

Vision:



An independent, constitutionally mandated organisation that pioneers and catalyses gender development and transformation.

Mission:



To lead, promote, protect, monitor, and evaluate gender equality through research, managing public education, policy development, legislative initiatives, and litigation.

CGE Hosts Stakeholder Accountability Session on Illegal Initiation Schools and Traditional Male Circumcision Practices

By Nceba Mrwebo

The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) Eastern Cape Provincial Office conducted a stakeholder accountability session on illegal initiation schools and traditional male circumcision practices.

The session was attended by representatives from the Department of Health, which was represented by Dr. Nkholha Chief Director who is responsible for health promotions and Medical and Traditional Male Circumcision. Traditional surgeons, and members from civil society organisations that play pivotal role on traditional male circumcision were also represented. It should be noted that the stakeholder accountability session coincided with the initiation season, which resulted in some key stakeholders, particularly traditional leaders, being unable to attend and participate in the discussions.

During the engagement, stakeholders deliberated on several challenges and gaps within the current system. Key

issues raised included inconsistencies in the legislative framework governing traditional male circumcision, as well as the lack of representation of traditional surgeons within the Provincial Traditional Male Circumcision Structure. Stakeholders further highlighted the importance of addressing the intersectional issues associated with traditional male circumcision and the harmful masculine norms and toxic tendencies that often create negative perceptions and undermine the cultural significance of the practice.

Dr Nkholha emphasised the need for proper communication and awareness regarding the provisions of the National Traditional Male Circumcision Act, particularly those relating to initiation fees and the responsibilities of parents. He further clarified that the National Traditional Male Circumcision Act supersedes provincial legislation and should serve as the primary legal framework guiding the practice and regulation of traditional male circumcision.

Participants also discussed ongoing efforts aimed at reducing fatalities, injuries, and amputations among initiates. Stakeholders emphasised the need for stronger collaboration, improved governance, and greater inclusion of all relevant role players in decision-making processes.

The stakeholders urged the CGE to reconvene the accountability session after the initiation season to allow for broader participation, particularly by traditional leaders, and to take stock of progress in addressing deaths, amputations, and other challenges associated with traditional male circumcision practices. During the discussions, the issue of intersectionality between disability and traditional practices was emphasised for persons with disabilities, especially young boys who are about to attend initiation schools. These boys face myriad challenges from family members and communities; therefore, practices must also consider their rights and provide reasonable accommodations and safety measures.



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Gender Mainstreaming Session Reinforces Commitment to Gender-Responsive Service Delivery

By Tsholofelo Sabole



Provincial Manager Joyce Khutsoane (left) and Education Officer Tsholofelo Sabole (right) during the session with the Department's delegates

On 29 June 2026, the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) North West conducted a gender mainstreaming session with the Department of Economic Development, Enterprise, Conservation and Tourism. The session formed part of the Commission's ongoing efforts to strengthen institutional capacity and promote gender-responsive governance within government departments. Attendees included representatives from the Office of the Head of Department (HoD) and Human Resource Management.

The purpose of the session was to introduce the gender mainstreaming programme and to create awareness on the importance of integrating gender perspectives into departmental policies, programmes, and service delivery. The engagement highlighted the role of gender mainstreaming in addressing inequalities, promoting inclusivity, and

ensuring that both women and men benefit equally from development initiatives. Discussions also explored the department's responsibilities in advancing gender equality in the workplace and within the sectors they oversee.

Through this session, the CGE reaffirmed its constitutional mandate to monitor, educate, and advocate for gender equality across all sectors of society. The Commission emphasised that gender mainstreaming is not merely a compliance exercise, but a strategic approach to achieving sustainable development and social justice. Such engagements remain crucial in building accountable institutions that are responsive to the diverse needs of all people.

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Stakeholders Unite to Empower Youth and Address Community Challenges in Ngqeleni

By Ludwe Mbeceni



One of the young participants during the campaign.

