Gender Analysis of the Digital Transformation in South Africa

ICE and BiRD-GmbH on behalf of the Delegation of the European Union to South Africa

Final Version

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Dedicated to: Dr. Rose Gawaya

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

IC

4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AU	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CGE	Commission for Gender Equality
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DALRRD	Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
DARA	Development in Africa with Radio Astronomy
DCDT	Department of Communications & Digital Technologies
DSI	Department of Science and Innovation
DTPS	Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DWYPD	Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities
EGDI	E-Governance Development Index
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
FB	Facebook
G2G	Government to Government programmes
G2B	Government to Business programmes
G2C	Government to Citizen programmes
G2E	Government to Employee programmes
GAP-III	EU Gender Action Plan III (2021-2025); An ambitious agenda for gender equality
	and women's empowerment in EU external action
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHS	General Household Surveys
ICASA	The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICTs	Information, Communication and Telecommunications
ICTS	ICT-Services
ILO	International Labour Organization

loT	Internet of Things
ITC	International Trade Centre
LGBTQIA+	Lesbians, Gays, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and others
MIP	Multi-Annual Indicative Programme
NDP	National Development Plan
NEMISA	National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIDS-CRAM	National Income Dynamics Study - Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey
NPC	National Planning Commission
NSP	National Strategic Plan
OGBV	Online Gender Based Violence
PWD	Persons living With Disabilities
RSA	Republic South Africa
SA	South Africa
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SAHRC	South Africa Human Rights Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMMEs	Small Medium and Micro Enterprises
SOC	State Owned Company
StatsSa	Department of Statistics South Africa
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and design, and Mathematics
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational and Scientific Cultural Organization
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
USSD	Unstructured Supplementary Service Data
VAW	Violence Against Women
WEF	World Economic Forum
WISET	Women in Science, Engineering and Technology
WOAN	Wireless Open Access Network

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The European Union Delegation (EUD) has commissioned this gender analysis of the digital transformation in South Africa with the aim of enhancing gender mainstreaming in its development and cooperation interventions in the country. Moreover, this analysis seeks to assist with identifying actors, priorities, and entry points to promote gender equality in the digital transformation through dialogues and cooperation across the different instruments and investment frameworks. The analysis explores common ground for an action for the EUD and the EU Member States in partnership with the South African government, civil society organisations (CSOs), the private sector and relevant international actors to promote gender equality and social inclusion in the digital transformation. It provides recommendations to the EUD and the EU Member States to support an inclusive and just digital transformation in South Africa and strengthen the implementation of shared international commitments (SDGs, Paris Agreement, CEDAW, etc.) as reflected in South Africa's legal and policy framework to promote gender equality and a digital transformation, and in the EU Gender Action Plan-III 2021-2025 (GAP-III)¹.

Section 1 provides a contextual **overview** of South Africa's socio-economic landscape, the dualistic characteristics of the South African economy, as both an advanced and a developing economy, and how this plays out in the Information Communication and Technology (ICT) sector. It explores the relevance of promoting gender equality in the digital transformation process, highlighting the common ground for cooperation and partnership between South Africa and the European Union (EU) in this area.

Thereafter the analysis delves into the following sections, focused on five gender-relevant thematic areas:

Section 2 explores how digital transformation can contribute to promoting the economic empowerment of women and girls. It highlights South Africa's policy commitments to women's economic empowerment and shows how the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the gender digital divide. One of the unintended positive effects of the pandemic is the growth of e-commerce and digital service delivery, which has the potential to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the digital economy. Other aspects of this section refer to the decentralisation of digital economic processes, creating home-based economic opportunities, and digital solutions to combine work with family responsibilities. Section 2 closes with several recommendations, including strategies to enhance access to digital technologies, increase the participation of women in the development and decision-making processes of the digital economy, to improve digital literacy skills in e-commerce for women start-ups, self-employed women, and women who are part of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and to link the digital economy to the green transition through the empowerment of women smallholders in agriculture, making them drivers of change in the new value chains of organic food supply.

Section 3 covers gender-relevant aspects of the **e-governance process** in South Africa, which is one of the leading countries in the African continent in terms of e-government development. South Africa's legal framework and policies on e-governance are focused on achieving inclusive economic growth, although they are not fully gender mainstreamed. Notably, women are the majority at the top level of the

¹ European Commission, 2020, 'EU Gender Action Plan III – Joint Commination to the European Parliament and the Counsel': <u>https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/join-2020-17-final_en.pdf</u>; European Commission, 2020, 'EU Gender Action Plan III – Joint Staff Working Document': <u>https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/swd_2020_284_en_final.pdf</u>.

Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT), which leads the digital transformation of South Africa. Data show that 55.5% of the employees in the Department are women, and there is a relatively good gender balance at all levels. The main bottleneck for advancing inclusive good e-governance is the digital divide, due to the lack of access to ICT for affordable internet, and gaps in digital literacy and skills. This section recommends supporting the development of guidelines and tools and capacity building on gender mainstreaming in e-governance; the process to address practical and strategic gender interest in governmental messages and services. It further recommends to support the effort of the South African government to increase coverage and affordability of the internet, as well as the digital literacy and skills of the most disadvantaged groups and communities. The monitoring of the gender digital divide; the inclusion of tangible gender equality targets and the recognition of innovative women champions in strategic sectors for the digital economy as new role models are further recommended.

Section 4 addresses access to digital capacity building and skills and highlights South Africa's National Digital and Future Skills Strategy (2020) which sets out a structured series of initiatives to enhance the digital capacity building of all people in South Africa. While gender mainstreaming appears to be embraced by the government, the digital divide is of high concern, and there is a pressing need to increase the participation of girls and women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and innovative careers of the digital economy as reflected in many policies and actions undertaken by several Departments The COVID-19 lockdowns contributed to the acceleration of the digital transformation of the economy and created more opportunities for decentralised, home-based, and flexible work. In terms of digital education, there are still many challenges to address, including limited access to the internet and devices, a gender gap in STEM careers and vocational training on digital skills, a lack of training in digital literacy for parents and learners, a growing need for teacher support and training. Many initiatives are taken to enhance digital training and capacity building, both by the government, CSOs and the private sector. Bridging the gender digital gap also requires the visualisation of new role models, mentors for the encouragement of women's self-confidence, scholarship opportunities and financial resources to support girls and women in a STEM career. This section concludes with recommendations focused on, among others, the promotion of gender-inclusive digital education as well as the support of programmes for the upskilling and reskilling of women who lost their jobs.

Section 5 on access to the internet and digital technologies shows that, notwithstanding South Africa's leading role in the region, there are several barriers to access, connectivity, and digital skills. The digital divide runs along the lines and historical structures of discrimination, oppression, gender inequality and other socio-economic factors, as substantiated in this section with statistical data. However, the high cost of data and access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)s is the most common barrier that cuts across all these structural inequalities. The section provides an overview of the policy landscape, showing how the government is attempting to address these disparities in access, use and benefits of ICT services and tools. Notably, new license conditions are set to expand internet connectivity and reduce prices in South Africa and require zero-rating of all mobile content provided by public benefit organisations, allowing people to download education, health, and welfare resources This section highlights findings from the recent public consultations conducted on the National Infrastructure Plan for high-speed broadband. The section further discusses the empowering potential of access to digital

resources and closes with recommendations to support the development of viable infrastructure plans and to promote digital literacy skills across all sectors of society.

Section 6 explores the evolving notion of online harms and online gender-based violence (OGBV). and its disproportionate impact on women, girls, and gender and sexual minorities. It unpacks recent law reform developments in South Africa that mark important steps for the recognition of online harm and improved protection and online safety. Moreover, the recent Cybercrimes Act and the Domestic Violence Amendment Act are praiseworthy examples of their gender-neutral language. The effective implementation of the legal protections requires institutional capacity building at all levels of the judicial sector to equip public officials with digital literacy skills that enable them to better understand the impact of online harms and to equip them with the knowledge and skills required for responding appropriately to cases of OGBV. Further, digital literacy training should also be provided to the public in general to enhance a safer, accessible, and inclusive internet. The section provides various examples of prevalent forms of OGBV and online harm, that are in many ways part of the continuum of violence against women, girls, and gender and sexual monitories that occurs offline. Women and girls, women journalists, and activists are at risk of online harm, particularly women from marginalised communities, including LGBTQIA+ people, women of colour, and Black women, who are often disproportionately targeted with online abuse, which means their voices are silenced more often than other women. This section provides an overview of several civil society programmes and initiatives that seek to address online harm in South Africa. The section closes with recommendations to support digital literacy programmes for police officers. clerks of the court, and judges to appropriately respond to and report on OGBV. It further recommends the collection of reliable disaggregated data on the prevalence and impact of OBGV and suggests the need for research support on the evolving context of online harms, violence and discrimination in 'new' digital technologies.

Section 7 summarises the **key findings and recommendations** to support and strengthen South Africa's efforts towards an equal and inclusive digital transition that promotes and encourages the empowerment of women and girls. All recommendations are based on shared legal and policy commitments between South Africa and the European Union and are relevant for the implementation of the EU Gender Action Plan-III 2021-2025, and the Multi-Annual Indicative Programme 2021 – 2027 of the EU Delegation to South Africa.



This Gender Analysis of the Digital Transformation in South Africa is the third in a series of three. The first is a Gender Country Analysis of South Africa (2021), and the second a Gender Analysis of the Green Transition in South Africa (2022).

This third gender analysis is dedicated to Dr. Rose Gawaya, who was a member of the team that worked on these three gender analyses since June 2021. Unfortunately, in December 2021, shortly after we finished the first draft of this gender analysis on digital transformation, Rose got serious health problems. In the hospital in Johannesburg, she lost the fight for her life, and died on the 7th of March 2022. We were shocked and sad about her passing away too early in life. Our deepest condolences go to Rose's family and in particular to her 12-year-old son. This publication is a **tribute to Dr Rose Gawaya's life** and the important causes for which she has worked during her lifetime, both as a grassroots leader for women's rights and as a researcher and international consultant. She accomplished many significant assignments for bilateral and multilateral agencies in different countries worldwide. Her contributions to this gender analysis of the digital transformation in South Africa was the last accomplishment in her life. We are grateful for her highly valued contributions to this study.

We have **consulted important stakeholders** to obtain first-hand input for the gender analysis, including South African national authorities, civil society organisations (CSOs, the private sector, scientists, as well as international agencies and staff members of UN agencies, EU Member States Embassies, and representatives of other international cooperation agencies in South Africa. We thank all those who have generously shared their knowledge, experience, views, expertise, and ideas with us. All who have contributed to this gender analysis and previous gender analyses in this series are listed in **Annex 2** of this report, and we want to apologise in advance in case we might have forgotten anyone who has provided their contribution to this Gender Analysis of the Digital Transformation in South Africa.

Many thanks to the **co-authors**, who jumped on the riding train of this gender analysis in 2022: **Tina Power** and **Zahra Abba Omar** from ALT Advisory (South Africa) for their research, key contributions, quality control and final editing. **Jennifer Smout**, independent consultant, for enriching the study with updated statistics for sections 3 and 4. **Nuša Muršič**, intern at OQ Consulting, for arranging the bibliography and the list of acronyms.

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The process of digital transformation in South Africa has many stakeholders and aspects of which only a part could be explored by this gender analysis. All mistakes and omissions remain the sole responsibility of me as the team leader, and cannot be assigned to the EU, the co-writes, or to any of the persons or institutions consulted for this gender analysis.

On behalf of the Contractors ICE and BiRD GmbH, and sub-contractor OQ Consulting BV, Thera van Osch, team leader, 20 May 2022.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This section provides a brief overview of South Africa's socio-economic context and the process of digitalisation in South Africa and its perspectives in terms of gender and inclusiveness. It explains the rationale for this gender analysis and explores the common ground for cooperation and partnership between South Africa and the EUD in this process. This section will close with a short explanation of the methodology and the issues covered by this gender analysis.

