



AfWID

AFRICAN WOMEN
IN DIALOGUE

Strengthening the Continental African Women's Movement within the
Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) towards a New and Value-Based Eco-System

19 – 23 NOVEMBER 2018

The Inaugural African Women in Dialogue



Zanele Mbeki
DEVELOPMENT TRUST

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"It is intended that AfWID will be an inclusive platform of dialogue to unite African women from all walks of life under one roof to deliberate on issues of continental importance. AfWID will be an annual pilgrimage of African women from diverse fields to explore emerging challenges, share opinions, exchange views and review policies on themes crafted by national, continental and global agendas."

– Zanele Mbeki



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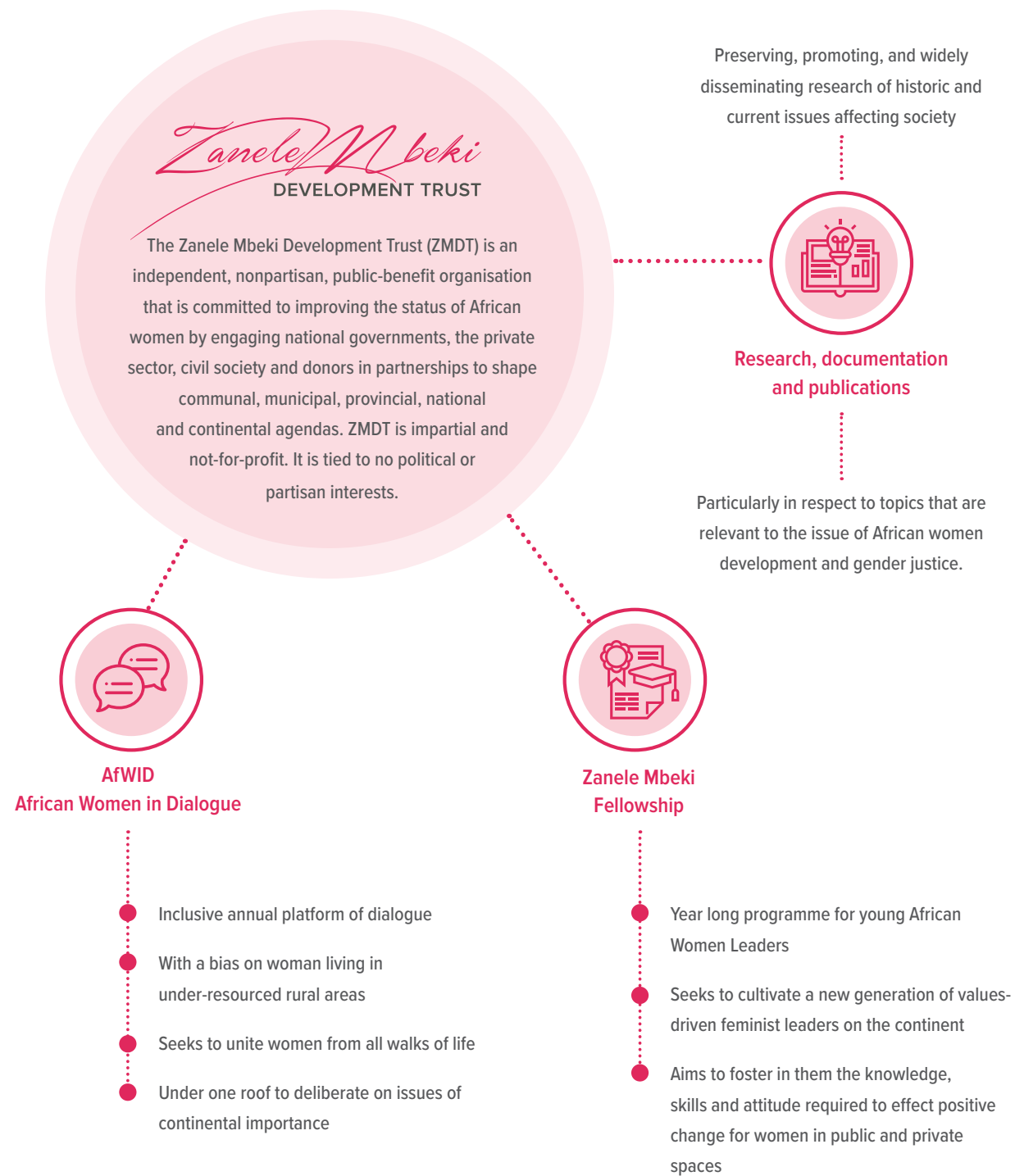
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ABOUT THE HOST

ZANELE MBEKI DEVELOPMENT TRUST (ZMDT)



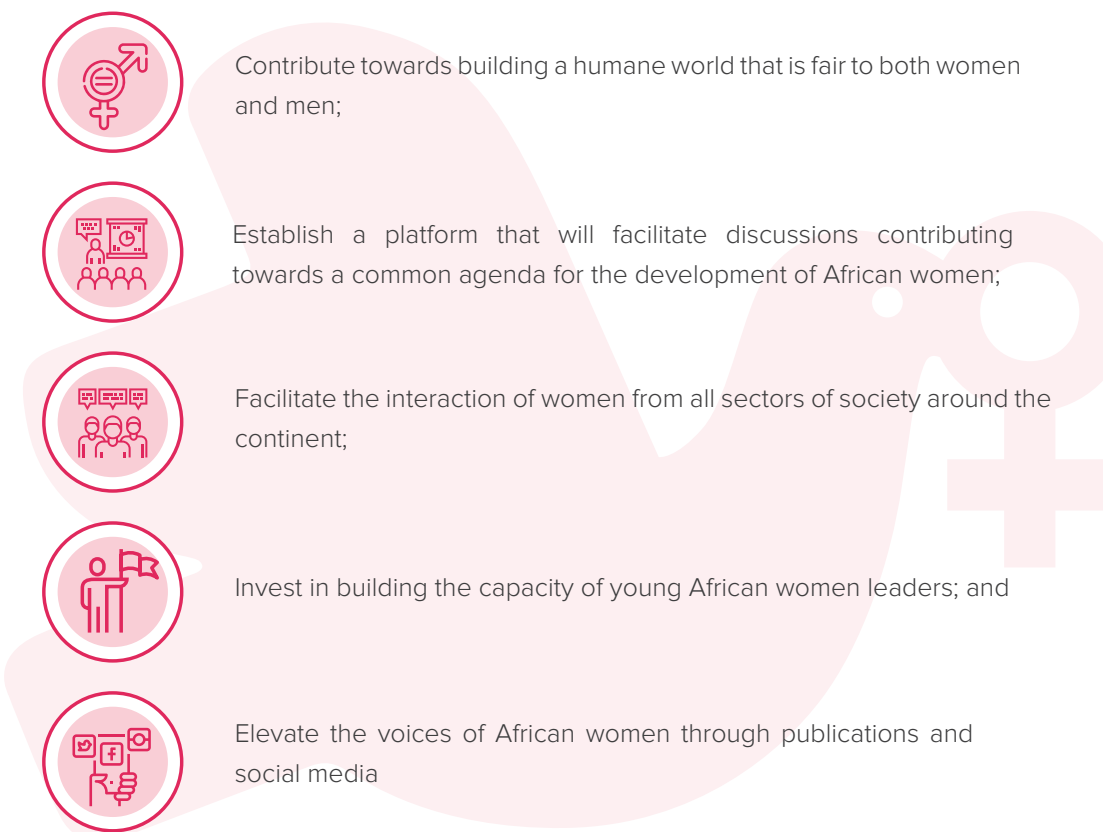
VISION

Pan-African women working together to build a sustainable ecosystem to humanise our continent.

MISSION

Promote women's solidarity for peace, equality and development; in so doing, mobilising the African women's movement to influence the development agendas of our respective countries, communities and homes.

OBJECTIVES



VALUE STATEMENT

Values define who we are, guide our decisions and processes, and shape the way we interact with one another and with the world around us. As African women, we therefore pledge to be respectful of one another and of our communities, be trustworthy and accountable, and fulfill our responsibilities of servant leadership with commitment, diligence, honesty and integrity. Striving for excellence will underpin all our programmes and projects.

ABOUT THE AFRICAN WOMEN IN DIALOGUE (AfWID)

AfWID IS THE FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME OF THE ZMDT

AfWID is an inclusive platform of dialogue that seeks to unite African women from all walks of life under one roof to deliberate on issues of continental importance. It is an annual platform with its home in South Africa.

This annual pilgrimage gives voice to the perspectives and experiences of thousands of African women, including rural and urban women, politicians, public servants, women of various religious denominations, faith-based formations, academics, development practitioners, traditional leaders, business leaders, professionals from diverse fields and the youth, to share opinions and exchange views, and review policies on themes crafted by national, continental and global agendas.

AfWID Objectives are to:



- ✿ **Contribute** towards attaining a united voice of African women on continental issues;
- ✿ **Vitalise, inspire and broaden the vision** of African women under a common development agenda;
- ✿ **Review continental strategies and programmes** that are aimed at impacting African women;
- ✿ **Identify current and evolving systemic barriers**, including practices and norms, that work against the implementation of the women's and development agenda;
- ✿ **Facilitate the review of undergirding systems, structures and practices** that hinder the advancement of African women. This includes the review of policies, structures and programmes on a national and continental level;
- ✿ **Influence community, national and continental structures** (public, private, civil society) and implementation strategies aimed at empowering African women; and
- ✿ **Strengthen national, regional and continental networks** of women organisations.





#WeAreHere



LINDA VILAKAZI
AfWID Co-ordinator

Looking back at the inaugural African Women in Dialogue (AfWID), we are filled with good memories and moments of sheer amazement. Amazement at what was achieved in terms of logistics and awe at what was achieved in terms of conversation, collaboration, discussion and networking during that week.

What started out as a dream many years ago in the mind of our patron, Mrs Zanele Mbeki, and her compatriots, became a reality in November 2018 when women came together from over 15 Southern African countries to reignite and strengthen the continental women's movement.

Women came in numbers, diversities and colour. It was humbling to see women connect, learn from each other, share experiences, participate in workshops as well as educate self on the implications of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, opportunities and challenges. This was a unique gathering with some women as first-time travellers outside their villages and revelling at the sheer impact of exposure.

Collectively, we all kick-started what Africa had never seen before, a gathering of African Women, on African soil, using our resources, time and self-determined agenda. Indeed, the platform reignited the spirit and vision of our Pan African feminist ancestors, who all sacrificed for a better Africa. Strengthening the African women's Movement became a strong rallying point as

we all recalled the undying spirit of women from the 1970s and 1980s, culminating in the 1990s in a strong showing of African women in Beijing 1995, wherein, among others, African women put the issue of girl child on the agenda.

HOW DO WE MOVE FORWARD?

As we head towards the conclusion of the African Women's Decade, 2020, we need to ask ourselves if enough has been done in the almost 10 years since the declaration to take a grassroots approach to gender equality and women's empowerment.

What was incredible about the inaugural AfWID Forum is that we had women from across various sectors and geographic locations, we had a significant number of grassroots women representing their issues, we had women who work and dedicate their lives for improving communities in which they live, young people were present and all had a place to share their stories. Much work was done to solidify relations and ideas and concepts so that the women could go back to their

home countries and communities and continue doing what they had been doing with renewed energy, clarity, and commitment, while living and embracing the AfWID values.

The question we wanted every delegate to leave with was: "What will I do, personally or collectively with others, to take my people forward?" Much of the dialogue was about breaking down barriers and asking ourselves some hard questions, including: "Which area am I passionate about that will make a difference in the lives of the vulnerable people who are dear to me, particularly in my community?"

AN ENRICHING WEEK

It was a challenging and uplifting week and we would like to say a very warm thank you to every one of the women and (few) men who attended the inaugural AfWID forum; to our committee members near and far; and to the incredible volunteers who make us believe in the youth's ability to do just about anything.

To those of you reading this report, this is a glimpse into the week that was at AfWID 2018, but please know that AfWID is so much more than an event, it's a movement. We would like to welcome everyone on this incredible journey. This platform (AfWID) belongs to all African women; it is non-partisan, non-hierarchical and open for all - putting into practice the principles of inclusivity.

During the dialogue week, our volunteers wore T-shirts bearing the hashtags: #IAmHere and #WeAreHere branding. This was very much about standing up and being counted and creating a community that stretches far and wide across the African continent. Equally, the message sought to acknowledge women as individuals as well as a collective. To all of those women who took AfWID away in their hearts, we look forward to hearing about the changes you are making on the ground in your provinces and your countries.

To all of those women who will take part in the AfWID forums of the future, you are welcome – we need your input, we need your passion, we need you to be present.

#WeAreHere and there is work to be done.

Linda Vilakazi



THE AfWID JOURNEY

IN CONVERSATION WITH NALEDI MAITE AND LINDA VILAKAZI



NALEDI MAITE
Project Manager



LINDA VILAKAZI
AfWID Co-ordinator

Naledi and Linda may have been working together for only six months but their collaboration and cohesion seems like it was built over many years. Maite has been Project Manager for the Zanele Mbeki Development Trust (ZMDT) since 2017, while Vilakazi joined only at the end of September 2018 as the AfWID Programme Co-ordinator.

Organising 1000 women from all over the SADC region to come to a conference in Johannesburg with just six weeks to pull it together? The ZMDT organising committee pulled off a near impossible task.

There were moments when it all seemed like a crazy, unrealistic idea, while at the same time “that very feeling” became the force behind the team’s resilience and drive to deliver. It brought to mind the relevance of the quote attributed to **J W Goethe**:

Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness.

Concerning all acts of initiative and creation there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and endless plans that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred.

A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one’s favour all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamed would come his way.

Whatever you do, or dream you can, begin it.

LAUNCHING A DREAM

Providence did move in... “It started with bringing together about 50 people to consult with and brainstorm the idea of what we needed to do to create this forum, hoping to start small,” says Maite.

However, discussions with potential funders and sponsors took on an energy all of their own, and the event was scheduled for launch in August 2018 with the aim of attracting 1000 women to participate. This was to be a platform of dialogue, not only convened by Africans but also funded by Africans, such that no-one was to be excluded on the basis of a lack of resources. This meant mobilising for resources to cover all logistical arrangements, including transport and five-day accommodation for all 1000 women.

Fundraising went into overdrive, with organisations like WDB Trust, Wiphold, Motheo Construction Group, Nozala Investments, WDB Investment

Holdings and many others lending their financial and intellectual support. During one consultative meeting, Ms Granny Seape was nominated to spearhead the fundraising drive, which then enabled the ZMDT team to focus solely on delivering the dialogue. At this stage, everything was still within the walls of consultative meetings, with all processes from concept, to design, to venue identification, etc. yet to start. At the same time, our governance team warned us not to contract any event management company as these tended to be too expensive. The ZMDT team became the engine that drove the vision to fruition.

TEAM AfWID IN ACTION

The ZMDT team, consisting of Naledi Maite, Linda Vilakazi, Nonhlanhla Masemola, Samantha Sibanda and Meisie Maraba and, of course, Zanele Mbeki (“Ma’am”) at the helm, could then move on with the organisation of the event now scheduled for November 19-23.

The ZMDT Fricker Road office (one room with a large desk in the middle) in Johannesburg became the AfWID engine room and the team quickly learnt to rely on each other’s strengths. Key portfolios mattered but any piece of work was never too much for anyone to run with. The presence of and unquestionable support from Ma’am helped keep the team on track, motivated and empowered to make decisions.

SADC FIRST, THE CONTINENT NEXT

The vision for AfWID is a big one, inspired by the many years of “dialoguing” among South African women through the South African Women In Dialogue (SAWID) platform.

The initial idea was always to recruit participation from each country on the continent; however, due to time constraints and travel restrictions such as visas, we decided to rather focus on mobilising participation from the SADC region, which was easier from a logistical perspective and had fewer travel restrictions. Needless

to say, a few participants as speakers and moderators did come from beyond SADC.

NUTS AND BOLTS

The team put together a mobilisation guide for all the invited countries and an inclusivity list – something absolutely key to the ethos of the AfWID movement, ensuring no-one is excluded on the basis of “classifications”. Because time was not on our side, the ZMDT contracted Gender Links (one of the most established NGOs dealing with gender issues on the continent), which is the secretariat to the SADC Gender Protocol Alliance, to partner with and mobilise the SADC region. This worked.

Soon thereafter we saw progress and got to a point where we had everything covered – logistics, draft programme, the venue and then there was this big monster of actually moving people across the continent, which was very complex and costly. Yet we persevered and learnt to negotiate safe cross-border transport, navigate airport taxes and visa-issuing within a short time. Some of these challenges brought to light the need to plan for future engagement in collaboration with relevant authorities. This is necessary to effect change to some of the restrictive laws and regulations that still



Front: Naledi Maite, Linda Vilakazi and Meisie Maraba
Back: Nonhlanhla Masemola and Samantha Sibanda

inhibit movement for Africans within their continent. The challenges experienced exposed the contradiction of statements by some African leaders that “Africa is open for business.” While Africans find it difficult to move across internal borders, who is Africa open for?

TRAINS, PLANES AND AUTOMOBILES

It was a little more complicated than just flying people from A to B. The fact that AfWID had a bias towards grassroots participation (targeted at 60%) meant that a significant number of our participants came from remote rural areas. For instance, in the Seychelles, some women came from small remote islands and had to first travel by boat, then micro-flight, then bus to finally get to a major airport to fly to Johannesburg.

A number of the women had never travelled before, which also meant a lot of careful co-ordination. Some of the women from Tanzania had never been to the capital, Dar es Salaam, yet they managed to fly on a plane to Johannesburg. This was a great deal to most, demonstrating their sense of adventure and trust in people they’ve never heard from before.

Nonhlanhla “Noni” Masemola became a travel desk, with the patience of a saint and the organising prowess that surprised even herself. Samantha Sibanda became the scribe, drafting hundreds of emails and documents, while Meisie Maraba co-ordinated the volunteers and buried herself in the details of organising a gala dinner that would later blow everyone away.

“As a late addition to the team, it was incredible to be part of this small, dynamic team,” says Vilakazi. “We may have only been a team of five, plus Ma’am, but for us nothing seemed impossible,” she says.

TACKLING THE ISSUES OF OUR TIME

Co-ordinating the logistics of a dialogue is one thing; making it meaningful for a diverse group of women from all over Southern Africa is quite another.

After much deliberation, it was decided that “Strengthening the Continental African Women’s Movement within the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) towards a New and Value-Based Eco-System”, would form the core of discussions. This theme had many sub-themes and layers to be unpacked, each demanding a great deal of planning and well-crafted content. For example: What is the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)? What is its relevance and opportunities for women? And what is a “new value-based eco-system”?, etc.

Not wanting to sound like a cliché, the 2018 AfWID sub-themes were really a festival of ideas. The platform was used as a place for robust discussions, surfacing varying diverse views. It also became a place for learning, listening and sharing to each other’s experiences. All the team had to do was create the safe and conducive environment and let the women control the outcome as well as what each wished to take away after the five-day immersion.

AN IMMENSE LEARNING CURVE

At this point, it is evident that pulling off the Inaugural African Women in Dialogue was a challenge, a triumph and a major learning curve. What is important now, is to ensure that the thoughts and ideas expressed at the Inaugural African Women in Dialogue Forum continue to live on outside of the walls of the Birchwood Conference Centre and become a launch pad for the women who attended to create their own conversations and find their own resolutions.

The very first AfWID, 2018 was just about getting started...

We look forward to this platform growing from strength to strength and being a place for real transformation benefiting the continent.

We all feel privileged to have been part of this initiative.

We thank you all.

IN OUR OWN WORDS: AfWID 2018



I’m so proud to be associated with this team of dreamers who are breaking barriers and are so courageous in doing things differently. The AfWID platform is the first of its kind on the continent and a gift to all African women.
– Naledi Maite



Organising for the African Women in Dialogue forum was an amazing experience. Having been given a chance to make a difference in women’s lives and knowing the impact it has in this lifetime and the future of the next generations to come was not only rewarding but an absolute honour. Of course there were challenges being involved in something of this magnitude and with the small but super team we had, but sticking together and being there for each other - creating our own sisterhood - was every bit as exciting as it was exhilarating. Being around these superwomen and learning from them is something that I will cherish. And the gratitude that we received was humbling; an opportunity to get to do this again would be a blessing. – Meisie Maraba.



