



**South Africa:**

# Gender Assessment

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# Acronyms

<b>ADB</b>	African Development Bank
<b>AFAWA</b>	Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa
<b>AG</b>	Auditor General
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>CAMFED</b>	Campaign for Female Education
<b>CAO</b>	Community-Advice Office
<b>CBO</b>	Community-Based Organizations
<b>CCTs</b>	Conditional Cash Transfers
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CEE</b>	Commission for Employment Equity
<b>CGE</b>	Commission for Gender Equality
<b>COGTA</b>	Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
<b>CSG</b>	Child Support Grant
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil Society Organizations
<b>DALRRD</b>	Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development
<b>DBE</b>	Department of Basic Education
<b>DCDT</b>	Department of Communications and Digital Technologies
<b>DEL</b>	Department of Employment and Labour
<b>DHET</b>	Department of Higher Education and Training
<b>DHSWS</b>	Department of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation
<b>DIRCO</b>	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
<b>DOH</b>	Department of Health
<b>DOJ&amp;CD</b>	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development
<b>DPME</b>	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>DPSA</b>	Department of Public Service and Administration
<b>DPWI</b>	Department of Public Works and Infrastructure
<b>DRDLR</b>	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
<b>DSAC</b>	Department of Sports, Arts, and Culture
<b>DSBD</b>	Department of Small Business Development
<b>DSD</b>	Department of Social Development
<b>DSI</b>	Department of Science and Innovation
<b>DTIC</b>	Department of Trade, Industry and Competition
<b>DWYPD</b>	Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities
<b>ECD</b>	early childhood development
<b>EPWP</b>	Expanded Public Works Programme
<b>ERAP</b>	Emergency Response Action Plan
<b>FBO</b>	Faith-Based Organizations
<b>FET</b>	further education and training
<b>FFC</b>	Financial and Fiscal Commission
<b>FHH</b>	female headed households
<b>GBV</b>	gender based violence
<b>GCIS</b>	Government Communications and Information System
<b>GFP</b>	gender focal person

<b>GGI</b>	Global Gender Index (World Economic Forum)
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>IDP</b>	Integrated Development Plans
<b>IEC</b>	Independent Electoral Commission
<b>IGM</b>	intersex genital mutilation
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>LGBTQI+</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex. The + sign is generally used to represent genders and sexualities outside of the letters LGBTQI, including people who are questioning their gender or sexuality.
<b>MTEF</b>	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
<b>NEET</b>	not in employment, education, or training
<b>NICD</b>	National Institute of Communicable Diseases
<b>NIDS-CRAM</b>	National Income Dynamics Survey – Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey
<b>NGM</b>	National Gender Machinery
<b>NSC</b>	National Senior Certificate
<b>NSP</b>	National Strategic Plan
<b>NSP-GBVF</b>	National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide
<b>NT</b>	National Treasury
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>PR</b>	proportional representation
<b>SACU</b>	Southern African Customs Union
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>SAHRC</b>	South African Human Rights Commission
<b>SALGA</b>	South African Local Government Association
<b>SANAC</b>	South African National AIDS Council
<b>SAPS</b>	South African Police Services
<b>SETA</b>	Sector Education and Training Authority
<b>SOEs</b>	state-owned enterprises
<b>SOGIESC</b>	sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics
<b>STEM</b>	science, technology, engineering and mathematics
<b>SRH</b>	sexual and reproductive health
<b>UIF</b>	Unemployment Insurance Fund
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>VAWC</b>	violence against women and children
<b>WEF</b>	World Economic Forum



# Executive Summary

**This gender assessment was prepared as part of a process to review the progress made in relation to gender equality, analyze the persistent gender gaps in South Africa, and identify associated areas of action to narrow priority gender gaps.** Given that the assessment was undertaken when the COVID-19 virus had begun to have an effect on South Africa, the assessment includes specific reference to some of the challenges that have emerged in relation to the pandemic. The key target audience for the assessment is the government of South Africa with the World Bank and other development partners secondary audiences.

**The assessment adopts the lens of the three dimensions of gender inequality: Human Endowments, Economic Opportunities, and Voice and Agency, as framed in the World Bank Gender Strategy (2016-2023) and World Development Report: Gender Equality and Development (2012).** In the area of human endowments, the focus is on health and education. In the economic opportunities area, it assesses progress and gaps as measured by participation in economic activities and access to and control of key productive assets. Finally, in the area of voice and agency, it focusses on freedom from violence, the ability to have influence in governance and political processes, and to exercise control over key decisions.

**Using the above framework, the study seeks to address four main questions:** (i) What are the key gender gaps in South Africa across the three dimensions of human endowment, economic opportunities and voice and agency? (ii) How have these gender gaps changed over time across different groups (that is, different genders, race, geography, and income levels), especially in the context of COVID-19?; (iii) What are the barriers that constrain advancements in gender equality?; and (iv) What are the priority areas for urgent actions requiring support to bridge key gender gaps? The findings are derived using a mixed-method approach including primary and secondary research to enable the triangulation of results. Gender gaps and their drivers are identified under each of the above three categories and in turn inform the final selection of ways to bridge specific priority gender gaps. The assessment also points to areas where data gaps exist in national statistical databases and where further qualitative research would be beneficial and necessary to inform evidenced-based policymaking to address other identified gender gaps in the three domains. All data in the assessment reflects what was available as of April 13, 2021, unless otherwise specified.

**South Africa has made important progress toward gender equality since the end of apartheid and its first democratic elections in 1994, putting it among the top 10 of all countries to have successfully implemented reforms to improve women's legal rights** (World Bank 2020a). In the World Economic Forum's 2021 Global Gender Gap Index (GGI), South Africa ranks 18 globally and 2 in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It has made notable progress in improving the numbers of women in parliament, achieving gender parity in participation at the primary and secondary school levels and in closing the gender gap in rates of adult literacy. The largest and most persistent gaps remain in the areas of economic empowerment (World Economic Forum 2021).

**South Africa's efforts in addressing gender gaps has been shaped by the legacies of apartheid and the interactions of race and poverty with gender.** The constraints and barriers informing gender gaps in the domains of human endowments, economic opportunities, and voice and agency are cross-cutting. They include gender inequitable social norms; weak implementation of laws and policies; insufficient women-friendly workplaces and lack of substantive representation of women in governance systems. It is important to note that women's opportunities and access are influenced by race, sexual orientation, class status, educational level, geography, ability and disability, nationality, and other social features. The interconnected nature of the effect of various social categorizations creates overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination and disadvantage which need to be accounted for when designing interventions to narrow gender gaps.

**In the domain of "Improving Human Endowments," South Africa has progressed in reducing maternal mortality and fertility as well as in achieving gender parity in literacy levels and enrollment, especially when compared with other SADC countries.** However, challenges associated with Gender-based violence (GBV) remain significant, inter-generational relationships drive human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infections among women, and poverty continues to be one of the main drivers of maternal ill-health. It is important to highlight that race and geography influence access to healthcare more than gender. In the education sector, South Africa has achieved gender parity in literacy levels and enrolment, and enrolment at tertiary levels favors women. It has the sixth highest female literacy rate and the seventh highest male adult literacy rate in the SADC region. However, it lags in educational attainment. South Africa ranked 69 out of 153 countries in terms of educational attainment in the Global Gender Gap Report 2021 with boys falling behind in enrolments at the secondary and tertiary levels. When measuring South Africa's progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Agenda 2030, it is noted that South Africa's progress with respect to certain indicators is stagnating – for example in relation to Goal 4 (Quality Education) where the mean years of schooling for children is 10.1 years as of 2017 (The Sustainable Development Goals Center for Africa and Sustainable Development Solutions Network 2020). While wealth and urbanity continue to be larger determinants of school completion than gender, girls are more likely than boys to cite "family commitments" as their reason for dropping out at all levels of education, and the pass rates in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects at secondary and post-secondary school favor boys and men.

**In the domain of "Economic Opportunity" which covers both jobs and women's ownership of and control over assets, the low levels of labor force participation, occupational segregation, wage gaps and persistent barriers to women's control of land and other productive assets, are remaining critical gaps.** In the Global Gender Gap Report 2021, South Africa ranked 80 out of 153 countries (score 0.815) for labor force participation, an improvement on its ranking and score from 2006 (90 and a score of 0.58). However, the lower likelihood of women participating in the workforce compared to men, both in the informal and formal sectors, persists. Even in instances where women do participate in the labor markets, they tend to earn lower wages compared to men. Despite narrow gender gaps in education, women are concentrated in the low-skilled, low-paying, and more vulnerable forms of employment. Across all sectors, women tend to be less represented among supervisors and managers, and race remains a predominant factor that influences both women's and men's ability to reach top management. Although many organizations have tried to meet employment equity targets, the representation of women at managerial levels across the private sector also remains poor. A gender pay gap persists even at the top levels of businesses, and the gap has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**The gendered nature of gaps in household and care responsibilities limit women's ability to enter and remain in the labor force.** The structure of South African families is characterized by uneven responsibilities for childcare and domestic labor. This gap intensified during the pandemic with the closure of schools and early childhood centers as well as the increased need to care for ill family members. Women are underrepresented in frontier-skills jobs and make up most workers in the "Community and Social Services" sector, and are more likely to be classified as essential workers and thus exposed to COVID-19 in the course of their daily work.

**South Africa suffers from high levels of financial exclusion and gender gaps exist in savings practices and business ownership.** While gender gaps with regard to account ownership are minimal, women are less likely to use their accounts, or to use mobile money and are more likely to save informally with fewer women accessing credit from banks or formal financial institutions. Although the South African legal framework does not place any restrictions on women's business ownership, women are less likely to own a business and this gender gap has grown over the past decade. Women continue to face barriers to entrepreneurship including a lack of financial literacy, basic skills, and limited access to finance. Although the government has set targets to increase procurement from businesses run and owned by women, a lack of data makes it difficult to measure progress.

**Land ownership rates in South Africa are informed by both race and gender and the pace of land reform has been slow.** Legal changes that seek to address the barriers to equitable land reform were proposed by the 2017 High Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation and the Acceleration of Fundamental Change but progress on the implementation of these recommendations is unclear. Women living in rural areas continue to face practical barriers to accessing security of tenure due to customary practices, and although legal changes to governance at the local level aim to support greater rights for rural women, traditional leadership systems remain patriarchal.

**Finally, in the domain of "Improving Voice and Agency," women's representation in government overall is good compared to many other SADC countries, although challenges remain in terms of substantive representation at all levels.** As country experts posit, descriptive representation at the national and local levels of government does not always translate into legislative influence or substantive power in decision-making. South Africa is ranked high at number 12 in the world in terms of women's representation in parliament although at the local government level women's representation remains low (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019). After the local government elections held in November 2021, three out of eight metropolitan councils (Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni and Nelson Mandela Bay) elected women as mayors. South Africa also has a well-defined institutional framework for addressing gender gaps, but critical challenges remain in the effectiveness of the national gender machinery ([appendix D](#)). As a result, its legislative and policy commitments to gender equality have not been translated into gender-responsive planning, budgeting, monitoring, or evaluation. While, as elsewhere, underreporting and a lack of national prevalence data contribute to a challenge in estimating the scale of the challenge, GBV rates have been consistently high, much like other SADC countries. Further, the rates of female homicide are almost five times higher than the global average (Brodie 2020).

**It is important to note that social norms are key determinants of gender equality in all three domains, i.e. Human Endowments, Economic Opportunities and Voice and Agency.** Through the work on building systems to address gaps in human endowments and economic opportunities, a significant contribution can be made in improving women's voice and agency, i.e. promoting behavior change that addresses social norms constraining gender equality. Policies

and public actions are needed to change social norms, the law and legal institutions, alongside programs to promote economic opportunities, social protection and education. .

**The final section of the report, “Taking Action to Bridge Priority Gender Gaps in South Africa” emphasizes a narrow set of opportunities that can be leveraged as a way forward to address select persisting gaps and drivers set out in the assessment.** The five ways forward are summarized below. Each have corresponding areas of action that are further described in the final section of the report. The areas of action that are identified all build on existing priorities in the government’s agenda, i.e. the National Development Plan 2030 and the [South African Government Medium-Term Strategic Framework 2019 – 2024 \(MTSF\)](#). Further, the five ways forward set out below are highly inter-dependent and if implemented will together constitute foundational pieces necessary in the path toward narrowing the widest and most persistent gender gaps in South Africa.

1. **Increase access to childcare and promote gender equitable domestic labor** through legislative amendments, improving the affordability and availability of child-care options for women in both the formal and informal sector, and addressing the social norms that drive the gendered nature of the distribution of household labor.
2. **Improve the school-to-work transition in STEM and other frontier skills sectors** by promoting girls’ success in STEM subjects at the secondary and tertiary levels.
3. **Address the legal and social barriers to gender equitable entry and retention in the workforce** through legislative amendments that promote pay transparency and identify sectoral targets for women’s inclusion.
4. **Improve financial inclusion and entrepreneurship of women** by introducing preferential procurement targets, strengthening women-focused Business Development Services, and strengthening women’s financial literacy and access to credit.
5. **Strengthen women’s voice and agency** by addressing (i) women’s role in decision-making structures from the local level up, and (ii) high levels of GBV and HIV and their consequent effect on women and girls.



# I. Introduction

## A. Rationale and Primary Objective

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The primary objective of this study is to provide a high-level assessment of key gender gaps in the country, through the lens of the three domains of gender inequality, that is: human endowments, economic opportunities, and voice and agency. Specifically, the study seeks to address four main questions:

1. What are the key gender gaps across the three domains of human endowment, economic opportunities, and voice and agency in South Africa?
2. How have these gender gaps changed over time and across different groups, especially in the context of COVID-19?
3. What are the barriers that constrain advancements in gender equality?
4. What are the priority areas where urgent actions are needed to support bridging key gender gaps?

The main target audience of the assessment is the government of South Africa, with the World Bank and its partners as the secondary audience. The assessment identifies a narrow set of five areas of action that build on existing policies and programs already in place by the government. These actions are all inter-dependent and if implemented, will constitute foundational pieces necessary in the path toward narrowing the widest and the most persistent gender gaps in the country.

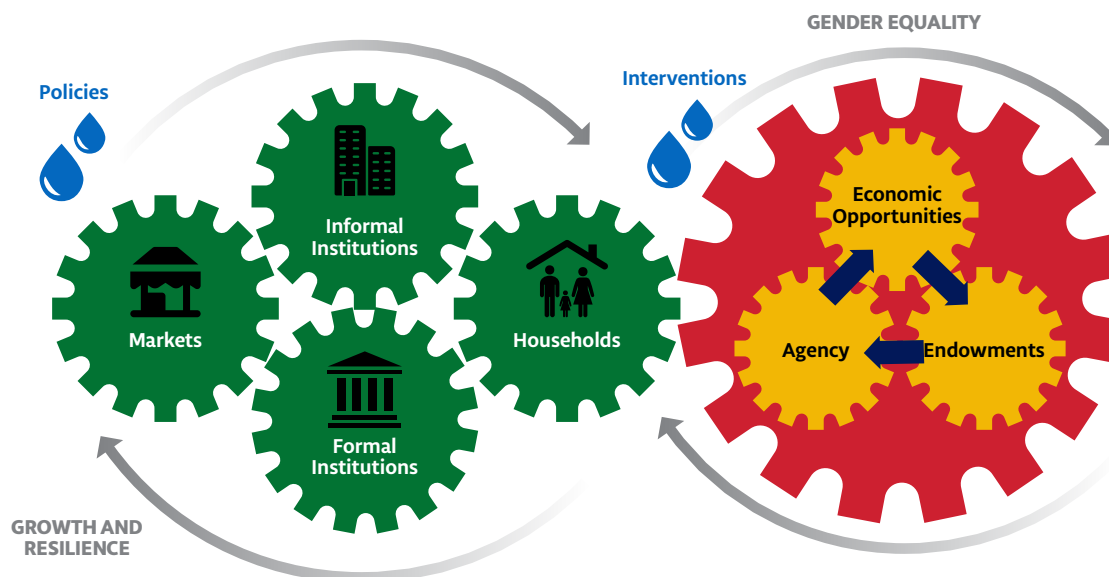
## B. Conceptual Framework and Methodology

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The gender assessment is informed by the conceptual framework of the *World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development* (World Bank 2012) and the *World Bank Group Gender Strategy (FY16–23): Gender Equality, Poverty Reduction, and Inclusive Growth* (World Bank 2015). Gender is understood as the social, behavioral, and cultural attributes, expectations and norms associated with being male or female and in order to address gender gaps the focus is on addressing socially determined gender inequalities, which are deeply rooted in attitudes, institutions, and market forces in any particular society. Males and females are not homogeneous groups, but are stratified by race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity, which together with income level, geographic location, and migratory status, can lead to multiple overlapping layers of vulnerability and discrimination.

This conceptual framework posits that gender equality can be achieved when there is measurable progress across the three domains of: (1) human endowments, especially with regard to health and education; (2) economic opportunities, in terms of participation in economic activities and access to and control of key productive assets; and (3) voice and agency, as measured by political participation, freedom from gender-based violence, and the ability to make key decisions. Further, the framework holds that households, markets, and institutions (both formal and informal), and the interactions between them, all influence gender equality and economic development.

The interactions of individuals and households with markets and institutions, and the ways in which institutions and policies shape these interactions and are in turn shaped by them ultimately influence gender outcomes. The interconnectedness between the three domains, (as represented by the blue arrows in figure 1); the potential of programmatic interventions to tackle specific issues in these domains; and in a world facing recurring climatic disasters and conflict related shocks, the interactions between households, markets, and institutions,

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

Source: World Bank Gender Strategy 2016-2023

influence gender equality growth and resilience. Using this conceptual framework depicted in figure 1, the assessment identifies high-level gaps in each of the three domain, focusing on those gaps that have intensified and remained persistent in recent years and highlighting areas of action that intersect at the household, market, law/policy and institutional levels.

In the case of South Africa, gender gaps are found to be most persistent in the economic opportunities domain (addressing constraints to decent employment and barriers to women's ownership and control of assets) and the voice and agency domain (addressing gender-based violence and women's role in decision-making structures). The five areas of action in turn focus on critical and persisting gaps across all three domains. They are interrelated and, if implemented, will contribute to improving the agency of women to make decisions at the household, local, and national levels, stimulating the drivers that promote more and better jobs for women, and removing barriers to their ownership and control and assets. In this way, while the areas of action are by no means exhaustive, they constitute the necessary first steps that can be built on to begin bridging key gender gaps as they relate to improving outcomes for women under the economic opportunities and voice and agency domain.

**Methodology:** The assessment is based on the application of a mixed method of primary and secondary research to enable the triangulation of results. To do so, the assessment combines an extensive review of secondary literature including analysis of relevant data and statistics as well as primary research comprising qualitative interviews and roundtables with a group of over 70 stakeholders representing governmental and non-governmental stakeholders (including academia, civil society organizations, and donor agencies) which took place between January and April 2021. The information garnered from consultations shaped the recommendations in this report, as well as helped to strengthen the information contained herein. All data in this report reflects what was available as of April 13, 2021, unless otherwise specified. Case studies to illustrate some of the opportunities for action to bridge gaps were selected based on their success in other country contexts and their potential for replicability in the South African context. The report however is not intended as a deep dive sectoral gap assessment.

In some areas of this report, the existing data gaps prevented a full assessment of whether gender gaps existed or made it difficult to ascertain the drivers of these gaps. These data gaps and areas for further research have been flagged in the report so that the government, research institutions, development partners and others may undertake additional analyses to get a better understanding of the gaps, drivers, and solutions. In addition, given South Africa's complex intersectional issues, it is important for gender-disaggregated data to be further disaggregated by race, settlement type, education levels, and other demographic factors. The detailed list of data gaps and areas of future research is available in [appendix B](#).

**Structure:** This gender assessment provides an overview of gender gaps in South Africa in the areas of human endowments (health, education, and social protection) in Chapter III, economic participation and opportunities (jobs and ownership of both financial and non-financial assets) in Chapter IV and V, and voice and agency (participation in decision-making at the national and local levels and gender-based violence) in Chapter VI. To set the stage, the report begins in Chapter II by providing an overview of key concepts for understanding gender gaps in South Africa, covering the legacy of apartheid and its effect on family structure and the intersections of race and poverty with gender. It also sets out cross-cutting issues that drive gender gaps, including patriarchal gender norms that affect women's access to education, employment, voice and agency; challenges with implementation of laws; and the limitations of data. In each of these sections, the effects of the COVID-19 crisis are briefly discussed after the identification of relevant gaps. Finally, the report concludes by providing areas of action to bridge priority gender gaps affecting women and girls presented in chapter VII. This section highlights five areas of action, with illustrative case studies from the region and beyond provided in [appendix I](#). Other key appendices include [appendix B](#) which discusses the data gaps and areas of future research, [appendix C](#) which benchmarks South Africa's progress in closing gender gaps compared to other SADC countries and [appendix J](#) which provides an overview of key gender gaps, challenges, and corresponding drivers.





## II. Key Concepts and Cross-Cutting Issues Linked to Gender Gaps in South Africa

## A. The Legacy of Apartheid: Intersectional Challenges linked to Gender in South Africa

**Given the legacy of apartheid, an analysis of the relationship between race and poverty is vital to understanding the gender gaps in South Africa.** In this section we discuss the legacy of apartheid, race, class status, geography, and family structures as key to understanding gender issues in South Africa. These different but interconnected social categorizations have created overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination and disadvantage which persist in contemporary times. While an in-depth assessment of the intersectional challenges and their relationship with gender gaps in South Africa is beyond the scope of this report, the objective of this section is to recognize the role played by specific historical factors in the development and entrenchment of certain social norms and practices that will help contextualize the discussions on drivers and gaps set out in each section and potential ways to address priority gender gaps in Chapter VII of this report.

**Apartheid was characterized by** the creation of a large low skilled population, and the legacy of this can still be seen with poorer access to health, education, and economic opportunities among the black and colored population.

**Women, especially black women, are disproportionately among the poorest people in South Africa.** Women in South Africa are not a homogenous group. While this is true for women in almost all countries, the heterogeneity and differences in race, socio-economic status, access, and opportunities among women in South Africa is very pronounced. Women, and particularly black women, comprise the majority of low-paying job holders, are more likely to be landless, and also receive a large majority of the government's cash assistance. Women are often subject to multiple forms of violence and harassment in the workplace, in public spaces, while using public transportation, and in the home. There are also important distinctions between various groups of black women—rural and urban, older, and younger—each posing distinct challenges that need to be understood and addressed to achieve gender equality in South Africa.

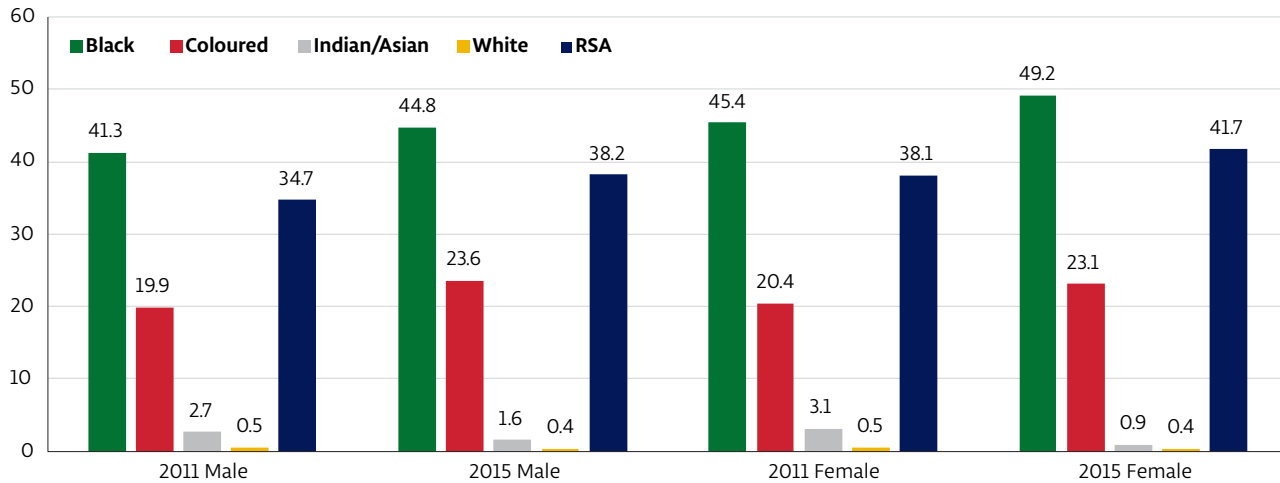
### 1. Human Endowments

**The current health care system was adapted from the system under apartheid which provided inferior care for most of the non-white population, including black and colored women.** During apartheid, while white people were able to access higher quality and subsidized private care, black and colored people were mostly limited to poor quality public care (World Bank 2018a.). Despite the end of apartheid, continuing inequalities in access and quality of care can be seen between different races since the better quality services available at private healthcare facilities, is unaffordable to most black and colored persons, including women from these groups. Four in 10 black women (41.3 percent), and three in 10 colored women (33.4 percent) and Indian or Asian women (29.4 percent) reported at least one problem in accessing health care compared to less than one in 10 white women (8.4 percent) (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019). In terms of the geographic location of physical infrastructure, it is not only the health care facilities that are inadequate in peri-urban and rural areas, but other infrastructure that is essential to the maintenance of public health – for example access to piped water and sewerage in the home, are also insufficient. However, when it comes to maternal health care, data from the 2016 Demographic and Health Survey indicates that there is a high level of access to care across all regions, education levels, and poverty quintiles indicating the success of South Africa in attending to this issue (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019)

**The post-apartheid government was faced with a school system that was highly fragmented, segregated by race, had gender differentials in curricula, and was characterized by discriminatory funding for teachers, learning materials, and school infrastructure.** During the late 1980s and early 1990s, slightly more males than females were enrolling at a primary level. However, there were significant gender gaps in enrollments at the secondary level, with more females (74.4 percent) enrolling in secondary education than males (63.4 percent) in 1990 and in 1994 (87.1 percent female and 74.7 percent male) (World Bank 2021d). In addition, the segregated apartheid education system disadvantaged black women. According to the 1996 census, black women (25.5 percent) were more likely to have no schooling than black men (20.8 percent) and women of all other races (colored women 9.7 percent, Indian women 8.9 percent, and white women 1.1 percent). Black women (3.1 percent) were more likely than black men (2.8 percent) but less likely than women of all other races (4 percent colored women, 7.9 percent Indian women, and 18.9 percent white women) to have education higher than secondary level (Statistics SA 2001). In addition, the apartheid education system was characterized by lower quality education for black, colored, and Indian South Africans, and by gender differing curricula that encouraged those women who were able to study further into fields leading to low-paying jobs (such as teaching and nursing) (Unterhalter 1990; see also Martineau 1997). This education system had little legitimacy, given its role under apartheid in perpetuating racial inequalities. The major dismantling of this racially-based system occurred in 1994 with the rapid integration of the school system into a single framework, administered by a national department and nine provincial departments. There was a considerable reduction in the resources allocated to schools that formerly were for white children only, and a commensurate increase in the resources benefiting formerly black schools. The integration of the school system also led to major changes in the composition of formerly white schools, with around half the enrolment in such schools now being learners other than whites. Despite these changes, there are some major continuities from the old system. The most important remain the massive differences in infrastructure in schools as well as the very large performance differentials between the different parts of the school system that largely follows historical divisions. Nevertheless, class rather than race, has now become a stronger dividing line than in the past, considering that many of the beneficiaries of the well-functioning part of the system are not white (World Bank 2018a).

## 2. Economic Participation and Opportunities

**Spatial patterns inherited from apartheid persist and interact with gender to heighten the challenges faced by black, colored and Indian women.** Apartheid and colonialism created an economic system that fundamentally required the exploitation of labor, which has created persistent structural hierarchies marked by racism and sexism. Patriarchal social norms were institutionalized through legislation and policy, with the effect that, while women of all races were marginalized, poor black women were also prevented from participating in politics and decision-making through legal, social, and cultural means. Similarly, women, especially black women, were denied equitable access to productive assets (land, houses, and property), healthcare, social services, educational opportunities and also employment (Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation 2019). This remains a contemporary challenge with more than half (54 percent) of land being owned by white individual landowners (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform 2018). While the government since 1994 has made significant efforts to address this legacy, South Africa remains one of the most unequal countries in the world—with a Gini coefficient typically well above 0.6 (Statistics SA 2019d) despite the extensive constitutional and legal freedoms.

**Figure 2: Proportion of the Population Living Below the Lower-Bound Poverty Line by Race and Sex, 2011 and 2015**

Source: Statistics SA 2017a

### Another legacy of apartheid is the disruption of the family structure in South Africa and its effects on women's empowerment.

Apartheid and the migrant labor system it entailed made it more likely for fathers to be absent from households, particularly in rural areas, while mothers and some grandmothers were left with all family care responsibilities, severely impeding women's empowerment. These patterns persist in post-apartheid South Africa. Many families are extended, featuring multiple generations under a single roof, and women commonly are the primary care-givers for multiple family members, not only children. In a 2019 survey, children (ages 0 to 4) were most likely to live with just their mothers (43.1 percent) than with both parents (33.8 percent). Further, 37.6 percent of households consisted of two generations while 14.2 percent contained at least three generations. Skip-generation households with grandparents living with grandchildren made up 5.1 percent of all households (Statistics SA 2019b).<sup>1</sup>

### Female-headed households (FHHs) tend to be larger and extended resulting in a large burden of care

(Statistics SA 2018a). Approximately 6.1 million (37.9 percent) of households in South Africa were headed by women in 2018, and FHHs were most common in provinces with large rural areas and conversely least common in urban provinces (Statistics SA 2019b).<sup>2</sup> This type of family structure and the childcare responsibilities that limit women's ability to seek and remain in work have contributed to the feminization of poverty. For example, women are more likely than men to live below the poverty line with the black population, particularly women, making up the largest proportion of those who do so (figure 2) (Statistics SA 2017a). Accordingly, more than one-third of black South Africans (33.9 percent), 29 percent of colored South Africans, and 14.7 percent of Indian or Asian South Africans received a government grant (Statistics SA 2020j), compared to 7.3 percent of white South Africans (Statistics SA 2020j). More grants are received by women (52.17 percent) than men (47.83 percent), and eight in 10 people who receive grants are black (88.57 women and 89.24 men) (Statistics SA 2020j).

### Families are key spaces where notions of gender roles and differences are nurtured, and the current social structure in South Africa continues to reinforce inequitable norms that put

<sup>1</sup> In comparison, only 3.3 percent of children were living with just their fathers.

<sup>2</sup> Accordingly to survey results from 2018, female headed households were most common in provinces with large rural areas such as the Eastern Cape (46.9 percent), Limpopo (45.8 percent), and KwaZulu-Natal (45 percent) and conversely least common in urban provinces such as Gauteng (29.8 percent) and the Western Cape (35.2 percent).

**women at a disadvantage economically and socially.** Almost half of South Africans surveyed in 2012 (45 percent of women and 48 percent of men) agreed that it was a man's job to earn money and a woman's job to look after the home and family (Mokomane et al. 2020). Similarly, a 2019 gender attitudes survey found that more men than women (41 percent versus 28 percent) felt that “when jobs are scarce, men have more right to work than women” (Gouws et al. 2019). The perception that family life is negatively compromised by women's work persists, with 36 percent of women and 38 percent of men agreeing that “all in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job” (Mokomane et al. 2020). Unfortunately, these norms of the male breadwinner and woman homemaker negatively affect women's ability to seek work outside the home and men's willingness to undertake domestic responsibilities within the home (Tronto 2013). They also increase tolerance for violence against women in the home when women do not conform, as is discussed below. Further, in traditional rural settings, women face additional negative attitudes from traditional leaders as well as gender inequitable customary law that inhibit their access to work, land, and other assets. It is important to note that the responses to social norms relating to “women's” work, do not diverge much between men and women, which could indicate that women have internalized the traditional gender norms. Thus, as reported by the Department of Women (DOW), although legal barriers to women's economic participation have been eliminated, barriers such as attitudes, assumptions, norms, and traditions continue to unfairly affect women and girls (DOW 2015).

### 3. Voice and Agency

**Unfortunately, the above-mentioned gender-differentiated social norms of male as breadwinner and female as homemaker also encourage violence.** In 2019, six in 10 women and five in 10 men surveyed agreed with the statement “men who feel unable to provide for their families beat women” (Gouws et al. 2019). In addition, more than half of the women surveyed agreed that “women who know their place will not get beaten”, a figure comparable to 60 percent of men who agreed to the same (Gouws et al. 2019). Notably, violence is common in both rural and urban settings, regardless of women's marital status, or age (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019).

**Social norms also shape how men and women participate politically.** In a recent gender attitudes survey, men (55 percent) were more likely than women (44 percent) to attend a community meeting, *lekgotla*, or *imbizo*, and were more likely to have attended a peaceful demonstration (31 percent men, 19 percent women) (Gouws et al. 2019). Women were also less likely than men to have joined a service delivery protest, or to say that they would ever do so (Gouws et al. 2019). Almost half of men (47 percent) and a third of women surveyed (33 percent) agreed that “on the whole men make better political leaders than women” (Gouws et al. 2019). However, women were more likely to have signed a petition (52 percent) than men (22 percent), indicating a more passive form of participation.

**There remains variance in political participation rates by race** (Statistics SA 2019j). White and Indian or Asian populations (73.8 percent respectively) were more likely to register for national and municipal elections compared to just 58.2 percent of colored persons and 62.8 percent of black persons. These figures were not disaggregated by gender but are nevertheless indicative of possible lower political participation of non-white women compared to white women.

## B. Overview: Law and Policy Landscape

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**Inclusive rights, including those relating to gender equality, are provided for in the Constitution and in South Africa's international and regional commitments.** The South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) provides all South Africans with a set of fundamental human rights, and the Bill of Rights in the Constitution includes the right to equality, dignity, life, and freedom, and security of the person, which includes the right to be free of all forms of violence by public or private sources. South Africa's commitment to gender equality is also underscored in the various international conventions, and gender priorities as outlined in the report on the Beijing Platform for Action (2014–19) published by the United Nations, and include (South African Government 2019b):

- Effectively implement gender mainstreaming across all sectors of society.
- Fully and effectively implement South African law and policy.
- Put a greater emphasis on women's economic emancipation.
- Transform unequal gender relations.
- Confront the culture of patriarchy, toxic masculinity, misogyny, hierarchies, and languages that perpetuate the patriarchal norms, including in the public service.

**South Africa does not have an overarching gender equality law, and previous efforts to establish one have not been very successful.** This was largely due to the quality of the proposed law (the 2013 Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill was met with widespread rejection from civil society and the private sector for duplicating other key laws and setting out immeasurable targets) rather than a lack of public interest in gender equality. Nonetheless, South Africa's legal and institutional framework for gender equality is extensive, with the aim of fulfilling the right to equality enshrined in the Constitution.

**There are many challenges when it comes to implementation.** Challenges include a lack of costing of legislation which makes it impractical to enforce, a lack of support for the National Gender Machinery, a lack of coherence in some cases between multiple laws, a failure to mainstream gender across departments which results in piecemeal application of laws, and the inadequate capacity and training for implementation officers such as gender focal points (the Financial and Fiscal Commission 2012, DOW, Youth and Persons with Disabilities 2019a; Gouws et. al 2019). See [appendix E](#) for a list of the laws according to the areas of gender equality they affect.



### **III. Gender Gaps in Human Endowments**

**This section provides an overview of key gender gaps in South Africa in the areas of health, education, and social protection.** A full review of these sectors is beyond the scope of this analysis, and the report focusses only on areas where key gender gaps exist. Accordingly, the discussion on health focuses on issues of nutrition, access to healthcare, HIV, access to reproductive and sexual health, maternal health and illness and fertility while the section on education includes data on literacy and enrolments, school dropouts, and the uptake of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

## A. Key Gender Gaps in Health

Over the last two decades, South Africa has made significant improvements in maternal and child health (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019)<sup>3</sup> and in reducing the HIV burden. However, health indicators remain poor when compared to other countries at similar levels of development ([appendix C](#)) (World Bank 2018a.). Gender gaps on access to health are unclear particularly because of the dearth of data on men's access to health care. Existing information however suggests that women and transgender persons continue to face barriers in accessing health services, and significant gaps in access to quality healthcare by race persists.

Gender differences occur in the prevalence of stunting and childhood malnutrition that mirror gaps in Sub-Saharan Africa with boys being most disadvantaged. However, race and family income continue to be a stronger determinant of household hunger than gender.

Fertility rates have declined over the last two decades, but the reduction in rates is unequally distributed by race and socio-economic status. The unmet need for contraception is highest among the groups of women with the highest fertility rates, particularly among adolescents and youth. There are differences in the use of contraception by education and geography, with increasing levels of contraception use with increasing education and urbanization. HIV remains a critical challenge for South Africa, despite successes in the rollout of Antiretroviral Therapies (ART), with women more likely to be infected and higher rates of HIV among the black population than other groups.

### 1. Access to health care

**The majority of South Africans access health care through the public health care system, and are satisfied with the service they receive, but barriers to access persist and are affected by both race and gender.** According to the most recent General Household Survey (2019) most South Africans were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the level of healthcare they received during their most recent visit to a health facility (84.11 percent of men, 81.21 percent of women). However, black South Africans continue to face barriers to accessing services because they are too expensive or too far away. In 2019, where survey respondents had not consulted a health worker despite being sick or injured, the main reasons for both men and women across race groups for not doing so were that they had self-medicated or treated themselves or that the illness was not severe enough (Statistics SA 2020j). However, although similar proportions of men and women had not accessed healthcare in the month prior to the survey despite being sick or injured because it was too expensive (1.6 percent of men and

#### COVID-19 Infection Rates: Men and Women.

- **Women make up the majority of community and social service workers in South Africa, 59 percent, and are thus at increased risk of COVID-19 infection.** For instance, as of 2019, 90 percent of all registered nurses in South Africa were female and as of 2015 around 40 percent of doctors were female.
- **The female population had a higher rate of infection with COVID-19 compared to their male counterparts across all age groups.** Infection rates (per 1,000 population) peaked in the 45 to 49 age group for women (20.1 percent compared to 15.7 percent of men) and were lowest in the 15 to 19 age groups (5.1 percent for girls, compared to 3.4 percent for boys).
- **Death rates for females were lower than those of males across all age categories.** Death rates were highest in the 70 to 79 (0.46 for females, and 0.84 for males), and 80+ (0.94 for females, and 1.8 for males).

(Statistics SA 2020h, Statistics SA 2020i).

<sup>3</sup> Under five mortality rates decreased from 59 to 42 per 1,000 live births over the last two decades, while infant mortality decreased from 45 to 35 per 1,000 live births over the same period; both the percentage of births delivered by a skilled provider (84% in 1998 and 97% in 2016) and the percentage delivered in a health facility (83% in 1998 and 96% in 2016) have significantly increased.



1.35 percent of women), women were more likely to say that services were too far away (0.67 percent of men and 2.12 percent of women) (Statistics SA 2020j). Of those who found services too expensive, 84 percent of men and 81 percent of women were black. Only black South Africans reported that services were too far away (Statistics SA 2020j). Similarly, only black South Africans reported transport problems and difficulty with getting a diagnosis.

While the 2016 Demographic and Health Survey did not report on problems experienced by men in accessing health care and focused only on those experienced by women (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019), the results indicate that race, age, income, and locational differences are pronounced in explaining differentials with regard to both access to health care services as well as the quality of delivery (see box below).

**Women, especially the poor, elderly and those in rural areas, face several challenges in accessing health care with the ability to pay followed by access to transport appearing as the most common barriers.** Four in 10 (38 percent) women aged 15 and older report at least one problem in accessing healthcare for themselves when they are sick with significant differences across different groups of women (appendix F). The proportion of women who report at least one problem is much higher in non-urban (53 percent) than urban areas (30 percent). Notably, the percentage of women who report having a problem in accessing healthcare steadily decreases with increasing household wealth with more than half (57 percent) of women in the lowest quintiles, and just one in five (20 percent) of women in the highest wealth quintiles reporting having had at least one problem. Elderly women (65 years old and over) are more likely to experience problems, and overall 49 percent of these women reported at least one problem accessing healthcare (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019; Statistics SA 2020j). The most reported problem is insufficiency of funds for treatment (28 percent), followed by distance from the health service (25 percent).

**Transgender persons face barriers to accessing healthcare, particularly access to hormone treatment and gender reassignment surgery.** There is a general lack of knowledge among both public and private health care providers about the specific needs of transgender people (Graves 2013). Although the Alteration of Sex Description and Sex Status Act (Act 49 of 2003) allows persons to have their sex description altered on official documents, there are barriers to the implementation of the Act including improper application of the law coupled with stigma, bias, and prejudice (Southern African Litigation Centre 2017). Transgender persons also face stigma from health care providers, which can discourage them from accessing HIV treatment (Müller 2013). Other barriers include the refusal of treatment, challenges in availability and access to chronic medication, a lack of insurance (Chakuwumba and van der Merwe 2015), and long waiting lists for gender reassignment surgery (Southern African Litigation Centre 2017).

## 2. Food Security, Nutrition, and Stunting

**Gender differences occur in the prevalence of stunting and childhood malnutrition (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019), and the socio-economic status of the family appears to be the dominant determining factor.** According to the Global Nutrition Report (2021), among children under five in South Africa, boys were more likely to be stunted, malnourished, or overweight than girls. A quarter of girls under five (25 percent) and almost three in 10 boys (30 percent) were stunted while 17.6 percent of boy children and 13.8 percent of girl children under five showed signs of malnourishment. Likewise, problems relating to being overweight and signs of wasting are more common among girls than boys (15.5 percent of girls versus 11 percent of boys are overweight and 2.8 percent of girls show signs of wasting compared to 2.1 percent of boys). This is a trend common in Sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere, which

### Race and geography influence access to health care more than gender.

- Seven in 10 white South Africans (72.4 percent) compared to one in 10 black South Africans (10.8 percent) are members of a private medical aid scheme.
- White women (8 percent) are less likely than black (41 percent), colored (29 percent) and Indian or Asian (33 percent) women to report a problem accessing healthcare.
- Seven in 10 (74.4 percent) South Africans who said the reason they did not consult a health care worker was because it was ‘too far’ were black women.
- Black women (5.4 percent), colored women (10.1 percent) and Indian women (5.8 percent) are more likely than white women (0.43 percent) to say they were very dissatisfied with the service they received during their most recent visit to a health facility.
- Women in non-urban areas and from poorer households are more likely to experience challenges in accessing healthcare.

(DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC and ICF 2019)

### Race of the household head remains a more significant marker for household hunger.

Within the category of households vulnerable to hunger, 91.1 percent were headed by a black person compared to 0.4 percent headed by an Indian or Asian person, 7.3 percent headed by a colored person and 1.3 percent headed by a white person. Moreover, urban households (63.4 percent) made up the majority of households that were vulnerable to hunger, and the largest proportion was in Gauteng (25.2 percent) and KwaZulu-Natal (20.9 percent).

(Statistics SA 2019h)

**During COVID-19 adults in households shielded children from hunger.**

20.6 percent of adults in larger households (more than four members) and 16.6 percent of adults in smaller households (up to four members) reported hunger during Wave 3 of NIDS-CRAM surveys. Likewise, 17.2 percent of children in larger households and 14.6 percent of children in smaller households.

(Van der Berg, Patel and Bridgman 2020).

has been partly attributed to higher morbidity among male neonates and infants in general, with effects on weight (Wamani 2007).<sup>4</sup> However, it is also important to note that problems like stunting among children declines with increasing mother's education and wealth of the household. For example, 36 percent of children in the lowest wealth quintile are stunted compared to 13 percent in the highest wealth quintile (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019). More research is needed to understand these trends.

**Female-headed households (FHHs) make up just more than half of the households vulnerable to hunger (50.9 percent) (Statistics SA 2019h).**

More than half of the households involved in agricultural activities in South Africa are headed by women (52.8 percent) (Statistics SA 2019h). FHHs heads are more likely to prepare food, and to buy food than male-headed households (MHHS) (Caeser and Riley 2018). Nonetheless, female-headed households are more likely to have children who experience hunger (Statistics SA 2019h). For example, in 2017, 17 percent of female-headed households had a child under five who had gone hungry compared to 9.4 percent of male-headed households (Statistics SA 2019h).

### 3. Sexual and Reproductive Health

**Total fertility rates have declined in South Africa over the last two decades, however, the fertility rates are unequally distributed by race and socio-economic status.** Rural provinces tend to have fertility rates of about 3.1 children per woman compared with 2.4 children per woman in urban areas. Fertility rates tend to decrease with increasing household wealth (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019)<sup>5</sup> and vary significantly by race. For example, black women have the highest total fertility rate (2.7 children per woman), followed by colored women (2.5 children), Indian or Asian women (1.7 children), and white women (1.5 children) (Statistics SA 2020a). Because of these differences, the commonly associated gains that correspond to reduced fertility, such as higher educational attainment and increasing income, are also unequally distributed, as will be discussed in the next section.

**Access to contraception differs by level of education and geographic location.** Mirroring global trends, the use of modern methods of contraception in South Africa has risen in urban areas and continues to increase. The use of contraception among sexually active women is similar across all age groups, including adolescent women, with the exception of women ages 45 to 49 (for all age groups, the prevalence rate ranges from 60.4 percent to 60.7 percent; however, for the 45 to 49 age category, it is the lowest at 42.9 percent). Use of contraception was slightly higher among sexually active women in the lowest wealth quintile (60 percent) compared to those in the highest wealth quintile (58.5 percent) (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019).<sup>6</sup>

**There are marked differences across education levels—**62.7 percent of women with more than secondary education reported using contraception while the prevalence rate is only 44 percent for sexually active women with no education.

**Unmet needs for contraception are highest among those groups of women who have the highest rates of fertility, thus increasing challenges for preventing adolescent pregnancy.** Unmet needs for contraception among sexually active women are the highest in the age bracket of 15 to 19 (31 percent) and 20 to 24 (28 percent) (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019). Approximately 31.1 percent of all unwanted births in 2016 were in these two age groups.

**Fear of accessing healthcare facilities due to risk of COVID-19 exposure may have reduced women's access to important antenatal care.**

Wealthy mothers were slightly more likely to attend healthcare facilities than poor mothers (86 percent versus 83 percent). National Income Dynamics Study – Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey (NIDS-CRAM) data suggest that early access to antenatal care care was slightly lower than expected and the survey of public sector mothers found (i) One in six mothers reported a two-month gap in accessing maternal health care; (ii) One in four mothers whose babies needed key vaccinations did not visit the clinic during the two-month period of the survey; (iii) One in 10 mothers and pregnant women living with HIV ran out of antiretroviral therapy (ART) medication.

(Mbatha 2020; Burger et al. 2020).

4 See also Thurstans, S, Opondo, C, Seal, A, Wells, J, Khara, T, Dolan, C, Briend, A, Myatt, M, Garenne, M, Sear, R and Kerac, M. 2020.

5 Fertility rates are 3.1 children per woman among the poorest 20 percent of households compared to 2.1 children per woman among those among the wealthiest.

6 No national details available from source by race or by township.

Furthermore, adolescent childbearing is most common among women in the two lowest wealth quintiles (20 and 22 percent, respectively while the rates among young women in the highest wealth quintile is 7 percent) (Statistics SA 2020b). Urban women (14 percent) are less likely than non-urban women (19 percent) to begin childbearing in their teen years (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019) with the adolescent pregnancy rates higher among black (16 percent) and colored adolescents (11.9 percent) (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019). While South African law and policy provide adolescents the right to legally access contraception or terminate a pregnancy, many adolescents and women face physical and social barriers to doing so (Makola et al 2019; Amnesty International 2017; HEARD 2016).<sup>7</sup>

**Sanitary dignity and access to menstrual health is a challenge in South Africa with direct influence on girls' education.** An estimated 30 percent of girls in South Africa do not attend school when they are menstruating (The Citizen 2018).<sup>8</sup> Menstrual hygiene products remain expensive and unaffordable for many young women; many schools, especially those that are under-resourced, do not have adequate toilets and private sanitation facilities; and female learners often experience stigma and teasing from peers when menstruating (Crankshaw et. al. 2020). Recently, the government has taken significant steps to address the affordability challenges and as of April 2019 menstrual products were given a zero-tax rating (Rodriguez 2018). In addition, in June 2019 the then Department of Women (now known as the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities), introduced the Sanitary Dignity Implementation Framework, proposing norms and standards for the provision of free sanitary products to indigent persons.

## 4. HIV

**HIV is a critical health challenge in South Africa, and more women than men are HIV positive, with the prevalence rate increasing over the years (Avert 2020b).** Women between the ages of 15 and 49 have had the highest incidence of the disease, with over one-fifth being HIV positive (South African Government 2019b). Further, the proportion of South Africans who are HIV positive has risen between 2002 and 2021. For women, the proportion has increased from 15.2 percent in 2002 to 23.9 percent in 2021, and for adults (both women and men) from 13.2 percent in 2002 to 19.5 percent in 2021. On a positive side, the prevalence among youth (ages 15 – 24) has declined from 6.3 percent in 2002 to 5.5 percent in 2021 (Statistics SA 2021f). HIV and related illnesses are a common indirect cause of maternal deaths in South Africa—for example, 38.4 percent of maternal mortality cases in KwaZulu Natal are linked to HIV and related illnesses (Bomela 2020).

The gendered differentials in the HIV prevalence rate are further accentuated by race, socio-economic, age, and locational differences. Black South Africans have higher infection rates compared to other population groups, with black females (24.1 percent) having the highest rates (Mabaso et al 2019). HIV prevalence is also higher in urban informal settlements among women (38.1 percent), and men (22.6 percent) ages 15 to 49 (Gibbs et al. 2020), though the rates for women in rural informal settings has been increasing significantly while some decline has been observed in urban formal settings for both men and women. Changes in HIV prevalence over time (2002-2012) for men and women by settlement type are detailed in Table 1. The high prevalence of HIV among girls in South Africa is found to be driven by intergenerational transactional relationships (young girls with older men) (Human Sciences Research

**Lower fertility rates and higher birth intervals are linked to the closing of gender gaps.** Girls and women who are healthy and able to delay pregnancy and complete education are more likely to undertake higher-value economic activity and thereby raise the overall growth potential of the economy.

(UNFPA 2021).

**Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health was negatively affected by the COVID-19 lockdown due to confusion about which services were essential under the regulations.** While sanitary pads, tampons and condoms were classified as essential goods in South Africa's lockdown regulations, the closure of schools negatively affected access by young girls and boys. NIDS-CRAM survey results indicated that 23 percent of respondents reported inability to access medication, contraceptives, or condoms.

(Mbatha 2020; Burger et al. 2020).

**Improvements in the range and access of the Prevention of Mother-to-Child program,** have resulted in significant progress in reducing mother to child transmission of HIV. In 2018, 88 percent of all pregnant women tested for HIV, and of those found to be HIV positive, 87 percent received ART.

(AVERT 2020b, UNAIDS 2020).

**More recent HIV prevalence data is required,** disaggregated by gender, race, and location to update findings from 2012 that indicate the need for more targeted interventions in both urban and rural informal settlements to target the drivers of high infection rates among women, and identify reasons for decline in urban formal settings for both men and women.

<sup>7</sup> Barriers to access include: A lack of access to information on sexual and reproductive rights, including how and where to access legal abortion services; Religious and cultural stigma.; Limited number of health centers—only half of the designated 505 centers provide first and second trimester pregnancy termination.; A failure to regulate conscientious objection on the part of health care providers.

<sup>8</sup> South African Human Rights Commission 2019 report also notes that many girls miss school because of menstruation.

