



**Let's Unite for Gender Equality:  
Take Action Today, Ignite Change Now!**



## **Let's UNITE Towards Gender Equality in South Africa**

**Women's Jail, Constitution Hill Human Rights Precinct**

**Johannesburg**

**8 December 2023**

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## 1. Workshop Background Information

<b>Theme:</b> Let's UNITE Towards Gender Equality in South Africa
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b> Friday, 8 December 2023 during 08:45 – 13:00
<b>Venue:</b> Women's Jail, at the Constitution Hill Human Rights Precinct, Braamfontein, Johannesburg
<b>Registration and Welcome Reception:</b> Ameerah Abrahams
<b>Program Coordinators:</b> Nangamso Kwinana & Liezelle Kumalo
<b>Facilitator:</b> Zuziwe Khuzwayo
<p>Key Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Puseletso Maile: African Monitor</li><li>● Lindokuhle Malambe: Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV)</li><li>● Rethabile Mbokodi: UN Global Compact Network (South Africa)</li><li>● Matilda Lasseko-Phooko: Centre for Human Rights (Women's Rights Unit)</li><li>● Khutso Monyepao—Commission for Gender Equality (CGE)</li><li>● Karen Pillay: Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV)</li><li>● Zanele Mabaso: Kagiso Trust</li><li>● Cathy Kodiemoka: Human Rights Institute of South Africa (HURISA)</li></ul>
<b>Rapporteur:</b> Senghor Papa Mututhele — WriteCue
<p>Total number of participants: 37 Number of men: 10 Number of women: 27 Trans: 1 Non-binary: 0</p>
<b>Objectives of the workshop:</b> To initiate a platform inclusive of multiple stakeholders advocating for periodic monitoring, reviewing and reporting of the practical interventions the government and the relevant development stakeholders have implemented since 2015 which directly and indirectly promote the accelerated achievement of gender equality in South Africa.

## 2. Introduction

The workshop themed Let's UNITE Towards Gender Equality in South Africa, was convened on 8 December 2023 at the Women's Jail inside the Constitution Hill Human Rights Precinct in Braamfontein Johannesburg. The workshop was convened by African Monitor (AM) in collaboration with the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) and the Australian High Commission.

This was a pivotal multi-stakeholders workshop, dedicated to highlighting the important work implemented by multiple stakeholders committed to the accelerated achievement of gender equality in South Africa by 2030, in line with the [2030 Agenda](#)<sup>1</sup> for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015.

The workshop brought together 37 delegates and representatives from the following organisations: African Monitor (AM), the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), the Australian High Commission, the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Embassy of Denmark, the Embassy of Ireland, Trans Works Global, the Women's Rights Unit of the Centre for Human Rights, IPAS, the African Parliamentary Network on Illicit Financial Flows and Tax (APNIFFT), Indigenous Afrika, Umntu Ngumntu Ngabantu Foundation, the UN Global Compact Network, South African Women in Business (SAWiB), the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE), Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME), Kagiso Trust, the Human Rights Institute of South Africa (HURISA) and the South African Council for Educators (SACE).

The workshop fostered a dynamic environment for discussions. Participants engaged in focused group interactions, high-level plenary engagement, and thematic discussions, thus invigorating an atmosphere of peer-to-peer exchange of information and mutual agreement. Throughout the workshop, speakers and participants endorsed content and recommendations from diverse interventions, key documents and resources reflecting a consensus on the need to promote and attain gender equality in South Africa by 2030.

The focal points of the workshop were multilayered. Firstly, it aimed to assess the present status of gender equality initiatives in the country, implemented during 2015 - 2023. Secondly, it sought to inaugurate an expanded campaign spanning during the period 2024 - 2030 in line with the National Development Plan (NDP), Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), aligning with the international 16 Days of Activism campaign that highlights these initiatives during the year.

Additionally, the workshop explored the potential for cross border collaboration with peers in Southern Africa, the continent of Africa and globally across regions, committed to the same advocacy of gender equality. Lastly, the workshop proposed advocating for reviews of interventions by the government and relevant development stakeholders since 2015 to-date, with the overarching goal of accelerating the achievement of gender equality in South Africa by 2030.