1.1. Overview

South Africa has the characteristics of both an advanced and a developing economy. It has access to technology, it has sophisticated institutions including research bodies and universities, and it has a strong private sector and fiscal resources.² However, South Africa remains a deeply unequal society with almost half its population living below the poverty line. Gender-based violence (GBV), gender discrimination, and access to resources and opportunities along gender lines remain rife in South Africa. These dualistic characteristics of the South African economy play themselves out in the ICT sector. Paradoxically, South Africa ranks highly on the continent for its digital development, and there are strong indications that it is becoming an increasingly digitalised society. However, it still faces significant challenges in terms of access and inclusivity, with many of the "existing inequalities, barriers to access, and structures of discrimination have been magnified by the global pandemic".³

1.2 South Africa's ICT landscape

The **National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper** (White Paper) approved by the South African Cabinet in October 2016 outlines the overarching policy framework for the digital transformation of South Africa into an inclusive, innovative and knowledgeable society.⁴ It introduces a range of strategies focused on ensuring that "everyone in South Africa, regardless of who they are, where they live or their socioeconomic status can improve the quality of their lives through accessing the benefits of participating in the digital society."⁵ Building on South Africa's National Development Plan 2030,⁶ the White Paper seeks to strengthen existing strategies, including the South Africa Connect,⁷ and the National Cybersecurity Policy Framework 2012.⁸

<u>Understanding what is happening in ICT in South Africa.pdf</u>. ³ Paradigm Initiative, 2021, 'Londa: Digital Rights and Inclusion in Africa: South Africa', page 93: <u>https://paradigmhq.org/wp-</u>

content/uploads/2021/05/Londa-Digital-Rights-and-Inclusion-in-Africa-Report-2020-Ir.pdf.

⁴ Department Telecommunications and Postal Services, 2016, 'National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper':

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201610/40325gon1212.pdf.

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/ndp-2030-our-future-make-it-workr.pdf.

⁷ Department of Communications, 2013, 'South Africa Connect: Creating Opportunity, Ensuring Inclusion':

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/37119gon953.pdf.

⁸ State Security Agency, 2015, 'National Cybersecurity Policy Framework':

² Gillwald, A, Moyo, M & Stork, C,. 2012, 'Understanding what is happening in ICT in South Africa; A supply- and demand-side analysis of the ICT sector' *Evidence for ICT Policy Action Policy Paper* 7: <u>https://media.africaportal.org/documents/Policy_Paper_7_</u>

⁵ Ibid at page 9.

⁶ The National Planning Commission, 2012 'National Development Plan: 2030':

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201512/39475gon609.pdf.

In 2019 the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT) was created to "lead South Africa's digital transformation to achieve digital inclusion that must result in economic growth through creating an enabling policy and regulatory environment", leading the country into the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR)⁹ and in March 2020 DCDT's **Strategic Plan 2020-2025** was approved.¹⁰ One of the priorities of this plan is to bridge the digital divide between the digitally empowered and the digitally deprived. The DCDT is responsible for promoting secure and affordable universal access to digital transformation in cooperation with State-Owned Companies (SOCs), relevant stakeholders from the government, private sector and civil society. The DCDT further ensures the mainstreaming of critical issues related to gender, disability, youth and children.¹¹

South Africa has relatively good prospects for the development of a digital economy, as its policy wisely leverages the four pillars of such an economy, namely, **technology**, **policy**, **people**, **and strategy**:

- The **technology** employed in the South African telecommunications network includes most of the high-end communications services expected in the advanced economies. The country has the largest telecommunications market in Africa and leads the continent in the number of fixed lines, the number of cellular subscribers, number of data services users, level of financial revenues, level of investment, and level of manufacturing capabilities. South Africa recognises that 'going digital' is required to respond to the demands of businesses for cost lowering, accuracy increasing, and speed improvement.
- In terms of **policy**, South Africa endeavours to promote an inclusive economy and society, building upon numerous laws developed to promote equality of all persons regardless of sex, gender, race, class, disability or sexual orientation.¹² This aligns with South Africa's constitutional commitment toward the protection of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms founded on the values of non-racialism and non-sexism.¹³ Additionally, South Africa's government recognises that in a "digital society, universal access to communications services is not just a tool to address inequality across society but also a precondition for equality".¹⁴ The challenges to achieving these goals include the expansion of digital access to rural areas and remote communities, the increase of ICT skills and knowledge, keeping highly qualified ICT experts in the country, investing in ICT, increased competition in the ICT sector, and reduced prices for digital access.
- Investing in **people** is the third pillar of harnessing a digital economy. One of the bottlenecks in South Africa is the lack of skilled and qualified people in studies relevant for ICT. The South African education system is struggling with a drop-out crisis, where about 50% of the students drop out before reaching grade 12. The majority of dropouts are Black and Coloured boys.¹⁵ Although girls have lower drop-out rates, they still remain underrepresented in studies that are relevant for the

⁹ DCDT, 'Our Mandate': <u>https://www.dcdt.gov.za/about-us/mandates.html</u>. The DCDT was a merger of the Departments of Communications and Telecommunications and Postal Services into one single Department.

¹⁰ DCDT, 2020, 'Strategic Plan 2020-2025': <u>https://www.dcdt.gov.za/documents/strategic-plans/file/54-strategic-plan-2020-2025.html</u>. ¹¹ Ibid at page 11.

 ¹² Gawaya, R, and van Osch, T,. 2021, 'South Africa: Gender Country Profile' Study commissioned by the EU Delegation to South Africa and implemented by International Consulting Expertise (ICE), and Bureau for Institutional Reform and Democracy (BiRD GmbH).
 ¹³ The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996:

https://www.parliament.gov.za/storage/app/media/Acts/constitution/SAConstitution.pdf.

¹⁴ White Paper above n 5 at page 25.

¹⁵ Gawaya and van Osch above n 17 at pages 64-70.

ICT sector, due to gender stereotypes about what women should study. The shortage of skilled people to boost the digital transformation is one of the legacies of the deeply ingrained patriarchal apartheid system on one hand, and the lack of coordination between the education system and the labour market on the other. Addressing these inequalities, building ICT capacities, and ensuring the equal participation of women and men in the digital economy is key to the desired transformation process in South Africa.

With regard to strategy, the fourth pillar in the harnessing of the digital economy, the South African government has undertaken a series of measures to enhance digital transformation at a local level, such as support for the development of Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs), investment in skills development, improvement of ICT infrastructure in rural and peri-urban communities, including multi-purpose community information centres, public internet terminals, and other approaches to public computing. Nevertheless, the high prices per MB remain the main obstacle to access to the internet for citizens with low-income. The lack of competition in the telecommunications sector keeps prices artificially high and combined with the metered tariff structure makes it exceedingly costly for SMMEs and consumers to fully utilise the existing information and communications infrastructure. While there are ongoing efforts to address competition in the ICT sector, regulating this oligopolized sector to bring down the prices for access to the internet effective short-term strategy to expand digital access.

In 2019 President Cyril Ramaphosa commenced the **Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution** which is developing concrete plans for a digital transformation to change the entire society. The Commission's task was to identify relevant policies, strategies and action plans that will position South Africa as a competitive global player. The 30-member Commission, chaired by the President and coordinated by the Minister of DCDT, comprises a diversity of eminent persons, both women and men from different sectors of society.¹⁶

In 2020, the **Report of the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution** was published.¹⁷ The Commission found that "[t]he possibilities and prioritisation of pathways presented by the 4IR are given material direction and purpose within the South African National Development Plan (NDP) towards 2030". The Commission found "in evaluating the socio-economic impacts and opportunities of the 4IR, there is an opportunity to address the core concerns of the NDP and in so doing, provide a policy-embedded path towards our constitutional objectives in the context of a significantly improved and altered future". The Commission further remarked that "[t]he 4IR is not in the future, it is the present. It is therefore imperative that the country reorganises itself to ensure that citizens are positioned to benefit from the opportunities it presents. To achieve this, there must be clear accountability for implementing the recommendations within a timeframe that can be monitored by all stakeholders in society." The report makes some references to gender-based factors and considerations, however, gender considerations were lacking in the recommendations. The report made several recommendations including, the need to invest in human capital related to 4IR, build infrastructure, and own some significant 4IR infrastructure, such as hyperscale data centres, fibre-optic networks and undersea cables, create

¹⁶ Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services, 2019 'Terms of Reference of the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution: <u>https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201904/42388gen209.pdf</u>.

¹⁷ DCDT, 2020, 'Report of the Presidential Commission on the 4th Industrial Revolution': <u>https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/202010/43834gen591.pdf</u>.

platforms for citizen participation, incentivise future industries and applications of 4IR technologies, and update the regulatory framework.

The development of the digital economy is identified as one of the key enablers of South Africa's 2020 **Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan**,¹⁸, which is a bold plan for a new inclusive and

sustainable economy in which the "government will ensure effective gender mainstreaming in all aspects of the Plan, through the participation and mobilization of women at all levels."¹⁹

1.2. South Africa's response to gender equality

The promotion of gender equality is enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa and is at the heart of most policies and strategies in different sectors. South Africa is committed to the SDGs which have several goals and targets related to gender and the digitalisation of the economy (see Box 1). Additionally, at the regional and international level, South Africa is committed to the empowerment of all women and girls and the promotion of gender equality to build a non-sexist and non-racist society for all men, women and non-binary persons in all their diversity. These commitments include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,²⁰ the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,²¹ the United Nations Durban Declaration and Programme of Action,²² the African Union Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment,²³ and the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.²⁴

Box 1: Relevant SDGs for gender and ICT

• Goal 4: Inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all

<u>Target 4.b.</u>: Substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology

• Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

<u>Target 5.b</u>.: Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.

- Goal 8: Sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all <u>Target 8.5</u>: By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.
 Goal 9: Resilient infrastructure, inclusive and
- Goal 9: Resilient infrastructure, inclusive and sustainable industrialization and innovation
 Target 9.c: Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020.
- Goal 17: Strengthen global partnership for sustainable development

<u>Target 17.8</u>: Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology.

United Nations: https://sdgs.un.org/goals

²⁴ SADC, 2008 'SADC Protocol on Gender and Development:

¹⁸ Government of South Africa, 2020, The South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery

Plan:https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/202010/south-african-economic-reconstruction-and-recovery-plan.pdf

¹⁹ Ibid at page 15.

²⁰ The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979: <u>https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/cedaw.pdf</u>.

²¹ Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995: <u>https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/.</u>

²² Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, 2002:

https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/Durban text en.pdf.

²³ AU, 2021, 'AU Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment': <u>https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/36195-doc-au_strategy_for_gender_equality_womens_empowerment_2018-2028_report.pdf</u>.

https://www.sadc.int/files/8713/5292/8364/Protocol on Gender and Development 2008.pdf.

Box 2: South Africa's vision and mission on Gender Equality

The vision on which this Gender Policy Framework is based is that of a society in which women and men are able to realise their full potential and to participate as equal partners in creating a just and prosperous society for all. The vision is that of gender equality.

In support of this vision, the mission is to create an effective enabling framework to guide the process of developing laws, policies, procedures and practices which will serve to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all spheres and structures of government, as well as in the workplace, the community and the family.

Government of South Africa, 2000, South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Economic Empowerment and Gender Equality, page 20. South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Economic Empowerment and **Gender Equality**,²⁵ also known as the Gender Policy Framework, outlines the country's vision for gender equality and the approach of the government to realise this goal through gender policies. mainstreaming across laws, procedures and practices (see Box 2). Like other generic policy documents, it details the overarching principles and set several targets, which need to be integrated by all departments of the national government into their own sectoral policies, practices and programmes, including those related to the digital transformation process. With regard to science and technology, the Gender Policy Framework states that women should be actively involved in the definition, design, development,

implementation and gender-impact evaluation of policies related to the economic and social changes referred to as transforming patterns of production of a knowledge-based society.²⁶

The digitalisation of the economy transforms the patterns of production, the structure of the labour market, the private life of persons and families, the consumption behaviour, and the processes of decision making and governance. A gender analysis is required to get a picture of the ongoing changes and outline how South Arica's vision and mission on Gender Equality can be put into practice.