**Table 1: Weighted HIV-Prevalence for Men and Women Ages 15 to 49 by Settlement Type Over Time (Percent)**

		2002	2005	2008	2012
Urban formal	Male	12.8	10.6	9.8	12.6
	Female	18.1	17.2	16.8	16.9
Urban informal	Male	21.4	20	20.7	22.6
	Female	33.8	30.7	34.7	38.1
Rural informal	Male	11.7	10.4	12.7	15.9
	Female	12.9	21.8	23.9	29.4
Rural formal	Male	8	12.4	11.9	14
	Female	15.2	15.5	21.4	20.0

Source: Gibbs et al 2020

**Access to social grants reduced rates of transactional sex among young women.** Among 3,000 families receiving regular child support grants, adolescent girls had a 53 percent lower incidence of transactional sex and a 71 percent lower incidence of age-disparate sex (UNAIDS 2018).

Council (HSRC 2017).<sup>9</sup> A long-term study in Soweto (2002-2012) found a cycle of transmission whereby high HIV prevalence in young women was driven by sex with older men (on average 8.7 years older) who themselves had female partners with HIV, many of whom had acquired HIV as young women (Evans et al. 2016a). This is particularly concerning since over the last 10 years there has been an increase in intergenerational relationships, especially in schools, with girls more likely than boys to have age-disparate sexual relationships, with 35.8 percent of girls and just 1.5 percent of boys surveyed in 2017 indicating that they have had a relationship with a partner five or more years older than them (HSRC 2017).

**Sex workers are at higher risk of HIV (AVERT 2020b) than other South African women due to the nature and context of their work and the criminalization of sex work in South Africa.**

While national data on sex workers is scarce, HIV prevalence among sex workers is estimated at 57.7 percent, and this varies provincially with a high rate of 71.8 percent in Johannesburg compared to 39.7 percent in Cape Town (AVERT 2020b). In rural South Africa, a rise in the incidence of HIV was found among women practicing transactional sex which is particularly concerning since 8.7 percent of adolescent girls and women from rural areas also reported having practiced transactional sex with a casual partner (UNAIDS 2018).

**Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people have also been identified as communities that are at a higher risk of HIV infection and related illness (South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) 2017).**<sup>10</sup>

Although no national prevalence data exist among people from the LGBTI community, studies on men who have sex with men show that they were at least four times more at risk of HIV infection than their heterosexual counterparts (Evans et al 2016b). Similarly, estimates on HIV prevalence among women who have sex with women range from 8 percent to 13.8 percent (SANAC 2017, AVERT 2020b). While HIV infections among the transgender population have been linked to lack of access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights (SANAC 2017), data on HIV prevalence and morbidity among transgender and intersex populations is limited and urgently needed to ensure an appropriate and effective policy response.

**Conservative social norms around sexuality, institutional barriers, gender norms and stigma around contraception and testing has a bearing on the level of testing and treatments sought.** Men are less likely than women to get tested for HIV, and women are more likely than

**Fear of getting COVID-19 reduced access to HIV testing and antiretroviral therapy.** Four in 10 people surveyed indicated risk of exposure as a reason for having run out of ART compared to only two in 10 who reported that ART was not available. HIV testing has also dropped dramatically. These trends have particularly affected women users of ART (Burger et al. 2020).

<sup>9</sup> Approximately 35.8 percent of girls compared to just 1.5 percent of boys surveyed in 2017 indicated that they have had a relationship with a partner five or more years older than them.

<sup>10</sup> Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people have been identified by the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) as communities that are at a higher risk of HIV infection and related illness.

girls to get tested. This is because HIV testing has been linked to maternal health care and the prevention of mother-to-child transmission thus increasing the likelihood of women getting tested compared to adolescent girls and men. On the contrary, educational institutions make it difficult for young people to access contraception and HIV testing which together with the law in South Africa requiring children younger than 14 get parental consent for HIV testing, restricts access to testing and treatment (AVERT 2020b). Likewise, social norms and stigma that associate health facilities as being “women’s places” and consider testing for HIV as being “non-masculine,” contribute to men’s lower testing rates (Burger et al. 2020). In addition, these harmful social norms negatively affect the ability of health programs to reach men, with the effect that compared to women, men are less likely to be diagnosed with HIV, less likely to receive ART, more likely to start ART with advanced HIV disease and at older ages, and have higher mortality rates on ART (Cornell et. al. 2015). Notably, people from the LGBTI communities face several barriers even when they are able to access health facilities, including the lack of health care workers with the requisite clinical skills to provide targeted LGBTI health care and lack of preventative tools for same-sex intercourse.

#### Progress made in relation to HIV prevention, testing, and treatment.

- The number of persons living with HIV receiving ART increased from 3.39 million in 2015 to 4.7 million in 2019.
- Total numbers of new HIV infections declined by 44 percent between 2016 and 2018, with the largest declines among women (56 percent).
- 92 percent of South Africans are aware of their HIV status, 70 percent of people living with HIV are on HIV treatment, and 64 percent of people living with HIV are virally suppressed.

(DPME 2019, Avert 2020)

## 5. Rates of Mortality and Chronic Illness

**In South Africa, male mortality has consistently surpassed female mortality; and the high prevalence of comorbidities among men and women puts South Africans at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (Centre for Disease Control 2020).** Men in South Africa consistently represent a higher proportion of deaths due to unnatural causes (16.4 percent) compared with women (5.3 percent) (Statistics SA 2019d); yet, women (17.5 percent) are more likely than men (11.1 percent) to report having a chronic illness. Research suggests that social norms around masculinity dissuade men from reporting chronic illnesses as a result of which reporting among men is less than women (Statistics SA 2019d). Alcohol and tobacco use are common, especially among men, and contribute to the burden of disease and to years of life lost (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019).<sup>11</sup> Women on the other hand are more likely to be overweight and obese. Thus, both men and women are at similar risk of developing diabetes and of having high blood pressure, increasing the risks of severe illness from COVID-19 (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019; Statistics SA 2020h).<sup>12</sup>

**While the maternal mortality rate has been declining (World Bank 2021d), South Africa is still far from achieving the Sustainable Development Goal target by 2030.** As of 2017, South Africa’s maternal mortality rate was 119 per 100,000 live births which is significantly less compared to 168 per 100,000 live births in 2001. Yet, the rates are still high when compared to the SDG target of less than 70 per 100,000 live births (Centre for Africa and Sustainable Development Solutions Network 2020). Pregnancy-related deaths in 2016 accounted for 8 percent of all deaths among women ages 15 to 49, and for every 1,000 live births, about five women died during pregnancy or within two months after childbirth (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019). It is estimated that approximately 60 percent of these deaths in South Africa could have been prevented if it were not for poor quality of care (Bomela 2020). In addition, poverty continues to be one of the major drivers of maternal ill-health—in 2016, 16.3 percent of pregnant women lived in households in which adults or children suffered from hunger.

11 Risky drinking is defined as drinking more than five drinks on a single occasion in the 30 days before the survey. Data from 2016 suggests that an estimated 8 percent of women and 37 percent of men smoke tobacco daily or occasionally while alcohol consumption rates are highest among men, with 28 percent of men and 5 percent of women exhibiting risky drinking.

12 Data from 2017 shows that 13 percent of women and 8 percent of men aged 15 and older are diabetic, and 64 percent of women and 66 percent of men are pre-diabetic. Almost half of South African men (44 percent) and women (46 percent) have hypertension, and close to a third of women (27 percent) are overweight, and four in ten (41 percent) are obese. Similarly, two in ten men (20 percent) are overweight, and one in ten (11 percent) are obese.

## B. Key Gender Gaps in Education

**South Africa has made significant progress in the education sector, including in terms of improving access.** However, as the government's 20-year review acknowledges, South Africa's school system faces several important challenges, including inequities of quality and access with race and the socio-economic status of children influencing the outcome (DPME 2019). However, as this challenge is not directly connected to gender, it is beyond the scope of this assessment to delve into these issues. Instead, this section focuses on gender gaps in areas of literacy, enrolments, and pass rates; school dropout rates; and STEM, including gaps in pass rates and uptake rates.

### 1. Literacy, Enrolments and Pass Rates

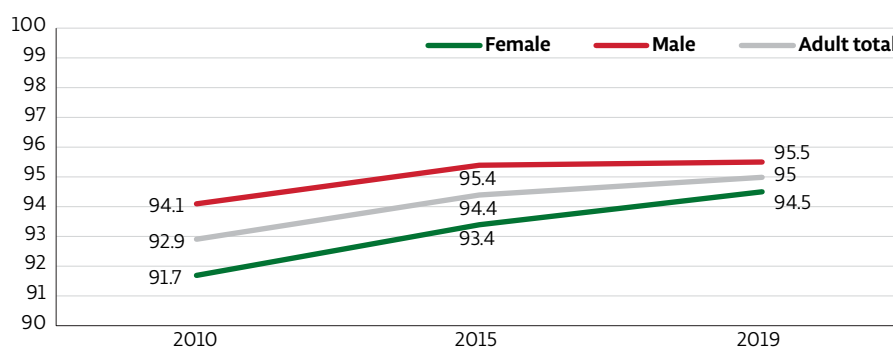
**A major achievement of South Africa's education sector is the attainment of gender parity in adult literacy levels.** For adults, the female literacy rate in South Africa is in line with the country's adult literacy (94.5 percent) though slightly lower than men's (95.5 percent) (South African Government 2019b) (*figure 3*).

**South Africa also has a positive gender gap in enrolments in schools.** While South Africa's gender parity index score at primary and secondary level has been 1 since 1998, recent figures indicate that more girls than boys enroll at both primary (94.7 percent for girls versus 90.3 percent for boys) (World Bank 2021d) and secondary school levels (female net enrolment is 78.5 percent compared to male net enrolment at 65.4 percent) (World Bank 2021d).

**Although South Africa's success with attaining gender parity in education suggests a positive picture, its education system still faces multiple challenges.** A lack of quality and throughput has caused it to rank poorly on the global level (WEF 2014, 2016, 2018, 2019). Almost 8 in 10 (78 percent) learners in Grade 4 (9 to 10 years of age) are not able to reach the lowest benchmark of reading or read for meaning (DPME 2019). Research shows that girls outperform boys at the primary and lower secondary level in reading, mathematics and science. However, girls are less likely to be confident about their mathematics abilities than boys despite higher actual achievement (Spaull and Makaluz 2019).

**Enrollments at the tertiary level and in technical and vocational education and training institutions, favor women.**<sup>13</sup> According to the World Economic Forum (WEF), 26.4 percent of women and 18.4 percent of men are enrolled in tertiary education in South Africa (WEF

**Figure 3: Adult Literacy Rates Over Time, South Africa, 2010-2019**



Source: World Bank 2021d.

<sup>13</sup> Technical and vocational education is where learners can pursue vocational and occupational courses and under certain conditions can then qualify for university.

**Table 2: Gaps in Primary and Secondary School Completion Rates, 2016**

	Primary education completion rates	Male (percent)	Female (percent)	Gender gap (percentage points)
<b>Primary education completion rates</b>	Poorest wealth quintile	88.31	94.28	5.97 (favors girls)
	Richest wealth quintile	98.96	98.62	0.34 (favors girls)
	Gap by wealth quintile (percentage points)	10.65	4.34	-
	Urban	97	98.4	1.4 (favors girls)
	Rural	91.51	96.81	5.3 (favors girls)
	Gap by urban and rural (percentage points)	5.49	1.59	-
<b>Secondary education completion rates</b>	Poorest wealth quintile	18.35	23.92	5.54 (favors girls)
	Richest wealth quintile	75.47	84.97	10.5 (favors girls)
	Gap by wealth quintile (percentage points)	57.12	61.05	-
	Urban	51.83	58.62	6.79 (favors girls)
	Rural	30.59	37.7	7.11 (favors girls)
	Gap by urban and rural (percentage points)	21.24	20.92	-

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2016

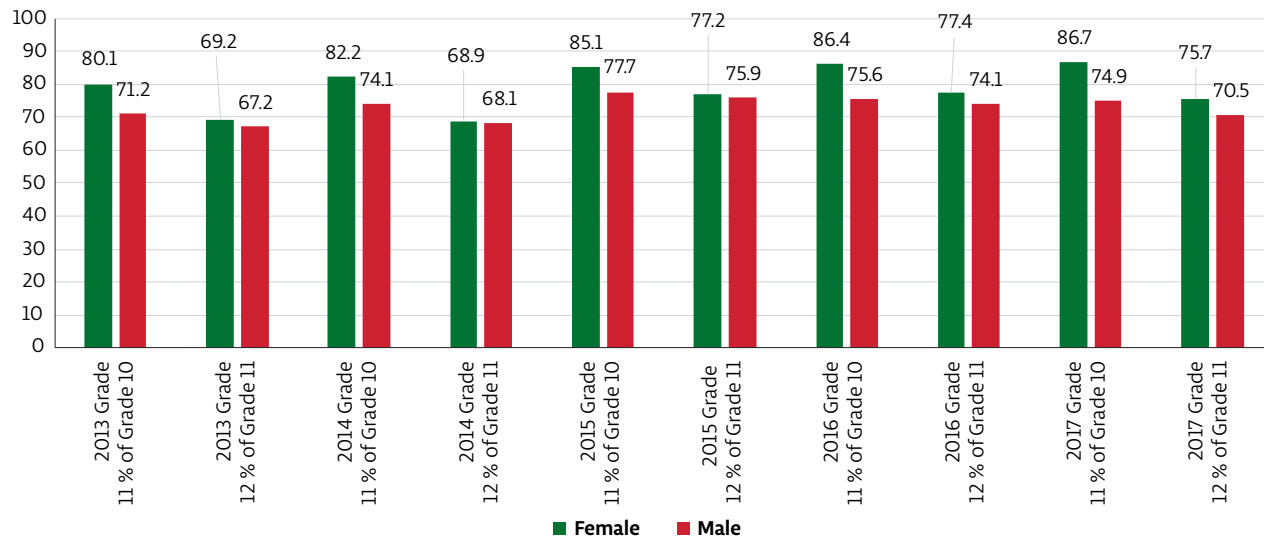
2020). Of those seeking a bachelor's degree between 2000 and 2016, 63 percent were female (Statistics SA 2019c). In terms of technical and vocational education and training institutions, more than half (56.8 percent) of the students enrolled in 2016 were women. And, just over half (51 percent) of students enrolled in private colleges in 2016 were women (Statistics SA 2019c).

**Gender gaps are more pronounced in relation to school completion rates with wealth and urbanity as significant determinants of completion rates, particularly at the secondary level.**

Broadly, gender gaps in school completion rates typically favor girls over boys across primary and secondary school levels as well as wealth category and location. However, gender gaps are larger in the poorest wealth quintile and among rural learners, though these too tend to favor girls (Table 2).

## 2. Gender Gaps in School Dropout Rates

**Boys are more likely to repeat grades than girls and also drop out in higher numbers (DG Murray Trust 2019).** In South Africa, four in 10 learners leave the school system before completing school (DG Murray Trust 2019), but in general, girls are more likely to progress in the higher grades of secondary school compared to boys (figure 4) (Statistics SA 2019c). As Figure 4 shows, in 2017, only 74.9 percent of males and 86.7 percent of females who were enrolled in Grade 10 progressed to Grade 11, with lower rates of progression between Grade 11 and 12 (the final year of schooling). Among youth ages 14 to 18 years, both boys and girls report fees or money as the main reason for not being in education. However, boys are more likely than girls to cite “education is useless” (13 percent versus 7.5 percent), “unable to perform” (12.2 percent versus 4.4 percent), and “working” (10.3 percent versus 4.7 percent) (Statistics SA 2020j). On the contrary, girls are more likely to cite “family commitment” (16.5 versus 1.1 percent) which appears to reflect early childbearing (Statistics SA 2020j). Notably, the South African Schools Act allows pregnant girls to re-enroll in school once they give birth but among girls ages 15 to 19 who were not enrolled in school, most (28 percent) cite being pregnant or having a baby as the reason for not enrolling in schools (Statistics SA 2020). Existing research indicates that both the push and

**Figure 4: Grade 11 and 12 Progressions by Gender, 2013-2017 (Percent)**

Source: Statistics SA 2019c

**Deeper dive assessments are needed to understand the underlying cases for:**

- Drivers of male school dropouts;
- Lower rates of male enrolment in tertiary education; and
- Lower rates of female passing in STEM subjects in secondary school and uptake of STEM in post-secondary school.

pull factors,<sup>14</sup> such as quality of school infrastructure, teacher attitudes and practices, exposure to violence, and household responsibilities seem to explain the school dropout rate, especially among the male learners (Zero Dropout Campaign 2020). However, further research that includes a gendered analysis of the drivers of school dropouts, would be beneficial.

**As a result of the gender differentials in dropouts, there are substantial gender differences in the numbers of girls and boys who reach the final years of schooling and write their school-leaving exam.** Over the last 10 years, the number of males writing matric have declined steadily. In 2018 for every 100 females writing matric there were only 80 males (Spaull and Makaluz 2019). The male-to-female ratio of those writing matric has been steadily declining since 2008.

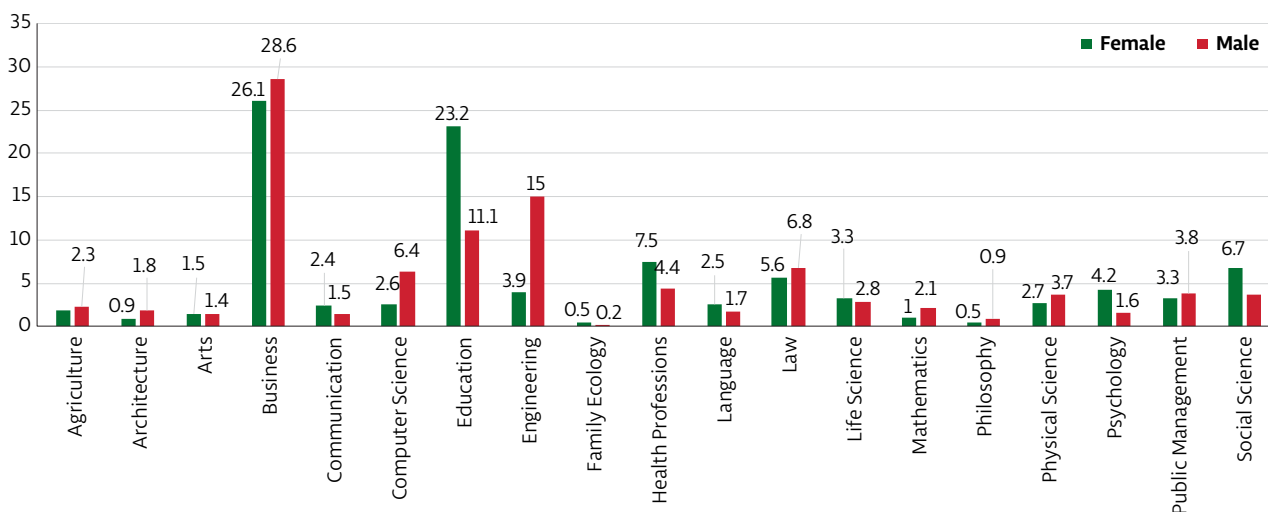
**The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have a gendered effect on school dropouts (DG Murray Trust 2021).** While data disaggregated by gender was not available at the time of writing this report, according to the latest NIDS-CRAM findings, school dropouts may have tripled from 230,000 learners pre-pandemic to approximately 750,000 in May 2021 (Spaull and Makaluz 2019). Further, a survey on the effect of COVID-19 on schooling indicates that learners, particularly girls, are overburdened by household chores and caring for younger siblings (DG Murray Trust 2021), although another study carried out subsequently indicated very little evidence that children in the household had shouldered the responsibility of caring for their younger siblings (Wills and Kika-Mistry 2021).

### 3. STEM Subjects: Gender Gaps in Uptake and Pass Rates

**Although higher proportions of women (28.6 percent) than men (19.2 percent) enroll at university (World Bank 2021d), gender gaps in pass rates in Mathematics and Physical Sciences subjects at a secondary school level favor boys, and consequently, STEM enrollment at post-secondary level is also higher for males.** The number of girls who enrolled for Mathematics and Physical Sciences over the past five years is greater than that of boys (2016-2020). However, on average,

<sup>14</sup> Push factors are factors and influences internal to a school – like quality of school infrastructure, teacher attitudes and practices, school policies – and pull factors are those that occur out of school – such as gangsterism, substance abuse, the child's exposure to violence, household chores, and peer pressure.



**Figure 5: Enrolment at Universities by Classification of Educational Subject Matter Categories and Gender, 2016**

Source: Statistics SA 2019c

boys performed better than girls in the two subjects over the period under review (Department of Basic Education (DBE) 2021; Statistics SA 2019c).<sup>15</sup> Since girls have lower pass rates than boys for STEM subjects, this pattern carries through with fewer females than males enrolling in STEM subjects at tertiary level. The largest gender gap in STEM subjects is in the field of engineering enrolments (figure 5). Social norms play a key role in girls' choices of educational subjects and are a key factor thereafter in their choices regarding the transition from school to work (Naudé 2017). Graduations in each field also show a gender difference, with far more women graduating in care professions (psychology, health, and education) than in other fields (figure 6).<sup>16</sup>

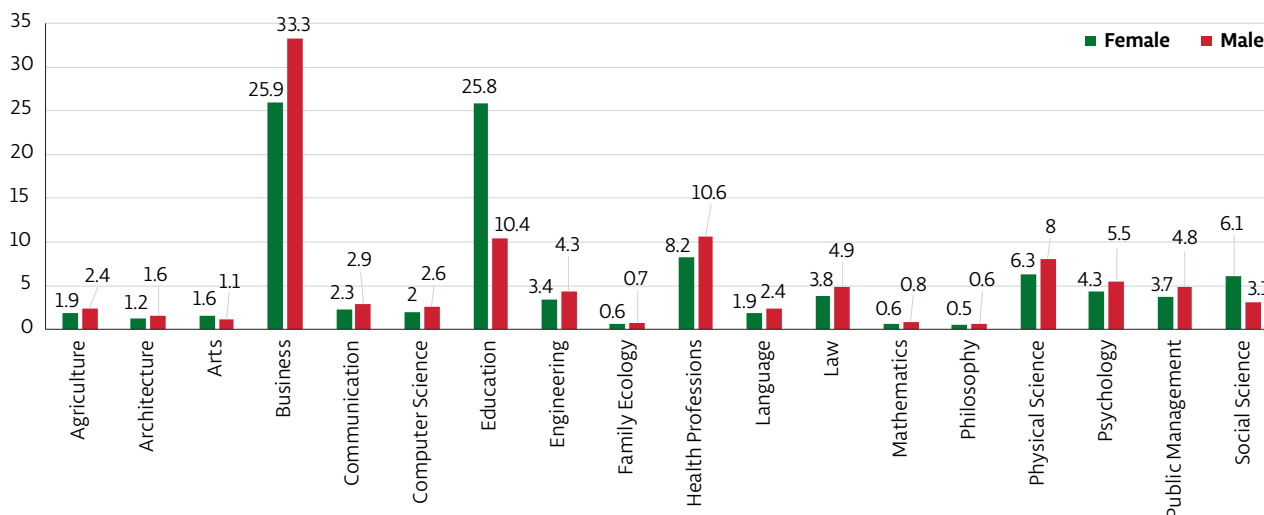
## C. Social Grants and Their Effects on Women: Initial Insights

**While an in-depth review of the gender impacts of South Africa's social protection system is outside the scope of this report, this section briefly reflects on a few of the positive impacts of the current system of social grants on women.** A full assessment of the gender impacts of the social protection system would require an in-depth analysis of the differentiated impact of the various policies and programs designed to protect people from shocks and stresses throughout their lives. It would include for instance safety nets, social insurance schemes, labour market regulations, facilitated access to essential services, amongst other policies and programs in place to reduce the lifelong consequences of poverty and exclusion.

**South Africa has a well-established social protection system with black women from rural areas being the single largest group receiving social grants (8.26 million) (Statistics SA 2019b).** There are eight types of social grants available, namely: Care dependency grants, Child support grants, Disability grants, Foster child grants, Grants-in-aid, Older person's grants, Social Relief of Distress Grants, and War Veterans Grants.

<sup>15</sup> The 2020 NSC data finds that 50.3 percent of girls passed mathematics compared with 58.6 percent of boys and 64.9 percent of girls passed physical sciences compared with 67.1 percent of boys.

<sup>16</sup> See also Council for Higher Education 2017 for comparative course uptake and graduation between 2010 and 2015.

**Figure 6: Graduates of Tertiary Education in South Africa by Gender and Field, 2016 (Percent)**

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020 (No data on Life Science).

**Table 3: Social Grant Beneficiaries and Amounts as of April 1, 2020**

	Child support grant	Foster child grant	Care dependency	Disability	Older persons
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	12,784,324	355,610	154,760	1,042,029	3,676,798
<b>Share of all grants (percent)</b>	70	2	1	6	20
<b>Rand value 2020 (pre-COVID-19)</b>	R440	R1 050	R1 860	R1 860	R1 860
<b>Share of grants budget (percent)</b>	37	2	2	13	45

Source: May, Witten and Lake 2020.

### An overview of social grants as of April 1, 2020 is provided in Table 3 above (May et. al. 2020).

The majority of grants distributed in South Africa are child support grants, which are targeted toward the support of children under 18 provided that their caregivers pass a means test. Despite its low rand value, the Child Support Grant (CSG) in particular has been linked to many positive social outcomes including improved nutrition and health for children, reducing income poverty, and cushioning households against financial shocks (May et. al. 2020).<sup>17</sup>

### In addition, recent research has shown that the income assistance through CSG boosts the self-esteem and agency of the women who receive it.

This includes offering an incentive for women to obtain official documents such as identity cards, increasing birth registration rates, increasing the likelihood that women will have a bank account, increasing the likelihood of women taking on the role of the main decision-makers of household spending, and reducing the extent and depth of poverty among female-headed households (Hunter et. al. 2020). The CSG has also been linked to health benefits including protecting against additional pregnancies among adolescents, longer spacing between pregnancies for adults, and lower rates of common mental disorders (when payments are reliable) (Hunter et. al. 2020). In terms of voice and agency benefits, the CSG has also been linked to increased awareness of rights, more agency, and increased participation in elections (Hunter et. al. 2020). Further, the effect of social grants on young girls is important – among the 3,000 families receiving regular child support grants, adolescent girls had a 53 percent lower incidence of transactional sex and a 71 percent lower incidence of age-disparate sex (UNAIDS 2018).

**COVID-19 special grants:** The government introduced a special COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress grant with a value of R350 per month. The grant was initially limited to those not receiving any other social grant, which excluded a vast majority of women who were already beneficiaries of child support and care dependency grants. However, as of July 2021, the President announced that the grants would be available to child support grant recipients

(Eldmann et al 2021).

<sup>17</sup> See also Sustainable Development Goals Centre for Africa and Sustainable Development Solutions Network 2020: 25.



## IV. Gender Gaps in Economic Opportunities

Globally, gender gaps in labor markets have been remarkably resistant to change despite progress made in other dimensions of gender equality.

At the heart of this resistance, are social norms and assigned gender roles which require a long-term and multifaceted approach to change them, both from a policy as well as from a grassroots perspective.

(IMF 2019; Klasen 2019)

The disproportionate responsibility placed on women for care work and domestic tasks affects their economic opportunities and economic empowerment more broadly.

Taking on responsibility for domestic tasks, providing care for children and the elderly, has intrinsic economic value, in that it helps others to have time to pursue work if they want to. In most countries, as is the case in South Africa, women perform a disproportionate share of childcare and household work which in turn constrains their economic opportunities, in terms of engaging in employment and entrepreneurship.

During the lockdown, women were more likely to be living with children and likely to be living with more than one child.

The NIDS-CRAM survey found that approximately 74 percent of women reported living with at least one child of age 0 to 17 in their household compared to 61 percent of men. Women also were more likely to report living with a higher number of children on average.

(Casale and Posel 2020)

**Achieving gender equality in economic opportunities requires removing constraints for more and better jobs as well as improving women's ownership and control over assets (World Bank 2016).** Accordingly, this section examines (i) gender gaps in labor market outcomes which includes labor force participation and employment, occupational segregation, the gender wage gap, and the legislative environment in relation to women's access to jobs; (ii) gender gaps in ownership of and control over assets including land, women's representation as entrepreneurs and business owners, and their engagement in government procurement. Where data were available, the effect of COVID-19 on gender gaps is also highlighted. Considering the critical importance of the role of household and care work in women's labor force participation, employment, and odds of securing paid work, this section begins with an assessment of gender gaps in household and care responsibilities.

## A. Gender Gaps in Household and Care Responsibilities

**South African gender norms result in girls and mothers often taking on the responsibility for household chores on top of their education and employment duties.** The most recent time use survey administered in 2010 revealed large gender gaps in the division of household labor (Statistics SA 2013). Women who had children younger than seven years living with them spent more than 4 hours doing household activities and 1 hour 25 minutes caring for the children and other members of the household. Men in a similar situation spent 1 hour 16 minutes on household maintenance activities and 15 minutes on caring for children and other members of the household (Statistics SA 2013). These trends are further accentuated by the fact that children in South Africa are most likely to live with their mothers only, and where children lived with neither parent, they commonly are in the care of another female relative (Casale and Posel 2020). Even in cases where there were no children in the household, women undertook more unpaid household labor than men (196 minutes for women and 96 for men), the majority of which was preparing food and drinks, and cleaning and the upkeep of the house (Statistics SA 2013). Education levels did not significantly alter the time spent by either men or women.

**Social norms and gender roles in the household play an important role in a woman's decision to participate or remain in the labor market.** Existing data show that the presence of children in the home decreased a woman's ability to participate in economic activities (Statistics SA 2013). A 2019 study found that women who had biological children still living with them were 14.1 percent less likely to be employed than those who did not (Van Rensburg et. al. 2019). This has far-reaching consequences because long-term unemployment lowers future job-finding rates, and women in general already have lower job-finding rates than men (IMF 2016). Notably, these gender differences informing care responsibilities and social norms start early. In a 2016 survey carried out with young men and women (ages 19-35) in several rural communities, 35 percent of female youth reported household chores and childcare as significant aspects of their daily life compared to 15 percent of the young men. Moreover, 74 percent of male youth and 44 percent of female youth agreed that it was fine for women to do most of the household tasks (Clulow n.d.).

**Lack of access to childcare facilities outside the home is also another driver affecting women's labor force participation.** In South Africa, enrolment rates in early childhood development centers are low, with just 19 percent of children from ages 0 to 2 and 64 percent of children from ages 3 to 5 enrolled in childcare services (De Henau 2019). Public spending on

this sector is also low, just 0.09 percent of GDP (or 0.15 percent if including Grade R for 6-year-olds). Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers are largely privately funded through school fees, with estimates suggesting that average childcare costs per child (as a proportion of average earnings) are around 20 percent of household income (De Henau 2019) which often is a major deterrent, especially for poorer households.

**Gender gaps in care responsibilities further intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic.** The effect of the closure of schools and ECD centers on mothers has been disproportionate, requiring them to juggle work and childcare. When asked who was looking after their young children, 67 percent of women versus 25 percent of men said they were looking after the children themselves (Casale and Shepherd 2020). Consequently, in June 2020, more than twice the number of women than men (roughly 3.4 million women versus 1.7 million men) said that looking after children prevented them from going to work or made work very difficult, and similar numbers reported difficulty working the same hours as before lockdown or searching for work as a result of childcare responsibilities (Casale and Shepherd 2020). In the case of school closures, the effects on women from the lower income bracket are expected to be worse, given that remote schooling was not always possible due to a lack of resources including technological resources and the internet (Gustafsson and Nuga 2020).

## B. Gender Gaps in Labor Market Outcomes

**Women are less likely than men to participate in the labor force, both in the formal and informal sectors, and when they do, they tend to earn lower wages.** Given South African women's current educational attainment levels, women should be participating in the labor market at higher rates. However, not only is the female labor force participation low in South Africa but even among working women, they tend to be concentrated in the low skilled, low-paying, and more vulnerable forms of employment than men. A range of constraints explain this situation, including women's self-selection into lower-paid jobs and sectors, wage discrimination, and their unequal share of domestic tasks (such as childcare and family care related to HIV/AIDS) (World Bank 2018a). This section discusses the labor force participation and employment in both the formal and informal economy and highlights the gendered patterns of occupation and employment and wage inequality. Persisting barriers constraining more and better jobs for women are discussed at the end of the section.

### 1. Gender Gaps in Labor Force Participation and Employment

**There is a large gender gap in labor force participation rates in South Africa,** with the ratio of female to male labor force participation rate of just 78.8 percent as of 2019 – the fourth lowest in the SADC as of 2019 ([appendix C](#)) (World Bank 2021d). Further, not only is the gender gap significant, but women's absolute level of participation is low – according to International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates, just 49.6 percent of women are economically active as of 2019 compared to 65.3 percent in Botswana, 60.4 percent in Lesotho, and 55.8 percent in Namibia. The lower rates of female labor force participation have persisted over the last decade (figure 7). By the final quarter of 2020, women's participation rate was at 50.6 percent to men's 62.8 percent – with a gender gap of 12.2 percentage points (Statistics SA 2021e).

**Among women, rates of labor force participation also vary by racial groups.** The labor force participation rate of white females is higher than that for women across all other groups, with Indian or Asian women lagging farthest behind (Statistics SA 2019c). Figure 8 compares these

**Key drivers of gender gaps in household and care responsibilities are largely linked to social norms of childcare and labor and gender roles within the household.** For example, the notion of male breadwinner and female homemaker, and lack of access to childcare facilities.

**The COVID-19 pandemic worsened unemployment and reduced labor force participation for both men and women. Available data suggest fewer women were able to recover jobs.**

- More than nine in 10 women (96 percent) compared to less than one in 10 men (6 percent) said that they had worked less because of COVID-19.

(Hunter, Abrahams and Bodlani 2020a)

- Poor women workers were most affected – almost half of all employed women surveyed (47 percent) in the poorest tercile reported losing their job between February and April 2020 compared to just over one third of men (36 percent).

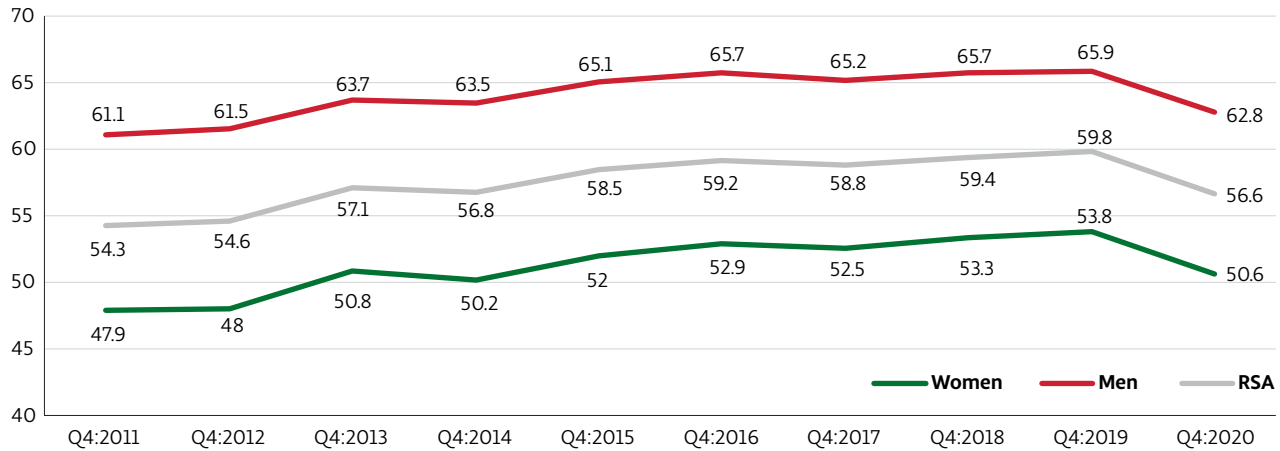
(NIDS-CRAM; Casale and Posel 2020)

- 15 percent of women versus 10 percent of men in the highest tercile lost their jobs (Ibid).
- While by March 2021, men's employment and working hours were back to pre-COVID levels, women's employment and working hours remained below the February 2020 baseline figures.

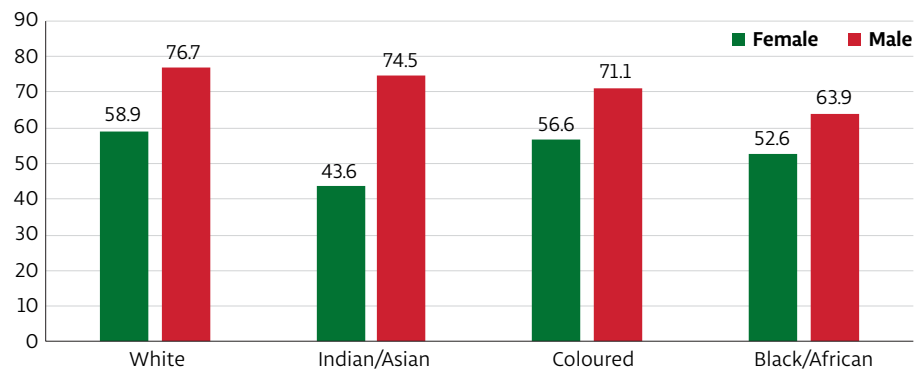
(Casale and Shepherd 2021)

- Fewer women recovered their jobs, despite easing of lockdown restrictions.

(Statistics SA 2021e).

**Figure 7: Labor Force Participation Rate by Gender 2011-2020 (Percent)**

Source: Statistics SA 2020c, Statistics SA 2021e

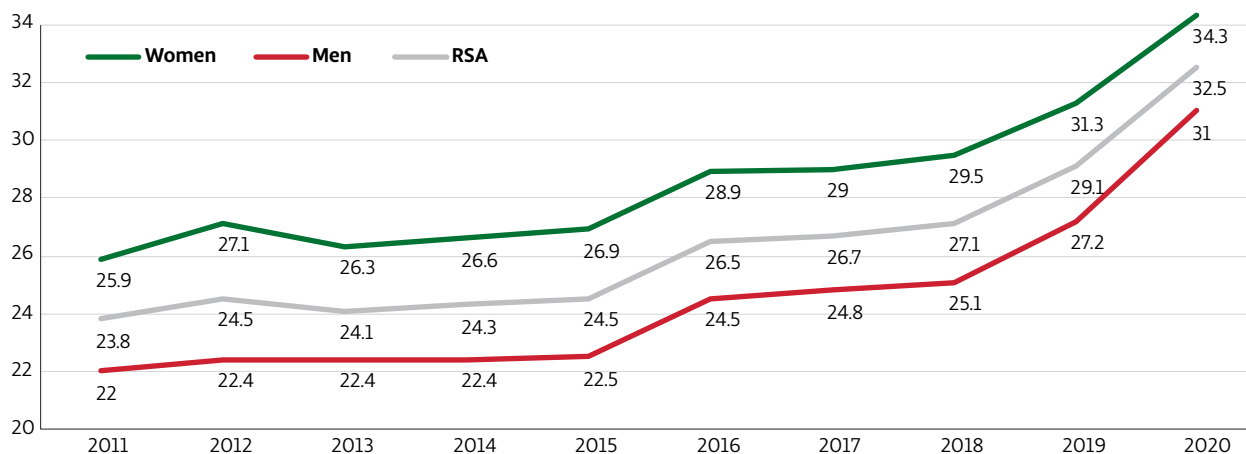
**Figure 8: Labor Force Participation Rates by Race and Gender, 2019 (Percent)**

Source: Statistics SA 2019i

figures among men and women of different racial background but considering that men in each of these groups have a higher labor force participation rate compared to their female counterparts is an indication that irrespective of race, a gender gap persists in the labor market. At the time of writing, there was no national survey of LGBTQI+ persons in relation to employment or access to opportunities. However, recent research carried out in South Africa estimates a US\$316.8 million cost due to wage discrimination and underemployment related to sexual orientation and gender expression (Nyeck et al. 2019).

**In terms of unemployment, while the problem is a lack of decent jobs for everyone, women have always been more likely than men to be unemployed (2011-2020) (figure 9).** In 2019, an estimated 9.0 million women compared to 6.5 million men were not economically active (Statistics SA 2020c).<sup>18</sup> By the end of 2020, more than 17 million South Africans were not economically active – 9.8 million women compared to 7.25 million men. Of these, 1.64 million women versus 1.33 million men were discouraged work-seekers (Statistics SA 2021e). Accordingly, the unemployment rate for men is 31 percent; for women, it is 34.3 percent. Further, female youth (from age 15 to 34) are more likely than male youth to be NEET—not in employment, education, or training (45.4 percent versus 38.3 percent) (Statistics SA 2021e). According to the 2020 figures, unemployment rates in South Africa have been at an all-time

<sup>18</sup> Of these, 1.5 million women versus 1.35 million men were discouraged work-seekers.

**Figure 9: Unemployment Rate by Gender, 2011-Q4 2020 (Percent)**

Source: Statistics SA 2020c, 2021e

high of 32.5 percent in terms of the official definition, and 47.5 percent in terms of the expanded definition.<sup>19</sup> The official rate does not account for the effects of COVID-19 or the numerous discouraged work-seekers who are no longer looking for work—from a gender perspective, this is more pressing because women are more likely than men to be economically inactive and to be discouraged work-seekers.

**Education level affects employment outcomes and provided some protection from COVID 19-related job losses (Statistics SA 2020i, Statistics SA 2021e).** Unemployment rates are highest among those with less than a matric level education (37.8 percent) and lowest among graduates (8.4 percent). To factor in the effects of COVID-19, in Quarter 4, 2020, only 9.8 percent of graduates received a reduced salary compared to 18.8 percent of the employed with less than matric (Statistics SA 2021e). Further, job losses during 2020 varied by sector with some sectors, particularly those where women predominate (private households and community and social services sector), being more severely affected than others (Statistics SA 2020i).

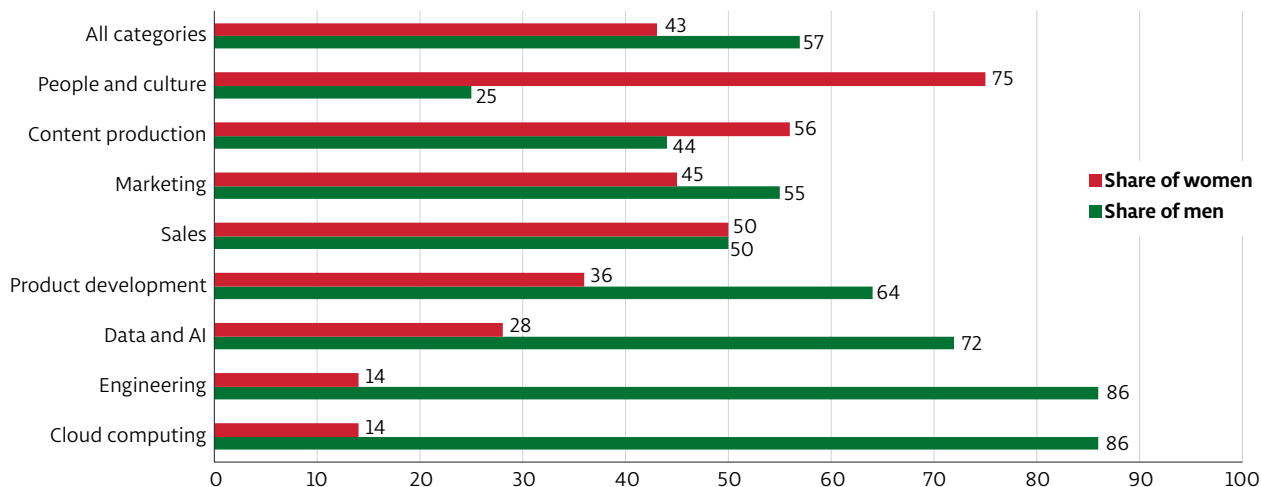
## 2. Occupational Segregation

**Despite small or reverse gender gaps in education, women are concentrated in low skilled, low-paying, and more vulnerable forms of employment.** As of December 2020, women make up 45 percent of the informal labor force and 43.4 percent of the formal labor force (Statistics SA 2021e). The WEF’s Global Gender Gap report ranked South Africa first (along with 40 other countries) in terms of the proportion of professional and technical workers that are female, predominantly nurses and teachers (WEF 2021). However, there is predominance of men in what is termed as “frontier skills,” or those that are relevant to the changing global economy (figure 10). This mirrors the curriculum and professional track choices that male and female youths make starting in high school and continue at institutions of higher learning (see figure 5 and figure 6 in the previous section).

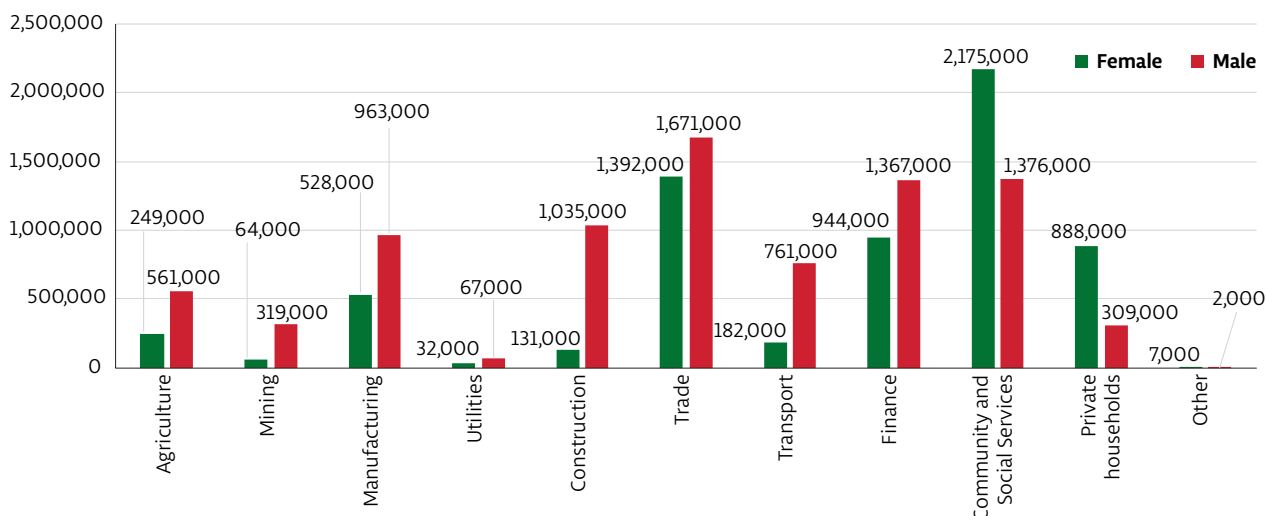
- **The Early childhood development (ECD) sector, where most employees are female, has been hit hard by COVID-19.** The ECD sector receives limited subsidies from the government with most programs operating as small businesses charging fees to 75 percent of learners. Without fees, many of these businesses are at the risk of closure thus affecting women’s employment and women’s care burden
- **The Private Households Sector was heavily affected by COVID-19 lockdowns.** In the early months of the lockdown, domestic workers were locked out of employment, due to regulations restricting movement to those employed as essential workers. For example, 96,000 women who were employed in Q1 were no longer employed in Q4 of 2020, compared to 23,000 men during the same period.

(Wills, Kotze and Kika-Mistry 2020)

<sup>19</sup> The expanded definition takes into account those who are unemployed and are discouraged work seekers or are no longer looking for work.

**Figure 10: Proportion of Men and Women in Frontier Skills Job Fields, 2020 (Percent)**

Source: WEF 2020

**Figure 11: Employment by Industry and Gender, Q4: 2020**

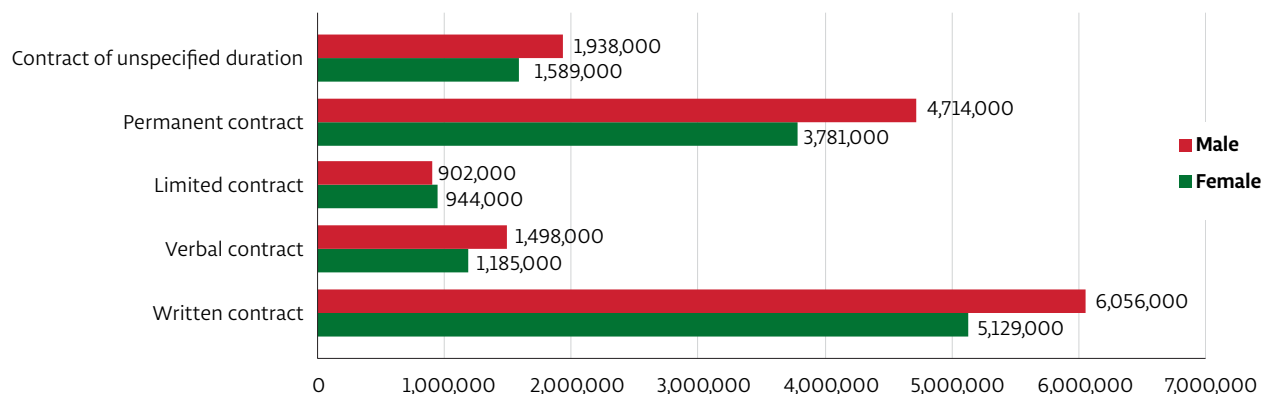
Source: Statistics SA 2021e

**Women workers are concentrated in vulnerable sectors, primarily in Community and Social Services<sup>20</sup> and Private Households<sup>21</sup>** (figure 11). As of December 2020, the only sectors where more women than men are employed were in Community and Social Services (2,175,000 women compared to 1,376,000 men), and Private Households where women make up the majority (74 percent) of domestic workers. The pay scale in the private households sector is low, and few workers have access to employment security. On an average, domestic workers receive a low minimum hourly wage (R19,09 per hour) compared to other workers where minimum wages apply (farm workers for example earn R21,69 per hour) (Department of Employment and Labour 2021). Despite efforts by the government to increase protections for

<sup>20</sup> Community and Social Services refers to all workers in health, education, government, veterinary, library, sporting, agency, and social development services in both the public and private sector.

<sup>21</sup> Private households normally refer to domestic workers, private childcare, nannies, and garden services workers. This covers those in both informal and formal work.