Working on the 2018 AfWID forum events and logistics was challenging and glorious at the same time. It was serious hard work mainly because of the numbers of delegates that were expected and equally wonderful because it was like giving birth to something and watching it grow and flourish to its intended glory. Organising and co-ordinating this massive event was not always smooth because dealing with such a big group of people is quite overwhelming. I truly attribute the success of the 2018 AfWID forum to all of us (colleagues and partners) for our dedication, drive and passion. – Nonhlanhla Masemola

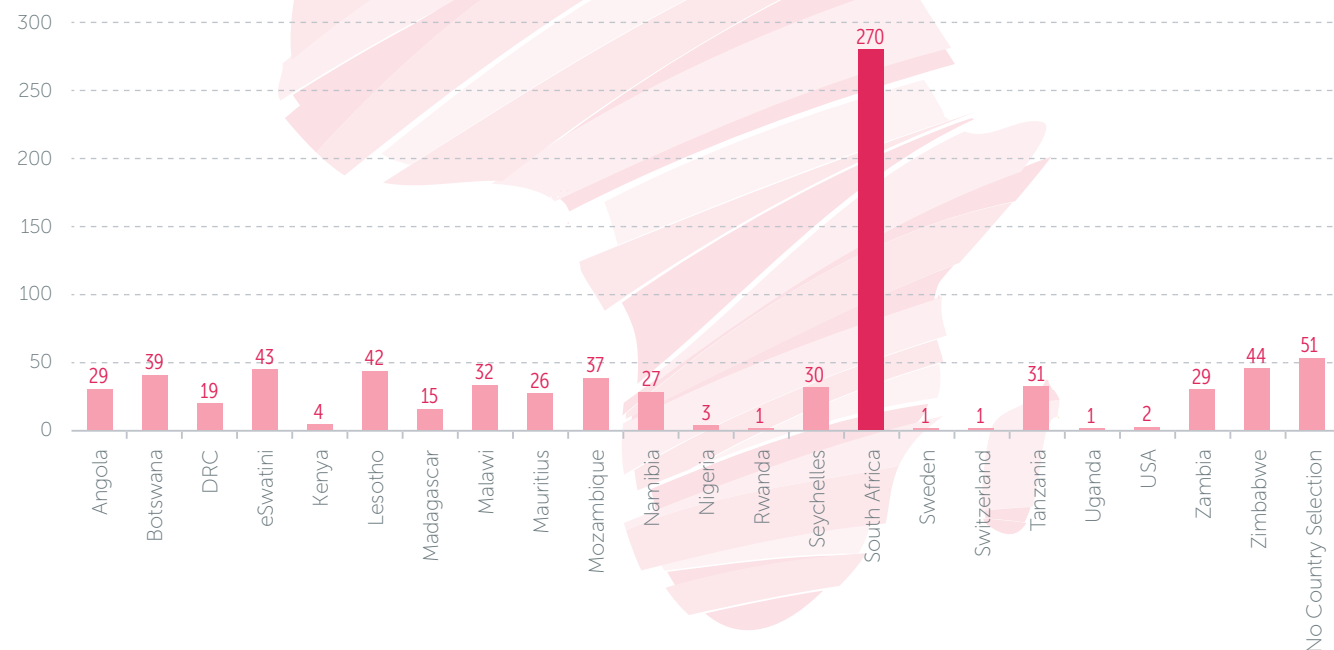


AfWID was an amazing experience that was very busy and fun at the same time. One of the highlights was definitely meeting the hundreds of women from across Africa. It gave me a greater outlook on life and the power that we hold as African women. – Samantha Sibanda

AfWID ATTENDEES

Over 1 147 women from the SADC Region and other parts of the continent attended AfWID 2018.

COUNTRY ATTENDANCE STATISTICS



1147 PARTICIPANTS **OTHER** **200** WALK INS **176** ZMDT TEAM, VOLUNTEERS, SERVICE PROVIDERS, MEDIA, EXHIBITORS, PERFORMERS

INCLUSIVITY LIST

The spirit of inclusivity and diversity in AfWID is represented by honouring the following inclusivity checklist when inviting participants to take part in the forum:

- 🌸 Rural/Grassroots (preferably 60% of the participants)
- 🌸 Peri-Urban & Urban
- 🌸 All Races
- 🌸 Government Representatives (National, Provincial, Municipal, etc.)
- 🌸 Traditional Authorities
- 🌸 Political Parties (All Political Parties Represented in Parliament)
- 🌸 Religious Bodies/Faith-Based Organisations (Christian, Muslim, Traditional, Hindu, etc.)
- 🌸 Homemakers
- 🌸 Business Women (Corporate, Small, Medium, Micro and Informal)
- 🌸 Academia
- 🌸 Youth Formations and Young Professionals (no school children under 20 years. Youth up to age 35 years)
- 🌸 Veterans of The Women's Struggle (Widow Forum, Church Elders, Retired Nurses, Retired Social Workers etc.)
- 🌸 Trade Union Representatives
- 🌸 Non-Governmental Organisations
- 🌸 People with Disabilities
- 🌸 Women in Service (Army, Police, Correctional Services, Nurses, Social Workers, etc.)
- 🌸 LGBTQI+
- 🌸 Refugee Women
- 🌸 Informal Settlement Women
- 🌸 Homeless and Displaced Women

AfWID FORUM PARTNER'S BREAKFAST

On the 14th of November 2018, a special AfWID forum Partner's breakfast was held at the home of Mrs Mbeki to get sponsors and partners up to speed on the exciting launch of the Inaugural African Women in Dialogue event, and also to thank various companies and individuals for their support. Of course, it was an almost all-women affair filled with laughter, generosity of spirit and support for the upcoming forum. For Mrs Mbeki, it was a moment to be celebrated, with some of her oldest friends and colleagues in the room – many who have travelled a long road with her in realising her AfWID dream.



”

I am in boots and all, said Gloria Serobe from Wiphold, one of the sponsors. It is a massive privilege to be part of this legacy. When Mrs Mbeki says show up, then you drop everything else and show up. She leads by example.



THE DIALOGUE WEEK: A SENSE OF OCCASION

The inaugural African Women in Dialogue (AfWID) event was a week of bonding, deliberation, self-reflection, networking and learning for the approximately 1000 women who attended from all over the SADC region, but it was also cause for celebration with song, dance and ceremony.



After much anticipation the big day finally arrived, the inaugural AfWID forum kicked off with a room of African women (and a few men) packed to capacity in anticipation of the proceedings to come. The SADC flags, including AU flag, framed the AfWID stage to the left and the right – representing the women from the 15 countries attending the historic event.

THE SPEAKERS AND FACILITATORS

A highly skilled team of speakers and facilitators were invited to the inaugural AfWID forum, as well as moderators and panellists, all experts in their given fields. The response to invitations to attend the event was highly favourable, and the response to the theme of dealing with issues around how to “Strengthen the Continental African Women’s Movement within the Fourth Industrial Revolution” was unpacked in its many layers. There were valuable contributions from the speakers, moderators and panellists, all bringing their particular wisdom to the table.

THE PROGRAMME

The programme was carefully put together to ensure that many aspects of the main topic were covered, but also to give the participants time to get to know each other a little bit better. The Breaking Barriers workshops were aimed at just that – allowing participants to connect with self and others in small facilitated groups; the commissions allowed the groups to take part in various topics and issues brought forward during the conference; and the country caucuses were aimed at creating space for discussion around specific country issues and possible solutions to problems. A formidable line-up of speakers and panellists shed light on the theme of AfWID 2018, and the audience responses also shed immense light on the fears, questions and needs that should be addressed when looking at the theme of “Strengthening the Continental Women’s movement in a time of 4IR with a focus on a New and Value-Based Eco-System”.

SONG, DANCE AND MANY BLESSINGS

A forum for African women means cause for celebration and song and dance were simply part and parcel of the events. The opening ceremony began with South Africa’s Imilonji KaNtu Choral Society singing the AU anthem and the South African national anthem, followed by an inter-faith devotion (Muslim, Christian and traditional). A major highlight of the opening ceremony was the musical item/poem by the energetic school girls of the Chief Albert Luthuli Primary School. Poetry, music, song and dance continued throughout the week, culminating with the various countries wearing their traditional gear and performing traditional song and dance at the gala dinner on the Thursday evening.

EXHIBITORS: AfWID would not have been able to take place without the generosity of the sponsors, and the eight exhibition stands in the foyer of the OR TAMBO Conference Centre offered fascinating insights into the offerings of the sponsors and also provided a relaxed “chill spot” where attendees could chat and find out a bit more on the latest telecoms products on offer. Please see our list of sponsors on Page 118.

VOLUNTEERS: The 53 young volunteers, wearing #WeAreHere T-shirts, offered an incredible service to all attendees; no request seemed too big or small. A team of volunteer rapporteurs also played a significant role in recording and documenting key highlights of AfWID 2018, and creating a noteworthy newsletter handed out to participants as they departed on the last day.





MESSAGE FROM PHUMZILE MLAMBO-NGCUKA



**DR PHUMZILE
MLAMBO-NGCUKA**
Executive Director of
UN Women

The Executive Director of UN Women, Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, addressed AfWID participants via video, talking passionately about the progress around gender equality and the fact that so much more needs to be done.

Greetings African Women in Dialogue (AfWID)! Congratulations to ZMDT for hosting this important event and to Mrs Zanele Mbeki for leading this process together with the leadership of SAWID.

The timing of this event is important because the world is at a crossroads between women making progress and changing the world and a pushback and backlash that threatens to take away the gains we have made. Some of the solid gains that unite us as women across the world, and to which Africa contributed significantly, include: the Beijing Platform for Action; the Sustainable Development Goals; Africa's Agenda 2063; the Maputo Protocol, which addresses, in the most progressive way, the rights of the women of our continent; and the Women Peace Security Resolution 1325, just to name a few.

If all these were to be fully implemented, the progress on gender equality would be substantively achieved. A lot of these agreements are meant to ensure that we leave no girl and no woman behind in most rural areas,

in the slums, in informal settlements or the girl who is trapped in an early marriage.

What faces us now is finding a way to build a bridge that can address the millions of women on our continent who are being left behind and take them to the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

As Africa, we do not have the luxury to move through stages of development incrementally. We have to prepare our people for a future in which technology will rule. At the same time, some of the core industries like agriculture also have to adapt and leverage technological advances so that women who are mostly in those industries are not left behind again.

There is already cause to be concerned as the digital divide is growing right now. As we speak, a quarter of a billion fewer women than men are connected. We recognise that African women, like all women in the world, have created an ecosystem that ushers in meaningful transformation for women. Moreover, we

have identified what can truly make a difference. We have in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), for instance, identified the importance of making sure that you can overturn all laws that discriminate against women and address the norms that underpin them.

Child marriage and female genital mutilation have been made possible by laws, and where the laws have changed, the norms perpetuate these practices. Participation of women in politics, which is relatively higher in Africa than the global average, can still be much higher and that is something we still have to fight for because it should be achievable in Africa. It is critical for the continent to reach its full potential. It is possible for almost all our countries to have gender-balanced cabinets. There are 10 gender-equal cabinets in the world. Only 10. These are Sweden, Spain, France, Colombia, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Seychelles, Rwanda and Canada. Three are from Africa, which means that Africa is doing better than the average, but we can do much better. The gender gap is not okay. For instance, right now, South Africa is at 49% women in the cabinet, so it means we can do this. We also have to strive for good women because we also know that when we are represented by bad men or bad women, we do not win.

The unequal representation of women in the private sector, both in decision-making and in the many strategic parts of industries, together with unequal pay, which denies women the income for services they have rendered, is a form of discrimination. That would change the lives of millions of women in the world as well as our continent if it were to change. The inequality is worth fighting for.

Unpaid care leaves millions of women with motherhood as a form of penalty, as it takes away the possibility for them to enter the labour market because of the absence of adequate, affordable care for family members. This is usually misunderstood as an insignificant matter, but it is significant. Now we have research that shows that addressing care and creating the support for women - making sure that care is remunerated - would change

the lives of millions of women who would be able to enter the labour market. If women were able to enter the labour market at the same level as men, the global economy would be increased by as much as \$12-trillion and poverty would be reduced significantly.

We also have to target women in rural areas, especially with the provision of infrastructure and education. This is important to change the lives of women in rural areas. That is why next year's Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will address this issue of infrastructure and social protection.

Violence against women is still one of the biggest challenges that we face in the world and Africa. It is a crime in which most perpetrators are not brought to book. We have to use everything we have to change the extent to which violence against women has been normalised.

With all of these issues that I have mentioned, we must think about 2020, which will be the year where we would have been implementing the Beijing Platform for 25 years. We should make sure that at that time we have identified these critical interventions that are game-changers. Together in Africa, in Asia, in Latin America, in Europe and in the Middle East, we should pull together a global message that we will adopt in 2020 in support of the Beijing Platform of the SDGs. We should push in one direction so that by the end of 2030, when the SDGs would have been expiring, we would have achieved substantive equality.

Let us make 2030 the year for the expiry of gender inequality. However, let us try to do it much sooner than 2030.

I wish you good luck.

You are supporting the African Women's Leadership Network by gathering in this manner because this network is trying to achieve what I've just discussed. It needs you in your countries and your region in order for it to succeed and make a difference.



MESSAGE FROM WINNIE BYANYIMA



WINNIE BYANYIMA
Executive Director
of Oxfam

Although she could not be with us in person, Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of Oxfam, sent a powerful video message for the attendees of AfWID.

Ninjane. It is a great honour to be invited to share with you dear sisters at the African Women in Dialogue forum. Congratulations to you Zanele Mbeki, my sister, for convening this important dialogue.

My name is Winnie Byanyima; I'm the Executive Director of Oxfam International. At such meetings, we ought always to start by acknowledging and celebrating our successes. We have fought and won many laws and policies to ensure gender equality and protect women's rights. We are the continent that has made the most rapid progress on women's political participation. We have closed the gender gap at the primary-school level. These are the gains made through our activism.

There's much more to do. We face serious threats to the gains already made. We face a crisis of rising extreme inequality. Seven out of 10 of the most unequal countries in the world are African. Did you know that? South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Central African Republic, Lesotho and Swaziland are among the top 10 most unequal countries in the world.

The wealth of our boom years has ended up in the hands of a few, shall I say, very rich men and foreign companies. The majority of women have remained at the bottom of the economic pyramid.

Growth has arrived without jobs for our children. We have the figures - extreme poverty is once again rising on the continent. Meanwhile, climate-related disasters have shot up. Climate extremes are destroying homes, assets and people in their path. New United Nations data shows how climate change is driving up hunger after years of reducing it.



Africa is the continent in which everything seems to be getting disrupted. Everything besides the same old elite men who run it. This male elite is crowding out the voices of our young people.

There are some signs of hope such as in Ethiopia, but we cannot wait for change. Change must come sooner. We must always remember, though, that these negative trends are a result of policy choices that our leaders make. The same goes for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), the theme of this dialogue.

I remain incurably excited about the opportunities of new technology. It has the potential to solve the problems we face. Wisely used technology can enable more equal economies across our continent, in which the benefits of increased productivity lead to more incomes and more personal time for both male and female workers. It can decarbonise our economies. Technology can transform the livelihoods and incomes of our smallholder farmers. It can liberate women from the burden of unpaid care work to be economically and



politically active. It can create millions of well-paid jobs in care services, where women predominate.

However, that is not the path we are on. Our leaders the world over seem to be accepting that technology is like rain falling from the heavens, over which they have no control. So we are seeing the owners of technology and capital running amok. They are using technology to run ahead of everybody else, and they leave the majority behind. They are using technology to threaten jobs, especially of the poorest; to disrupt the competitive advantages of our low-income countries, and therefore our path to development.

They are using technology to enable their companies to dodge paying their fair share of taxes, meaning that governments' revenue that could go to quality health and good education for all is not there. So for me, the 4IR is a question of the type of economy we choose. It is a question of who will benefit. A few, rich, mostly men? Alternatively, will it be all of us? To reap the benefits of the 4IR, all of us citizens, men and women, must push our governments to take control. We cannot afford to just sit respectfully on the sidelines, watching. Governments must use the right mix of regulation, incentives and imagination. We can do it. I regret that I cannot be part of this exciting discussion. However, I am with you in solidarity. I wish you a very productive and fun meeting and look forward very much to hearing the outcome.

Thank you.

PANEL DISCUSSION ONE

STRENGTHENING THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT ON THE CONTINENT

In the 8th year of the African Women's Decade, and in the time of the resurgence of active feminism across the world, this panel was convened to reflect on the status of the African women's movement and its effectiveness in the past decade in changing the lives of African women. In recent years, the movement has been criticised for losing its autonomy, vigour and vigilance, and thus being complicit in the deepening of challenges, as well as reversals of some of the development gains made by women on the continent.



OPENING COMMENTS:



PANELLISTS



MODERATOR

DR GERTRUDE MONGELLA,
Special Advisor to the UNESCO Director-General;
Founder, Advocacy for Women in Africa (AWA);
Former President of the Pan-African Parliament (Tanzania).

MS EMMA KALIYA,
Chairperson of the SADC Protocol Alliance (Malawi)

MS COLLEEN LOWE MORNA,
CEO of Gender Links (SA)

MS SARA LONGWE,
Board Member of Gender Links (Zambia)

MS MEMORY KACHAMBWA,
Executive Director of FEMNET (Pan-Africa)

MS ANNE GITHUKU-SHONGWE,
UN Women South Africa Multi-Country Office Representative

LERATO MBELE-ROBERTS,
BBC Africa Reporter (SA)



We must also reconsider our space within the African continent. – Dr Gertrude Mongella

"The big question, today, that I want you to answer is: Are you seeing the Africa which we women want?" asked Dr Gertrude Mongella of the packed audience in her opening address on the first day of the AfWID forum.

"We (women) have never rested on the African continent," she declared. "We worked during slavery, we have worked during apartheid.... We worked hard at dismantling colonialism. The unfortunate thing is that, after liberation, the men let us down. They took it all. And we have started a new liberation front where we women want to be equal."

She pointed out that the first movement on the African continent was in fact the Pan African Women's Organisation (PAWO), which had worked so hard for the liberation of women across the continent in 1962 (even before the men had created the Organisation of African Unity). That, Mongella highlighted, had shown the strength of women on the continent.



BUT HER CONCERN IS THAT THIS MOMENTUM HAS BEGUN TO SLOW.

"In Beijing, I gave 'homework', as Secretary-General of the Conference, that we begin a revolution," said Mongella.

Almost 25 years after Beijing, the question we must ask ourselves is that we started a social revolution, but how are we fitting in with the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)? With technology, women are so marginalised. How can they get into the 4IR?

Mongella says Africa's presidents, including her own, Tanzanian President John Magufuli, are running around talking about the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) without consideration being given to the inclusion of women. She would like the considerations from the AfWID forum to inform these decisions, and to ensure that the women of Africa are not left behind.

NEW WAYS OF BEING

Mongella further cautioned that women needed to decide how they wanted to be defined, or risk remaining within the same parameters. This new paradigm reaches across women from all walks of life. She praised Zanele Mbeki and the AfWID organising team for bringing the women together from across the SADC region, especially those grassroots women who are absolutely key when plotting the future in the age of technology.

“Sis Zanele, you have made us proud, you have brought us all together so that we can network, so that we can continue thinking and unpacking ways we are going to be in the 4IR.”

She is passionate about the fact that women can’t be left behind, and that the women of Africa don’t have another 25 years to complete the social revolution that was started in Beijing. While there are many women networks on the continent, there are still women who can’t read or write and many – like herself - who are “technologically illiterate”.

She says it’s time to sing from another hymn sheet.

“We have to consider that because we have become obsolete in the 4IR, we cannot keep singing what we did in Beijing, what we did in Nairobi, if we do not repackage ourselves.”

INTER-GENERATIONAL SHARING

Much has been said about the digital divide in Africa, and one theme that was prevalent at the AfWID forum was that of the importance of the cross-pollination of knowledge between grandmothers, mothers and daughters in our communities.

Mongella emphasised the need for inter-generational sharing for the good of the continent, in the light of the new world order brought about by technology.

“The older generation has the experience, the younger generation has the energy, and they have been exposed to technology. We have to consider how we are going to work together to create that strong movement that is part of African culture.”

Those who have come before have created the cornerstone for collective action, said Mongella, but this new revolution demands action from the women’s movement to close the digital divide and to envision real change that affects all women on the continent.

“We must close the gap. We must look for a new school of thought on the economy, on management, on political leadership, in order to be able to move ahead. We must also reconsider our space within the African continent.”



THE UNITED NATIONS BEIJING PLATFORM OF ACTION



17,000 PARTICIPANTS

30,000 ACTIVISTS

189 GOVERNMENTS

An unprecedented 17,000 participants and 30,000 activists streamed into Beijing for the opening of the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995.

They were remarkably diverse, coming from around the globe, but they had a single purpose in mind:

gender equality and the empowerment of all women, everywhere.

Two weeks of political debate followed, heated at times, as representatives of 189 governments hammered out commitments that were historic in scope. By the time the conference closed, it had produced the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the most progressive blueprint ever for advancing women’s rights. As a defining framework for change, the Platform for Action made comprehensive commitments under 12 critical areas of concern:



*The older generation has the experience,
the younger generation has the energy*

Over 20 years later, The United Nations Beijing Platform of Action remains a powerful source of guidance and inspiration. **Source: UN_Women**



Anne Githuku-Shongwe, UN Women South Africa

WHERE TO NOW?

For **ANNE GITHUKU-SHONGWE**, UN Women South Africa Multi-Country Representative, acknowledging that the women's movement has lost some momentum and seeking ways of speeding up the pace of change when it comes to gender issues is absolutely key.

She picked up on the video message from UN Women Executive Director Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and noted that UN Women had pulled together an African Women Leaders Network (AWLN) in June 2017, to reclaim the energy that had been lost.

Referring to the predictions in the 2017 World Economic Forum Gender Gap publication, she asks the question:

Will it truly take women another 217 years to achieve gender equality if we continue at our current pace? We have to change that story.

She shared that UN Women seeks to step in and bolster women's movements wherever they are, and to send groups of African women to places where women leaders can support each other.

GIVING PEACE A CHANCE

Githuku-Shongwe's delivery also centred on the theme of peace, and the opportunity of driving peace through the various women's networks.

She pointed out that in South Sudan, five years previously, when things were very bad, many women's movements had supported the South Sudanese women's movement. Women now have the opportunity to create a new kind of network, to carry the civil society organisations.

She wondered, however, how women could make sure that peace prevailed, and that UN Resolution 1325 was implemented? How can women make sure that the Beijing declaration begins to achieve the intentions that were formulated 25 years ago?



