

30 years OF WOMEN'S PROGRESS in South Africa



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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30 YEARS OF WOMEN'S PROGRESS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Before 1994, inequality shaped the lives of women in South Africa, with black women bearing the brunt of the injustices of apartheid. From economic participation to health care and educational access, barriers were deeply entrenched.

The transition to democracy marked a new beginning. Over the past 30 years, our nation has made significant strides toward gender equality. Women now play vital roles across society, benefitting from legislative reforms and targeted initiatives that have opened the doors of opportunity. Access to education has broadened, health care services have become more inclusive and economic opportunities have been expanded.

Yet, challenges remain. Persistent inequalities and social ills like gender-based violence affect women's lives and undermine their dignity and safety.

This publication is both a reflection on our progress and a call to action for the work that lies ahead. It reminds us that while much has been achieved, the journey towards true gender equality continues.



SHAPING THE NATION

- *Political empowerment and decision-making*

WOMEN AT WORK

- *Economic empowerment to end poverty*

BUILDING THE FUTURE

- *Education and skills development*

WOMEN'S SAFETY

- *Ending gender-based violence*

WOMEN'S WELLBEING

- *Expanding health care access*

OWNERSHIP AND OPPORTUNITY

- *Securing women's land rights*

SHAPING THE NATION

South Africa stands out for its progress in women's political empowerment.

The country ranks among the top globally for female parliamentary representation, and women have held key political positions since the advent of democracy, including as ministers of defence, education, health and international relations, as well as the Deputy President. Women have also been prominent as Speakers of Parliament and as mayors and premiers in major cities and provinces.

Significant portfolios that have been led by women include the Commissioner of Police, Public Protector, head of the Independent Electoral Commission, Governor of the Reserve Bank, the current Auditor-General and the National Director of Public Prosecutions.

In the judiciary, efforts to enhance gender and racial diversity are ongoing. History was made this year with the appointment of a black woman as South Africa's Chief Justice. Women have also been a crucial force as voters, making up the majority of the electorate in national and provincial elections in 2019 and 2024.

Despite these advancements, there remains a need for further progress to ensure that women can ascend to the highest levels of political power and influence.

Political empowerment and decision-making

THE PILLARS OF EMPOWERMENT



- **The Constitution**, adopted in 1996, guarantees that all citizens have a right to be affirmed and enriched with the democratic values of human dignity and equality. It provides specifically for gender equality, affirmative action, freedom, security of the person and socioeconomic rights.



- **The Bill of Rights** prohibits any form of unfair discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation or disability.



- **The Commission for Gender Equality** promotes and protects gender equality through research, public education, policy development, legislative initiatives, effective monitoring and litigation.



- **The Office on the Status of Women (OSW)** was established in 1997 to champion women empowerment and gender equality.



- **The Ministry of Women, Children and People with Disabilities** was established in 2009 to elevate women's issues, and later evolved to become a dedicated **Ministry for Women in the Presidency**.



Female leaders and lawmakers have also helped to usher in an array of laws and policies designed to empower women and safeguard their rights and wellbeing.

Domestic Violence Act

Criminalised violence in the home and allowed women to obtain court orders against perpetrators

Maintenance Act

Enforced fathers' obligation to pay maintenance for their children

Recognition of Customary Marriages Act

Recognised marriages conducted under African customary law and made the registration of marriages mandatory

Choice of Termination of Pregnancy Act

Allowed women to make decisions concerning reproduction and enabled access to safe methods of fertility regulation

Sexual Offences and Related Matters Act

Changed the definition of rape to be more encompassing and included victim empowerment

Labour Relations Act

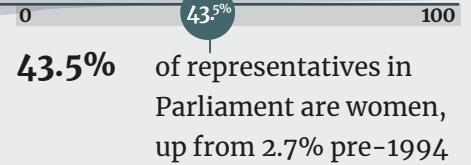
Prohibited discrimination against women taking maternity leave and allows women to take up to four consecutive months of maternity leave

Employment Equity Act

Prohibited discrimination on the basis of gender and provides for equal pay for work of equal value



REPRESENTATIVES IN PARLIAMENT



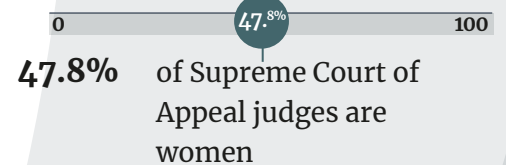
VOTERS



CABINET POSITIONS



JUDGES



MANAGEMENT



WOMEN AT WORK

Under apartheid, South African women faced systemic barriers to economic participation.

