

Gender Document



Western Cape- June 2015

GENDER SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Introduction

1. South Africa remains a highly unequal society on the bases of race, gender and class. Gender inequalities in particular permeate all spheres of our society. These gender inequalities which remain deeply entrenched in South Africa come as a result a Colonialism of a Special Type (CST).

2. The experience of Colonialism of a Special Type in South Africa led to the triple oppression of women – which is oppression as a result of their race, secondly because of their class position and thirdly because of their gender. This means that the three societal contradictions, which are race, gender and class corroborated and still corroborates in the exploitation of black women. This is different to white women who had and still enjoy privileges on the basis of their race and to a greater degree on their class position. This system of male domination has always been reflected in the entirety of the economic base and the superstructure.
3. The liberation and emancipation of women in South Africa is therefore a struggle which comes at the backdrop of what Bell Hooks refers to as struggle against “Imperialist White-Supremacist Capitalist Patriarchy”.
4. In developing a policy framework to address this anomaly it is essential to understand the forces underpinning gender inequality.

Defining Gender as a Social Construct

5. Too, often, the concept of gender and sex are used interchangeably while in essence they are quite different. The most common misunderstanding of concept of gender is that it simply means addressing men and women’s concerns equally. This effectively ignores unequal power gender power relations, and undermines the central objective, which is the emancipation of women.
6. Gender refers to the attitudes, feelings and behaviours that a given culture associates with a person’s biological sex. Sex refers to a person’s biological status as typically categorised as male, female, or intersex (i.e. a typical combinations of features that usually distinguish male from female). There are a number of indicators of biological sex, including sex chromosomes, gonads, internal reproductive organs and external genitalia. Gender is to show these biological differences are expressed in terms of roles assigned to different sexes in society. As such gender is a social construct that reflects broadly the power relations in society.
7. Men have hitherto been in a powerful position in society, and women played a largely subordinate role. The way society interprets gender roles on the basis of sexual differences between men and women leads to a division of labour that is construed to be natural. In this context, there is interplay between society and

biology (nature), in that biological differences give rise to a set of roles for men and women. One example is that of child rearing. This task is mostly seen as a women's function because of her role as a child bearers. These socially determined roles for men and women are culturally or socially (not naturally) determined.

8. Gender roles generate expectations from both sexes, men and women, in terms of what it means to be a man or a woman. Women are, for example, expected to be feminine and men intellectual and be achievers. Children are raised up in an environment where these ideas are dominant and they become part of their socialisation. The notions of masculinity and femininity defines how men and women should look and behave. They refer to physical appearance, psychological state, intellectual capability and emotional responses. Men are expected to be natural leaders, decision makers and providers in society beginning within the family while women are the care-givers, supporters and followers of men.
9. When we predominantly speak of gender relations, we are referring to a power relations defined by inequality between the sexes and the gender roles ascribed to each. This system is called Patriarchy.
10. Patriarchy is a political-social system that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence.
11. There is a need for a deeper understanding of these power relations and how they are maintained in both direct and indirect ways. This does not mean that all men benefit in the same and equal ways out of the system of patriarchy. Men of different ages, races, class and even sexual orientation have different subjective experiences with the system in much the same way that women of different ages, races, classes and sexualities do. This being the case, the common denominator is that the relations between genders under patriarchy are defined by subordination of women and domination by men. Raising cautions about differential incorporation is useful in that it reminds us to steer clear of essentialising women's oppression.
12. At the same time, the use of the concept "women's oppression" must seek to elevate women from the status of victimhood into agents of change. Used in a de-contextualised form, the latter can pigeonhole women's struggles and completely

divorce it from struggles against other forms of oppression. Clearly a nuanced perspective on gender would strike a balance between the two, ensuring that the struggle against women's oppression is not divorced from the struggle against racial oppression and class exploitation whilst at the same time not treating gender as a side issue.

The Struggle for Gender Equality: Where are we?

13. In the struggle to liberate South Africa the contribution of women can never be isolated, since the wars of resistance and the struggle against colonialism women have always been at the frontline. With the introduction of pass-laws, women were the first to denounce the law long before the Sharpeville massacre or the pass protest in Langa.
14. Since 1994 we have seen constitutional and legal entrenchment of gender rights. In line with other achievements, there have been important if uneven gains made in ensuring greater gender representivity in parliament, the judiciary and senior civil service, for instance.
15. Major achievements, among others, include:
 - The achievement of gender parity in schooling enrolments;
 - Progress in addressing the primary health care needs of women and girls;
 - Combating violent crimes against women and children identified as a priority;
 - Specialised courts to deal with sexual offences instituted with staff working at these courts empowered with specialised skills,
 - Progressive amendments to the Sexual Offences Act;
 - A comprehensive anti-poverty strategy that addresses increased feminized poverty
 - The impact of social grants on women's poverty
 - Significant progress in achieving gender parity at senior management level within the public service,
 - Great strides in the representation of women at political and decision-making levels, placing South Africa currently 6th on the Global Report Index.
 - A number of civil society, non-governmental and research organisations working in the field of gender equality with significant successes in

advocating for and shaping gender legislation; influencing policies and providing evidence of successful methodologies.

