. This model fails to recognise the labour of women, who act as the executives and directors of their homes, and does not issue loans to them on this basis. Such (lack of) financial access discriminates against women, which is a challenge that financial services organisations need to address in their credit models. A number of self-employed people – such as, for example, Uber drivers – who don't receive a pay slip, face similar challenges in extracting credit. One solution is to produce innovative ways of raising money for women running businesses, such as by issuing social impact bonds.³²

Outside the issue of providing financial access, banks can act as good corporate citizens, promoting progressive social initiatives that benefit women. For example, Absa works with the medical council and the government to provide life skills to young women who give birth as teenagers and so fail to finish school; launched a "no means no" campaign in the wake of the rape and murder of University of Cape Town (UCT)

student Uyinene Mrwetyana in 2019; and recently entered the advocacy space to provide funding for research and data that can support women. At present, many women activists seem to be caught in a cycle of self-doubt and hesitation. However, this can be broken by something as simple as stepping outside one's comfort zone and doing something for the cause or committing to make a difference. Such action requires a seriousness of intent. For example, if an organisation has been invited to a big national or international meeting, it should review the agenda in advance and, as required, demand inclusion for those who may otherwise be marginalised, such as black women and people with disabilities.³³

Solidarity can also offer a useful antidote to the toxicity that has spread among a number of NPOs in the sector. Organisations can be weakened in part by the stress and fatigue experienced among staff who are continually on the frontline, seeking to address and manage hardship in the community. This can breed a certain cynicism – staff may criticise their own organisations. The pressures can be exacerbated by the challenge of seeking to combat patriarchy both in the larger world and in relation to its impacts within the organisation itself. As a result, many staff leave suffering from burn-out. It is important to recognise

31 This section is based on remarks made by Sazini Mojapelo, managing executive of ABSA Group Citizenship and Community Investment; Rosieda Shabodien, The World for All Foundation – Women's Leadership Project; and Shoko Tshabalala, acting director general, Department of Women, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

32 This paragraph and the next are based on remarks made by Sazini Mojapelo, managing executive of ABSA Group Citizenship and Community Investment, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

33 This paragraph and the next five are based on remarks made by Rosieda Shabodien, The World for All Foundation – Women's Leadership Project, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

the signs and to try and keep organisations healthy. Counselling services should be employed as part of such efforts. Intergenerational mentoring can also be a source of support – although intergenerational work to promote the cause of women should not be viewed as a matter of handing over the baton, but rather as a race that all women are running together. Women of a certain age are not necessarily planning on retiring. The reality is more akin to everyone standing on the podium together.

In relation to funding, it seems that the NPO environment is shrinking. Fewer people and organisations appear to be offering financial support for a decreasing number of issues in an ever more select set of areas. Under apartheid, the sector flourished. It was as if all one had to do to win funding was to pick up the phone. But donors now seek accountability and results. In this context, a number of steps may be taken to woo funders effectively. First, it is important not to approach funders not as if seeking a gift. Rather the approach should be that the donor and the NPO are seeking to achieve shared goals. Accordingly, a discussion should be initiated about the issues at stake and a relationship forged on this basis. As has often been said, funders don't give to causes but to people. Second, it is important to research the nuances of funding in the given sector. This may entail finding out about the funding cycles of the various donors, as well as their niche interests. In order to guide this research and subsequent fundraising efforts, it may be useful to draft a one-page note on the various sources and institutions from which finance may be accessed. Third, it is important to produce realistic, if innovative, plans for achieving the goals of the project for which funding is being sought. NPOs must respect funder expectations, by meeting and/or managing them properly; and must deliver the impacts that have been promised.

In raising funds, it is important to be engaged and creative. There is little point in passively waiting for a share of the R1.6 billion that was promised by President Cyril Ramaphosa to combat gender-based violence. Rather fundraising should become a continuous activity. For example, conference participants should seek to network with people they don't already know over lunch, rather than "not work" with familiar faces as they eat.

The principles of creativity and engagement should extend beyond fundraising into the NPO's efforts

to forge change. So, for example, the kinds of strategies and actions that worked in addressing yesterday's problems are unlikely to offer solutions today. Notwithstanding the impacts of marches on parliament and the holding of large conferences, other methods of achieving change may need to be found – methods that actually address the challenge at hand. In this regard, the goal should be less about trying and gaining a pass to the big international meeting and more about supporting those who are equipped to advocate at such events, while keeping the focus on one's own specialist area of endeavour. In this regard, a useful practice is always to introduce yourself by describing what you actually do, rather than by reciting your job title and the name of your organisation.

It is also important to bear in mind the personal nature of the underlying mission to overthrow patriarchy. So, for example, women activists should make sure that their own fathers, husbands and sons cook; and, instead of sitting there quietly in church listening to a reactionary homily, they should adopt a leadership position and make their voices known. They must also stand their ground against the recently fashionable view among funders, that organisations representing men and boys need to be found to lead new efforts to combat patriarchy. Such either/or logic makes little sense. The efforts of both men and women are required to implement the preventative and curative work that is needed. It cannot be left to the men alone – for whom patriarchy has made life easy – to save women. Indeed, it is very much women's responsibility not to raise sons who will assault women.

At the national level, the Department of Women's role is not to implement policies but rather to advocate for the inclusion of gender concerns and issues in other government departments' policy-making; planning; budgeting; and monitoring and evaluation efforts. To this end it has developed guidelines for all departments – although with a particular focus on those with an economic rather than social-sector orientation. These guidelines, which promote gender as a cross-cutting issue across departmental budgets, have shaped the new medium-term strategy framework (MTSF) being launched by President Cyril Ramaphosa this year. The implementation of this framework will have significant impacts. For example, all the departments dealing with the economy are now forced to acknowledge gender issues in their planning. In addition, a preferential procurement process which

favours women-owned and -run businesses has been incorporated with the National Treasury, which has been opposed by a number of departments.

Meanwhile, the government also continues to support civil society and recognises its virtues as a strong, versatile, dynamic and independent contributor to the country's development. However, the official view is also that in the absence of a representative national body and facing a shortfall in donor funding, the sector should start seeking to raise finance in more collective ways. So, for example, those NPOs which are concerned with children's issues could come together to foster greater funding support for community-based organisations. Such co-operation would require greater integration and co-ordination among organisations, as well as the development of more accessible forms of service provision that should redirect resources at the ground-level to where they are most needed.

In terms of funding support from the government for civil society, significant finance has been made available to civil society organisations by the Department of Social Development; the Department of Trade and Industry; and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. However, greater co-ordination among government departments is required to ensure that vulnerable groups which need funding are not excluded.

10.1 DISCUSSION ³⁵

Conflict has mounted between the government and NPOs. In part, this dates back to the situation just after the introduction of democracy in 1994, when foreign donors preferred to give money to civil society organisations than the government in their quest for influence. The result now is that many officials not only refuse to co-operate with foreign-funded civil society organisations, they oppose and even seek to damage them. However, the government and civil society should collaborate in the national interest; and NPO representatives will not complain about their treatment by their own government at upcoming international women's events, even though it is seeking to interfere

in and undermine the civil society sector.

Complaints about the government's treatment of the sector include that the Department of Social Development has failed in its obligations to oversee the estimated 250,000 NPOs in the country, of which only 50% actually report back to the department as required; and has failed to produce reliable information on how the estimated R9.8 billion funding for the sector is being spent – including whether it is being properly or effectively used.

Government calls for civil society to reorganise itself along lines similar to those adopted by the government for itself have also received short shrift. It has been argued that instead of seeking to establish a system for civil society that bears comparison to the paternalist welfare boards established under apartheid as that government's voice, the present government should be promoting broader consultative forums that seek to incorporate every voice, rather than limiting those who can and cannot speak. Fears have further mounted that certain civil society organisations face being victimised for raising common concerns about the government's stance that are shared across the sector. It has been pointed out that there is little benefit to be gained from officials competing with communities to deliver services. Rather a more democratic approach should be adopted under which equal, mutually respectful partnerships between the government and civil society are established which can distribute shared resources in pursuit of the common goal of inclusive, equitable national development.

The government also stands accused of betraying a commitment made by President Ramaphosa in 2019 to allocate R1.6 billion to a new campaign to eradicate the scourge of gender-based violence across the country. For its part, the government says that money pledged to fund the emergency plan to respond to GBV took the form of budgetary repurposing. Departments were told to indicate how they were focussing their budget on the issue of GBV and to cut back their spending in other areas as required. In addition, R50 million was allocated to be disbursed to the NPO sector by the National Development Agency (NDA).

35 This sub-section is based on remarks made by panellists and comments from the floor at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

PANEL DISCUSSION 7

Harnessing technology for Women's Economic Empowerment and Gender Equality²⁶

SUMMARY OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION

Key participants: Professor Daniela Gachago (CPUT); Siphokazi Nciza, (Founder, Kasie Labs); and Dr Nyx McLean (CPUT)

The Centre for Innovation and Educational Technology (CIET) at CPUT has sought to use the technique of digital storytelling to help students express who they are and how they see their lives, past, present and future. The technique, which was first developed as a tool for personal reflection and growth, has also increasingly been used to help people learn about each other. As Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie has said: "The consequence of the single story is that it robs people of dignity. It makes our recognition of our equal humanity difficult and it emphasizes that we are different rather than how we are similar." Digital storytelling enables the production of diverse stories that may be disseminated widely, supporting advocacy by breaking the silence produced by stigma in relation to certain topics – although this depends entirely on whether the students telling the tales consent to sharing their stories.³⁷

In addition to enabling students to discuss their identities and the impacts these may have on others, digital storytelling teaches them the technology required to compile and edit their stories, including how and which images may be selected to illustrate these. The goal is to enable students to become producers of knowledge. The programme also provides an introduction to ethical practices in knowledge production, which can lead students to study ethical thinking more broadly.

Online engagement has grown rapidly, with about half the world or just under 4 billion people being connected in 2017 – although about 75% of Africans were still offline at that time, compared with only 21 of Europeans without an internet connection. At the same time, there is a significant digital gender gap, with much greater internet penetration rates for men than women. For example, just under 22% of women were connected at the end of 2016 compared with more than 28% of men. Against this background, South Africa had a relatively strong internet penetration rate of about 54% in 2018, although over 20 million residents were still offline.³⁸

The need for greater gender equality in access to information and communications technology (ICT) has been noted by Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, former South African deputy president and executive director of UN Women: "ICTs offer vast potential for women and girls; from ending poverty, to improving education and health, to agricultural productivity and creating decent jobs." However, the digital gender gap is great. There are 250 million fewer women online; 200 million fewer using cell phones; and less representation of women in Silicon Valley. In addition, at present only 6% of apps are designed by women.

