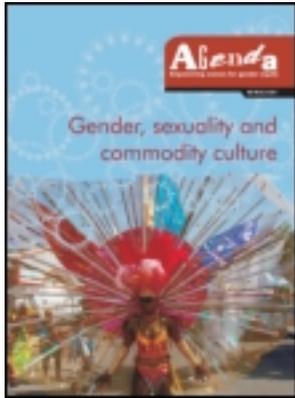


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## Agenda: Empowering women for gender equity

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# Weaknesses in South Africa's progress with women's equality and the Millennium Development Goals

*Agenda* interviews Masefako Segooa, Commission for Gender Equality

One of the Commission for Gender Equality's (CGE) official mandates as a Chapter Nine institution responsible for protecting woman's rights and gender equality is to monitor South Africa's progress in meeting the United Nations woman's human rights commitments, one of which is the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). *Agenda* interviewed Masefako Segooa on the process and the findings of the CGE MDG report. Masefako was the lead researcher in the compilation of the CGE MDG Report.

**Agenda:** In the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a set of development measures which South Africa, as a signatory is required to report on, how is information gathered, synthesised and analysed on the progress made in relation to women in meeting the respective goals, and their targets and indicators?

**CGE:** The study clusters the MDGs into three spheres - namely social, economic and political to contribute to the understanding of the gendered implications of all the MDGs. In this regard, the study drew on the African Gender and Development Index approach to measure the status of women against that of men in each of these three spheres. Security and sustainable development were added to ensure that all the goals were covered. The study triangulates both primary and secondary data collected from ten national government departments, Chapter Nine institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs),

and international institutions. The data was collected through desktop research on policies, legislation and programme implementation in relation to the MDGs and indicators. Questionnaires, interviews and a consultative dialogue, hosted by the commission for all the relevant stakeholders to have discussions on the MDGs were also used in the process of gathering the data. Commissions were formed based on the clusters to facilitate discussion and input by the stakeholders. Finally, the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) were included because they provide critical, gendered, strategic objectives for each MDG goal as well as a set of targets. These provide a further gendered lens and nuanced targets for the implementation of the MDGs.

**Agenda:** Can you give an example of how the Beijing Platform of Action and CEDAW has helped to interpret the MDGs in terms of advancing and gauging where South African women's specific problems can be highlighted and raised as concerns for government in implementing the MDGs?

**CGE:** CEDAW defines what is meant by gender discrimination and how it can be identified, while the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) provides the strategic objectives within each Critical Area of Concern and also provide actions that need to be taken by all relevant stakeholders to address all the gaps that lead to discrimination.



MASEFAKO SEGOOA, Commission for Gender Equality lead researcher in the compilation of the CGE report on South African women and the Millennium Development Goals  
Source: CGE

CEDAW and the BPA also address similar issues that are addressed by the MDGs, specifically looking at the gender aspects of those issues; for example, if the goals set targets to be achieved by 2015 and indicators to measure those targets, CEDAW and the BPA measure their gender sensitivity through its article and strategic objectives.<sup>1</sup>

**Agenda:** In terms of the CGE's mandate to initiate enquiry and respond to the problems created specifically by gender inequality (located in the context of the apartheid legacy of race and class exclusion and deep poverty in the post-apartheid state), what have been identified as the weakest areas in meeting the MDG goals and, similarly, can you pinpoint areas where progress can be spoken of?

an investigation into whether minimum wage measures have benefited South Africa's domestic workers has not been dealt with adequately

**CGE:** As I have already mentioned, the CGE has grouped the MDGs into five headings,

economic, social, political, security and sustainable development to measure the progress. The report highlights the following points:

### Economic cluster

The Economic cluster includes MDG Goal 1, eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, and Goal 8, global partnerships for development. The Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA) and the Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA) policies were launched to address South Africa's chronic problem areas - namely, unemployment and the skills shortage. The AsgiSA aims to halve unemployment from 28% in 2004 to 14% by 2014, and halve the poverty rate over the same period.

South Africa's social indicators perform relatively poorly for a country with a GDP per capita in the upper-middle income ranks. From 2000 to 2006, the UNDP (2008) estimated that 42.9% of the South African population lived under the United Nations recommended poverty line, that is below US Dollar 2 a day (R174 in 2000 prices), in terms of individual (instead of household) incomes. Many black women experienced downward income pressure as they were forced to work in the low-income generating informal sector. The largest groups of chronically poor households and individuals are in rural poor (in 2000 about 1 million households) female-headed households (Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Labour Studies, 2009).