The Eastern Cape Provincial Office of the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) joined the Office of the Public Protector South Africa, the National Youth Development Agency, the South African Police Service, and the Eastern Cape Office of the Premier, at an

outreach programme held in Ngqeleni under the Nyandeni Local Municipality

The CGE was among the stakeholders that participated in the Services on Wheels initiative, where various institutions provided information of their respective mandates and serviced to community members.

The programme focused on empowering young people through awareness of youth employment opportunities, youth development and empowerment services offered by different institutions, and crime prevention initiatives, including efforts to combat extortion. Discussions also highlighted critical social challenges affecting the area, such as the high number of initiates' deaths during initiation season, with Nyandeni being one of the areas experiencing particularly high fatality rates among young men.

Other issues addressed included school

dropout rates among youth, and the growing number of young mothers, many of whom are teenagers. The engagement sought to encourage collaboration among stakeholders in addressing these challenges and promoting positive outcomes for young people.

The theme of the event was "Promoting Youth Participation in Anti-Corruption Campaigns." The programme aimed to raise awareness, empower young people to become active citizens, and encourage their involvement in initiatives that promote accountability and good governance.

Participants were drawn from the surrounding communities within the Gqokama Administrative Area in Ngqeleni, ensuring broad community representation and engagement.

CGE Conducts Gender and Development Workshop for Northern Cape Government Departments



Provincial Manager Solly Ngoveni delivering a presentation during the GAD workshop.

The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) convened a Gender and Development (GAD) workshop for Gender Focal Persons (GPFs) from various Northern Cape government departments at the Office of the Premier, also joined by Provincial Gambling and Liquor Board on 24 June 2026.

The workshop aimed to strengthen gender mainstreaming efforts across government institutions and enhance the capacity of GPFs to advance gender equality within their respective departments and entities.

Facilitating the workshop, CGE Provincial Manager, Solly Ngoveni, outlined the constitutional mandate of the CGE and highlighted its powers to monitor, investigate, educate, lobby, advise, and report on issues affecting gender equality. He further introduced and distributed the Gender Audit Tool (GAT) to all departments and entities present. Ngoveni emphasised that the CGE will continue to monitor compliance, provide policy development support, and offer capacity-building interventions where gaps are identified.

The workshop also featured a presentation by Education Officer, Keneilwe Mokalane, who sensitised participants on key gender concepts and their practical application in government planning, implementation,

monitoring, and evaluation processes. Addressing participants on the way forward, Ngoveni expressed concern about the state of GAD and gender mainstreaming within the Northern Cape Provincial Government. He highlighted that only one woman currently occupies a senior leadership position out of eleven positions, reflecting a significant gender disparity in decision-making structures. He indicated that the CGE will invoke its powers in terms of Section 11 of its mandate to engage the Director-General and the Northern Cape Legislature to account for the persistent underrepresentation of women in senior leadership positions within the province.

The workshop concluded with a commitment from participants to strengthen gender mainstreaming initiatives and work collaboratively with the CGE towards achieving substantive gender equality in the Northern Cape.

CGE Presents Reports to the Portfolio Committee on Employment and Labour

By Lesego Zungu

On 24 June 2026, the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) presented two reports to the Portfolio Committee on Employment and Labour: "Women in the South African Economy (2024)" and "Men, Masculinities, and Gangs: Investigating the Persistence of Male Gangs in Selected Provinces of South Africa (2024)."

Presenting the Women in the South African Economy (2024) report, CEO Dr Dennis Matotoka highlighted that, despite economic development programmes and policy interventions, many women continue to experience exclusion from economic opportunities and remain underrepresented in decision-making positions in both government and the private sector.

The report identified financial exclusion, unemployment, limited access to land and technology, rurality, and persistent gender stereotypes as key barriers to women's economic participation. It further recommended strengthening gender-responsive legislation and public policy, improving the availability of gender-disaggregated data, and expanding women's access to finance, land, and productive resources.

