

GENDER POLICY



AS ADOPTED BY COUNCIL ON 26 NOVEMBER 2008

COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 68

AT A COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT MSUKENI COMMUNITY HALL

1. BACKGROUND

The rights of women and girls are an inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The South African Constitution guarantees the right to equality in the law and equal benefit of the law without discrimination on a number of grounds including sex.

The advancement of women and the achievement of equality between women and men are matters of human rights and conditions for social justice and should not be seen in isolation as a woman's issue. They are the only way to build a sustainable, just and developed society. Empowerment of women and gender equality are prerequisites for achieving political, social, economic, cultural and environmental security among all people. Throughout the world, gender equalities exist in order to gain access to and control of resources, in economic opportunities and in political representation. In response, one of the most prominent development goals throughout modern society focuses on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The Umzimvubu Municipality has expressed a commitment to this goal. However, there are current gaps between the Municipality's policy statements and the ways in which money is raised and spent in support of this commitment. Gender equity and achieving gender equality is seen as a cross-cutting theme of the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) process of the Umzimvubu Municipality, covering all spheres and sectors of local government responsibility, including:

- Basic human needs
- Human rights
- Democratisation and good governance
- Budgeting and finances
- Social development
- Access to land and land reform and in particular access to land for women
- Poverty alleviation and reduction
- Health care, HIV/AIDS and antenatal care
- Planning and development
- Education and training
- Environmental protection and management
- Disaster management
- Infrastructure service provision
- Housing and security of tenure
- Economic growth, local economic development and access to employment
- Data collection for women

Gender equality also need to be achieved within the Umzimvubu Council as part of their Employment Equity Plan and due cognisance needs to be taken of the content of this Plan. This forms an integral part of the process of achieving equity and equality within the entire Umzimvubu population.

The aim of this policy document is to align the Umzimvubu Municipality's commitment to gender equality with their social, financial and development responsibilities.

2. CURRENT REALITY – THE GENDER ANALYSIS

Gender analysis is an indispensable tool for both understanding the local context and promoting gender equality. This is based on the recognition that development interventions operate within existing social, cultural, economic, environmental, institutional and political structures in any specific community. Few communities are homogeneous and formal and informal power structures within each reflect social, economic and political relationships among the people concerned as well as with the outside world. Knowledge of the local context is vital to understanding these relationships and their connection to development projects and programmes in terms of needs, impact and results.

Gender analysis examines one of these relationships, i.e. that between women and men and provides information on:

- ✚ The varied roles played by women and men, girls and boys in the household, community, workplace, political processes and the economy. These different roles usually result in women having less access than men to resources and decision-making processes, less control over them;
- ✚ The differential perspectives, roles, needs, and interests of women and men in the project area, as well as the practical needs and strategic interests of women and men;
- ✚ The relations between the women and men pertaining to their access to, and control over resources, benefits and decision-making processes;
- ✚ The potential differential impact of programme or project interventions on women and men, girls and boys;
- ✚ Social and cultural constraints, opportunities, and entry points for reducing gender inequalities and promoting more equal relations between women and men;
- ✚ The capacity of institutions to programme for gender equality; and
- ✚ The differences among women and men and the diversity of their circumstances, social relationships and consequent status (e.g. their class, race, ethnicity, age, culture and abilities).

3. WHAT IS GENDER EQUALITY?

Gender equity results in gender equality and is the process of being fair to women and men. To ensure fairness, measures must often be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a level playing field.

Gender equality means that women and men enjoy the same status and those women and men have equal conditions for realising their full human rights and potential to contribute to their local, political, economic, social and cultural development, and to benefit from the results.

Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of both the similarities and differences between women and men and the varying roles that they play.

Attention to gender equality is essential to sound development practice and at the heart of economic and social progress. Development results cannot be maximised and sustained without explicit to the different needs and interests of women and men. If the realities and voices of half of the population are fully recognized, objectives related to reducing poverty and to contributing to a more secure, equitable and prosperous society will not be met.