The Sectoral Determinations on farm workers and domestic workers was implemented in March 2003 to protect unskilled workers who were vulnerable to exploitation. Estimates in terms of the 2002 Labour Force Survey show that roughly 840 000 women, predominantly African and Coloured, work as domestic workers (cooks and child-minders), whilst about 180 000 men work as gardeners (Hertz, 2004). An investigation into whether minimum wage measures have benefited South Africa's domestic workers has not been dealt with adequately. Labour legislation further requires employers to register domestic employees with the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), and to deduct UIF contributions

from their wages. It is apparent that this too is inadequately monitored and enforced.

These are some of the indications that the country still has a long way to go in terms of eradicating poverty among women. Despite the creation of new employment opportunities for women as a result of the globalisation of the economy, there are also disconcerting trends that have exacerbated inequalities between women and men. Globalisation, including economic integration, can increase pressure on women to adjust to new circumstances and to find new sources of employment. Unemployment continues to be the highest amongst black Africans, with an increase of 5% reported in 2008 (StatsSA, 2009). It is clear from the rising levels and rates of unemployment that South Africa has not been able to create enough jobs to accommodate new job seekers. Education is closely linked to employment and poverty alleviation for women. In 2006, 13.9% of young girls in the 13–19 years of age category were not in school due to pregnancy, and 38.6% of persons aged 7–24 years were not attending educational institutions because they had no money to pay for their tuition (StatsSA, 2006), as reflected in the social cluster, below. In addition, South Africa has a higher literacy rate amongst men (87%), compared to women (85%).

The StatsSA (2009) measure of variations in the educational profile of the working-age population for employed, unemployed and not economically active is also relevant. In 2009, a larger proportion of the employed (3.6%) than the unemployed (2.2%) had no education. The data reflects that more women in the labour market are uneducated: for every 100 unemployed men there are 113 unemployed women without education. Among the non-economically active in 2009, there were 152 women per 100 men who had no education.

**Agenda:** The CGE has highlighted that poverty and unequal access to education and unemployment are features of the lives of South African women which can be seen as part of the broader problem of the unequal distribution of resources.

## Access to land

**CGE:** One of the more glaring areas of inequality is in land redistribution. In 2005/06, men comprised 92% of land reform beneficiaries, and women comprised only a mere 8%: these figures adjusted marginally to 90% (men) and 10% (women) in 2009/10 (The Presidency, 2009). Women will, however, be able to increasingly gain access to land through the implementation of programmes such as the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) and the Comprehensive Agricultural Support System (CASP) programmes. These programmes aim to encourage women-only projects, and ensure that at least one third of transferred land resources accrue to women. Land restitution and land reform are crucial elements in redressing apartheid dispossession, ensuring transformation and addressing asset poverty, especially for women-headed households. CASP programmes, land restitution and reform are crucial elements in redressing apartheid dispossession, ensuring transformation and addressing asset poverty (The Presidency, 2009).

The government introduced the LRAD initiative to support black commercial farmers, and makes explicit mention of gender in its programme. LRAD aims to “expand opportunities for women and youth in rural areas”, as well as “overcome the legacy of past racial and gender discrimination in land tenure” (CGE, 2010a). In the light of the above findings, the CGE highlights the policies and programmes that move the government closer to achieving the MDGs, however the government poverty alleviation policy and programmes themselves do not specifically target the needs and context of poor women. As a result, these are not adequately addressed. The CGE recommends that women should be targeted as part of initiatives to eradicate poverty that will benefit men and women.

one of the more glaring areas of inequality is in land redistribution

## Social cluster

**Agenda:** Under the Social Cluster, the CGE has looked at education and health issues covered by MDGS 2, 4, 5, 6. What are the main gender concerns raised by the CGE?

**CGE:** Goal 2 (universal primary education), reviewed in relation to the targets that countries are required to meet, reflects both progress and the need for more attention to specific areas of women's and girls' education.

