



## **Parallel Report from Black Womxn Caucus: Beijing Platform of Action Commemoration, 69th UN CSW Session**

*14 January 2024*

### **Introduction**

The Black Womxn Caucus (BWC) is a youth-led feminist organization based in South Africa. BWC is currently leading a sub-regional capacity-building program for young feminists, focusing on the UN Commission on the Status of Women. This report is a result of consultations with the youth feminist cohort from South Africa, Zambia, and Eswatini. Additionally, BWC is an active member of the Generation Equality Forum as a Commitment Maker, South Feminist Futures and the Action Coalition on gender based violence. BWC also participates in monthly webinars coordinated by the UN Women and also the NGO Forum of CSW. The Black Womxn Caucus (BWC) initiated its youth feminist capacity-building program in 2023, and it continues to be held annually virtually as in the form of monthly webinars.

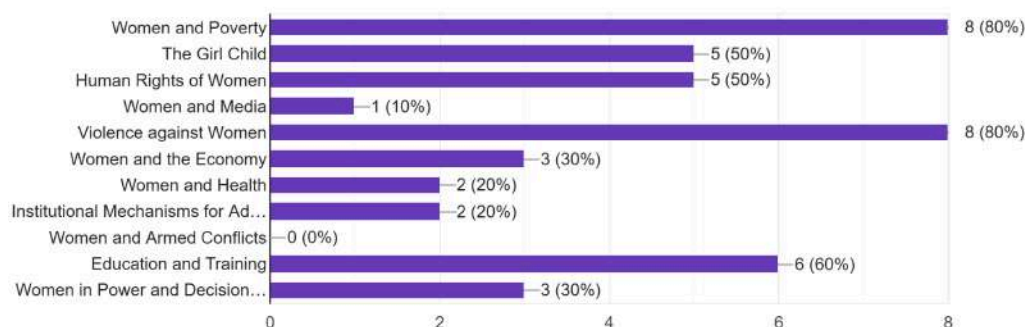
### **The Status of Women in the Subregion with regard the Beijing Declaration Critical Areas**

The state of gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa is alarming. According to the South African Medical Research Council, between 2020 and 2021, 5.5 women were killed by intimate partners per 100,000 women. This translates to a femicide rate that is significantly higher than the global average.

In terms of the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the Beijing Declaration, South Africa is struggling to make progress in several key areas. Findings from the consultation revealed that Women and Poverty, Women in Power and Decision Making as well as Violence Against Women are key areas where the Subregion has a challenge towards realisation of equitable women's rights.

Choose a topic or few topics below that is important to you that needs to be added to the report.

10 responses



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## Violence Against Women

Violence against women is a pervasive global issue. According to the World Health Organization, 30% of women experience violence from their partners. Women also face harassment and assault in public spaces and educational institutions. It is crucial for us to unite in eradicating violence against women and children.

## Women and the Economy

Women's economic empowerment is essential for achieving equality and fostering development. In South Africa, women encounter significant challenges, including limited access to education, training, and credit. Women are underrepresented in leadership roles and often earn less than men. The World Bank highlights that increasing women's economic participation can stimulate economic growth. Investing in women's empowerment benefits everyone, particularly the economy is key.

## Women in Power and Decision-Making

Women's representation in leadership positions is critical for ensuring equality. In many communities, women are underrepresented in politics, business, and education. According to the UN, women hold 27% of global parliamentary seats. Enhancing women's representation leads to more inclusive decision-making. There is a need to dismantle barriers that hinder women from assuming leadership roles.

## Women in Poverty

Women in South Africa face numerous challenges, including limited access to education, training, and economic opportunities. They are often the majority among the poor due to cultural norms, gendered division of assets,

<sup>1</sup> The chart is based on findings of the subregional consultation conducted by Black Womxn Caucus on the state of advancing women's rights as per the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Declaration of 1995.

and discrimination in the workforce. Empowering women through education, economic opportunities, and healthcare is crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty and promoting gender equality.

### **Women and Health**

Women's health is a critical concern, especially in disadvantaged communities with limited access to healthcare and education. Educating girls about health, hygiene, and empowerment is essential for their future well-being. Women need to be aware of their rights when accessing healthcare services to ensure they receive proper care.

### **Community Projects**

Community projects focusing on the girl child and women in marginalized communities should emphasize entrepreneurial skills, empowerment, and financial literacy. Teaching women the importance of personal finances and creating healthier money habits can significantly improve their future.

### **Women and Education**

Education and training are vital for women's economic mobility. Women should be trained at various levels, including self-defense, to address the challenges of daily life. Barriers to education and training perpetuate cycles of poverty. Initiatives to educate and empower women are essential for their independence and well-being.

### **Institutional Mechanisms**

Efforts to advance women include organizations like Swaziland Rural Women Assembly, Women Unlimited Eswatini, and Crossroads International. These groups support gender equality, women's rights, and provide assistance to survivors of gender-based violence. Additionally, national policies and international commitments, such as the African Women's Protocol, play a significant role in promoting women's rights.

### **Conclusion**

Addressing these issues requires a collective effort to ensure women's rights and equality. Empowering women through education, economic opportunities, and healthcare is vital for breaking the cycle of poverty and promoting gender equality.

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