



women, youth &  
persons with disabilities

Department:  
Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**DRAFT COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**  
**ACCELERATING SOCI-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN**  
**JANUARY 2016**

## PROLOGUE

“We women do not want to form a society separate from men. There is only one society, and that society is made up of both women and men. As women we share the problems and anxieties of our men, and join hands with them to remove social evils and obstacles to progress.” Women’s Charter, 1954

This declaration was made by women of South Africa, united in their diversity fourteen months before the Freedom Charter was adopted in Kliptown. Women converged under the umbrella of the Federation of South African Women and adopted the Women’s Charter at its founding conference. The Women’s Charter became a blueprint of demands of South African women and a rallying document that united women behind the Federation of South African Women. They went further to declare that:

“It is our intention to carry a nation-wide programme of education that will bring home to the men and women of all national groups the realization that freedom cannot be won for any one section or for the people as a whole as long as we women are kept in bondage.”

In June 1955 the Freedom Charter was adopted containing fundamental ideas of a South Africa united in diversity and free from all bondages of oppression. This is particularly important for the struggle for women’s emancipation because Freedom Charter served as a foundation for a non-sexist, non-racial, united and democratic South Africa. Subsequent to the adoption of the Freedom Charter 20 000 women from all races marched to the Union Building demanding an end to the pass laws.

Since the dawn of democracy South Africa has enacted a number of reforms and legislative frameworks to address gender equality and women’s empowerment. Our government has also established a number of institutions to protect the rights of women and ensure women empowerment as a key element of building a South Africa that truly belongs to all who live in it.





Twenty-one years into democracy the Department of Women noted the need to evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions, amongst other given the ongoing scourge of violence against women. The Department will therefore embark on national dialogues reaching out to communities in all provinces.

The Department is also preparing for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1956 Women's March in 2016. These concurrent processes provide a critical opportunity to assess progress, review policies and programmes and position on gender equality and women's empowerment. This year's theme for August month is: **"Women United in Moving South Africa Forward"** which emphasizes Unity of purpose among women and their vital role as agents of development. The Department will also launch a Report on the Status of Women in August 2015 as announced by the President on Women's day 2014. This report will review progress, as well as barriers that continue to militate against women empowerment.

The African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government, during the 23rd Ordinary Session, held from 26 to 27 June 2014 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, declared 2015 as **"the Year of Women Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063"**, marking the 20th Anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action (1995), the 5th Anniversary of the African Women's Decade (2010-2020).

A 1994 study based on World Bank data found that out of about ten selected risk factors facing women, rape and domestic violence rated higher than cancer, motor vehicle accidents, war and malaria. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of December 2014 His Excellency, President Jacob Zuma made a clarion call that the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children should cease to be only a 16 days of activism but it should be a 365 days activism. This led to the Department launching **"#365DAYS"** and its flagship programme **"#CountMeIn"** aimed at mobilizing all South African including men to join hands with government in the fight against gender based violence.





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## 2. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Communication Strategy of the Department is designed for a period of five years in line with the Strategic Plan of the Department. It will form the basis for Annual Communication Plans that will be informed by the Departmental Annual Performance Plan, public relations plans, web strategy as well as marketing plans. It calls for regular, focused and continuous communication throughout the term. It identifies the need to strengthen the capacity of government to influence public perceptions and the media agenda as key.

This communication strategy is a tool designed to help the Department of Women to effectively communicate its mission, vision and thereby meet its core objectives as contained in the Strategic Plan (2014 – 2019). It will assist the Department in achieving the following:

- Build the Brand of the Department of Women and profile DOW by popularizing its objectives and programmes through consistent communication
- Communicate messages that build and instill confidence in the DOW as a credible gender nodal point that is capable of being a custodian of gender equality and women's empowerment
- Ensure that the mandate of DOW and its contribution to nation-building and social cohesion are communicated effectively
- Change behaviour or perceptions regarding gender issues and the role of women in society.
- Provide the public with timely, accurate, clear information about Department's policies, programmes, plans, services and initiatives.
- Provide the public with co-ordinated, well planned, effectively managed communication / information that is delivered within budget and is perceived as value for money.
- Enhance access to information that enables women to participate in the country's transformation and in bettering their lives.
- Continuously ensure that the Department is visible, accessible and accountable to the public it serves.
- Ensure that the Department consults with the public, listens to and takes into account the needs and interests of the people when establishing priorities, developing policies and planning programmes and services.
- Promote a dialogue between citizens and government through debate and discussion.



- Consistently profile DOW's work through a range of communications platforms in order to promote understanding of the departmental activities
- Establish partnerships with a range of stakeholders including the private sector, academia, research institutions and non-governmental organisations.

In order to achieve the above, the DOW Communication strategy is aligned to the National Communication Framework (2014-2019) driven by the Government Communication and Information Services (GCIS). The alignment will go a long way in strengthening the coordinated and integrated approach to government communication.



## 2. OVERVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Conceptual Framework

According to the National Strategic Communication Framework (2014-2019), the government communication is the life blood and the strategic element in service delivery. The effective transparent and productive communication is essential to the achievement of the mandate of DoW. It is the medium through which the Department's vision and goals are interpreted and understood by both its internal and external stakeholders. The following is conceptual framework necessary for understanding key concept within this strategy:

#### a) Communication

The word communication originates from the Latin word '*communicatio*' which has two major denotations: a) making common, imparting; and b) taking one's audience into one's confidence. It means the imparting or exchange of information by speaking, writing or using any other medium such as television, radio etc. It also includes sending and receiving information through internet.

It is a process of expression and interpretation of messages, imparting ideas between the communicator and the recipient with an aim of arriving at mutual understanding, in which participants not only exchange (encode-decode) information, news, ideas and feelings but also create and share meaning. In general, communication is a means of connecting people or places. In the modern world, it is a key function of management. An organization cannot operate without communication between levels, departments and employees. At a broader government level, communication also embraces both media liaison and direct communication with the public, hence the role and scope of government communications is defined to mean a citizen-focused continuous dialogue.





## **b) Strategy**

Is the long term direction and scope of an organization whose ultimate goal is to achieve competitive advantage for the organization through management of its resources within a demanding environment. It is a process of analysis, where organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are used to determine a course of action or direction. This communication strategy will therefore make an analysis of the communication strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within which the Department of Women operates.

Communication Strategy of the Department of Women can therefore be summarised as a long term approach to exchanging information, news and ideas with a view of influencing public perception and changing the mind-set around gender equality and women's empowerment.

The success of this strategy will require both the leadership and the management of the Department to work together in ensuring that key messages are communicated timeously to the key audiences of the Department.

## **c) Strategic Communication**

To drive the Department to speak in one voice, the Department has to adopt a strategic communication approach. This approach is more than just getting the right message out but it also seeks to ensure that the communication programmes is directly linked to the mandate of the Department. The success of a strategic communication is based on a clear communication strategy supported by a detailed annual communication plan.

Through the strategic communication, the Department will be able to convey deliberate messages through the most suitable channels and platforms to the designated audiences at the appropriate time and thus contribute to the achievement of the overall objectives of the Department. The strategic communication will assist the Department in:

- Responding to the ever-changing communication environment
- Systematically applying the process, strategies and principles of communication to bring about positive social change





- Developing people-centred approach to promoting changes in people's attitudes and behaviour to achieve development objectives
- In distributing messages that while different in style and purpose but have inner coherence

## 2.2 Institutional Framework

The Department of Women was established in 2014 to promote gender equality and socio-economic empowerment of women. The President recognised that while the achievement of gender mainstreaming in all departments across the tiers of government and throughout society is the desired outcome, there is a need for a Minister in the Presidency responsible for Women to champion and monitor this cause.

## 2.3 Policy and Legislative Framework

### a) The Constitution

The Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic envisages a united, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous nation that is anchored on the respect of human rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights which includes gender equality. It furthermore provides that legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons or categories of persons disadvantaged by unfair discrimination, may be taken to promote the achievement of equality.

The department derives its mandate from the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The Department of Women has replaced its predecessor, the Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities in 2014. The mandate of the DWCP was primarily focused on promoting rights of all vulnerable groups. With the establishment of the Department of Women located in the Presidency, the mandate of the Department thereby evolved from promotion of rights to promotion of gender equality and socio-economic empowerment of women.