The country's net enrolment rate statistics indicate that by 2007 South Africa was already close to reaching Goal 2, universal primary education (StatsSA, 2007). This is however, solely based on enrolment and does not take cognisance of attendance. Primary school attendance rates stood at 80% (male) and 83% (female) in South Africa from 2003 to 2008 (StatsSA, 2008; DoE, 2008b). This rate drops at secondary school level, where the attendance rate stands at 41% for male and, a higher percentage of female learners at 48% (StatsSA, 2008). The CGE recommends that there should be tailored policies and interventions, or better implementation of existing policies to address the primary causes for girls to drop out of school, such as teenage pregnancy, which appears to be on the increase, predominantly in rural areas and areas of entrenched poverty. Additional reasons for missing school include inadequate sanitation facilities at school, the lack of access to safe transport, and the domestic responsibilities that are imposed on girl children, impacting negatively on their attendance, and the time available to spend on studies.

The Department of Education (DoE) has given attention to ensuring increased access to Grade R for all 5 year olds to enable equal access to school amongst boys and girls (DoE, 2008a). It is of great concern however, that gender based violence (GBV) reported at schools is not being adequately addressed by the Department.

there is considerable uncertainty about the levels of infant mortality in South Africa

According to DoE, South Africa has embarked on a mass literacy campaign and formal Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programme. The campaign was

aimed at meeting the MDGs by enabling 4.7 million adults to become literate between 2008 and 2012 (DoE, 2008a; DoE 2009). The CGE is however concerned that there is no sex disaggregated data available on women's participation in the ABET programmes. The CGE notes, however, that literacy levels are still lower among women than men; and there is a need for gender parity in literacy amongst adults (StatsSA, 2005).

**Agenda:** One of the critical areas for South Africa's women is the lack of progress with women's health.

**CGE:** Health is covered under Goal 4. Reduce child mortality 5. Improve maternal health 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

### Child mortality

In order to reduce the under-five mortality rate by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015 (MDG target Goal 4), the government relies on several programmes that have been implemented such as free primary health care for all, free health care for pregnant women and children under the age of six, integrated management of childhood illnesses programmes, as well as the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT) to ensure the realisation of this right (Kibel *et al.* 2010). The MDGs represent the most recent global commitment to revive efforts to improve child health.

South Africa set the target to reduce child mortality to 20 per 1000 live births, or less, by 2015. Despite all the initiatives by the Department of Health, South Africa's infant and under-5 mortality rate is unacceptably high, almost four times the World Health Organisation (WHO) minimum target of 10 deaths per 1000 births (StatsSA, 2010). Mortality rates also appear to be on the increase, with reports highlighting the shocking mass deaths of infants at state hospitals.

**Table 1. Status and trends of under-five mortality rate per 1000 live births**

1998	2001	2007	Target
59	97	104	20

Source: StatsSA MDG Draft Report (2010)

The evidence the CGE has from various sources indicates that there is considerable uncertainty about the levels of infant mortality in South Africa. What is clear is that there are no signs of improvement, and instead an alarming increase in the number of deaths, and no indication that MDG targets will be met.

Monitoring South Africa's progress in reducing the under-5 mortality rate has proved to be complex and challenging. Mortality rate differences between boys and girls only commence from the 5–14 years category. The most reliable estimates of child mortality are to be found in the mid-2003 National Demographic Health Survey, which is somewhat dated by now and does not provide gender disaggregated data. A drastic improvement in statistics collection and gender disaggregation is needed to properly monitor the under-5 child mortality rate.

In addition, South Africa's infant mortality has been characterised by inequalities based on population group, urban/rural residence, province and socio-economic status. The mortality rate in the predominantly rural provinces of KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and Free State is two to two-and-a-half times higher than that in the Western Cape, the province with the lowest rate. HIV is the leading cause of child deaths in every province, accounting for 21.5% of child deaths in the Western Cape, and 50.1% in KwaZulu-Natal (Bradshaw and Nannan, 2006).

While the level of infant mortality is increasing, from the available evidence (HSRC, 2010), 97% of pregnant women attended ante-natal clinics during their pregnancy, 76.7% of children under two years were born in hospital and 94% of those delivered were attended by a skilled attendant. The reasons for the high rate are then cause to question the quality of health care that is provided in health facilities. The government's response to child mortality is the provision of nutrition and immunisation programmes, a proactive approach that prioritises the prevention of diseases rather than treatment.