16. However, all socio-economic indicators relating to the triple crisis of unemployment, poverty and inequality indicate that women (and particularly black women in rural areas and in informal settlements) continue to suffer the brunt of the crisis and its related impacts.

Women and the Economy

17. The latest employment data released by Statistics South Africa indicate that although strides have been made in the economic emancipation of women in society, women still constitute less than 50% of South Africa's Economic Active Population (EAP) nationally.

18. In the Western Cape, females constitute 47.4% of the economically active population. African women constitute 15%, Coloured females 25%, Indian females 0.1% and White 7.3%. The latest Employment Equity figures show that males continue to be over-represented at the Top Management Level with males occupying 79.4% of all top management positions in the country in 2013/2014 and females on 20.6%. The representation of females in top management positions in the country has however increased over the years. Between 2003 and 2013/2014, female representation increased by 113% at the level of top management employees. What is of concern however is that African females constitute only 1.5% of top management level and only 3.3% of Senior Management positions in the Western Cape.

19. Women still remain the highest unemployed group with an unemployment level of 26.6% which falls even above the national average of 24.3%. As a result, South Africa's poverty is highly gendered.

20. A high percentage of women undertake low-skilled, low wage employment. Women primarily serve as domestic labour and home-based care-givers. Women remain consistently under-represented in high-skills, high-wage employment. Moreover, many women continue to operate in the informal trade sector, including in informal cross border trade.

21. In addressing gender-based oppression we must however not be narrowly economic. Other discriminatory practices, social norms and stereotypes all play a role in perpetuating gendered oppression. Getting to the roots of the problem requires active transformation of the economy to deal with the triple crisis of poverty, unemployment and inequality which affects women the worst.
22. Although the experience of economic oppression is gendered, this should not be misconstrued to mean that men have been left unscathed by this process. As an example, the state of retrenchments and the resulting unemployment has made it more difficult for men to conform to their patriarchal gender roles as “providers” and “breadwinners”. This leads to a variety of problems on the part of the affected males including suicide (including family killings), involvement in crime as a survival strategy and domestic abuse which is meted out on women and children in the home.
23. Thus radical economic transformation is crucial for the economic emancipation of women in society to in order to ensure that the continued exploitation and oppression of women is halted. The ANC's Second Transition as adopted by the 2012 Mangaung Congress is crucial in this regard.

Women and Education

24. The apartheid education system was characterised by gross inequalities in terms of race, gender and sex. This is reflected when looking at the participation rate of different groups in higher and basic education. The student and staff profile of learning institutions still reflect the apartheid racial and gender geography. Higher education was constructed on a patriarchal notion of the role of women and men.
25. This can be seen in what is conceived as the role of men and women in the home but now expressed in terms of education enrolments. For instance, the Reconstruction and Development Programme Base document (1994: 62) point out that “girls and women are education and trained to fulfil traditional roles which perpetuate their oppression. Within all education and training programmes special attention must be given to the special interest of girls and women”.
26. South Africa's post 1994 policies generally, and education policies in particular, are informed by a strong human rights framework. Within this framework, gender-

related issues are given prominence in different ways in the education system. Despite the array of gender parity policies, a poor or lack of understanding and acceptance of these policies among those tasked to implement them (teachers and education officials) presents challenges. The profound patriarchal and sexist context in which they are implemented makes gender inequality difficult to eliminate in the schooling system and in particular, school going-age girls continue to face discrimination.

