



## Educating the community of the Walter Sisulu Local Municipality



The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) in the Eastern Cape visited the Walter Sisulu local municipality as part of carrying out its mandate to educate communities about the importance of promoting and attaining gender equality. Education Officer, Khaya Nkontso worked with local Ward Councillors in mobilizing communities.

The outreach sessions were conducted at the Polar Park on 21 June, and at the Ventersdad Town Hall on 22 June. CGE was also hosted by Takalani Community radio to share their mandate with the broader community.

The Women's Caucus of the local municipality has encouraged more of these outreach programmes, indicating that there is a need to reach other areas such as Jamestown, Burgersdorp, Steynberg, Dukathole and Khayamandi. "We have welcomed this invitation by the Women's Caucus, we continue to have a good working relationship with the Walter Sisulu local municipality as they also work on gender mainstreaming, a strategy used to achieve gender equality in local municipalities," said Khaya Nkontso.

Public Education and outreach programmes are central to the work of the Commission, and CGE officials conduct these in languages of each province to the benefit of the community members. "Access to information is also about people understanding the communication they are being engaged on. We always try our outmost best to address community members in a manner that will create a space where they are able to freely engage with us", concluded Mr Nkontso.

## The face of unemployment is that of a black female



Opinion piece author: Commissioner Dr Nthabiseng Moleko

The recently released quarterly labour force survey, yet again, shows an economy that cannot create jobs. One of the most startling results is the employment increase attributed to private households. Households are reported as the biggest contributor to an increase in employment at 129 000. Not construction, manufacturing, or transport; which are contracting by up to 14.7% compared to last quarter.

The increase attributed to trade, community and social services sits lower than household contribution at 118 000 and 73 000. Worryingly, these are not sectors that contribute to our manufacturing value add, nor our real productive capabilities. The industrialisation capacity in South Africa needs to be urgently enhanced to drive expansion of labour absorptive sectors that have high potential to create jobs. Technical and vocational skills need to be improved by going back to the basics of targeting mathematics and science outcomes. This will enable South Africa to create a capable and skilled workforce. There needs to be unrelenting drives, incentives and targets pushing more women towards STEM sectors.

Despite the need for urgent industrialisation, as it stands South Africa's economic structure has remained firmly services led, buttressed by debt pumped into consumption. Labour intensive sectors of agriculture and mining, when combined with finance combined in the last quarter created less employment than private households. This is absurd! At barely 81 000 employed in the sectors combined, it is still barely two thirds of private household contribution. It is startling that individuals hiring of domestic workers and gardeners is the highest contributor to employment as a sector.

The dire situation reveals that we are now at 46.2% unemployment, with 7.9 million South Africans actively looking for work, but jobless. There are a staggering 3.8 million who have simply given up all prospects of employment. Therefore, the real unemployment rate sits at 12.5 million South Africans. The national response afforded to COVID-19 pandemic should be applied to unemployment levels by both government and the private sector. We are in an unemployment pandemic. More aptly put, we have been in an unemployment pandemic (crisis) before Covid-19. Yet before Covid – 19 and up to this point, our macroeconomic framework remains unchanged.

## Instilling values of gender equality and respect in our young men and boys



The Department of Education's Special Programmes & Transformation Unit in the Free State Province hosted a Boys Dialogue, "Gwala Mpinji", a dialogue-based resource aimed at supporting the personal and social development of boys and young men, typically from Secondary schools from Grade 9-10 and Young Men in the Community.

The Unit is a sequential, self-consolidating programme, thematically split, aimed at facilitating constructive and meaningful dialogues around the social messages to which boys and young men are exposed in multiple ways. Its exploration of themes of respect, personhood, safety and empathy, directly engages with the root values of sexism and misogyny and has a relentlessly practical focus on ways in which boys and young men can support both their own healthy development and be a positive and respectful presence in the lives of women and girls. The Gwala Mpinji Dialogue programme provides boys and young men with a space where they can

exercise their individual agency to reflect, learn and make crucial decisions about what it means to 'be a man'.

The Dialogue was hosted on 17 June at the Lenyora la Thuso Secondary School in Botshebelo.

Amongst the few stakeholders engaging with the boys and young men was the CGE. Commissioner Mothupi Dibeela addressed the youngsters on how gender-based violence manifests itself amongst young people, the role they as young men can play to curb it as future leaders and she also raised awareness on gender equality. "These dialogues are important because boys are often equipped with knowledge and treated in such a way that leads to patriarchal entitlements and toxic masculinity. Men are not naturally violent, and it is our responsibility to instil good and quality values in our young men to prepare them for life" said Commissioner Mothupi.