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<sup>1</sup> 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

### **3. Opening & Welcome Remarks**

#### **3.1 Workshop Coordinator Ms. Nangamso Kwinana**

Programmes: African Monitor

On behalf of African Monitor, Nangamso Kwinana welcomed all guests and introduced the concept behind the workshop. African Monitor (AM) and the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), supported by the Australian High Commission in South Africa, convene this hybrid workshop themed “Let’s UNITE Towards Gender Equality in South Africa”.

Amongst the suggestions for pursuing this multi-stakeholder’s workshop, is to initiate a platform where we may engage about monitoring interventions implemented in South Africa towards the achievement of #SDG5. The platform is envisioned to comprise of national development stakeholders committed to periodic reviews of assessing the implementation and mechanisms geared towards the country improving our achievements of attaining Gender Equality #SDG5 by 2030.

South Africa has contributed great efforts towards equality, and we convene this workshop to measure our progress and improve during the period 2015 - 2023.

Ms. Kwinana provided a poignant reflection on the pervasiveness of gender inequality and violence against women in South Africa. She underscored the nation's commitment to addressing issues of inequality, equity, injustice, monitoring and enforcing policies and legislation, funding for human rights defender programmes, mental capacity & health and shed light on the alarming rates of gender-based violence and femicide affecting children and women domestically.

By portraying gender-based violence and inequality as a global pandemic, Ms. Kwinana set the tone, encouraging participants to explore the nuanced layers of the challenges faced by girls and women in the country.

In aligning with the workshop's objectives, she outlined a dual purpose in her opening address. Firstly, she emphasised the importance of establishing a shared understanding of gender equality amongst the stakeholders, identifying the root causes of inequality, persisting challenges, and recognising successful initiatives. Secondly, Ms. Kwinana passionately urged that the workshop transcend traditional discussions, becoming a platform for actionable solutions. She called for concrete, implementable strategies that advocate for gender equality in South Africa, challenging participants to move beyond discourse and actively contribute to transformative change.

#### **3.2 Workshop Coordinator Ms. Lizelle Kumalo**

Gender Programme Manager: Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR)

From 25 November to 10 December the world comes together to commemorate the 16 days of Activism against gender-based violence as part of the annual international campaign. In support of this civil society initiative, the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), in line with the government of South Africa and relevant stakeholders aligns with the proposal to monitor and improve interventions that South Africa is engaged with when addressing gender equality.

South Africa is well known for its activism against GBV. At the same time stakeholders have been involved in different initiatives that are at the forefront of addressing gender inequality in the country. This initiative allows for us to expand the 16 Days of Activism campaign by observing the challenges that exist but also spotlight the significant progress that has been made in different sectors regarding gender equality. All this data is important in contributing to the evidence of impact made when we unite towards gender equality.

On behalf of CSV, Ms Kumalo affirmed support for recognising, acknowledging and spotlighting interventions implemented by the diverse stakeholders during the period 2015 – 2023.

Drawing together on the collective expertise from the group the workshop will identify the specific contribution of each represented stakeholder to ensure that the agreed upon outcomes can be taken on and implemented. The discussions will also enable participants to gain greater awareness of gender equality challenges and opportunities from the varied experience of each other and contribute to better understanding of critical gaps of knowledge towards a human rights approach to achieving gender equality.

### 3.3 Words of support from the Australia High Commission

Ms. Madeleine Pillans - Second Secretary  
Managing External Engagement, Development & Thematic Issues

It is an honour to represent the Australia High Commission at this platform and to commemorate 16 days of Activism against gender-based violence.

I would like to begin by acknowledging and thanking those from civil society, the South African government, diplomatic missions and, in particular, the teams from African Monitor and the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation for organising this event, and the Women's Jail for hosting our meeting at the Constitution Hill Human Rights Precinct.

The world we live in today is not the ideal circumstance to achieve gender equality and end violence against women and girls. In Governments and multilateral forums, there has been pushback to the fight for gender equality and to end gender-based violence. Part of this is to do with conflict.

We know that conflict means more gender-based violence, more instances of rape being used as a tool of war, and more poverty and disadvantage which disproportionately affect women and children. Australia is committed to ending violence against girls and women. Violence against girls and women is fundamentally a violation of their human rights, and has a profound and devastating impact on individuals, communities, and countries.

Australia recognises that responding to and ultimately ending gender-based violence, will make our communities, countries, and world stronger, more secure, and inclusive.

