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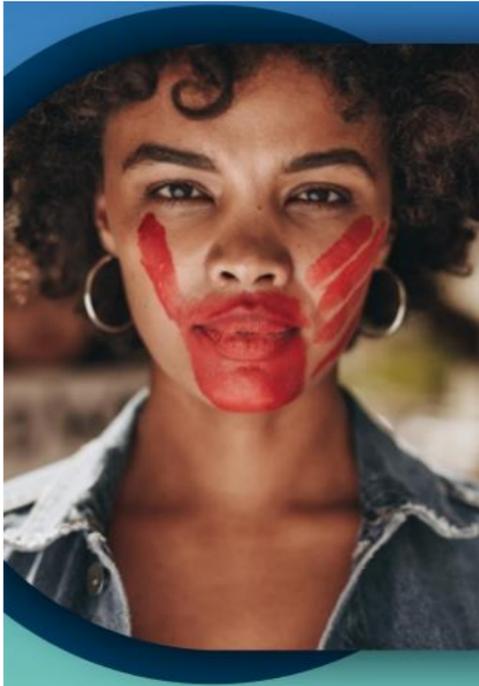


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A Commission for Gender Equality Newsletter

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## GBV Dialogue for Women and Girls in Mangaung

On Friday, 15 October, the Free State office of the Commission for Gender Equality conducted a Women and Girls Dialogue in collaboration with other stakeholders within the Bloemspruit Task Team against GBV. Bloemspruit is a township in the Mangaung Metro that has been listed as one of the Gender-Based Violence hotspots in the city.

“The dialogue served as a safe space for open engagement between women and girls about various factors that put women and girls at more risk for GBV” said Free State Education Officer, Ms Boitumelo Zwane. Participants included the Department of Education, SAPS, Department of Social Development, African

Substance Use Disorder Management Clinic, Women Believes Connection tabulated resolutions for further interventions.



*Boitumelo Zwane is the Education Officer of the Commission for Gender Equality in the Free State province.*

## Women Representation in Municipalities Good for Democracy

Head of Research and Policy at the Commission for Gender Equality, Dr Thabo Rapoo, says a fair representation and participation by women in municipal leadership could yield significant benefits, especially by infusing the perspectives and experiences of women in policy and decision-making processes.

“Many decisions on policies and programmes pursued by municipalities or other levels of government, have a bearing on the lives of women. For instance, local level decision-making, in areas such as local economic development, land use planning, local enterprise promotion, community safety, low-cost housing, street lighting, and others, can impact positively or negatively on opportunities for women’s empowerment” Rapoo said.

“This creates an obligation on the political parties and political leadership, to put in place the necessary policies and effective processes, to promote gender equality in political participation and representation of women in government”.

## Meeting The CGE Faces



Leonard Macakathi has been the Education Officer for the CGE in the Western Cape province since December 2009. He grew up in Cape Town’s Langa township. “Working for the CGE helped me understand gender equality better. I love talking, educating, informing, and discussing gender related issues with women, men, girls and community members at large,” he said. Macakathi believes that the CGE should ensure that gender equality is institutionalised and attained by public and private sectors, “Not forgetting to monitor and assess religious and cultural sectors as they are the origins of patriarchy in our country. Looking at the high rate of GBV and femicide incidents, we cannot run away from the fact that religious and cultural stereotypes, practises and beliefs are the cause of GBV and femicide.”

## Limpopo Office GAD Training targeting different forums at COGHSTA

On Thursday, 14 October 2021, the Limpopo office hosted Gender and Development training via Teams. The training targeted different forum members of the department of COGHSTA. “We believe that gender and development has much to offer for developing both analytical paradigms and new institutional practices” said our Limpopo Education Officer, Nkhensani Hlekani. The training covered Gender Concepts, International Instruments and Gender Responsive Planning with focus on women, youth and people with disabilities.

### How rife is gender-based violence in the North-West Province and what other challenges have you observed in the province?

The gender based is very rife given the cases and murders experienced thus far in the province, and the challenges is that not enough public education is happening due to organisations and stakeholders working in silos. If there was an establishment of ward-based Gender Based Violence forums, it would assist law enforcement agencies and ensure preventative measures.

### What initiatives/programmes are you working on with stakeholders?

In Matshepe Village in Mahikeng Local Municipality we had a fact-finding meeting as stakeholders and community members and out of that came a proposed community steering committee that will establish a ward-based Gender Based Violence forum to update stakeholders on local challenges. We will also have a campaign against Gender based Violence with other stakeholders at Disaneng Village in the Ratlou municipality where a woman was murdered last year.

## Q&A with Joyce Khutsoane North-West Provincial Manager



### How did the lockdown affect your outreach plans and how did you cope?

It negatively affected our outreach plans. Grassroot societal challenges need people on-site rather than virtual engagements. It has also been difficult to serve GBV victims due to connectivity problems. Access to networks in rural areas is poor, however we made progress in stakeholder engagements through virtual meetings.

### Do you have many people lodging complaints with the CGE in the province?

Only a few but we follow-ups on previous cases, much still needs to be done in educating the public especially in rural areas to know more about services provided by the Commission For gender equality.

### Do you conduct LGBTIQ+ programmes?

We are always a part of the LGBTIQ programmes and most organisations do invite us for their trainings and meetings and the last one was the training was on intersex and transgender offered by Iranti and the local organisation called Gay-Umbrella.