Gauteng Provincial Manager Naledi Selebano presented the findings from the second report. The report highlighted that gang involvement among men and boys is driven by a combination of family instability, father absence, poverty, unemployment,

peer pressure, substance abuse, and the glamourisation of gang culture. While gangs often provide a sense of belonging and identity, the report found that this is rooted in violence, substance abuse, and harmful notions of masculinity. It further highlighted that existing interventions to address gangsterism remain fragmented, with limited coordination between government and non-government stakeholders, affecting the effectiveness of efforts to combat gang-related violence.

CGE Holds Accountability Session on Agricultural Support for Women Farmers

By Sandile Useni



The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) Mpumalanga Provincial Office held an accountability session with the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs at Thulamahashe.

The purpose of the session was to assess the support provided by the Department to women in farming. This follows a stakeholder engagement hosted by the CGE in November 2025 wherein the community highlighted the lack of economic empowerment in the area as

a contributing factor in women being subjected to gender-based violence.

Provincial Manager, Moltah Mavuso gave the purpose of the event and urged attendees to raise challenges they encounter as women farmers as the CGE has brought the relevant stakeholders and knowledge to the community.

Mr. Musa Mtileni from the Agricultural Research Council gave a presentation on the work from their different

programmes offered by the Council; he also outlined the support provided by the Council to local farmers. Dr. Mapaseka Mabelane from the Department of Agriculture presented on the services provided to small scale farmers. She further stated the challenges women face when it comes to access to land and the right to occupy in rural areas. Ms. Jabu Malepe from the Ehlanzeni District Municipality presented on the various support and outreach programmes available to the community. She cited the donations of spades, picks and wheelbarrows for some of the Bushbuckridge beneficiaries, aimed at encouraging local farming in the area. The attendees raised concerns over the same people being repeat beneficiaries every year, while excluding other farmers.

Commissioner HRH Mogane gave the keynote address and vote of thanks. She urged women to work together and to also take up training opportunities which will capacitate them. She assured the attendees that the CGE will take the issues raised during the session further with a view of addressing the challenges.

The CGE Convenes a Policy Dialogue on Masculinities, Youth, and Gangs

By Naledi Selebano

The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) recently convened an interprovincial Policy Dialogue on Masculinities, Youth, and Gangs. The engagement brought together stakeholders from Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Western Cape, which are provinces that continue to experience high levels of violent crime and gang-related activity. The dialogue sought to unpack the growing intersection between harmful constructions of masculinity, youth vulnerability, and organised criminal networks.

Discussions highlighted that gang involvement is not merely a criminal justice issue but a symptom of deeper structural challenges, including poverty, inequality, unemployment, social exclusion, and limited opportunities for young people. With youth unemployment remaining alarmingly high in South Africa, gangs often emerge as alternative systems of

belonging, identity, protection, and economic survival for marginalised youth.

Participants critically examined how rigid notions of masculinity can normalise violence, dominance, and risk-taking, making young men and boys particularly vulnerable to gang recruitment. At the same time, the dialogue challenged simplistic narratives that portray gangs solely as criminal entities, exploring how criminal networks increasingly occupy governance, protection, and economic spaces where state institutions are absent or ineffective. Particular attention was also given to the role of extortion economies, so-called “mafia” networks, and the involvement of women and girls within gang ecosystems.

A key outcome of the dialogue was the recognition that sustainable solutions

require prevention-focused interventions that address the root causes of gang involvement. Participants called for greater investment in education, psychosocial support, economic opportunities, mentorship, and community-based programmes that promote positive and non-violent masculinities.

The dialogue also underscored the need for coordinated action across government, civil society, communities, and the private sector to disrupt cycles of violence and create meaningful alternatives for young people. Insights from the engagement will inform a CGE policy brief aimed at strengthening evidence-based and gender-responsive approaches to addressing youth violence and gang proliferation in South Africa.