## **b) National Development Plan (NDP)**

The National Development Plan has been adopted by government as a long-term plan to eliminate unemployment, poverty and inequality in South Africa by 2030. In addition the NDP envisages a South African society that is democratic and prosperous by 2030. To achieve this society, the NDP sets as an imperative a need to overcome social and economic exclusions because they are causes as well as outcomes of poverty and inequality. The achievement of the NDP requires a new approach – one that moves from passive citizenry receiving services from the state to one that systematically includes the socially and economically excluded particularly women.

The successful achievement of the plan therefore requires that citizens become active participants in development, the capacity of the state is built, and leadership /partnerships are promoted. The NDP identifies that there is a growing distance between citizens and government that needs to be reduced if South Africa is to reach its developmental goals. This therefore means that government needs to communicate more effectively with citizens.

## **c) Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF)**

The MTSF contains a comprehensive plan for a five year period and is approved by Cabinet. This is a Framework that focuses on the priorities of government, setting targets to be achieved in specific time frames and budgeting for these. This is the principal guide for the planning and allocation of resources across all spheres of government. The MTSF has 14 priority outcomes which cover focus areas as they appear in the NDP.

These are: quality basic education, improving health outcomes, reducing crime, creating jobs, developing the skills and infrastructure required by the economy, rural development, sustainable human settlements, effective and efficient local government and public service, the environment, international relations, social development, and social cohesion and nation building. The Department of Women (DoW) contributes towards the achievement of Outcomes 2 (health), 3 (safety), 4 (economy), 13 (social protection) and 14 (nation building).



#### **d) National Communication Strategy Framework (NCSF)**

The National Communication Strategy Framework (NCSF) is informed by the MTSF and therefore ultimately the NDP. The NCSF outlines a communications vision and approach for government. The NCSF (2014 – 2019) outlines communication tactics for the period that include consideration of the role of GCIS, how to strengthen intergovernmental communication, strengthening communication at provincial and local level; building partnerships etc. A communication plan to support these tactics has also been developed by the GCIS.

#### **e) The South African National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality (2000)**

The main purpose of this policy is to establish a clear vision and framework for gender mainstreaming across laws, policies, procedures and practices which will serve to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all spheres and structures of government as well as in the workplace, the community and the family. The main objectives are to:

- create an enabling policy environment for translating government commitment to gender equality into a reality;
- develop policies, programmes and mechanisms to empower women and to transform gender relations in all aspects of work, at all levels of government as well as within the broader society;
- ensure that gender considerations are effectively integrated into all aspects of government policies, activities and programmes;
- establish an institutional framework for the advancement of the status of women as well as the achievement of gender equality; and
- advocate for the promotion of new attitudes, values and behaviour, and a culture of respect of women's rights as human rights in line with the policy.





### 3. COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT

Trends in the environment play an important role in determining the key strategic issues for communication. Central to the character of the current environment is the fact that the Department of Women has evolved from an organization that focused on the plight of marginalised and vulnerable groups to an organization that is focusing on women socio-economic empowerment and gender equality. The reconfiguration and reorganization of the Department provides focused attention on issues of socio-economic empowerment and gender equality previously dealt with as part of the empowerment agenda of marginalised and vulnerable groups. The environmental scan is divided into two components, namely; PEST Analysis and the SWOT Analysis.

#### 3.1. Pest Analysis

PEST Analysis involves listing of the Political, Economic, Social and Technological factors that could affect the communication environment of the department.

##### a) Political Factors

The legislative and institutional framework of South Africa reflect the reality that it remains resolute in promoting gender equality, women's rights as human's rights and women empowerment in all spheres of life. In addition the President has elevated the status of the Department of Women to be located in the highest office in the land. Increasingly there is a realization that women plays a critical role in nation building and should be integrated in all sectors relevant to the economy. The Department of Women should develop enough capacity to continue to monitor the implementation of gender parity within decision-making structures both in government and in the private sector.





According to the Medium Term Strategic Framework and as pronounced by the president of the Republic of South Africa in 2014, South Africa has begun a new phase of its democratic transition. The mandate of the fifth democratic government is to deepen transformation and implement the National Development Plan (NDP). It is to accelerate growth, create decent work and promote investment in a competitive economy. To realize this mandate government will continue to be guided by our Constitutional commitment to “improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person”. Over the last 21 years, the first phase of our democratic transition, the foundations have been laid for a non-racial, non-sexist, united and prosperous South Africa, and for a society based on fundamental human rights, equality and unity in diversity. The people’s dignity has been restored. Non-racial majority rule based on one-person, one-vote has brought about government based on the will of the people.

The location of DoW in the Presidency has been hailed as a mechanism of elevating women socio-economic empowerment and gender equality to the highest Office in the land. The location of DoW in the Presidency is aimed at accelerating socio-economic transformation for women’s empowerment and advancement of gender equality. The Department has a dynamic role to play in enhancing the implementation of the National Development Plan (Vision 2030) by ensuring that its implementation is gender mainstreamed and responsive to needs of South African women.

While the department of Women does not administer any legislation apart from the Commission on Gender Equality Act, there is a wide range of legislation that has a direct impact on the mandate of the department within the framework of protection, support and promotion of gender equality and women’s rights across all sectors of society.



**International Obligations:** The section of the Preamble of the Constitution commits South Africa to comply with international law and human rights standards. The Constitution is aligned with and also serves as an instrument for facilitating South Africa's compliance with its international human rights obligations. Many of the international human rights standards and resultant obligations relate to women's human rights and the duty of parties to take measures to eradicate inequality between women and men in all spheres of life, including the justice system, the family, societal practices and the economy.

Therefore by adopting these instruments for the advancement of the socio-economic empowerment of women in the country, Government committed itself to their full and effective implementation at the national level. South Africa is a signatory to several regional and international commitments on women's empowerment and gender equality. These include the following:

- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, signed in September 1995
- United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) ( December 1995), signed in 1995 and ratified in 1997
- Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000), adopted in 2000
- African Union Heads of States' Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, adapted and ratified in August 2004
- Optional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (AU Women's Protocol) (December 2004), ratified on 17 December 2004
- Commonwealth Plan of Action for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality 2005-2015, adopted in 2005
- SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (2012), ratified in 2011



## **b) Economic Factors**

As the Twenty Year Review and the National Planning Commission's 2011 Diagnostic Report highlight – poverty, inequality and unemployment continue to negatively affect the lives of many people and women are at the receiving end. The second phase of our democratic transition calls for bold and decisive steps to place the economy on a qualitatively different path that eliminates poverty, creates jobs and sustainable livelihoods, and substantially reduces inequality. This requires radical economic transformation and a sustained focus on addressing the uneven quality of service delivery.

Women are far more vulnerable to and deeply affected by poverty than men, face overwhelming institutionalized challenges in gaining access to land and land ownership, employment, and remain largely unrecognized by and excluded from the formal economy. If a national strategy to reduce poverty, exclusion and inequality, such as the NDP, does not specifically recognize and address these engendered imbalances and vulnerabilities, then it will unwittingly perpetuate them, and have very little prospect of socio-economic transforming towards a gender equal society.

The burden of poverty borne by women as a result of lack of income and economic opportunities signifies a phenomenon in our country where women represent a disproportionate percentage of the poor due to gender prejudices and economic policies that do not favour women. Feminization of poverty remains one of the key challenges facing women of our country.





The economic empowerment of women remains a prerequisite of reducing poverty in our society and dismantling patriarchy. Therefore the Department of Women should be strategically placed to actively advocate for radical economic transformation. Economic empowerment on the other hand is about women's capacity to contribute to and benefit from economic opportunities on terms which recognize the value of women's contribution, respect their dignity and make it possible for women to negotiate a fairer distribution of returns. It is also about changing institutions and norms that inhibit women's economic participation, such as attitudes about child care or the type of work that women can or cannot do, including decision making.

The economic participation of women, therefore, in terms of women representation in places of employment across sectors is important not only for reducing the disproportionate levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality among women, but also as an important step toward raising household income and encouraging economic development in the country as a whole. In addition economic participation concerns not only the actual numbers of women participating in the labour force, but also their skills, remuneration levels as well as access to funding.

A possible measure to increase economic benefits for women across sectors is perhaps through the facilitation of access to economic opportunities which would address the quality of women's participation in the economy, beyond their mere presence as workers or women in entry level businesses.

Meaningful empowerment and participation of women in all sectors of the economy require significant changes in power relations. Many approaches to empowerment tend to focus on power relations among actors and strengthening capabilities to act but do not always pay attention to shifting the structures, societal norms and barriers that enable and constrain the behavior of all actors.