This year (2023) Australia launched a new International Development Policy which is centred on listening, respect, and genuine partnerships. And we, as governments, need to listen. Violence against girls and women is one of the greatest challenges faced by South Africa. But it's not a

South African problem. It's not a problem of the developing world, or of the Global South. This scourge impacts people across the globe.

Including in my own country. Australia too has a long way to go to end gender-based violence. I stand here today and speak humbly because the rates of gender-based violence in Australia and the number of women who have been killed by intimate partners this year is unacceptable. And so the Australian government – and our officials across the world – are working hard to listen: Listen to our own communities and also to other governments and communities across the world that are making progress on these issues. More times than not, they have innovative solutions and approaches that we haven't thought of.

The Australian High Commission in Pretoria is proud to support a range of civil society organisations advocating for gender equality and supporting survivors of gender-based violence to access support services, economic empowerment opportunities, and legal representation, and those that support institutional and systemic change. Thank you for all that you do.

### 3.4 Workshop Agenda & Programme from Ms. Zuziwe Khuzwayo Independent Facilitator

Following the introductions from the African Monitor, CSVr and the Australian High Commission, Ms. Khuzwayo facilitated the workshop by first outlining the proposed flow for the day and thereafter introduced herself and her experience as a gender researcher and her previous experience in the philanthropy sector. The structure of the workshop began with representatives from each stakeholder reflecting their organisation's framing of gender equality as a concept and as a practised theory and concluded with a reflection of the work their organisations have implemented or are pursuing in relation to achieving gender equality in South Africa by 2030. The facilitator encouraged attendees to participate holistically, incorporating themselves and organisation's interests within the objective of the workshop.

### 3.5 African Monitor: Ms. Puseletso Maile

African Monitor is actively engaged in fostering partnerships towards promoting prioritisation of and achieving gender equality by 2030. Within civil society, African Monitor takes on the pivotal role of coordinating efforts to produce a comprehensive civil society report<sup>2</sup>. Simultaneously, the organisation contributes to the procedural framework for the national Voluntary National Review report, a collaborative endeavour led by the national planning commission (NPC). The focal areas for civil society involvement in the upcoming 2024 VNR processes will encompass the following Sustainable Development Goals:

- Goal 1: No Poverty - End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- Goal 2: Zero Hunger - End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.
- Goal 4: Quality Education - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Goal 5: Gender Equality - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

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<sup>2</sup> [Citizen's Report](#) South Africa

- Goal 13: Climate Action - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

African Monitor promoted the inclusion of #SDG5 in the VNR 2024 report, encouraged by the recognition that gender equality is foundational to the successful implementation of the sustainable development goals. African Monitor emphasises the multifaceted and complex nature of gender, considering it as a stand-alone goal. This approach acknowledges that discussions about employment, gender-based violence, and issues surrounding gender equality are inherently interconnected. For instance, addressing gender is imperative when discussing employment and essential when confronting gender-based violence. Moreover, gender plays a pivotal role in driving other sustainable development goals, such as poverty alleviation, climate action, and even the issue of hunger is intrinsically linked to gender dynamics. African Monitor underscores the importance of gender inclusion across all development goals, asserting that ensuring gender is embedded vertically and horizontally in the process guarantees inclusivity.

By strategically incorporating gender considerations into every facet of development, African Monitor aims to create an inclusive and comprehensive approach that addresses the diverse challenges faced by girls and women, fostering a more equitable and sustainable future.

### 3.6 Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR): Ms. Lindokuhle Malambe

Ms. Malambe, a gender programmes assistant at the CSVR, highlighted that CSVR conducted research on sexual and gender-based violence in eight communities in 2022 and provincially in 2023. In this engaging session, Lindokuhle presented several pressing issues faced by youth that emerged during their interaction with the communities.

One significant concern is the exclusion of youth from decision-making processes and resource distribution within these communities. Ms. Malambe emphasised the systematic sidelining of youth, limiting their influence and access to vital resources.

Another major challenge highlighted is the unequal opportunities available to the youth, resulting in a high rate of unemployment. This economic disadvantage often propels them towards substance abuse and criminal activities, reflecting a broader issue of despair and disillusionment within the existing system.

The youth expressed a pervasive sense of hopelessness, perceiving many occurrences as part of a systemic problem. This discontent is compounded by their exposure to various forms of violence, stemming from their vulnerability to different societal pressures.