CGE Promotes Gender Equality and Civic Participation in Postmasburg



Delegates participate in the GAD engagement.

On 7 July 2026, the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE), led by PEI Officer Keneilwe Mokalané, participated in the Gender and Development (GAD) programme held in Postmasburg under the Tsantsabane Local Municipality. The engagement brought together key government departments and civil society organisations to promote gender equality and encourage active community participation ahead of the upcoming Local Government Elections.

The programme was attended by representatives from the Office of the Mayor, the Department of Home Affairs,

the South African Police Service, the South African Social Security Agency, and various civil society organisations. Their collective participation reflected a shared commitment to advancing gender equality, protecting human rights, and strengthening democratic participation within local communities.

The primary objective of the engagement was to sensitise community members, particularly women, on the importance of promoting respect for gender equality and exercising their constitutional rights. Ms Mokalané highlighted the critical role women play

in shaping democratic governance and encouraged them to actively participate in electoral processes by registering to vote, engaging in community decision-making, and holding public representatives accountable.

The session also provided a platform for stakeholders to raise awareness of the services available through their respective institutions and to address challenges affecting women and other vulnerable groups. Community members were encouraged to report incidents of gender-based discrimination and violence, access government support services, and contribute to building inclusive and equitable communities.

The CGE reaffirmed its commitment to promoting and protecting gender equality through ongoing public education initiatives and collaborative partnerships with government institutions and civil society. By empowering women with knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, the Commission continues to foster meaningful participation in democratic processes and support the creation of communities founded on equality, dignity, and respect for all.

CGE Strengthens Community Partnerships During Women's Rights Outreach in Platfontein



Stakeholders during the community outreach programme.

On 7 July 2026, the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) participated in a community outreach programme held in Platfontein, outside Kimberley, organised by the Sol Plaatje Local Municipality in partnership with Gender Links under the theme, "Women's Rights are Human Rights." The programme brought together government departments, community leaders, and local residents to discuss challenges affecting women and to promote gender equality and human rights.

The CGE Provincial Manager, Mr Solly Ngoveni, was among the guest speakers and reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to promoting, protecting, and monitoring gender equality across both the public and private sectors. He emphasised that the CGE continues to hold institutions accountable through stakeholder engagements, advocacy, public education, and oversight to ensure that the rights of women and other vulnerable groups are respected and upheld.

The outreach programme was attended by representatives from the Thuthuzela

Care Centre, the Department of Justice, the Department of Health, the Department of Social Development, and other key stakeholders, who shared information on the services available to survivors of gender-based violence and vulnerable members of the community.

During the engagement, community members raised several pressing concerns requiring coordinated intervention. These included the lack of reliable public transport, which leaves women and children vulnerable to crime and other forms of abuse, poor mobile network connectivity that limits access to emergency services, and the inadequate visibility of the South African Police Service within the area. The CGE acknowledged these concerns and committed to engaging the relevant stakeholders to seek sustainable solutions.

In closing, the local chief, Mr Antonio Sabao of the !XU Traditional Leadership, expressed appreciation to all stakeholders for their participation. He emphasised that collaborative efforts between communities, traditional

leadership, government institutions, and civil society are essential in addressing gender injustices and building safer, more inclusive communities for everyone.



The programme brought together government departments, community leaders, and local residents to discuss challenges affecting women and to promote gender equality and human rights.

CGE Northern Cape Hosts GBV Reporting Sensitisation Workshop with Teemaneng Radio Station



Stakeholders engage during the workshop at the CGE Northern Cape offices.

The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) Northern Cape Office hosted a Gender and Development (GAD) sensitisation workshop on gender-based violence (GBV) reporting with Teemaneng Radio Station on 10 July 2026 at the CGE Northern Cape offices.

The purpose of the workshop was to sensitise journalists, reporters and radio presenters on ethical, fair and responsible reporting of GBV matters. The session aimed to strengthen participants' understanding of gender-sensitive reporting and to encourage media professionals to communicate GBV issues in a manner that upholds the dignity, rights and safety of survivors while promoting public awareness and accountability.