The oppressive system not only excluded Black people from skilled employment, but also disproportionately marginalised black women, severely restricting their economic opportunities and keeping many locked in poverty.

South Africa has made significant strides in promoting women's economic empowerment. Progressive legislation and labour reforms have been introduced to ensure equal rights and eliminate unfair discrimination in the workplace. Government initiatives have supported women's entrepreneurship and increased their participation in various sectors of the economy.

Government has also committed to using procurement as a driver of women's empowerment. Entities like the Public Investment Corporation and the National Empowerment Fund have committed to establish special-purpose vehicles to support women-owned businesses.

However, women continue to face substantial income inequality and are more likely to be concentrated in lower-paying jobs.

Addressing these disparities is crucial not only for reducing poverty but also for unlocking the country's full potential.

Economic empowerment to end poverty

35.7%

unemployment rate for women

100%

45.7%

of working-age women are not active in the labour force

100%

36%

of women aged 15–24 are not engaged in employment, education or training

100%

30%

extent of the gender wage gap in South Africa

100%

STRENGTHENING LAWS AND POLICIES

Key legislative changes since 1994 have helped to entrench women's rights in the workplace.

In 1998, the **Affirmative Action Policy** was introduced to combat the legacy of apartheid.

The **Basic Conditions of Employment Act** guarantees paid maternity leave, including antenatal, postnatal and family leave.

The **Employment Equity Act** provides for women's equal access to the workplace.

The **Labour Relations Act** of 1995 prohibits both direct and indirect unfair discrimination, including discrimination based on family responsibility.

The **Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act** of 2000 further reinforces these principles.

Domestic workers received protection through sector determinations under the **Basic Conditions of Employment Act** in 2002.

The **Labour Relations Act** includes a Code of Good Conduct requiring workplaces to implement formal sexual harassment policies. This is reinforced by the **Protection from Harassment Act** of 2011.

INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

To support women's economic empowerment, government has implemented a range of interventions and targeted programmes to foster entrepreneurship and increase women's participation in the workforce.



- Women's Economic Assembly (WECONA)
- Presidential Employment Stimulus
- Women's Empowerment Fund
- Black Industrialist Programme
- Social grants

Women's Economic Assembly (WECONA)

In 2021, President Cyril Ramaphosa launched the Women's Economic Assembly, which aims to increase the participation of women-owned businesses in core areas of the economy.

- WECONA facilitated the establishment of the first 100% **women-owned car dealerships** in South Africa.
- Successful partnerships with various sectors have driven **gender transformation** in business ecosystems.
- The second Assembly showcased achievements and brought in new sectors to continue **advancing women's economic participation**.

Presidential Employment Stimulus



PRESIDENTIAL
EMPLOYMENT
STIMULUS



PRESIDENTIAL
YOUTH
EMPLOYMENT
INTERVENTION

The **Presidential Employment Stimulus (PES)** and the **Presidential Youth Employment Intervention (PYEI)** have made a difference in the lives of many thousands of women around the country.

These initiatives have enabled the most rapid expansion of public employment in South Africa's history.

66%

of PES
beneficiaries
are women

70%

of PYEI
opportunities
secured by
young women

1.7

million
beneficiaries
reached

Women's Empowerment Fund

The NEF Women Empowerment Fund aims to accelerate the provision of funding to businesses owned by black women using a range of funding instruments.



- **40% of NEF funding** approved for black women entrepreneurs over the past 12 years.



- **Over R4 billion** repaid by women investees.



- **3600 jobs** created through NEF's investment of R900 million in 23 industrial projects.

 NATIONAL
EMPOWERMENT
FUND

Growing Black Economic Participation

Black Industrialist Programme

The Black Industrialist Programme creates an enabling environment for black industrialists and workers who were previously denied access to opportunities for economic ownership and participation.

Efforts are ongoing to bring more women into the programme.

800 black industrialists funded over the past 5 years

R18 billion value of investment in black industrialists

40% of government procurement spend to be allocated to women's businesses

R9 billion earmarked for women's businesses by the Industrial Development Corporation

Social grants

Women's economic empowerment is essential for addressing the high rates of poverty in South Africa.

