Country gender profile: South Africa

Report prepared for the Swedish International Development Office (Sida) Pretoria, Republic of South Africa

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABET     Adult basic education and training
ACDP     African Christian Democratic Party
ADAPT    Agisanang Domestic Abuse Prevention and Training
AFRA     Association for Rural Advancement
AGI      African Gender Institute (Cape Town)
ANC      African National Congress
ANCWL    African National Congress Women’s League
AusAID   Australian Agency for International Development
BRIDGE   Briefings on Development and Gender (Institute of Development Studies, Sussex)
C A S E  Community Agency for Social Enquiry
CBO      Community based organisation
CBP      Capacity building programme (AusAID)
CCF      Country co-operation framework (UNDP)
CEC      Commission for the European Communities
CEDAW    Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CERSA    Centre for Epidemiological Research in South Africa (MRC)
CGE      Commission on Gender Equality
COSATU   Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPA      Community property association
CSDS     Centre for Social and Development Studies (University of Natal)
CSS      Central Statistics Service
Danida   Danish International Development Agency
DBSA     Development Bank of Southern Africa
DFID     Department for International Development (UK)
DLA      Department of Land Affairs
DoA      Department of Agriculture
DP       Democratic Party
DTI      Department of Trade and Industry
DWAF     Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
EAP      Economically active population
ECD      Early childhood development
EIU      Economist Intelligence Unit
EPRD     European Programme for Reconstruction and Development (EU)
EU       European Union
FAWESA   Forum of African Women Educationalists - South Africa
FRRP     Farmworkers’ Research and Resource Project
FSAW     Federation of South African Women
GAIN     Gender in Africa Information Network (AGI)
GAP      Gender Advocacy Programme
GDP      Gross domestic product
GEAR     Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GETNET   Gender Education and Training Network
GETT     Gender Equity Task Team (Department of Education)
GNU      Government of National Unity
GoSA     Government of South Africa
<table>
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<th>Acronym</th>
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<tr>
<td>GTZ</td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Technical Co-operation Agency)</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome</td>
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<td>HRC</td>
<td>Human Rights Commission</td>
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<td>HSRC</td>
<td>Human Sciences Research Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>IAJ</td>
<td>Institute for Advanced Journalism</td>
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<td>IDASA</td>
<td>Institute for Democracy in South Africa</td>
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<td>IDRC</td>
<td>International Development Research Committee (Canada)</td>
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<td>IDT</td>
<td>Independent Development Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>IES</td>
<td>Income and expenditure survey</td>
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<td>IFP</td>
<td>Inkatha Freedom Party</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Office</td>
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<td>JSCOF</td>
<td>Joint Standing Committee on Finance</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAPC</td>
<td>Land and Agricultural Policy Centre</td>
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<td>LRA</td>
<td>Labour Relations Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>MK</td>
<td>Umkhonto we Sizwe (armed wing of ANC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIP</td>
<td>Multi-indicative Programme (EU)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP</td>
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<td>MRC</td>
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<td>MTEF</td>
<td>Medium term expenditure framework</td>
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<td>MYM</td>
<td>Muslim Youth Movement</td>
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<td>NAFCOC</td>
<td>National African Federated Chamber of Commerce</td>
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<td>NDA</td>
<td>National Development Agency</td>
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<td>NDF</td>
<td>National Defence Force</td>
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<td>NEDLAC</td>
<td>National Economic, Development and Labour Council</td>
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<td>NEW</td>
<td>Network for the Empowerment of Women</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
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<td>NIPILAR</td>
<td>National Institute for Public Interest Law and Research</td>
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<td>NLC</td>
<td>National Land Committee</td>
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<td>NOW</td>
<td>Natal Organisation of Women</td>
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<td>NP</td>
<td>National Party</td>
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<td>OAP</td>
<td>Old age pension</td>
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<td>October Household Survey</td>
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<td>OSW</td>
<td>Office of the Status of Women</td>
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<td>PAC</td>
<td>Pan-Africanist Congress</td>
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<td>PAHA</td>
<td>People Against Harassment and Abuse</td>
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<td>PIR</td>
<td>Poverty and Inequality Report</td>
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<td>PLP</td>
<td>Presidential Lead Project</td>
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<td>PPA</td>
<td>Participatory poverty assessment</td>
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<td>Programme for Development Research</td>
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<td>Presidential Review Commission on the Public Service</td>
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<td>PSLSD</td>
<td>Project for Statistics on Living Standards and Development</td>
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<td>PSNP</td>
<td>Primary Schools Nutrition Programme</td>
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<td>RCA</td>
<td>Rotating credit association</td>
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<tr>
<td>RDP</td>
<td>Reconstruction and Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>RWM</td>
<td>Rural Women’s Movement</td>
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<td>SA-PPA</td>
<td>South Africa - Participatory Poverty Assessment</td>
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<td>SACTWU</td>
<td>South African Clothing and Textile Workers’ Union</td>
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<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>SADF</td>
<td>South African Defence Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>SADWU</td>
<td>South African Domestic Workers’ Union</td>
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GLOSSARY

amakhosi       chiefs
bantustan      former ‘homeland’ area designated by apartheid government
induna         headman
inkosi          chief
kgotla         council of elders
lobola         brideprice
manyano        women’s church group
stokvel        rotating credit association
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the report

This Country Gender Profile of South Africa was commissioned by the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida), Pretoria. It is one of a range of initiatives on the part of Sida to promote gender equality within its development co-operation programmes, a goal adopted in 1996, following the Beijing Conference (Sida, 1997a). Sida’s Action Plan for Gender Equality states that ‘Women and men shall enjoy equal rights, obligations and opportunities in all sectors of society. For equality to be attained, sharing of both power and responsibility between men and women is required’ (ibid.). The focus has shifted from attention to women, to ‘women and men’ and the relations between them. Furthermore, efforts to achieve equality are now ‘mainstreamed’ across Sida’s programmes, i.e. they should permeate Sida’s work at all levels, although women may still require special support to build their capacities (ibid.).

The case for a focus on gender relations and inequality, rather than women, is particularly clear in the South African context. Given the intersections between race, class and gender oppression, a strategy which focuses on women to the exclusion of their social, political and economic relations with men is unlikely to succeed in South Africa. Since coming to office in 1994, the Government of South Africa has made strong and legally binding commitments to uphold and promote gender equality and has established a comprehensive national machinery to implement and monitor these commitments. The emphasis on gender, rather than women, implies the need to develop effective linkages between gender and other forms of inequality through concerted policy efforts.

The immediate purpose for commissioning this Country Gender Profile is to provide an understanding of gender inequality issues in South Africa as an input into the process of developing a new country strategy for Sida’s development co-operation from 1999. While the initial audience for the report is the personnel of Sida, it is intended that it should have wide circulation and act as a resource for people within as well as outside South Africa concerned with gender inequality. A shorter, popular version of the profile has also been prepared for distribution across a wider, non-specialist audience.

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¹ This report was prepared under the management of the BRIDGE (briefings on development and gender) service at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex. Sally Baden, BRIDGE Manager, was the overall co-ordinator and editor and also drafted sections 6-9, as well as co-authoring the introduction. Shireen Hassim (Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria) and Sheila Meintjes (University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg) drafted sections 2-5 and co-authored the introduction. The first draft was reviewed by Debbie Budlender, Senior Researcher, Community Agency for Social Enquiry (C A S E), Cape Town and by Lotta Sylwander, Social Development Adviser, Sida. Debbie Budlender also provided invaluable advisory input, information and documentation throughout the preparation of the report. Any remaining omissions or errors of fact or analysis are the responsibility of the authors. This report is also being published separately by Sida, and a popular version will also be published. Contact Sida, Pretoria, for further information (See Appendix 2).

² Debbie Budlender produced the shorter version.
1.2 Scope of the report and methodology

Whilst a wealth of information on gender issues in South Africa is available, this report is intended to provide a summary and comprehensive analysis of gender issues and problems, with specific attention to sectors where Sida gives development support. The specific aims of this County Gender Profile as set out in the terms of reference (see Appendix 1) are to:

- Provide a gender analysis of south Africa summarising the comparative situation of women and men, with particular reference to their economic, social, socio-cultural, legal and political status;
- Identify particular gender discrepancies in education, public administration, media and culture and urban and rural development;
- Provide an integrated gender and poverty analysis, especially of disadvantaged groups such as female-headed households and the disabled;
- Identify particular gaps in information, research and data concerning gender.

The report does not attempt to arrive at direct recommendations (to Sida or others) on future development co-operation. It does, nevertheless, give a view on where there are important gaps in knowledge on gender issues and on possible measures to redress gender inequality in South Africa.

This profile is essentially a literature survey, which summarises the extensive policy and research literature (published and unpublished) available on gender issues in South Africa. The latest government statistical data is also synthesised and reported where appropriate. In addition, interviews were conducted with key informants, i.e. researchers, policy makers, practitioners and activists working towards gender equality in South Africa, to seek their views on current developments. Discussions were also held with representatives of the donor community and a questionnaire was circulated to this group.

Given the very wide scope of the analysis and the time constraints on the preparation of the report, it cannot claim to be exhaustive. Wherever possible, pointers are given to additional resources which can be followed up for more detailed information on specific issues. Every effort has been made to ensure that ongoing research initiatives and emerging issues are covered but the fast changing situation in South Africa means that some of the information and findings will inevitably become rapidly out of date. It is hoped, nevertheless, that this report will remain a useful resource for a wide audience.

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3 A list of persons interviewed in South Africa is given in Appendix 2. The authors are grateful for the co-operation of all concerned in providing documentation, giving time to be interviewed and commenting on the final draft.

4 Appendix 3 provides a list of resource persons, who, for reasons of time, could not be interviewed in the preparation of this report, but whose expertise may prove valuable in future work on gender inequalities in South Africa.
1.3 Framework of analysis

This report explores the dynamics of gender relations and the challenge of transforming gender inequalities in the broader economic and political context of South Africa’s transition to democracy and re-integration into the global economy. The report examines two aspects of this process: firstly, the crafting of a constitutional and institutional framework for democracy; and, secondly, the challenge of consolidating democracy in a highly unequal society, which requires that the social and economic basis of disadvantage be addressed in tandem with political transformation. Both aspects of the report place central emphasis on the gendered nature of these processes and challenges.

Gender is defined here in terms of the social relations and processes embodied in the variety of institutions (e.g. families, communities, markets, legal systems) underpinning day-to-day life. As such, gender relations are dynamic, variable, and context-specific. Gender relations are shaped by historical processes, which influence how gender interacts with other axes of inequality. In South Africa, the central forces that shaped social relations were colonialism, capitalism and apartheid and the legacies of these historical dynamics are explored in summary in this report (section 2 and elsewhere). Gender relations also shape, and are shaped by, socio-economic institutions governing labour allocation and resource entitlements (see sections 7 and 8); by socio-cultural norms which define gender identities (see section 4.5); and by the scope for representation of gender interests within political and legal institutions (sections 3-5). All of these factors interact to create specific patterns of gender differentiation and inequality, as described in section 6.

The report looks at how the institutional environment creates gender-equitable, or gender-biased, outcomes. But it also highlights the responses of individuals, households, organisations and social movements in creating livelihoods, articulating needs and interests and developing new visions, which can lead to changes in how gender relations are defined and experienced.

Responding to the specific concern of Sida with poverty reduction, the report focuses centrally on the interaction between gender-based disadvantage and poverty. In doing so, it highlights two issues

- Firstly, that gender inequality and poverty are linked but distinct forms of disadvantage: gender inequality is not reducible to ‘women’s poverty’
- Secondly, that poverty cannot be properly understood or addressed without a recognition that it is ‘gendered,’ in how it is defined, experienced and assessed, in its underlying causes and through the institutional context from which poverty-reduction policies and programmes may spring. Informed by a gender perspective, poverty is not seen as a purely economic issue. Rather, poverty is embedded not only in class but also in race and gender inequalities.

5 A variety of other forms of disadvantage and discrimination, based on age, disability and sexuality, are also evident in the South African context and some measures have also been taken to address these within the legal and policy framework. Clearly, these also interact with gender, to create for example specific circumstances faced by young women, disabled women and gay women, for example. Given the primary concern of this report with gender inequality, and its summary nature, these more specific interests have not been covered in detail. Where possible, reference is made to literature which can provide further information on these areas.
A focus on the social relations of gender entails an examination of both the institutions that embody those social relations as well as the entitlement claims which emerge from particular institutional arrangements. Thus, we consider how gender was taken into account in the crafting of new institutions of democracy and in the transformation of the legal system and the civil service. In the phase of establishing democratic principles and institutions (c.1992-1994), the gender debate focused on the particular rights of women and gay people. The reason for this was that the political rights of black people in general had become *sine qua non* in the whole negotiation process. Racial and economic inequalities were regarded as intertwined by the major negotiating parties; the impact of women’s interventions was to ensure that gender inequalities were also on the table.

In the crafting of the new institutions of democracy, women’s organisations played a crucial role in ensuring that women’s representation and the principle of gender equality were secured. The inclusion of gender in this process took the form of a focus on the particular disadvantages of women, i.e. on those aspects of subordination and disadvantage specific to women. The relational aspects of gender inequality were not given much attention. Rather, emphasis was placed directly on ways to facilitate increased representation of women in the institutions of democracy, and to create an enabling environment for women to give ‘voice’ to their various interests.

For this reason, the focus here is especially on the creation of state mechanisms for mainstreaming gender, as these will be the locus of policy interventions on behalf of various groups of women. The ability of these structures to intervene in policy formulation on behalf of different women’s interests depends on both their internal capacity as well as their relationship with women’s organisations in civil society. Within women’s organisations, issues of capacity and policy effectiveness are also central to their ability to make the representative structures work on their behalf.

The second part of this report considers the socio-economic complexities which will have to be taken into account in the policy formulation process. Considering women as a category distinct and separate from men in this context would be inappropriate and may lead to misguided policies and programmes which encounter unforeseen constraints or have unintended consequences in implementation. The sharp race and class cleavages in the South African context, albeit softening in some respects, are also a warning that women cannot be lumped into a single category. Race differences outweigh gender differences on almost any measure.

The report highlights the limitations of conventional economic indicators on poverty once gender is brought into the frame, since available data cannot disaggregate below the household level. Female poverty is not just about female headship of households, although data does show that some women in this category are highly likely to be poor. In fact, there are more poor women in male-headed households. To broaden the picture, a range of other indicators of well-being are used, covering education, health, nutrition, access to basic services and demands on time, but even here there is a lack of reliable evidence to establish and monitor trends over time.

As well as attempting to assess the gender dimensions of poverty, the report attempts to understand its underlying causes, which are also gendered, through, for example, pervasive labour market segmentation and discrimination. For historical reasons, but also because of current economic restructuring processes, the majority of African women are concentrated in casual agricultural labour, domestic work and informal
sector activity, where they are poorly paid, least protected and most vulnerable to job loss, harassment and abuse.

Vulnerability, a dynamic concept, is in many ways more useful than poverty *per se* since it captures the often insecure and weakly enforceable nature of women’s claims on resources (land, remittances, maintenance etc.).

Also addressed is the complexity of household arrangements and of intra-household negotiation processes and the difficulty for many women in making claims on male resources. One manifestation of tensions within households is the widespread occurrence of domestic violence.

The acceptance of the principle of gender equality as both a formal constitutional value as well as a substantive policy imperative has introduced a new set of complexities that have to be considered in resource allocation. The diverse and sometimes confusing needs and interests that arise out of the multiple claims of race, class and gender can only be effectively mediated in the formulation of specific policies and programmes. An important tool in understanding these complexities is the creation of a widely-available information base; this report brings some of the available information together and points to institutional and social conditions which determine gender relations.
2. BACKGROUND TO GENDER RELATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 Gender relations under colonialism and apartheid

The contemporary position of women in South Africa cannot be fully appreciated without an understanding of the ways in which colonialism, capitalism and apartheid have organised social relations and fractured society along racial, class and gender lines. British colonialism was accompanied by a disruption of pre-existing social relations and the distortion of indigenous ideologies of gender (Walker, 1990). Subsequent settler domination under regimes of segregation and apartheid exacerbated and institutionalised new forms of racial and gender inequalities.

The central role played by women as producers in pre-colonial agricultural society accorded them status as well as a limited degree of authority. However, with colonial state interventions which restructured the homestead economy to serve the migrant labour system, women lost much of both their economic centrality and their social status (Guy, 1990). Nevertheless, since migrant labour was never fully able to subsidise the rural economy, women’s productive activity continued to be vital for rural survival. As conditions of agricultural production in African reserves declined, and arable land became scarce, women were less and less likely to be allocated land in their own right by chiefly authorities (Walker, 1990:8). For this reason, their attachment to chiefs and to male relatives, even those who were migrant workers in the city, was vital for the continuation of their productive activities and for the survival of rural households.

At the same time, new forms of male authority were reinforced by missionaries and by local colonial officials (Bozzoli, 1983; Burman, 1990; Meintjes, 1990). Traditional leaders were co-opted into the colonial government and a codified system of ‘Customary law’ emerged which locked African women into positions of formal inferiority to men (Robinson, 1996). White, Indian and ‘coloured’ women were not part of this legal system, but were governed by the ‘western’ legal system, except for Muslim women, who were informally regulated by the operation of Muslim personal law and through Muslim marriage.

While recruitment of mine workers remained male-dominated, African women began to move into urban areas in increasing numbers from the 1930s onwards. While the range of employment opportunities for white women increased during the War (see Walker, 1991:61-145), the vast majority of African women in the cities were employed in domestic work, which, although highly exploitative, offered women food and shelter in urban areas. Legal restrictions on the movement of women into the cities, and the exclusion of Africans from a range of jobs resulted in a high proportion of women located in the informal sector in activities such as hawking and beer brewing or, in rural areas, working casually on farms. During the late 1940s and 1950s, the apartheid government began to regulate more systematically the movement of African people, and especially of African women in order to restrict the development of a large urbanised African population (Hindson, 1987).

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6 This section is a brief summary of gender relations under apartheid and women’s involvement in the liberation struggle. For authoritative accounts of these issues, refer to Walker (1990; 1991).
2.2 Women's responses to economic and political oppression

The processes of economic exploitation and political oppression of black women and men resulted in two types of responses by women. The first response might be characterised as the development of survivalist strategies to increase household income and to create networks of social support. These networks intersected with women’s cultural activities, particularly where active church groups were involved. The forms these networks took, and continue to take, were the manyanos, which are similar to women’s guilds attached to different churches, as well as burial societies and stokvels, which are forms of savings groups. These women’s networks provided new cultural forms in a context of tremendous social dislocation, whether in urban or rural areas. However, these survivalist strategies did not address the underlying ideological and structural forces which shaped women’s experiences of economic and political subordination. Indeed, some rural forms of women’s networks took an avowed conservative position on the involvement of women in political activities (Hassim, 1991).

The second response took the form of political organisation, both independently of and alongside men. South African women have been central to the struggles against apartheid for decades. From the early 1950s, the African National Congress (ANC) Women’s League began to establish a branch structure in the townships and to participate actively in ANC campaigns such as transport and education boycotts. Pass laws were finally extended to African women in 1959, despite years of struggle against these regulations by the ANC, the ANC Women’s League and the Federation of South African Women (FSAW)7 (Wells, 1993: 105). However, as levels of repression increased and major liberation movements were banned in the 1960s, organised women’s politics declined.

By the 1980s, the crisis of apartheid was beginning to manifest itself more openly, as mass strikes and popular protests against local administrations - the ‘everyday’ face of apartheid - began to occur with increasing frequency. The strengthening of the trade union movement and the emergence of a wide range of community-level organisations or ‘civics’ were the hallmarks of this new era of open protest (Fester, 1997). Within the trade unions, women began to take up concerns around the conditions of women workers, as well as about the lack of women in the leadership. On the new terrain of battle inside the townships, women emerged as a powerful force in community level politics, organising around ‘bread and butter’ issues such as high rents, lack of services and corrupt local councils. Consumer boycotts of companies in dispute with workers created a synergy between the struggles of trade unions and of community-based organisations (Fester, 1997; Madlala-Routledge, 1997).

These challenges to the apartheid system met with violent reactions from the state as well as from its collaborators in local administrations - especially in the bantustans - and from ‘third force’ elements. The roles women played in the violence were varied: some women were active perpetrators; some actively opposed violence; others supported the violent repression of liberation elements in the townships; and yet others, by far the majority, were victims. The disruption of families and households as homes were burnt down created an added burden for women who had to recreate

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7 The Federation of South African Women (FSAW) was the first structure which drew in women from a range of race and class backgrounds around the common goal of advancing women’s cause through struggling against the racist state (Walker, 1991).
homes in remote locations. Political violence increased the vulnerability of all households in areas of unrest. On occasion, opposition to the violence united women across race barriers, as organisations like the Black Sash joined in all-night vigils with their black comrades in the townships.

The formation of the United Women’s Organisation (UWO) and the Natal Organisation of Women (NOW) in the early 1980s allowed women to organise alongside, as well as inside, the male-dominated union and civic organisations (Patel, 1988; Fester, 1997; Madlala-Routledge, 1997; Meintjes, 1998). Ironically, as community-based organisations became more powerful through the establishment of the United Democratic Front (UDF), women’s organisations were weakened through the absorption of their leaders into national structures. At the same time, the UDF focus on national and international rather than local mobilisation, limited women’s participation, because of women’s dual burden of work and home and their lack of confidence in terms of public speaking (especially in English), among other factors (Beall et al, 1987).

The 1980s also saw the emergence of a range of non-governmental organisations which directly or indirectly addressed women’s practical needs. Several groups emerged to provide organisational and legal support to communities under threat of removal. Women in these communities formed part of the organised resistance which occurred in the rural areas (Platzky and Walker, 1985). Towards the end of the 1980s, a separate organisation known as the Rural Women’s Movement was formed, which remains one of the few mouthpieces of the special interests and problems faced by women in the rural areas.

2.3 Women in the transition

The re-emergence of women as high profile actors in politics in the 1980s laid the basis for opening political debates about the relationship between women’s struggles and struggles against apartheid and capitalism. A key area of debate was whether the autonomy of women’s organisations was desirable or led to a weakening of national struggles, and how political organisations on the left could be internally transformed to take account of women’s interests and to facilitate women’s equal participation (Hassim, Metelerkamp and Todes, 1987). Furthermore, the involvement of women in these struggles and debates during the 1970s and 1980s fostered the emergence of a strong women’s leadership, which demonstrated its capacity to intervene strategically in the interests of women in the 1990s.

These debates also took place within political movements in exile, where women activists and guerrillas argued that the liberation of women could not be separated from national liberation. A range of conferences in the early 1990s focused on women and gender issues, most notably the Malibongwe conference which was held...
in Amsterdam in 1990, and which brought together for the first time women in exile and activists inside South Africa (Charman et al, 1991).

These efforts of women in exile, combined with the higher level of organisation of women in the 1980s under the banner of the UDF, resulted in a high level of awareness of the need for women to be represented at the negotiation forums after 1990. This awareness coalesced in the formation in 1992 of the Women’s National Coalition (WNC), a process initiated by the African National Congress Women’s League (ANCWL). The WNC was initially charged with the single purpose of drafting a Women’s Charter of Effective Equality, based on the demands of women at the grassroots as well as of women’s organisations. The Coalition brought together women’s structures in political parties as well as women’s organisations in communities. While the issue of gender equality remained unresolved within liberation movements and peripheral inside the country, the WNC brought it directly into the mainstream of public debate. The Coalition also debated at length the impact of differences between women on the way in which gender inequalities should be addressed (Meintjes, 1997).

2.4 Gender and race differences

While this account has focused mainly on the situation of African women, under apartheid, all women were to differing extents the object of formal discrimination.11 Various pieces of legislation (particularly matrimonial and tax laws), although differentiated by racial group, discriminated against all groups of women. Nevertheless, women’s capacity to challenge their oppression through their access to political and economic power, differed enormously, then as now, by race and class.

While African women, like their male counterparts, had no political representation, white women won the vote in 1921, largely as a result of the white government’s efforts to dilute the power of the ‘coloured’ vote in the Cape (Walker, 1990). White women’s access to better education, and their economically privileged position in general, provided them with limited means to challenge their subordinate status. A minority of white women used their privileged position to fight for the abolition of apartheid and to support its victims.

More typically, though, black women found greater common ground with their black male counterparts than with their white ‘sisters’ and vice versa. These racial distances among women were reinforced as the Nationalist Party continued to be elected into power by white men and women. The most common form of interaction between white and black women was the ‘madam-maid’ relationship.

Economic differences between women are mirrored in differential social and political power with implications for how to advocate gender interests in policy terms. For example, the proposals of the Lund Committee on child benefits had to mediate

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11 Albie Sachs has famously commented that patriarchy is the only non-racial institution in South Africa.

12 This did not translate into white women having significant representation in the Apartheid parliament, however. Before 1994, women were less than three percent of MPs (Beall, 1997).
between competing demands for racial parity in benefits, and demands by women’s
groups for adequate levels of benefit.

2.5 Gender issues in post-apartheid transformation

The political struggles of women against apartheid, as well as for the inclusion of
women and women’s concerns in liberation movements has had a major impact.
Through these struggles, a strong women’s leadership emerged, which was able to
articulate the demands of women during the multi-party negotiations process. There
is a high level of political representation of women in the post-apartheid government,
with a history of activism and links outside Parliament, and who provide strong
leadership on gender issues (see section 3). Gender inequality is recognised as an
issue in mainstream debate and among the country’s senior leadership. In particular,
the majority party in Parliament, the ANC, has explicitly committed itself to gender
equity.

The strong intervention by women’s organisations and representatives in political
parties during the negotiations for the new South Africa has left two key lasting gains
for women. Firstly, the Constitution guarantees the equality of women (see section 4)
and, secondly, a comprehensive institutional package has been created to ensure that
gender issues are addressed by government as well as the private sector (see section 2).

Women’s struggles to transform unequal and exploitative gender relations are also
enhanced by the overall ethos of human rights that is established by the Bill of Rights,
the Constitution, and by the ANC government’s commitment to a strong
transformation agenda. This includes recognition that gender, as well as race
inequality forms the basis for affirmative action. The framing of socio-economic
rights as justiciable in the Constitution opens spaces for women to make specific
claims on redistribution and poverty reduction policies. Furthermore, the strong
position South Africa has taken on the areas of human rights and women’s rights
internationally has created a favourable context for women to make rights claims on
this and future governments.

Since the 1994 election, there has been a shift towards examining strategies for
transforming the state to be more responsive to women’s demands and more
representative of women. The linkages between the broad transformation of society
and the specific position of women have been reiterated on several occasions by the
Government. At the opening of the first democratically elected Parliament, President
Nelson Mandela singled out the importance of this issue:

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13 See Section 7.6.5 of this report.
14 The value of the Constitutional provision on equality was recently demonstrated by the upholding of
the constitutionality of the Termination of Pregnancy Act by the Pretoria High Court. The Act was
challenged by a Christian coalition on the grounds that the foetus has a right to life. The case was
defended by the Reproductive Rights Alliance, The Department of Health and the Commission for
Gender Equality.
15 However, the clause on socio-economic rights is proving difficult to uphold in practice as it allows
wide scope for the interpretation of government responsibilities in the context of severe fiscal
constraints. For example, in Soobramoney vs. Minister of Health (KwaZulu-Natal) the Constitutional
Court ruled against Soobramoney’s claim for dialysis treatment on the grounds that scarce resources
forced the Department of Health to offer selective access to treatment and equipment. (1998 SA (1)785
(CC); 1997 (12) BCLR 1696.)
freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression. All of us must take this on board, that the objectives of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) will not have been realised unless we see in visible and practical terms that the condition of the women of our country has radically changed for the better, and that they have been empowered to intervene in all aspects of life as equals with any other member of society.\textsuperscript{16}

In spite of the major gains, there are huge disparities and inequalities which remain to be addressed. Central markers of gender inequality in South Africa today are:

- Gender inequalities cannot be separated from other dimensions of inequality, including class, race, age and location. Overall, the most disadvantaged group are African women living in rural, former ‘homeland’ areas.
- While apartheid institutionalised gender inequality across all racial groups, African women were further discriminated against through the promulgation of specific legislation to ensure their minor status;
- African women are predominantly located in rural areas, while white women are predominantly urban-based;
- A high proportion (over 40 percent) of African households are headed by women and the majority of these have dependants, a much higher proportion on both counts than for white households (Govender \textit{et al}, 1994);
- African women constitute 75 percent of workers in the informal sector, and 82 percent of these women are in ‘elementary’ activities (street vending, domestic work and scavenging) (Budlender, 1997a:26);
- Women, especially rural African women, suffer more from poverty than men: overall, 48 percent of women live in poverty, compared to 44 percent of men, rising to 70 percent for African rural women (over 15) compared to 65 percent for men in the same category (May, Carter \textit{et al}, 1997).
- Women in South Africa are at risk from high levels of domestic violence and abuse and rape: during 1996, 35000 rapes were reported to the police.

