

Ilitha Labantu 35 Anniversary International Conference **WOMEN'S RIGHTS AT THE CROSSROADS**

RETHINKING GENDER EQUALITY AND
EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN & GIRLS IN
ADVANCING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

REPORT

**26TH - 28TH
FEBRUARY 2025**
Rockefeller Hotel
Cape Town, SA



ILITHA LABANTU
PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE



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1. INTRODUCTION

Globally notable progress has been made in achieving equality for women and the full realization of their human rights. Despite this, we are still at a crossroads as women and girls are confronted with tons of challenges in achieving real progress across the spectrum.

The Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) aims to "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls". It's one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations (UN). It further states that Gender equality is considered a fundamental human right and a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world.

According to the UN, though progress has been made in some areas, the world is not on track to achieve gender equality by 2030. This cuts across health, education, and economic growth of entire communities.

September 2024 marked thirty years of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, themed, "Achieving gender equality, the rights and empowerment of women and girls"

Has there been any achievements since then? Reports highlighted that despite significant strides, progress on gender equality, the rights and empowerment of all women and girls remain slow.

According to the Conference Concept, "Ilitha Labantu's International Conference, theme "Rethinking Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls in Advancing Sustainable Development" was aimed at confronting these challenges head-on"

The conference therefore focussed on creating a roadmap that not only addresses the immediate barriers but also strategizes long-term sustainable solutions that uphold and advance the human rights of women and girls globally. The event was a rallying point for stakeholders from all sectors to recommit to this critical cause, ensuring that the momentum towards gender

The report therefore gives feedback to the stakeholders and partners on the deliberations, dialogues, discussions, feedback and recommendations from the various speakers and contributors.



2. CONFERENCE PURPOSE

The conference was aimed at examining the ongoing challenges that continue to impede gender equality and women's empowerment. The conference seeks to answer questions about why the world is at a crossroads on gender equality. The conference was used as a platform for networking, exchanging ideas, and engaging in discussions surrounding gender equality, women's empowerment, and the advancement of women leaders across various sectors.

3. OBJECTIVES

The overarching objectives of the conference were to discuss how gender equality and women's empowerment agenda can be promoted in international development cooperation and assess what has changed over the last 30 years since Beijing's plan of action in the pursuit of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and women's and girls' human rights, and how those changes are impacting on prospects for women and girls in achieving the objectives of the CEDAW, BPfA and the SDGs from a gender perspective. The conference aims to:

- Overview of global progress, setbacks, and future strategies and gender equality in Emerging Societies
- Strengthen awareness of gender equality and women's empowerment issues within the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- Promoting gender equality, empowering women, and addressing issues related to women's leadership.
- Find the links between Violence against Women and women's homelessness
- Share knowledge and insights on the progress and challenges in realizing women's rights.
- Highlight what prevents women from attaining leadership levels, and discuss possible solutions;
- Reflect on the role and evolution of key mechanisms in advancing women's rights.
- Link between gender equality, women empowerment, democracy, and sustainable development.
- Serve as a critical platform for reassessing our current strategies fortifying regional and global commitment to women's rights and promoting the exchange of ideas

The three day conference was divided into nine sessions with different themes. The themes aimed to explore the following:

- Violence against women and girls.
- Sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls
- Women and reproductive health and rights
- Women's economic empowerment
- Innovation and Technology
- Women, Governance and Leadership
- Democracy, backsliding and backlash against women's rights.
- Reinvigorate regional and international commitment to gender equality.
- Peace, security, and humanitarian agenda from a gender perspective,
- Gender-responsive monitoring of the SDGs
- Beijing + 30 Review current and emerging challenges, good practices, lessons learned,
- and priority actions.





4. OPENING SESSION

Introduction and Welcoming

MS NONTUTUZELO MTWANA: AWIF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The moderator requested that all delegates rise and observe a moment of silence. She alluded that it was a sad moment for everyone gathered as it was the first time without the presence of the Founder and President, Ms Mandisa Monakali who was stolen from us. She called upon the delegates to sing the song by the musician, Vusi Nova, "Asiphlelanga, kushota u Mandi" which means, "We are not complete, Mandi is missing"

She greeted, "Good morning Mandi's orphans"

- She called upon her spirit to be present and bind the room together.
- As her children, we needed to make her happy and show her respect.
- She dedicated her life to the betterment of the country and its women and children.
- It is a tradition that every year in November and February of the following year is a conference. Things changed due to her passing. The struggle for the emancipation of women and children continues, hence a combined conference which focuses on the achievements of the Beijing Platform +30.
- In the three days, it was critical to reach our intended goals and objectives.

She reminded delegates that the conference was a culmination of Mam Mandisa's hard work, as evident over the years. Mam Mandisa conceptualised the theme "Rethinking Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls in advancing sustainable development"

In closing, she again welcomed all those who graced the event and encouraged that we put our minds together to realise the theme of the conference.

Umphakathi womfazi - The Inner Voice

The poet, Abongile Ntsuca with her choreographer and dancer performed a touching performance on the struggles women experience as they keep their feelings and anger bottled inside. Fighting between partners was emphasized, fighting that could have been resolved through communication. It was a cry for open communication between men and women to minimise occurrences of Domestic Violence





TAKING US DOWN MEMORY LANE TO CELEBRATE THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY

MS ELLA MANGISA: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ILITHA LABANTU

Ella Mangisa Executive Director, Ilitha Labantu welcomed all Honourable Dignitaries, esteemed guests, friends, and family.

She dedicated her speech to honouring the legacy of Mama Mandisa, the Founder and President of Ilitha Labantu, a woman of extraordinary vision, courage and compassion. . In her opening she said, "It is both an honour and a deep source of pride to stand before you today, representing Ilitha Labantu, an organization that has touched the lives of so many women and children across South Africa and beyond"

Ms Mangisa highlighted that Mama Mandisa, was a survivor herself, and founded this organization in 1989 during a time of immense political instability, driven by her unwavering commitment to creating a safer, more supportive world for women and children. Her tireless efforts to ensure that the voices of the marginalized were heard and valued have shaped Ilitha Labantu into the influential force it is today.

She then closed off by saying, "We are proud to carry forward her legacy, standing on the foundation she built with such strength and resilience. As we look at where Ilitha Labantu is now—35 years later—we are reminded of the remarkable impact Mama Mandisa had in paving the way for women's empowerment and social justice"

Ilitha Labantu Milestones



ILITHA LABANTU MILESTONES (1989 - 2024)

1989 • Founding of Ilitha Labantu: Established by Ms. Mandisa Monakali, a survivor of violence, during a period of significant political instability in South Africa. The organization was created to provide a safe haven for women and children, offering protection, support, and empowerment.

1994 • Introduction of the 16 Days of Activism: Mandisa Monakali approached State University of New Jersey, Rutgers, to introduce the concept of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, which would go on to become an international campaign aimed at raising awareness about violence against women and girls.

1995 • Beijing Platform for Action: Ms. Mandisa Monakali was among the women who participated in the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, where the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was adopted. She played a role in shaping discussions on gender equality, women's rights, and strategies to combat violence against women and girls.

1996 • Request for Permission to Use Take Back the Night Concept: Mandisa Monakali further requested permission from an international institution to bring the Take Back the Night campaign to South Africa, focusing on violence against women and girls. • Take Back the Night Origin: The Take Back the Night movement was initiated by Women's International Network (WIN) and the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women in 1976. The campaign sought to combat gender-based violence, particularly violence against women in public spaces, by reclaiming those spaces through marches and events.

1996-1998 • Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Engagement: During the TRC hearings, Ilitha Labantu highlighted the gender-specific experiences of women affected by apartheid-era violence. Ms. Monakali stressed the psychosocial impact on women whose husbands were imprisoned or killed and advocated for their inclusion in reparations and healing processes.

1997 • With the late Thandi Memela they brought together the IFP women brigade and ANC Women's League, to discuss issues affecting women when no one considered issues of women, irrespective of their political affiliation

1998 • Training Ministers of Faith: Ilitha Labantu began training Ministers of Faith to engage with men on issues of gender-based violence and community support, when it was not yet fashionable to involve religious leaders in these topics. This initiative aimed at encouraging male involvement in advocating for women's empowerment and addressing gender-based violence from a faith-based perspective.

1999 • Participation in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM): Ilitha Labantu actively engaged in CHOGM held in Durban, advocating for policies prioritizing women's empowerment and gender equality within the Commonwealth nations

2001 • IWorld Conference Against Racism: Played a significant role in the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance in Durban, addressing the intersection of race, gender, and social justice.

2002 • World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD): Ilitha Labantu co-organized the Women's Action Tent and played a role in the Peace Train initiative, bringing together activists and leaders to discuss gender, social justice, and sustainable development.

2002s • International Collaborations:

- Liberia: Worked with Senator Conmany B. Wesseh to empower women and strengthen gender equality initiatives.
- Côte d'Ivoire: Partnered with First Lady Simone Ehivet-Gbagbo to promote women's rights and leadership.
- Zimbabwe: Worked with Sithembiso Nyoni to ensure that women's voices were heard in national and regional decision-making processes.
- Ilitha Labantu was selected as part of the Sectoral Working Group on the Millennium Development Goals in assisting to draft the Country Report under the Department of the Presidency and report on Progress made to the UN from the perspective of Civil Society to ensure a proper and inclusive report is presented.

2010s • With Thandi Modise they localized UN Security Council Resolution 1325:

Played a crucial role in implementing Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, ensuring women's participation in peace missions and post-conflict reconstruction in Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Senegal, Sudan, Burundi, and Nigeria.

2015 • Launch of the Comprehensive Food Security programme with the

Department of Social Development for the establishment of Community Nutrition Development Centres across the Western Cape where daily meals are served to 250 beneficiaries per site per day.

2018 • Working with the Department in the presidency in drafting and compiling the SDG report and ensuring that we put forward localized targets for our own Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 in line with the National Development Plan..

2020 • Beijing +25 Consultative Forum: Ilitha Labantu participated in the Generation Equality Forum, reflecting on 25 years since the Beijing Platform for Action and advocating for accelerated progress on gender equality.

- Ilitha Labantu was recognised as a critical service provider during the COVID 19 pandemic, not only continuing with services for the victims of GBV, but supplying food and aid to vulnerable people throughout the Western Cape



2022 • Launch of Isisele Senyathi Women's Hub: Established the Isisele Senyathi Women's Hub on African Women's History in Cape Town to preserve and celebrate the contributions of African women..

2024 • 35th Anniversary: Celebrating 35 years of impact, advocacy, and support for women and children affected by violence in South Africa and across the continent.

Although there are many more and I have barely scratched the surface, I felt it is important to just highlight these few milestones, but the greatest of all milestones is the ability for Ilitha Labantu to impact lives on a daily basis, and this is what keeps our grounded as it was the philosophy of Mam Mandisa, to always ensure that we assist the people we serve, from which ever background, which ever race, which ever class, our priority rests on the beneficiaries of our services and the community at large.



CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

DR PHUMZILE MLAMBO NGCUKA – UMLAMBO FOUNDATION

The message from the former Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa was clear, she urged everyone to commit, support, and stand in solidarity with everyone and any victim of Domestic Violence, without discrimination.

Ms Mlambo-Ngcuka greeted the leadership of Ilitha Labantu, workers and beneficiaries. She further greeted the community of Gugulethu, which continues to support Ilitha Labantu. She regrets that she was not at the conference. She requested the delegates to congratulate Ilitha with her on the work they have done over the years. She said she applauded Ilitha Labantu for doing something about Gender-Based Violence in South Africa:

- It is not an easy road.
- Its hard work and a lot of sacrifices was made to reach the level that has been reached by Ilitha Labantu, Mam Madisa gave her all.
- She fought for Ilitha Labantu.
- She fought for women, men, and children who were affected by violence.
- We need to appreciate and uphold her legacy.

She emphasised that “Everyone to commit in doing the work and stand in solidarity with everyone any victim without any discrimination”

She closed by reminding everyone of the motto, “An injury to one, an injury” which was made popular by Labour Unions. We are all in this fight together.

Ms Mlambo- Ngcuka addressed the children of Mam Mandisa by saying that she hoped that they have the same fighting spirit Mam Mamdisa had inside of her.





CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

NELSON MUFFU, UNITED NATIONS RESIDENT COORDINATOR IN SOUTH AFRICA

Nelson Muffu opened his address by paying respect to the towering memory of the inspiring and beloved Mam Mandisa. He said he was honoured to be joining the delegates in celebrating Ilitha Labantu's anniversary, marking illustrious 35 years of resilience, advocacy, and unwavering commitment to ending violence against women and girls.

The speaker said Ilitha Labantu has been a beacon of activism, support, and hope, providing the crucial life and survival of South Africa, defying the voices of the marginalized, and pushing for real, lasting change in South Africa and beyond.

Referring to the conference theme, Women's Rights at the Crossroads, he said that it resonates profoundly as we navigate a pivotal moment in our collective pursuit for a just, sustainable, and equitable world based on reinforced social protection and, indeed, social consciousness.

He quoted the United Nations Secretary-General, His Excellency Antonio Guterres, who has said, emphatically, that progress for decades is vanishing before our eyes. In South Africa and around the world, despite significant strides, gender inequality persists, as witnessed by the alarming violence and pushback against women's rights, livelihoods, and in some areas, regressive laws and policies.

He said this stark reality underscores the urgency of our mission to deliver on the promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is currently off track.

The following was highlighted:

- At the heart of our efforts has to be the empowerment of women and girls. This is not only a moral imperative, it is something that is a necessity for socio-economic transformation.
- South Africa has made progress in legislative reforms, and policies, but deep systemic barriers remain which still hold millions of women and girls behind. Women, for example, continue to face higher unemployment rates than men across all education levels.



- Gender-based violence continues at an alarming rate. Justice and inequality remain elusive. That's why grassroots organizations like Ilitha Labantu, and the work they're doing with partners is important.
- Partners including UN Funding through Young Women, UNFTA, UNICEF, UNODC and others are vital in bridging these gaps by supporting the realization of women's rights and those who are economically disenfranchised and often left behind.

He reiterated that:

- There must be a shift from reflection to bold, decisive, collective action.
- There is a need for strong collaborative efforts among governments, society, the international community, academia, and the private sector to dismantle patriarchal structures and promote inclusive policies and empowerment interventions. This will effectively ensure that we are accompanying the emergence and leadership of women in the socioeconomic and political spheres.
- There must be investment in women's leadership.
- Legal frameworks must be strengthened and the gap in education, economic opportunities, the just energy transition, and digital access be closed.
- Work together to transform social norms, and in this way, promote equality in all spaces, public, private, family, and in our communities.
- We must demand and foster positive masculinity, and in this way, ensuring all are playing their part in this necessary push for gender equality and empowerment.

In his conclusion, he reiterated that, the strength and perseverance of women is a cornerstone for collective advancement and destiny, in both personal and professional lives, the role played and the contributions from women have been nothing but phenomenal.



KEY NOTE ADDRESS

HONOURABLE SALLAH NJE- UNITED NATIONS RESIDENTS COORDINATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Honourable Sallah addressed the delegates on innovative approaches and community-based solutions to combat Violence Against Women and taking stock of lessons learnt from local to international responses.