Government is also supporting women with targeted grants and resources to address immediate needs and help them achieve lasting financial stability.

50%+ of those living below the poverty line are women

28 million South Africans receive social grants each month

9 million South Africans benefit from Social Relief of Distress Grant

80% of social grant recipients are women



sassa

SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY



STORIES OF IMPACT



Gwendolyn Mahuma-Madida

FROM TOWNSHIP DREAMS TO INDUSTRIAL SUCCESS

Remkor Manufacturing, a woman-owned enterprise in the heart of Johannesburg, is rewriting the narrative of success in the male-dominated world of manufacturing.

The story of Remkor begins with its founder Gwendolyn Mahuma, whose entrepreneurial spirit was ignited during her childhood in Ga-Rankuwa outside of Pretoria. Growing up in a family immersed in various township enterprises, she developed a keen business acumen from a young age.

In 2005, Mahuma launched her specialist investment company Mahuma Investment Holdings (MIH), which focuses on acquiring and building businesses that service the infrastructure sector. One of these enterprises, Remkor Manufacturing, crafts bespoke ferrous and nonferrous metal sheet products tailored for the rail, energy, transport and communications sectors.

Remkor's growth has been propelled by strategic partnerships and crucial government support, particularly from the government-owned Industrial Development Corporation (IDC).

"IDC provided Remkor Manufacturing with a loan

to invest in much-needed equipment as well as working capital. This gave us an opportunity to increase our capacity in terms of offerings, as well as to reduce our dependence on other service providers," explains Mahuma.

The expansion has also allowed for an impressive surge in employment, with Remkor's workforce increasing from 25 to 104 employees. Beyond its commitment to quality fabrication, the company places a premium on skills development, offering a range of internships and learnerships.

"Without the IDC loan, we would not have been in our current position," Mahuma reflects. "But I want to emphasise, it is not just about us, the owners, having grown our investment. Rather, it is about the wider ecosystem where jobs have been created, local skills have been expanded and the industry remains relevant in South Africa." "IDC provided Remkor Manufacturing with a loan to invest in much-needed equipment as well as working capital. This gave us an opportunity to increase our capacity in terms of offerings, as well as to reduce our dependence on other service providers," explains Mahuma.

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Mahuma is keen to point out that the IDC funding provided much more than a financial boost.

"Without the IDC loan, we would not have been in our current position," she notes. "But I want to emphasise, it is not just about us, the owners, having grown our investment. Rather, it is about the wider ecosystem where jobs have been created, local skills have been expanded and the industry remains relevant in South Africa. It is about pushing back against the tide of cheap imports. We need to protect our local industry and manufacturing capabilities."

BUILDING THE FUTURE

Education and skills development

Since the end of apartheid, South Africa has made notable strides in ensuring educational access, with the Constitution guaranteeing every child the right to basic education without unfair discrimination.

Despite progress, stark inequalities and underperformance persist.

Poor classroom infrastructure and overcrowding have a negative impact on the

motivation and performance of both learners and teachers.

Female learners in marginalised communities face additional challenges, including inadequate sanitation facilities that contribute to increased absenteeism. They are also vulnerable to teen pregnancy and sexual violence, further compromising their educational opportunities.

STRENGTHENING LAWS AND POLICIES



South African Schools Act

- Promotes access to education
- Promotes quality and democratic governance in the schooling system
- Makes schooling compulsory for children aged seven to 15
- Combats racism, sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination

Children's Amendment Bill

- Recognises the importance of inclusive and holistic early childhood development (ECD)
- Aims to streamline the regulatory framework for ECD programmes for a more accessible and inclusive ECD sector

National Integrated Early Childhood Development (NIECD) Policy

- Establishes a comprehensive framework for providing quality ECD services to all children
- Sets out targets and commitments from the state

Skills Development Act:

- Promotes workplace-based training and apprenticeships
- Enhances workforce skills to meet economic needs

Further Education and Training (FET)

Colleges Act:

- Governs vocational education and training colleges
- Supports skills development for employment and entrepreneurship



INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Empowering Young Women:

The policy provides pregnancy prevention education and health services, reducing unintended pregnancies and helping female learners complete their education.

Support and Continuity:

It ensures pregnant learners receive support, reducing stigma and encouraging them to return to school post-childbirth, promoting educational success.