The economic participation of women, therefore, in terms of women representation in places of employment across sectors is important not only for reducing the disproportionate levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality among women, but also as an important step toward raising household income and encouraging economic development in the country as a whole. In addition economic participation concerns not only the actual numbers of women participating in the labour force, but also their skills, remuneration levels as well as access to funding.

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Fundamentally, there is only one society, and it is therefore incumbent upon both women and men, to work together to eradicate patriarchal practices and stereotypical attitudes. The engagement of men and boys is invaluable in advancing women's rights as human rights in achieving gender equality. In this regard, more work needs to be done to ensure the transformation of power relations between women, men, institutions and laws; elements that are fundamental in building an inclusive, progressive and prosperous society. Collective efforts will be directed at addressing gender inequality, poverty, unemployment and sexism, in order to create a transformed society which enables women to take control of their lives.

Women's access to land and property is central to women's economic empowerment as land can serve as basis for food and income generation, collateral for credit, and a means of holding savings for the future. Moreover, gender equality in land ownership is important as it is shown to improve agricultural productivity and strengthen the ability of households to manage economic shocks. Evidence shows that gender inclusion of land rights can reduce domestic violence (Action Aid 2008) and that women who own land are more capable of exiting violent relationships and negotiating safe sex.



Women face particular barriers in obtaining land. The land redistribution programme must therefore target women. Institutions, practices and laws that discriminate against women's access to land must be reviewed and brought in line with national policy. In particular, tenure and matrimonial laws must be revised appropriately.

There is a significant gender gap in land ownership as a result of women having limited participation in local and traditional land administration structures and the lack of land being allocated to single women. The acknowledgement of women's rights is still limited. There is strong perception of negative attitudes from service providers, traditional leaders/chiefs as well as hostile rules and practices of customary law and patriarchal household and community relations. Thus, notwithstanding the security of land tenure being a right in the Constitution and the various land reform programmes and targeted policies in the last thirty years, land ownership still remains elusive for most women in South Africa.

### **c) Social Factors**

One of the key elements of the mandate of our government is therefore to eradicate poverty, inequality and underdevelopment. The socio-economic empowerment of women still remains a cardinal goal and an anchor for the achievement of this mandate and above all for a free democratic and prosperous South Africa. Given the legacy of women's oppression generally and specifically African women, government is biased towards the working class and rural women. The struggle for women emancipation was not only about political emancipation but economic empowerment, equal representation, access to justice and land rights amongst.

Empowerment, as understood and promoted in the context of development, reducing the inequality gap, eliminating poverty and increasing decent work for women, is a multidimensional and interdependent process involving implemented and monitored social, political, economic and legal changes that will enable women to participate meaningfully in shaping their own futures. Without meaningful empowerment, participation can quickly become a token exercise or even a means of maintaining power relations; and without meaningful participation, empowerment can remain an unfulfilled promise.



Socialization of boys and girls within a patriarchal system has led to a situation where in religion and culture has been used to oppress women and treat them as second class citizens. This is despite the progressive policies of government. This socialization has led to social ills such a gender based violence. The launch of #365 Days of Activism on no violence against women and children together with #CountMeIn will assist in changing the mind-set and ensuring that all South Africans works with government in ending gender based violence.

Meaningful empowerment and participation require significant changes in power relations. Many approaches to empowerment tend to focus on power relations among actors and strengthening capabilities to act but do not always pay attention to shifting the structures, societal norms and barriers that enable and constrain the behaviour of all actors, that is, men and women including those in power and those that vote them in.

Thus social empowerment is about changing society for instance changing gender norms so that women's place within it is respected and recognised on the terms on which they want to live, not on terms dictated by others. A sense of autonomy and self-value is important for women to preserve their integrity, participate in democratic processes and the economy allowing them to be in a position to, for instance, demand equal pay for equal work and take full advantage of public services, such as, rural development, paying the necessary attention to the need for food security; health as an integral aspect in responding to gender based violence; justice in terms of equal access, education for amongst others, young women ensuring adequate technological support and employment across all economic sectors.

Fundamentally, there is only one society, and it is therefore incumbent upon both women and men, to work together to eradicate patriarchal practices and stereotypical attitudes. The engagement of men and boys is invaluable in advancing women's rights as human rights in achieving gender equality. In this regard, more work needs to be done to ensure the transformation of power relations between women, men, institutions and laws; elements that are fundamental in building an inclusive, progressive and prosperous society. Collective efforts will be directed at addressing gender inequality, poverty, unemployment and sexism, in order to create a transformed society which enables women to take control of their lives.



The general socio-economic, cultural and environmental conditions that include the living and working conditions; social and community influences and individual lifestyle factors are social determinants of health in South Africa. There have been major efforts to address factors such as poverty, underdevelopment and unemployment; access to basic services such as water, sanitation, electricity, fuel, housing; and provision of social security nets such as social grants. These are having positive impacts on health outcomes and the empowerment of women in the country. South Africa has improved access to basic services through improving access to water, sanitation, electricity, roads and housing to a large extent which is critical for good health outcomes.

Among others, the National Health Act provides for free health care service for all citizens, pregnant women and children under 6 years, at hospital level, has resulted in enhanced access to primary health care services for all in South Africa.

Education is central to gender equality. Education improves access to the labour market, specifically higher skilled and more remunerative occupations but it also enables individuals to engage more meaningfully in society. For women, education is important in opening up higher skilled areas of the labour market that have traditionally been dominated by men, but it is also important in empowering women, providing them a more equal footing in their engagements within male-dominated or patriarchal institutions and spheres.

Social norms; like land ownership; often allocate men to the role of bread-winner and relegate women to doing unpaid work within the household or on the land. Across the entire life course, females spend more time in household production or unpaid work than do males, with the gap particularly large in the years around age 30 (more than three hours per day). These are the prime ages for childbearing and childrearing, which make particular demands on women's time.





Globally women earn on average 24 per cent less and do two and a half times more unpaid care and domestic work than men. The fact that women are less likely to have an independent source of income may result in uneven distribution of power within the household.

Studies examining poverty and household composition find that per capita household earnings tend to be lower in households with a larger share of women because of lower female labour market participation and earnings. There is also a greater risk of poverty in 'female-only' households – amongst separated and widowed women, as well as single mothers and female-headed households (UN Women, 2015).

While it is clear that poverty rates remain high for both genders and are of national concern, the plight of women is particularly alarming, especially when evaluating poverty at the household-level. In addition to facing higher poverty rates than men, the rate at which female headcount poverty has decreased between 2008 and 2012 has been generally slower (or non-existent) when compared with changes in male poverty rates.

Rural areas are still disproportionately affected by poverty and rural women are considerably more vulnerable to poverty than those living in urban areas. Those women living in rural areas face high unemployment rates as they are spatially separated from income-earning opportunities. This is aggravated by lack of access to productive resources, such as arable land, credit and technology, which intensifies their risk of poverty compared with women living in urban areas.

Equality between the sexes is therefore a key component of poverty eradication as female ownership and access to resources, as well as higher female education levels, lead to greater female productivity and participation in the labour market (UN, 2011). This in turn enables women to contribute considerably to lifting their households out of poverty.





In addition, women who lack the resources necessary to survive often become dependent on a male partner for their livelihood. This may exacerbate domestic violence as women are unable to extract themselves from harmful situations due to their excessive financial dependence on their partners.

**Violence Against Women and Children:** The scourge of violence against women and children continue to be one of the key challenges facing our country. Incidents of rape, abuse and violence are reported daily to the Police, the media, etc. and many are not reported leaving some victims to suffer in silence.

Various efforts have been made by government, civil society, private sector and media in communicating messages against gender-based violence and on programmes that are implemented to prevent and combat gender-based violence and abuse against children - hence an increased reporting on gender-based violence in the past few years. Whilst government has established legislation to provide protection to vulnerable persons who fall victim to sexual offences, we need to continue to educate society more on these legal instruments and promote greater access to them.

Despite South Africa's constitutional and legislative protection, violence based on gender and sexual orientation, remains at unacceptable levels. The violence takes different forms such as sexual harassment, abuse, assault, rape, domestic violence and other cultural practices that are harmful to women and children. According to recent police statistics, reporting of these crimes has increased even though the crime is also on the rise.