At the same time, there are significant opportunities

36 This section is based on presentations made by Professor Daniela Gachago, Centre for Innovation and Educational Technology (CIET), CPUT; Siphokazi Nciza, founder, Kasie Labs; and Dr Nyx McLean, Multimedia and Information Technology Department, CPUT, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

37 This paragraph and the next are based on a presentation made by Professor Daniela Gachago, CIET, CPUT, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

38 This paragraph and the next five are based on a presentation made by Siphokazi Nciza, founder, Kasie Labs, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

that may be grasped by women in the digital world, including in the data sciences; data analytics; machine-learning; and digital marketing. NPOs can access free programmes teaching coding and enhancing digital literacy and skills from Microsoft. IBM Digital National Africa offers website development courses. Google also offers digital skills training in Africa. Women may find a wide range of career opportunities in the digital world, training for many of which may be researched and accessed via HP Life. There are also online courses to teach women how to start and market their own business, such as a Facebook digital marketing programme called SheMeansBusiness. A further range of IT courses, both free and paid-for, are available online through the Cisco Networking Academy, although physical attendance is required for certain instructor-led courses.

In Africa, there is an annual code week, at which pupils and students across the continent can learn coding at a range of venues, including, in South Africa, at a temporary school made from shipping containers. The training is available in African languages and also offers teacher-training modules. Another initiative is African App Launchpad – an Egyptian programme which aims to build capacity of 10,000 young would-be programmers and support the establishment of 100 start-ups in gaming and app development across the continent. Delivered through three leading MOOCs (massive open online courses), the initiative seeks to establish a significant African presence in the global video game industry which should be worth \$300 billion-a-year by 2025. African women gamers may play a leading role in this.

Against this background, a crucial issue is to enable African women and youth to produce digital media that tell their stories in their own languages. In this regard, Kasie Labs, which is a South African academy offering a range of digital skills, including in coding, networking and marketing, has launched a programme for African children to support them in producing cartoons that reflect their own lives, by contrast with the English-language entertainment telling stories from the Global North on the Cartoon Network.

The drone industry, which is set to grow from \$4.4 billion in 2018 to more than \$63 billion a year by 2025, represents another growth area. Drones can assess the health of the plants in agriculture; they can be used for security surveillance; and they have been deployed by Facebook and Google to spread WiFi access. Operators will be required to oversee drone flights; and

data-processors will need to be hired to process the data analytics driving the industry. Policy development for the drone industry also represents a crucial area for development. In addition, apps and technologies will need to be produced in a range of areas to enable and facilitate: film-making; commercial inspection services; fast-food delivery; package delivery; home inspection services; and a range of other services yet to be conceived. A particular challenge is to solve the so-called “last 50-feet dilemma” by developing new methods for delivery, such as by dropping, parachuting, hoisting, or landing goods.

Many queer women, and trans and non-binary people, who may identify themselves with the pronouns “they” and “them”, face discrimination and violence as a result of their sexual identities and sexuality. In the absence of safe, supportive spaces in the physical world, they may turn to online forums where they can share information and discuss the challenges they face. For example, one such group in South Africa, shared stories about surgeons who had performed sex-change operations. At the same time, some online spaces may be unsafe. Trolling is prevalent on twitter; and reactionary individuals and institutions, including even governments, can stalk and hack online accounts and activity, which can lead both to online harassment and physical threats to actual personal safety.³⁹

A number of strategies have been developed to counter online harassment of the LGBTQI community. In cases in which particular individuals come under attack online, other LGBTQI people may enter the space and form a kind of “counter-public” to defend that person and create a more informed environment for debate. In South Africa, which has a liberal democratic dispensation, such push-back can be quite effective. However, in other countries, in which, for example, discrimination against the LGBTQI community may be officially sanctioned, virtual private network (VPN) technology may be used to help queer and LGBTQI people communicate – although this method of disguising user’s identities and locations can have the unintended consequence of effectively excluding them from the broader online public discourse. In the name of inclusivity, it is important that all individual identities are granted space on the internet.

In considering the benefits of the introduction of new technologies, such as the internet, it is important to take note of fundamental socio-economic conditions and the inequity in access that can arise as a result. For example, without electricity or connectivity, an individual

39 This paragraph and the next six are based on a presentation made by Nyx McLean, Multimedia and Information Technology Department, CPUT, as a panellist at the consultative forum on “Generation Equality: Realising Women’s Rights for an Equal Future” held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

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cannot go online. Without the appropriate data, it is difficult to mount an effective online campaign for change. Without the appropriate skills and knowledge, the benefits of the new media cannot be leveraged democratically by all.

In addition, the appeal of new forms of communication, such as social media, can also divert attention from the risks they may bring. For example, Facebook's data-hoovering represents an invasion of privacy and may produce consequences that are not in the individual user's interests, even if these do not rise to the level of a physical threat. Accordingly, a global Take Back the Tech campaign has been launched to combat phenomena such as online stalking; hacking of personal accounts; unauthorised sharing of personal data, including the dissemination of personal photographs to damage an individual's reputation, such as through revenge porn; and a number of forms of online GBV. For example, female characters in online games, who may be the avatars for offline players, have been raped. In all the excitement about the wonders of the internet it is important to consider who is being included and excluded in the new online world that is being created.

There are also critical concerns around the interface between the offline and online world's including in relation to surveillance. Many web-based services and social media are always tracking online behaviour, developing detailed profiles of individual users; and people are often unaware they are being watched. For example, Alexa, the virtual assistant for the Amazon shopping and media service, allegedly recorded a murder taking place in the American state of Florida in 2019. The data produced by such technology may be useful. Surveillance can help to keep people safe and provide evidence in court of violent and other crimes. The location finder on the Facebook app can be used to introduce people to each other at meetings. Smart, internet-connected zones in cities can produce important economic benefits. The algorithms produced by monitoring of online behaviour can help to identify individual needs and ease the provision of goods and services to meet these. The digital world has created new job opportunities.

At the same time, there may be few controls over how the big data produced by internet use and social media is being exploited. Privacy can be invaded. Surveillance technology may be used as a tool of political oppression. Online trolling based on personal information can cause significant emotional damage. Indeed, many people are leaving online social spaces, or at least taking a technology break after being trolled.

A great number of users are cheated out of money by online scams, against which there is little protection.

In South Africa, the Protection of Personal Information Act (PoPI) of 2014 provides some safeguards, although these are more aligned with protecting consumers rather than privacy in the broader sense. Meanwhile, the The Regulation of Interception of Communications and Provision of Communication-Related Information Act (RICA) of 2002, establishes a regime for culling data and also a fraud-reporting database. However, gender issues needed to be integrated into the mandate proposed by this legislation and other privacy and communications policies. The current field of play has also been challenged by a number of lawsuits asserting individuals' rights to be forgotten as a form of privacy.

11.1 DISCUSSION ⁴⁰

A number of apps have been developed to help women record and/or report incidents of violence. In addition, drone and security camera surveillance may also offer a tool to help women protect themselves. Images taken with camera-phones and live WhatsApp notes can be produced as evidence in court; and recordings on online activity by predators can also be used to report crimes and bring cases. Firms also are looking to enable their technology to be used in the public interest – so, for example, Uber offers a transport service to the nearest police station for women who have been attacked.

NPOs working to combat gender-based violence should review how present technology and apps may best be used to support survivors and victims of GBV and consider the kinds of partnerships that may be forged to leverage these most effectively. In this work, it is important to be aware of the legal framework – for example, if local women launch surveillance, such as through cameras, they must post warnings to that effect.

Beyond the issue of GBV, civil society must seek to respond to new technology-based issues that are starting to surface – such as how the algorithms used to shape how surveillance footage is analysed may discriminate against black people. Civil society organisations should also seek to empower communities; and collaborate more effectively among themselves and with public- and private-sector partners to produce communications and information technologies and projects with equitable, democratic benefits. In Cape Town, Codebridge, which offers training in coding to local communities, represents one such initiative.

40 This sub-section is based on remarks made by panellists and comments from the floor at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

PANEL DISCUSSION 8

12

Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation – empowering women to build climate resilience⁴¹

SUMMARY OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION

Key participants: Professor Beatrice Opeolu (CPUT); Lungisa Wona (TCOE); Wendy Pekeur (Ubuntu Rural Women); and Cam Chetty (Consultant)

Climate change in the form of global warming and shifting weather patterns as a result of carbon-burning and industrial emissions is no longer a prediction, it is a reality. The evidence is there in extreme weather and, in 2019, in the bush fires that devastated large parts of Australia. There will be more such disasters. Meanwhile, those who are most vulnerable and will suffer the most as a result are the poor, and women and children, particularly in the Global South. For example, if a home is destroyed by flooding it must be rebuilt, which is easier for men than women. In response, actions must be taken at every level. Governments must adhere to the agreements that they have signed, as well as promoting alternative forms of agriculture; and individuals must change their behaviour. People must become more aware of their individual carbon footprint and how to reduce this by, for example, eating less meat; abandoning single-use plastics; looking after clothes better rather than just buying new ones; and refraining from pouring old cooking oil down the sink, which exacerbates the pressure on the waste water treatment system.⁴²

Women are the guardians of life, land, seeds and oceans. However, the agenda of rural women, who produce 70% of food, has been largely overlooked. As the climate crisis mounts, the land that has historically been farmed by women is being denuded. Yet, there has been relative silence in the media on the continuing drought in the Eastern Cape, which forced residents to drink the same dirty water as that given to the livestock – while all eyes were turned to the approaching spectre of Day Zero in Cape Town. Similarly, while national governments attend the latest international climate change conference amid great fanfare, their talk means little to small-scale women farmers who continue to fight for food sovereignty to make sure that their children are fed. The Rural Women's Assembly which celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2019 noted that a number of tipping points had been breached as the environment had become increasingly harsh, causing many rural women to lose their livelihoods and indicating that the impacts of climate change now posed an existential threat to civilisation. It recommended that new forms of adaptation should be considered. In particular, rural women are campaigning

⁴¹ This section is based on presentations and remarks made by Professor Beatrice Opeolu, leader, CPUT Climate Change and Environment Research Focus Area; Lungisa Wona, Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE); Wendy Pekeur, environmental activist, Ubuntu Rural Women; and Cam Chetty, consultant, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

⁴² This paragraph is based on remarks made by Professor Beatrice Opeolu, leader, CPUT Climate Change and Environment Research Focus Area, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

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for climate justice and greater control over land, the ownership of which has historically been shaped within a patriarchal system. In addition, rural women are seeking to link their concerns to those of urban women, showing the connections in their common struggle for emancipation.⁴³

During the water restrictions of 2017 and 2018 in the Western Cape, local farmers who were using grey water to tend their crops were threatened with imprisonment if they used water; while a local Coca-Cola bottling plant was allowed to continue to use water for its products and make profits. During the drought, livestock in the Klein Karoo and Northern Cape died and even the flowers stopped growing. The crisis pushed many rural communities, in which people were spending 70% of their income on food as local farming failed, over the edge. People in these areas continue to live in extreme hardship, with unemployment rates of 40 percent, while diabetes and other illnesses spread. Meanwhile, it is the women who have to go and collect the wood who bear the brunt.⁴⁴

These communities are also paying the price for the pollution of the mine companies, and the depredations of the energy industry. Mining ghost towns are scattered across the landscape of the Northern Cape and the Klein Karoo. Yet, the country continues to rely on toxic energy sources, with Eskom relying on coal to fuel 90% of its electricity production. In addition, fracking for gas in the Karoo, which requires the consumption of millions of tons of water and will result in groundwater contamination that will poison local agriculture, remains a key part of the government's Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). At the same time, the use of pesticides in large-scale agriculture continues to harm the environment and people, notwithstanding the protections offered by the Occupational Health and Safety Act, which are insufficient.