**Figure 12: Nature of Contracts, 2017**

Source: Statistics SA 2020c.

domestic workers, the private household sector is a particularly vulnerable sector due to the challenges with regulating it because the work is being done in private residences (ILO 2016).<sup>22</sup>

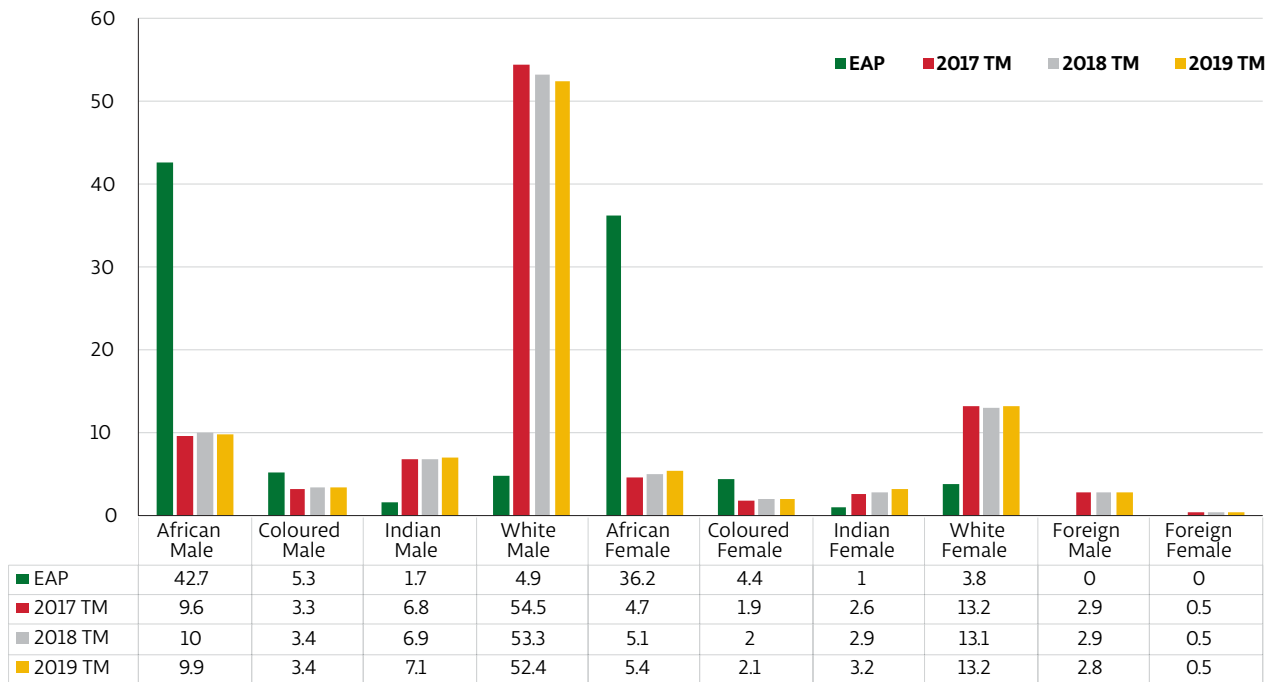
**In the formal sector, women constitute a smaller portion of those with access to employment benefits and stable contracts (figure 12).** Men are more likely than women to have an employment contract of any kind, with the exception of limited contracts. Higher number of men tend to have permanent contracts.

**Across all sectors, women tend to be less represented among supervisors and managers, and race continues to be a predominant factor that influences both women and men's chances of success.** As of 2019, top management and senior management were 75.6 percent and 64.7 percent male respectively, whereas women constituted just 24.4 percent of top managers and 35.3 percent of senior managers (Commission for Employment Equity 2020). In the agricultural sector, where women are employed full time on farms, they are less likely than men to be farm managers (16 percent female, 84 percent male), or supervisors (26 percent female, 74 percent males) (Loubser 2020). Though improvements have occurred since 1994, the Employment Equity Reports reveal there is much more that needs to be done to transform the private sector, including large companies (Commission for Employment Equity 2020). In the private sector, black females made up just 4.2 percent of top management, colored females 2.1 percent, and Indian females 3.2 percent, compared to 13.2 percent white females (figure 13). However, race appears as a larger determinant than gender in the case of top management positions—white females are more likely to be in top management compared to black males (7.8 percent), colored males (3.3 percent), or Indian males (7.4 percent) (Commission for Employment Equity 2020). Shifts in terms of racial and gender transformation of leadership at the skilled, and semi-skilled levels are occurring, but progress is slow.

**Racial equity at top management level is better in the public sector, however women still make up less than half of all top managers (Commission for Employment Equity 2020).** For instance, at national government level, 76.7 percent of top management is black; however, women still make up less than half of the band of top managers. In addition, the representation of women in top management at a local government level – where the majority of

22. In 1993, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) was extended to cover domestic workers, changing their status from "servant" to "worker", and bringing protections such as maximum working hours, overtime limits, and more days of paid family responsibility leave in recognition of the fact that domestic workers often have to live far away from their families. In 1994, the Labor Relations Act was extended to cover domestic workers, providing them with organizational rights. In the early 2000s, South Africa introduced a minimum wage for domestic workers and the extension of the Unemployment Insurance Fund to these workers.

**Figure 13: Proportion of the Economically Active Population (EAP) Versus the Proportion of Those in Top Management by Gender and Race 2017-2019 (Percent)**



Source: Commission for Employment Equity 2020.

**Reducing employment segregation in South Africa is central to economic empowerment in three ways:**

1. Improving job quality and earnings for women and reducing the gender wage gap;
2. Increasing skill acquisition and overall economic productivity; and
3. Improving household welfare and intergenerational social mobility.

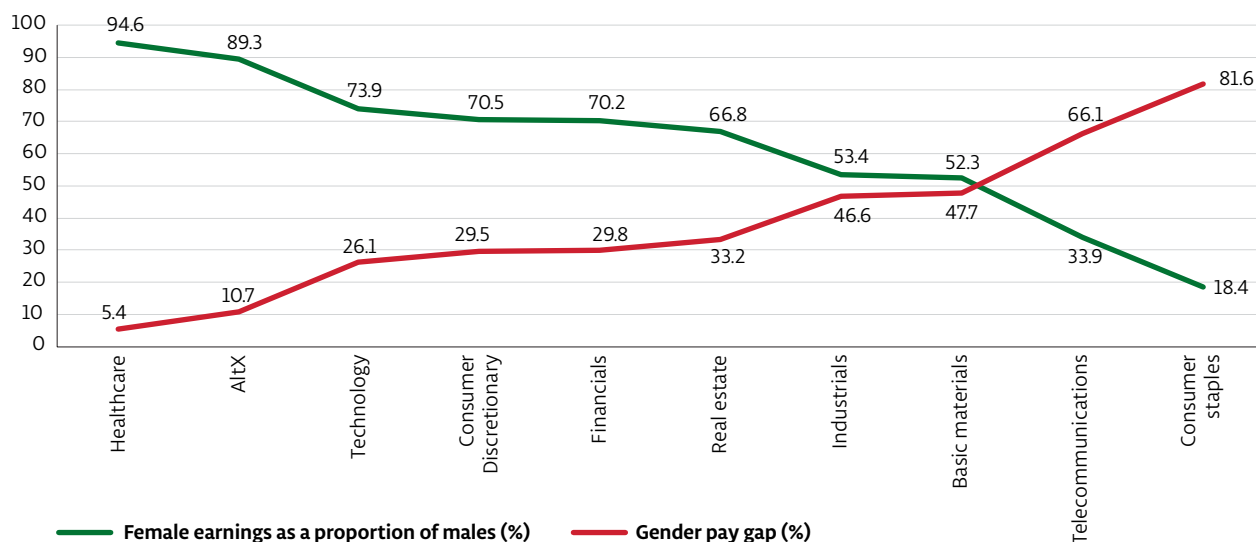
(Das, Carranza, and Kotikula, forthcoming; Das and Kotikula 2019; Solotaroff et al 2019)

government services are delivered – is lower when compared to national and provincial government. (See [appendix G](#) for more detailed employment equity tables at multiple skill levels).

**There have been efforts to introduce employment equity targets, but these remain indeterminate.**<sup>23</sup> The effect of policies on affirmative action show that “the transfer of asset-building wealth to Africans is still a challenge” with direct black ownership of companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) only making up 3 percent of all such companies, and declines in black and women shareholders between 2015 and 2017 (DPME 2019). Progress on employment equity has been slow.<sup>24</sup> The Draft Employment Equity Bill makes provision for sector targets to enable the government to establish affirmative action employment targets in specific areas where progress has been the slowest, including numerical targets for different occupational levels, sub-sectors, or regions within a sector. The Bill was introduced to Parliament in July 2020, and as of July 2021 was still being debated in Parliament (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2021b; Minister of Employment and Labour 2020). If successful, the Bill may help address the stagnation in gender progress in key sectors; however, efforts will also be required to address the gender gaps in educational self-selection to encourage women’s entry into high-skill and high-earning fields.

<sup>23</sup> The Employment Equity Act requires designated employers to implement affirmative action measures for people from designated groups and to develop employment equity plans to promote equity. Employers that are not designated by the Director General of the department may comply voluntarily.

<sup>24</sup> For more detailed employment equity tables please see the [appendix G](#).

**Figure 14: Gender Pay Gap by Industry of Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) -Listed Companies, July 2019**

Source: PWC 2019.

### 3. Gender Wage Gap

**Women earn significantly less than men despite improvements in female educational attainment.** Women continue to get paid 25 to 35 percent less than men even if they have the same amount of schooling and similar work experience (Mosomi 2019). They also earn less than men across all income brackets except in the poorest 5 percent (figure 14, also see [appendix G](#) for more detailed tables). In fact, even in the informal economy, the median monthly earnings for women in 2019 was R1,950, whereas for males it was R2,600 per month. Over time, the wage gap has increased, as measured by the WEF Gender Gap Index where in 2021 South Africa dropped 10 ranks down to 131 out of 153 countries (WEF 2021).

**Occupational segregation contributes in part to the gender pay gap, where women tend to be over-represented in low paying sectors (for example private households) and underrepresented in most of the higher paying sectors.** Information on median monthly earnings by sector in 2020, shows that the highest monthly earnings in 2019 were in the utilities sector and mining sector where women made up only 32 percent and 17 percent of the workforce respectively (see detailed tables in [appendix G](#)). By contrast, the lowest median monthly earnings were reported in the private households sector where women make up 74 percent of the workforce (Statistics SA 2019i).

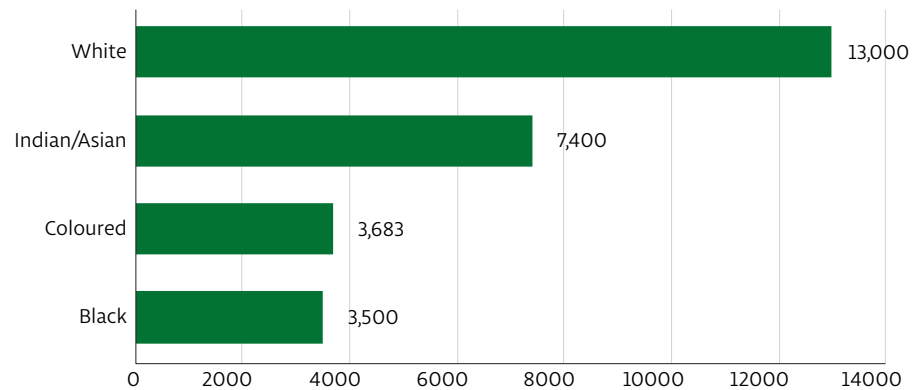
**The intersections of gender with race and sexual orientation are also significant in explaining the pay gap.** In 2019, the median monthly earnings of a black South African was the lowest among all groups while white South Africans earned almost four times as much (figure 15) (Statistics SA 2019i). At the time of writing, there was no national survey of LGBTQI+ persons in relation to the gender pay gap. However, recent research carried out in South Africa estimates that the monthly earnings of gender-non-conforming heterosexuals and gay and bisexual men were 30 percent lower on average than cisgender heterosexual men (Nyeck et al. 2019).

**Drivers of gender wage gaps are heterogeneous and cut across a numerous range of issues.** Therefore, efforts toward narrowing the gender wage gap will need to be specific to the

#### COVID-19 increased the gender wage gap.

- The first two waves of NIDS-CRAM data results show that women earned around 29 percent less than men per hour in February 2020, which increased and by June 2020 they earned 51.6 percent less.
- Changes in the wage gap were driven by decreased working hours among women.
- The wage gap widened most among poorer earners, was larger in urban than in rural areas, and in terms of education level was highest among those with a tertiary degree.

(Hill and Köhler 2020)

**Figure 15: Median Monthly Income by Race Group (in Rands)**

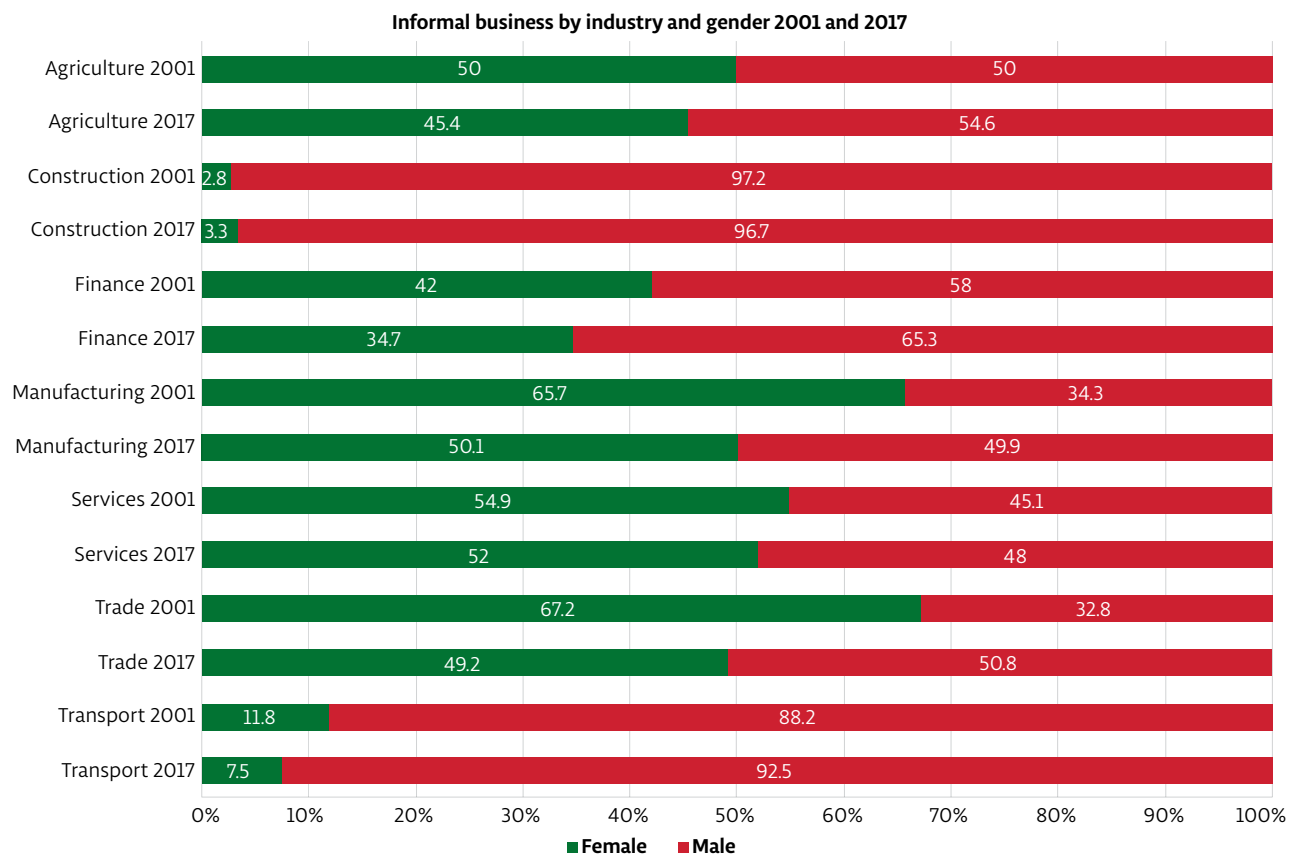
Source: Statistics SA 2019i

challenges faced by the different groups of women. There are different factors that influence the gender wage gap in South Africa, including government policies, family and childcare responsibilities that are primarily borne by women, and associated social norms that discourage the hiring of women to top positions and that dissuade girls from taking certain career paths (Bosch 2020). Accordingly, initiatives targeted at narrowing the gender wage gap should also be able to attend to the challenges faced by women in different income groups and wealth quintiles (Mosomi 2019). For the lower bottom of the distribution list, efforts to raise the minimum wage may help, but for the upper bottom of the wage distribution, more efforts will be needed to relieve women of the disproportionate burden of care work that they shoulder; to encourage them to spend more hours at work; and, more importantly, to encourage employers to hire women for these positions.

#### 4. Gender and the Informal Economy

**The informal economy is widespread in South Africa and remains a major source of employment for women despite multiple challenges that women experience in the sector.** As of 2019, the informal sector provided 31.5 percent of all employment in South Africa. Women make up less than half (43.8 percent) of those in the informal economy, a rate which has steadily declined since 2001, when 60.7 percent of persons running informal businesses were women (Statistics SA 2019g). Yet, as of 2017, black women made up the significant majority of women running informal businesses (90.6 percent), a proportion that has not changed much since 2013 (Statistics SA 2021b). Men, on the other hand, made up a larger proportion of the informally employed across all races except for white males (Statistics SA 2021b). There are several determinants for the decline in women's participation in the informal sector, including a lack of labor standards and women's heightened vulnerability; lower monthly turnovers compared to men; the seasonality and unreliability of incomes that are highly dependent on agriculture, and tourism; the lack of affordable childcare (Statistics SA 2021b); and the care economy, where women are concentrated (figure 16) (Mabilo 2018).

**COVID-19 had a significant effect on women informal workers' ability to work and the informal sector did not serve as a buffer for the formally employed who lost their jobs.** Women informal workers who reported an increase in their care responsibilities worked fewer days and earned less than other informal workers (Ogando et. al. 2021). An estimated 37 percent of women and 35 percent of men in informal employment lost their jobs between April and June 2020 compared to 13 percent of women and 11 percent of men in formal employment (Benhura and Magejo 2020). Between April and June 2020, when South Africa was in a hard

**Figure 16: Informal Business by Industry and Business Owner's Gender, 2001 and 2017**

Source: Statistics SA 2019g.

lockdown, hours worked per week decreased by 139 percent for women in informal employment compared to a decrease of 25 percent for women in formal employment, and the decrease in wages among women in informal work was 114 percentage points higher compared to that of women in formal work (Benhura and Magejo 2020). Men in informal work also experienced a higher decline in hours worked than men in formal work.

**The special relief measures introduced by the state had a limited cushioning effect for informal workers, particularly women informal workers.** This included a small increase in the child support grant, a social relief of distress caregiver allowance paid to the primary caregivers of children receiving child support grants, the top up of all other social grants with additional amounts, and a COVID-19 social relief of distress grant (Shepherd et al. 2021). In addition, the state introduced a COVID-19 Temporary Employer Relief Scheme implemented by the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF). However, few informal workers are registered with the UIF that would have enabled them to benefit from the Temporary Employee Relief Scheme. For instance, just 20 percent of South Africa's 1.2 million domestic workers report being registered for UIF (Rogan and Skinner 2020).

## C. Law and Policy Protections, Limitations and Cross Cutting Barriers

**South Africa scored 88.1 in the Women, Business, and the Law Index – the second highest in Sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank 2021c).** Over the past decade, the government has enacted several programs and legal reforms to enhance women's economic opportunities. South Africa introduced nearly 20 reforms that increased women's economic inclusion between 1990 and 2020.<sup>25</sup> As a result, South Africa scored 100 percent in the categories of Mobility, Workplace, Pay, Marriage, Entrepreneurship, and Assets, and its lowest scores were 80 for Parenthood which examines laws affecting women's work after having children, and 25 on laws affecting the size of a woman's pension (World Bank 2021c). Notable government policy interventions include:

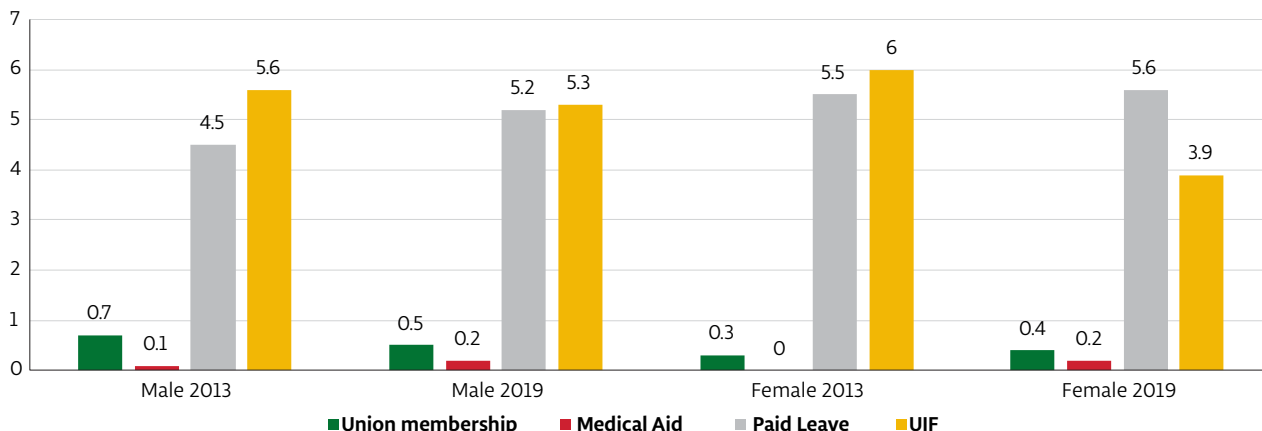
- The draft Employment Equity Bill (2020) that makes provision to set gender targets for certain sectors.
- A Gender-Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework that aims to ensure that government spending and planning is gender-responsive, improving women's access to social support and opportunities.
- The Labour Laws Amendment Act (Act 10 of 2018) extended additional leave days to fathers and to adoptive parents. However, the Act does not require payment for this parental leave nor for existing parental leave for women. This Act also does not cover those who are informally employed.<sup>26</sup>

**Despite policy efforts, there are several cross-cutting barriers that continue to perpetuate gender gaps and constrain women's access to more and better jobs.** These include:

- a) *Gaps in equal access to employment and other benefits.* Not all South African companies offer a full range of employee benefits that are flexible for families. Although the provision of leave for maternity and paternity is mandated by law, the funds provided by the UIF are less than a full wage and companies are not legally required to pay staff during parental leave. Further, there are restrictions on who can contribute to the UIF as set out in the Unemployment Insurance Act (2001) and Unemployment Insurance Contributions Act (2002) (South African Revenue Service 2021). As a result, informal sector access to benefits is low (figure 17) among men and women, with lower rates of access for women as of 2019 (Statistics SA 2021b). In the formal sector too, women constitute a smaller portion of those with access to employment benefits and stable contracts (figure 12 above).
- b) *Social norms, educational choices and childcare responsibilities are key to explaining patterns of female labor force participation.* As set out in Chapter II above, South African gender norms often make it difficult for girls and mothers who are expected to take on the responsibility for childcare to also manage their education and employment duties (Casale and Posel 2020). When in education, women self-select or are encouraged into care and social sciences fields, which when combined with their household responsibilities, limits their ability to enter and remain in high-paying jobs and those requiring frontier skills.
- c) *Sexual harassment at the workplace appears to be common in South Africa.* A recent survey on sexual harassment reveals that some 30 percent of women and 18

<sup>25</sup> See figure 1 in Arekapudi and Martins 2021 for more details.

<sup>26</sup> Though it is not included in the WBL index, the Employment Equity Act (Section 27) also requires employers who employ more than 50 employees or who meet a certain annual turnover threshold to report income differentials across both race and gender groups to the South African Department of Labour.

**Figure 17: Informal Sector Access to Employment Benefits by Gender 2013 and 2019 (Percent)**

Source: Statistics SA 2021b

percent of men experience sexual harassment in the workplace (Columinate 2019). The Code of Good Practice on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace provides appropriate procedures to deal with sexual harassment but there is no law that requires private sector organizations to have company-specific policy. As a result, 51 percent of work environments do not have a clear sexual harassment policy (Columinate 2019). Further research is recommended to determine the extent of the influence of having such policies in place.

- *Historical occupational segregation:* During apartheid, many jobs, particularly those at management level, were reserved for whites and for men. As a result, white males continue to predominate at management level in many sectors including accommodation, agriculture, construction, information and communication technology, manufacturing, mining and quarrying, real estate, transport and storage, and wholesale retail trade as seen [appendix G](#), Table 9, and Table 11. Although employment equity targets exist for large companies, and both the public and private sector are required to report on them, these targets are voluntary and there is not much evidence that they have been effective in the private sector. This is evident from the reports of the Commission for Employment Equity, as shown in detailed tables in [appendix G](#) of this report.

**The Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF)** provides short-term relief to workers when they become unemployed or are unable to work because of maternity, adoption leave, or illness. The following categories of employees are excluded from contributing to the UIF:

- Workers employed for less than 24 hours a month.
- Those employed as an officer or employee in the national or provincial sphere of government.
- Members of a municipal council, a traditional leader, a member of a provincial House of Traditional Leaders, a member of the Council of Traditional Leaders.
- Students or learner in a learnership.
- Self-employed and freelance or part-time workers.







## **V. Gender Gaps in Ownership of and Control Over Financial and Non-Financial Assets**

Women's ownership of and control over both non-financial assets such as land,<sup>27</sup> as well as savings, loans and other financial assets is linked to their economic empowerment since they provide a means to generate income, facilitate access to capital and credit, and strengthen their overall decision-making power. This section covers women's access to land, financial inclusion, business ownership and entrepreneurship, as well as data on government procurement viewed through the lens of gender. A detailed analysis of government programs that seek to advance Micro-, Small-, and Medium-Enterprise (MSME) ownership in South Africa is beyond the scope of this report; however, these are mentioned where relevant. It is important to also note that national data on entrepreneurship and business ownership is limited, and the last in-depth government review of small businesses was conducted in 2014 (Department of Small Business Development 2014).

## A. Gender Gaps in Access to Land

### 1. Gender Gaps in Rates of Land Ownership

#### Men own bigger portions of land:

- Ownership by hectare among men is more than twice that of women.
- 71 percent of men versus 13 percent of women are owners of farms and agricultural holdings.
- Only 9 percent of land restitution beneficiaries are women.

(Department of Women 2015)

**Land ownership rates in South Africa are informed by both race and gender.** About 72 percent of the country's arable land remains in the hands of white South Africans who account for fewer than 10 percent of the total population. Black South Africans own only 4 percent of land and Indian South Africans own about 5 percent (DRDLR 2018).<sup>28</sup> In terms of gender, ownership by hectare among men is more than twice that of women (DRDLR 2018). Further, the registry of deeds indicates that plots, erfs,<sup>29</sup> lots, and stands are registered mostly to men, and men continue to own land of greater size than women.

**Despite the progressive laws and policies on land reform and land redistribution, the effects, including on gender differences, have been limited.**<sup>30</sup> Although all policies relating to land redistribution emphasize gender equality, nationally women only constitute just 23 percent of land redistribution beneficiaries.<sup>31</sup> The 2017 High Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation and the Acceleration of Fundamental Change proposed a new framework law on land reform that would set out both law reform and land restitution principles; address past deficiencies in law and policy, including the representation of women as elected members of traditional councils; and provide a coherent and consistent set of guiding principles for land reform, including defining the concept of equitable access to land and principles for beneficiary selection.<sup>32</sup> In addition, it also recommended reform around Communal Property Associations,<sup>33</sup> development of a robust land administration system, and establishment of a system of recording rights for people who have lived all their lives with no official recognition of their land rights. By defining equitable access, and improving data collection on land allocation, there is increased potential for more gender-equitable distribution of land. To date, it is difficult to establish whether the High-Level Panel recommendations have been acted upon. If implemented, the recommendations would have profound positive implications for women.

<sup>27</sup> Data on access to productive assets (such as cattle or farm animals) is not available.

<sup>28</sup> The Land Audit report does not present gender-disaggregated data on ownership by race.

<sup>29</sup> An *erf* is a plot of land of approximately half an acre in size.

<sup>30</sup> Data on access to productive assets (such as cattle or farm animals) is not available.

<sup>31</sup> High Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation and Acceleration of Fundamental Change 2017.

<sup>32</sup> High Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation and Acceleration of Fundamental Change 2017.

<sup>33</sup> Communal property associations enable communities to come together to form juristic persons in order to acquire, hold and manage property on a basis agreed to by members of the community in terms of a written constitution.

## 2. Customary Law as a Barrier to Women's Land Ownership

**The legacy of colonialism and the customary system influenced by apartheid has had an effect on the land rights and tenure security of women in the former homelands (Clark and Luwaya 2017).** Both systems relied on male elders to define the content of customary law to the exclusion of women, with the result that women's land rights became dependent on their husbands, fathers, or male relatives. While there are variations between one communal tenure system and another, women are generally treated as "minors" and therefore predominantly access land as wives, with their tenure security affected upon the dissolution of a marriage or death of their husband (Clark and Luwaya 2017).

**Changes have been made to customary law in favor of inheritance rights by both genders, but women continue to face barriers in accessing and making decisions about land (Claassens 2012).** Legal challenges to customary laws of succession resulted in the requirement that the Intestate Succession Act (Act 81 of 1987) apply to all, making the rule of male primogeniture (that is, the customary law of succession where all land is inherited by the eldest male heir, and land is passed on by males rather than females) no longer the legal default (Maunatlala and Maimela 2020). However, despite the legal reform to advance gender equality through jurisprudence, women – particularly single, unmarried, divorced, or widowed women – continue to face barriers in accessing and making decisions about land. Many women in rural areas do not have access to land records to establish their ownership and thus remain vulnerable to eviction and dispossession. Further, women are often evicted from their marital homes when marriages fail, or their spouse dies. Yet, they are also excluded from traditional institutions such as traditional and village councils and traditional courts where they could seek redress (Coetzee 2017; DOW 2015; High Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation and Acceleration of Fundamental Change 2017).

**Legal changes to governance at the local level aim to support greater rights for rural women, but traditional leadership systems remain patriarchal.** Efforts by rural women, particularly single rural women without children, to access residential sites, independent of a male guardian, after 1994 have faced resistance from traditional leaders who tend to be primarily males (Claassens 2012). In fact, women's rights are increasingly precarious due to the overreach of traditional councils through proposed laws such as the Traditional Courts Bill which excludes people in rural areas from accessing the ordinary justice system and instead limits their access to traditional councils, which are often not gender representative (Mogale 2021).

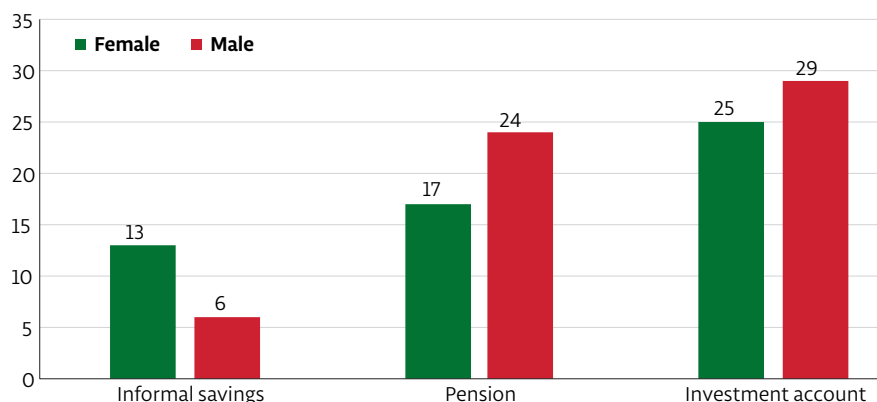
**Single and unmarried women,** widows, and girl children are most vulnerable in terms of accessing and owning land, due to the continuing influence of gender unequal provisions of customary law.

**Drivers of gender gaps in land ownership:**

- Gender inequitable customary law
- Gender inequitable implementation of the government's land reform and restitution policies

## B. Gender Gaps in Financial Inclusion

**In South Africa, there is a positive gender gap in terms of access to formal financial institutions; financial exclusion instead is linked to poverty and inequality which disproportionately affects people, including women, at the bottom of the economic pyramid.** South Africa is the only country in the SADC region that has a positive gender gap in terms of access to formal financial institutions with more women (70 percent) than men (68 percent) owning a bank account held in financial institutions (World Bank 2020b). However, these minimal gaps in account ownership may not be a good indicator of levels of financial inclusion (Klapper et al. 2019; Georgieva 2018; Demirgüç-Kunt et al. 2018). One possible reason why more women have bank accounts is due to a higher rate of women's receipt of government transfers and payments that require a bank account (FinMark Trust 2016; Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion 2020). It is therefore not surprising that despite the higher proportion of women with bank accounts, more men than women use their own accounts (FinMark Trust 2016).

**Figure 18: Savings and Investment Account Ownership by Gender (Percent)**

Source: Statistics SA 2019b

**Table 4: Gender Gaps in Savings 2017**

Saved	Males (percent)	Females (percent)
Any money in the past year	61	58
For education or school fees (2014)	25	23
To start, operate, or expand a farm or business	15	11
For old age	10	11
At a financial institution	26	19
Using a savings club or a person outside the family	28	31

Source: World Bank 2020b

A similar trend is visible in the ownership and use of mobile money accounts and digital payments (World Bank 2020b; Wentzel and Diatha 2016). In fact, in South Africa, levels of education and income are more strongly correlated with financial inclusion than gender (Wentzel and Diatha 2016). For instance, 64 percent of adults with primary education or less have a bank account compared to 71 percent with secondary education or more. Likewise, 63 percent of those in the poorest 40 percent of incomes have an account compared to 74 percent of those in the richest 60 percent (World Bank 2020b).

**Gender gaps in saving practices and borrowing behavior are notable, where women are more likely to save and borrow informally compared to men.** Only one in three South Africans use their bank accounts to save money—most either save semi-formally (20 percent) using other methods, or do not save at all (Demirgüç-Kunt et al. 2018). Likewise, South African borrowing behavior is also mostly informal. Global Findex data from 2017 show that the majority of South Africans borrowed money from family or friends (Demirgüç-Kunt et al. 2018). Even then, women are more likely to save informally compared to men, and are also less likely than men to have a pension or own an investment account (Table 4 above provides data on gender gaps in savings from 2017) (FinMark Trust 2016). Gender gaps in borrowing behavior also reflect a smaller proportion of women than men having borrowed money in the last year (World Bank 2020b), including credit from banks and financial institutions (11 percent of men compared to 8 percent women) (FinMark Trust 2016). Further, most women in South Africa access credit from non-bank financial institutions, such as insurance companies, microfinance institutions, and savings and credit associations (FinMark Trust 2016). On the positive side, rural women do appear to have been benefiting from easier access to finance through post offices, gas stations, and retail stores that allow withdrawals and transactions at a low cost (FAO 2019).

#### Barriers to women accessing credit from formal and informal sources include:

Legal constraints in traditional and customary law, employment and income limitations faced by women, a shortage of start-up capital, unequal attitudes toward women, a lack of information and exposure to business and financial environments, a lack of collateral, a lack of awareness of women's differing financial needs among banks, and the fact that women often want to borrow smaller amounts which might be outside banks' minimum loan policies.

(DWYPD 2020).

## C. Gender Gaps in Business Ownership and Entrepreneurship

**Despite the enabling legal framework, in South Africa, men are significantly more likely to own a business than women.** The South African legal framework does not place any restrictions on women's business ownership and women can legally access credit,<sup>34</sup> sign a contract, register a business, and open a bank account in the same way as a man (World Bank 2021c).

- According to Mastercard (2019) South African business ownership is estimated at 78.5 percent male and just 21.5 percent female (Mastercard 2019).
- The International Finance Corporation's estimate suggests that MSME's were 62 percent male-owned, and 38 percent female-owned as of 2017 (IFC 2018).
- South Africa's female-to-male ratio of nascent/new business entrepreneurship was 0.69 as of 2017, just below the global average of 0.7 (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2018).

Most MSMEs are in urban areas and their ownership continues to reflect racial and gender inequality. Sixty-nine percent of MSMEs in South Africa are in urban areas with only 31 percent in rural areas (IFC 2018). The gender gap in micro, small-, and medium-business ownership has increased over the last decade and remains the highest at the micro-level (41 percent female) (IFC 2018) (figure 19). Statistics South Africa's survey of employers and the self-employed showed that 40.4 percent of informal (non-VAT registered) businesses were run by women (Statistics SA 2019g). Women are also more likely to run businesses in the services (52 percent female) and manufacturing (50.1 percent female) sectors while men dominated all other sectors with construction (96.7 percent male) and transport (92.5 percent male) sectors showing large gender gaps (Statistics SA 2019g). MSME ownership continues to reflect racial and gender inequality, with black and female ownership more common at the micro enterprise level and in the informal sector (IFC 2018). Barriers to entry exist for women in such male-dominated sectors, and accordingly women may require different forms of support from the financial services sector and from the government to enter these sectors (DWYPD 2020).

**However, the situation seems to be improving with South Africa ranked 23 in 2020 on Mastercard's Index of Women Entrepreneurs moving up nine places from its 2019 ranking.** Improvements appear to have been made in the:

- Component on Women's Advancement outcomes which measures women's progress and inclusion as business leaders, professionals, entrepreneurs, and labor force participants. This score was boosted by an improvement in the overall rate of women's entrepreneurial activity, with 10.2 percent of working-age women engaged in early-stage entrepreneurial activities compared to 11.4 percent for men, and the relatively large (53 percent) share of professional and technical worker positions held by women in the workplace.
- The Knowledge Assets and Financial Access component, which gauges women's progress and degree of marginalization as financial customers and academically in terms of tertiary education enrolment. South Africa's score for this category increased by 6.5 percentage points between 2019 and 2020, moving from 19 to 15.
- In the Support for Small and Medium Enterprises component there was a substantial increase of 13 ranks up to 32 place – which indicates improvements in

### MSMEs were hard-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic with women disproportionately affected

According to the World Bank and Department of Small-Business Development Pulse Survey:

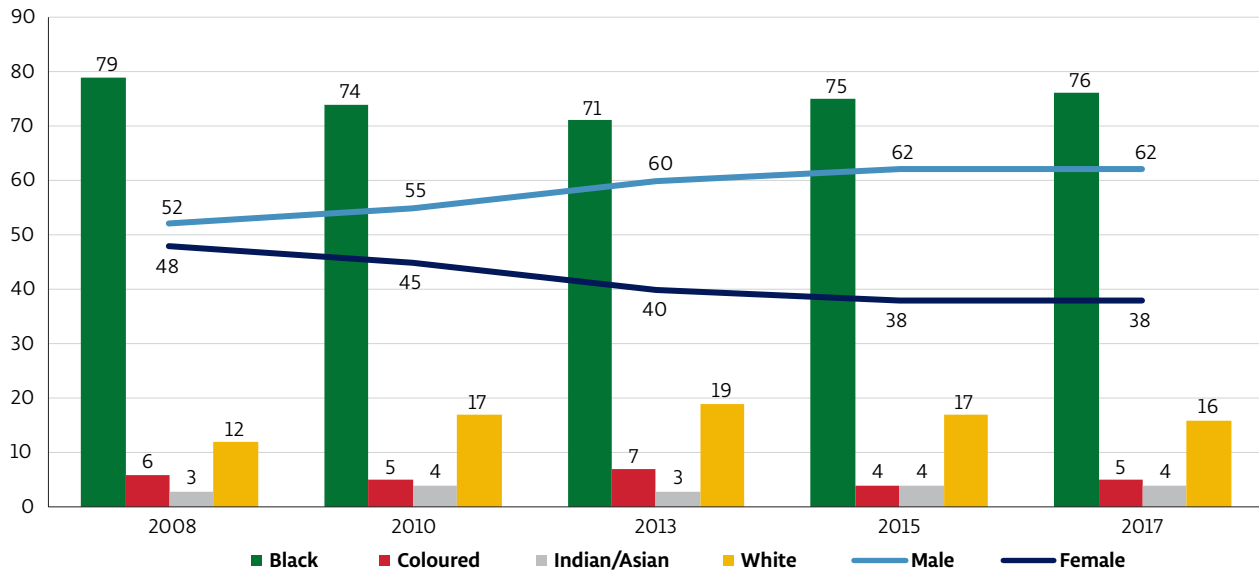
- 49 percent of female owned businesses compared to 44 percent of male owned businesses were closed during the hard lockdown.
- Average decrease in sales was larger for female-owned businesses (66 percent) than male-owned businesses (62 percent).
- Micro, informal, female-owned, youth-owned, and firms with disabled workers or majority black workers received government support at lower rates than other groups. This had an effect on employment as well.
- One in four female-owned firms fired workers, 49 percent gave workers a leave of absence without pay, 61 percent reduced hours and 67 percent reduced wages.

(World Bank Group and DSbD 2021)

**More than half (55.3 percent)** of women-owned informal businesses had low turnover (R0 to R1500 per month) compared to 38.9 percent of male-owned businesses.

(Statistics SA 2019g).

<sup>34</sup> The National Credit Act prohibits discrimination based on gender in access to credit.

**Figure 19: Distribution of MSME Owners by Race and Gender, 2008 and 2017**

Source: IFC 2018.

**Common barriers faced by women entrepreneurs include** access to knowledge and skills for starting and running a business, care responsibilities that limit their ability to run a business, access to information about finance, access to finance, and difficulties in connecting with markets.

(IFC 2019a; Mandipaka 2014; Chinomona and Eugene 2015; Mjadu 2019; FinMark Trust 2006; FinMark Trust 2021)

availability of finance, training, and development programs for women (Mastercard 2020). South Africa improved by 12.8 percentage points in this category, moving from 45 to 32 in the rankings.

**Select South African policies and schemes for women's MSMEs exist, however they are not without constraints.**<sup>35</sup> The government has introduced several programs specifically to increase women's economic empowerment. These include the B'avumile Skills Development Programme, the Isivande Women's Fund, Technology for Women in Business, the South African Women Entrepreneurs' Network, and the SEDA Women Enterprise Coaching Programme (Commission for Gender Equality 2020a). However, key findings by the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) from 2020 indicate gaps in existing programs including:

- Government policy and legislation does not give a clear definition of women's economic empowerment, and thus there has not been a consistent approach;
- Investments were not coordinated or strategic;
- Existing programs did not necessarily link to one another;
- Implementation has been irregular; and
- Challenges persist in terms of the administration and management of finance (CGE 2020a).

<sup>35</sup> The government has an extensive range of programs aimed at providing support to SMMEs. These include the Black Business Supplier Development Programme (DTI), the Co-operative Incentive Scheme (DTI), Green Energy Efficiency Fund (IDC), Black Industrialist Scheme (BIS), Incubation Support Programme (DIT), Isivande Women's Fund (DTI), Rural and Community Development Fund (NEF), Small Enterprise Finance Agency (IDC), Support Programme for Industrial Innovation (DTI), Technology Innovation Agency (DSI), Transformation and Entrepreneurship Scheme (IDC), Women Entrepreneurial Fund (IDC), Gro-E Scheme (IDC), Imbewu Fund (NEF), National Youth Development Agency SA Young Entrepreneurship Fund (NYDA), Risk Capital Facility Programme (IDC), Identity Development Fund (SEFA), Enablis Acceleration Fund (SEFA), Transformation and Entrepreneurship Scheme (IDC), and the Jobs Fund. There are also several provincial initiatives.

## D. Gender Gaps in Government Procurement

**South Africa has legislation that recognizes the need to transform the economy and supports the inclusion of groups that were previously excluded, including promoting women-owned and women-led businesses.** Laws like the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act (Act 5 of 2000) and the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (Act 53 of 2003) both include a points system that encourages the use of women-owned enterprises (CGE 2019). In addition, the Public Finance Management Act (Act 1 of 1999) includes regulations that provide for preferential procurement for certain categories of bidders if this does not compromise the condition of value for money.<sup>36</sup> However, the CGE found a general lack of political will among government departments to integrate gender into their procurement practices, inconsistent application of the available laws and legal provisions, absence of women in decision-making and governance, and failure to use supply chain management protocols to enhance procurement from women-owned and led businesses (CGE 2019).

**In recent years, there have been stronger commitments from high-level government institutions to encourage women entrepreneurs.** While there is no publicly available gender-disaggregated data on public procurement, in 2020, the President announced that the government would set aside 40 percent of public procurement for women-owned businesses (South African Government 2020d). Accordingly, government departments were required to develop plans to implement this commitment by August 2021. Increased procurement from women is also one of the five-year outcomes of the National Strategic Plan on GBV and Femicide (NSP GBVF). Further, in October 2020, the National Treasury introduced a draft Public Procurement Bill which includes a commitment to advancing economic opportunities for women and other vulnerable groups (National Treasury 2020c). The Bill requires the Minister of Finance to prescribe a framework for treatment of categories of preferences. To implement these commitments, it will be vital that the government adequately defines what it considers to be a “women-owned company” as this has resulted in differential application in the past (International Trade Centre 2014).

The World Bank is currently undertaking additional research into conditions that can facilitate entrepreneurial ecosystems and small business development in South African townships under its Jobs Platform Initiative.

- Initial research points to challenges faced by township businesses, including a lack of compliance and legal requirements, poor financial management, lack of social capital, poor control systems, poor access to credit, lack of infrastructure, poor technology skills, crime, corruption, unethical practices, lack of business models, poor business planning, lack of professional management, lack of understanding business needs, lack of small business support structures and a lack of funding systems.

(Parker 2020a)

- Support needed thus includes access to funding, equipment, digital technology, growth strategies and skills development.

(Parker 2020b).

<sup>36</sup> The Implementation Guide: Preferential Procurement Regulations 2017 provision 5.5 notes that prequalification must be used in identified tenders to advance designated groups on the basis of one or more of the following (a) B-BBEE Status Level of contributor; (b) EME or QSE; or (c) on the basis of subcontracting with EMEs or QSEs which are 51% owned by either of the following: Blacks; Black Youth; Black Women; Black people with disabilities; Black people living in rural or underdeveloped areas or townships; cooperatives owned by Black people; Black people who are Military Veterans







## **VI. Gender Gaps in Voice and Agency**

**Women's lack of agency and voice persistently drive gender gaps in outcomes.** Globally, the key issues have been and remain women's lack of societal voice due to low substantive representation in national and local decision-making bodies; the muted voice of women within their own households in many countries, which in turn is associated with their limited control over household resources and fertility as well as their exposure to GBV.

**Women's political representation is important for ensuring that laws reflect women's interests and that political decisions take women into account.** In South Africa, white women were given the right to vote in 1930, while women of all other races were only granted this right in 1994. Since then, the country has had relatively high levels of women's political participation and representation at the national level, a trend which is also increasing. However, at the local government level, the representation of women is low, which is particularly concerning as most basic services are delivered at this level. Few political parties are led by women and substantive representation of women at all levels of decisions remains a key constraint in South Africa. Additionally, while progress to address violence against women and girls continues, GBV remains a threat. This section provides an overview of the barriers to women's voice and agency in South Africa. It includes an examination of the institutional framework for addressing gender gaps, challenges in increasing the representation of women, as well as gender-based violence.

## A. Institutional Framework for Addressing Gender Gaps

**South Africa has set up a well-defined institutional framework for addressing gender gaps, known as the National Gender Machinery, however, since its establishment in 1994, it has faced persistent challenges.** Collectively, the Department of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities; the CGE; the parliamentary committees focused on women's rights; and the departmental gender focal points are referred to in South Africa as the *National Gender Machinery* (See [appendix D](#) for more information on the structures of national gender machinery). Challenges faced by the National Gender Machinery include:

- **Overlapping mandates** and the influence of corruption and infighting within and among structures on its functioning;
- **Poor coordination and communication** hence limited achievements in terms of gender mainstreaming, and a lack of public understanding and acknowledgement of its structures and uneven engagement with civil society;
- **Challenges with the skill and gender training of staff and appointees** hence a lack of compliance with the gender policy framework, a lack of gender expertise, and the exiting of feminists from government structures;
- **Uneven engagement with civil society organizations**, hence a lack of public trust in these institutions; and
- **Under-resourcing** (DWYPD 2019a; Gouws et al 2019).

**Legislative and policy commitments to gender equality have not translated into gender-responsive budgeting and planning.** The CGE found that South Africa's two key policy documents that define its development and economic goals: *National Development Plan 2030* (introduced in 2011) and *South Africa's Economic Strategy* (introduced in 2019) do not focus on factors constraining progress toward addressing gender gaps. Similarly, annual budgets for local, provincial, and national government departments have rarely included a gender-responsive budgeting element (CGE 2018). This lack of integration of a gender-responsive budgeting lens has practical implications for women's access to economic opportunities, health, and services. For instance, women's unpaid domestic and childcare labor have not been costed or included in the National Treasury's economic strategies or the government's planning. In 2018, the South African government hosted the Gender-Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation Summit, aimed at setting clear targets to address the absence of

**Renewed focus on setting measurable targets** and adequate resourcing of the many good structures, policies, laws, and programs is needed for the country to renew its commitment to its transformational agenda.

gender integration into planning and introduced a Gender-Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Auditing Framework to mainstream this practice. The Framework was published after the summit; however, the plan is yet to be made operational at the national level in the 2020/21 national budget (DPME 2019). See [appendix E](#) for more details on this Summit.

## B. Key Gender Gaps in Political Representation

### 1. Women's Representation in Various Tiers of Government

**Gender parity in representation has been steadily increasing in South Africa though there are differences across different structures and tiers of the government.**<sup>37</sup> The proportion of female ministers in the cabinet has increased since 2014, reaching 50 percent in 2019. However, political parties led by women continue to have less representation in parliament—in the national elections of 2019, women-led parties received only 0.009 percent of valid votes (IEC 2019d). Likewise, the proportion of female members of parliament increased from 27.8 percent in 1994,<sup>38</sup> to 43 percent in 2014, and 46.1 percent in 2019. However, fewer women than men chair parliamentary committees (Parliament of South Africa 2019a). Women's representation in the National Assembly is the highest it has been since 2004, though it is still under 50 percent. On the other hand, the percentage of female members in the National Council of Provinces is low but improving. As of 2019, of the 54 permanent delegates, 21 (38.9 percent) are women (South African Government 2019b). This reflects an improvement since 2009, when female membership stood at 29.6 percent (South African Institute for Race Relations 2013). However, women are not equally represented within the judiciary (CGE 2020b). Four out of eleven Constitutional Court justices are women, and women constitute less than a third (29 percent) of judges at the Supreme Court of Appeals though the President of the Supreme Court of Appeals is a woman. At the magistrate level, almost half (47.8 percent) of magistrates are women (CGE 2020b).

**Gender parity has not been achieved in provincial leadership and representation of women as premiers has decreased since 2009 when five of nine premiers (55.56 percent) were female.** Every province in South Africa is led by a premier, who serves as head of the executive for that province. Since the 2014 elections, two of nine premiers are women and remained the case after the 2019 elections (South African Government 2019b). However, the representation of women as speakers and members of provincial legislatures has increased since 1994. Between 1994 and 2009, the representation of women in provincial legislatures almost doubled, from 23.5 percent in 1994 to 41.5 percent in 2009 (SAIRR 2013), and as of 2019, women's representation in provincial legislatures is 46 percent. Since the 2019 provincial elections, eight out of nine (88.9 percent) speakers have been women (Provincial Government of South Africa 2019).

**At the local level, women are better represented as local councilors than ward councilors, but representation remains below 50 percent—the target of the SADC Gender Protocol.** Local government elections took place in 1995, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2016, and recently in 2021, though the analysis presented here does not include the 2021 information (Table 5). Past trends indicate that women's representation at ward level has stagnated, whereas the representation of

<sup>37</sup> South Africa's parliament is made up of a National Assembly (400 members), with a proportion of seats allocated to parties based on their percentage of the vote in national elections, and the National Council of Provinces comprising 54 permanent members and 36 special delegates.

<sup>38</sup> There is a reason for this – the ANC first had a 30% quota but changed it to 50% in 2009.

**Table 5: Women's Representation in Local Government 1995 - 2016 (Percent)**

Year	Women Ward Councilors	Women Proportional Representation Councilors	Women Overall
1995	11	28	19
2000	17	38	29
2006	37	42	40
2011	33	43	38
2016	33	48	41

Source: Hicks et al. 2016.

women on political parties' proportional representation lists has grown with each election.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, women's representation in municipal governance is growing, though at a slow pace. Less than half (35.4 percent) of municipal mayors are women (Statistics SA 2021d); and in the 2021 elections, only three metropolitan councils (Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni and Nelson Mandela Bay) out of eight elected women as mayors. Men are more likely than women to be in managerial positions within the local government structures and women made up less than a third of full-time (29.5 percent) and part-time (22.5 percent) managers in this role. The Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act (Act 41 of 2003) requires that 40 percent of traditional councils be democratically elected and that a third of all members (both elected and unelected) be women. This affects all persons living in traditional communities and who are subject to traditional leadership and observe customary law. However, data on the representation of women in traditional councils is not available, precluding an analysis of the extent to which the Act has been implemented as well as an examination of its effects. See [appendix B](#) on how this data gap could be address by government.