These markers underline the diversity of interests between women and point to the range of areas needing policy attention by government and other institutions if gender inequalities are to be redressed.

\textsuperscript{16} Hansard no. 1 Debates of the National Assembly 1st session, 25 May 1994, p. 21.
3. THE POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT FOR GENDER EQUALITY

3.1 Overview

By 1994, women in South Africa had achieved a commitment to the need for the a co-ordinated set of structures within government dedicated to gender policy issues, as well as a statutory Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) funded by, but independent of, government (Albertyn, 1995). This package of arrangements is unique in its scope for a new democracy and it carries high expectations that it will be able to effect significant changes in gender relations (ibid.). Government structures addressing gender are particularly important for poverty reduction programmes, as they are specifically charged with the responsibility for mainstreaming gender into government policies.

The roles of the various statutory and government institutions are vital in keeping alive a public discourse on gender, as well as in monitoring progress in both the public and the private sectors in fulfilling their stated commitments to transformation. However, there remains a serious gap in the structures at local government level. There are also major constraints on the existing bodies, in terms of available resources, their status and influence within the public administration as well as in their capacity and expertise in gender analysis and in the technical skills to apply this analysis.

3.2 Institutional arrangements for gender equality

The national machinery in South Africa has various components, set out in Figure 1 (overleaf).

**The legislature:** in the national assembly there is a multiparty Parliamentary Women’s Group and a Committee on Improving the Quality of Life and Status of Women which takes responsibility for monitoring the implementation of CEDAW, as well as for disaggregating and analysing the budget along gender lines. Each province also has its own legislature, some with associated gender structures. The Women’s Empowerment Unit (in the Gauteng Speaker’s Office but with national scope) is responsible for training and capacity building for women parliamentarians at all levels.

**Government:** the Office for the Status of Women (OSW) is based, nationally, in the Deputy President’s Office and has provincial counterparts in the various Premiers’ offices. Its role is co-ordinating and facilitating the implementation of government policy and programmes on gender.

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17 The UN Convention for the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women.
18 The Presidential Review Commission has recommended that a more appropriate location for the OSW would be within the proposed Office of Public Management in the President’s office, ‘where their contributions to policy could be more effectively integrated into the overall planning processes’ (Government of South Africa, 1998a).
**Independent body**: the Commission on Gender Equality, is a statutory body independent of government, which monitors the implementation of government policy and commitments, as well as having a public education and investigative role;

**Civil society**: the above structures liaise and consult with civil society organisations. (Beall, 1997).

CEDAW acts as an important international instrument for encouraging government to follow through on its formal commitments to promoting gender equality through its legislation and policies.

### 3.2.1 The Commission on Gender Equality

The Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) was established in April 1997. The CGE comprises 11 Commissioners, of whom 5-6 are part-time. The tasks of the CGE, as set out in section 119 of the Constitution and Act 39 of 1996, include:

- Monitoring and evaluating the policies and practices of government as well as private institutions;
- Public education and information;
- Making recommendations to government to promote gender equality, including recommending changes to existing legislation and proposing new legislation;
- Resolving gender related disputes through mediation and conciliation;
- Investigating inequality and commissioning research.

As one of its first activities, the CGE initiated a series of information and evaluation workshops on organisational responses to gender inequality. At these workshops, government departments as well as civil society organisations made presentations of their needs and ideas on how the CGE could support them (CGE, 1997a). These have been used as the basis for a plan of action by the Commission. A series of public debates entitled ‘Gender Dialogues’ have been launched to debate issues of general concern. In addition, the Commission has held a workshop on customary law, initiated an inventory of legislation which discriminates against women, acted as advocate for anti-discrimination legislation, and designed and launched a public education campaign on gender and media. The CGE has also taken up a challenge to a Muslim radio station which has barred the voices of women and will make representations to the Constitutional Court on the twin provisions in the Bill of Rights for gender equality and religious freedom. This is the first of a number of ‘test cases’ which the Commission is likely to initiate or support, to uphold gender equality provisions in the Constitution (Colleen Lowe-Morna, personal communication).

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19 The first two Dialogues focused on the controversy over the Termination of Pregnancy Act and on political parties’ strategies to include women in the 1999 elections.
The CGE is committed to focusing on the poorest and most disadvantaged groups of women, particularly rural African women. They are planning to convene hearings of women farmworkers to document the discrimination they face, as well as to investigate the experiences and needs of women in the informal sector. Other priority areas for the CGE include political empowerment and combating violence against women (Colleen Lowe Morna, personal communication; CGE, 1997a; 1997b).

3.2.2 Government structures

Within government, there is a range of structures within line departments (gender units), and a separate Office on the Status of Women (OSW), which is located within the office of the Deputy President and which has offices in all the Provinces.

The OSW was established in 1997 with the function of co-ordinating and facilitating the implementation of gender policy in government. This includes:

- Taking forward national policy on gender;
- Promoting affirmative action in government;
- Supporting government departments and public bodies to integrate a gender perspective in all policies and programmes;
- Organising gender training for government departments;
- Initiating cross-departmental initiatives (e.g. On violence against women);
- Monitoring and evaluating government programmes.


The OSW has recently devised a draft National Gender Plan which is expected to be made public in 1998 (Ellen Kornegay, personal communication). This will draw on the earlier National Women’s Empowerment Policy introduced under the RDP office.

The direction that has been taken in terms of institutionalising gender within the government is that of mainstreaming gender, i.e. integrating gender concerns in the policies of all departments, rather than creating a separate ministry for ‘women’s affairs’. By May 1997, 11 departments (of 28) had established gender units.

Examples of Departmental activities include:

- The Department of Land Affairs has a multi-level strategy for gender transformation, including a Gender Forum which deals with gender practices within the department (such as employment opportunities for women, sexual harassment, and working conditions for women) as well as a Land Reform Gender project which assesses the needs of land reform beneficiaries;
- The Department of Trade and Industry had hired a consultant to assist them in developing a gender action plan and setting up a gender unit (Nomtuse Mbere, personal communication);
- The Department of Welfare played a major role in South Africa’s participation in the Beijing Conference, in co-ordinating the government’s CEDAW report and in supporting the National Network on Violence Against Women. It has also launched the first major government programme to address the needs of poor women.

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20 The CGE is collaboration with C A S E, is also planning a baseline qualitative and quantitative survey on gender, to be completed by late 1998, to assist in developing benchmarks or indicators on which to the measure progress of the CGE (Colleen Lowe-Morna, personal communication).
21 The draft plan remained embargoed at the time of writing (July 1998).
women, the Flagship Project for Unemployed Women with Children Under Five (see section 7).

The most significant gap in the package of structures is that local government is not addressed. The irony is that it is at the local government level that women experience the state most directly, in terms of the delivery of services which impact on women’s gendered household responsibilities (Robinson, 1995). There is a concerted strategy to address this by the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), an association of local councils covering all the provinces. SALGA has established a Gender Working Group with a range of strategies to train councilors (men and women) to integrate gender into planning and policy processes. As well, SALGA is developing a long term programme that gender issues, and support for women councillors, into local government planning.

### 3.3 Institutional capacities for upholding gender equality

The structures to support gender equality in South Africa are very newly-established. While their effectiveness cannot be assessed at this stage, it is nevertheless possible to point to certain constraints within which they are operating and which may limit their impact.

#### 3.3.1 Structural constraints

The decision to create both the national machinery and the CGE was only implemented in 1996, two years after the democratic elections, forcing them into a catch-up position in terms of accessing financial and other resources. Since some gender units were established in line departments before the establishment of either the OSW or the CGE, there was little co-ordination of programmes or leadership direction given to their activities.

Although there is a commitment to mainstreaming gender, in effect the capacities of the OSW to impact on policy-making are very limited. The OSW is not automatically involved in the drafting of policy papers, and has no formal capacity to ensure that the concerns of female constituencies are addressed. Indeed, even if it were to have such formal power, it would not be in a position to act on it as the staff component in the Deputy President’s office is small (one Director plus a secretariat). There is no independent research capacity that can be drawn on by the OSW.

At provincial levels, the picture is even bleaker. Offices are still in the process of being established, budgetary resources have not been allocated in all provinces and there is great dissatisfaction about the authority of provincial offices to make policy interventions. In effect, the OSW structures have been ghettoised despite the commitment to mainstreaming (CGE, 1997a). In the absence of a co-ordinated strategy to address this problem, there is a danger that the OSWs will be treated by government as convenient, ‘ready-to-use’ representatives of an interest group (‘women’), to be called upon in processes of broad consultation.

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23 Local government arrangements in general were not addressed in any detail during the multi-party negotiations. Elections lagged behind national elections, and a final electoral system and allocation of role and authorities has yet to be legislated (Government of South Africa, 1998b).
Gender equality issues are often construed as relating to internal personnel and organisational issues (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft: 12). While all departments can provide a gender breakdown of personnel, few (Land Affairs, Education, Home Affairs, Welfare) collect gender disaggregated data on beneficiaries. A gender desk is being established in Central Statistical Services (CSS), funded by Norway (ibid.) which should lead to some improvements in national survey data, although Departments are still responsible for improving their own administrative and monitoring statistics.

No government departments report on the gender implications of their mainstream budgetary allocations, although some which have specific allocations directed at women (e.g. health) can report on spending directly on women (ibid: 12). There is a tendency to rely on donor funding to support gender equity components of departmental budgets. While the leverage provided by donor resources to get structures up and running and to enable them to function effectively in their early stages may be vital, it is important to ensure that this does not lead to weak or contingent commitment on the part of government, or vulnerability to changing donor priorities (Budlender, 1996, 1997a; Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft: 12).

Pockets of hostility remain in the civil service about the transformation process and the influx of new personnel. Within the civil service, women are frustrated by the lack of progress in terms of establishing structures and outlining plans of action. Struggling on the one hand with the women-unfriendly nature of the bureaucracy and their marginalisation from decision-making, and on the other with the criticism of women’s groups about their inaction, women bureaucrats feel trapped (CGE, 1997a). As a result of the restructuring of the civil service by the Public Service Commission, some internal changes have been made towards addressing women’s position as employees. But human resource development policies which will be effective in promoting women to senior positions have not been thought out (Nomtuse Mbere, personal communication) and the constraints of lack of expertise and resources remain a point of frustration.

The Commission on Gender Equality is facing similar constraints in terms of capacity. Established only in 1997, the CGE did not have its own offices or staff until March 1998. There are 11 Commissioners, 5 or 6 of them full time, selected by a parliamentary committee including representatives from every political party. Two commissioners have since resigned due to other commitments. The Chairperson, Thenjiwe Mtintso, was redeployed by the ANC to act as Deputy Secretary General of the movement in December 1997. The budgetary allocation is a small percentage of that granted to other statutory Commissions (R2 million compared to R6 million for the Human Rights Commission; the chairperson earned less than any other Commission chair). No public explanation has been given for these disparities, and there has been no public protest at this stage from women’s organisations. In the second year, the CGE managed to increase its budget somewhat. However, the CGE is fighting a rearguard action to counter criticisms of inefficiency from the Democratic Party. These claims are perplexing in the light of the CGE’s performance despite constraints on resources. Part of the criticism stems from an unease over the wide scope of the CGE’s ‘oversight’ function, which includes the right to monitor the private sector. This makes it different from other statutory commissions.
More generally, there has been continuing debate in the media as to why gender inequalities cannot be dealt with by the Human Rights Commission (HRC). Despite the statutory nature of the Commission, the lack of adequate budgetary allocations poses severe problems for the CGE’s ability to fulfil its constitutional obligations. At the same time, the expectations of women’s groups have been raised about the possibility of the CGE acting as lobby group for their various interests.

3.3.2 Expertise

There is a typical pattern of a small number of highly sophisticated gender specialists in universities and some NGOs, and a wide base of politically sophisticated but theoretically untrained women within civic organisations. Gender analysis was not well developed within women’s organisations, which out of necessity focused much more on the battle to simply put women’s issues on the agendas of political organisations. Women’s and gender studies courses are a relatively new phenomenon and have not yet trained women in any great numbers (Bonnin, 1996).

The lack of analytical training and of skills in gender-aware budgeting, programme design and implementation (Beall, 1997) limit the ability of women in the OSW structures and in the gender units at different levels of government to translate women’s needs into effective policy and programmes. A large proportion of skilled women leaders have taken up political positions, leaving a capacity gap in women’s organisations and a small pool of expertise for the OSW to draw on.

In any case, given that the OSW posts are civil service jobs, they are in many cases occupied by women with little expertise in gender issues and few linkages to women’s organisations outside the state (Gouws, 1996). Many office-bearers in departmental and particularly provincial structures are unclear about what role they are supposed to play and how exactly to begin to integrate gender into government procedures. There are varying levels of understanding of gender equality and a tendency to see it as a women’s issue only relevant to certain sectors (Ellen Kornegay, personal communication). This is further exacerbated by the lack of direction from management and lack of job descriptions (Pethu Serote, personal communication).

The central training institution for public servants is the South African Management and Development Institute (SAMDI) which is unclear at present as to whether gender is to be featured in its public service training courses (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft). Various departments have held in-house workshops on gender, although none have as yet devised individualised training programmes for their staff.  

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24 Recent comments in the press by the HRC chairperson that ‘gender is not his issue’ as he is not a ‘victim’ are revealing of the kind of attention gender issues might get if they were collapsed into the HRC (Saturday Star, 25 October 1997).
25 There are attempts to address the expertise shortcomings through the establishment of a number of short courses offered through the Public and Development Management Department (Wits) and the Centre for Human Rights (University of Pretoria). The Wits course aims to train both men and women in gender, development and management while the Centre for Human Rights offers training in government procedures. The School of Government, University of the Western Cape is also running a Management Development Programme for Women in 1998 (Debbie Budlender, personal communication). The SALGA training workshops hope to do the same for women in local government, although they have yet to secure funding for these initiatives.
26 SAMDI’s general ability to effectively respond to the needs of a transforming civil service has been questioned by the Presidential Review Commission. The PRC has recommended a review of SAMDI’s functions, with a possible scaling down of its operations (Government of South Africa, 1998a).
27 The Commonwealth Secretariat has facilitated training programmes for gender units.
Govender, in the preface to the *Second Women’s Budget* (Budlender, 1997a: 7) makes the assessment that, unless the broader Budget process is made more woman-oriented, the resources required for the national machinery to translate into meaningful programmes and real development for women will not be forthcoming:

> between the vision and the objective, between commitment and concrete change, is reality with its plethora of compromises, trade-offs, and established power. We have seen structures which needed effective resourcing and authority being placed at unacceptably low levels in the hierarchy with little or no power to influence the budget and broader economic policy. The Commission of Gender Equality has a budget of R2 million. The Office of the Status of Women in the Deputy President’s office has effectively been reduced to a low level gender desk with a director and one secretary.
4. GENDER, DEMOCRATISATION AND PARTICIPATION

4.1 Overview

Enormous strides have been made in transforming the conditions for participation in political, social and economic change in South Africa. A dramatic increase in women’s national representation in formal politics has occurred since 1994. Importantly, many women representatives have their roots in political activism or the trade union movement and retain strong links with civil society. Their increased presence has translated into increased influence of senior women in government, has allowed women politicians to promote women’s interests through new legislation and has also led to some changes in parliamentary culture, to accommodate their needs.

However, the social power of patriarchy is proving difficult to shift, particularly at local government level where traditional leaders retain a strong foothold and women have yet to establish a strategic presence. Men remain the prime decision-makers in society, and to a large extent women remain secondary subjects. With the entry of many women activists into political life, women’s organisations in civil society have been weakened. Moreover, the resources previously directed towards developing the capacity of movements and organisations in civil society have very significantly been redirected towards the state (Madonsela, 1995), with the danger that wider participation in processes of change, will be undermined. Nevertheless, a number of smaller organisations of women mobilising around specific issues, such as the Self-employed Women’s Union (SEWU) have begun to articulate their interests more assertively through the government policy-making processes.

Women’s capacity to redefine their gender roles is also dependent on their influence in the media and other cultural institutions, which remain resistant to change, and are not easily held to account where their practice contradicts equality provisions. The diversity of cultural identities in post-apartheid South Africa poses a particular challenge in terms of ensuring that gender inequality does not become entrenched in rigid definitions of tradition or religion.

4.2 Political representation

4.2.1 National government

The African National Congress took its commitment to gender equality as far as establishing a thirty percent quota on its party list for representatives to Parliament. This strategy was widely debated before acceptance by the movement. Concerns were raised about the extent to which the quota would lead to women being elected who had a support base beyond the party leadership and about whether women elected by a quota would necessarily have the expertise to put women’s issues on the legislative agenda.

The quota was successful in drawing a significant number of women into parliament in the first election. In the 1994 elections the ANC won 252 seats, of which 90 were held by women. The other parties, none of which have a formal quota in place, do not
have such a high ratio of men to women members, although the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) has significant representation of women (see Figure 2 below). Overall, women formed 28 percent of the representatives in Parliament.

**Figure Two: Numbers of representatives in national Parliament by sex.**

![Graph showing numbers of representatives by political party and gender](image)

Source: adapted from Government of South Africa, 1997a, Part 1: 28

The gender lobby appears to have significant representation within the decision-making structures of government. Women constitute 31 percent of ministers and deputy ministers, with four out of 25 ministers and eight deputy ministers out of 13 being women. Women in senior positions include Sankie Mthembi-Mahanyele (Minister of Housing), Stella Sigcau (Minister of Public Enterprises), Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi (Minister of Welfare) and Gill Marcus (Deputy Minister of Finance). However, only eight of the chairpersons of Select Committees in Parliament are women.

### 4.2.2 Provincial and local government

In the Provincial legislatures (see Figure 3) women comprise 102 of the 425 members (24 percent) overall. The proportion of men to women legislative members varies by region, being particularly low in KwaZulu-Natal (14 percent) and Mpumalanga (20 percent) and highest in Northwest (37 percent) and Gauteng (29 percent).

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28 NB this was the representation immediately following the elections; there have been slight changes since.

29 The representation of women ministers and deputy ministers doubled in 1996, following a Cabinet reshuffle and the withdrawal of the NP from the GNU. Prior to this the proportion was 6 out of 39, or 15 percent (Government of South Africa, 1997a: part 1: page 33).
At the provincial level, the Speakers of the Northern Cape and, until November 1997, of the Free State Legislative Assembly were women. The Deputy Speakers of Gauteng, Northern Province and the Western Cape are all women.

At local government level, women are less well represented. The first democratic local government elections were held in 1995. Overall, 19.4 percent of all councillors elected are women, and 14.4 percent of all executive committee positions, well below the 25 percent achieved by the use of a quota in the national parliament. It is also below the 30 percent which is considered the critical mass for voting. (SALGA, 1997). Even for those women who are in local government, there is a need to ‘enable women to become a strategic presence in local government’ (ibid.).

The local government electoral system in the first term of democratic government was different from the national and provincial proportional representation system. Local governments are elected with a mix of proportional representation and a ward system. In the local government elections held in 1995, women won 29 percent of the seats contested on the basis of proportional representation but only 11 percent of those won on a ward basis. This difference has important implications for the future representation of women in national and provincial elections, as there is some indication that the proportional representation system is to be reviewed.

In October 1997, the Green Paper on Local Government was released by the Ministry for Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development and a number of groups

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30 Local government elections in some parts of the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal took place in 1996 and data from these elections are not included here.
representing women’s interests made submissions, including the Gender Advocacy Programme (GAP), SALGA and the CGE. GAP advocated the adoption of an electoral system based on proportional representation with a 30 percent quota for women, and a strong emphasis on poverty eradication (as women are the majority of the poor) as well as on gender equity (GAP, 1997). The CGE further called for the contradiction between the entrenchment of the powers of traditional leaders in rural areas and the principle of democratic representation to be addressed, to prevent two parallel systems of local government (rural and urban) from emerging, in which rural women will be unfairly disadvantaged (CGE/HSRC Workshop on Women and Local Government, November 1997). The White Paper on Local Government released in 1998 (Government of South Africa, 1998b) recommends a mixed electoral system with 40 percent of representatives elected on a proportional representation basis and 60 percent on a ward basis. It further recommends that political parties should include a 50 percent quota of women on their lists but does not make this mandatory. The first legislation to come out of the White Paper is the Municipal Structures Bill, which deals with demarcation and representation of constituencies. This bill recommends that each alternate name on the party list should be that of a woman.

4.3 Impact of women’s representation

The impact of the large increase in the proportion of women in the legislatures has been to considerably alter the masculinism which hitherto has been the hallmark of politics in South Africa. Frene Ginwala (the Speaker) instituted a number of important reforms in Parliament which have made the institution more woman-friendly. For instance, the working hours of Parliament have been re-examined to accommodate child-care and domestic responsibilities, more toilet facilities for women and a crèche have been provided. The dress code has also been relaxed. Despite these changes, however, the overall culture of Parliament remains women-unfriendly.

In a recent study on women in politics, more than half of the women parliamentarians interviewed felt they did not wish to run for the 1999 elections (Britten, 1997). Their disillusionment stemmed from the conflict between work and family responsibilities and relationships. Many women felt frustrated by the procedures in Parliament, as well as the sense of alienation from their own communities and constituencies. Much of the alienation appears to be derived from a sense of inadequate preparation for the formalities and skills required for parliamentary life (Government of South Africa, 1997a, Draft, Part 2; 32). However, this frustration cannot be assumed to apply to all women in politics, nor does it necessarily indicate that women wish to move out of politics altogether. Rather they may see themselves having a greater political impact in other positions. Further research is required to better understand the motivations and experiences of women in political life.32

A multi-party Parliamentary Women’s Group was set up to provide help to women members in their work. More recently, the Speakers’ Forum of the National and Provincial legislatures established a Women’s Empowerment Unit (WEU) to assist in the training and empowerment of women members of all the legislatures. A co-ordinator was appointed in mid-October 1997, and a needs assessment is being

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31 Only one third of all women parliamentarians were interviewed for the study.
32 A joint UNDP/ World Bank study is planned (Colleen Lowe-Morna, personal communication).
undertaken to establish how best to empower women parliamentarians. These are all important developments in an on-going challenge to the male domination of the political and institutional process of government. Equally significant is the impact of gender sensitivity in the attention given to the language of debate and that used in the drafting of legislation.

The role of senior women members of Cabinet has been crucial in promoting gender equality concerns through the political system. The Minister of Welfare and Population Development, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, has played a very important role in ensuring that the gender machinery ‘package’ agreed upon in the pre-election negotiations was implemented. The Minister of Health, Nkosazana Zuma, who led the South African delegation to Beijing, has spearheaded important reforms of the health system, making it more accessible for women and children, and enabling the passage of the Termination of Pregnancy Act. She has also promoted legislation to ensure the availability of cheaper generic drugs on the market.

The Committee on Improving the Quality of Life and Status of Women was set up in August 1996\(^3\) with membership of men and women across all parties. It is responsible for monitoring the implementation of CEDAW (Government of South Africa, 1997a, Part 2: 8). The Joint Standing Committee on Finance (JSCOF) under the guidance of MP Pregs Govender has also taken a proactive role in assessing the budget process. Since 1996, in collaboration with advocacy and research groups outside Parliament, a collaborative research project has been undertaken to comprehensively appraise the budget in relation to women’s priorities and basic needs (Budlender, 1996; 1997a; 1998).\(^4\)

Links between civil society and the legislature are maintained through the public’s access to Select Committees since the 1994 election, as well as through informal consultation processes. Many women in Parliament, at both national and provincial level, were previously active within women’s groups and NGOs.\(^5\) Women’s or gender-focused NGOs have been involved in lobbying on specific pieces of legislation and are working to develop closer links between grassroots women and political representatives\(^6\).

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\(^3\) As of late 1997, this committee became a formal structure (Debbie Budlender, personal communication).
\(^4\) As at 1998, the Women’s Budget had reviewed all 26 budget votes in three volumes, as well as developing an analysis of economic policy and the budget process itself, from a gender perspective. The Ministry of Finance has, as part of a wider project of engendering macroeconomic policy supported by the Commonwealth Secretariat, undertaken to conduct its own analysis of government budgets.
\(^5\) The Speaker of Parliament, Dr Frene Ginwala, was the Deputy Chair of the Emancipation Commission in the ANC and she was the Convenor of the WNC. The Deputy Speaker is Baleka Kgositile who was Secretary General of the ANC Women’s League before 1994. The Deputy Minister of Justice, Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, was an active member of women’s groups in Durban prior to the elections.
\(^6\) For example, the Gender Advocacy Programme has organised tours of women to the Parliament and fora where women can meet their local representatives (Rosieda Shabodien, personal communication).
4.4 Civil society and gender issues since 1994

Since the 1994 election, the participation of women in the democratic process beyond Parliament appears to have fallen and, for this and other reasons, there is a danger of deceleration in the pace of change (Hassim and Gouws, 1997). The fact that many of the leading women in the WNC went to Parliament left a considerable gap. Partly this reflects the general weakening of social movements in the wake of the elections. The disbanding of the earlier women’s organisations when the ANC and ANCWL were unbanned in 1990 has had the effect of lessening the possibilities for the emergence of an independent women’s movement, at least in the short term. The general absence of a strong, organised women’s movement will have negative consequences for the ability of women’s organisations to put pressure on the state in a concerted and effective fashion (Primo, 1997).

The WNC was very effective in lobbying during the transitional negotiations, both because it was able to claim a broad constituency across party lines and because it was able to mobilise women within political parties to exert internal pressure on their party leaderships. Internally, however, the WNC found it difficult to maintain its broad basis of support as tensions emerged over the dominance of white, middle class women, and the difficulties of dealing with racial and political differences (Kemp et al, 1995; Fester, 1997). The WNC has declined since the specific focus of its activities became less relevant to national political debates and since the focus has shifted to the establishment of structures within government. The popularisation of the Women’s Charter for Effective Equality (WNC, 1994) was not a great success, partly because the regional coalitions of the WNC were unable to maintain permanent offices, and partly because of the lack of a vision and strategy on the part of the new leadership. It does not have the support of the earlier period, nor has it yet been able to discover the issues which would generate wider support from women’s organisations.

A central problem which has persisted for decades in women’s organisations in South Africa is their urban focus. Despite the high proportion of women living in rural areas, and their disadvantaged position economically and politically, they have remained outside the mainstream of the women’s movement (Zondo, 1994; Yako, 1995). With some exceptions, notably the Transvaal Rural Action Committee (TRAC) and the National Land Committee (NLC), rural women were relatively neglected by the NGO sector (Small and Kompe, 1991; Meer, 1997b). The NLC had specific programmes to address issues of access to resources and capacity of rural women to transform gender relations. Most significantly, the formation of the Rural Women’s Movement (RWM) with the support of TRAC gave a strong organisational form to rural women’s interests. Its efforts are reflected in a strong awareness in the Land Reform Programme about the specific needs of women (Hargreaves, 1996). In KwaZulu Natal, the Inkatha Freedom Party has a strong constituency among rural women, built through a combination of ideological appeal and patronage. However, it has used this position to further reinforce women’s subordinate status rather than to advance an agenda of equality (Hassim, 1991).