PROGRESS BY NUMBERS

For every 100 men under 35 with a matric qualification, there are 112 women with the same credentials.

Young women with degree equivalents or higher outnumber their male counterparts by 50%.

In 2018, the majority of National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) beneficiaries (61%) were female.

In 2019, NSFAS advanced women's rights by introducing a **personal care allowance** for hygiene and sanitary products, benefiting 490,000 female university students by 2023.

The **Sanitary Dignity Programme** provides hygiene products to indigent women and girls in no-fee, special and farm schools. Between 2019 and 2023, the programme benefited a total of 4.3 million learners.

43% of permanent academic staff in public higher education institutions in South Africa are women, 13% increase since 1992

55% of female students were consistently funded by the National Research Council (NRF) at **Honours and Masters levels**. At the PhD level, this target was achieved in the years 2020 and 2021.

WOMEN'S SAFETY

Ending gender-based violence

Gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) in South Africa is a deeply rooted issue, shaped by a history of colonialism, apartheid and inequality.

During the apartheid era, legal and social structures provided little to no protection for women, and the judicial system often failed to support victims, particularly black women.

Despite significant social progress since the end of apartheid, GBVF remains widespread, taking various forms such as intimate partner violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Addressing GBVF requires a multifaceted approach, including legislative reform, specialised support services and proactive prevention strategies.



<https://gbvf.org.za/>



1.5 million women aged 18+ years have experienced GBV in the past 12 months



25%–40% of women have experienced sexual or physical violence by intimate partners



Government has introduced new laws to protect women and children in South Africa from abuse and violence.

STRENGTHENING LAWS AND POLICIES

The National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Act 024

- Establishes the National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide
- Provides for the objects and functions of the Council including:
 - The appointment of the Board of the Council
 - The establishment of committees of the Board
 - The establishment of norms and standards for the provincial and local working groups
 - The making of regulations

Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act Amendment Bill

- Expands the definition of incest
- Introduces a new offence of sexual intimidation
- Further regulates the National Register for Sex Offenders
- Regulates the reporting duties of people who are aware that sexual offences have been committed

Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) Amendment Bill

- Introduces mandatory DNA collection for certain crimes
- DNA to be taken from people convicted for schedule 8 offences
 - rape, murder, human trafficking, robbery and culpable homicide

Domestic Violence Amendment Bill

- Expands the definition of domestic violence to include actions such as controlling or bullying behaviour
- Makes provisions for protecting people in engagements, dating and in customary relationships
- Further regulates protection orders in response to domestic violence

Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Bill

- Amends various laws that address GBV and offences committed against vulnerable people
- Provides for additional procedures to reduce secondary victimisation of vulnerable people in court proceedings

PROGRESS BY NUMBERS



THUTHUZELA CENTRE | PIC: NEWS24. Samantha Lee-Jacobs

INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

The National Strategic Plan on GBVF is the government's comprehensive strategy for tackling all forms of violence and abuse against women and children. Since its launch in 2020, several new interventions have been implemented.

- Dedicated **Sexual Offences Courts** to bring relief and justice to survivors
- Support for survivors through the provision of **evidence kits** at police stations
- **Psychological and social services**
- **GBVF Response Fund** to support organisations engaged in the fight against GBVF
- Support for **Thuthuzela and Khuseleka Care Centres**, which provide vital services for GBV survivors
- Dedicated **GBVF desks** at police stations in hotspot areas, staffed by specially trained police officers



THUTHUZELA CARE CENTRES

65

65 Thuthuzela Care Centres provide support for GBV survivors



SEXUAL OFFENCES COURTS

83

83 Sexual Offences Courts established



PROSECUTIONS

94%

94% conviction rate achieved in femicide prosecutions

0 75% 100

75% conviction rate achieved in sexual offences prosecutions



SURVIVOR SUPPORT

1,159

1,159 police stations now have victim-friendly rooms

0 134 100

134 GBVF desks in operation



EVIDENCE KITS

1.5 million

1.5 million DNA kits procured to reduce processing backlog

0 281K thousand 100

281,110 DNA reports processed between October 2022 and July 2023



FUNDING

R162 million

R162 million pledged to the GBVF Response Fund, benefitting 53 organisations

STORIES OF IMPACT



SOCA manager Advocate Nqwenelwa Mazwi

GBV SURVIVORS FIND SUPPORT AND JUSTICE AT THUTHUZELA CARE CENTRES

The Thuthuzela Care Centre (TCCs) project aligns directly with President Cyril Ramaphosa’s commitment to addressing GBV. With 63 centres across the country, TCCs play a critical role in offering support and justice for rape survivors.

