

# Women's Month concept document

**“Generation Equality: Realizing Women’s Rights for  
an Equal Future”**

June 2020

# Outline of Presentation

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To request approval of the concept document for Women's Month 2020, under the proposed theme: “**Generation Equality: Realizing women's rights for an equal future**”

## Summary

- Women's Month in August commemorates the watershed 1956 women's march to the Union Buildings and entails activities to advance women's empowerment and gender equality
- In 2020 Women's Month takes place under unprecedented conditions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic which has underlined the urgent need to drive the global and country gender agenda despite constraints
- Envisaged to mark National Women's Day and Women's Month under the global Generation Equality campaign with the theme: **Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for An Equal Future**
- Various sub-themes linked to country priorities, including impact of COVID-19 on women

- Women's Month will contribute to advancing the women's empowerment agenda in line with
  - South Africa's constitutional vision
  - the National Development Plan and
  - the 2019-2024 Medium Term Strategic Framework
- The focus will be on activities and strategic interventions which will result in tangible improvement in women's lives
- A key focus will be on the country gender priorities for 2020-2025 and to 2030 to promote the political, social and economic empowerment of women under the banner of What Women Want

- The year 2020 marks:
  - 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations
  - 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
  - 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)
  - End of African Union Decade of African Women (2010-2020)
  - SA's chairship of the AU and new African Decade of Women's Financial and Economic Inclusion (2020-2030)
- Important advances in empowering women since 1994, incl
  - Political and public sector representation, legislation, access to services, education, health status, economic opportunities etc.
- However, depth, pace and scale of change insufficient to ensure gender equality and achieve societal transformation goals with persistence of economic exclusion, GBVF etc.



- **Overall objectives of Women's Month**
  - End gender discrimination, gender-based violence and femicide and advance the rights of women and girls in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres of life
  - Mobilise women and strengthen their organized formations towards the development of sustainable Action Coalitions
  - Develop national consensus around a programme of gender policy priorities and programming to advance the gender agenda in the period 2020-2025 and towards the achievement of gender equality in South Africa by 2030.
- **Overall theme**
  - *Generation Equality: Realising Women's Rights for an Equal Future*
- **Approach**
  - Innovative approaches taking into account COVID-19 conditions
  - Multi-sectoral approach across state and non-state sector

- **Generation Equality thematic areas**
  - Gender-Based Violence
  - Economic justice and rights
  - Bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)
  - Feminist action for climate justice
  - Technology and innovation for gender equality
  - Feminist movements and leadership

- **Other priority areas include:**

- Women's financial and economic inclusion (in line with the AU Decade from 2020-2030)
- The gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Equal pay for work of equal value
- Recognition of and sharing of unpaid care and domestic work;
- An end to sexual harassment and all forms of violence against women and girls
- Equal participation of women in political life and decision-making
- Elimination of child marriage
- Changing patriarchal norms and values

- **Highlights include:**

- A series of **policy roundtables** on South Africa's gender policy priorities and interventions for 2020-2025 and to 2030
- **National Women's Day**, in the form of a televised address by the President of the Republic
- **National Women's Assembly**, which brings together all the inputs made on the policy and programming priorities for the period 2020-2025 and to 2030. It is proposed that this take place in the National Parliament with live-links with provincial women's stakeholders through provincial legislatures.
- Activities including remote or virtual dialogues at community, district, organizational/ institutional/ sectoral, institutional and provincial level. Each level to develop consolidated reports for consideration in the National Women's Assembly.
- **High-level AU roundtable** chaired by President Ramaphosa with African Ministers of Women and Gender Affairs to focus on African gender priorities including the Decade of Women's Financial and Economic Inclusion, to mark Pan African Women's Day on 31 July 2020.

- **Organisational and personnel implications**
  - DWYPD responsible for overall coordination of Women's Month
  - DSAC responsible for coordination of preparations for National Women's Day
  - National Coordination Steering Committee (NCSC) made up of government and civil society, including Generation Equality Task Team
  - Offices of the Premier to coordinate at provincial level
- **Financial implications**
  - The following are responsible for the costs of specific activities:
    - DSAC for National Women's Day commemoration.
    - DWYPD for Policy Roundtables, including partner contributions
    - DWYPD, Parliament, Provincial Government's and Provincial Legislatures for costs of Women's Assembly
    - Specific government departments and other stakeholders responsible for costs of their own activities

- **Risks mitigation**

- Innovative mechanisms to ensure compliance with COVID-19 regulations while maximizing public participation

- **Communication implications**

- Massive opportunities for public communications and media

- **Constitutional implications and implications for vulnerable groups**

- Promote constitutional rights and rights of women

- **Security implications**

- Cyber security

- **Consultation**

- Consulted between DWYPD & DSAC
- Consultation through DG clusters planned
- Consultation with Gender Stakeholders planned

- **It is recommended that cabinet:**
  - Approves the concept document on the commemoration of Women's Month in August 2020, under the proposed theme: "Generation Equality: Realizing women's rights for an equal future".
  - Approves that Departments submit their planned activities for Women's Month to DWYPD by 6 July 2020 to enable the development of an integrated Women's Month programme of action for the country.