### Maternal mortality

The goal set by the Department of Health in 2005 was to reduce maternal mortality by

25% from 150 to 100 deaths per 100 000 live births by 2010, and by 50% to 75 per 100 000 births by 2015, excluding deaths due to HIV and AIDS. However maternal mortality has increased from 104 to 400 per 100 000 live births. The major reason for this increase was said to be due to poor quality of health care, despite the high level of facilities in the country, and an increase in the spread of HIV and AIDS. In 2008, a population based survey reported that 97% of the mothers of 2 year-old children indicated that they attended antenatal clinics during pregnancy and 94.3% of those mothers were attended to by a skilled practitioner during labour. This has raised a question as to whether the country will achieve the set target of reducing maternal mortality by three quarters by 2015 (SAHRC, 2010).

the CGE argues that the health issues that have an impact on women do not inform departmental budget allocations

The CGE argues that the health issues that have an impact on women do not inform departmental budget allocations which need to be taken into consideration. It is also argued that there should be more outreach programmes promoting the involvement of men in paternal and reproductive health education and health care, to give support to women in terms of paternal care and the sharing of responsibilities which is still lacking.

The CGE welcomed the state's National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan (NSP) (2007–2011; 2011–2016), arising from a situational analysis that acknowledges women's vulnerability to HIV, and that has committed to a prioritising of interventions to address the causes of gender inequality and the impact of HIV on women and girls. A study by the HSRC revealed a significant decline of HIV incidence in women aged 15–24 between 2005 and 2008, and a decline in HIV infection overall (Centre for Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Research *et al.* 2010), although levels remain unacceptably high. Women continue to bear the brunt of caring for those infected, and it is apparent that we need to encourage, recruit and train men to assist with this care, particularly for women living with HIV.

Malaria incidence appears to be on the increase, bringing about the renewed use of Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT) as a response to control it (Barron and Roma-Radon, 2008). However effective this measure may be in the short-term, research by Christian de Jager, head of Environmental and Occupational Health at the University of Pretoria reveals a worrying long-term gendered impact of this chemical, with exposure to neurological abnormalities as well as spontaneous abortion (Brulliard, 2009). The CGE has noted that interventions are needed to address women’s particular vulnerability to malaria and tuberculosis infection.

oblige, political parties to ensure equal representation of men and women on their election list for the national and provincial legislature. The political will to attain women’s equal representation in the political arena is not encouraging when a gendered view is taken of leadership positions. South Africa no longer has a women deputy-president as the incumbent was replaced by men, and the same applied to the Speaker of Parliament. The CGE has noted that this trend appears to be replicated when one considers the growing replacement of women ministers, mayors, and councillors by men. Only one political party is committed to a 50/50 quota system.

**Political cluster**

**Agenda:** In the Political Cluster, the CGE has analysed the situation of women in the public sector and women in civil society. What issues are highlighted as obstacles to women’s equality by the CGE?

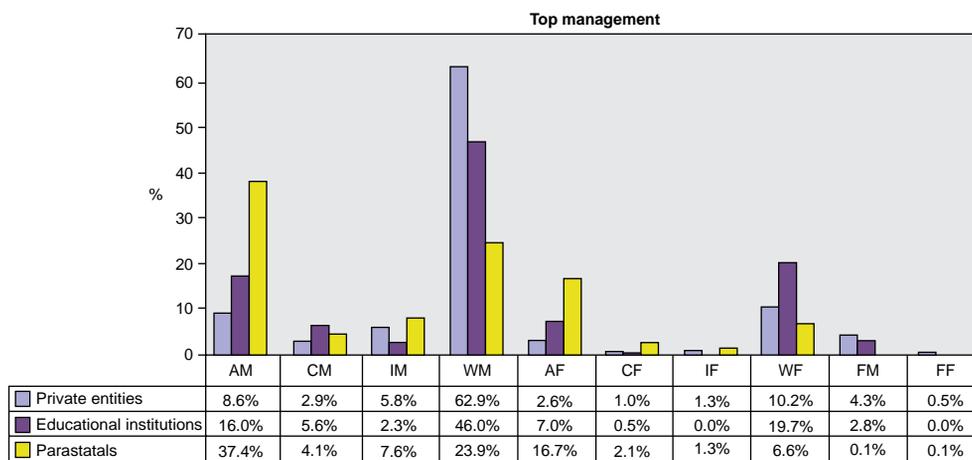
The Public Service Act, No 30 of 2007, as amended, does not make it mandatory for government departments to ensure equal representation of men and women at senior management level in the public sector. Women’s position in employment has surfaced as one of the most glaring areas where gender inequality exists.