To ensure heightened awareness and the elimination of violence against women and children, South Africa extended the period of the campaign from 16 days to 365 days campaign against violence against women and children. Government has therefore adopted **#365 Days of Activism** on no Violence Against Women and Children as well as **#CountMeIn**.



In 2014, the GCIS in collaboration with the Department of Women conducted a communication research on 16 days of Activism on no violence against women and children. The research findings noted that awareness of 16 days was on the rise in SA until 2012 and in 2013 there was a huge decline of awareness programmes. On the other hand the report noted the rise in the incident of violence against Women and Children. Based on this, the campaign messages and approach had to change. This led to the slogan **“Don’t look Away”** being replaced by **“Count me In: Together Moving a Non – Violent South Africa forward.”** To this end, a three year Communication Strategy was adopted in partnership with Crime Line. The Strategy saw the launch of **#365 Days of Activism** and the **#CountMeIn** campaign. The objective of these campaigns was to call every member of society to commit and stands against this scourge.

In the past few years the partnership between government and civil society has improved in the fight against violence directed at women and children. The participation by civil society in the campaign is critical to achieve the desired impact and reach of the campaign. There is a strong sense of recognition of the importance of working together. The new campaign theme: Count me in was inspired by the need to re-establish and commit to a partnership between government and civil society.

The media continue to raise awareness by exposing cases of violence against women and children. However, there is a need for sustained exposure of success stories as a mechanism of encouraging more victims to come to the fore. The media should also play a greater educational role in the campaign. The media will be encouraged to serve as an educational platform for women and children who are abused. We need to encourage sensitive, professional and responsible coverage and reporting of these issues. Efforts should be made to encourage women and children to report abuse and violence.





Many women have been victims of intimate partner violence. The most common form of intimate partner violence is emotional violence which is usually not addressed in police statistics. Patriarchal norms of wife ownership, sexual entitlement following marriage and the legitimacy of violence as a means of controlling wives drives gender-based violence.

There is reluctance on the part of victims of violence to come forward and seek legal advice and social support. This could be due to a lack of knowledge of their rights, the social stigma around domestic violence or the inaccessibility for rural women of police and courts. In cases where false reporting of rape has occurred, the individuals must be made aware of the impact of their actions, through popularization of key messages.

Success of the campaigns against abuse and violence directed at women and children is dependent on the partnership between government and various sectors of society including the media. The private sector has been keen to participate in the campaign to widen the message and reach of the campaign. There is greater recognition that by working together as men and women, we are more likely to make an impact and contribute towards a decrease in violent crime against women and children. Looking at the 16 Days Campaign in the context of the #365 Days of Activism and participation of various stakeholders, there are communication opportunities to heighten communication on gender-based violence and profile the work done by government and various partners.

#### **d) Technological Factors**

Technological innovation is a feature of our rapidly changing communication environment. Government needs to be up-to-date with these technological developments and be aware of how this technology can benefit the public. Communication campaigns must consider the most appropriate communication channels/methods that would suit a particular audience.







Where necessary, the Government must continue to use traditional forms of media in conjunction with new media so as to not exclude members of the public who for different reasons might not have access to online information.

In addition to Facebook and Twitter the Department of Women has launched various social media platforms such as DOW You Tube channel, Instagram and Google plus. The Department has also launched an online radio which is accessible through the **media room** menu item on the Department of Women's website. The radio is running continuously and can be accessed anytime, anywhere. The online radio features speeches, interviews, and media statements relevant to the work of the Department. The content will be continuously refreshed to cover the emerging work of the Department.

Digital tools have the potential to revolutionize the operation of the Department because most people today have access to internet and use internet to access services including information management. The Department has a functional website that is easily accessible with user-friendly tools. The Department has not fully optimized social media space to articulate its policies and profile its work.



## 3.2. SWOT Analysis

### a) Strengths

The Department has completed the transfer of functions and programmes related to the rights of people with disabilities and of children to the Department of Social Development. The first phase of the re-alignment and the restructuring process has been finalized with the Department tabling the Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan in Parliament in March 2015.

### b) Weaknesses

It cannot be denied that the public has a very negative perception of the performance and role of the department. This negative perception arises in part from a mistaken understanding of the mandate of the department. In addition, factors such as increased irregular expenditure, perceived excessive travelling have strengthened these negative perceptions.

### c) Opportunities

One of the critical challenges facing the department is limited understanding of its mandate. The other related challenge is that the establishment of the department and the value it adds are still contested in the public domain. The priority for the department is to aggressively communicate the mandate, contribution and challenges that the department is grappling with. We must rally communities and stakeholders behind the programme and vision of the department. Messages will include the mandate of the department, achievements of the department as well as the turn-around strategy.





#### **d) Threats**

The late response to media queries in the past has led to negative perceptions about the department. The department will therefore need to continue to develop capacity to respond promptly to negative and potentially damaging stories/ issues in the environment. This would imply that whilst this is reactive in nature it ensures that the department secures an early place amongst the litany of voices that permeate the media agenda.

The other threat is that the Department mostly respond to queries and does not set the media agenda. We must build on the achievements of August 2015 and make sure that our communication work has foresight and does not become a rainbow after the rain chasing after stories generated by the media.

At the level of good governance, the Department must also acknowledge the limits of communication and the fact that communication is not a panacea for service delivery and good governance. Communication can only be effective as a support mechanism to the core function as well as the real and concrete delivery on the identified priorities for the Department. It is difficult to sustain a message of delivery when evidence and practical reality on the ground negates such a message. Our commitment to ensure gender equality and women empowerment must be practically demonstrated, not merely asserted.

Our media relations work must be message-driven and less events-driven. Communicating the on-going implementation of the department's programme and its mandate on an on-going basis will turn the tide of public opinion in favour of the department.



### 3.3. Influences within the communication environment

There are three main factors in the communication environment of the Department that will affect its responses and what the Department can and cannot do. These factors are:

- Resources: The nature of human and financial resources available to the organization;
- Processes: The patterns of interaction, co-ordination, communication and decision-making that can be used to transform resources into products and services. Processes may be formal and explicitly defined and documented, or informal.
- Value: The benefit that the organization can gain from resources and processes utilized. It also includes the significance of the required communication and the impact of the communication process both internally and externally.

The Department of Women places great value on the need to communicate effectively with its internal and external stakeholders. In order to communicate effectively, the Department must understand the environment within which it operates. This communication strategy will be informed by the contextual environment in which DOW operates as well as its mandate and the resources at its disposal.





### 3.4. Competitor Analysis

While the department does not necessarily have competitors, there are organisations that operate in a similar environment as the department. These include the Commission for Gender Equality, Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation located in the Presidency and Civil Society Organizations.

It is also important to note that some Civil Society Organizations operates in such a way that they want to contest the gender equality and women empowerment space with DOW and do not necessarily complement its work. This is however limited to a very small portion of the CSO's.

For the purpose of this Communication Strategy it is necessary that the department ranks and monitors the effectiveness of its communication strategy against that of organisations in similar environment.

|      | WEBSITE  | MEDIA PRESENCE                                    | STRENGTH OF BRAND  | SPOKESPEOPLE  |
|------|--|---|--|---|
| CGE  | 4/5 – strong colours, easy to navigate, good use of case studies | 1/5 – one trade press appearance in last 3 months | 3/5 – strong logo and name but not always associated with the range of issues they cover | 5/5 – high profile chief exec and board with the Chairperson occupying the space of the key Messenger |
| DPME | 5/5 – well designed, easy to                                     | 4/5 – regularly called upon to                    | 5/5 – strong brand and   | 4/5 – good high profile   |





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|                             | use and well linked to other resources. Good integration with social media outlets                       | respond to issues relating to the sector. Seem to lack proactive media comments though | chosen commentator on their area of specialism   | spokespeople but limited service user voices |
| Civil Society Organizations | 4/5 strong colours, easy to navigate, good use of case studies, linkages to services within their sector | 4/5 Regular appearance on the media e.g. Sonke Justice, Gender Links                   | 5/5 – strong logo and name but not always associated with the range of issues they cover | 4/5 – good high profile spokespeople         |

The following is a summary of the Department of Women as compared to the above structures:

|            | WEBSITE   | MEDIA PRESENCE                      | STRENGTH OF BRAND   | SPOKESPEOPLE   |
|------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>DoW</b> | 3/5 strong colours, Use of photos to profile departmental work, easy navigation | 3/5 Regular appearance on the media | 1/5 Brand not well established or non-existent except for the government code of arms and the August month Logo | 2/5 – Minister as the key messenger with limited supporting spokespeople |