Furthermore, the unequal representation of youth in managerial positions, political spheres, and parliamentary seats exacerbates their feelings of marginalisation. The absence of financial support and empowerment for youth-led organisations was highlighted as a crucial issue that requires awareness and attention. In rural areas, especially, opportunities are constrained, particularly for young women who face limited access to education.



This educational gap contributes to increased risks of HIV contraction and a higher incidence of teenage pregnancy among young women in these areas.

Lastly, Ms. Malambe highlighted the issue of hate crimes, particularly against LGBTQI “+” communities. Rooted in a patriarchal system, these crimes are exacerbated by a lack of recognition and support from the broader communities. The prevailing feeling of insecurity among LGBTQI”+” individuals in their living environments was identified as a significant concern requiring urgent attention and intervention.

### 3.7 UN Global Compact Network: Ms. Rethabile Mbokodi

In the workshop's proceedings, Ms. Rethabile Mbokodi presented the UN Global Compact Network's insights into the expansive efforts of the largest corporate sustainability initiative globally. Operating with a dedicated secretariat in South Africa, the organisation focuses on catalysing corporate sustainability and fostering inclusive gender equality within the private sector. Ms. Mbokodi delved into the specifics of their gender equality initiatives, highlighting the "Target Gender Equality" program. This program serves as a catalyst for private sector entities in South Africa, guiding them in amplifying their commitment to gender equality. A core facet of this initiative revolves around supporting companies in setting targets to enhance gender equality, with a specific emphasis on advancing equal pay for work of equal value. At the heart of these efforts are the "Women's Empowerment Principles," a collaborative initiative with UN Women consisting of seven principles that private sector entities in South Africa are encouraged to implement, thereby making substantial contributions to gender equality.

Rethabile further detailed the UN Global Compact Network's collaborative events, particularly those held annually in partnership with the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), the largest stock exchange in Africa. These events serve as platforms to rally companies to embrace gender equality, emphasising the importance of collective action in fostering sustainable change. Additionally, the organisation facilitates various other events throughout the year, creating opportunities for the private sector in South Africa to share insights and learn from one another.

### 3.8 Centre for Human Rights (Women's Rights Unit): Ms. Matilda Lasseko-Phooko

The Women's Rights Unit, a vital component of the Centre for Human Rights, collaborates with various vulnerable groups, with a primary focus on gender equality. Ms. Lasseko-Phooko, who is the programmes manager for the Women's Rights Unit, highlighted the Centre's engagement within the African human rights regional space, encompassing South Africa and all African Union (AU) member states. In the realm of women's rights, the Centre staunchly advocates for the implementation of the regional Treaty on Women's Rights, as outlined in the [Maputo Protocol](#)<sup>3</sup> on the Rights of Women in Africa. Ms. Lasseko-Phooko underscored that the Centre's work on women's rights aims to ensure the practical implementation of these rights at the country level. This involves supporting member states in understanding their obligations and identifying measures to fulfil those obligations as outlined in the Treaty.

Moreover, the Centre collaborates with civil society organisations across different countries.

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<sup>3</sup> Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa ([Maputo Protocol](#))

Their joint efforts aim to ensure that these organisations can hold their respective member states accountable in monitoring the implementation of the Treaty. In the context of South Africa, the Centre for Human Rights has played a crucial role in assisting the government in preparing its periodic report to the commission over the last two years. This report is vital for the commission, which monitors compliance with the Treaty, ensuring that the government has taken substantive steps to uphold gender equality as defined in the Treaty.

Expanding on their initiatives in South Africa, Ms. Lasseko-Phooko highlighted the Centre's collaboration with civil society organisations to provide counter information to the commission through formal shadow reports. These reports offer a more nuanced understanding of the on-the-ground reality, aiming to ensure that the Treaty's obligations are met comprehensively by society at large. As an academic institution, the Centre actively engages in research, particularly focusing on various aspects of gender. Notably, their recent work addressed violence against women across the entire continent. This encompassed a legal review in 25 selected countries, examining not only laws explicitly related to gender-based violence but also any legislation impacting women's vulnerability. The research findings inform AU processes and enable the Centre to engage with other countries, sharing insights and strengthening capacities in the pursuit of gender equality.