- We should check the language we use. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs - no one who lives in poverty in a township will understand the terminology). How do we localize SDGs?
- We should remove the barriers that disempower women.
- A question was raised on the reason people go to New York CSW. Is it really to help our constituencies for constituencies for fun? What do we do when we return?
- How do we continue engaging in conversations post-CSW68?
- The role of civil society and to be involved in New York was emphasized,
- How do we move from paper to action?
- How do we enable a woman from Khayelitsha to also go to New York- there are barriers, language, VISA, etc.? How do we overcome this?
- Shadow report needed for Beijing +30. Where are we in terms of women?
- We need to look at resolution 1325.
- How do we localize SDGs for the government to account?
- The role of funders, who further divide CSOs to be explored.
- We must look at the role of government officials who do not give credence to processes.

She said this could not have come at a better time as advocating for gender equality at the African Commission takes a forefront. Initiatives from communities are encouraged. The speaker started off by saying posing a question on the work of the Academy of Certified Human Resource Professionals (ACHRP) in the role of the special rapporteur on women's rights in Africa. The rights of women are an important component of sustainable development.

Significant milestones have been seen since the adoption of the Maputo protocol. 2024 was a testament to the resilience of women's rights, Namibia's first woman president, and transformation in Ghana of women placed in higher positions. There is a paradigm shift breaking barriers in challenging stereotypes.

The appointment of females into the most powerful pivotal positions in government and not in only supportive roles is proof that women's rights are being taken seriously.

She further argued that:

- Sustainable development must harness women's potential as women's rights are a human rights issue.
- Commitment is to be made towards the realization of the empowerment of women and girls because they are still significant challenges.
- This is because we still have populism, and nationalism, stressing conservative religious or cultural groups, which means going back on their commitments and under international law obligations, political unrest.
- Investment in health care and land ownership are still critical areas when women's positions as two critical.
- There's also a need to bridge the digital divide by harnessing technology.
- Climate change also exacerbates existing challenges for women. In fragile states, there is no talk of access to justice for women and girls.
- The COVID pandemic is unforgettable and it has added to gender disparities.
- Another challenge of GBV in all its forms that continues to be a threat to women and girls.

Sadly it is not only in terms of conflict but also in terms of peace where these crimes against women are not sufficiently punished hence the increase in impunity. How to navigate the crossroads?

1. working together as a government and private sector lets us share networks and resources because we require collaborative efforts to achieve progress.
2. We need to advocate for policy that will impact positively, let us use our expertise in advancing these ideals.



3. Legal reform is an absolute must.
4. Invest in quality education for women and girls.
5. Community engagement, community leaders and members of the community are important in addressing the needs of the community.

PANEL PRESENTATION

This session provided participants with innovative approaches, and community-based solutions to combat violence against women and take stock of lessons learned from local to international responses to Violence against Women and Children.



CHRISTINE MUHIGANA - UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE

The representative explored an innovative approach to combat violence against women and children and shed light on an often-overlooked but critical issue—the intersection of violence against women and violence against children. Christine mentioned that this intersection is not merely a coincidence but a deeply rooted, systemic challenge that demands a more holistic response. These systemic challenges are the following:

- **The Intersection of Violence Against Women and Children**

Violence against children and violence against women have long been addressed as separate issues. Different policies, programs, and research agendas have developed in parallel, often failing to acknowledge that these forms of violence frequently co-occur within the same households. She stressed that this reality underscores a crucial point: We cannot address one form of violence effectively while ignoring the other. We must move beyond isolated interventions and adopt a more integrated approach that acknowledges the deep interconnections between violence against women and violence against children.

- **Shared Risk Factors and Consequences**

Violence against women and children is often driven by the same underlying risk factors—gender inequality, harmful gender norms, and intergenerational cycles of abuse.

These shared drivers mean that it is possible to work collaboratively among the children's sector and women's sector to address common driving factors, and it would be a lost opportunity if we address one form of violence in isolation.



- **A Sustainable Approach to Gender Equality**

On this challenge, she suggested that to break these cycles, there is a need for sustainable interventions to address gender equality, namely, strategies that do more than address immediate harm but also challenge and shift the harmful norms that sustain violence. An example was the the recent systematic review by UNICEF thirty unique interventions across sixteen countries, within which twenty interventions targeted both Intimate Partner Violence against women and violence against children.

She shared the main findings, lessons learned and approaches to tackle both Violence Against Children and Violence Against Women.

- **Helping Parents and Caregivers** – Programs that support parents to use positive discipline instead of physical punishment help break the cycle of violence.
- **Encouraging Healthy Relationships** between partners through communicating better and resolving disagreements peacefully. This reduces violence in the home.
- **Challenging Harmful Beliefs** – Changing these harmful norms through education and community discussions can help prevent violence before it starts.
- **Supporting Adolescents** – The review found that adolescents are often left out of programs, while they are at high risk of becoming perpetrators and survivors of both IPV and VAC. Providing them with guidance, mentorship, and education on healthy relationships can prevent them from experiencing or perpetrating violence in the future.
- **Working with Schools** – School based programme can play a big role in preventing violence by teaching students about gender equality and non-violent ways to resolve conflicts.

It is also important to recognize violence against children and violence against women often co-occur in the same households. Prevention and response interventions should look at a family as a unit, to address the violence at home effectively. The consequences of exposure to violence in childhood are significant. Children who witness or experience violence at home are at greater risk of perpetuating or experiencing violence later in life. This intergenerational transmission of violence reinforces harmful cycles that persist across generations unless effectively disrupted.

BUSISIWE NXUMALO – ACTIVIST / STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

The speaker focused on the Queer community and being marginalized. She said that most of these hate crimes target the LGBTQI+ and what seems to happen is that when a hate crime is reported authorities usually respond late citing lack of resources.

The Western Cape is the epicenter of violence to members of the LGBTQ+ community. Is it a beautiful city as is claimed? Intersectionality teaches us that we are to include everyone because violence is multifaceted to include race, class, gender, etc. The LGBT Community is one of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in South Africa. To help curb violence against this group, we contributed to the Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Bill which is now law in South Africa. We joined other stakeholders in putting forward the recommendations for the bill as working together to echo more voices is better than working in silos. While this is an important stride to have laws that govern behaviour, the next steps should be with departments and communities to change the societies and mindsets of people because LGBTQ persons are in every community. We have also noted challenges at the policing level as one of the areas where gender sensitivity remains an issue with markers denoting only male and female. Deeper conversations are needed to bring everyone on board and expand the conversation to include women, children, LGBTQ+, and migrant women because for us to move forward, no one must be left behind.



TAKEAWAYS FROM THE SESSION

- Financial abuse to be taken seriously and equally acknowledged as an element of Gender Based Violence and Femicide as financial dependency
- The LGBTQI+ to claim their space, and not appear in spaces when a lesbian is killed.
- Religion is at the centre of dogmatism to gays and lesbians. There is a lot of discrimination in churches.
- How far is the GBVF Council? How is it performing? There are no reports regarding this.
- How do we look at ourselves as women, the shadow that we have, oppression, and violence against each other?
- We do need a conference that will look at the violence we inflict on each other.

BRIDGING THE GAP: INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL AND CULTURAL PRACTICES WITH MODERN APPROACHES TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

This session explored how traditional and cultural practices can be effectively integrated with modern strategies to combat violence against women and children. It will focus on understanding the strength of both traditional and modern approaches finding a common ground and developing collaborative methods that respect cultural heritage while addressing the urgent need to eliminate Gender-based Violence



KEY NOTE ADDRESS

DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY NONCEBA MHLAULI POLICY MEETS TRADITION: THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN HARMONIZING CULTURAL PRACTICES WITH LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

Points that she raised touched on the following key concerns:

- Child marriages- an important phenomenon that seems to be escalating daily.
- Churches that encourage older men to marry young girls.
- The practice of Ukuthwala- forced marriages.
- She commended the Balopedi culture and the rain Queen Modjadji on the respect they have for women by recognizing them as leaders whilst patriarchy pushes the agenda and narrative of King Shaka, who was regarded as the leader back in the time.
- The Minister also pointed out that times have changed as woman-to-woman marriages are recognized despite resistance from other spheres of society.



She posed a question on "How can we ensure that legislation and cultural frameworks ensure the protection of those who are discriminated? She added that culture should be practiced in such a way that it upholds human rights.

What then must be done? Balance the two ends and ensure that either ends are not negatively affected.



KEY NOTE ADDRESS

ADVOCATE KAGISO MAPHELLA - ILITHA LABANTU BOARD MEMBER

Advocate Maphella described herself and her work as a customary law expert, lawyer by profession and a researcher by protest, who growing up has always been fascinated by women and their struggles.

Specializing in customary law in South Africa, one of the first-ever research projects she worked on was titled, "Cultural Practices. She narrated a story of encounters with customary practices, which was when she visited her grandmother's village. Her grandmother said something to her that stayed with her and guided her career as a researcher.

In research, she learned the following:

- If it bothers you so much do something about it.
- "Whoever tells the story controls the narrative"
- Women are empowered as some are taken advantage of in cultures where men are still considered superior, an example is where women and children are overpowered by greedy relatives leaving them with nothing.
- Knowledge is power: the absence of knowledge can have a ripple effect and affect generations. The old notion was that only a White child was supposed to become a doctor or a lawyer.
- Creating dialogues with communities still rooted in these practices and teaching them, traditional leaders as the first point of contact.
- Traditional relate in a language that they are familiar with, therefore if Gender-Based Violence is to be addressed in traditional communities it has to be done in a language they can relate to.
- The question, "Why are women angry?" Women have the right to be angry as they are still at the receiving end.



- Marriages between women are becoming popular. This is an old practice in countries like Kenya and Nigeria. Women have been utilizing this system as it is much easier, less demanding and no patriarchal tendencies experienced.

Therefore, whilst we practice modern ways of doing things, Indigenous knowledge systems should not be discarded. These beliefs and traditions passed down through generations are still relevant today. Therefore:

- You cannot act on knowledge if you do not have it.
- Knowledge systems transfer is essential.

To effectively integrate strategies to combat violence against women and children requires an understanding of the strengths of both traditional and modern approaches and finding common ground in developing collaborative methods that will respect both cultural heritage while also addressing the urgency to eliminate gender-based violence.



MBUYISELO BOTHA – SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL MEN'S FORUM

The speaker narrated and dedicated his encounters with Mam Mandisa who left him in awe with his leadership qualities and dedication to gender equality and the protection of women and girls. He pointed out two occasions in particular:

- Their first meeting was in New York at the CSW. Her sharp sense, wittedness being unafraid to call one to order.
- Her respect of the Ilitha brand and ensuring that when wearing the Ilitha Labantu T-Shirt it was to promote the organization and worn to tarnish its image.

He also paid tribute to former Minister of Social Development Ms Bathabile Dlamini for the role she played when she was a minister. We need to give people their flowers while they are still with us. He remembered a time when she rescued Social Work students who didn't have fees but fought tooth and nail for their inclusion. He recognized other women such as Ms Ndivhuwo Sekobela who have also been fighting fearlessly for women's rights.



- A lot of men feel emotionally, and financially emasculated.
- When it comes to their lived experiences, they also ask why there is no Ministry for Men.
- There is a reality or a perception that men feel excluded, this must not be dismissed as cheap talk.
- Women must also be mindful of their choice of language like, 'Men are dogs, this scares men into engaging with issues as they feel that they have been relegated.
- Men's conversations among themselves are important but we must bridge the gaps to bring them into the mainstream conversations.

In his experience with traditional leader Kgosi Mabi from North West, they were able to bridge gaps between the traditional leader and his community and mobilized the other chiefs to bring men into the conversations. He said this was not merely to tick boxes but to make real differences.

He said Mam Mandisa understood these challenges and urged Ilitha's leadership to look at this aspect and include men in conversations. The issue of ukuthwala is still an issue, therefore it is important to have laws explained to communities and that they take ownership of these laws.

He further emphasized that:

- Top-down laws will not achieve the changes we desire and traditional leaders and communities must not be treated as a 'by the way' group.
- GBV and traditional leadership need to be interrogated, for example, young men coming from the mountains are considered dirty and to cleanse themselves would need to sleep with other women, who are not their girlfriends. This is a dehumanizing practice and we are not even talking about the other consequences such as HIV/AIDS, and STDs. This must be stopped.
- Women must be negotiators when boys go to the mountains to provide much needed wisdom and guidance.
- Cultural practises and modern practices need not be mutually exclusive to each other, there should be a converging point.
- Boys do not become men after a few weeks in the mountain so women must be brought in and traditional leaders are the bridge to harness these issues.
- Traditional leaders cannot be as they are also parents at the end of the day with children who are girls and prone to GBV as well as children who are in the LGBTQ community. They encounter these issues.

He urged that a sense of ownership must be created for traditional leaders. Genital mutilation is still happening in countries like Uganda, Nigeria where these practices are rife. He called everyone not to be complacent and allow such issues to creep back in, efforts must be made to make traditional leaders part and parcel of our dialogues.





JUSTICE ZIONE JANE NTABA – MALAWI JUDICIARY

Her extensive legal career spans both criminal and civil cases, as an adjudicator, legal policymaking and legislative analysis, energy law, international law, constitutional law, and human rights law. Her passion for gender, children and disability rights was encapsulated in her address as she kicked by thanking the Malawi Judiciary, through her Chief Justice for allowing her to attend the conference and share their experiences outside the country, in particular, women judges.

A key achievement of the Malawi judiciary is that:

- The fact that the work done has now become inculcated into the Malawi judiciary because as the Women Judges Association of Malawi, we have managed to get our institution, the Malawi judiciary, to take on from a programming perspective, things that usually would not have been very traditionally in the judicial system.

Giving an example of her growing up, she said there were no gender roles in her home. The men did what the girls could do, the girls did what the boys could do. And because of that, she learnt what the concept of gender is and how that can be inculcated, even from a traditional perspective.

Her focus was on bridging the gap between traditional and cultural practices and modern approaches to end gender-based violence and looking at the Malawi judiciary's approach to this.

She quoted,

"Each human being requires that the state and all persons shall recognize and protect fundamental human rights and afford the fullest protection to the rights and views of all individuals, groups, minorities, whether or not they are entitled to vote"

Constitution of Malawi



She said this is the concept everybody always talks about which is inherent dignity or worth. And sometimes when you talk about culture and traditions, that kind of gets lost in the process. She stressed the importance of talking about inherent dignity and worth, It is intrinsically African. The concept of Ubuntu or Umuntu. And that's where the concept of rights as well as justice is in our systems. Sexual and gender-based violence is pervasive in its very nature. It takes away the inherent dignity and worth of a human being. It catches across cultures, races, genders, and societies. Some experience with SGBV, whether personally or through others. We also must understand that the fact that traditional and cultural practices are both good and bad.

She agreed with the other speakers that traditional leaders hold significant influence in many communities.

She referred to Malawi's context to understand where Malawi fit in terms of GBV. She anchored the discussion on the rule of law and justice. The fundamentals of any judiciary are to promote the rule of law.

The following were highlighted

- The role of the judiciary is to interpret the law, whichever law it is, whether it is good law or bad law, the fundamental human rights, most of our constitutions have set out, which have a very significant impact on sexual and gender-based violence.
- The right to life, human rights and freedoms, human dignity and personal freedoms are fundamentals of any constitution. This is what Malawi have in the constitution.
- The concept of equality, the concept of rights of children, elderly, persons with disabilities, sexual orientation and rights of women is entrenched in the constitution and laws of the country.

Despite all of this, femicide is prevalent, and paedophilia continues to take place.

CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

- Have there been efforts to recognise women traditional leaders who form majority of traditional healers and traditional healers not accessing natural resources for performing rituals?(mountains, rivers etc)
- Because women's problems have not been resolved for the longest time, communities have become apathetic to policy participation and do not want to be involved as there seems to be no hope. The answer may be to ensure that all channels of communicating with that community are exhausted .
- Recognition of the good cultural and traditional aspects is key to addressing some of our challenges. Taking China as an example, it has not lost its customs while African customs have been set aside.
- Centering African perspectives and challenging patriarchal laws must be done while acknowledging the inter-sectionalities that exist in society. For example, some training of girl children are done shrouded in mystery with older women teaching sexual grooming to children in preparation for marriage. This creates a very complex problem showing other women defending patriarchy. Age appropriate teaching will ensure that overly sexualizing girls does not happen in society.
- Let us promote intra-agency among girls so that they are able to say no.
- There should be a culture of accountability in both culture and formal justice systems.
- It is vital that we move beyond empowerment and begin implementation.



SESSION 2: WOMEN'S SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH INITIATIVE AND RIGHTS

This session focused on sexual and reproductive health and rights as a key pillar to addressing poverty from a gender perspective, advancing Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Africa through strengthening access to quality comprehensive health education.

It will also tackle the challenges of sexual reproductive health and the rights of young women with disabilities and how it impacts mental health.



MR YU YU - UNFPA REPRESENTATIVE

Giving background on the fund Mr Yu Yu mentioned that the fund was established in 1967 as a trust fund for population issues. It was fully operational in 1969. At that time it was called United Nations Fund for Population Activities and in 1987 then it was renamed as Population Population Fund.

He thanked the Executive Director of Ilitha Labantu for the opportunity to collaborate and to honour the legacy of Mandisa. He also showed appreciation for creating a space to discuss sexual reproductive health and rights issues and South Africa.

Borrowing a message from a colleague, he quoted, "African issues are to be dealt with African solutions"

He proceeded to say that his discussion point is going to centre around the theme of the workshop, in terms of women's rights at a crossroads as that resonates with sexual reproductive health and rights.

So I'm going to present to you. middle-income trapped from the economic term. It means that the countries strive or struggle to advance to a high-income developed world. So they are trapped as a middle-income country.

Middle-Income trap

- According to the World Bank, there's almost more than a hundred countries in the world are still trapped in this middle-income trap.
- South Africa as one of those struggling countries has struggled for over 60 years. It means that 60 years ago, South Africa was already a middle-income country, yet today you're still in that trap, being trapped as a middle-income country.



- Why is this important? There is a strong correlation between those countries trapped in the middle-income trap and poorer sexual reproductive health indicators.

CONCEPT OF HUMAN CAPITAL

- There is a strong correlation between the middle-income trap and human capital.
- The concept of human capital is critical in shaping and helping a country to develop and advance its society and economy.
- South Africa is doing pretty well, we can see how the wealth is being contributed to through three key pillars:
 - Produce, from natural resources and human capital.
- In South Africa about 58% of wealth accumulation comes from strong human capital. South Africa is more advanced than many of the African countries. But if you look at the developed world, the developed economies, are sitting at 70%.
- So there's still a gap between South Africa and the European country in terms of reaping the benefits of human capital compared with the developed world.
 - there is a clear gap there. And for human capital development, the theory says that there are a few key elements contributing to human capital development. For example, early childhood development, healthy living, quality education, and learning outcomes. For example, the skills to match the job market can take advantage of the human capital.

DIGITALISATION

The world is advancing so rapidly, with digitalization, and how the country innovates is also a key component in building human capital. Health, especially sexual reproductive health, is a key component to contribute to the development of human capital. I understand, for example, that South Africa is facing challenges, the triple crisis, but specifically in terms of sexual repudiation, and teenage pregnancy,

In terms of sexual and legal health and rights, Bringing a different perspective, South Africa focuses a lot on young people. The older population is often neglected. There's a belief that young people will be the fastest growing population in the next 20 or 30 years. It is not true. The fastest growing population is the older population in South Africa.

Professor Mark from MRC conducted a longitudinal study on ageing in one of the districts. One of the conclusions of their study was that there was a high increase in the incidence of HIV, and STIs, not among young people, but among the older population. So there is interesting evidence from the researchers on many other subjects. Mr Yu Yu then introduced a summarized framework UNFPA is advocating to build human capital. Sexual, and human health and rights sit at the centre of the framework. For South Africa to fully tap into the capacity of the human capital. I mean, just to summarize three takeaways after one year is, you know, spending a year in South Africa. And a lot resonates with what colleagues said yesterday.

- Long-term Planning: First and foremost is to plan beyond a cycle of the government. So having the foresight, looking at generation, longer-term planning.
- Identify root causes: Start to address some of the fundamental and root causes to prevent young people from accessing or shaping the kind of behaviour.
- Adopt a layered approach: Using the example of teenage pregnancy, I've been advocating since last year to say that so far the focus is very much on biomedical health interventions, not so much on social behavioural change, even less on structural issues.

Based on his 20 years in different countries, Mr Yu Yu confirmed that South Africa has the most progressive, the best policy framework on sexual reproductive health and rights. There are still gaps and room for improvement, but overall there is a significant achievement in the country.

However, there is a huge implementation gap from policy to practice. How do we unlock that? South Africa has all the solutions. But often the policymakers don't want to follow. They believe what they believe in, not what the evidence says. There is a great potential for South Africa to fully tap into the human capital and sustain the development of the country. Thank you very much. Thank you.





KHANYISA DUNJWA – PASSIONATE UNLIMITED PEERS IN ACTION

The speaker shared her lived experiences as an activist in the Tabankulu, Alfred Nzo District, in the Eastern Cape. She presented this case study focusing on three key issues:

1. Policy
2. Practice
3. Impact

She said that in Tabankulu they do not have the impact they want simply because there is a huge gap between policy and practice. The country is good at policy development, however bad when it comes to practice. So communities are unable to see the desired impact or results on the work done, or the experience, the lived experience of women and girls, particularly in hard-to-reach rural settings.

"Why are you not angry enough? You know? Why are women not angry enough? Because as women, we should be angry enough?"

We know what the lived experience is, women and girls are at the losing end. And the question is why. And as we deliberate on women's rights that are at the crossroads:

- Women should be angry as we know and lived these experiences
- There are women who lived before us. It is a known fact that when they were angry, that anger took them to the streets. It's not as if there's no footprint for women of today to follow. There is a footprint.
- 27A of the Constitution: 27, says, Everyone has the right to have access to— (a) health care services, including reproductive health care; (b) sufficient food and water; and (c) social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependents, appropriate social assistance.

In Alfred Nzo and many other rural, this right is violated. No access to health care service, poor access to food and water, and some are unable to reach service to access social services as the roads are not fixed and rivers have no bridges. This requires a multisectoral approach.

- Need for community-led data and monitoring. Stats SA to work with communities.
- There is a notion that services should be directed to 15- 24-year-olds. Where is this delusion coming from that investment should be in this group?
- Community-based organizations should not be divided by investments.



What should be happening? A Call for:

- Support youth and women-led organisations, and provide them with:
 - Training.
 - Resourcing Compensation: No to unpaid work.
- To be successful it is imperative that
 - All work is documented.
 - Meaningful investment.



NKHABELE MARUMO – ILITHA LABANTU BOARD CHAIRPERSON

There seems to be a disconnect between Mental Health and Sexual Reproductive Health. Also, people with disabilities are often overlooked. Many women and women with disabilities face significant crises, including anaemia and depression. According to the speaker, research shows that one in ten women lives with a mental related to reproductive health. It is essential to address the intersectionality of these issues with bold and integrated approaches.

On the topic of teenage pregnancy, she said it must be called by its appropriate name—childhood pregnancy—to reflect its true nature. Depression among elderly women is another critical issue; many are forced into old age homes for safety, raising questions about whether this is the best approach. Covid 19 left many people with respiratory, cardiovascular and mental health like depression, anxiety and other mood disorders.

How do we protect adolescents from mental health? There is the increased use of substances, they get no support, junk food is easily accessible than real food, and children take Ritalin due to attention deficiencies.

Substance abuse poses a severe risk to young people, as research indicates that brain development, particularly the prefrontal lobe, continues until the age of 25 to 30. High rates of substance abuse endanger this crucial developmental phase.

In terms of nutrition, South Africa faces a concerning trend of increased reliance on fast food over wholesome, home-cooked meals. This societal complacency is a painful phenomenon, putting the future of the African child at risk.



Other pressing mental health concerns include postpartum depression, growing reliance on antidepressants, ADHD in children, and the inadequacies of the education system. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened many of these issues, leading to a rise in child abandonment, teenage suicide, and self-inflicted injuries among men aged 15 to 44. Men, in particular, face overwhelming pressure, resulting in more daring and successful suicide attempts. PTSD is also alarmingly prevalent in South Africa.

These challenges require collective effort, urgent action, and sustainable solutions to safeguard mental health and well-being across all demographics.

CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

- While the focus on youth is important, the elderly are also a huge concern because of their vulnerabilities.
- Teenage pregnancy should be more accurately referred to as child pregnancy, as recognizing it as such raises awareness of the significant challenges young individuals face.
- The statistics regarding the high increase in the incidence of HIV, and STIs, not among young people, but among the older population are misleading and illogical, as they fail to account for the reality that children as young as 10 are becoming pregnant exacerbated by the age of consent (for sexual intercourse) pegged at 12 years. This means a child from the age of 12 can consent to sexual intercourse as long as their partner is not older than them by more than two years. There is further need to interrogate these contradictory laws including, for example, the crime of incest should just be recognised as rape.
- Research in South Africa shows that the intersectionality of abused children (sexual violence) can be traced to their parents who were also abused at some point in their lives
- Corruption has hampered service delivery crippling many community functions.
- There is unlimited access to porn by children and adults.
- Sexual reproductive Health is not explained or taught to children and women.
- There is need to understand that families and communities have become so dysfunctional and services are not available.
- Strategic litigation must be considered to challenge government on its constitutional obligations.
- South Africa should increase its mental healthcare services in public health institutions. It is a sad fact that the South African system in healthcare is a diseases service and not a healthcare service. It is important that mental healthcare services be integrated in all services.
- Women must stop agonizing and organize themselves to take action. For example, Ilitha should rightfully take its place as an observer at the African Commission of Human Rights.
- Engaging Stats SA is important as this is critical to proper planning of government hence the sensitization of communities is important to participate in statistics initiatives spearheaded by Stats SA.

SESSION 3: WOMEN'S SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH INITIATIVE AND RIGHTS

ACCELERATING WOMEN'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT: THE PATH TO PEACEFUL, JUST, AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES AND LEVERAGE FINANCING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

This session advanced sustainable women's economic empowerment in line with the Sustainable Development Goals - Agenda 2063. It will also seek to investigate the impact of financial inclusion and gender budgeting response that will foster enabling environments for financing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls that will advance Sustainable Women's Economic Empowerment in Line with the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063.





PHELISA NKOMO - ECONOMIST

In response to accelerating women's socio-economic empowerment, the speaker opened her address by highlighting the impact of diseases on the national budget. Disease which usually is followed by a whole lot of people demanding support for chronic medication. Just like education, creating opportunities and providing housing, health can be used as a catalyst for empowerment and children, as well as ending gender inequality.

Health

According to the speaker, health and well-being were never invested in much earlier. Similar to education, in South Africa every year between 1.1 to 1.4 children studying for grade R, by the time they hit grade 12, 50% have been lost in the system, and they cannot even be traced. And part of it is that you can trace young women, which is in the context if they get pregnant, then they come back into the healthcare system, you know that they are a young mother. With young men, it is difficult to trace them, most of them are on the street corners.

Education

Every street corner you drive to in our communities, you can find young people and children. They are out of school. One can experience despondency and social tension when there is talk about schooling. So when you are in an academic institution, you must truly get worried, the education system does not prepare those children who do not fit into mainstream schooling. What European countries have done is establish short courses to allow young people who, if they can read and write English, to do short courses like project management.

Economic Opportunities

Economic opportunities are created where people want to live so that they spend time with their families. Mothers continue to carry the burden because 54% of South African households are women-headed. And it's black women, and 16% is white women.

With such discrepancy, it means that we have to start evaluating our policy framework as far as gender equality and machinery is concerned. South Africa is rated at the top as far as policies are concerned. Africa looks to South Africa. I mean, we're doing well in certain things, but we're not doing well in others. It must be a concern for women that we're seeing such an increased economic migration.

Ms Nkomo referred to the impact of colonialism, labour, and Russia disrupting African feminism. She said, that in a democratic dispensation where Africans in Africa are liberated, this kind of disruption is not expected.



South Africa is becoming a lot more urbanized. So Africans, particularly, live two lives. They move into the city for 11 months, and then one month they move into a rural community.

Housing

The sad thing is, in the 11 months, Africans live in an informal settlement without water, electricity, decent abortion facility. But they build a beautiful house in rural communities, which they only get to enjoy between three weeks to a month. What that signals is that society is moving ahead of what government is, in that people are starting to say, these are the decent houses we want to live in.

In closing, she alluded to the fact that South Africa is heading the G20 and African Union both seeking to find solutions to regional and global economic and financial issues. It is hoped that South Africa will benefit from these forums bringing back to the country sustainable solutions, in particular on issues that cause disparity and affect the livelihoods of women and children.



DR TIRHANI MANGANYI – GBVF RESPONSE FUND 1

"We're talking the real lives of women, children, and many vulnerable groups that are being battered every day. And one life is way too many for us to keep silent"

This was the opening statement as Dr Manganyi shared information on the GBVF Response Fund, the progress and highlights.

She said it was great for her to talk about one case study in South Africa that demonstrated something to support efforts to fight against Gender-Based Violence and Femicide. She indicated that there is movement in the right direction, even though the find recognizes that there is still a long way to go and more needs to be done because it's going to take a multi-sectoral approach.

Dr Manganyi raised the issue of the complex problem of gender-based violence and the work of the Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Response Fund.



CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

- Reminders and recognition that South Africa is a country with high levels of gender-based violence.
- The Medical Research Council reported that at least three women get killed in South Africa country every day.
- How did the fund come about? How did the National Strategic Plan come about? We don't exist outside of the National Strategic Plan on gender-based violence and femicide and it's important to center ourselves and to, you know, recognize that.
- Contribution made by the women in the country they are the ones who stood up and said enough is enough. They went to the President and presented 24 demands. The 24 demands, as we know, culminated in the development of the National Strategic Plan, they did not stop there. They marched to the Johannesburg Stock Exchange and made a call to action for the private sector to contribute to fighting gender-based violence in the country.
- This is how the fund came about. So that planted a seed and again the president championed the establishment and the launch of the fund. However, and just a reminder that again, we are very much guided by the National Strategy Plan on Gender-Based Violence and its six pillars.
- They also wanted the private sector to contribute. When the fund ultimately got launched, it took about one year for the fund to be set up and launched, the International Women's Forum supported the launch of the organizing and the registration, putting together the board, and mobilizing private sector companies for them to start making contributions. And ultimately the fund was launched by the president in February 2022.
- The Board of Directors was established back then and right in 2021 still, we were able to announce the call for applications and out of that process we were able to support at least 170 organizations with about 86 million rands that was invested there.
- This problem is way too big, it's way too complex, and it will take a whole society approach to be able to address gender-based violence. It's become a chronic crisis in our country. We want to see a South Africa that is free from all forms of gender-based violence directed at women, children, and LGBTQI. and other vulnerable groups, because we know that women living with disabilities are actually at a far much greater risk of experiencing gender-based violence.
- When the fund was first launched, there was a lot of momentum and a lot of groundwork that was laid and there was a lot of excitement, not excitement in a bad way, but I think a recognition that yes, the private sector needs to step up. As a result of that, we received significant amounts of cash donations that came to the fund, but also pro bono support. Today we can run a very lean organization.
- It is important for to pay attention to capacity gaps and areas for capacity strengthening because, just like any other funder or any other donor.