37 Section 2 provides a summary account of the activities of women’s organisations and the participation of women in political struggle in the period 1950-1993. Section 8.3 covers some more recent developments in civil society.
Whilst women’s political organisations such as the ANCWL have tended to become less issue-oriented and become absorbed with power struggles within their parties, the issues themselves have become an opportunity for women to organise (see section 8.3 for further details).

4.5 Culture, media and religion

4.5.1 Culture
In South Africa there exists an extraordinarily rich and diverse cultural heritage. There are eleven official languages and four distinctive organised religions (Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism), as well as ‘traditionalists’. Apart from racial identities which emerged in complex ways both before and during the era of apartheid, ethnicity and religion have intersected with race to create multiple cultural identities amongst the peoples of South Africa. In addition, class and gender structure the nature of cultural life (Agenda, No. 25).

From a gender equality perspective, it is important that the fluid and changing nature of culture is recognised and that it is not conflated with fixed definitions of ‘custom’ or ‘tradition’ which entrench biases against women in law or in practice (see section 4). In late 1997, the CGE was planning a series of hearings on culture, tradition and religion (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft, part 1: 23).

4.5.2 Gender issues in the media
The potential for women to participate in the transformation of society in South Africa depends on their ability to organise and to influence public opinion, including through the media. However, women journalists do not wield significant power in the decision-making echelons of the media. While there are sometimes a majority of women participants in skills-based media courses, women generally form less than a quarter of participants in management courses conducted by the Institute for Advanced Journalism (IAJ). The environment is described as at best ‘tolerant’ of initiatives to improve gender awareness (CGE, 1997a).

While the media has been relatively slow to respond to gender equality concerns, since 1994, this has gradually begun to change. A black woman, Dr Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri, was the Chairperson of the Board of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) until she was redeployed by the ANC to become the premier of the Free State. A Women’s Forum was set up in the SABC and lobbied for changes (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft, Part 1: 26). However, there are still no women editors of major newspapers and women journalists continue to cluster in areas traditionally accepted as the domain of women: fashion, home-making, food and gardening.

During 1994, media activists ensured that a clause in the Women’s Charter highlighted the need for women’s portrayal in the media to be of a ‘positive, active and life-affirming’ kind, emphasising the achievements and contribution of women to

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38 This section deals briefly and in somewhat general terms with a very complex and difficult subject. By culture we mean ‘way of life’, and understand it as particular sets of beliefs, morals, traditions and social and historical inheritance.

39 It is believed that this has since been disbanded.
public life. The clause pointed to the negative and injurious portrayals of women, which defined their roles in narrow terms (WNC, 1994, Article 12).

In 1996, Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) researchers examined prime time and front page television, radio and newspaper coverage for its representation of women reporters and presenters, and portrayal of women and gender issues. Overall, men were represented to a much greater extent (82 percent) than women, and fewer women were involved in reporting news, particularly on political issues. More than 90 percent of those represented in the political category were men (much higher than their actual representation) and coverage which did feature women tended to portray them as victims, or in relation to violence against women, reproductive health and women’s empowerment (CASE, 1996, cited in Government of South Africa, 1997a, part 1: 25). Gender bias in media coverage was also identified in the selective production and use of images, in news values which downplay development as an issue while sensationalising violence against women, and in the use of sexist language (CGE, 1997a: 294).

Feminist alternatives to mainstream media were born out of the period of women’s struggle against apartheid, in the form of Speak, a magazine in English which raised questions, provided information and performed a networking function for women from a great diversity of backgrounds, and Agenda: a Journal about Women and Gender (set up in 1987). Produced by a collective, Agenda provides a forum for discussion of both theoretical questions and practical strategies and has become a reputable and invaluable journal for academic debate as well as a forum ‘professionals, educators, community workers, students and women’s organisations’ to explore the dynamics of gender relations (Agenda, 1997). While Agenda has been produced consistently over 10 years, it faces challenges of financial sustainability, the need to widen its readership and to attract more contributions from African women authors (CGE, 1997a: 300-5).

Considerable debate, though little active opposition, has arisen around the issue of pornography. In particular the question hinges around whether pornography is speech, and whether it is hate speech. The pornography industry is seen to systematically exploit women, particularly poor women, and perpetuates abuse and inequality. But for many it is not as significant as the issue of violence against women (Fedler, 1996).

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40 The study was commissioned by the South African Broadcasting Corporation Women’s Forum (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft, Part 1: 26).
41 The fact that more of the lead stories on women related to women’s empowerment (21 percent), than beauty or fashion (four percent) was nevertheless encouraging (ibid.).
42 Speak was unable to maintain production once funding for NGOs began to dwindle after 1990.
43 Other alternative media include Reconstruct, an initiative of the NLC, Urban Sector Network and NGO Coalition, a quarterly supplement to the Mail and Guardian on development issues which attempts to mainstream gender in its stories. Imbokhodo was produced as a tabloid newspaper under the Department of Welfare to disseminate information on gender issues, while the national machinery was being established (CGE, 1997a: 297-8). CGE and Nipilar have recently launched a new publication, focusing on CEDAW, entitled Mahlo A Basadi.
44 The Film and Publications Act introduced in October 1996 widens the range of material available to adults, which would previously have been illegal. At the same time, its attempts to protect children and women from exploitation through prohibition of the showing, distribution or advertising of pornographic, sexually explicit or degrading material (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft, Part 1: 25).
4.5.3 Gender and religion

About 15 percent of South Africans are ‘traditionalists’, 80 percent Christians and the remainder Muslims, Hindus or Jews. Within the Christian churches, as well as in other faiths, women are still largely absent from the leadership and the ordination of women priests remains a subject of controversy. Most religions represented in South Africa uphold patriarchal beliefs about marriage and the family and the role of women in society, although the religious texts on which they are based can be interpreted in many different ways (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft, Part 1: 22-3).

On the other hand, progressive elements exist within most religious currents, who have promoted the welfare and rights of women, and are attempting to reform structures and practices within their own faiths. For example, the Muslim Youth Movement (MYM) has set up a gender desk which is committed to promoting women’s voices and representation within the Islamic establishment, to campaigning for a ‘just Muslim personal law’ and is working towards the establishment of a National Federation of Muslim Women (CGE, 1997a: 91-2). The Union of Jewish Women of South Africa made submissions (via the Chief Rabbi) to the Law Commission on the 1996 Divorce Act, to enable Jewish women to divorce more easily, and also organises around violence against women and pre-school education (ibid: 94). Many women activists who have become leaders in NGOs (such as Black Sash) and government, have entered welfare, rights and development work through their involvement in the churches. Religious organisations, particularly the Christian churches, are very important for outreach to women because of their wide membership and spread across rural areas.

There is little detailed research available on gender aspects of religious life and organisation. This is a serious gap, considering that up to 70 percent of women are estimated to be active in religious life (WNC, 1993). A recent survey of informal sector workers found 37 percent of informants belonged to a religious group, a much higher number than belonged, for example, to political organisations. These women were mainly in low income groups (Bedford, 1995). While women are a numerical majority in rural churches, they are often confined to stereotyped cleaning and preparation activities, while men dominate leadership roles (Fife, 1996).

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45 Some historical research work has been done on religion and gender (e.g. by Debbie Gaitskell), on women in the Independent African Churches (by Glenda Kruss) and on Muslim women, the law and the Constitution. Natasha Erlank is also researching missions, gender and Christianity in South Africa in the nineteenth century. It was not possible to access this work during the period of the study (Debbie Budlender, personal communication).
5. GENDER EQUALITY, THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK, HUMAN RIGHTS AND SECURITY

5.1 Overview

The legal framework for gender equality and the framing of a new gender-sensitive human rights culture have been put in place and are reflected in the Constitution and stated commitment to the principles of equality and to CEDAW. However, these provide merely a framework from which to promote women’s legal and human rights. While the formal legal status of women may have improved, the social effects of gender discrimination have remained, and women often require the consent of husbands, for example, to open bank accounts or acquire credit facilities.

The Department of Justice is sensitive to these problems, and in motivating for a reform of the legal system in its draft discussion paper on Gender Policy argues that:

*The reality is that women have largely been rendered invisible in the legal system. They tend to require legal remedies for problems and violence which occur in their private world – with their husbands, partners, children, other relatives or friends. But the laws upon which they must rely have historically been formulated and applied by men and are not informed by the genuine needs of women. The practices and procedures of the legal system are also alienating for women, particularly those who are victims of violence.* (Department of Justice, 1997: 4)

Patriarchal forms of authority are deeply embedded in social and cultural life so that upholding human rights in practice is a major challenge, requiring mobilisation of women’s organisations and support from their representatives in parliament and government. In particular, the balance between customary rights and the equality clause will be a difficult one to achieve and will be determined by the broader political trade-offs between the demands of traditional leaders and those of women (Mbatha, 1997b).

5.2 Constitutional provisions for gender equality

Amongst the values enunciated in the ‘Founding Provisions’ of the Constitution alongside ‘non-racism,’ is that of ‘non-sexism’ (Chapter 1.1 (b), Act 108 of 1996). The Bill of Rights, whilst providing for equality before the law and for equal protection and benefit of the law to ‘everyone’, also made provision for the implementation of these principles via legislative and other mechanisms. In effect, the Constitution allows for positive discrimination in the context of previous structural discrimination. This is more than mere formal equality. ‘Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms’. It specifically enables the passing of ‘legislative and other measures’ to promote equality (Chapter 2.9 (2): 7). In addition, both the state and individuals are prohibited from direct or indirect discrimination on grounds:
including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth...unless it is established that the discrimination is fair.

These aspects of Constitutional change offer women and gay people in particular the possibility of challenging discrimination in employment, in social service provision, and in the definition of what constitutes marriage and family life.

Box 1 summarises the main constitutional provisions relevant to gender equality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1: Constitutional provisions with relevance for gender equality</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The equality clause in the Bill of Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Provisions for affirmative action, including legislative and other measures to protect or advance people who have been disadvantaged.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The clause on freedom and security of the person, which states that everyone has the right to ‘bodily and psychological integrity,’ including rights to make decisions concerning reproduction and control over one’s body.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Clause guaranteeing legal and other measures to promote land reform and equitable access to natural resources to redress the past effects of racial discrimination, of particular importance for rural African women.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Statement that in conflicts between the Constitution and customary law, the Constitution will take precedence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Constitutional provision for socio-economic rights in housing, health care, food, water and social security.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Bill of Rights provision for the right to basic and further education.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Government of South Africa (1997, draft: 4).

5.3 International law and women’s rights

In addition to the existence of the equality clause in the Constitution, interpretation of the Bill of Rights also has to be consistent with International Law (Chapter 2, Section 39 (b)). The South African Government has signed a number of international conventions relevant to gender equality.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was signed in January 1993 by the National Party Government and ratified in December 1995 by the new democratic Government. In 1997, the Government’s first report to CEDAW was prepared on the basis of reports submitted by all departments (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft). The government has since presented its report to CEDAW.

5.4 Customary law and gender equality

There is considerable debate about how customary law can be accommodated within the new constitutional dispensation (Kaganas and Murray, 1994). Under the Black Administration Act (Act 38, 1927), African women married under customary law are considered minors, subject to the guardianship of their husbands (except in KwaZulu-Natal, where women were granted majority status). These women have no rights to inherit from the estate of their husbands. This exclusion from inheritance rights extends to women who are married out of community of property under civil law.

The deeply embedded nature of patriarchy in South Africa has created an overarching cultural acceptance of the traditional moral authority of men as heads of household. Amongst African women, both in urban and rural settings, customary practice remains a determinant of their status as subordinate partners. The practice of lobola, still widespread even amongst educated Africans, whilst widely understood as bonding the relationship between families of the bride and groom, at times has also been seen as a property transaction, reinforcing the subordination of women to their husbands and in-laws (Mbatha, 1997b).

Although not yet challenged, the patriarchal authority of both chiefs and husbands will be difficult to sustain in the face of the constitutional commitment to equality and non-discrimination against women. To many, the continued existence and recognition given to traditional chiefs is a travesty of the new democratic order. Others argue that a careful balance has to be crafted between the two sets of demands, and that ‘some customary practices are not incompatible with the constitutional right to equality’ (Mbatha, 1997b: 1). The government appears reluctant to alienate the chiefs, who are sensitive to any measures which might undermine their authority outside Parliament.

In consultations with researchers, the Rural Women’s Movement (RWM) has said that whilst they want lobola to be retained, they are opposed to its legalisation. But they are vociferous in their opposition to polygyny and to the discriminatory aspects of customary practice. It seems that lobola remains important not so much for its redistributive role, as some legal experts have argued, as for its continuing role as a social cement (Mbatha, 1997b).

5.5 Legislative reforms

5.5.1 Legal reforms in the transition

Even before 1994, the ANC’s legal experts, as well as academic lawyers, had begun to address the question of legislative reform to end the subordinate position of women under the diverse legal regimes existing under apartheid (Sachs, 1990; Murray, 1994). Of particular concern were laws relating to the family, including marriage and divorce and regulations pertaining to maintenance. The issues of rape in marriage and broader violence against women were also highlighted in discussions of what needed to be changed.

47 A huge number of new Bills have been presented to parliament since 1994 and it is not possible to review them all. Here, a few recent and proposed reforms are touched on with particular significance for gender equality and women’s rights.
In the transitional period, a number of important legal reforms passed into law, including:

- The Guardianship Act (Act 192 of 1993);

The Prevention of Family Violence Act effectively abolished conjugal right in rape cases and allowed for marital rape (Kaganas and Murray, 1994: 13). The new Act has also streamlined procedures and broadened the meaning of ‘violence’ to include verbal harassment, financial exploitation and stalking (Clark, 1996: 591). But the definitional issues of rape as a sexual act rather than grievous assault remains a problem, as does the issue of protection orders and the procedure for obtaining interdicts.

The Guardianship Act provided for shared guardianship of children between parents. Previously, the married father had sole guardianship over children. The General Law Fourth Amendment Act repealed discriminatory clauses in laws which dealt with citizenship, attendance at trials, dismissal of female employees on marriage and prohibitions against women on night shifts or performing dangerous jobs.

The South African Law Commission is engaged in a review of this legislation, in view of criticisms leveled at aspects of these Acts.

5.5.2 Legal reform since 1994

A number of legislative reforms have been made since 1994 with significant implications for women and gender equality. Discriminatory legislation is being removed and efforts are being made to ensure that new legislation proposed is in line with gender equality commitments. There is consideration of broad anti-discrimination legislation by the Department of Justice (Albertyn et al, 1997: 147, para 224 n10).

Government departments are responsible for initiating legislation relevant to their sectors of activity. In addition, the Parliamentary Committee on Improving the Quality of Life and Status of Women, the CGE and the Law Commission are involved in reviewing legislation to ensure that discriminatory measures are removed, as well as in proposing new legislation.

**Personal autonomy and reproductive choice**

The problem of South African women’s personal autonomy and freedom from oppression in partnerships and marriage is one raised in many different ways by women. Whilst most women are agreed about their right to control their sexual activity and fertility, there is little agreement amongst women about the right to terminate an unwanted pregnancy.

In line with Constitutional provisions on bodily integrity (Act 108 1996, Chapter 2, 12(2)), the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act 92 of 1996 provides for greater access to abortion. Significantly it allows women freedom of choice without the consent of parents or partners. Although medical practitioners are not bound to effect
abortions against their conscience, they are bound to inform women of their rights under the Act.

**Labour and employment related legislation**

Legislation relating to work is the responsibility of the Departments of Labour and Public Service. The Office of the Public Service Commission undertook a review of all regulations to remove any discriminatory practices in the Public Service, which found expression in the Public Service Act (1994). In the 1996 White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, the objective of a representative public service was spelled out, and the establishment of Transformation Units in all national and provincial departments was proposed. The new Labour Relations Act (1995) protects against unfair discrimination on any arbitrary grounds (including but not limited to sex, race etc.) and extends this to previously unprotected sectors, such as farm workers and domestic workers.

The 1983 Basic Conditions of Employment Act was extended in 1993 to cover agricultural workers and in 1994, to cover domestic workers. Evidence to date suggests weak implementation of its provisions, however. A new Basic Conditions of Employment Act was passed in late 1997 extending protection to workers in ‘atypical’ or ‘non-traditional’ employment, where women are likely to be disproportionately represented. It also provides protection from dismissal for pregnant, lactating or disabled women and new maternity and family leave provisions.48 (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft: 23).

The Employment Equity Bill (being considered by Parliament in mid-1998) requires companies employing 50 or more people to have an equal opportunities plan and report regularly to government on race, gender and disability categories.

**Decriminalisation of sex work**

The decriminalisation of sex work has been the subject of some debate in South Africa. Consensual sex is admitted for women over fourteen years of age, but the Sexual Offences Act (1957) makes prostitution and brothels illegal. The effect of present legislation is to criminalise prostitutes and to relieve clients of any responsibility. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (United Nations, 1996) specifically signalled this inequity, and the Department of Justice has undertaken to review the sexual offences legislation in order to decriminalise prostitutes and offer greater protection for women. In 1996, the Gauteng Ministry of Safety and Security produced a draft policy on ‘sex work’ which argued for the decriminalisation adult sex work accompanied by measures to prevent child prostitution. Civil society groups have also conducted extensive research on this topic to support proposals for decriminalisation.

48 During the passage of the Bill, much debate focused on the proposals relating to maternity provisions. Clause 25 of the Act provides for at least 4 consecutive months of maternity leave, commencing any time from four weeks before expected date of birth. Provisions for maternity pay remain unclear (Debbie Budlender, personal communication).
5.6 Judicial institutions

5.6.1 The Constitutional Court
The existence of the Constitutional Court has opened further possibilities for women, and men, to challenge social convention surrounding gender roles. All legislation, regulations, administrative practices and executive policies of the government can be reviewed by the Court. This includes Presidential decrees and pardons.

The interpretation of the equality clauses is beginning to be tested in practice. For example, a land-mark judgment in the Constitutional court in the Brink v Kitshoff case outlawed discrimination against married women. Justice Kate O’Regan held:

> Section 8 was adopted...in recognition that discrimination against people who are members of disadvantaged groups can lead to patterns of group disadvantage and harm. Such discrimination is unfair: it builds and entrenches inequality amongst different groups in society (Birenbaum, 1996: 485).

State housing subsidies for married women in the public service were also won on the basis of the Constitutional provisions against discrimination. In essence it appears that the Constitutional court is taking a broad interpretation of equality from a ‘substantive’ position (Albertyn and Kentridge, 1995).

5.6.2 Representation of women in the judiciary
The representation of women in the judiciary is relatively low, especially at higher levels. Two out of ten Constitutional Court judges are women. The Labour Court and Land Claims Court respectively have two and one women judges. Of the total of 186 judges, 156 are white men, 20 are black men, seven white women and three black women. (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft: 2).

At lower levels of court personnel, representation does not necessarily improve: only five percent of magistrates are women. However, women have better representation among state prosecutors, forming 42 percent of those below senior prosecutor level. Discussions are underway regarding the possibility of establishing an association of women in the judiciary (ibid.). Some members of the judiciary have undergone gender and human rights training.

5.6.3 Sexual abuse courts
In response to widespread dissatisfaction with the treatment of sexual offence complainants, in 1993, the Wynberg Sexual offences court was established by the Attorney General of the Western Cape. This project was intended to address insensitive treatment or ‘secondary victimisation’ of women who are complainants of sexual offences, to establish a co-ordinated and integrated approach to dealing with sexual offence cases by criminal justice agencies and to improve the reporting, prosecution and conviction rate for sexual offences. The initiative has been taken up as a pilot project under the National Crime Prevention Strategy.
A recent evaluation of the project highlights only partial success of the project, due to insufficient planning, lack of resources, insufficient understanding of ‘secondary victimisation’ and a lack of overall co-ordination. The need to improve the existing model and increase resources to support this activity is also underlined (Stanton, Lochrenberg and Mukasa, 1997).

5.6.4 Problems in the implementation of laws

There are still many problems in terms of the implementation of laws in practice. In relation to family law, it is unclear what will happen to the different courts established under apartheid to deal with such issues as divorce in African marriage. For the moment, magistrates courts have been permitted to deal with all divorce cases, including those of whites. A major area of concern to women’s organisations has been the question of maintenance provision and its proper enforcement. Mechanisms to force fathers to comply with maintenance orders are under consideration by the Department of Justice (CGE, 1997a).

5.7 Crime and violence against women

South Africa’s transition to democracy has been accompanied by extremely high levels of both political violence and violent crime. As these levels of violence have increased, so levels of violence against women have spiralled. Battery, rape and sexual violence are ‘endemic’ in South African society. Fear of violence is pervasive and has major impacts on the economic and social opportunities available to women, because of risks to their security and safety. Violence against women affects all social groups but there are particular concerns about its impact on young women and about the vulnerability of certain groups of workers (e.g. farm workers, domestic workers) to sexual abuse. Localised forms of violent abuse against women (e.g. witch-hunting, reported mainly in Northern Province) are poorly documented.

A pilot study by the Sexual Harassment Education Project (SHEP) found that one woman was murdered every six days by her partner or ex-partner in Gauteng province in 1993-4. It also found that at least 60 percent of women in Gauteng were in abusive relationships (The Star, 28 November 1997). The Human Rights Watch Report on Violence Against Women in South Africa (1995) estimated that between one in four and one in six women are abused by their partners. The Interpol International Crime Statistics Report in 1994 ‘indicated that South Africa has the highest reported rape ratio in the world’. In 1996, 35,000 rapes were reported to the police in South Africa.

Figure four gives a breakdown of the trend in rape reporting in the last 3-4 years, showing an increase over time (Budlender, 1997b: 2 -11).

49 The Medical Research Council is undertaking a national survey on women and gender violence, and qualitative research on gender violence focusing on men, women and youth. The national survey, which is being implemented in 1998, will establish a more reliable database on the extent of gender violence in the country (Rachel Jewkes, personal communication).
50 This data under-represents the risk to women, since they form the majority of rape victims in the population and in legal terms according to these statistics men cannot be raped.
The legal framework and judicial system has failed to protect women from public or private violence. Less than one third of reported cases of rape and sexual crimes actually reach the courts, whilst reported rapes represent only 2.8 percent of occurrences (Olckers, 1997: 130). Until recently, violence against women did not appear in the ‘policing priorities’ of the South African Police (SAPS) \( (ibid.: 134) \). Delays in processing cases and a variety of procedural and attitudinal factors combine to render the experience of reporting and prosecution in rape cases highly distressing for many victims.

Parliament has made violence against women a particular focus of concern in both the Portfolio Committee of Justice and the Committee on the Status and Quality of Life of Women \( (Albertyn et al., 1997: 164 \text{ para } 235) \). Moreover, the Deputy Minister of Justice has been given responsibility for dealing with the issue of violence against women. In civil society, NGOs and government have formed a partnership in the National Network Against Violence Against Women (see section 7 and Appendix 4 for further details). Ilze Olckers (1997) makes very specific recommendations in The Second Women’s Budget on making violence against women a ‘national crime priority’. The recently launched National Crime Prevention Strategy has responded by giving priority to the issue. Broader responses to violence against women include public awareness campaigns, the setting up of shelters and socio-medical centres, as well as work with men to combat violence. The Commission on Gender Equality is planning a hearing of male perpetrators of violence (Colleen Lowe-Morna, personal communication).

\[ \text{Figure Four: Reported rapes per 100,000 of the population, 1994, 1995 and 1996} \]

Source: Crime Management Information Centre, cited in Budlender, 1997b: 2-11

\[ ^{51} \text{Law on rape and violence against women is under review by the South African Law Commission (SALC) (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft).} \]
5.8 Gender issues in the military

Before the transition, women comprised seven to 15 percent of the permanent force of the South African Defence Force (SADF), whilst they formed 20 percent of Umkhonto We Sizwe (MK), the army of the ANC (Pettman, 1996: 136). In the SADF, women were confined to supportive roles within a rigid sexual division of labour in which only male soldiers were combatants, and all ranks above brigadier were held by men. There was a different ideology in MK, where women were ostensibly conceived as equals, and served both as combatants and as commissars. However, women did not attain numerical parity with men suggesting a reluctance of women to join MK. There is some evidence to suggest that women experienced considerable sexual harassment in MK camps (Cock, 1992; Goldblatt and Meintjes, 1996).

In the post-apartheid period, the amalgamation of the two armies has been fraught with difficulties related to different standards of discipline and different conceptions of gender relations. The assembly points did not provide separate facilities for women cadres, who were sexually harassed and forced into menial activities. Women cadres protested and forced the new army to set up a separate task force to investigate gender relations (Frankel, forthcoming).

The National Defence Force (NDF), as the new army is now called, has abolished separate training for men and women, except for basic leadership training. Women are expected to follow the same academic and physical training as men, but they also have to meet the same entry criteria. New disciplinary regulations have been introduced based on equality, and women, including unmarried women, are entitled to maternity leave. Despite these changes, the military hierarchy remains deeply masculine and women continue to be encouraged to enter the service sectors in the military establishment.

By the end of 1995, women comprised 25 percent of the officer corps above the rank of major, whilst 17 percent of the NDF personnel overall are women. However, there are very few women in senior ranks and most are former SADF officers (ibid.).

5.9 Developing a human rights culture

After the elections in 1994, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established with the brief ‘to overcome the injustices of the past by promoting national unity and reconciliation’ (Sarkin, 1996, 622).

Human Rights Violations, Amnesty, and Reparation and Rehabilitation defined the three areas of work of the TRC. Initially set up for a period of eighteen months, the timeframe of the TRC had to be extended to deal with the volume of human rights cases and amnesty applications. The process has been a public one, in which television and radio have played a very important part in publicising and analysing the unfolding history of abuse.

Early on in the process, women’s advocacy groups signalled that the TRC would have to take special account of the nature of political abuse experienced by women, in particular, the sexual nature of such abuse. The issue of the male experience of such abuse was not addressed at all, but is clearly also significant (Lawyers for Human
Rights, 1995; Goldblatt and Meintjes, 1996). Special women’s hearings were organised in Natal, the Cape and Gauteng. Although many women came forward, few have been able to speak about themselves. They have mainly recorded the experience of loss and pain associated with the detention, torture and death of family members. Out of nearly 10,000 cases, only nine or ten have specifically recorded sexual violation, including rape. Published accounts of violence experienced by women record far more such instances (Goldblatt and Meintjes, 1996: 73-78).

The outcome of the TRC process has been to create awareness of the terrible atrocities of the past and, at least in the public mind, to assert the need for a new human rights culture. The connection between women’s rights and human rights is still one that has not been fully absorbed into the emerging democratic thinking in South Africa. However, the gender advocacy lobby did receive considerable media attention and were persistent in their efforts to ensure that the TRC kept ‘gender questions’ to the fore. Nevertheless, gender issues were often been an ‘add-on’ factor rather than integrated into the thinking of the TRC.
6. GENDER, INEQUALITY, POVERTY AND VULNERABILITY

6.1 Legacy of apartheid, inequality and poverty

Questions of poverty and inequality are central to development debates in South Africa today. The legacy of apartheid confers certain characteristics on the distribution and depth of poverty and on patterns of inequality in South Africa today, i.e. its strong spatial dimensions and its correlation with racial and gender divisions.

Racial capitalism under apartheid unleashed processes of underdevelopment and impoverishment which affected both men and women, but their experiences of poverty and dispossession differed. The system of controlled labour migration under apartheid (which denied Africans residence in urban areas, while requiring them to work there) created gendered patterns of poverty as well as impacting on gender relations within households. Since the system specifically discouraged rural women from entering towns, particularly with the introduction of pass laws for African women in 1959, and most labour demand was for African men, women’s options were (and remain) largely confined to rudimentary agriculture, informal earnings, or reliance on remittances and transfers (Wilson and Ramphele, 1989). To the extent that women did access urban employment, it was mostly in the form of insecure and low paid domestic work.

Women’s lack of residence rights in urban areas made them vulnerable to arrest or removal when visiting husbands and vulnerable to the whims of partners and employers on whom their presence in urban areas depended. Separation from male partners made it difficult for women to access their income for household purposes. It also deprived women of male labour for agricultural or other labour around the homestead and rendered them vulnerable to attack and theft, living alone in rural homesteads. Women’s access to land and other resources in rural areas was also weakened due to male absence and was dependent on the discretion of relatives or male chiefs (ibid.).