## 4. ORGANISATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

### a) Organizational Objectives

The Department endeavours to build “a society that realises the socio-economic empowerment of women and the advancement of gender equality”. In order to achieve the above we shall strive to “accelerate socio-economic transformation for women empowerment and the advancement of gender equality”. The Department aspires to adhere to the highest standards of ethical behaviour and continuous application of the following core values from which we operate and respond:

- Innovation and creativity
- Integrity and Honesty
- Accountability, transparency and openness
- Equity, equality and fairness
- Courtesy, responsiveness and commitment
- Respect and Trust

Over and above values that informs our character as a department we aspire for a society that entrenches values of equity and equality across race, colour and gender; eradicate the oppression of women and promote a dignified quality of life and sustainable livelihoods. In the next five years, the priority of the DoW will be to ensure that women’s socio-economic empowerment and women’s rights are mainstreamed across all sectors of society through:

- Policy analysis to ensure engendered transformation for socio-economic empowerment of women and gender equality;
- Provide advice on policy implementation to ensure women’s socio-economic empowerment and gender equality;
- Develop intervention mechanisms for women’s economic empowerment;
- Develop intervention mechanisms for advancing women’s social empowerment;
- Develop a gender monitoring system to monitor progress made on women’s socio-economic empowerment and gender equality; and





- Conducting outreach initiatives, information dissemination and gathering to promote women’s socio-economic empowerment and gender equality.

**b) Communication Objectives**

The communication strategy is driven by the fundamental values of democracy, openness and public participation. For the purpose of this strategy, the communication objectives are as follows:

| OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE  | COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVE   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve internal communication and ensure that staff is well informed of the work of Department and what is expected of them.</li> <li>• A more engage staff who better understand the connection between their jobs and the government vision as well as the departmental mandate.</li> <li>• Managers who are better equipped to have regular conversations with their staff including, but not limited times when faced with difficult decisions.</li> <li>• Make sure that staff members actively participate in communication platforms created by the Department</li> <li>• Improve the moral of staff members</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build the Brand of the Department of Women and profile DOW by popularizing its objectives and programmes through consistent communication</li> <li>• Communicate messages that build and instill confidence in the DOW as a credible gender nodal point that is capable of being a custodian of gender equality and women’s empowerment</li> <li>• Ensure that the mandate of DOW and its contribution to nation-building and social cohesion are communicated effectively</li> <li>• Ensure that South Africans understand the mandate of the Department</li> <li>• Change behaviour or perceptions regarding gender issues and the role of women in society.</li> <li>• Provide the public with timely, accurate,</li> </ul> |







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|  | <p>clear information about Department's policies, programmes, plans, services and initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide the public with co-ordinated, well planned, effectively managed communication / information that is delivered within budget and is perceived as value for money.</li><li>• Enhance access to information that enables women to participate in the country's transformation and in bettering their lives.</li><li>• Continuously ensure that the Department is visible, accessible and accountable to the public it serves.</li><li>• Ensure that the Department consults with the public, listens to and takes into account the needs and interests of the people when establishing priorities, developing policies and planning programmes and services.</li><li>• Promote a dialogue between citizens and government through debate and discussion.</li><li>• Consistently profile government work through a range of communications platforms in order to promote understanding of government activities</li><li>• Establish partnerships with a range of stakeholders including the private sector, academia, research institutions and non-governmental organisations.</li></ul> |
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## 5. ANALYSIS OF THE TARGET STAKEHOLDERS/AUDIENCES

The stakeholders of the Department of Women range from its staff members to communities, the DoW stakeholders are thus very broad and diverse. The target stakeholders/audiences will therefore require different communication approaches and mechanisms. Consequently the target stakeholders/audiences will be segmented as follows:

### a) Internal Stakeholders

- Minister
- Staff

### b) External Stakeholders

- General Public
- Women
- Civil Society Organizations Faith based Organizations
- Organised Labour
- Academics
- Private Sector
- Parliament
- Media
- International Organizations





## 5.1. Stakeholder Matrix

### a) Internal Communication

The purpose of the internal communication is to position DOW as an employer of choice among its internal stakeholders. As such all internal communication activities will endeavour to keep internal stakeholders informed of the programmes and activities of DOW. The Department will use a variety of communication tools in order to achieve a set of objectives. These will include, but not limited to, internal newsletter, special events, email system and intranet.

| Stakeholder | Communication tools   |
|-------------|---|
| Staff       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bulletin (<b>Our voice</b>)</li> </ul> <p>Employees must know what is happening in the organization at all times. DOW will need to have a quarterly internal Bulletin called <b>Our voice</b>. This Bulletin will be a platform to communicate, among others organizational activities, management decisions and policy changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intranet</li> </ul> <p>A good corporate intranet offers employees with an access to a wide range of organizational information. It can also serve as a one-step source of information and knowledge management. The DOW intranet will continue to be used as a tool for sharing information through an integrated</p> |





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|  | <p>SharePoint.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email</li> </ul> <p>DOE email system will continue to be used as a quick medium to disseminate essential information to internal stakeholders</p> |
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**b) External Communication**

The purpose of the external communication is to build and instil confidence in the DOW as a gender nodal point and ultimately position it as a custodian of gender equality and women’s empowerment within government. As such all external communication activities will endeavour to keep external stakeholders informed of the programmes and activities of DOW. The Department will use a combination of communication tools in order to address needs of external stakeholders. These will include, but not limited to, media liaison, special events, use of mass media e.g. television and radio, internet, social media networks etc.

| Stakeholder  | Communication tools   |
|--|---|
| General Public<br>Women<br>Civil Society Organizations<br>Parliament<br>Media<br>International Organizations | <p><b>i. Media Liaison</b></p> <p>Media liaison will be used as one of the key facets of the DOW’s external communication. Critical to an external communication is to position the DOW as a knowledge-based institution on matters pertaining to gender equality and women’s empowerment. In order to achieve this objective, DOW must use media to communicate its work</p> |





and programmes effectively. This may be used in a form of press releases, letters to the editor, interviews and media briefings, among others.

DOW must be accessible to members of the media and provide swift responses to media enquiries. To this end, the Department must have an official Spokesperson who can engage with members of the media at all material times. The Chief Director and Director: Communication will be most appropriately placed to undertake this responsibility. The Media Liaison Officer of the Minister will be the official Spokesperson of the Minister and will undertake this responsibility on behalf of the Minister.

**ii. Media releases**

Every day, newspaper editors are inundated with media statements from different organizations. However, not all media statements issued are published in the newspapers. Media releases that catch the eye of editors and subsequently published are those that are newsworthy and well structured. Accordingly, media releases based on any part of the work of DOW must be factual, current, concise and straight to the point.

**iii. Media Interviews**

It is critical to place emphasis on providing journalist with quality news angles. This usually results in quality media coverage. The DOW Spokesperson should be courage to make themselves available to be interviewed by journalist.





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|  | <p>The aim is to build a strong relationship with the media as well as ensure that DOW has the reputation of being approachable and willing to comment on contemporary issues without being sensational in approach.</p> <p><b>iv. Regular Write-ups</b></p> <p>DOW must develop the capacity to deal with monthly thematic issues in line with the national themes e.g. human rights month, Africa month, youth month, women’s month etc. Locating gender equality and women’s empowerment within these monthly themes will go a long way in ensuring gender mainstreaming beyond theory to practice. This will assist in bringing discussions around gender issues in the battle of ideas and open up avenues for active participation in issues of gender equality and women’s empowerment.</p> <p>This could be done in a form of opinion pieces by the Minister, the Director General and Deputy Directors General. However, this must be coordinated by the Chief Directorate: Communication and approved by the DG as the editor-in-chief of the Department.</p> <p>It must however be noted that there are no guarantees of publication as that can only depend on the interest of the media in the subject being discussed in the write-up.</p> <p><b>v. Roundtable discussions</b></p> <p>One way of receiving feedback on the impact of the departmental work and related services is through roundtables discussions. DOW will use roundtable</p> |
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discussions to engage stakeholders on its flagship projects such as **#365 Days of Activism** and **#Countmein**.

This platform will provide the external stakeholders with an opportunity critique DOW's work and where possible provide valuable feedback on the impact of the work of DOW.

