



Commission on Gender Equality

MEDIA STATEMENT

DEEPENING DEMOCRACY IN PROVINCES: CGE's COMMEMORATION OF WOMEN'S MONTH / DAY

The Women's Month celebration is one of the flagship programmes of the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE).

As part of upholding gender equality as mandated by South Africa's Constitution, and aimed also to commemorate contributions women have made to society and their achievements, the CGE is hosting **countrywide events** throughout August 2007.

It has been established that more women **in provinces** are unaware of legislation and accessing of constitutional rights that protect them. Thus it is important for the CGE to centre Women's Month celebrations on the rights of women in the coal face. The **celebrations run from August 02 to 31 2007, and the full Provincial Calendar of Events is available on www.cge.org.za. Highlights are:**

KwaZulu-Natal: In partnership with the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), Office of the Public Protector and Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA) will host "Open Day" activities where organisations and service providers will be available to receive complaints on women's issues and offer services, advice and support in addressing those issues.

Western Cape: The focus of August month is on the establishment the Provincial Gender Machinery. Since March 2005 the CGE in partnership with the Department of the Premier have had numerous working sessions on the roles and functions of the Gender Machinery and have conducted broad consultations with the Civil Society and Local Government (this included rural and urban areas) in integrating these structures in the PGM. Based on the needs of these components as well as work undertaken with the other components, namely government and parliament, since 2005 the following activities are to be conducted in August Month. This is aimed at bringing the 4 components together in a structured forum that is aligned with the national gender framework policy.

In the ***Gauteng*** the focus during will be on roadshows aimed at mapping out a structured way-forward for an office that is aligned with the CGE Act and the National Gender Framework Policy. The roadshows will specifically help to:

- Popularise the CGE newly established provincial office
- Raise awareness in terms of the CGE's roles and functions
- Identify needs and determine priorities of Women in the Province
- Improve effectiveness of Provincial coordination and to strengthen existing gender structures

Eastern Cape: In a collaborative effort, province-based office of the CGE, Office of the Public Protector and the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) will conduct joint workshops on the mandates of each Chapter 9 institution and avail their respective personnel to receive complaints from the public on violation of their rights. The information sessions will target 200 participants to speak out against gender-based violence.

The CGE endorses the commemorative day and month under the national banner of "Emancipation, Empowerment, Equality and Eradication of Poverty....Now!!!" and sends a reminder of the contribution women have made to society, and the difficulties and successes they continue to encounter in securing their rights.

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