**The World Health Organization estimates** that 35 percent of women worldwide have been the victim of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner or non-partner in their lifetimes. With rates up to 40 percent, South African women endure levels of violence that are above the global average.

(WHO 2017)

## 2. Public Service

**There are more women than men employed in the public service, but fewer women occupy management positions.** As of 31 March 2019, more than half (61 percent) of employees in the public service are female (Department of Public Service and Administration 2019). At top management, two out of five positions (42 percent) are occupied by women, and in the 2019/2020 financial year, 42 percent of senior managers were female (DPSA 2019). The gender and racial representation of employees in the public service can be found in [appendix G](#) Tables 18, 19 and 20.

## 3. Political Parties

**South Africa has introduced measures to ensure representation of women in the political party apparatus but many parties fall short of effectively mainstreaming gender in their party manifestos and lists.** The Municipal Structures Act (Act 117 of 1998) requires that parties seek to ensure that 50 percent of representatives on party lists are women, and that men and women candidates are distributed evenly throughout the list. It also notes that the procedures to elect members of ward committees should consider the need for women to be equitably represented. Despite provisions that should give women an opportunity to run for

**As of 1 November 1, 2019,** women made up 55 percent of registered voters. In fact, women make up more than half of all registered voters in every age category, with 62.5 percent in the 70 to 79 age category and 72 percent of registered voters 80 years and older.

<sup>39</sup> South African local government includes two types of representatives – half are local councilors elected through a proportional representation ballot, and the other half are elected ward councilors by the residents in each ward on a first past the post system. In municipal elections each voter will vote once for a political party on a PR ballot. Each voter also receives a ballot for their ward. Ward candidates can stand as independent or as representatives of parties.

public office, it has been observed that in the absence of quotas, the system relies exclusively on the commitment of individual political parties to gender equality and women's representation (Hicks et al. 2016). Further, the proportional representation provision of the electoral system also creates a context where if women are not listed in priority or senior positions on the political party election list, they will not be appointed to government if their party did not win a significant majority. So far, among all political parties, only the African National Congress had a 50 percent representation of women in the last national elections (IEC 2019c). Without being listed as priority in political parties' electoral lists, women are likely to continue to be absent from political representation.

## C. Gender-Based Violence

**South Africa has extremely high levels of violence, affecting both men and women.** Interpersonal violence was among the leading causes of years of life lost in South Africa in both 2010 (number 10 among causes), and 2015 (number 8), and among the top 10 leading causes of life lost in six of nine provinces in 2015 (Massyn et al. 2017). However, violence against women and GBV takes specific forms, including high prevalence of intimate femicide, sexual offences, and rape, which point to a need to consider GBV, its drivers and effects, as separate and distinct from the broader culture of violence (Brodie 2020).

### 1. Prevalence and Types of GBV in South Africa

**GBV prevalence is high in South Africa, but no nationally representative prevalence data is available.** Table 6 provides statistics on the four most common sexual offense categories over the past five years. Estimates suggest that between 25 and 40 percent of South African women have experienced sexual or physical intimate partner violence while between 12 and 28 percent of women report having been raped (Gender Links and the Medical Research Council 2010). Between March 2009 and February 2019, rape was the most common sexual offense reported to the police (Smout 2019). However, because underreporting remains a major concern; many researchers posit that the actual rates of GBV may be much higher than official assessments (Jewkes et al. 2011 2015; Machisa et al. 2011; Mathews et al. 2016).

**Women's reported experience of physical and sexual violence varies across geographic regions and population groups.** While no significant difference was observed between reported experience of physical and sexual violence among women in urban (20.2 percent) and rural (20.9 percent) areas, differences across provinces are notable—the percentage of women who have ever experienced physical violence by any partner varies from a low of 14.2 percent in Limpopo to a high of 31.4 percent in the Eastern Cape (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019). The percentage of women reporting sexual violence by an intimate partner showed little variation by employment status (7.4 percent of employed women versus 5.6 percent unemployed) and by education level (4.7 percent for women with no formal education versus 3.2 percent for women with more than secondary level education) (DOH, Statistics SA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019). Those in the highest wealth quintiles (5.7 percent) were slightly less likely to experience intimate partner sexual violence than those in the lowest wealth quintiles (7.4 percent). More research is needed to understand the precise reasons for these differences or lack thereof among different groups of women.

**Surveys that ask men to self-report acts of sexual and physical violence in South Africa suggest more alarming figures.** Multiple-perpetrator rape, involving one victim attacked by two

**In 2021, the Human Sciences Research Council** was expected to commence a GBV national survey that will measure emotional, economic, physical, and sexual intimate partner violence; non-partner sexual violence; sexual harassment; and other forms of GBV including *Ukuthwala*.

(HSRC 2021).

or more perpetrators, appears to be highly prevalent in South Africa (Jewkes et al. 2011). In a 2008 survey, 27.6 percent of men aged 18 years and older reported ever having raped a woman, with 8.8 percent of those reporting that they had engaged in multiple perpetrator rape (Jewkes et al. 2015).

**Femicide occurs at high levels, yet the conviction rate is low.** The World Health Organization estimated that in 2017 the global rate of female homicide was 2.3 per 100,000 women. During that same period in South Africa, the rate was 14 per 100,000 women (Brodie 2020). The rates of perpetrator convictions for femicide remains low. In 2009, perpetrators were convicted in 37.4 percent of intimate femicide cases and just 23.1 percent of nonintimate femicide cases (South African Medical Research Council 2012a).

**South Africa has several cultural, traditional, and customary practices which negatively affect the rights of women and girls (Maluleke 2012).** Virginity testing (*Ukuhlolwa Kwezintombi*) is permissible in South African law for girls over the age of 16, provided that they have given their consent and have received proper counselling; however, the practice continues to occur among girls younger than 16, primarily in KwaZulu Natal and the Eastern Cape (Maluleke 2012; Farise 2019). The practice of “bride inheritance” (*Ukugena or Ukugenwa*) is prevalent in some communities and involves the inheritance of a deceased male’s spouse by his male relatives. If the woman refuses to be inherited, in terms of traditional law, she may be evicted from her property and lose custody of her children as well as her inheritance (Maluleke 2012; CGE 2013c). In addition, the CGE reports that widows are often victims of “property grabbing” (CGE 2013c). Elderly women, particularly widows, are also at risk of being labelled as witches and suffering assault or murder. In addition, the practice of bride kidnapping (*ukuthwala*), where young girls are kidnapped and forced to marry often much older partners, is also a challenge (Shange 2020; Shange 2021; SANAC 2020; Brodie 2020). Data on the prevalence and incidence of these crimes is however not available.

**Many boys die or are seriously injured physically (including injuries that result in amputated penises), each year in traditional initiation ceremonies.**<sup>40</sup> There is no national data on the prevalence of legal and illegal initiation schools, or the numbers of injuries and deaths that occur during initiation ceremonies each year but most deaths following initiation are caused by septicemia, dehydration, gangrene, kidney problems and assault (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2014). Available information suggests that initiation is primarily practiced in South Africa’s rural provinces (Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, and Free State). In mid-2021, the CGE report on the prevalence of illegal initiation schools noted that the fragmentation of the law and policy framework around initiation and the poor enforcement of existing legislation and policy continues to put boys in danger (CGE 2021c). In 2021, the government introduced the Customary Initiation Act (Act 2 of 2021) with the aim of effectively regulating customary initiation practices and established national and provincial Oversight Committees. However, analysis of the influence of the Act is not yet available as it is a new piece of legislation.

**The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development** has introduced a task team to focus on LGBTQI+ hate crimes and introduced draft legislation on these crimes. However, at the time of writing this legislation has not been passed.

**Hate crimes against LGBTQI+ persons are common, and “women who have sex with women are particularly vulnerable to homophobic sexual assault” (SANAC 2017).** Sexual assault and rape targeting women who have sex with women, commonly called “corrective rape” in South Africa, has been reported in high numbers for the past decade. The Minister of Women in the Presidency has indicated that at least 500 lesbian women become victims of corrective rape annually (PMG 2019c). Further, a survey of transgender persons found that 86 percent

<sup>40</sup> Traditional initiation ceremonies involve various cultural practices aimed at marking the transition to adulthood. One of these is circumcision, generally conducted by a traditional healer or leader, rather than by a certified health care provider.

**Table 6: Reported Sexual Offenses, March 2014 to February 2019**

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	10-year total
<b>Rape</b>	41,503	39,828	40,035	41,583	42,289	<b>437,417</b>
<b>Sexual assault</b>	6,212	6,271	6,786	7,437	7,749	<b>68,306</b>
<b>Sexual offenses</b>	2,573	2,073	2,066	2,146	2,076	<b>26,915</b>
<b>Contact sexual offenses</b>	1,607	1,488	1,221	1,254	1,179	<b>21,383</b>
<b>Annual total</b>	<b>51,895</b>	<b>49,660</b>	<b>50,108</b>	<b>52,420</b>	<b>53,296</b>	<b>554,021</b>

Source: SAPS 2020a.

had survived an incident of violence as a result of their gender non-conformity (Chakuwamba and Van der Merwe 2015).

## 2. Costs of Gender-Based Violence in South Africa

**Violence exacts enormous economic and social costs in South Africa.** The direct costs of GBV in South Africa is estimated to be about R28.4 billion to R48.2 billion (approximately US\$2.3 to US\$4 billion) per year (KPMG 2014). Likewise, R238 billion (US\$19 billion) per year has been estimated as the direct and indirect costs of violence against children by a recent study commissioned by Save the Children South Africa (Save the Children 2016). These studies include the costs of direct criminal justice service provision, disability-adjusted life years, the costs of psychosocial support and earnings lost by victims of these crimes. Beyond the human cost of lives lost and altered by violence, responding to violence overwhelms households and communities, drains state resources, and discourages investment in human and financial capital (Willman et. Al. 2019).

## 3. Government Response

**South Africa's response to violence against women has thus far been largely legislative through the criminal justice system, with less emphasis and expenditure on prevention and social care services.** According to a recent report, annual state spending on violence prevention is R9 billion, just 7 percent of the expenditure on response services (Government of Canada et al 2019). The majority of GBV interventions are reactive and focused on providing support to survivors. This constraint has been accounted for in the recently passed National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide 2020. Many task teams and committees, summits and dialogues have been held on GBV, yet these have not resulted in a reduction of reported violence. These structures are mentioned in more detail in [appendix E](#).

**Since 1994, multiple problems have hamstrung GBV-related legislation and policy implementation.** Challenges include structural and social factors that hinder the legislative framework's ability to deal with the root causes of the violence from the insufficient allocation of financial and human resources, low arrest and conviction rates coupled with a slow criminal justice system with significant backlogs, uneven access to services to prevent and respond to violence, unequal access to specialized units and infrastructure for survivor support, and negative attitudes among state service providers that result in reduced reporting and secondary victimization (DSD and UNICEF 2018). Likewise, a 2016 evaluation commissioned by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation found several challenges in the GBV response mechanisms. The findings of the review highlighted that the GBV sector would benefit from improved collaboration and integration and that there was a significant reliance on

donor funds to ensure the sustainability of programs to combat violence against women and children (VAWC). The study also found that most of the relevant coordination structures were redundant (DPME 2016), and that plans and programs to address VAWC are typically not costed and therefore inadequately funded. The sector faces a shortage of skilled staff (DPME 2016) and better data collection is necessary, as is the more regular evaluation of VAWC programs.

**In February 2021, the President launched a Private Sector Fund for GBVF.** The purpose of the fund is to support the implementation of the NSP GBV. More than R70 million was pledged during the launch event.

In September 2019, following several high-profile femicides, the government released an Emergency Response Action Plan (ERAP) to combat gender-based violence and femicide that included interventions across several key areas.<sup>41</sup> The plan had a timeframe of six months from October 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020 and was announced by the President in Parliament alongside a significant budget of R1.6 billion (South African Government 2019a). An evaluation of the ERAP by the CGE found that out of 81 targets across five thematic areas, only 17 (21 percent) were achieved within the ERAP's six-month time frame, and 12 targets (15 percent) were partially achieved (CGE 2021b). To address the challenges associated with the past interventions, the NSP GBVF, developed jointly by the government and civil society organizations, has significant potential, if effectively resourced and implemented, to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls. The demand for NSP GBVF emerged over several years following numerous civil society campaigns.<sup>42</sup> In March 2020, the cabinet announced that it had approved the plan, which included a structure for a permanent national council on gender-based violence and femicide. The cabinet also established an inter-ministerial committee to formally establish this council (South African Government 2020a). At the time of writing the council had not been established.

**“GBV is South Africa’s second pandemic during COVID-19,” said President Ramaphosa (June 2020)**

- Reported sexual offences decreased during the first and second quarters of 2020, however, reported violence returned to pre-COVID levels by the third and fourth quarters of 2020/21.
- South Africa also reported reduced levels of domestic violence; however, violence including the murder of women did increase quarter-on-quarter as the lockdown restrictions were eased.
- Possible explanations for why a reduction in reported cases may have occurred but incidents increased once again as lockdown measures eased include the ban on alcohol sales, the increase of police brutality that was seen in the early days of Level 5, lockdown restrictions on movement, fear of contracting the virus, or a possible change in behavior of abusers sparked by the lockdown.
- Without substantial research into this lockdown period, the reasons for reduced reporting and the extent of violence that occurred in South Africa is unclear.

<sup>41</sup> The plan covered five areas of intervention: access to justice for victims and survivors, changing norms and behaviors through high-level prevention efforts, urgent response to victims and survivors of GBV, strengthening accountability and architecture for an adequate response to GBV and femicide, and interventions for women's economic empowerment

<sup>42</sup> See for instance Sonke Gender Justice 2015; Total Shut Down 2018





## **VII. Taking Action to Bridge Priority Gender Gaps Affecting Women and Girls**

**South Africa has made significant progress over the last 25 years in creating a strong law and policy foundation for gender equality.** It has successfully promoted gender equality in access to education for girls, in women's access to healthcare, in reducing maternal mortality and has also introduced several policy and legislative interventions to increase women's participation in the economy.

**The continued barriers to gender equality that remain are associated with the legacy of apartheid, patriarchal gender norms, and constraints to effective implementation of progressive legislation.** Gender issues remain to be mainstreamed across the government's planning and budgeting, and adequate resourcing and monitoring of commitments under laws and policies is critical to begin addressing gender gaps, particularly those that are expected to have widened during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**The potential steps identified below represent areas of opportunity to narrow the gender gaps by targeting the drivers of these gaps and building on existing law and policy commitments already made by the government.** The areas of action which could enhance progress emerge from priority gaps and their specific drivers that have been identified in all three domains examined in the assessment, are interdependent, and taken together can make a significant contribution to improving outcomes for South African women, in terms of human endowments, economic opportunities and voice and agency domains, where the gender gaps in South Africa are deepest and most persistent. For a summary of gender gaps and their drivers please see [appendix J](#).

**Potential timeframes for implementation of each area of action are suggested and aligned to the government's existing prioritization where possible.** Short-term opportunities are those that represent quick-win opportunities for the government and build on pre-existing efforts and commitments, that is supporting passing into law of existing Bills, adequate resourcing and budgeting of policy commitments, or funding to gather targeted disaggregated data. Medium to longer-term actions have been identified as those that relate to changing social norms or that require legislative or policy change to first occur, to be followed by sufficient resourcing, effective implementation, and targeted interventions. Further, the areas of action described in this section have been successfully implemented around the world to close gender gaps. [Appendix I](#) provides case studies of examples from Africa and globally where the areas of action identified have been seized.

**It is important to emphasize that this is not an exhaustive list of actions toward narrowing gender gaps in the country;** they are simply those foundational and essential actions, as informed by the selection criteria below, which are anchored in existing policy commitments that the government has set out to achieve for itself. In future, these foundational actions will need to be built on by other interventions targeting markets, households, and institutions (informal and formal), which will together influence both gender equality and economic development.

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## A. Selection Criteria

Suggestions for the way forward and their corresponding areas of action center around addressing gaps most affecting girls and women and targeting those gaps, across all three domains, where constraints have been most persistent and where gaps have likely increased with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The areas of action identified contribute in some

way to removing constraints for women in accessing more and better jobs and in enhancing their voice and agency. The factors that informed their selection include:

- A pre-determined focus on women and girls, considering that historically most inequalities based on gender have put females at a disadvantage.
- Gender gaps where reliable data are available; in the instances where data on gender gaps are lacking, [appendix B](#) elaborates on areas where more research is needed to fill in data gaps.
- Gender gaps that widened or are expected to have widened due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Only those areas of action which could be validated during the consultative process and were informed by the feedback and inputs of stakeholders have been adopted in the assessment.
- Issues that are already on the government's agenda and reforms or initiatives that are already in progress. In this regard, the way forward section and its corresponding areas of action are well-aligned with the South African Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MSTF) 2019–2024.

## B. Key Considerations for Success

Successful interventions aimed at reducing gender gaps in South Africa will require multi-level interventions that target complex historical, structural, societal, institutional, family, and individual issues. In this regard, there are factors that are key in ensuring that the actions taken henceforth do lead to transformative gender equality outcomes. These include:

- Comprehensive multi-pronged approaches, addressing intersectional and cross-cutting factors emanating from the legacy of apartheid.
- Acknowledging challenges faced by men and women, as well as anticipating the potential for male resistance, is essential to securing broad-based buy-in particularly when interventions are targeted exclusively to overcoming inequalities faced by women.
- Greater integration and partnership within and between government ministries, departments, agencies as well as with the private sector and civil society.
- Adequate budgeting and resourcing of actions addressing gender gaps under existing and proposed amendments to laws and policies. This will necessitate integration into annual budgets, and the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework.
- Integration of specific interventions, particularly medium to longer-term opportunities into annual and strategic plans of relevant Departments to ensure human and financial resources are allocated toward their achievement.
- Publicly-accessible monitoring and tracking of the government's commitments made with gender specific targets.
- Oversight by parliament, provincial legislatures and other institutions comprising the National Gender Machinery to ensure gender is mainstreamed across all areas of government business.

## C. Ways Forward and Corresponding Areas of Action to Bridge Priority Gender Gaps

Figure 20: Five Ways Forward To Address Priority Gender Gaps in South Africa



Five Ways Forwards together address strategic objectives below



Increase women's participation in labor force, boost access to higher quality jobs, and help increase earnings



Increase women's access to key physical and financial assets



Improve women's participation in decision making bodies and capacity to influence and reducing exposure to GBV, with a focus on social behavior change programs

**Table 7: Summary of Ways Forward and Corresponding Areas of Actions to Bridge Priority Gender Gaps**

Five Ways Forward and their corresponding Areas of Actions to Bridge Priority Gender Gaps			
Priority Gender Gap	Areas of Action	Time Frame	Key Stakeholders
<b>1. Increase Access to Childcare and Promote Gender-Equitable Domestic Labor</b>			
<p>Burden of childcare and household chores is on women and girls <i>COVID-19 has highlighted the effect of gender-inequitable care responsibilities. Women had higher job-exiting rates during the hard lockdown and their return to employment had been slower than men's, largely because of the closure of schools and the increased responsibilities for childcare.</i></p>	<p>a) Amend laws to promote equal parental responsibility from birth and gender-equitable working conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amendments to the Labour Laws Amendment Act (Act 10 of 2018) to provide gender-equitable parental leave to support improved family structures and norms.</li> <li>Amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act (Act 63 of 2001) to allow for mothers and fathers who are self-employed, informally employed, or only employed part-time to contribute to UIF and draw from it should they be unemployed for reasons of parental leave.</li> </ul>	Short-term	CGE, CSO, DBE, DEL, DSD, DWYPD, ECD sector, GCIS, Trade Unions, Private sector bodies, SAHRC
	<p>b) Improve the affordability and availability of child-care options for women in both the formal and informal sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free and low-cost options targeting women in the informal sector</li> <li>Incentives for employer-supported childcare to assist women in the formal sector.</li> </ul>	Medium to Long-Term	
	<p>c) Introduce social behavior change programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build on existing work of DSD programs to address deep-rooted social norms that place the burden of household and care work on women, even when they are in the workforce</li> </ul>	Medium to Long-Term	
<b>2. Reduce School Dropout and Improve the School to Work Transition in STEM fields and other Frontier Skills Sectors</b>			
<p>Boys are more likely to repeat grades than girls and drop out in higher numbers, and since the start of the pandemic student dropout rates overall are the highest they have been in 20 years. Fewer women enroll and graduate in STEM fields, although at the tertiary level overall more women than men enroll and graduate. The number of girls studying mathematics outnumber boys, but boys have higher pass rates.</p>	<p>a) Keep girls and boys in school and make it easy for them to return if they drop out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build on and scale up existing initiatives of the Department of Basic Education, drawing from good practices in reducing dropout in the country, with an emphasis on programs that address gender inequitable norms affecting boys.</li> </ul> <p>b) Promote girls' success in STEM subjects at the secondary and tertiary levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programs to challenge social norms around girls and women and STEM among students and parents</li> <li>Training for teachers/career services staff in schools to address gender bias and encourage girls' performance in STEM subjects</li> <li>Scale up the targeted peer group support and role modeling of girls in STEM, at the school level and in the workplace</li> <li>Increase women's access to internships and young professionals' programs through partnerships with the private sector</li> </ul>	Medium to Long-Term	CGE, DBE, DEL, DHET, DPME, DSD, DSI, DTIC, DWYPD, Private sector, SOEs, Trade Unions
<b>3. Address Legal Barriers to Gender-Equitable Entry and Retention in the Workforce</b>			
<p>Occupational segregation: Women are less likely than men to be in frontier-skills jobs Gender Pay Gap: Where women are employed, their employment is at lower levels, lower paid, and less secure</p>	<p>a) Use the legislative review envisioned in the Employment Equity Amendment Bill (2020) to create a supportive and equitable environment for women in the formal sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include specific requirements for pay transparency as a step toward promoting pay equality</li> <li>Include sectoral targets to promote women's inclusion in STEM and male-dominated sectors, coupled with publicly-accessible monitoring and evaluation systems and supportive programs mentioned in the way forward above around improving school to work transition of women in STEM and frontier skills sector</li> </ul> <p>Actions to address the legal barriers above should be coupled with the following areas of action that address social barriers discussed in way forward 1 and 2. Namely, 1 (c) 'Build on existing work of DSD programs to address deep-rooted social norms that place the burden of household and care work on women, even when they are in the workforce'; and 2 (b) 'Promote girls' success in STEM subjects at the secondary and tertiary levels'; this way forward can support a significant step forward in addressing the drivers of gender gaps in occupation segregation and pay (See <a href="#">appendix J</a> for a summary on Gender Gaps and their associated Drivers).</p>	Short-term	CGE, DBE, DEL, DHET, DPME, DSD, DSI, DTIC, DWYPD, Private sector, SOEs, Trade Unions

Five Ways Forward and their corresponding Areas of Actions to Bridge Priority Gender Gaps			
Priority Gender Gap	Areas of Action	Time Frame	Key Stakeholders
<b>4. Improve Women's Financial Literacy, Access to Credit, and Rates of Business Ownership</b>			
The gender gap in MSMEs (favoring men) has increased over the past decade. Gender-inequitable public procurement. More women than men are banked, but women access finance through informal savings and lending.	a) Consider amendments to the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act (Act 5 of 2000) to reflect the 40 percent target for government procurement from women-owned and led businesses. Coupling the above with a publicly-accessible M&E systems to establish clear baselines and targets for the 40 percent goal will build citizen trust and strengthen accountability.	Short-Term	Banking sector COGTA DEL DPWI DSBD DTIC
	b) Undertake a national survey of women entrepreneurs and business-owners, with a focus on women in townships, to improve understanding of why fewer women are becoming entrepreneurs and the specific barriers and constraints they face. The results will provide evidence based guidance to inform ongoing and future business development services (BDS) initiatives to be more effective at meeting gaps, for instance, in which areas is skill building most needed (by education level, race, urban versus rural women). It will also help determine the need for women-focused financial services and products, and what types of new mechanisms are needed for evaluating women's creditworthiness.	Medium-Term	DWYPD Municipalities National Treasury SARS State-owned entities Statistics South Africa
	c) Addressing the barriers posed by customary law that constrain rural women's access to land. The 2017 High Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation and the Acceleration of Fundamental Change proposed legislative amendments on land reform that would address barriers faced by rural people, including rural women in accessing land. This assessment recommends that the Panel's recommendations be revisited to establish next steps toward addressing gender gaps in access to land for rural women	Medium-Term	
<b>5. Strengthen Women's Voice and Agency by Addressing (i) women's role in Decision-Making Structures from the Local Government Level Up; and (ii) high levels of GBV and HIV and their consequent effects on women and girls</b>			
Women's representation in government is lowest at the local government level where most basic services are delivered. High levels of GBV. Women are more likely to be HIV positive. Unmet need for contraception is highest among young women ages 15 to 24.	a) Strengthen substantive representation and participation of women in local government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operationalize the Gender Policy Framework for local government (2013) with a focus on promoting women's political participation in elections and local level decision-making and initiating capacity development programs to increase women's confidence and leadership skills, provide support with their campaign strategies and techniques, including through linkages with civil society organizations.</li> <li>Train government officials to ensure that IDPs include attention to gender gaps, and that municipalities undertake gender-responsive budgeting, planning, monitoring and evaluation.</li> </ul>	Short-term	CGE COGTA DWYPD IEC Municipalities SALGA DOJ&CD DHET DOH DSD DWYPD
	b) Consider a review of the Electoral Act, to promote gender equal representation of women party lists to promote the election of women at all levels of government.	Medium-to Long-term	FBOs FFC NT
	c) Resource and roll out existing NSPs that have provisions relevant to prevention and response of gender-based violence. Namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The National Strategic Plan on HIV, TB and STIs 2017-2022.</li> <li>The South African National LGBTI HIV Plan.</li> <li>The National Strategic Plan on Gender-based Violence and Femicide, ensuring that there is transparency and communication with the public about any efforts toward operationalizing the permanent National Council on GBV.</li> </ul> <p>Note: Giving women an equal voice and equal role in decision making in societies and households is perhaps the most significant part of the gender equality agenda and is the most difficult as well. This way forward coupled with the other four, in particular those areas of action that target changing the norms and expectations about female and male roles, can have the most sustainable impact over the long term on changing the power relationships that are contributing drivers to gender gaps in the three domains discussed in this assessment.</p>	Medium-to Long-term	

## 1. Increase Access to Childcare and Promote Gender-Equitable Domestic Labor

### CURRENT SITUATION/CHALLENGES:

- South African women are responsible for 70 percent of unpaid household labor.
- Gender norms that support inequitable division of labor are enforced from a young age, making it more likely that girls will drop out of school for “family responsibility” reasons than boys and less likely that men will assist with childcare.
- Legislative limitations that do not place equal value and responsibilities on men’s childcare responsibilities as well as the absence of legal obligation for employers to pay women employees during their maternal leave.
- Inability of many families to afford ECD and childcare options, and the absence of childcare provided by employers.

### Areas of Action:

1. Amend laws to promote equal parental responsibility from birth and promote gender-equitable working conditions
  - a) Consider amendments to the Labour Laws Amendment Act (Act 10 of 2018) to provide gender-equitable parental leave to support improved family structures and norms.
  - b) Consider amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act (Act 63 of 2001) to allow for mothers and fathers who are self-employed, informally employed, or only employed part-time, to contribute to UIF and draw from it should they be unemployed for reasons of parental leave.
2. Improve the affordability and availability of child-care options in both the formal and informal sector
  - a) Free and low-cost options targeting women in the informal sector such as increasing access to state-sponsored ECD, and extending the length of the school day, for example.
  - b) Create incentives for employer-supported childcare to assist women in the formal sector.
3. Introduce social behavior change programs
  - a) Build on the existing work of DSD programs on social and gender norm changes to address deep-rooted social norms that place the burden of household and care work on women.

Please see [appendix I](#) for more details on each of the areas of action discussed above and case studies discussed below.

**Related Strategic Objectives of World Bank Gender Strategy:** Removing constraints for more and better jobs; Engaging men and boys as well as women and girls to change social norms around masculinity and femininity (Voice and Agency)

### Links to MTSF Priorities:<sup>43</sup>

The MTSF identifies three key interventions regarding ECD that align with the opportunities identified above. These are (DPME 2020):

- Migrate the responsibility for pre-schooling from the Department of Social Development to the Department of Basic Education. The lead Departments are the National Department of Basic Education, the provincial Departments of Basic Education and the Department of Social Development. This is to emphasize the educational aspects of the program and to develop a standardized approach to ECD across the country.
- Develop and make operational an ECD planning, funding, registration, and information system. The lead departments are the national and provincial DBEs.
- Develop and operationalize a school readiness assessment system. The lead departments are the national and provincial DBEs and the National Treasury.
- Providing quality ECD services to children (from 0 to 4 years).

### Case Studies Related to this Opportunity :

- Shifting norms regarding who is responsible for household labor, including childcare, is important to free women's time for paid employment and to reduce the double burden of employment and household labor. A small, but growing, body of literature shows that social norms can be amenable to social programmes and interventions. These studies show that messaging on social norms should challenge norms around "women's work" and "men's work" within and outside the household, including norms around childcare. Interventions in South Africa and elsewhere that have already shown success are included in the Case Studies section ([appendix I](#)) of this report.
- Interventions to increase access to childcare and after-hours services are vital to increase women workers' ability to seek and remain in employment. Access to affordable childcare could also help girls stay in and return to schools. The government has already committed to the expansion of ECD services, and there are several examples from the global south that indicate the benefits of doing so.
- The benefits of employer-supported childcare are extensive and have been well researched. Providing reliable childcare options can increase women's attendance, retention and workplace productivity.

<sup>43</sup> The MTSF only focusses on enforcing employment equity and trying to get companies to hire more women. The legislation reforms suggested re: UIF for Labour Laws Amendment Act are not included in MTSF priorities.



## 2. Reduce School women in townships and Improve the School-to-Work Transition in STEM and other Frontier Skills Sectors

### CURRENT SITUATION AND CHALLENGES:

- Greater dropout rates of boys from education institutions, even pre-pandemic, and overall increased dropout since the start of the pandemic.
- Women have higher educational attainment in primary, secondary, and tertiary education but are not enrolling in STEM subjects at tertiary level.
- Although girls enroll in higher numbers in Mathematics and Science at secondary level, their pass rates are lower, and STEM fields in the workforce are male-dominated.
- Data on the causes for these discrepancies are unclear and further research on this topic is needed.
- There are existing initiatives at schools to encourage the uptake of STEM by both boys and girls from an early age in South Africa (for example Molo Mhlaba, LEAP Science and Maths Schools, and Girl Code discussed in [appendix I](#)).

### Areas of Action

1. Keep girls and boys in school, and make it easy for them to return if they drop out.
  - a) Build on and scale existing initiatives of the Department of Basic Education, drawing from good practices in reducing the school dropout rate in the country, with an emphasis on programs that address gender inequitable norms affecting boys.
2. Promote girls' success in STEM subjects at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels.
  - a) Programs to challenge social norms around girls and women and STEM subjects among teachers and students.
  - b) Training for teachers and career services staff in schools to address gender stereotypes and bias to ensure gender-responsive STEM pedagogy.
  - c) Scale up targeted peer group support, role modelling and mentoring opportunities for girls, at the school level and in the workplace, in order to develop and retain interest in STEM subjects.
  - d) Increase women's access to internships and young professionals' programs through partnerships with the private sector.

Please see [appendix I](#) for more details on each of the areas of action discussed above and case studies discussed below.

**Related Strategic Objective of World Bank Gender Strategy:** Improving human endowments; Removing constraints for more and better jobs; Engaging men and boys as well as women and girls to change social norms around masculinity and femininity (Voice and Agency)

### Case Studies Related to this Opportunity:

- Programs that address gender inequitable norms more broadly may encourage both boys and girls to continue with school. Research from India shows that interactive classroom discussions about gender roles and gender discrimination positively affected adolescents' gender attitudes, aspirations and behavior and

strengthened girls' belief that they would access tertiary education (Dhar et al. 2020). School-based attitude change programs have also shown large shifts in behavior for boys. Dhar et al. (2020) suggest that this is linked to general societal power patterns linked to gender where boys are more able to act on their views, and thus when these views are gender progressive, they can act on these. Moreover, in the case of girls as many are found to drop out to care for others in their families and young children. Increasing access to childcare and promoting gender-equitable domestic labor may also contribute to reducing dropout rates of girls. There are already programs in South Africa trying to address school dropouts in various ways. These models have the potential for large-scale replicability to ensure that early warning systems are used to detect learners at risk of dropout to provide additional support and ensure retention.

- Teachers' beliefs about girls' ability to pursue STEM careers can shape girls' success. Research shows that addressing teachers' gender bias is important to encouraging girls to take STEM subjects. In addition, encouraging a growth-mindset among learners and parents is also important. Examples from Zimbabwe, Niger, and Nigeria are included in the case study section.
- Research shows that the presence of more female peers in a classroom increases girls' desire to take STEM subjects, and that a student's academic goals and achievement can be influenced by their peers. In addition, the presence of visible role models for girls is important in targeting their own beliefs about their abilities. Finally, job shadowing, and internships have shown success in increasing the retention of women in STEM fields. Successful examples from the United States, Zambia, Cameroon, and South Africa are discussed in the case study section.
- Increasing women's job-exposure and work experience through internships and young professionals' programs can facilitate women's entry into male-dominated fields, giving them a "foot in the door," (Schomer and Hammond 2020) and can provide them with much-needed support (Semi.Org and Accenture 2020). Young Professionals Programs that help to match and place young STEM professionals could increase women's entry into STEM fields and other male-dominated sectors. UNICEF (2020) research recommends sponsoring incentive apprenticeship schemes and offering stipendiary internships to girls and young women to enhance their transition into the labor market, including a focus on mentorship of disadvantaged women. There are a few examples from South Africa and beyond of mentorship, job shadowing, scholarship and skill building programs in the private and public sector that result in internships and job opportunities summarized in [appendix I](#).

### 3. Address Legal Barriers to Gender-Equitable Entry and Retention in the workforce

#### CURRENT SITUATION AND CHALLENGES:

- Women's labor force participation rates are lower and unemployment rates are higher when compared to men. This is despite girls graduating from secondary school and tertiary institutions in higher numbers.
- A gender pay gap persists across all sectors and levels of the economy. A woman earns, on average, 75 cents for every rand a man earns. In South Africa, pay transparency is not required by law, meaning that companies are able to offer variable pay for work of equal value.
- Existing affirmative action and employment equity targets are ambitious but have not been achieved.

#### Areas of Action

- Use the legislative review envisioned in the Employment Equity Amendment Bill (2020) to create a supportive and equitable environment for women in the formal sector.
- Include specific requirements for pay transparency as a step toward promoting pay equality
- Include sectoral targets to promote women's inclusion in STEM and male-dominated sectors, coupled with publicly-accessible monitoring and evaluation systems and supportive programs mentioned in the way forward above around improving the school-to-work transition of women in STEM and frontier skills sectors.

Actions to address the legal barriers above should be coupled with the following areas of action that address social barriers discussed in way forward 1 and 2. Namely, 1 (3) 'Build on existing work of DSD programs to address deep-rooted social norms that place the burden of household and care work on women, even when they are in the workforce'; and 2 (2) 'Promote girls' success in STEM subjects at the secondary and tertiary levels', this way forward can support a significant step forward in addressing the drivers of gender gaps in occupation segregation and pay ([appendix J](#) for a summary on Gender Gaps and their associated Drivers).

Please see [appendix I](#) for more details on each of the areas of action discussed above and case studies discussed below.

**Related Strategic Objective of World Bank Gender Strategy:** Removing constraints for more and better jobs

#### Links to MTSF Priorities:

- Under Priority 2 the MTSF includes a focus on job creation through Operation Phakisa – a program to accelerate the delivery of developmental priorities including job creation, which also includes several STEM fields. It also includes an intervention on eliminating gender and race wage disparity.
- Under Priority 3 the MTSF includes interventions aimed at increasing learners' exposure to STEM. It also includes a target for Sector Education and Training Authorities to identify increasing numbers of workplace opportunities and to publicize this information. This includes opportunities in STEM fields.

- Under Priority 6 the MTSF identifies a focus on the gender pay gap, establishing the target of a 50 percent decline in the gender pay gap by 2024 and the development of tools to monitor and report on this.

### **Case Studies Related to this Opportunity:**

- Mandating pay transparency among employers could compel employers to pay workers fairly and equally (Bosch and Barit 2020). Pay transparency can close gender pay gaps by supporting individual workers in gaining information on wages, and by sparking public pressure for pay equality (Beegle 2020). It is linked to improved pay equity outcomes for women of all ages (PayScale 2019). Research also shows that pay transparency can raise the hiring rates when workers have sufficient bargaining power and can raise employer profits (Cullen and Pakzad-Hurson 2020).
- Research shows that where sectors are resistant to change, employment targets and quotas can help to shift conditions for women in those fields. Case studies of interventions like those proposed in the Employment Equity Amendment Bill, and others that have shown success in developing contexts are included in [appendix I](#).
- Quotas and employment targets can increase the likelihood of countering stereotypes of people in positions of leadership (Price Waterhouse Coopers 2018), thereby increasing representation and changing beliefs about what a leader looks like (Smith et al. 2015). Even where quotas and equity targets are in place, it is still important to create a social context whereby women are able to take up and remain in work and leadership positions. There are several examples of where workplaces can adopt proactive strategies to promote this, and these are detailed in appendix I.

## 4. Improve Women's Financial Literacy, Access to Credit, And Rates of Business Ownership

### CURRENT SITUATION AND CHALLENGES:

- The government has set an ambitious target of ensuring that 40 percent of all government procurement is awarded to women-owned and women-led businesses. However, there is presently no gender-disaggregated data on government procurement. This makes it difficult to assess progress towards this commitment. There is no legislation to mandate this.
- Government departments and branches of government do not routinely collect data on procurement disaggregated by gender.
- Rates of entrepreneurship among women are declining, and available data suggests women struggle with lower levels of financial literacy, access to finance, and business skills.
- In the informal sector, there are large gender gaps in the construction and transport industries. There are also data gaps on the barriers to women's access in particular sectors.

### Areas of Action

1. Consider amendments to the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act (Act 5 of 2000) to reflect 40 percent target for government procurement from women-owned and led businesses along with clear baselines and targets for the 40 percent goal and a publicly-accessible monitoring and evaluation system with gender disaggregated data on procurement. Combined with supportive interventions on BDS suggested in the area of action below, this can increase proactive access by women entrepreneurs to government procurement opportunities.
2. Undertake a national survey of women entrepreneurs and business owners, with a focus on women in townships to improve understanding of why fewer women are becoming entrepreneurs and the specific barriers and constraints they face. It will be critical for such a survey to include disaggregation by other social categories such as race and education levels. This will serve to inform ongoing initiatives supporting Business Development Services (BDS) and improve women's entrepreneurial skills through training and determine the need for women-focused financial services and products. For instance, informed by the findings of the survey actions could include:
  - Strengthen BDS focusing on women. This could include providing high-quality training in business practices, such as formal accounting practices, registration practices, and managerial skills.
  - Improve women's access to credit including micro-credit in partnership with the private sector with a focus on ensuring options are available to meet the demand of women particularly those facing specific barriers such as in townships.
  - Develop new mechanisms for evaluating women's creditworthiness that take into account other spending and lending behavior and/ or introducing new financial products aimed at women and provided by women.
3. Addressing the barriers posed by customary law that constrain rural women's access to land. The 2017 High Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation and the Acceleration of Fundamental Change proposed legislative amendments on land reform that would address barriers faced by rural people, including rural women in accessing land. This assessment recommends that the Panel's recommendations

be revisited to establish next steps toward addressing gender gaps in access to land for rural women.

Please see [appendix I](#) for more details on each of the areas of action discussed above and case studies discussed below.

**Related Strategic Objective of World Bank Gender Strategy:** Removing barriers to Women's ownership of and Control over financial and non-financial assets.

### Links to MTSF Priorities:

- Under Priority 1, the MTSF includes an intervention to monitor the implementation of the existing gender, youth and disability responsive planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation and auditing framework, aiming to address challenges in data and planning.
- Under Priority 2, the MTSF focuses on increased participation, ownership, and access to resources and opportunities by women, youth and persons with disabilities including expanding job creation for these groups and expanding government procurement. Priority 2 also includes the introduction of programs to expand access to finance, incentives, and opportunities for businesses owned and led by women, youth and persons with disabilities, including those in the informal sector.

### Case Studies Related to this Opportunity :

- Preferential procurement programs and policies have been pursued in several developing countries and examples of these are included in the case studies section of this report.
- In a context where women do not have equal access to land or property, products that eliminate or reduce the need for traditional collateral can increase women's access to credit (Kende-Robb 2019). Where women are constrained by lack of access to credit, providing access to microcredit can work better than business training (Buvinic and O'Donnell 2016). Technology can help to bridge the gender-finance gap and there is a range of alternative data for fintech companies and traditional lenders to draw on to make decisions about the creditworthiness of individuals (Kende-Robb 2019). There are several models that have had success in other countries. In South Africa a combined model could consider traditional collateral, non-traditional collateral, the presence or absence of a guarantor, psychometric scores, mobile credit scores, and social media scores (Hendricks and Budree 2019). More details of alternate models from other country contexts is available in [appendix I](#).
- One way to foster women's demand for financial services would be to expand the range of financial products aimed at meeting their needs (Morsy 2020). These needs include skills development and support. The CGE recommended that government loan financing agreements should be accompanied by initial training for new entrepreneurs, that focused on business management skills and that ensured effective information dissemination about the terms and conditions of loan agreements. In addition, many new entrepreneurs require and should be provided with "ongoing, consistent, sustained and effective support" particularly in the early stages of their loan agreement, which includes regular monitoring and evaluation (CGE 2020a). Having more women as agents in the banking sector may also increase women's use of banking services (Chamboko et al 2020). Examples of financial products aimed at women from other country contexts is available in [appendix I](#).

- Research suggests that “high quality business management training of reasonable duration can have positive outcomes for poor women entrepreneurs” (Buvinic and O’Donnell 2016). However, providing business skills training to women should not be a once-off event and requires a long-term, sustained approach. In some cases, women are less likely to start a business and seek finance because of incorrect information about the available products, or products that are ill-suited to women’s realities. Thus, campaigns to improve women’s awareness of the opportunities available to them could be beneficial. Case studies of other developing countries where initiatives have been effective are detailed in [appendix I](#).

## 5. Strengthen Women's Voice and Agency by Addressing (i) Women's role in Decision-Making Structures from the Local Government Level Up; and (ii) the High Levels of GBV and HIV and their Effects on Women and Girls

### CURRENT SITUATION AND CHALLENGES:

- Women make up the majority of the population and of registered voters, yet they are not equally represented in government decision-making structures.
- Women's representation is good at a national level at parliament and the cabinet thanks to quotas in the governing party.
- At a provincial level, women's representation in decision-making structures is improving, except at the level of Premier.
- At the local government level, women's representation has stagnated at around 30 percent.
- Women and vulnerable groups are more likely to be infected and affected by HIV.
- High rates of GBV affect girls and women.
- Government has existing plans to deal with these issues, but they have not been fully implemented and resourced.

### Areas of Action:

1. Strengthen substantive representation and participation of women in local government.
  - a) Make the Gender Policy Framework for local government (2013) operational with a focus on promoting women's political participation in elections and local-level decision-making and initiate capacity development programs to increase women's confidence, leadership skills, and provide support with their campaign strategies and techniques, including through links with civil society organizations.
  - b) Provide training to ensure that Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) include attention to gender gaps, and municipalities undertake budgeting, planning, and monitoring and evaluation that are responsive to gender.
2. Consider a review of the Electoral Act to promote equal representation of women on party lists to support the election of women at all levels of government.
3. The government has already clearly outlined plans for action to address HIV, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and tuberculosis (including a National LGBTI HIV Plan; and a National Strategic Plan on HIV and STIs), and to address Gender-based Violence and Femicide (that is the NSP GBVF). This assessment recommends that the government recommit to resourcing and rolling out the three plans together with publicly-accessible monitoring and reporting systems in order to revitalize citizen trust:
  - a) The National Strategic Plan on HIV, TB and STIs 2017-2022 (and any future updates);
  - b) The South African National LGBTI HIV Plan; and
  - c) The NSP GBVF, ensuring that there is transparency and communication with the public about any efforts toward operationalizing the permanent National Council on GBV.

It is important to note that social norms are key determinants of gender equality in all three domains, i.e. Human Endowments, Economic Opportunities and Voice and Agency. Through



the work on building systems to address gaps in human endowments and economic opportunities a significant contribution can be made in promoting behavior change that addresses social norms constraining gender equality. Policies and public actions are needed to change social norms, the law and legal institutions, alongside programs to promote economic opportunities, social protection and education. Engaging men as key change agents, especially in supporting care work, dismantling norms that sanction violence against women, and promoting benefits of gender equality is also necessary. This way forward coupled with the other four, in particular those areas of action that target root drivers of gender gaps such as changing the norms and expectations about female and male roles, can have the most sustainable impact over the longer term. Balancing power relationships that are contributing drivers to gender gaps in the three domains discussed in this assessment, will have a significant impact on both strengthening women's role in decision-making structures and dismantling norms that sanction violence against women.

Please see [appendix I](#) for more details on each of the areas of action discussed above and case studies discussed below.

**Related Strategic Objective of World Bank Gender Strategy:** Enhancing Women's Voice and Agency

### Links to MTSF Priorities:

- Priority 7 of the MTSF includes interventions linked to ensuring compliance with international protocol commitments, and to compliance with gender, youth, and disability obligations at the UN, African Union, SADC, the Commonwealth, and the bloc comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, SA (BRICS). This would include the SADC Gender Protocol which commits states to 50:50 representation of women.
- The MTSF commits to introducing a core package of services between 2019 and 2024. The MTSF states: "government will develop a core package of social welfare interventions, including an essential minimum psychosocial support and norms and standards for violence against women and children, families and communities" (DPME 2020).
- This core package is linked to broader comprehensive social security goals including supporting children's rights, maternal support, and building family resilience to shocks. However, it does involve addressing GBV and femicide. The target is a 10 percent decline in incidence of GBV and the lead department is the DSD . In terms of the NSP GBVF, the target is an approved implementation plan for the NSP for GBV by 2022, to be led by the DWYPD. It is also linked to expanding the reach and nature of services to children and adults with disabilities.
- Under Priority 6 of the MTSF the South African Police Service (SAPS) is also tasked with interventions related to reducing violence against women and children. The goal is a 10 percent increase in the percentage of households who feel safe walking in their neighborhoods at night. Unfortunately, the targets for this include a 6.7 percent reduction in reported crimes against women and children. In the past when targets have included reduced reporting, it has resulted in perverse disincentives for individual police to not open cases and turn victims of violence away so as not to fail at achieving their targets (Smythe 2015; DPME 2016).
- Under Priority 6 the MTSF focusses on establishing a Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Council by 2024, led by the DWYPD and supported by the Presidency, DOJ&CD, and the DSD (DPME 2020). The target is 100 percent implementation of the NSP by 2024.

### **Case Studies Related to this Opportunity:**

- Improving the representation of women and the government’s responsiveness requires several interventions. Institutionalizing gender equality in political party structures, processes, and practices by introducing internal quotas, requiring equal gender representation in candidacy, carrying out gender audits, training and mentoring for female candidates to enhance their skills in campaigning, will be important for transforming internal party culture. Concerted campaigns and programs to promote women’s political participation have been effective in other developing contexts including Benin, Namibia, and Nigeria. This includes a discussion of the government’s commitment to training government officials on gender-responsive planning.
- Electoral quotas have been instituted around the world. [Appendix I](#) includes case studies of best practice in responding to this challenge.



## VIII. Appendixes

# Appendix A: List of Organizations and Individuals Consulted in Preparing the Assessment

The World Bank is grateful to all stakeholders who made themselves available for consultations on this report. Stakeholders consulted included:

## The South African Government:

- Free State Provincial Department of Social Development: Mokone Nthongoa
- Mpumalanga Provincial Department of Education: Ruth Ledwaba
- Mpumalanga Provincial Government: Ureyya Ismail
- National Treasury: Lebogang Molefe; Lungisani Mabaso; Nomthandazo Shandu
- Statistics South Africa: Gloria Nkuna
- The Civilian Secretariat for Police: Chwayita Msada
- The Commission for Gender Equality: Dr Thabo Rapoo
- The Department of Higher Education and Training: Mokgadi Tena; Sesi Mahlobogane; Spino Fante
- The Department of Mineral Resources: Masefako Segooa; Nondumiso Zulu; Oresiametse Mokwena; Winnie Mamatsharaga
- The Department of Science and Innovation: Nondumiso Jwatya; Siphwe Mthombeni
- The Department of Small Business Development: Nomvula Makgotlho
- The Department of Trade, Industry and Competition: Paula Makgabutlane; Nonceda Mashalaba; Paula Moitoyi
- The Department of Transport: Tshepiso Matsapola
- The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities: DG Mikateko Joyce Maluleke, DDG Shoki Tshabalala; Chief Director Ranji Reddy; Pheladi Kekana; T Mukwevho
- The Financial and Fiscal Commission: Commissioner Elzabe Rockman; CEO Dr Kay Brown; Chen W. Tseng; Mkhululi Ncube; Nomonde Madubula
- The Independent Electoral Commission: Futhi Masinga
- The National Department of Basic Education: Chief Director Patricia Watson
- The National Department of Social Development: Memorie Herholdt
- The National School of Government: Angela Montana
- The Office of the Premier, Limpopo: Lydia Maradu

## Donor and development agencies

- DG Murray Trust: Iris Nxumalo
- Ford Foundation: Nicolette Naylor
- GIZ: Mylène Mangwanda
- Heinrich Böll Stiftung: Claudia Lopes
- The Open Society Foundation for South Africa: Renee Lewis
- United Nations Women: Anne Githuku Shongwe

### Research Institutions and Academia

- African Centre for Cities, University of Cape Town: Caroline Skinner
- Centre for Social Development in Africa, University of Johannesburg: Sadiyaa Haffejee
- Sexual Violence Research Institute: Tirhani Manganyi
- South African Labour and Development Research Unit, University of Cape Town: Multiple Staff via a SALDRU town hall
- Southern Centre for Inequality Studies, University of the Witwatersrand: Lisa Vetten
- University of Stellenbosch Business School: Prof. Anita Bosch

### Civil society and non-governmental organizations

- Ilifa Labantwana: Laura Brookes
- Molo Mhlaba: Rethabile Sonibare
- Public Service Accountability Monitor: Zukiswa Kota
- Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust: Jessica Bobbert
- Sisterhood Movement: Vainola Makan
- Sonke Gender Justice: Wessel Van Den Berg
- The Dullah Omar Institute Women and Democracy Initiative: Samantha Waterhouse
- Youth Capital: Kristal Duncan

### World Bank

- Pamela Chebiwott Tuiyott
- Daniel Kirkwood
- Jennifer Solotaroff

### Peer reviewers

- Professor Amanda Gouws, University of Stellenbosch
- Professor Daniela Cassale, University of the Witwatersrand
- Kathryn Beegle, World Bank
- Dr Quarraisha Abdool Karim, Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA)
- Anne Githuku-Shongwe, UN Women

# Appendix B: Data Gaps and Areas for Future Research

## 1. Data Gaps

*These data gaps require government leadership and can be most effectively addressed by the relevant Ministries and Departments.*

- **The National Gender Machinery:** strengthening gender focal points: An audit of gender focal points in the government to map their locations, mandates, activities, and expenditure would be beneficial to ensure standardization of this element of the National Gender Machinery. This could be conducted by the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, the CGE, and the DPME.
- **Conduct a Time Use Survey:** A Survey of Time Use was last conducted in 2010 by Statistics South Africa, and results were released in 2013. An updated survey is required so that accurate data on gender inequities in childcare and household labor are measured. This could also be integrated into existing General Household Survey Questionnaires that Statistics South Africa conducts so that this information is collected annually.
- **A national survey of private employers' provision of childcare benefits and facilities would be valuable to identify best practice and promote more equitable provision of these services.** The Department of Employment and Labour and the DSD would be important leads for this research, as would the Commission for Employment Equity and CGE.
- **Traditional leadership and gender equality:** The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs should conduct:
  - An audit of the representation of women in traditional councils would assist in identifying the extent to which these councils are compliant with the Traditional Governance and Leadership Framework.
  - A qualitative survey of women in traditional councils would also assist in identifying the barriers to representation at this level. This could be supported by the CGE.
- **National data on the drivers of school dropout by race and gender is limited:** Although Statistics South Africa General Household Survey data notes that a lack of money for fees is the main reason for dropout, it does not explain the gender gaps in progressions between grade 10 and 11, and grade 11 and 12. Here boys drop out in much higher numbers and an analysis of these gender gaps and how they can be addressed and mitigated by the DBE would be beneficial.
- **Up to date gender disaggregated data on access to land, housing, and the allocation of land in traditional and rural areas is urgently required.** The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform would be a key lead department for this data collection, as would the Department of Human Settlements.
- **Going beyond the gender binary:** Most statistical reports only refer to male and female indicators. This makes it difficult to draw conclusions about and accurately reflect the needs and issues facing South Africans linked to their Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and Sex Characteristics (SOGIESC). For this to be included in statistical surveys, Statistics South Africa will need to begin to collect data that is non-binary (possibly through the inclusion of an 'other' option for sex /

gender in surveys). In addition, the Department of Home Affairs will need to speed up the process of legal gender recognition.