Memory Kachambwa, FEMNET

Programme Director **LERATO MBELE-ROBERTS** noted that women's collective strengths would be needed to confront the challenges and create the opportunities for strengthening the women's movement.

DISRUPT THE PATRIARCHAL NARRATIVE

MEMORY KACHAMBWA, Executive Director of FEMNET and the youngest member of the panel, wondered who was writing the story of African women.

"Who is writing Herstory?" she asked, stating that we really only know the narrative of the patriarch, and this must be challenged.

In terms of strengthening the movement, we should be pushing the African feminist to be bold about being a feminist. She encouraged other women out there to find their voices and tell their story and to be bold enough to stand up as African women.

She pointed out that the partners and sponsors of AfWID were all African, and that it was important to identify the women who have access to finance, and who can drive an agenda for women's rights.

She reminded women that in hosting the first AfWID gathering, South Africa was really leading, and that all the women present should tune into the resources available to African women through the various networks and organisations. For Kachambwa, it is also key to be mindful of what is happening on the continent.

"We must in solidarity also understand and also tune into the other struggles happening in other regions of Africa," she said.

SARAH LONGWE, board member of Gender Links in Zambia, expressed her pride in being present at the AfWID forum as the journey for gender equality and women's empowerment was not yet done.

"We, around this room, should be able to recognise that patriarchy is real and is often hidden."

Longwe pointed out that it is essential that women should continue to mobilise and to constantly look for solutions. She highlighted the fact that:



THE AGE OF TECHNOLOGY MAY ALSO BRING OPPORTUNITIES TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS.

"My question is, how do African women utilise the Fourth Industrial Revolution technology, since we are already in it?" she asked.

GENDER VIOLENCE

COLLEEN LOWE MORNA, CEO of Gender Links in South Africa and the co-ordinator of the SADC Gender Protocol Alliance, outlined the broad sweep of change that women were confronting in Africa, noting that Africa and the SADC region were regions of struggle, beset by issues of gender, political independence and democracy.

The progress for women is often one step forward, two steps back, according to Lowe Morna, and the result is that young women (in South Africa) have become very disillusioned because the "fruits of freedom" have failed to materialise.

The biggest way in which these freedoms they were promised are failing to be delivered is the extremely high levels of gender violence that we have in our societies, because the single biggest indicator of gender inequality in our society is the level of gender violence.

She says young women are being raped at their universities, and they are angry. She mentioned the #TotalShutDown campaign, in which, during August,

Women's Month in South Africa, the women refused to "celebrate" but went to the lawns of the Union Buildings to see President Cyril Ramaphosa and would not take no for an answer in being fobbed off by the presence of another minister.

"This is the new generation of the women's movement," says Morna.



"THEY ORGANISE THROUGH HASHTAGS, THEY ORGANISE ON THE GROUND. THEY MOBILISE IN A WAY WE NEVER COULD."

She agrees with Mongella that it is essential for intergenerational dialogue to take place. "The young people have the energy; we sitting here have the experience."

She looks forward to a future in which the gender issue has reached its expiry date.

Paraphrasing Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, she asks: "How do we make it to a 2030 where gender inequality has expired?"

OWNING THE TABLE

LERATO MBELE-ROBERTS. Programme Director, remarked that, just the previous week, Graça Machel had said at a gathering: "We don't want to have a seat at the table, we want to discuss the shape of the table, and we want to redesign the menu."

Women are tired of being dictated to on every level, from policy to grassroots, and there is an overwhelming need for action on all levels.

EMMA KALIYA, from Malawi and Chairperson of the SADC Gender Protocol Alliance, noted that women from the SADC region had looked at the global and continental gender protocols and gains, and said, "No, this is not enough, we need a SADC Gender Protocol, taking further what was already achieved."

She explained that the 15 countries represented were very vibrant in terms of the SADC Gender Protocol, but women's struggles are more than just about membership and representation. Although South Africa might have achieved over 42% women's representation in parliament, women also had to ensure that young women were included. In return, young women had to make sure that they acknowledged the old women in the struggle.

She pointed out that in FEMNET there is a saying: "If you are not at the table, you will be on the menu, and you will be eaten."

The challenge now within the SADC Gender Protocol Alliance is that women should be able to sustain the gains that have been achieved, according to Kaliya. The alliance members have had to assert themselves within SADC to get a foot in the door of formal SADC structures, but women have been steadfast in their commitment, saying, "If you won't let us through the door, we will get in through the chimney."

GAINING TRACTION

In her role as moderator, **MBELE-ROBERTS** noted that Mlambo-Ngcuka had mentioned the Maputo Protocol, the Beijing Platform for Action, the establishment of the Pan African Women's Organisation (PAWO) in 1962, and other gains and achievements, "It seems to me that the women's movement is alive and well. However, it seems to me like it's not properly networked. It's not

known about particularly well and it's the traction that's the issue. How do we give it momentum?"

EMMA KALIYA responded by saying there were networks in every country, but the hope and desire is that much more will still be accomplished. The business sections are on their own, and the civil society organisations are on their own. There is strength in unity, she asserted, and African women should ensure that they work closer together in future.

A GLOBAL VIEW (AND THE POWER OF THE HASHTAG)

LOWE MORNA feels that we are living in exciting times, in which women are starting to have a loud voice, with social media playing a major role in mobilising the younger women.

Gender equality and women abuse are playing a leading role on social media platforms, says Morna, pointing to hashtag campaigns like "#Metoo, #Time'sUp, #SheDecides, to mention just a few.

So, she asks, the question really is: How do we harness the already existent energy and take it to action?

MEMORY KACHAMBWA highlighted the many areas in which social media has played a role on the continent, with emphasis on the #JusticeforLiz hashtag that FEMNET started in Kenya after a young girl was gang-raped and her perpetrators were given very light sentences.

"We got together, we got different organisations and networks and we got the hashtag #JusticeforLiz. Within 48 hours, it had two-million endorsements. It was such a wave, to the point that everyone was talking about it." It might have taken four years for Liz to get justice, but a special prosecutor was appointed and the men were sentenced to 15 years in prison.

This case has translated into more awareness of women's rights, and the power of the social media platform.



Emma Kaliya, SADC Protocol Alliance



Colleen Lowe Morna, Gender Links SA



Lerato Mbele-Roberts, Moderator

We cannot keep singing what we did in Beijing, what we did in Nairobi, if we do not re-package ourselves. – Gertrude Mongella

LOWE MORNA points out that while social media, marches and forums are all needed, gender violence and abuse need to be addressed at every level, including local government, organisations and networks working together.

TALKING ECONOMICS



Why do we women keep on being the face of inequality and poverty?

MEMORY KACHAMBWA made a pertinent point, praising the sponsors of the AfWID forum (many of them women or women-led organisations), but also felt that it wasn't fair that, in her view, only women have to do the "hard lifting" of the plight of rural women.

She says it's important to look at the big picture, noting that Africa as a whole loses \$80-billion each year through illicit financial flows, including corporate tax (and corporates taking money out of Africa); widespread corruption and drug trafficking.

"Those are the issues where it's a discourse where the amount for every dollar that Africa receives it loses \$10. And when we take just 5%, for example, that is lost through corruption and we use it, it is enough to finance all the schools, provide education and provide quality health care."



GERTRUDE MONGELLA is very clear on the fact that you cannot have equality in a political system that does not practise true democracy. "We are trying to get into politics, which was never considered. We had never conceded that women are part of the decision-makers. So we have to change this school of thought and reframe our societies. We can do it."

ANNE GITHUKU-SHONGWE noted that in issues of the economy, patriarchy prevails, since, in Africa, 35% of the economy comes from procurement. "Annually, \$655-billion is spent by African governments, yet women access only 1%." She added that "on this issue of procurement, in Kenya, it was recently reported that 35% would be set aside for women's businesses".

She highlighted the fact that it is important that women disrupt the public procurement procedure. There needs to be access and more transparent and public procurement.

Around the world, in most of our economies, 25%-35% of the GDP comes from public procurement (tenders), says Githuku-Shongwe. This is "the purchase of goods and services by governments across the world. The global average and the Africa average is that women businesses access 1% of that!"

"So, already, entire economies are designed against women, whether rural or urban. So, as the government is thinking about buying goods and services, they're not thinking about a rural woman as the person from whom they're going to purchase." When it comes to the building of roads or RDP houses, women aren't generally going to be considered, so they are therefore missing out on huge pieces of the economy.

"If we continue doing business as we do, it automatically falls into those who already have access. So we've got to disrupt the value chain of opportunity so that women in both rural and urban areas can access it, or we remain the same."

FOCUS ON WHAT UNITES

Fittingly, **GERTRUDE MONGELLA** had the last word on the issue of how to strengthen the women's movement. For her, it's all about collaboration and about taking the power where we are to harness the winds of change.

"Use the skills of women, regardless of the level of technological knowledge. Let us use our traditional methods and join together regardless of what divides us AND starting from home. You cannot come and talk here about the equality of women when we are divided between the rural, the educated, the non-educated, the rich and the poor. You will never make it."



"And finally, please let's make sure that we love each other."



*Gertrude Mongella, Special Advisor
UNESCO Director General*



BURNING QUESTION:



What can we do to ensure that the 4IR will not destroy our livelihoods?

GITHUKU-SHONGWE noted that technology should enable women, not threaten them. "Every telecommunications company has a responsibility to make the internet available to all. There is at least \$400-million dollars dedicated to this cause that has remained unspent. In Burkina Faso alone, it was \$77-million dollars. We need a #ConnectUs campaign. It is supposed to be the responsibility of these telecoms companies to create connectivity. Of this \$400-million, at least 50% has to go to the connectivity of women. The same argument goes for issues of artificial intelligence. We have to make sure that we have a critical mass of young girls who can code. The World Economic Forum is also driving internet for all."

IN ADDITION TO THE UNITED NATIONS BEIJING PLATFORM OF ACTION, KEY MILESTONES IN THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT



THE MAPUTO PROTOCOL: Adopted by the African Union and signed on 11 July 2003. Also known as The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the charter guarantees comprehensive rights to women, including the right to take part in the political process, to social and political equality with men, improved autonomy in their reproductive health decisions, and an end to female genital mutilation.



The women's continental movement of the 1960s, which formed the **PAN-AFRICAN WOMEN'S ORGANISATION (PAWO)**, is still active in many African Union (AU) member states. PAWO predated the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), yet shares the same objectives as the continental body. PAWO all along had an observer status in the OAU/AU. [It was only in January 2017, that PAWO was accorded specialised agency status within the structures of the AU.]



THE AFRICAN WOMEN'S DECADE: At their Extra-Ordinary Meeting of Ministers of Gender and Women Affairs in Maseru, Lesotho, in December 2008, the African Union (AU) Ministers for Gender and Women's Affairs called on the AU to declare 2010-2020 as the African Women's Decade. The proposal was adopted by the Assembly.



UNITED NATIONALS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand in hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests. **Source: UN Women**



PANEL ONE: KEY THOUGHTS



We always have to make sure that the young people are among us. I remember when we were preparing for Beijing, alongside the elders, we had the youth meetings. I learnt a lot from the youth. I brought in people to talk about contraception, but they were all grey. Then I learnt that we are more successful by not castigating the youth, but learning from them.
– Gertrude Mongella



How do we harness the data hubs that can really work for us? We have to look at what was happening after Beijing. There was a gap on raising the ideological issues. Beijing shook up the whole system. It provided us with an ideological wave of understanding patriarchy and the political wave to end it.
– Memory Kachambwa



It is not just about 'jobs for the girls'. If you gave me a feminist man, I would vote for him. We need transformative leadership. Let us have leaders who are willing to have the term feminist behind their names.
– Colleen Lowe Morna



We need to have our spaces and hold our government accountable.
– Emma Kaliya



We women do have power. We are patriarchal gate-keepers, even as women. Can we learn to see how we do it, and how we can stop it? We should form groups to support young women.
– Sara Longwe

CONNECTING WITH SELF AND WITH OTHERS

BREAKING BARRIERS WITH MIKE BOON

Barrier-breaking, healing one's pain, focusing on core values and reaching out to others was an essential part of the inaugural AfWID Forum. Facilitated by Mike Boon and his team from Vulindlela, the “Breaking Barriers” sessions were a safe space to release, reflect and reimagine.

*“You **can** contribute to our continent,”*

said Mike Boon, addressing the room.

You are creating a new order, not just for Africa, but for the world in terms of women and the equality of women and the real empowerment of women.

Passionate about the upliftment of women, Boon has been working with South African Women in Dialogue (SAWID) since 2003, and was honoured to be invited to the inaugural AfWID to do what he does best – create a safe space for people to get in touch with their own humanity. He does this with African song and dance and by inviting and encouraging people to talk to each other in real and meaningful ways.

Working with his trained facilitators, Boon divided participants into 42 groups in different parts of the Birchwood Hotel and conference venue.

“At these breakaway sessions, the delegates first declared their values, established a constitution and then followed through with an ‘emptying’ session,” he told AfWID rapporteur Akhona Valashiya in an interview.

Emptying is the process of letting go of the pain or burden and creating an opportunity to share and be heard.

After mind-mapping their personal vision, visions for AfWID and for the continent, participants came together once more, with Boon discussing their dreams, visions and contributions to a larger vision of themselves and for Africa as a whole.



This is a good platform for women to come together and make a change in Africa. Women here are sharing their stories, exchanging plans and implementation strategies to go home and bring about change in their communities. – Gaotlhobongwe Modise, Botswana

EMPOWERING DREAMS

Boon firmly believes in the power of facing up to pain, and then letting it go before any real work can be done.

He says, “In order for people to talk about their dreams, they have to be able to release their pain.”

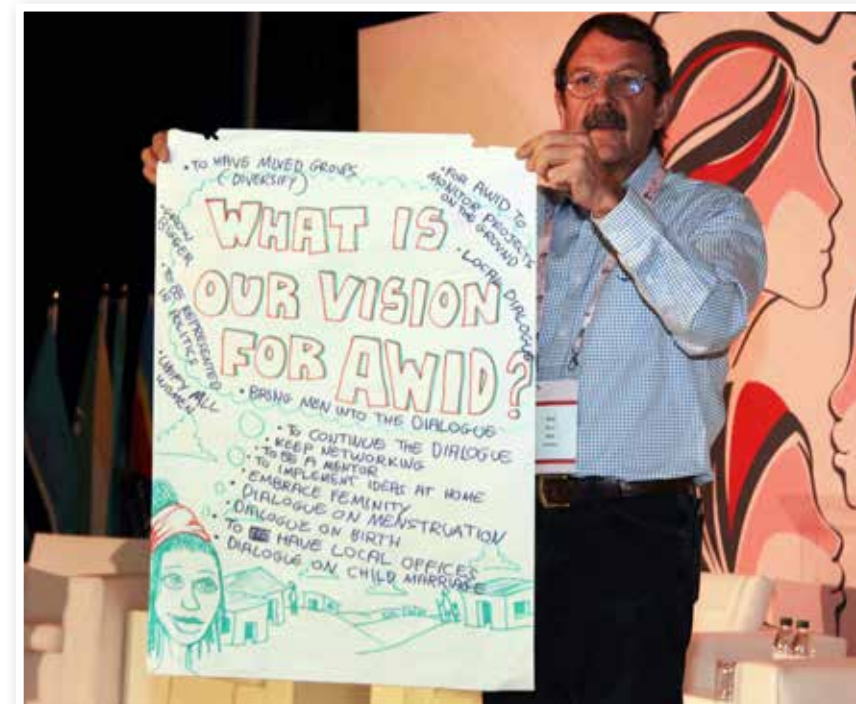
The kinds of heart-breaking issues that were brought to the fore during the sessions included the loss of children; the loss of husbands; the fear of pregnancy; terrible emotional abuse; gender-based violence; and unemployment, as well as discussions about keeping one's head above water in a patriarchal society.

Boon says that by shining light on our collective pain, we learn that we are not alone and then the real work can begin.

He encouraged the women to express their dreams fully.

“Make it very clear what you wish to achieve - even though you know there are what seem to be completely insurmountable hurdles to achieve it. You declared your personal vision. Now go out there and make it happen,” said Boon.

VISION FOR AfWID



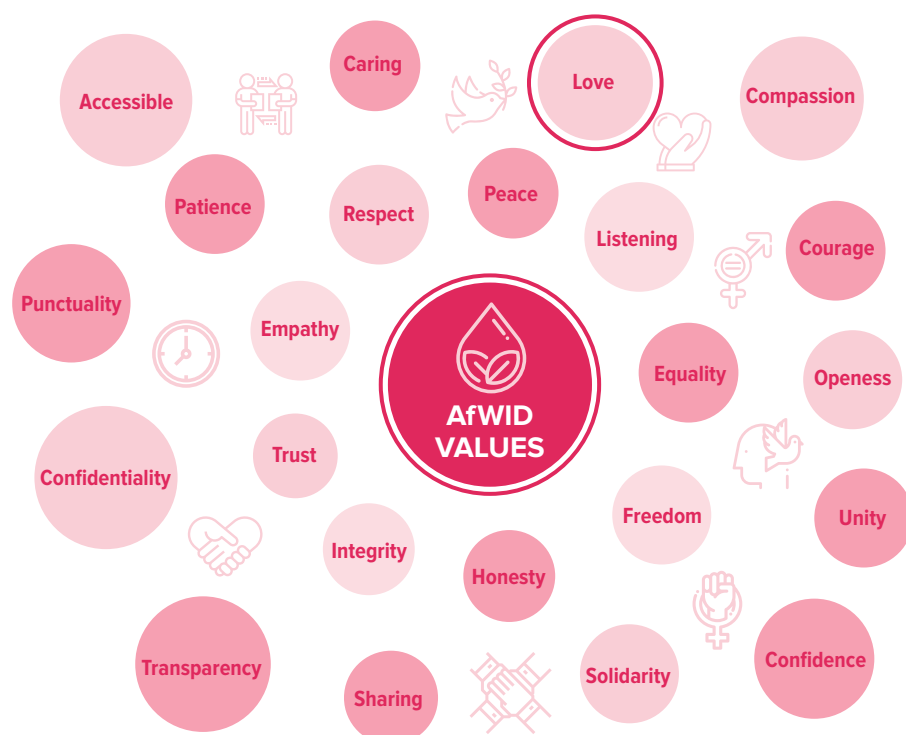
MEDITATION WITH BRAHMA KUMARIS

The Breaking Barriers session concluded with a guided meditation facilitated by Brahma Kumaris. The group was fortunate to receive a blessing from Sister Verdanti, the Regional Director of Brahma Kumaris from India, who delivered a message of peace and empowerment before the women were invited to a beautiful meditation.

LOVE IS THE STRONGEST VALUE OF ALL, UNDERPINNING ALL OF THE OTHER NOBLE VALUES THAT WERE DISCUSSED AND CHOSEN.

The AfWID participants were encouraged to explore their personal vision for AfWID. The phrase, creating a “strong women’s movement”, was underlined time and time again in the feedback.

The AfWID vision evolved into the participants exploring values and what they mean.



THE INVITATION

“Our vision for AfWID is to invite and to keep extending our circle to make it reach across the entire continent; to remain apolitical; to invite and to continue to invite patrons and sponsors to the events, not just here but in all of our beautiful African countries,” read Boon from one of the contributions.

THE VISION FOR AFRICA

The Vulindlela team also asked the women to discuss their vision for Africa and the women’s movement, and the collaboration allowed participants to explore the notion of what a united African sisterhood means.

The take-home message for participants was one that LOVE is the strongest value of all, underpinning all of the other noble values that were discussed and chosen. And that empathy for each other and oneself is the cornerstone of building a prosperous and caring continent.



PANEL DISCUSSION TWO

MOVING TOWARDS A NEW VALUE-BASED ECOSYSTEM FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

We are currently witnessing the detrimental effects of some of the local and global shifts that are threatening to reverse developmental gains made over the years. In the past decade, we have seen the emergence of worrying political shifts to the right, declining economies, a rise in human rights violations, deepening poverty, inequality, anti-migrant policies, destructive environmental changes and increased violence against women, children and other vulnerable groups. This panel discussion focussed on the growing call for value-based leadership in all spheres of society, which will lead communities towards the creation of peaceful and more egalitarian societies.



OPENING COMMENTS:



PANELLISTS



MODERATOR

PROFESSOR CATHERINE ODORA HOPPERS,
DST/NRF South African Research Chair in Development Education (Uganda)

DR MAMPHELA RAMPHELE,
Co-founder of ReimagineSA (South Africa)

MS FATIMA SHABODIEN,
Feminist activist (South Africa)

MS MILDRED NGESA,
Head of Communications at FEMNET (Kenya)

SISTER PRATIBA DAYA,
Senior Yogi of the Brahma Kumaris (South Africa)

MS TAMALA CHIRWA,
Founder of Women's Leadership Footprint (Malawi)



What is our way of articulating the common good, knowing that common good and common wellbeing are neither feminine nor masculine? – Professor Catherine Odora Hoppers

Impassioned and insightful as always, **PROFESSOR CATHERINE ODORA HOPPERS** is not afraid to ask difficult questions, or give one serious pause for thought.

The 21st century and our awareness of our freedoms brings with it greater responsibilities and obligations, says Hoppers. She says it means women are now involved in the modern (and male-dominated) political order – an order they once despised.

She asks how women in power can do things differently to the patriarchal system, bearing in mind that a value-based ecosystem is on the side of common good and is based on humanity and inclusivity to the benefit of all.