Against this background, it is important to remember the saying: We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children. In this spirit, a number of actions should be taken. The model of the Philippi farming co-operative in Cape

Town, which produces the bulk of the organic food in the Western Cape, should be rolled out elsewhere; and more funding and subsidies should be made available to support small farmers, particularly women. The electricity grid needs to be decentralised, the energy system should be decolonialised by focussing on sustainable sources of energy and fostering community-based ventures to exploit these, such as solar power co-operatives. There should be proper redress for mining communities. More broadly elitist exploitation of the environment should be replaced by co-operative relationships that protect the earth. The Beijing Platform and Programme for Change gave warning that climate change would pose an increasing problem, but this prognosis was largely ignored. Global meetings were held, accords were signed and some wonderful reports were written, but climate-change denialism persisted and, in 2017, US President Donald Trump withdrew from the internationally agreed Paris Agreement on climate change mitigation. Shifting the agenda in this area will clearly require a struggle in the teeth of opposition from some powerful people in the petrochemical and energy industries, which are the major carbon producers.⁴⁵

In seeking to shift the agenda it is important to recognise that climate change affects men and women differently and to identify in detail the forms that this difference takes. Research into this which would disaggregate the data to produce greater granularity on the impacts of climate change on women and equity is required to forge policy properly. At present, researchers are saying that they lack this data. In order to mount such research, a number of key questions need to be addressed: What are the social forces that continue to produce climate change? What are the large-scale consequences of climate change, including on women? What are the latest projections on the rate of climate change? And, what should be done to change the trajectory?

The UN's 17 SDGs which were adopted in 2015 include a total of 232 indicators, 54 of which are gender-related; 93 of which are environment-related; and only eight of which are related to both gender and

43 This paragraph is based on remarks made by Lungisa Huna, TCOE, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.
44 This paragraph and the next two are based on remarks made by Wendy Pekeur, environmental activist, Ubuntu Rural Women, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.
45 This paragraph and the next three are based on a presentation made by Cam Chetty, consultant, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

the environment. This indicates that a fundamental shift is required to place women at the centre of the agenda for climate change. Global Gender and Environment Outlook (GGEO) has said that the foundations of the international outlook on how to address the climate challenge need to be changed. It is insufficient merely to seek to add women's issues to a pre-determined agenda, deeper transformation of the agenda around women's concerns is required.

In addition, major work to produce new data in support of such a transformed agenda, which should consider key issues such as the dynamics of food production; the provision of water and sanitation services; and access to energy, is required. For example, much current thinking on food production pays insufficient attention to issues such as: who controls the land; the amount of time that women spend on agriculture; the gender impacts of small-scale production; and the different risks which women may face on farms, for example, their increased exposure to pesticides through having to wash clothes. In order to create opportunities for new approaches, women should move away from the silo thinking that has so far shaped many of the responses to climate change, capacitate themselves with new data and develop new methods for engaging civil society, government and business to produce change.

the use of pesticides, and/or to redistribute the food around the world in a green way.

There has been significant opposition to the farming of genetically-modified organisms among rural communities in South Africa, who argue that the consumption of food from GMO (genetically modified organism) crops may be harmful and so insist on growing crops from indigenous seeds instead. At the same time, there is no scientific evidence to show that GMO foods are bad for your health. In the absence of any firm evidence of detrimental impacts, a common approach has been to label food that contains GMO ingredients and let the consumer make their own choice.

Rural women activists in South Africa have made available clear, accessible information on issues such as climate change and fracking to make local communities aware of the dangers that they may face and to build popular opposition to policies and actions that damage the environment. Campaigners have also sought to identify and build on indigenous knowledge to produce new, environmentally friendly approaches to agriculture.

12.1 DISCUSSION ⁴⁶

Poverty persists. A quarter of the world's population live on less than a dollar a day; and many women go to bed having eaten only a slice of bread or having survived on maize meal. However, the world produces enough food to feed everybody. The problem is distribution – some areas have more than enough, while others have next to nothing. Against this background, issues of quality and the safety of food are greater concerns in the Global North than in the South, where availability is a more pressing concern. Against this background and in the context of climate change, the priorities should be to increase the quality of the food produced for consumption in the Global South, in particular by taking greater care in relation to

⁴⁶ This sub-section is based on remarks made by panellists and comments from the floor at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER 5

The role of Parliament and key Government Agencies leading up to Beijing+25 and beyond⁴⁷

SUMMARY OF THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Professor Hlengiwe Mkhize (Deputy Minister of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities)



The road to Beijing in 1995 brought unity through common purpose under a strong leadership to a movement that had been fragmented for decades in the struggle against apartheid, when activists were scattered across the NPO sector, or imprisoned, in exile or underground and were working in disparate areas, including in education and health, and to combat political (rather than gender) violence. Since

then there have been significant divisions within the movement, even as activists and government officials have worked on common platforms, which should be acknowledged and addressed on the road to Beijing+25 to ensure the authenticity of the representation at forthcoming international meetings. In addition, government and civil society stakeholders should consult closely to understand each other's positions and priorities with the goal of leveraging the greatest possible benefits (and funding) for women in South Africa at the planned international platforms. To this end, although government and NPO representatives attend such meetings independently of each other and may present separate official and shadow reports, they should seek to speak clearly with one voice in pursuit of common, readily understood goals.

In seeking to define these goals, it is important to recognise the changes that have taken place since the production of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, which South Africa signed, including through the introduction of the Constitution in 1996, which provides a strong human-rights-based legislative framework for women's demands. The clauses on unfair discrimination and the right to be free from all forms of violence are particularly pertinent. Against this background and although questions have been raised about how effective the government has been in implementing its commitments on gender, both the

⁴⁷ This section is based on a speech made by Professor Hlengiwe Mkhize, Deputy Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

official and civil society delegations to forthcoming international meetings may seek to prioritise South Africa's role in the campaign for an end to GBV. This is founded on a constitutional obligation at the national level and should be framed as such. A further change in the national political discourse since Beijing is the increasing centrality of gender issues, instead of the struggle for racial equality which was uppermost in the minds of activists before the introduction of democracy in 1994. There used to be some talk about the triple oppression of race, gender and class before then, but this was quite marginal. However, now that racism is dead institutionally and constitutionally, if not in some hearts, gender has become a crucial concern – which makes it more important to show solidarity on this. After all, this struggle is not about individuals but about women as a collective – including those in the community of the queer, many of whom have been attacked and killed for declaring their sexual identity.

Meanwhile, the government has also sought to sharpen its focus on implementing the rights of people with disabilities, playing particular attention in its efforts to the “nothing about us without us” slogan of the disability movement – although it has struggled to enforce the 2% threshold for employment of people with disabilities. It has sought to expand educational opportunities, including by fostering comprehensive integration of, and support for, pupils with disabilities in mainstream public schooling; reforming and modernising special schools, many of which were established by missionaries; and providing more vocational training for economic inclusion for people with disabilities. The programme of action also entails providing support for mothers so that they can fulfil their duty of care to children with disabilities, including by ensuring that they access a decent education. A White paper on disability and inclusive rights has been prepared to end discrimination against even people with mild disabilities. A further priority for the government has been its efforts to implement national health insurance (NHI) to provide universal, democratic coverage. The progressive women's movement, COSATU, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) have been invited to engage in consultations to shape this initiative and ensure it promotes proper access to healthcare for women on the ground and their children.

Meanwhile, a gender-responsive planning and budgeting programme which was launched under the administration of former President Jacob Zuma is being pursued. The goal is to establish and ring-fence budgeting for women's issues within all key government departments. As part of this, women's organisations are being mobilised to advocate for budgeting for women's issues in government as a central concern.

For its part, civil society should seek to lead and shape the government's planning and response to gender-based violence. Those who are working in rural areas must speak out and make demands on behalf of the women in these areas. They must press the government on the actions that are being taken from the police stations to the courts, calling out those efforts that are failing and looking to improve and strengthen those that are having a positive impact. In this campaign, communities need to ask difficult questions of their representatives – from the local councillor to the president – and show them the problems, including at the local police station. Political leaders who make policy can be unaware of what is taking place in their own backyards. Civil society should also seek to influence the prevention component of the national strategic plan being drawn up by the steering committee on GBV, which is the most important.

13.1 DISCUSSION ⁴⁸

The submission of shadow reports at international meetings can produce a number of benefits. They help to unpack issues which are specific to communities; offer powerful testimony from the ground, for example, from trauma victims; frame debates within a different discourse; and express concerns which may be unlike those raised by governments, which tend to focus on more high-level issues such as infrastructure. However, shadow reports may also be viewed as the product of a failure on the part of governments to engage civil society stakeholders effectively – and thus something of an embarrassment.

In addition, their presentation has a chequered history and has fostered resentment between the government

⁴⁸ This sub-section is based on remarks made by panellists and comments from the floor at the consultative forum on “Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future” held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

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and the NPO sector in South Africa. In one instance, the government criticised civil society stakeholders for producing a shadow report on human rights; in another, the government requested a report from Ilitha Labantu, which it submitted in lieu of an official report at a CSW meeting – although officials have subsequently treated the NPO with hostility. The history of contestation over shadow reports speaks to broader concerns about a lack of effective consultation with civil society by the government. One is that the turnover among senior elected officials prevent the government from implementing programmes effectively, with new ministers erasing the policy legacies of their predecessors. So, for example, although a space for review and co-ordination with civil society had been created by Bathabile Dlamini, the former minister of women in the Presidency, and former minister of social development, this led nowhere under her successor. Meanwhile, amid the political churn, unelected officials wield increasing power which they tend to exercise to promote parochial, rather than broader national, interests. Similarly, political leaders are supposed to work for the country rather than their parties or factions.

In addition, the government stands accused of offering only rhetorical support for women's civil society organisations; and of exploiting them while talking of the need for a united front at international meetings. For example, a number of ministers were notable by their absence at Ilitha Labantu's consultative forum on Beijing+25. Furthermore, the government has a habit of reinventing the wheel – for example, by seeking to produce new internal structures, and establish new organisations to address the issue of GBV, rather than turning to existing civil society bodies which already have great knowledge and experience in this area. For example, a GBV committee convened by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) comprises only academic experts and no women on the ground.

For its part, government representatives have said that they will listen to authentic voices and take their recommendations on board. Officials have further noted that a number of organisations in the NPO sector feel marginalised and should be engaged more closely to forge a unified platform; while also acknowledging the crucial role that CSOs play in spaces where the government finds it difficult to work and in networking to drive the women's agenda on

the ground. Accordingly, it has been advised that the government may make additional resources available to support the establishment of a more effective partnership with the NPO sector on women's issues.