### 3.8 Commission on Gender Equality (CGE): Ms. Khutso Monyepao

Ms. Khutso Monyepao the CGE Gauteng Provincial Manager presented an overview of the significant efforts undertaken by the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) in addressing gender equality and gender-based violence. Central to their mission is the CGE's mandate, which involves promoting, protecting, and developing gender equality across government spheres, the private sector, and civil society organizations. The CGE executes its work through three key departments: the legal department, policy and research, and public education and information.

Using research, the CGE plays a crucial role in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of international treaties and SADC protocols related to gender equality. At the CGE, research analysis is prioritised in order to assess the effectiveness of governments' responses to gender-based violence, identify shortcomings, and provide informed recommendations. Ms. Monyepao highlighted various research reports relevant to the workshop, underscoring the CGE's commitment to addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by gender-based violence.

The CGE's public education and information department aims to educate the public, business, and civil society sectors on gender equality and the avoidance of discrimination and violence based on gender. They take a gender mainstreaming approach, emphasising the localization of the SDGs. Working with organisations established in towns, colleges, and government agencies, this process entails choosing and incorporating pertinent SDGs while assisting them with gender mainstreaming procedures. Stakeholder engagement is a key aspect of the CGE's public education efforts, involving interactions with stakeholders to share information, mechanisms, and best practices in gender equality. **CGE conducts gender development workshops to update civil society on the current state of gender development within the country, SADC, and international protocols.**

In order to address gender-based violence, the CGE recognised the value of inclusivity and launched programmes that included men and boys.

Through recognising the diverse roles that men play—as perpetrators, victims, or change agents—the CGE seeks to leverage activism and interest to transform attitudes towards gender-based violence, femicide, and gender equality.

The legal department of the CGE conducts investigations, assesses complaints, and carries out systemic investigations. Their work has uncovered issues in gender-based violence cases, including delays in DNA processing, false allegations, and specific trends such as the Mavuso trend involving financial demands following intimate encounters. The CGE actively engages with these challenges on the ground, working with both men and women. Furthermore, the CGE has published investigative and public hearing reports, addressing critical issues such as sterilization of women living with HIV/AIDS and the state of shelters for victims of gender-based violence. Their investigations revealed a shortage of well-equipped shelters, funding gaps, staff shortages, and insufficient infrastructure, emphasizing the need for increased support.

In the legislative domain, the CGE has actively reviewed bills, including the Criminal Procedure Act, Sexual Offences Act, and Domestic Violence Act. Taking a leadership role, they ensure that these bills are inclusive and safeguard the rights of victims, contributing significantly to the evolution of gender-based violence legislation in South Africa.

#### **4. Breakaway Group Discussions**

To focus on the group tasks, participants were divided into 5 groups, including a group of the online participants, tasked with addressing the following 5 questions:

1. How does your organisation define/ understand gender equality?
2. Reflect initiatives/ programmes implemented by your organisation during 2015 – to date? Kindly share noted milestones, achievements, and challenges?
3. What initiatives/ programme would you advise this platform to pursue?
4. Propose how this platform may monitor our agreed objectives?
5. Propose the frequency of the platform’s meetings to track agreed objectives?

The below responses are summary notes of the reflections presented by the 5 groups, including a group of the online participants. Additional responses to the same above 5 questions, were captured on [mentimeter](#) and can be found in the following link as additional input to the above responses: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1oirnuWATeX6kEbpzj0qNUeeHB71pfvpf>

#### 4.1 QUESTION 1: How does your organisation define/ understand gender equality?

1. How does your organisation define or understand gender equality?	Gender equality involves ensuring equal access to resources and opportunities regardless of gender.
	It encompasses equality in economic participation, decision-making, and resource allocation.
	According to UN Women, it means providing equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for women, men, girls, and boys.
	Gender equality implies unbiased access to opportunities and resources, promoting economic participation and inclusive decision-making.
	It can be seen as granting equal opportunities, freedom, safety, and liberation irrespective of gender.
	Achieving gender equality involves treating everyone equally in terms of career progression, opportunities, and resource allocation, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, or social standing.
	In the context of human development, mainstreaming women is considered a crucial aspect of achieving gender equality.

#### 4.2 QUESTION 2: Reflect initiatives/ programmes implemented by your organisation during 2015 – to date? Kindly share noted milestones, achievements, and challenges?