**vi. DOW Internet**

Members of the media, public servants, civil society organizations, members of the public etc. regard DOW's website as an important information portal and are regularly browsing the website to get information. In this regard, DOW will continue to make its products and services available online. It will also carry on with the culture of making its information available immediately after being released or announced.

**vii. Newsletter**

DOW will have an external newsletter that will be known as the *Voice of Women* (VOW). Consonant with its name, the newsletter will be a voice of South African women where they share best practices as well as get invaluable information on government programmes, projects and services that has an impact on gender equality and women's empowerment. The newsletter will be launched as part of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of women's march celebrations in 2016.





This newsletter will also be used as a tool to raise awareness around gender equality and women's empowerment issues as well as the work of the DOW. The newsletter will be published quarterly and will include articles from the pool of our stakeholders as well.

**viii. Brand awareness**

As a newly established and configured department, DOW should focus on building its brand and instilling public confidence in its ability to deliver on its mandate. The use of promotional materials such as display banners, t-shirts as well as other corporate gifts targeting major departmental events will strengthen the organizational image. DOW will therefore continue to systematically produce and distribute promotional materials that will enhance its image.

**ix. Tabling of DOW Reports and communication thereof**

DOW reports are tabled in Parliament this include Annual Reports and reports focusing on its international obligations were applicable. Once a report is tabled it becomes a public document and journalists who are based in Parliament receive copies of the report. The journalist would in many instances write a piece/article about the report which had been tabled.





In the absence of a media statement putting the contents of the report into perspective, most journalists would draft their own stories based on their own interpretation of the content of the report, which many instances, result in misrepresentation of the content of the report.

To prevent this from happening, the Chief Directorate: Communication should compile a media statement about the report and where possible a media briefing on the day the report is tabled in Parliament. In this way, DOW will be able to influence the manner in which its reports are reported in the media and eliminate the possibility of misrepresentation of information by members of the media.

**x. Portfolio Committee Briefings**

DOW will continue to present its work to Parliament through the Portfolio Committee on Women in the National Assembly and the Select Committee on Governance in the National Council of Provinces. The appearance of DOW in the Parliament should be supported with regular media statements and briefings to keep the public informed of the accountability responsibilities of the department.



## 5.2. Summary of Messengers, Audiences and Channels

| MESSENGER   | AUDIENCES  | CHANNELS   |
|---|--|--|
| Minister<br>Director General<br>Deputy Directors General<br>Chief Director: Communication<br>Director: Communication<br>Media Liaison Officer | <b>Internal</b><br>c) Staff  | Staff meetings<br>Information and learning sessions<br>Internal Bulletin<br>Intranet<br>Emails   |
| Minister<br>Director General<br>Deputy Directors General<br>Chief Director: Communication<br>Director: Communication<br>Media Liaison Officer | <b>External</b><br>d) General Public<br>e) Women<br>f) Civil Society Organizations<br>g) Faith based Organizations<br>h) Organised Labour<br>i) Academics<br>j) Private Sector<br>k) Parliament<br>l) Media<br>m) International Bodies | Media Briefings<br>Media Statements<br>Response to media enquiries<br>Speeches<br>Electronic Media interviews<br>Opinion Pieces<br>Internet<br>Newsletter<br>Roundtables |



## 6. KEY MESSAGES

The communication strategy provides an opportunity for the Department to develop consistent messages that profile its work and also enable the public to be active citizenry in issues of gender equality and women’s empowerment. Detailed messages of the Department will depend on the specific campaign objectives as well as audiences and will form an integral part of the Annual Communication Plan. The following is the overarching messages that will guide the Department over the next five years:

| Message  | Supporting Statement   |
|--|--|
| <p><i>Since the dawn of democracy, South Africa has taken bold steps to institutionalise gender equality and women empowerment</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Twenty-one years into democracy, there is an increase in numbers of women in Parliament and government.</li> <li>• This development can be attributed to the introduction of important legislation that empowers women, including the establishment of statutory bodies and a Ministry in the Presidency responsible for Women to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment.</li> <li>• The statutory and policy architecture for gender equality in the country is comprehensive and multidimensional, with individual laws and policy overlapping to provide seamless protection of the rights of women and girls.</li> <li>• Progressive legislation includes the <a href="#">Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act</a>, the <a href="#">Employment Equity Act</a>, the <a href="#">Domestic Violence Act</a>, <a href="#">Sexual Offences Act</a> and the <a href="#">Civil Union Act</a>, among others.</li> <li>• The <a href="#">National Gender Machinery</a> (NGM), as outlined in the <a href="#">2000 South African National Policy Framework for</a></li> </ul> |





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|  | <p><a href="#"><u>Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality</u></a> is “an integrated package” of structures located at various levels of state, civil society and within the statutory bodies, in particular the Commission for Gender Equality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ministry in the Presidency responsible for women is a central coordinating point for the advancement of gender equality and socio-economic empowerment of women.</li> </ul> <p>The Public Service adopted a Gender Management System – a network of structures, mechanisms and processes – that enables the mainstreaming of gender across government. The Eight Principle Plan for Heads of Departments provides a mandate to see that gender equality becomes a goal in all aspects of government departments.</p>  |
| <p><b><i>Women’s Rights are Human Rights: Together Moving a Non-Violent South Africa Forward</i></b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Africa has put in place and implemented a comprehensive legislative framework that looks at addressing violence against women and girls in all its manifestations and in its myriad of forms. Priority has been accorded to sexual offences and domestic violence, and considerable attention has been given to crimes such as trafficking of women and children and child pornography. Some specific areas targeted by the law include issues of bail, sentencing, victim empowerment and integrated responses to gender based violence.</li> <li>• The Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998: seeks to strengthen protection against domestic violence. The Act broadens the scope of cover of what constitutes domestic relationships and domestic violent actions. It defines violence against women as including in addition to physical abuse, other</li> </ul> |