In relation to ICT, South Africa's Gender Policy Framework states:

"Distributive justice requires that women should participate in the ICT driven information society on an equitable basis. Technological changes themselves should be used to promote economic and social empowerment of women, thereby resulting in the enlargement of the market for equipment and service delivery".²⁷

South Africa's gender policy aims to promote gender equality in the digital economy:

"In the era of knowledge-intensive modes of production, facilitated by ICT development, it will be strategic to mobilise the untapped cognitive skills of women for complex managerial and technological tasks. It is in the light of the importance of cognitive skills for sustainable development that a gender focus on recruitment, training, operational policies and practices of the ICT sector will be necessary. The goal of the ICT sector and gender equity advocates is the full participation of women as equal partners in the sustainable development of society."²⁸

²⁵ Office of the Status of Women, 2002, 'South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality' https://www.dffe.gov.za/sites/default/files/docs/national_policy_framework.pdf.

²⁶ Ibid at page iv.

²⁷ Ibid at para 2.13.3, page 18.

²⁸ Ibid at para 2.13.4, page 19.



Promoting gender equality in the process of digital transformation is a mandate in South Africa, as it is a question of social justice and human rights. Additionally, it is needed for the mobilisation of the talents and capabilities of all citizens, women and men in all their diversity, to contribute to the country's development plan as reflected in the NDP-2030. This, as will become evident through this analysis, provides a solid common ground for action between South Africa and the European Union to promote gender equality in the digital transformation.

1.4. Rationale of the gender analysis

The EUD to South Africa has commissioned this gender analysis of the digital transformation in South Africa in line with the **GAP-III (EU Gender Action Plan-III 2021-2025**) which is an ambitious agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment in EU external action.²⁹ It consists of a study that aims to identify actors, priorities, and entry points for mainstreaming gender equality in the digital transformation process in South Africa through dialogues and cooperation across the different instruments and investment frameworks.³⁰

This gender analysis explores the common ground of action for the EUD and the EU Member States in partnership with the South African government, CSOs, the private sector and relevant international actors to promote gender equality and social inclusion in the process of digital transformation. The gender analysis is intended to produce an operational document that explores the gender perspectives of South African digital transformation policies, access and usage of digital technologies, e-governance, the production and consumption of goods and services using e-commerce, computing and digital banking, ICT skills, research and online safety. In particular, the study reviews how the digital sector implements national gender equality and anti-discrimination policies; what are the gender gaps, barriers and challenges to be addressed; and how they respond currently to the different gender needs and interests of women and men (and girls and boys as appropriate) in all their diversity, as citizens, clients, consumers, users, workers, managers, producers, and suppliers.

This gender analysis of the digital transformation in South Africa is complementary to the Gender Country Profile (GCP-2021) that offers a more comprehensive picture of South Africa's overall legal and policy commitments, achievements and challenges with regard to gender equality and social inclusion.³¹ Here we mainly focus on the search for key gender-transformative targets in South Africa's strategy of the digital economy, which will contribute to the effective implementation of the country's legal and policy commitments to gender equality and that can be aligned with the EU GAP-III and shared international commitments to gender equality. It shows the hindrances and opportunities to respond to both practical

partnerships/system/files/swd 2020 284 en final.pdf)

²⁹ European commission, 2020, 'GAP III Joint Communication': <u>https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/join-2020-17-final_en.pdf</u>); 'Staff Working Document of GAP III': <u>https://ec.europa.eu/international-</u>

³⁰ Terms of Reference, for drafting of the Gender Action Plan, Country Level Implementation Plan and of a Gender Analysis of the Green and Digital Sectors in South Africa. Source document of the Request for Services No: SIEA 2018 – 3672 Lot 3 – Human Rights, Democracy and Peace, May 2021.

³¹ Gawaya, R. and Van Osch, T., (2021), South Africa: Gender Country Profile. European Union, FWC on Human rights, democracy and peace, Ref. Nr.: 2018-3672, International Consulting Expertise (ICE) and Bureau for Institutional Reform and Democracy (BiRD GmbH).

and strategic gender needs and interests of women and men in all their diversity, and how human rights -based interventions can be achieved in a digital transformation process that leaves no one behind.

Ultimately, this gender analysis provides insights into how the EUD and other Development Partners can strengthen gender mainstreaming in the digital transformation, and to support efforts to leverage digitalisation to contribute toward gender equality and women's and girls' rights and empowerment in South Africa. It is meant to inform decision-making on future action and integrate these into all relevant dialogues, policies, strategies, programmes and operations of the EU in partnership with South Africa. It also provides, where possible, gender-sensitive and sex-disaggregated indicators and statistics which allow the programme managers to monitor and evaluate the actions supported by the EUD. The findings of a gender analysis give robust reasons to focus on actions that contribute to gender equality, as mandated in the EU Gender Action Plan-III 2021-2025 (GAP-III). The multi-annual indicative framework (2021-2027) for the cooperation of the EU Delegation in the country over the coming years, is focusing, among others, on the digital transformation.

1.5. Methodology

This gender analysis of the digital transformation is based on desktop research, consultations, and interviews with resource persons. Annex 2 gives an overview of organisations and persons consulted. Several secondary data sources were used such as journal articles, research reports, news articles, blogs, policies, laws and strategies. The report will not go into technical aspects of the digital transformation, but mainly into the gender dimensions of this transformation, particularly with regard to:

- The public digital literacy.
- The access to affordable and secure broadband, technology and digital tools.
- Aspects of equal participation in the digital economy.
- The importance of online safety online.

1.6. The structure of the report

The report is divided into 7 interrelated sections:

Section 1 introduces the scope and the rationale of the gender analysis of the digital transformation. Section 2 explores how digital transformation can contribute to the economic empowerment of women and girls.

Section 3 outlines the impact of e-governance processes in South Africa on access to public services, gender equality and social inclusion.

Section 4 analyses the gender disparities in ICT capacity building and skills.

Section 5 reviews the access to affordable and secure broadband, technology and digital tools.

Section 6 investigates the gender aspects of online safety.

Section 7 outlines conclusions and recommendations for the EU Delegation to South Africa, on how to enhance the process of mainstreaming gender equality in the digital transformation.

SECTION 2: PROMOTING ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

It is globally recognised that "bridging the 'gender digital divide' is about more than ensuring that women and girls have basic access to the Internet and cell phones; it means providing training, so they have the skills to use the information and communications technologies (ICTs) to their benefit and taking active measures to boost the numbers of women in ICT leadership positions, including in academia and entrepreneurship."³²

Continentally, the African Union's (AU) Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa (2020-2030) tackles various forms of the digital divide and promotes online cultural diversity and the effective participation of every African citizen in the digital economy, acknowledging the need to address the persistent gender gap in mobile access and usage.³³ The AU and European Union (EU) gender strategies for digital transformation are aligned. The EU policy document 'Digital4Development' (2017) highlights the enabling power of digital tools and platforms for women's empowerment: "Addressing the gender digital divide can have a fundamental impact in promoting gender equality on multiple levels. Improving digital skills and literacy presents a unique opportunity for increasing the inclusion in the labour market of women and girls, contributing to their financial empowerment and independence, ensuring a better work-life balance and enabling them to act as drivers of development for local communities and economies."³⁴

The empowerment of women, girls, and gender and sexual minorities is one of the fundamental conditions for bridging the digital divide, and in turn, enabling an inclusive digitally transformed society in which people of all gender identities can participate and enjoy the advantages of the online world. At the same time, digitalisation is a key enabler for women's economic empowerment. Access to the internet and digital tools enable participation which in turn can lead to employment and business opportunities.³⁵ Moreover, ensuring meaningful participation of women at the decision and policy-making level is crucial for ensuring an inclusive and accessible digital economy. While there have been some developments in relation to South Africa's digital economy, further efforts are needed to ensure that the economic empowerment potential of online spaces is accessible to all people in South Africa. This section discusses South Africa's efforts to promote the economic empowerment of women in the digital economy.

2.1. Policy context for promoting economic and social rights and empowering girls and women

As noted above, gender equality is anchored in South Africa's Constitution and is included in the policies and strategies in different sectors. While there have been some important policy developments and

³² United Nations, 2019, 'In tech-driven 21st century, achieving global development goals requires closing digital gender divide': <u>https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/03/1034831</u>.

³³ African Union, 2018, 'The Digital Transformation Strategy For Africa (2020-2030)': <u>https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38507-doc-dts-english.pdf.</u>

³⁴ European Commission above n 1.

³⁵ Shava, E., 2021 'Gender Equality in Information Communication Technology (ICT) for Attaining Sustainable Development Goal Number 5 in South Africa' *Gender and Behaviour* 19.

initiatives references to gender in the digital transformation of the economy are sometimes reflected as an add-on or are simply non-existent.

From a national policy perspective, the Commission for Gender Equality recently observed that "the country's National Gender Machinery has for many years been characterised by tremendous institutional weaknesses" and a lack of appropriate skills and poor training for state personnel.³⁶ South Africa's seemingly outdated **National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality** makes some reference to ICTs and the need for technological changes to be used to promote the economic and social empowerment of women, but there is limited guidance on practical implementation.³⁷

The 2015-2020 Strategic Plan of the Department of Women (which was renamed the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities – DWYPD - in June 2019). provides no guidance on the economic empowerment of women through enabling access to ICTs.³⁸ The most recent addition to the national policy framework is the **2021 Women's Charter for Accelerated Development** which was launched by the South African Parliament on 20 August 2021, and seeks to set a 25-year vision and agenda to advance women's equality, growth and development.³⁹ The Charter makes some reference to the role ICTs, for example, the Charter requires the state to take action to increase women's participation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), which offer better-paid employment opportunities. The Charter further suggests the state prioritises women in the informal sector, including women who are functioning in the digital/ technological space.⁴⁰

In terms of ICT policies, the **2016 National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper**, the primary policy paper outlining South Africa's strategies to facilitate access and enable participation in a digital society, makes limited reference to gender equality. While it references equality throughout, its reference to gender considerations is wanting. For example, under access, the policy notes that access means "the ability of all people to use and access services regardless of education, disability, age, gender etc."⁴¹

The **ICT and Digital Economy Masterplan for South Africa** (draft for discussion: 21 July 2020) in the final phases of the development of the implementation plan is set to direct South Africa to become digitally empowered in order to enable people in South Africa to "create and participate in tech-enabled opportunities that drive inclusiveness, employment and economic transformation across our cities, towns and provinces."⁴² While this ambitious plan provides useful guidance on developing South Africa's digital economy, it appears to be silent on gender equality and opportunities for women.

³⁶ Commission for Gender Equality, 2020, 'Report on South Africa's Compliance with CEDAW Committee 2011 Concluding Observations & Recommendations': <u>https://cge.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/the-bare-minimum-cedaw-report-2020.pdf</u>.

³⁷ The Office on the Status of Women, 'Technological changes themselves should be used to promote economic and social empowerment of women' <u>https://www.empowerwomen.org/en/resources/documents/2015/10/south-africas-national-policy-framework-for-womens-empowerment-and-gender-equality?lang=en.</u>

 ³⁸ Department of Women, 'Strategic Plan 2015-2020': <u>http://www.women.gov.za/images/Department-of-Women---Strategic-Plan.pdf</u>.
 ³⁹ Parliament of South Africa, 2021, 'The Women's Charter for Accelerated Development':

https://www.parliament.gov.za/storage/app/media/1 Stock/Events Institutional/2021/19-08-

²⁰²¹ Launch of the Womens Charter/docs/Womens charter for accelerated development.pdf.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Department Telecommunications and Postal Services, 2016, 'National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper' at page 29: <u>https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201610/40325gon1212.pdf.</u>

⁴² Genesis Analytics and Knowledge Executive, 2020, 'ICT and Digital Economy Masterplan: Draft for discussion': <u>https://www.ellipsis.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/ICT-and-Digital-Economy-Masterplan-for-South-Africa_Draft-for-discussion_-</u>

The weak policy context is reflected in certain realities. Research suggests that there is a "low percentage of women accessing digital financial services, with 11.6% compared to men's 16.8%. In addition, women only occupy 5% of ICT industrial senior manager positions in South Africa".⁴³ Notwithstanding these concerning statistics, it appears that women in South Africa are engaging in e-commerce and the digital economy. Data from the Heavy Chef Entrepreneur Education Survey showed that 63% of e-commerce founders surveyed were women.⁴⁴ Moreover, during the pandemic, evidence suggests that women were actively seeking to upskill and join the digital economy. According to local media reports, of the 1000 participants of the **DigitalSkills** platform (an online platform offering free short courses), 60% were women.⁴⁵

In 2019, the policy direction was enhanced by licensing high demand spectrum and a Wireless Open Access Network (WOAN).⁴⁶ And in 2020, applicants for WOAN were required to demonstrate empowerment aspects on the diversity of ownership and meaningful participation of small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) and the participation of at least 20% of Black women-owned enterprises.