“Common good or common wellbeing are neither feminine nor masculine. So what are we talking about in this gathering? When we have to transition from submission into responsibility we find ourselves caught in a time warp. Two histories, two visions in the contemporary woman. The domestic self and the political, and we experience it as duality and yet it is what makes us so, so powerful.

“So, this duality that is experience is a handicap or an incoherence? It's the Western mindset. And patriarchy would call it a juxtaposition. It is in this juxtaposition in which the past and the present roles of women are brought out that the secret of a woman's humanity lies. Because when we bring out this juxtaposition in public we carry with it the destiny of our era in which tradition and modernity are confronted.”

SO WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “CREATING A VALUE-BASED ECOSYSTEM”?



HOPPERS SAYS IT SIMPLY HAS TO BE ABOUT **CONSIDERING THE WELLBEING OF ALL OF AFRICA'S CITIZENS.**

If the 20th century was the century of African political independence, I believe that the 21st century is the century of Africa's RECLAIMING of human agency and of (her) status in the world citizenship as subject, not as object.

While the 21st century will be one in which we will experience the complete political freeing of the continent, she cautions that the awareness of the spirit of our time, our generation, and our continent, and of being free, takes us far beyond mere cries of reparation



Professor Catherine Odora Hoppers

and claims of injustice, even beyond the dictates of modernity and enlightenment, in which all nations of the world are locked in the grids created by Europeans.

She points out that this new-found freedom comes with responsibility. She also says that victimhood has no place in the journey going forward.

KNOW WHAT YOU ARE FIGHTING FOR

Hoppers encouraged AfWID participants to go beyond anger and making others suffer for “what happened to me in the past”.

“Much will depend on how we articulate ourselves out of the experience of humiliation suffered at the hands of colonialism apartheid and of patriarchy and make sure we avoid adding to self-perpetuating cultural cycles of violation and vindication which would seem to say: ‘I have the right to be angry and make others suffer forever because someone has hurt me in the past’. That will not work!”

She is passionate in articulating that Africa has to become clear about what Africa is fighting for, and not against.

ETHICAL-BASED LEADERSHIP

DR MAMPHELA RAMPHELE concurred with Professor Hoppers that one has to go beyond the negatives, to transcend the anger and pain of the past and, in doing so, transcend oneself.

I believe that AfWID is that revolutionary platform that has brought us here from so many different parts of this continent to redefine the Africa we want to live in, she said.

She warns against becoming “hooked into the discourses from elsewhere”, and noted that the first and second industrial revolutions took place in Europe, the third in America, yet the first human civilisation started in Africa.

“Let’s remind people that Africa is not only the cradle of humanity, it is also the cradle of the first civilisation,” said Ramphele.

“And so, we are bringing to this Fourth Industrial Revolution the values of Ubuntu - *I am, because you are* - and in that way we can create a more sustainable world which understands that I only succeed to the extent that I enable others to succeed.



THE VALUES OF UBUNTU:
I AM, BECAUSE YOU ARE.

SHAPING THE VALUES OF SOCIETY

Feminist activist **FATIMA SHABODIEN** says that, although she lives in a country with a radical constitution, and a world-class Bill of Rights, it is assumed that *Ubuntu* is in abundance in society.

She says: “The reasons why women experience the scale of violations at the extent that we do in my country is because of the disconnect between what we have on paper and what happens in real life. And part of the biggest failures in our post-apartheid era, in my belief, is a failure to take control of shaping values in our society.”

Shabodien says our advocacy agendas have got to be a challenge to our states to take on values-shaping projects that make real notions of equality as a value. She also says that creating hierarchy in all walks of life means that inequality still reigns supreme.

“You can go to trade union conferences in South Africa, and there can be a VVIP section, so not only are you very important, you are Very, Very Important. What does it say to the rest of us who are not in that queue who don’t have a VVIP badge?”

She also points out that, as a feminist movement, it is important to challenge government to take control of all

exposure, including state broadcasters like the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC).

“If you switch on the SABC and hear the sexist nonsense that we are subjected to every day, it’s not a surprise that patriarchy is normal because every time you switch on the TV that is what they tell us. It’s normal that men are in control of women and women are subjugated.

“So we should learn from our communist brothers and sisters who have done a much better job of this, taking control of state broadcasters, taking control of education and saying we are going to embark on an active project of shaping values.”

Capitalism has shaped the values of a post-apartheid South Africa and other African countries, says Shabodien. Capitalism is about individualism, it’s about greed, it’s about looking out for yourself. It’s about stepping on anybody to get to the top.

She also posed a question that resonates with the theme of the AfWID forum, and that is: “How do we use your technology in an agenda that is our agenda, and that holds people accountable?”

THE WISDOM OF THE PLACENTA

AfWID 2018 will be remembered for many incredible moments, but perhaps the most memorable was **MILDRED NGESA’S** introduction of the “The Wisdom of the Placenta”.

As FEMNET, we work in 57 African countries. We are working in all the five sub-regions in this country, and in every region we visit we meet women who are us. We speak the same language... the language of the placenta, yet we don’t know it.

“I challenge you to think about where your placenta was buried when you are born,” says Ngesa. “We talk to our young sisters and they say, ‘But I was born in the Johannesburg maternity hospital’. I say that is true but you need to go back to your mother and ask your

mother where her placenta was buried when her mother gave birth to her. And if she's not there, then ask your grandmother where her placenta was buried.

"Because we Africans know that it is where the placenta is buried that roots you. So history, and understanding who we are, where we come from and why we are - that is extremely important because if we do not understand the wisdom of the placenta and where it is buried then we are doomed as African women because that is the beginning of thinking as African women as we actually take up the challenges that we see."



HISTORY, AND UNDERSTANDING WHO WE ARE, WHERE WE COME FROM AND WHY WE ARE - IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT.

She noted with appreciation that, in this coming together of a thousand women, both "grassroots" and "rooftops", "this amazing, ground-breaking dialogue has connected all of us".

There has to be no distinction between you and me. The placenta has no race or colour. It has no status. It has no class. It has no tribe. So when we look at it that way, my sisters will begin to understand that when a child is raped in Libya and a child is raped in Cape Town, we both cry. Because the cry of the child being violated, the woman being violated is the same.

"And so technology has come and this technology cannot be policed and it keeps diverting, it keeps changing, and it's vibrant and it's connecting things and it's making our world totally different."

How do we make use of technology in communion with the soul of the African woman, the soul of the African woman's placenta? asks Ngesa.

While being part of a larger community, a sisterhood from around the African continent, is absolutely key to moving forward, moderator **TAMALA CHIRWA** posed a question to **SISTER PRATIBA DAYA** from Brahma Kumaris on the

importance of self-awareness and emotional intelligence when it comes to ethical leadership.

SISTER PRATIBA DAYA, BRAHMA KUMARIS

"I think to really begin to look at our response to the world around us and even the values that we hold is very directly connected to the sense of self that we hold of ourselves," she says.

She adds that physical identity based on our cultural, national, religious, racial or circumstantial context plays a role and influences our sense of self-worth, and also allows us to see others as being different from us.

"Based on the differences that I see, I begin to evaluate and measure myself," she says, but "we are more than our contexts, we are more than even our histories in a way that we are spiritual beings".

It's the power that we have within ourselves. It's when we begin to see ourselves from that deeper, innate level that (we are) free from the influence of all these labels that we've attached ourselves to.

Sister Daya says that when we begin to reconnect and identify with our innate self, it gives us a new way of seeing our self-worth.

"My self-worth is not how I compare myself against the other. My self-worth is who I am and what I am as spirit, as consciousness. This foundation of self-respect then begins to anchor me and when I feel anchored then it helps me to engage with the other from this inner security."

Sister Daya says that, in her observation, the lack of emotional intelligence is actually an insecurity within the self.

"When you see a behaviour that's aggressive, it's actually showing powerlessness, not real power inside. So we begin to create this deeper foundation of I am because of what I am within. I am the spirit within. I am this consciousness within. I am this amazing energy

within as I begin to create that foundation and deepen that sense of self-worth."

She says having a greater feeling of self-worth enables individuals to engage with each other with respect and get the best from any situation.

Sister Daya also points out that the lack of self-worth may come from the fact that many women have internalised patriarchy: "We have internalised the prejudices that we faced, without realising it. So subconsciously sometimes we still react from it."

"And so it's so crucial for leadership going into the future that we actually cultivate a practice to actually pause and look at the self with deep honesty and to really ask the self not just the intention but what is the energy with which I am coming from and am responding to? And so it's this constant re-checking of the self. Within that process, I find we need to do it with compassion for the self, which is key."

Professor Hoppers says that our past pain and disappointments may allow us to open up to new possibilities.

"Remember your wounds are where the healing light enters you," she says.

LEADERS LEADING THEMSELVES

Ramphele says leaders need to walk their talk and start by leading themselves.

If you don't embrace and live the values you claim to be leading by, we will soon find out, she says.

She adds that it is very important to remain grounded in the values in which you were brought up, to pass these values on to your children and grandchildren and to constantly check in with yourself to see if you are living up to your own values. The sign of a good leader is one that has emotional intelligence and accountability, says Ramphele.



Sister Pratiba Daya, Brahma Kumaris



Participants during proceedings



Tamala Chirwa, Moderator



Mrs Zanele Mbeki, Founder AfWID



Participants in attention



Dr Mamphela Ramphele, ReImagine SA

On the topic of accountability, Fatima Shabodien says



IT IS IMPORTANT TO SURROUND ONESELF WITH “**SISTERS WHO WILL HOLD YOU ACCOUNTABLE TO ALL THE THINGS THAT YOU CLAIM TO BE**”.

She also says it is important to acknowledge the fact that you will make mistakes along the way.

She says women are “swimming in a sea of patriarchy” every day, and that each day one has to recommit to one’s own values – and, while the fight against patriarchy may seem to be a case of two steps forward, one step back, it is crucial to remain anchored to your values.

HUMILITY

It’s important to look to role models and leaders who walk the talk and Shabodien says one of the most valuable attributes of any true leader is humility. The best example of this type of leadership, she says, comes from the AfWID Founder, Mrs Zanele Mbeki.

“This is the kind of leadership that’s in short supply in our country. We have people sitting on platforms and speaking about it, but we don’t see it role-modelled in their conduct. And part of the challenge is that we are surrounding ourselves with people who don’t call us out.

We must have around us people as women, women who love us fiercely but also call us out when we contradict ourselves. And we have to be willing to know that that contradiction will come.

For Shabodien, the fact that South Africa has a high representation of women in parliament means absolutely nothing when it comes to women’s rights because these women are unaccountable and not representing women, but the agendas of their own political parties.

“We want the kind of ministers, MPs in parliament that represent our hopes and dreams,” she says. “There is no evidence that the women who sit in parliament represent our interests.”

LEADERSHIP IS NOT ABOUT EGO

MILDRED NGESA says true leadership is never about the individual, but about those who are being led.

“The individualistic nature of leadership pushes us to forget that we are servants called upon to serve,” says Ngesa. “If you don’t know what you stand for then you will fall for anything. I love that this programme begins with self-reflection internally, so that you can ask yourself difficult questions as women. What do I stand for? What is my ideology? Who am I leading? How am I leading? Those reflections are extremely important.”

Sister Daya agrees that being a leader is not just a position, but a responsibility, and a responsibility to serve.

“The key thing is that when you’re coming from that right place of your deeper awareness and also from a higher set of values, it’s reflected in the people you serve. When you begin to see that in your engagement with others, they are feeling empowered, then you know that the work you’re doing is serving its purpose.”

She says it is very important to let your conscience be your guide, so that you in yourself know that you are coming from a place of truth.

“Very often what happens is that, when we do see a discrepancy within us, we very easily justify it. And as long as we justify it, we blind ourselves to it. It is very important to listen to the voice of your conscience.”

THE QUESTION OF CLIMATE CHANGE

RAMPHELE steered the conversation towards the topic of climate change, saying that Africa is going to be affected strongly by climate change.



“HOW DO WE, AS AFRICANS, GET TO FOCUS ON MOTHER EARTH THAT WE HAVE SO ABUSED?” SHE ASKS.

It’s important that we look at the source of abuse, and for Ramphele, it is capitalism that is to blame.

“Capitalism is inherently iniquitous, it consumes resources without any care about crossing the planetary boundaries. And it instils the values that are opposite to the values of Ubuntu.”

We have to ask fundamental questions about what ecosystem we are going to shape. How do we reimagine Africa and the world as the place which will live in harmony with nature? How do we make sure that the economic system we forge as leaders in our own rights, but also as business people and as academics is not simply following the global economic system, which is iniquitous?

We need to use AfWID as a platform for reimagining. Reimagine our relationships at the personal family level; reimagine our relationships in the workspace; reimagine our relationships at country level and our relationships as a continent. And when we do that with the wisdom of the placenta and the wisdom of Ubuntu we will and we have the obligation to lead the world to a new civilisation.

CONFERENCES DON’T CHANGE THE WORLD

“We’ve lived the history of dramatic change on our continent. How did slavery end? How did colonialism end? How did apartheid end?” asks Shabodien. “It’s by building movements of the poor. So, as much as this conference is revolutionary, let us not be deluded by thinking that conferences changed the world.”

She says that, while there is talk about the women’s movement in South Africa, there is no women’s movement of poor black women in the country.

“There is a collective of NGOs. Some of us are black-led, some of us are black-staffed, but actually, the hard work about challenging patriarchy is in movement-building. So that’s the conversation we need to have.”



SHABODIEN says working on the self is important, but that real change will come in movement-building. That, for her, is where the real power for change lies.

“This is where I think the Total Shutdown movement has been exceptional in the post-apartheid era, because for a long time NGOs spoke about these things in NGO spaces but it was the young women of Total Shutdown who had the vision to say: ‘Let’s take this to the streets.’”

She says thousands of women die in gender violence in South Africa each year and nothing changes.

“What the Total Shutdown movement achieved through that march was forcing government to say: ‘There’s a crisis’. That’s the first point - to get the vocabulary of crisis in the national discourse and to say let’s get together and make a plan. And that’s where we are now. So it’s quite an exciting moment for us as women in our country.”



THE TOTAL SHUTDOWN MOVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

On August 1, 2018, women and gender non-conforming people (GNC) from all over South Africa shut down the country and marched in protest against gender-based violence. Neighbouring countries in the Southern African region also took part. A memorandum of demands was handed over to the government, Parliament, the Supreme Court of Appeals and other provincial and regional structures, listing action steps and with stipulated deadlines to deal with gender-based violence – making the country safer for women, children and gender non-conforming people. #TotalShutdown
Source: thetotalshutdown.org.za

Q&A TIME:

Q&A

Members of the audience were invited to ask questions of the panel.

Members of the audience were invited to ask questions of the panel. They varied from issues of how to make an impact in the home, to the fact that hate is not an African value and why bisexual and transsexual women are being faced with homophobia, to can there be a woman-led revolution and how can we can go back to the placenta in spite of the fact that we live in a capitalist world?

(The full list of questions and answers will be made available on the AfWID website.)

RAMPHELE says: “This idea that homosexuality is un-African is a reflection of ignorance. If you go back into history you’ll find great warrior women or men and great people, poets and others, who were recognised as people who were part of what today we call the LGBT community. But they were not regarded as a threat, because the societies were so comfortable with the idea of diversity and unity all at the same time.”

She also raised the issue of how women on the continent should be celebrated, citing the warrior queens of Africa, many of them not even known. She says it is very important to promote the African story, not just one of post-colonialism, but a rich history that will make women proud, and be passed down to further generations.

In closing, **SISTER DAYA** emphasised the importance of listening. She noted that older people often think, when they talk about inter-generational matters, that they know more, but she acknowledged that “it is a different world now. The world needs young people who are listened to.” She encouraged the use of intergenerational dialogues.

SHABODIEN suggested that participants look forward to November 20, 2020: “What kind of conversations should we be having in two years’ time?”

PROFESSOR HOPPERS suggested that women not only organise themselves, but that they also organise some strategic action, like networking around issues that affect their country/continent/the world. “Since we meet annually, let us review what has happened in these past 12 months regarding the wisdom of the placenta. What has happened since Johannesburg?” She concluded that women should be as strategic as possible, so that they hold themselves accountable.

The **PROGRAMME DIRECTOR** concluded by expressing her gratitude towards her “powerhouse panel” for their insights on the Ubuntu value system and the wisdom of the placenta. She also noted that women needed to be bold enough and courageous enough to make things happen.

And the last word must go to Mildred Ngesa. Her take on the wisdom of the placenta is certainly one of the highlights of the inaugural AfWID. She underlines the need for solidarity, of women “showing up” when the going gets tough.



“Solidarity is not a word, it’s an action,” she says.

WE NEED TO SPEAK OUT



AMBASSADOR MAVIVI MYAKAYAKA-MANZINI: *I am as old as the CSW, and I have been a gender activist long before I came back as an Ambassador. They are raising the same things we raised. We struggled, we stayed in Zambia, we came back here and some of us were at the World Trade Centre and in parliament to write this constitution. We need to change the strategy. How much talk are we doing with issues of violence, the corruption, which has also permeated the women? The women politicians are into this thing. I am not one of those who will support them. We must speak out as women. It doesn’t work. Let us change the strategy. This GBV thing we are talking here about is about women and children being violated. But the major thing is this violence. Ma’am, let us move with the youth and share our experiences. Let us not pretend that we have achieved a lot.*

AfWID
MOMENTS IN TIME:

Women from all over the SADC region congregated together at the Birchwood Hotel for one week in November 2018, to share insights, ideas, knowledge and solutions on how African women can play a significant role in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.







MASTER CLASS ON 4IR

Delegates thoroughly enjoyed the MASTER CLASS delivered by Professor Tshilidzi Marwala, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg.



Professor Tshilidzi Marwala

Our culture is rich in knowledge that is actually quite essential for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.
– Professor Tshilidzi Marwala

“The first person who taught me engineering was actually my grandmother,” Marwala told the audience.

As a child, he used to accompany his grandmother to go down to the river and select clay to mould clay pots, something she would do expertly and which he says the modern world would refer to as “material selection”. Although she did not have the sophisticated software that is available these days, he says his grandmother did an excellent job of selecting just the right clay, which she would then bring back home and leave in the sun to dry. Then she would bake it in the oven and let it cool slowly. In academic terms, this method is a kinetic equation known as the Boltzmann Equation and is attributed to German physicist Ludwig Boltzmann.

“My grandmother did not know who Boltzmann was,” he told a delighted audience. “She did not even know the Boltzmann Equation, but she knew what the Boltzmann Equation was all about. In fact, based on my observation, it is quite conceivable that Boltzmann might probably

have gotten the ideas of his equation from us,” he said as the room burst into applause.

He says that once the pots had cooled down, his grandmother would knock each pot and listen to the sound it made, before moulding them.

“The algorithm was very simple. If it rings for a long time, it's a good pot. If it rings for a short time, it's a bad pot. That is really what it was all about.” His grandmother successfully used this simple method for years to mould her clay pots. He said things went awry when his grandmother's hearing deteriorated, but then brought the idea forward into the present, asking how one would automate his grandmother's process.

Giving the example of a bridge that collapsed in Sandton a few years ago, he says measuring devices were put in place where engineers measured the movement of the bridge.

“They hear the noise, that information goes to a computer and the computer decides whether that bridge is a good bridge or not. Exactly as my grandmother was doing with her pots. We call this condition motor monitoring. So many of our cars are monitored by systems like this. And I think what we can learn from this is that we shouldn't think that knowledge only appears in books.”

AFRICAN-CENTRIC TECHNOLOGY

Further in his delivery, Marwala said technology is not necessarily one size fits all.

“Not everything that this technology does is good.” He cited an example in which he went to Singapore and along with colleagues had a not-so-constructive interaction with artificial intelligence. He says that when



he produced his passport, the verification machine was unable to read and verify it, although it easily did so for his European colleague.

It turns out that these facial recognition tools are actually discriminating against Africans, said Marwala.

“Now, why are these machines discriminating against Africans? It is because they are trained using data and most of their machines are trained to using data that is likely to come from Europe and Asia not from Africa,” says Marwala. “And there are business opportunities for you! How do you create databases that are able to understand African faces?”

He says the same applies to Google Maps, trained by data gathered in North America, Europe and Asia and therefore battle with pronouncing African names.

“Again, there is a business opportunity for us to create our own maps that are able to pronounce things the way they are supposed to be pronounced.”



MARWALA RECKONS THERE ARE
ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR
AFRICANS IN THE (4IR) AND THAT
EDUCATION IS ABSOLUTELY THE KEY.

He says the businesses of the future will depend on how well we respond to the circumstances around us and will require:

- 🔥 The regulation of ownership date;
- 🔥 An understanding between automation and people; and
- 🔥 An understanding of automation.

INVEST IN FURTHER READING

MARWALA has many accolades under his belt, including having studied for a PhD on artificial intelligence at Cambridge University 22 years ago and writing numerous books and papers. His latest books include the following:

- 🔥 Tshilidzi Marwala (2018). Handbook of Machine Learning Volume 1: Foundation of Artificial Intelligence. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing. ISBN 978-981-3271-22-7.
- 🔥 Tshilidzi Marwala (2019). Handbook of Machine Learning Volume 2: Optimization and Decision Making. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing. ISBN 978-981-120-566-8.
- 🔥 Collins Achepeh Leke; Tshilidzi Marwala (2019). Deep Learning and Missing Data in Engineering Systems: Applications to Engineering Systems. London: Springer. ISBN 978-3030011796.

PANEL DISCUSSION THREE

DRIVING INCLUSIVITY: EMPOWERING WOMEN TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION (4IR).