27. There is a strong relationship between poverty, gender and gender-based violence. Evidence shows that girls experience sexual harassment and violence more than boys. Sexual harassment and rape are one of the major forms of GBV in many South African schools. Corporal punishment of both boys and girls has an impact, as a gendered form of violence, on their learning capabilities and retention within schools. There are also unacceptably high numbers of teachers (mainly male) engaging learners (mainly female) in sexual relations.
28. At the tertiary level there are more females than males enrolled in tertiary institutions. However, women are in lower numbers in technical universities, and therefore in technological and scientific fields of study. Women still dominate in areas which are stereotypically caring or “feminine” areas and men still dominate “masculine” study fields.
29. The education system needs to facilitate a process in which gender equality concerns become integral to the systemic processes and operations, including planning, decision-making, policy development and in the implementation of transformation programmes. Interventions could include:
 - Structural functions and coordination within the higher education sector so that problems are tackled holistically. This will create a base for communication and reporting as well as working on projects that address specific areas such as increasing access, retention and the output of women in science, engineering and technology fields of study.
 - Clear goals and targets linked to intervention programmes that address the areas indicated as challenges including increased number of women studying in science, engineering and technology fields. Such interventions could

include providing scholarships targeting women, particularly women from disadvantaged rural backgrounds.

Women and Rural Development

30. The ANC's 2012 Mangaung National Congress noted the following regarding Women, Food Security and Rural Development.
31. In terms of addressing women's economic and rural development, Government has implemented several programmes. The Agricultural Women Empowerment programme includes the Agricultural Development Finance programme. A total number of 29538 community members benefited from the co-operatives initiatives as community projects. Of this, 20 078 are women against 9460 men across all provinces.
32. The MAFISA programme benefited 7229 people to an amount of R65 million. Of this 744 were women. A total of R22 222 333, 00 was allocated for various projects under women's leadership. Land Care projects are responsible for empowering communities targeting women and children. A total number of 634 518 community members benefited from these programmes, of which 411 167 were women as against 223 351 men.
33. The Food Security measures included a total number of 43 200 community projects and 162 food production packs. A total number of 157 694 community members benefitted from these projects across the country. Of these 115 929 were women as against 36 597 men.
34. The Comprehensive and Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) benefited a total number of 165 679 community members. Of this 28 709 were women against 55 075 men, from all nine provinces.
35. In the Financial Assistance Land Administration (FALA) programme, a total number of 34 women benefited with 18 women benefiting through the NCERA FARM projects. An amount of R21 261 000, 00 for 23 projects were allocated in terms of entrepreneurship development and 21 of these projects were on women's leadership. A total number of 212 women were beneficiaries of these projects.
36. Despite these measures, women continue to be marginalized and discriminated against in terms of economic opportunities, the labour market as well as access to

land, credit, and finance. Women's financial dependency increases their vulnerability to marginalization and all forms of abuse.

37. Despite the critical role women play in food production and management of natural resources, they have ownership of a very minute percentage of agricultural land. Rural women's lack of access to resources and basic services is compounded by their unequal rights in family structures, as well as unequal access to family resources, such as land and livestock. This explains further why African rural women are not only poorer in society as a whole but also in their own families. It also defines why their level and kind of poverty is experienced differently and more intensely than that of men. Their lack of access to and control over land means less access to credit and technical assistance, essential for development. Little access to credit limits their ability to purchase seeds, fertilizers and other inputs needed to adopt new farming techniques and hence their economic participation.
38. Women have a crucial role to play in the fight against hunger. As mothers, farmers, and entrepreneurs, they hold the key to building a future free of malnutrition and hunger. A key factor contributing to hunger and food insecurity in the country is gender inequality in families, communities and society as a whole. Due to gender power imbalances, women are often denied access to available food; food production activities (the labour market); and production spaces and tools such as land and implements. This disadvantaged position in any given society is based on the relations of, among others, gender-based access to social resources and opportunities, defining as well women's unequal access to these resources and opportunities.
39. The conspicuous absence of particular reference to interventions targeting gender inequality or improving the status of women as a strategy for addressing food insecurity is one of the major gaps that exist. Without such a focus, the root causes of hunger and food insecurity may not be fully understood and interventions may miss the mark in terms of their orientation and goals. Given the key role of women in the agricultural sector, improving their situation means progress for the sector and for the economy as a whole. Measures to improve their situation include:
- Increasing their access to farming land, fertilizers, seeds and ploughing implements

- Increasing their access to credit
 - Ensuring that they receive education;
 - Increasing their participation in decision-making; and
 - Strengthening their role within the family
40. Rural women's development must be enhanced through increased job creation. Of the five hundred-thousand (500 000) jobs to be created in the rural sector between 2011 and 2020, at least 50% of the jobs must be allocated to rural women. Their access to and ownership of land must result in at least 50% ownership by women of the 411 recapitalized farms, 30% women ownership of the 27 irrigation schemes that will be revitalized in the current MTEF, 50% of state owned farms awarded to women farmers, and special programmes to foster resourcing of both finances and equipment for women farmers.