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|  | <p>forms of abuse such as emotional, verbal, psychological, sexual, economic, damage to property, harassment and stalking. The main strength of the legislation lies in protection orders against perpetrators and the institution of criminal action against perpetrators where the alleged act(s) of domestic violence constitute a crime. The Act affords victims of domestic violence with the maximum protection from domestic abuse and establishes Domestic Violence Courts. The Act applies to a range of relationships and covers both heterosexual and same sex relationships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In 2014 Parliament passed the Judicial Matters Second Amendment Act No 43 of 2013 to support the establishment of sexual offences courts. This Act amends the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act by inserting section 55A to provide the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services with the authority to designate a court as a Sexual Offences Court for the purposes of hearing cases of sexual offences. The Act further requires Government to develop regulations for Sexual Offences Courts that will guide the intersectoral establishment, resourcing and management of these courts. The draft regulations have already been produced and are now taken through the intersectoral adoption process.</li><li>• South Africa has adopted an integrated approach to the management of violence against women and children called an Inter-Departmental Management Team. This is a multi-disciplinary expert team, established in 2005 to design and implement programmes aimed at addressing gender-based violence. Its programmes were integrated in the objectives of the National Crime Prevention Strategy, which, with evolution of crime approaches, resulted in the adoption of the Justice Crime Prevention Strategy. This strategy has several components including programmes to address sexual violence as a priority; interdepartmental initiatives to</li></ul> |
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|  | <p>improve criminal justice processes; education and awareness programmes; partnership with civil society; and victim empowerment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Government in conjunction with the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) has also been running the Ndabezitha Project, which seeks to train traditional leaders and court clerks on domestic violence matters in rural areas. The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, in partnership with the National Prosecuting Authority and the National House of Traditional Leaders, co-developed the Personalized Safety Plan for Victims of Domestic Violence. This initiative is part of the NDABEZITHA PROGRAMME that started in 2006 between the 3 stakeholders to uproot all cultural beliefs and practices that lead to domestic violence from rural communities.</li><li>• Government has also been running awareness campaigns (through the media, booklets, pamphlets, etc.) aimed at sensitising the masses on domestic violence services. The Police Service has also been conducting public education campaigns, with a focus on domestic violence, under its Social Crime Prevention Programme.</li><li>• Most recently, electronic forms and systems have been developed and approved to be piloted at two Magistrates' Courts after which they will be rolled out to all Magistrates' Courts' service points in order to improve the handling of domestic violence cases. The Government is also in the process of developing a booklet called "No More Violence" booklet which is aimed at teaching the role-players at service points as well as victims how to manage and improve in alleviating domestic violence matters and the impact of such crimes on their lives. In December 2014, Government developed a public educational DVD titled: "Court-based Support for Victims of Domestic Violence" for all the courts across the country.</li></ul> |
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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Domestic Violence Register has been developed and kept at all police stations in the Client Service Centre, to register all incidents and cases reported on domestic violence. A domestic violence incident form is used to record all incidents of domestic violence whether a case has been opened or not. There is also a form on the notice of rights which is issued to the complainant which stipulates all options and rights that the complainant has in dealing with domestic violence. There is also a service provider referral list which lists particulars of other service providers that are also providing services to the victims of gender based violence</li><li>• The establishment of the Ministry of Women in May 2014 has championed the implementation of the prevention programme for violence against women through awareness raising programmes and debates with different stakeholders such as business, religious based organizations including parliament under the theme “Count me in: Together moving non-violent South Africa Forward”.</li><li>• The Ministry of Women also works in collaboration with other departments and local government municipalities to convert crime hot spots into sport grounds and /or communal vegetable gardens. The Ministry in partnership with CrimeLine activated the #365 Days of no violence against women immediately after the end of the 16 Days Campaign in 2014 and called on all stakeholders to come on board. Pledges of commitments were made by participating organizations that will be implemented through the year.</li><li>• All South Africans and communities must partner with government and actively fight all forms of violence against women and children through campaigns such as <b>#365 Days of Activism</b> on no violence against women and <b>#Countmein</b>.</li><li>• Combating violent crimes against women and children</li></ul> |
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|  | <p>have been identified as a priority by government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specialised courts have been established to deal with sexual offences instituted with staff working at these courts empowered with specialised skills.</li><li>• Speak out against woman and child abuse. Encourage silent female victims to talk about abuse and ensure that they get help.</li><li>• Men are critical partners in the fight against the abuse of women and children.</li><li>• Families must stick together to create a safe environment for women and children. Parents and adults: don't expose your children to sexual and violent material such as pornography, etc.</li><li>• Government has identified factors such as law reform on bail, sentencing, victim empowerment, capacity-building, extending access to courts to previously disadvantaged areas and integrated responses, as critical pillars of the fight to end violence against women.</li><li>• Thuthuzela care centres were introduced as part of South Africa's Anti-Rape Strategy, aiming to reduce secondary victimisation, improve conviction rates and reduce the cycle time for finalisation of cases.</li><li>• These 24-hour one-stop centres where rape victims have access to all services such as the police, counselling, doctors, court preparation and prosecution. During 2009, a total of 10 213 matters were reported at the Thuthuzela care centres.</li><li>• The Sexual Offences and Crime Unit in the National Prosecuting Authority highlights that in 2010/11 there was an increase in capacitation of prosecutors with a</li></ul> |
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|  | <p>total of 180 prosecutors trained on the comprehensive manual on maintenance matters in line with the Maintenance Act and latest developments in law, 349 prosecutors trained on the Child Justice Act, 102 prosecutors received integrated domestic violence skills manual training and 79 prosecutors were trained on human trafficking-related topics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Government has established a task team to investigate the resuscitation of sexual offences courts, which have shown impressive conviction rates in certain parts of the country in the past.</li><li>• The task team will look into practical steps that will ensure that these courts benefit the entire population and not selected communities as was the practice in the piloted sites.</li><li>• Processes are underway to establish the number of sexual offences cases, which have been put on hold to identify additional capacity that may be required through the case-backlog courts.</li><li>• Government is confident that the re-introduction of family violence, child protection and sexual offences units in the police, as well as the establishment of the inter-sectoral task team to look into the viability of prioritising such cases through specialised sexual offences courts will ensure that we deal with these heinous crimes effectively.</li><li>• The approval of the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Bill, 2010 by the National Assembly will strengthen the fight against sexual offences and assist in protecting vulnerable people, especially women and children.</li></ul> |
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| <p><b><i>Poverty eradication: a cornerstone to gender equality</i></b></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The burden of poverty borne by African Women as a result of lack of income and economic opportunities signifies a phenomenon in our continent where women represent a disproportionate percentage of the poor due to gender prejudices.</li><li>• A comprehensive anti-poverty strategy that addresses increased feminised poverty</li><li>• There is an urgent need to assess the impact of social grants on women’s poverty.</li><li>• The economic empowerment of women is a prerequisite of reducing poverty in our society and dismantling patriarchy. Therefore radical economic transformation without the full inclusion and empowerment of women is unsustainable.</li></ul>  |
| <p><b><i>There is only one society, and every person and institution must “Play Your Part” to join forces to eradicate gender inequality</i></b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our <a href="#">Constitution</a> (1996) recognises women as equal citizens, with equal rights and responsibilities.</li><li>• Media portrayal of women also impacts on how young girls perceive themselves and makes it difficult for society not to be influenced by the overwhelming message to objectify women.</li><li>• Institutions of democracy must prioritise addressing issues facing women, especially gender-based violence and representation of women in our economy and society.</li><li>• In line with government’s vision of equity across all institutions, a critical approach is gender mainstreaming, which is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation,</li></ul> |





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|   | <p>monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Government calls on all South Africans and organisations to action for partnerships that gives expression to our commitment in ensuring that women become fully functioning agents in our developmental agenda.</li></ul>  |
| <p><b><i>Building on the foundation of non-racial, non-sexist, united and democratic South Africa</i></b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Government has endorsed a number of legislations to create an enabling environment for women, and to improve their participation in income-generating activities in the economy since 1994.</li><li>• Government is committed to ensuring that it takes collective action for the active development and implementation of policies and practices that address the needs of poor women.</li><li>• The Labour Force Survey (Stats SA, 2011) demonstrates the inequalities which exist in the formal economy where women dominate in sectors regarded as traditionally “soft and female,” such as social services, while fewer women can be found in traditionally male-dominated sectors such as mining and engineering.</li><li>• Female-headed household are generally much poorer than men, and are more likely to live below R570 a month. This is especially the case in the rural areas and thus renders women more vulnerable to food insecurity.</li><li>• Despite South Africa’s favourable legislative context for the realization of gender equality equity and women</li></ul> |





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|  | <p>empowerment, shortcomings occur at the implementation level, where multiple challenges exist. As a result, women bear the brunt of the triple challenge of poverty, unemployment and inequality.</p> <p>The Department of Women is mandated to work with line function departments to analyse policy and policy implementation through a gender lens to ensure the progressive realisation of the socio economic empowerment of women and gender equality. This will be achieved through mainstreaming gender within government programmes, including those of the private sector. The basic principles of mainstreaming are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• System-wide mainstreaming which rests at all levels and across all spheres of government, the private sector and civil society organizations</li><li>• Appropriate and adequate accountability mechanisms for monitoring progress</li><li>• Identification of issues and problems across all area(s) of activity should be such that differences and disparities between men and women, girls and boys can be diagnosed</li><li>• Assumptions that issues or problems are neutral from an equality, empowerment and rights perspective should never be made</li><li>• Clear political will and allocation of adequate resources for mainstreaming, including additional financial and human resources if necessary are important for translation of the concept into practice.</li><li>• Broaden participation at all levels of decision-making.</li></ul> <p>Mainstreaming does not replace the need for targeted women specific policies, programmes and legislation; nor does it do away with the need for specialized units or focal points.</p> |
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***Radical transformation of the economy must be in line with the creation of decent work and sustainable livelihoods as well as rural development***

- Women globally face significant challenges in the labour market and South Africa is no different. These challenges include differentials in educational attainment and quality; interruption of labour force participation related to childbearing; discrimination in terms of employment practices and wage determination; relatively fewer role models; vulnerability and weak bargaining power; and environments that may be hostile to female membership of the workforce.
- Women typically also face the consequences of gender norms and the unequal division of labour. This is due to women being seen as caregivers within the family, while men are viewed as bread-winners
- Women make enormous contributions to economies, whether in businesses, on farms, as entrepreneurs or employees, or by doing unpaid care work at home. But they also remain disproportionately affected by poverty, discrimination and exploitation. Men are more likely than women to be engaged only in market activities, while women are more likely than men to be engaged only in non-market activities. Women are thus more likely than men to be doing unpaid economic work.
- There is a consistent trend of low labour force participation rate of women compared to men and the gap has almost remained the same over the 13 year period (2001-2014). In 2001, labour force participation rate for female was 54.9% compared to 67.4% for male and in 2014, females were at 51% compared to 63.6% of males (Statistics SA, Gender Series Volume 1 2001-2014).
- Women's access to and control over economic and financial resources is critical for the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women. It is also important for equitable and sustainable economic growth and