SESSION 4: WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP AND THEIR FULL AND EQUAL PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING H.E. EUNICE IIPINGE, PRESIDENT OF PAN AFRICAN WOMEN'S ORGANISATION(PAWO)

The session looked at how to strengthen women's rights and political participation in decision-making at all levels of governance to entrench domestic legal frameworks and provisions on gender equality and women's participation. Experts will discuss strategies to overcome barriers that hinder the progress of women in various fields and explore the strengthening of women's leadership and women's full and equal participation in decision-making in all areas of sustainable development. It also promotes sustained peace, inclusive and sustainable growth, and development through strengthened formal and informal institutions by providing access to effective equitable justice and security services, promoting and protecting human rights, and strengthening social cohesion and reconciliation. It will also discuss the status of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the current political context and identify priority areas for action ahead of the Summit of the Future and the 25th Anniversary of Resolution 1325 and mainstreaming and strengthening the role of gender across the humanitarian-development-peace and advancing women and girls.





WOH.E. EUNICE IIPINGE, PRESIDENT OF PAN AFRICAN WOMEN'S ORGANISATION(PAWO)

True leaders embody a deep sense of purpose. Leadership without action is meaningless, as purposeful action is the essence of effective leadership. As the Bible teaches, faith without works is dead, so too is leadership without intentional and decisive action. Great leaders pursue their goals with a clear focus on the collective good, ensuring their efforts benefit all.

"Leaders rise above the status quo, often making personal sacrifices—Mandisa, for instance, even gave up her property. True leadership connects others to a larger purpose and inspires individuals to find deeper meaning within their communities".

Ms Ipinge referred to a discussion about traditional leadership and said that one of the challenges women face in leadership is the pressure to emulate men. It is crucial to remember that while biology cannot be changed, social constructs can—and should—be transformed.

Democracy has been a significant step forward, offering more opportunities for women to assume leadership roles. In the past, a woman could only become a leader if she was born into or married into royalty, which excluded the majority of women. Today, democracy provides a platform where any woman can aspire to lead. However, we must also acknowledge the lingering influence of Christianity and colonization, which brought their ideologies and continue to shape our collective consciousness.

In decision-making, gender relations are inherently tied to power dynamics. Historically, women were excluded from positions of authority, even denied the right to vote, and were often regarded as dependents. Women must actively resist perpetuating harmful myths. For instance, in some traditions, the birth of a boy is celebrated as the arrival of a hunter, while the birth of a girl is seen as the arrival of a preparer, reinforcing the elevation of boys over girls.

This bias extends into politics, where women are often pitted against one another, allowing men to dominate leadership roles. The underrepresentation of women in politics remains a serious issue. Africa, with its 55 countries, has only one female president. However, progress is visible, as Namibia follows Sierra Leone in electing a female president—a milestone worthy of applause.



CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

- Women must overcome financial and digital barriers to fully realize their potential.
- Women must guard against agendas that hinder their ascent into high-ranking positions. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach.
- Research plays a vital role in shaping how we perceive ourselves and our place in society.
- Symbols in African contexts hold significant influence in shaping gender perspectives. For example, in some Namibian cultures, women carrying baby boys feel emboldened to walk at night, believing the boy's manly scent; offers protection. We must be cautious not to perpetuate such stereotypes.
- Mentoring the younger generation is crucial, as it fosters transformation and progress.
- Building partnerships among women and promoting development are essential for uplifting and empowering others.



COMMISSIONER DR LITHA MUSYIMI OGANA – AFRICAN COMMISSION FOR HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

While there are women leaders, many still do not hold critical positions. In 1995, at the Beijing Conference women brought their agendas to the forefront. Now, 30 years later, we reflect on our progress. For example, through our initiatives, we have trained women in East Africa, many of whom have advanced to become ministers and other high-ranking officials. This project has proven effective overall.

In 1993, African women joined a United Nations caucus, playing a pivotal role in shaping key institutions like the African Union and conceptualizing the African Parliament. There was a deliberate campaign to include women in the AU, and these efforts also resulted in women holding positions in ECOSOC. Women further contributed to the Durban Conference on Racism in 2002. Additionally, their lobbying efforts have led to milestones such as the Maputo Protocol.

As we move forward, we must maintain clarity of the vision. Let us localize and apply the knowledge gained from the United Nations. Research and data compilation should be prioritized, along with the establishment of a comprehensive database of women leaders to provide immediate access to qualified individuals when needed. Lastly, we must continue fostering political will across Africa to ensure the empowerment of women.



CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

- Political barriers can hinder women's progress.
- Women who act as proxies for male interests, undermining genuine representation.
- Lack of experience among some women in leadership roles.
- Gender advocacy that lacks genuine passion and commitment.



Advocate Nthabiseng Sepanya-Mogale. - Commission of Gender Commission (CGE) Chairperson

The Advocate opened up by saying that she was excited to be talking on the topic as although South Africa has tried everything to fight against Gender-Based Violence, is still high. South Africa has:

- Progressive legislation and policies in place
- Progressive interventions in 2000 – Thuthuzela Care Centres model
- Expressed as a priority,
- 2nd Pandemic,
- but not funded.

CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

1. What then should we do?

1.1. Call it what it is – GBV.

- It is violence, nothing less.
- Violence – physical
- To the mind, the soul and emotions, our chosen identity.

1.2. See it and respond to it as a Social justice issue

- Dismantle Patriarchy in all its manifestations - the entire system -the churches, education, our homes, communities, the workplace, governments etc
- Dysfunctional families. Honesty on factors that exacerbate it.
- Alcohol misuse and abuse, Integrated system and response –

1.2.1. Don't fix what is not broken, fix what is broken, and never disregard a good idea

- Revive TCCs and other successful intervention Models
- Re-align with District model and other models,
- NSP should have been an upgrade of the TCC model - was itself an innovative way and one-stop comprehensive model – Revised J88, Forensic nurses.



- If it's regarded as a pandemic- it must be in everyone's plans including planning structures – Municipal Demarcation Board, Cogta. There are 284 municipalities
- Response lines. We need to have We cannot afford many numbers. We don't remember them therefore do not use them. There were only 45 calls in KZN in the year 2022/23. Can be innovative but how effective are they? That should be the question.

1.3. Don't make it fashionable, make it honest, truthful and the right thing to do

- Yes, men have to participate, but they cannot be made into celebrities, held high as though they are doing something that women have not done since time immemorial.
- Think about is how would we feel if when tackling racism we celebrate white people who participate. It would be nothing but the entrenchment of racism, especially when we parachute them to the front as those they deserve to lead. That is a classic patriarchal approach to things, it cannot continue.

1.4. Learn for each other

- Impact of Illitha la Bantu – Illitha Labantu Model of community mobilization, sustainability and staying the course,
- Responsiveness, networking

1.5. International Solidarity

- No new, but must be recognized and guarded as a success



DR HAZEL GOODING – UN WOMEN DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE MULTI-COUNTRY OFFICE

Dr Gooding remarked that this is a critical discussion that demands our attention, as societal dynamics evolve daily.

The ability to transform aspirations into lived realities is a testament to women's resilience. When women lead, communities flourish, making it essential to have women in government, the private sector, and other key positions. As UN Women marks its 15th anniversary, global research from 2024 reveals a concerning trend: the participation of women in global leadership has stagnated, with only 30% of women occupying high-level leadership roles. This calls for renewed efforts to break barriers and drive progress.



The persistent challenges include:

- Discriminatory laws that continue to undermine gender equality, Deep-rooted stereotypes that perpetuate male dominance and Gender-based violence, which affects women at all levels, including those in leadership positions.
- The question is: what strategies are we implementing to empower women in leadership?

Governments play a critical role in guaranteeing women participation, and the UN works collaboratively with them. However, it is important to acknowledge that the UN is also a political organ. UN Women, being the youngest branch of the United Nations, was only established in 2010. It needs opportunities to collaborate with grassroots organizations like Ilitha Labantu to witness and support advocacy efforts on the ground. Redirecting, rather than diminishing, funds is key to sustaining these efforts. Above all, we must continue sharing our stories, ensuring they are heard and understood, as storytelling remains a powerful tool for change.

CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

Going forward, We must actively promote stronger participation of women across all sectors and areas of society.

- A zero-tolerance approach to gender-based violence (GBV) is essential; it is a societal imperative.
- Open conversations with our children are crucial—we must not wait or assume they cannot be part of these discussions.
- Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative, multi-sectoral approach, uniting efforts across communities, governments, and organizations.
- Together, let us remain steadfast, continue working collectively, and persist in the fight for progress and equality.

SESSION 5: DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING AND BACKLASH AGAINST WOMEN'S RIGHTS: UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT CHALLENGES FOR FEMINIST POLITICS.

This session analyzed the links between democratic erosion and the perpetuation of discriminatory and patriarchal norms and practices and addressed backsliding and backlash against women's rights, creating an understanding of the challenges for feminist politics and how they impact gender equality policies and women's rights. The Panelist will analyze the implications of attacks on women's rights on gender equality policies





DR THOZAMA APRIL – UNIVERSITY OF FORTE HARE

Dr April expressed gratitude to Commissioner Ogana from the African Commission for Human and People's Rights for her insights into what the 1995 Beijing Conference was like for African women. She also shared how historians are humbled by her narration as this helps analyze and interpret past events, figures, and societies to better understand how the past has shaped the present and may influence the future. On intersectionality, she recommended works by Kimberly Crenshaw and Patricia Hill Collins for a deeper understanding of the complexities of identity and insights on the "consciousness of a Black woman," their works are essential reading, offering powerful perspectives on how race, gender, and other forms of oppression intersect. Ilitha Labantu's 35 years of fighting for women's issues is a major milestone.

It is important to develop theories about the oppression of women, recognizing that women are not a homogeneous group and their experiences vary widely. However, women should be cautious of stubbornness, as there is a tendency to be both provocative and determined to hold our ground, fearing that we may lose in the process. The significance of major conferences, particularly the Beijing Conference, cannot be overstated; it served as a catalyst for women to recognize and claim their rights, marking a pivotal moment in the global feminist movement.

The South African delegation's contribution to the 1995 conference focused on interpreting paragraph 96, which asserts that women's rights are human rights, including the right to freedom from discrimination. They rephrased the issue to emphasize that women have the right to autonomy over their bodies and should be free from coercion. Essentially, they argued that rights cannot coexist with coercion—true freedom is incompatible with forced control.





NALEDI MAPONOPONO (UCT PHD CANDIDATE)

Ms Maponopono described a wave of embarrassment caused by another woman, who made a point/comment about her outfit. The remark was harsh, accusing her of dressing “inappropriately” as if her choice of clothes diminished her worth or credibility. This, she described as policing of women’s bodies which was detrimental to achieving the gender equality women were fighting for. She had carefully chosen her attire and she felt confident and comfortable.

Democratic backsliding and backlash against women’s rights is the current challenge for feminist politics. In understanding the geopolitics of the day, backsliding is tantamount to regression and a perfect example is The United States of America and the whole world is watching regression in real time. The increasing scourge of gender-based violence in South Africa is another example of backsliding and regression. It is crucial to understand how intersectionality connects with various forms of oppression. For example, a black, queer and poor woman will face more oppression. Sadly, Africa in general has regressed and this is seen in how women are treated in all facets. Women will choose to have abortions illegally despite the law permitting abortion but societal attitude dictates otherwise.

The role of intersectional feminism plays a crucial role in recognizing and addressing the diverse and interconnected ways in which gender-based oppression intersects with other forms of discrimination, such as race, class, sexuality, ability, and more. It emphasizes that women’s experiences are not monolithic, and different women face unique challenges based on the various aspects of their identities. There is a need to intensify support to organizations like Ilitha because they are watchdogs and hold the government accountable. It is also important to reflect on the next 35 years. Feminism should be remembered as the most active form of resistance and everyone must rise to the call to act. Legal literacy remains a critical component and there is a need for updating knowledge within women’s movements. In the context of democracy, it is a worrying trend that its rise has left limited space for social activism. However, if we embrace new strategies, we can revitalize feminist movements and create opportunities for meaningful engagement and progress.



CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

- What is the perspective on the role of men in addressing gender-based violence (GBV)?
- What strategies should we implement over the next 30 years to combat gender-based violence (GBV), given that it has deeply permeated society, including in churches and traditional practices?
- Have we overlooked the plight of children who, even when their parents are alive, are left to fend for themselves? There has been an increase in violence against children, including abuse from teachers and peers.
- A question for universities and scholars: In the HIV discourse, women were the ones caring for the sick, yet when funding was allocated, these women did not receive the necessary resources. Instead, big organizations received the funds. Why were women at the grassroots level overlooked, despite their critical contributions? They are often not recognized for their compliance, but rather for embodying Ubuntu—the spirit of community and caring.
- At what point do feminists in academia begin documenting the achievements of grassroots women, who are often excluded from mainstream narratives? If we fail to acknowledge their contributions, mistakes are bound to be repeated, and cancel culture may emerge as a consequence.
- When discussing these issues, it's crucial to avoid getting lost in irrelevant details. It's important and strategic, when organizing or coordinating colloquiums, to focus solely on the key issues we want to address. This ensures that the conversation remains purposeful and effective.
- Feminist movements aim to elevate women's rights and challenge the dismantling of patriarchy, a system that harms both women and men. Our goal is not to recenter men in the discourse, nor are we fighting men—our fight is against patriarchy. It is a system that must be deconstructed for the benefit of all.
- It is critical to focus on the message to be conveyed. There must be a focus on shifting our language to ensure that we communicate effectively with those gathering data. The data we rely on should be credible and sourced from global, regional, and national levels. This data must be collected properly and systematically to ensure its accuracy and reliability.
- First, we should be cautious about relying on temporary measures. Instead of having another women's conference without knowing what will come of it, let us host our conference as African women.
- Focus should be on increasing the representation of women everywhere, as men are present in all spaces. When it comes to patriarchy, it remains a top-down system, but at the personal level, it leads to its downfall. Women, if empowered to take care of themselves, hold the key to dismantling it.
- Universities must equip NGOs with essential skills, but it's important to remember that universities are political spaces, and historically, Black universities have often been sidelined. From experience within the university system, research should not be confined to the library. We must actively promote the work of women to reshape the discourse on rights. This can be achieved by partnering with communities to ensure that research reflects and amplifies their lived experiences, empowering women to address their own challenges. Through these partnerships, we can generate impactful ideas that help uplift women and acknowledge the realities they face.



SESSION 6: FEMINIST ORGANIZING AND PRACTICE/ACTIVISM, SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

This session focused on strengthening grassroots movements and feminist networks. It also examined the role of Feminist Movements and Activism in challenging and transforming oppressive structures and systems in different contexts and cultures. It will also clarify the meaning and definition of feminism to dispel the perceptions about the phenomenon.



NOMCEBO MNGENGE - ILITHA LABANTU

Feminist movements work to dismantle patriarchal norms, discriminatory practices, and power imbalances that perpetuate oppression and marginalization and strive for an inclusive and intersectional approach to liberation. Feminist movements and activism play a crucial role in challenging and transforming oppressive structures and systems across various contexts and cultures. By advocating for gender equality, women's rights, and social justice, feminist movements work to dismantle patriarchal norms, discriminatory practices, and power imbalances that perpetuate oppression and marginalization.

Through grassroots organizing, advocacy campaigns, and collective action, feminists mobilize communities, raise awareness, and demand accountability from institutions and policymakers, driving meaningful social change. Moreover, feminist movements recognize the intersecting forms of oppression experienced by marginalized groups, including racism, classism and homophobia, and strive for an inclusive and intersectional approach to liberation.