Cultural and Women's Oppression

41. Women are still oppressed by cultural practices which although recognised by the constitution, undermine women's rights. Without dwelling into an depth discussion on this, cultural practices such as lobola, forced marriages, virginity testing tend to affirm the rights to cultural and religious freedom over and above the right of sexual agency and equality.
42. Some of these practices affect most brutally young women. Reports on young women being abducted and forced into marriage, sometimes with the sanction of their impoverished parents are now too familiar. These practices highlight how the economic oppression of women curtails their choices and makes them vulnerable to a whole range of practices that undermine their right to dignity.
43. Although some might argue that virginity testing continues to play an important role in ensuring that young women delay their sexual debut, thus curbing unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS, it shames those who fail the test & shames sexually active women - perpetuating the stereotype that women aren't sexual beings or ought to be in charge of their sexuality while the opposite is expected from boys/men.
44. Studies have shown that girls that go through virginity testing and come out as non-virgins face humiliation, ridicule, abuse, isolation, financial penalty, family shame,

and poor marriage prospects. This therefore has implications on women's right to sexual freedom and emancipation and thus perpetuates their oppression by vilifying those who express agency over their sexuality.

45. The high lobola paid for a virgin or a woman with no child, virginity testing that some young girls go through so they can "ensure purity", the white veil over one's face when they are getting married as a sign of purity are amongst those things that put so much pressure on women to not explore or embrace their sexuality and perpetuate their oppression sexually and otherwise. These realities point to the fact that is crucial that we infuse gender consciousness to our mission to attain transformation our society.

Sexual Harassment & Violence

46. The question of sexual harassment cannot be looked at in isolation from women's oppression. Women's subordinate position in society and consequently in the family is to a very large extent responsible for the oppression of women socially, politically, economically, and undoubtedly, sexism, which is deep-rooted in our social structure e.g. Tradition, family, education, religion and laws, all of which do, to a larger extent, result from the economic mode of production.
47. Out of sexism attitudes has emerged what one may term the "group dominance" phenomenon, the fact that men feel entitled to express emotions through violence against so many women shows the power that men as a group have over women a group. This phenomenon of group dominance is not natural but is the result of socialization and conditioning. It is learned, and can be unlearned. Generally, boys are taught to be tough to be tolerant, obedient, quite, and subordinate particularly to men-this conditioning happens within the family situation whereby social norms, beliefs and traditions are fully entrenched; further endorsing the male superiority and female insubordination.
48. Sexism being the discrimination of women on the basis of gender is manifested in sexual harassment- sexual harassment exhibit violence against women. We are confronted by high incidence of violence against women including but not limited to rape. Statistics reveal that every 1 in 9 women have been raped or sexually assaulted by other means. South Africa has one of the highest rates of violence against women

in the world. Different studies show that most rape (88%) in South Africa is unreported. The reason for this are varied, ranging from embarrassment, stigmatisation, self-blame and fear of victimisation. These studies also reveal that the rate of sexualised violence is actually higher than what official statistics suggest.

49. Over and above the non-reporting of cases of sexual violence and harassment, women who do report these cases are often threatened, attacked and victimised for acting against such abuses. This has therefore resulted in a situation where women not only experience sexual abuse but are further oppressed for speaking out against such. This should not be viewed separate from the broader framework of how patriarchy manifests itself in different forms in society.

Prostitution and Trafficking of Women

50. The current legal framework on prostitution and sex work is total criminalization against the seller (predominately women). Law reform approaches to prostitution as provided for in the SALRC Issue Paper 19 on Sexual Offences: Adult Prostitution is as follows: Criminalization model, Regulatory model and Total Decriminalization. The ideal approach for the ANC will be for the support of a position that will embrace the dignity of women.

51. In order to respond to the international problem of trafficking in persons, the current ANC government passed the “Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act (2013)”, which aims: (i) to prevent trafficking in persons, (which disproportionately affect women and children); (ii) the prosecution of traffickers and other role players; and (iii) the protection of victims of trafficking. It inter alia provides for the criminalisation of trafficking in persons and related acts such as subjecting a victim of trafficking to debt bondage and destroying or confiscating the travel documents of victims of trafficking. Even though there are other laws that are used to prosecute perpetrators, women still fall through the cracks.

Developing Woman’s Leadership

52. In spite of its commitment to non-sexism, the organisation lacks a clear programme to encourage and develop woman leadership. Most women find the organisation to be alienating and tend to be male dominated. Women constitute a large component

of the ANCs membership. In fact, woman, especially at branch level, dominates most of our organizational activities.