- **Understanding men's barriers to accessing healthcare:** The Department of Health and partners should include questions and indicators in the next Demographic and Health Survey to understand men's barriers to accessing healthcare. The 2016 survey did not report on this and considering the challenges of male health-seeking behavior, it would be beneficial for the next survey to include this information.
- **GBV:**
  - In the announcement of the Emergency Response Action Plan in 2019 the President mentioned key surveys on GBV prevalence, including LGBTQI+ persons' experience thereof. It is not clear at the time of writing what progress has been made on this commitment and thus it is recommended that these be undertaken or expedited. The Office of the President would lead on this.
  - Domestic violence statistics are not released annually by the SAPS although they are collected at a station level. Releasing these statistics would help to present a clearer picture of the extent of this issue.
  - The GBVF fund was announced in 2020, but there is a lack of clarity on the value of the fund and how it has been used. Making this data transparent would be beneficial for an understanding of expenditure and how it is being directed to key areas.
- **Progress on key gender frameworks:** At the time of writing the progress on implementing several recently launched gender frameworks is unclear. These include the Framework on Gender Responsive Budgeting, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation and Auditing (2019); the Framework on South Africa's National Gender Machinery (2019); The Women's Financial Inclusion Framework; and the implementation of the High Level Panel Report (2017). More information is needed on these.

## 2. Areas for Future Research

*These areas of future research could be most effectively addressed by the government in partnership with research institutions, development partners, NGOs, and so on.*

### a) Health

- i. **Research to address gendered impacts of alcohol abuse:** A review of global case studies to understand how through (i) policy making; and (ii) norms change, countries have been addressing the linkages of alcohol abuse, GBV and ill-health for men and women. This can include understanding how sustainable mechanisms to regulate the sale of alcohol, limit the advertising of alcohol, and support those who are addicted have fared in other countries.
- ii. **Granular data on LGBTQI+ populations:** Granular data is needed on access to health by, and the prevalence of health challenges amongst LGBTQI+ persons to assess the extent to which government initiatives are responsive to their needs and barriers to access to treatment.

### b) Education

- i. **A national study of the impacts of adolescent pregnancy on school dropout, subject choices, and work choices:** This would be beneficial to understand and address the barriers to returning to education and the long-term impacts of adolescent pregnancy on women's educational outcomes and economic opportunities.
- ii. **An audit of the ECD sector:** This would be beneficial, and it should include gender-disaggregated data on attendance and employment in the sector and would assist the government in better funding the sector.

- iii. **Curriculum assessment to identify scale of subject clashes that impact girl's enrolment in STEM:** A gender responsive assessment of the curriculum in terms of the scheduling of subjects from Grade 10 – 12 to assess the extent to which subject clashes prevent girls from choosing STEM subjects in the higher years of secondary schooling.<sup>44</sup>
  - iv. **Deeper dive assessments** are needed to understand drivers of male school dropout, lower rates of male enrolment in tertiary education, lower rates of female passing in STEM subjects in secondary school and uptake of STEM in post-secondary school. Drivers identified through existing qualitative research include gender unequal social norms that make it more likely for girls to dropout due to pregnancy or other family responsibilities.
- c) **Voice and Agency**
- i. **Qualitative research to better understand low levels of influence of women representatives in government structures:** Even where women are represented in local, provincial, and national government (including the executive and legislature) they do not appear to have influence in raising key issues impacting women. What are the constraints- social, behavioral, structural- and how can this better inform the areas of action to narrow the gender gaps in decision making.

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<sup>44</sup> In South Africa, at the end of Grade 9, learners are required to select six subjects to take to matric level. It may be the case that there are timetable clashes that do not allow girls to take STEM subjects along with other subjects they may be interested in. This requires investigation. For instance, anecdotal evidence suggests that in some high schools certain traditionally humanities subjects clash with sciences. For example, you may not be able to take both Biology and Art, because these classes were offered at the same time on the timetable each day. Similarly, you may not take mathematics and typing, or Home Economics and Geography. If this practice is widespread, it may be discouraging girls from taking STEM subjects. It requires further investigation.



# Appendix C: Benchmarking South Africa's Progress on Closing Gender Gaps

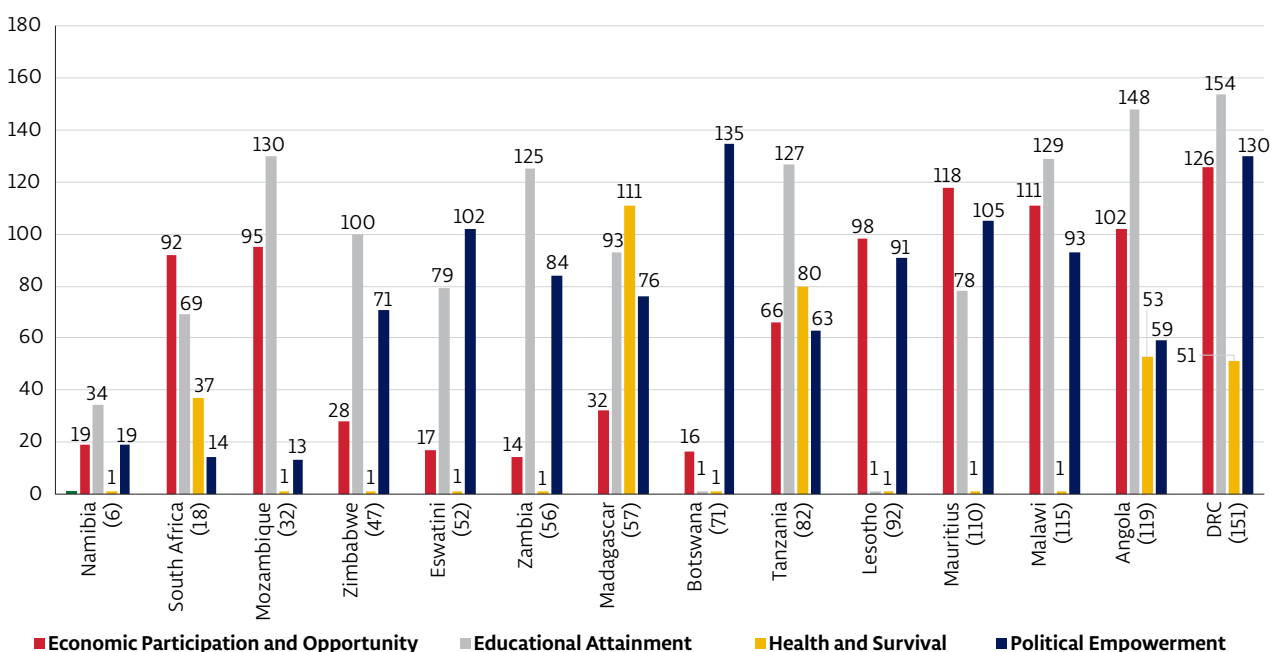
This section lays out how South Africa is progressing on closing gender gaps when looked at alongside other countries in the sub-Saharan African region and globally. This regional and global benchmarking sets the stage for readers on where South Africa is making progress and where barriers to closing gender gaps persist. Persistent gender gaps and their drivers are discussed in more detail in [appendix J](#).

In the WEF's 2021 Global Gender Gap Index (GGI), South Africa ranks 18 globally and 2 in SADC. It has made notable progress in the realm of *improving representation of women in politics, achieving gender parity in participation at the primary and secondary school level and in closing the gender gap in rates of adult literacy*. The largest gaps remain in the areas of *Educational Attainment and Economic Empowerment* (WEF 2021).

In the Global Gender Gap Report 2021, South Africa ranked first for gender parity for school attendance. However, the country ranked 69 out of 153 countries in terms of educational attainment (with boys falling behind in enrollments at the secondary and tertiary levels) and 80<sup>th</sup> out of 153 countries for labor force participation (where women fall behind). These rankings represent worsening conditions from 2006, when the country ranked 79<sup>th</sup> for labor force participation and 42<sup>nd</sup> for educational attainment. Figure 20 reflects South Africa's performance in the GGI in comparison with other SADC countries.

South Africa has progressed in reducing maternal mortality and fertility, when compared with other SADC countries; as well as in achieving gender parity in enrollments at the primary and secondary school level when compared globally. Key areas where constraints remain are in educational attainment and economic participation and opportunity.

Figure 21: SADC: Global Gender Gap Index Rankings, 2021



Source: WEF 2021

**Complimentary findings are revealed when measuring South Africa's progress on Agenda 2030 (Sustainable Development Goals Centre for Africa and Sustainable Development Solutions Network 2020), which it has aligned to the SDGs to its National Development Plan.** In terms of Goal 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing), trends show that South Africa is moderately improving in maternal mortality, age-standardized death rate due to cardiovascular disease, and life expectancy at birth (Sustainable Development Goals Centre for Africa and Sustainable Development Solutions Network 2020). In terms of Goal 4 (Quality Education), South Africa's progress on increasing the female-to-male mean years of schooling has stagnated since 2017 (10.1 years), but it has achieved its goal in meeting the targets for adult literacy and improvements have occurred in net primary enrolment rates (Sustainable Development Goals Centre for Africa and Sustainable Development Solutions Network 2020). South Africa is also on track to reaching its target on women's representation in national parliament, and has met its target on women in ministerial positions.

Key challenges remain in terms of Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) where progress is stagnating. Major challenges remain in terms of GDP growth per capita (-0.3 as of 2018), the employment-to population ratio (40.1 percent as of 2020), and progress has declined in terms of the proportion of the population aged 15 and over that has access to a bank account (69.2 percent as of 2017) (Sustainable Development Goals Centre for Africa and Sustainable Development Solutions Network 2020).

## 1. Human Endowments

South Africa's progress in the spheres of health, survival and educational attainment are set out in the context of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and globally, where data was available.

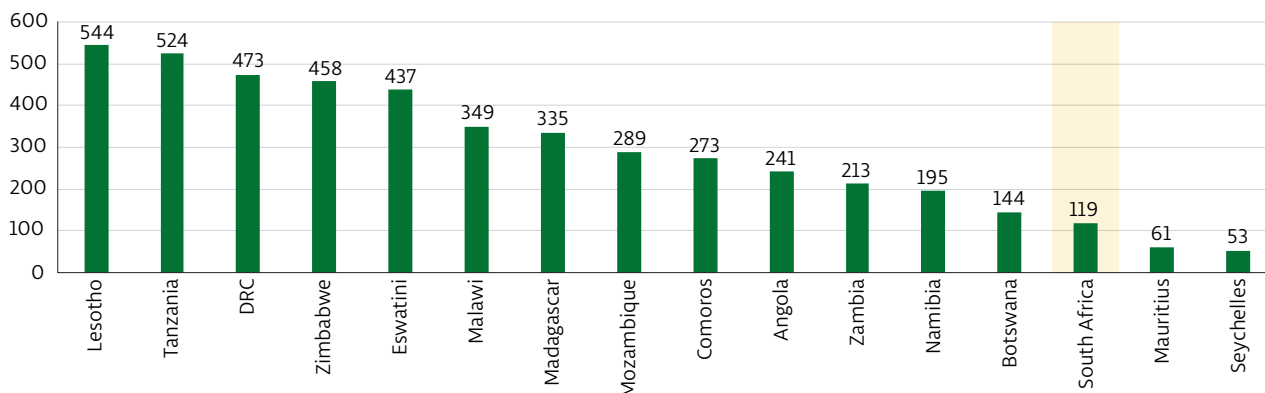
### Health

South Africa's human capital index score for 2020 is 0.43, with a slightly lower score for boys (0.41) than girls (0.45) (World Bank 2020d). South Africa's score indicates it is doing moderately well. Its score is lower than Seychelles (0.63), Mauritius (0.62), Zimbabwe (0.47) and Namibia (0.45), but higher than other countries in the SADC region (World Bank 2020d). Nonetheless, given that the methodology for the score draws on indicators that favor women and girls, it does not clearly point out persistent gender gaps in South Africa (World Bank 2020).<sup>45</sup>

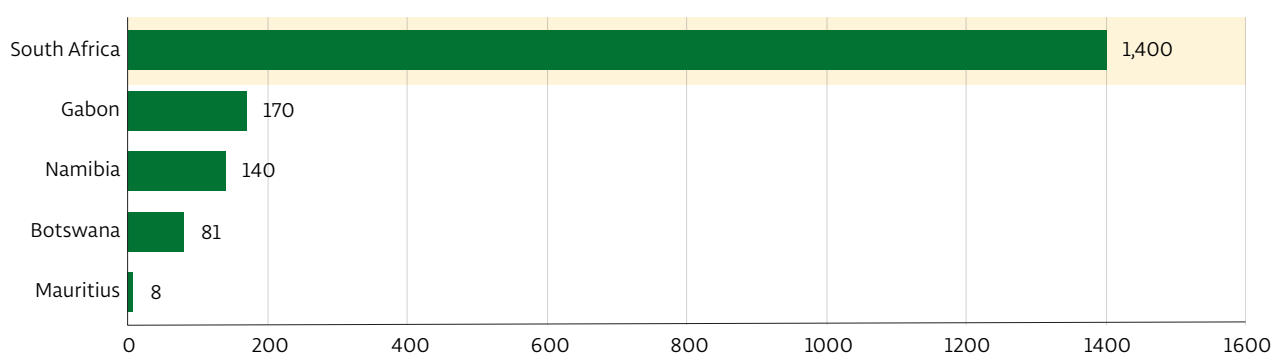
**Maternal Mortality:** In SADC, South Africa is performing better than most in terms of the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) (figure 21). The MMR has declined over the past decade. However, the number of maternal deaths each year remains high when compared to other Upper Middle-Income countries, with more than 1,000 maternal deaths per year (figure 22).

**Fertility:** South Africa's adolescent fertility rate and total fertility rate are in the lower range for SADC countries. South Africa has the 6<sup>th</sup> lowest adolescent fertility rate amongst the 16 countries in the SADC community (figure 23), and the third lowest total fertility rate (figure 24).

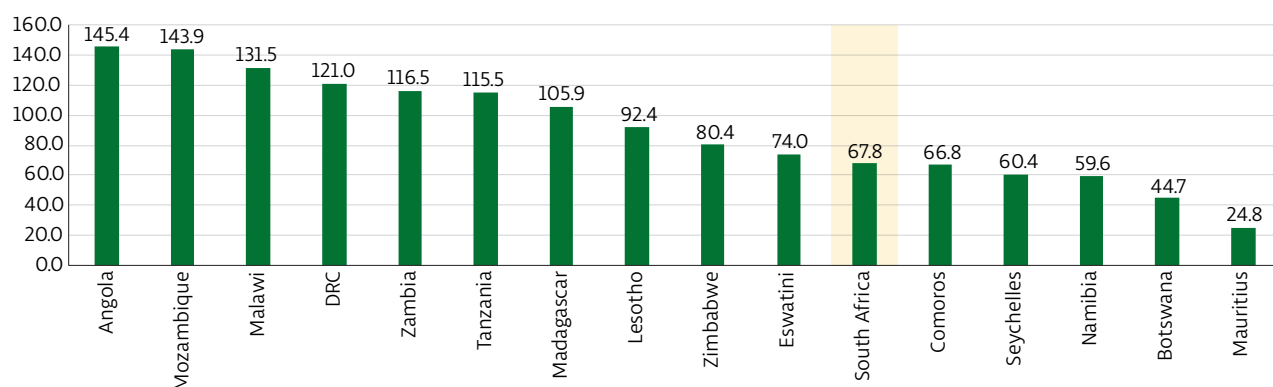
<sup>45</sup> While the human capital indicator tool is important to communicate success and challenges to policy makers, human capital accumulation and utilization is more complex than what the score can capture or describe. As with any indicators, the components making up the index are imperfect proxies of human capital that try to balance accuracy with available data. For instance, the human capital index focuses on specific life-cycle stages in which girls have slight biological advantages over boys in child and adult survival rates but "does not capture gender bias in terms of sex-selective abortions."

**Figure 22: Maternal Mortality Ratio in SADC (2017) (Modelled Estimate per 100,000 Live Births)**

Source: World Bank 2020c.

**Figure 23: Number of Maternal Deaths in Upper Middle-Income Countries in Africa, 2017**

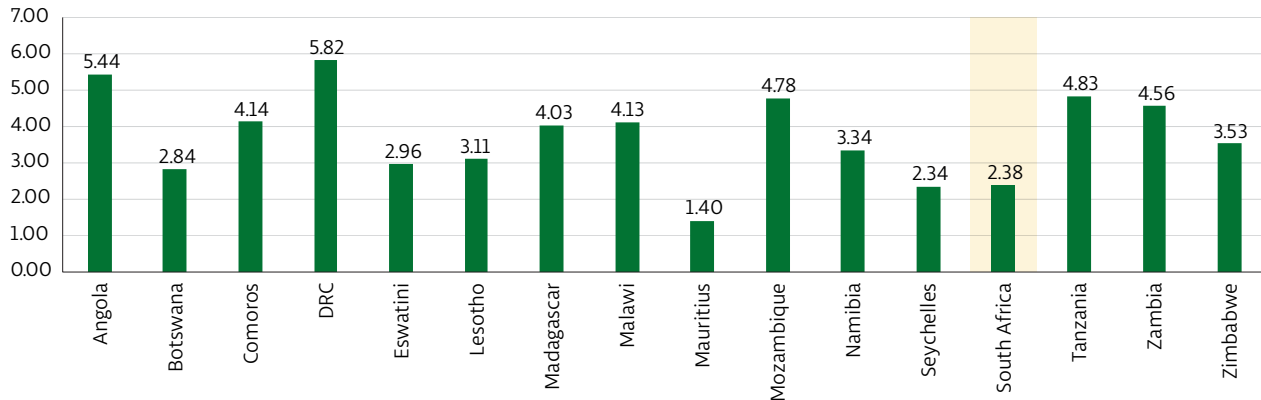
Source: World Bank 2020c.

**Figure 24: Adolescent Fertility Rate (births per 1,000 Women Ages 15 - 19), 2019**

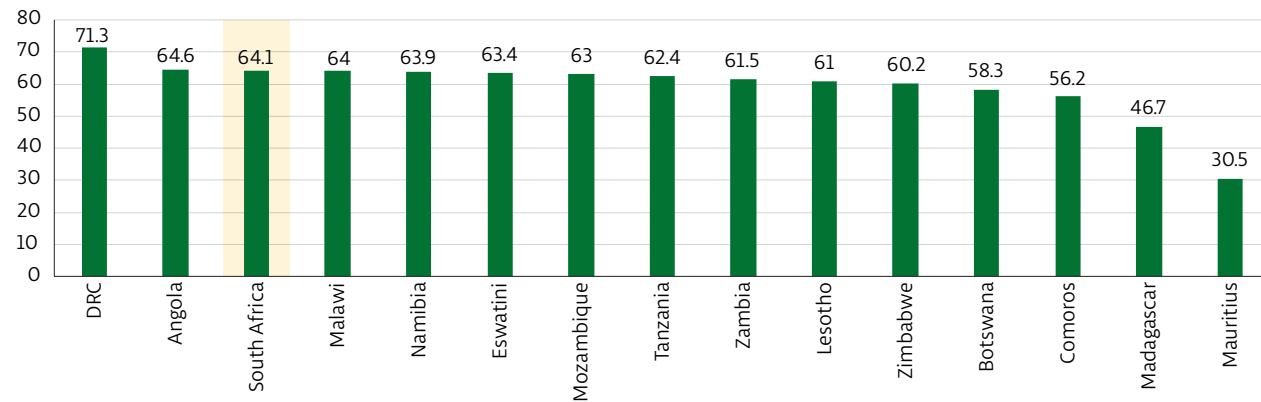
Source: World Bank 2021d.

However, South Africa's adolescent fertility rate (67.79) is almost double the median range of Upper Middle-Income Countries, where the median range is 30 on average (World Bank 2021d).

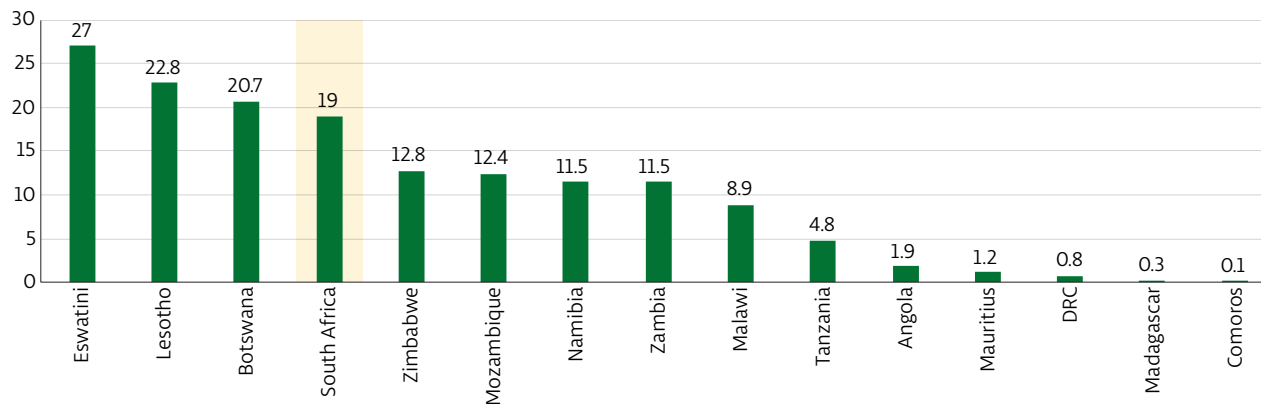
**The adolescent fertility rate only declined slightly over the past two decades.** In 1999, South Africa's adolescent fertility rate was 72.6. By 2009, it was 69.1, and by 2019 it was 67.8. The total fertility rate has declined slightly from 2.8 in 1999, to 2.6 in 2009, to 2.4 in 2019 (World Bank 2021d).

**Figure 25: SADC: Total Fertility Rate (Births per Woman), 2019**

Source: World Bank 2020c.

**Figure 26: SADC: Women's Share of Population Ages 15+ Living with HIV (Percentage), 2019**

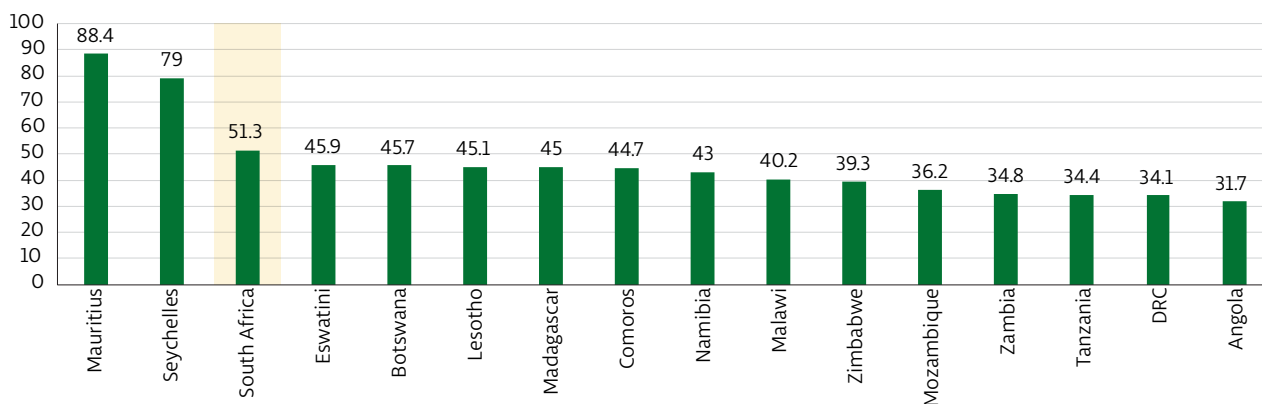
Source: World Bank 2021d.

**Figure 27: SADC: Prevalence of HIV Total (Percent of Population Ages 15 to 49), 2019**

Source: World Bank 2021d.

**Health Issues:** In SADC, South Africa's female share of the population ages 15+ living with HIV is the third highest (figure 26) and this proportion has decreased over the past decade from 69.4 percent in 2011 to 65.2 percent in 2021 (World Bank 2021d). South Africa also has the fourth highest rates of HIV prevalence in SADC as of 2019 (figure 27) and the third highest rates of cause of death by non-communicable disease in SADC (figure 28).

**In terms of nutrition and stunting, across SADC boys under 5 are more likely to be stunted than girls (World Bank 2020c).** Though annual comparisons are not possible, the available

**Figure 28: SADC: Cause of Death by Non-Communicable Disease (Percent of Total), 2019**

Source: World Bank 2021d.

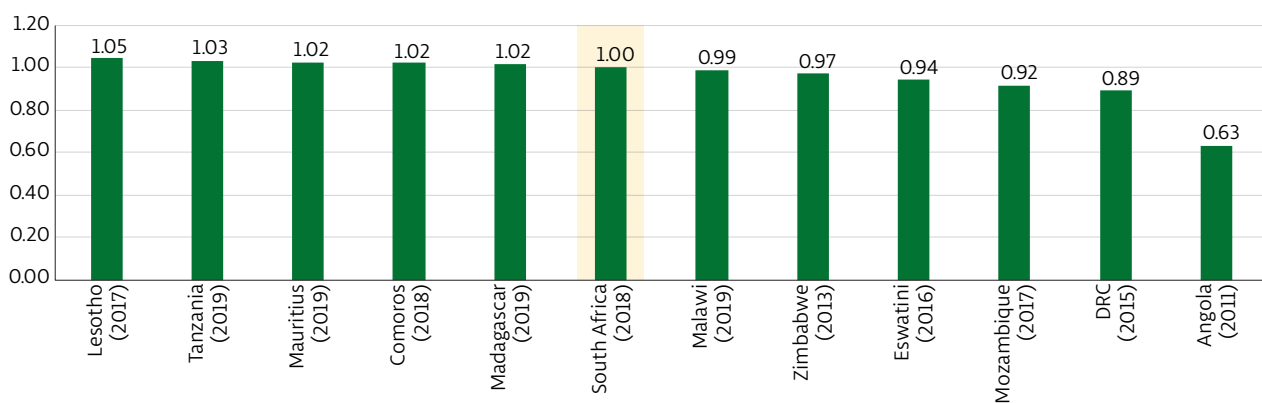
data shows that South Africa's rates of stunting are second lowest in SADC for both boys and girls, but that boys are more likely to be stunted than girls, and that South Africa's depth of food deficit is the lowest in the SADC region (Sustainable Development Goals Centre for Africa and Sustainable Development Solutions Network 2020).

**Alcohol consumption in South Africa is high compared to SADC countries and alcohol abuse contributes significantly to the burden of disease.** South Africa's alcohol consumption is the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest in SADC (World Bank 2021d).

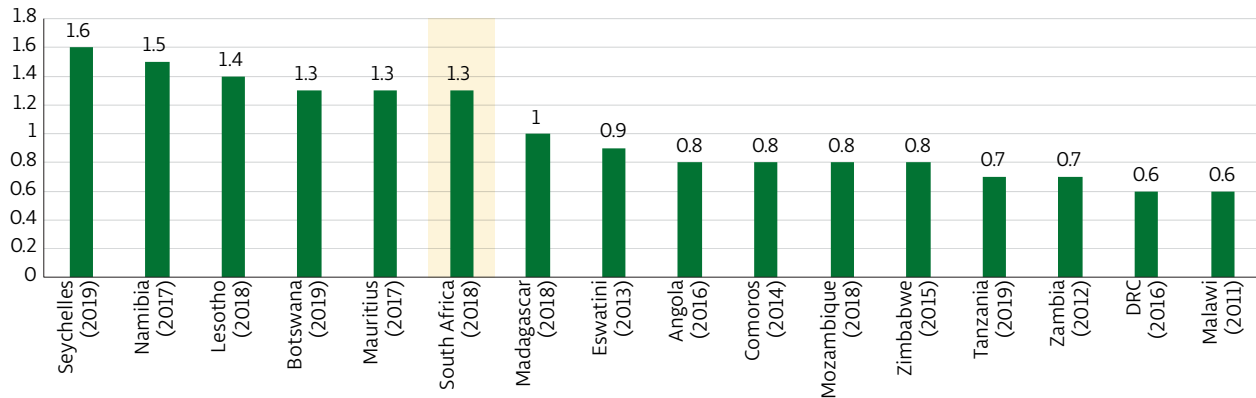
## Education

**Literacy and Enrolments:** South Africa has made tremendous progress in improving literacy rates since 1994. South Africa's has the sixth highest female literacy rate and the 7<sup>th</sup> highest male literacy rate in SADC

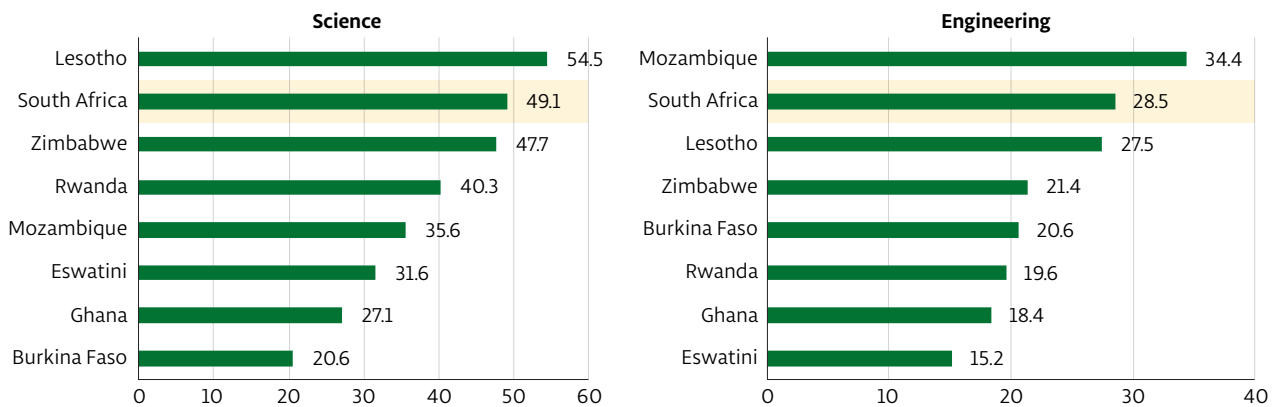
**South Africa has made tremendous progress on improving gender parity in enrollments.** At the primary and secondary school level, raking 6<sup>th</sup> in SADC in its gender parity index (figure 29) (World Bank 2020c). Similarly, in terms of the enrolment at a tertiary level, South Africa ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in SADC on the gender parity index (figure 30) with more women than men enrolling in tertiary education.

**Figure 29: SADC Countries: School Enrolment, Primary and Secondary (Gross), Gender Parity Index (Years Specified per Country)**

Source: World Bank 2021d.

**Figure 30: SADC Countries: School Enrolment, Tertiary (Gross), Gender Parity Index (Years specified per Country)**

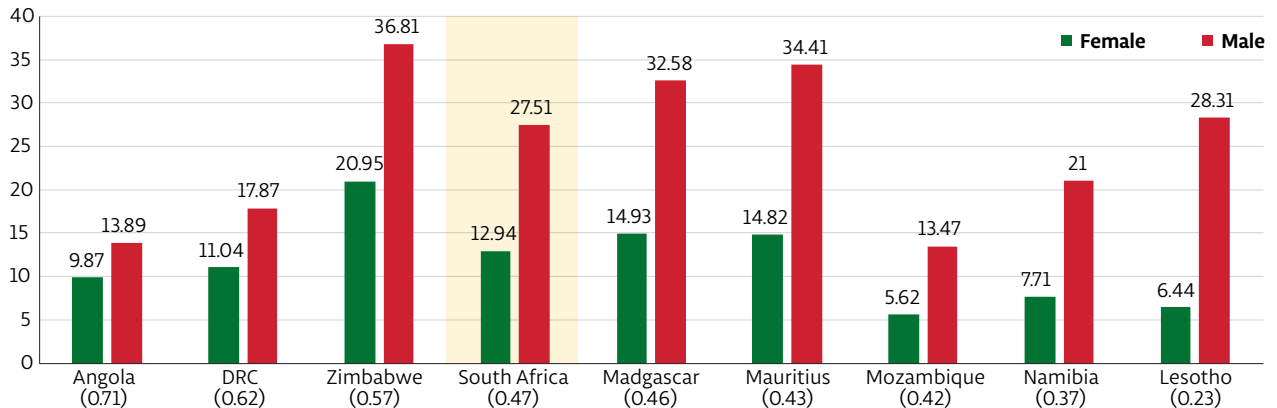
Source: World Bank 2021d.

**Figure 31: Share of Female Tertiary Graduates in Engineering and Science in Sub-Saharan Africa, 2015**

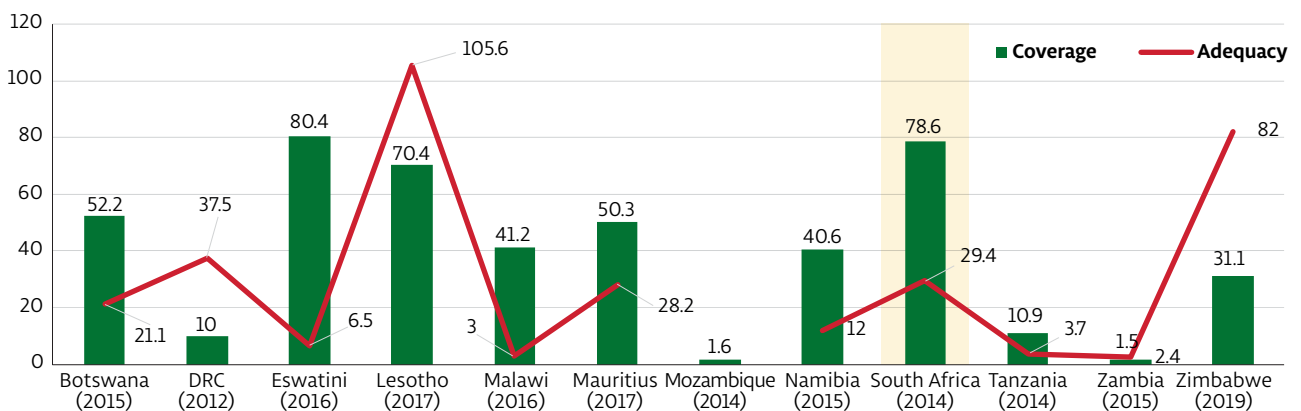
Source: UNESCO 2015.

**STEM:** The challenge remains in STEM enrolment at the post-secondary level which favors men. Fewer females than males enroll in STEM subjects in South Africa and the largest gender gap in STEM subjects is in the field of engineering enrolments – men: 15 percent; women: 3.9 percent (Statistics SA 2019c). This is an issue across sub-Saharan Africa, where the share of females graduating from tertiary education in STEM subjects was below 30 percent for many countries in the region (figure 31) (UNESCO 2015). South Africa fares above average for the sub-Saharan Africa region in female tertiary graduates in Science and Engineering.

**South Africa is fourth in SADC in terms of STEM attainment** (the percentage of male/female tertiary education graduates in STEM), however male graduates surpassed female graduates in all countries (figure 31).

**Figure 32: SADC: STEM Tertiary Education Graduates (Percent), 2018**

Source: WEF 2021

**Figure 33: SADC: Coverage and Adequacy of Social Safety Net Programs (Dates Specified)**

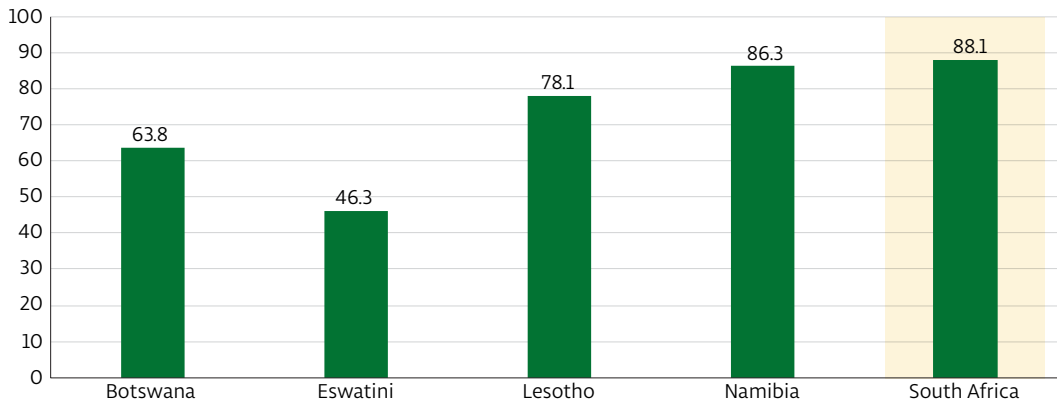
Source: World Bank 2021d

## Social Protection

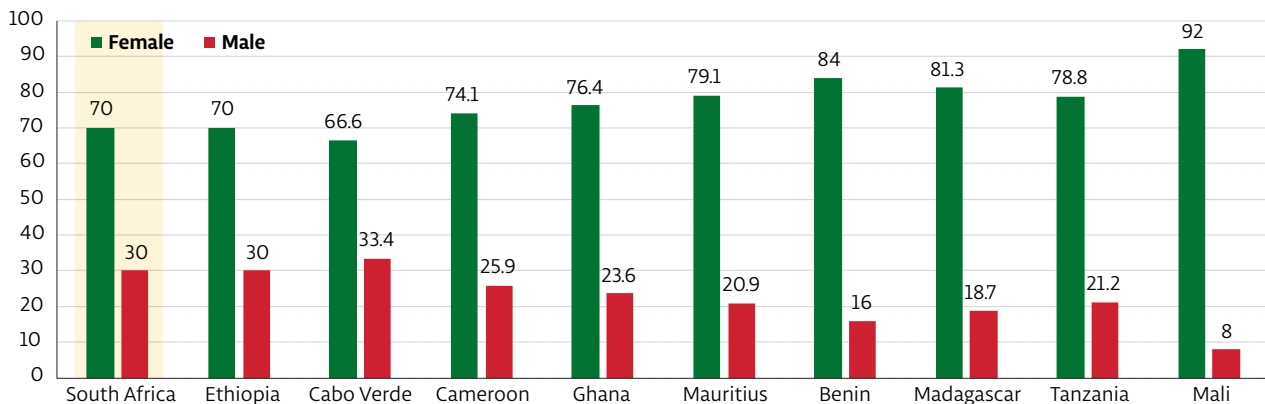
**South Africa has the second highest coverage of social safety net programs in SADC (78.6 percent),** however the adequacy of the social safety programs – that is the proportion they make up of the total welfare of beneficiary households – is just 29.4 percent, lower than DRC, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe (figure 33).

## 2. Economic Participation and Opportunities

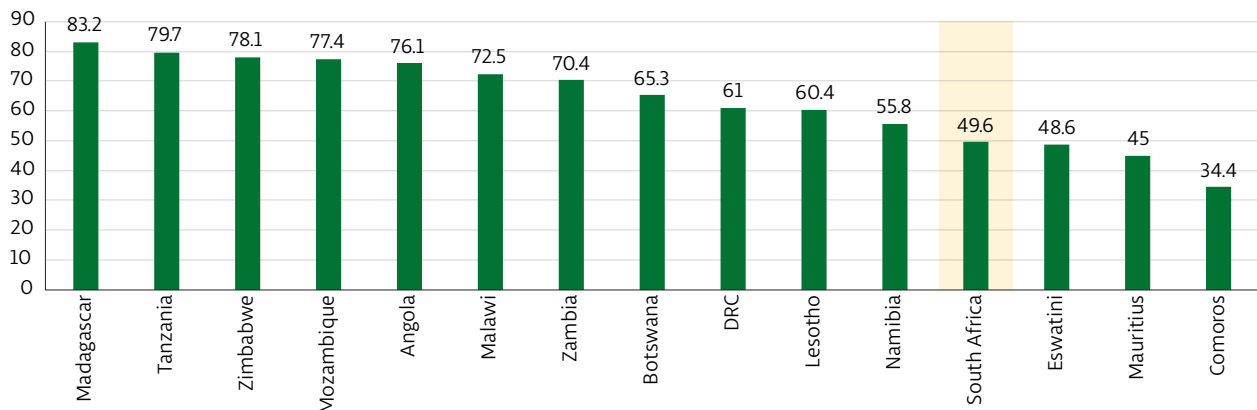
**South Africa has a strong legal and regulatory foundation in place in relation to women's economic opportunity.** It featured in the top 10 economies witnessing an increase in score in the Women, Business, and the Law index (World Bank 2021c). Amongst SACU countries, South Africa received the highest Women, Business, and the Law Index Score in 2020 (figure 34). South Africa's score on the 2021 index is 88.1, with 100 percent scores in the categories of mobility, workplace, pay, marriage, entrepreneurship, and assets. Its lowest scores were 80 for parenthood which examines laws affecting women's work after having children and 25 for assessing laws affecting size of a woman's pension. The 2021 score represented a slight decrease on the 2019 score from 88.13 (World Bank 2021c).

**Figure 34: Women, Business, and the Law Index Score, 2021**

Source: World Bank 2021c.

**Figure 35: Women and Men's Share of Unpaid Care Labor**

Source: Charmes 2019

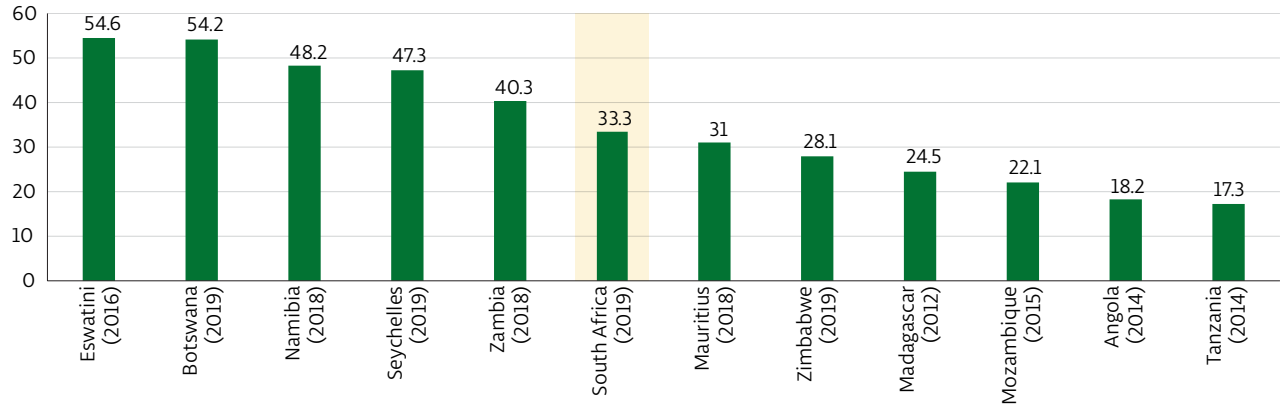
**Figure 36: SADC: Female Labor Force Participation Rates (Modelled ILO Estimate), 2019**

Source: World Bank 2021d

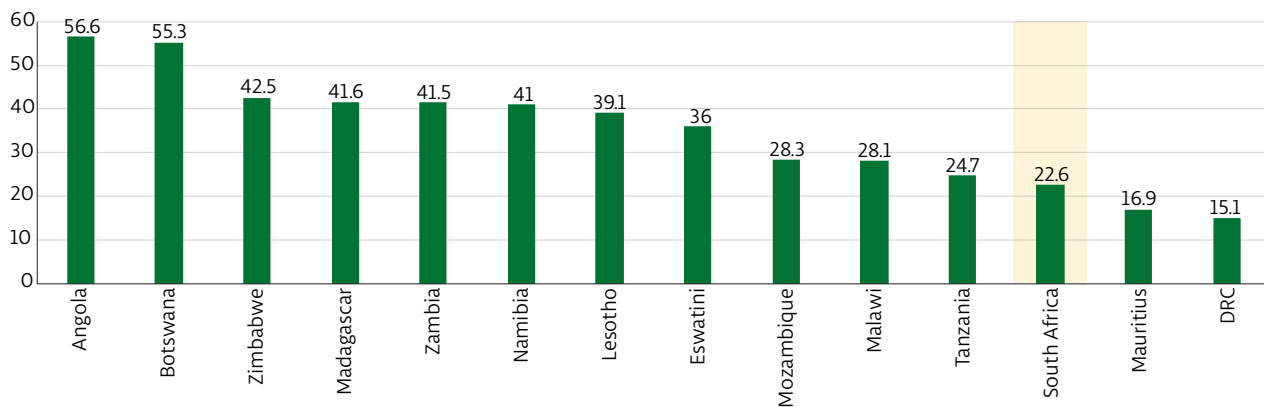
**South African women, along with Ethiopian women, take on the second lowest share of unpaid care work in Sub-Saharan Africa.** However, women do more than double the unpaid care work of men. This is reflected in Figure 35.

**Despite a relatively strong law and policy foundation, in practice and among SADC countries, South Africa's record of closing gender gaps in economic participation and opportunities is poor.** World Bank data shows that South Africa has the third-lowest ratio of female: male



**Figure 37: SADC: Share of Women Employed in Senior or Mid-Management (Dates Specified)**

Source: World Bank 2021d

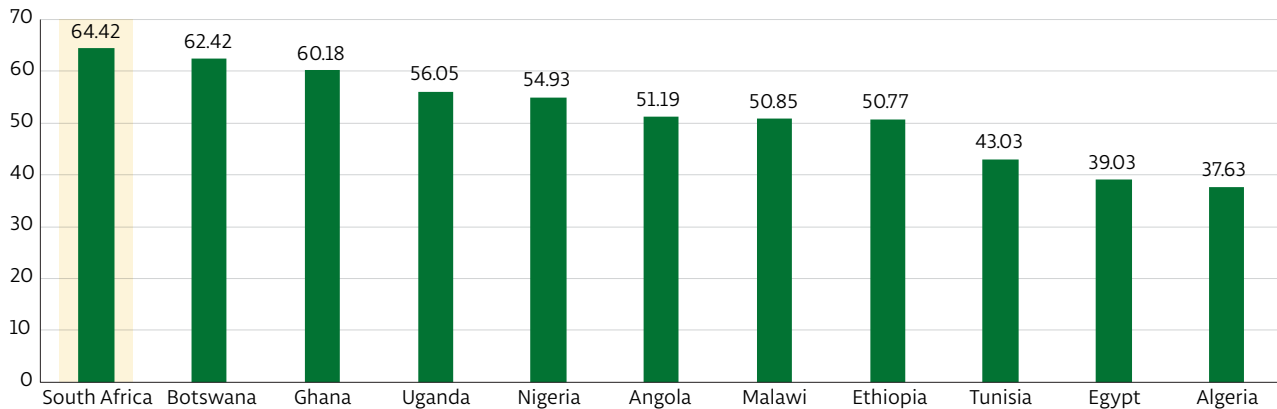
**Figure 38: SADC: Firms with Female Majority Ownership (Percent Firms), 2021**

Source: WEF 2021

labor force participation rate (78.8) (2019). Not only is the gender gap large, but women's absolute level of participation is low, where it has the fourth-lowest female labor force participation (2019) (figure 36). South Africa is sixth in SADC in terms of women employed in senior or mid-management (figure 37).

**In the case of women in leadership positions in the public and private sector**, of SADC countries South Africa has the third lowest number of female majority ownership in firms (22.60 versus 77.40 for men) and has been consistently experiencing a decline in the share of female employment in senior and middle management since 2016 (figure 37) (WEF 2021). Of African countries ranked by Mastercard, South Africa has the highest score on the Index of Women Entrepreneurs (2020).

**In terms of Wage Equality, the WEF ranked South Africa 131 – a decline from their 2020 ranking of 121.** Neighboring countries have seen their situation deteriorate as regards to the gender wage gap, with Eswatini declining from 59 to 67, Botswana from 33 to 45, and Lesotho from 133 to 138. This is likely linked to the impact of COVID-19 on the labor force, but more research is needed (WEF 2020; WEF 2021).