Meanwhile, civil society is seeking greater clarity on where the focal points for action that were agreed at Beijing are sited within government; and whether 30% of budgets have been allocated from women's work as promised, and if so, how these will be managed and spent. A further complaint has been that previous government pledges to fund women's work were unfulfilled and that the NPO sector remains underfunded, although the government can source the financing to bail out Eskom and South African Airways (SAA). In this regard, it has been noted that the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), where CSOs have only observer status, should making greater efforts to produce greater genuine equity among the population, rather than merely supporting a skewed version of equality.

Civil society, which is better placed than government to identify and report on gender-based violence, should be granted a greater say in how state funds to combat this should be spent. For example, a disproportionate amount of funding seems to have been directed towards men's organisations that have been established in solidarity since President Ramaphosa announced a major drive against GBV in 2019; and, following intrusive official vetting, certain CSOs in the field rather than others have been singled out as favourites for government grants, which has had the effect of pitting organisations against each other.

The government has adopted the position that greater efforts should be made to heal the population, which suffers from the historical legacy of the trauma produced under the apartheid and colonial systems. The inherited damaging impacts of the past continue to be expressed in high levels of violence and widespread poor mental health. Meanwhile, those on the frontline in communities often lack the time and resource to attend to their own trauma, which can be redoubled by the nature of their work. For example, those who helped to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) established in 1995 described themselves as "wounded healers".

In this context, the high levels of gender-based violence have produced an overwhelming experience of trauma. Accordingly, actions to address this must be comprehensive and continuous and may be led by those who have found a way to survive past violence and pain. They may entail closed sessions to enable women in particular to talk about their experiences and the triggers that can force them to relive past damage. In addition, increasing efforts need to be made to strengthen the values and norms that bind together members of society – for example, through the family. In this regard, processes of intergenerational healing may be fostered and supported to produce greater psycho-social wellbeing. In addition, more effective campaigns to manage alcohol and substance abuse, which can trigger violence, should be forged. These should be aligned with positive norms and values to ensure their impact.

Government expenditure on women's issues needs to be monitored closely in order to ensure that the money goes where it should and is spent properly – rather than, for example, being disbursed anyhow at the last minute to prevent underspending. Given the complexity of departmental budgets special platforms should be established by Cabinet and the National Treasury to enable effective civil society oversight by sector and kind of recipient. On the basis of such oversight, civil society organisations may be able to make more informed decisions about where they may seek to allocate their own resources for maximum impact – and communicate this to actual and potential funders.

In relation to people with disabilities, it is important to try and close the gap between what is offered to those from wealthier, white families, which may have established dedicated trusts and foundations to supply quality educational and occupational therapy services and those provided by the government, which does not generally include any special early childhood development (ECD) services. Since most good special schools are private and costly, children with disabilities from poor families can be left behind from the start. In relation to jobs, government claims that it cannot meet the 7.5% equity target for employing people with disabilities appear unfounded given the ability of many social organisations to source such staff. In this regard, greater official efforts should be made to foster economic inclusion

for people with disabilities. Another issue that should be represented more strongly in the discourse relating to discrimination is that of albinism.

It is also important that women have a greater voice at NEDLAC, which is where the work of national economic transformation is supposed to be done. The activism to produce such transformation cannot be left to COSATU alone as a workers' movement; other interests also need to be addressed. At the same time, it is also important to acknowledge the benefits for women and men alike of bailing out the state-owned enterprises, which not only provide significant employment, but also act as hubs for skills development for the youth and women.

13

PANEL DISCUSSION 9

Ending discrimination against women and girls in all their diversity⁴⁹

SUMMARY OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION

Key participants: Nandi Msezane (Rights of LBTQIA+); Poppy Mocumi (Disabled Women South Africa); and Ludwe Ndeleni (Student:CPUT)

There are a number of prevalent myths about lesbians, including that their sexuality is a choice; a lifestyle; just a phase; or a product of being cursed or confused. In addition, a number of prejudiced assumptions are often made about lesbians from how they dress and present themselves. In particular, some lesbians may be accused of deliberately dressing or looking like men to adopt stereotypical male roles, when their choice of clothing may rather merely derive from seeking to wear what is comfortable. In this regard, lesbians are diverse in their appearance. For example, there are feminine-presenting lesbians; androgynous lesbians; and masculine-presenting lesbians. In addition, many lesbians are mothers.⁵⁰

To foster greater understanding of LBTQIA+1 and gender non-conforming women and persons, it is worth considering what the terms of this acronym actually mean. The "B" stands for bisexuals, who are discriminated against for failing to choose a side and alleged promiscuity. But bisexuals are not saying that they are sleeping with everybody; and even if they are sleeping with many people at once, it is no one else's business. Rather their sexual identity is pansexual – they see a human and if they are attracted to them, they may seek to have a relationship with them.

The "T" stands for transgender, otherwise known as gender non-conforming (GNC). These are people who while they have been born biologically as a boy or a girl, do not see themselves as belonging that sex as it is expressed through the social construct of gender. So, for example, as they grow up, they may choose or lean towards behaviours associated with the other gender, such as by wearing the clothes habitually worn by the other gender. Such individuals can struggle in life. For example, their families may reject them on the basis that they are not what their families say they are. They may become homeless and struggle with mental health issues. Alternatively, in some cases in which the family is accepting, they may consider medically transitioning to the other sex, by taking hormones and/or undergoing surgery. The "I" stands for intersex people. Such people have not undergone any medical intervention to change their sex, rather they are just born this way. So, for example, they may produce more male hormones, although they are a girl. For example, the South African athlete Caster Semenya, whose personal medical history was shared with the world, was brought up as a girl. It was only later, when doctors intervened, that it was revealed she was intersex. Many of these issues of sexuality and gender have gained prominence in recent years and were not

49 This section is based on presentations and remarks made by Nandi Msezane, Rights of LBTQIA+1 and gender non-conforming women and persons; Poppy Mocumi, Chairperson, Disabled Women South Africa; and Ludwe Ndeleni, CPUT, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

50 This paragraph and the next five are based on a presentation and remarks made by Nandi Msezane, Rights of LBTQIA+1 and gender non-conforming women and persons, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

raised at the Beijing conference in 1995 – with the result that it fails to address many of the challenges faced by LBTIQA+1 and gender non-conforming women and persons. Against this background, the Beijing+25 initiative must attend to the concerns of these women, in particular by analysing how efforts promoted in the 12 areas of the Beijing Platform for Action affect LBTIQA+1 and gender non-conforming women and persons, for example, in relation to combating violence against women. The South African delegations to the upcoming international meetings should include queer women, otherwise there will most likely be alternative representation and a shadow report. In this regard, it is important to distinguish between in-principled support for the LGBTQI community – which is guaranteed in the South African Constitution – and the reality of what is required on the ground. So, for example, the idea that permitting marriage for gay people is the priority may be misplaced in the context of widespread extreme violence against, and murders of, lesbians. However uncomfortable it may be to listen to the agenda of those of the receiving end of violence and discrimination as a result of their sex, sexuality and/or gender, they must be heard.

At the same time, the process of producing greater inclusion for LBTIQA+1 and gender non-conforming women and persons is a long one and may entail a range of partners and strategies. One approach for black lesbians who face the threat of being raped, mutilated and killed in rural communities is to mobilise their mothers to speak out against this violence. In relation to the problem of men with toxic masculinities who may engage in corrective rape, safe spaces need to be produced. These may be political as well as physical spaces that are away from men. In this regard, men should realise that their inclusion in the struggle against GBV is conditional on a sea-change in patriarchal attitudes, which is a process. Another crucial strategy for change is to talk about sex and sexuality with young children from an early age so that they are equipped with the language and understanding to say how they identify themselves and how they feel.

LGBTQI activists working on the front line in South Africa and the rest of the continent can adopt a number of strategies to communicate their message.

South African activists campaigning in other African countries where the rights of the LGBTQI community are not recognised may have to tone down their rhetoric. Similarly, in South Africa, notwithstanding the country's enlightened Constitution, activists are also confronted by popular prejudice. Church leaders call for lesbians to be aborted at birth; and bigotry on the grounds of sex, sexuality and gender takes violent forms. In this context, activist need to put their safety first and approach the issue through a number of strategic gateways – working with businesses, families and churches, etc – to change the discourse.

People with disabilities are disabled by their environments – for example, a podium without a ramp that cannot be accessed by someone in a wheelchair – rather than being inherently less able. The point is an important one and goes to the heart of much discrimination and prejudice experienced by people with disabilities, who are often viewed through that lens rather than for who they are. The policy-making sphere also perpetuates this prejudice, for example, only inviting women with disabilities to discuss technical issues pertaining to so-called disability, and not the larger issue of facing and overcoming prejudice – and not as women who also have their own, important stake in the continuing struggle against patriarchy.⁵¹

In considering how to ending discrimination among women and girls in all their diversity, including on the grounds of disability and gender-based roles, it is clear that the challenge to be confronted is that of patriarchy. In this regard, women as the mothers of the boys and men that perpetuate patriarchal discrimination have a crucial role to play. Mothers are the first point of interaction for these boys and men; they are the first socialisers – and, as such, bear great responsibility for everything that these boys and men do to women. Accordingly, these boys need to be educated in the foundational principle of equality among the sexes at home and through early childhood development programmes onwards. As part of this, women must ensure that the curriculum includes work on gender-based discrimination. Such campaigning is particularly important in rural areas. To date, there has been little research about the experiences of LBTIQA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual

52 This paragraph and the next are based on remarks made by Poppy Mocumi, Chairperson, Disabled Women South Africa, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

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and other terms such as non-binary and pansexual) students and staff and the prejudice that they face from the heterosexual community at universities. Against this background, levels of reporting of verbal or physical harassment, threats and intimidation by LGBTIQ+ students and staff are low and they continue to face serious challenges based on dominant heterosexual views of their sexuality or gender identity and expression.⁵²

Room allocation also presents a challenge – for example, by placing LGBTIQ+ students with heterosexual students, which can create tension. Rather universities should seek to allocate residences to LGBTIQ+ students according to their preferences. Another issue is gender-binary admission policies, which do not accommodate LGBTIQ+ students since they are based on the principle that everyone is either male or female. Universities should also integrate an understanding of the diversity of sexual orientations in all aspects of student life, including in the curriculum, research and teaching, as well as community engagement.

Queer people also face exclusion from positions of political authority – for example, on student representative councils. These positions can be allocated according to political allegiance and the division of power among party factions within the student body rather than according to individual abilities. Thus, a political operative was elected as the lead gender official in the SRC at CPUT, although he did not even acknowledge the rights of queer people in line with the council's official policy. This created a toxic situation. However, activism has opened the eyes of members of the council to this problem, promoting greater understanding of issues of sexuality there and encouraging a number of students to become more confident about who they are.

Parents and communities are requested to support their LGBTIQ+ children. At the same time, LGBTIQ+ must conduct their own awareness-raising initiatives at home, which will also produce positive impacts among neighbours and communities.

14.1 DISCUSSION ⁵³

Comprehensive sexual education programmes are required in schools and communities particularly in rural areas to produce greater understanding and to allow the next generation of children to discover their own sexual and gender identities free from restrictive stereotypes. Such programmes, which should address the lived experiences of local people would entail significant personal transformation for many participants and would also likely encounter push-back from individuals with highly conservative norms and values, including parents.