This segment arose from the recognition that most African women are unfamiliar with the concept of 4IR. But it is upon us and it is therefore imperative to take time to consider exactly what kind of shifts we are experiencing and how we might, collectively and individually, ensure that it creates benefits for the many, especially for African women, rather than the few.



OPENING COMMENTS:



PANELLISTS



MODERATOR

PROFESSOR BRIAN ARMSTRONG,

Chair of Digital Business, Wits Business School, and Telkom Chair in Digital Business.

MS LILIAN BARNARD,

Public Sector Director at Microsoft SA (promoted to the position of Managing Director of Microsoft SA in 2019).

MS REGINA GOUNDEN,

Provincial Manager for Small Business & Professional Bank at Nedbank.

PROFESSOR FIONA TREGENNA,

DST/NRF South African Research Chair in Industrial Development at the University of Johannesburg.

NGWAKO RAMOHLALE,

CEO Nunnovation Africa Foundation.

LEE KASUMBA,

TV Presenter, musician and media host.



After Marwala's passionate delivery, it was time for another professor – **BRIAN ARMSTRONG** – to open the way for further discussion. He started off the session by asking a pertinent question:

How do we make sure everybody, and in the context of today, specifically women, participate in the benefits of 4IR and aren't marginalised? It really is all about driving inclusivity.

4IR is about cyber-physical systems, artificial intelligence, robotics and so on, Armstrong pointed out. But he said that it's also about the world we live in and our society is transforming.



IT IS ABOUT THE FACT THAT WE ALL WANT TO BE CONNECTED.

"It all comes down to the fact that we live in a time of profound technological disruption, which is affecting all of society, all of business and every facet of life. And although it is a technological disruption, the impacts go far, far wider than just the technology," says Armstrong.

The topic of empowering women to participate in 4IR is paramount, especially when one considers the belief

that men are progressive with technology and women are stuck in the old ways of doing things.

TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION BY WOMEN

He first tackled the point of view that technology adoption and usage by women is lower than by men.

He referenced a study done across Latin America and Africa that indicated that cellphone and internet adoption and usage were lower among women than men.

He says the results speak to the narrative that women are technophobic, but one must dig a bit deeper when it comes to reasons for unequal technology adoption.

Let's dispel this myth that women are technophobic and slow adopters, says Armstrong. There are other factors, specifically income, employment and education disparities that are the main causes of slower adoption of new technology by women than by men.

This scenario brings about another challenge for the industry. "If there are already income, employment and educational disparities, I am going to make the case that technological disruption amplifies inequality in employment and skills challenges. So, how do we avoid a downward spiral?"



Professor Brian Armstrong, WITS Business School

CREATING A VIRTUOUS CYCLE

He says now would be a good time to consider the positive aspects of the situation: “We know that digital access empowerment leads to positive outcomes in education, income and employment, and positive outcomes in education, income and employment drive greater access to digital technologies. That is the virtuous cycle we have to create.

The challenge, on the other hand, is that it could be argued that a lack of digital access and digital disempowerment will create more unequal education, income and employment and lead to a downward spiral, with reduced access and usage.

He reminded the audience of the fact that, in the 1990s, when the internet first came onto the scene, it was touted as the **most powerful democratising platform** ever invented because all of a sudden information was available to everyone. And if information is knowledge, and knowledge equals power, then power should equal wealth. He says this has definitely not been the case.

THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

“What’s actually happened is that we have seen a concentration of wealth in the hands of increasingly few people,” says Armstrong.

He says we see the top three tech companies in the world having a market capitalisation bigger than the GDP of Africa.

What we are seeing is that, in the digital economy, wealth is increasingly being concentrated in the hands of the digitally empowered at the expense of the digitally disempowered, he says.

He says it’s a question of concentration in the digital economy, citing the fact that Google, just one company, has 92% of global market share in search.



Lilian Barnard, Microsoft



Professor Fiona Tregenna, DST/NRF Chairperson



“The problem with concentration in the market,” he says, “is that its flipside is inequality.” He looks to the example of South African data: “One quarter of us earn three quarters of the gross household income. We are digitally empowered. Then there are the other three quarters of South Africans who earn about one quarter of the gross household income. They are less educated. They are not digitally empowered, and between us lies the economic and digital divide.”

He says that because the digital economy is driving concentration, the concern is that this digital divide is getting wider and deeper, not shallower and narrower, which is the major concern around income inequality and concentration.

THE FUTURE OF WORK

And, of course, the workplace is changing – and for many people this is a cause for concern. Armstrong says that for the next 10 years or so, people who are involved in creative roles, leadership positions, personal brands, complex algorithmic designs and systems thinking will sit comfortably at the top of the future of work. However, people who do routine computation, white-collar clerical work and fact-based analysis will lose jobs to automation.

But routine physical work and production will be automated. Which means that the people who are doing that now will be reduced to lower paid services work, no work at all or sub-economic labour.”

He says that data suggests that 10%-50% of jobs globally are exposed to “technological disruption”.

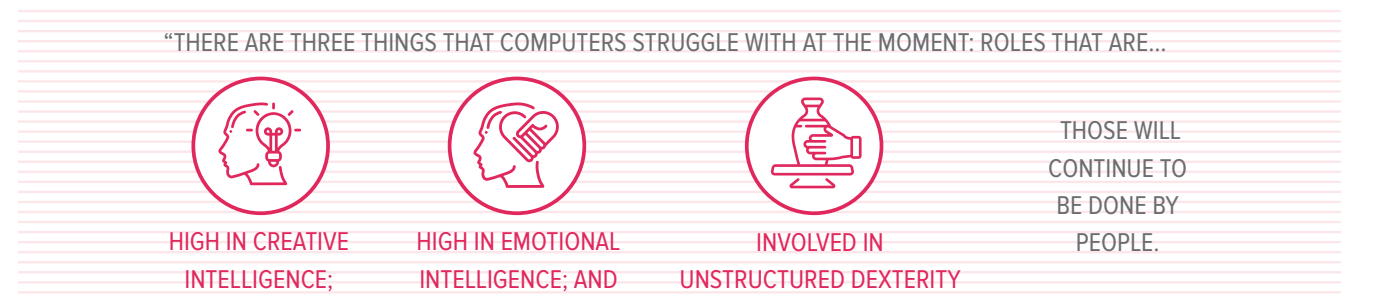
If you look at the scenarios for disruption in South Africa, we see that somewhere between 2- to 5-million jobs are at risk of being disrupted in the medium to long term, depending on the scenario you look at.

He says the stats are particularly significant if you look at women and the world of work. “Women are already disadvantaged in the workplace, so how do we make sure that with this pressure on employment, it doesn’t get worse?” he asks.

The World Economic Forum 2018 Future of Employment report states that many roles will remain stable, and while technology will make some roles redundant, it will also create jobs. But Armstrong points out that the roles that will be made redundant – admin clerks, secretaries, etc. - are largely female roles, while roles that will be created, such as specialist managers, analysts, scientists, etc., are largely dominated by men at present.

SEEKING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE AGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Armstrong brought up a slide of the Top 10 Giants in Tech (Bezos, Zuckerberg, Nadella, etc.), pointing out that they are all men and that there are no Africans among them.



Top 10 Giants in Tech



“If I asked you to show me a slide with the top 10 people in politics, or the top 10 people in showbiz, or the top 10 people in sport, there will always be a polite representation of women. But when it comes to the tech sector, you see it for yourself. This is the challenge we have to address.”

HOW DO WOMEN PARTICIPATE FULLY IN 4IR?

LILIAN BARNARD from Microsoft says it's important to look at the opportunities that 4IR is bringing to the party for women.

The world is profoundly becoming more digital. It is changing the way that we live, the way that we play, the way that we work. The biggest question we need to ask ourselves is how we are going to make sure that we participate. How are we going to make sure that we are relevant as women?

We believe that, as a global tech company, we have to democratise knowledge. – Lilian Barnard

She says that we all need to be challenged to learn.

“I have been in IT for the last 23 years, but every day I have to upskill myself to make sure that I am relevant for these future jobs that we are talking about being future-ready.”

She says the sky is the limit for learning – for those with access to the internet.

“What I am asking women to do is to open themselves up to some of these new tools that are available for free and start exposing yourself to the technology, because all of us are forced to learn and we need to be brave enough to make sure that we step up our own individual game.”

She mentioned that the free Microsoft Cloud Society platform is a good place to start with upskilling.



MICROSOFT CLOUD SOCIETY:

Microsoft has an offering called Microsoft Cloud Society - a one-stop free learning platform offering a range of courses, from understanding cloud platforms to app development to upgrading data skills to web development. [visit: cloudsociety.microsoft.com](https://cloudsociety.microsoft.com)

TECHNOLOGY TOUCHING LIVES

PROFESSOR FIONA TREGENNA, DST/NRF South Africa Research Chair for Industrial Development at the University of Johannesburg, says 4IR is going to affect all of us, whether we like it or not and whether or not we choose to be directly involved.

“We might think it is something just for IT people, for engineers, for professors, but it is something that is going to touch all of our lives, not only technologically but also socially, culturally, politically, economically and in myriad ways,” she says.

Like Armstrong, who had spoken about major shifts in the workplace due to technology, Tregenna says the rise in unemployment on the continent is a fundamental concern.

She says, “On the one hand, some people argue that 4IR is likely to bring mass destruction of jobs, mass technological unemployment and a kind of dystopian future. On the other extreme, some people argue that there will be no net displacement of jobs. That any jobs destroyed will be balanced by new jobs being created. We don't really know yet but the reality is likely to be somewhere in between these.”

Tregenna says an interesting question is whether women or men are more likely to be affected by job displacement. And so far there is no clear-cut answer.

At the moment I think the jury is still out on what the gender balance of the jobs most affected will be. There is also a lot of debate about whether developing countries such as our own will be more or less affected than the advanced economies.

She says the policy aspects of 4IR must be considered.

“One wide option is to say let's accept that there will be displacement of jobs and look at how we generate other incomes for people, so that even where people don't get income from work, they are still able to have a decent and even rising standard of living by sharing socially in the benefits of automation,” says Tregenna. “Another broad policy option is to say let's minimise the job losses and try to hold on to jobs as much as we can.”

BEING HUMAN IN THE AGE OF AI

REGINA GOUNDEN, Provincial Manager for Small Business and Professional Bank at Nedbank South Africa, says we need to stop looking at jobs and job losses and start focusing on entrepreneurship.

Why do we need jobs when we can create employers? she asked. When each one of us can run a business that can actually sustain us and our families?

Like Barnard, she says it's essential to upskill and that all businesses will need to be digitised in the near future. She says it's time to become more business-minded than being employee-minded.

Introducing Peppy, one of Nedbank's humanoid robots that delighted the audience with its human-like antics, she says there is no need to fear the age of AI and robotics as the human element will always be key.

“Do you think you can be a part of that, and in your thinking, the fear factor of robotics taking over? They can do nothing without humans. They need you and me and without you and me there can be no robotics,” says Gounden.



Peppy is the brother/sister to Pepper, Nedbank's first humanoid robot launched in March 2018. The robots can be programmed to recognise principal human emotions, voice, chat with customers and answer questions – and Peppy's interaction with the audience at the first Inaugural African Women in Dialogue forum was definitely appreciated by the audience.

Armstrong agrees with Gounden on the focus on entrepreneurship.

He says that when it comes to skills and education, it's a good idea to separate out formal skills development from informal skills development.

Armstrong says it's important to become comfortable with the new technologies and the new ways of doing things and it's not just cellphones and computers, it's the applications we run on them, and become familiar and comfortable in e-commerce.

He says the most critical skill is to learn how to learn.

It's a willingness to learn new things and recognise that what made you successful yesterday is not necessarily what will make you successful tomorrow. So, it is a culture and a personal orientation towards life-long learning and re-skilling.

He says he could talk for hours about the formal skills needed and whether kids should be taught to code at schools and universities and how STEM skills should be at the forefront of basic education.

"Those are all absolutely critical but there are lots of forums for talking about those. What I would like to emphasise today is the personal engagement, personal renewal and personally getting comfortable and familiar in this tech space."

LILIAN BARNARD spoke on Microsoft's focus on digital literacy, saying the company is doing a lot in the learning space with young people.

"We have partnered with various NGOs and, in particular, we have partnered with the Gauteng provincial government.



THEY HAVE MADE AVAILABLE A **DIGITAL LITERACY LEARNER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**, WHICH IS AVAILABLE IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN OUR TOWNSHIPS.

Our young people, and literally anyone, can go in and it will make this technology accessible to you, where you can literally go and learn at your own pace."

TECH AS AN ENABLER

"All of us are now learning at the same time; we are literally starting right now, as men and women, exactly on the same page and it's all about the appetite that we have to learn and to learn very fast."

She says it's not about the tech, but about what knowledge can open up for young entrepreneurs in the townships, for example.

"If you have a business today, one of the things that businesses do worry about is how to scale. It is no longer good enough for you to have a business where

only the people in your township know about what you have to offer. How do you make sure that your offering goes viral? How do you make your market accessible? Technology is there as an enabler so you need to understand how technology could help you build a business that could scale." Barnard says you can literally put up a website where you can interact with your customers, and technology is able to give you that platform.

She says that as an IT company, what Microsoft is doing today is helping people up-skill themselves because we understand that we have a role to play. We have a big vision across the Middle East and Africa to train at least 100 000 people in some of these new emerging technologies. We talk a lot in Microsoft about the class of 2030. The class of 2030 is the learners who will start in Grade 1 today.

HOW WILL EDUCATION CHANGE?

The question is what are we doing today differently in education to make sure that they are ready for the jobs of tomorrow? We need to teach them differently. We need to make sure they are able to fill these jobs, so it's not just about jobs going away; the reality is that we are creating new jobs so we need to make sure that we give them future-ready skills in order for them to participate, she says.

Microsoft recently commissioned a study on what is happening to jobs with all these advancements.



IT SAID THAT IN THE **NEXT FIVE YEARS**, **112 000** NEW JOBS WILL BE CREATED ON THIS CONTINENT, NOT ELSEWHERE.

But here is the challenge - we are going to have to make sure we have skills in this country, readily available, to take advantage of those jobs.



Lee Kasumba, Moderator



Regina Gounden, Nedbank

I INNOVATE, I CREATE, I DISRUPT

Adding a burst of youthful energy to the plenary, **NGWAKO RAMOHLALE** of NGO Nunnovation believes in innovation, creation and disruption.

“We’ve got 1 000 women in this room who are being given a lot of information, a lot of data, a lot of statistics of what is going on, in terms of skills development, in terms of technology, in terms of digital literacy and where it is and where it can go. At the opening I said, innovate, create and disrupt because the time has ended when we just keep feeding information and we sit on it in our nice notebooks and we do absolutely nothing with it. It is time that we all take the responsibility to ensure that the information we are gathering is being used and accessed by the people who don’t know about it.

One of the things we need to do is to hold the private sector accountable, to ensure this information reaches the deepest, most rural areas in Africa, because those are their clients.

TREGENNA concurred, saying: “We are talking about 4IR, but most people in this country and on this continent don’t have computers, meaning they haven’t passed through the Third Industrial Revolution. Many people don’t have electricity, meaning they haven’t passed through even the Second Industrial Revolution. In some cases, people haven’t even passed through the First Industrial Revolution, so it’s not as though we have passed through all of these three revolutions and we are now going into the fourth.

She says the further behind people are left, the further behind they will remain and that closing this digital divide is fundamental in terms of moving forward.

We can’t just look at this as a narrow technological issue. If people are poor, don’t have jobs, if incomes are unequally distributed, it’s not a technological solution, it’s an economic and political solution that’s needed.

Picking up on the issue of the private sector, **GOUNDEN** says the policy in South Africa is that all corporates have to have enterprise development, and they have social projects as well.

Speaking from a Nedbank viewpoint, she says, “What we have done in the last two years, is taken this kind of conversation out into the townships.” The organisation has done incubator training with a number of businesses owners, helping them to take their businesses “to the next level”.

She says the private sector needs to take education and skills upliftment on board, with a focus on making sure these skills make their way to the hard-to-reach rural areas.

CONNECTIVITY AND SKILLS UPLIFTMENT

The challenge for us from a technology point of view, according to **BARNARD**, is connectivity, which she says is the biggest challenge in rural areas. She says that what Microsoft has done is to look for partners in the geographic areas and community partners to ensure that the organisation addresses the digital divide in Africa.

She says the corporate sector is really reaching out and partnering with governments and NGOs, but there are not enough partnerships and the initiatives need to be accelerated. She says awareness of technology and connectivity is key.

“We also need to make sure that we drive the right level of awareness and hunger among our next generation to actually take advantage of what’s being offered.”

TREGENNA says the truth is simple:



NOBODY CAN AFFORD TO STAND STILL, AND IT’S NOT JUST ABOUT “KEEPING UP” BUT ABOUT “MOVING AHEAD”.

“In terms of some more concrete policy ideas, let me throw out some kind of suggestions.” She says a lot of money is thrown at skills development but outcomes don’t necessarily reflect the investment. Holistic skills training is what is really important.

“In terms of the skills development for 4IR, this has to encompass both technical skills training - science, maths, engineering and so on - but also creativity, problem solving; the human dimension that machines can’t replace and which can actually become more important in future”.

COST OF DATA

ARMSTRONG points out the obvious problem in under-resourced areas – cost of access and the cost of data.

The issue for me is not that the average price of data is too high, the issue is that it’s got to be re-balanced, and that we can make the entry-level packages more affordable.

AN INDUSTRIAL POLICY FOR THE SERVICES SECTOR

TREGENNA says that, at a more industrial and economic level, we need greater government support directed towards industrial development and technological upgrading of both production systems and also of services.



Ngwako Ramohlale, Nunnovate

We need an industrial policy for the services sector, which is going to support greater productivity, greater competitiveness so that we can compete internationally, as well as domestically.

She says further funding needs to go to targeted research and development, and also points out that there will be people losing jobs due to 4IR through no fault of their own, and there needs to be support in place so that those who lose out are not “plunged into poverty”.

POLICY

ARMSTRONG acknowledges that a higher degree of economic integration in Africa would be beneficial. The reason China can create an Alibaba, or a Tencent, is the market effect that the scale brings.

The issues of inter-country trade in South Africa are inhibitors for digital, and to the creation of our own digital champions for e-commerce...

He says another critical area is to rethink the competition law on the continent to address the issue of market dominance. He says the European Union has competition laws in place but this is not the case in Africa.

INDUSTRIAL
REVOLUTION
STAGES



1ST - STEAM



2ND - ELECTRICITY



3RD - ELECTRONICS



4TH - VIRTUAL



IT SHOULD ULTIMATELY BECOME
AN **ENABLER OF HUMANS**, NOT
REPLACING HUMANS.

RAMOHLALE says “it is important that in AI we take a stand to participate in the development of the policy of how artificial intelligence should be managed so that we ensure that it is built to suit everyone, not just men and not just women, not just black, not just white. It should be a socially cohesive solution, and it cannot happen if we are just going to sit and watch the men develop this AI. So, it’s important that we participate.”

A MENTAL AND CULTURAL SHIFT

Ramohlale says it appears that men and women tend to play different roles in the digital space. She says, “One of the things we noticed, especially at the G20 summits we attend globally, is that at all conversations that have to do with digitisation, the women will always opt for the social part of the conversation. It will just be the men sitting in the room, talking about digitisation.”

She says that there is definitely a cultural shift that needs to be made, starting in the home. “In December (for Christmas), we will be buying granddaughters and daughters dolls and hairbrushes, and mini kitchen units, and hair dryers, and the boys will be getting their PlayStations and remote controlled cars...”

She says technology has levelled the playing field in a big way, and that parents and caregivers need to ensure that children, from a young age, are open to the world of tech.

“Let’s create a culture that says technology is for everyone. That will also help with the gender roles that will be taken and the new jobs that will be created because most people don’t take those roles because, ‘I was raised being fearful of technology, so why would I take a job of a software engineer?’”

The issue of taxation also needs to be considered, says Armstrong, although he says his fellow panellists may cringe at the idea. “At the moment, globally, taxation is based on point of production, rather than point of consumption, so if you buy a cloud service from Ireland, the revenue and tax benefit accrues to Ireland.”

He says the global tax regime needs a rethink, so that “we can make sure that we get the benefits of these digital services that are provided where they are consumed, rather than from where they are provided”.

ETHICAL AI

BARNARD suggests that policy also needs to be looked at when talking about artificial intelligence. At Microsoft, the term “ethical AI” is an important one. She says that while there is anxiety around job losses, there will always be roles that robots cannot fill – creativity, collaboration, critical decision-making, etc.

“For me, we should not despair. As IT companies, we have to hold ourselves highly accountable when we talk about it. At Microsoft we have an ethical AI guide. Whenever we think about developing anything it has to go through certain steps, to make sure it’s ethical, but for us, we see artificial intelligence as an opportunity to augment and amplify human ingenuity and not replace humans

BARNARD says there are a number of myths that need to be debunked. She says the research shows that young girls are passionate about “softer” career options, such as marketing and advertising, and they are also driven by making an impact on society, which is fortunate because the information age presents a lot of opportunity.

“Technology literally intersects with everything you do. So if you think about just the challenge that we have in Africa around education, around healthcare, around agriculture, you would think these things are “soft”, but if you infuse technology into some of them you can have a profound impact.”

THE AFRICAN NARRATIVE

KASUMBA asked a very relevant question: How can the African narrative play out from a 4IR perspective?