The Department of Small Business Development (DSDB) is acknowledging the value of digital tools in boosting SMME growth and appears to be considering the role of ICTs and digital tools in some of its programmes. For example, **SheTradesZA Hub** provides opportunities for women entrepreneurs in South Africa. Through the SheTradesZA platform, selected women-owned businesses and corporations will benefit from a wide range of opportunities to expand their businesses and broadly advance women's economic empowerment. Together with the Department for Small Business Development and the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), the ITC SheTrades⁴⁷ has set up a Hub in South Africa, in order to help South African women entrepreneurs, increase their international competitiveness and connect to national, regional and global markets through the SheTradesZA Hub. The primary objective of the Hub is to connect at least 50 000 women-owned businesses to markets by 2023. This is part of South Africa's contribution to ITC's goal of connecting three million women-owned businesses to markets.⁴⁸

2.2. Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on economic opportunities in the digital sector

The pandemic undoubtedly impacted economic empowerment opportunities. A working paper from March 2021 (a year after South Africa went into hard lockdown) recorded that "employment losses were

economy/#:~:text=There%20is%20still%20a%20low,high%20rate%20of%20under%2Drepresentation. ⁴⁴ Heavy Chef Reports, 2021 'E-commerce entrepreneur education', page 13:

<u>August -2020.pdf;</u> Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams: Communications and Digital Technologies Dept Budget Vote 2021/22, 2021: <u>https://www.gov.za/speeches/minister-stella-ndabeni-abrahams-communications-and-digital-technologies-dept-budget-vote</u>. ⁴³ Ojo, T & Segone, K., 2022, 'Women are being squeezed out of the digital economy' *Daily Maverick*:

⁴³ Ojo, 1 & Segone, K., 2022, Women are being squeezed out of the digital economy *Daily Maverick*: <u>https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2022-03-07-women-are-being-squeezed-out-of-the-digital-</u>

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58bb1eac725e258dbeb80b2c/t/617ab8c5f1403a0e8c4341b9/1635432648100/2021-HC+Reports-E-Commerce+Entrepreneur+Education.pdf.

⁴⁵ Naidu, E,. 2022, 'Youth and Women at the heart of digital economy – but still a long way to go' *IOL*:

https://www.iol.co.za/sundayindependent/analysis/youth-and-women-at-the-heart-of-digital-economy-but-still-a-long-way-to-go-601cd4a7-8f31-4d3d-a078-042be7dd5ba2.

⁴⁶ NCOP Public Enterprises and Communication, 2021, 'Transforming ICT landscape in South Africa: Department briefing; with Deputy Minister' : <u>https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/31943/</u>.

⁴⁷ Platform initiated by the International Trade Centre (ITC)

⁴⁸ Department of Small Business Development, 'SheTradesZA': <u>http://www.dsbd.gov.za/programme/shetradesza</u>.

concentrated among those who were already disadvantaged prior to the pandemic—women, less-skilled workers, informal workers, low-income earners, and those with a history of unemployment".⁴⁹

While it is irrefutable that the pandemic has led to devastating socio-economic consequences "the disruption has positively accelerated the adoption of technology and countless new digital innovations" some of which were enabled by the South African government's efforts to create reduced data prices and increased internet access.⁵⁰ As will be discussed in more detail in section 5, South Africa adopted several pre-emptive measures to ensure access to the digital environment during the early stages of the pandemic. The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) allocated a temporary spectrum to major mobile networks. Mobile networks were also required to zero-rate websites providing educational material or COVID-19 related health information – which signalled a commitment to access and connectivity on the part of South African leaders. Additionally, price increases were prohibited for all licensed entities.⁵¹ Some local entrepreneurs took the opportunity, such as local food delivery services, and women driven e-hailing services offering safe transport for women and members of the LGBTQI+ community.⁵²

There were indeed various challenges occasioned by the pandemic, many of which disproportionally affected women, and where there was a lack of internet access, repressive, harmful and unequal contexts for women and people of diverse genders and sexualities were exasperated.⁵³ However, in instances where access was attainable, opportunities emerged, highlighting the empowering potential of access and connectivity. Moreover, and as explained by Research ICT Africa, "the impact of the virus highlights the digital opportunities for significant localised innovation in fintech, health, education and the retail sector, which could have longer-term systemic effects in enabling local economic multipliers."⁵⁴

2.3. Decentralised digital economic processes and home-based economic opportunities

The digitalisation of working processes, online communication, and the use of mobile devices (including smartphones, laptops, and tablets) have increasingly created decentralised working arrangements, which allow people a high degree of flexibility in terms of time and location of work. Parents with children can better combine their job with family responsibilities, they lose less time in traffic, and they are more autonomous about the planning of their time, which can facilitate a better work-life balance. The process of digital working from home accelerated during COVID-19 lockdowns, particularly home-based online work, including administration, online meetings, helpdesks, education, training, advisory services, and

⁵¹ Power, T., 2020, The gender digital divide and COVID-19: Towards feminist internet regulations in Southern Africa <u>https://africaninternetrights.org/sites/default/files/Tina_Power.pdf</u>.

https://www.smallbusinessinstitute.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Digitalisation-Mar-2021-FINAL.pdf.

⁵³ Association for Progressive Communications (APC), 2020, 'Closer than ever: Keeping our movements connected and inclusive – APC's response to the covid-19 pandemic': <u>https://www.apc.org/sites/default/files/closerthanever_pp.pdf</u>.

⁴⁹ Schotte, S & Zizzamia, R., 2019, 'The livelihood impacts of COVID-19 in urban South Africa A view from below', *Southern Africa Towards Inclusive Economic Development* at page 4: <u>https://www.smallbusinessinstitute.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SA-TIED-WP168.pdf</u>.

⁵⁰ Small Business Institute, 2020 'Reflections on the impact of COVID-19 on small businesses (SMEs) in South Africa: <u>https://www.smallbusinessinstitute.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Reflections-on-the-Impact-of-Covid-19-on-SMEs-in-South-Africa.pdf</u>.

⁵² Small Business Institute, 2021, 'Digitalisation – the best hope for South Africa and its small firms' at page 17:

⁵⁴ Ahmed, S., 2020, 'How COVID-19 exposes the defects in South Africa's digital economy': <u>https://researchictafrica.net/2020/03/26/how-covid-19-exposes-the-defects-in-south-africas-digital-economy/.</u>

shopping and entertainment. In some cases, companies or governmental offices provided the required devices to their employees to allow them to continue their work from home during lockdowns.

Decentralisation of digital economic processes also requires new organisational forms, both in the company and at home. The concept of labour often conjures images of the productive activity carried outside the home, but labour is crucial to the functioning of home life. Social reproduction, according to sociologist Evelyn Nanako Glenn, encompasses "the array of activities and relationships involved in maintaining people both on a daily basis and intergenerationally"⁵⁵. Social reproduction is thus all the work done to sustain the productive labour force – including cleaning, cooking, and child-rearing. Deeply entrenched patriarchal norms mean that the work of social reproduction is viewed as the innate or natural responsibility of women. The remote work necessitated by the pandemic resulted in a blurring between the social reproduction of the home and the productive labour typically conducted outside the home. Lockdown restrictions on movement and gathering also meant that children and adolescents were unable to attend schooling, presenting difficulties for women in balancing the productive work they were expected to complete by their employers and the work of social reproduction that they were expected to complete by their dependents.

The decentralised digital economic processes have created new opportunities for self-employed people and SMMEs, such as starting up an online shop, or offering online coaching, training, and advise. However, only those could benefit who could afford the high costs of devices and access to the internet. Research conducted by Genesis Analytics on how social media can unlock Africa's potential and powering small businesses, found that digital inclusion must be achieved for these benefits to be realised, which includes making digital devices more affordable and ensuring fast and reliable network connectivity.⁵⁶ For self-employed people and SMMEs, digitalisation creates many new opportunities, such as offering them new avenues for establishing a brand presence, networking and learning, direct and innovative modes of sales and communications, recruitment, and paid advertising enriched by information gathered by platforms.

The decentralised digital economic processes can also open new economic perspectives for the women-led households that earn income from sales of farm products and services, both in rural areas and peri-urban agriculture. Digital literacy, access to the internet, economic empowerment and the successful integration of women smallholders in the new value chains of organic food supply, is an opportunity to link the digital transformation to the green transition.⁵⁷

Decentralised digital economic processes can thus facilitate the creation of new economic opportunities for women in South Africa.

⁵⁵ Boris, E & Parreñas, R,. 2010 'Introduction' in *Intimate Labors: Cultures Technology and Politics of Care*.

⁵⁶ Genesis Analytics, 2021, 'Unlocking Africa's potential: How social media is powering small business in Africa':

https://genesis.imgix.net/uploads/files/GENESIS_Unlocking-Africas-Potential-2021_Report-FINAL.pdf.

⁵⁷ Van Osch, T., Gawaya, R., Mackie, G., Möllmann, C., Smout, J., 2022, 'Gender Analysis of the Green Transition in South Africa', Commissioned by the EU Delegation to South Africa to the consortium partners ICE (International Consulting Expertise) and BiRD GmbH (Bureau for Institutional Reform and Democracy).

2.4. Digital solutions to reduce unpaid workloads and reconciliation jobs with family life

By far the largest sector of any national economy is the unpaid care sector. This work, done in service of social reproduction, consists of taking care of children and sick family members, facilitating life for elderly people or family members with a disability, managing the home (including tasks such as shopping, cleaning, cooking, washing clothes, and growing food for home consumption) and providing long-term unpaid support to the community of friends, neighbours, colleagues and other acquaintances who have a disability or suffer from an illness. Women in South Africa assume about 70% of the total time dedicated to unpaid work.⁵⁸ During the lockdown, these tasks increased due to school closures, and reduced capacity of hospitals to attend non-urgent illnesses. Unpaid care work by women in South Africa was estimated to be over three times higher than for men during the COVID-19 response: 180 additional working hours for women and 66 for men.⁵⁹ For the year 2020, one of the gender effects of the lockdown was that women had more than 22 extra working days, and men had about 8 extra working days due to additional unpaid care work. Survey data from NIDS-CRAM covering the first lockdown in South Africa show destabilisation of the distribution of work in the paid and unpaid economy. The crisis affected women's paid work more than men's, both in net job losses and in a decline in the number of paid working hours. Additionally, women's unpaid workload increased, particularly unpaid childcare responsibilities due to school closures.60

On the other hand, remote working allowed some women to reduce the stress of reconciling paid and unpaid work, as this set-up offers more autonomy to parents to combine their job with unpaid care and domestic work. The digital economy also creates opportunities to share unpaid care work, such as intergenerational family group chats in which members can connect and check on each other. In this way, asking for and receiving care is made easier and it does not require being physically present with loved ones. Additionally, online shopping allowed parents to work from home to order items safely and conveniently for their households, limiting the stress and costs associated with commuting household goods. Although online shopping is still reserved to a minority that has full access to internet, and to a limited number of online shopping options, evidence shows that 36% of consumers now shop online weekly, which is an increase from 28% before the pandemic. It signals the growing importance of digital solutions to changing the nature of housework.⁶¹

Developments in robotics that are already unfolding as part of the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) are also set to reduce unpaid work in the home – such as 'smart refrigerators' that order groceries automatically when stock runs out and robot vacuum cleaners that eliminate the need for human labour. Robotics technology is improving alongside artificial intelligence (AI) and expanding to all sectors, including

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/publication/wcms_732791.pdf.

https://www.cgdev.org/publication/global-childcare-workload-school-and-preschool-closures-during-covid-19-pandemic.