There are ten common critical areas of concern for particular attention for local government action and intervention, i.e.:

- ✚ Poverty
- ✚ Education and training
- ✚ Health
- ✚ Violence against women and children
- ✚ Access to land for women
- ✚ Economy
- ✚ Power and decision-making
- ✚ Institutional mechanisms for gender equality
- ✚ Human rights
- ✚ Environment
- ✚ The girl child

4. GOALS OF GENDER EQUALITY IN THE UMZIMVUBU MUNICIPALITY

The ultimate goal of this Gender Equity Policy for the Umzimvubu Municipality is to support the achievement of equality between women and men to ensure sustainable development and improving well being of women, men, girls and boys.

This Policy focuses on achieving equality between women and men through co-operation activities. This is essential since sustainable development and, in particular poverty reduction, will not be achieved unless inequalities between women and men have been eradicated. This policy therefore puts great emphasis on the eradication of discrimination against women and girls as part of the Umzimvubu Municipality's concern for social justice and development effectiveness.

5. THE OBJECTIVES FOR GENDER EQUALITY

The objectives of this Gender Equity Policy for the Umzimvubu Municipality are geared towards the following:

To advance women's equal participation with men as decision-makers in shaping the sustainable development of their societies;

To support and empower women and girls in the realisation of their full human right; and

To reduce gender inequalities in access to and control over the resources and benefits of development

6. PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE GENDER EQUALITY IN UMZIMVUBU L.M.

The following gender equality principles guide policy formulation and programme implementation in the Umzimvubu Municipality:

- a) **Gender equality must be considered as an integral part of all the Umzimvubu Municipality's programmes and projects.** Gender equality is a cross-cutting goal. Achieving this goal requires that women's view, interests needs shape the development agenda as much as men's. it also requires to the development agenda support progress toward more equal relations between women and men.
- b) **Achieving gender equality requires the recognition that every policy, programme and project affects women and men differently.** Women and men have different perspectives, needs, interests, roles and resources. These differences may also be reinforced by class, race, caste, ethnicity or age and disability. Policy programmes and projects must address the differences in experiences and situations between and among women and men
- c) **Achieving gender equality does not mean that women become the same as men.** Equality means that one's right or opportunities do not depend on being a male or female.
- d) **Women's empowerment is central to achieving gender equality.** Through empowerment, women become aware of unequal power relations, gain control over their lives and acquire a greater voice to overcome inequality in their home, workplace and community.
- e) **Promoting the equal participation of t agents of change in economic, social and political processes is essential to achieving gender equality.** Equal participation goes beyond numbers. It involves women's equal right to articulate their needs and interests, as well as their vision of society, and to shape the decisions that affect their lives, whatever cultural context they live in. partnership with women's organisations and other groups working for gender equality is necessary to assist this process.
- f) **Gender equality can only be achieved through partnership between women and men.** When choices for both women and men and achieving them involves working with men to bring attitudes, behaviour, roles and responsibilities at home, in the workplace and in the community.
- g) **Achieving gender equality will require specific measures designed to eliminate gender inequalities.** Given ingrained disparities, equal treatment of women and men is insufficient as a strategy for gender equality. Specific measures must be developed to address the policies, laws, procedures, norms, beliefs, practices and attitudes that still maintain gender inequality these gender equality measures should be developed with stakeholders and should support women's capacity to make choices about their own lives.
- h) **The Umzimvubu Municipality policies, programmes, and projects should contribute to gender equality.** Gender equality results should be incorporated into all of the Umzimvubu Municipality's initiatives although application will vary among departments, programmes and projects.
- i) **Gender equity and equality can only be achieved through empowerment.** Empowerment is about people-both women and men- taking control over their lives,

setting their own agendas, gaining skills, building self-confidence, solving problems and developing self-reliance. Empowerment can be both on a collective and individual basis and it is not only a political and social process but also a political and social outcome. Outsiders cannot empower women: only women can empower themselves to make choices or to speak out on their own behalf. However, institutions such Umzimvubu Municipality can initiate and support processes that increase women's self-confidence, develop their self-reliance, help set their own agendas and develop their human potential and worth.