2. Reflect initiatives or programmes implemented by your organisation during 2015 – to date? Noting milestones, achievements, and challenges.	
	Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Sector Policies
	Identification of discriminatory legislation through monitoring and evaluation of public sector policies.
	Investigative and research reports with published findings and recommendations.
	Target Gender Equality Program.
	Events for Gender Equality, e.g., Ring the Bell.
	Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) and tools.

Successes	Successful participation in the Target Gender Equality Program.
	Some companies are signatories of WEPs.
	Total Shutdown Initiative: A successful advocacy and movement-building initiative with multi-stakeholder involvement.
	Capacity building on localising SDGs at the local level, leading to increased acknowledgment of gender mainstreaming and reporting.

Challenges	Slow uptake of WEPs principles.
	Community-driven response strategies for co-designing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) initiatives.
	Funding challenges for collaborative, multi-disciplinary, cohesive efforts.
	Clash between community needs and focused gender equality initiatives.
	Competition for a limited pool of funding.
	Lack of centralized data repository for informed initiatives.

#### 4.3 QUESTION 3: What initiatives/ programme would you advise this platform to pursue?

3. What initiatives or programme would you advise this platform to pursue?	Compliance and Enforcement of Recommendations & Legislation guidelines.
	Ensure implementation of recommendations from research and legal reports.
	Establish national development stakeholders' mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing compliance.
	Periodically monitor the justice cluster to ensure justice for victims of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF).
	Sustain programs and events at the Global Compact, in order to be more inclusive of the private sector in development of SA objectives.
	Ongoing commitment to gender equality and transformation.
	Emphasise the need for gender transformation.
	Advocate for a balanced and equitable society through gender equality initiatives.

#### 4.4 QUESTION 4: Propose how this platform may monitor our agreed objectives?

4. Propose how this platform may monitor our agreed objectives?	Research, investigative hearings, systemic investigation, and gender audits are integral components of the gender mainstreaming program.
	Implemented across public, private, and civil society organizations (CSOs).
	Fast-tracking progress through targeted initiatives.
	Establishing mechanisms for annual reporting to monitor and assess progress.

#### 4.5 QUESTION 5: Propose the frequency of the platform's meetings to track agreed objectives?

5. Propose the frequency of the platform's meetings to track agreed objectives?	Quarterly
	March 2024
	June - July 2024
	August 2024
	November - December 2024

## **5. Emerging Insights: Post-Debate Reflections on Questions, Work Plan, and Contributions**

The initial concept that arose after addressing the five questions in the group discussion centred on the need to dismantle patriarchy as a fundamental step toward achieving gender equality. Ms. Karen Pillay pointed out a crucial aspect often overlooked: the role of women in perpetuating the intergenerational patriarchal system. It was emphasised that moving forward, it is imperative to address and rectify this aspect to ensure comprehensive progress.

The second idea focused on ethical resource mobilisation as a critical factor in addressing gender equality. Participants recognised that as efforts are consolidated to build an equitable system, many organisations new to the social justice landscape lack defined priorities due to resource mobilisation challenges. This underscored the importance of ethical practices in resource mobilisation, avoiding a shift toward issues that have already been extensively addressed.

The third idea introduced the concept of 'Ubuntu' as a way of life, emphasising the idea of the collective and how this needs to be integrated at both personal and organisational levels to actively contribute to changing social behaviour and realising gender equality. This perspective highlighted the transformative power of collective action at all levels.

Ms. Liezelle Kumalo emphasised that achieving gender equality is a gradual process, acknowledging that the wheel does not need reinventing, but rather the synthesis of existing efforts. The focus now is to bring together previous work and strategically highlight it to bring about incremental changes. Participants were urged to collaboratively devise a work plan during the session, emphasising the importance of delineating specific actions, agreements within respective organisations, and developing measurement and monitoring mechanisms. This approach aims to address structural issues and discriminations, acknowledging the need to engage with various forms of discrimination, be it in the workplace, accessing sexual health and reproductive rights, or experiencing economic, land, and safety discrimination, which are all significant barriers to gender equality.

## **6. Recommendations and Ideas to Consider for Future Action for Different Organizations**

### **6.1 Reconsidering Customary Law**

To advance a reconsideration of customary law, a proactive step identified is to engage with the African Lawyers Association. The plan involves initiating a dialogue with them within the next quarter to collaboratively explore legal avenues and strategies on the best approach to address and dismantle customary law. Simultaneously, community-level discussions with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are proposed. The focus here is to question the origins, authors, and purposes of customary law, ensuring a critical examination of its impact on gender equality.