Some mothers of daughters in the LGBTQI community, including from church-going backgrounds, have reacted with shock to the “corrective” rape of lesbians and preachers who have labelled their offspring as “demons” from the pulpit. Understanding that it may not be easy for parents with conservative values to accept their daughters for who they are, these women travel to different communities to bear testimony to the lethal threat that their daughters face and the importance of standing by them in the spirit of ubuntu.

Services for women who have been the victims of gender-based violence should be adapted to meet the needs of women with disabilities. For example, although a blind woman who has been raped may not be able to identify her assailant by sight, she may be able to identify them by smell. Doctors who can use sign language should be employed to treat deaf women who have been assaulted or who have a sexual or reproductive health issue, to obviate the need for a third party to be present to translate on an extremely intimate issue.

More broadly, the legislation to ensure equal access to public services for people with disabilities is largely ignored. For example, some people with disabilities applying for identity documents have been charged for the services of the sign language interpreters supplied to help them with their applications. In relation to public transport and housing, people with disabilities are also often left to bear additional costs, such as for assistance, transporting wheelchairs and adapting structures to their needs – although these should be fully subsidised by the government.

52 This paragraph and the next three are based on remarks made by Ludwe Ndeleni, CPUT, as a panellist at the consultative forum on “Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future” held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

53 This sub-section is based on remarks made by panellists and comments from the floor at the consultative forum on “Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future” held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

PANEL DISCUSSION 10

Generation quality and communicating Beijing+25 actions⁵⁴

15

SUMMARY OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION

Key participants: Anne Githuku-Shongwe (UN Women) and Mmabatho Ramagoshi (Ministry of Women)

The 1995 Beijing meeting became synonymous with women's empowerment and radicalisation and laid the groundwork for a new era of women's activism. In part as a result of this new priorities have emerged. For example, the kinds of conversation that are now being held around LGBTQI issues, which should be inter-generational, were not even on the agenda at that time. In addition, the progress on women's emancipation since Beijing has only been partial. Although the principles of equal pay, eradicating discrimination and sharing power with women have been broadly accepted, much remains to be achieved in practice. In March 2020, there were relatively few women in the South Africa cabinet – and when women occupy ministerial positions, they are often in social development portfolios.⁵⁵

Against this background, the idea of "generation equality" being promoted by the UN aims to bring together the older and younger generations in the belief that gender equality can be achieved while reflecting on the progress that has and has not been made over the past 25 years. It is also about insisting that the gender equality indicators promoted by the SDGs be achieved. For example, there should be no unfair laws or practices, including customary ones, that discriminate

against women. Preferential procurement policies for businesses run by women such as those in South Africa which offer a 40% cut should be completely equal and offer them at least 50%.

With civil society engaging national governments, the UN planned three major meetings to forge and begin to implement the "generation equality" programme for women's emancipation in New York, Mexico City, which was to have been the main forum for civil society, and Paris – although the schedule and agenda for these has been shifted in the wake of the global Covid-19 crisis. The plan is to establish six action coalitions, each led by an individual country and with its own theme: gender-based violence; economic justice and rights; bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights; feminist action for climate change; technology and innovation for gender equality; and feminist movements and leadership. The process of deciding on these themes was highly contested, with a number of sectors – such as women in peace and security – complaining that they had been excluded. However, some of these concerns may be seen as being addressed in the cross-cutting issues proposed by the generation equality programme.

⁵⁴ This section is based on a presentation and remarks made by Anne Githuku-Shongwe, UN Women Multi-Country Office; and Mmabatho Ramagoshi, Acting Advisor, Ministry of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

⁵⁵ This paragraph and the next five are based on a presentation made by Anne Githuku-Shongwe, UN Women Multi-Country Office, as a panellist at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

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Under each of the six themes, a few “actions” or interventions are identified which have the potential to produce concrete, measurable results; and global support will be galvanised around these actions under the advocacy of the head of the state delegated to lead the particular action coalition with the support of a number of other states. The targets for these actions may include, for example, the allocation of 50% of budgets to women under the economic justice theme; or the abolition by law of sexual harassment in the workplace under the GBV theme. Five-year plans to implement the various actions will be forged.

South Africa may wish to consider adopting the lead role for one of the six themes – perhaps that of GBV, given the scale of the problem in the country and its efforts to address this; as well as its leadership in legislating for, promoting and implementing gender parity in a number of areas. The theme on bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights may also be one that could be led by a country from the Global South. However, there is contestation for the leadership of the themes and the support of the AU in the face of opposition from other African countries for South Africa’s bid to head one of the themes may be difficult to win. Civil society may have a role to play in work with the government and the president on this issue.

The campaign for generation equality has adopted the life experience of adolescent, 15-year-old girls as in all their diversity as the means for delivering its message. Thus, a central question posed by the campaign is: How can the circumstances and life of this notional 15-year-old, who acts as the avatar for the initiative, be changed so that by the time she is 25 years old the conditions have been established for her to pursue emancipation without hindrance. This is crucial for black women, who have to worry about basic issues, such as safety and how to make a living. In this regard, it is important that the UN initiative addresses such concerns rather than prioritising those of the wealthier countries. For example, while the Global North may be keen to roll out 5G for all, 20% of African women lack proper identity papers and thus the documentation, as well as the connectivity, to access even low-speed internet.

When, at the end of 2019, the UN formally invited

the South African government to participate in the international Generation Equality meetings to be held in 2020, it sought feedback on a number of key issues, such as women’s engagement in the economy and the progress that had been made in relation to lifting women and girls out of poverty. The invitation left the government with little time to prepare. In January, it reflected on the progress made against the goals established by the Beijing Platform and Programme for Action. In this regard, an addendum to a report on this, following consultation with civil society on this may have been beneficial. It is also important to acknowledge in this context that a number of women activists opposed the idea of another round of international conferences – saying they would prefer action to more talk. In addition, the UN expressed little interest in viewing a country report – and the Beijing+25 process may be viewed, in this regard, as an opportunity to establish a new agenda.⁵⁶

At the same time, it is clear that this agenda, which will be forged through the process of the planned international conferences, should be informed, from the South African side, by a process of national consultation. Forums and debates must be held at the country level. Accordingly, the national government has written to premiers to produce provincial plans for the next decade and will hold them to account for implementing these. Women’s month in August may offer an opportunity to present these plans.

Monitoring and evaluation led by joint government and civil society task teams will need to be put in place to assess the country’s progress at the national and provincial levels on implementing gender equality plans. In addition, popular engagement in and support for the UN’s generation equality initiative may be fostered by establishing large public forums connected to and streaming the events at the international conferences as they happen. South Africa, which has been asked to co-ordinate the Southern African Development Community response to the international programme, may also seek to use new technology to connect spaces among the countries in the bloc in order to foster a regional response. Such efforts to create vibrant activities around, and popular interest in, the generation equality initiative should be driven by provincial leadership and influential civil society organisations.

⁵⁶ This paragraph and the next two are based on remarks made by Mmabatho Ramagoshi, acting advisor, Department of Women, as a panellist at the consultative forum on “Generation Equality: Realising Women’s Rights for an Equal Future” held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

15.1 DISCUSSION⁵⁷

The young women chosen as representatives in the civil society delegations to the international conferences should be able to talk from personal experience about the realities of urban and rural life for girls and women. They should be articulate, able to network and authentic in their point of view. Young women with lived experiences that genuinely represent those of the larger society rather than celebrities should be chosen and mentored; and inducted in the common agenda of the delegation.

There is a national process which shapes who and which organisations are funded to attend international UN conferences. UN Women has a budget to take a certain number of people and the national government selects representatives. Civil society representation is chosen from among those organisations which are recognised by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), such as Ilitha Labantu, which opens its platform to women who are not invited as part of the government delegation. Civil society organisations seeking representation should apply for ECOSOC status. The delegations to the international meetings should be as comprehensive as possible in their representation, including stakeholders from a range of sectors, for example, including religion and sport.

There are also significant opportunities for civil society engagement in the generation equality initiative outside actually attending the big conferences. Plans to support the programme through popular participation have included: holding sports events – such as women's football matches among the SADC countries; setting up chat groups; establishing fan parks, such as those which were created during the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, to air the key debates at the meetings set to be held in Mexico City and Paris; and co-ordinating an online message board for the delegates and the groups back home on the ground to facilitate broader input into the discussions and to share the outcomes. Universities may also be used as venues to stream the proceedings and for civil society gatherings around the initiative.

⁵⁷ This sub-section is based on remarks made by panellists and comments from the floor at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER 6

Closing remarks⁵⁸

SUMMARY OF THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma (Minister: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA))



The Beijing conference in 1995 took place soon after the introduction of democracy in South Africa in 1994, when the country once again took its seat among the family of nations at the UN. The liberation movements had been unbanned; many prisoners had been released; and political exiles had returned home. Since then a number of reviews have been conducted of the progress on implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The results of these show that much has been done but much more needs to be achieved.

At Beijing, it was declared that the face of poverty was the face of a woman. This is still the case. In order to eradicate poverty, you have to eradicate poverty among women. Thus, women must be the focus of this work. They and the children are the ones who suffer the consequences of conflicts, which are started by men. They are still the ones who need skills. In relation to the economy, women continue to be the consumers, spending what little they have and owning few of the

means of production. The economy cannot grow to the optimum unless women can participate fully in it.

The economic discrimination against women persists despite the fact that the half who are excluded are the half who, as mothers, produce the other half. Amid the rhetoric about empowering women, it should be remembered that women empower the world. So, women should be proud of themselves: starting with what God or nature gave them, they ensure the continuation of the human race. If women were to go on strike, the human race would be extinct. However, even in the family, the work that women do is unappreciated and unrecognised and unvalued. This work must be recognised.

On the road to Beijing, the slogan was: Women's rights are human rights. You cannot observe human rights without promoting women's rights. Nevertheless, the media continues to portray women as objects that can be owned, with whom men can do as they please. However, women cannot be objects to be owned.

In relation to the environment, women and children are the most affected by climate change and will be the ones to suffer the most if the issue is not addressed. Women's engagement in the blue economy and in producing environmentally sustainable businesses also represents an important frontier. In this regard, women, who continue generally to occupy the lowest paid jobs, have become increasingly dynamic as business people. One common response to this engagement has been to offer support through what is termed "micro-financing" – but what is micro about women in business? Addressing the need to fund women-run businesses more effectively, the AU has launched a special fund to

58 This section is based on a speech made by Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

which member states have been asked to contribute. It is also important to support women in agriculture, who are generally not the commercial farmers or the owners of the land. They should be provided with the financing, seed and equipment, to be able to operate on a commercial basis in a sector – agriculture – which will continue to be crucial as long as humans exist. Mining depends on a finite resource, but agroprocessing and agribusiness, which provide people with the fuel – the food and water – that they need to survive will continue in perpetuity.

Although Africa is coming to the end of what the AU termed a “women’s decade”, President Ramaphosa who will be chairing the continental body for a year has said that women will be one of his priorities. In this regard, the next decade should seek economic inclusion for women as the key goal. Another goal must be to silence the gun. Wars affect everyone and constrain development. At the same time, in the absence of development, there will be war, as the excluded and the marginalised take up arms because they have nothing to lose, no stake in the future.