7. UMZIMVUBU'S GENDER EQUALITY FRAMEWORK

Within the Umzimvubu Municipality poverty is one of most prominent issues that need to be addressed to achieve sustainability. Gender inequality is strongly linked with poverty and most accentuated in poor and marginalised communities such as those found in Umzimvubu.

The goals of reducing poverty and of achieving gender equality are distinct but interrelated. Poverty reduction involves addressing the constraints that limit people's capability to avoid, or limit deprivation. Gender inequalities intensify poverty, perpetuate it from one generation to the next and weaken women's and girl's ability to overcome it.

Inequalities prevent women and girls from taking up opportunities which will make them less vulnerable to poverty in situations of crisis. To eradicate poverty the constraints that women and girls face must be eliminated. These constraints include lack of mobility, low self-esteem, lack of access to and control over resources, lack of access basic social services, to training and capacity development opportunities, to information and technology, as well as to decision making in local government, development and private sector organisations and in communities and households.

Poverty reduction means a sustained decrease in the number of poor and the extent of their deprivation. This requires that the root causes and structural factors of poverty be addressed. Reducing poverty places a focus on people's capabilities to avoid, or limit, their deprivation. Key aspects of this include recognising and developing the potential of the poor by increasing their productive capacity and reducing barriers limiting their participation in society. Poverty reduction must focus on improving the social, economic and environmental conditions of the poor and their access to decision-making.

The following policy framework is geared towards achieving this:

Overarching Policy and Programming Priorities	Links with gender equality	Examples of results that contribute to the Achievement of Gender Equality
Poverty reduction: to promote policies that create an enabling environment for poverty reduction; support poverty focused programmes and that improve income-generation opportunities, skills training	Compared to men, women generally have less access to control over productive assets, employment and training opportunities, basic services, information, and decision-making mechanisms in local	Increased access to and control over productive assets (especially land, capital and credit). Processing the marketing for women. Increased access to and control over basic services (especially

<p>and basic services; launch targeted interventions that directly empower vulnerable group like women, children, minorities, the landless, the unemployed and the displaced.</p>	<p>government, private sector organisations, the community and within the household. These gender inequalities contribute to and perpetuate poverty from one generation to the next.</p>	<p>primary and reproductive health, child care, shelter and basic education for girls). Increased skills training and capacity development opportunities, as well as on-the-job training and opportunities for women. Increased participation of women in decision-making in local government, private sector and civil society organisations, the community, and the households. Strengthened capacity of partner institutions, government and civil society organisations to promote, design and implement policies, programmes and projects which reflect the needs, priorities and interests of both women and men. And support gender equality.</p>
<p>Basic Human Needs: to support efforts to provide primary health care, basic education, family planning, nutrition, water and sanitation, and shelter.</p>	<p>Women and men have different needs rising from their society constructed roles and responsibilities. Women tend to be responsible for meeting their families' basic human needs. However they face specific constraints in gaining access to services which meet their basic human needs, given their lack of access to and control and ownership over resources, and their lack of decision-making power. Girls, in particular face constraints in terms of their opportunities and life choices. These specific constraints must be taken into account in order to ensure that the basic human needs of the entire community are met, and that basic human needs programmes contributes to poverty reduction.</p>	<p>Increased decision-making power for women regarding expenditures in the household. Increased sharing of household responsibilities by women and men. Increased options for child-care. Increased access to and control over primary health care service for women and girls. Increase understanding of gender differences in determinants and consequences of diseases such as HIV/AIDS and respiratory diseases. Increased access to a broad range of reproductive health care services for women and men. Increased access to education programmes for girls. Increased access to and control over decision-making by women in the design, management and maintenance of water and sanitation services.</p>
<p>Infrastructure Services: to deliver environmentally sound</p>	<p>Women and men have different priorities and preferences in</p>	<p>Improve access for women to safe and affordable public</p>