While the restrictions on movement and residence have formally ended, and efforts are being made to redress imbalances in access to resources and social provision, much of this legacy affects the day-to-day reality of poor black South African women.

6.2 Overall income inequality and poverty

6.2.1 Income inequality and poverty

In South Africa, inequality is seen as inextricably linked to the question of poverty. Distribution of income in South Africa is one of the most unequal in the world. The richest 20 percent of households have 65 percent of all income, while the poorest 20 percent have only 3 percent and the poorest 10 percent as little as one percent. The

52 The PSLSD survey, carried about by SALDRU for the World Bank in 1993, was the first major household survey which covered the whole population, including all race groups (RDP, 1995). In 1994, a participatory poverty assessment (PPA) was commissioned through the RDP office, to find out about poor people’s own perceptions of their situation and views on what government should do to address their problems (May, Atwood et al., 1997). The Poverty and Inequality Report (PIR) (May, Mokate et al., 1997, draft) reviews the policy response to poverty questions in South Africa.
Gini coefficient for the country as a whole was 0.59 in 1995 (Central Statistics, 1997: 26).

There is no agreed poverty line for South Africa which would establish absolute poverty levels, although a number have been proposed (May, Mokate et al, 1997). UNDP (1997a: 54) gives the proportion of population in poverty at 24 percent, based on the $1 a day criteria (1989-94). Relative definitions of poverty, which defined the poorest 40 percent of households as ‘poor’ and the poorest 20 percent as ‘ultrapoor,’ are widely used.

Data from recent household surveys reveal the continuing concentration of poverty among Africans, who carry 95 percent of the poverty burden, and the rural population, with a 75 percent share of poverty (RDP, 1995). The rural African population accounts for 71 percent of poor households in South Africa (May et al, 1995: i). The distribution of this rural African poverty is uneven across provinces and particularly high in Kwazulu Natal, the Eastern Cape and Northern Province, and notably in the former ‘Reserves’ (RDP, 1995). The ‘depth’ of the poverty gap is also varied by province, as well as social group.

6.2.2 Trends in inequality and poverty

The relatively recent availability of data and the lack of comparability between datasets make assessing trends in poverty and inequality difficult. Some evidence shows an overall decrease in inequality due to a rising share of income among blacks, although within race groups, inequality is tending to widen (Central Statistics, 1997).

Qualitative information suggests that some trends identified as historically linked to poverty may be continuing, i.e. job losses in agriculture, mining and elsewhere; and farm evictions (ironically aggravated by recent legislation designed to protect farm workers); casualisation of agricultural labour and drought. The spread of HIV/AIDS is a more recent factor linked to increasing poverty. A particular concern emerging is the difficulties experienced by men who cannot find secure employment, the lack of male contributions to household welfare and high levels of abuse and violence, directed at women and children (May, Atwood et al, 1997). Reference to the feminisation of poverty (Strong, 1996) in South Africa suggests a rising share of poverty among women but this cannot be substantiated (in terms of income poverty) on the basis of existing data.

53 Since poorer households tend to be larger, this income distribution is even more skewed than it first appears.
54 These definitions are drawn from the PSLSD survey and other sources based on this.
55 However, this is based on a comparison of urban centres only.
6.3 Gender and poverty

6.3.1 Vulnerability to poverty and gender

With high levels of unemployment, insecure land rights, and often dependence on men, women are particularly vulnerable to poverty. Figure 5 quantifies women’s higher risk of poverty.

Figure Five: Risk of poverty by gender

![Risk of poverty by gender](image)

Source: Adapted from May et al, 1995: 3-4

Rural women tend to be heavily dependent on remittances through absent male partners and on agriculture, in the absence of other opportunities (May et al, 1995), so that the lack of reliability of remittances is a particular problem for women (see section 7). When women lose a husband or other income earning household member (though illness, death, divorce etc.), they are especially vulnerable because they risk loss of property and land rights, as well as income coming into the household. Lack of inheritance and property rights, or ability to enforce these rights in areas governed by African customary law remains a major problem for rural African women.

Average income figures do not accurately reflect the seasonal variations in people’s incomes which make them vulnerable to poverty. Poor women in rural KwaZulu-Natal noted that the early spring months (March, April) were particularly lean (Murphy, 1995, cited in May, Atwood et al, 1997). Seasonal stresses are linked to irregular employment in agricultural wage labour and to uneven expenditure patterns, with requirements to pay school fees and purchase uniforms noted as a particular burden by poor women (ibid.).
6.3.2 Poverty and female headship

Female-headed households are heterogeneous and difficult to define. ‘Gender of head of household’ interacts with other factors, such as race, location, and dependency ratio, to produce patterns of disadvantage and poverty. Poor people themselves tend to identify female-headed households with dependent children as a disadvantaged group (May, Atwood et al., 1997).

Figure six shows that, in 1995, without accounting for race, 49 percent of female-headed households were in the ‘poor’ category, while 26 percent were in the ultra-poor category. By contrast, 31 percent of male headed households fell into the ‘poor’ category, and only 13 percent into the ‘ultra-poor’ category.

**Figure Six: Share of households in income categories (quintiles), by gender of household head.**


Breaking down income distribution by race, gender of household head, as well as location and province reveals further stark statistics (Central Statistics, 1997: 19, 22):

- **65 percent of African female-headed households in rural areas are poor**, compared to 54 percent of African male-headed households in rural areas, and 47 percent of African households overall. Among rural African female-headed households, 37 percent are in the bottom quintile, or ‘ultra-poor’ category.

- **In the Eastern Cape, over half (53 percent) of female-headed households in rural areas are in the ‘ultra poor’ category, while in the Free State, the proportion rises to 60 percent.** (Comparative figures for male-headed households are 31 percent and 47 percent respectively).

A more disaggregated, as well as qualitative, analysis reveals of aspects of the disadvantage faced by particular groups of female-headed households.

- Among African rural households, *de jure* female-headed households, with a resident head are at greatest risk of poverty (May et al., 1995). Among these are
widows and divorced or abandoned women, who have particular difficulties in gaining access to or control of resources;

- Female-headed households with older heads, who are receiving pensions, often have a higher dependency ratio than their younger counterparts, which explains to some extent increased poverty among these groups, whereby pensions, as a reliable source of income, are expected to support a large number of dependants (May et al, 1995).

- *De facto* female heads who lack reliable remittance income from migrant partners or other household members are particularly vulnerable, because their control over assets and decision making may be circumscribed.

In spite of these high recorded rates of poverty among female-headed households, the majority of the poor remain in male-headed households. For 1993, the figures were 47.8 percent for female-headed households and 52.2 percent for male-headed households (RDP, 1995: 13, Table 5). Moreover, the extent of women’s (and children’s) poverty in male-headed households is probably underestimated, due to the assumption of equal sharing of resources implicit in existing surveys (Posel, 1997).

### 6.4 Other indicators of well being

#### 6.4.1 Education

Given the importance of access to wage income for poor households, and the low returns to uneducated or poorly educated labour (particularly for households without land). Educational disparities impact severely on the prospects of poorer households (May et al, 1995).

About 50 percent of the poor have no or incomplete education, rising to 53 percent for the rural poor. This compares with 35 percent for the population overall, and less than ten percent for higher income groups. Expansion in educational provision in recent years means that even for poorer groups, primary net enrolment ratios are 85-87 percent, only slightly lower than for better off groups (88-90 percent), although disparities in secondary and tertiary enrolment ratios remain wide (RDP, 1995: 20-21).

Data on educational achievement by gender and age group reveal that more women in the 25 years and above group have no education (18 percent overall, compared to 23 percent among African women) than men (12 percent overall, 16 percent among African men). Twenty two percent of women (28 percent of African women) and 16 percent of men (21 percent of African men) had not achieved Standard 3, a minimum for basic literacy (Budlender, 1997b: 2-17).

Data were not available to assess whether gender differences in enrolment ratios (or other education indicators vary by income groups. The RDP study states that ‘there are no significant differences in the school achievement and school enrolment by

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56 This report does not cover in detail gender issues at higher levels of education, although these are clearly important. Shireen Hassim (see Appendix 2 for contacts) has written a survey on gender and higher education.
gender. In fact among the poorer quintiles, girls have higher primary and secondary enrolment rates’ (RDP, 1995: 21). Other sources suggest that the aspirations of both parents and children to access formal employment, the narrow range of options available to women and the qualification requirements for women to enter ‘good jobs’ such as teaching and nursing act as an incentive for female enrolment and persistence.

In view of this, the lower matric pass rate of girls is a major concern. In 1993, while 57 percent of matric candidates were girls, only 45 percent of those who passed were female, although in absolute terms more girls passed than boys (Shindler, Chabane et al, 1996: 159). Sexual harassment and abuse and inability to go to classrooms to study at night, due to fear of violence, are possible reasons for lower female attainment. Other factors may include the burden of domestic labour and early pregnancy (ibid.).

In a recent survey of out of school youth, financial reasons were given as the main cause of drop-out for both sexes, but this appeared to affect boys more than girls. For girls, who do not drop out in as great a number as boys, teenage pregnancy was a second major factor, affecting nearly one third of African teenage girls out of school (Shindler, Chabane et al, 1996: 157-8). Possible reasons for higher male drop-out rates include their greater range of options for earning income.

6.4.2 Health

Poor households suffer from higher levels of infectious diseases and mental and physical disability than better off ones. High prevalence rates of tuberculosis (224 per 100,000) and measles (32 per 100,000) also are closely related to poverty and preventable through immunisation and other programmes (May, Mokate et al, 1997). Poor women are not only vulnerable to diseases and death but, as the major carers, also bear the brunt of ill health of household members.

Reliable estimates for infant and child mortality, and maternal mortality are not available (Rachel Jewkes, personal communication) and are not disaggregated by income group. However, the data that do exist show much higher maternal and infant mortality rates for Africans than for whites. Maternal mortality is estimated at 58 deaths per 100,000 live births for Africans compared to three per 100,000 for white women. Infant mortality rates are 54 deaths per 1000 live births for Africans compared to seven for whites. Sex-disaggregated data on infant and child mortality was not available for all race groups nor for recent years but earlier data does not reveal any unexpected gender disparity. Life expectancy is higher for women than men in all race groups, but white men live longer on average than African women.

Reported adult mortality rates show a much higher death rate for men (38.4 percent) than women (25.4 percent), possibly reflecting accidents at work, particularly in mining, and violence as major causes of death among men. African women have a higher (29.4 percent) mortality rate than white women (11.5 percent) (Govender et al).

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57 Matric is the examination taken at secondary school leaving.
58 However, the lower proportion of women giving financial reasons as the answer may be a statistical artefact, due to only one answer being required per respondent (Debbie Budlender, personal communication).
60 Data on IMR from Budlender (1997c) citing Department of Health (1994).
1994: 30). The links of violence to poverty and the hazards faced by poor people at work are highlighted in the various studies conducted in the SA-PPA (May, Atwood et al., 1997). The loss of male income (through death or injury) is particularly devastating for rural women who depend on this (ibid.).

The lack of economic options open to poor women is clearly a factor in promoting sexual survival strategies, which carry high risks of HIV/AIDS infection, particularly in urban areas. ‘Substantial numbers of urban women exchange sex for money, security and favours. The definition of what constitutes sex work is fairly complex in this setting; ranging from escort agencies to town-wives for migrant men’ (Frohlich, 1997: 6).

Figure seven contains data on HIV prevalence, showing a higher rate of infection for females than males and a particularly high risk of contracting HIV among young African women.61 The rate of infection among women has also risen rapidly since 1990. Women tend to become infected at an earlier age than men, for whom infection rates peak in their late twenties. Heterosexual transmission of HIV is dominant in South Africa but perinatal transmission is also a route of transmission from infected mothers to children and breastfeeding may be associated with higher perinatal infection rates (Frohlich, 1997).

### Figure Seven: HIV prevalence rates among women attending ante-natal clinics, 1990-6.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>10.44</td>
<td>14.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Budlender (1997b: 2-29), citing Department of Health

Higher than average levels of HIV infection have been observed among partners of migrant workers and among some groups of sex workers. Provinces in the northeast of the country, close to borders and to transport routes, or with high rates of circular migration, have particularly high HIV prevalence rates, rather than poverty per se being a directly causal factor. Studies of women in rural areas and informal settlements found that only a minority (about one third) of women felt able to insist on condom use or refuse sex, or ask partners questions about their sexual behaviour (ibid.).

Poor people are less likely than better off groups to seek treatment when ill62 and tend to travel further and wait longer for the treatment that they do receive. Whilst richer

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61 Studies in KwaZulu-Natal in 1990-2 found HIV infection rates were 3.2 times higher among women than men. A 1994 survey in Hlabisa, in rural KwaZulu-Natal, found HIV prevalence of 13.4 percent among women compared to 5.8 percent among men (Frohlich, 1997: 5-6).

62 Up to one quarter of those ill sought no treatment in the lowest income group according to the PSLSD survey (RDP, 1995).
groups rely heavily on private doctors, subsidised hospitals and health centres are used by a much higher proportion of the poor (RDP, 1995: 22-3). Cost and time in travel and waiting to be seen are given as major reasons for not seeking care. Women (76 percent) were more likely to have consulted a health professional than men (63 percent) in the past year.

6.4.3 Nutritional indicators

Poor nutritional status of children is thought to be linked to poor infant feeding practices, which may themselves be related to demands on women’s time, as well as income constraints, diseases (including diarrhea), lack of services (particularly water and sanitation) and social and psychological consequences of poverty, rather than income poverty per se (McLachlan and Kuzawayo, 1997). These factors may lead to intergenerational transmission of poverty.

Chronic undernutrition among children under five is associated with poverty in South Africa. Children under five in ultra-poor households have a stunting rate of 38 percent compared to only six percent in the highest quintile and 27 percent overall (RDP, 1995: 23). Stunting is also associated with a high food share in total household expenditure, another indicator of poverty, and lack of water connection (McLachlan and Kuzawayo, 1997). Acute malnutrition is less prevalent than chronic malnutrition, but micro-nutrient deficiency is a considerable public health problem. Depending on the nutritional poverty line set, 45-57 percent of households in the rural African population is undernourished (May, Mokate et al., 1997). Sex-disaggregated data was not found for nutritional indicators.

Overall, controlling for income and prices, under-nutrition is slightly lower in de jure and de facto female-headed households than for the overall rural African population, suggesting greater investment in adequate food intake in these households. Nevertheless, children are vulnerable to severe malnutrition (kwashiorkor) in those households with very low income levels, unreliable income sources, uneducated mothers and no support from fathers (McLachlan and Kuzwayo, 1997).

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63 Some sources claim that poor people also use private facilities due to the lack of available public facilities, although this, if true, is probably diminishing with the expansion of free health care (Debbie Budlender, personal communication).
64 This in itself is not very revealing given men’s and women’s different health needs and women’s heavy demand for reproductive health services. More detailed data would compare women’s usage across different social groups (race, income) and types of services and allows for higher usage by women of reproductive health services.
65 SAVAGC (1995) cited in McLachlan and Kuzawayo (1997: 9) gives a national rate of 23 percent for stunting. This data is thought to be more reliable than that in the PSLSD (Debbie Budlender, personal communication).
66 Indicated by low weight-for-age (underweight), weight-for-height (wasting) values.
Other nutritional problems observed on which there is insufficient understanding include:
- High levels of obesity among African women, sometimes coexisting with undernutrition of children;
- High rates of low birth weight children (14-24 percent of live births overall);
- High anaemia rates among young children.

Inadequate nutritional data exists on pregnant and lactating women, among other groups. Since nutritional data are not routinely collected in household surveys, monitoring is difficult (ibid.).

6.5 **Access to basic services and time poverty**

The lack of access to basic services of poor households (see Figure 8) means that women and young children (often girls) are forced to spend time in collecting water, firewood and in arduous and sometimes hazardous household labour. Lack of facilities also means risk of exposure to communicable diseases, particularly for women (Reconstruction and Development Programme, 1995: 17). The situation is improving, however, with increased investment e.g. in rural water supply and electrification (see section 8).

Conventional measures of poverty do not value or take into account women’s unpaid labour as an indicator of, or a factor linked to, poverty, although this is often highlighted as an issue by poor women themselves (May et al., 1995; May, Mokate et al., 1997; Posel, 1997). The high priority given by some rural women to crèches and electrification is also revealing of time constraints and trade-offs they face.

**Figure Eight: Access to basic services for poorest 40 percent of households, 1993**


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\[^{67}\text{Up to 60 percent among the 45-54 age group.}\]
Water and sanitation access is particularly low among poorer rural households. Eighty-eight percent of the poorest households in 1993 needed to fetch water daily and 90 percent had no modern sanitation (RDP, 1995: 17-18). Among African households who fetch water off site, 17 percent travel one kilometre or more to the source (Central Statistical Service, 1996: 31-2). In 1995, the majority of African rural households used pit latrines (67 percent) and 20 percent had no sanitation facilities at all (ibid.).

Women form 80 percent of those responsible for fetching water and, in addition to the demands on their time, are vulnerable to negative health consequences (Reconstruction and Development Programme, 1995). Average time spent fetching water per day was calculated at just under two hours (111 minutes) per household per day and just under half of rural women over 18 reported spending time collecting water. Reliance on woodfuel (in most poor rural communities, but also in some poor urban households) imposes heavy costs on women in collecting wood, an average of 11.9 hours a week for rural women (Van Horen, 1996, cited in James and Simmonds, 1997: 237).

Multiple energy-use strategies are adopted by women in poor households to economise in fuel, e.g. switching between paraffin, gas, and electricity in urban areas. The costs of purchasing paraffin fall heavily on women, who are responsible for household management. Fire and other health risks are associated with paraffin use and with woodfuel collection (James and Simmonds, 1997). Electrification policies do not always lead to higher take up because of constraints on women’s budgets, multiple fuel consumption strategies, and for other reasons, such as poor housing design (ibid.).

More than 60 percent of poorest households walk to work, while another 27 percent use public transport (RDP, 1995: 19-20). There is little data available on gendered patterns of transport use in South Africa. The time and other costs of transport are greater in many instances for women, where they travel to access services (schools, health, childcare), to go to work and to perform household maintenance tasks (shopping, collecting woodfuel and water). It is thought that overall women are more reliant than men on public (rather than private) transport and in urban areas use combi taxis more heavily than men. Safety concerns are paramount as women moving around alone, particularly outside daylight hours, are particularly vulnerable to attack (Price with Budlender, 1997).

6.6 Poverty and gendered power relations

Qualitative research has highlighted gendered power relations as an important factor in men’s and women’s different experience of poverty. Fear of men’s violence, or the lack of respect shown them by male partners and relatives are important facets of women’s experience which are not easily captured by conventional indicators of well-being. Some poor women perceive men as threatening, demanding, lazy and useless and wasteful of scarce resources (May, Atwood et al, 1997).

68 Calculated by Ingrid Woolard, from SALDRU data (Debbie Budlender, personal communication).
69 The study was less revealing of men’s perceptions of women.
Failure to disclose earnings and use of income for personal consumption (alcohol, cigarettes, spending on other women) are among the complaints of women about their male partners with employment. Variations in the extent to which female earners are able to control their own income is another poorly understood factor highlighted in some research (*ibid.*). In some cases, women who become the main earners effectively take over household decision-making and management, relegating unemployed husbands to a secondary position; in others women are still vulnerable to demands for money from male partners and feel they have no choice but to hand it over, even knowing that it will be spent wastefully (*ibid.*).

Another facet of shared poverty, however, is that it can build solidarity among disadvantaged groups, with class and race identity overshadowing the kinds of gender differences and tensions mentioned above.
7. ECONOMY AND LIVELIHOODS

7.1 Overview of the economy

7.1.1. Structure of the South African economy

South Africa is the largest and richest economy in Southern Africa (and Africa as a whole), with a total GDP of 133.5 billion dollars (1995) (EIU, 1997: 28) and a per capita income of over $3,500\(^{\text{70}}\). It is rich in natural and mineral resources and relatively industrialised, with more than 55 percent of the population in urban areas\(^{\text{71}}\).

Mining and quarrying as well as agriculture contribute relatively small percentages directly to GDP (about five percent and nine percent respectively in 1995), but provide the basis for much manufacturing activity (twenty five percent of GDP in 1995), as well as being major sources of exports (EIU, 1997: 13-14, 47). Overall, the service sector\(^{\text{72}}\) is the largest (and fastest growing) sector, accounting for over 50 percent of GDP in 1995. While the contribution of agriculture to GDP declined in the period 1991-1995, the respective contributions of services and manufacturing increased (\textit{ibid}).

Existing GDP calculations do not account for women’s unpaid labour in the home (e.g. in household chores and childcare), with implications for the way in which economic policy is conceived and formulated. Including these would, at a guesstimate, add 20-25 percent to the overall labour force activity rate (Standing \textit{et al}, 1996: 401, citing Makgetla, 1995).

Both investment and consumption patterns have historically been highly skewed in South Africa. In 1994, African per capita income was 13 percent of white per capita income, ‘coloured’ 27 percent, and Indian, 40 percent (Budlender, 1996, citing Republic of South Africa, 1995: 15). Africans, the majority of the population, have proportionately benefited very little from economic development. As a consequence, South Africa has some of the widest income inequalities and disparities in social indicators in the world (see section 6.2.1). As well as maldistribution by race, other major axes of economic and social differentiation are region, location and gender, in a pattern of cumulative disadvantage with its origins in the apartheid system.

7.1.2 Recent economic performance

In the 1980s and early 1990s, negative real growth rates in South Africa were accompanied by large-scale job losses, particularly in manufacturing (EIU, 1997: 14, 30). Positive but modest growth has resumed since 1993, with real GDP growth reaching around three percent in 1995 and 1996 (\textit{ibid}: 18, 46). Early 1996 saw a currency crisis in South Africa, followed by a rise in interest rates and a move towards

\(^{\text{70}}\) EIU (1997) gives a figure of $3222, but this is based on 1991 Census population estimates. Dividing the 1995 total GDP by the preliminary population estimate from the 1996 Census gives a figure of $3526.

\(^{\text{71}}\) The urbanisation rate, however, is highly uneven, ranging from 96 percent in Gauteng, to less than 12 percent in Northern Province (CSS, 1997).

\(^{\text{72}}\) Services is used here as a primary classification, to include the range of service activities (finance, trade, personal services, government services etc.). In most data sources on sectoral activity in South Africa, ‘services’ refers to personal and community services.
tightly macroeconomic policy (see section 7.8). In 1995-6 concerns about unemployment came to the fore with the persistence of increasing rates of joblessness in spite of resumed growth (Standing et al, 1996: 57). Low savings ratios (particularly by households) and low rates of domestic investment are noted as constraints to increased growth in South Africa (ibid.).

7.2 Economic activity and the labour market

7.2.1 Gender bias in the South African labour market

Controls on and institutionalised discrimination in labour markets in South Africa have created a highly segmented labour market, with race and gender being strongly correlated to position within the labour market.

A range of factors contribute to gender biases in the labour market in South Africa, including:

• The burden of unpaid labour in childcare and household maintenance, which falls heavily on rural and peri-urban women lacking access to services;
• Women’s apparently much higher levels of unemployment especially in rural areas;
• Biases in access to skills training and apprenticeships;
• Entrenched gender segmentation, by industry and occupation, within the labour market, giving women a narrower range of options than men and lower pay;
• Women’s disproportionate representation in rural agricultural work, in casual forms of employment and informal activities with limited unionisation;
• Gender disparities in earnings, for workers of similar educational levels, and disparities in employment-related benefits.

(Standing et al, 1996: chapter 10; Budlender, 1995).

In spite of the erosion of earlier controls and the removal of many legal and institutional forms of discrimination in the 1980s and 1990s, the legacy of discriminatory processes will take many years to undo. This provides justification for public action to address remaining biases (Standing et al, 1996).

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73 At the time of revising this report (July 1998), South Africa was experiencing another currency crisis resulting marked by further devaluation of the Rand and rising interest rates.

74 Modest increases in public sector employment have been slowing down (Debbie Budlender, personal communication). Also, the expansion of export manufacturing has not, as might have been predicted, led to an increase in job creation, since export sectors are not labour intensive in South Africa (Standing et al, 1996).

75 This brief section can only give a short account of labour market and gender issues. For more detailed analyses, refer to Budlender (1995) and Standing et al (1996: chapter 10). A study has also recently been conducted for the World Bank by Carolyn Winter, looking at education, race and gender issues in formal labour markets but was not available for consultation during the drafting of this report.

76 These includes legal controls on residence and movement, as well as various pieces of labour legislation to protect white workers and regulate black workers, backed up by complex regulations and institutional arrangements, with myriad exclusions and exemptions (Standing et al, 1996: 13-17.)

7.2.2 Overall activity rates and trends

Of the population aged 15 and over, 54.5 percent were defined as ‘economically active’ in 1995 (i.e. 14.4 million out of 26.4 million) (CSS, 1996: 14-15). Based on official definitions, 56 percent of the economically active population were men compared to 44 percent of women, in 1994 (Valodia, 1996: 55). Rough calculations to correcting for distortions in the data collecting system bring the proportion of women in the ‘extended’ labour force to just over 50 percent (ibid.). In October 1995, 46 percent of women overall were reported as economically active, compared to 63 percent of men (Budlender, 1997b: 2-21). Activity rates increase with levels of education for both men and women at matric and higher levels of education. Below this level, increasing education appears to be associated with declining activity and employment rates (ibid.: 2-25).

The existing system of data collection fails to capture accurately the extent of informal sector activity, subsistence agriculture, or non-market work, all of which are observed to be performed largely by women. Improvements are being made in the data collection system and a major initiative to support time budget studies over the next three years should improve the prospects for measuring and valuing non-market work. Child labour has recently become an issue of concern in South Africa, as elsewhere, and ILO are sponsoring a detailed investigation of this area (Debbie Budlender, personal communication).

Data on trends in economic activity rates show a steady increase in female labour force participation over time, alongside an apparent decrease in male rates, particularly for African men. In 1960, women constituted 23 percent of the labour force. By 1985, this had increased to 36 percent and by 1991, to 41 percent. The increase was most marked among African, ‘coloured’ and Indian women (Standing et al, 1996: 60, Table 3.1).

There is reported to be growing informalisation and casualisation of employment, with Africans, and African women particularly, strongly affected by both these trends. According to the 1993 PSLSD survey, 13.4 percent of employed women versus 9.5 percent of employed men were in casual employment. Other studies also indicate women’s greater likelihood of being in casual or temporary employment (cited in Standing et al, 1996: 406-7; Budlender, 1995). In general, there is a shift of employment away from agriculture to services, but this may be overstated by official data which have not recorded women’s subsistence production since 1970.

CSS (1996) estimates that 1.7 million people (about 12 percent of the labour force) are engaged in informal activities, predominantly Africans. African women are estimated to be 60 percent of the workers in the sector (Valodia, 1996: 61, Table 11).

78 The data on men may not be reliable.
79 These figures exclude the TBVC areas. (Standing et al, 1996).
80 Other estimates place the figure higher at 4-5 million (or 27-35 percent of the labour force) and the value of informal sector output at about nine percent of GDP. There is a predominance of petty trading and services activity, and relatively limited informal manufacturing, especially among women (Rogerson, 1996).
National datasets of a snapshot kind do not accurately reflect the diversity and complexity of livelihoods due to under-reporting of activity in the informal sector, in casual, seasonal, sub-contracted or home-based work and in subsistence agriculture where women’s productive activity is concentrated.

7.2.3 Sectoral and occupational distribution of economic activity

Personal services (31 percent of the labour force), trade, catering and accommodation (17 percent), manufacturing (15 percent) and agricultural forestry and fisheries (13 percent) are major employers in the formal economy (CSS, 1996: 23). Figure nine below shows the sectoral distribution of economic activity by gender. Sectoral trends by gender are difficult to ascertain because of lack of comparability of datasets and the large proportion of active women categorised as ‘unspecified’.