In relation to the issue of an African agenda for development it is also important to note that great emphasis has been placed on the SDGs, perhaps as a result of the UN’s influence, but the AU’s Agenda 2063 is even more important – and this has to be driven by women and youth. In this regard, those countries that have domesticated this agenda are noting significant improvements through its implementation. In Namibia, for example, they took it down to the village level. Greater participation in the agenda should be urged in South Africa, including at the municipal level and in rural areas.

In relation to efforts to combat GBV, effective criminal sanctions are crucial as a disincentive. At present, offenders may be released on bail and thus commit further offences before they are brought to trial – and then are handed only a few years in prison. However, steeper sanctions are not enough alone. Women must also look to their own responsibilities as mothers. How many mothers bring up their boys as little princes – making tea for them instead of asking them to make tea for themselves and others? In this respect, individuals bring back to society what they learn as children. Women transmit societal values. The habits of violence are learnt. So, boys must instead be taught the importance of mutual support and protecting others. They must be taught to respect their sisters. It is also important to address the issue of substance abuse, which can be linked to increased levels of

violence, for example, when children turn on their parents. Campaigns against the abuse of alcohol and hard drugs must be conducted with greater vigour. In addition, human trafficking, which can be initiated by hoodwinking children through the internet, must be eradicated.

On technology, young women must be educated so that they can take the new jobs being created in the software industry, for example to forge new apps. South Africa must grasp the opportunities for development in this area and protect the intellectual property interests of its software designers. It may look to the benefits that Kenya, which revolutionised banking through the M-Pesa cellphone-based money transfer service, accrued in this way.

In relation to the issue of traditional practices, it is important to acknowledge that customary frameworks must be dynamic in order not to become obsolete. In order to assess this, culture may be considered through three lenses: Is it helpful to society? Is it neutral? Is it detrimental? In this regard, it is for society to decide which customary practices it supports and which it opposes. Tradition can produce some positive values. At the same time, there can be no room for customary circumcision practices that lead to the death of initiates. Custom must be practised in ways that do not take lives.

In promoting the leadership role of women, all areas of endeavour – academia, the judiciary, civil society, the government – should be considered. Women must be everywhere in ways that count, which will entail a fight. However, it should be remembered that this struggle is waged on the shoulders of forebearers who fought with their lives to bequeathed freedom and a better South Africa than the one into which they were born. The current generation of activists too bears this responsibility.

All women must work hard to teach the children to be good citizens in order to prevent crime, create peace and forge a country of patriots. In this regard, short programmes to socialise children more effectively may need to be developed. One such, which is run by the South African Defence Force (SADF), has recruited 1,000 youth who are taught the virtues of discipline order, patriotism and the importance of service to others before they go and learn about agriculture. Officials working in government also should learn that their responsibility is to the public – to address their issues and concerns and help them resolve these, is paramount.

PLENARY

Breakaway Presentations⁵⁹

Breakaway groups at the consultative forum considered and reported back on the six themes which have been adopted as the focus of the action coalitions under the UN's generation equality initiative. The six themes are: gender-based violence; economic justice and rights; bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights; feminist action for climate change; technology and innovation for gender equality; and feminist movements and leadership. The groups considered the achievements that had been recorded in these areas, the challenges that continued to be faced and the shorter- and longer-term kinds of action that may be prioritised to address these.

17.1 GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

Achievements towards combating gender-based violence have included the promulgation of progressive legislation and the establishment of: national gender machineries; focal points for the issue in all government departments; partnerships between NPOs and universities to address GBV; Thuthuzela Care Centres to provide victim support; a presidential GBV and femicide centre; and a national GBV council. In this regard, ownership of programmes and policies to combat GBV has increased in the public, higher education and private sectors, as well as within civil society

However, a number of significant challenges persist, particularly in relation to inadequate: gender budgeting; implementation of legislation; funding and support for civil society organisations; and training of officials, including in the police and criminal justice systems. In addition, community awareness remains

low, partly as a result of cultural barriers, as well as the persistence of harmful cultural practices. There is also a shortage of shelters for victims/survivors of GBV. In addressing these challenges, efforts should be made to improve access to justice, as well as relevant health and counselling services; prevent harmful activities and protect women from the threat of harm; ensure that all cases are properly prosecuted. In general, the increased participation of women at all levels in the criminal justice, health and education systems would be beneficial in promoting such efforts. The five main priorities should be the implementation of the relevant laws by the judiciary; the establishment of consciousness-raising and awareness campaigns for the public; the roll-out of empowerment programmes and training for women; the implementation of monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the legislation is appropriate and is being implemented; and the establishment of a budget that can fund all these efforts properly.

An overarching priority must be to implement broad measures to prevent discrimination against women in general, which could include producing culturally and religiously appropriate campaigns to foster a more tolerant society that recognises and supports women's rights. A national femicide conference could be held to discuss the issues across a broader spectrum.

17.1.1 Discussion

Community-based organisations and rape crisis centres have produced crucial partnerships to address GBV and have helped to create widespread understanding of the issues at stake. However, notwithstanding the benefit of learning from the experience of other GBV stakeholders in the

⁵⁹ This section is based on presentations made by six breakaway groups which considered a number of key topics at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

international community, South African women need to take greater ownership of their domestic issues and the particular challenges that they face. On a practical level, a sea-change in attitude is required within the criminal justice system, in which rape victims are further traumatised by the treatment they receive, for example, in the courts. Supportive systems and proper counselling should be provided instead. In addition, the Thuthuzela centres which have been established are inadequate. Only three of the six are fully operational; and there is a shortage of rape kits, including at police stations. An additional challenge is posed by the level of violence against queer bodies. Notwithstanding the establishment of a rapid response unit, the police can make it difficult to report such incidents and monitoring is required to ensure they act appropriately.

Blind and deaf people can also find it difficult to report cases, encountering a lack of sensitivity for women who are physically challenged. It is also important to note that GBV remains rife in higher education although task teams have been formed to address this. A further concern is that the focus on violence against women in the GBV agenda has tended to marginalise the issue of male victims of rape. In fact, systems have been established to meet their needs and these should be advertised more widely. In addition to promoting action to address the symptoms of male violence, it is also important to focus on a cure – that is, efforts to prevent and pre-empt GBV. These should include educating communities on the ground about the issues and the preventative actions that may be taken. Informed communities, in which neighbours watch over neighbours, and everyone takes ownership of what they are trying to stop, should be fostered.

17.2 ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND RIGHTS

The Beijing Platform and Plan for Action established a number of objectives to foster women's economic rights and independence, including through the establishment of appropriate working conditions, and equal access to employment, control over economic resources, markets and trade. In particular, it sought to:

- Promote the provision of business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women;

- Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks;
- Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination; and
- Promote harmonisation of work and family responsibilities for women and men.

Progress has been made towards these goals in South Africa. There is progressive legislation to promote women's empowerment in place; actions have been taken to redress past inequity; women increasingly occupy decision-making positions; a government department for women has been established; the government has made a significant effort to create jobs and sustainable livelihoods; access to education and skills has improved for young women and girls leading to their increasing participation in sectors that were previously dominated by men; economic empowerment has been fostered in women's businesses, particularly among small, medium and micro-enterprises (SMMEs), co-operatives, and the informal sector.

However, a number of challenges have persisted. The economic sector remains broadly unfriendly to women, where more equitable spaces need to be established. Meanwhile, although the creation of ground-breaking models, such as that of co-operatives, has helped women, these are relatively poorly supported. For example, under the co-operative model, women have to work in groups to apply for a particular broad-based black economic empowerment (BBBEE) deal, whereas one man on his own may be able to bid for this.

In the labour market, gender-based discrimination and segregation, as well as weak implementation of gender-equity rules, have served to confine women to low-paid jobs with poor working conditions and inadequate access to social protections. Widespread sexual harassment and the provision of employment opportunities in return for sexual favours also continues to discriminate against women in the workplace. Broadly, women face multi-layered forms of economic exclusion, particularly from the formal sector.

A number of policies have been put in place to address these challenges. In this regard, the implementation of gender budgeting across government departments in the MTSF represents an achievement. Other areas in which action has been taken but more is required include: programmes to

raise awareness of women's rights; the provision of emotional and practical support; assistance with the management of trauma; campaigning to ensure the implementation of the social-chapter provisions of the Constitution; and counselling and referrals to promote skills development.

Reflecting on the agenda established at Beijing, the long-term priorities should be to implement:

- Sustained inclusive economic growth and equal employment opportunities and decent work for all women;
- Stringent measures to assess and verify ownership of companies by women and other designated groups before awarding government tenders to prevent fronting;
- Gender equity in ownership, management and decision-making across all sectors;
- Provision of inclusive and equitable quality education and training opportunities and career paths to women and girls; and
- Sustained equity in earnings between men and women for work of equal value, addressing the pay gap.

Future plans should also include wide-reaching implementation of the anti-discrimination measures propagated by PEPUDA; changing social norms, including the forms of socialisation produced by patriarchy; focusing on skills development for women; and improving women's access to credit and to land, as part of broader efforts to mainstream women into the economy.

17.2.1 Discussion⁶⁰

Entrepreneurship by black women in the informal sector, who support families and communities with their incomes, should be a priority area for support. In addition, black economic empowerment provisions should be updated in line with the rights outlined in the Constitution, particularly in relation to the engagement of the LGBTQI community in business.

Education, workplace and economic forms need to be adapted to empower women. The different needs experienced by women at different life stages need to be addressed accordingly. Creches should be provided; workplaces should be sensitive to women

who are breastfeeding; support should be given to women who are menopausal and may for example be experiencing hot flushes. Childcare services should also be extended to enable women to acquire the education, for example, at universities or through night classes, that they need to gain better-paid, higher-quality jobs.

In relation to changing patriarchal norms, it is important to engage male youth in discussions and to provide the necessary psycho-social support to empower the families to stop producing broken young men.

17.3 BODILY AUTONOMY AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

There have been a number of achievements in this field in South Africa. The right to terminate a pregnancy has been recognised and services and information in support of this right have increasingly been made available.

Similarly, information and services to prevent the spread of HIV and to treat those living with HIV/AIDS have been made widely available, particularly in the wake of a landmark ruling about the duty to take measure to prevent the transmission of HIV from pregnant mothers to their children. To support new mothers, paternity leave has become a national employment right. Sex education and awareness programmes have been launched at schools across the country, including on the use of the morning-after pill. A Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act was passed in 2013; and in 2019, a national policy framework to support the implementation of this legislation, including by imparting life skills and instituting multi-stakeholder public awareness and education programmes. Broadly, the South African government has recognised the need to ratify international conventions relating to women's rights to bodily autonomy and domesticating these in legislation.