<p>infrastructure services, with an emphasis on poorer groups, capacity-building, and the environment.</p>	<p>relation to technology. They have different access to and control over it and make differently use of infrastructure services based on their socially ascribed roles, responsibilities, privileges, and financial resources. By recognising these differences, programmes and projects can provide appropriate and accessible infrastructure services that met the water, energy, transport, communications and information needs of both women and men.</p>	<p>transport services and infrastructure. Increased capacity of women and their organisations to influence decisions regarding the design public services and infrastructure. Increased employment of women (at all levels- from road construction worker to manager) in infrastructure service delivery. Increased capacity of institutions to design and implement infrastructure investments which respond to the needs and priorities of the poor women</p>
<p>Human rights, democratisation and good governance: to increase respect for human rights including children’s rights; to promote democracy and better governance; and to strengthen both civil society and the security of an individual.</p>	<p>The human rights of women and girls are an inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. By both promoting and supporting processes towards eradication of all forms of discrimination on the grounds of sex, the Umzimvubu Municipality contribute to human rights practices that protect all human beings.</p>	<p>Increased numbers of women employed in non-traditional occupations. Greater numbers of civil society organisations advocating for women’s and girls’ rights. Greater awareness of women and girls of their economic, social, civil, political, and cultural rights and greater support for these rights by men and boys. Increased capacity of institutions to implement policies and programmes that address domestic violence.</p>
<p>Private sector development: to promote sustained and equitable economic growth by supporting private sector development.</p>	<p>Women and men face different social and economic constraints in responding to economic opportunities in the private sector. In general, these constraints relate to women having less education or appropriate training, less access to and control over collateral and capital and financial markets. Women also have a greater household and child care responsibilities. Attitudes and beliefs may also put up barriers to women’s opportunities in the private sector. By recognising and addressing these “inefficiencies” in the market and the social barriers to</p>	<p>Adoption and implementation of policies and plans on gender equality. Increased economic options for poor women. Greater access to and control over credit, training and services for women entrepreneurs. Increased capacity of partner organisations to address gender equality issues in trade policy and economic reform. Elimination of discriminatory practices against female workers.</p>

	women's equal participation, the Umzimvubu Municipality will contribute to equitable and sustained economic growth.	
<p>Environment: to help protect the environment and contribute to addressing local and regional environmental issues.</p> <p>Local and regional environmental issues.</p>	<p>Environmental conditions such as pollution, soil degradation and watershed reduction affect Women and men differently, given their different roles and relative decision-making power. As consumers, producers and users of natural resources for their families, and educators, women also play an integral role promoting sustainable and ecologically sound consumption and production patterns and approaches to natural management.</p> <p>The Umzimvubu Municipality's goal of environmental sustainability will be illusive unless the differential impact of environmental factors on women and men are addressed and women's contribution to environmental management is recognised and supported.</p>	<p>Increased recognition of women's knowledge of the natural environment and increased</p>
<p>Women in Development: to support the full participation of women as equal partners in the sustainable development of their societies.</p>	<p>Support for the achievement of gender equality is carried out through integration efforts in all development programmes as well as through investments in initiatives where the principal objective is to support gender equality.</p> <p>Examples include gender funds, direct institutional support to government departments responsible for promoting gender equality, and support to advocacy organisations working for gender equality, or working with men to end violence against women.</p>	<p>Strengthened capacity of institutions, organisations, the private sector and firms to promote, design and implement policies, programmes and projects which reflect the needs, priorities and interests of women and men and support gender equality.</p> <p>Increased recognition of violence against women as a social problem and greater commitment to eliminate it.</p> <p>Greater participation of women in political office and increased attention to women's needs, priorities and interests in political discourse.</p> <p>Increased capacity of those mandated to promote gender equality and promoting gender equality, to monitor and</p>

		influence public planning processes and public policy. Greater social, economic political empowerment for women as measured through increased economic security, decision-making in the household, legal awareness, and collective action for self-determination.
--	--	---