**CGE:** The Political Cluster is concerned with Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women. The CGE has noted South Africa’s lack of national legislation establishing quota or requiring the equal representation of men and women in decision-making positions. The Electoral Act 17 of 1998 encourages, but does not

**Women in the workplace**

The findings outlined in the Employment Equity Commission’s (EEC) 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Report (2010), as well as the CGE (2008) report on Gender Equality in the Private Sector, revealed that the South African

**Table 2. Workforce population distribution for top management for private sector employers**



Source: 10<sup>th</sup> EEC Annual report (EEC, 2010)

private sector is performing dismally in gender transformation in the workplace.

The EEC's Report (2010) reveals that women are predominately represented in administrative as opposed to decision-making and senior managerial functions. Black women in particular comprise a mere 6% of those recruited and 2% of those promoted to top management positions, and constitute 5% of those benefiting from skills development programmes.

The CGE (2008) study on the promotion and protection of gender equality in the private sector reports that:

- most companies are ignorant of national and regional treaties and country commitments to gender equality;
- employment equity plans are developed, but not implemented;
- there are no focused gender equality strategies or women empowerment programmes.

### **Gender equality in the private sector**

The CGE is also concerned to pinpoint the elements that continue to marginalise working women, mostly related to the institutional culture that prevails within a demonstrated male-dominated environment. The problematic elements relate to internal policies and practices regarding recruitment and promotion, sexual harassment in the workplace, and access to skills training, coupled with the sense that men are taken more seriously and women have to 'earn their stripes' – a situation that is harder for black women who may also have to confront racism. The gender wage-gap remains critical in South Africa at 33.5%, while globally the average is 22.4% (CGE, 2008). Working women with children experience an even higher wage-gap.

### **Women's representation in the judiciary**

South Africa has not made significant progress in ensuring that women are sufficiently represented in the judiciary. The education and training programmes for recruitment of judges does not seriously address the need

for women's empowerment and equitable representation. The country still does not have a woman Judge President in any of its Divisions of the High Court. According to the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (2009), out of 205 judges in South Africa, 112 are black and 93 white, and only 42 are women. Of these 42 women judges, 28 are black and 14 white. The Minister of Justice has undertaken to place gender representation in future appointments of judges as a priority for transformation of the judiciary, but that this will not overlook the application of male, and white, applicants (DOJCD, 2009).

### **Women in civil society: Non-profit sector**

It is a concern for the CGE that in the main, there is no gender parity in the NGO sector's leadership, yet again, most senior positions in this sector are dominated by men (Centre for Gender and Development, UNECA, 2006). A gender balance is needed among committed leaders, who while representing their communities are influential in decision making, need to close the gender gap and ensure that both men and women's interest and needs will be taken into consideration. It is important to the achievement of the MDGs as the Millennium Declaration resolved, among other things, to promote gender equality and women's empowerment as an effective way to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate sustainable development.

the gender wage-gap remains critical in South Africa at 33.5%, while globally the average is 22.4%

### **Cluster on sustainable development**

**Agenda:** Turning to the cluster on Sustainable Development, please describe the salient points that are highlighted by the CGE?

**CGE:** The cluster on Sustainable Development relates to Goal 7: Environmental Sustainability.

In 2002, 10 years after the Rio Earth Summit, South Africa hosted the World

Summit on Sustainable Development, bringing the MDGs into the sustainable development arena, and seeking to find an effective balance between development, on the one hand, and economic, social and environmental objectives, on the other. A significant outcome of the summit was the adoption of the Johannesburg Plan of Action, which outlined actions for further implementation of Agenda 21. This provides the guidelines to achieve sustainable development; however, women's empowerment and gender equality are also key ingredients for sustainable development, as one of the MDGs.

Through women's management and use of natural resources, they ensure the livelihood and sustainability of their families and communities. As consumers and producers, caretakers of their families and educators, women are situated as holding an important role in sustainable development through their concern for the quality and sustainability of life for present and future generations.

In relation to Goal 7 (ensure environmental sustainability), women's access to potable water is an important indicator of progress and in tracking women's equal access to the resources needed for survival. Access to free basic water services has increased from 59% in 1994 to 96% at the end of 2009 according to the Department of Water Affairs (Government of SA, 2005).