Figure Nine: sectoral distribution of the economically active population (EAP) by gender, 1995 (percentage)

Source: Adapted from Budlender (1997b: 2-23).

Men are the majority of the employed in all sectors except in services where shares are about equal, and in the ‘unspecified’ category. Although not the majority, women also have relatively high shares of employment in manufacturing (31 percent), trade (44 percent) and finance (45 percent) (Budlender, 1997b: 2-23).

By occupation group, 38 percent of women and 51 percent of African women are in the elementary (or unskilled) group, compared to 27 percent of men and 36 percent of African men. Women outnumber men as clerks and as technical or semi-professional workers, the former category being predominantly white women, whilst the latter includes many African women (particularly as nursing aides). Women are 22 percent

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81 Deborah Johnston, personal communication.
82 Some attempts have been made to assess the extent of women (and men’s) involvement in these under-reported activities and the differing conditions they face: Sender and Johnston’s (1996) work on women farm workers; SEWU’s study on home-based workers, by Budlender and Theron (1995). Budlender has also carried out a study for the Department of Labour on domestic workers.
overall of managers, but half of these are white women. Only two percent of employed African women are managers (Budlender, 1997b: 2-24).

7.2.4 Sectoral trends in employment
Major job losses were recorded in clothing and textiles manufacturing in 1989-1995, with a reported loss of approximately 40,000 jobs, mostly of women, who constituted 64 percent of employees in the sector in 1991 (Valodia, 1996: 71). Although employment growth in the sub-sector has resumed (and may be underestimated because of outworking and informal sector activity) it is unlikely to be major source of employment in the future because of pressures to liberalise the trade regime and to increase capital intensity in order to be internationally competitive, raising the danger of women losing further jobs (Standing et al, 1996: 97; Valodia, 1996: 71).

Construction, financial services and tourism offer some hope for increased employment and of these, the latter two sub-sectors employ a relatively high percentage of women, while construction although typically male-dominated, has potential for increased and improved quality of employment for women. The public sector has been an important source of employment growth in the early 1990s, particularly for women, but this is easing off with increased controls on government spending. Cuts in public sector employment were announced in 1995-6 (Standing et al, 1996: 98) and the impact of these on gender equality in employment will be important to monitor, as will the impact of proposed privatisation.

7.2.5 Earnings differentials
Where women are able to access formal employment, they are paid less than men. Reviewing different sectors, women’s earnings are 65 - 95 percent of men’s, with particularly marked disparities in finance and manufacturing (Valodia, 1996: 59, Table 7). Pillay (1993, cited in Budlender, 1995) found that women’s manufacturing earnings were overall 73 percent of men’s in metropolitan areas, explained by their clustering in low level, unskilled occupations, such that returns to education are zero, or even negative. Even with similar or higher levels of education, women earn less than men (72-85 percent of men’s earnings for the same education level). No data was found on earnings from informal activity, which would allow a gender analysis of differences.

There are major differences in earnings between degree holders and matriculants by gender and race. While one third of white male matriculants earned R4000 per month or more in 1995, only 14 percent of white female matriculants and nine percent of African women matriculants earned as much (Budlender, 1997b: 2-25).

83 This trend may have been counteracted to some extent by a growth in sub-contracting and outwork (Standing et al, 1996: 97).
84 According to Figure 3.3, in Standing et al (1996: 78).
85 In South Asia, women are employed in large numbers in the construction industry, although often in low paid and casual jobs.
86 The study drew on 1987 data for 1200 manufacturing workers (ibid.).
87 More general data from the SALDRU 1993 survey provides evidence that education has higher returns for women than men at all levels, given existing biases in employment and wages (Standing et al, 1996).
7.2.6 Unemployment
There are high levels of unemployment in South Africa and women form a higher proportion of the unemployed than men in all race groups, in both rural and urban locations. Reported unemployment rates are highest for Africans, followed by ‘coloureds’, Indians and whites and are higher for women than men in each group. Only four percent of white men, compared to eight percent of white women, are reported unemployed.\(^89\)

Rural unemployment is particularly high for women.\(^90\) Forty seven percent of African women, compared to 29 percent of African men were reported unemployed in 1995 (CSS, 1996). This is a product of apartheid history whereby women were excluded from urban areas and so were not able to acquire the skills and experience of formal employment.

Under the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), payments are made to the unemployed and about one third of claimants are women (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft). Thus, compared to their over-representation among the unemployed, women are clearly under-represented as claimants. Millions of South Africans have private or employment-related social security provision of various kinds. Women are less likely than men to be in employment which will give them coverage under either private or occupational systems (Lund Committee, 1996). Maternity provisions are payable under the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), but much of women’s work is not covered by these provisions.

7.2.7 Labour market legislation and affirmative action
Since 1994, new labour relations legislation has strengthened worker protection and affirmative action policies provide the leverage to positively discriminate in favour of blacks and women. In particular, the 1995 Labour Relations Act (LRA), the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (1997) and planned Employment Equity Act for larger enterprises, provide the basis for greater gender equality in the labour market.

However, these measures have a number of limitations as currently formulated. The LRA does not provide for worker representation in small-scale establishments where women tend to be concentrated. Current legislation on wage discrimination is not strong enough to tackle the role of occupational and industrial segregation in contributing to earnings disparities (Standing et al, 1996).

Comprehensive data is not available to assess the impact to date of affirmative action policies and this needs further research with attention to gender, as well as race.

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89 There are two definitions of unemployment in official use: a strict definition which records those out of work who have looked for work in the last four weeks, and an expanded definition based on those who would like to work, irrespective of whether they have taken any steps to find work. Using strict definition, the unemployment rates for African women and African men are 27 percent and 16 percent respectively (CSS, 1996: 23). Budlender (1997b: 2-21) gives an additional method of calculating unemployment, using the population aged 15 and above as the denominator. On this basis, the unemployment rate of African women rises to 76 percent, compared to 57 percent for African men.
90 Standing et al (1996) raise questions about the reliability of unemployment data. Their analysis suggests that overall unemployment estimates are exaggerated and that female rates are overestimated compared to male.
91 This is based on the ‘expanded’ definition of unemployment in the 1995 October Household Survey.
issues. There is possibility, with some anecdotal evidence to support it, that given existing hierarchies, affirmative action could end up favouring black men and white women. In general, affirmative action policies are likely to have been most effective for educated, middle class employees in the formal and particularly public sectors, rather than the majority of less educated, semi- or unskilled workers.

7.3 Households

Household composition and intra-household relations in South Africa are varied and complex. The notion of the ‘traditional African family’ is one which has little meaning today. However, traditions, particularly those surrounding the authority of fathers over their families, persist. Nor has polygyny disappeared, although it is less prevalent than in the past. The migrant labour system encouraged the growth of new forms of common law partnerships, with urban and rural partners. Lobola arrangements were made between the families of both partners (Mbatha, 1997a). Reform of customary law has been proposed which would recognise the status of various forms of partnership.

High rates of female headship are noted, particularly among African women although there is no consensus on how such households should be defined. De jure definitions give a rate of 26 percent overall, and of 30 percent for African women. De facto definitions increase the prevalence of female headship to 35 percent overall and that for Africans to 41 percent (Budlender, 1996: 45). African female-headed households are also more likely to be single mothers than white women as well as having other dependants (Muthwa, 1994). Even where males are present in the household there is often lack of support for household expenses and children (Strong, 1996) and many women do not receive maintenance payments for children from absent husbands (Sender and Johnston, 1996).

There is great variation in the way in which households are constituted, with implications for land reform and for economic and social policy more broadly (Sunde and Harmann, 1996). While much literature focuses on distinctions between male and female-headed households, variations are more subtle and complex. In one study up to 18 types of household were identified (ibid.). Many rural households have a ‘missing’ middle generation, where grandparents or older relatives support children while younger adults pursue urban employment (Beall, 1997).

Furthermore, the nature of rural institutions appears to influence both the composition of households and the allocation of resources within them. Tenure arrangements are thought to influence the extent of female headship for example, which is higher in peri-urban areas than in remote rural reserves where women’s access to land is highly constrained. A key issue for policy design aimed at gender equality, is to examine and anticipate men’s likely responses to women’s increased access to resources, such as

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92 Nomtuse Mbere, personal communication.
93 Other sources give higher rates based on broader definitions, e.g. where the woman is the main earner (e.g. Strong, 1996; Muthwa, 1994).
94 Only 13 percent of African women-headed households have no dependants, compared to 50 for white women (Budlender, 1996: 45).
95 About 17 percent of households overall contained no adult men in 1995, and just over half of those headed by women contained no adult men (Budlender, 1997b: 1-5).
withdrawal of support for household expenses (Cross and Friedman, 1997; Cross et al, 1997).

### 7.4 Land holding, tenure and reform

#### 7.4.1 Gender and land entitlements

In 1993, overall 26.2% rural households had access to land (May et al, 1995). Poor quality, environmental degradation, and lack of security of tenure are major problems facing small landholders (Land and Agricultural Policy Centre, 1997a). Lack of effective entitlement to land, and lack of security of tenure are major issues for rural African women, more than access to land *per se*. Where women do access land it is often unusable, of low quality or lacking in associated entitlements (e.g. grazing rights; rights over trees, thatch, water etc.). In tenancy areas, women’s security over land may be particularly weak.

There is a lack of detailed, gender-focused research on land tenure systems at local level, so that it is hard to generalise about gender differences in current land access and control or to assess how gender relations affect the institutions of land allocation. Moreover, much local practice is informal and rapidly changing, particularly in the former reserves which are not governed by formal legislation.

Women’s land rights vary but in general they are limited and insecure, threatened by chiefs, the rules and practice of customary law and by patriarchal household and community relations (Meer, 1997b; Mbatha, 1997b). On the other hand, women do access and use land, and the basis and mechanisms for this need to be better understood to inform land reform programmes and rural development policy (Mbatha, 1997b).

In rural African communities land allocation is governed by customary law but what this means in practice is highly varied (Mbatha, 1997b). Studies from KwaZulu-Natal reveal highly conservative practices at local level, which effectively deny women’s theoretical land rights (Cross and Friedman, 1997) whereas in parts of North West province, for example, some chiefs see themselves as promoting gender equality within the context of customary law (Mbatha, 1997b). In addition, the capacities of women to claim land entitlements are extremely variable and dependent on their social status and relationships, in particular, the presence of male sons or relatives (*ibid.*).

Land is administered by chiefs (*amakosi*) and actual allocation is performed by headmen (or *iinduna*) and local committees or landlords where chiefs are absent. Outsiders usually have to be introduced to the community by a male relative or contact. They often pay levies and are not automatically entitled to land, unlike (married) male members of the community.

In general, under customary tenure, women’s access to land is mainly through marriage, i.e. through their husbands. While in theory, both married men and women are entitled to land, in practice the entitlement is claimed by the man, who controls the land (Mbatha, 1997b). Single women and men are generally not entitled to land although historically (and in some instances currently) employed single men have
been allocated land on the basis that they will marry. Widows have often been able to maintain use rights over land allocated to former husbands particularly where they have sons, under whose name the land is usually registered. The same applies to married women with absent husbands, although their prospects for viable farming may be limited by lack of cash incomes (ibid.). However, instances have also been noted where male heirs fail to provide housing or livelihood support to widowed female relatives, in contrast to the expectations of customary practice (Small, 1997).

As outsiders to communities, women find it more difficult to access land than men unless they have male relatives or contacts to introduce them, so that women are often less willing to move to new areas (Cross et al, 1997). In some areas, unmarried women with children are being allocated land in their own names but this is generally seen as ‘exceptional’ and not widely considered acceptable (Mbathe, 1997b).

Inheritance rights for women are limited under customary law. Even where women are entitled to inherit, they may find it difficult to keep control over their landholding. There is pressure to sell land, or else cede their rights to other, usually male, relatives.

Because of the male dominance of traditional authorities and the lack of voice of women in these structures and because women are not usually expected to engage in public affairs, it is extremely hard for women to represent their own claims for land. However, this situation is changing. In some communities, male migrants have lobbied for representation of women in community decision-making structures, fearing the dominance of an elite of elders in their absence. In communities closer to urban employment opportunities, with more young people, a loosening of attitudes and structures is also apparent. In freehold areas, women may gain a voice where they have begun to deal in land (Cross and Friedman, 1997; Mbathe, 1997b; Thorp, 1997).

In freehold communities, it remains unusual for women to be let land in their own right, but practice is more individualised than in reserves and in some communities women can be landowners. However, their rights tend to be squeezed when resources are scarce (Cross and Friedman, 1997). Under state land tenure (betterment schemes, Trust land etc.) severe pressure on arable land means that male heads of household tend to be favoured by land allocation (ibid.).

### 7.4.2 Land reform

Land reform is a central plank of current attempts to redress past injustices and the legacy of inequality left by apartheid. It incorporates three elements:

- **Redistribution**: Aiming to provide the poor and disadvantaged with access to land, using subsidies. Pilot programmes have been established in all provinces;
- **Restitution**: Covering cases of forced removal after 1913 and dealt with by the Land Claims Courts and Commission;
- **Tenure reform**: A review of present land policy, administration and legislation to improve security of tenure and resolve conflicts in claims to land rights in the content of diverse tenure arrangements.

(Meer, 1997a; Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft; LAPC, 1997b).

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96 This trend is probably diminishing (ibid.).
Land reform is not expected to create full time farming opportunities for the majority of rural people but may provide part time work and supplementary incomes and nutrition for many (LAPC, 1997b).

The largest budget thus far has gone to redistribution (Meer, 1997a). Progress is slow, with just over 300 projects identified as at May 1997 (LAPC, 1997b: 4). The Department of Land Affairs has made a strong commitment to gender equity and systems to monitor the allocation of land by gender are being set up. However, land reform has yet to make a significant impact on rural women (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft).

Recent research designed to inform land reform projects suggests that men and women have different land use priorities. Men tend to see land as having political and social significance for forming alliances. They are also oriented to profit maximisation and cattle rearing, and are thus interested in large holdings. Women tend to be more ‘risk averse’ and oriented to food security, and are limited in the viability of their agricultural options by lack of cash. They have greater interests in smaller holdings for gardening close to the homestead (Cross et al, 1997; Middleton, 1997). The average size of holding requested by women was six times smaller than that requested by men (LAPC, 1997b). This reflects historical patterns of bias and other constraints on women’s farming. It also suggests the need for caution in assessing demands for land on the priorities of men (ibid).

The use of the household based subsidy\(^97\) to effect land reform runs the risk of reinforcing existing gender-based inequalities and power relations within households, unless countervailing measures are taken (Sunde, 1997). Only one subsidy is available per household and where this is claimed by one partner, the other partner is no longer eligible (Sunde, 1997; Meer, 1997a). There is evidence from some land distribution sites that grants are mainly made to male household heads. This runs the danger of diverting their use to urban areas, where men are more likely to be based, and may have other partners, disadvantaging rural-based women (Meer, 1997a).

Experiences are varied, but, to date, pilot projects under the land reform programme have not been highly successful in ensuring women’s participation (see Du Toit, 1996; Hargreaves, 1996, cited in Meer, 1997a). A recent study of a pilot land reform area in the Southern Cape found that women knew less about land reform processes than men and that they were less involved in the planning committee. Moreover, women’s aspirations were mainly linked to new housing rather than any livelihood potential, whereas men were considering economic options (Sunde, 1997). While general indicators have been proposed to monitor the progress of pilot programmes, indicators that would measure the impact of land reform on gender relations have yet to be operationalised (ibid.).

Land claims under the Restitution of Land Rights Act have proved very slow to process. No race or gender breakdown of claims is available, but current trends suggest that claims are urban biased and therefore likely to favour males, Indians and

\(^{97}\) Under the redistribution programme, a subsidy of R15000 is available for purchase of land, or housing (up to 40 percent of the total) and infrastructure development. Since households are only eligible for one subsidy, there is an implicit assumption that housing subsidies are for urban areas. While many rural households do prioritise residential sites, they also require land for cultivation.
‘coloureds’. Restitution has a tendency to reinforce the status quo of male ownership and control since women will find it hard, given historical biases in land rights against them, to establish evidence of ownership rights.

Tenure reform in former bantustans is critical for women but highly sensitive, since it threatens the power of chiefs. Where private ownership is established, there is a danger that males will sell the land, leaving women with no access. Women married to migrant men with urban partners are particularly vulnerable. Group ownership is a possible route, which would provide relative security of tenure for women. Communal Property Associations (CPAs) set up for this purpose are required to have gender equality in representation (Meer, 1997a). Tenure reform in tenancy areas runs the risk of bringing most benefits to men, who are regarded as tenants, while their female partners are treated as dependants (Government of South Africa, 1997a, draft: 12).

For land reform to bring about gender-equitable change, it is suggested that a range of additional measures are required, including legal changes (e.g. clarification over the definition of a direct descendant, which would assist women’s land inheritance rights), as well as support to NGOs who have long-term links with communities. The demand-driven basis of land reform underlines the importance of government and NGO efforts to ensure information is accessible to rural women and in support of land claims (Meer, 1997a: Sunde, 1997). Fears have been expressed by men and many women that the rural social order and marriage patterns will be disrupted if women gain greater access to and control of land. These will have to be addressed in the land reform process if women are to gain genuine improvements in their position (Cross and Friedman, 1997).

### 7.5 Access to finance

Access to formal finance for low-income groups in South Africa is relatively limited although some changes are apparent with the ending of institutionalised discrimination by race. Credit or loans for small enterprise development (at least for those with some capital, business experience, or in full time employment) and, linked to the housing subsidy scheme, for housing construction or purchase, are increasingly available. A variety of government agencies have been set up to promote improved access to finance and a few non-governmental organisations are also active in this field (SEWU, various). Special initiatives have also been set up to target women with financial services (e.g. Women’s Development Bank).

In general, however, these initiatives have not been able to provide access to finance for the majority of those on low incomes and particularly to poor African women working in the ‘survivalist’ sector (Pat Horn, personal communication; SEWU,

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98 Claims received up to 1995 revealed potential urban bias (Meer, 1997a) and recent media reports also suggest this. The Cape Times of 14 November reported 22,404 claims lodged to date, with only four finalised. Of these 19,032 were lodged in urban areas. The apparent urban bias is somewhat reduced by the fact that rural claims often represent more than one person.

99 The Land Reform Research Programme found that the majority of women surveyed did not support the registration of land in women’s name (LAPC, 1997b).

100 Data is sparse on the extent of access to formal and particularly informal finance. The observations in this section would need to be tested against more rigorous analysis of data, as it become available.
(various)). Initiatives targeting women have not proved to be sustainable, or replicable on a large scale.\footnote{101}

Reasons for the failure to reach women with loans include:

- Minimum loan size is too large;
- Support is only given to manufacturing enterprises, which forms a relatively minor part of informal activity;
- Support is not given to rural areas;
- Procedures may also be bureaucratic and discriminatory, sometimes requiring male permission;
- Lack of formal employment and collateral of women is another constraint, although group solidarity mechanisms have been used as a guarantor of loans to women in the informal sector.

One rural survey in Northern province in late 1995 found that 30 percent of women farmers had access to credit, compared to 29 percent of men. Women had more difficulty in accessing formal credit unless they were part of agricultural development projects, and relied more on neighbours and relatives (Ngqaleni and Makhura, 1996: 343-4). The Land Bank, which previously gave subsidised credit to white farmers, is committed to redirecting resources to African, including women farmers, but no information was found at the time of writing on the extent to which this has occurred in practice (Catherine Cross, personal communication)\footnote{102}.

Some studies have noted quite high levels of participation of poor women (e.g. street vendors) in stokvels or Rotating Credit Associations (RCAs) (Bedford, 1995). Others comment that poor women do not have the resources for membership fees (May, Atwood \textit{et al}, 1997)\footnote{103}. More accurate information is required on the extent of women’s participation in informal savings associations. High levels of indebtedness are noted in household surveys, with goods purchased on credit and extensive borrowing often from family or friends (May, Atwood \textit{et al}, 1997).

Savings (rather than credit) schemes are now viewed by many development workers as an effective means to mobilise women’s own resources to invest in economic or social development (Anne Githuku-Shongwe, personal communication). Not only do these build up creditworthiness but they can also be used as leverage to pressure formal financial institutions into providing account facilities for women, thus improving their integration into the formal financial sector (Pat Horn, personal communication).

\footnote{101} SEWU has facilitated access to finance for its members through group solidarity, but has run into problems with members not meeting repayment commitments.

\footnote{102} The recent Cape Town seminar on ‘Transformation for Gender Justice and Organisational Change/Institutional Transformation’ (June, 1998) included discussion of a case study of the Land Bank, by Helena Dolny and Komikie Masekela. Papers from the meeting should be available in due course. (Contact Michelle Friedman, AGI, Cape Town for further details – see Appendix 2).

\footnote{103} Debbie Budlender estimates, using IES data, that around three percent of households invest money in stokvels.
7.6 Livelihood strategies

Gender relations and livelihood options is an under-researched area and little detailed information is available. Studies of livelihoods in South Africa tend to focus on the household (e.g. Lipton et al, 1996a; 1996b).

This section reviews existing research on areas where poor women’s activity is thought to be concentrated: casual labour, including domestic and farm work and informal sector activity; subsistence and small-scale agriculture; as well as transfers and other claims which poor people, and particularly women, rely on. Figure ten gives an overview of the relative importance of different sources of income to poor households, showing the importance of wage income, pensions and remittances. While 44 percent of the poorest households are primarily reliant on wage income, 42 percent rely on transfers. Only 3 percent give agriculture as their primary source of income.

Figure Ten: Primary source of income for the poorest 40 percent of all households in 1993

![Figure Ten](image)


7.6.1 Casual and low paid work

Farm labour

By 1992, official statistics estimated that there were approximately one million farm workers on white farms. Including black farms and state farms the total number of farm workers is probably around 1.7 million.

Sub-sectoral production patterns are linked to race and gender variations in agricultural employment. Some evidence suggests a shift towards female workers and immigrants since the 1980s and an increase in labour contracting in agricultural employment. This may reflect the increased bargaining power of male farm workers and farm owners’ fear of workers making claims on land or demanding better wages.

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104 Research into poor people’s livelihood strategies is relatively recent in the South African context and the concept of ‘sustainable livelihoods’ based on agriculture has been the subject of some critical debate (see e.g. McIntosh and Vaughan, 1996; Meer, 1997a).

105 A distinction is drawn here between casual and low paid wage labour, described in this section; and informal sector activity (self-employment), described in the next section.

106 There is under-reporting of casual, seasonal, subcontracted labour and informal employment on African farms. State farms in former ‘homelands’ are sometimes not included in official statistics.
conditions, especially with the backing of new legislation (LAPC, 1997a). Horticulture is a growing sector and may be particularly female intensive, because of the labour-intensive nature of the harvesting process, and perceived advantages of female labour (cheapness, dexterity, ease of control, passivity) (ibid.).

There is a lack of accurate wage data on agricultural employment. In 1991, 65 percent of ‘coloured’ farm workers and 75 percent of African farm workers were receiving less than R250 per month, with a high level of variation in wages between provinces and sectors (LAPC, 1997a). Earnings also vary considerably by gender. A study in 1996 in Northwest province, Free State, Gauteng and Northern province found that mean earnings of men were 38 percent higher than for women, at R318 vs. R230. When other (in kind) payments were added, the difference increased to 43 percent (R433 vs. R249) (ibid.).

Labour legislation has now been extended to cover farm workers and a number of both politically aligned and independent unions have organised workers in this sector.

**Domestic work**

More than one million women are employed as domestic workers, most of these African women.

Research into domestic service in 1960s and 1970s in Durban highlights poor conditions of domestic service - low pay, insecurity, exploitation, sexual harassment - as well as some of its ‘advantages,’ particularly for young women entering cities for the first time. Domestic service provided women with a place to live in urban areas. At employer discretion, certain income-generating activities (e.g. dress making, even liquor brewing) were tolerated, although they were often risky. On the other hand, possibilities for earning informal sector incomes were better for those ‘living out’. This was also often preferred, especially by older women, who needed to earn extra income to support children, for house-building, or to assist with dowry or bridewealth, for those intending to marry.

Living out (or ‘char’) domestic work has become more common, due to the removal of restrictions on the movement of African women, and also a decline in households employing full-time help (Preston-Whyte, 1991). Some labour legislation has been extended to cover domestic workers but in practice provisions are weak and do not provide for a minimum wage, job security or unemployment or maternity benefits. Attempts to organise domestic workers have proved difficult and the union SADWU, affiliated to COSATU, closed in 1996.

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107 Further published data on the conditions of agricultural wage labour was not found. The Farmworkers’ Research and Resource Project (FRRP) (see Appendix 3) does important work in this area. The MRC Women’s Health Project is starting some in-depth research into harassment and violence against women farm workers (Rachel Jewkes, personal communication). A current research project, co-ordinated by the University of Hertfordshire (Dr Stephanie Barrientos) and Christian Aid (Liz Orton), UK, is investigating gender relations in the horticulture sector in South Africa.  

108 SEWU is considering taking up representation of domestic workers (Pat Horn, personal communication).
7.6.2 Informal activities

In October 1995, 33 percent of economically active African women were recorded as being own account workers, compared to six percent of African men. Overall, 25 percent of women are own account workers, compared to nine percent of men (Budlender, 1997b: 2-22). Most African (and ‘coloured’) women who are self-employed are lone workers (97 percent) and 88 percent are in ‘elementary’ or unskilled occupations (Budlender, 1997b: 2-22; Valodia, 1996). A high proportion of these were domestic workers (see 7.6.1 above for separate discussion).

There is marked gender segmentation in informal activity, with women concentrated in low-profit activities, such as street trading, food preparation, childcare and dressmaking, whilst metal production, wood processing and transport enterprises tend to have male proprietors. There are more women than men in ‘survivalist’ (as opposed to ‘growth’) activities and few women’s enterprises are successful or growing. Women earn less than men in informal economy and, even where they do employ others, tend to have smaller enterprises (Liedholm and McPherson, 1991).

A study in rural KwaZulu-Natal found that most informal activity of women was based on existing skills and local markets, while men, with experience of migration and town employment, were able to develop new skills and acquire tools. Income from women’s income-generating activities was ‘startlingly low’ (Preston-Whyte and Nene, 1991).

Where women do run successful businesses, these tend to be in areas most vulnerable to competition from the formal sector as deregulation increases. For men, the informal sector offers accumulation possibilities, whilst women’s activity in the sector tends to meet survival needs. It is difficult for women to find ways of accumulating capital without this coming under control of men (Friedman and Hambridge, 1991).

The predominance of African women in informal activity is explained by: their lack of other employment opportunities; the links between formal housing and employment, relegating many women to shack settlements; and by the substitution of women for men in casual and seasonal agricultural labour. Older women and those with responsibilities for putting children through school are more likely to resort to informal sector activity to meet needs for security and to support children’s education. Community factors, such as proximity to markets, existence of stokvels and burial societies may assist women in setting up informal sector activities; elsewhere, men may move in (Friedman and Hambridge, 1991). Historical studies show links between women’s life cycle, their goals and their patterns of engagement with the informal sector (Bozzoli, 1991).

Rogerson (1996) and Budlender (1996) suggest that policy to address informal economic activity needs to specifically target the ‘survivalist’ sector, and that detailed

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109 For Indian and white groups, a higher proportion of active men, than women are self-employed.
110 96 percent of self employed ‘coloured’ women and 77 percent of African self employed women (Budlender, 1997b: 2-22).
111 A new research project on women street traders in South Africa is underway, as part of the WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising) initiative. This is being co-ordinated by Francie Lund of the Centre for Social and Development Studies, University of Natal, Durban (see Appendix 2). A synthesis of existing research should be available by July 1998, as a working paper of CSDS.
112 A survey of township enterprises found that women’s enterprises had on average 1.7 employees compared to 2.6 for men’s enterprises (Liedholm and McPherson, 1991).
analyses of specific sub-sectors and their conditions are required for effective support. ‘Survivalist’ enterprise is seen as a target for welfare and anti-poverty interventions, such as local government services, water, sanitation, and basic education (ibid).