**Figure 39: Scores on the Master Card Index of Women Entrepreneurs, 2020**

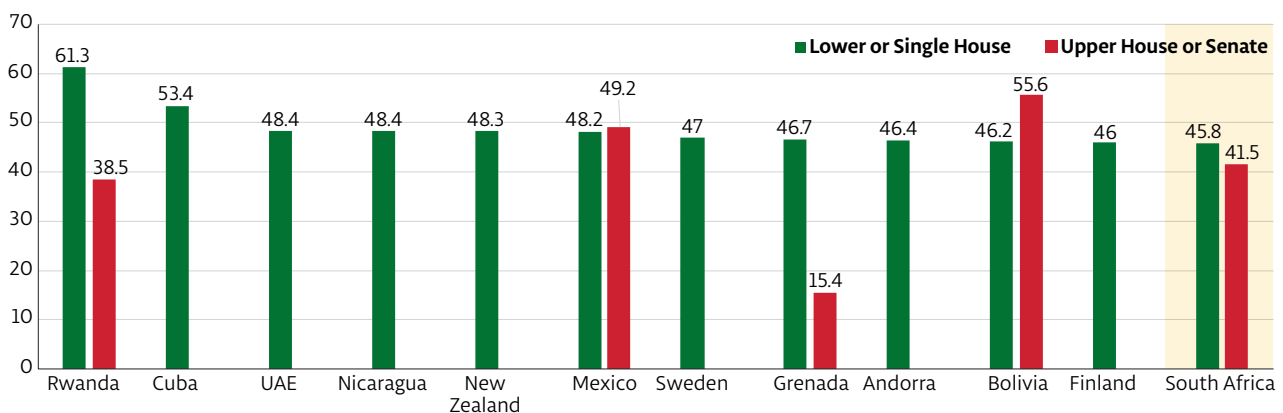
Source: Mastercard 2020

### 3. Voice and Agency

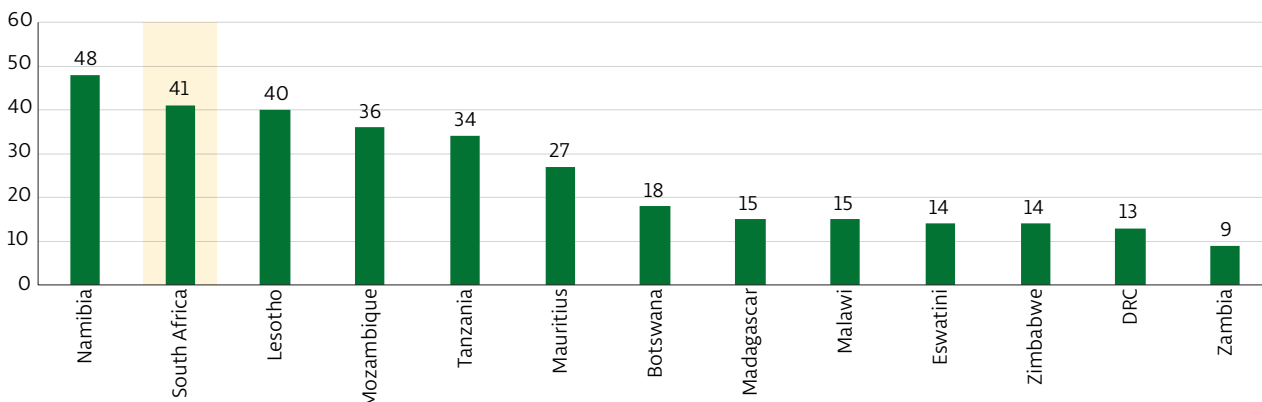
#### Representation in Parliament

South Africa is ranked twelfth in the world in terms of women's representation in parliament, a decline from their 2019 position of tenth (figure 40) (IPU 2019). The country has had a consistently high representation of women in national parliament since 1994. In addition, as of 2019, South Africa's cabinet is 50 percent female for the first time in its history. However, as country experts posit, this descriptive representation does not always translate into legislative influence or substantive power in decision-making. South Africa's political system means that women who are elected to parliament represent party interests, and not exclusively or necessarily a commitment to advancing gender equality. This is discussed in more in the Voice and Agency section of this report.

South Africa has the second highest representation of women in local government in SADC (2019) (figure 41). However, gender parity has not yet been reached (Gender Links 2019).

**Figure 40: Representation of Women in National Parliaments (Percent) Situation as of January 1, 2021 - Top 12 Countries**

Source: IPU 2021

**Figure 41: SADC: Percentage Women in Local Government, 2019**

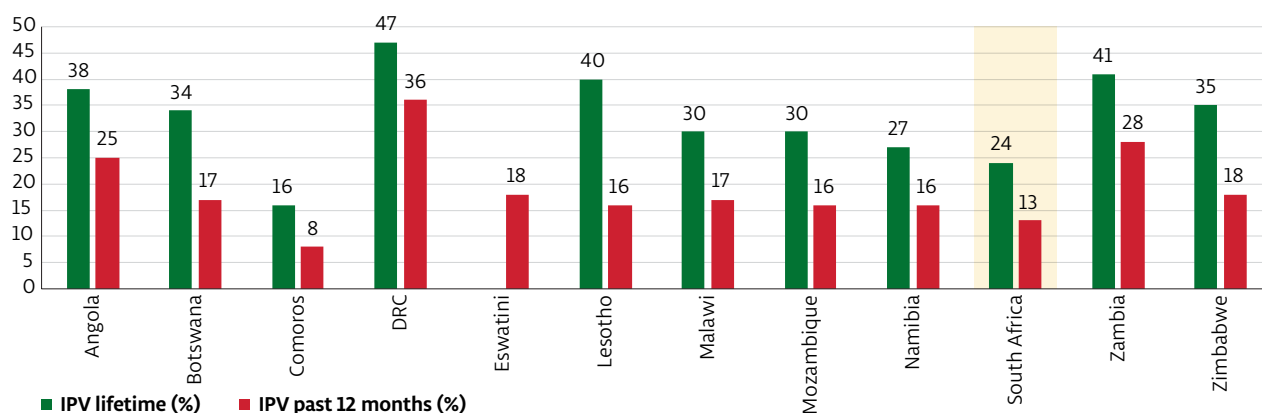
Source: Gender Links 2019

## Violence and Gender Based Violence

### South Africa has high-levels of gender-based violence, including intimate partner violence

(figure 42), much like other SADC countries. As elsewhere, underreporting and a lack of national prevalence data contribute to a challenge in estimating the scale of the challenge.

**South Africa's rates of female homicide are much higher than the global average.** The World Health Organization estimated that in 2017 the global rate of 'female total homicide' was 2.3 per 100,000 women. During that same period in South Africa the femicide rate was 14 per 100,000 women (Brodie 2020).

**Figure 42: Prevalence Estimates of Lifetime and Past 12 Months Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Among Ever-Married or Partnered Women Ages 15 to 49, 2018)**

Source: World Health Organization 2018

# Appendix D. National Gender Machinery

The National Gender Policy Framework was approved in 2000 following extensive consultations with the public. The framework outlined South Africa's vision for gender equality at that time and aimed to provide a coordination framework for the various gender structures and institutions inside and outside of government known as the National Gender Machinery (NGM). As of 2021 the NGMs include the CGE, The Portfolio Committee on Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, the Multi-Party Women's Caucus, the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, and Gender Focal Points within Departments.

**The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE):** The CGE is an institution established in terms of the Constitution (Chapter 9) and the Commission for Gender Equality Act (Act 39 of 1996). As a Chapter 9 Institution it has a broad mandate of supporting democracy, and a specific mandate of enhancing gender equality. It is thus an independent statutory body and is not a government department, and it is subject only to the Constitution and law (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Section 181). It is mandated to monitor, evaluate, and make recommendations on policies and practices of the state and private bodies, any law, and government compliance with respect to gender equality. The CGE may propose any new law that may impact on gender equality on the status of women, and must develop, conduct, and manage educational strategies and programs that foster understanding about gender equality and the role of the CGE. In addition, the CGE must investigate and resolve conflicts on gender matters and complaints through mediation, conciliation, and negotiation or referral to other institutions. The CGE must liaise and interact with institutions, bodies, or authorities with similar objectives to the Commission (e.g., other institutions supporting democracy as established in the Constitution), and any other organization which actively promotes gender equality and other sectors of civil society to further the objects of the Commission. The CGE must report to Parliament on issues of gender equality. In addition, the CGE may conduct research or order research to be conducted and may consider recommendations and suggestions from any source on gender equality.

**The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities:** This is the lead governmental structure tasked with developing programs and activities in relation to advancing women's rights and gender equality. It has taken many formations since 1994. Between 1994 and 2009 the form was the National Office on the Status of Women (OSW) which was in the Presidency. Each of the nine provinces also established provincial offices on the status of women, some of which are still maintained as of 2020. The OSW was the national coordinating structure for the gender machinery and was tasked with leading a gender program, developing plans and frameworks, and monitoring the implementation thereof. In 2009, the OSW was disbanded, and a Ministry for Women, Children and People with Disabilities was established, also situated in the Presidency. In 2014, this Ministry was again transformed to only focus on Women. Children and Disability rights were transferred to the Department of Social Development. In 2019, the old formation was semi-revived, and the new Ministry for Women, Youth and People with Disabilities was formed.

**Gender focal points:** Gender Focal Points (GFPs) were established in terms of the Gender Policy Framework (2000). These were to be located at the Departmental level with the function of (The Commission for Gender Equality 2017):

- Ensuring that each Department implemented the Gender Policy Framework;
- Ensuring that gender issues were routinely considered in their strategic plans;
- Ensuring that departments reflected gender, considered gender considerations in their business plans, and reported on them regularly;
- Reviewing departmental policy and planning in line with the Gender Policy Framework;
- Reviewing policies, projects, and programs for their gender implications;
- Ensuring that departments provided and used gender disaggregated data in their work;
- Establishing mechanisms to link and liaise with civil society;
- Coordinating gender training and education for all staff within departments to ensure that gender is mainstreamed; and
- Monitoring and evaluating departmental projects and programs to assess whether they are consistent with national gender policy.

In 2013 the CGE undertook an assessment of GFPs in South Africa and found a number of common challenges related to their function: Namely, GFPs were usually appointed at the lower ranks of the public service thus lacked authority; did not have sufficient institutional resources to implement their work and did not have dedicated budgets; were generally located in units that were responsible for other functions unrelated to gender mainstreaming thus deprioritizing this role; government institutions were reluctant to establish fully dedicated gender mainstreaming units thus the GFPs did not always have the necessary skills and training; the perception of GFPs as successful at coordinating activities or events but not as influencing departmental decisions regarding gender; and a poor understanding of the role by those who occupied it (The Commission for Gender Equality 2014). Those that the CGE interviewed indicated that they would support the retention of the GFPs but that they needed the required resources and authority to influence decisions related to gender mainstreaming. The CGE thus made several recommendations in relation to the strengthening of GFPs, ensuring that departmental leadership was familiar with gender policy, that institutions develop effective internal strategies for ensuring the effective allocation of budget to the GFPs, and that this be their main function, and that those government departments and local authorities that did not have a GFP establish these, and that Parliament undertake a review as to why they do not exist (The Commission for Gender Equality 2014).

**Parliamentary committees and sectoral parliaments:** Since 1994, Parliament has had several structures focused on promoting gender equality through oversight and public participation. In addition to regular committees, Parliament also has a Multi-party Women's Caucus (MPWC) made up of all female members of Parliament, which can meet on issues that it deems of important in relation to gender equality. This was launched in 2008. The MPWC is thus a joint committee of both houses of Parliament and its mandates include representing the interests and concerns of women Members of Parliament, promoting the discussion of women's issues in Parliament, making submissions to relevant committees, introducing a women's perspective and focus in parliamentary activities and debates, and engaging on developmental and empowerment issues with women in political structures outside Parliament and women Members of Parliament internationally (Abrahams et al., 2015). Since 1994 this Committee has functioned at various levels, but since 2014 there has been increased activity, including leading on issues such as the decriminalization of sex work, the promotion of gender parity in politics, and access to sanitary dignity (PMG 2019b).

The National Gender Machinery (NGM) has faced persistent challenges since its establishment in 1994. These include (Commission for Gender Equality, 2017; Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, 2019a; Gouws et al., 2019):

- Overlapping mandates and poor communication among structures;
- Limited achievements of gender mainstreaming and a lack of compliance with the Gender Policy Framework;
- Uneven engagement with civil society organizations;
- Lack of gender expertise;
- Lack of acknowledgement of NGM structures;
- The regular reconfiguration of governmental structures to drive gender equality (e.g., the Department and consequently the parliamentary committees);
- Lack of coordination amongst NGM structures at all levels;
- Unequal distribution of these structures (i.e., in some provinces there is no established provincial gender machinery, the Western Cape is a case in point);
- Under resourcing of these structures;
- The dilution of feminist efforts following criticism of former President Mbeki's AIDS denialism;
- The exit of feminists from state structures;
- The patriarchal norms held by the Women's League of the African National Congress;
- The failure of the ANC to uphold its 50:50 quota in terms of women's representation in the National Elections and the lack of gender quotas in other political parties resulting in decreasing representation of women; and
- The impact of corruption on the gender machinery and other institutions supporting democracy.

**The NGM Framework:** Subsequently, in November 2019, the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities released the Framework on South Africa's National Gender Machinery to clarify the 'package' of institutional structures in the National Gender Machinery, and to update the National Gender Policy Framework. The Objectives of the document are to coordinate the NGM and to promote accountability for gender equality across public and private institutions. The NGM Framework sets out what is expected of state and non-state agencies and gives guidance on how to foster a gender-sensitive culture in their organizations, become more gender-responsive in their own actions, and become more proactive in ensuring that the State is accountable to its duties to promote gender equality and that citizens can claim their rights. It established an NGM Coordination and Accountability Forum to respond to gender equality, and to strengthen structural mechanisms for gender equality within government, including gender focal points. This Framework is yet to be approved by Cabinet.

# Appendix E. Key South African Laws and Policies and Institutional Structures as They Relate to Gender Equality

## 1. Brief Overview of Key Laws

### a. General Application

**The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996):** The Constitution provides the broad framework for human rights, the provision of services, and the duties and structure of the State. The Bill of rights provides for the human rights of equality, human dignity, freedom and security of the person, freedom from being subjected to servitude, forced labor and the right to fair labor practices. The Constitution also provides the right to adequate housing and prohibits discrimination on several grounds including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, color, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language, and birth. The Constitution provides that the state must take reasonable measures to foster equitable access to land. The Constitution also establishes the Commission for Gender Equality as an Institution Supporting Constitutional Democracy in Chapter 9. The Constitution binds South Africa to best practice in terms of international law.

**Commission for Gender Equality Act (Act 39 of 1996):** The Act further clarifies the duties of the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) and the appointment process for Commissioners.

**Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (PEPUDA) (Act 4 of 2000):** Prohibits discrimination by the state or private organizations and individuals on a number of grounds including gender, sex, pregnancy, or marital status. It defines female genital mutilation, GBV, and harmful cultural/traditional/religious practices as unfair discrimination. The High-Level Panel on the Review of Legislation since 1994 (HLP) recommended that government should use its power to introduce legislative changes to PEPUDA including promulgating certain outstanding sections of the Act. PEPUDA establishes Equality Courts, which are courts designated to deal with matters covered by PEPUDA. Every magistrate and high court must have an equality court within their jurisdiction.

**Alteration of Sex Description and Sex Status Act (Act 49 of 2003):** The Act allows, under certain conditions, a person to change their sex in the population register.

### b. Marriage and Divorce

**Marriages Act (Act 25 of 1961):** this act sets the minimum age for marriage as 18 and prohibits the marriage of minors except in restricted circumstances.

**Divorce Act (Act 70 of 1979 as amended):** Amends the laws in relation to divorce and provides for matters related to this. A marriage may be dissolved by a court on the grounds of irretrievable breakdown of the marriage or the mental illness or continuous unconsciousness

of a party to the marriage and the act defines the circumstances of each of these. The Divorce Act does not explicitly set out any right to maintenance by reason of the marriage (except for childcare, see discussion below).

**Recognition of Customary Marriages Act (Act 120 of 1998):** this act provides for legal recognition of customary marriages, sets out the conditions for valid customary marriages, and provides for the equal capacity of spouses. It regulates the registration of customary marriages and sets the minimum age for marriage as 18. The act prohibits the marriage of minors except in restricted circumstances. In terms of the Act, a customary marriage entered into before the commencement of the Act which was not already registered in terms of another law had to be registered within 12 months of the Act. Those entered into after the Act must be registered within three months. Registration is encouraged as it constitutes evidence of the existence of the marriage, which can protect the wife in cases of death, or polygamy. If a customary marriage is not registered, and the man takes a second wife, this second marriage is invalidated.

**Recognition of Customary Marriages Amendment Act (Act 1 of 2021):** Amends the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act to further regulate the proprietary consequences of customary marriages entered into before the commencement of that Act.

**Civil Unions Act (Act 17 of 2006):** Provides for same sex partners to register their domestic partnership.

**Civil Union Amendment Act (Act 8 of 2020):** Amends the Civil Union Act by repealing a section that allowed marriage officers to opt out of solemnizing civil unions if it was against their beliefs.

**Judicial Matters Amendment Act (Act 12 of 2020):** Amends the Divorce Act to further regulate the division of assets and maintenance of parties in divorce proceedings in accordance with a Constitutional Court Judgement.

**Gaps in the law:** Currently religious marriages that are exclusively conducted religious ceremonies are not automatically recognized in terms of the marriage acts but require registration in terms of one of the existing marriage laws. The consequences of this are that women in non-registered religious marriages are not protected under the law. There are currently cases before the Western Cape High Court to attempt to address this gap in legal protection.

### **c. Representation**

In South Africa, white women were given the right to vote in 1930, while women of all other races were only granted this right in 1994. The Constitution established equal political rights for citizens including the right to form a political party, to participate in the activities of political party and to campaign for a party or cause. Every adult citizen has the right to vote in elections, and to do so in secret, and to stand for public office and if elected to hold office.

**The South African Electoral Act (Act 73 of 1998)** Schedule 2 specifies an electoral code of conduct, which specifies the role of women. It states that every registered party and every candidate must respect the rights of women to communicate freely with political parties and candidates; facilitate the full and equal participation of women in political activities; ensure the free access of women to all public political meetings, marches, demonstrations, rallies, and other public political events; and take all reasonable steps to ensure that women are free to engage in any political activities.



**Similarly, the Municipal Structures Act (Act 117 of 1998),** requires that parties seek to ensure that 50 percent of representatives on party lists are women, and that men and women candidates are distributed evenly throughout the list. It also notes that the procedures to elect members of ward committees should consider the need for women to be equitably represented. This thus encourages gender equality, but there is no legal requirement for them to comply. Parties thus have the option to introduce their own quota, which some, including the ruling party, have done.

**The Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework (Act 41 of 2003):** This act requires that 40 percent of traditional councils be democratically elected and that a third of all members (both elected and unelected) must be women. This affects all persons living in traditional communities and those who are subject to traditional leadership and observe customary law.

#### **d. Labor and Economic Empowerment**

The South African Constitution promotes equality in the workplace. This is expanded on through several pieces of legislation.

**The Labor Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995):** Provides the right to approach the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation, and Arbitration (CCMA) in cases of unfair labor practice.

**Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Act 75 of 1997 as Amended):** The Act gives effect to fair labor practices as envisioned by the Constitution, including determining leave, hours of work, rest periods, overtime, public holidays, maternity leave, family responsibility leave, and protection of employees before and after the birth of a child. Certain employee benefit contributions are legally required by employers including a contribution to the Unemployment Insurance Fund, a Skills Development Levy, and the compensation of employees for Occupation Injuries and Disease. The Basic Conditions of Employment Act specify that all full-time employed women are entitled to four months unpaid maternity leave, 15 working days paid leave every twelve months, 30 days sick leave over a three-year cycle, and three days of family responsibility leave on full pay per year. South African legislation does not specify an age of retirement and does not require employees to contribute to a retirement fund / pension. There is also no legal requirement for employers to provide a written contract, however, employers are required to provide certain written particulars of employment in terms of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act.

**The Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998):** Prohibits discrimination and promotes equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment. The Act defines harassment of an employee as unfair discrimination and prohibits it. The Act allows for the promotion of equality through affirmative action measures for certain groups.

**The Skills Development Act (Act 97 of 1998 and amendments):** The Act provides an institutional framework to devise and implement national, sector, and workplace strategies to develop and improve the skills of the South African workforce. It establishes several institutional bodies tasked with developing the workforce.

**Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (Act 4 of 2000):** Detailed above as it applies generally across all areas of society.

**Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act (Act 5 of 2000):** The Act aims to give effect to the Constitution by providing a framework for the implementation of procurement. It provides that an organ of state must determine its preferential procurement policy, and that the

specific goals of this policy may include contracting with persons, or categories of persons, historically disadvantaged by unfair discrimination based on race, gender, or disability.

**Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (Act 53 of 2003 and Amendment Act 46 of 2013):** The Act establishes a legislative framework for promoting Black economic empowerment, to establish the Black Economic Empowerment Advisory Council and to provide for matters connected to these issues. It aims to promote the achievement of the constitutional right to equality, increase broad-based and effective participation of Black people in the economy and promote a higher growth rate, increased employment, and more equitable income distribution, and to establish a national policy on Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment. It defines Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment as the viable economic empowerment of all Black people, in particular women, workers, youth, people with disabilities and people living in rural areas, through diverse but integrated socio-economic strategies.

**The Employment Services Act (Act 4 of 2014):** Aims to provide for public employment services and to provide for the establishment of schemes to promote the employment of young work seekers and other vulnerable persons.

**The National Minimum Wage Act (Act 9 of 2018):** The Act provides a national minimum wage, establishes a National Minimum Wage Commission, and provides for the review and annual adjustment of the national minimum wage. The Act was updated in 2020 to correct a cross reference with another law.

**The Social Assistance Amendment Act (Act 16 of 2020):** Amends the Social Assistance Act of 2004 to provide for additional payments linked to social grants, and to provide for social relief of distress in the event of a disaster.

#### **e. Inheritance, Housing, and Land Rights**

**The Administration of Deceased Estate Act (Act 66 of 1965):** The Act has the purpose of consolidating the law around the liquidation and distribution of the estates of deceased persons, and the administration of the property of minors and person under curatorship, and to regulate the rights of beneficiaries under mutual wills made by any two or more persons.

**Reform of Customary Law of Succession and Regulation of Related Matters Act (Act 11 of 2009):** The Act modified several previous laws relating to the law of succession and clarified certain matters relating to the law of succession and the law of property in relation to persons subject to customary law. It thus provided protection to widows in customary marriages whose husbands died without a will and modified the law to respond to the Constitutional Court ruling that declared that the principle of male primogeniture cannot be reconciled with the principle of equality as contained in the law. It thus modifies the customary law of succession to ensure that women can benefit.

**Restitution of Land Rights Act (Act 22 of 1994 and amendment acts):** Aimed to provide restitution rights in land to persons or communities who were previously dispossessed of this land by past racially discriminatory laws and practices and establishes the Commission on Restitution of Land Rights and a Land Claims Court. Amendments increased the ability of the Minister of Land to purchase and acquire or appropriate land for the purpose of restoration or restitution of that land. \*This is currently under discussion in Parliament through the Constitution Eighteenth Amendment Bill which aims to provide for land expropriation without compensation.

**Land Reform (Labor Tenants) Act (Act 3 of 1996 as amended):** The Act provides for security of tenure for labor tenants and those persons occupying or using land because of their association with labor tenants, and to provide for the acquisition of land and rights in land by labor tenants.

**Extension of Security of Tenure Act (Act 62 of 1997):** Aims to provide for measures with State assistance to facilitate long-term security of land tenure, to regulate the conditions of residence on certain land, and to regulate the conditions under which those rights may be terminated, and the conditions under which they may be evicted. This Act was amended to ensure that in contexts where a woman had lived in a property with her spouse (and the property was provided as part of the spouse's working contract) she cannot be evicted when that spouse loses his job or is fired. This provided security of tenure to many vulnerable female farmworkers in South Africa.

**Housing Act (Act 107 of 1997):** The Act provides that the housing development process must promote measures to prohibit unfair discrimination on the ground of gender and other forms of unfair discrimination by all actors in the housing development process. In addition, the administration of housing development the Government is required to respect, protect, and promote and fulfil the Bill of Rights in Chapter 2 of the Constitution.

**Housing Development Agency Act (Act 23 of 2008)** established the functions and powers of the Housing Development Agency.

**Prevention of Illegal Eviction from Unlawful Occupation of Land Act (Act 19 of 1998):** provides for the prohibition of unlawful eviction and provides procedures for the eviction of unlawful occupiers.

#### **f. Right To Be Free from Violence**

SA's legislative framework relating to VAWC is extensive and includes legislation that relates to the prevention of underage and forced marriages, sexual harassment in the workplace, non-discrimination, films, and publications (including child pornography), preventing violence against children in schools, sentencing and procedures relating to VAWC cases, domestic violence, sexual offences, trafficking, hate crimes, firearms control, children's rights, and violence against older persons.

**Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (Act 32 of 2007):** The Act defines several offences against children and adults that can be considered sexual offences. It emphasizes consent and defines certain categories of persons who are not able to consent (i.e., children under 12 or persons with mental disability). The Act establishes a National Register of Sexual Offenders which as of 2019 has 19,688 names on it (Department of Justice 2019). In 2012, an Amendment Act was passed to remedy technical issues in the act to ensure that all offences in the Act can result in a sentence upon conviction.

**Domestic Violence Act (Act 116 of 1998):** provides a broad definition of domestic relationship and defines domestic violence as including physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional, verbal, and psychological abuse; economic abuse; intimidation; harassment, stalking; damage to property; entry into the complainant's residence without consent where the parties do not share the same residence; or any other controlling or abusive behavior toward a complainant, where such conduct harms, or may cause imminent harm, to the safety, health, or wellbeing of the complainant.

**Judicial Matters Amendment Acts (Act 43 of 2013, Act 24 of 2015, Act 8 of 2017):** These Acts were passed in relation to the sexual offences act (Act 32 of 2007). Act 43 of 2013 made provision for the designation of sexual offences courts. Act 24 of 2015 was introduced to further regulate the reporting on the implementation and training programs in relation to the Act to Parliament. It also regulates protective measures for foreign victims of trafficking. Act 8 of 2017 further defines the designation of sexual offences courts, specifying their nature and required services. It also specifies the details of entering the names of offenders of sexual offences against children into the National Register of Sexual Offenders and provides sentences in terms of the Prevention and Combatting of Trafficking in Persons Act.

**Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act (Act 7 of 2013):** The Act establishes a legislative framework to prevent and combat trafficking in many forms, and to assist the victims thereof. The law deals with children and adults differently, ensuring that they get age-appropriate support and services. The Act also requires the introduction of a National Policy Framework which must provide a uniform, coordinated, and cooperative approach by all government departments and organs of state. It also requires relevant Ministers and Director Generals of departments to issue regulations and instructions related to the Act.

**Protection from Harassment Act (Act 17 of 2011):** This Act seeks to address harassment and stalking and provides for civil remedy through the form of a protection order. Anyone who contravenes that order is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine or imprisonment. The Act also covers cyberbullying and bullying at schools. Although the Domestic Violence Act already addressed harassment, it only did so in relation to domestic partnerships, thus this Act expands that protection. It came into force in 2013.

**South African Police Services Act (Act 68 of 1995):** Part of this Act provides for the National Commissioner of Police to issue national instructions and orders related to matters that fall under her/his responsibility. Thus, for the laws related to GBV the Commissioner is required to issue instructions for how the police must fulfil their duties.

**The Civilian Secretariat for Police Act (Act 2 of 2011):** The Civilian Secretariat for Police has the responsibility of monitoring the compliance of the South African Police Services (SAPS) with their duties in terms of the Domestic Violence Act, and of making recommendations to the SAPS about remedial action.

**The Criminal Procedure Act (Act 51 of 1997 and Amendments):** The Act details the procedures in relation to crime and provides that no evidence as to any previous sexual experience or conduct of a person is relevant in a case where they are the complainant. The Second Amendment Act (Act No 85 of 1997) further amended bail laws to ensure that persons accused of serious offences are not released. In 2018, Section 18 of the Act was declared unconstitutional (because of the *L and Others v Frankel and Others* (29573/2016) case) and thus the Prescription in Civil and Criminal Matters Bill will address the limitations around the prescription of sexual offences.

**The Criminal Law Amendment Act (Act 105 of 1997):** The Act provides discretionary minimum sentences for certain serious offences (including sexual offences and murder when the accused was attempting to commit rape or compelled rape) and provides details on aggravating factors for sentences in relation to sexual offences.

**The Prescription in Civil and Criminal Matters (Sexual Offences) Amendment Act 15 of 2020.** Amends the Prescription Act 1969 to extend the list of sexual offences in respect of which prescription does not commence to run under certain circumstances regarding a debt that is

based on the alleged commission of those sexual offences. It also amends the Criminal Procedure Act to extend the list of sexual offences in respect of which a prosecution may be instituted after a period of 20 years has lapsed since the date of the alleged commission of the sexual offence.

### **g. Health (including sexual and reproductive health)**

**Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act (Act 92 of 1996):** Determines the circumstances and conditions under which the pregnancy of a woman may be terminated. Terminations of pregnancy may only take place with the informed consent of the pregnant woman, and no consent other than the pregnant woman's is required. The State is required to promote the provision of non-mandatory and non-directive counselling before and after the termination. The Act also governs the termination of pregnancy in a case of a pregnant minor, which does not require the permission of the minor's parents.

**The National Health Act (Act 61 of 2003):** The Act aims to provide uniformity in health care services across South Africa. It aims to promote the progressive realization of the Constitutional right to health care services, including reproductive health care, and to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being. The Act specifies that the State must provide free health care to pregnant and lactating women amongst other categories of person. It provides several rights to healthcare users to participate in decisions affecting his or her health. It allows health care personnel to refuse to treat a user who is physically or verbally abusive.

## **2. Policies**

### **a. The National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (2020)**

The commitment to a National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (NSP GBVF) emerged from the National Summit on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide which took place in November 2018. That declaration committed the State and civil society working in partnership to develop an overarching strategy to respond to the persistent high levels of violence against women in the country. In March 2020 Cabinet announced that it had approved the NSP. The NSP that was tabled included a structure for a permanent National Council on Gender Based Violence. Cabinet also established an inter-ministerial committee to formally establish this council (South African Government 2020c). In 2021, The Minister of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities sent out notice of a Bill to establish the council, but at the time of writing no further information on progress is available. It is worth noting that this is not the first effort by the South African Government to establish a council of this nature. A similar structure (established in 2012 by the Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, disbanded in 2013) was not successful due to challenges in terms of mandate, working relationships between the state and civil society, and access to human and financial resources, amongst other issues (Commission for Gender Equality, 2014, 2015, 2016).

### **b. The President's Emergency Response Action Plan on GBV 2019**

In 2019 in response to increased awareness of femicides in the country, the President of South Africa announced a new Emergency Response Action Plan which would entail a government response extending from September 2019 to March 2020, an additional budget, as well as a focus in five strategic areas (South African Government, 2019a). The ERAP was announced alongside a significant budget of R1.6 billion, which was drawn from the existing fiscus through requesting departments to reprioritize GBVF in their programming. This budget has not been made publicly available, and was not recorded in the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework

for monitoring or transparency. Increasing transparency and accountability measures around the budget for ERAP will be important for increasing citizen trust.

### **c. The Framework on Gender Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing (2018)**

The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities introduced this Framework in December 2018; it was developed in partnership with several other Government Departments including the National Treasury (Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities 2018). The Framework aims to provide a sustainable and comprehensive multi-sectoral approach to gender mainstreaming within the country's planning, monitoring and evaluation and public financing systems. It identifies the need for gender responsive planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation, and auditing (GRPBMEA) as linked to political, social, and economic exclusion of women, and weak institutionalization of gender mainstreaming across the state machinery. It aims to take an approach of ensuring that gender policy priorities are translated into gender-responsive programs, which in turn are linked to gender-responsive budgets. Accordingly, it identifies short-, medium- and long-term strategies and has a phased implementation approach between 2018 and 2021. A central component of this is the development of a Country Gender Indicator Framework consisting of development indicators and program performance indicators. It aims to institutionalize this approach across all levels of government. The Framework was approved by Cabinet in March 2019.

### **d. The Gender Policy Framework for Local Government (2013)**

In 2013, the Gender Policy Framework for Local Government was developed to provide guidance and support to the sector around gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment (Department of Provincial and Local Government 2013). It aimed to integrate gender into key priority areas for local government, propose gender mainstreaming measures for key programs, provide for women's empowerment, among other goals. The objectives included entrenching gender analysis as a fundamental requirement for local government planning, program development and implementation.

### **e. The National Gender Policy Framework (2000)**

The National Gender Policy Framework was approved in 2000 following extensive consultations with the public. The framework outlined South Africa's vision for gender equality at that time and aimed to provide a coordination framework for the various gender structures and institutions inside and outside of government known as the National Gender Machinery (NGM). The Framework outlined the use of Gender Focal Points in Government to encourage gender mainstreaming (Office on the Status of Women 2000).

### **f. The Women's Charter for Effective Equality (1994)**

The Women's Charter built on the 1954 Women's Charter and aimed to claim women's rights in the new democratic dispensation. It emphasized the equality of women, and the necessity of recognizing past exclusion. It also emphasized the need to pass legislation to create institutions to ensure the effective protection and promotion of equality for women.

### **g. The Framework on South Africa's National Gender Machinery (2019) (Set out in appendix D)**

### **h. The Women's Financial Inclusion Framework (2019)**

The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities introduced this framework in 2019. The Framework seeks to address persistent gender-specific economic exclusion faced by women and to promote women's economic empowerment and gender equality. It provides a strategy on the inclusion of women into the mainstream economy. It has eight objectives<sup>46</sup> which include:

- Mobilize resources to support campaigns and programs that promote the inclusion of women in the economy;
- Coordinate, collect, and disseminate information on best practices relating to the inclusion of women across all sectors of the economy;
- Strengthen the capacity of women in leadership, management, control, and entrepreneurship; and
- Share best practices relating to the economic empowerment of women.

The framework outlines its targeted beneficiaries as women, girls, and women with disabilities; women-led or owned cooperatives, hawkers, spaza shops, SMME's, big businesses, cooperative banks, micro-financing, and women's funders; townships, rural areas and traditional leadership; Government; and the Private sector.

At the time of writing this report this Framework had been finalized within the Department, and endorsed by the Economic Cluster of Cabinet, but had not been formally approved by Cabinet (Khathi 2020).

### **i. The Policy Framework to address Gender-Based Violence in the Post-School Education and Training System (2019)**

This policy framework sets out the strategic intent of the Department of Higher Education and Training to curb GBV in the entire post-school education and training system. It applies to all students, full or part-time, residential, or online, and all staff of organizations and institutions. The framework provides guidance on structures, mechanisms, and processes that institutions must put in place to address GBV, including looking at infrastructure.

### **j. Gender Based Violence- Additional information: Task teams, specialized units and facilities and summits**

Since 1994 the State has also established and rolled out several specialized services and facilities to respond to the high levels of violence in a sensitive and specialized way. These include

- **Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences (FCS) Units at police stations:** FCS units are involved in the policing of all sexual offences against children, contact crimes where the family is involved, illegal removal of children under 12, and electronic media facilitated crimes. Each station either has an FCS unit or is part of a cluster of stations that can access an FCS unit at another station.

<sup>46</sup> The other four objectives are promoting an all-inclusive approach to Women's Financial Inclusion; Facilitating an enabling operating environment for mainstreaming Women's Financial Inclusion in government and private sector institutions; Promoting financial inclusivity through equitable access to ownership and control of all economic activities for women; Lobby the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations to incorporate the inclusion of women in their policies, programs, projects and products.

- **Thuthuzela Care Centres (TCCs):** TCCs are one-stop center where sexual offences victims may access medical assistance, police assistance, and counselling with links to a prosecutor who will assist with their case. A total of 51 centers have been established since 2006, and these are predominantly in urban areas.
- **Sexual Offences Courts:** Sexual Offences Courts are designated courts that offer specialized facilities and services that improve the experience for the survivor, and where service providers have special training around sexual offences. These were relaunched in 2013, and as of 24 February 2020 there are 96 of these courts across the country in urban and rural areas.
- **The Sexual Offences and Community Affairs (SOCA) units at the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA):** This unit was established in 1999 with the main objective of eradicating GBV. The unit aims to enhance the capacity of prosecutors to prosecute sexual offences and domestic violence cases, reduce secondary victimization of complainants, raise public awareness of the scourge of GBV, and ensure the proper management of young offenders.
- **Shelters run by the state and civil society (often subsidized only in part by the state):** The Domestic Violence Act makes provision for the police to transport women and their children fleeing violent domestic living conditions to a shelter. However, the Act does not specify who must provide these shelters, or who must fund them. The state has several of its own shelters that it funds in full, and it also subsidizes NGOs in underserved areas to run these shelters. Inconsistent funding for these facilities continues to remain a challenge
- **One Stop Child Justice Centres and Child and Youth Care Facilities** are designed to assist children and youth in conflict with the law.
- **The Ministerial Advisory Task Team to Tackle GBV on Campuses (2019).** This task team commenced work in June 2019 (Kahla 2019). It is guided by the Policy Framework to address Gender-Based Violence in the Post-School Education and Training System.
- **The National Task Team on Gender and Sexual Orientation Based Violence:** was established by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development in March 2011. The aim of the Task Team is “to address human rights concerns and violations amongst Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex persons” and it is comprised of government and civil society official, and chapter 9 institutions (National Task Team on Gender and Sexual Orientation-Based Violence 2018).

#### **k. The Presidential Review Committee on Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality (2018)**

In December 2018 the President established the Presidential Review Committee on Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality (PRCWEGE) to be led by the Minister for Women (now Minister for Women, Youth and Persons with Disability). The Committee was launched in January 2019 and met twice in early April. The PRCWEGE is now chaired by Professor Vivienne Taylor, a retired academic and member of the National Planning Commission, and 24 experts were appointed. They will be undertaking a 25-year review of gender equality in South Africa. It aims to submit its report to the President in March 2020. According to a press release on the subject the report will “provide practical and strategic guidance to consolidate the gains made since 1994, to address the policy, planning and institutional gaps, the changing contexts, and new forms of exploitation and oppression of women and girls in contemporary South Africa”. (Department of Women 2019).



## I. The High-Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation Since 1994 (2017)

This Panel aimed to review all legislation passed since 1994 for the purposes of assessing its impact and the challenges in its implementation, thus it was not necessarily gender specific. However, the panel made several recommendations for legislative change relevant to this report including (High Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation Since 1994 and the Acceleration of Fundamental Change 2017):

- Strengthening the role of Chapter 9 Institutions in implementing legislation and policy.
- Introducing legislative changes to PEPUDA to strengthen its impact and improve its implementation.
- Tabling the Combating of Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Bill.
- Develop a National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence to the Executive.
- Making legislative changes to the Domestic Violence Act to address gaps in the legislation and to recognize domestic violence as a crime in its own right. In addition, the panel recommended regular hearings on the act to obtain feedback on the act from the public.
- Amending the Firearms Control Act to address access to guns and to allow for disaggregated crime statistics on gun use in crime.
- Amending the Sexual Offences Act to decriminalize prostitution and sex work, and to improve on statistics in relation to sexual offences. In addition, the panel recommended regular hearings on the implementation of the Act to improve its application.
- Improve birth registration for South Africans and foreign nationals to prevent discrimination and statelessness.
- Amend the Child Justice Act to raise the age of criminal capacity. In addition, the panel recommended regular hearings on the Act to improve its application.

## m. Summits and Dialogues

### The 2018 Gender-Based Violence Summit

On August 1, 2018 during nationwide protests on gender-based violence, a memorandum of demands was issued to the President of South Africa at the Union Buildings in Pretoria. These 26 demands led to the commitment from the Presidency to host a Gender Based Violence Summit (The Total Shut Down 2018). The Summit resulted in a declaration of 19 commitments which was formally adopted in February 2019 at the opening of the Booyens Sexual Offences Court (South African Government 2019d). The declaration was signed by the President and seven civil society organizations. Since the summit, progress on implementing this declaration has been underway through the work of the Interim Steering Committee on Gender-Based Violence.

### The Summit on Gender Responsive Budgeting, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (2018)

In November 2018 a Summit on Gender Responsive Budgeting, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation was hosted by the Department of Women and resulted in a declaration on this subject that included 11 actions to be taken by the South African state and private sector (Department of Women 2018). These were:

1. Ensure the development and implementation of a Gender-Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing Framework in South Africa.

2. Urge all government Departments and public entities at national, provincial, and local level to a. Institutionalize gender-responsive planning and budgeting systems, including within the Mandate Paper, Medium Term Strategic Plan, Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans and Budgets. b. Develop and implement gender-responsive monitoring, reporting and evaluation systems including regular performance and expenditure reviews on gender equality and women's empowerment.
3. Urge parliament and provincial legislatures to include performance and expenditure on women's empowerment and gender equality within their oversight functions, including at the level of oversight committees.
4. Continue to lobby for increased public investment in gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, considering the diversity of needs and circumstances of women and girls and ensuring the necessary human, financial and material resources for specific and targeted activities to ensure gender equality.
5. Integrate a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and reporting of all national policies, strategies, and plans, in a coordinated manner across all policy areas and across sectors and spheres of government.
6. Ensure gender mainstreaming across public sector systems, including within the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) and induction programs and through the rollout of capacity building on gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive planning and budgeting through the National School of Government.
7. Strengthen the capacity of the Department of Women in the Presidency to effectively lead, coordinate and monitor the implementation of the GRPBMEA and performance on women's empowerment and gender equality.
8. Develop and implement a Country Gender Indicator Framework linked to global, continental, regional, national, and sectoral policy frameworks for integration within planning, budgeting, and monitoring instruments.
9. Improve, systematize, and fund the collection, analysis, and dissemination of sex-disaggregated and gender-related data, including data disaggregated by age and other factors and develop the necessary input, output, and outcome indicators at all levels to measure progress on women's empowerment and gender equality, including through the national statistical system administered by Statistics South Africa.
10. Ensuring that the voices of women and girls underpin gender-responsive planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation and auditing systems across sectors and spheres of government.
11. Join hands as government and civil society toward the realization of our constitutional vision of a non-racial and non-sexist society in South Africa.

No follow up to the summit has been held to address progress made. However, since the summit, the Framework for GRPBMEA has been adopted by the government. As of May 2020, the DWYPD was working with National Treasury to ensure that this framework is implemented (PMG 2020).

### **Women and Youth on Land Reform Dialogue (2018)**

In 2018 the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform hosted a women and youth dialogue on land reform from 19 – 21 September. The purpose of the dialogue was to create a platform to discuss the participation of women and youth in the economy through land reform programs, and to assess tools necessary to improve the participation of women and youth in the agricultural sectors (South African Government 2018). The Dialogue was structured around three commissions: women's land rights and rural development, economic

opportunities for women and youth development in land reform, and access to land. It is not clear whether this dialogue resulted in any resolutions as nothing can be found on either the Department's website or online.

#### **The National Forum on the Implementation of the Sexual Offences Act (2017)**

The National Forum on the Implementation of the Sexual Offences Act was held on October 30 and 31, 2017, hosted by the Department of Justice. The theme was "Bridging the Gaps." The Forum attempted to review the progress in implementing the Act since 2007 to address the challenges. The forum drafted 12 resolutions which were due to be developed into a National Action Plan led by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development 2017). It is not clear whether these have been implemented or not.

## Appendix F. Additional Information: Gender Gaps in Human Endowments

**Table 8: Women Age 15 and Older Who Report Problems in Accessing Health Care for Themselves by type of Problem and other Background Characteristics**

Background characteristic	Problems in accessing health care				
	Getting permission to go for treatment	Getting money for treatment	Distance to health facility	Not wanting to go alone	At least one problem accessing health care
<b>Age</b>					
15 – 19	13.0	24.8	24.8	16.4	37.2
20 – 24	11.6	23.1	19.9	11.8	33.6
25 – 34	13.6	26.8	21.9	12.5	36.5
35 – 44	13.3	26.7	23.7	11.8	37.0
45 – 54	13.8	27.9	23.1	10.5	35.1
55 – 64	16.9	33.0	25.7	14.1	44.0
65+	23.65	37.0	35.1	28.2	48.7
<b>Population group</b>					
Black African	16.2	30.5	26.9	15.4	41.3
White	2.6	5.5	3.2	2.6	8.4
Colored	9.8	21.4	14.9	11.2	29.4
Indian / Asian	11.5	21.3	20.0	21.9	33.4
<b>Residence</b>					
Urban	9.9	22.0	15.6	9.3	30.4
Non-urban	24.1	39.8	41.1	24.4	53.4
<b>Education</b>					
No education	28.0	43.8	43.6	31.3	57.3
Primary incomplete	19.3	39.7	31.9	19.5	50.0
Primary complete	21.5	38.8	32.3	17.8	46.3
Secondary incomplete	14.9	30.4	25.6	14.5	40.7
Secondary complete	9.9	19.3	16.0	8.7	28.1
More than secondary	7.0	9.0	11.5	7.1	20.0
<b>Wealth quintile</b>					
Lowest	25.6	46.9	42.9	24.9	57.2
Second	18.8	37.1	33.0	18.3	50.1
Middle	12.5	28.5	23.1	11.0	39.5
Fourth	11.2	19.5	15.4	10.3	28.7
Highest	7.4	11.8	10.7	9.3	19.8

Source: DOH, SSA, SAMRC, and ICF 2019

# Appendix G. Additional Information: Gender Gaps in Economic Opportunities

**Table 9: Employment Equity by Occupation Level, Race, and Gender, 2001-2019**

Occupational Level	Period	White (percent)	African (percent)	Colored (percent)	Indian (percent)	Male (percent)	Female (percent)
Top Management	2001	87	6	3	4	87	13
	2019	65.6	15.2	5.6	10.3	75.6	24.4
Senior Management	2001	81	9	5	5	80	20
	2019	53.7	23.5	8	11.4	64.7	35.3
Professionally Qualified	2001	56	33	6	5	62	38
	2019	34.7	43.2	10	9.4	53.1	46.9
Technical Skilled	2001	18	61.7	18	6	60	40
	2019	18.1	63.2	11.6	5.4	52.3	47.7

Source: Commission for Employment Equity 2020

**Table 10: Gender Pay Gap: Monthly Earnings, 2017 and 2018**

Category	Bottom 5%	Bottom 10%	Bottom 25%	Median	Top 25%	Top 10%	Top 5%
Men 2017	600	1,000	2,275	4,000	9,500	20,000	30,000
Women 2017	600	700	1,600	3,000	7,500	18,000	23,000
Women's earning as a proportion of men's 2017 (percent)*	100	70	70,33	75	78,95	90	76,67
Men 2018	600	1,000	2,200	4,000	8,666	20,000	30,000
Women 2018	600	738	1,600	3,033	7,300	18,000	25,000
Women's earning as a proportion of men's 2018 (percent)	100	73,8	72,72	75,83	84,24	90	83,33

Source: SSA 2018b, 2020d.