### **6.2 Advocating for Ubuntu in Education**

A strategic initiative is recommended to advocate for the incorporation of Ubuntu principles from the grassroots level, starting from early childhood education. The proposal suggests introducing Ubuntu as part of the curriculum in settings like crèches and daycare centres, emphasizing its integration as a way of life rather than a mere slogan. The aim is to foster a deeper understanding of Ubuntu principles, promoting a cultural shift towards equality.

### 6.3 Collaboration for Gender Equality

Recognising the need for cohesive efforts, the recommendation is to emphasize collaboration among various organizations working towards gender equality. The call is to unite efforts during campaigns to avoid scattering resources. Through collaborative initiatives, organizations can share ideas, align goals, and collectively work towards achieving gender equality, leveraging shared insights and experiences.

### 6.4 Engaging Community Influencers

A community-level approach is proposed to engage influencers within communities, such as community activists and leaders. The objective is to amplify voices from the ground, ensuring that the challenges and realities of gender equality are accurately communicated. The initiative seeks to bridge the gap between discussions at higher levels and the understanding of these issues within local communities.

### 6.5 Transforming Education at University Campuses

To address gender equality comprehensively, a recommendation is proposed, suggesting working with the community of gender practitioners at university campuses. This collaboration aims to advocate for curriculum changes, specifically in departments focused on transformation and inclusivity. By engaging with these practitioners, it is anticipated that curriculum changes will contribute to broader educational transformations in the context of gender equality.

### 6.6 Integrating and Consolidating Individual Institutional Efforts

The recommendation underscores the importance of integrating and consolidating the efforts of different organisations working towards gender equality. The proposal is to create a unified cohort that outlines the collective contributions of various institutions over specific periods, providing a comprehensive overview of their endeavours in promoting and attaining gender equality.

### 6.7 Social Impact Assessment for Legal Judgments

The need for social impact assessments is highlighted, particularly in evaluating the impact of legal judgments on gender equality. Examples include assessments of legislative changes in areas such as compensation for occupational injuries and diseases and inheritance laws. The objective is to gauge the effectiveness of these legal changes and their real-world impact on individuals affected by gender-based discrimination.

### 6.8 Monitoring the National Strategic Plan (NSP)

An ongoing effort involves monitoring the pillars of the National Strategic Plan (NSP), with a specific focus on CGE's work in monitoring justice cluster activities. CGE is actively assessing the responsiveness of institutions like SAPS, Sexual Offence Courts, and NPA in addressing gender-based violence issues. Monitoring reports, such as the SAPS report, are regularly produced and made available on the CGE website, outlining challenges and proposed plans for improving response mechanisms. The emphasis is on proactive engagement with institutions to ensure timely and effective responses to gender-based violence complaints.

## **7. Measurements: Navigating Change of Norms Incrementally**

After the extensive exchange of ideas, the development of a work plan, and the formulation of recommendations, the critical question arose: How do we effectively measure and monitor the progress of our efforts in advancing gender equality? To embark on this measurement journey, a prerequisite was identifying the root causes of gender inequality on the ground, encompassing aspects such as customary law, patriarchy, and societal scepticism toward gender equality.

### **7.1 Incremental Game for Norm Change**

A departure from traditional metrics was emphasised, particularly concerning norms change. The discussion highlighted the significance of shifting entrenched customs, citing the example of monitoring norm change regarding sexual health and reproductive rights, specifically safe abortion. The suggested approach involves embracing an incremental game that acknowledges the gradual nature of norm change.

Illustrative scenarios, such as challenging gender norms related to land ownership in a village, were proposed as tangible indicators of changing societal norms.

### **7.2 Quantitative Measures and Progressive Realisation**

The conversation delved into the idea of quantitative measures for norm change, using the example of safe abortion. The focus shifted to government-initiated abortion centers and the connection between increased access to safe abortion services and changing societal norms. By quantifying the number of girls seeking safe abortion and assessing the impact on stigma reduction, the approach aims to illustrate norm change over time. The emphasis was on a progressive realisation and measurement approach to gauge the transformation of societal attitudes.

