

# **BRIEFING NOTES FOR THE HONOURABLE MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR WOMEN, BATHABILE DLAMINI, MP, ON THE OCCASION OF THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE FORUM FOR GENDER FOCAL POINTS**

Burgers Park Hotel, Pretoria

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Women entered the post-apartheid era with optimism for government's agenda of distributing social and economic power to favour gender equality. The women's movement of South Africa played a central role in ensuring the South African democratic government's substantial success in both the structural establishment of women's institutions across all state functions, and in inserting gender equality principles into legislation.

Government increased the numbers of women representation in leadership roles, established legal protections, and made various social welfare provisions available for the needy. The democratic government has promulgated a myriad of legislative instruments and policy interventions to address gendered inequalities.

In June 1996, Cabinet approved the establishment of the National Gender Machinery to develop and implement a national gender policy, and to mainstream gender perspectives into all areas of South African society.

The South African model for a National Gender Machinery is globally well-appraised and emulated in multiple countries.

However, the persistent gender inequalities, and the milestone of South Africa's twenty-fifth democratic anniversary has spurred the review of the capacity of the National Gender Machinery to advance government's agenda of the socio-economic empowerment of women.

The Department of Women is conducting a review of the capacity of the National Gender Machinery to lead the agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment. The review adopts a bottom-up approach in examining:

- The human and financial resources capacity of the National Gender Machinery;
- The Organisational Capacity of various structures of the National Gender Machinery; and
- The Strategic Vision and Inter-Relations amongst structures of the NGM.

We have consulted representatives of the NGM in government, academia, parliament, youth organisations, the private sector, independent bodies, gender experts, Civil Society Organisations, and the private sector.

Our main focus is on analysing the programming, organizational efficiency and resource needs of various NGM institutions. The final Report will provide an integrated overview of the major achievements, constraints, challenges and opportunities presented by the women's movement of South Africa.

The Diagnostic report will further outline the tools, manuals and strategies that can contribute to effective mainstreaming of gender in public and private sector policies, projects and programme.

One of our key challenges was our failure – when the Department of Women was established - to do a retrospective examination of how the Office on the Status of Women functioned, and how the new Department of Women could maximise the work that had previously been undertaken by the OSW.

Our preliminary findings in the review process thus far include the following:

## **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Practitioners of the National Gender Machinery must be employed at the executive levels of their respective institutions to enable them to mainstream gender at the highest decision making level.

2. The NGM should have a **5-year strategic plan with gender indicators**.
  - A certificate for gender mainstreaming should emanate from this strategic plan. The role of the NGM will be to ensure that targets set in the strategic plan have been met.
  - A clear gender scorecard should be developed to measure implementation of policies/ gender mainstreaming.
3. The establishment of an **independent secretariat** that will coordinate all stakeholders working within the NGM. DoW will remain the custodian of the NGM.
4. The Ministry in the Presidency for Women must be retained, strengthened and resourced (financially and in terms of human resources).
  - Gender-responsive budgeting must be expanded to include the development of a gendered macro-economic plan that is responsive to women. Currently, gender responsive budgeting is limited to programmes.
5. A gender-based social policy also needs to be developed: Including a strategy for identifying and empowering groups of vulnerable women (such as those in sacred places, traditional and faith-based spaces).

6. Gender education should be incorporated into the school curriculum (it is important to keep in mind that gender is not limited to the female sex but includes males as well). As such, the curriculum should seek to:
- **Demystify** gender taboos; **Deconstruct** gender roles; and **Include** the boy child.
7. The Gender Advisory Committee (GAC) should follow the best practice employed by the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) to mainstream HIV/AIDS, and the depth of activism. In terms of the NGM, the GAC should advise government on the implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of policies that advance gender equality and women's empowerment. The NGM should ensure DoW is able to provide oversight.
8. **Clear pathways for the monitoring and evaluation** of the work conducted by the NGM must be set up. These must include platforms for feedback and accountability where there is failure to comply (including criminalisation and the issuing of compliance certificates).
9. DoW should look to international documents on NGMs for best practices and determine what will work in the South African context.

10. Mobilisation of the NGM to legislate the gaps that exist is just as important as ensuring there is a strong legislative framework. It is important to include academia and young women.
11. The role of churches in society must be evaluated from a gendered perspective. This is in light of recent reports of sexual abuse within churches.
12. As an immediate interim measure, the political clout of DoW must be reinstated.
13. The NGM must be protected from changes in the political climate.
14. The gender discourse should not be limited to women. The understanding of GBV should be broadened (to include men and members of the LGBTIQ community). Proposed way forward: the revised legislative framework should have a clause on participation, the lack thereof as well as the consequences.

## **CONSOLIDATED RECOMMENDATIONS – THESE TO COME UP AS DISCUSSION POINTS**

Improve Administrative Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Human resources allocation, budget allocation, communication, proper recruitment processes, strategic gender plans, and reporting</li> </ul>
Adequate Support of Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The recruitment of new employees has to be supported by their adequate capacitation</li> </ul>
Clarity of Mandate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clearly defined structures/ working teams/ groups.</li> <li>▪ Clearly defined roles and responsibilities of established bodies.</li> <li>▪ Clear interface with existing institutions to avoid duplication and fatigue.</li> </ul>
Policy Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Policy that guides the allocation of dedicated budgetary resource for gender mainstreaming</li> <li>▪ Clear and strong monitoring and evaluation systems</li> </ul>
Data-Banks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organisation keeps regular, accurate and updated statistics disaggregated by sex/gender, and other socio-demographic factors</li> </ul>
Accountability Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengthening oversight Structures</li> <li>▪ KPAs of Heads of Departments and Chief Financial Officers to be monitored with punitive measures for non-compliance</li> <li>▪ Establishment or re-establishment of gender empowerment units within organisations.</li> </ul>
Political Buy In	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The buy-in of political leaders such as MECs, Ministers, DGs,</li> <li>▪ Proper consultations to be done before political</li> </ul>

	<p>deployment can be implemented;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Women caucuses to be part of the municipal calendar</li> </ul>
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gender mainstreaming to be included in Key Performance Areas (KPAs) for managers;</li> <li>▪ Gender responsive planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation and auditing as Key Performance Area (KPA) for Chief Financial officers (CFOs)</li> <li>▪ Enforcing (with consequences) the inclusion of Key Performance Areas (KPAs) related to gender equality by Director Generals (DGs) and Ministers</li> </ul>
New Institutions of the NGM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Traditional leaders, healers and churches were identified as needing to establish new institutions of the NGM. This is in line with the identification of religious and cultural gender stereotypes as important to address in the fight for gender transformation.</li> <li>▪ Labour movements, women entrepreneurs, and the LGBTI community were identified as needing attention;</li> <li>▪ Collaboration, involvement and participation of political, and all stakeholders must be attained. Participation of women to be encouraged at all levels.</li> </ul>
Independent Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improvements in public, private and CSOs partnerships</li> <li>▪ To co-ordinate women's movement unity</li> <li>▪ A uniform institutional design for all should be applicable.</li> <li>▪ A clear strategic vision.</li> </ul>

Thank you