**Table 11: Workforce Profile at the Top Management Level by Sector, Population Group and Gender, 2019**

Sector	Male (percent)				Female (%)				Foreign National	
	African	Colored	Indian	White	African	Colored	Indian	White	Male	Female
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	6.3	1.9	3.9	52.8	4.5	2.0	2.7	22.2	3.3	0.4
Administrative and Support Activities	20.9	3.6	6.3	38.2	10.8	3.1	3.0	12.2	1.6	0.2
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	7.4	0.0	1.5	72.1	1.5	10.3	0.0	7.4	0.0	0.0
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	22.8	4.1	4.1	34.9	12.0	1.9	2.8	14.5	2.4	0.6
Construction	14.5	5.7	5.9	53.9	6.5	2.2	2.6	6.3	2.0	0.3
Education	9.8	3.2	4.4	33.6	7.1	3.2	3.1	31.9	2.2	1.5
Electricity, Gas, Steam, and Air Conditioning Supply	13.7	4.4	8.0	46.5	9.3	2.1	3.3	9.2	3.4	0.1
Financial and Insurance Activities	10.8	3.2	6.9	49.9	6.5	2.3	3.5	12.8	3.3	0.7
Human Health and Social Work Activities	9.1	2.3	6.5	41.8	7.5	2.5	5.1	21.6	2.3	1.3
Information and Communication	7.7	2.9	8.6	51.0	5.3	2.5	4.1	13.1	3.9	0.8
Manufacturing	5.3	3.3	9.7	58.0	3.2	1.7	3.2	10.6	4.5	0.5
Mining and Quarrying	20.9	2.7	2.5	51.9	7.0	1.1	1.9	7.4	4.1	0.5
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	8.7	2.7	4.9	47.2	5.9	2.5	4.3	19.6	3.2	1.1
Public Administration and Defense, Compulsory Social Security	42.5	7.6	3.3	17.2	18.2	3.3	2.1	5.8	0.0	0.2
Real Estate Activities	8.7	3.2	4.3	59.2	2.7	1.8	2.5	16.2	1.1	0.2
Transportation and Storage	8.6	3.3	10.7	50.6	4.2	2.3	4.7	12.2	3.1	0.2
Water Supply, Sewerage, waste Management and Remediation Activities	30.1	5.3	2.4	32.5	16.7	2.2	1.6	8.3	1.0	0.0
Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	4.3	2.7	11.3	56.6	2.2	1.7	3.8	15.0	1.8	0.5

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, 2020

**Table 12: Workforce Profile at the Senior Management Level by Sector, Population Group, and Gender, 2019**

Sector	Male (percent)				Female (percent)				Foreign National	
	African	Colored	Indian	White	African	Colored	Indian	White	Male	Female
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	12.1	4.3	4.5	29.2	12.6	6.0	2.7	24.9	2.5	1.2
Administrative and Support Activities	25.5	5.0	5.2	23.3	15.1	3.9	3.8	16.5	1.0	0.6
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	8.2	3.6	1.8	65.5	0.9	1.8	1.8	14.5	1.8	0.0
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	27.9	4.7	5.7	19.7	18.4	3.6	3.3	14.8	1.1	0.8
Construction	20.0	6.2	5.3	42.5	8.7	2.1	2.0	10.7	2.1	0.4
Education	12.7	4.0	3.4	22.4	9.6	3.4	3.8	34.2	4.4	2.1
Electricity, Gas, Steam, and Air Conditioning Supply	26.0	3.8	6.7	27.0	17.2	2.6	3.2	10.7	2.4	0.4
Financial and Insurance Activities	10.9	4.0	8.9	33.2	8.6	3.6	6.3	19.6	3.4	1.5
Human Health and Social Work Activities	15.7	3.4	4.3	19.5	16.5	4.6	5.7	27.4	1.8	1.3
Information and Communication	9.5	4.4	9.0	36.3	7.0	3.6	4.5	19.5	5.0	1.3
Manufacturing	9.5	5.5	9.8	44.3	4.6	3.0	4.3	15.8	2.7	0.6
Mining and Quarrying	20.6	2.6	4.0	50.1	6.8	1.0	1.8	9.7	2.8	0.5
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	10.4	3.2	5.7	36.1	7.3	3.3	5.0	24.6	3.1	1.3
Public Administration and Defense, Compulsory Social Security	38.5	5.5	3.9	13.3	26.3	2.8	2.3	6.8	0.5	0.2
Real Estate Activities	8.0	2.5	4.4	39.6	5.0	3.0	5.3	29.4	1.5	1.3
Transportation and Storage	11.2	5.2	9.7	40.2	5.2	3.0	5.1	18.2	1.7	0.5
Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	34.0	6.7	3.8	19.5	18.9	2.6	1.8	11.6	1.1	0.2
Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	11.6	5.7	10.5	35.5	6.3	4.1	4.6	19.4	1.8	0.4

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, 2020

**Table 13: Workforce Profile at the Professionally Qualified Level by Sector, Population Group, and Gender, 2019**

Sector	Male (percent)				Female (percent)				Foreign National	
	African	Colored	Indian	White	African	Colored	Indian	White	Male	Female
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	18.3	5.4	3.5	16.3	20.6	8.5	3.4	19.4	2.9	1.7
Administrative and Support Activities	31.1	6.0	2.7	13.9	25.3	5.4	2.3	12.0	1.0	0.4
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	20.9	7.8	3.7	37.7	13.5	1.6	0.8	13.5	0.4	0.0
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	34.0	2.1	5.6	6.1	35.3	2.2	6.7	6.9	0.7	0.5
Construction	29.1	6.8	4.1	30.8	12.5	1.9	1.8	9.9	2.7	0.5
Education	22.4	4.8	1.4	11.0	27.4	4.5	2.4	22.6	2.5	1.1
Electricity, Gas, Steam, and Air Conditioning Supply	28.1	5.0	6.0	23.3	22.7	2.7	2.8	8.0	1.1	0.2
Financial and Insurance Activities	16.7	5.5	7.4	18.7	16.8	6.8	7.6	17.8	1.7	1.0
Human Health and Social Work Activities	15.6	2.2	2.9	6.8	44.5	6.8	5.4	12.9	1.7	1.0
Information and Communication	15.1	5.8	7.7	30.2	11.1	3.8	4.5	15.8	4.8	1.2
Manufacturing	16.1	6.8	8.9	34.1	8.7	3.8	4.4	14.6	2.1	0.5
Mining and Quarrying	30.3	3.4	2.3	36.6	12.1	1.4	1.4	10.0	2.1	0.4
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	15.7	4.2	4.9	25.7	14.5	4.7	4.7	21.3	3.0	1.2
Public Administration and Defense, Compulsory Social Security	37.1	7.5	2.6	13.2	25.7	4.4	1.8	7.4	0.2	0.1
Real Estate Activities	12.4	3.9	4.1	28.2	11.3	5.3	6.2	26.7	1.2	0.7
Transportation and Storage	23.1	6.9	7.2	26.9	10.5	4.2	4.2	14.9	1.6	0.4
Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	37.3	5.5	2.5	12.2	28.9	3.8	1.8	7.1	0.8	0.2
Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	17.7	6.7	7.3	22.8	13.7	6.7	4.9	18.5	1.2	0.5

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, 2020



**Table 14: Workforce Profile at the Skilled Level by Sector, Population Group, and Gender, 2019**

Sector	Male (percent)				Female (percent)				Foreign National	
	African	Colored	Indian	White	African	Colored	Indian	White	Male	Female
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	28.6	4.7	1.9	5.9	35.6	8.1	2.3	8.3	3.1	1.6
Administrative and Support Activities	47.9	4.4	1.9	5.3	27.5	4.4	1.4	5.6	1.3	0.3
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	34.5	14.1	1.5	17.3	13.8	5.2	0.5	12.4	0.3	0.5
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	30.1	1.3	1.9	1.9	56.3	1.4	3.4	3.0	0.5	0.2
Construction	50.6	7.0	2.1	12.4	15.7	2.3	1.3	6.1	2.4	0.2
Education	19.4	3.9	0.6	4.4	46.0	7.5	1.7	14.5	1.2	0.8
Electricity, Gas, Steam, and Air Conditioning Supply	43.0	5.8	2.7	12.8	25.3	2.9	1.6	5.1	0.7	0.1
Financial and Insurance Activities	21.5	6.0	3.5	6.9	31.4	11.4	5.5	12.5	0.7	0.6
Human Health and Social Work Activities	17.6	2.4	1.3	2.5	53.0	8.3	3.1	10.7	0.5	0.7
Information and Communication	24.7	8.0	6.0	17.9	19.5	5.8	3.9	11.4	2.1	0.7
Manufacturing	34.4	9.7	6.0	17.7	13.1	5.1	3.0	8.8	1.9	0.3
Mining and Quarrying	50.8	4.0	0.5	22.0	12.3	1.1	0.3	5.0	3.8	0.1
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	20.6	5.0	3.2	10.5	27.3	6.9	6.8	18.2	0.9	0.7
Public Administration and defense, Compulsory Social Security	53.7	7.0	1.3	6.0	24.1	3.6	0.6	3.6	0.1	0.0
Real Estate Activities	18.5	4.7	3.4	15.5	15.0	8.4	4.4	27.3	2.0	0.9
Transportation and Storage	40.7	8.1	4.8	12.3	15.1	4.7	2.8	8.7	2.5	0.3
Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	43.1	5.5	1.4	5.8	32.1	5.5	1.2	4.5	0.9	0.2
Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	27.1	6.9	4.7	10.9	25.2	9.0	4.1	10.4	1.2	0.5

Source: Commission for Employment Equity 2020

**Table 15: Workforce Profile at the Semi-Skilled Level by Sector, Population Group, and Gender, 2019**

Sector	Male (percent)				Female (percent)				Foreign National	
	African	Colored	Indian	White	African	Colored	Indian	White	Male	Female
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	32.3	3.1	0.5	1.3	49.7	5.9	0.5	2.1	3.0	1.6
Administrative and Support Activities	58.8	2.7	0.5	0.9	31.3	3.4	0.6	1.2	0.5	0.2
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	48.3	12.4	0.4	3.3	23.3	6.0	0.5	3.9	1.5	0.3
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	46.2	2.8	1.8	1.3	40.5	3.1	1.6	1.8	0.6	0.3
Construction	68.6	5.7	0.7	2.6	15.2	1.6	0.5	2.5	2.4	0.1
Education	24.1	6.5	0.3	2.3	36.3	17.4	0.9	11.1	0.5	0.5
Electricity, Gas, Steam, and Air Conditioning Supply	56.5	5.2	1.1	3.2	35.6	3.0	1.0	3.4	1.1	0.1
Financial and Insurance Activities	32.9	4.3	1.7	2.0	41.2	9.1	2.9	5.1	0.4	0.4
Human Health and Social Work Activities	24.5	3.1	1.2	1.3	55.8	7.4	2.1	4.3	0.2	0.2
Information and Communication	30.7	7.1	3.5	4.4	35.1	7.9	3.8	5.0	1.6	0.9
Manufacturing	50.8	9.3	2.5	3.7	20.9	6.6	1.6	2.7	1.6	0.2
Mining and Quarrying	70.8	2.2	0.0	1.7	10.5	0.6	0.1	0.9	13.2	0.1
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	31.3	6.0	1.6	3.3	31.1	11.1	3.4	11.0	0.7	0.5
Public Administration and Defense, Compulsory Social Security	48.6	6.6	0.6	1.2	35.8	5.3	0.5	1.5	0.1	0.0
Real Estate Activities	32.1	5.8	1.8	3.9	24.2	8.2	5.7	15.0	2.6	0.6
Transportation and Storage	52.9	6.9	2.4	3.3	23.4	3.9	1.5	3.6	2.0	0.2
Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	49.6	5.6	0.4	1.3	36.5	3.4	0.4	1.3	1.1	0.3
Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor vehicles and Motorcycles	31.1	4.9	1.4	1.9	46.3	9.1	1.6	2.4	0.9	0.4

Source: Commission for Employment Equity 2020

**Table 16: Workforce Profile at the Unskilled Level by Sector, Population Group, and Gender, 2019**

Sector	Male (percent)				Female (percent)				Foreign National	
	African	Colored	Indian	White	African	Colored	Indian	White	Male	Female
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	33.1	3.7	0.2	0.6	50.2	7.6	0.1	0.6	2.4	1.5
Administrative and Support Activities	51.7	3.8	0.4	0.4	37.8	3.7	0.2	0.2	1.3	0.4
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	42.5	10.9	0.0	0.8	34.1	7.9	0.0	0.4	2.3	1.1
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	51.4	3.7	1.0	0.6	38.6	3.0	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3
Construction	65.5	5.4	0.2	0.7	24.0	1.2	0.1	0.2	2.6	0.2
Education	35.2	7.3	0.1	1.0	45.6	8.4	0.2	1.4	0.5	0.3
Electricity, Gas, Steam, and Air Conditioning Supply	60.8	6.0	0.5	1.7	28.0	0.9	0.1	0.4	1.4	0.1
Financial and Insurance Activities	53.2	4.7	0.3	0.8	35.1	3.1	0.2	0.5	1.6	0.5
Human Health and Social Work Activities	29.9	3.5	0.3	0.8	56.5	6.5	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.7
Information and Communication	53.6	4.3	0.7	1.1	33.0	4.2	0.3	0.6	1.8	0.5
Manufacturing	52.3	7.3	1.2	1.1	29.0	6.1	0.6	0.3	1.7	0.5
Mining and Quarrying	68.7	0.8	0.0	0.6	16.5	0.2	0.0	0.1	12.0	1.1
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	51.2	6.0	0.7	1.0	34.0	4.1	0.5	1.3	0.9	0.3
Public Administration and Defense, Compulsory Social Security	46.4	15.0	0.3	0.6	30.9	6.3	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.0
Real Estate Activities	38.6	2.7	0.4	1.0	45.6	2.7	0.6	1.1	4.4	2.9
Transportation and Storage	60.2	6.7	0.8	1.4	25.5	2.5	0.2	0.5	1.6	0.5
Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	55.0	4.9	0.1	0.4	36.3	2.2	0.0	0.1	0.7	0.3
Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor vehicles and Motorcycles	40.8	5.0	0.7	0.7	43.2	6.6	0.6	0.5	1.4	0.6

Source: Commission for Employment Equity 2020

**Table 17: Quarter on Quarter Job Changes by Gender Q1 to Q4: 2020**

Employed	Women				Men			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Formal sector (non-agriculture)	4,831,000	4,337,000	4,456,000	4,554,000	6,451,000	5,727,000	5,850,000	5,942,000
	-	-494,000	+119,000	+98,000	-	-1,171,000	+123,000	+92,000
Informal sector (non-agriculture)	1,132,000	814,000	858,000	901,000	1,789,000	1,446,000	1,598,000	1,620,000
	-	-318,000	+44,000	+43,000	-	-323,000	+152,000	+22,000
Agriculture	287,000	271,000	230,000	249,000	577,000	528,000	578,000	561,000
	-	-16,000	-41,000	+19,000	-	-49,000	+50,000	-17,000
Private households	984,000	748,000	867,000	888,000	332,000	257,000	254,000	309,000
	-	-236,000	+119,000	+21,000	-	-75,000	-3,000	+55,000

Source: SSA 2020i, 2021e

**Table 18: Total Number of Employees in the Public Service by Race and Gender, 2019**

	Black	Colored	Indian/Asian	White	Total
Male	386,636	44,327	12,269	32,853	475,812 (38.78 percent)
Female	610,668	62,954	18,711	58,853	751,186 (61.22 percent)

Source: DPSA 2019

**Table 19: Public Servants in Senior Management by Race and Gender, 2019**

	Black	Colored	Indian/Asian	White	Total
Male	4,256	470	364	649	5,739
Female	3,112	319	270	508	4,209
Female proportion by race (percent)	42.24	57.41	59.57	56.09	42.13

Source: DPSA 2019

**Table 20: Public Servants at Senior Management Level by Gender and Salary Level, 2019**

	Salary level 13	Salary level 14	Salary level 15	Salary level 16
Male (percent)	56.74	58.73	61.52	72.03
Female (percent)	43.26	41.27	38.48	27.97

Source: DPSA 2019

**Table 21: Barriers Faced by Women Entrepreneurs in Selected Economic Sectors**

Sector / sub-sector	Barriers for female entrepreneurs
Metals: Women commonly work as jewelry designers and producers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited access to markets</li> <li>• Limited access to finance</li> <li>• Lack of knowledge relating to basic business administration (quotes, invoicing)</li> <li>• High start-up costs</li> </ul>
Agro-processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty accessing funding</li> <li>• Lack of support and mentorship from male-owned businesses who predominate the sector</li> <li>• Lack of partnership opportunities</li> </ul>
Textiles, clothing, and leather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of marketing skills</li> <li>• Negative stereotypes about women with the impact that they must work harder to be credible</li> </ul>
Chemical industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of funding</li> <li>• Difficulty penetrating markets</li> <li>• Lack of information about the sector</li> <li>• Lack of support for women, thus difficulty entering the market</li> <li>• High operating costs</li> </ul>

Source: DWYPD 2020.

**Table 22: Median Earnings per Sector and Male and Female Share of Each Sector, 2019/2020**

Sector	Median monthly earnings 2019	Male share Q4 2020	Female share Q4 2020
Private households	2,000	26	74
Agriculture	3,033	69	31
Construction	3,683	89	11
Trade	3,900	55	46
Manufacturing	4,333	65	35
Transport	4,333	81	19
Finance	4,500	59	41
Community and social services	4,500	39	61
Mining	9,000	83	17
Utilities	9,000	68	32

Source: Statistics SA 2019j, 2021f

## Appendix H. COVID-19 and Gender-Based Violence

**The South African State collects annual crime statistics for each financial year (March to February) and releases these annually in the following September.** Prior to the end of apartheid, the crime statistics did not include the homelands (areas that were classified by apartheid law). Since 1994, the crime statistics have reflected statistics from all police stations in the country. The statistics are not sex-disaggregated for all crimes and do not offer information about the perpetrators of crime. The fact that these statistics have been publicized since 1994 does allow for some comparison of the incidence of crime, however.

**As with all forms of GBV it is widely accepted that crime statistics do not portray the whole picture, as many of these crimes are never reported.** South African studies, namely, Gender Links and Medical Research, 2010 and Statistics South Africa, 2015 report that between less than half of rapes are reported to the police. In addition, although the South African Police Service (SAPS) collects disaggregated data on domestic violence at every police station, they do not release this disaggregated data to the public. Thus, most domestic violence incidents appear under the categories of assault or assault with the intention to do grievous bodily harm. In addition, in the South African context it should be noted that few GBV crimes that are reported to the police result in a perpetrator being found guilty, sentenced, and imprisoned. This will be elaborated on in the subsections below.

**Gender-based violence tends to increase in all forms of crises and emergency setting (UNDP 2020).** Globally, countries that have undergone a lockdown because of COVID-19 have reported increased levels of GBV (UN Women 2020b; UNDP 2020).

**It is well-known that reported crimes represent only a small portion of the problem of GBV, as many survivors do not report GBV to the criminal justice system.** In addition, due to the lockdown restrictions on movement, some victims may not have been able to reach a police station to report the crime (Institute for Security Studies 2020). Prior to the COVID-19 lockdown, levels of GBV in South Africa were extremely high. Thus, a lowering of reported figures does not necessarily point to a reduction in violence, but possibly to challenges in accessing the police to report a crime. This is discussed in more detail below.

**Reported sexual offences decreased during the first and second quarters of 2020.<sup>47</sup>** The findings suggest that for the first quarter (April to June 2020) there was a 40.4 percent reduction in reported rapes, a 35.9 percent reduction in reported sexual assaults, a 40.3 percent reduction in attempted sexual offences compared to the same period in the 2019/20 financial year (SAPS 2020a). This trend continued in the second quarter of 2020, with a further 9.6 percent decrease in reported rapes, 10.5 percent decrease

<sup>47</sup> Crime statistics from the South African Police Services (SAPS) are normally only released annually in September, reflecting the previous financial year. In 2020, two quarterly crime statistic reports were released that reflected crime during the COVID-19 lockdown period.

in reported sexual assaults, and a 9.4 percent decrease in attempted sexual assaults compared to the same period in 2019/20 (SAPS 2020b). However, reported violence returned to pre-covid levels by the third and fourth quarters of 2020/21. This is reflected in Table 33, below.

**Table 23: Changes in Reported Sexual Offences 2019/20 Compared to 2020/21**

Crime category	Jan to Mar 2019/20	Apr to Jun 2019/20	Jul to Sep 2019/20	Oct to Dec 2019/20	Jan to Mar 2020/21	Apr to Jun 2020/21	Jul to Sep 2020/21	Oct to Dec 2020/21
Rape	9,905	9,737	10,985	12,037	9,518	5,805	8,922	12,218
Sexual Assault	1,913	1,668	1,964	2,288	1,910	1,070	1,758	2,390
Attempted sexual offences	497	454	498	639	433	271	451	625
Contact sexual offences	312	235	283	361	272	150	292	362
Total sexual offenses	12,627	12,094	13,370	15,325	12,133	7,296	11,423	15,595

Source: SAPS 2020a, 2020b

**South Africa also reported reduced incidents of domestic violence.** Domestic violence reports to the SAPS decreased by 69.4 percent between 2019 (March/April) and 2020 (March/April) and hospital trauma units reported a similar trend (Gould 2020).

**However, violence including the murder of women did increase quarter-on-quarter as the lockdown restrictions were eased and alcohol was sold again.** This prompted the President to describe GBV as “South Africa’s second pandemic” and to indicate there was a need to urgently reexamine the role alcohol abused played in violent crime (Ellis 2020). It may be the case that women could not seek out the legal protections they needed in violent domestic partnerships and were murdered because of these barriers to access.<sup>48</sup>

**The NGO sector, including the organizations that respond to GBV, has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.** Social care services provided at a community level will be vital for the recovery of communities from the series of social shocks prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. More than 200,000 people work for a non-profit organization (NPO) in South Africa, and between two-thirds to three quarters of these workers are women (Vetten and Grobbelaar 2020). As Vetten and Grobbelaar note (2020): “Given the feminized composition of the NPO workforce, these job losses will only reinforce the disproportionate impact of the lockdown on women’s employment” (Vetten and Grobbelaar 2020).

<sup>48</sup> During consultations it emerged that the Medical Research Council will be producing a report examining femicide over the lockdown period, but this report was not available at the time of writing this report.

**NPOs are subsidized by the state, but not in full, and this has put them in an increasingly precarious position over the past decade.** NPO services fulfil the mandate of the state, and are subsidized by the DSD, however, the DSD rarely covers the full cost of the services that are required, and the funding is inequitable (Vetten and Grobbelaar 2020). NPOs also reported late payments during the lockdown, and the reduction in payment amounts made by the DSD without a change in the expected services provided or in fact increased services without increased pay, for instance, residential facilities such as shelters or child and youth care centers that would have had to cater and care for their residents for longer periods as a result of the lockdown. As a result, some NPOs have not been able to pay their staff and have begun retrenchment processes. There is significant variance between provinces (Vetten and Grobbelaar 2020).



# Appendix I. Additional Information: Taking Action to Bridge Priority Gender Gaps

This section provides a brief overview of additional research and good practice case studies from around the world that underpin and inform the areas of action identified in section VII.

## 1. Increase Access To Childcare And Promote Gender-Equitable Domestic Labor

### a) Short-Term: Amend The Law To Promote Equal Parental Responsibility From Birth

**Consider amendments to the Labour Laws Amendment Act (Act 10 of 2018) to provide gender-equitable parental leave to support improved family structures and norms.**

**The Labour Laws Amendment Act improves the availability of parental leave for fathers, but it does not go far enough. As it currently stands, women receive a legislated three months and men 10 days.** The law expands parental leave for same-sex partners, increases maternity leave benefits, includes women who had miscarriages or stillbirths during the third trimester, and includes public servants among other amendments (Sonke Gender Justice 2017). However, it still provides too little parental leave to fathers (only 10 days), reinforcing the norm that raising children is women's work.

**Research shows that women's employment in private firms is significantly higher in countries that mandate paternity leave (Amin et al. 2016).** When accompanied by leave for mothers and other structural solutions (that is, childcare, and national legislation or policy), leave for fathers can significantly contribute to changing social norms around care work and to the redistribution of this domestic labor between men and women (MenCare 2016; Shand 2018). Fathers who take up parental leave, especially in the two weeks after childbirth, are more likely to be involved with their young children (ILO 2014; Tamm 2018; Farré 2016). When fathers take leave, mothers benefit in the workforce and home. In the workforce they benefit by being able to keep their jobs, their employability, and their prospects in the labor market. At home, mothers benefit from a decreased care work and domestic burden, and improved health and wellbeing (Shand 2018). Children also benefit by having increased parental capital available to them, thus contributing to their development (O'Brien 2009). In Sweden, for example, research found that for every month a father took paternity leave, the mother's income increased by nearly seven percent – more income than she lost by taking maternity leave (Johannsson 2010). Men also benefit from improved mental health and wellbeing as a result of involvement in childcare (Ricardo 2014).

**Research shows that paid parental leave is good for business, improves staff retention, morale, and productivity; and reduces absenteeism and turnover (Shand 2018, Lyonette and Baldauf 2019; IFC 2013).** As cited above, most forms of paternity leave are paid for by employer liability (ILO 2014). Governments can incentivize the private sector to provide paid parental

leave and other family friendly benefits through tax relief, either to businesses of a certain size, or in a certain sector (UNICEF 2020b).

**Highlighting the benefits of gender-equitable employment to the private sector may address barriers to entry and retention.** The evidence shows that full and productive employment of women increases GDP, improves company performance, and provides entry into new markets, and is good for the social and economic development of society (IFC 2013).

**MenCare (2016) suggests 10 criteria for parental leave policies to ensure they enhance gender equality.** Parental leave should be: equal for women and men; non-transferable between parents; paid according to each parent's salary; adequate in length for each parent, with a minimum of 16 weeks each; offered with job protection; encouraged and incentivized; inclusive for workers of all kinds; combined with subsidized, high-quality childhood education and care and other policies to ensure equity in caregiving, particularly in low-income settings; supportive of diverse caregivers and caregiving; and enshrined and enforced in national law and international agreements (MenCare 2016).

**Many countries (plus the province of Quebec in Canada) have a statutory and designated paternity leave.** Paternity leave is generally paid (Koslowski et al. 2020) by the employer (58 percent) (ILO 2014). In some instances, there is a pay ceiling so that higher-paid workers receive proportionately less. However, despite their rights to take parental leave in many countries, fathers account for less than 20 percent of those taking paid parental leave (Queisser et al. 2016). This may be linked to the pay available during leave periods, employers' attitudes toward this leave, and to social and cultural gender norms that present obstacles to men taking leave. This shows how this opportunity is connected to the need to transform social and gender norms and roles. In addition, it is important that diverse forms of families – adoptive parents, single parents, same-sex couples, and so on – are included in considerations around leave policies and their funding.

**The duration of paternity leave around the world varies significantly from a few days to around one month.** In 2020, the global average for paternity leave was 5 days (World Bank 2020a). In some countries, there is what is known as “father-only parental leave” – for instance in Iceland, as of January 2021 parental leave is offered for 12 months after the birth of the child: five months for mothers, five months for fathers, and two months for the family divided between parents as suits each family (Einarsdóttir 2021). In Norway there is designated paternity leave of two weeks (to be used at the time of birth) and a further “father quota” or “daddy quota” of 15 to 19 weeks that only a father can use, paid from public funds (Einarsdóttir 2021). There is great variance in the structure of leave.<sup>49</sup>

**“Use it or lose it” leave for fathers or “daddy quotas” have been shown to increase and encourage men's uptake of leave and equal participation in care work (MenCare 2016; Shand 2018; Patnaik 2019).** In addition, in Quebec, the quotas substantially increased mothers' participation in paid work (Dunatchik and Özcan 2019). This may address some of the negative social norms that discourage fathers from taking leave available to them, as would an employer requirement that fathers take this leave (MenCare 2016). Where these quotas are in place (for instance, Sweden and Iceland) men's uptake of parental leave is higher (90 percent) than in countries where the leave is transferable (Denmark, 24 percent; Slovenia, 6 percent) (MenCare 2016). Assigning the leave as an individual entitlement for each parent can normalize both men and women's caregiving and does not compromise the mother's parental leave.

49 See Koslowski et al. 2020; ILO 2014; World Bank 2020a; and Queisser et al. 2016 for summaries of global trends

In addition, this better supports diverse family structures. Research indicates that where these quotas exist, they need to be well-paid if they are to be used widely (Koslowski et al. 2020, O'Brien 2009, Queisser et al. 2016).

**Evidence shows that well-designed parental leave regulations can expand uptake by fathers and lead to a more equitable sharing of home and market work between parents (Patnaik 2019; Van den Berg and Khoza 2019).** The positive effects of parental leave persist for one to three years after the leave period ends and shift households toward a dual earner, dual caregiver model. Where parental leave is accompanied by the availability of quality childcare and early childhood education, this can also alleviate mothers' unequal responsibilities for care (MenCare 2016).

**An alternative approach is to offer bonus additional leave if both parents take some form of parental leave, which is the approach taken in 11 countries around the world (Koslowski et al. 2020).** In Germany, paid leave is extended by two months if fathers take at least two months of leave, and Portugal offers bonus leave to families where the father shares part of the initial parental leave (formerly maternity leave) (Koslowski et al. 2020). In 2019, Canada introduced five to eight extra weeks of paid leave for fathers or second parents if ordinary parental leave was shared between couples (Koslowski et al. 2020). In ten countries, additional leave known as 'childcare leave' can be taken immediately after parental leave, creating a longer continuous period of leave. Countries with this option include Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, and Portugal. It is also available in the public sector in Malta (Koslowski et al. 2020). The payment and length of these offerings varies.

**There is opportunity for South Africa to structure increased parental leave for fathers in a way that is both affordable and practical, sourcing funds from both private and public sources.** The UIF, which has operated at surplus for several years in a row, could be an important source of funds. It will also be vital for the private sector, through individual organizations and private sector associations, to be involved as a funding partner.

**There are many good examples of parental leave policies in South Africa that can be developed as case studies for good practice.** A survey of large employers to assess their parental leave offerings could encourage competitiveness in delivering good policy. Case studies of successful business in South Africa that have implemented good parental leave policies would be a useful intervention for the Department of Employment and Labour or the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities to undertake to drive this change. For example:

- **Vodacom Group** announced a gender-neutral parental leave policy in 2020. All parents regardless of gender or sexual orientation will be offered 16 weeks fully paid parental leave and the flexibility to take this up anytime during the first eighteen months of their child's life (BusinessTech 2020b). In addition, employees are able to phase their return to work with a reduced hour working week for full pay for a further two months.
- In 2019, **Hewlett Packard Enterprise** introduced an offer of 26 weeks of paid leave for new parents with at least one year of service that can be taken within the first 12 months after the birth or adoption of a child (BusinessTech 2020c).
- **Volvo South Africa** also has a gender-neutral leave policy providing employees who have been with the company for more than one year with six months parental leave at 80 percent pay (Naidoo 2019).
- **Unilever**, one of the largest employers in South Africa, offers all fathers a minimum of three weeks leave (Unilever 2019).

**b) Short-term: Consider amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act (Act 63 of 2001) to allow for mothers and fathers who are self-employed, informally employed, or only employed part-time to contribute to UIF and draw from it should they be unemployed for reasons of parental leave.**

In South Africa, several categories of workers are excluded from the UIF.<sup>50</sup> Global evidence finds that the exclusion of certain categories of workers from parental leave benefits can pose health risks to the mother and child (ILO 2014). In fact, expanding paternity leave benefits to all types of workers could improve women's economic position and prevent the need for women having to work late into their pregnancy or shortly after birth.

**Legislative reforms to expand the number of women who can contribute to and draw from the UIF, and the parameters for contributions, would be beneficial to working mothers and to the children they support.** The UIF has reported a surplus for several years in a row which has been beneficial in easing the COVID-19 burden. Considering now how it can be expanded to cover part-time, informal, and self-employed workers, in particular women could have significant positive impacts. Moreover, collective financing by private employers which has been found to distribute the cost and create more stable and inclusive support can also be considered (MenCare 2016).

**Global examples of countries that have included self-employed and part time workers in benefit schemes include:**

- In **Spain**, maternity leave legislation explicitly covers casual, seasonal and self-employed workers and is financed by social insurance contributions from employers and employees (Meil et al. 2018).
- In **Brazil**, as of 2010, micro-entrepreneurs, domestic workers, and other vulnerable workers including workers in the informal economy can register for maternity leave benefits (ILO 2014).
- In **China**, rapid expansion of social security coverage, including parental leave benefits, more than doubled the number of women able to access such benefits (ILO 2014).
- **Self-employed workers are also covered for cash benefits for parental leave** in Azerbaijan, Brazil, and Singapore. In other countries, such as Bulgaria, Mali, and Paraguay, the self-employed are covered on a voluntary basis. In Cyprus, Libya, EU Member States, France, Mexico, and Greece self-employed workers all receive some form of financial assistance (ILO 2014).
- In Ethiopia, Ghana, India and Peru, **social cash transfers and employment guarantee schemes** provide maternity protection to vulnerable workers (ILO 2014).

**c) Medium- to Long-term: Improve the affordability and availability of child-care options for women in both the formal and informal sector through introducing free and low-cost options targeting women in the informal sector.**

**Interventions to increase access to childcare and after-hours services are vital to increase women workers' ability to seek and remain in employment.** For those outside of formal employment who may not benefit from employer-sponsored programs, other alternatives can be considered. South African informal workers often rely on private childcare or family members to care for their children, affecting their ability to maintain long enough working hours to support their families (Alfers 2016).

<sup>50</sup> A list of all exclusions can be found at SARS 2021

**Access to affordable childcare could also help girls stay in and return to schools.** “The most critical intervention to assist a teenage mother to return to school after childbirth is providing her with childcare support during the day to enable her to attend school and study” (Willan 2013). Childcare responsibilities are gendered and frequently fall to the teenage mothers, often with an expectation that the maternal grandmother is involved in raising her grandchild, particularly in black communities in South Africa (Chohan 2010). Girls who had support from their mothers – in the form of emotional support and childcare – were most likely to return to school (Willan 2013). Paternal support was also important in enabling girls to return to school (Chohan 2010). Increased access to Child Support Grants for teenage mothers in South Africa could increase the affordability of returning to school and could advance nutritional outcomes for their children (Willan 2013, Ardlington et al. 2012). Schools and clinics could inform and encourage pregnant teens and their families on how to access the Child Support Grants to improve uptake.

**The South African Government has already committed to the expansion of ECD services.** It would be valuable for the Department of Basic Education and the Department of Social Development to engage with the recommendations of the Financial and Fiscal Commission (FFC) in this regard. The FFC (2021) identified that a lack of approved legislation, insufficient and poorly targeted funding, a lack of up-to-date data to inform decision-making, and the inadequate training of ECD teachers were key challenges (FFC 2021). The FFC recommended that a nation-wide audit and mapping of ECD services being rendered should be conducted by the DSD, that government take urgent steps to strengthen the funding for the sector, that the registration process for non-center based ECD programs be simplified and finalized (FFC 2021). However, it is vital that these audits do not delay support to those centers already operating, as there are many existing examples from the global south that South Africa could learn from.

**Examples of childcare schemes in the global south include (Alfers 2015; Alfers 2016):**

- In **Brazil**, state-subsidized free childcare centers have been provided since the 1960s. They have been important for informal workers – particularly for waste pickers who could not take their children with them to work because of the dangerous working environment and irregular working hours.
- In **Chile**, the *Crece Contigo* program, started in 2006, caters to children from birth to six from families in the lowest six income deciles. It forms part of Chile’s social protection system and is administered in a multifaceted manner – some services are offered by the semi-public *Junta Nacional de Jardines Infantiles* (JUNJI), and some are offered by third parties (including municipalities and NGOs) via JUNJI subsidies. The program expanded the number of public crèches from 700 in 2006 to 4,000 by 2009. All employees are considered public sector workers. The facilities offer care from 8.30 to 16.00 and the government were considering extending this to 19.00.
- In **Mexico**, the *Estancias Infantiles*, launched in 2007 provides day care for children from 0 to 3 years from poor families. The focus is specifically on childcare to support women’s ability to look for and take up income-earning opportunities. It is run by the government’s Social Development Secretariat through subsidies, allowing those interested in starting a center to apply for a start-up lump sum of 35,000 Mexican Pesos (approximately R25,150). Families who meet the requirements for entry can apply for a grant to purchase childcare from the facilities. These workers are considered self-employed, thus do not have access to the benefits of public sector workers like those in Chile.
- In **Colombia**, the *Hogares Comunitarios de Bienestar Familiar* program runs state-subsidized, community-led childcare programs. The program targets children between 0 and 6 years in poor neighborhoods. Within those neighborhoods

parents are encouraged to form parent associations who then select a “community mother.” The community mother must meet two criteria: she must have a basic education and must live in a large enough house to accommodate a maximum of 15 children. Parents are charged a small monthly fee, which makes up the salary of the community mother.

**Extending the school day has proved effective in several contexts by supporting women workers in completing a full workday.**<sup>51</sup> It is also more cost-effective than building new child-care facilities as it uses existing school infrastructure. Examples where this has had a positive effect on women’s labor force participation include:

- In **Chile**, a lengthened school day for older children increased the probability that women would participate in the workforce with particularly strong effects for single mothers and mothers with children under the age of five (Buvinic and O’Donnell 2016; Berthelon et al. 2015). The program increased the educational attainment of learners and earnings when students are in their 20s (Dominguez and Ruffini 2018).
- In **Germany**, a lengthened primary school day by two hours on average drew more mothers who had not been working into the labor market (Shure 2019).
- In **Switzerland**, the provision of after-school care on-site at school had a positive influence on the full-time employment of mothers (Felfe et al. 2016).

**The government can also provide incentives for parents to assist with the cost of childcare (IFC 2019b).** This could take the form of allowances – cash benefits to support children under the age of 18, or allowances specific for the use of childcare services. This solution has the benefit of reaching lower-income women (Gong and Breunig 2015). Another alternative is the provision of tax benefits based on income or depending on the number of children. The government could also incentivize childcare by providing childcare tax deductions for childcare fees that are paid by parents (IFC 2019b). However, tax incentives are likely to disproportionately benefit wealthier women (Gong and Breunig 2015). It is also important to note that many mothers in South Africa receive a child support grant and remain unable to pay for childcare, thus these incentives would need to make up for those costs.

**For women in the informal sector, who do not have a regular “employer” or defined site of work, a few alternatives can be considered by workers, the government, and employers.** These include (IFC 2019b, Alfors 2015):

- **Informal worker organizations with a large enough membership could take steps to establish childcare services (IFC 2019b).** For example, in **India**, the Self-Employed Women’s Association trade union established childcare centers in which members can leave their children while they are engaged in income-earning work. An evaluation of the program of childcare centers found that the income of mothers was better among those who used the childcare centers, the expenditure on their children was less, and children who attended the facilities were healthier (Alfers 2015).
- **Government** could provide subsidies or financing to the private sector to encourage employer-supported childcare services. These could include tax benefits to help employers cover expenses in the form of corporate income tax deductions or credits, or financial or non-monetary support (IFC 2019b).

<sup>51</sup> In Brazil, the *Mais Educação* program extends the school day to at least seven hours by financing extra activities before or after regular class hours. It focuses on grades five and nine, which have higher dropout rates. After-hours activities include sports, culture, and arts, and a mandatory activity of extracurricular academic support to help students in certain fields (including STEM subjects) (Almeida 2016). Challenges in the initial rollout negatively affected learners’ performance (Almeida et al. 2016). In addition, when evaluated based on the impact on mother’s employment, the program was found to have no impact, and hence a redesign of the program was proposed (de Resende et al 2020).

- **Employers of informal workers** (for instance waste companies, domestic workers, garden services, and construction workers) could support community-based or worker-organized childcare, by helping by providing safe physical spaces or contributing to the costs of operating expenses (like the *Mobile Creches* example in India (see page 124), or by financing voucher programs to allow these workers to access services elsewhere.

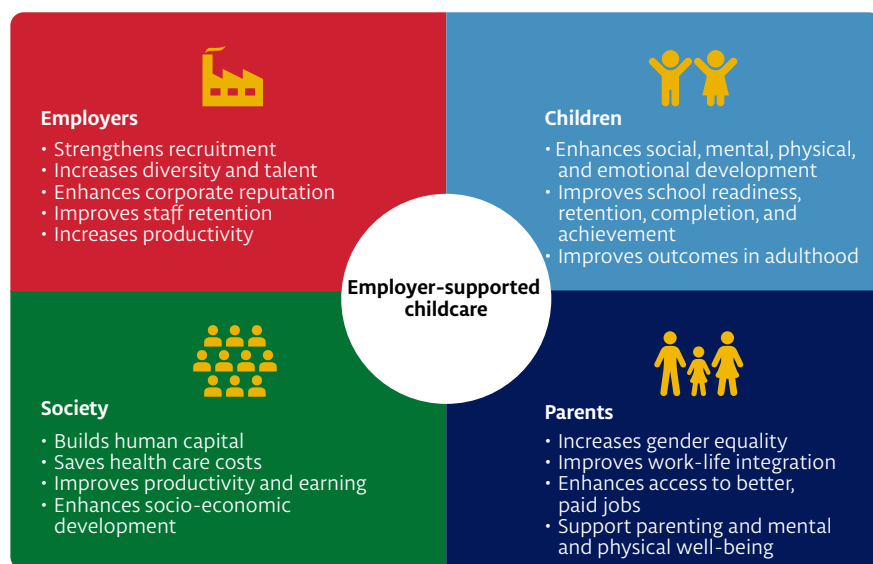
**d) Medium- to Long-term: Improve the affordability and availability of childcare options for women in both the formal and informal sector by providing incentives for employer-supported childcare to support women workers in the formal sector.**

**The benefits of employer-supported childcare are extensive; it is good for business and society (IFC 2019b).** This is represented in Figure 43 below. Several countries legally require employers to offer some form of childcare services (based on a set of criteria). These include (Ibid):

- Based on a certain number of female employees: Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, Arab Republic of Egypt, Guatemala, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Nepal, Panama, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Ukraine, and Vietnam.
- Based on the number of employees regardless of gender: Ecuador, India, Kuwait, Paraguay, and Taiwan.
- Based on the number of children of employees: Islamic Republic of Iran.
- Without any numeric trigger: Afghanistan, Japan, and the Netherlands.

**Child-friendly workplaces could increase the desirability of male-dominated sectors and women's ability to sustain STEM and high-earning careers.** Research from the US shows that women are less likely to choose occupations with high work hours due to the conflict with the demands of raising a family and childcare (Khan and Ginther 2017). With respect to STEM, married women with children are less likely to complete their STEM degree, to pursue a STEM

**Figure 43: Benefits of Early Childhood Care and Education for Individuals, Families, Businesses and Society**



Source: IFC 2019b.

career, to participate in the labor force, to be promoted in a STEM job, to move to a better job, and are more likely to leave STEM because of work-life balance issues, a lack of part-time work, and a lack of mentoring (Khan and Ginther 2017). In contrast, the likelihood of leaving the labor market is lower for single childless women than for men (Khan and Ginther 2017). Employer-sponsored childcare can respond to several of the obstacles women face.

**Providing reliable childcare options can increase women’s attendance and retention and can increase workplace productivity.** The decision-making process on the best strategy to pursue should be developed with employees, as there is no “one size fits all solution.” Considerations include accessibility, affordability, flexibility, quality, and diversity of options. The International Finance Corporation’s *Tackling Childcare* report provides details of some considerations for employers. Cost-sharing between the government, employers, and employees can help to balance the cost of childcare. For example (IFC 2013, IFC 2019b):

- In **Japan**, the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ Ltd. retained more than 1,000 mothers when it began offering childcare benefits to its employees, resulting in notional financial returns of \$45 million (IFC 2019b).
- In **Kenya**, within one year of introducing childcare facilities at Red Lands Roses, unplanned leave declined by 25 percent and productivity improved. The childcare facility is 30 minutes’ walk from the facility, so the company provides mothers with bicycles to shorten the journey and to allow mothers to return for breastfeeding breaks (IFC 2013).
- In **Sri Lanka**, MAS Holdings, an apparel manufacturer which has 10 childcare facilities around the world (eight of which are in Sri Lanka) saw reduced volatility in attendance and turnover after introducing childcare benefits. In **Jordan**, the same company also increased the number of female employees, and reduced absences due to sick leave by 9 percent within the first nine months of introducing an on-site daycare center, nursing care, breastfeeding rooms, and safe transport at its factory (IFC 2019b).

**Where it is not feasible or practical to provide childcare on site, workplaces can consider other alternatives such as providing financial assistance for workers to use off-site childcare or partnering with non-profits.** For example (IFC 2013, IFC 2019b):

- In **Brazil**, Anglo American recruited higher rates of women workers by offering a monthly childcare allowance to workers. In addition, Pandurata Alimentos Ltda, one of Brazil’s leading producers and distributors of baked goods, partners with a local childcare center to offer free spaces for its employees’ children up to the age of six.
- In **East Africa**, a social enterprise called Kidogo, supports women entrepreneurs to start and grow a childcare microbusiness (social franchise) in their local communities, by providing training and mentorship, support with facilities and learning materials, and ongoing quality assurance to franchisees to ensure that children get affordable and quality care. In addition, since 2017 Kidogo has partnered with leading companies in East Africa to provide on-site or near-site childcare for their lower-income employees in factories, offices, and plantations.
- In **India**, an NGO called *Mobile Creches*, provides mobile childcare services for women construction workers. Companies can seek their services to set up creches on construction sites so that women construction workers can continue to work and breastfeed.
- In **Turkey**, Borusan Mannesmann, a heavy manufacturer, provides a childcare subsidy that was specifically requested by its male blue-collar workers. The subsidy of



200 TL (approximately R350) is available to workers for each child aged three to six years old if the employee can show that their child is enrolled in preschool or kindergarten, and that their spouse is in formal employment. This enables the workers' wives to enter the formal workforce, by helping to cover the cost of childcare.

**e) Medium- to Long-Term: Introduce social behavior change programs to address gender-equitable domestic labor by building on existing work of DSD programs to address deep-rooted social norms that place the burden of household and care work on women, even when they are in the workforce**

**Stereotypical gender roles are harmful to both men and women.** Rigid views and inequitable norms of masculinity are linked to men's use of violence against a partner, their likelihood of sexually transmitted infection, previous arrests, and drug and alcohol use (Barker et al. 2011). In addition, they reduce the likelihood that men will participate in caregiving, domestic chores, and health-seeking behavior (Ibid).

**Shifting some of the norms regarding who is responsible for household work is important to free-up women's time for paid employment and to reduce the double-shift of employment and household labor.** "The economic empowerment of women is not sufficient if men are not also engaged in collaborative decision-making at the household level and in taking on a greater role in caregiving in the home" (Barker et al. 2011). Mothers who are supported by their children's fathers also experience health benefits such as reduced stress and experience greater satisfaction from their parenting roles (Van den Berg and Khoza 2019).

**Evidence shows that caregiving is good for men.** They benefit from improved physical, mental, and sexual health, and reduced risk-taking. Fathers who are more involved in their homes and with their children cite this as one of the most important sources of their wellbeing and happiness (Van den Berg and Khoza 2019).

**A small but growing body of literature shows that social norms can be amenable to policy interventions, at least in some contexts.** While it is very important that these public interventions be well targeted and channeled, the relevant programs must be carefully evaluated in terms of their effectiveness and ethical implications. Messaging on social norms should challenge norms around "women's work" and "men's work" within and outside the household, including norms around childcare. Interventions in South Africa and elsewhere that have already shown success include:

- In **India**, the *Taaron ki Toli* program at schools included a session focused on household chores, with learners breaking into groups and listing whether males or females did various household chores. The pattern emerged that women did most of the household chores and students discussed the fairness of this. Following the program, effort made on household chores was more gender-equal than a control group not exposed to the program (Dhar et al. 2020).
- In **South Africa**, the *MenCare Child Care and Protection* program focused on improving the capacity of social services professional to support involved fatherhood. In Phase 1 of the program, Sonke Gender Justice, an NGO, worked with provincial DSD and conducted a 12-session intervention with state social service professionals focusing on the impact of fathers, pregnancy, birth, family planning, caregiving, and gender among other topics. In Phase 2 of the program, Sonke Gender Justice worked with the National Association of Child and Youth Care Workers and conducted a five-session intervention with these workers, male beneficiaries, and their partners, with a focus on the legacy of the father, gender values clarification, violence prevention,

and caregiving activities. The program aimed to improve participants' attitudes about the sharing of domestic and caregiving work, and in the post-intervention survey both men and women showed improved attitudes and awareness of the importance of gender equality in caregiving. The spillover effect was a change in the gender distribution of household chores (Van den Berg and Khoza 2019).

- Research from **Rwanda** showed that the *Bandebereho Couples Intervention* changed deeply entrenched gender inequalities and health outcomes and increased men's participation in childcare and household tasks (Doyle et al. 2018). The intervention engages expectant fathers and fathers of children under five, along with their partners, in group education sessions designed to promote men's engagement in maternal, newborn and child health; family planning; caregiving; and preventing domestic violence. The program includes 15 group sessions for men, of which their partners are invited to attend 8, facilitated by trained community volunteers. The sessions address child development and caregiving among other topics. The results showed an approximately 60 percent increase in men's time per day spent on childcare and household tasks (Laura and John Arnold Foundation 2019). It also resulted in decreased incidences of domestic violence, increased male participation in maternal health care (that is attending antenatal visits), reduced use of physical punishment against children and reduced male dominance over household decision-making (Laura and John Arnold Foundation 2019).

**The government is already implementing social and behavior change programs through the Department of Social Development and other departments.** DSD programs focus on changing risky sexual behavior and addressing the social drivers of HIV infections, including GBV (DSD 2020). The department has already built relationships with communities and non-governmental organizations that would be important partners in building on existing programs to target the root causes of gender-equitable domestic labor. *Also see Action Area 2.1.a for social norm change programs that focus on reducing school dropout levels and are also relevant to addressing gender-equitable domestic labor.*

## 2. Reduce School Dropout Rate and Improve the School to Work Transition in STEM and other Frontier Skills Sectors

### (a) Medium to long-term: Keep girls and boys in school, and make it easy for them to return if they drop out

**Build on and scale existing initiatives drawing from good practices in reducing drop out in the country, with an emphasis on programs that address gender inequitable norms affecting boys.**

**It is important to emphasize that school-based interventions targeting gender norms must include boys.** In fact, research shows larger shifts in behavior for boys than girls. Dhar et al. (2020) suggest that this is linked to general societal gendered power patterns where boys are more able to act on their views in general, and thus when these views are gender progressive, they can act on these (Dhar et al. 2020).

**There are already programs in South Africa trying to address school dropout in various ways that could be adapted and replicated (Zero Dropout Campaign 2020).** Some examples include:

- **Community Action Partnership:** An initiative that mobilizes the community of Swellendam in the Western Cape to tackle school dropout as a collective. By working with community members and school leadership six schools can track and reflect absenteeism, track learner-level data, and monitor learners who drop out per grade, each quarter in each school (Zero Dropout Campaign 2020).
- **Masibumbane Development Organization: Check and Connect Program:** Masibumbane Development Organization runs a program in three schools that uses early warning systems to support and respond to young people at risk of dropping out. This has helped them to identify at-risk learners in grades 6 to 9 and to connect these learners with mentors. Each school has one full-time trained mentor who works together with learner support agents in the school (Masibumbane 2021) and each learner has a single one-on-one session per week. Over the two years of this program, grade 8 learner dropout has reduced in all three schools by 8 percent on average (Zero Dropout Campaign 2020).
- **Khula Development Group (KDG)** works in Paarl in the Western Cape in 7 schools. Khula Development Group focusses on learners in grades 5 to 7. The program creates opportunities for psychosocial support and academic catch up in schools. KDG has an early warning system in each school that allows teachers to flag learners who have missed school for more than three days to women based in the school communities. These women serve as “dropout catchers” who conduct home visits to identify why children are missing from school. This is accompanied by in-school support to all reengaged learners who receive a 30-minute one-on-one session per week with a trained social work coordinator and volunteers. Support is also provided for teachers in school, and the learners’ primary caregiver at home (Zero Dropout Campaign 2018). This has reduced chronic absenteeism in these schools from 41.36 percent in the first term of 2018 to 30 percent in the third term of 2019 (Zero Dropout Campaign 2020).
- **National Association of Child Care Workers: The Isibindi Ezikoleni Model.** This model works to prevent school dropout by providing a school-based child and youth care service. Child and Youth Care Workers (CYCWs) work with Learner Support Agents (LSAs) employed by the Department of Basic Education to support learners, encouraging them to talk about issues. This is supported by training for staff and principals (Zero Dropout Campaign 2020).

These models have the potential to be adapted and scaled to ensure that early warning systems are used to detect learners at risk of dropout to provide additional support and ensure retention.

**Moreover, programs that target norms of gender-equitable care and teenage pregnancy are also found to be effective in reducing school dropouts for girls. Areas of action discussed under I above is also relevant to reducing school dropout, particularly among girls.** Many girls drop out to care for others in their families and communities. Also, the lack of financial means to pay for childcare or have access to a support network (usually the girl’s mother) means girls who fall pregnant while still in school often do not have a choice but to stay home and care for the baby (Willan 2013). Other issues such as stigma from peers and teachers, poor academic performance prior to pregnancy, balancing being a mother and a learner can contribute to a girl not returning to school but “to a lesser extent than support from childcare” (Willan 2013).

**When girls see the benefits of school, and are supported in remaining in school, and are provided with good sex education and life skills, this may reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancy.** Research from Ecuador shows that when girls have limited life options and projects, teenage pregnancy and the social and economic costs of teen pregnancy are perceived as

low (Azevedo et al. 2012). The research suggests that the promotion of life skills, the raising of expectations through career development and activities aimed at enhancing girls' and boys' aspirations and agency may reduce teen pregnancies, though further research is recommended. Azevedo et al. (2012) also found that young parents indicated an inability to foresee the consequences of parenthood thus it may be helpful for youths to be educated about the realities and care responsibilities of early parenthood. In the South African context, any such education would need to include a strong emphasis on shared parental responsibility to address gender norms (Azevedo et al. 2012).

### **b) Medium to long-term: Programs to challenge social norms around girls and women in STEM among students and parents**

**Research shows that students' academic goals and achievements can be influenced by their peers (Herzig 2002) and that connecting with peers can enhance girls' and young women's confidence about their ability to study and succeed in STEM fields and careers and limit a sense of isolation (Herzig 2002).** In fact, the presence of more female peers in a classroom has been found to increase girls' desire to take STEM (Azmitia and Cooper 2001; Robnett 2012; Mouganie and Wang 2019; Hammond et al. 2020). In the US when peers motivated girls to identify with STEM subjects or careers this increased their intent to pursue a career (Robnett 2012). In China, being in a classroom with high-performing female peers in math increased the likelihood that women chose a science track during high school<sup>52</sup>, whereas more high-performing males decreased this likelihood (Mouganie and Wang 2019). Similarly, research from Norway suggests that the presence of male peers in a class may discourage girls from taking STEM (Mouganie and Wang 2019; Schøne et al. 2017). However, research from Zambia suggests that co-education may promote gender equality because both boys and girls are able to see girls demonstrate equal competence in STEM classrooms (Evans 2014). Regardless, there is much potential for success of school-based programs that encourage girls to identify with STEM subjects and careers, celebrate female high-performing science learners to influence girls' subject choices, and encourage their retention in STEM. The impact of co-education versus gender segregated STEM classes could also be explored further in the context of South Africa to inform the design of any intervention.

**Encouraging a growth mindset about STEM amongst learners can improve achievement in mathematics (Cheng et al. 2017).** A growth mindset in mathematics is defined as the extent to which individuals believe that their mathematics abilities can be improved over time with effort. Students' own beliefs about their potential was linked to higher math achievement, the completion of more advanced math courses, an increase in the likelihood of earning a tertiary STEM degree, and increased interest and likelihood of entering STEM fields. Conversely, when girls believed the stereotype that "girls are bad at science", they were likely to underperform (Tikly et al. 2018, PWC 2018).

**Parents' growth-mindset also has a positive influence on girls' uptake of STEM (Solotaroff et al. 2019).** Data on countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development show that parents are more likely to expect their sons to work in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics than their daughters, even they perform equally well in mathematics at age 15 (OECD 2015; Hammond et al. 2020). This suggests that confidence-building in classrooms and ensuring that schools and teachers involve parents in encouraging a growth-mindset (in addition to providing quality teaching) could have a positive impact on

<sup>52</sup> In China, all learners start high school with a common curriculum, but from the second year must either choose an arts track or a science track. Most learners create new peer relationships in the first year, and when these peer relationships include girls that are good at science, girls are more likely to select the science track.

girls' performance and uptake of STEM. Where learners' parents are in STEM fields this role modelling also has a positive influence on math achievement (Cheng et al. 2017).

