

Follow the CGE on Instagram: @cgealive

A Commission for Gender Equality Newsletter

25 August 2023

EDITION 91

Follow the CGE's Youtube Channel: @CommissionForGenderEquality

## Empowering Rural Women on Legalities of Marriage Regimes In Free State

The Commission For Gender Equality in collaboration with the South African Human Rights Commission and the Department of Justice's Master of the High Court, conducted a women's empowerment outreach to educate women about the legalities of various types of marriage regimes, management of estates, importance of wills, and the function of the Guardian's Fund.



CGE's Acting Provincial Manager in the Free State province, Ms Boitumelo Zwane, said a high number of women lack knowledge on what the law entails on these issues, and this exposes them to injustices and the woes of widowhood or divorce, "Women are usually left out in the cold when their partners pass on and family disputes over the estates and children ensue" she said. Zwane added that the outreach was conducted with awareness that women in rural areas do not have the knowledge and resources needed to protect themselves, "From an economic

lens, most women in rural areas are unemployed and depend on social grants and their partners for sustenance, we are here to address those issues", she said. The outreach, which was supported by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) and SAWID,

took part in a small community of Verkeerdevlei in Masilonyana Local Municipality, Free State. The outreach was aligned with the theme "Women's Socio- Economic Rights and Empowerment: Building Back for Women's Improved Resilience".



## Students Ask for Anti-GBV Support On College Campus

Students at Taletso TVET College in the North West province, have requested the college management to provide a youth desk and a complaint box to be monitored by the Commission for Gender Equality to ensure that there is fairness on how gender-based violence cases are handled at the institution. This suggestion was made during a public education outreach programme conducted by the Commission at the college's Lichtenburg campus last week.

The CGE educated students and staff on gender-based violence & femicide (GBVF) and strategies that could be implemented to prevent it. Challenges such as inadequate staff training to support victims of GBVF and the lack of gender-sensitive facilities on campus were highlighted during the outreach.

"We have noticed that students do not feel comfortable to share their experiences with staff or anyone else who is not capacitated to offer support to survivors of GBVF, as a result they have suggested that the college make means to train student representative council (SRC)", said Tsholofelo Sabole, CGE's Public Education Officer in the North West province.

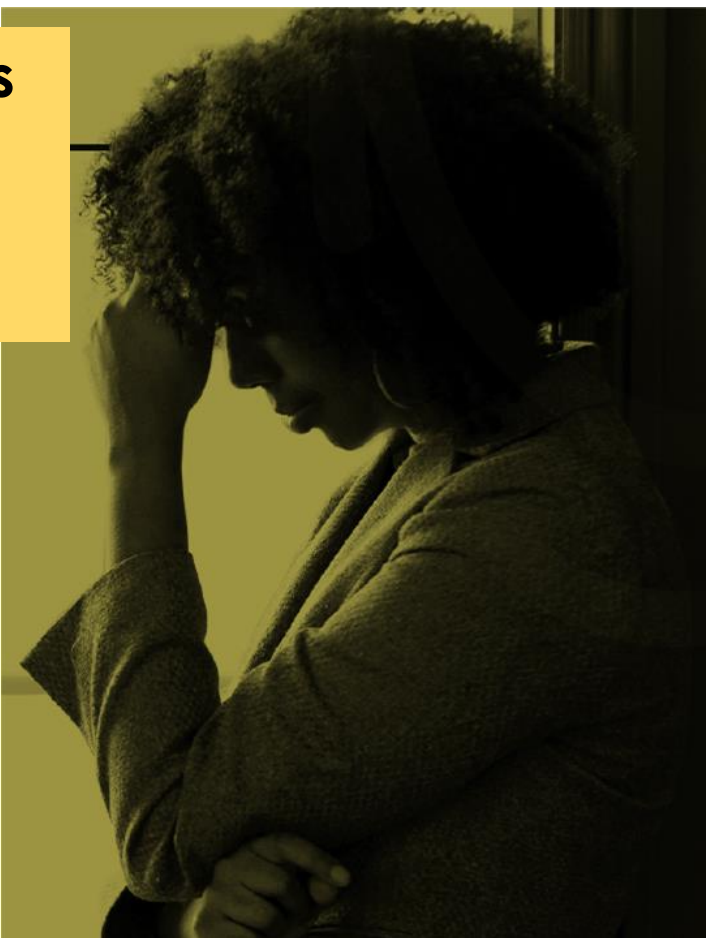
PIC: CGE's Tsholofelo Sabole during an engagement with students and staff at the Taletso TVET College.

## Civil Society Organisations Encouraged To Develop Women Empowerment Programmes

Commission For Gender Equality, Public Educator, Tsholofelo Sabole encouraged Civil Society Organisations to develop women empowerment programmes, programmes that are responsive, as well as engaging men and boys to promote gender equality during a stakeholder engagement in the North-West.