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Nationally, even although there have been annual fluctuations, the percentage of households who receive piped water supplies from their local municipalities increased from 78.2% in 2004 to 83.3% in 2009. Given the large proportion of women in rural areas who depend on natural resources for their families' livelihood, and are affected by poverty, access to this resource is a fundamentally important gender issue. In large measure, women still struggle to access this increasingly scarce commodity. Women are responsible for supplying and managing their family's water needs, and either have to accommodate the cost of water within their house-

hold budget, or use a large portion of their time and that of girl children to walk long distances to get water from free – but often unsafe sources. Universal access to water and sanitation services in South Africa has increased from 59% in April 1994 to 96% at the end of March 2009. Similarly, access to basic sanitation services increased from 49% to 75% (DWAF, 2009).

The establishment of settlements prior to the 1994 democratic dispensation resulted in the introduction of the bucket system for sanitation. December 2007 was declared as a national target for the eradication of the bucket system. At the end of March 2008, the remaining backlog was 23 083, reduced during 2009 to 9 044 (DWAF, 2009).

There is a clear rural/urban difference with regard to sanitation: 28% of rural households did not have access to any type of toilet facility, compared to 5% of urban households. Women are disproportionately impacted by the lack of sanitation facilities. Poor sanitation is a major cause of water-borne diseases which are directly responsible for most infant deaths in developing countries. In the absence of sanitation close to their homes, women are forced to forego privacy and security and are often rendered vulnerable to infection, harassment and abuse. Lack of separate toilets in schools has been identified as a cause for girls dropping out when they reach puberty (DWAF, 2009).

## Human settlement

Nearly 58% of South Africa's population live in urban areas. The housing types in South Africa that conform to the UN definition of a slum with respect to secure tenure, range from sub-let inner city tenements to informal settlements, and include poor neighbourhoods, townships and informal settlements which exist both within urban and rural settlements. Settlements across the country vary in terms of the quality of life and social amenities that they offer. Depending on the type of settlement that people live in, they enjoy greater or lesser measures of health, access to schooling, services, housing, water, electricity, employment and safety. An increasing number of poor urban and rural households in many developing

countries are sustained exclusively or primarily by women's reproductive unpaid labour (DEAT, 2007). Women's vulnerability to sexual and physical harassment in urban environments constrains their freedom of mobility and limits their work opportunities. The low representation of women in urban governance in many countries contributes to their invisibility in urban planning (DEAT, 2007).

The Goal requires we achieve a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020 and reduce the number of people living in informal settlements. Informal settlement across the country varies in terms of the social class. The housing type in South Africa ranges from sub-let inner city tenement to informal settlement, including townships. The provinces with the highest percentage of households whose main dwelling was informal, in 2009, were Gauteng (22.3%), Western Cape (17.1%), North West (16.0%) and Free State (14.8%). The provinces where most progress was observed in terms of reducing the proportion of households who live in informal dwellings are Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. At the time of the CGE report, 12.8% of South African households were living in a 'RDP' (former state Reconstruction and Development Programme), or state-subsidised dwelling. Female-headed households were significantly more likely (11.5%) than their male counterparts (8.2%) to receive a government housing subsidy (DEAT, 2004).

### Women and energy

Despite the increased electrification of households, other fuels for heating, cooking and lighting are still being used. In 2006, approximately 31.6% of households used paraffin or wood for cooking (StatsSA, 2006). Collection of fuel to manage domestic energy consumes a large portion of women's time, as well as that of girl children, impacting on women's ability to participate in other productive processes, and often on girl children's ability to remain in school or focus on their studies. The non-availability of cheap and clean fuel forces them to rely on wood, dung, and biomass fuels, impacting on their health and their children.

**Agenda.** The CGE reflects that progress has been made with regard to water and sanitation provision but there are information gaps on women. It does not identify which women and how many are unable to purchase water when their free water allocation runs out or how many are living in shacks with no amenities at all? This information is critical to track women's most basic areas of poverty and therefore inequality in broad social terms. Please can you comment on this?

An increasing number of poor urban and rural households in many developing countries are sustained exclusively or primarily by women's reproductive unpaid labour.