Local service centres are a policy option being promoted to support informal enterprise, including of women. These are intended to provide a range of inputs, including training, advice, marketing support, etc. in one location. Another possible mechanism of institutional support could be the establishment of an informal sector training board, which would provide courses to prepare women, particularly, with the base level of skills and confidence required before training in more technical skills (Pat Horn, personal communication).

7.6.3 Subsistence and small-scale agriculture
The vast majority of African owned or run farms, encompassing a total of approximately 1.2-1.3 million households, are in former ‘homelands’. Of these, around one million households are smallholders at or near subsistence, a quarter of a million are ‘progressive’ small-scale farmers who market some surplus and a few thousand are ‘market oriented commercial farmers,’ who have been the main target of agricultural services to the black population (LAPC, 1997a). The likely increase in numbers of black micro-farmers as a result of land reform (i.e. smallholders as defined above) will probably draw mainly on the unpaid family labour of women and children, rather than creating new employment.

Little detailed information was found on women’s agricultural activity or on gender relations in small-scale agricultural production. A number of sources emphasise women’s concentration in subsistence production, while men focus more on commercial production and livestock rearing (Cross and Friedman, 1997; Cross et al, 1997). Others portray women as wanting to earn incomes from agriculture, but constrained by requirements to produce maize for household consumption as well as by the small size of their plots (Ngqaleni and Makhura, 1996). In KwaZulu-Natal, women have been involved in sugar outgrower schemes (Catherine Cross, personal communication). Few women own livestock and those who do may not have access to land for grazing (see 7.3).

Women’s agricultural activity is constrained by time, other domestic and household labour requirements and by lack of cash to invest in purchased inputs or hired labour. Most women who are farm managers are older women and in general cultivation activity is concentrated among older groups, while younger people tend to look for employment opportunities, or are constrained by responsibilities for young children. In some areas, the incidence of cultivation activity is extremely low and this is particularly marked among migrant households (Cross et al, 1997).

A survey of rural livelihoods in Northern Province in 1994-5 found differences in cropping patterns, landholdings and earnings from agriculture as between male and female farmers (see Figure 11). (Ngqaleni and Makhura, 1996). De facto female-headed households were more constrained in income earning than either male- or de jure female-headed households, suggesting that absent men or male relatives still have

113 A major initiative is underway in Durban, of action research linked to local services centre provision (Glen Robbins, personal communication).
considerable control over decisions to dispose of produce and over inputs to production (*ibid*.).

**Figure Eleven: Comparisons between male and female farmers in Northern Province, 1994-5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>women</th>
<th>men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subsistence orientation</td>
<td>73 %</td>
<td>53 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. total land owned (ha)</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. Family size</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. Gross income from agriculture (Rand)</td>
<td>1745.25</td>
<td>5603.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. Other income including pensions (Rand)</td>
<td>3067.38</td>
<td>9277.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ngqaleni and Makhura (1996)

According to this study, interestingly, women were more involved than men in agricultural projects and had greater access to extension services, primarily because these focused on women’s main crop, maize. Land was identified as the major constraint for women in increasing production due to historical as well as cultural barriers and estimates showed that reallocating male land to women would lead to increased production overall (*ibid*.).

### 7.6.4 Migration

A large number of rural people in South Africa are on the move seeking livelihoods. Historically people have been driven out of rural areas by dispossession and overcrowding, and have moved closer to urban areas to access jobs. However, this strategy is decreasing in viability, because of poor urban employment prospects and because people are tending to lose access to their land once they move (Cross *et al*., 1997).

Women are less likely than men to migrate because they are more vulnerable to losing what control over land they have, and less likely to find employment. They are also greatly disadvantaged as strangers in communities (see 7.3). They tend to migrate to tenancy areas or those run by committees, where they are more likely to be accepted as cultivators but where conditions are poor (*ibid.*).

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114 One current estimate puts the proportion of those using migration to overcome resource constraints at up to half the rural population (Cross *et al*., 1997). However, this is probably biased by field study in KwaZulu-Natal where violence, as well as rural overcrowding and poverty, have led to many rural people moving.
7.6.5 Transfers and claims

State Old Age Pensions
The non-contributory, means-tested Old Age Pension (OAP) is received by around 1.7 million South Africans and about 24 percent of all African households. It is a vital source of income for the poor (although not necessarily the poorest), particularly poor elderly women in rural areas, many of whom have no means of livelihood or reliable source of income. Because of women’s lower retirement age (60 versus 65) and their longer average life expectancy, they form a majority of the eligible population. Thus, these benefits are exceptionally well targeted on women (Lund and Ardington, 1996; Francie Lund, personal communication).

However, data broken down by race, gender and location show that take-up rates are lower for women than men in all categories. The reason for this is not obvious since, ostensibly, procedures are not discriminatory, although there may be informal ‘gatekeepers’ who bias the implementation of procedures (Lund and Ardington, 1996). The SA-PPA highlighted problems of establishing eligibility through identity cards, which many people did not have. Administrative personnel were reported to raise suspicions over the age of applicants, particularly women, who in some instances were told ‘you’re too young, go and get married’ (May, Atwood et al, 1997).

Child maintenance
Child maintenance for those in families with an absent parent (usually the father) has relied on either enforcement of private maintenance payments, or on the means-tested State Maintenance Grant (SMG), which comprised a parental allowance and a child allowance (set at R430 and R135 respectively in July 1996).

Attempts to secure maintenance from absent fathers by mothers are in most cases unsuccessful, because the courts do not tend to enforce father’s payments, because there is discrimination and suspected corruption in the system and because of high rates of male unemployment. Women may fear engaging in a process with former partners who may be violent or threatening (May, Atwood et al, 1997; Lund Committee, 1996).

The proposals of the Lund Committee are aimed at extending child benefits to reach a wider group of beneficiaries, particularly African women, who historically have benefited little from the SMG. Research has shown the poverty reducing affects of child support payments in ‘coloured’ communities in the Western Cape. Through improved targeting, it is hoped that the benefit will reach more, poorer children.

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115 Under the 1992 Social Assistance Act, changes were made to the SMG, including removal of distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children and different forms of union. Fathers also become eligible under certain conditions. The grant is also restricted to two children per mother, which is regressive in that poor mothers (and African ones in particular) tend to have more children (Lund Committee, 1996: 79; Debbie Budlender, personal communication).

116 SMG has tended to be disproportionately received by ‘Coloured’ women (in the Eastern and the Western Cape), Indian women (in KwaZulu Natal) and white women (in Gauteng) (Lund and Ardington, 1996). In 1990, 48 in every hundred coloured and 40 in every 1000 Indian children received the grant compared to 2 in every 1000 African children (Debbie Budlender, personal communication).
Because of budgetary constraints, however, the level of the benefit per household will fall.\textsuperscript{117}

\textbf{Remittances}

Remittances are a vital source of transfer income for rural women whose direct access to the labour market is limited, but which tends to reinforce unequal gender relations. Data in Figure ten (above) shows that around one fifth of rural households are primarily reliant on remittances. Analysis of household data shows that about half of remittances are sent on a regular (monthly) basis, while the remainder are irregular. The lack of reliability of remittance income renders women highly vulnerable to poverty. Survey data in 1993 showed that \textit{de facto} female-headed households were receiving an average of R350 per month through claims on other household members - higher than the average for other household types - and forming a significant proportion (about 10 percent) of total monthly income (May, Carter \textit{et al}, 1995: 69).

\textbf{7.7 Economic policy and decision making}

\textbf{7.7.1 Economic policy}

In 1996, a new macroeconomic strategy, GEAR (Growth, Employment And Redistribution) was introduced in South Africa, with targets for reducing the budget deficit and increasing growth. This replaced the earlier RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) framework. Included in the strategy are proposals for privatisation and labour market reform (EIU, 1997: 16). Current government policy also favours comprehensive trade liberalisation (Standing \textit{et al}, 1996).

GEAR has been the subject of much debate by various interest groups.\textsuperscript{118} In general, the discussions have not reflected women’s perspectives. However, gender researchers and activists are starting to raise questions about the assumptions underlying GEAR and about its likely impact on women’s livelihoods. In particular, the lack of consideration of any differential impact of policy on men and women, of women’s unpaid labour as a factor in the economy and of informal activities, where poor women predominate, have been criticised (Taylor, 1997).

It is feared that the policy may negatively impact women in a number of ways:

- Through controls on public expenditure, reduced priority may be given to investments favouring women;
- Through reductions in employment in the public service, which is a major employer of women and where terms and conditions tend to be less discriminatory;
- Through increases in demands on women’s unpaid labour, as a result of public sector restructuring;
- Through job losses associated with trade liberalisation, particularly e.g. In clothing and textiles.

(Taylor, 1997; Budlender, 1997d).

\textsuperscript{117} There has been considerable opposition from women’s groups to the proposals of the Lund Committee, particularly in the Western Cape, including a march to Parliament. Thousands of current recipients stand to lose R430 a month of their income.

\textsuperscript{118} Including trade unions, business groups, international bodies and research institutions of various kinds.
As yet, these views are speculative, but they do signal major concerns if the gains of recent years are to be maintained.

**7.7.2 Women’s involvement in economic decision making**

**Forums for women to influence economic decision-making**

At the national level, women are represented in discussions on economic policy, through their involvement in trade unions and, via the Women’s National Coalition, in Nedlac, the negotiating forum between business, government and the unions. Female membership of unions is relatively high in South Africa, in international terms, particularly for African women (36 percent of the active female population in 1995 were members of trade unions) although slightly lower than men’s overall.

Nevertheless, even in unions such as SACWTU, which have a mainly female membership, the leadership of unions is predominantly male. In addition, the high proportion of women who work outside the formal sector are not represented. WNC has relatively weak influence in Nedlac as part of the Development Chamber and has limited capacity in either its membership or secretariat to produce detailed analysis of economic issues. Efforts among women in the trade unions to organise around the Working Women’s Charter (see section 8) and SEWU’s presence in the informal sector may increase pressure for more attention to gender issues in discussions of economic policy.

Women are under-represented at management level in the private sector and in organisations of business, but are beginning to organise themselves to increase their visibility.¹¹⁹

**Women’s Budget Initiative**

The Women’s Budget Initiative (WBI), now in its third year, has attracted much attention as an attempt to influence public and political debate on fiscal policy to reflect the interests of women. Initially rooted in civil society, but with strong political links to Parliament, it has now been taken up by the Budget Office of the Ministry of Finance, as part of a wider Commonwealth initiative to support the engendering of macroeconomic policy. By March 1998, analysis will have been made of all budget votes as well as cross-cutting themes such as taxation (Budlender, 1996; Budlender 1997a; Budlender, 1998). The WBI has been a key tool to bring gender issues to the attention of policy makers who would otherwise not engage with these issues and in demonstrating the resource implications of existing decision making patterns for women and gender equity. The WBI also advocates further reform of the budget process to make it more gender sensitive (Budlender, 1997c).

¹¹⁹ A consortium of women contractors (Nozala) has recently formed, with a reported membership of around 300 (Michelle Friedman, Debbie Budlender, personal communication). The National Small Business Council, funded by the Department of Trade and Industry is establishing a women in business chamber (Debbie Budlender, personal communication). The National African Federation of Chambers of Commerce (NAFCOC) has a Women’s Forum which is lobbying for greater visibility and influence (CGE, 1997a: 166).
8. GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

8.1 Overview

Gender equality has emerged as a legitimate focus of policy and programmes for South Africa’s post-apartheid government. While policy development skills are highly developed in South Africa, policy management, programme design and implementation capacity is less strong, particularly at lower levels of the administration and in NGOs. The general weakness of capacity is a constraint to gender equality issues being effectively mainstreamed in development institutions, over and above the specific need to build capacity around gender equality itself.

The primary focus of much activity relating to gender equality to date has been on change and capacity building within institutions, rather than on gender equality in service delivery, impact and accountability. Many of the strategies envisaged by gender units in government, and by organisations working with government officials are directed at this stage at ensuring greater representation of and support for (black) women in government, rather than with broader issues of making government more accessible to and ‘friendly’ for ordinary citizens. While the former is probably a pre-requisite for the latter, it is increasingly important that the concern with transformation does not overshadow the importance of outcomes for those who are ‘beneficiaries’ rather than providers of services.

The ‘transition to bilateralism’ in development co-operation after 1994 has led to a shift of human and financial resources from non-government to government agencies. This has posed some difficulties for NGOs and civil society organisations who have lost financial support as well as skilled personnel. It also implies a change in the relations between government and civil society, between donors and government, and between donors and NGOs. All these relationships remain fluid. A positive feature is the commitment of government to working with non-government partners, including in relation to gender equality. Government is in the process of setting up a National Development Agency (NDA) which will channel both government and donor funds to non-government partners. The modalities of this, or its likely impact on these relationships, are not yet clear.

120 An important recent conference in Cape Town (June, 1998) focused on ‘Transformation for Gender Justice and Organisational Change/Institutional Transformation’. This was organised by the Association for Women in Development (AWID, USA); the African Gender Institute (AGI); GETNET; the School for Public Administration at Wits and MBM Change Agents. The conference brought together 50 people from all continents to discuss case material on organisational change/institutional transformation from a variety of settings. This included government bodies in South Africa, such as the Land Bank, Department of Water Affairs, DBSA, as well as discussion of the justice system and the Employment Equity Bill. Further information can be obtained from Michelle Friedman at AGI (see Appendix 2 for contacts).

121 In 1998, the National Development Agency is planned to open, based in the Office of the Executive Deputy President and reporting to Parliament, with funding anticipated from government, a state lottery, and donors, including the private sector.
8.2 Government services and programmes

Many existing government programmes clearly have major potential benefits for low-income women, although there is a danger of benefits being skewed towards higher income groups, or men in implementation. Specifically, public works programmes, water and sanitation provision, free women-specific reproductive health services and the Department of Welfare programme aimed at unemployed women with children under five, seem likely to have brought or have the potential to bring immediate and direct benefits to poor women.\footnote{122 This assertion would need to be tested against careful evaluation in due course.} The extent to which women have benefited from existing programmes is hard to monitor and existing evaluations do not routinely provide this information, although some mechanisms are now developing (Debbie Budlender, personal communication).

In general, social sector services have undergone shifts in policy, resource allocation and restructuring which are, broadly speaking, favourable to women. Recent legislative changes in the area of social welfare address the complexity of social relations surrounding child rearing where nuclear families are not the norm and household arrangements and relations are fragmented and diverse (Francie Lund, personal communication).\footnote{123 Developing the notion of the ‘primary care giver’ in the context of reform to child maintenance, is one important way in which these challenges have been addressed.}

In many areas (e.g. health, education, welfare), however, there is an implicit assumption that women will provide care in the home, or unpaid labour in the community. This is reflected in current budgetary priorities, whereby provision of early years education or nurseries, crèches is not a priority. The low valuation of women’s caring work is further reflected in the lack of attention to the burden of health care on women’s unpaid labour time. This is notable, for example, in the lack of attention in HIV/AIDS programmes to the need for care provision for people with AIDS (Stevens, 1997). Furthermore, insufficient attention has thus far been given to the role of violence, sexual harassment and fear of violence in limiting women’s access to services.

The devolved nature of budgets (to provincial and local levels) and variations in conditions and capacities between provinces mean that monitoring actual spending and outcomes is difficult and better systems are required if the gender (and other) equity commitments of policy are to be followed through and monitored in the implementation stage. This also suggests the need for strengthened capacity to deal with gender issues at provincial, district and local levels, not just through individual training, but also through improved structures and support.

At the level of service delivery, biases in access to and quality of provision will take some time to redress, but a positive start has been made. Exploitative employment conditions and lack of training and support mean that front line services are often weak and that a legacy of bureaucratic, patronising and discriminatory attitudes prevails. This often creates hardship for poor people, as well as subjecting them to abuse and sometimes violence. As major users of health and social services and recipients of social security payments (e.g. pensions, child maintenance) women, particularly the elderly, pregnant women and those with young children, may be
subjected to poor quality services, denied entitlements, or discouraged from taking them up.

8.2.1 Education
Reducing disparities in education and extending access to previously disadvantaged groups has been a major post-apartheid priority. In 1996-7, education expenditure accounted for 26 percent of total government expenditure and 6.4 percent of GDP (Shindler, Chabane et al, 1996).

The Department of Education has recognised gender inequity as an issue and recommended the establishment of a permanent Gender Equity Unit (Gender Equity Task Team, 1997). Violence and sexual harassment in educational institutions, gender issues in the curriculum and legal measures, policies and structures to support gender equity in education have been foci of discussions (ibid.).

A lack of funding to Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and Educare (pre-school education) are areas of gender bias in education expenditure. This has been attributed to a failure to acknowledge the importance of women’s unpaid labour in childcare and the effect of this, as well as illiteracy and poor skills, on poor women’s labour market opportunities. Within Educare, employees are very poorly paid and lack training. ABET curricula and provision is gender biased, e.g. in the lack of daytime facilities which are more likely to be used by women, distance from homes and lack of childcare provision (Shindler, Chabane et al, 1996; Gender Equity Task Team, 1997).

The legacy of lack of training and support for teachers in black schools has a major impact on women who form the majority of teachers, but among whom a higher proportion than male teachers are unqualified and of whom few are in management positions. Explicitly discriminatory measures against women teachers have been removed and some innovations in assessment introduced, which will remove the bias towards those with qualifications, but overall progress is slow. However, the recent closure of some teacher training colleges, due to lack of employment opportunities for teachers, is worrying because of its disproportionate impact on women, for many of whom this is their only route into tertiary education, and other professional career opportunities. Teacher retrenchment is also a concern in this respect, although the gender consequences are not known (Debbie Budlender, personal communication).

8.2.2 Health
The health budget increased by 2.6 percent in real terms between 1995/6 and 1996/7, rising to nearly 10 percent of government expenditure but is unlikely to rise more in relative terms. Department of Health policy prioritises integration and extension of services, equity of provision and primary-level care. Priority is given to poor and vulnerable groups (including women and children) and so far, clinic upgrading and

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124 Educare comprised only 0.8 percent of education budget and 2.2 percent of the welfare budget in 1990; and other Departments contributed only small allocations. ABET received less than one percent of the provincial education budget in those provinces for which data was available (Shindler, Chabane et al, 1996).

125 Government has made a commitment to including a year of pre-school education in the ten years of compulsory schooling, to be introduced gradually as capacity is developed. This implicitly suggests that remaining early childhood years will not be addressed by the state.
building has been effective in targeting the poorest areas (May, Mokate et al., 1997). Previously fragmented services are being brought under one administration and integrated district-level services being established. Population policy has moved away from seeing population control as a means of addressing poverty and gender issues are explicitly addressed within the new framework (Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1995). All of these developments are potentially beneficial to women (Stevens, 1997).

Of particular significance is the extension of free primary healthcare to pregnant women and children under five since June 1994, which research has shown, led to significant increases in usage, although concerns were raised by staff about increased workloads and lack of supplies to meet the increase in demand. From April 1996, free primary care was extended to all patients (May, Mokate et al., 1997; Stevens, 1997).

Considerable improvements have been made which are likely to increase women’s access to health care and to improve the quality of care. However, there remains a need for more integration of primary level services, for greater emphasis on non-reproductive as well as reproductive health needs of women, for training of health workers (particularly nurses) and for greater resources and support to community health workers. Existing provision in the area of STD/HIV prevention and care, as well as health sector responses to violence against women, are inadequate. Reproductive health services do not focus sufficiently on the need to empower people to negotiate openly and effectively in their sexual relationships. More attention is required to targeting men in reproductive health campaigns.

In general, there is a lack of clarity in the Department about its approach to gender issues, with specialised women’s sections in some sub-directorates, but an overall lack of co-ordination (Stevens, 1997).

Quality of services is important in improving usage and effectiveness of health provision. There are a number of initiatives to examine and address this, e.g. the Reproductive Health Transformation Project in the three northern provinces, undertaken by the Women’s Health Project NGO (ibid.).

Health sector restructuring also has major implications for gender equity within health sector employment, with implications for quality of care. In 1988, only 3.4 percent of nurses were male and historically nursing is one of the few professions to which women, particularly African women, have had access. The lack of negotiation space of nurses within the profession may in part explain resort to mistreatment of patients, as well as poor treatment of nursing aides (ibid.).

### 8.2.3 Housing

Housing is a high profile political issue in South Africa today with a government commitment to build one million new houses in its first five years of office. The new policy is intended to favour the poor through a R15,000 subsidy to those earning less than R800 a month. Provinces with a higher percentage of rural people also benefit from a higher allocation. There is a commitment to non-discrimination in the

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126 This finding is based on and impact assessment by McCoy (1996) reported in Stevens (1997: 293).
127 Francie Lund (University of Natal) has recently completed an evaluation of this Project.
128 Lower levels of subsidy are available for households up to an income of R3500/month.
allocation of housing and to administrative restructuring within housing services (Parnell, 1996). These are positive developments from a gender perspective.

In practice there are barriers to achieving the promised expansion in housing and to meeting the gender equity commitment in housing policy, including insufficient budgetary allocations and delays in implementation.

The housing subsidy is unlikely to reach the very poor (among whom women are a higher percentage) because they lack information or awareness about its availability, lack resources to complement the subsidy and ‘creditworthiness’ to raise additional finance. Although community involvement in housing development is encouraged through the requirement for a social compact between developers and community organisations, many of the organisations involved are male-dominated NGOs or civics, where women have little voice or influence. Monitoring systems to track the allocation of subsidies by gender were not in place as at 1996.

Other areas of housing policy remain discriminatory. Subsidies for hostel upgrading allow men to improve their own housing and retain an urban residence, while women do not benefit from this option. Regulations on the age and dependency ratio of those eligible for the housing subsidy discriminate against teenage mothers and against single women with no children. Township housing transfer schemes (which subsidise the conversion of rental property into owner occupied housing) favour existing holders of title deeds, reinforcing the pre-existing bias of the apartheid era and making a major one-off asset transfer to men. While some local authorities have developed policies to address conflict within households in the allocation of tenure (e.g. in Soweto, where if the mother has custody of children, she is automatically given housing rights) but this is not systematic. The lack of finance to subsidise increased rental provision discriminates against women who find it harder to raise finance to buy housing (ibid.).

In rural areas, there are problems with security of tenure in the provision of housing for women farm workers, or partners of farm-workers. Tribal tenure systems tend to allocate residential sites to male heads of household and single women are particularly disadvantaged. The extension of housing subsidy schemes to rural areas will need to address these biases if the non-discriminatory housing policy is to be upheld (ibid.).

8.2.4 Water and sanitation

The White Paper on Water Supply and Sanitation Policy issued in November 1994 made a commitment to extending domestic water supply to 250 litres a day, within a distance of 200m, for all, within 10 years. Current water policy includes an element of cost-recovery, with a ‘lifeline’ tariff for basic supplies (below 25 litres) and higher charges for additional supplies.

Between 1994 and May 1997, it was claimed that access to a fresh, safe water supply had been extended to one million new users for the first time (Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, 1997). There is little doubt that this will have brought benefits to women and girls, by reducing their workload in accessing water and increasing the water supply available to households, with potential health and economic benefits. The precise nature of these benefits, their distribution across income, gender and other
social groups requires more systematic evaluation. One limitation may be that government schemes have tended to favour those with houses which are easier to connect to the water supply. This suggests a bias away from rural areas and away from poorer people in rural areas, among whom a higher proportion are women (Debbie Budlender, personal communication). Some communities report problems with water management, even where new facilities have been introduced, due to poor maintenance, theft or breakage, raising questions about the sustainability of new supplies (May, Atwood et al, 1997).

Tens of thousands of jobs are claimed to have been created in the construction phase of water facilities and ‘many’ (numbers not specified) of those employed were women. New approaches have also been adopted to procurement and construction in the water sector, where new schemes are being built, encouraging job creation and SMME opportunities. However, current monitoring and evaluation mechanisms do not permit an assessment of the gender distribution of benefits from this. DWAF regulations stipulate that 30 percent of women must be members of local water committees.

Improvements in sanitation has been slower, partly reflecting its lower priority than water in community consultations (for both men and women) as well as the need to work intersectorally on this issue.

### 8.2.5 Other government programmes

**Department of Welfare Flagship Programme for Unemployed Women with Children 0-5.**

The Department of Welfare is pioneering its ‘developmental social welfare’ approach with the Flagship programme, designed to assist unemployed women and their children out of poverty. R3 million has been earmarked for one project in each province, with a total of over 1000 beneficiaries. Additional contributions and support are expected from other Departments, as well as NGOs, and integrated planning is a feature of the venture, to ensure synergy and avoid duplication. The aim is to provide vulnerable families with economic independence through market based initiatives (e.g. in farming, house building, garments), as well as access to basic social services and the programme is oriented particularly towards rural women. The first project was launched in Northern province in 1996, based on a vegetable farm.

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129 Experiences elsewhere suggest that economic benefits to women of improved water supply are sometimes overestimated, in terms of time saved and potential use (e.g. for income generation) of any time saved, particularly in remote areas far from markets. Health benefits also are sometimes exaggerated. In addition, access to new water supply may be constrained by cost factors, siting and delivery mechanisms as well as maintenance problems. Low-income female-headed households may be particularly liable to being excluded from or limited in their access to new water supplies where assessment of willingness to pay is made on the basis of male-headed households’ average incomes (Baden, 1993).

130 Nevertheless, experience elsewhere suggests that women often place higher priority on sanitation than men (Baden, 1993).

131 There is some confusion over how the target group is defined. Mothers with young children, but not necessarily female heads of household, seem to be the main beneficiaries (Debbie Budlender, personal communication).

132 Other sources suggest two projects per province (Debbie Budlender, personal communication).
This is the only major government programme in existence which directly tackles women’s poverty and as such its progress will be highly significant for any future initiatives, as well as for evolving thinking about developmental social welfare.\footnote{133}

\textit{Public works}

Public works programmes (PWPs) were a central plank of the RDP, with provincial level schemes meant to form the majority of PWPs. Assessments of the schemes implemented by Independent Development Trust (IDT) in 1994/5\footnote{134} show that 3.7 million labour days were provided in nearly 500 projects, with participation rates by women of 36-49 percent, varying by province. The creation of basic infrastructure ( electrification, water facilities) is also potentially of benefit to women through reductions in demands on their time (Valodia, 1996). The Department of Public Works is committed to extending schemes for the foreseeable future and is very aware of gender issues.\footnote{135}

The experience of public works in South Africa suggests that it is possible to involve women and that child care is not a priority for those women participating, who tend to have other adults in the house who can look after children (Lund Committee, 1996: 40)\footnote{136}. Careful evaluation would also need to assess the contribution of schemes to sustainable livelihoods (e.g. through promoting savings), whether women were acquiring new skills, were placed in supervisory positions, were employed on an equitable basis with men, and other qualitative aspects and outcomes of women’s participation.

\textbf{8.2.6 Government bodies}

As well as government departments, a variety of public agencies exist to promote development, by offering technical or financial support. These include:

- The Development Bank Of Southern Africa (DBSA), with a new mandate to focus on infrastructure development finance;
- The Land Bank, focusing on finance to agriculture and rural development
- Khula and Ntsika, respectively the financial and non-financial services support agencies for SMMEs;
- The Industrial Development Corporation;
- The National Housing Finance Corporation.\footnote{137}

\footnote{133} There is ongoing evaluation of this programme, by an outside NGO. Potential limitations are the exclusion of women receiving grants and the Departmental guarantee that good produced by the women will be bought, which may limit long-term sustainability (Debbie Budlender, personal communication). \footnote{134} These formed a small proportion of the overall total. An evaluation of the provincial component has recently been completed by CASE (Debbie Budlender, personal communication). No information on its assessment of gender outcomes was available at the time of writing. \footnote{135} Debbie Budlender, personal communication. \footnote{136} However, this is probably a self-selecting group, in that those for whom childcare is a constraint, who may be poorer households, are unlikely to participate. \footnote{137} Of these bodies, information was obtained directly only from DBSA. Reports suggested that Khula and Nisika were so far unsuccessful in targeting their resources towards the small scale segments (sometimes referred to as ‘survivalist’) of the informal sector where women predominate. The IDC deals with large scale initiatives and is unlikely to be of major direct benefit to women.
DBSA has taken a number of steps to institutionalise gender within the organisation, to promote investments which will benefit women and to improve the information base on gender issues. The impact of these measures is as yet unclear (DBSA, 1997: 12, 19). An appraisal of several DBSA funded projects is underway to assess their gender impact, and to develop a conceptual framework for mainstreaming gender in infrastructure finance operations. While in some areas of infrastructure development, there are clear benefits to women which are widely understood (e.g. water and sanitation), in others (e.g. road development) gender equality concerns are not always seen as an issue (DBSA, 1997; Makgoshi Sindane, personal communication). However, research shows that, for example, road development schemes can have a major impact on trading possibilities for women in the informal sector (Preston-Whyte and Nene, 1991).