Transformation of oppressive structures and systems refers to the process of challenging and changing the policies, practices, and norms that perpetuate inequality and discrimination based on social identities such as race, gender, class, sexuality, disability, etc. It involves transforming social institutions such as education, healthcare, criminal justice, and employment to create more inclusive and equitable outcomes for marginalized groups.



One example of the transformation of oppressive structures and systems in a developed economy is the Black Lives Matter movement in the USA, which emerged in response to systemic racism and police brutality against African Americans. The movement has mobilized millions of people to protest, organize, and demand accountability and justice for the victims of racial violence. It has also influenced public opinion, media coverage, political discourse, and policy changes on issues such as criminal justice reform, police accountability, racial equity, and anti-racism education (Ray, 2017).

Another Movement was a movement of women living with HIV—they mobilised together with the community and those women did not have enough money but had tremendous bravery in coming out by doing that it forced people to talk about a lot of issues- relationships with their partners; use of condoms... The Treatment action campaign- was led by men but women were mobilised; they went to communities— and that action changed the international law to enable the generic production of ARVS.

Furthermore, the #MeToo movement in Japan was sparked by a journalist's accusation of sexual harassment by a high-ranking government official in 2017. The movement has exposed the widespread problem of sexual violence and discrimination against women in Japan's patriarchal society and culture. It has also inspired women to speak out, seek legal action, and demand social change. The movement has led to some reforms in the legal system, such as extending the statute of limitations for rape cases, increasing the minimum prison sentence for rapists, and allowing victims to use pseudonyms in court.

In South Africa, the tragic murder of Uyinene Mrwetyana in 2019 sparked the #AmINextProtest, highlighting the need for greater protection of women and prompting widespread activism, including protests at Parliament and the World Economic Forum. Social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter play a significant role in amplifying these movements, providing visibility and connecting communities.

Campaigns like Ilitha Labantu's #Uthuleleni Anti-GBVF Campaign in response to gender-based violence aim to empower women to speak out and take legal action. The call to action is clear: there is a need for greater inclusion of marginalized women, more support for feminist causes, and a commitment to practising feminism in everyday life, starting in homes and communities.

Women must work to challenge patriarchal structures and support feminist efforts both within and outside of their immediate circles. Because "The inequality that we face is structural that is caused by multiple systems with intersecting power, economic power dynamics that affect us as feminists- how do we contest those?", there is a need to:

- Work more on the issue of inclusion and the kind of changes we want and support women from minority groups.
- Encourage more women to support and engage with feminist events rather than supporting patriarchal structures and giving their money to churches.
- Feminism is action, wherever one finds oneself be it in own home or community, the call to action is waiting.





NHLAKANIPHO MAHLANGU - EDUVOS

When feminists gather, it is often a deeply spiritual experience. The “weakness of patriarchy” reveals fascinating phenomena, such as the societal expectations that prevent boys from showing affection, like hugging each other, or even eating certain foods like ice cream or bananas in public. Patriarchy not only oppresses women but also enslaves men by enforcing rigid norms. As bell hooks wrote, feminism is about uprooting patriarchy in all its forms. Research on queer men has uncovered intriguing behaviours, such as the habit of keeping hands in their pockets while talking to other men, a subtle way to avoid being perceived as gay. Feminism is also a personal journey, one that continually asks how we can dismantle patriarchy. To live according to the ideals of feminism, systemic change is essential.

The renowned American author, feminist theorist, cultural critic, and social activist Bell Hooks has written on the intersection of race, class, and gender, and these contributions are critical to feminist theory and the critique of traditional feminist movements for being too centred on the experiences of white, middle-class women. Feminism should also advocate for a more inclusive and intersectional approach.

CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

- What is the Children’s Resource Center doing to foster social movements that bring children together and empower them?
- How can we make complex ideas and concepts accessible to ordinary women, ensuring that no woman is left behind in the process?
- Repeated statements that feminism is unimportant miss the mark. The real question should be: How does feminism impact African lives? Is it aligned with our African values, and does it bring balance to our communities?
- Take lessons from the elderly generation of women who did not subscribe to the Western terminologies we are using the currently ()Feminist/Activist yet through their actions elderly women were the real feminists and were not confined or boxed in these terms.



- Feminism is not a one-size-fits-all concept; we must understand it within the context of our unique geopolitical conditions. Feminists should engage with other women, as the challenges faced by different generations vary. It's important to remain cautious of dictatorship, as it can easily take root, and men may exploit such power dynamics to their advantage.
- Feminism is deeply personal and rooted in one's sense of self. It doesn't always require a woman to consciously identify with the label for her actions to be considered feminist.
- Men can also be feminists, as feminism is a movement that seeks equality and justice for all, regardless of gender.
- It is vital to create meaningful intersections without leaving men behind but it is equally important to recognize that patriarchy is hindering the progress of gender equality, and we cannot rely on men to grant us our equality—we must demand it for ourselves.
- Boys must not be left behind, as they are our children and part of the future we are shaping.
- When discussing feminism, it's important to acknowledge that it is not an African term—it was first raised by white women. Let's stay focused on the issues that directly impact us, and not get distracted by matters that do not reflect our struggles and needs.
- Advocate for the inclusion of older women in discussions about empowerment, as they are often victimized and excluded from educational opportunities, particularly in favor of the 18 to 35 age group. Their voices and experiences are just as valuable and deserve recognition.

SESSION 7: REINVIGORATE REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENT TO WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY

The session explored ways and means of strengthening commitments to the Beijing +30 gender equality at regional and international levels and implementing commitments on women and girls over the next decade, aimed at "Accelerating progress towards Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063 that will enhance international and regional cooperation.



HON THOKO DIDIZA - SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Advancing the Beijing Declaration: Parliamentary Leadership in Achieving Gender Equality in Africa and Beyond



The Speaker first reminded the delegates that the 21st of February was (2:12) the International Day of Mother Tongue Language Day because many times in engagement of this nature there is a tendency to forget the power of language. Not only in terms of communication, but it also defines us as people and who we are. It is through the language that we can communicate, but also it is through the language that we can continue to affirm who we are. Language also enables inclusivity, to be able to carry all of us together. Our children would have learned through their mother tongue language until university. Those who choose to engage in international work then would learn English, Mandarin, German etc.

She said the conference has come at a time when several global shifts have taken place and are likely to impact on women and society negatively.

- We are still reeling from the disruption that was caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This health pandemic tested our health systems and our resilience as a people. It caused disruptions in the agri-food system and trade.
- Our livelihoods were affected. But one thing that is rarely spoken about is how women carried the brand of COVID-19 (6:04) as caregivers to their loved ones. Some of the women we lost during COVID-19 are because they cared for others and thereby sacrificed their very lives for the betterment of others.
- We remember those women for the work that they did then and those who are still alive for the work they continue to do in the care space to make sure that our families and our communities are nurtured.
- The impact on the country's resources as a result of COVID-19 stretched and compromised other development indicators as governments had to save lives and livelihoods. Conflict and wars have not only displaced people but have also heightened (6:56) the level of insecurity for women and communities.
- Agriculture and agribusiness value chains in particular also were disrupted thereby threatening food security. Women who were traders were highly affected because they could not move their goods during this time when they were locked, you know, in countries close to their borders. But, also women who are hawkers could not be on the streets and sell their wares.
- The conflicts that negatively and continue to affect countries that might have made progress in improving the livelihoods of their communities, but also affected world peace.
- The restructuring in the United States following the recent elections (9:02) has also had an impact on development assistance, which have assisted some programs that support women's health and social activity.

These and many others, as these global shifts that are happening impact on the gains that we would have made in the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action.

CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

- We are starting to see regression in a number of areas and issues of democracy and human rights, we've seen what some of those executive orders are saying and what impact are they likely to have on human rights and democracy in general. And one wonders what the consequence of that is going to be.
- The supposed deal between Ukraine and the US, which does not talk much about development, but rather about how much mineral deposits access would the United States have in Ukraine as part of a payback for what was given to them during the war.
- What do these changes mean? And what should be our advocacy during this time?
- A conference of this nature should allow to deliberate on critical issues that impact the rights of girls and women. It should also offer us a platform to share lessons from various communities and nations, thus enabling reflection on the progress made since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration in 1995.
- The Beijing Declaration was the most progressive global blueprint for advancing women's rights.

Going back to history and the role women played and influenced changes in our society and way they have shaped the current discourse:

- Mama Charlotte Maxeke, how she used her own intellect and portfolio to actually start to theorize about gender equality and empowerment, and her boldness.
- Women's role during the formation of the oldest liberation movement, but it didn't allow women as members. Women went ahead and formed the Bantu Women's League
- It was these women who took up the struggle against the land question, particularly in South Africa.



- 1954: It was these South African women across racial as well as class lines that came together to say what should be the future of our country. What should we say as women? If you look at the Women's Charter of 1954, there are certain
- 1956: It was those women, who marched to Pretoria backed by young people.
- 1962: It was the women of Africa who came together and said, we need to do something to liberate this continent, working side by side with men when the Organization of African Union, African Organization, OAU was formed, They soldiered on, and worked side by side with men and young to liberate our countries.
- It was the resolve that had continued to drive women and contributed to making the constitution, in its bill of rights, have a clause on equality.

In closing, she said, that when we review the Beijing platform, we must use this background on what women have done and continue to do. So when Beijing came, it was these collective experiences of women across the globe which came to bear and again made an affirmation of the world that we wanted.



JENNIFER ACIO - UN WOMEN SPECIALIST

Agenda 2030 aims to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, particularly SDG 5 on gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. The focus is on Targets 1-3, which aim to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, aligning with the Beijing Platform that also calls for urgent global action. Despite 30 years since the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, gender equality remains unachieved globally. According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2024, it will take approximately 134 years to close the global gender gap. Issues like child marriage may take even longer to end, with a projected completion in 2092. One of the most concerning indicators is the violence against women and girls, child marriage, and legal gaps.

The targets for SDG 5 set by 2030 include:

- Ending discrimination against women and girls.
- Eliminating all forms of violence, including trafficking and sexual exploitation.
- Eradicating harmful practices like child marriage and female genital mutilation.
- Recognizing and valuing unpaid care work.



- Ensuring women's participation in decision-making and leadership roles.
- Guaranteeing access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- Providing women equal rights to economic resources, including land ownership.
- Enhancing the use of technology to empower women.
- Adopting and enforcing gender equality policies.

Highlighting South Africa's progress and challenges:

- South Africa has made strides with new GBV laws (e.g., the Domestic Violence Amendment Act), but issues such as rape remain high, and progress on gender equality is uneven.
- GBV statistics are worrying, with a significant number of rape cases reported, and underreporting remains an issue due to cultural attitudes.
- There is a lack of comprehensive data on violence against women, which impedes effective policymaking and reform.
- Societal barriers, such as deeply ingrained patriarchal norms and the social legitimization of violence, continue to hinder progress.
- Challenges also include increased unemployment for women, unequal pay, and reduced representation in parliament, despite powerful women holding positions in key roles.

Actions required to eradicate violence against women and girls (VAWG) by 2030 include:

- Improving access to GBV services (e.g., welfare, justice, health sectors).
- Enhancing justice access for survivors.
- Strengthening victim support services, particularly in rural areas.
- Promoting social cohesion to change harmful gender norms and attitudes.
- Increasing investment in women's rights organizations and empowering women and girls.
- Advocating for policy changes and engaging men in the fight against violence.

Going forward, action is required to:

- Ratify the AUCEVAWG framework for eliminating violence against women and girls in Africa.
- Hold leaders and communities accountable and develop an action plan to ensure concrete progress.

In 2025, several opportunities arise to advance gender equality, including global events like the thirtieth anniversary of the Platform for Action, UN Climate Change Conference, and South Africa's G20 presidency, which can be used to promote women's rights and tackle gender-based violence on a global scale.





BATHABILE DLAMINI -VICE PRESIDENT (PAWO) & FOUNDER MABAKHULE FOUNDATION

The Vice President of PAWO stated that instead of delivering a prepared speech, she would focus on addressing the key issues that had emerged during the conference and provide her input on those matters.

CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS:

1. On why are we not angry? When I was framed, I became consumed by anger. However, I've since learned to approach women's causes with diplomacy. We must channel our energy into constructive, strategic actions while still holding on to our passion for justice.
2. Patriarchy is like an Amoeba: It is constantly shifting and adapting. Our initiatives must acknowledge this dynamic and tackle it head-on. Issues like misogyny and masochism are deeply embedded in our societal structures, requiring a multifaceted and comprehensive approach to eradicate them.
3. Intersectionality of Violence: While gender equality remains our central focus, it is crucial to recognize how race, class, and gender intersect to perpetuate the violence we face. We must address these interconnected issues in tandem, understanding that they collectively shape women's experiences.
4. UN Security Council Resolution 1325: This resolution addresses the impact of conflict on women, particularly in regions like Gaza, Ukraine, and the DRC. We must ensure that women's voices are included in peace processes and decision-making in conflict zones.
5. Men Leading Negotiations: Why are men still leading negotiations when they are often the ones causing the wars? We have exceptional women capable of leading peace talks. Women need to understand their power and the importance of their involvement in peace processes.
6. The African Union (AU) Declaration: How far have we come in implementing the AU Declaration? We need to assess the progress made in domesticating policies that aim to empower women and promote gender equality across the continent.



7. The Maputo Protocol and Agenda 2063: These instruments lay out important frameworks for women's rights and empowerment in Africa. We need to ensure their effective implementation and monitor the progress towards achieving the goals set out in these documents.
8. Climate Change: Women are disproportionately affected by climate change, yet they are often excluded from decision-making processes regarding environmental issues. We need to recognize this disparity and advocate for women's active participation in climate action.
9. Support to Grassroots Organizations: Regional and international organizations must provide more support to grassroots movements. We are not isolated; collective efforts are necessary to create sustainable change at the community level.
10. The AU: The African Union (AU) have often overlooked the role of organizations like PAWO (Platform for African Women's Organizations). We need to ensure that these women-led initiatives are given the attention and support they deserve.



MMABATHO MAKENA - MMABATHO FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT

The world is currently facing challenges such as Trumpism and other global shifts—what steps are we taking in response? What do UN conventions mean for us, and what role does the CSW play in our struggle today? At CSW, we often find ourselves at odds over the language we use, which hinders consensus. How can we reinvigorate the agenda for African women? It's time to redesign our agenda with issues like water and other essential resources at the forefront. While many view Trumpism negatively, it should be seen as a wake-up call for Africa. There are lessons to be learned from countries like China, where they've shifted from being mere consumers to thriving through reverse engineering. In the context of patriarchy and racism, victims should never apologize; it is the perpetrators who must be held accountable. Unfortunately, we're seeing a troubling trend where perpetrators seek help through false narratives. Africa is rich in resources, especially in places like the DRC, yet we often see these resources exploited rather than leveraged for our own benefit. The CSW has historically been dominated by the U.S., and many African countries are denied the opportunity to participate due to visa restrictions. Conventions alone are insufficient—they don't deliver tangible change. We need a call to action, where men actively come forward with their initiatives and say, "This is what we are doing to combat GBV and sexual violence."





ADDRESS

MEC OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT GAUTENG HON FAITH MAZIBUKO

Building Social Systems That Empower Women: Strengthening Regional and Global Partnerships for Sustainable Social Development

The speaker noted that in provincial addresses, women were not included on the agenda; instead, the focus was on the economy and other issues. In South Africa, we are seeing an alarming number of trafficked children from Malawi, Zimbabwe, and other African countries, brought under the false pretense of playing soccer. These children are in South Africa, trapped in situations like those in the Children and Youth Care Centers. She said that government made calls to African countries where these children are coming from. Children, particularly from Zimbabwe, have been used for begging, and only Zimbabwe has reached out to South Africa to help bring these children back.