⁶⁰ Casale, D. & Posel, D., 2020, *Gender and the early effects of the Covid-19 crisis in the paid and unpaid economies in South Africa.* National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) – Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey (CRAM): <u>https://cramsurvey.org/wp-</u>

content/uploads/2020/07/Casale-Gender-the-early-effects-of-the-COVID-19-crisis-in-the-paid-unpaid-economies-in-South-Africa.pdf. ⁶¹ Morgan, B, 2020 '50 Statistic showing the lasting impact of Covid-19 on consumers' Forbes: https://www.forbea.com/citics/blakemargan/2020/10/10/10/50 attributes abouting the lasting impact of covid-19 on consumers' Forbes:

⁵⁸ Charmes, J,. 2019, 'The Unpaid Care Work and the Labour Market. An analysis of time use data based on the latest World Compilation of Time-use Surveys' International Labour Office – Geneva: ILO:

⁵⁹ Kenny, C & Yang, G, 2021, 'The Global Childcare Workload from School and Preschool Closures During the COVID-19 Pandemic' Centre for Global Development:

https://www.forbes.com/sites/blakemorgan/2020/10/19/50-statistics-showing-the-lasting-impact-of-covid-19-onconsumers/?sh=4cf783d4261f.

hospitals and care houses, but there is still a long way to go until such technologies become mainstream features in homes. Even so, it is likely that these developments will remain the domain of a privileged few that are able to afford these hi-tech devices. In addition, domestic and care-based work provides considerable employment opportunities for women in South Africa. To the extent that these digital solutions become a reality, skills development and access to other employment opportunities need to be prioritised alongside the innovative developments to ensure that no one is left behind. These developments should therefore be considered in the context of South Africa's socio-economic divide.

2.5. Addressing gender gaps in the labour market and access to finance

In terms of financial inclusion, the development and promotion of ICTs to enhance the socio-economic empowerment of women is a major principle within South Africa's Women's Financial Inclusion Policy Framework⁶². However, women in South Africa still face considerable challenges that hinder them from accessing employment and finance. According to Stats SA's Quarterly Labour Force Survey of the 2nd quarter of 2021, the rate of unemployment among women was 36.8% in the 2nd quarter of 2021 compared to 32.4% amongst men according to the official definition of unemployment. The unemployment rate among Black African women was 41.0% during this period compared to 8.2% among white women, 22.4% among Indian/Asian women and 29.9% among Coloured women. Whereas the unemployment rate among men is lower than among women, the labour force participation rate of men is higher than that of women. These statistics highlight that woman face barriers in entering employment and also experience gendered discrimination once they are in employment – marginalisation that is compounded by race- and class-based realities.

The obstacles women face in the analogue world are only set to intensify in the increasingly digitalized world if the accumulated disadvantages women face to their full participation in the digital economy are not addressed. In South Africa, most women are working in fields that are likely to be automated in the 4IR. In Sub-Saharan Africa, many women are working in the fields of administration and accounting which are likely to be automated in the 4IR. They risk exclusion from the digital economy as they are underrepresented in internet technology, computing, and engineering.⁶³ "Women in accounting are overrepresented in positions most likely to be displaced by AI, and underrepresented in positions likely to be created or maintained in the Smart Machine Age."⁶⁴ Jillian Alderman encourages educators and leaders in the area of accounting to address these risks and to support women to pursue advancements in technological literacy, and enhancement of emotional intelligence skills that are less likely to be replaced by machines, such as collaboration, teamwork, and ethical decision-making.⁶⁵

⁶² Department for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, 2019, 'Women's Financial Inclusion Framework':

⁶³ Kigotho, W., 2021, 'Sub-Saharan women risk exclusion from digital economy <u>https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20210216061039300</u>.

⁶⁴ Alderman, J., 2021, 'Women in the smart machine age: Addressing emerging risks of an increased gender gap in the accounting profession', *Journal of Accounting Education* 55: <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaccedu.2021.100715</u>.

65 Ibid.

http://www.women.gov.za/images/Womens-Financial-Inclusion-Framework-WFIF.pdf.

Approximately 2 million South African women may have to transition between occupations or skill levels by 2030 to find work in an automation-reliant future⁶⁶ – this accounts for 20% of people currently employed in the country.⁶⁷ Women are also less likely to be part of areas where the adoption of new technology will lead to job creation. Although men and women alike will be affected, because men make up a larger share of the job market, the employment gender gap is set to worsen. Thus, scores of jobs of female workers will be automated and they will stand to lose not only their livelihoods but even future possibilities of work.

Women risk exclusion from the economy, both in its present and future forms, because they have not been trained for and remain underrepresented in key STEM fields⁶⁸. Globally, women make up 5% of CEOs in ICT companies,⁶⁹ speaking to a dramatic underrepresentation of women at virtually every level of the industry.

In terms of access and use, research shows that structural inequalities in income, education and employment opportunities increase barriers to digital technologies for women more than men.⁷⁰ Without effective and inclusive training, nor the implementation of coordinated integration processes, women remain excluded from the ICT sector.

Women who have managed to enter the sector face other discriminatory challenges. Although 51% of those working in the ICT sector are women, they occupy only 20% of the formal jobs⁷¹. In large scale tech companies, women's role in leadership and technical aspects is limited. A 2020 survey of 572,000 technologists in 76 companies found that 25.12% of technical roles were occupied by women.⁷² Factors such as rejection, work allocation, and a negative perception of female leadership hinder the career progression of female IT security professionals. Furthermore, within this male-dominated organisational culture, women – and women of colour in particular – are not offered opportunities for growth and development, are ineffectively mentored, and face a lack of flexibility to combine work with family responsibilities.

Other studies classify career barriers into three categories: individual, organisational, and societal barriers.⁷³ Individual barriers relate to a lack of confidence or skills.⁷⁴ While organisational barriers are those that emanate from the culture, working environment and policies of an organisation. The organisational attributes can be prohibitive to women's participation in the digital sector. While societal

⁷⁰ Kuroda, R et al, 2019 'Policy Brief. The digital Gender Gap': <u>https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Digital-Equity-Policy-Brief-W20-Japan.pdf</u>.

⁶⁶McKinskey Global Institute, 2019, 'The future of women at work: Transitions in the age of automation':

https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/gender%20equality/the%20future%20of%20women%20at%20work%2 Otransitions%20in%20the%20age%20of%20automation/mgi-the-future-of-women-at-work-report-july-2019.pdf.

⁶⁷Statistics SA, 2021 'Key findings: P0277 - Quarterly Employment Statistics (QES), December 2021':

https://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1856&PPN=P0277&SCH=72995.

⁶⁸ Kigotho above n 34.

⁶⁹ South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), 2021, 'No women left behind: The gender digital divide technology': <u>https://saiia.org.za/research/no-woman-left-behind-the-gender-digital-divide/</u>.

⁷¹ Makola,Z. & Kgosinyane, E., 2020, 'How Women End Up in the Information Technology Sector: The Perspectives of South African Women', *Academy of Strategic Management Studies*, 19:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/345632208 How Women End Up in the Information Technology Sector The Perspectives _of_South_African_Women.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

barriers include gender stereotypes, domestic conflict, and the gender division of labour that shape the prioritisation of men within the workplace.

To bring these issues back to South Africa, researcher Matebe Chisiza found that the employment gap in the ICT profession is highly gendered, noting that only 2.9% out of 22% of female graduates in the field are employed in it.⁷⁵ As a result, the gender divide will continue to widen in the 4IR unless appropriate measures are taken to adopt sustainable digital policies relating to gender is observed that only 7% of executive directors and 10% of CEOs are women. A staggering 31% of the companies have no women representatives at all at senior levels.⁷⁶ By race, Black women are underrepresented in the technology sector, which excludes them from managerial positions.⁷⁷ Importantly, this is against the background, that in general, women of colour are prejudiced in employment.⁷⁸

2.6. A digital world with decent jobs, equal pay, and women's economic and financial independence

While digital tools can be empowering and support new sources of inclusive economic growth, an important part of achieving this is ensuring women's meaningful representation in digital spaces.

particularly decision-making spaces. Ensuring that marginalised and previously excluded voices form part of conversations is necessary in order to dismantle structural inequalities and allow for accessible, safe, and inclusive online spaces and opportunities occasioned by the digital world.79

Empowering women in the digital era call for the design and implementation of interrelated and complementary policies that need to attend to:

- strengthening women's digital skills participation in STEM fields;
- fostering women's entry and upskilling for the labour market in its present and future forms (with a focus on developing capacity around digital tools);
- supporting evidence-based gender-related policy; and
- enabling meaningful participation in decision making and policy-making processes.

Box 2: A feminist digital economy

A feminist digital economy can break of discrimination cycles and oppression and can disrupt harmful power relations. Research Fellow and Deputy Leader of the Digital and Faith. Technology cluster, Beck explains that: "a feminist digital economics perspective gives us space to discuss the negative 'externalities' or harmful side effects – of the Internet and the whole value chain of digital production and consumption; from manufacture mining, to use, consumption of electricity and so on."

Faith, B,. 2018, 'Why we need a 'feminist digital economics': https://www.genderit.org/feministtalk/why-we-need-%E2%80%98feminist-digitaleconomics%E2%80%99

⁷⁵ SAIIA above n 90.

⁷⁶Makola,Z. & Kgosinyane, E abov n 92.

⁷⁷ Matotoka, M,D & Odeku, KO, 2021, 'Mainstreaming Black Women into Managerial Positions in the South African Corporate Sector in the Era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)', Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal (PELJ), Vol.24, No.1. http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_isoref&pid=S1727-37812021000100037&Ing=en&tIng=en.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Shilongo, K., 2021, 'A feminist perspective on the data economy': https://researchictafrica.net/2021/05/06/a-feminist-perspective-on-thedata-economy/.

Strong multisectoral collaboration can harness infrastructure to facilitate equal representation in all spheres, using education, opening up access and implementing policies to motivate girls and women to embrace digital literacy.

2.7. Conclusions and recommendations

"Women and youth are constantly referred to as South Africa's saving grace in terms of potential for economic growth and broadening economic participation. However, they have historically faced higher vulnerabilities in the labour market than older and male counterparts, and now numerous studies of COVID-19's impact on employment and household income show that women and the youth have been the hardest hit."⁸⁰ However, given some of the unintended and positive consequences of the pandemic relating to the growth of the e-commerce and digital economy, there is huge potential in these spaces, which, if accessible on an equitable basis, have the potential to promote equality, empowerment and contribute towards sustainable economic growth. Accordingly, the following recommendations are made:

- Supporting government plans to enhance access to and improve the affordability of digital technologies: At the current pace, universal access will not be achieved before 2042. To foster a more inclusive digital world it is crucial to connect the many million women that still lack access to broadband and mobile networks, especially those in poor and marginalised communities. Access and digital inclusion are central to women's participation in the digital economy. Public national broadband plans provided through private-public partnerships can help enhance both access and affordability. Access-related policies should be coupled with gender-oriented targets for broadband access and usage. This will enhance conditions for women to take part in the digital economy. To ensure consistent action and progress, stakeholders should implement clear accountability structures to ensure targets are delivered and women are supported in accessing and using the Internet and broadband. It is, therefore, recommended that the EU Delegation supports the South African government to build gender-responsive capacity and plans to increase access to digital technologies.
- Enabling spaces to consult and involve gender equality advocates and experts: Feminist advocates and experts should be included at the outset in the development of strategies, policies and budgets to ensure policy development centred on women's equal rights. Gender impact analysis must assess strategies, policies and implementation plans and recommend how to ensure that gender equality considerations are sufficiently reflected and prioritised. Gender-responsive implementation and monitoring processes must ensure gender equality perspectives in the future development of all strategies, policies and budgets. Supporting government and civil society to bring appropriate stakeholders into the room is an important process that can boost access to the digital economy. The organisation of a hackathon to outline a gender transformative digital economy could be part of this process.