53. It is important to develop woman leadership within the overall cadreship development programme. The organisation on the other hand has produced a number of capable leaders who today occupy key position in society. This has been more by default rather than a coherent programme to develop woman's leadership. Our leadership structures tend to be male dominated with negligible participation of woman. Where woman comrades participate in leadership structures they lack clear support mechanism or mentors.
54. In order to improve the participation of woman in the organisation we are faced with number of options. The first option will be to set up a separate women's forum to deal with the concern that women need the space to develop, which is often lacking within the organisation. This option, however, attractive, will only serve to isolate women and reduce the challenge to develop women leadership as a women's issue. It may further be perceive as forming a separate organisation within the organisation. The latter response, though valid, does not tackle the real problem of the male dominated culture of the organisation.
55. The second option would be to have a clear programme within the gender department that caters for the need to give women the space to develop. This may suggest that gender department should be structured in a way that involves women and take care of their interest. This approach addresses the concern raised on a separate women's forum. The emphasis is on the programmatic intervention rather than creating structures that may not be useful in the long term. This appeared to be viable option supported by the congress.
56. The quota system has been introduced to ensure gender balance in the leadership. This approach has resulted in a numbers-driven process as we try to fulfil the quotas that we have set for ourselves. It has however not addressed the need to transform the culture and modus operand of leadership structures, which for a long time have been male-dominated.
57. In order to increase women's representation in leadership positions we need to take a strategic and long range view. This means adopting a number of mechanisms rather than depend on one mechanism. The first step in this direction is the need to

evaluate our organisational culture and identify real obstacles to women's development and participation. Secondly, it will be important to increase the number of women in positions of leadership not only in the NEC, PECs, RECs and BECs. There must be a standard policy that departments and delegations to organisational forums be gender balanced.

A Program to transform gender relations

58. The realisation of gender equality depends as much on a strong focus on gender advocacy in the women's movement as it does on the practical campaigns aimed at the day to day organising around women's practical gender needs. It also requires stern leadership from the ANC as the leader of the state and the leader of South African society. Thus marching towards the Western Cape Provincial Congress and the National General Council of the ANC, the following are the key demands that our Congress should make with a view of radically transforming gender relations in our society.

- Noting that the Gender Equality Bill that has since been passed, we propose that proper implementation mechanisms be put in place to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the 50/50 policy in both the public and private sector.
- Propose that women should be active agents in the transformation of their own lives and those of the society in general.
- Have specific training programs to be put in place to fast-track the employment of women in different spheres of government.
- Substance abuse awareness campaigns to be done frequently.
- Adequate services from different government departments to be provided to all rural communities.
- Develop programs on the empowerment of women especially and in particular farms.
- Monitor and implement equality at work (salary wise) where a woman is paid less while doing the same job as a man.

- The 3 spheres of government to work together in doing programs in communities and school especially in rural areas where they are not seen (Min of Women and Children, Social services and that of Basic Education.
- Gender parity should start at basic level (foundation phase) so as to master it especially at schools to assist single parents (women).
- Raise awareness on the prioritization of women with disabilities not forgetting to empower those in business as most of their benefits are taken by men (especially in construction).
- Promote women upliftment in politics and stop exploitation in general especially women by other women.
- Reach out and engage different NGO's to provide support and influence them politically.
- Strengthening of gender desks in all regions and branches so as to drive these programs and further raise awareness, with this proposed program for August month

PROGRAM	DATE	WHO
Cadres forum for women	02 nd Aug	All regions
Young women round table discussion (invite relevant NGO's)	7 th Aug	All regions
Build up to Women's Day (Mini Rallies)	8 th Aug	All regions
Women's day event	9 th Aug	TBC
Engagement with women in business (invite Min L. Zulu)	22 Aug	D/Omar
Engagement with women in farms (invite gov dept <i>ie</i> Dept of Labour, Social Dev, Rural Dev)	29 th Aug	Region with farm areas

Conclusion

The program proroposed herein do not and will not fundamentally alter the nature of women's oppression under patriarchy. They do however offer creative ways in which the ANC in the WC can position itself in the struggle against women's oppression by introducing internal mechanisms aimed at making the organisation a home for young women. A sustained assault on patriarchy requires a strong and united women's movement and a leading role for women in the struggle for their own liberation. Campaigns calling for an increased state intervention in the economy are crucial for it is on the backs of interventionist states that many women's rights were won. In addition to educating

society about women's oppression, we must continue to wage attacks on the neoliberal development trajectory as this has been a great setback in terms of the realisation gender equality.

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