At the same time, the country continues to face a number of challenges. High rates of teenage

60 This sub-section is based on a discussion from the floor at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

pregnancy persist in certain areas. There is a lack of education and awareness-raising in relation to contraception and the morning-after pill, particularly in rural areas and among the youth, as well as restricted access to clinics providing this pill. Female condoms should be improved. Religious interventions opposing abortion rights, which may leverage personal religious convictions, continue to be mounted. There is also a lack of buy-in for laws upholding women's right to bodily integrity among a number of communities and families, including from women who are seen to support perpetrators, as well as in certain cultural and religious communities and political spaces.

Cases of graft have been reported in relation to the legal enforcement of the 2013 trafficking act. In addition, there can be a lack of adequate legal representation for women bringing cases asserting their bodily autonomy and reproductive health rights. In this regard, the legislation in support of women's rights in this field has not always been implemented effectively. In addition, a number of significant setbacks have hampered the capacity of the criminal justice system to bring GBV cases. Rape kits can be scarce. Police Family violence, child protection and Sexual offences (FCS) units are often male-dominated and insufficiently trained, and treat victims with a lack of gender-sensitivity and professionalism.

More broadly, socialisation which produces fixed gender stereotypes continues to discriminate against women. In this regard, trans people face particular prejudice, which in the light of the constitutional right for every individual to be identified as they please, would seem needless. A person's gender marker can be changed if they so wish – regardless, for example, of whether they have undergone hormone replacement therapy (HRT) or surgery. So, notwithstanding the potential hostility of local communities, trans children can attend schools in the uniforms of the bodies that they are, rather than those assigned to them by doctors at birth.

Addressing the shortfall in implementing measures to safeguard women's bodily integrity and health rights, a number of actions have been taken: awareness campaigns and programmes have been mounted in a number of sectors – for example, senior personnel at SADF war colleges have now been trained in the

issues. In addition, marches and roadshows have been held.

Broadly, the priorities for the future are to facilitate greater and more democratic access to SRHR services; to transform social services to make them more gender responsive; to empower women through economic and poverty eradication programmes, so that they are more independent and less reliant on their partners; and to establish institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women.

17.3.1 Discussion ⁶¹

Women with disabilities used to be sterilised without their consent and they still face prejudice at clinics when they seek to access care, being expected, for example, to explain how they became pregnant. At the same time, people with disabilities may also be treated as asexual. The result is the provision of services and products that fail to meet their needs. So, for example, there is no expiry dates in braille on a condom wrapper; and there may be no guarantee of confidentiality for a deaf person who has to take an interpreter when seeking voluntary counselling and testing (VCT).

There have been some clear successes in the government's efforts to roll-out medications such as post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for those who have just been raped and pre-exposure prophylaxis (Prep) to combat contracting HIV. However, young women who have been assaulted and pregnant young women often face prejudice at sexual health clinics in South Africa, including from nursing staff who may look down on them. In addition, women may not be given a proper choice of reproductive health treatments at such clinics – and may even be sterilised in the absence of their informed consent as a result. There is an urgent need for comprehensive sex education in schools which covers all issues of protection and bodily autonomy.

Many poor, young people are effectively being forced into transactional sex due to an absence of alternative ways of making their way in the world. This can lead to human trafficking. Recent cases have indicated that both young men and young women are being trafficked from one province to another and being imprisoned in informal

⁶¹ This sub-section is based on a discussion from the floor at the consultative forum on "Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future" held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

settlements. Meanwhile, paedophiles have mounted campaigns to legitimate their activities – in particular, by supporting efforts by men to reclaim custody of their children, having been excluded from looking after them sometimes as a result of sexual abuse.

17.4 FEMINIST ACTION FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

A number of significant achievements have been registered in relation to climate change in South Africa and elsewhere. Government leaders and institutions in most countries, with a number of exceptions accept the fact of climate change, although their commitment to addressing the issue has remained open to question. There are fewer climate-change deniers and the academic debate about the reality of the phenomenon has effectively been concluded. South Africa has signed up to the SDGs which talk to climate change in a range of ways; and a woman, Maggie Sotyu, has been appointed Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries. The issue of environmental protection is on the school curricula at primary and high schools; and campaigning green groups engage school pupils and university students. The government has acted to close down a coal mine and a titanium mine because of poisonous emissions. A co-operative in Wupperthal in the Western Cape was recently granted a patent to produce Rooibos tea on the grounds that it was made from indigenous seeds using local knowledge. An increasing number of young women have become climate activists, while, on the ground, many waste pickers are women.

At the same time, significant challenges are faced. There is not enough investment from industry and government in the technologies that are required to adapt to, and mitigate, climate change. In this regard, there is a contradiction between the goals of national climate change legislation and the energy plans and policies, which are pro-nuclear and pro-coal, produced under the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, Gwede Mantashe. Big companies continue to dump waste; and mining continues to cause great damage, including to people's health, such as by creating respiratory illnesses, as well as the environment. Furthermore, fossil fuel advocates – such as those promoting fracking – divide communities and spread disinformation. Against this background, it is important to assess the

risks posed by environment threats through the lens of gender. For example, it has been shown that the impacts of soil and water pollution disproportionately affect women. In addition, there are too few women in decision-making in the environment and energy sector, which may in part explain why the new integrated resource plan (IRP) fails to capture the impacts of the present and proposed systems of electricity supply on women.

Priorities for change include aligning laws and policies, and private industry activities, with the SDG; granting women greater access to land and resources to work it in sustainable ways; and campaigning by educating society at large about climate change. Such educational campaigns should focus on recycling, reusing and reducing the use of resources; producing new forms of environmental risk, and in particular water, management; promoting green living in urban areas; producing new, green initiatives in rural areas (thus challenging the false notion that environmental planning is merely a parochial academic, or urban, concern); fostering the spread of backyard gardens; and investing in solar power – for example, it should be decreed that every house must have solar power. The work should entail political education to build greater awareness of the issues; and should promote greater inclusivity for women in environmental decision-making processes.

Massive, widespread bushfires in Australia in 2019 and 2020 destroyed about 20 million hectares of land; killed more than 2 billion animals, including frogs and reptiles; and burnt down more than a thousand houses. The devastation gave warning of the threats facing the earth and indicated the need for everyone to become environmental activists to promote actions to adapt to, and mitigate, the disasters that are coming.

17.5 TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Technological innovation has brought a number of significant benefits. The implementation of a bank card system for government social grant payments has brought relief and made the process more secure and convenient. The results of medical tests, such as scans, can now be sent via email rather than in the form of a large X-ray photograph. Everyday communications have been eased, with instant

messaging (IM) services replacing SMSes. Information on important global developments, such as the spread of Covid-19, is now widely available, with the internet operating as a crucial tool for public education. Innovations in the health sector have helped to prolong life expectancy; and emergency medical assistance is now more readily accessible. Women have adopted an increasing role as technology operators – for example, as video assistant referees (VARs) in football.

At the same time, the implementation of new technologies has produced challenges: bank cards may be stolen; cybercrime, including the unlawful distribution of personal data, has increased; and people can struggle with filling in complex online registration forms and applications, with which they may be bombarded by a number of government departments. Indeed, the generation who were “born before tech” (BBT) can find it difficult to adapt to using the new tools and software at their disposal. In addition, there needs to be greater access to information and communications technology in rural areas. More broadly, the wide use of social media reduces actual social interaction and can make young people anti-social. In addition, the engagement of women in the ICT sector has been insufficient, particularly in the areas of development – few apps have been forged by women – and leadership.

A number of actions have been taken to leverage the benefits of new technologies. A National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper has been forged, considering the impacts of new technologies on industry and the population at large affect everyone and all industries. Free WiFi is now available in many clinics, public institutions and elsewhere via thousands of hotspots. The government's Vision 2030 identifies the fourth industrial revolution (4IR) as a priority; and pledges more resources to schools to equip the youth with the required skills, including grants to promote greater engagement with science, engineering and technology (SET) subjects among girls.

There has also been activism to prevent discrimination against women in the technology industry and to use new technologies to help end gender-based violence, such as through the “Take Back the Tech!” campaign. New technologies have further provided the tools used by broad-based movements seeking a more equitable

and safer society. They have been deployed to promote the #TotalShutdown campaign and to produce pop-up advertising against GBV.

The long-term priorities for women in relation to technological innovation include: promoting the 2030 agenda for sustainable development to bridge the digital divide; supporting the priorities established by the AU's Agenda 2063 blueprint to produce a more knowledgeable society; forging and implementing national priorities for women to lead technological development; and aiming to ensure that 90% of senior positions in the industry are occupied by women.

17.5.1. Discussion ⁶²

In the light of the technologies that have already been developed and are widely available, such as smartcards and digital fingerprint identification, the government should seek to forge more integrated systems for providing information and services. For example, if someone dies, their relatives may be told quite easily; and queuing for appointments at clinics and government offices may be eased. However, more co-ordinated action is required to develop virtual individual profiles that may be shared among government departments.

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has developed new facial identity screens, which, along with other new forms of biotechnological identification, may be used to intervene against offenders and suspects in sex trafficking cases, and to make life safer in communities. In particular, the new technologies may be used to protect children from predatory behaviour and from accessing damaging material online; and to monitor Uber drivers to make this form of transport more secure. It is also important to find new ways to curb cyberbullying, which can affect the mental health of girls and young women, including through slut- and body-shaming – even leading to suicide.

17.6 FEMINIST MOVEMENTS AND LEADERSHIP

Feminism may be defined as a liberating ideology promoting equality for women in all their diversity while

⁶² This sub-section is based on a discussion from the floor at the consultative forum on “Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future” held in Cape Town on 10-12 February 2020.

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redressing inequalities. A key concern in shaping the discourse on this topic is the question of who owns the feminist knowledge, since current expressions of feminism can fail to articulate African experiences. Under the umbrella of feminism, three main kinds of stakeholders may be identified; those who work on the ground in the area of welfare, such as Mothers Unions' Guilds, which is generally an uncontroversial field of activity; those who may be classified as gender experts, who produce research and reports to shape policy and some of whom may be men; and those who work as activists, who deploy the information and the experiences of the women working in welfare and the gender analysts they seek change. These women may use tough language. They engage in multi-layered struggles against the various hierarchical "isms" with which they are confronted, such as colonialism, imperialism, racism and sexism. These activists promote the ideology of gender equality and, accordingly, seek to redress existing imbalances within society.

Achievements toward women's emancipation in South Africa have included the establishment of a Constitution that is feminist in its orientation, particularly in its equality clause in Chapter Two. The Constitution has enabled structures to respond to gender equality. Other achievements include the establishment of a Ministry of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities. Women have been increasingly included in Parliament; important organs of state (for example, the recently appointed director of the National Prosecution Authority (NPA); on private sector boards, which is an obligation under South African law; and in the judiciary. Women have also entered previously male-dominated professions and workplaces, including in the army, the clergy and the aviation sector. Women have challenging customary systems; led awareness campaigns on the oppression of women; and leveraged new technologies such as the internet as tools in their activism.

At the same time, a number of key challenges continue to be faced, in particular the perpetuation of patriarchy. The idea of feminism itself is also subject to misunderstanding, with a new, fuzzier conception emerging that means little more than women talking to each other. There has been insufficient awareness of policies promoting women's emancipation and resistance towards their implementation as a result

of reactionary institutional cultures. This has led to a reversal to some of the gains made in the legal and policy spaces. At universities, policies on rape and the strategies adopted to combat gender-based violence tend to remain unclear.