The project is led by the National Prosecuting Authority’s Sexual Offences and Community Affairs Unit (SOCA). In the Free State, provincial SOCA manager Advocate Nqwenelwa Mazwi has seen its impact firsthand.

“We have four TCCs in the Free State and are currently building a TCC at the Elizabeth Ross Hospital in Phuthaditjhaba in QwaQwa,” Advocate Mazwi states. “There is always someone there to hold your hand, from the beginning to the end of the process. When people hear about this, it makes them more willing to come forward.”

Beyond their premises, TCCs lead campaigns to drive awareness and mitigate the root causes of GBV in communities. One example in the Free State is the ‘Tavern Project’, which targets taverns as problematic sites for incidents of GBV.

TCCs also actively distribute educational materials to hundreds of schools, covering crucial topics such as understanding sexual assault and the legal consequences of rape.

“We are having huge impacts in our community. This is also because of the GBV Summit which the President started in 2018, and also held in 2022, as well as the recent changes in GBV legislation,” notes Advocate Mazwi.

“The entire country is becoming more passionate about fighting GBV and coming up with ways to report and prosecute these cases.”

Let’s end gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa.

Stand up.

Speak out.

Sign the pledge and show your support for the fight against GBVF.

HERE

#endGBVF



WOMEN'S WELLBEING

During apartheid, South Africa's health care system was deeply fragmented and unequal, divided along racial and geographic lines.

The end of apartheid in 1994 marked the beginning of a monumental task: extending decent health care to all South Africans. The new Constitution enshrined the right of access to health care services, including reproductive health care. Government has also made strides in addressing the health needs of the most vulnerable in society, including women, who face unique challenges and barriers to care.

Progress has been made in reducing maternal and child mortality, largely through initiatives like free prenatal care at public clinics and the prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission. Women, who bear the brunt of the HIV pandemic, have also benefited immensely from government's antiretroviral (ARV) treatment programme.

The next significant step in addressing health care inequities is the implementation of the National Health Insurance (NHI). The NHI represents a bold move towards ensuring that every South African, regardless of income, has access to quality health care.

Expanding health care access



STRENGTHENING LAWS AND POLICIES

National Health Act

- Provides for free reproductive health care services to pregnant and lactating women at public health facilities, including contraception, ante-natal care, abortion services, HIV management, reproductive cancer treatment and psycho-social support
- Promotes the establishment of community health clinics, improving health care access for women in rural and under-served areas

Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act

- allowed women to make decisions concerning reproduction
- enabled access to safe methods of fertility regulation