**CGE:** The current study does not have specific percentages of women who cannot afford to pay for the water when their basic free water allocated runs out or the number of those who are living in shacks with no basic services. The CGE research focused on the number of men and women who have access to basic services and also identified some gaps, however it did not dwell much on the extent of the gaps identified, which will have to be addressed in the next report. Getting data that is sex disaggregated is still a challenge. This is the CGE's first report on the MDGs which also serves as baseline for the institution that will also inform the next study. The CGE is mandated to report annually about progress on gender equality in the MDGs to the South African Parliament. The commission further reports independently on the country's compliance with the MDGs at international level as the monitoring institution.

### Access to secure tenure

To elaborate on the difficulty, but also critical importance of disaggregated data, the CGE report has highlighted that on private farms, workers and their families face continued tenure insecurity and inadequacy or absence of basic services. It is estimated that nearly one million people have been evicted from farms since 1994; 75% of these are women and children with little education and work experience (DEAT, 2007). The study conducted by Nkuzi

Development Association (NDA) on eviction revealed that in the period between 1994 and 2004 about a million people were evicted and only 1% received some form of legal representation. The study further noted that just over three quarters of those evicted from farms are women and children. The study conducted by CGE revealed that it is very difficult to disaggregate the data for land tenure cases because cases are not reported as individuals but as families or community. It is only possible to indicate gender disaggregated data if you establish the number of people affected. However only few provinces could do that - just to give an example of one province which managed to disaggregate data by sex, Limpopo DRDLR dealt with 35 cases, of which 61% were women and 30% men (CGE, 2010a). The vulnerability of rural women, especially those working on farms is an area that needs attention.

**Agenda:** How much information that is included in the reports compiled for the United Nations is in a form that accurately reflects gender disaggregated data for the purposes of revealing the inequalities between women and men in health, education, employment and access to resources and services, to mention a few, and tracking the disparities between men and women. Where are the gaps in information, and what is being done by the CGE to request changes to the way data is collected?

despite the existence of a number of poverty alleviation programmes, there is little evidence of gender mainstreaming within the planning, budgeting or implementation

**CGE:** The government's approach to poverty includes the provision of basic services and other non-financial transfers; including Free Basic Services (FBS) by municipalities such as water, electricity, as well as refuse removal. The free services include education and primary health care for the poor. The CGE argues that despite the existence of a number of poverty alleviation programmes, there is little evidence of gender mainstreaming within the planning, budgeting or implementation of these pro-

grammes. There is no sex disaggregated data on the beneficiaries of most of the programmes, yet there are gender policies developed within the department which should guide gender mainstreaming from policy development to implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Pursuant to its monitoring and evaluation mandate the CGE has recently developed a Gender Barometer – a self administered web-based online tool to be used by government departments as part of this evaluation process. The Barometer was launched nationally in 2009 and provincially in 2011. The Barometer constitutes a Monitoring and Evaluation tool which will be administered to government departments (national, provincial and local) on an annual basis to track progress achieved in advancing women and gender equality in pursuit of the constitutional vision of non-sexism and Section 187 of the Constitution.

**Agenda:** MDG 3 as the only Goal that mentions women's empowerment and indicators of inequality has come under criticism from feminists because it peripheralises gender instead of a mainstream approach which would see gender as integral to all facets of the economy, society, and governance and political representation, not overlooking the centrality of women's agency to the reduction of poverty, hunger and to development. What has been the CGE's means of dealing with this fundamental problem of addressing some of the substantive gender concerns in the MDGs and measuring progress and failure?

**CGE:** The CGE has noticed that gender has not been mainstreamed in the development of targets and indicators and as a result, took a decision to mainstream gender in the assessment of the government's implementation of all the goals. As noted earlier, a table is included as an annexure to the main report to represent the mapping of Beijing and CEDAW strategic objectives to the MDGs, and provides a set of gendered indicators, which the CGE developed and used in undertaking the gendered analysis of country progress in implementing these goals and targets.

**Agenda:** It has been said that sub-Saharan and other regions of Africa are lagging

behind in meeting the MDGs. Please can you speak to how Africa, as a region with different development needs and priorities from the North, is positioned and how useful the MDGs as a global measures of progress are when many of the real causes of hunger and poverty arise in the context of global inequalities (brought into the foreground in the financial crisis). Should Africa develop its own indicators to overcome gender inequality?