### **c) Medium to long-term: Training for teachers and career services staff in schools to address gender stereotypes and bias to ensure gender-responsive STEM pedagogy.**

#### **Addressing teachers' gender bias is important to encouraging girls to take STEM subjects.**

- **Research in Zimbabwe**, for instance, shows that teachers need more training in gender responsiveness to avoid gender bias in evaluating students, and there is a need for positive female role models to transform gendered expectations (Tikly et al. 2018). Jacob et al. (2020) suggest that creating positive STEM experiences in school, and having specific interventions targeted at girls at that level, may also be necessary (Jacob et al. 2020).
- **In Niger**, UNESCO's CapED Program launched a pilot in 15 secondary schools training teachers and principals in gender responsive pedagogy in STEM subjects. Girls and boys were encouraged to sit together in class, and teachers reported being more aware of the harm caused by gender bias (UNICEF 2020a). The Initiative has since been expanded to new schools and regions, involving 9,500 teachers and education staff. This Program also supported Uganda to develop national guidelines for gender responsive pedagogy, which includes strategies to ensure that girls and boys participate fully in STEM related subjects (UNICEF 2020a).

**Efforts should be undertaken with teachers and career services to ensure that girls and young women are encouraged to enter nontraditional fields, even ones that currently employ mostly men.** Mentoring programs, support networks, and information campaigns on the profitability of jobs across industries can encourage women to enter and stay in male-dominated fields (Alibhai et al. 2017; Campos et al. 2015; Goldstein et al. 2019; Herrmann et al. 2016).

#### **Providing girls and young women with information about STEM career pathways and opportunities may also encourage girls to enroll and remain in STEM at a tertiary education level.**

Christie et al. (2017) found that girls often faced difficulties getting information from teachers, career advisers, family, and friends about the right choice of subjects at a first-year university level. Ensuring that all learners have a better understanding and expectation of tertiary study is important for ensuring successful transitions from school to university (Christie et al. 2017).

- **Research from Nigeria** shows that job-training in ICT for women helped them overcome their own biases about their ability for success in the sector (Croke et al. 2018). In 2010, the Government of Nigeria and the World Bank launched the Assessment of Core Competency for Employability in the Service Sector (ACCESS) program to equip recent university graduates with sufficient skills to work in Nigeria's ICT sector. The program was implemented across five Nigerian cities in 2012. Those in the program received 85 hours of classroom-based training over ten weeks. The study found that the ability to switch fields into the emerging ICT sector in Nigeria was more pronounced for women who held biases against women's professionalism, and it induced their movement into the ICT sector (Croke et al. 2018). After the training the women enrolled in the program who held these negative biases were three times more likely to find an ICT enabled service job than unbiased women, even though this program contained no special gender focus – it simply expanded women's conception of their career possibilities.

- In **South Africa**, WomEng, a non-profit organization, developed booklets with information about engineering programs and scholarship opportunities, addressing frequently asked questions and providing information about careers in engineering for secondary school girls (Schomer and Hammond 2020).

**There are already South African examples of schools that encourage girls' and boys' uptake of STEM from an early age.**

- **Molo Mhlaba** is an all-girls low-fee private school in Khayelitsha in Cape Town that supports STEM. The school focusses on an innovation, science, technology, engineering, art and design, and mathematics (iSTEAM) curriculum. The school model includes an extended school day (to support working parents and create employment opportunities for carers in the community), nutritious meals, employs qualified teachers with a teacher-learner ratio of 1:25, location in the community the girls live in, and providing leadership training for children and the teachers (Molo Mhlaba n.d). At present the school services learners ages 0 to 12. In addition to the ordinary curriculum, learning is supported by the IamScience and IamAstronomy project, specifically aimed at giving girls exposure to these areas of learning.
- **South Africa's LEAP Science and Maths Schools** provide student-centered math and science focused education to poor students from grades 8 to 12. Their school day is extended (9 hours), after-hours tuition is provided, and the school calendar includes Saturday classes and formal holiday programs to encourage continued learning. Each LEAP school partners with a more privileged school and a school in a township in the community the school serves (LEAP 2021). In addition, the LEAP Movement promotes the sharing of lessons, good practice, and advocacy amongst education stakeholders and the communities they serve.
- **GirlCode** runs a series of initiatives including a GirlCoder Club – a nationwide network of volunteer-led, weekend coding clubs for high school girls – and an Online Coding Bootcamp that involves six months of weekend training that teaches participants to become developers. They also run an annual hackathon (GirlCodeHack) that is hosted during Women's Month in South Africa and is designed to encourage interest in coding among young and girls (GirlCode n.d).

**d) Medium to long-term: Scale up targeted peer group support, role modelling and mentoring opportunities for girls to develop and retain interest in STEM subjects**

**Another critical aspect of promoting women in science is to make sure young girls have visible role models and mentors (Hammond et al. 2020; Zachman 2018; Khan and Ginther 2017; Solotaroff et al. 2019; Shin et al. 2016).** Role models can encourage girls to see themselves as future STEM professionals, and mentors can support them as they navigate education and career pathways. Case studies include:

- In **South Africa**, WomEng provides an online hub that allows women in engineering to connect with women in STEM around the world. Members can search a database of mentors and mentees, as well as connect with peers in online chats and groups. This provides an opportunity for peer group support and role modelling (WomEng n.d).
- In **Cameroon**, mentorship programs such as COACH-Cameroon and HIGHER Women have trained hundreds of women in career-building scientific skills and mentors also provide professional guidance on dealing with African traditional, societal, and cultural pressures on women with evaluations showing improved assertiveness

and self-confidence amongst participants and advancement in their careers (Tiedue 2020).

- In **Chile**, the Pontifical Catholic University developed a Women in Engineering Program to increase women's uptake of engineering degrees. The Program hosted activities including a bootcamp to provide female students with leadership and self-awareness skills, training students as ambassadors who would then engage and inspire secondary school students and showcasing the success of outstanding female engineers in an annual gathering (Hammond et al. 2020).
- In **Spain**, a role-model intervention in which female volunteers working in STEM went to schools to talk to girls about their careers showed a positive and significant effect on girls' math enjoyment, the importance they attached to math, and their expectations of success and interest in STEM fields (González-Pérez et al. 2020).
- In **New Zealand**, a program where young professional technologists, engineers, and scientists (known as ambassadors) visited schools and carried out interventions (career talks and classroom activities) to encourage students to take STEM careers were influential on student career decision processes, though not all students were influenced (Mangan and Williams 2016).
- In the **US**:
  - Research shows that exposure to female role models and gender-equitable teaching strategies in high school are positive in three important areas. Female students' attitudes toward STEM improved; more female students elected to take advanced STEM courses than had in the previous two years; and participants expressed increased confidence and interest in a future STEM pathway (Zachman 2018).
  - An intervention in introductory chemistry and psychology courses found that a simple initiative of female role models writing letters to students that normalized their concerns about belonging in STEM and reinforced its worth increased the grades of those students compared and reduced course withdrawals compared to a control group (Hermann et al. 2016).
  - A program that paired 58 peer mentors (male and female) with 158 peer mentees for monthly meetings over one year showed that when females were paired with female mentors, they "maintained a sense of belonging and positive self-efficacy" (Hammond et al. 2020). The women in this cohort without mentors, and the ones paired with male mentors, had a sharp decline in their sense of belonging despite reporting that the male mentors were supportive.

**Using the media to showcase successful women in STEM as role models is important.** African examples to encourage and celebrate women in STEM already exist and are replicable in the South African context. The QuoteThisWoman+ database, which provides a database of sector experts in all fields, promotes the use of women's voices and narratives in South African media. Their database has 400 female experts listed in a variety of fields and enables journalists to reach out to qualified women experts for their analysis (Quote This Woman+ 2021).

### **e) Medium to long-term: Increase women's access to internships / young professionals' programs through partnerships with the private sector**

**Increasing women's job-exposure and work experience through internships and young professionals' programs can facilitate women's entry into male-dominated fields, giving them a 'foot in the door' (Schomer and Hammond 2020) and can provide them with much needed support (Semi.Org and Accenture 2020).** Young Professionals Programs that help to match and place young STEM professionals could increase women's entry into STEM fields and other male-dominated sectors. UNICEF (2020) research recommends sponsoring incentivize

apprenticeship schemes and offering stipendiary internships to girls and young women to enhance their transition into the labor market, including a focus on mentorship of disadvantaged women. Examples of scholarship programs that result in internships and job opportunities include (Schomer and Hammond 2020):

- **In Ethiopia**, a partnership between the Ethiopian Electricity Utility (EEU), the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, and 12 Ethiopian universities recruits 40 female graduates in STEM per year to participate in internship service with the EEU, and on completing their service the EEU offers these students job opportunities. In addition, 44 female employees at the EEU per year will be offered full scholarships to pursue further education at university.
- In the **Lao People's Democratic Republic** an Asian Development Project with provincial water utilities provides scholarships for young women to study water-related STEM careers and provides them with job opportunities when they graduate.
- **In Tanzania**, the Structured Engineers Apprenticeship Program supports 300 women in engineering apprenticeships, covering their living expenses, and providing them with both training and mentorship opportunities.
- **In the Republic of North Macedonia**, the Energieversorgung Niederösterreich provides a range of interventions including paid internships and engineering scholarships to help young women gain professional experience, and eventually join the company.
- **In South Africa**
  - **SENTECH**, a State-owned Enterprise has partnered with several universities to provide disadvantaged students with scholarships. The scholarships are accompanied by mentoring in the field of electronics and information technology engineering.
  - **The Techno Girl program** – a public-private partnership between UNICEF and several government departments and a private sector implementing partner (Uweso Consulting) aims to promote girls' participation and learning in STEM. The program began in 2007 supported by UNICEF, and in 2012 the TechnoGirl Trust was set up by Uweso Consulting to take over running of the program. Techo Girls offers girls an opportunity to take part in job-shadowing, mentorship, and skills development programs in the public and private sectors in STEM fields. In Grade 9, girls are connected with a host organization whose core business is work in a STEM field and they undertake shadowing there over three consecutive school holidays until they pass Grade 11. From Grade 12, girls become "alumni" and are supported with applications for post-school education, access to mentors and networks (Uweso Consulting 2017). Almost all of the girls who participate said that "job shadowing was the most important opportunity offered by the program" (Okumu and Reddy 2016).
  - **The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Experiential Training, Internship and Development Programme was introduced in 2003, and has a strong focus on strengthening the capacity of young women entering the agriculture sector.** Between 2014 and 2018, 59 percent of the 1,115 internships awarded were awarded to women. In addition, the Department's External Bursary Scheme, introduced in 2004, recruits young people to study agriculture, awards them a comprehensive bursary, and following their studies they are expected to work in the department. Between 2014 and 2018, 61 percent of the 507 bursaries awarded were awarded to women (DWYPD 2020).



### 3. Address the legal and social barriers to gender-equitable entry and retention in the workforce

**a) Short-term: Use the legislative review envisioned in the Employment Equity Amendment Bill (2020) to create a supportive and equitable environment for women in the formal sector by including specific requirements for pay transparency as a step toward promoting pay equality**

**Include specific requirements for pay transparency as a step toward promoting pay equality**

**South Africa's gender pay gap is larger than the global average.** In South Africa, despite legislation like PEPUDA and the regulations to the Employment Equity Act, which define gender pay inequality as unfair discrimination, a gender wage gap persists. Decreasing occupational segregation and increasing the number of women in STEM and high-earning sectors will help to address part of the income gap, but it may still be the case that employers pay women less for work of equal value. Pay secrecy contributes to gender pay gaps, making it difficult for women to establish whether they are being paid fairly, and easier for companies to mask pay inequality.

**Mandating pay transparency among employers could compel employers to pay workers fairly and equally (Bosch and Barit 2020).** Pay transparency can close gender pay gaps by supporting individual workers gain information on wages, and by sparking public pressure for pay equality (Beegle 2020). It is linked to improved pay equity outcomes for women of all ages (PayScale 2019). Research also shows that pay transparency can raise the hiring rates when workers have sufficient bargaining power and can raise employer profits (Cullen and Pakzad-Hurson 2020). However, this may be because employers refuse to pay high wages to any worker, to avoid costly wage negotiations with others (Cullen and Pakzad-Hurson 2020). A growing number of mostly high-income countries are mandating pay transparency as a means of reducing gender pay gaps, which may lead to an increase in incentives for women to join the labor force. The relevant laws typically stipulate that companies must publicly report their gender pay gaps, although special provisions and exemptions may apply to small companies. While this is a relatively new type of intervention, some early assessments suggest that such legislation can be effective. For example:

- **Canadian** public sector salary disclosure laws reduced the gender pay gap affecting university staff by approximately 30 percent, primarily in those institutions in which faculty are unionized (Baker et al. 2019). However, this was linked to reduced salaries on average.
- **Danish** legislation that required firms to provide sex-disaggregated wage statistics narrowed the gender pay gap by 13 percent relative to the pre-legislation mean; however, this was primarily driven by a slower growth of wages among men and not increases in women's wages (Bennedsen et al. 2020). The law also resulted in an increase in the hiring and the promotions of women (Bennedsen et al. 2020).

**Other countries have pursued transparency to achieve pay equality but the sanctions for non-compliance vary.** Examples include (Bosch and Barit 2020):

- In **France**, the requirement is that employers must publish information on the size of the gender pay gap on their website.
- In **Japan**, companies must perform research on the gender pay gap and submit action plans based on that research to address it.

- In **Australia**, non-compliant employers can be named and shamed by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency and can be prevented from accessing government tenders.

**Pay transparency could also motivate women to cross over to high-earning sectors from lower-earning sectors (Campos et al. 2015).** In Ethiopia, access to information about the pay in various fields encouraged women's cross over into higher paying fields.

**South Africa already collects data on employment equity through the Commission for Employment Equity.** Each year, companies submit information on the gender breakdown of their staff and leadership. The Employment Equity Act requires employers to submit an Income Differential Statement (IDS – EEA4) form that details the average remuneration and benefits received by employees at each occupational level, segregated by gender, race and nationality to the Employment Conditions Commission. However, the EEA4 is not a public document. At the time of writing this report, the Employment Equity Act is being reviewed, and this is an opportune time to consider the collection and publication of data in relation to pay to establish a clear picture of the gender pay gap. It would be beneficial for this dataset to capture data on pay, so that pay inequities can be brought to light, and gender and race disparities eliminated.

**Solutions for small businesses also require consideration, given the predominance of men in small business ownership, and the gender wage gap.** For legislated pay transparency to be effective in South Africa, it would also need to reach micro, small, and medium enterprises, which are not currently required to submit Employment Equity Reports. Research shows that income transparency is not expected or practiced in Africa (World Bank 2019). This may be linked to reluctance to disclose income because of family pressure to share income with the household (World Bank 2019). However, providing guidelines on how to achieve pay equality and assisting small businesses with negotiating fair pay for their services would be a beneficial intervention for the South African Department of Small Business Development and Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities. For example, in the United Kingdom, the Equality and Human Rights Commission provides a guide for smaller companies that assists them in undertaking an equal pay review. This includes information on how to determine whether employees are doing equal work, to compare the pay between men and women doing equal work, and to identify any action that needs to be taken (UK Equality and Human Rights Commission).

**b) Short-term: Use the legislative review envisioned in the Employment Equity Amendment Bill (2020) to create a supportive and equitable environment for women in the formal sector by including sectoral targets to promote women's inclusion in STEM and male-dominated sectors, coupled with publicly-accessible monitoring and evaluation systems and supportive programs mentioned in the way forward above around improving school to work transition of women in STEM and frontier skills sector**

**Where sectors remain resistant to change, it may be necessary to create employment targets and quotas for women in those fields.** Sectoral targets (like those envisioned in the Employment Equity Amendment Act 2020 and the Government's Women's Financial Inclusion Framework) can encourage firms to hire more women and to transform the leadership of sectors. In addition, in the 25-year review of progress made in relation to women's empowerment and gender equality, the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (2020) includes a recommendation that the private sector should consider quotas for corporate boards (Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities 2020). Quotas and

employment targets can increase the likelihood of counter-stereotypical people in positions of leadership,(PWC 2018) increasing representation and changing both men's and women's belief about what a leader in a STEM field looks like (Smith et al. 2015).

**Like South Africa, several other countries have codes of good governance that include gender targets at a governance (board) level** including Australia (2011), Austria (2012), Denmark (2010), Germany (2010), Ireland (2012), Luxembourg (2009), Malawi (2010), Malaysia (2012), Netherlands (2008), Nigeria (2011), Poland (2010), Sweden (2010), the United Kingdom (2012), and the US (2010) (Terjesen et al. 2014). South Africa had the highest proportion of women on boards in Africa in 2019 (26.4 percent) (Deloitte 2019).

**Where soft targets do not promote gender equity, it may be necessary to introduce legislated quotas.** There is evidence that quotas have worked to transform the leadership of the private sector around the world, but the evidence shows that compliance varies. Some studies suggest that quotas must distinguish between executive and non-executive board to avoid gender tokenism (Lalanne and Seabright 2011). Some examples of legislated quotas include:

- In 1999, **Israel** passed the Companies Law requiring at least one female director for publicly listed companies. By 2014, 17.2 percent of board positions in the top 100 firms were occupied by women (ILO 2019).
- In 2000, **Colombia** introduced legislation to require gender quotas of at least 30 percent representation of women in decision-making positions in all state-owned companies, companies in which the state is a majority shareholder, and all government entities (Deloitte 2019).
- In 2003, **Norway** was the first country in the world to adopt a gender quota that required a 40 percent representation of women on all boards in public limited and state-owned companies. In 2006 Norway implemented a quota law requiring all public limited companies to be compliant by 2008 or face forced liquidation for non-compliance. The quota resulted in an increase of women's representation on boards from 6 percent in 2002 to 40 percent in 2008 (ILO 2019) and 41 percent by 2019 (Deloitte 2019). However, the impact of the quota was not necessarily that more women held directorships, rather that more women sat on multiple boards. In addition, some companies opted to delist on the Norwegian stock exchange and list elsewhere, thus circumventing the regulations (ILO 2019).
- In 2007, **Spain** introduced a Gender Equality Act recommending that all large public and private firms designate at least 40 percent of each gender on company boards by 2015. There were no penalties for companies that failed to meet the target, however companies were incentivized to implement it by offering preferential access to tenders for public contracts. Research shows that many firms did not comply, and in some instances companies with representative boards did not receive preferential procurement (ILO 2019).
- In 2010, **Kenya's** Constitution included a commitment that no gender should occupy more than two-thirds of board seats in state-owned companies or those in which the government is the majority stakeholder (Deloitte 2019).
- In 2011, **Quebec in Canada**, introduced a gender quota for boards of government-owned enterprises (Terjesen et al. 2014).
- In 2011, **France** passed the French Gender Quota law (*Copé Zimmermann*) requiring all listed and non-listed companies with revenues or total assets over EUR 50 million or those that employ 500 persons for three consecutive years to reach a gender quota of 20 percent by 2014, and 40 percent by 2017. Where companies were non-compliant, the appointment of new directors was considered void. By 2018, the largest listed French companies had an average of 44 percent women on

boards (up from 10 percent in 2010) (Terjesen et al. 2014). The law was supported by proactive measures on the part of private sector associations, including gender transformative policy and targets. By 2019, the representation of women on boards had decreased to 37.2 percent (Deloitte 2019).

- In 2011, in **Italy** the Government introduced a law requiring gender quotas for boards of directors of companies listed on its stock market and state-owned enterprises to have 33 percent of the underrepresented gender (*Golfo-Mosca Law*). Non-compliant companies were given progressive warning, including being subject to fines, and the potential future invalidation of boards (ILO 2019). Quotas resulted in a higher share of female board directors, higher levels of education of board members, and a lower share of older members. In addition, the quotas resulted in a positive return on the stock market, hence, were positively received by the market (Ferrari et al. 2016). In 2010, women made up just 10 percent of board members and by 2017 this had increased to 33 percent. In 2019, Italy announced plans to increase this quota to 40 percent (ILO 2019).
- In 2013, **India** introduced the Company Act requiring listed companies and other large public limited companies to appoint at least one woman to their boards by 2015. Non-compliant companies are subject to a fine. The results show that most companies have appointed only one woman (the ‘one-and-done’ effect or gender tokenism). Only 16 percent of 739 companies have more than one female (ILO 2019). In addition, almost a quarter of these appointments were a known family member of the owner.
- In 2018, **Austria** introduced a 30 percent gender quota for the boards of all listed companies and those with more than 1,000 employees. Noncompliant companies will have board elections annulled. In addition, since 2011, all companies in which the state has a majority stake have a 35 percent gender quota for supervisory boards, and by 2017 the average percentage of women serving on these boards was 46.7 percent (Deloitte 2019).
- At the time of writing, the governments of Brazil, Chile, Peru, are discussing legislation requiring a gender quota for women on boards (Deloitte 2019).

**The evidence on quotas at a labor market level is less certain.** Some research suggests that quotas can transform the leadership of institutions, and this can trickle down to better representation at the lower levels of institutions (Gould et al. 2017). In the Australian public sector, for example, research shows that female executive representation in one year had a positive impact on female representation in the executive feeder group in the following year (Gould et al. 2017). This trickle-down effect was the strongest in the first two years after the introduction of the quota but was still significant after five years. However, other research suggests that there is limited spill over / trickle down effects for regular women over the long term (Skandalis 2018).

**However, it is still important to create a social context whereby women can take up and remain in work and leadership positions in STEM.** With respect to STEM, married women with children are less likely to complete their STEM degree, to pursue a STEM career, to participate in the labor force, to be promoted in a STEM job, to move to a better job. They are more likely to leave STEM because of work-life balance issues, a lack of part-time work, and a lack of mentoring (Schomer and Hammond 2020). “Countries are unlikely to achieve a critical mass of women on boards in the absence of adequate childcare services” (Kowaleska 2020). Barriers to women’s retention in STEM include a lack of flexible work arrangements, women’s care responsibilities, the gender wage gaps, workplace biases and hostile working environments, and a failure to address the needs of female workers (Schomer and Hammond 2020).

**Workplaces can take proactive strategies to encourage women to seek employment in and remain in STEM and the frontiers sectors.** Smith et al. (2015) suggest seven strategies to encourage retention in STEM fields: (i) implementing flexible family care spending to allow women to spend a portion of grants on childcare or family related expenses; (ii) providing additional awards programs for primary caregivers that provide extra funding opportunities for young investigators designed to alleviate household obligations and domestic responsibilities; (iii) recruiting gender-balanced external review committees and speaker selection committees; (iv) incorporating implicit bias statements into grant makers' external program review processes; (v) improving gender awareness training into all academic institutions' postdoctoral orientations and into laboratory settings; (vi) creating institutional report cards for gender equality to measure progress and gaps; and (vii) creating partnerships with relevant scientific organizations to expand upon existing searchable databases of women in science, medicine and engineering to build strong peer networks (Smith et al. 2015).

#### 4. Improve women's financial literacy, access to credit, and rates of business ownership

##### **(a) Short-term: Consider amendments to the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act (Act 5 of 2000) to reflect the government's target of 40 percent procurement from women-owned and women-led businesses**

**Preferential procurement is one mechanism that the government can use to promote gender quality (Kronfol et al. 2019).** This form of incentive works best when the constraints to women accessing existing procurement opportunities are linked to imperfect information on the part of women (who may not have networks or be aware of opportunities) or are linked to demand (procurement entities lack knowledge about qualified female-owned firms) (Kronfol et al. 2019). However, it is important for government to clearly define what constitutes a women-owned or women-run business in order to avoid companies misusing the incentive by appointing token or figurehead women (Kronfol et al. 2019). Complementing procurement incentives with capacity building programs for women that help them bridge the information and skills gaps and enable their effective competition in bidding processes would also be of benefit in South Africa.

##### **South Africa has committed to ensuring that 40 percent of public procurement will be allocated to women-owned and women-run businesses (South African Government 2020d).**

Departments would need to develop plans to implement this commitment by August 2021. This has been operationalized in other country contexts including:

- The Government of the **Republic of Korea** changed their public contracting rules in 2014 to make it easier for female entrepreneurs to bid on contracts. Female entrepreneurs can use a simpler set of procedures for bids of up to 50 million won (approximately R639,000), whereas male entrepreneurs can only use the simpler procedures for smaller bids (20 million won) (Kronfol et al. 2019).
- In the **US**, federal law requires all federal agencies to set percentage targets to award contracts to small businesses, including female-owned businesses. In 2015, the city of Albuquerque New Mexico passed a bill that established preferential bidding for businesses seeking city contracts that can show that their gender pay gap is no greater than 10 percent for comparable jobs. Businesses qualify through an online form and a certification from the city's Office of Diversity and Human Rights (Kronfol et al. 2019).

**In South Africa, however, there is no publicly available data on the status of procurement in terms of the gender of beneficiaries.** In addition, previous targets of 30 percent for youth owned and managed enterprises were not found to be effective in ensuring access to government procurement (DPME 2019).

**Improved procurement tracking will assist in monitoring this goal, and there are already local examples that the government can draw on:**

- **A local public-private partnership has made it easier to track budget spending.** Recently a coalition of civil society organizations – Imali Yethu – has worked with the National Treasury to make budget information more accessible in South Africa. By developing an online budget portal (called ‘vulekamali’) the coalition has made it easier for ordinary citizens to access information about government expenditure in the budget (Vulekamali 2021). The next phase of this project is to deepen the inclusion of procurement data, potentially making it a valuable source of information.
- In the **Philippines**, Procurement Watch Inc, has developed an innovative expenditure tracking methodology (the Differential Efficiency Measurement, or DEEM) to analyze procurement documents and hold government agencies accountable (Van der Westhuizen 2015). This is complemented by a public bidding checklist and an observers’ diagnostic report. The DEEM tool allows users to record and compare information from the bidding phase and contract implementation phases of the procurement process, to gather objective evidence of irregularities or corruption. Civil society monitors complete the DEEM, analyze the results, and share the information with the relevant procuring department. Civil society monitors also complete the public bidding checklist, observing different stages of the procurement process and verifying whether they are compliant with legislation. Any irregularities are noted and shared with the relevant government department or agency (Van der Westhuizen 2015). Whilst these tools were developed to mitigate corruption, there is the potential for similar tools to be developed to track gender targets.
- In **Argentina**, Poder Ciudadano (a civil society organization) developed the Program for Transparent Contracting in Argentina. This program monitors bid specification, the bidding phase, bid evaluation, awarding of contracts and contract implementation (Van der Westhuizen 2015). It promotes transparency in municipal procurement through public hearings organized during the bid specification phase, and the signing of Integrity Pacts “where the municipality and all interested bidders sign a pact in which they commit not to offer or accept bribes and to guarantee full transparency of all documentation” (Van der Westhuizen 2015). The pacts also commit the parties to publicly disclose the award, and the reasons for the selection of the successful bidder. This commitment to transparency allows civil society to monitor the bid process and could be considered a model to track South African procurement at a municipal level from a gender perspective.

**It is only possible to track gender commitments if government departments, agencies, state-owned enterprises, and municipalities collect this data, and make it public.** Training for government officials on how to collect gender disaggregated data may be necessary, and the development of a gender-responsive procurement guide may be beneficial. Other countries and development agencies are also grappling with this issue, and the South African government may benefit from engaging with their insights. For example, in 2020, the **Australian** Government Workplace Gender Equality Agency produced an insight paper and guide on gender-equitable procurement and supply chains (Australian Government Workplace Gender Equality Agency 2020). The recommendations include introducing a government requirement that all

firms bidding for procurement contracts disclose workplace gender quality data and enforceable targets in all government contracts.

**Defining what constitutes a “woman-owned” or “woman-led” business is an important first step, but municipalities and other government departments may require guidance on how to collect and analyze gender-disaggregated data and are able to use this data for gender responsive planning and budgeting.** The CGE found that the failure to define what constituted women’s economic empowerment hindered the government’s ability to implement its goals (CGE 2020a). Providing clear definitions for gender-equal procurement will thus be an important first step in enhancing government’s ability to track procurement effectively. In addition, the FFC (2012) recommended that municipalities be provided with guidelines to analyze budgets from a gender perspective to collect gender-disaggregated data. Building capacity for these tasks is vital, and gender-sensitive public participation and consultations at the local level are essential (FFC 2012). The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs has yet to develop these guidelines, or training, and the development thereof could go some way to improving the situation at the local government level. This could be supported by the South African Local Government Association Women’s Commission, the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities as well as Statistics South Africa and the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation.

**(b) Medium-Term: Undertake a national survey of women entrepreneurs and business owners with a focus on women in townships**

This will serve to inform ongoing BDS initiatives and improve women’s entrepreneurial skills through training and determine the need for women-focused financial services and products. For instance, informed by the findings of the survey, actions could include:

- i. Strengthen Women-focused Business Development Services (BDS), this could include providing high-quality training in business practices, such as formal accounting practices, registration practices, and managerial skills.
- ii. Improve women’s access to credit including micro-credit in partnership with the private sector with a focus on ensuring options available meet the demand of women, particularly those facing specific barriers such as in townships
- iii. Develop new mechanisms for evaluating women’s creditworthiness that take into account other spending and lending behavior and or introducing new financial products aimed at women and provided by women

**The data on the experiences of women entrepreneurs is limited, particularly in terms exploring the specific challenges faced by women in different locations (urban, peri-urban, rural) and their needs in terms of support.** The evidence shows that most women entrepreneurs are active in the tourism, retail, and services sectors, where there are lower annual turnovers (SBP 2013). As Figure 16 in this report shows, women informal business owners tend to be concentrated in the manufacturing, services, and trade sectors and make up very small proportions of the transport and construction sectors. Many women start a business out of necessity rather than opportunity, and thus may need business development knowledge, experience, and training. A national survey would assist the government with developing programs that are context appropriate.

**In a context where women do not have equal access to land or property, products that eliminate or reduce the need for traditional collateral can increase women’s access to credit (Kende-Robb 2019).** Where women are credit constrained, providing access to micro-credit can work better than business training (Buvinic and O’Donnell 2016). It is difficult for

consumers and prospective entrepreneurs to build creditworthiness without access to collateral or existing credit. Some global fintech companies are looking at alternative data and newer methods of analyzing data to assess applicants' creditworthiness.

**Technology can help to bridge the gender-finance gap.** There is a range of alternative data for fintech companies and traditional lenders to draw on to make decisions about the creditworthiness of individuals (Kende-Robb 2019). Alternative data can include information about rent payments; utility bill payments; mobile phone payments; television payments; bank account information including information on deposits, withdrawals or transfers; point of sale transaction devices; social networks; and email and web browser history (Kreiswirth et al. 2017; Alibhai et al. 2019). This information paints a picture of an individual's community relationships and spending behavior and can help to generate evidence for the ability of women to pay bills, the ability to pay loans on time, and can provide more timely information of day-to-day and recent spending activities (Kreiswirth et al. 2017; Alibhai et al. 2019).

**Mobile credit scoring – where data around mobile phone use is used to predict creditworthiness – is another method that could be considered.** Mobile credit scores consider certain mobile phone use as good risk (making more calls in the evening, text volume and frequency, and gambling), and others as bad risk (for instance, sending more texts than they receive, battery draining, and infrequent travel) (Dwoskin 2015). This method is already being employed in South Africa.

- For example, companies such as First Access (First Access 2021) use mobile data such as phone calls, airtime top-ups, mobile money, texts, and bills that are paid on time to develop correlations between mobile data and loan performance (Hendricks and Budree 2019).
- Another company, Tala (Tala.co 2021), requires users to fill in a form about themselves, and this is checked against data points on the mobile phone to verify the customer's identity. If this verification is successful, customers give Tala permission to access their mobile phone data, and this is correlated with data on loan repayments (Hendricks and Budree 2019).

**One strategy, psychometric credit scoring, links to the idea that a borrowers' character relates to their likelihood to repay a loan.** Models like this have been built in Peru, Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Kenya and Ghana, among other locations.

- In **Argentina**, psychometric testing was piloted in evaluating credit risk among small and medium enterprise clients of the *Banco Ciudad de Buenos Aires (BCBA)* one of the top three public banks in Argentina. The study found that psychometric testing was accurate in predicting who would and would not default on their loans, and that such a tool could help assist SME's in accessing finance in Argentina (Klinger et al. 2013).
- In **Ethiopia**, the potential of this solution has been examined by the World Bank, to explore technologies that could address collateral constraints facing women entrepreneurs where information scarcity was a barrier to women accessing credit from banks. The findings show that after three years psychometrics have successfully demonstrated the ability to predict credit risk in the Ethiopian markets and although lending in Ethiopia still remains largely asset-based one of the country's largest financial institutions have started to use psychometrics (Alibhai et al 2019). The intervention also sparked broader interest in the fintech credit screening space in Ethiopia, and within other country teams at the World Bank including Tanzania, Madagascar and Ethiopia (Alibhai et al 2019).



- In **Peru**, the fifth-largest commercial bank piloted a tool developed by the Entrepreneurial Finance Lab which used a psychometric application to predict entrepreneurs' repayment behavior. Loan applicants were screened by the tool, and all applicants that achieved a high enough score were offered a loan. When loan applicants did not have a credit history (referred to in the study as "the unbanked"), the score was based on demographic information. The pilot found that the psychometric tool could be used to extend credit to some unbanked entrepreneurs who were rejected based on their traditional credit scores without increasing the risk of the portfolio (Arráiz et al. 2015).

**A combined model may increase women's access to credit in South Africa by increasing potential sources of data to assess creditworthiness.** A combined model could consider traditional collateral, non-traditional collateral, the presence or absence of a guarantor, psychometric scores, mobile credit scores, and social media scores (Hendricks and Budree 2019).

**One way to foster women's demand for financial services would be to expand the range of financial products aimed at meeting their needs (Morsy 2020).** These needs include skills development and support. The CGE recommended that government loan financing agreements should be accompanied by initial training for new entrepreneurs, that focused on business management skills and that ensured effective information dissemination about the terms and conditions of loan agreements. In addition, many new entrepreneurs require and should be provided with "ongoing, consistent, sustained and effective support" particularly in the early stages of their loan agreement, which includes regular monitoring and evaluation (CGE 2020a). Having more women as agents in the banking sector may also increase women's use of banking services (Chamboko et al 2020).

**Superficial "pink-washing" is not sufficient to attract women to use banking services.**

- Research from **Turkey, Romania and Lebanon** showed that when banks offer real solutions to female borrowers, and develop meaningful customer value propositions, they are more likely to be seen as a women-friendly bank and can more successfully tap into the female market (IFC 2016). This requires banks to undertake market research that generates meaningful insights into female borrower's wants and needs to develop an offering that addresses these. In addition, it requires a transformation of internal culture through ensuring that staff are trained in gender sensitivity (IFC 2016).
- In **China**, the IFC worked with the Bank of Deyang to extend its services to SMEs and women-owned businesses that were affected by the 2008 earthquake. IFC also provided gender sensitivity to bank managers. As a result, the bank launched a microloan program for women, which disbursed \$2 million to 322 women entrepreneurs, creating more than 1,000 jobs (Isaacs 2014). The bank also opened a branch exclusively dedicated to women in 2013.

**Collateral-free loans for women could improve women's access to finance.**

- In **the West Bank and Gaza**, some local banks offer loans to small and medium-sized enterprises, with a range of products aimed at women including collateral-free loans. The loans are accompanied by financial literacy programs and online business toolkits and advisory services to help small businesses and women entrepreneurs manage and grow their businesses (Morsy 2020). In 2015, the IFC and the Bank of Palestine launched a program to boost women entrepreneurs' business performance and spur economic growth. The *Felestineya Mini-MBA Program*

combines access to financial products with non-financial services, including mentoring, coaching and business information. The results show that participants in the program have doubled their revenue and profits, taken steps to register their businesses formally, and created new jobs (SME Finance Forum 2021a).

- Similarly, the **Grameen Bank**, in Bangladesh makes small microcredit loans to impoverished people without the requirement of collateral. In 2006, the bank was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its work. By that time more than seven million borrowers had been granted such loans, and over 95 percent went to women or groups of women (The Norwegian Nobel Institute 2021). In South Africa, collateral-free microfinance may enable women with a lack of traditional capital to start small businesses.

**The use of mobile money cash transfers has shown potential to transform women’s access to finance.**

- In **Niger** research shows that because mobile money is less observable by other household members, women were able to select what they spent their money on, rather than having to allocate it to household expenses. This provides the potential for women to use mobile money to redirect their business revenue back into their businesses (Aker et al. 2016).
- In rural **Kenya** mostly female M-PESA (a mobile money option in Kenya) users said that mobile money served as an alternative savings and banking device (Morawczynski and Pickens 2009). Mobile money could also serve as a good source of data for alternative mechanisms to assess women’s creditworthiness. It also reduces the time that women have to spend at in-person pay points to collect and deposit payments or receive government remittances and reduces expenditure on travelling to these points of service (Aker et al. 2016).

**Solidarity lending – where small groups borrow collectively, and group members encourage one another to repay – and group lending has shown effective in increasing women’s access to finance in several developing contexts.**

- In **Africa**, CARE’s Village Savings and Loan Associations have directly supported nearly 7 million members, across 45 countries, most of whom are women (Kende-Robb 2019). Community members pool their resources and create a ‘community bank’ allowing them to access savings in times of need (CARE 2021). In **Ethiopia**, the CARE Village Savings and Loan Association recently supported 5,000 women entrepreneurs, resulting in a 500% increase in their income and an increase in the proportion of women who had savings (Kende-Robb 2019).
- The Grameen Bank (mentioned above) in **Bangladesh** allows community members to voluntarily form small groups and uses the group’s social capital – mutual trust and accountability – as a form of surety for collateral-free loans. All members of the group are held responsible for repaying the loans, and if one member defaults all members are denied subsequent loans (Mashigo 2010).
- In **Kenya**, the Kenya Women Microfinance Bank Limited, enables group lending at a microfinance level. The research shows that when these groups have strong governance, this has assisted them in paying back microfinance loans (Jagongo 2019).
- In **South Africa**, stokvels – a version of rotating savings and credit associations – have long been a source of access to informal credit for women (Mulaudzi 2021; Mkhwanazi 2020). Recently, the formal banking sector has introduced mechanisms to support stokvels by offering “stokvel accounts” or “society scheme savings accounts” which offer additional benefits such as discounts at certain grocery

outlets and funeral or burial cover. This is one example of innovation and catering for women's needs. However, these accounts are rarely high interest earning accounts. Research shows that financial education of stokvel members is essential to increase awareness of better ways to invest and manage the money (Mulaudzi 2021; Mkhwanazi 2020).

**The Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA) program facilitates women's access to finance using three pillars – finance, technical assistance, and an enabling environment (ADB 2021).** *AFAWA finance* leverages the African Development Bank's (ADB) financial instruments to create incentives for lending to women through risk-sharing instruments and a rating system evaluates financial institutions based on the share and quality of their lending to women and their socio-economic impact. Top institutions are rewarded with preferential financing terms from the ADB. Second, *AFAWA technical assistance* provides advisory services to financial institutions to help them ensure successful implementation of their product portfolios for women and strengthen women entrepreneurs' capacity by providing training to enhance business productivity and growth. Finally, *AFAWA enabling environment* engages with African governments and other key stakeholders to support legal, policy and regulatory reforms and the structural barriers that limit women's success and access to business. In 2018, the ADB dedicated over \$50 million in lines of credit to women through African-based financial institutions, provided technical assistance to train 1,000 women entrepreneurs across the continent, and engaged in policy dialogue with central banks and government entities in various countries (ADB 2021).

### **(c) Addressing the barriers posed by customary law that constrain rural women's access to land.**

The 2017 High Level Panel on the Assessment of Key Legislation and the Acceleration of Fundamental Change proposed legislative amendments on land reform that would address barriers faced by rural people, including rural women in accessing land. This assessment recommends that the Panel's recommendations be revisited to establish next steps toward addressing gender gaps in access to land for rural women.

## **5. Strengthen Women's Voice and Agency by Addressing (i) Women's role in Decision-Making Structures from the Local Government Level Up; and (ii) High levels of GBV and HIV and their consequent impacts on women and girls**

### **(a) Short-term: Strengthen substantive representation and participation of women in local government.**

Operationalize the Gender Policy Framework for local government (2013) with a focus on promoting women's political participation in elections and local level decision-making and initiating capacity development programs to increase women's confidence and leadership skills, provide support with their campaign strategies and techniques including through linkages with civil society organizations.

**Women make up the majority of registered voters in South Africa, yet they are not equally represented, and political parties are not effectively addressing gender gaps in their manifestos (CGE 2020b).** Women may be restricted from participating in political decision-making by a number of factors: their childcare responsibilities, a lack of finance to participate and

run for office, a lack of experience, patriarchal norms that do not respect women's leadership abilities or define public spaces as 'male domains', and challenges with documentation in order to register and vote (IDEA 2021; ACE Electoral Knowledge Network 2021). The CGE's investigation into South Africa's compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women found that there were no targeted training and mentoring programs for women elected to public office, and that most efforts to engage women in political participation occur as once off events in August (South African Women's Month) (CGE 2020b).

**Concerted campaigns and programs to promote women's political participation have been effective in other developing contexts.** These interventions highlight the importance of building women's capacity to stand for office by sensitizing women to understand their own leadership and decision-making roles; ensuring that rural women are reached by campaigns; and providing women with leadership training. In addition, addressing harmful gender norms requires sustained advocacy across multiple sites and platforms to change negative perceptions of women's participation in decision-making and leadership, and providing (AUDA-NEPAD 2018). Examples of successful interventions include:

- In **Benin**, the GIZ Decentralization and Municipal Development Program focused on strengthening female leadership to improve women's representation in municipal councils. The program pursued a three-pillar approach: identifying and training potential female local election candidates, organizing meetings for the female leaders so that they can share their knowledge and experiences and build a network; and awareness-raising activities to help to develop a favorable political and social environment within local communities that enable them to participate in local politics. These campaign activities are adapted to local contexts, and take several forms including public rallies, radio programs, and door-to-door and poster campaigns with a focus on the importance of female representation (GIZ 2014). Specific awareness-raising activities target: (a) the husbands and families of potential candidates with the aim of encouraging families to become supportive and preventing conflict within families; and (b) local politicians, and religious and traditional leaders to promote the acceptance of women in local decision-making processes. Between 2012 and 2014, 310 potential female candidates in 30 municipalities have benefited from the program. In 23 of these municipalities, local support committees for female candidates were created and provided ongoing support for women throughout the election process which was ongoing at the time of GIZ's assessment (GIZ 2014).
- In **Namibia**, Gender Links (an NGO) implemented a program called *Cascading Centres of Excellence (CoE)*. The focus was on promoting gender mainstreaming in local government and promoting women's equal representation at that level for developing CoEs for the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. The CoE's actively developed the capacity of women to stand for elections through civic engagement and the provision of campaign financing. This improved women's representation at the local government level (AUDA-NEPAD 2018).
- In **Nigeria**, the Christian Rural and Urban Development Association of Nigeria increased the involvement of women leaders in governance in Nigeria by engaging with women leaders, civil society organizations, community members, politicians, and religious and traditional leaders in capacity training and change monitoring workshops, a conference on gender issues for women leaders, convening a women's forum, and hosting a seminar for traditional and religious leaders on the role of women leaders in governance. This was accompanied by monthly live Radio-TV programs that discussed gender policies related to different sectors in the state,

and the establishment of gender equality clubs at 89 public primary and secondary school (AUDA-NEPAD 2018).

**Short-term: Train government officials to ensure that IDPs include attention to gender gaps and that municipalities undertake gender-responsive budgeting, planning, monitoring and evaluation.**

**The Government already has the Gender Policy Framework for Local Government, which includes a commitment to gender responsive budgeting and gender data collection.** However, there are barriers to its implementation including the under capacitation and lack of gender training of gender-focal persons, the absence of gender mainstreaming at the local level, and the absence of broader municipal gender-mainstreaming strategies (FFC 2012).

**Ongoing in-service and onboarding training for officials at all levels of government should include information on gender-responsiveness.** This has been outlined in several government's existing policies on gender equality and requires implementation. It may be necessary for the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs to introduce a guide on how to implement this.

**(b) Medium- to Long-term: Consider a review of the Electoral Act to introduce a commitment to gender equal representation of women on party lists to promote the election of women at all levels of government**

**Instituting gender quotas for political parties will increase the representation of women in government and could transform policy responses to future crises.** The government could introduce a legal gender quota for parties to promote 50 percent representation of women at all levels of government, in line with South Africa's international, regional, and local commitments to gender equality.

**The South African government has shown support for the idea of introducing a quota in the past.** This has included the draft Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill (2013), which included a chapter on equal representation and empowerment, and included amongst its objectives a commitment to "provide for the implementation of measures to achieve a progressive realization of a minimum of 50 percent representation and meaningful participation of women in decision-making structures" (Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities 2013). Although many sections of the Bill were problematic and were rejected by both public and government consultations, the section on the quota was well-received.

**Gender quotas have been effective in increasing women's representation around the world.**

- Of the 15 countries in the world with the highest number of female parliamentarians in 2010, 11 had gender quotas (GIZ 2014).
- All top 10 countries in Africa<sup>53</sup> in terms of women's representation in parliament have gender quotas (IDEA 2021) – five have legislated quotas and five have voluntary party quotas.
- In **Africa**, 54 countries have quotas for National Parliaments and 19 countries have quotas at the local government level (IDEA 2021). The evidence shows that to date, women's representation in parliaments is highest in PR electoral systems with a

<sup>53</sup> The countries are, in order, Rwanda (61 percent), South Africa (46 percent), Namibia (44 percent), Senegal (43 percent), Mozambique (42 percent), Ethiopia (39 percent), Burundi (38 percent), Tanzania (37 percent), Uganda (35 percent) and Cameroon (34 percent). In contrast – women constitute just 16 percent of parliamentarians and 8 percent of councilors in countries with no quotas. (IDEA 2021).

voluntary party quota (for example **South Africa, Namibia, and Mozambique**), and women's representation at the local level is highest in PR electoral systems and a constitutional or legislated quota (49 percent) (for example **Namibia**). The lowest representation of women occurs in First Past the Post systems with no quotas (for example **Nigeria and Botswana**) (IDEA 2021).

**South Africa will need to carefully consider the best mechanism for introducing quotas.**

There are options in terms of the structure of gender quotas including (IDEA 2021):

- Reserved seats that earmark a certain proportion of parliamentary seats for women,
- Voluntary political party quotas (which only a few parties adopted in the 2019 elections), and
- Legislated candidate quotas.

**“Constitutional or legislated quotas in the PR system are the most water tight way of achieving gender parity. However voluntary party quotas can be equally powerful and effective” (IDEA 2021).** Measures that are supported by political parties “have the added advantage of enhanced sustainability” (IDEA 2021). Voluntary political party quotas and legislated candidate quotas promote women's representation by ensuring that there is a minimum proportion of women on the candidate list. It is also important to keep in mind that the ranking order of party lists matters, and any intervention should ensure that women are not placed at the bottom of the party list and thus less likely to be represented (GIZ 2014). In addition, sanctions for non-compliance with quotas must also be considered. Financial penalties may not be effective in ensuring compliance for richer parties. Increased women's political participation can also keep governments accountable to commitments to gender equal political representation. For example, in Mali women protested the non-observance of electoral quotas for women (IDEA 2021).

# Appendix J. Summary of Key Gender Gaps, Challenges, and Corresponding Drivers

**Table 24: Key Gender Gaps and their Drivers**

Key challenges and gender gaps	Drivers of gaps
<p><b>Health:</b> Women are more likely to be HIV positive. Many unplanned and increasing numbers of unwanted pregnancies.</p>	<p>Gender inequitable social norms that prevent women from using and accessing contraception. Poor women less likely to access quality sexual and reproductive health care. Barriers to accessing contraception and termination of pregnancy services. Unmet need for contraception highest amongst those aged 15-24. Intergenerational transactional relationships. GBV.</p>
<p><b>Early Childhood Development Education:</b> Low access to and enrolment in Early Childhood Development programs for girls and boys (ECD)</p>	<p>Unaffordability and inaccessibility of ECD programs, and low state expenditure on this sector.</p>
<p><b>Gender differences in reasons for school dropout:</b> Girls are more likely than boys to drop out of school due to family responsibilities. Boys are more likely to dropout overall.</p>	<p>Social norms that limit girls and women to domestic labor and care responsibilities Unmet need for contraception, which is highest among ages 15 to 24.</p>
<p><b>Subject segregation at a secondary and tertiary level:</b> The number of girls studying mathematics outnumbers the number of boys, but boys have higher passing rates. Boys have higher passing rates in science. At tertiary level, more women than men enroll and graduate, but fewer women enroll and graduate in STEM.</p>	<p>Harmful social norms that discourage girls from pursuing STEM and boys from pursuing care careers. Teacher gender norms and bias. Potential subject clashes that prevent girls from taking these subjects.</p>
<p><b>Labor force participation:</b> Women's economic participation is lower than men's in all sectors except private households and community and social services sectors <b>Unemployment:</b> Women have higher levels of unemployment than men. <b>Barriers to work:</b> Women more likely than men to cite that childcare prevented them from travelling to work.</p>	<p>Gender norms that place the full burden of childcare and family care responsibilities on women. Gendered division of household and care labor, which reduce the time that women have available to engage in income-generating activities. Apartheid and contemporary labor patterns that rely on migrant labor and decrease men's presence in households.</p>
<p><b>Occupational segregation and a gender pay gap:</b> Women are less likely to be in STEM and frontier-skills jobs. Where women are employed, their employment is lower level, lower paid, and less stable than men's. The gender pay gap is large and consistent across all income groups.</p>	<p>Women's subject choices at school and university which limit their progress into higher-skill, higher-paying jobs. Discrimination in salaries offered to women by employers coupled with a lack of pay transparency, which makes monitoring and enforcing equal pay a challenge.</p>
<p><b>Entrepreneurship:</b> The gender gap in micro-, small-, and medium businesses ownership has increased over the past decade. Men are more likely than women to run a business (formal or informal).</p>	<p>Lack of financial literacy, ownership of assets and agency make it difficult for women to access formal credit</p>
<p><b>Procurement:</b> Gender targets set, but no data on gender equity in public procurement.</p>	<p>Lack of gender disaggregated data collection.</p>

Key challenges and gender gaps	Drivers of gaps
<p><b>Unequal access to assets:</b> Women do not have equal access to land, property, or the internet and are less likely to be digitally financially included. More women than men are banked, but women more likely to access finance through informal savings and lending.</p>	<p>Apartheid land distribution patterns. Gaps in the inheritance of land and property. Lack of gender equity in land restitution. Feminized poverty, making the cost of data for digital access unaffordable.</p>
<p><b>Representation:</b> Women are not represented equally at any level of government, and the representation of women is the lowest at a local government level. Women who are represented represent a party, not necessarily women's interests. Gender Focal points in government are under resourced and there is a lack of gender mainstreaming, and gender-responsive budgeting, planning, monitoring and evaluation, despite commitments to do so.</p>	<p>Absence of a gender quota on political party election lists. Lack of clarity on status of key gender equality frameworks thus poor policy coherence.</p>
<p><b>GBV:</b> High levels of GBV including sexual offenses, domestic violence, and femicide.</p>	<p>Harmful patriarchal and violent social norms that tolerate GBV. Ineffective legal mechanisms to respond to GBV (low conviction rates, implementation failures). Limited focus on addressing social norms and preventing violence. A lack of a coordination and leadership to enable a coherent and comprehensive response to preventing and responding to GBV. Weak interdepartmental cooperation. Insufficient funding of the state's response, including the underfunding of, and funding inequities amongst, NGOs that deliver GBV-related services on behalf of the state.</p>

**As the table above shows, there are several common drivers of gender gaps.** These include gendered social norms that relegate women to the home and reduce the time women can spend on income generating activities, discourage girls from taking up STEM subjects, limit women's access to land and property, and tolerate gender-based violence. In addition to the challenge of social norms, there are specific educational, economic, and social barriers as reflected above that also inform gender gaps.



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