The social systems that empower women must always employ a multi-pronged approach. First, we need to address the structural issues that discriminate against women. Second, the women who came before us have shown that solidarity is key. Third, despite our progress, there is still much more to be done. Instruments such as the CEDAW, Beijing, SADC Protocol, and the Maputo Protocol are vital instruments in moving forward.

Women's empowerment impacts many areas: the economy, the family, and society. When women are not empowered, social ills, such as child begging, drug abuse, and food insecurity, only worsen. Female-headed households are especially vulnerable to food insecurity. Brazil's Bolsa Família program introduced in the 1990s and early 2000s to combat high levels of hunger, poverty and inequality that characterised urban life in many, and particularly the densely populated, reduced levels of inequality and hunger – with significantly fewer people living below the poverty line – and closing the historical rural-urban gap is a good example of how such initiatives can uplift communities. South Africa has also incorporated social relief programs like the R350 grant, the old-age grant, EPWP, and CPWP provide much-needed relief to women.



There is an urgent need for shelters for women fleeing domestic disputes. Why should women be forced to leave their homes? Men must also be made to leave in such situations. Education for women and girls is vital for empowerment, and we must ensure spaces for reflection and dialogue on issues affecting women. Our struggle stalwarts Mam Charlotte Maxeke said, 'this work is not above yourself' and Mam Winnie Mandela also said, "I will fight, and women will bring change in South Africa." Let us heed these words and continue striving for a better, more just future.

CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

- While Africa must rise to the occasion in terms of funding, what immediate actions should be taken to support those affected by the funding cuts, particularly social workers in these organizations?
- Where does BRICS stand in this context? How can we revisit the Women's Parliament to reintroduce issues concerning women?
- What steps are being taken to properly recognize the founder of ILITHA such as the National Orders?
- How can we emphasize the importance of women in media, considering the need for resolutions to be effectively communicated?
- Have we looked into amending the charter to assess the actions of global organizations such as the United Nations?
- Numerous public works buildings are empty and in a state of disrepair, yet there is a shortage of shelters for abused women. How can this issue be addressed?
- How does the CSG (Child Support Grant) contribute to supporting women and children?
- Are we planning to attend the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)?
- Since 1994, has there been any research conducted on the budget allocation for women?
- We often address gender-based violence (GBV) reactively. Why can't we take a more proactive approach by focusing on training and conditioning boys to become men who respect women?
- What role do health workers play in preventative measures for gender-based violence?
- What role could a young women's brigade play in offering a deeper understanding of how to address challenges in our communities?
- The effects of COVID-19 have been devastating, with homes closing and many families lacking income. Even now, we are seeing mysterious deaths being recorded. How can we prioritize and protect vulnerable groups moving forward?
- The plight of children with disabilities is a serious concern. While the government has taken steps to recognize their needs by providing grants, these measures don't seem to support their growth and development. There are very few schools for children with autism, and they are often located far apart. What can be done to address this issue more effectively?
- The justice system, especially in civil matters, is often costly and out of reach for many, particularly employees with low wages. How can we make the justice system more accessible and affordable for all?
- Will we ever reach a point of cohesion with the Department of Social Development regarding the support for women once they leave shelters?
- Regarding the CSW, it could also be held online, making it a hybrid meeting for greater accessibility and participation.
- On the issue of child trafficking, the Convention on the Rights of the Child was the fastest to be ratified, but it has yet to be fully domesticated.
- Child labor and trafficking, especially the exploitation of children through prostitution, remain among the most severe forms of abuse. A particularly alarming example comes from Angola, where a driver offered his children for better opportunities in South Africa—a stark reminder of the dangers children face, often at the hands of their own parents.
- The impact of COVID on women's issues, including mysterious deaths, is concerning. While healthy individuals are dying, we must avoid fueling rumors and myths. Italy is researching this matter.
- Regarding the NSP and its long-term focus on prevention, it aims to address the needs of children, women,



and families, particularly targeting child-headed households and dysfunctional families. However, this requires full participation from everyone.

- Regarding shelters, men in Austria are the ones who leave during domestic violence cases, allowing women and children to stay in their homes, South Africa could benefit from looking at this model.
- When it comes to polyandry, the principle of “what’s good for the goose is good for the gander” applies. In terms of education, it’s essential to engage in the legislative process and ensure our voices are heard.
- As for the Treasury, it is arguably the biggest obstacle to women’s issues, as its budget for women’s programs is laughable and severely underfunds these critical initiatives.
- The impact of COVID has been devastating, and further research is urgently needed. Stats SA does valuable work, so we should engage with them to gather the data we need.
- Additionally, it’s crucial to actively participate in shadow reports, as NGOs play a key role in holding governments accountable.
- Legal aid is available for those who cannot afford legal representation, ensuring access to justice for all.
- A larger portion of the budget is still allocated to NPOs working in substance abuse, but non-compliance remains a significant issue. NPOs must recognize that the funds they receive belong to taxpayers, and therefore, proper accountability is crucial. Shelters also need to ensure compliance, especially considering the risks of foodborne diseases.
- Documenting the work done by NGOs, and when raising awareness, ensure you include everyone—avoid working in silos, as there is no one-size-fits-all approach. The UNAIDS platform is also an important tool we can leverage to advance women’s issues and amplify our collective impact.
- Utilization of Public works buildings to be authorized if the department provides the mandates because this would aid vulnerable individuals, particularly by transforming them into shelters. The current budget allocates 300 million for substance abuse programs and 260 million for skills development.
- When considering skills training, we must broaden the scope beyond traditional areas like sewing and baking. It is crucial to also include other trades such as welding, plumbing, and other vocational skills that can provide individuals with sustainable career opportunities.
- Going forward, we must focus on improving how we gather and share information. Let’s avoid being selective and instead leverage both social media and mainstream media to reach a wider audience. For example, we can raise awareness about compliance and the deregistration of NGOs, while also exploring ways to support those organizations that have been deregistered. By using these platforms effectively, we can ensure a more informed and engaged community.

SESSION 8: THE ROLE OF YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SHAPING THE NEXT DECADE OF GENDER EQUALITY.

The session elevated the voices of young women in leadership and decision-making processes, ensuring youth inclusion in Beijing +30 and the SDGs.



Precious Banda – Young Women of Africa President

It is essential to befriend people outside of your age group. In this digital age, as we witness various cases of



digital love scams, such as the examples from the Northwest Province where elder women lost their pensions to GE PF scams within just three months, it's clear that intergenerational connections are more important than ever.

Feminism is not a threat to anyone. The conference of young women, initiated by women, was founded in solidarity with the hashtag #TotalShutdown. Young people need the wisdom and experience of older generations, and vice versa, if we are to achieve our shared objectives. Sometimes, young people fail to acknowledge the struggles that older generations have faced and mistakenly believe they are equals. The pace at which younger people rise to leadership positions is slow. While many young people don't necessarily seek top positions, they do want to start at the bottom, but the opportunities are often scarce and hard to come by. This generational gap is a major source of tension. Young people want to address the struggles that directly affect them, and they also understand the importance of being mentored because they lack access to best practice examples. There's a significant gap between the older and younger generations—while younger people offer solutions grounded in technology, older generations bring solutions rooted in lived experience. Young people often feel lost because there is a lack of mentorship. It's crucial to bridge this divide to create a future where both generations can learn from.



SIMNIKIWE MABOE - ILITHA LABANTU

Persistent societal norms limit the potential of young women, specifically the outdated belief that women are only fit for domestic roles and should support men's decisions. These harmful norms still affect young women today, but education, empowerment, and mentorship can help them challenge these views. The role of young women in shaping gender equality is critical, as they are the future leaders and change-makers. Some of the strategies for empowering young women include:

- Access to Quality Education: Education equips young women with the skills and confidence to challenge discriminatory norms and engage in important societal conversations.
- Amplifying Voices: Creating platforms for young women to express their concerns and ideas can make their voices heard and raise awareness on issues affecting them.
- Mentorship and Role Models: Pairing young women with positive role models provides guidance and inspiration, helping them navigate societal challenges.
- Challenging Social Norms: Encouraging young women to question patriarchal traditions and norms, and advocating for gender equality in all societal spheres, is essential.



- **Digital Literacy:** Training young women in digital skills empowers them to engage in the modern world and drive change through technology.
- **Innovation and Entrepreneurship:** Encouraging young women to pursue innovation and entrepreneurship enables them to tackle pressing social and economic issues.
- **Advocating for Policy Change:** Supporting young women to advocate for gender-equal policies contributes to the creation of a more just society.
- **Participating in Decision-Making:** Ensuring young women are included in decision-making processes helps ensure their concerns are addressed.

The importance of youth inclusion in global initiatives like the Beijing Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) cannot be over-emphasised. Youth should be actively involved in decision-making, be provided with capacity-building opportunities, and have platforms to amplify their voices. By fostering intergenerational partnerships and addressing structural barriers, the potential of young women can be unlocked thereby empowering them to create a more equitable and sustainable world.

CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

- Young people increasingly identify as feminists, recognizing the importance of language in shaping discourse. However, respect should never be disregarded in these conversations. It is essential to educate older generations about social media while addressing the challenge of coexistence between younger and older generations. Bridging this gap requires a mutual exchange of skills and knowledge, ensuring that young people gain leadership exposure while benefiting from the experience of their predecessors.
- Stigmatization remains a challenge for women, often reinforced by myths, stereotypes, and biases. Women must practice introspection, which if not done can hinder personal and collective growth. Women must recognize that they are multifaceted and should not be confined to societal expectations. For instance, some female celebrities hold their heads high despite criticism, yet their public image may not align with traditional ideals of womanhood. Women must support one another—engaging in meaningful dialogue rather than tearing each other down. When one woman faces criticism, others should not contribute to the negativity but instead foster solidarity.
- Respect is essential—not just in what you say, but in how you say it. The way you treat others reflects who you are. It's important to be strategic when addressing issues. Respect and thoughtful communication are key to building meaningful relationships and learning from those who can help you grow.
- Intergenerational dialogue is key to mutual understanding. Ilitha Labantu should look into hosting the Mandisa Intergenerational Dialogue annually on her birthday. Recognizing the unique struggles of young women within the broader call to action is essential. Skill transfer between generations fosters growth, and everyone has a role to play. When you rise, bring others with you because uplifting each other strengthens the collective journey.
- Ilitha Labantu to look into establishing a Feminist Political School as well as an intellectual hub with the aim to address the survival of women's agendas in spaces where this is not a priority. By so doing, Ilitha will not only harness intellectual capacity in identifying curriculum for feminism and activist training that could become income revenue for the organisation.
- Be cautious of new women's organizations founded by men, where women are merely used as a front. These men often lack an understanding of women's lived experiences, which is crucial for meaningful advocacy and representation.
- Create platforms for young women to participate in influential spaces like the ones we occupy today. The role of media in amplifying their voices cannot be underestimated. The Beijing Platform for Action highlights 12 critical areas for gender equality, including poverty, education, health, violence, armed conflicts, the economy, decision-making, human rights, media, environment, and the rights of the girl child.
- 2025 marks 30 years since the adoption of the Beijing Conference, yet many challenges remain unresolved, and numerous promises have yet to be fulfilled. Although South Africa has declared gender-based violence (GBV) a crisis, declarations alone are insufficient. Persistent issues such as gender inequality, unequal pay, and patriarchy continue to hinder progress. It is imperative to harness the energy and potential of youth across all levels and spheres to drive meaningful change. Furthermore, recognizing the critical role of digital



technology in shaping our future is vital. The Beijing document is not merely a record of past commitments; it is a living guide for action and transformation.

- Guard against the 'pull-down syndrome,' as patriarchy continues to sow division among women, ultimately silencing the gender discourse. In many parts of the world, including Mozambique, women endure horrendous violence without any recourse.
- In Europe, their history of struggles is actively commemorated, but in South Africa, history is being sidelined and pushed out of the classroom. Children often ask why we still talk about apartheid, yet we must never forget our history. The story of apartheid has never been fully or properly told.
- Education is essential to sustaining the enthusiasm and hope of our democracy, and it must be integrated into the curriculum. However, our education system remains unprepared for the needs of our children, with persistent issues such as race, land, and patriarchy still unresolved. Stark inequalities persist with golf clubs, for example, paying as little as R88 per month in rental fees, while NGOs are charged exorbitant rates of up to R12,000. These golf clubs often hold 99-year leases, while the most vulnerable bear the burden of excessive costs.

SESSION 9: PATHWAYS TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY HALFWAY TO THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

This session contextualized the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action and its Significance and assessed global review and progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing Platform for Action)



DR HAZEL GOODING - UN WOMEN DEPUTY MULTI-COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE

When women lead, economies grow, communities thrive, and governance improves. Yet, despite decades of progress, women still face significant barriers preventing their full participation in politics, public administration, the corporate world, and peace processes. Dr Gooding agreed with one of the speakers who highlighted the pushback against women's leadership—this resistance signals that there is progress made.



As the Deputy Representative of UN Women's South Africa Multicountry Office, now celebrating 15 years since its establishment in 2010 and operational launch in 2011, the organisation encounters questions like, "What about UN Men? Why only UN Women?" Dr Gooding said the response to this question speaks volumes about the women's challenges. .

Women Executive Director recently addressed the state of the global community in 2025, reflecting on the progress—or lack thereof—towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. She highlighted that globally, in 2024, progress on women's political participation stalled. Currently, women hold less than 30% of parliamentary seats, 35% of local government positions, and 28% of managerial roles in business. These numbers tell us what we already know: the gender gap in leadership and decision-making remains a significant issue.

Women continue to face entrenched structural barriers limiting their participation in leadership roles. These barriers include laws and policies that restrict women's access to leadership opportunities, as well as deeply ingrained stereotypes about leadership that continue to favour men making it harder for women to be recognized and supported in such roles.

Issues raised in the speech were as follows:

- Women in leadership often face gender-based violence, a reality that can't be ignored
- In an era where artificial intelligence is touted for its potential to revolutionize our work and capabilities, we must also acknowledge that the very same technologies can be misused to perpetuate harm, including discrimination against women and girls.
- Limited access to financial resources and funding remains a significant barrier to women's leadership.
- Dismantling these barriers and promoting gender equality in leadership requires deliberate, collective action.
- Governments need to adopt and implement laws that guarantee women's equal rights in governance, politics, and the economy.
- Utilizing platforms like the United Nations can be an effective way to amplify our voices and strengthen our collaboration with governments and other key stakeholders.

UN Women acknowledges that our work would be impossible without the collaboration of on-the-ground partners. We understand that our success is tied to an all-of-society approach, which involves working with everyone: men, women, boys, girls, and all genders. This is an approach we cannot afford to overlook.

She also highlighted the meaningful work done with organizations like Ilitha Labantu and mentioned a visit by a group of communications colleagues from East and Southern Africa who visited South Africa to see firsthand the work UN Women is doing in partnership with Ilitha Labantu. The visitors had the opportunity to walk through the neighbourhoods of Gugulethu, witnessing firsthand the impactful outreach we're doing together to end gender-based violence.