TREGENNA says innovation is fundamental to 4IR and that innovation is happening every day across the continent in different ways. She says product innovation is happening all around us, where people are coming up with different, or cheaper/better ways of doing things.

The problem is that where some of this innovation is happening is in an informal context; it’s not being upscaled, it’s not being commercialised, it’s not being shared. So, even where there are ideas out there, they are not feeding into a wider development.

She says it’s key to support the innovation that is already happening, and broaden the base of innovation - “Where there are ideas, translating those into development, which goes beyond that specific niche, or that specific area where innovation is actually happening.”

ARMSTRONG says it’s very important to focus on what computers can’t do.

We need to focus on our humanity, our humanness; that is what makes us special and that is what computers will never copy. In a way, I think Africa starts from a better position in that our cultures tend to be more social, more collective. The whole principal of Ubuntu, is that we exist to an extent only in relation to other people and it is celebrating that person-to-person connection that I’m sure will elevate some of our businesses and make them more competitive than those that are strictly technological.

LILIAN BARNARD believes 4IR is giving the continent “the greatest opportunity”.

“I think there is a lot of opportunity for us out there, to make it out there, to make a difference. Instead of just looking at the jobs, let us look at the business opportunities that are actually opening up in the continent,” she says. “I think that we as a continent have the opportunity to exploit the promise of technology right now to make sure that we actually move forward.”

RAMOHLALE says it is important to understand that Africa – with over a billion people - is its own economy. She gives China as an example - they are not using Google, Facebook or Twitter. They have their own search engines and social-media platforms designed for Chinese people in China.

I’m just saying that they embraced themselves as an economy, and if we can do the same as Africans then I think we will then be able to keep the authenticity of the African culture in the innovations that we come up with.

Perhaps Ramohlale summed it up best at the very beginning of this session by saying there are three things that need focus. So let’s join in her chorus across the continent: **“I create. I innovate. I disrupt.”**

I create. I innovate. I disrupt. – Ngwako Ramohlale

COMMISSIONS

As the name African Women in Dialogue (AfWID) suggests, the platform is all about dialogue, discussion, conversation, collaboration and the exchange of ideas. The inaugural AfWID 2018 forum provided a platform to deliberate the various issues affecting lives across the continent.



RAPORTEURS:

Professor Lulama Makhubela and Marthe Muller

While the aim of AfWID is to create a platform for mutual sharing and learning centred on a week-long event, the hope is that each participant will be empowered to go and take constructive action in their own lives once back home. It is the hope of the founders and the organisers that the lessons from each participant attending AfWID will extend far beyond the conference centre in Johannesburg and that discussions around major issues will be taken to the poorest and most rural areas for further deliberation in the hope of taking action to find solutions.

The various commissions sought to provide an opportunity for women to engage in conversations and discussions while being exposed to diverse and inclusive views.

Participants were invited to choose between eight commissions, informed by the overall AfWID theme,

Driving inclusivity: empowering women to participate in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).



AGRICULTURE AND THE 4IR COMMISSION



Image ©WDB Trust



FACILITATOR:

Ms Slauzy Zodwa Mogami



RAPORTEUR:

Ms Prisca Togaraseyi

Agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa is predominantly small-scale farming, with more than 50% of the agricultural activity performed by women, producing about 60%-70% of the food in the region. Due to institutional barriers, however, and social, legal and cultural constraints in terms of land inheritance, ownership and use, fewer than 20% of landholders are women, with the figure varying between countries, from less than 5% in Mali to over 30% in Botswana. Lack of access to credit further reduces the efficiency and productivity of women farmers. In the absence of credit, women farmers cannot secure fertiliser,

improve varieties of seeds and make use of other beneficial technologies. Most women farmers are not able to obtain credit without a male guarantor or without the assistance of a husband. A study based on women farmers in Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Sierra Leone found that women received only 10% of the credit for smallholder farmers and 1% of total credit to agriculture.

The Agricultural/Food security commission at AfWID focused on the advancement of women within the context of 4IR. Access and affordability issues affecting



50% OF THE
AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY
PERFORMED BY WOMEN



PRODUCING ABOUT
60%-70%
OF THE FOOD IN THE REGION



women in female-headed households were discussed, as well as issues pertaining to access to land, and the need for concrete enablers, like subsidised bags of fertiliser. The opportunities open to women, as opposed to those accessible by their male counterparts, were unpacked.

THE DISCUSSIONS FOCUSED ON THE FOLLOWING:

General policies and implementation – The discussion explored the advisability of a top-down approach versus a bottom-up one. Policies that address agricultural issues in general lack a gender lens and do not have a specific focus on empowering women. The widening gender-productivity gap between men and women, for example, is largely due to the inaccessibility, unaffordability and unavailability of key productive resources at women's disposal. The existing policies do not tend to address these issues critically. Top-down approaches tend to downplay women's potential for agricultural advancement within the region.

There is a need to migrate from gender-mainstreaming approaches in agriculture to gender-transformative ones, which deliberately target equity, inclusivity, empowerment and rationalising the power struggle within the household. This would empower women to have control over resources such as land and income as decision-makers, rather than as decision-takers, and as price-makers rather than as price-takers.



KEY ISSUES:

- 🌸 Genetically-modified foods;
- 🌸 Innovative agriculture that encompasses the use of new technologies and how it will help rural and disadvantaged women access resources and opportunities in order to reach markets;
- 🌸 Tobacco as an enhancer of development and how it affects women; and
- 🌸 How to demystify and address concerns on tobacco-related farming



TWO KEY RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE AGRICULTURE AND 4IR COMMISSION STOOD OUT:



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 🌸 The overall framework should be guided by a performance-based monitoring and evaluation tool and milestones that clearly track progress towards the planned targets; one of which is taking advantage of the BRICS Agricultural/Food Security focus within the 4IR to access the available finances.
- 🌸 Increase development financing for women-led agribusiness and promote a women-targeted programme of technical assistance to improve business. A special focus could be on generating start-ups for women and enhancing national and regional dialogues to keep women engaged.

COMMISSION ON THE THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW)



The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) Commission reviewed the themes for CSW 63 (PRIORITY THEME: social protection systems; access to public services; and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. REVIEW THEME: Women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development (agreed conclusions of the 60th session); as well as garnering inputs from women that will be channelled to various continental platforms and declarations in preparation for CSW 63 in 2019. Noting that a number of women were not familiar with the processes followed to achieve the above purpose, it was imperative to set the scene by giving the genesis of CSW and unpacking its implications.

Established on 21 June 1946, the CSW is held annually in New York for two weeks in March. It is the principal global inter-governmental body dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Items discussed are the progress and gaps and implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and key global policy documents on emerging issues. The CSW therefore plays a central role in monitoring, within the UN system, the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action.

In order to understand the founding principles of the CSW one has to ask: Where are we in the outcomes and recommendations of each session as forwarded to the United Nations Economic and Social Council in terms of setting standards and formulating international

conventions to change discriminatory legislation and foster global awareness of women's issues? The principal output of each CSW forum is the Agreed Conclusions on the priority themes set for each year.

KEY ISSUES:

To build the movement from the pillar of Beijing in order to make a difference to women and their younger sisters. 2018: BEIJING + 24 years (evaluation). Twenty-four years after Beijing, a lot has not yet changed. The CSW complexities centre on the negotiations representing individual countries; the conniving and disagreements on contentious issues such as reproductive health vs reproductive rights; and LGBTIQ+, among others.



Among the many complexities and the myriad issues discussed in this commission, which had three parallel sub-commissions, the following priority areas emerged:

- ✿ Expanding the recognition of women's rights.
- ✿ Documenting the reality of women's lives throughout the world.
- ✿ Shaping global policies.
- ✿ Ensuring the UN incorporates women issues.
- ✿ It was emphasised that the CSW is about government and civil society, where civil society organisations (CSOs) are given an opportunity to write their own documents. To that end, it is important to understand a country position versus a continental position, where a region is expected to speak as a block.

- ✿ NGOs were urged to claim their stake to ensure that the language adopted in Beijing is regularly revised, e.g. reproductive health, sex work, and LGBTIQ+, simply because the struggle for women's equality permeates all spheres of our lives and is far from over.
- ✿ There is a need to build the sisterhood. Participate, share experiences and come back to implement.
- ✿ Moral enforcement mechanisms – prioritise and review them.
- ✿ Review Theme: CSW 62 that happened in 2018 had issues of rural women.
- ✿ Priority theme: Social protection systems, access to public services; and
- ✿ sustainable infrastructure. Emphasis that the theme should be taken in its entirety.

The three other enabling environments must be linked to each other. These are:



SOCIAL PROTECTION:
Preventing, managing and overcoming situations that adversely affect people's wellbeing.



PUBLIC SERVICES:
Services provided by governments to their people, either directly (through the public sector) or by financing provision of services.



SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE:
The development of roads, buildings and energy and water infrastructure, but requires careful consideration due to the enormous impacts on the wellbeing of people and the planet.



NOTE: ABOVE ARE INTER-RELATED ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED IN 2019.



ADDITIONAL AREAS OF CONCERN INCLUDE

- 🌸 Global normative and policy frameworks, including those first adopted in 1948;
- 🌸 The right to social security enshrined in several human rights instruments; including safe and clean drinking water and sanitation;
- 🌸 Discrimination against women; social protection; women's equal rights to social protection that remains unfulfilled; public services and investments, which are key drivers of women's income insecurity;
- 🌸 Gender-responsiveness should therefore be a key feature of the quality of public services – poor quality can be an access barrier; and
- 🌸 Sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and women's empowerment is therefore needed; Private Public Partnerships are key, as well as resource mobilisation for infrastructure development.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE COMMISSION RANGED FROM THE FOLLOWING:

Concern about reference to Beijing 1995. It is important to share knowledge with the young sisters beyond “googling” to find more information to be able to answer the following:

- Q: Why can't CSW allow women to speak for themselves and how do we give proper inputs to governments?
- Q: How Beijing 1995 came about. How can the youth get to know the moments and the history?
- Q: What can communities do to stop talking and start engaging on issues of violence?
- Q: What is the role of women's ministries?
- Q: Is the procedure of writing reports (state-party reports) different from other treaties?
- Q: Can women in politics participate?
- Q: What is the legal weight of agreements made at the UN CSW?
- Q: Are there other ways to navigate issues of CSW moving forward?
- Q: Where should investments be made with regards to women's needs?



RECOMMENDATIONS:

KEY COMMITMENTS OR INITIATIVES THAT CAN BE TAKEN UP BY THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES INCLUDE:

- 🌸 The power of collective networking to mobilise for support; and
- 🌸 Stakeholder mapping in order to know which countries have different positions.

The key actions to take forward by the CSW in relation to the priority themes are elaborated below:

A: Social Protection

Special care to be given to ensure inclusivity of marginalised groups, including women with disabilities; mothers of children with disabilities; girls and young women; orphans living with the elderly; ethnic and linguistic minorities; care-givers, guardians and siblings of people with disabilities; rural women; culturally oppressed women; children in conflict with the law; people with mental illness; low income and child-headed households; widows; sex workers; infants; and LGBTIQ+.

Solutions: Capacity enhancement; domesticating and eradicating discriminatory legal instruments and documents; popularising women-friendly laws, instruments and protocols; advocacy and lobbying; economic empowerment; 3IR to be implemented before tackling the 4th IR; media campaigns & technology; and deeper community work.

B: Public Services

Two main public services: Outsourced and free government services e.g. Life Esidimeni. Access – sanitary pads; uniforms (manufacturing); discrimination of girl child; lack of resources; free education; health facilities (clinics, especially in rural areas; sexual reproductive health (abortions – safety and legality especially in Lesotho and Tanzania where there are no laws or any rights enshrined in the constitution); inclusion of LGBQIA+ population.

Solutions: Advocate for free sanitary pads/dignity packs; education reform in life orientation; advocacy for dignified treatment in public health services; urgency in treatment of GBV; more institutions that are trans-based (public facilities, e.g. prisons and hospitals; procure outsourced services from women cooperatives and entrepreneurs.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

C: Sustainable Infrastructure

- 🌿 **Issues:** Lighting areas in communities; disability-friendly infrastructure; transportation; gender-sensitive infrastructure, e.g. toilets with regards to their locations, convenience & safety; community participation; women input into infrastructure procurement to ensure gender appropriateness; rehabilitation centres for special needs; and credit facilities for informal traders.
- 🌿 Access to police services, transport and other resources; availability of safety shelters for survivors of violence; gender-sensitive infrastructure for informal traders; and access to public facilities for termination of pregnancy (abortion).

WHAT DOES ALL THESE MEAN TO AfWID?

- 🌿 These issues assist with understanding the total process as countries engage at CSW.
- 🌿 An opportunity to engage through the NGO-CSW website, www.ngoscwafrica.org, the consultative meeting of NGOs and advocacy to government for inclusion in the pre-CSW national consultations.
- 🌿 Identify sticky issues such as abortion. Know the Africa resolutions, especially with regards to the reopening of issues.
- 🌿 Understand the existing different resolutions and have knowledge about policies at local and global levels to back up one's argument.



EDUCATION AND THE 4IR COMMISSION



Image ©WDB Trust



FACILITATOR:
Ms Charmaine Houvert



RAPPORTEUR:
Ms Kibbie Naidoo

Education systems around the world are experiencing extreme stress as the disruptors of bio-tech, climate change and rising inequality have exposed the weaknesses of current curricula to provide adequate skills for a rapidly changing world. Education in Africa suffers from the additional problem of low literacy and reading levels of primary school learners, poor performance in maths and science, limited resources, especially in under-served rural areas, high poverty and unemployment rates, high school drop-out rates, and the exclusion of many young girls from educational opportunities. The 2018 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), pointed out that for over half of Africa's citizens, education outcomes have been worsening. How can these already inadequate education systems be transformed to address not only the changing demands of the 4IR workplace, but also the poverty and economic and gender inequality that keep so many African learners, and especially girls,

from reaching their full potential and contributing to the transformation of their societies?

The discussion explored the fact that one is not only dealing with technology as an end in itself, but as an enabler. There is a need to talk about what the impact of 4IR is on the learner, the parent and the teacher, and the broader community. Professor Schwab argued that 4IR will change the way we work, live and play. It will change humanity, and that is pertinent because of the rapid pace of change. There is a need for a new "animal" that is adaptive, thinks creatively and innovatively and in a problem-solving way. The central question to ask is: Does the current curriculum prepare a student to be adaptive, creative and innovative? One where the humanities is as important, and combined with, technology? The answer to that is that one needs a different way of thinking and a new and revolutionised education system.



KEY ISSUES:

- Three disrupters (climate change, technology, and a large and increasingly unequal population). Adoption of 4IR differs from country to country, economy to economy, community to community.
- Think how we can harness AI and other aspects of 4IR to make a difference.
- Growing inequality is a big threat to political stability.
- Education – there is a need to get girl children to school; although 75% of girls go to school, only 8% of them finish school.
- There is a need to create environments that are girl-friendly. Get rid of myths that inhibit girls.
- Accessible and understandable education that will make girls digitally savvy.
- Collaborative learning. Problems will be solved by different minds coming together through collaboration and partnership.
- Indigenous knowledge needs to be built on by drawing on our collective knowledge.
- context of 4IR. Access and affordability issues affecting



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Institutions need to be set up to enable collaboration and partnerships. Inter-institutional partnerships (facilitated by AfWID) with communities.
- Create an online resource for collaboration and sharing of best practice across sectors/industries and countries.
- Curriculum needs to change to be more relevant to the context.
- Leverage on a number of programmes that support the development of technology skills. Multiple paths to develop skills; diverse skills; introductory courses to career ready courses. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to developing skills and addressing problems.
- Dialogue – to share “best practice” access for visually impaired persons, for example.
- Companies must make a meaningful contribution to society. It is mutually beneficial – it should not be “for compliance”.
- Need to identify levers for growth (between government and business) that will inform policy.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMMISSION



Image ©WDB Trust



RAPORTEUR:
Dr Roelien Brink

A November 2018 World Bank study shows that Africa is the only region in the world where more women than men choose to become entrepreneurs, but female-owned enterprises post monthly profits that are on average 38% lower than those of male-owned enterprises. The same study highlights that data collected in 10 African countries indicates that, on average, male-owned enterprises have six times more capital than female-owned enterprises.

Many other studies have shown that female entrepreneurship has the potential to reduce poverty and foster sustainable development in Africa, but many female entrepreneurs continue to face serious obstacles, including a lack of the relevant business skills and limited access to funding. Women entrepreneurs have demanded training in management, negotiation, and marketing skills, better access to loans, access to land and improved opportunities for business partnerships.

CONTEXT: There was a need for a greater conceptual understanding of what entrepreneurship is, and how to encourage entrepreneurial behaviour in order to strengthen women's productive self-reliance. It was therefore important to unpack the following points:

- 🌸 Define what an entrepreneur is.
- 🌸 Locate the role of women as entrepreneurs in an ecosystem.
- 🌸 Identify threats and opportunities; necessary skills and funding.
- 🌸 Know the key success factors for an entrepreneur.



A NOVEMBER 2018 WORLD BANK STUDY SHOWS THAT AFRICA IS THE ONLY REGION IN THE WORLD WHERE **MORE WOMEN** THAN MEN CHOOSE TO **BECOME ENTREPRENEURS**.

KEY ISSUES:

Questions and issues that needed further probing included:

- 🌸 What is the perspective on the current education system and its ability to encourage entrepreneurial thinking and mindsets?
- 🌸 Skills shortages to address the new skills requirements of the future.
- 🌸 What are the new approaches to skills and development?
- 🌸 Is the current entrepreneurial ecosystem designed to be inclusive and support the mainstreaming and meaningful participation of women?
- 🌸 How do we collaborate with neighbouring countries as women in order to build collaboration and dismantle barriers?
- 🌸 Address barriers for women entrepreneurs, such as access to funding and knowledge and skills.

Although some participants viewed the commission as being too academic and theoretical and far removed from women's lived experiences, the following recommendations emerged:



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 🌸 Women raised the concern that they were in dire need of solutions, and not theory. They indicated that the panel seemed to be disconnected from the issues experienced by women in business. There should be a change in the education system in order to prepare for and encourage the entrepreneurial mind-set.
- 🌸 ICT skills are necessary to enhance the environment in which women operate
- 🌸 Address the threats and opportunities of 4IR for women entrepreneurs in Africa
- 🌸 Build an ecosystem that places women in the right networks.
- 🌸 Women must be skilled and be aware of the funding opportunities that are available to them.
- 🌸 Set up an enterprise or platform that can connect women in the SADC region, for example, a "stokvel".
- 🌸 An entrepreneur must have the knowledge of managing risks.
- 🌸 Women need to have the right skills in order to grow their businesses.
- 🌸 Entrepreneurship is a hard and challenging. It requires women to be bold, brave and believe in what they do.
- 🌸 We need more space to address issues of technology. How can technology enhance or enable our business? None of the technology issues have been addressed in the plenary.

INCLUSIVE FINANCE COMMISSION



FACILITATOR:
Fatema Shabodien



RAPPORTEUR:
Gugulethu Mayisela

According to the World Bank's Global Findex financial inclusion data, 34.2% of adults in sub-Saharan Africa now have a bank account, about half of the global average of 62%. Yet Africa leads the world in mobile banking, since 45% of Africans have a mobile money account, whereas the figure for the rest of the world is less than 10%. Financial inclusion in sub-Saharan Africa has "increased dramatically", from 23% in 2011 to 43% in 2017, yet sub-Saharan Africa remains one of the world's most gender-unequal regions. Only 37% of women in Africa have a bank account, compared with 48% of men, and at current rates of financial inclusion, it will take the world more than 200 years to achieve

gender parity. How can African women benefit from the advances in technology to secure the financial resources they require for their own productive self-reliance, and for the health and wellbeing of their families?

The discussion focused on the current exclusion of women in many areas of the finance sector. The facilitator introduced experts from financial institutions to provide an introduction and presentations with regards to the finance sector for the audience, especially to those who came from other countries in Africa, demonstrating how to include women in all aspects of the financial sector.



45% OF AFRICANS HAVE A
MOBILE MONEY ACCOUNT WHEREAS
THE FIGURE FOR THE REST OF THE
WORLD IS LESS THAN 10%.



ONLY **37%** OF WOMEN IN
AFRICA HAVE A BANK ACCOUNT,
COMPARED WITH 48% OF MEN.

KEY ISSUES:

It was explained that blockchain is an innovative technology system that is used in the banking sector when transacting. blockchain is there for the good of all, allowing everyone to trade and run it in a trusted network. It is a distributed ledger.

Salient issues that were raised include:

- Can you use blockchain for banking transactions?
- How do you empower others to use blockchain as part of their business accounts?
- Can it benefit or favour the majority?

Further, key issues that emerged in discussions included:

- Women do not support each other to grow their businesses.
- Every woman should be included in the economy, because at times the main focus is on established women, and never on women who are trying to get things together, who own informal businesses.
- Women trading in micro-businesses between Mozambique and South Africa do not have good banking systems that link the two countries, and the women struggle at the borders in terms of finances.
- Finance and women are often very distant.
- Financial education should be a priority for the upcoming generation, so they can understand the importance of the economy and how it affects social issues.
- What is our agenda as African women in challenging the banks?
- Women should not feel intimidated or disadvantaged in the workplace because of salaries.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following actions were suggested:

- Let us vote for women to be in Parliament.
- Encourage women to start up their own banks.
- Include every woman in the economy.
- Not allow banks to charge women who get social grants to be charged for withdrawals or any other bank transactions.
- Every woman, no matter where they are, should not stop fighting for inclusion of women into all financial transactions and systems.
- The solution is in our hands.