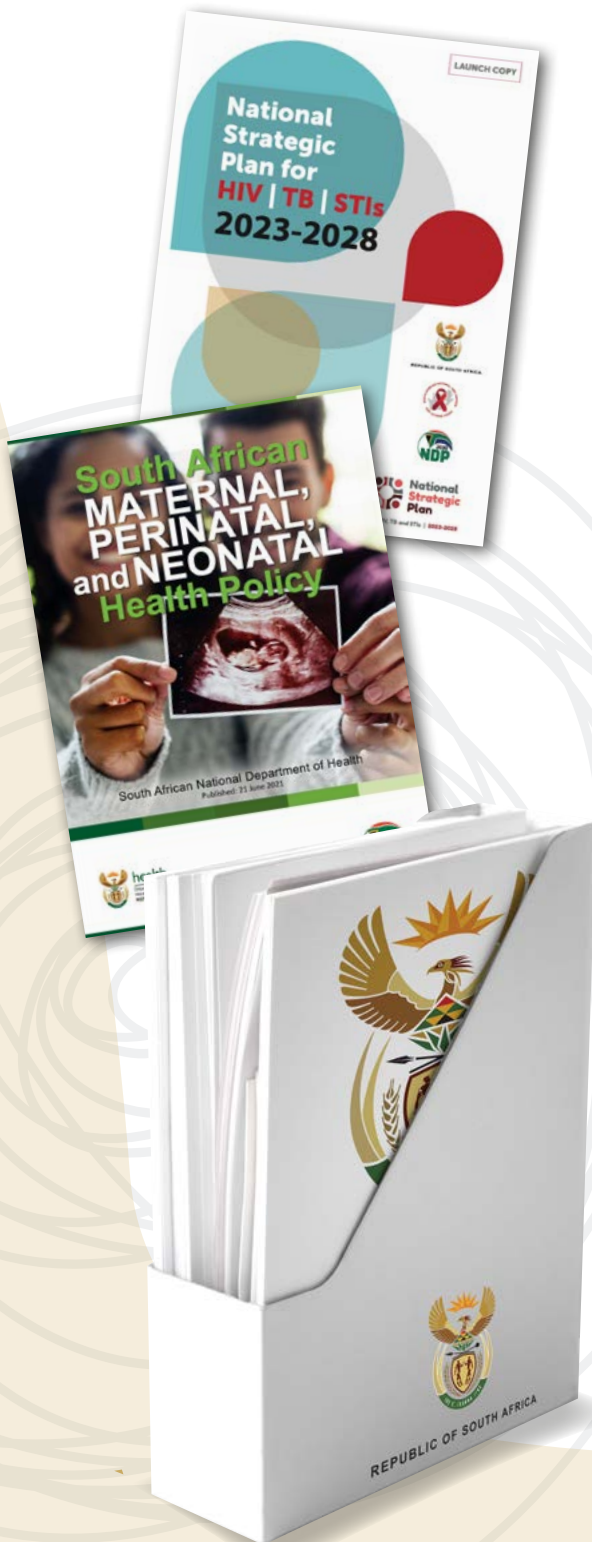
National Health Insurance Bill

- Aims to narrow the gap in healthcare standards for rich and poor
- Presents an innovative approach to funding universal healthcare based on social solidarity

HIV/AIDS and STI National Strategic Plan?

Maternal, Perinatal and Neonatal Health Policy?

Any other legislation/policies?



INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

- HIV treatment
- Maternal wellbeing
- National Health Insurance



HIV treatment

One of the most pressing public health challenges in post-apartheid South Africa has been the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Since the first reported case in 1982, the country has made significant progress in reducing HIV deaths and infections.

In 2004, government rolled out free ARV therapy at public health care facilities nationwide, which has curbed the devastating impact of HIV on communities across the country.

Today, South Africa has the largest ARV programme in the world. Access to ARVs is crucial for women, who face a higher HIV prevalence than men. It also significantly lowers the risk of mother-to-child transmission.

SOUTH AFRICAN HIV STATS



80% of the country's HIV response is government funded



94.2% of HIV+ people know their status



78% of HIV+ people are on ART



89% of HIV+ people on ART are virally suppressed



83% of women aged 15 and older living with HIV were virally suppressed in 2022



84.2% of women who knew they were HIV-positive before pregnancy were already on ART prior to pregnancy.

Maternal wellbeing

Access to skilled care before, during and after childbirth can save the lives of both mothers and newborns. In South Africa, significant progress has been made in providing these essential services at free public health clinics, leading to better outcomes for women and their babies.



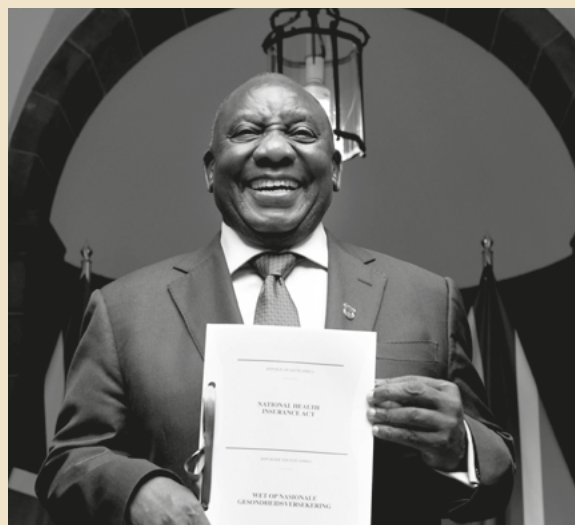
23.4% reduction in **maternal mortality** in facility ratio (MMFR)

- The **maternal mortality** in facility ratio (MMFR) decreased from:
 - **114.9 deaths** per 100,000 live births to
 - **88 deaths** per 100,000 live births by 2020
- The **neonatal death** in facility rate (iNMR) in facilities stabilised at:
 - **12.1 deaths** per 1,000 live births between 2018 and 2020.