⁸⁰ Resha, G., 2021, 'Prioritising youth and women: How the digital economy can protect South Africa's most precarious': <u>https://www.africaportal.org/features/prioritising-youth-and-women-how-the-digital-economy-can-protect-south-africas-most-precarious/</u>.

- Ensuring safe and enabling environments in the digital economy: In order for women to thrive in the digital economy, work needs to be done to ensure that not only are opportunities available but that they are meaningful and sustainable. This requires the support of policy initiatives and possibly law reform efforts to ensure that the e-commerce spaces that women participate in are safe, enabling and free from patriarchal barriers and harmful practices.
- Supporting programmes that equip and train women with the skills needed for the digital economy: Education is one of the most powerful tools to leverage in bridging the digital gender divide. This should involve training that reaches women in their varying existing capacities from digital literary skills to e-commerce for women start-ups, women who are self-employed, and women who are part of SMMEs. Public-private partnerships between institutions of learning, government, and the private sector can help identify skills that are demanded by the labour market in the digital era and develop training for these skills.
- Link the digital economy to women's empowerment in the green transition: Invest in innovative digital and green infrastructure and services that reduce women's burden of unpaid work. Support grassroots initiatives focussed on the empowerment of women smallholders, their capacity building and integration in the digital economy, to become drivers of change in the new value chains of organic food supply. This may include promoting opportunities for e-agriculture.
- Working with government to make e-finance more inclusive: This involves creating a conducive environment to empower women, ensuring women's access to finance for innovation, for starting-up digital enterprises, and SMMEs business for online marketing of their services and skills. This can be achieved through advocating for the extension of e-banking to under-banked and unbanked women and men, especially in rural and peri-urban areas. Providing skills transfer and research support can assist the South African government in forging an appropriate path toward an inclusive digital economy.

SECTION 3: THE E-GOVERNANCE PROCESS IN SOUTH AFRICA

E-Governance, or electronic governance or digital governance "can be referred to as the use and application of information technologies in public administration to streamline and integrate workflows and processes, to effectively manage data and information, enhance public service delivery, as well as expand communication channels for engagement and empowerment of people".⁸¹

It is well established that "national policy and programmatic efforts for gender equality and women's empowerment span social, economic and political domains" and is therefore not surprising that "as governance goes digital, the needs and interests of women require to be central to the intent and design of such initiatives."⁸² E-governance⁸³ can be an "effective public policy instrument for promoting women's empowerment and gender equality, as the introduction of digital technologies in government systems can help in overcoming traditional barriers to women's inclusion in governance and public participation."⁸⁴ Accordingly, gender-responsive e-governance is necessary for digital transformation and empowerment.

South Africa is one of the leading countries in Africa in terms of e-government development with an E-Governance Development Index (EGDI) of 0.6891, which is above the global average.⁸⁵ South Africa's EGDI ranks at place 78 (among 193 countries).⁸⁶ The Online Service Index (OSI) of South Africa is 0.7471, which is the highest among African countries.⁸⁷ The OSI is a composite indicator measuring the use of ICTs by Governments for the delivery of public services at the national level.

The South African government relies on traditional modes of e-governance such as websites and email to interact with people in the country, online meeting platforms for public consultations, and more recently has been relying on social media and messaging platforms, particularly Twitter and WhatsApp.⁸⁸ During COVID-19 many of these efforts were accelerated with various digital innovations during the pandemic.⁸⁹

This section presents the policy framework of e-governance and how it is used. The South African government utilises ICTs to enhance government efficiency, transparency, accountability, and service and information delivery, as well as foster citizen participation in democratic processes via ICT networks and networking. This section shows that South Africa, unlike other countries is ahead in implementing e-governance. And with the advent of COVID-19, several services are increasingly online.

⁸¹ United Nations, E-Government knowledgebase. <u>https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Resources/Glossary</u> ⁸² eGov4women, 2018, 'Toolkit: E-government for women's empowerment and gender equality':

https://egov4women.unescapsdd.org/toolkit/unit-11-e-government-for-women%E2%80%99s-empowerment-and-gender-equality. ⁸³ The OECD defines E-government as 'the use of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) by governments as applied to the full range of government functions. In particular, the networking potential offered by the Internet and related technologies has the potential to transform the structures and operation of government.' OECD Glossary of Statistical terms. <u>https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=4752</u>

⁸⁴ İbid.

⁸⁵ UN E-Government Knowledgebase, 2020, 'South Africa': <u>https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Data/Country-Information/id/159-South-Africa</u>.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Bosman, I., 2021, 'COVID-19 and E-Governance: Lessons from South Africa' *South African Institute of International Affairs*: <u>https://saiia.org.za/research/covid-19-and-e-governance-lessons-from-south-africa/</u>.

⁸⁹ İbid.

3.1. Policy context for gender equality perspectives in e-governance

The National e-Government Strategy and Roadmap - published in the Government Gazette of November 10, 2017 - aims "to guide the digital transformation of public service in South Africa into an inclusive digital society where all citizens can benefit from the opportunities offered by digital technologies to improve their quality of life."⁹⁰

It guides the processes of:

- Government to Government programmes (G2G) about the interaction between different levels of government and collaboration with government agencies;
- Government to Citizen programmes (G2C) about the interaction between government and citizens;
- Government to Employee programmes (G2E) about relations between government and its employees, including knowledge sharing among them;
- Government to Business programmes (G2B) about supporting business activities.

The National E-Government Strategy and Roadmap⁹¹ proposed over 500 new e-government services to be delivered between 2018 and 2022, including digital platforms as sources of information for different services, such as register birth, providing visa, passport, and driver's licenses, providing internet services to learners and writing exams online, and providing for the implementation of the National Integrated Social Protection System (NISPIS) to improve the well-being of children and youth. Some few new e-government services refer explicitly to gender issues, including providing sex-disaggregated labour market statistics, preventing gender-based violence, promoting CEDAW objectives, supporting girl child programmes, and providing women's empowerment and development services.⁹² It is unclear which of these measures have been put in place so far (May 2022).

Digitalisation in the Government to Government programmes (G2G) should be gender mainstreamed according to standing policies in South Africa. In general, the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) monitors the implementation of gender issues and holds the government accountable. There are other authorities to regulate and monitor compliance within the digital sector. Hence, CGE has the mandate to monitor its compliance with gender equality and women's empowerment. A review of compliance to South Africa's commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women, implemented by the CGE, found that compliance is based on a voluntary basis of government departments, missions, and agencies.⁹³ The reporting on the implementation of gender equality and women's empowerment commitments is a means of enforcement. However, no enforcement and punitive sanctions for poor compliance exist.⁹⁴ The review recommended that the government, in collaboration with the CGE and other institutions within the National Gender Machinery, develop effective processes for ensuring compliance with, and accountability for, the implementation of the ratified global and regional instruments.

⁹⁰ Department of Telecommunication and Postal Services, 2017, 'National E-Government Strategy and Roadmap': <u>https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201711/41241gen886.pdf.</u>

⁹¹ https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201711/41241gen886.pdf

⁹² Ibid. page 23, 25, 27,

⁹³ Commission for Gender Equality, 2016, 'On Paper and in Practice. The Challenges of South Africa's Compliance with Global and Regional Gender Instruments' :

http://cge.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/on-paper-and-in-practice.pdf.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

3.2. Equal participation and representation in policy- and decision-making for the digital world

At the highest level, the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT) plays a leading role in the digital transformation of South Africa. Gender representation in the Ministry's leadership is good. Both the previous and the current Minister of the department are women as is the Director-General, whereas the Deputy Minister is a man. More broadly 55.5% of the employees in the department are women, although at the senior officials and manager level there are more men (56.6%) than women.⁹⁵ This is reflected in the tables below.

Occupational		Mer	1			Total			
category	African	Coloured	Indian	White	African	Coloured	Indian	White	TULAT
Legislators, senior	51	2	3	4	38	2	5	1	400
officials and managers	48.11%	1.89%	2.33%	3.77%	35.85%	1.89%	4.72%	0.94%	106
Professionals	44	0	0	5	49	3	1	7	100
FIDICSSIDIIDIS	40.37%	0	0	4.59%	44.96%	2.75%	0.92%	6.4%	109
Technicians and associate	26	2	1	0	53	5	2	2	91
professionals	28.57%	2.2%	1.1%	0	58.24%	5.49%	2.2%	2.2%	
Clarks	5	0	0	0	9	1	0	0	15
CICINS	33.33%	0	0	0	60%	6.67%	0	0	13
Total	126	4	4	9	149	11	8	10	321

 Table 1: Employment Equity in the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies by occupational category, 31 March 2021⁹⁶

 Table 2: Employment Equity in the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies by

 Occupational Band, 31 March 2021⁹⁷

Occupational Male						Female				
Band	African	Coloured	Indian	White	African	Coloured	Indian	White	TOtai	
Top management	4	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	٥	
	44.4%	0	0	0	55.6%	0	0	0	9	
Senior	47	2	3	4	33	2	5	1	07	
management	48.5%	2.1%	3.1%	4.1%	34%	2.1%	5.2%	1.0%	97	
Professionally qualified and	44	0	0	5	49	3	1	7	109	
experencienced specialists	40.4%	0	0	4.6%	45%	2.8%	0.9%	6.4%	105	

⁹⁵ Department of Communication and Digital Technologies, 2021, 'Annual Report 2020/21': <u>https://www.dcdt.gov.za/documents/annual-reports.html</u>.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

EINTERNATIONAL CONSULTING EXPERTISE										
Occupational		Male			Female				Total	
Band	African	Coloured	Indian	White	African	Coloured	Indian	White		
Skilled technical and academically qualified workers, junior	26	2	1	0	53	5	2	2	91	
management, supervisors, foreman and superintendents	28.6%	2.2%	1.1%	0	58.2%	5.5%	2.2%	2.2%		
Semi-skilled and discretionary	5	0	0	0	9	1	0	0	15	
decision-making	33.3%	0	0	0	60%	6.7%	0	0		
Total	126	4	4	9	149	11	8	10	321	

3.3. E-governance and access to services to increase health, safety, and security

"A feminist internet starts with enabling more women and queer persons to enjoy universal, acceptable, affordable, unconditional, open, meaningful and equal access to the internet".⁹⁸ Access to the internet

Box 3: E-governance incorporated in domestic violence law

Following recent law reform efforts, South Africa enacted the Domestic Violence Amendment Act. There are several notable amendments to the Act which will be discussed in section 5 below. For present purposes, the recognition in the Act that ICTs could play a role in advancing protection and enabling access to justice is noteworthy. The Act introduces the option for online applications for protection orders against acts of domestic violence. The inclusion of an additional application process has the potential to enhance access to justice for victims and survivors. Moreover, the Act introduces an integrated electronic repository for domestic violence protection orders. This has the potential to play an important role in the practical functioning of the protection order process, which, if effectively managed, can improve access to justice.

> Domestic Violence Amendment Act 14 of 2021: https://www.justice.gov.za/legislation/acts/2021-014.pdf

enables access to an array of information, resources and support. A study of selected municipalities found that gender "plays an important role in promotion, uptake and usage of ICT for service delivery by citizens at the local level in South Africa as both male and female use services provided by municipalities."⁹⁹

The internet, social media and digital platforms proved to be important avenues for information and communication to provide response during the pandemic.¹⁰⁰ The government and public health authorities used digital platforms to keep the public informed about the latest developments – which formed a key part of South Africa's COVID response, making South Africa a positive example in Africa on the future of e-governance.¹⁰¹ The importance of no-cost or low-cost access to online services and information on health and education was also manifested during the COVID-19

⁹⁸ Power above n 70.

⁹⁹ Muridzi, G.,' Framework for e-governance to improve service delivery for local authorities in South Africa', 2019 <u>https://dspace.nwu.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10394/35328/Muridzi G.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y</u>.

¹⁰⁰ Bosman above n 70.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

response. At an early stage of the pandemic, South Africa published directions, emphasizing the importance of continued access to the internet. As a result of these directions, the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) allocated a temporary spectrum to major mobile networks and prohibited licensed entities from price increases¹⁰². Mobile network providers reduced data prices and offered no-cost USSD services¹⁰³ for reporting COVID-19 infections and accessing critical information.