The engagement was attended by delegates from the IEC, National Development Agency, Traditional Leaders, NGOs, and Faith -Based Organisations, aimed at identifying strategies that can be used to strengthen advocacy and referral systems, and establish a coalition of civil society organisations themed, "Civil Society Unmuted". Sabole engaged with the participants on how they can support the coalition regarding gender equality and equity.

"We cannot talk about equality without mentioning equity, equality refers to the norms, values, attitudes, and perceptions required to attain equal status between men and women. It challenges gender stereotypes, traditional gender roles, patriarchy, and toxic masculinity. It realizes that men and women are different and contribute to the development in different ways, gender equity is the process of allocating resources, programmes, decision-making fairly between men and women". "It does not



mean making the same programmes and facilities available to both men and women. Instead, it means girls and women be provided with full range of activities and programme choices that meet their needs, interests, and experiences", she said.

**Head Office:**  
2 Kotze Street,  
Constitution Hill,  
Bramfontein, 2017

**Telephone**  
+27 11 403 7182

**Fraud Line**  
0800 204 968

**Opening Hours:**  
MON - FRIDAY: 8AM - 5PM





## South Africa's Constitutional Court affirms equal parental rights

Legal Opinion Piece by Nomthandazo Sithole

On the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2023, the Constitutional Court of South Africa delivered a monumental judgment that resonates with the principles of equality, dignity, and the best interests of the child. The case centred around the exclusion of permanent life partners as automatic recipients of parental rights and responsibilities under Section 40 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 (Children's Act).

discriminatory Section 40 unconstitutional, asserting that the exclusion of permanent life partners undermined dignity and equality. The Constitutional Court, in a unanimous judgment authored by Kollapen J, upheld this order and extended it to address unfair discrimination based on sexual orientation.

The Court's decision not only rectified this discriminatory provision but also celebrated the evolving landscape of family dynamics in a diverse and inclusive society such as South Africa. The dispute at hand emerged when two women in a permanent life partnership sought to establish their own family through in vitro fertilization (IVF). The birth mother was legally recognized, while her partner was denied the same parental rights, despite their joint decision to become parents. The High Court declared the

At the heart of the Court's ruling was the principle that the Constitution's commitment to inclusivity and equality mandates the recognition of diverse family structures. The Court emphasized that modern notions of family and parenthood have evolved under the constitutional framework, and it is the commitment to care, the commitment itself, and familial relationships that matter most.

(To read the full piece, visit [www.cge.org.za](http://www.cge.org.za) – under Articles)

Nomthandazo Sithole is a Legal Officer at the CGE



The Commission for Gender Equality in the Northern Cape embarked on a door-to-door campaign in Sabelo community, in Richmond, to assess whether Gender-Based Violence services are reaching people and how the quality of services can be enhanced. Questionnaires were used as tools to understand the impact of GBV in the community.



### Accelerating Socio-Economic Opportunities for Women's Empowerment

## Empowering Women With Financial Management Skills in Mpumalanga



CGE's Moltah Mavuso (centre) with delegates and speakers who participated in the financial management empowerment session.

The Commission For Gender Equality (CGE) in Mpumalanga recently hosted a stakeholder engagement session to empower women in the public and private sector with financial management skills. The women were addressed by representatives from financial private sector institutions such as First National Bank, Old Mutual and National Credit Regulator (NCR) on how to manage finances. The session also shared knowledge empowerment on financial services offered by various banking institutions and the process and implications of debt review. Addressing the delegates, the

Commission's Provincial Manager in Mpumalanga, Ms Moltah Mavuso, said financial literacy is a critical requirement in the general empowerment and advancement of women, "The power of financial literacy for women is that it empowers them to make informed decisions about their finances, helps them create sustainable budgets, allows for better money management and can help them feel more confident about themselves and their own worth, therefore we believe that this gathering has changed the lives of our women in the society," she said.

## Chapter 9 Institutions Give Support To People With Disabilities



PIC: (AllAboutVision.Com)

Chapter 9 Institutions in the Eastern Cape empowered community members on various topics relating to their mandates during a women's month commemoration in Dimbaza township outside King Williams Town. The engagement was initiated by the Eastern Cape Forums of Institutions Supporting Democracy (FISD) with the help of Brail Society. The session formed part of the FISD women's month commemoration championed by the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) in the Eastern Cape. Attendees got the

opportunity to consult with Investigating officers of FISD in a private space and several issues were raised by people with partial and complete blindness for further handling by the forum. "Today we are here to share messages with the attendees centred around social cohesion and support to people with blindness as they are an easy target of crime including sexual offenses, particularly blind women as they rely on sighted people both for protection and identification of perpetrators", said Khaya Nkontso, CGE's Public Education Officer.