3.1% reduction in **early neonatal death rates**

- Early neonatal death rates decreased from:
 - **9.8 deaths** per 1,000 live births to
 - **9.5 deaths** per 1,000 live births during the same period.



National Health Insurance

The National Health Insurance (NHI) is a health financing system that aims to provide access to quality healthcare for all South Africans as enshrined in the Constitution – regardless of their ability to pay. President Cyril Ramaphosa signed the NHI Bill into law in May 2024, paving the way for the implementation of the NHI.

Universal healthcare is vital to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our society, including women. Only 17% of women in South Africa have medical aid coverage, making NHI a crucial programme for improving access to quality health care.

Current progress

60 million people registered on NHI database

3,000+ clinics registered on NHI database

34 hospitals registered on NHI database

Securing women's land rights

STRENGTHENING LAWS AND POLICIES

OWNERSHIP AND OPPORTUNITY

Ensuring equitable land access is crucial for advancing gender equality and economic empowerment in South Africa. Government has prioritised land access for women farmers, recognising their vital role in agricultural productivity and rural development.

Despite these efforts, challenges persist. The legacy of apartheid and discriminatory practices have created significant barriers. Cultural norms also continue to restrict progress, particularly in rural areas where patriarchal systems dominate.

Although women are active participants in agriculture, especially in subsistence farming, their access to land for homesteads and businesses remains limited. Only a fraction of government's land reform programme beneficiaries are women.

More work is needed to ensure women can fully benefit. Training in agricultural techniques is also essential for turning land ownership into sustainable economic empowerment. Partnerships with traditional leaders and investments in rural infrastructure are key.

Various measures and programmes have been put in place to ensure more women become landowners in South Africa.

Extension of Security of Tenure Act

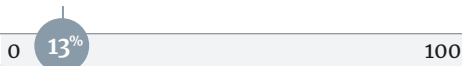
- Grants women equal land rights by including them in the definition of 'occupier'
- Ensures women have the same rights as men

Land Redistribution Programme

Land Tenure Reform Programme

White Paper on Land Reform

Gender Policy Framework by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform



13% of farms and agricultural land are owned by women



8,763 of 21,517 beneficiaries in the land redistribution programme were women between 2009 and 2017

Fortune 40 Youth Farmer Incubation Programme

INTERVENTION STRATEGIES



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Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP)
 • Provides support to women farmers by improving access to land, agricultural training, and resources.

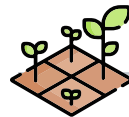
The Mpumalanga Fortune 40 Youth Farmer Incubation Programme aims to foster and accelerate the growth of agriculture and agro-processing sectors and catalyse the participation of youth in the farming sector.

A fair and transparent recruitment and selection process was followed in choosing the beneficiaries, who are mainly youth and women.

The beneficiary youth were placed in a farm within a 50-kilometre radius from their homes. Eleven incubators were appointed based on their experience and capacity.

The Fortune 40 farms currently span a total of 1,600 hectares, with the potential for expansion as additional farms are acquired.

PROGRESS BY NUMBERS



2.3 million+ individuals have benefited from land reform



177,504 female-headed households have benefited from land reform



593,167 hectares of land transferred



83,056 land claims settled

STORIES OF IMPACT



CITRUS FARMER FINDS SUCCESS WITH GOVERNMENT BACKING

Once a trained social worker, Louisa Maloka-Mogotsi transformed her career path with the help of government support, opening the doors to the international citrus-farming market.

In 2016, Maloka-Mogotsi acquired a 66-hectare farm in Mooinooi, thanks to financial assistance from the North West Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The funding not only enabled her to purchase the land but also provided the necessary equipment to expand production and improve the quality of her crops.

Today, she exports several orange varieties and Lisbon lemons to the Middle East and Russia. “I appreciate that with the intervention the government gave us, I can steer the business in the right direction,” she reflects.

Funding and upskilling female farmers is a key government priority, as highlighted by the MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Desbo Mohono. “I am encouraging youth and female farmers to take heed of the opportunities presented to them by the government,” she notes. “They should not underestimate their potential with the belief that agriculture is a male-dominated industry. The department is committed to providing quality services and support to emerging farmers.”