### **7.3 Impact on Reporting Gender-Based Violence**

Another dimension of norm change centred on reporting gender-based violence (GBV) to the police. The discussion highlighted the importance of instilling confidence in victims to report crimes, ensuring that law enforcement treats such cases as criminal offenses rather than dismissing them based on relationships. The desired norm change involves both the victim's perception and the response of law enforcement, illustrating a multifaceted approach to societal transformation.

## **8. Conclusion and Commitment to Action**

The concluding session, led by workshop coordinator Ms Nangamso Kwinana, framed the workshop as an activation dialogue, bringing diverse stakeholders together to evaluate the potential expansion and consolidation of individual interventions. The theme of actively striving for gender equality was envisioned as a collective effort, transcending organisational affiliations. Expressing gratitude to all contributors, Ms Kwinana underscored the workshop's purpose of fostering collaboration and acknowledging the collective effort to advance gender equality objectives in South Africa.

Ms. Kwinana encouraged participants to view the event not as the initiation of individual projects but as the beginning of a collective commitment to framing a national development stakeholder mechanism that may monitor and work with interested stakeholders to support the achievement



of gender equality in South Africa, with future aspirations to spiral to the greater continent of Africa and globally. She envisioned the collaborative efforts as a shared

responsibility, emphasizing that the cause of gender equality should no longer be associated with specific organizations but seen as a collective endeavour requiring all, in order to leave no one behind. The importance of contributing strategies to nurture this shared commitment was highlighted.

As a symbolic gesture, Ms Kwinana introduced the pledge banner featuring a powerful image of women marching in 1956 to the Union Buildings (the official seat of South Africa's Government) in the capital city of Pretoria. Participants were invited to sign the pledge banner on behalf of their represented organisations, signifying a pledge of commitment to actively contribute toward a gender-equal society. The banner was envisioned as a lasting reminder of the collective dedication manifested in the workshop.

The conclusion culminated in capturing a main group photo, symbolising the unity of those present, both physically and remotely, in their commitment to advancing gender equality. The workshop coordinator expressed gratitude once again for the valuable contributions and active participation, signifying a hopeful and collaborative journey toward a gender-equal South Africa.





In Person		
Name	Organisation	Role
Zuziwe Khuzwayo	Independent	Facilitator
Senghor Papa Mututele	WrightCue	Rapporteur
Gustav Stander	LAV Events	Manager
Allic Tembo	LAVevents	Tech
Shaun S	LAVevents	Tech
Joseph Eliabson Maniragena	African Monitor	African Monitor
Puseletso Maile		African Monitor
Nangamso Kwinana		African Monitor
Ameerah Abrahams		African Monitor
Lizelle Kumalo	CSVr	Gender Programme Manager
Lindokuhle Malambe		Gender Programme Assistant
Madeleine Pillans	Australian High Commission	Second Secretary: Managing External Engagement, Development and Thematic Issues
Marten Menger	Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany	First Secretary: Cultural Affairs & Political Affairs
Andreas Udholm Kramer	Embassy of Denmark	Intern
Sibusisiwe Nkosi	Embassy of Ireland	Programme Manager
Siya Hlongwa	Trans Works Global	Chairperson
Matilda Lasseko-Phooko	Centre for Human Rights	Programme Manager: Women's Rights Unit
Dr Makgoale Magwentshu	IPAS	Senior Capacity Building Advisor
Dr Khanyisile Litchfield-Tshabalala	APNIFFT	Chairperson
Buhle Tshomela	Indigenous Afrika	Coordinator
Nicolene Trom	Umntu Ngumntu Ngabantu Foundation	Founder
Sello Motsoane	UN Global Compact Network SA	Participant Engagement Coordinator
Fika Mokwana	SAWiB - South African Women in Business	President

Online		
Mr Yared Tsegay	African Monitor	African Monitor
Rethabile Mbokodi	UN Global Compact Network - SA	Programmes Manager
Khutso Monyepao	Commission for Gender Equality	Gauteng Provincial Manager
Siphilele Poswa	CSV	
Athini Magodla (He/Him)	CSV	CSV
Karen Pillay	CSV	CSV
Xoliswa Dilata	DPME	
Nondumiso Nsibande	IPAS	
Silondile Mpotshane	DPME	
Carol Seatlanyane	CSV	
Zanele Mabaso	Kagiso Trust	
Cathy Kодиemoka	HURISA	
Tuzana Sophethe	South African Council for Educators (SACE)	
Nkele Yvonne Lechaba- SACE	South African Council for Educators (SACE)	