In his welcoming and opening remarks, the Provincial Manager, Solly Ngoveni, welcomed the station manager and his team and emphasised the importance of responsible media reporting on GBV. He explained that although there has been no public outcry regarding the station's reporting, the CGE considered it necessary to facilitate the workshop

following an own-accord investigation into certain remarks made by the station on GBV-related matters. He noted that such remarks had the potential to spark public debate and influence societal perceptions regarding GBV. Mr Ngoveni reiterated that the workshop was intended to provide guidance, strengthen understanding and foster constructive engagement between the Commission and the media.

The Station Manager of Teemaneng Radio Station welcomed the initiative and expressed appreciation to the CGE for organising the workshop. He acknowledged that the training would assist presenters and reporters in understanding what is appropriate and inappropriate to say both on air and off air when covering GBV and gender equality issues.

Participants actively engaged in discussions on ethical reporting principles, the importance of using survivor-centred language, avoiding harmful stereotypes and ensuring that media reporting contributes positively to the fight against GBV.

The workshop concluded with a shared commitment between the CGE and Teemaneng Radio Station to continue promoting ethical journalism and gender-sensitive reporting. The station management further noted that workshops of this nature are valuable in strengthening their capacity to address gender equality and GBV issues, not only in their broadcasting but also within their workplace.



The workshop concluded with a shared commitment between the CGE and Teemaneng Radio Station to continue promoting ethical journalism and gender-sensitive reporting.



OPINION PIECE

By Naledi Selebano and Frank Malata

Why Gender Equality Requires Us to Invest in Boys and Young Men



South Africa has made significant progress in advancing the rights and opportunities of women and girls since the advent of democracy. Initiatives such as Take a Girl Child to Work Day have played an important role in exposing girls to professional environments, challenging gender stereotypes, and inspiring future generations of female leaders. These efforts remain critical in

a society where women continue to experience disproportionate levels of gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), economic exclusion, unequal pay, and underrepresentation in positions of power.

However, a critical question remains: what are we doing to engage boys and young men? This is not a call to replace programmes aimed at empowering girls, nor is it an attempt to suggest that boys and young men are more disadvantaged than girls and women. Rather, it is a call to recognise that meaningful gender transformation requires investment in children and young people of all genders.

Across South Africa, many boys and young men are struggling. Educational data consistently show concerning

patterns of school disengagement, poor academic performance, and dropout among males. At the same time, youth unemployment remains one of the country's most pressing challenges, leaving many young men disconnected from education, training, and meaningful economic opportunities. For far too many, particularly those growing up in impoverished communities, the pathways to success appear increasingly narrow.

Read more: <https://cge.org.za/why-gender-equality-requires-us-to-invest-in-boys-and-young-men/>



OPINION PIECE

By Leandi Matthews

Maternal Health, Public Money and Public Accountability: The Governance Gap in State-Funded Medical Schemes



South Africa has committed itself to reducing maternal mortality and advancing sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) through constitutional guarantees, national health strategies, and international obligations. These commitments are

reflected in the National Department of Health's (NDOH) strategic priorities, which emphasise equitable access to maternal healthcare, early intervention, prevention, and continuity of care.

Yet, an important governance question remains largely unexplored: What accountability mechanisms exist for state-funded medical schemes in achieving these national health objectives?

The State occupies a unique position within South Africa's health system. It is both the custodian of public health policy and a significant purchaser of private healthcare through subsidised medical schemes for public employees.

Schemes such as the Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS) and Police Service Medical Scheme (POLMED) receive substantial public funding through employer contributions, placing them within a broader ecosystem of publicly financed healthcare.

Read more: <https://cge.org.za/maternal-health-public-money-and-public-accountability-the-governance-gap-in-state-funded-medical-schemes/>