If wealth was the inevitable result of hard work and enterprise, every woman in Africa would be a millionaire. – George Monbiot



LAND, WATER AND ENERGY COMMISSION



Image ©WDB Trust



RAPPOREUR:
Nnnesi Kgabi

African women, and especially rural African women, shoulder a larger burden of unpaid household responsibilities, such as food preparation and the collection of fuel and water. In addition to being land-poor, African women are also time-poor and are disproportionately exposed to health risks associated with some forms of energy production. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in its General Recommendation No. 34 on the Rights of Rural Women, considers rural women's rights to land and water resources to be fundamental human rights. In sub-Saharan Africa, only about 51% of urban

populations and a mere 8% of the rural population had access to electricity in 2007, compared with 99% and about 80% respectively in northern Africa. Access to modern energy services can improve the socio-economic status of women, reducing the time and effort involved in household chores and the health risks associated with current energy practices.

This commission located issues of land, water and energy within the Africa-wide challenges, situating them squarely within the aspirations of Africa's Agenda 2063.

ELECTRICITY ACCESS IN 2007

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

51% OF

URBAN POPULATIONS

8% OF

RURAL POPULATIONS



NORTHERN AFRICA

99% OF

URBAN POPULATIONS

80% OF

RURAL POPULATIONS

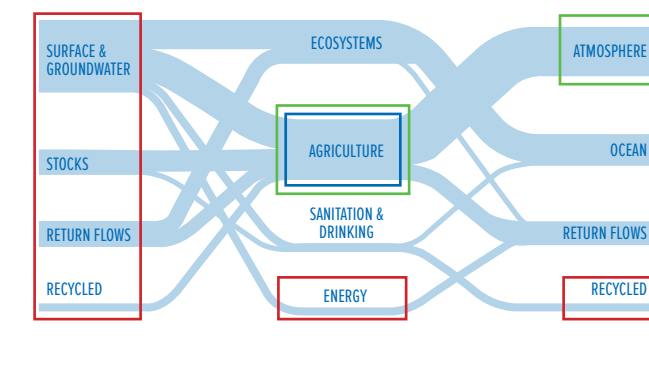
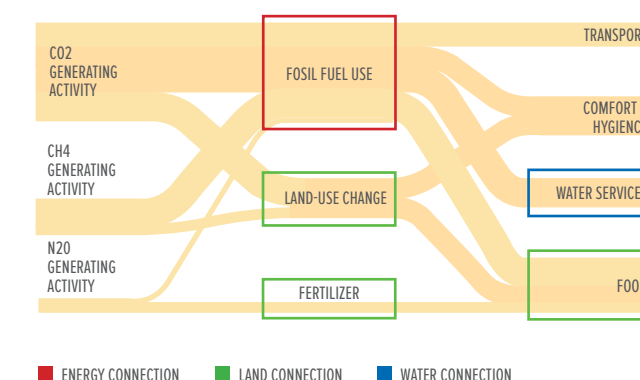
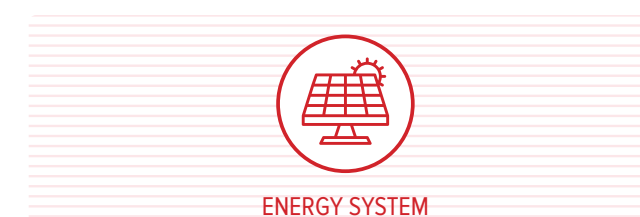
THESE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ARE:

- For Africa to be a prosperous continent founded on inclusive growth, with sustainable and long-term stewardship of its resources.
- For all Africans to have a high standard of living, with adequate quality of life, and sound health and wellbeing.
- For there to be equitable and sustainable use and management of resources for socio-economic development, regional cooperation and the environment.

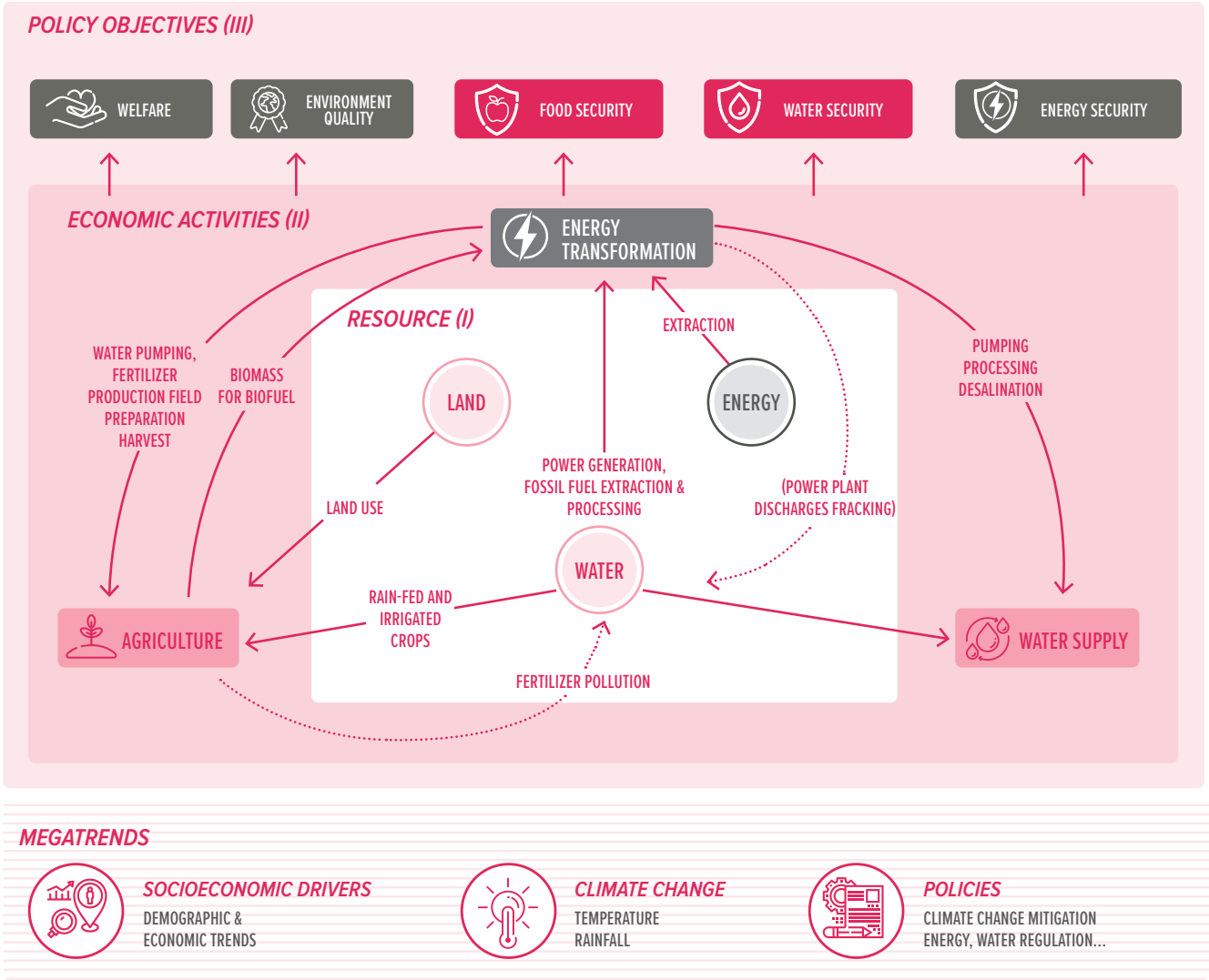
KEY ISSUES:

Land-Water-Energy Linkages

- The linkages between land, water and energy need to be considered in the planning and decision-making processes.
- Gender representativeness is crucial in the planning and decision-making platforms.



CONTEXT: The Land-Water-Energy Nexus exemplified in the drawing below.



WATER IS CENTRAL TO MANY OF THE UN SDGs



The link between ‘Clean Water and Sanitation - SDG6’ is always emphasised in decision-making and international platforms, yet SDG5 - ‘Gender Equality’ - is ignored completely. **Fact: Women play a crucial role in all SDGs**

A Proposed Framework should:

- Guide the activities by identifying, connecting, and prioritising specific aspects of the various framework elements.
- Facilitate communication.
- Guide the design of programmes to ensure that all components are included, balanced, connected, and collectively focused on producing quality information.
- Consistent quality information should be available at all times.



PEACE AND SECURITY COMMISSION



Image ©UN Women



FACILITATOR:
Maj Caroline Komsana SANDF:
Peace Mission Training Centre



RAPPORTEUR:
Marthe Muller, SAWID

MAKING THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA A REALITY

What issues and challenges do women and children face during conflict? 18 years after UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was adopted, what role do female peacekeepers play during peacekeeping operations?

Violence against women during conflicts includes sexual abuse, GBV, displacement, and loss of food, water, health, income and employment. Thousands of mediators have been trained, yet an Oct 2018 UN Women Report noted that women only constitute 3% of mediators, 5% of negotiators, and that only 3% of signed peace agreements contained provisions on gender equality.



Image ©UN Women

Before peacekeeping, there is conflict, which has negative effects on women and children. The military (peacekeeping) is not the only solution to a conflict, and other ways to resolve conflict is through peacemaking (mediation efforts) to reach peace agreements by the warring factions.

KEY ISSUES:

Summarised below is the burning platform in this commission

- ✿ UN Res. 1325 (Windhoek Declaration, 2000) focused on the three Ps of Prevention, Participation, and Protection.
- ✿ In 2000, we had 1% of women mediators, yet, in 2018, only 3%, but a global increase of 56% in gender and sexual violence.
- ✿ November 2018: 78 countries globally with NAPs, (40% of all UN Member States), 23 in Africa, but very little implementation.
- ✿ New issues include human trafficking and slavery, water, climate change, 4IR, cyber-security and child pornography.
- ✿ We do not have the right tools for the job that confronts us. We keep training peacebuilders, but we have to start using them.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ✿ Psycho-social support/training to deal with physical, emotional and mental traumas of war.
- ✿ Mobile clinics, mobile legal centres and network connectivity for countries at war.
- ✿ Co-ordinated implementation plans for each country's NAP.
- ✿ Strengthening local conflict resolution and peacekeeping capacity.
- ✿ Training women in computer science.
- ✿ AfWID peace dialogue before the 20-year anniversary of Res. 1325 in October 2020.
- ✿ Integrate WPS agenda during South Africa's two years of tenure in the UN Security Council.
- ✿ Lobby the UN for a 5th World Conference on Women in 2020.

YOUTH COMMISSION



Image ©WDB Trust



FACILITATOR:
Ms Toni Nkosi



RAPPORTEUR:
Ms Lindiwe Khoza

Young African women are facing challenges and opportunities that older generations are poorly equipped to assist them with. Africa is the world's youngest continent, with almost 60% of Africa's more than 1.2-billion people being under the age of 25. According to the UN's demographic projections, the median age in Africa is going to be 19.8 in 2020. On the continent, Mauritius is expected to have the highest median age, at 37.4, and Niger is expected to have the lowest, at 15.1.



60% OF AFRICA'S MORE
THAN 1.2-BILLION PEOPLE ARE
UNDER THE AGE OF 25.

It is estimated that by 2100, Africa's youth population could be equivalent to twice Europe's entire population. The African Union's (AU) African Youth Charter rightly claims that Africa's youth is its biggest resource and that Africa's growing youth population offers enormous potential. But the reality shows that almost 16-million young Africans – about 13.4% of the total labour force of 15-24-year-olds - are facing unemployment. How can young African women engage constructively with the challenges of relevant education, employment, finance, food, climate change, and human insecurity while taking advantage of the demographic dividend of the youth bulge to fully develop their potential and contribute effectively to the realisation of Africa's development goals?



CONTEXT: A major concern is the incredibly high rate of youth unemployment. South Africa has a youth unemployment rate of more than 50%, so that even those matric graduates with seven distinctions are unemployed. There is therefore a need for a generation of young women who are able to innovate but also are able to manufacture things. It is important to cultivate a culture of makers, of young women who can make things. For instance, William Kamkwamba, a Malawian innovator and engineer, did not need or have Google before he could build a windmill. Therefore, young people today don't necessarily need to have access to Google before they can think.

Critical questions asked against the brief contextual backdrop given above include:

- ❖ Africans knew how to make use of cow dung to make fire without relying on Europeans. (How do we bring that back into our classrooms?)
- ❖ Our curriculum must reflect African technology, which is African solutions to African challenges - solutions that we know really works for us.
- ❖ What can we as Africans learn from the Chinese about their manufacturing culture, from the Indians about their software development culture, or from the Jewish about their collaboration structure?

- ❖ What therefore sets us apart as Africans? Why is it that we cannot work together? Where did "the first, the only or the youngest" mentality come from?
- ❖ What are we going to do about the rural and urban divide?
- ❖ What are we going to do about the cultural and religious contexts that we find ourselves born into, and what does that mean for the future of the continent?
- ❖ "Each generation must discover its mission, to either fulfil it or to betray it."

KEY ISSUES

- ❖ Young women in political parties or those leading movements rarely make it to cabinet or to ministerial positions as compared to their male counterparts.
- ❖ Most interventions are western; they rarely address the reality of young people living in rural areas, informal settlements or townships.
- ❖ Duplication of conversations and efforts is a wasteful expenditure for all countries. It is important to have only one platform to present common issues at AU level.
- ❖ Common challenges across the SADC region: youth unemployment, early marriage, teen pregnancy.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

Key for the Youth Commission are the following:

- 🐦 Create a temporary email or WhatsApp communication platform where young women would be able to keep contact with each other.
- 🐦 Attendance register and minutes of meeting to be shared.
- 🐦 A commitment to keep contact to be in solidarity, build networks, strengthen in-country networking, find solutions and harness opportunities within 4IR.
- 🐦 Call for action including the urgent launch of Young African Women in Dialogue (YAWID).
- 🐦 Document success stories of YAWID.
- 🐦 Brainstorm and work as a team through the communication platform (important to trust each other with ideas so that it becomes “our idea” and not “my idea” or “her idea” or “their idea”).
- 🐦 Share resources on the communication platform and escalate the YAWID lobby group to the AU level. It’s a strategic position to be officially recognised as a lobby group at AU level.

IN CONCLUSION

The overall message from the commissions is that we are African Women in Dialogue (AfWID) and that when we come out of this conference we need to have clear actions about what action we want. We need to keep the dialogue going. The actions to take this forward is the responsibility of everyone. Collaboration is key.

AfWID 2018 is the start of a continental conversation about the Africa women want.

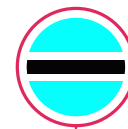


YOUTH PERSPECTIVES THROUGHOUT THE DIALOGUE

The robust level of engagement and all-inclusive country representation in the Youth Commission stood out in comparison to the other seven commissions. The exuberance of the youth was displayed not only in the active manner in which they engaged throughout the week-long AfWID platform but also in questioning the “*status quo*”. The comments from a multi-country perspective as summarised below gives an indication of the length and breadth of the burning issues regarding the alignment between the young that is perceived as missing. To that end, the Youth Commission country perspectives cement the richness of the voices of the youth in the forward-looking AfWID trajectory.



COMMENTS



BOTSWANA

GBV, lack of educational materials, lack of opportunities, death through abortion is a number one killer, we need infrastructure



LESOTHO

Unemployed graduates, poverty, crimes, young people don’t want to drink ARV pills



eSWATINI

Governments to develop country plans and policies with the buy-in and involvement and programme participation of young people.

Young women to learn how to invite themselves into planning and policy meetings where they are not invited.

The need to support young women in leadership.

death through abortion is a number one killer, we need infrastructure



MADAGASCAR

School dropout.
No public policy focusing on gender equality, young women and the girl child.



MALAWI

Ideas of young people disappear as there is no single digital platform where young people can log in to share or register their ideas with other young people.

A challenge for young women in other countries to come to Malawi to partner.

Young people are delayed in obtaining their degrees to get further in life as they have to use their educational funds for family responsibilities.



MAURITIUS

- Drugs, teenage pregnancy.
- There needs to be strong collaboration between the different governments departments and stakeholders.
- Policies must be implemented and not only be good on paper.
- Strong monitoring and evaluation systems to be in place.



MOZAMBIQUE

- There must be severe punishment for leaders who refuse to obey the law or who refuse to implement that which will promote and liberate women, young women and the girl children.
- There is an existing young women feminist movement.
- Post 2015 transition: donors don't trust NGOs and civil society solutions to make a strong advocacy case.
- We need to find strategies on how to scream; the problem is not finance but it is showing that we want to work and this is what donors want to see - new ways of screaming to highlight a crisis.



NAMIBIA

- Teen pregnancy and corruption.
- Solution is AfWID youth, as through AfWID youth, young people can build solidarity with one another.



SEYCHELLES

- Youth unemployment because young people don't want to work, despite government efforts to create work incentives.
- A big issue is migrants coming into the country to take jobs created for Seychelles youth.
- Drug addiction (addiction to heroin) is a big contributor to ineffective youth – it is a vicious cycle that affects the education, employability and prosperity of the youth.
- The problem is not poverty but rather a lack of youth interest.
- A national youth assembly was set up where young people come together.



SOUTH AFRICA

- A need to support existing initiatives in South Africa where girls living in rural areas in Venda are connected to girls from nearby border countries, e.g. Zimbabwe and Zambia, to introduce them to a digital world. (After the exchange programme, the girls are expected to solve digital-related problems in the own countries.) Language is a barrier initially, but with time there is understanding and cohesion.
- Let us support Tanzania though the SADC gender protocol.
- Boy children, young men and men are not held accountable.
- The alignment between young and old is not available.
- SA organisations not getting funding, even though illegal immigrants are taken care of, and yet it is a good thing to come up with solutions on how to improve the condition of migrants in the country.
- GBV, sexual harassment, incest, femicide.
- Support young women leaders in higher-learning institutions.



TANZANIA

- More than 50% of young people in Tanzania are unemployed.
- Not enough support from parents and government to support youth technology related inventions.
- Early marriages and early teen pregnancy causing educational delays.



ZAMBIA

- The problems are the same as other SADC countries (child marriage, teen pregnancy, youth unemployment, HIV/AIDS, etc.)



ZIMBABWE

- Religious and cultural practices; children are forced to follow what the elders are saying.
- A need for science programmes for young girls.

COUNTRY CAUCUSES SUMMARY REPORT



The purpose of the caucuses was to discuss and highlight country-specific challenges as well as to provide inputs on how AfWID can be improved going forward. The following transpired as the cross-cutting core values that the 14 SADC countries agreed upon, and that point to possible next steps in advancing the AfWID platform and objectives:

CORE VALUES: The common values highlighted in the various caucuses, not in order of importance, include uniting women to empower one another; stronger co-ordination of women's initiatives, local solutions and best practices, within countries and across countries;

solidarity in action amongst women; teamwork; ethical values; respect for integrity; humility; the need for inter-generational transparency; mutual respect between all generations and, finally, the ongoing need for effective communication.

SOME OF THE URGENT PRIORITIES THAT EMERGED WERE:



THE NEED TO HOLD
PEOPLE IN POWER
ACCOUNTABLE;



TO DEVELOP A
COMMON AND
ACCESSIBLE DATABASE;



TO PUT MORE EFFORT
TOWARDS STRENGTHENING
OUR AFRICAN IDENTITY;



AND TO ENSURE UNITY
AMONGST WOMEN IN ALL
COUNTRIES.

Some of the core values that were country-specific include the need for racial tolerance; an appreciation of the hospitality offered to African women by their South African sisters, as well as training of women on various societal issues and projects and leadership and governance training.

HOW CAN AfWID BE IMPROVED GOING FORWARD?

Participants identified the need to have more meetings and discussions like AfWID when they return home so that the message reaches women in more remote and rural parts of the country; to work on the inclusivity of young women in order to bridge the intergenerational gap; and to learn from all existing gender frameworks.

Specific areas that required attention were to clarify the role and organisational status of AfWID in countries; to recruit members of other organisations into AfWID; and to encourage other NGOs to adopt the policies of AfWID and affiliate with AfWID. On the issue of the generational gap, it was highlighted that there is a need to include young panellists on the AfWID platform; create an active WhatsApp group; and learn more about the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

To effect practical and robust knowledge-management solutions and build an intra-country community of practice, it was suggested that a platform be created on the AfWID website to showcase women's work per region and to find an adequate vehicle per country to continue the work started at AfWID. The framing of AfWID conversations should be guided by evidence-based research, policy briefs and literature reviews, so that the women's development agenda is informed by sound decisions.

Another key fundamental action that was suggested post-2018 AfWID was the establishment of a women's bank to assist each other in entrepreneurship and not depend on government funding. Linked to this is the call to mobilise relationships for funding national forums.

by Professor Lulama Makhubela, additional text by Marthe Muller



The late Dr Thandi Ndlovu, Motheo Construction



A TIME FOR CELEBRATION

The AfWID Gala Dinner was a riot of colour, song, dance, joy and pure African magic. The women were encouraged to wear national dress, or any outfit that spoke of home. Country performances were a triumph as each country proudly out-performed the next – all in good spirit. As a result, the conference venue was alive with the creativity of the continent, as many danced long into the night celebrating new friendships and a camaraderie built on strong sense of togetherness that filled the ballroom.







UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH ZANELE MBEKI



Professor Lulama Makhubela sat down with African Women in Dialogue (AfWID) founder Zanele Mbeki on the final day of the inaugural AfWID forum for a spirited Q&A session. The event took place on the eve of Mrs Mbeki's 80th birthday, and proved to be the realisation of a dream and the ultimate gift.