8.3 Non-government organisations

South Africa has a vibrant and active civil society encompassing political, labour, religious, cultural, welfare and developmental organisations, many of which have their roots in the history of opposition to apartheid. Many NGOs, including those working on gender issues, are in the process of refocusing their work since the transition and trying to work out new roles.

Gender equality is a main focus of activity for some organisations and some organisations are women-specific. Women also participate in the wider activities of many NGOs, community based organisations (CBOs), unions and political organisations, but many such organisations have a predominately male leadership.

Women’s or gender focused organisations cover the whole spectrum of activities including welfare and rights work (Black Sash, Farmworkers’ Resources and Research Project - FRRP), lobbying and advocacy (Gender Advocacy Programme - GAP), and religious organisations (see 4.5). There are also sector-specific organisations such as FAWESA (Forum for African Women Educationalists – South Africa), focusing on gender and education and the Women’s Health Project.

Recently, a number of organisations have been established whose focus is on training, networking, capacity building and research on women’s or gender equality issues sometimes as part of broader programmes. The extensive research, training and institutional capacity development expertise on gender issues, located in universities, specialist NGOs and among individual researchers and consultants, is invaluable in supporting government transformation efforts (see Appendix 5 for details of specific organisations). On the other hand, the resources that exist appear to be unable to meet the current high level of demand for advisory and other support from both government and international donor agencies.

138 The assignment is called the ‘Impact of Development Finance Institutions on Gender Equity’.
139 This sub-section gives a brief review of a huge range of activities and is intended to provide an overview picture of current developments. It is not intended to suggest that other activities, not specifically mentioned, are not also worthy of attention.
140 WNC estimates that there are around 2000 women’s organisations in the country (Mohau Pheko, personal communication). PRODDER (1995) have produced a Directory of Women’s Organisations in South Africa, organised by region and sector, although this is not comprehensive.
141 The Report of CGE Information and Evaluation Workshops (CGE, 1997a) contains more details on many of these organisations. Appendix 5 also gives a brief description of a selection of them, based on interviews and other sources.
There is a growing focus among gender-focused NGOs on economic policy, poverty, labour and land rights of women, as well as community-based housing, informal sector/microenterprise support and child maintenance. Specific developments include:

- Organisations concerned with assisting abused women have begun to form new networks. The Departments of Justice and of Welfare have supported the formation of the National Network on Violence Against Women which includes national NGOs working on this question.142

- The need to include men in gender research and training initiatives (GETNET) and in programmes such as reproductive health, HIV/AIDS prevention and work addressing violence against women (Adapt) is receiving greater attention.

- The Network for the Empowerment of Women (NEW) was recently established with the aim of bridging the gap between women who have entered government and leadership positions and are being empowered, and the majority of women whose living conditions have changed little, or even worsened, since the transition.

- National Land Committee affiliates continue to work on gender aspects of land reform. A recent workshop at the Centre for Rural Legal Studies to compare outcomes of research and consolidate efforts to strengthen research capacity among NGOs (Shamim Meer, personal communication).

- A conference in November 1996 identified the multiple problems faced by women in the trade unions and in the work-place, and formulated a Charter for Working Women’s Rights, which will form the basis for a practical programme of action (Benjamin, 1997, 64-5).

- Outside the formal sector, the Self-Employed Women’s Union (SEWU), representing women workers in the non-organised sector, has expanded its membership into two new provinces and has made inputs into policy processes relating to training and support to the informal sector, as well as negotiating with local authorities and others to solve specific problems (Pat Horn, personal communication).

- The South African Homeless People’s Federation (SAHPF), with a large female membership, is promoting community based self-help housing schemes (SAHPF).

- At the local level, the policy processes emanating from the Lund Committee of Enquiry into Welfare Provision has galvanised a range of NGOs to form an anti-poverty network, which has the potential to develop into a stronger movement or coalition (Taylor, 1997).

Capacity for the design and implementation of gender-aware activities, as well as for lobbying, advocacy and policy analysis, are areas where NGOs, including gender-focused NGOs require support. As well as the general decline of donor funding to civil society, mainstreaming has made is more difficult for gender-focused

142 See Appendix 4 for more details.
organisations to get support, although some donors maintain special lines of funding. The National Development Agency, given limitations on resources and a likely tendency to support large, high profile initiatives may not improve the situation. For all these reasons, NGOs, including women’s organisations, are increasingly looking to alternative sources of support and sustainability, including direct support from the corporate sector and investment in financial markets.

8.3.1 Private sector support for gender equality programmes
There is little information on and little evidence of support from the private sector for development programmes aiming at gender equality or improving the lives of women. This is an area which has been identified by the Commission on Gender Equality as requiring further research (CGE, 1997b).

8.3.2 International NGOs
International NGOs operational in South Africa include INTERFUND, NOVIB, HIVOS and Oxfam, which all have gender policies. A strong focus of their activities is in training and capacity building in gender-aware planning and organisational development. They network with local NGOs and CBOs through the Northern NGO network, which provides a channel for information and capacity building on gender. Another main focus of international NGOs is support to activity to combat violence against women.

8.4 International donor agencies
Because of the relatively recent ‘transition to bilateralism’ (beginning officially in 1994), donors are still in the process of developing country strategies, and so programmes to date have been somewhat ad hoc in nature. A feature of this period has been the development of relations with government and a shift away from historical support of historical civil society partners. Some, though not all, donors are likely to reduce their aid disbursements to South Africa in the next two to three years as the immediate transitional phase recedes, because ongoing priority to South Africa is not seen as consistent with donor objectives of poverty reduction, given the middle income status of South Africa overall.

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143 WNC’s submission to the CGE workshops refers to South African Breweries’ involvement in a project supporting women in local government in North West Province. No further information was obtained on this initiative (CGE, 1997a: 89).

144 Budget cuts and restructuring of international NGOs mean some rationalisation of activities and foci, so that Oxfam (UK) and NOVIB, in future, will not fund gender-specific activities, now the mandate of Oxfam Canada. Oxfam (UK) will in future focus its activities on Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal from offices in Umtata and Durban, with a main orientation towards rural livelihoods. It is planning research to establish the current basis for rural livelihoods in these regions and the basis for future livelihood support.

145 This section relies on information gathered at a meeting of the donor co-ordination group on gender on 23rd October, 1997, attended by representatives of USAID, EU, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway, World Bank, UNDP, Ausaid, German Development Co-operation, Ford Foundation, and Commission on Gender Equality, at the Swedish Embassy in Pretoria. Questionnaires were distributed to all agencies participating in the donor co-ordination committee meeting. Additional material comes from interviews with Lotta Sylwander of Sida, Gayle Martin and Judith Edstrom of the World Bank and Anne Githuku-Shongwe of UNDP.
Gender (along with environment, poverty etc.) is treated as a ‘cross cutting theme’ in many development co-operation programmes in South Africa, and the ‘mainstreaming’ approach is common across most agencies which operate in South Africa.\textsuperscript{146} What this means in practice varies. Some agencies (e.g. Sida, UNDP, UNICEF, Norad etc.) combine mainstreaming with gender-specific funds and activities, while others do not have any gender specific activities (e.g. World Bank, GTZ). In some cases, specific staff members are appointed with responsibility for gender issues (Sida, UNDP, UNICEF); in others there are internal ‘gender teams’ representing the various sectors (USAID), while others have no formal structures or allocation of responsibility for gender (EU, World Bank).

No details were available at the time of writing on the actual budgetary allocations of donor agencies to support for gender equality. Because of mainstreaming, it is often hard to ascertain the extent to which broader budgets are of benefit to women, as well as men and some types of expenditure do not lend themselves easily to disaggregation.\textsuperscript{147}

\textsuperscript{146} JICA is an exception to this.
\textsuperscript{147} On the other hand, since government is expected and being supported to make this information available, it would be useful if donor agencies followed suit.
Figure Twelve: Gender Initiatives by Selected Bilateral and Multilateral Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/Agency</th>
<th>Support to Gender Specific Initiatives</th>
<th>Support to Mainstreaming Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Secretariat</td>
<td>National Gender Policy in RDP/OSW; Parliamentary Women’s Group; Technical assistance to CGE, CEDAW and WBI</td>
<td>Dept. of Justice and Dept. of Water Affairs and Forestry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Support to OSW</td>
<td>Justice, Land Reform, Human Rights and Democracy, education and rural water supply and sanitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gender as a cross-cutting issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gender as a cross-cutting issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Focus on violence through women’s NGOs</td>
<td>National Land Committee; water and sanitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>Focus on violence through women’s NGOs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Pre- and post-Beijing process through WNC; Education of women politicians with WDF; Women’s Empowerment Unit in Speaker’s Office</td>
<td>Housing, education and public administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>National Network Against Violence Against Women</td>
<td>Health and education, governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>Capacity building at provincial and local government level</td>
<td>SMME sector, public works, crime prevention, housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>Gender Training of Men through GETNET</td>
<td>Focus on girl child in UNICEF programmes; DBSA audit of gender-related data sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td></td>
<td>Poverty assessment and cross-cutting issue in health, education, land reform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Beall (1997)
Overall, relatively little expertise in gender is found among core agency staff and, in spite of individual efforts, those with gender responsibility often lack the training, resources, authority or management support to effectively implement agency gender policies (Beall, 1997). Consultants tend to be used (both South African and external) for much gender advisory work, underlining the weak institutionalisation of gender within country programmes.

The manner in which gender issues are integrated into overall strategy and programme development also varies. In some cases broad policy commitments do not carry through clearly into programming (e.g. in the EU’s development co-operation programme) (Dronnet, personal communication; Beall, 1997). In others, gender concerns are brought in late in the process of strategy development, once main priorities have been decided on, so that gender is a focus within sectoral or thematic priorities but not a deciding factor in establishing these (USAID, UNDP). For most agencies, gender equality appears to be at best a second-order priority, with poverty reduction and ‘good governance’ (encompassing, variously, democratisation and participation) the main emphases of donor programmes. Figure 12 (above) gives an overview of the different activities of donor agencies in South Africa in mid-1997.

To date, major areas of donor support relevant to gender equality in South Africa include:

- **Policy and institutional development**: support to capacity development of national machinery for gender equality (OSW, CGE) at different levels, particularly through gender training, improving the gender information base;
- **Political empowerment**: training/support for women in parliament and (to some extent) local government;
- **Legal rights and violence against women**: support for research and training in legal rights and gender; violence and gender; shelters and services for victims of violence;
- **Social sector support**: education, primary and reproductive health care, welfare, housing, water, with emphasis on women’s participation and gender equity.

Support to women’s NGOs and networks was important in the period 1994-7, particularly for Beijing preparation and follow up but is tending to fall away.

Areas where donor support for gender equality to date appears limited include:

- Support to sustainable rural livelihoods and to gender-aware agricultural services (finance, extension, marketing) provision;
- Support to informal sector workers through skills training and development, and the provision of financial, infrastructural, social development and marketing services;
- Mobilisation, organisation and advocacy for labour and welfare rights of low paid and insecure workers (in agriculture and domestic service);

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148 Sylwander, 1997; Anne Githuku-Shongwe, personal communication; Lotta Sylwander, personal communication.
149 EU does support some programmes linked to rural livelihoods development in the Community Projects Fund in Free State province (Beall, 1997).
150 A gender consultant recently proposed to the EU extending its proposed support to national vocational training to cover the need for skills development among low paid women workers (Beall, 1997).
• Capacity building on gender issues in local government, support for women’s participation in local government and for improving the accountability of service delivery to women;
• Development of gender-aware research and policy analysis skills, in finance and economic policy, agriculture and rural development, labour and human resources.

These constitute major gaps, particularly given the over-riding priority being accorded to poverty alleviation.

According to Beall’s (1997: para 11) assessment for the EU, ‘the main problem regarding gender in development co-operation in South Africa is lack of capacity to design and implement gender-integrated projects’. Gender training is often included as a component in wider programmes but there is uncertainty over the impact of current gender training efforts and over how to measure this. Mechanisms to monitor the impact of donor resource allocation and donor supported programmes on gender equality are not clear and programmes were not of long enough duration for many major evaluations to have been done at the time of writing.

Since early 1997, a network for donor co-ordination on gender issues has been established which was convened by Sida’s Social Development Adviser during its first six months. This operates at the level of information exchange and attempting to establish common priorities, gaps in support and complementary strategies for support to government and NGOs.

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151 A further meeting of the donor gender coordination network was held on 7th July 1998 in Pretoria. At this meeting, both the bilateral and multilateral agencies, as well as a separate group for international NGOs and Foundations working on women/gender issues, met together for the first time and planned to have at least some joint meetings in future.
9. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The preceding analysis highlights a number of issues relevant to future research, policy and action to address gender inequality in South Africa. This concluding section will not attempt to summarise, but rather to point out some key issues, biases and gaps in existing research, highlighting where future efforts might usefully focus.

9.1 Summary of key points

It is clear that in South Africa, gender inequality cannot be understood without reference to other axes of inequality (e.g. race, location, age). Nor does it provide a simple basis for ‘targeting’ interventions. This is because women are highly differentiated in experiences and needs; because targeting resources at women will lead to unintended responses from other members of the household and community and because women themselves may not have the capacity or confidence to initiate new forms of action. There is a need for sustained development of women’s organisations and for gender integration into NGOs and CBOs so as to ensure policy effectiveness.

Poverty cannot be properly understood, or addressed, without analysis of its gendered dimensions and processes. In particular, the following are key ‘gendered’ dimensions of poverty in South Africa, which need consideration in any interventions aimed at poverty reduction:

- The complex, varied and fluid nature of ‘households’ in South Africa
- The existence of inequalities in resource and power within, as well as between households;
- Pervasive labour market segmentation, disadvantage and discrimination;
- Time poverty particularly but not only of rural women;
- The insecurity of women’s claims on resources, including land and transfers;
- Vulnerability to violence and abuse.

9.2 Biases in existing research and programmes

Inevitably, this report reflects the biases, lacunae and limitations of existing data and research. The relative dearth of research designed and produced by black, particularly African women, on gender relations in South Africa is an important limitation on the existing knowledge base and suggests a need to encourage young African women (and men) to develop research skills on gender issues.

Other biases in the existing data and research are its urban and formal sector bias; and its focus on legal and political issues. In relation to poverty, there is a tendency to focus on loosely-defined female-headed households, rather than the diversity of household forms and relations. Very little research was identified which looks at male identities and responses to changing gender relations.

At the level of government and other actors, there has been and remains a major preoccupation with internal organisational change for gender equality and much gender training and advisory work has been geared towards this. Analysis and training to improve mechanisms of service delivery and accountability for gender
equality is now also needed, through monitoring systems, including participatory monitoring and evaluation.

9.3 Gaps in existing research and programmes

The existing statistical and research database inadequately covers the key areas of poor people’s livelihoods and specifically how gender relations shape livelihood strategies. Some gaps will be covered by upcoming national surveys, but much more needs to be done, e.g. in disaggregated analysis of informal activities, earnings, conditions, labour practices, marketing mechanisms. Existing systems for mobilising savings and credit, their uses by women and men and possibilities for linkages or leverage into the formal sector is another major area for investigation.

In general, there is a dearth of rigorous qualitative research on changing gender relations and livelihoods at the level of household and communities. The interface between the institutions and practice of customary law and changing views of gender relations is a rich area for further enquiry. Similarly, the extent and nature of women’s involvement in religious organisations (in particular the independent African churches) and their potential as a mobilising force is an area about which little is known. In its broader sense, gender aspects of local governance, particularly in rural areas, and ways in which women can access power and resources at the local level are poorly understood.

Evidence of high levels of neglect and abuse of children suggests a need to address issues related to childcare and parenting in the context of changing family forms and gender relations. Specifically, the implementation of the new provisions on child maintenance require careful monitoring to ensure that they have the maximum possible impact and that ‘losers’ are given adequate support. Child sexual abuse and trafficking are a focus of concern but about which there is little concrete information, as are sexual survival strategies in general.

Current processes of change in employment in the public and private sector and specifically the impact of affirmative action from a gender, as well as a race perspective is a major gap in knowledge. More broadly, the likely impact of economic change, including trade liberalisation, privatisation and public sector restructuring, on employment patterns and conditions by gender, as well as livelihoods and security for women, needs to be monitored and assessed.


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Fester, Gertrude. (1997). ‘Women’s organisations in the Western Cape: Vehicles for gender struggle or instruments of subordination?’ Agenda, No.34.


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Mbatha, L. (1997b). ‘Customary land allocation processes which are not incompatible with the Constitution,’ Research in Progress, AGI Associate Programme Seminar, 4 June.


Primo, Natasha (1997). ‘Women’s emancipation: Resistance and empowerment’ Agenda No. 34.


SEWU, (various), SEWU News, SEWU: Durban


Realizing the Rights of Women in Development Processes. Valparaiso University School of Law.


Watson, Joy (1997). ‘Prioritising women’s rights: The Commission on Gender Equality’ Agenda, No.34


WNC (1993). ‘Profile of the women’s national coalition,’ Paper prepared for the WNC research methodology workshop, Johannesburg: WNC


APPENDIX 1: Terms Of Reference

Country Gender Analysis of South Africa
first phase

1. Background

Since the signing of the Development Co-operation Agreement between South Africa and Sweden in 1995, after the first democratic elections, gender issues have been high on the agenda of both countries. Gender issues have also been an important part of Sweden’s co-operation with NGOs in South Africa. Sweden gave substantial support to the preparation process for the Beijing conference on women.

Sida is presently in the start-up phase of the process to establish a Country Strategy for Swedish development co-operation with South Africa. In preparation for this, several studies will be commissioned covering different areas of concern and interest for Sida and the Swedish Government. Gender issues and the continued work for gender equality has been identified as one of the main areas of possible continued Swedish support to South Africa. It is also of importance to understand the complexity of South African society in a gender perspective.

A wealth of gender-related information about South Africa is available and may provide the information and analysis that is needed. However, it is presently not possible to get a comprehensive and summarised analysis of gender issues and problems in South Africa that also provides a specific analysis into the various sectors where Sweden renders development support.

Sida has previously commissioned several Country Gender Analysis of co-operating countries in order to provide information and instruments for desk officers and planners in dealing with gender. This has not been done for South Africa yet and no comprehensive study has been conducted in South Africa that would fulfil the needs of Sida at present.

2. Purpose of the assignment

In order to effectively address gender equality in the development co-operation with South Africa there is a need to increase Sida’s knowledge and awareness of the gender situation in the country. The present country gender analysis will be conducted in two phases, resulting in two documents:

- Country Gender Analysis - summary document
- Gender Analysis of South Africa: with in-depth sectoral research

In the first phase a general gender analysis, based on already existing research, statistics, etc. will be carried out and result in a concise and summarised document. The document will be mainly for Sida use.

The second phase of the gender analysis will be a broader process with South African society, public and private, donors and academic institutions. The second phase of the gender analysis work should benefit a larger user interest group and ...
The purpose of the Country Gender Analysis is:

- To provide a gender analysis of South Africa summarising the comparative situation of women and men, with particular reference to their economic, social, socio-cultural (especially race and age), legal and political status.
- To identify particular gender discrepancies in education, public administration, media and culture, urban and rural development.
- To provide an integrated poverty gender analysis, especially of disadvantaged groups such as female-headed households, and disabled people.
- To identify particular gaps in information, research and data concerning gender.

3. Scope and focus of work

The Country Gender Analysis should be a summary document on the situation of women and men, set in the context of various inter-related casual factors, as well as an analysis of the trends and forces which contribute to the overall change in existing gender relations.

The consultant should provide an overview and analysis with regard to gender equality, the situation of men and women, and context and group specific problems in the following areas:

3.1 Current situation

i. Overall economic situation
Economic policies and reforms, growth, debt situation, balance of payments, production (both tradable and non-tradable), inflation, public revenue, public expenditures (i.e. Women’s Budget), social sector spending, public investment, user charges, welfare subsidies, employment and labour in both the formal and informal sector.

ii. Socio-economic situation
General poverty situation, income distribution, demographic situation, provision and access to services and resources, infrastructure, health (including AIDS/HIV), education, disability, informal sector, information, energy, land, natural resources and environment, livelihood systems, etc. Of particular interest is a comparison between urban and rural settings.

iii. Socio-cultural context
Ethnic and racial groups, family structure (in particular female-headed households), children, youth, girl children, migrant labour, food security, housing and urban development, livelihood systems, traditional laws, etc. Racial discrepancies of particular importance.
iv. **Legal situation and human rights**
Inheritance, land tenure, status, marriage, labour laws, violence (especially family violence), rape, traditional vs. civil law, etc.

v. **Political setting**
Process of transformation, participation and access to power, constitution building, representation and participation in provincial and national parliament, local government, safety and security.

3.2 **Policies and inputs in the area of gender equality promotion**

The formulation and design of national gender equality policies, legislation and the constitution, their focus and status, and the implementation of these as well as the public and academic institutions of relevance and interest.

The consultant shall provide information and analysis of what is currently being done for promotion of gender equality in South Africa. A brief presentation of agents (government, NGOs, donors, women’s movements and pressure groups, academia and others) working with gender equality, the issues dealt with, target group and membership, applied approach and inputs, should be included.

3.3 **General problems and opportunities**

The consultant shall identify and describe the areas that have proved to create opportunities for gender equality promotion, and problems often encountered. Areas of apparent lack of information shall be identified.

4. **Methodology**

A mass of information, analysis and reports are available on gender issues and gender equality in South Africa. Limited disaggregated statistical data seriously limits the general and specific data analysis, however recent releases of new statistics should be availed of. The consultant’s task is to carry out an extensive desk study and summarise and analyse existing information and experience. This will involve reviewing written materials as well as interviewing relevant individuals and institutions. The information shall be obtained from government, NGOs, academic institutions, private sector, statistical bureau, donors and international organisations.

The study and analysis shall be carried out in a multi-disciplinary manner and cover relevant cross-cutting issues. The assignment shall be carried out by a competent international consultant, with extensive knowledge and experience in gender analysis and gender equality work. The consultant will have to work in a collaborative manner and will have to engage South African partners in the work.

A consultative workshop will be held during the assignment in South Africa.
5. Time frame

The assignment shall take 45 working days and be conducted between July 1997 and November 1997.

- Preparatory work: late July and August (2 weeks)
- Background research: September (2 weeks)
- Travel to South Africa: September - October (2 weeks), first draft
- Final drafting/review/editing: October - November (2-3 weeks).

To be completed by 15 November 1997.

6. Reporting

A draft report shall be presented to the Embassy of Sweden, Pretoria, no later than 15 October, the final report shall be submitted no later than 15 November 1997. The final report should not consist of more than 50 pages excluding Annexes.

7. The consultant

The consultant for the Country Gender Analysis should be well experienced in the field of gender analysis and gender and development issues. The consultant must also be knowledgeable about the general situation in South Africa, the developments in terms of gender mainstreaming in the post-Beijing era in South Africa.
APPENDIX 2: List of individuals interviewed or consulted

**Government**

Dr Ellen Kornegay  
Office on the Status of Women (OSW), Deputy President’s Office

**Government bodies**

Colleen Lowe-Morna  
Adviser, Commission on Gender Equality (CGE)  
Tel: 011 403 7182

Milla McLachlan  
Policy Unit, Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA),  
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Tel: 011 313 3144  
Fax: 011 313 3533  
Email: milla@dbsa.org

Makgoshi Sindane  
Head of Affirmative Action and Gender Unit,  
Development Bank of Southern Africa (as above)  
Tel: 011 313 3011  
Fax: 011 343 7804  
Cell: 082 501 8800.

**Non-governmental organisations**

Pat Horn  
Self Employed Women’s Union (SEWU)  
35 Baines House, 3rd Floor, 60 Broad Street  
Durban  
Tel: 031 304 6504  
Fax: 031 304 3719

Thandi Lewin  
Forum for African Women Educationalists, South Africa (FAWESA)  
c/o MBM Change Agents  
Tel: 021 531 7902;  
Fax: 021 531 1427.
Mohau Pheko  
Chief Executive Officer, Women’s National Coalition (WNC)  
3617 Tower Offices, Carlton Centre, PO Box 62319,  
Marshalltown 2107, Johannesburg.  
Tel: 011 331 5958/9;  
Fax: 011 331 5957;  
Cell: 082 881 9858  
Email: Beijing@wn.apc.org

Pethu Serote, Charmain Fortuin  
Gender Education and Training Network (GETNET)  
16 Belgravia Road  
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Tel: 021 637 8820/1558  
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Rosieda Shabodien  
Gender Advocacy Programme (GAP)  
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Researchers/ consultants

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Energy Development Research Centre, University of Cape Town (UCT)  
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Debbie Budlender  
Senior Researcher  
Community Agency for Social Enquiry (C A S E)/ Central Statistics  
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Cell: 082 579 6697  
Email: debbieb@wn.apc.org

Catherine Cross  
Centre for Social and Development Studies (CSDS)  
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Tel: 031 260 2841
Michelle Friedman  
African Gender Institute (AGI)  
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Tel:  021 650 2970  
Fax:  021 685 2142  
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Shireen Hassim  
Research Specialist, Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)  
134 Pretorius Street, Private Bag X41 Pretoria 0001  
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Email:  shassim@silwane.hsrc.ac.za

Nozipho January-Bardill  
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Cell:  083 604 0384.

Thandiwe January-Maclean  
Consultant  
c/o MBM Change Agents (see above)

Rachel Jewkes,  
Senior Specialist, Women’s Health Programme,  
Medical Research Council (MRC), Pretoria  
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Fax:  011 339 6423

Francie Lund  
Centre for Social and Development Studies  
University of Natal  
Durban  
Tel:  031 260 2365

Julian May  
Centre for Social and Development Studies  
University of Natal  
Durban  
Tel:  031 260 3274
Nomtuse Mbere  
Gender consultant  
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Cell: 082 457 0871

Shamim Meer  
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Mayfair, Johannesburg  
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Sheila Meintjes  
Dept of Political Studies  
University of the Witwatersrand  
P.O. Wits  
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Tel: 011 716 3339  
064smm@muse.wits.ac.za

Viviene Taylor  
University of Western Cape (UWC)  
Cape Town  
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(also part-time commissioner on Commission on Gender Equality).