The setbacks faced by the movement include that the women's ministry is underfunded, which is a matter of significant concern given that 20 years ago South Africa was in the lead on the issue of gender budgeting. Other concerns include the poor standard of education in many institutions; the prevalence of reactionary myths in relation to gender, feminism and women's rights; and the spread of xenophobia, which has tarnished South Africa's image.

The immediate priorities for accelerating progress include: increasing the number of women in parliament and decision-making spaces; improving the standard of, and women's access to, education; implementing constitutional, legal and policy advances; exploiting technology for women's emancipation; and mounting campaigns to promote awareness of, and support for, women's rights. In this regard, a number of recent protests against GBV, including at universities, indicate the desire to continue the feminist struggle.

The longer-term priorities for the movement include improving the quality of education at all levels which should feature modules on land rights, gender equality, patriarchy and pan-Africanism as part of the history syllabus; reinforcing and building on the gains made by women's empowerment and gender equality (WEGE) legislation; convening a national feminist summit; and reconnecting with women in other countries in Southern African region and the continent, which could build on South Africa's role as chair of the AU and a temporary member of the UN Security Council. There should also be greater space for young women activists, as has been demonstrated by their role in climate change campaigns.

RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 GENERAL

- Explicit efforts need to be made to engage the younger generation of feminists in the Beijing+25 process. In particular, the Beijing generation should leverage new communication technologies to create platforms for passing on their knowledge and experience, as well as the lessons to be learnt from key historical events such as the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 and the Beijing meeting in 1995.
- Modern technologies should be employed to reach out and communicate the messages and activism produced by the Beijing+25 process at the grassroots level.
- Feminist intersectionality needs to be promoted as a strategy to ensure no one is left behind in the Beijing+25 process. To this end the definitions of gender employed must go beyond the binary framework adopted at Beijing.
- Recent attacks on those defending women's human rights should be acknowledged and the Beijing+25 process should recognise their achievements and pledge solidarity with their cause.
- Campaigns to promote women's emancipation and create gender-equal communities need to be forged through increased co-ordination between women's rights institutions and civil society organisations.
- A clear set of measures to tackle patriarchal attitudes preventing women's full access to rights should be defined, adequately funded and implemented.
- Civil society should co-ordinate with policy makers to ensure that all international treaties, conventions and resolutions relating to women's rights are agreed, domesticated and implemented.
- Leveraging South Africa's chairing of the African Union, government and civil society stakeholders should look to hosting large-scale events commemorating and reflecting on the end of Africa's women's decade.
- A 25-year review of the progress made in implementing South Africa's Women's Charter of 1954 should be conducted.
- Consultation should be initiated on establishing a National Women's Development Agency which would seek to advance the economic empowerment of women.
- Civil society organisations should co-ordinate to establish platforms for analysing government departmental finances and evaluating these in terms of gender-responsive budgeting.
- Partnerships should be established with institutes of higher learning to produce gender-based research that can benchmark the extent of women's emancipation and the effectiveness of programmes to promote this; to co-ordinate actions and campaigns in relation to combating gender-based violence; and to curate archives on the history of the women's liberation movement.
- Ilitha Labantu should engage with the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities to present the recommendations from the consultative forum and to ensure that these are channeled to the relevant bodies and departments.

18.2 GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

- The relevant laws protecting women should be properly implemented across the criminal justice system. To this end, the police should be better trained and more women officers should be recruited to provide appropriate support to victims/ survivors reporting cases of GBV. In addition, Thuthuzela Care Centres should be fully equipped and properly funded.
- Consciousness-raising and awareness campaigns to promote greater public understanding of the causes and impacts of GBV should be implemented. Empowerment programmes and training for women to help them combat GBV should also be rolled out.
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be

established to ensure that the present legislation protecting women is appropriate and is being implemented properly.

- Broad measures should be crafted and implemented to prevent discrimination against women in general, which could include producing culturally and religiously appropriate campaigns to foster a more tolerant society that recognises and supports women's rights.
- School curricula should include modules on basic human rights including gender equality, as well as sexual and reproductive health and rights SRHR. In addition, inclusive education that does not promote gender roles should be introduced.
- Public education on sexual and reproductive rights should be promoted and accompanied by efforts to make SHRH services more democratically available in order to help prevent incidents of gender-based violence.
- A national femicide conference could be held to discuss the issue of GBV across a broader spectrum.
- A separate budget should be established to fund all these efforts to combat GBV.

18.3 ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND RIGHTS

- Sustained inclusive economic growth, equal employment opportunities and decent work for all women should be delivered to address the structural exclusion of women from the economy. There should be equity in earnings between men and women for work of equal value, addressing the pay gap.
- Implementation and enforcement of laws such as PEPUDA, which promote equitable economic engagement for women, should be prioritised.
- Partnerships should be established with financial institutions to support women entrepreneurs, in particular by improving women's access to credit and to land.
- Leadership and skills training should be undertaken to promote women's economic empowerment. In this regard, inclusive and equitable quality education and training opportunities and career paths need to be made available to women and girls.
- There should be gender equity in ownership,

management and decision-making across all sectors of the economy. At the local level, inclusive programmes that address issues of intersectionality and the status of women in their communities should be tailored according to circumstances to produce economic empowerment.

- Strict measures should be taken to assess and verify ownership of companies by women and other designated groups before awarding government tenders to prevent fronting.

18.4 WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

- A comprehensive, gendered approach should be adopted towards governance, protection and humanitarian responses during all phases of conflicts. Feminist, inclusive, intersectional and climate crisis perspectives should inform identification of the causes of, and solutions to, armed conflict.
- Peace and security initiatives may be made more accountable to women by establishing mechanisms under the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination. The UN Security Council's women, peace and security (WPS) agenda, and the national action plans that are forged accordingly, should be linked to implementation of the SDGs, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, CEDAW and other relevant conventions. Activists may find new ways of expressing, and campaigning for, how these may be linked.
- Disarmament and demilitarisation should be prioritised as critical to sustainable peace. The 2014 Arms Trade Treaty, which prohibits the transfer of arms to conflicts in which women and/or children might be harmed, should be comprehensively implemented.
- Early warning and alert mechanisms should be developed and promoted to enable women's organisations to report peace and security threats and protection concerns to responsible community, government and international bodies.
- Protection measures in relation to armed conflicts should include adequate provision of support services to address trauma, promote healing and mental wellness and attend to issues related to

sexual and reproductive rights.

- Women's economic empowerment should be prioritised in peace and security responses, especially for women affected by war.

18.5 BODILY AUTONOMY AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

- Greater efforts should be made to facilitate greater and more democratic access to SRHR services, including for people with disabilities and members of the LGBTIQ+ community. Social services should be transformed to make them more gender responsive.
- Women should be empowered through economic and poverty eradication programmes, so that they are more independent and less reliant on their partners.
- The challenge of socialisation which produces fixed gender stereotypes and thus continues to discriminate against women should be comprehensively addressed. For example, action may be taken to support trans people, who face particular prejudice, in asserting their constitutional right to be identified as they wish, regardless of the gender marker that may have been assigned to them at birth.
- Public campaigns need to be mounted to highlight how many young people are effectively being forced into transactional sex due to an absence of alternative ways of making their way in the world, and to combat the human trafficking that can result.
- There is an urgent need for comprehensive sex education in schools which covers all issues of protection and bodily autonomy.

18.6 FEMINIST ACTION FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

- Laws and policies, and private industry activities, should be aligned with the targets and principles expressed by the SDGs. Ministers with energy and environment portfolios should understand the threat posed by climate change and seek to forge and implement policies accordingly.
- Women should be granted greater access to

land and provided with the resources to work it in sustainable ways. Women should also play a greater, more inclusive role in environmental decision-making processes.

- Public education campaigns should be launched to promote greater popular understanding of climate change. These should focus on recycling, reusing and reducing the use of resources; producing new forms of environmental risk and water management; promoting green living in urban areas; producing new, green initiatives in rural areas; fostering the spread of backyard gardens; and investing in solar power.

18.7 TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- International and national goals supporting women's leading role in the technology sector should be promoted, including the 2030 agenda for sustainable development which aims to bridge the digital divide; the priorities established by the AU's Agenda 2063 blueprint to produce a more knowledgeable society; and national government priorities for women to lead technological development;
- A gender lens should be used to identify the global development challenges facing women in particular and what kind of technological, economic and social innovations may be forged to address these.
- Innovative economic models and solutions should be developed to empower women, foster greater gender equality and address the continuing challenge of women's unpaid work as carers.
- Women should be recruited to an increasing number of leadership positions within the technology sector.
- Access to the latest technological tools should be promoted for women, especially those with disabilities and women living in poverty.
- Government decision-makers should produce improved policies and implement these to protect women from cyber violence and make the internet a safer space for women, girls, and women's rights organisations. Such work would entail producing a workable legal definition of cyber violence against women.

- Training should be cascaded on how to spot and respond to online violence, including by leveraging current rules as well as by leveraging the technology and online communities to combat such harassment. To this end, data should be collected and produced in a clear, accessible form to reveal the extent and kind of online violence and map the lack of gender sensitivity of sites.

18.8 FEMINIST MOVEMENTS AND LEADERSHIP

- The gains made by women's empowerment and gender equality (WEGE) legislation, including in the form of constitutional, legal and policy advances, should be implemented and such implementation should be monitored to ensure its effectiveness.
- Campaigns to promote awareness of, and support for, women's rights should be continually mounted. The modus operandi should be to work collaboratively to generate synergies for social change, emphasising a human rights approach as a common platform that provides solidarity.
- Feminist leaders should adopt an intersectional approach, bringing together the various parts of the women's movement, including indigenous women; women with disabilities; and the LBTIQA+1 community, and engaging them on how Beijing+25 is important in their lives.
- The push-back against women in decision-making should be resisted and the number of women in parliament and decision-making spaces across all sectors should be increased. Gender parity should be institutionalised to ensure equal participation for women and their empowerment through comprehensive access to justice, education and health services.
- The women's movement should seek to transform the sustainable development of capacity, empowerment and understanding on the individual level into a broader drive towards collective action. Grassroots activism should be fostered as a unique pool of women leaders with the capacity to transform and produce new values and initiatives, demand accountability and new kinds of long-term partnerships within the movement.
- There should be greater space for young women activists, as has been demonstrated by their role in climate change campaigns. These young women should be mentored, including by Beijing feminists who should continue to inspire and nurture them.
- The longer-term priorities for the movement must include improving the quality of education at all levels which should feature modules on land rights, gender equality, patriarchy and Pan-Africanism as part of the history syllabus.
- Feminists in South Africa should reconnect with women in other countries in the Southern African region and the continent, and seek to build on South Africa's role as chair of the AU and a temporary member of the UN Security Council by hosting a conference and celebration to commemorate the end of the women's decade in Africa.
- A national feminist summit should be convened to plot the path ahead for the movement to emancipate women; and special forums on women's leadership should be held at the municipal level to address specific local challenges.



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