Q. PROFESSOR LULAMA MAKHUBELA: When you envisioned AfWID 2018, what did you have in mind?

A. ZANELE MBEKI: Once conceived and we began the planning, we ended up changing the date to the 18th of November – my birthday. Although I had planned a big party at home, I said to myself, “This is my real birthday present, to bring women from all SADC countries here.”

For the past 25 years, through the WDB Trust and WDB Investment Holdings, I have been concentrating on practical delivery programmes for rural areas. I asked myself, what have I not done when it comes to women's issues? What is there still to do? During my time as founder of WDB I had not participated in women's advocacy to bring about change in policy. So, after the 25th Anniversary of WDB, the board gave me the go-ahead to create the Zanele Mbeki Development Trust (ZMDT).

Under the banner of ZMDT, we created the ZMDT Fellowship – a means of creating a new generation of transformative feminist leadership. That is what I had in mind as the genesis for AfWID.

Q. PROFESSOR LULAMA MAKHUBELA: So, what does transformative feminist leadership mean to you?

A. ZANELE MBEKI: The society of patriarchy and capitalism is neither good for men nor women. We need a new ecosystem to transform what we have into a new structure that is value-based.

Conceptually, by transformative feminist leadership I envisage a new structure where women with a feminist perspective and vision of social justice, individually and collectively transform themselves to use their power, resources and skills in non-oppressive, inclusive structures and processes to mobilise other women around a shared agenda of social, cultural, economic and political transformation for equality and the realisation of human rights for all.

The South African Constitution is the “most feminist” because it is inclusive of everybody. Feminism requires the inclusion of men, women, children, homosexuals, and people of different faiths or whatever origin.

Q. PROFESSOR LULAMA MAKHUBELA: Is that the inclusiveness you seek?

A. ZANELE MBEKI: If you want an equal society, you have to include everyone. Moreover, people should make their own choices within a fair society. So that is why I advocate for transformative leadership.

Q. PROFESSOR LULAMA MAKHUBELA: One still picks up the tension, whether perceived or real: the exuberance of the youth on the one hand and the wisdom of the elders on the other. What do you think needs to be done to ensure that we do not polarise but still benefit from the two?

A. ZANELE MBEKI: The AfWID forum is inclusive and not polarising anything. There are many old people who are younger than some young people, who want more radical transformation than they do. Young and old need to complement each other. As Gertrude Mongela said, she is being mentored by her own daughter in technology. But she is mentoring her daughter on something else. So, this is how it should be envisaged in a value-based and benefit-sharing, rather than in a polarised, society.

Q. PROFESSOR LULAMA MAKHUBELA: There is one important discussion point that stood out strongly and very profoundly in connecting women through the imagery of the placenta. Using that imagery of the placenta, what will be a big take-out for you from AfWID 2018?

A. ZANELE MBEKI: For me, a big take-out is that one continues to learn. I had never confronted the theory of connecting women through the placenta. The presentation of the imagery of the placenta was a very powerful one. I am also going to learn more with others.

Professor Lulama Makhubela, is Research Associate at the Gordon Institute of Business Science at the University of Pretoria, and a global thought-leader in issues of knowledge management on women's leadership and feminism.



Q. PROFESSOR LULAMA MAKHUBELA: The AfWID Forum is very information-rich, with people from different levels. What centres you and makes you self-aware around others?

A. ZANELE MBEKI: I was asking myself this morning about self-awareness. When I went to the first class of social work, the key lesson we were taught was the need to be aware of yourself. I am not saying that centres me, but I want to be centred. I am just saying connect with your spirit. Be a united person. That is what self-awareness means.

Q. PROFESSOR LULAMA: Looking at the inaugural AfWID forum 2018, what goes on in your mind now that it is over?

A. ZANELE MBEKI: I am very pleased. It gives me a great sense of gratitude and satisfaction. The mission is accomplished.

REFLECTIONS ON THE WEEK THAT WAS



After so much fun at the gala dinner, it was hard to imagine that the last morning of AfWID had arrived. The morning devotion was led by Angola and Botswana and then delegates participated in reflections on AfWID, as well as the country commission reports.

“Are we still standing?” asked AfWID’s Linda Vilakazi as she started off the discussions for the morning. “We all had fun last night, and today we are closing our wonderful, amazing and invigorating week of being women here, together.”

She recalled other times when she felt such great joy in being a woman with other women – as part of the contingent that went to Beijing.

It was then that we felt we had sisters on the continent, and this week I am feeling that too. The power of the African woman is coming to bear and you are a symbol of that, she said, as participants nodded in agreement.

The morning gave participants the opportunity to report on their country meetings and give some brief feedback on issues discussed, as well as their general reflections on the first AfWID forum.

PULLING US ALL UP (AND THE POWER OF THE PLACENTA)

CHARITY MANDISHONA from Zimbabwe said the highlight of the forum for team Zimbabwe was the discussion around Mildred Ngesa’s impassioned take on the ‘Power of the Placenta’ and how it joins all women across all issues, whether economic, social or political.

“When you look at our country, most women are in the informal economy and they cannot access bank loans, they cannot access even health services - everything is in shambles BUT as women, if we pull up the placenta, we are going to pull each other up.”

She also says that when it comes to politics, African women need to advocate for change in policies throughout the continent.

HEALING AS A TOOL FOR CREATING VISIONARY LEADERS

JOVITA MLAY from Tanzania says what her country is taking away from the inaugural AfWID forum is that they are going to localise the movement and will create a Tanzania Women in Dialogue so that women in her country can heal and grow to become visionary leaders.

“We heard from the dialogues and from the sessions that the healing process really is a tool for women empowerment and to become an effective leader you have to start by yourself,” says Jovita.



“YOU NEED TO BE A **LEADER YOURSELF** AND THEN YOU WILL BE ABLE TO LEAD OTHERS.”

She says that, as visionary leaders, it will be key to engage efficiently in policy processes. “We will enable the policies to embrace and develop an effective environment for our girls to learn.” There is a need to restructure education systems currently in place to accommodate and empower girls.

She says another key area of policy engagement is that of influencing women to become technologically active so they can engage fully in the industrial revolution and therefore move the country forward.

SEEKING SOLUTIONS

BONANG GAOTLHOBGWE from Botswana says one of the important things learnt from AfWID 2018 was that it’s not one-size-fits-all when it comes to women finding solutions to problems.

“What we are taking home is that we realised that we need to have tailor-made solutions for all kinds of women, whether it is a young woman, whether in the urban area, or in the rural area, whether it is a middle age woman in the urban area or the rural area. We need





to look at the whole spectrum of women and actually come up with solutions for their environment and their circumstance.”

 **MARY PAIS DA SILVA** from eSwatini, said her country group was excited about the new information and the skills sharing that they got from the platform, but in particular the exposure to the 4th Industrial Revolution.




“WE REALISED THAT WE ARE USING TECHNOLOGY BUT WE DON’T HAVE A TRUE UNDERSTANDING OF THE **IMPACT AND EFFECTS** THAT IT HAS ON OUR LIVES.”



She says the big concern is the women who are being left behind - those who have not yet caught up to the 3rd Industrial Revolution yet. Mary says that although the women who attended AfWID were from different backgrounds and different geographical areas, the challenges seemed to be the same.

“The challenges and opportunities that come with the 4th Industrial Revolution will bind us in the work that we are going to do going forward. We have decided that going back home, our first step is ensuring that the information that we got from here is put back and shared with all the organisations that are working in the communities, but also taking it to the grass-roots level to make sure we reach that woman that does not have access to electricity, that woman that does not have access to not only a smart phone, but just your normal phone, that woman who does not have access to a computer, let alone internet access. How do we ensure that we do not leave any women behind?”

DIFFERENT COUNTRIES. SAME GOALS

 **NESHA RAMEN** from the Mauritian delegation says the inaugural AfWID forum was an eye-opener.

“We came here to strengthen the connection in Africa. To connect with other people and to connect with other




women around the world, but when we did the sessions, we realised that we all have the same vision, the same mission and the same goal.


“We, the Mauritian delegation, are going back home with lots and lots of experience, best practices. Like we said, in the 4th Industrial Revolution, we need to learn and learn and relearn.

“At the end of the day we all have the same goal – we want to empower our women. We want our women to achieve because each and every one of us is unique and what we learnt throughout this week is to bring out this uniqueness. We are going back home with our uniqueness and our togetherness.

UNITY AND SOLIDARITY

 **ERILIA LESPERANCE** from the Seychelles said the highlight of her group was understanding that they are part of the African sisterhood, no matter what challenges and difficulties they face in their own countries.

“We African women remain united and we remain in solidarity among ourselves and these are very important core values that are extremely vital for us to continue empowering other African women and in order for us to succeed in any endeavours that we might want to do, such as, mentoring, encouraging and supporting young women to take the role of leadership.”


 Zambia were on the same page as the Seychelles. **MAUREEN TRESHA** from Zambia said her group’s great take-away from the AfWID forum was that, despite the fact that there were 15 countries represented, all the women have similar issues.

“We have very similar challenges,” Tresha says, “The issue of child marriage. The issue of patriarchy. The issue of gender-based violence. We saw that as being very common and it was great to hear all the various strategies that we can use to fight that. And even as we

go back home, what we’ve also noted is that we need to continue working together.”


Bosa Ledwaba from South Africa’s North West province gave thanks to SAWID for offering the opportunity to participate in AfWID.

DISPELLING FEAR AROUND TECHNOLOGY

 **BOSA LEDWABA** from the North West says AfWID has helped to dispel some of the fear around technology and its role in an African woman’s life.


“The most important presentation was the one on the 4th Industrial Revolution. I think the mothers from South Africa will no longer be afraid of technology. We are going to leave this place and we are going to be innovative and creative and we are going to implement every resolution that has been taken here. We are also happy as South African women on how we joined hands with our young women.”

STARTING WITH SELF...

 From Cape Town, South Africa, **PATSY DANIELS** said AfWID was definitely a conference with a difference. For her, these types of conferences are usually about following a mandate and focusing on the agenda, but AfWID was about individuals first.

“For me, what stood out was that it started with me. I started to look at my own issues,” said Daniels. “The personal side and that is what I am taking away from this.”

A RICH COUNTRY OF POOR WOMEN

 **NATHALIE DIDIER** works in the media field and says that she learnt so much from the AfWID forum. She said that she became gender aware after she received training from Gender Links in Mauritius and is beginning to live her own personal empowerment.



"I realised that Mauritius is a rich country of poor women. Women are being disempowered in Mauritius because they are facing lots of issues, like gender-based violence, and as a media it's my role that I commit myself to go in each and every little area, including the remote areas of Mauritius, to get these women to take part because I want them to understand the challenges of this 4th Industrial Revolution."

THE TRUTH SHALL SET US FREE



MAMA GRACE MASUKU is a national treasure in South Africa. She is a traditionalist, environmentalist and community worker and a legend in her own lifetime. Mama Grace has been associated with SAWID from the very early days, and her presence and wisdom always adds incredible insights into women's dialogues.

She began by saying that everyone who had attended AfWID was at the cusp of the beginning of a wonderful era. She referred to the strength of the placenta, pointing out that when women are attached to the strength of the placenta, it means always having access to the truth.

"The first truth is that we are all the same," said Masuku. "The second truth is that we are all equal and therefore we need to give respect equally to each other."



AND BECAUSE WE GIVE RESPECT
EQUALLY TO EACH OTHER, WE HAVE
THIS WONDERFUL CHANCE OF
LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER."

Masuku received a robust round of applause from the audience.

RESPECT OF TRADITIONAL VALUES AND CULTURE



MARIA ELAGO from Namibia started off by thanking Zanele Mbeki for the opportunity of attending AfWID, as she has never attended a forum like



this in the past. She said it was important for her to take home the wisdom of the placenta.

"We have to teach the youth how to respect their values and their tradition and culture," she said.

Creating awareness in the rural areas is another essential matter that needs to be looked at in her country. She says that although the Namibian President (Hage Geingob) has adopted the Harambee Prosperity Plan, which aims to ensure that no citizen of Namibia is left in the cold, people in the rural areas are still being left out and that women are not well represented when it comes to leadership.

"I am going to create awareness among the women in the rural areas to take part in the decision-making body."

MAKING OUR VOICES HEARD



SITUMBEKO WAMBULAWE from Zambia is a proud feminist who believes that social media can be utilised to unite and further give African women a voice.

For me just to say that in a room full of women who have similar values, it may seem like something small but what we are forgetting at this conference is that many women are like me, who are proud feminists from different parts of the continent, who are not able to air their views so freely.

"One thing that I feel we need to take from this conference is the fact we have a lot of feminists from different parts of Africa who do not have a voice."

She says the power of social media has seen great men fall. She started a Facebook page called Zambian Feminists after seeing the incredible following of the #MeToo movement in America.

"I wondered why on earth should I follow a movement in the USA when we have the same problems in here in Africa, and how it is that I as a black woman in 2018,



every time I speak my mind, there is a man trying to shut me down. But how can I go against my culture and my beliefs to find who I am?"



JENNY TAMBWE from the Democratic Republic of Congo said she feels that everyone who has a smartphone should take the opportunity to make AfWID go viral.

"Let every home become a section or a branch of AfWID," says Tambwe.

"You know in Africa we talk a lot, we don't do. So LET'S DO AfWID," she said to resounding applause.

IN CLOSING - GRANNY SEAPE DRIVING THE WOMEN'S AGENDA FORWARD



An inspirational woman with a string of accolades behind her, friend of AfWID, Granny Seape, gave an inspirational closing address on the final day of the Inaugural African Women in Dialogue forum.

After we all leave here today, let's continue the fight. To march on. To keep talking and doing until we get it right. Let's keep going.

All of us have been around the volunteers, wearing the T-shirts with the hashtag #IAmHere, #WeAreHere. Let me tell you what the hashtags mean...



I AM HERE



WE ARE HERE

I Am Here represents the cries of women all over Africa, who are trying to make their voices heard, as they appeal to find their rightful place, economically and socially. **We Are Here** reflects women coming together, to learn from each other, to reflect on challenges that face them, and other women in their countries. We are all here, and we are all in this together.

It was a great pleasure to be among you these last few days and to hear your stories, to learn from your individual and collective wisdom, to learn about your respective initiatives and to be part of this momentous occasion.

As I looked around me over the past few days, seeing over 1000 women from all around Southern Africa, I realised that the Inaugural African Women in Dialogue is indeed a ground-breaking platform. I looked to the more mature women among us, myself included – seeing Ous Zanele, Mam Brigalia Bam, Gertrude Mongella, Emma Kaliya, Sara Longwe and many others – I thought, we couldn't have imagined this happening 50 years ago, in fact not even 20 years ago. This event is historic.

We have many mountains to climb, but one of our greatest challenges is overcoming our differences as women.

I have heard many stories this week about the difficulties women face to enter the political space, the economic space, and many other spaces. We can't expect a male-dominated government structure, or government structures, to really look out for us. We have to look out for ourselves, and to do that we need to be part of the decision-making processes. But I also hear too often that it is not only men who keep the political door locked against women, but when I look around this room, I don't want to subscribe to that. I don't think there is a single woman in this room who would be a gatekeeper.

We are our own biggest critics ladies, and we do ourselves no favours by that. In many ways, we uphold the patriarchal structures, either that is because what we were taught to do all our lives, or it is deeply ingrained in our societies that we struggle to shed, but we have to rid ourselves of that thinking. We can't move forward otherwise.

In my other life, I served in the South African National Defence Force as a colonel, and there was a problem where we wanted to bring women into study groups so that we could upskill and empower them. I was talking to one of the female generals about what I thought we needed to do and she looked around and said to me that we just need to be careful not to upset the men. She reminded me that when we set the programmes (for women) they needed to have the approval of the male generals or else we would not get the support we needed!

That is what we are going through as women. We need to get rid of the mindset that says men must determine where we need to be. Somebody said the other day that we don't only want to sit at the table, but we need to decide what is on that menu.

We are currently going through interesting politics in South Africa; political stories are driving the news agenda, they are driving the headlines, but it's an all-male cast starring in this movie. As South Africans, we love our soccer – but the headlines are all male. We have high crime, so we had plenty of stories on the topic, but the culprits are also male.

We have a sophisticated economy, but yes, you guessed it, its leadership is politically all male. Let me tell you that none of these males are about to move over and make space for you, for me, for us. We have to do it ourselves. We have to nudge our way through.

I am not advocating violence, but we must kick the doors open, and kick the glass ceiling. We should shoulder each other as we go, and keep going until we override this patriarchal world. It won't happen overnight, and it won't be without its obstacles, but as I said, 20, 30, 40 or 50 years ago, our mothers could not have conceived of an event like this. But it has happened. Who made it happen? We did!

We came together; each one of us showed up, and we are here. And so as we return to our everyday roles in our respective countries and spaces, let us carry with us the values we have embraced at this gathering. Values of selflessness, values of integrity, values of empathy towards the vulnerable and solutions-driven interventions. Let us use the networks we have created to continue to drive the African women's agenda.



LET US USE THE NETWORKS WE HAVE CREATED TO CONTINUE TO DRIVE THE AFRICAN WOMEN'S AGENDA.

This is an edited version of the speech Granny Seape delivered on November 23, 2018 at the AfWID forum.

Granny Seape, an Economist by training holds a Bachelors of Economics degree from the University of Zambia. She founded the 100% black woman-owned Ahanang Hardware and Construction in 1998. She is founder and director of Global Foreign Exchange – a Financial Services company that is female majority black-owned. Before setting up Ahanang, Granny served as a senior manager in the credit division of both ABSA and Nedbank. She also served as an intern at the World Bank in Washington (Southern African division). Granny is a colonel in the South African Airforce Reserves and serves on the South African Airforce Council. Source: www.ahanang.co.za

SPECIAL THANKS



MEMORIES CAPTURED AND MOMENTS TREASURED

The last hour or two of the African Women in Dialogue (AfWID) forum were bittersweet, with many beautiful moments shared on the stage. Of course Mama Grace Masuku gave us instructions: going forward we are to love ourselves, love our God and love each other. We heard you Mama Grace, loud and clear, and we cherish your presence and your messages of abundance and wisdom. Tears flowed

as we sang and danced together; so many different women from different parts of the continent, and from different backgrounds, finding common ground in our womanhood and in the celebration of the week that had flown by so quickly, offering all of us so many wonderful gifts that we will not only cherish for a lifetime, but will use to take back home and make real and meaningful change.



SPECIAL THANKS

The very first AfWID forum was a triumph in many ways. All too soon, the five days had gone by and it was time for everyone to head home. Many friendships were formed and alliances made, and there is no doubt that the women's movement on the continent gained in strength and stature. Thank you to every single participant who made the journey to join us at AfWID 2018. To our panellists, our sponsors, our partners – we cannot thank you enough for believing in our cause, and making it possible.

A special shout-out to our incredible volunteers, who went over and above the call of duty to make this event a success. If you are the example of what the young men and women of our continent are made of, we are most definitely in good hands.

We would also like to thank “The Breakfast Club” who so generously gave their time, energy and input into making AfWID so extraordinary in so many ways. Granny Seape we are forever indebted to you for taking the lead, and for being true to your word.

To all of you who walked the journey with Ma'am and the team, you know who you are and we thank you.



The AfWID Organising Committee



ONE OF A KIND

As we deliberated all the issues that affect us as women, among us was Dr Thandi Ndlovu, bringing her inspiration, her huge energy and even bigger smile to AfWID 2018. As we were working on this report in 2019, we were devastated to hear of her passing in a car accident on 24 August 2019. Rest in Peace Dr Thandi, you live forever in our hearts and minds.

Thank you for shining your light; we are richer in spirit for your blessings.

LAST WORD JUST THE BEGINNING



ZANELE MBEKI
Founder - ZMDT

I would like to thank each and every person who took part in the inaugural African Women in Dialogue (AfWID) Forum 2018, and would also like to thank our sponsors for making it happen.

When we started this journey, one of the things that was very important for all of us was that we wanted to create a safe, empowering space for participants to engage with each other with honesty, with empathy and in respect of their differences. We really hoped that the spirit of Ubuntu would be the cornerstone of this AfWID forum, and many other AfWID forums to come. I am pleased to say that this is exactly what happened at Birchwood in November 2018. While sometimes there were robust exchanges and differing opinions, mutual respect prevailed and a strong sisterhood was created, across race, religion, culture, generations and across borders. To quote one of our speakers, Mildred Ngesa, of FEMNET, Kenya:

We indeed listened to the 'wisdom of the placenta' and have come away transformed.

While AfWID is an inclusive platform to unite African women from all walks of life, it is simply a tool – a launchpad for all the women who attended to go forth and make the changes needed in their own countries. While AfWID is indeed a movement, participation is

voluntary and we urge all the women who attended to drive the AfWID agenda in their own countries, determine how to drive gender equity and feminist policy, and find ways for women's voices to not only be heard but to make real and lasting change.

There is so much still to be done. Through the AfWID platform, we mutually established that the people of greatest concern to us all are the poorest and most marginalised, mostly living in rural areas. We, therefore, need to get the agenda of peace, development and equality to the rural and urban women of Africa of every race, ethnic group, clan and language.

We will be hosting the next AfWID forum in November 2019, and this time we'll bring women from all African countries (55 of them.) We will continue to share our rich content and conversations with a wider audience on our various platforms, and we look forward to this movement growing from strength to strength. As women take up its ownership. We invite you to be part of this, our journey.

Zanele Mbeki



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