**International agencies**

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152 No longer in post.
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153 GTZ now has a representative based in South Africa with responsibility for gender (see Appendix 7).  
154 No longer in post.
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APPENDIX 3: Additional contacts and resource persons on gender issues in South Africa

Government:

Department of Agriculture
Bongiwe Njobe, Director General
Tel: 012 319 6000
Fax: 012 326 3454

Department of Education
Nasima Badsha, Deputy Director General
Tel: 012 312 5411/2
Ann Marie Wolpe, Chair of Gender Equity Task Team, Department of Education
Tel: 021 959 3591

Department of Land Affairs
Carolyn Fletcher
Tel: 012 312 9450
Fax: 012 312 9128

Department of Welfare
Edith Vries
Tel: 012 312 7500
Fax: 012 312 7684

Public bodies:

Land Claims Court
Cherryl Walker, Commissioner of Land Claims Court, Natal

National Economic Development And Labour Council (Nedlac)
Maud Dlomo
Tel: 011 482 2511

Public Service Commission
Neva Seidman-Makgetla
Tel: 012 314 7911

Parliamentarians

Pregs Govender
Committee for the Quality of Life and Status of Women
Tel: 021 403 3034
Fax: 021 403 2070
Cell: 083 550 4669
Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge  
Parliamentary Women’s Caucus  
Tel: 021 403 3102  
Fax: 021 461 0462  

Gertrude Shope  
Tel: 021 403 3212  
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**Researchers:**

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Centre for Applied Legal Studies, University of the Witwatersrand  
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(Legal issues, government policy)  
(Also Commissioner on CGE)  

Likapha Mbatha,  
c/o Centre for Applied Legal Studies, University of the Witwatersrand  
(As above)  
(Customary law/land rights)  

Keith Ruiters  
Psychology Department, University of the Western Cape  
Cape Town  
Tel: 021 959 2283  
Fax: 021 959 3515  
(Men and masculinity, psychology)  

Jackie Sunde, Centre for Rural Legal Studies, University of Stellenbosch  
Tel: 021 883 8033/021 448 2002  
Fax: 021 886 5076  
(Land reform)  

Anne Vaughan, University of Durban-Westville  
(Rural development)  

Caroline White, University of Natal, Department of Anthropology  
(Urban survival strategies)  

**NGOs:**

Agisanang Domestic Abuse Prevention and Training (ADAPT)  
Contact: Mmatshilo Motsei  
Tel: 011 855 3305  
Fax: 011 885 3309
Black Sash
Tel: (Jo’burg) 011 322 4480
Contact: Alison Tilley, Tel: (Cape Town) 021 461 7804

Community Law Centre, Western Cape
Women and Human Rights Documentation Centre
Contact: Sandy Liebenberg
Tel: 021 959 3602/ 2950
Fax: 021 959 2411
Email: docent@iafrica.com

Farmworkers’ Resource and Research Project (FRRP)
Contact: Mampe Ntsedi
Tel: 011 339 6671
Fax: 011 339 6808

National Institute for Public Interest Law and Research (NIPILAR)
Contact: Gender Unit, Boogie Khutsoane, Linda Vilakazi-Tselane (girl child)
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Network on Violence Against Women
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Fax: 012 341 6884
Cell: 083 268 8714

NGO Coalition
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Marsha Andrews, Tel: 021 685 3033

Rural Women’s Movement (RWM)
Contact: Poppy Edna Linda
Tel: 011 334 1939
Fax: 011 334 0099

South African Local Government Association (SALGA)
Alice Coetzee, Gender working group
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Social Sciences Research and Development Forum (Sosrdef)
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Transvaal Rural Action Committee (TRAC)
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Women’s Development Foundation (WDF)
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Fax: 011 339 6533

Women’s Health Project (WHP)
University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
Contact: Barbara Klugman
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**International agencies**

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Scholastica Kimaryo, Representative
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Fax: 012 326 6677
APPENDIX 4: Selected South African networks and NGOs focused on gender

Networks and coalitions

National Network on Violence Against Women
Established in November 1995 as a partnership between NGOs and government departments, including Welfare, Justice, SAPS, Health and Education. The Network on Violence Against Women works closely with WNC and a range of other NGOs. Its main aim is the prevention and eradication of all forms of violence against women. Activities include:
- Training in counselling for victims of violence;
- Use of legal measures to prevent violence;
- Gender-sensitivity training for police;
- Provincial-level capacity building;
- Establishment of outreach centres;
- Establishment of shelters;
- Men’s march against VAW (November 1997);
- (from 1998) Co-operation with Soul City in promoting debates around violence against women in print and TV media.

Network for the Empowerment of Women (NEW)
NEW was launched in October 1997 by a group of experienced women leaders. It is a ‘non-party political women’s forum, whose aim is to ensure the upliftment (sic) of the most disadvantaged women. These women are mainly black (NEW information sheet). The network aims to bridge the gap between women who have entered government and leadership positions and are being empowered, and the majority of women whose living conditions have changed little. The objectives of NEW are:
- To develop a network of community based and other women’s organisations with similar aims and generate a common database;
- To facilitate the participation of the most disadvantaged women in achieving economic independence;
- To develop women’s potential through assertiveness training and confidence building;
- To link women to institutions, services and information;
- To ensure representation of women in all levels of decision-making;
- To create a conducive environment for women’s empowerment.

Contact: Michele Ruiters, c/o IDASA, Pretoria

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155 This section is in no way comprehensive or objective and is intended simply to give a taste of the range of organisations and activities. Information given is based on both interviews (marked with asterisk) and documentary sources. In some cases, it is difficult, without more detailed assessment, to distinguish between programmes actually being implemented and those still in planning stages. This would require further verification.

156 Here black refers to African and so-called ‘coloured’ women.
Women’s National Coalition (WNC)*
WNC was established in 1993, and was instrumental in ensuring that women had a voice in the transitional negotiations, in particular through the Women’s Charter for Effective Equality which formed the basis for later constitutional and policy commitments to gender equality. WNC was also heavily involved in preparations for and follow up to the Beijing Conference.

WNC is a co-ordinating body representing its members, with (as at October 1997) 132 affiliates, 13 regional offices and seven provincial offices (none in Western or Northern Cape). The WNC membership comprises both women’s organisations and mixed organisations working on women’s issues. The composition of affiliates has changed over the years and includes grassroots organisations (both rural and peri-urban) as well as nationally representative NGOs.

Main programmes:
• Women’s database and information centre;
• Lobbying and advocacy;
• National and international networks and exchanges;
• Research and monitoring;
• Public education and awareness.
(CGE, 1997a: 88-9)

WNC is beginning to ‘sector’ its work and now supports networks on violence against women, health, economics and local government. The last members’ conference prioritised three main areas:
• Women in government (e.g. political participation, decision making, representation and participation);
• Women in law (e.g. reviewing old legislation, proposing new laws); and
• Women in the economy (e.g. women’s budget, GEAR, WTO and trade agreements, SADC/ inter-regional trade issues),

WNC also sits on Nedlac, representing women in the Development Chamber and makes inputs on a range of government policies (labour, welfare, population and development). Provincial and regional capacity building is a priority. Training is also needed for members, e.g. in lobbying.

Contact: Mohau Pheko

Networks integrating gender into their work

NGO Coalition
The NGO coalition was launched in 1995, and currently has a staff of nine and a membership of over 4000 NGOs, in nine provincial coalitions and 13 national sectoral networks. Its main areas of activity in relation to gender are:
• Lobbying;
• Advocacy;
• Information dissemination;
• Developing NGO leadership;
• Establishing NGO coalition structures at provincial level.
The NGO coalition is also involved in the ‘War against poverty’ campaign (CGE, 1997a: 23; Boulle, 1997)

Contact: Jacqui Boulle

Organisations

Agisanang Domestic Abuse Prevention and Training (ADAPT)
Focused on the prevention of violence against women in rural and urban contexts, with a particular emphasis on changing the perception of violence against women from a ‘women’s problem’ to a men’s issue. Activities include:
• Work with rural and urban communities on violence against women;
• Work with men;
• Arts and healing: using theatre and dance therapy;
• Work with government and churches at policy and service provision levels;
• Training of police and magistrates;
• Drawing on indigenous social sanctions and authorities to address issues of violence against women.
(CGEG, 1997a: 272)

Gender Advocacy Programme (GAP)*
The Gender Advocacy Programme (GAP) was established in 1993 by the Black Sash, the ANC Women’s League and the Western Province Council of Churches (WPCC) in order to lobby decision-makers on gender issues during the transition period.

In 1996 GAP became independent of WPCC. Its lobbying and other activities are organised into five programmes:
• Domestic violence: including a march on Parliament;
• Women in governance: seminar to address ‘politics fatigue’ among women representatives; organizing tours of Parliament for women from poor communities; training women in advocacy for public hearings;
• Women in local government: a study was prepared in 1996 and GAP is involved in lobbying on the Green Paper on local government; facilitating meetings between poor urban women and local councillors;
• Reproductive health;
• Social policy: alternative framework for child maintenance; building capacity of welfare organisations to be involved in policy making.

Overall, GAP aims to promote women’s participation in policy formulation. This also requires good research and policy analysis. GAP is working to balance this with advocacy and mobilisation work. Lobbying skills require strengthening in many areas.

Contact: Rosieda Shabodien

110
**Rural Women’s Movement (RWM)**

Established in 1992 as part of TRAC (Transvaal Rural Action Committee), RWM became independent in mid-1997. Past activities have focused on women’s land rights, on access to water and on political rights for women from former homelands. RWM is in the process of setting up offices and appointing personnel, and fund raising, with a view to becoming a fully independent national voice for rural women. It is an affiliate of WNC. Main focus of activities:

- Economic projects (sewing, poultry rearing etc.);
- Lobbying government;
- Informing rural women of their rights.

(Beall, 1997: Annex 3)

Contact: Poppy Edna Linda

**Self Employed Women’s Union (SEWU)**

SEWU is a union of informal sector workers with 3000 members in Kwa-Zulu Natal, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape. Through organising women workers in the informal sector, it has developed the leadership skills of poor women, increased the visibility and bargaining power of informal sector workers, won concessions and changes in local government policy affecting traders and made inputs into numerous policy discussions and fora. SEWU has also facilitated access to finance and training (particularly in ‘non-traditional’ skills) although it does not provide these services directly. It is poised to become a national-level organisation but is grappling with problems of financial sustainability (SEWU News; Pat Horn, personal communication).

Contact: Pat Horn

**Women’s Development Bank**

Based on the Grameen Bank model of group solidarity lending to low-income women, operating in Eastern Mpumalanga. No further information available at time of writing.

Contact: Zanele Mbeki
**APPENDIX 5: Selected research/ capacity development organisations focusing on gender**

*African Gender Institute (AGI)*

AGI was established in 1996 at the University of Cape Town. Its main focus is to support the development of indigenous knowledge on gender issues and to work in areas which link theory and knowledge to policy formulation, design and review processes. AGI has four main programme areas:

1. **Increasing women’s access to sites of knowledge production and developing leadership**
   - (a) Associates Programme: provides short-term scholarships for women from across the continent to complete gender-related projects;
   - (b) Gender-based violence and education: focused on understanding and combating sexual harassment and violence in tertiary, and, now, secondary, institutions;

2. **Developing gender studies courses** and curricula. A Chair in gender studies is currently being recruited;

3. **Supporting strategy development** through participating in processes of strategy and policy formulation for various institutions, including through training and advisory work;

4. **Documentation and information centre**: AGI has a library, a gender research contacts database, an Email listserve, and has recently begun producing a newsletter. In future a website will be developed. AGI has also initiated a pan-African information workers network focused on gender (Gender in Africa Information Network: GAIN).

   (CGE, 1997a: 97-102)

Contact: Michelle Friedman

*Gender and Education Training Network (GETNET)*, Cape Town

GETNET works to support a democratic, non-racist and non-sexist South Africa through education, training and consultancy on gender issues. Its main target groups are policy makers in government, gender co-ordinators in NGOs, CBOs and unions and the corporate sector. GETNET is a membership organisation, with a Panel of Trainers based in different provinces, which it draws on to provide services.

Training activities include:
- Maintaining and upgrading skills of own trainers through ongoing training;
- Training for gender co-ordinators in different organisations;
- Responses to incoming requests;
- Gender training for men and development of gender training expertise among men.

Other activities include facilitating seminars, workshops and conferences; networking and research. GETNET also produces an occasional newsletter.

   (CGE, 1997a: 103-5)

Contact: Pethu Serote

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157 This is not a representative selection of organisations, but a ‘taste’ of what exists. See previous footnote for caveat.
Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC, Pretoria)*
The HSRC is a national research institute which focuses primarily on applied research in the social sciences. It is funded largely by a Parliamentary grant, through the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, and partly through contract research work. In the Education research group, the Register of Graduates is able to provide gender-disaggregated information on women in the tertiary sector and on career trajectories of women graduates. Gender disaggregated development information is available from the Social Dynamics research group. The Democracy and Governance group has a number of gender-related projects in the areas of policy-making, state institutions (including national, provincial and local government), electoral behaviour and social identities.

A separate section of the HSRC, the Centre for Science Development (CSD) provides grants for women researchers and for research on gender. It also runs a research capacity building programme for women and black researchers.

Contact: Shireen Hassim

Women’s Development Foundation (WDF)
WDF was formed in 1992 to address the gap in training and support for professional women, particularly those entering political life for the first time. Women’s Development Foundation works mainly in training, with an initial focus on women in politics (national and local government) and voter education. WDF’s programmes have three main components:

- Training assistance (including leadership training)
- Policy and advocacy work (providing spaces for policy dialogue on important issues - e.g. women and land)
- Research and documentation.

(CGE, 1997a: 24, 95-6)

Contact: Nosisi Sokutu

Women’s Health Programme, Centre for Epidemiological Research in South Africa (CERSA), Medical Research Council (MRC)*
Involved in research and research training on women’s health issues and qualitative research methods, including:

- National survey on gender violence to be completed in 1998. Also qualitative work on issues of violence affecting women farm workers and adolescents.
- South Africa Demographic Health Survey: field work to be carried out in 1998, covering 12000 households. Survey to be repeated in five years time;
- Health-seeking behaviour and quality of care including: barriers to access of teenagers to family planning services; services for pregnant women; cervical screening services;
- Abortion research, looking at epidemiological aspects, services, economic aspects and women’s experiences. This is to be followed up with work on access to abortion services and health worker attitudes, as well as clinical trials.

Contact: Rachel Jewkes
Appendix 6: International donor agencies involved in promoting gender equality

*Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)*
AusAID’s policy is to mainstream gender perspectives in development co-operation and to ensure that they are systematically considered in all aspects of planning and implementation of projects. Its Gender and Development policy is to promote equal opportunities for men and women as both participants and beneficiaries of development, for example, in access to services, or on political and economic life.

AusAID’s programme in South Africa does not have a gender specialist on staff although one of three programme officers has a brief to deal with gender issues specifically in relation to support to civil society and government.

AusAID’s programme focus is on capacity building within national government, through short-term assistance to departments which request assistance under the Capacity Building Program (CBP), drawing on human resources, strategic planning and policy/legislative expertise from Australia. The current country strategy document is a brief (two-page) outline of AusAID activity in South Africa and does not contain any social, political, economic or gender analysis. The South Africa programme does not have any specific gender strategy, although general policies and guidelines (outlined above) apply. Neither have any sectoral analyses been done which would integrate a gender perspective.

AusAID has no specific mechanisms for consultation with women’s organisations, although the programme officer with responsibility for gender and civil society is expected to keep abreast of developments. This programme officer can take initiative in launching activities, or act on guidance from Head Office. About ten percent (estimated) of the total AusAID budget in South Africa goes on gender-related activities. (Based on completed questionnaire)

AusAID specifically supports the Commonwealth Secretariat and Women’s Budget initiatives (see below), as well as work on violence against women in Mpumalanga (Sylwander, 1997).

Contact: Sisonke Msimang

*European Union (EU)*
EU assistance to South Africa comes under the European Programme for Reconstruction and Development (EPRD), which runs up to 1999. The sectoral focus is:

- Basic social services;
- Private sector development;
- Good governance, democratisation and human rights.

The Commission for the European Communities (CEC) passed a council resolution in

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158 Entries marked with an asterisk are based on the supply of information through questionnaires or interviews. This section is not a comprehensive survey. It is a summary of what selected donor agencies are doing. In some cases, due to limited information, it is difficult to assess whether stated policies are actually being implemented.

159 No longer with AusAid.
1995 which supports the integration of gender issues in development co-operation, and gender is a ‘horizontal theme’ in the multi-indicative programme (MIP). Gender is addressed, in theory, by sector specialists. In the South Africa programme, gender issues are often referred to the staff member on rural development, who has no formal gender brief but deal with issues on an *ad hoc* basis. The MIP contains a limited amount of gender-disaggregated data. To date, the EU has had little formal interaction with women’s organisations, although it may have given funding through small grants schemes to some groups.

Through basic social services programmes, it is hoped that women’s living standards will be improved, and in private sector development, that the needs and aspirations of women are addressed. Good government activities have not yet incorporated gender issues, or provided support for the development of gender policy or machinery.

In 1997, a mission to review the South Africa programme from a gender perspective analysed the overall context of development co-operation, and the EU’s strategy, including a range of programmes from each of the three priority areas (Beall, 1997). Findings showed that while the MIP contains useful gender analysis and provides an entry point, this does not always carry through into the different stages of the project cycle. The absence of consideration of gender at early stages in project development is a particular problem. A number of the projects supported by the EU (e.g. Cato Manor Urban Upgrading, Soul City health and social awareness education) were found to have thoroughly integrated gender issues but this was on their own initiative, rather than due to EU input.

Other existing or proposed programmes require further support to ensure that gender is fully integrated. One possible route for greater emphasis on gender, suggested by the gender specialist consultant, is that the proposed national vocational training scheme be extended to cover workers in the domestic (and other less organised) sectors. In the area of good governance, the consultant has proposed that consideration be given to support to the national machinery at provincial or local levels (*ibid*).

The main overall recommendations of the mission were for the formalisation of responsibility for gender issues at senior management level, supported by gender awareness training and training in gender-integrated project cycle management for delegation staff, as well as partners, in order to improve capacity for design and management of gender-integrated development programmes (*ibid*).

(Based on completed questionnaire and Beall, 1997)

Contact: François Dronnet

_Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida)*_  
Sida’s development co-operation programme in South Africa began in 1994. Sida is currently preparing a new country strategy for its co-operation with South Africa, for the period 1999 to 2004. The preparation for the new strategy includes analytical inputs (28 studies, of which the Country Gender Analysis is one), a review and impact evaluation of Sida’s existing programme and a process of consultation and negotiation with various Swedish and South African stakeholders. The strategy should be approved in September 1998.
It is likely that future Swedish development co-operation will have three main pillars:

- Poverty alleviation;
- Democracy;
- Links between Sweden and South Africa (e.g. economic co-operation, conflict resolution, scientific institutions, cultural programmes).

Increasingly, there will be a shift towards technical co-operation rather than direct financial support. In the past, Sweden supported many civil society organisations linked to the anti-apartheid movement. Over 50 percent of Sida’s funding goes to NGOs at present.

Gender is one of a range of cross-cutting issues in Sida’s development co-operation. Others are poverty, environment, disability, children’s rights and popular participation. Sida has made considerable effort and progress in gender at policy level but has had less success in implementation. The Country Gender Analysis is intended as a tool to assist Sida to identify important areas and ways to work which will improve their effectiveness in the area of gender equality. Sida has a specialist field advisor on gender issues.

In consultation with the Government of South Africa, Sida has agreed that their main geographical focus should be on the Northern Cape and the Eastern Cape. In practice, the Northern Cape is the main focus, because of political obstacles in the Eastern Cape. Sida has three long-term consultants assisting with capacity development in particular sectors in the Northern Cape. At present, Sida does not support any rural programmes, based on a decision (at headquarters level) not to support agriculture. Otherwise, the lack of rural focus is not based on a rigorous analysis of the South African situation (Lotta Sylwander, personal communication).

The main areas of Sida’s existing programme (and mainstreaming of gender) are:

- **Education**: support to curriculum development in the national department; special needs education, monitoring. School building programme and bursary scheme in the Northern Cape, as well as provincial department capacity building. Funding to WUS for NGO adult education programmes.

- **Public administration**: At national level, support to Departments of Justice, Finance, Public Protection and Police. At the provincial level, support to the Northern Cape. Public administration will be a strategic focus for social development/gender work because of its importance for poverty alleviation through effective service delivery and accountability.

- **Urban housing and development**: housing programmes in Port Elizabeth and Kimberley, to facilitate access to government subsidies through the promotion of revolving funds. Also support to local government urban development programmes.

- **Human rights and democracy**: support to TRC, funding to NGOs. (This area likely to wind down).

Sida also supports five ‘gender-specific/ integrated’ projects:

1. **Women’s Empowerment Unit in the SA Parliament**: As part of a wider EU-funded transformation programme in the SA Parliament, support to Women’s Empowerment Unit in the Speakers’ Office in both National and Provincial legislatures. This is a three-year programme, in three phases, with funding of four million Rand. The first phase of needs assessment (gender training, attitudinal change, sexual harassment) is to be followed by training and information work,
beginning in 1998. A full time co-ordinator to the programme has been appointed.

2. **Community Law Centre, University of Western Cape:** Two years support for the gender programme, mainly for training of court officials.

3. **Law Race and Gender project,** University of Cape Town. For training of magistrates and other court staff around the family violence act, as well as broader issues of race, gender and the administration of justice. Also a research component.

4. **Women’s National Coalition:** For pre-Beijing process and Beijing follow up. This support is coming to an end.

5. **Women’s Development Foundation:** Support for training of politicians/public servants in a range of skills including budget analysis.

Future support for the public education campaign of the CGE has also been agreed.

Contact: Lotta Sylwander

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*United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)*

UNDP adopted a country co-operation framework (CCF) for South Africa, in September 1997, for the period 1997-2001, with an estimated budget of approximately US$ 59 million (UNDP, 1997b). Poverty reduction is the over-riding objective of the co-operation programme, which focuses on ‘sustainable livelihoods’ and ‘sound governance’ as the means to achieve this goal.

Gender equity is a cross-cutting theme in UNDP co-operation and gender equality and women’s empowerment are explicitly included in the CCF in relation to support to SMMEs (small, medium and micro-enterprises), community development initiatives, the decentralisation of public administration, capacity building in provincial administration and gender planning at national level. The need to allocate sufficient resources to mainstreaming gender is noted in relation to budgetary allocations. Economic empowerment, political empowerment and freedom from violence are the three main foci of support to women.

At the end of 1996, a situation analysis was commissioned for South Africa but there was no specific focus on gender within this. UNICEF has commissioned a brief separate strategy paper on gender mainstreaming and has also recently recruited a UN gender adviser, expected to be in post in early 1988. This person will develop a strategic approach to gender for the UN system as a whole in South Africa, and be based in the Resident Co-ordinators’ office (which is also the UN Res. Rep. office).

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160Nomtuse Mbere, gender consultant was preparing this paper at the time of writing this report.
Activities supported by UNDP in South Africa include:

1. **Poverty:**
   (a) support to PIR report and associated process of developing poverty indicators and monitoring systems, with some coverage of gender issues.[161]
   (b) sponsorship of newly launched ‘War against poverty’ campaign, with a focus on raising awareness of poverty issues, lobbying for economic policy which favours the poor, and for increased public expenditure in areas which benefit the poor (based on 20:20 compact) and for the repudiation of ‘apartheid debt’.

2. **Welfare:** Support to Department of Welfare Flagship Programme for Young Unemployed mothers with children under five.

3. **Housing:** Support to the National Housing Department to develop capacity for people’s housing processes. Eighty five to ninety percent of participants are women and programmes promote the control of women over title deeds.

4. **Education:** a minimal role in providing bursaries for black students to attend black universities, favouring low-income, female and rural candidates.

5. **Health:** Provision of UNV doctors in Northern Province.

6. **Crime and violence:** Support to the National Crime Prevention Strategy, for victim empowerment. Building the capacity of the National Network on Violence Against Women at provincial level and supporting two pilot outreach centres, providing legal, medical and a range of other services to victims of violence (male and female).

7. **Women’s empowerment:** Training of women in local government, through the Women’s Development Foundation.

8. **Economic development:** Support to small-scale enterprise, through SMME programmes, including a focus on disadvantaged groups, including women (no specific details available).

9. **CEDAW:** support to the preparation of the government report to CEDAW. 
   (Based on interview with Anne Githuku-Shongwe)

Contact: Anne Githuku-Shongwe

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**United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)**

UNICEF is currently building internal capacity to support gender work in South Africa, e.g. through internal gender training. A gender adviser to the UN system is expected to be in place in early 1998. UNICEF has a system of gender focal points.

UNICEF’s activities in the area of gender equality focus mainly on the girl child. UNICEF has produced situation analyses of children in South Africa (1993, 1996) and is currently supporting the preparation of regional situation analyses of the girl child in the poorer provinces, using a rights framework (Nomtuse Mbere, personal communication).

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[161] While it was not felt appropriate in the planning stages of the PIR to prepare a separate gender paper, in the event, a separate paper was prepared as an input into the final study (Budlender, 1997c).
Other activities supported include:

- Gender training of men (through GETNET);
- Preparation of training manuals on CEDAW (through NIPILAR);
- Mainstreaming gender into national statistics.

Contact: Scholastica Kimayo

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)*

USAID have recently approved a ten-year strategy for development co-operation in South Africa. Main priorities will be:

- Democracy;
- Good governance;
- Primary health care (with EU);
- Housing (with UNDP); and
- Primary education.

USAID has an overall gender policy and an internal gender team in its South Africa office. It is in the process of developing a gender strategy. At the time of preparing this study (October 1997), a team of three consultants were in South Africa for the first phase of this process. A second, larger team (including a gender economist) were due to visit South Africa in early December 1997. The strategy will provide a detailed gender analysis within the sectoral focus of the existing country strategy.

Contact: Dawn Emling, Democracy Fellow

World Bank*

As at October 1997, the World Bank did not have a lending programme in South Africa as such. Its role was mainly advisory and in providing capacity-building small grants for technical work. The World Bank had not yet developed a country analysis, although it has been involved in supporting the development of the database and analytical understanding of poverty issues, through its sponsorship of the SALDRU study, the PPA and the PIR, all of which include some coverage of gender and poverty issues. The Bank will develop concrete directions for any future programme in consultation with Government in 1998.

Key Bank priorities are poverty reduction and participation. Gender is seen as important within these areas. While the Bank has an overall gender policy statement, it has no gender-specific programmes and no formal structures for promoting gender within the organisation at country level. Gender is a factor, though not usually a determining one, in their priority setting.

To date, technical assistance in South Africa has focused on poverty; land reform; urban infrastructure and municipal development; health finance and hospital rehabilitation; small and medium enterprise; social security targeting; procurement reform (procurement weighting is given according to gender, as well as race); intergovernmental fiscal relations; reform of the budgetary process; and labour market modelling and analysis.

162 Gayle Martin, newly-appointed Health Economist, represented the Bank at the Donor Gender Co-ordination Network meeting in October 1997.
With the Ministry of Finance, a new labour market model has been developed by the World Bank to predict the impact of economic policy on employment creation, including tracing indirect effects on the non-formal sector. This model does not provide a gender-disaggregated analysis. A study has also been completed on gender, education and the labour market which looks at relative education levels and pay in formal sector employment by race and gender.163

In future, the Bank is likely to be involved in:
- Health service provision and health financing;
- Rural livelihoods;
- Human resources development.
Future programmes will consider targeting of female-headed households and improving access to social welfare and health serving of disadvantaged groups.

Contact: Gayle Martin

Other

Commonwealth Secretariat
- Support to National Gender Policy;
- Support to strategic planning meetings of CGE;
- Support to advisory capacity of CGE;
- Technical assistance on CEDAW report;
- Support to Gender and Macroeconomics policy project and Women’s Budget;
- Support to DBSA Audit of Gender-Related Data Sources initiative.

Danida
- Provides support to the OSW;
- Previous support to RDP, including gender desk;
- Survey on gender in Gauteng;
- Gender sensitivity training in Department of Justice.

Dutch Embassy
Focus on violence against women through direct support to NGOs: POWA, Adapt, WNC, Lungelo.

163 The study was completed in draft form but not available for consultation, at the time of writing.
164 Except where otherwise specified, all subsequent entries are based on Sylwander, 1997 (notes from May 1997 Donor Gender Co-ordination Meeting).
GTZ
Gender is a ‘core cross-sectoral issue’ and compulsory element of project design. GTZ has no specific women/ gender support. It has a Women’s Outreach Foundation (no further details available at time of writing).

Contact: Barbara Häming

International Development Research Centre (IDRC)
- Support to WNC;
- Gender database;
- Gender focus in People and Water project.

Contact: Wardie Leppan

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ireland

Gender mainstreaming is their main focus. Otherwise, activities include:
- Support to NLC, including gender focus;
- Support to Mvula Trust (water supply) which encourages the participation of women;
- Specific support to POWA in Mamelodi, shelter for women.

Contact Nicola Brenna
# APPENDIX 7: Participant list from Presentation of Country Gender Profile, Holiday Inn Crown Plaza, Pretoria, 7th July 1998

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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