The use of ICTs enables citizens to access government services. The mobile phone is increasingly being used by citizens to access services and to provide feedback to the service providers. The use of the mobile phone is increasingly used to improve health governance.¹⁰⁴ In a study conducted in 2017, the mobile phone was found to enhance service delivery, responsiveness and delivery of services for rape survivors in 4 rape centres in Pretoria.¹⁰⁵ This study also found that 55% of the rape victims had their mobile phones stolen during the assault.¹⁰⁶ Combatting gender-based violence and femicide (GBV/F) is one of the highest political priorities in South Africa. In 2020 the president launched the National Strategic Plan on GBV and Femicide.¹⁰⁷

Evidence shows that public ICT hotspots and centers are being set in South African municipalities to increase access to internet services to all. As will be discussed further in section 4, gender inequalities exist in the provision of ICTs among women in South Africa such as discrimination, lack of digital expertise, poverty and inequalities and negative stereotyped perceptions about women.¹⁰⁸ Within rural areas, such as some parts of KwaZulu Natal for example, community radio stations are recognised as support systems for their role in information dissemination and the community development of women.¹⁰⁹ However, a lack of adequate funding and insufficient numbers of trained personnel are some of the factors that limit the growth of community radios.¹¹⁰

3.4. E-governance to enhance equal and inclusive access to socio-economic rights

E-government initiatives have increasingly been introduced to improve the "efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency" of government.¹¹¹ However, e-governance has the potential to both reduce and enhance the digital divide and gaps in existing socio-economic rights, and thus it is important to consider how it is implemented in order to enhance equal and inclusive access to socio-economic rights.

¹⁰²Power above n 70.

¹⁰³ USSD (Unstructured Supplementary Service Data) is a Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) protocol that is used to send text messages. USSD is similar to Short Message Service (SMS).

¹⁰⁴ Mahlalela, N.B., Johnson, S & Mills, E., 2017, 'Feasibility and accessibility of a mobile phone intervention to improve post- rape service delivery in South Africa':

https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/20.500.12413/12771/RReport MobPhoneIntervention Online.pdf?sequence=1&isA llowed=y.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD), 2020 'Gender-based Violence and Femicide National Strategic Plan (GBVF-NSP)', Page 12 : <u>https://www.justice.gov.za/vg/gbv/NSP-GBVF-FINAL-DOC-04-05.pdf</u>.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

 ¹⁰⁹ Fombad, MC., & Jiyane G. 2019, 'The Role of Community Radios in Information Dissemination to Rural Women in South Africa' *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* 51: <u>https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0961000616668960</u>.
 ¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Gallo, M & Thinyane, H, 2021, 'Supporting decent work and the transitions towards formalization through technology-enhanced labour inspection. International Labour Organisation': <u>https://www.ilo.org/legacy/english/intserv/working-papers/wp041/index.html.</u>

ICTs, and the e-governance they enable, can improve governance, and promote equal and inclusive access to socioeconomic rights by:¹¹²

- Improving participation by enabling members of the public to make the government aware of the issues they face immediately, especially in remote locations.
- Improving the capacity of government to be responsive by connecting various departments in responding to challenges in a cohesive way.
- Improving the transparency of government by enabling them to report on their work openly.
- Increasing the speed of applications for documents such as birth registration, thus increasing equality of access to other services (grants, healthcare, etc.).
- Increasing the formality of informal workers and enterprises by increasing their access to financial inclusion through increased accessibility of information about government financial programs and their right to apply.
- Enabling workers or whistleblowers to report labour law infringements online and, if necessary, anonymously. This enables labour inspectorates to timely conduct labour inspection and take remedial action even in remote or underserviced areas.
- Improving the access of vulnerable groups to government services, for instance, those who might find it ordinarily difficult to physically access government services.

However, a significant challenge in a country like South Africa is the inequity in access to technologies that enable participation in governance, as well as gaps in digital literacy and skills that may limit their use and thus enhance existing gaps in access. In addition, where marginalized groups struggle to access technology, e-governance may further enhance their marginalization.¹¹³ There is likely to be a large overlap between those users who most need to access government services most often, and those with the lowest digital literacy. This was enhanced during COVID-19 when "In a

Box 4: E-governance for women's empowerment and gender equality (eGov4women)

'eGov4women' explains that for e-government to be effective in promoting equality and empowerment two aspects should be taken into account:

- a. Gender-based considerations in policy making and programme design/implementation, requiring:
 - Create and distribute digital resources.
 - Put in place mechanisms that enable women to transact in the new language of the digital.
 - Continuously assess the context for appropriate channelling of resources and design of strategies.
 - Directly engage with women from different social locations to ensure desired outcomes.
 - Gender-based outcomes of policy and programmatic outcomes. This requires:
 - Enhancing individual women's access to, and control over, resources.
 - Shifts in legal-policy frameworks.
 - Shifts in deep structures that shape gender norms in a society.
 - Building women's critical consciousness and capabilities to challenge gender power structures.

eGov4women, https://egov4women.unescapsdd.org/toolkit/unit-11-e-government-for-women%E2%80%99s-empowerment-andgender-equality

b.

¹¹² Ibid. See Also: Addo, A & Senyo, P.K., 2021 'Advancing E-governance for development: Digital identification and its link to socioeconomic inclusion' *Government Information Quarterly* 38: <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2021.101568</u>. See Also, World Bank Group, 2018 'South Africa ID case study': <u>https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/31885/South-Africa-ID-Case-Study.pdf?sequence=5</u>. See Also, OECD, 'Digital Government *Toolkit Principle 1: Openness, transparency and inclusiveness':* <u>https://www.oecd.org/governance/digital-government/toolkit/principle1/</u>.

¹¹³ Kariuki, P, Goyayi, ML, Ofusor, LO. 2021. "COVID-19, migration, and inclusive cities through e-governance strategies to manage asylum seekers in Durban, South Africa." In *Digital Policy, Regulation and Governance,* Volume 24 Issue 2.
situation with strict measures of social and physical distancing, people on the wrong side of the digital divide are completely left out of essential public services."¹¹⁴ For example, a study in Durban found that asylum seekers did not have access to digital technology, thus when the government moved services online during COVID-19, this group was further marginalized.¹¹⁵ Connectivity, community participation, and content are thus prerequisites for e-governance that promotes inclusivity.¹¹⁶

Successful e-governance, therefore, does not rest on technology alone.¹¹⁷ Ensuring that e-governance promotes inclusivity and access to socio-economic rights thus requires:

- Improving access to the internet and ICTS to promote the digital inclusion of the public;¹¹⁸
- Addressing the barriers to equal access (for instance improving the affordability and coverage of the internet, creating platforms that are manageable by people with low literacy, or people with visual, hearing or other disability);
- Increasing the digital literacy of communities to enable them to use e-services for instance by using public spaces as digital hubs (for example, libraries, telecentres);¹¹⁹
- Ensuring that gender is taken into account when considering access, use, and the impact of egovernance services, including undertaking gender-responsive data analysis of service users and the barriers to use;
- Ensuring that governmental messages address practical gender needs (such as facilities to reduce women's unpaid care work, like access to water, energy, childcare facilities, etc.), as well as strategic gender needs, including issues to address GBV/F, support women's participation in decision-making processes, enhance women's leadership and promote gender-relevant labour rights.¹²⁰

3.5. Intentional regulation of the digital economy to achieve inclusive economic growth

The World Bank's assessment of the South African digital economy confirms that South Africa is a "key player in Africa, serving as a 'hub' for many initiatives and investments on the continent", it does, however, note that the digital policy and regulatory framework needs to be improved, as does the quality and quantity of available digital skills. ¹²¹ The assessment further recommends that funding incentives could be increased for angel investors to invest in early-stage digital businesses (as in the UK) and angel

¹¹⁸ Morte-Nadal, T, & Esteban-Navarro, MA., 2022, 'Digital Competences for Improving Digital Inclusion in E-Government Services: A Mixed-Method's Systemic Review Protocol.' *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 21: <u>https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/16094069211070935</u>.

en/index.htm#:~:text=The%20four%20key%20ILO%20gender,and%20Maternity%20Protection%20Convention%20(No.

¹²¹ World Bank, 2018 'South Africa Digital Economy Assessment. Background paper series Digital Entrepreneurship Pillar': <u>https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/33632/South-Africa-Digital-Economy-Assessment-Digital-Entrepreneurship-Pillar.pdf</u>?seguence=1&isAllowed=y.

¹¹⁴ Morte-Nadal, T, And Esteban-Navarro, MA. 2022. "Digital Competences for Improving Digital Inclusion in E-Government Services: A Mixed-Method's Systemic Review Protocol." https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/16094069211070935 ¹¹⁵ Kariuki above n 144.

¹¹⁶ Koneur, I. 2007. *E-Governance: Empowering Cltizens Through E-Inclusion*. The IUP Journal of Governance and Public Policy, IUP Publications, Volume 3, pages 53 – 68.

¹¹⁷ Mogale, BH., 2021. A Review of Critical Factors Impacting the Implementation of E-government in Developing Countries. *Faculty of Humanities, Department of Political Studies:* <u>http://hdl.handle.net/11427/35960.</u>

¹¹⁹ Ashraf, T., 2017, 'Equality, Inclusion and Empowerment through E-Governance: Leveraging and repositioning libraries to support national digital programmes', *IFLA WLIC*: <u>http://library.ifla.org/id/eprint/1606/1/189-ashraf-en.pdf</u>.

¹²⁰ The five key International Labour Organisation (ILO) gender equality Conventions are the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111), Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156), Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183), and : <u>https://www.ilo.org/gender/Aboutus/ILOandGenderEquality/lang--</u>

networks boosted (as in Chile through CORFO, Corporación de Fomento de la Producción - Production Development Corporation). Those investments could also be "de-risked", for example through blended finance.

In a recent paper on Competition in the Digital Economy, the Competition Commission of South Africa acknowledges that "in order to harness the promised benefits of digitalisation South Africa must create a commercial and regulatory environment designed to extract those benefits and distribute them in a way that ensures inclusive economic growth".¹²² The Commission explained that this requires:

- increased and meaningful employment;
- equality; and
- shared prosperity.

However, the Competition Commission explains that South Africa, as an open economy, sees "many global tech giants establishing a commanding position in the domestic digital economy, especially in search and social media despite no substantial investments in the country. In some other areas where investment is required, either global companies have been absent (such as Amazon in delivery) or they have moved rapidly to establish a domestic lead before their business models are copied (such as Uber or Airbnb)."¹²³ This requires intentional regulation to deal with the global concentration of capital and control in the digital economy and find ways to avoid outcomes that could harm the development of small businesses, consumers and ultimately inclusive economic growth in South Africa.

Intentional regulation of the digital economy with tangible targets for gender equality could give an extra impulse to achieving inclusive economic growth. The Competition Commission South Africa's advocacy for inclusive economic growth doesn't pay specific attention to the promotion of gender equality. Nevertheless, several industrial policy instruments to enable competition and to promote inclusivity in the digital economy could be used to enhance equal access of women and men to investment, such as incentive schemes, support national champions in strategic sectors with conditions attached to state support and targets to promote gender equality in public preferential procurement.

3.6. Conclusions and recommendations

South Africa is one of the leading countries in the African continent in terms of e-government development. Its legal framework and policies on e-Governance are focused on achieving inclusive economic growth. Although they pay some attention to gender issues, they are not fully gender mainstreamed, and gender equality is only marginally integrated into G2G digital programmes.

The main bottleneck for advancing inclusive good e-governance is the digital divide, due to the lack of access to ICT for affordable internet, and gaps in digital literacy and skills. To avoid a consolidation or increase of the digital divide, investments in ICT infrastructure and focused strategies are needed to

¹²² Competition Commission South Africa, 2020, Competition in the Digital Economy': <u>http://www.compcom.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Competition-in-the-digital-economy_7-September-2020.pdf</u>.