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|  | <p>development. Promoting gender equality in finance is not only an ethical matter but one of economic opportunity. Moreover, development justification for improving women's access to economic and financial resources include women's role as "safety net of last resort" in the economic sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• South Africa has been substantially progressive in promoting access to credit for women in the country. The government has put in place several policies and initiatives aimed at increasing women's access to credit to promote economic empowerment. These initiatives include the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act which encourages increasing the extent to which black women own and manage existing and new enterprises, and increasing their access to economic activities, infrastructure and skills training.</li><li>• Furthermore, it has been noted that increasing the extent to which women own and manage existing and new enterprises through improving their access to economic activities and infrastructure is a strategy which will help facilitate sustainable development and empowerment within South Africa.</li><li>• The proportions of South Africans who borrow to start, operate, or expand a farm or business is very small. This is also substantially less for female as opposed to male entrepreneurs within South Africa</li><li>• Women's access to land and property is central to women's economic empowerment as land can serve as basis for food and income generation, collateral for credit, and a means of holding savings for the future. Moreover, gender equality in land ownership is important as it is shown to improve agricultural productivity and strengthen the ability of households to manage economic shocks. Evidence shows that gender inclusion of land rights can</li></ul> |
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|   | <p>reduce domestic violence (Action Aid 2008) and that women who own land are more capable of exiting violent relationships and negotiating safe sex.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women continue to face specific disabilities in obtaining land. The land redistribution programme must therefore target women. Institutions, practices and laws that discriminate against women’s access to land must be reviewed and brought in line with national policy. In particular, tenure and matrimonial laws must be revised appropriately.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b><i>A better life for South Africans is intertwined with the country’s pursuit of a better Africa in a better world.</i></b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Development Plan (NDP) is South Africa’s road map for economic development and social cohesion to the year 2030; and resonates very well with Agenda 2063. The NDP already includes the key proposals in Agenda 2063, including a strengthened focus on regional cooperation and integration.</li> <li>• The NDP highlights that South Africa needs to deepen its investment and promotion of cooperation and integration as means to enhance socio-economic development, both in southern Africa, and in the rest of the continent. Among others, enhanced regional integration will expand regional and continental trade; and the sharing of experiences and technical cooperation across the sectors.</li> <li>• The NDP highlights women’s central role in the achievement of South Africa’s domestic and international objectives.</li> <li>• South Africa continues to invest in the promotion and protection of women and their rights, with the firm belief that the country and the continent need the full participation of women in all areas of life.</li> <li>• In July 2012, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma was elected</li> </ul> |





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|  | <p>Chairperson of the AUC. This was a major achievement as it was first time that a woman and a candidate of the southern region was successfully elected to this high post. Key priorities for her term include greater internal efficiency and effectiveness within the AUC as an executing agency of the AU collective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In line with the NDP, South Africa will champion sustainable development in Africa by supporting and executing decisions of the AU as well as the promotion of the work of its structures.</li></ul> <p>South Africa is also a signatory to several regional and international commitments on women's empowerment and gender equality. These include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, signed in September 1995</li><li>• United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) ( December 1995), signed in 1995 and ratified in 1997</li><li>• Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000), adopted in 2000</li><li>• African Union Heads of States' Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, adapted and ratified in August 2004</li><li>• Optional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (AU Women's Protocol) (December 2004), ratified on 17 December 2004</li><li>• Commonwealth Plan of Action for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality 2005-2015, adopted in 2005</li><li>• SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (2012), ratified in 2011</li></ul> |
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|  | <p>Implied in the last part of the Preamble of the Constitution is a commitment to comply with international law and human rights standards. The Constitution is aligned with and also serves as an instrument for facilitating South Africa’s compliance with its international human rights obligations.</p> <p>Many of the international human rights standards and resultant obligations relate to women’s human rights and the duty of parties to take measures to eradicate inequality between women and men in all spheres of life, including the justice system, the family, societal practices and the economy.</p> <p>Therefore by adopting these instruments for the advancement of the socio-economic empowerment of women in the country, Government committed itself to their full and effective implementation at the national level.</p> |
| <p><b><i>Africa is driving its growth and development through Agenda 2063.</i></b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The recently-adopted Agenda 2063 will be people-driven, with the objective of facilitating the attainment of an Africa that is prosperous, integrated and at peace with itself by 2063.</li> <li>• A people-centred and inclusive development will only be possible through the full engagement of women and the youth in this work.</li> <li>• The AU has dubbed <i>2015 as the Year of Women’s Empowerment and Development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063</i> – the theme of the 25<sup>th</sup> AU Summit held in June 2015 in South Africa.</li> <li>• The Summit reflected on progress achieved mid-term in the AU African Women’s Decade (2010 to 2020). The decade was launched in 2010 by AU heads of state and</li> </ul>  |





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|  | <p>government, with the aim to advance gender equality by accelerating the implementation of Dakar, Beijing and AU Assembly Decisions on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In marking the Golden Jubilee of the founding of the OAU in 2013, Africa’s leaders committed to a renewed focus on the development and integration agenda, through the implementation of an overarching Continental Agenda 2063.</li> </ul> |
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In addition to the overall messages entailed above, it is important for the Department to develop key messages around the scourge of violence against women and children. The following are key messages that will guide **#365 Days of Activism** and **#CountMeIn**:

| KEY MESSAGES   | SUPPORTING STATEMENTS   |
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| <p><b><i>Together we can end the cycle of abuse.</i></b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government has adopted a zero-tolerance approach towards abuse of women and children.</li> <li>• Government alone cannot eradicate this scourge and calls on all South Africans and sectors to partner with us in creating safer communities.</li> <li>• We must all act to prevent abuse and to ensure a safer society for women and children.</li> <li>• Our criminal justice system and our courts deal harshly with those who commit violence and abuse.</li> <li>• The police and the existing courts are empowered to arrest, prosecute and convict perpetrators of violence, assault and rape.</li> </ul> |





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| <p><b><i>Count me in!</i></b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The voices of men are crucial in the fight against violence and abuse.</li><li>• Make your voice heard by declaring publicly that enough is enough.</li><li>• It is time to join the fight; men must become the vanguard of our push to end violence and abuse.</li><li>• Men can ensure that we put an end to abuse, assault, rape and domestic violence against women and children.</li></ul>   |
| <p><b><i>Change starts with you and me!</i></b></p>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Change starts with you and I, it is in our power to make our communities and society safe for women and children.</li><li>• We call on all sectors of society to oppose any form of violence committed against women and children.</li><li>• Report all cases of rape, sexual assault or any form of violence to the police.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We must work together with police, prosecutors and courts to ensure that those who hurt and abuse others are arrested and convicted.</li></ul></li><li>• Abusers, murderers and rapists have no place in our communities.</li></ul> |
| <p><b><i>Government is committed to making our communities safe for all.</i></b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Government has in place several legislative provisions that specifically address violence and abuse of women and children.</li><li>• The Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998, the Criminal Law Amendment (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Act</li></ul>  |





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|  | <p>32 of 2007 and the Protection from Harassment Act 17 of 2011, all offer notable protection for women and children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Children’s Act, 2005 and Children’s Amendment Act, 2007 were enacted to, among other things, protect a child from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation.</li><li>• South Africa is signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.</li><li>• Thuthuzela Care Centres are one-stop centres, which enable rape victims to lodge a case with the police and receive counselling and medical care, and are located in various areas throughout the country.</li></ul> |
| <p><b><i>Men must lead the change.</i></b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Men have the power to prevent violence and abuse in our communities.</li><li>• We call on responsible father figures to instill the values of human dignity, equality and respect in young men and boys.</li><li>• Mentor and teach young boys to grow into men who value and respect women.</li><li>• We encourage men to get actively involved in programmes that prevent gender violence.</li></ul>   |





## 7. CONCLUSION

Communication is a key element in the management of any institution. From the above it is clear that effective communication is more than just a simple transfer of information; it includes open exchanges and feed-back. The Chief Directorate: Communication has a complex and yet exciting responsibility of enhancing communication within and outside DOW by promoting a professional environment characterised by effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness to the needs of the Department and its stakeholders.

The ultimate outcome of this communication will be judged by its ability to promote DOW as a gender nodal point that is worthy being a custodian for gender equality and women socio-economic empowerment.

**THE END!**