- The experience was truly eye-opening. It was some time ago, people are still talking about it. These are the voices we need to amplify because they are our experts when it comes to media, social media, and spreading awareness.
- Why do I bring this up? Because we continue to hear that funding for gender equality and women's empowerment is diminishing. But what does that really mean? Essentially, it means that the funds that were once dedicated to these areas are now being redirected elsewhere. That's why we must stay vigilant and keep fighting. We must continue to share our stories.
- We must keep emphasizing that investing in women's leadership—through training, mentorship, and networking opportunities—is key to equipping women with the skills and confidence they need to lead.
- She stressed the importance of engaging the younger generation in these conversations.
- There are creative ways to navigate this challenge, and mobilization plays a key role., stronger legal protections, support mechanisms, and a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based violence, especially against women leaders.



We must create a safer environment for women to participate fully in public life. As we emphasized repeatedly yesterday, gender equality is not just a women's issue; it is a societal imperative. Male leaders and allies must also play an active role in dismantling patriarchal norms and advocating for women's leadership across all sectors of sustainable development.

She concluded by saying that this is no longer business as usual. For those of us attending the CSW, the UN Women have been asked to remove all references to gender from the political declaration draft. Let's be ready to continue the fight with even greater determination.



NKHABELE MARUMO – ILITHA LABANTU

Ms Marumo provided the delegates with a history of her years of working with Mam Mandisa. She witnessed her dedication and how she was always ready to come to the aid of other women. She said it was important that women needed to talk about their history because not engaging with it meant women would not heal. Some women hold painful memories and Mandisa always spoke about the story of a woman who was raped by soldiers when they came to inform her of her husband's impending death by hanging. We need to aspire to ideals that will heal us as a nation and the story of apartheid must be told properly. Cuba serves as a strong example of a country that prioritizes its people, ensuring that land remains for Cubans. In South Africa, our reluctance to confront and openly discuss our history hinders the healing process. To truly move forward, we must face our past and tell it as it is.

CLOSING CEREMONY - KEY INSIGHTS AND TAKEAWAYS: BUILDING THE PATH FORWARD FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

To our esteemed guests, leadership, the Ilitha Labantu Board, Ella and the team, and all delegates, we extend our heartfelt gratitude. We approached this conference with apprehension, as it was the first without Mandisa, and we wondered if we would hold ourselves together. Yet, we managed, and it was a resounding success. Thank you for gracing this occasion, a gathering where we connected for a higher purpose. This work is deeply spiritual, and Ilitha will continue its mission—that is our vision. While we may sometimes feel our contributions are small, they are aligned with the ideals of the Beijing Declaration. Let us remain steadfast and stay the course.



CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION DECLARATION:

From February 26th to 28th, 2025, an international conference was held at the prestigious Rockefeller Hotel, situated on the Foreshore in Cape Town, South Africa, to celebrate the 35th anniversary of Ilitha Labantu. On February 28, the final day, the focus was on the upcoming 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), which is scheduled to take place in New York from March 10th to 21st, 2025.

More than 40 civil society organisations aligned to engage in cooperative and significant discussions during this influential conference. Their comprehensive array of recommendations, which align with the 12 essential areas of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), was the result of their combined knowledge and dedication. This framework is designed to further the global advancement of women's rights. The recommendations that follow illustrate the impactful efforts, advocacy, and dedicated grassroots initiatives that civil society has undertaken to shape and influence the results of CSW'69.

In this document, the recommendations are summarised, establishing a connection between the urgent global discussions that will occur at CSW69 and the diverse programs and initiatives of civil society. This presents a practical and uncomplicated solution to the enduring challenges that women and girls face on a global scale, which is founded on the shared vision and commitment of those who are actively contributing to the field.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Women and Poverty

a. Advocate for African-Led Economic Empowerment Models

- Starting sustainable livelihood projects targeted on improving financial stability and land access for women, particularly survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), help Africa to become economically empowered.

b. Enhance Women's Access to Support Services

- By means of strong campaigns aiming at improving birth registration, acquiring identity documentation, and guaranteeing efficient child maintenance, so facilitate women's access to government aid and child support, so strengthening their social and economic security.

c. Equip Young Parents with Essential Skills

- Provide instructional courses stressing good family dynamics, smart parenting techniques, and skilful conflict resolution. This strategy will involve young parents actively in creating stable and encouraging homes.

d. Protect the Rights of the Elderly

- Use social services and legal protections to spot and handle the particular difficulties experienced by elderly caregivers—especially those engaged in unpaid childcare duties.

e. Drive Women's Economic Empowerment

- By means of easily available banking solutions, help women in acquiring independent financial control, so enabling them to properly handle their money and develop fundamental financial literacy.

f. Implement Peer-to-Peer Psychosocial Training

- Create peer-to-peer psychosocial training programs meant to help women break through personal and community obstacles, increase resilience, and improve social ties, so guaranteeing ongoing resilience in the face of hardship.

g. Advocate for Crisis Funding

- Establish quick financial aid initiatives meant to assist women and families going through crises, so enabling their financial stability in trying circumstances with limited means.

2. Education and Training of Women

a. Advocate for GBV Education in Schools

- Introduce focused education on gender-based violence (GBV) within schools, emphasizing prevention, awareness, and response strategies through interactive learning and peer-led activities. Partner with local



groups and educational authorities to sustainably integrate GBV education, ensuring safer and more supportive school communities.

- Establish a dedicated School of Feminism to ensure broad and meaningful engagement with feminist theory and thought across academic disciplines. This institution should focus on integrating feminist principles into education, promoting critical consciousness, and ensuring all students, regardless of their field of study, are exposed to feminist perspectives.

b. Culturally Relevant Legal Education

- Develop accessible legal empowerment materials using storytelling, local languages, and visuals to simplify legal concepts and resonate culturally.

c. Access to Justice for Women

- Provide practical resources on women's rights, especially for violence survivors navigating the justice system, empowering them to effectively understand and assert their rights.

d. Curriculum Reform for Gender Equality

- Update educational content to critically assess cultural practices, promoting protective traditions while challenging those harmful to gender equality.

e. Culturally Resonant Public Awareness Campaigns

- Counter GBV by shaping positive cultural narratives and promoting peaceful conflict resolution grounded in community values and gender equality.

f. Community-Based GBV Partnerships

- Strengthen partnerships with grassroots groups and men's networks to build a community-focused approach to GBV prevention and support.

g. GBV Education in Schools

- Embed GBV prevention programs within primary and secondary school curricula, equipping students with practical tools to identify, address, and prevent violence.

h. Academic Scholarships for Vulnerable Groups

- Advocate for tuition scholarships targeting refugees, migrants, and disadvantaged South Africans to ensure equal educational access.

i. Law Enforcement Training

- Collaborate with higher education institutions to provide specialized gender-sensitive training for law enforcement, enhancing effective responses to gender-related crimes.

j. Research & Policy Guidance

- Work with universities and research bodies to produce evidence-based research on gender and education, shaping informed policy and program decisions

k. Promote Women's Storytelling & Creative Expression

- Establish platforms promoting women's stories through literature, art, and crafts to educate, raise awareness, and inspire social transformation.

l. Women's Storytelling Hub

- Create dedicated spaces to highlight and celebrate women's experiences, empowering communities through sharing impactful narratives.

m. Gender-Sensitive Educational Materials

- Develop and distribute educational content showcasing women's evolving societal roles, challenging stereotypes, and advancing gender equality.

n. Reframing Gender Norms

- Share materials addressing outdated gender norms and promoting balanced gender roles, driving societal change toward equality.

o. Support Women's Creativity & Innovation

- Invest in platforms amplifying women's creative work in industries like arts, media, and technology, enhancing women's leadership and visibility.

p. Women-Led Solution-Driven Productions

- Support women-focused creative and media projects addressing social challenges, promoting gender equality, and inspiring positive societal change.



3. Women and Health

a. Promote Mental Health Services and Trauma-Informed Care

- Promote mental health services and trauma-informed care as essential standards in GBV recovery programs, offering survivors rights-based, comprehensive, and culturally sensitive support.

b. Trauma-Informed Therapeutic Support

- Provide trauma-informed support for survivors of domestic violence, GBV, sexual assault, and sexual violence, encouraging family reintegration where suitable and ensuring ongoing mental health services.

c. Ongoing Training for Therapeutic Teams

- Continuously train therapists, social workers, and counsellors in updated trauma-informed care techniques, emphasizing group therapy and support networks to boost survivor resilience.

d. De-Stigmatizing Mental Health

- Increase global awareness about mental health issues linked to trauma, including historical and intergenerational impacts, aiming to reduce stigma and encourage survivors to seek support.

e. Specialized Training for Support Workers

- Equip Victim Empowerment Programme (VEP) social workers, auxiliary workers, and counsellors with advanced trauma-informed methods to effectively and compassionately assist survivors.

f. Healthcare Access Without Discrimination

- Advocate for accessible and inclusive healthcare for all women, including migrants, ensuring equitable care regardless of their documentation status.

g. Support for Stranded Migrant Women

- Support safe, dignified, and voluntary repatriation processes for migrant women who wish to return home, safeguarding their rights throughout.

h. Amplifying Voices of Women in Conflict

- Amplify international advocacy efforts to address specific health challenges women face in conflict zones, prioritizing urgent healthcare needs such as sexual and reproductive health.

i. Social Cohesion in Host Communities

- Encourage integration initiatives between migrant populations and local communities to foster mutual understanding, social cohesion, and collective resilience.

j. Migration as an Opportunity

- Reframe global perspectives on migration to highlight its benefits, including cultural enrichment, economic growth, and innovation, recognizing migrant women's valuable contributions.

k. Inclusive Policies for Migrant Women

- Advocate for inclusive policies that leverage migrant women's skills and talents, empowering their active participation in both migrant and host community developments.

4. Violence Against Women

a. Urge UN Member States to Adopt and Fund Community-Based Accountability Models for GBV Response

- Promote community-based accountability frameworks where men actively support survivors in court, emphasizing collective responsibility and active community involvement to achieve justice.

b. Cultural Competency in GBV Courts

- Require comprehensive cultural competency training for judges and magistrates managing GBV cases, ensuring victim-focused, trauma-informed processes that honor cultural contexts while prioritizing survivor safety and dignity.

c. Integration of Traditional & Formal Justice Systems

- Develop judicial guidelines blending culturally relevant dispute resolution with statutory penalties, ensuring human rights standards are upheld alongside culturally sensitive outcomes for survivors.

d. Community-Based Legal Aid Centers

- Create legal aid services within community-based, trusted spaces, using traditional structures to improve access to affordable legal assistance for survivors.

e. Strengthen Victim Impact in Parole Hearings

- Encourage the use of victim impact statements during parole hearings for GBV and domestic violence offenders, advocating with Correctional Services to prevent systemic injustice and re-traumatization.

f. Holistic Survivor Support

- Offer tailored legal assistance, therapeutic services, and thorough risk assessments for survivors, providing



personalized development plans, secure placements, and continuous recovery support.

g. End Secondary Victimization

- Provide specialized training for frontline personnel (police, trauma counselors, legal professionals) to prevent secondary victimization at service points like SAPS, Thuthuzela Care Centres (TCCs), and shelters, ensuring respectful, empathetic, and just treatment.

h. Engage Perpetrators in Rehabilitation

- Establish rehabilitation programs for men, teaching alternative conflict resolution and communication skills. Engage perpetrators in awareness campaigns and community dialogues to tackle GBV root causes and encourage positive social change.

5. Women and Armed Conflict

a. Strengthen Traditional Justice in Post-Conflict Recovery

- Develop an African Continental Framework integrating traditional justice methods, prioritizing gender-sensitive and survivor-centered approaches in post-conflict recovery. Ensure inclusive participation of regional bodies, traditional authorities, and civil society to uphold women's rights and gender equality.

b. Address Urban and Armed Conflict-Related Violence Against Women

- Engage gang leaders and community mediators in initiatives aimed at preventing retaliatory violence and protecting women and children. Strengthen community-led programs focusing on violence prevention, reintegration, and peacebuilding with particular attention to GBV.

c. Provide Trauma Support for Law Enforcement in Conflict Areas

- Provide mandatory conflict-resolution and debriefing training for law enforcement and security personnel exposed to extreme violence and armed conflicts. Enhance mental health services to prevent burnout and secondary trauma among frontline responders.

d. Ensure Equal Protection for Women Fleeing War Zones

- Ensure migrant and refugee women have equal access to healthcare, legal, and psychosocial services. Advocate for fair asylum policies that protect against GBV, trafficking, and forced labor, providing equal rights and protections comparable to citizens.

e. Support Women's Social and Economic Integration

- Organize multi-sectoral workshops addressing health, legal rights, education, GBV prevention, and employment to facilitate the integration of displaced women. Offer language training programs to improve integration and access to local opportunities.

f. Strengthen Women's Leadership in Peacebuilding

- Guarantee women's equal involvement in peace negotiations, mediation efforts, and post-conflict governance. Provide training programs that build women's leadership capacity, empowering them to actively participate in reconstruction and peacebuilding processes.

6. Women and the Economy

a. Advocate for African Sisterhood as a Business Development Model

- Promote the establishment of an African Continental Framework focused on integrating traditional African justice practices, ensuring gender-sensitive and survivor-centered post-conflict recovery. Actively engage regional bodies, traditional leaders, and civil society to protect women's rights and promote gender equality.

b. Strengthen Access to Financial Resources for Women Entrepreneurs

- Encourage financial institutions to provide customized financial support—such as loans, grants, and financial literacy training—to women entrepreneurs, particularly in rural and underserved communities, to sustain long-term growth and stability.

c. Increase Support for Women's Cooperatives and Social Enterprises

- Strengthen women's cooperatives through targeted capacity-building initiatives, empowering them to create sustainable, community-driven enterprises with strong economic impacts.

d. Promote Cross-Border Collaborations and Networks for Women in Business

- Foster collaborative ventures between women entrepreneurs across Africa, enhancing their market reach, influence, and economic opportunities through strategic partnerships and joint initiatives.

e. Advocate for Gender-Responsive Policies to Support Women's Economic Inclusion

- Advocate for gender-responsive policies that remove barriers for women entering traditionally male-dominated industries, ensuring equal access to funding, infrastructure, and specialized training.



f. Secure Sustainable Funding for Gender-Responsive Economic Programs

- Push financial institutions to develop tailored financial services—including loans, grants, and literacy programs—specifically supporting rural and underserved women entrepreneurs.

g. Enhance Women's Economic Resilience Through Skills Development

- Implement gender-sensitive policies aimed at eliminating systemic barriers, particularly in industries traditionally dominated by men, to ensure equitable access to resources, training, and infrastructure for women entrepreneurs.

h. Support GBV Survivors with Business Recovery Grants

- Provide targeted financial rescue grants to GBV survivors, supporting their recovery and financial independence through sustainable small business initiatives.

i. Strengthen Women's Entrepreneurship Through Mentorship

- Develop mentorship and coaching programs focusing on business skills, leadership, and financial literacy, equipping women entrepreneurs with the necessary tools to succeed in diverse economic sectors.

7. Women in Power and Decision-Making

a. 50/50 gender representation

- Promote policies to achieve equal gender representation in leadership roles through quotas or targets, ensuring women's meaningful participation in government, law enforcement, and institutional governance.
- Support legislative reforms setting clear gender-balance targets in leadership positions, fostering inclusive governance that addresses gender-specific needs.

b. Assert African Women's Leadership in Global Gender Justice Frameworks

- Encourage African women to actively lead and build solidarity in continental and international dialogues on gender justice, ensuring African perspectives shape global responses to gender-based violence and inequality

c. Establish Pan-African Women's Negotiation Caucus

- Strengthen Pan-African networks among women, enabling unified negotiation and strategic leadership in shaping gender justice frameworks globally, reflecting authentic African experiences and solutions.

d. Advocate for Policy Reforms to Challenge Harmful Social Norms

- Advocate for societal transformation by engaging traditional leaders, youth, women's groups, and community influencers to challenge harmful cultural norms and promote gender equity through dialogue and education.

e. Amplify Women's Voices at Provincial and National Levels

- Promote greater representation of women in provincial and national decision-making structures, amplifying women's voices and ensuring their active role in shaping policies and legislation.

8. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

a. Advocate for Increased Funding for Grassroots Women's Empowerment Initiatives

- Advocate for enhanced funding and institutional backing for grassroots organizations, ensuring long-term sustainability of women's empowerment initiatives, particularly in underserved and marginalized communities.

b. Promote Gender-Equity Research

- Undertake targeted, practical research to identify barriers, challenges, and opportunities in gender equity, directly informing strategies to advance women's rights across diverse sectors.

c. Implement Intergenerational Mentorship for Gender Equality

- Initiate intergenerational mentorship programs focused on reinforcing positive cultural values that support gender equality, actively challenging harmful practices contributing to violence and inequality.

d. Advocate for Equitable Funding Models for Women-Led Enterprises

- Develop equitable funding mechanisms for women-owned enterprises, promoting financial inclusion, economic independence, and sustained growth for women entrepreneurs.

e. Strengthen Collaborative Responses to Complex Gender Issues

- Facilitate coordinated responses among government entities, civil society groups, and international partners to tackle complex issues like GBV, fostering collaboration and effective resource mobilization for sustainable solutions.

9. Human Rights of Women

a. Demand the Enforcement of National and International Human Rights Laws



- Advocate for rigorous enforcement of national and international human rights laws, ensuring GBV survivors receive full legal protection and holding institutions accountable for compliance.

b. Advocate for Parole System Review

- Continuously push for comprehensive reforms of parole systems and parole boards to prioritize survivor safety, deliver justice, and prevent further victimization.

c. Hold Institutions Accountable for Failing to Meet Mandates

- Hold government institutions and stakeholders accountable for meeting their obligations in protecting and supporting GBV survivors, ensuring adherence to legal and human rights standards.

d. Increase the Availability of Safe Spaces for GBV Victims

- Expand access to safe shelters and supportive spaces for GBV survivors, providing secure environments where victims can heal, rebuild their lives, and receive necessary legal and psychosocial assistance.

e. Ensure Access to Translators for Legal Proceedings

- Ensure GBV survivors have reliable access to translation services, removing language barriers so they can clearly understand legal proceedings, voice their concerns, and actively engage in justice processes.

10. Women and the Media

a. Advocate for Ethical Reporting on GBV Cases

- Advocate for responsible and ethical media reporting on GBV, prioritizing survivor dignity, confidentiality, and factual accuracy, while actively avoiding sensationalism.

b. Promote Strategic and Responsible Media Usage

- Encourage media platforms to proactively highlight gender equality issues and raise awareness about GBV, using narratives that challenge harmful norms and stereotypes.

c. Highlight the Plight of Displaced Women in Media Campaigns

- Urge media campaigns to responsibly address gender equality, using their reach to amplify awareness and foster meaningful dialogue around gender-based violence and related social issues.

11. Women and the Environment

a. Advocate for Gender-Responsive Climate Policies

- Advocate for gender-responsive climate policies emphasizing women's safety and economic resilience during disasters, ensuring gender equality remains central in climate action strategies.

b. Integrate Climate Change Education in Schools

- Engage schools in climate change discussions, particularly on the interconnectedness of food, water, and energy systems, to raise youth awareness about the gender-specific impacts of climate change.

c. Introduce Climate Studies Social Clubs in High Schools

- Establish Climate Studies social clubs in high schools, creating opportunities for collaboration with researchers, policymakers, and social stakeholders, while emphasizing gender-sensitive responses to climate change.

12. The Girl Child

a. Advocate for UN-Backed Youth-Led Platforms for Girls

- Advocate for UN-supported, youth-led platforms enabling girls to directly engage policymakers, ensuring their voices and perspectives shape policies affecting their future.

b. Establish a Girl Child Movement

- Establish a Girl Child Movement through continuous education, training, and awareness initiatives addressing critical issues such as education access, healthcare, teenage pregnancy prevention, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, gang involvement, and violence.

c. Develop Support Structures for Girls' Health and Hygiene

- Develop sustainable support structures, including cooperatives, to improve access to affordable sanitary products and personal hygiene essentials, helping girls maintain their health and dignity.

d. Broaden Networks for Girls Across Africa and Globally

- Expand girl-led networks across Africa and internationally through practical initiatives such as school leadership elections, girl-focused group activities, and community projects, empowering girls as leaders at local, regional, and national levels.

e. Promote Gender Equality and Community Engagement for Girls

- Coordinate gender equality efforts and community involvement to support girls' leadership potential, challenging societal norms that limit leadership roles to males, and promoting active participation in decision-making processes.

f. Encourage Creative Expression for Girls' Rights Advocacy

- Foster creative expression among girls through mediums like song, dance, poetry, and journaling, nurturing advocacy for their rights and empowerment.



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ILITHA LABANTU

PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE

Ilitha Labantu 35th Anniversary International Conference

Theme: WOMEN RIGHTS AT THE CROSSROADS

Date: 26 -28 February 2025

Time: 09H30 – 18H00


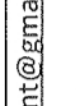
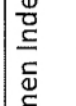


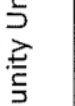

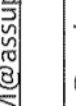
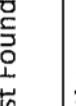

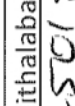


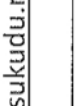


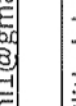
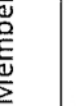

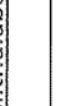

Venue: The Rockefeller Hotel

12 Christiaan Barnard St, Foreshore, Cape Town











CONSENT IN TERMS OF THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION ACT 4 OF 2013

The participant (as data subject) by signing this document, agrees and consents to the use of his/her personal information processed herein for the advancement of Ilitha Labantu's objectives. By signature hereunder, the participant agrees and acknowledges that the information provided may include placing such information in the public domain. Ilitha Labantu will endeavour to take all reasonable precautionary measures to ensure that any information processed is only used for purposes it has been provided

Moderators

Name & Surname	Organizations	Contact Details	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
1. Ntuthu Mtwana	African Women Independent Forum	mtwanant@gmail.com			
2. Damaris Kiewiets	UWC Community Unit	damaris.kiewiets@gmail.com			
3. Dr. Vuyelwa Nhlapo	Assupol Trust Foundation CEO	PatriciaM@assupol.co.za			
4. Nyameka Mabandla	MVK Consulting	nyameka@mvkconsulting.org			
5. Ntsiki Sigege	Ilitha Labantu	ntsiki@ilithalabantu.org 0825018660			
6. Phuthi Tsukhudu	Tsukudu & Associates	phuti@tsukudu.net			
7. Thobekile Ngubeni	Ilitha Board Member	ttngubeni1@gmail.com			
8. Natsai Chapkapfava	Ilitha Labantu	natsai@ilithalabantu.org			

Speakers

Name & Surname	Organizations	Contact Details	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
9. Ella Mangisa	Ilitha Executive Director	ella@ilithalabantu.org			
10. Zodwa Moya	Ilitha Board Member	zosun.moya@gmail.com			
11. Vuyani Buwe	Ilitha Board Member	vuyani465@gmail.com			
12. H.E Eunice Ipinge	President of Pan African Women's Organization	iiping02@iway.na			
13. Hon. Thoko Didiza	Speaker of Parliament of the RSA	Noluthando Shabalala nshabalala@parliament.gov.za			
14. Hon. Janet Sallah -Njie	African Commission on Human and People's Rights	isnii@torodochambers.com			
15. Hon. Faith Mazibuko	MEC of Social development Gauteng	Numa, Pinkie (GDSD) Pinkie.Numa@gauteng.gov.za			
16. Jane Maria Ongolo	UNODC				
17. Pro.Helen Combrinck	North West University				


ATTENDANCE REGISTER











Buyelwa Sonjica FORME Minister buyelwa53@gmail.com

Phiso D. S. D. S.

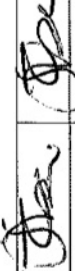
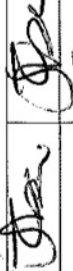


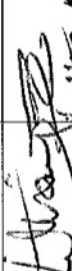



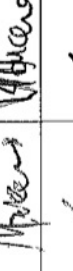

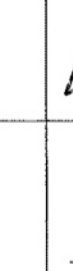
18.	Name & Surname	Organizations	Contact Details	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
19.	Christine Muhigana	UNICEF	cmuhigana@unicef.org	Christine		
20.	Hon. Nomcebo Mhlauli	Deputy Minister in the Presidency	Mandisa Mbele MandisaM@presidency.gov.za			
21.	Adv. Kagiso Maphalle	Ilitha Labantu Board Member	kagisoam@gmail.com	Phiso		
22.	Mbuyiselo Botha	South African NaMF	mbuyiselobotha78@gmail.com			
23.	Naledi Maponopono					
24.	Mr Yu Yu	UNFPA	jongizulu@unfpa.org			
25.	Khanyisa Dunjwa	Passionate Unlimited Peers in Action	duniwakhanyisa@gmail.com			
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30. Sarah Mokwebo	ANCWL YWD		Sarah@sarahmokwebo.africa				









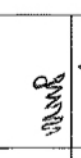
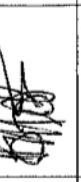


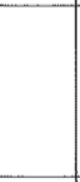






Name & Surname	Organizations	Contact Details	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
31. Dr Tirhani Mangayi	GBVF Response Fund 1	Tirhani@gbvfresponsefund1.org			
32. Adv. Nthabiseng Sepanya – Mogale	Chairperson of CGE	sepanya@cge.org.za			
33. Febe Potgieter – Gqubule	Research Specialist				
34. Dr. Thozama Maduma	University of Forte Hare	TApril@ufh.ac.za			
35. Lucinda Evans	Philisa Abafazi Bethu Women's Centre	lucinda@philisaabafazi.org			
36. Nhlakanipho Mahlangu	EDUVOS	ritzareemahlangu@gmail.com			







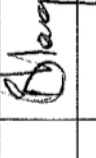
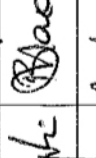
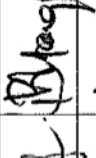

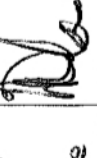


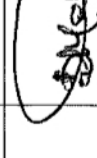
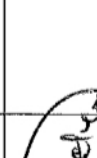
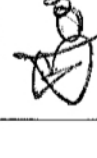



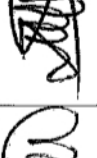

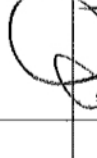
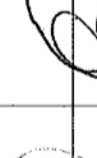
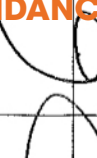
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37. Justice Zione Ntaba	Malawi Judiciary	zjvntaba@yahoo.com		
38. Bathabile Dlamini	Vice President PAWO & Founder of Makakhule Foundation	dlaminibatha@gmail.com		
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40. Mmabatho Makena	AWLN / Mmabatho Foundation for Women Development	mmabatho1@msn.com		
41. Precious Banda	Young Women of African Convener	preciousbanda679@gmail.com		
42. Nomcebo Mgenge	Ilitha Labantu – Social Worker	nomcebo@ilithalabantu.org		
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44. Simnikiwe Maboe	Ilitha Labantu – Legal Advisor	simnikiwe@ilithalabantu.org 067 686 3380		

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Delegates













Name & Surname	Organizations	Contact Details	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
45. Faildela De Vries	Manenberg People Centre	faldielad@gmail.com			
46. Maria Basson	St Mary of Hope	st.m.ofhope@gmail.com			
47. Mondisinyana Phohlela Mosidinyana	St Mary of Hope	st.m.ofhope@gmail.com mosidinyana@phohlela.trading.com			
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49. Mirriam Makhosana	Social Development	m99.makosana@gmail.com			
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54. Nombeko Lephuthing		Community Development Worker	princeneo725@gmail.com			
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66. Rene Daniels	Chief Directorate: Klipfontein/Mitchell's Plain Sub-structure Department of Health Western Cape Government	<u>Rene.Daniels@westerncape.gov.za</u>			
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71. Mathabo Ntumba	Ntumba Foundation	<u>pharelacconsultant@gmail.com</u>			
72. Nokuthula Mtwazi	Gender Equality and Persons with Disabilities Unit SARS	<u>NMTwazi@sars.gov.za</u>			
Patrick Mngxumthemi	Zibonele FM Lusitania Fishing	<u>patrickmngxumthemi@gmail.com</u> mfundisi, 333@gmail.com			

Name & Surname	Organizations	Contact Details	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
73. Asavela Peko	Asavela Peko Foundation	asah.foundation@gmail.com			
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77. Nomvuzo Mandikane	Nomvuzo Foundation	vuvusonti@gmail.com			
78. Jane Kanswe	Scalabrini Centre - Cape Town	iane@scalabrini.org.za			
79. Ayanda Nabe	Traditional House	ayandanabe@gmail.com			
80. Thabisile Msezani	Lerato Labesadi	thabisilem@yahoo.com			
81. Ndivhuho Sekobo	SANGOCO	ndivhuho62@gmail.com	AN Sekoba		
N M G Qawana 14	Zi Boko FM	nmgqawana83@gmail.com	N.M.G.		


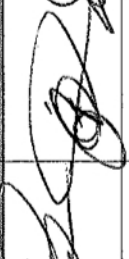












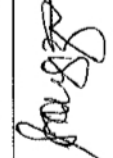

Anke Lyster

Shinchonji Volunteers

Sijvolunteers@shinchonji-10-24

11/11/24

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Name & Surname	Organizations	Contact Details	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
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83. Marthe Muller	SAWID	marthe.muller@sawid.org.za			
84. Nkanyiso Maqeda	Olof Palmes Internationella Center	nkanyiso.maqeda@palmecenter.se			
85. Dr. Hazel Gooding	UN Women	hazel.gooding@unwomen.org			
86. Jennifer Francesca Acio	UN Women	jennifer.acio@unwomen.org			
87. Mahlatse Ramoroka	UN Women	mahlatse.ramoroka@unwomen.org			
88. Ziyanda Ngoma	UNFPA	jongizulu@unfpa.org			
89. Siziwe Jongizulu	UNFPA	jongizulu@unfpa.org			
90. Linn Lovgren	UNFPA	lovgren@unfpa.org			
91. Nodwe Senoami	City of Cape Town	Nondwe.Senoamali@capetown.gov.za			

Ntombenkanya
 Montsha
 Sinyaka Tshiswa
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95. Prof Beatrice Opeolu	BE Solutions & Consulting Services	beatrice@bcshive.co.za	Beatrice	Beatrice
96. Asha Uwahahora	SCALABINI CENTRE OF CAPE TOWN	ASHA.UWAHORA@gmail.com asna@scalabini.org.za	Asha	Asha
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98. Pule Legodi	UNFPA	legodi@unfpa.org	Legodi	Legodi
99. Zuzala Ngema	UNFPA	ngemaz@unfpa.org	Ngema	Ngema
100. Yvonne Cupido	Cape DSL	Yvonne.Cupido@westerncape.gov.za	Cupido	Cupido

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 BUSISWE NXUMALO Activist
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THANKS TO ALL OUR SPONSORS



ILITHA LABANTU
PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE

OUR CONTACT DETAILS:

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Email: Khayelitsha@ilithalabantu.org

Visit: www.ilithalabantu.org.za