**CGE:** The CGE did not focus on sub-Saharan and other regions of Africa but specifically focused on South Africa. However, the persistence of unequal impact of poverty and conflict on women led the African ministerial preparatory meeting for Beijing + 10 held in Addis Ababa in October 2004, to conclude that despite all the good intentions and lofty declarations, many women are worse off than they were a decade before. Women still have limited access to productive resources including land, water, energy, credit, means of communication, education and training, health and employment (for which they are not adequately remunerated), contributing to the situation where more African women live in absolute poverty and relative poverty today (UNECA, 2004).

**Agenda:** How do the MDGs with their focus on development interface with the two women's rights conventions Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform of Action as a means of measuring progress in overcoming the main obstacles to women's social, economic and political equality in many countries, ie poverty and hunger?

**CGE:** UNIFEM (2008) have emphasised that there is a need to view the goals from the Millennium Declaration's perspective and to clearly link them to women's human rights: that is the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW. The two conventions cannot be separated from the achievement of the MDGs as they are a means to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. CEDAW highlights specific areas of women's discrimination and rights while Beijing Platform for Action's Critical Areas of Concern provide the roadmap of actions to achieve gender equality. However, the

MDGs in its targets and indicators to measure progress in overcoming obstacles to women's social and economic equality did not take into consideration the two women's rights conventions CEDAW and Beijing Platform for Action, except for those which fall under Goal 3 on gender equality and women's empowerment, which covered some of the issues on women in politics, education and absorption in the formal economy, which shows that there is a big gap in terms of measuring progress and attaining gender equality.

there is a need to view the goals from the Millennium Declaration's perspective and to clearly link them to women's human rights

**Agenda:** Several important gender equality concerns have been flagged. The CGE has provided data to track where women are in relation to the MDGs. As a question of clarity, please could you explain how violence against women is dealt with in the report as it is not mentioned in the UN MDGs at all, yet is an important dimension of women's inequality?

**CGE:** The CGE focussed broadly on Gender Based Violence (GBV) under the Cluster on Security and Human Rights. The commission welcomed the state intervention to address GBV, such as the introduction of Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Act; the creation of the Sexual and Community Affairs (SOCA) unit within the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA); the introduction of Thutuzela Care Centres and the Sexual Offences Court; the development of the Victim Empowerment Plan and the introduction of the Victims Charter. We are awaiting the adoption of the Trafficking of Persons legislation. There is a concern around inadequate resources available for the training and awareness programmes required for these measures to be effective interventions (CGE, 2010b).

At present the true extent of sexual violence in South Africa is unknown. StatsSA found that one in two rape survivors reported being raped to the police, while the Medical Research Council (MRC) found that one in nine reported being raped. Both studies clearly find rape to be under

reported, although their findings differ as to the extent of such under reporting (Vetten, 2005)

Statistics do reveal that domestic violence is widely prevalent in South African society, with women the overwhelming majority affected, regardless of race, class and geographic location. SAPS reported to have received 43 330 cases of domestic violence during July to December 2006, whilst in January to June 2007 they received 45 454 cases (CGE, 2010b). Statistics also reveal an unacceptable poor conviction rate in GBV cases and non-implementation of minimum sentencing legislation. There is a grave concern about the gender insensitive, judgemental and inappropriate responses by some of the police officers and judges dealing with GBV cases, enforcing gender stereotypes and undermining women's access to justice (CGE, 2009). We still have a lot to achieve for the realisation of gender equality in this area of concern.

statistics also reveal an unacceptable poor conviction rate in GBV cases and non-implementation of minimum sentencing legislation

**Agenda:** In conclusion, one aspect of the MDGs is the lack of information among many women on both the Goals and the MDG Monitor and the reporting on gender in/equality by the CGE to track this critically important aspect that relates to the rights and situation of women.

**CGE:** Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) need to put in place mentorship programmes to encourage and support women to advance to leadership positions within their sectors and to put in place measures to bring about transformation to male-dominated environments, such as public education on human rights issues for the achievement of the MDGs by 2015. Apart from the MDG Report and monitoring process, which in themselves constitute an important national responsibility in the collective global effort to overcome poverty, hunger and gender inequality, the women and marginalised groups have to participate in the community based meetings and work closely with CSOs to ensure their voices are heard by government in their interpretation and

activism on the MDGs. The CGE MDGs 2010 report 'A gendered review of South Africa's implementation of the Millennium Development Goals "What gets measured, gets done"' is accessible on [www.cge.org.za](http://www.cge.org.za)

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## Note

1. See the annexure attached to the CGE Report (2010c) as a format of analysis on page 76.

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