¹²³ Ibid.

enhance gender equality and social inclusion. In this context it is recommended that Development Partners to South Africa, including the EUD, support the following processes:

- The development of guidelines and tools on gender mainstreaming in e-governance to leverage inclusiveness at all levels of G2G, G2C, G2E, and G2B, including the regulation and monitoring of compliance to standing policy on gender equality and women's empowerment within the digital process. Support the enforcement of annual reporting on gender mainstreaming and gender targets achieved by government departments, missions, and agencies. Enhance capacity building in departments with poor gender performance.
- Prioritising e-governmental messages, services, tools and strategies that promote gender equality and women's empowerment, including equal opportunities in the labour market, sexual and reproductive rights and health, women's participation in decision-making processes, equal access to land, finance and innovation, preventing and combating GBV/F, accelerating the effective implementation of the National Strategic Plan on GBV/F.
- **Promote access to health, education and socioeconomic rights through e-governance** by increasing coverage and making access to internet affordability at low costs, or no costs (for example, more digital hubs in public spaces); increasing digital literacy and skills of the most disadvantaged groups and communities; creating platforms that are manageable by people with low literacy, or people with visual, hearing or other disability; monitoring the access, use, and impact of e-governance services with a gender lens and report annually on the gender digital divide.
- Include tangible targets for gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the industrial policy instruments for intentional regulation of fair competition in the digital economy, such as targets to enhance equal access of women and men to investment and incentive schemes, to particular state support, and to public preferential procurement.
- **Visualise innovative women champions** in strategic sectors for the digital economy as new role models for future generations.

SECTION 4. ACCESS TO DIGITAL CAPACITY BUILDING AND SKILLS

"Digitalisation is potentially a powerful tool for social transformation and gender equality. Development practitioners have often championed the investment in women's empowerment as the most direct and effective way to promote economic growth, peace and prosperity. One of the ways digital technologies and services enables empowerment is by providing accurate information – a critical enabler of good decision-making. Digitalisation can play a crucial role in breaking up gender segregation patterns through amplifying women's voices, facilitating the delivery of services and information to women with mobility constraints or limited access to public places."124 In order for the empowering potential of digitalization to be realised access to digital literacy opportunities is essential. Appropriate digital and technical skills enable people to navigate online spaces, unlock opportunities and participate in the digital environment. All people must have access to meaningful and appropriate educational opportunities in order to advance their digital skills.

South Africa's **National Digital and Future Skills Strategy**¹²⁵ sets out a structured series of initiatives to enhance the digital capacity building of all people in South Africa and promote their readiness for the digital transformation of the economy and society.¹²⁶ South Africa's new path to the fourth industrial revolution must lead to a prosperous future and an inclusive and green economy as visioned in the NDP-2030 and by the president's speech at the World Economic Forum in 2021 (See box 6).

Box 5: A New Path

At the 2021 World Economic Forum President Cyril Ramaphosa pointed out that the world is at crossroads, and that the COVID-19 crisis had exercerbated the problems of poverty, environmental destruction. conflicts, inequality, illiteracy and famine, which are all challenges created by humans, and results of our own actions. Restoring the old world that existed before the pandemic is not an option, said the president. He remarked: "We have to forge and design a new path to a world that is just, peaceful, cohesive, resilient and sustainable."

He affirmed that South Africa will restructure its economy, to create a competitive new econonomy that promotes innovations, including bridging the digital divide by launching broadband auctions, and creating network industries.

World Economic Forum, Davos, 2021, Special address by Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa. <u>https://www.weforum.org/videos/davos-2021-</u> <u>special-address-by-cyril-ramaphosa-presidentof-south-africa-english</u>

The DCDT, in charge of coordinating the digitalisation of the economy and the society, along with other stakeholders have been working towards a range of programmes and strategies to promote universal and affordable access to the internet for all and enable members of the public, through digital literacy and other initiatives to build their digital skills. This section focuses on the policy context relevant to ICT education and career development in South Africa.

¹²⁴ European Commission above n 1.

¹²⁵ DCDT, 2020, National digital and future skills strategy South Africa, <u>https://www.gov.za/documents/national-integrated-ict-policy-white-paper-national-digital-and-future-skills-strategy</u>.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

4.1. Policy Context for inclusive digital transformation technology advancement

As noted above, the **National Digital and Future Skills Strategy** sets out a structured series of initiatives intended to contribute to the capacities of people in South Africa to be digitally skilled. The strategy highlights the implication for the economy, society and education and calls on the education sectors to build a strong focus and invest in digital skills. It further encourages equal attention to cybersecurity skills as to any other digital skills. Third, monitoring and evaluation are emphasised as a mechanism to build strong resilience for the successful implementation of the strategy.¹²⁷ The **National Development Plan**: references the importance of digital skills noting the need to focus on e-literacy.¹²⁸ and the **SA Connect Broadband Policy** discusses prioritising the connection of schools and introducing ICT skills developing in the school circular.¹²⁹

The **National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper** makes several references to digital skills, affirming that government will "focus on facilitating multi-stakeholder collaboration on e-literacy and digital astuteness activities with all social partners and ensure that e-skills programmes will be integrated into primary, secondary and tertiary levels."¹³⁰ The White Paper further considers improved coordination and partnerships within and outside government where necessary to ensure the promotion of digital skills development. The **White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation** records that specific measures will be introduced to address the equality and empowerment of women such as ensuring gender-sensitive research agendas and providing targeted support to women researchers and techno-entrepreneurs.¹³¹

The digital divide is highlighted as an issue of increasing concern in **the National e-Government Strategy and Roadmap**, because "in a fair and rational society, all individuals have equal opportunity to participate in, or benefit from, the use of ICT resources... Empirical research in all nations confirms the growing gap between the rich and the poor, as well as between the well-educated and the poorly educated users of ICT."¹³² One of the main bottlenecks in South Africa is that – although "mobile broadband coverage is close to 100% coverage by mobile operators, there is a demand gap as low-income individuals are unable to afford access to digital services due to the cost of devices and the price of data services offered by the operators."¹³³ Given a gender-pay gap of 30%, it is to be expected that this demand gap among low-income individuals is higher for women than it is for men.

127 Ibid.

¹²⁸ The National Planning Commission, 2012 'National Development Plan: 2030':

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/ndp-2030-our-future-make-it-workr.pdf.

¹²⁹Department of Communications, 2013, '2014 SA Connect Broadband Policy':

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/37119gon953.pdf.

¹³⁰ Department Telecommunications and Postal Services, 2016, 'National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper': <u>https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201610/40325gon1212.pdf.</u>

¹³¹ Department of Science and Technology, 2019, 'White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation':

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201912/white-paper-science-technology-and-innovation.pdf. ¹³² Department of Telecommunication and Postal Services, 2017,National E-Government Strategy and Roadmap https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201711/41241gen886.pdf.

¹³³ Competition Commission South Africa, 2020, Competition in the Digital Economy': <u>http://www.compcom.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Competition-in-the-digital-economy_7-September-2020.pdf</u>.

Gender mainstreaming is embraced in information, education, and training by government departments in general:

- In the case of ICTs, the departments responsible for education, telecommunications and information technologies, mainstream gender in their work.
- The Department of Basic Education instituted a policy to increase the participation of girls in STEM subjects. The policy sets targets for participation and performance in maths, science and technology, support programmes for girl learners, promotion of girls participating in Olympiad and competitions and provides bursaries to high performing students.¹³⁴
- The Department of Higher Education and Training's **White Paper for Post–School Education and Training** outlines a system for post-education that integrates gender and vulnerability aspects.
- The Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) commits to addressing gender issues. It hosts the South African Women in Science Awards (SAWiSA) periodically to recognize female scientists.¹³⁵ Recently the Department of Science and Innovation launched the Women in Science, Engineering and Technology Organisation South Africa (WISETO-SA). WISETO-SA is a chapter of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Charter on Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (WISET). WISET is to enhance women's participation in science, engineering, and technology. DSI is in the process to develop a gender mainstreaming strategy.¹³⁶
- The Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services developed a **National e-Strategy** and ICT SMME Support Strategy. The strategy commits to facilitating the development and scaleup of youth and women entrepreneurs.¹³⁷

However, in general, this gender analysis report could not ascertain the systems in place, their capacity and effectiveness for each department to address gender issues as outlined in the national gender policy framework. Such analysis would require a wider scope than what was provided. Departments are not obliged to report systematically on their gender performance, and therefore information on the achievements in this field is scarce. The Annual Performance Plan and Strategic Plan for 2021/22 of the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies are silent on how gender equality and women's empowerment are addressed.¹³⁸

There are many opportunities to promote an inclusive society through a digital transformation. The African Union strategy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) 2018-2028 advocates for e-Tech firms and financial institutions to fund start-ups and innovation hubs that promote gendered

¹³⁵ Department of Science and Innovation, 2021, Women Taking The Lead In Technopreneurship':

https://www.dst.gov.za/index.php/media-room/latest-news/3517-women-taking-the-lead-in-technopreneurship on 21 Oct 2021. ¹³⁶ Department of Science and Innovation,2021 'Deputy Minister Reiterates Government's Commitment To Fighting GBV': https://www.dst.gov.za/index.php/media-room/latest-news/2224 deputy minister reiterates government a commitment to Fighting GBV':

https://www.dst.gov.za/index.php/media-room/latest-news/3224-deputy-minister-reiterates-government-s-commitment-to-fighting-gbv. ¹³⁷ Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services, 2017, 'National e-Strategy and ICT SMME Support Strategy':

https://www.dtps.gov.za/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&download=546:ict-smme-support-strategy-presentationmay-consultations&id=105:e-strategy&Itemid=453.

¹³⁴ Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2017 'Department of Basic Education on Education and Gender': <u>https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/23995/</u>.

¹³⁸ Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2021, 'Annual Performance Plan and Strategic Plan for 2021/22 of the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies': <u>https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/32982/</u>.

solutions and increase women and girls' equal and effective participation in the technology space.¹³⁹ It emphasises that for women to be economically empowered and able to effectively contribute to sustainable development, they must have access to quality education and control over productive resources.

On a more positive note, survey data of NIDS-CRAM covering the first lockdown in South Africa indicates that "in the longer-run, the crisis might also have a transformative role through changing behaviour and norms. Firms have had to allow employees to work from home, which may translate into greater flexibility in work arrangements in the future. This would benefit both mothers and fathers, but particularly mothers for whom flexibility has been shown to be very important as they try to juggle childcare and work responsibilities. The extent to which women in lower-income jobs could benefit from this remains to be seen."¹⁴⁰

4.2. Public digital literacy and skills development for secure participation in the digital world

South Africa was ranked 5th in Africa on AfricaBarometer's digital literacy index, with 52% of South Africans using their phone and the internet regularly, and 41% using their phone or the internet regularly. Only 6% of South Africans is not using phone or internet regularly.¹⁴¹ However, there is no national assessment instrument or approach that measures the digital literacy of South African citizens or that measures digital skills. The best available data is linked to access to the internet computers and mobile phones.

Statistics South Africa data suggests gender and racial divides in internet access with male-headed households more likely than female-headed households to have access to the internet, though the gender gap is decreasing over time. In 2017, an estimated 63.2% of male-headed households had access to the internet compared to 60.7% of female-headed households. In 2002, the gender gap was 9.7 percentage points, when just 18.1% of female-headed households had internet access.¹⁴² These gender gaps have spillover effects on digital literacy, making it more difficult for women to advance these skills.

Similarly, the divide in internet access at the home by population group also impacts who is easily able to access the internet for literacy purposes, work, education or leisure. In 2017, 62.2% of households had access to the internet. Although the gaps in access by population group are declining since 2009, they remain significant.¹⁴³ White households and Indian/Asian households are most likely to have access, and Black African and Coloured households are least likely to have access. This is reflected in the table below.¹⁴⁴

http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-10-19/Report-03-10-192017.pdf.

¹³⁹ AU, 2021, 'Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment': <u>https://au.int/en/directorates/women-gender-and-development-wqdd</u>.

¹⁴⁰ Casale, D. & Posel, D., 2020, 'Gender and the early effects of the Covid-19 crisis in the paid and unpaid economies in South Africa' <u>https://cramsurvey.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Casale-Gender-the-early-effects-of-the-COVID-19-crisis-in-the-paid-unpaid-economies-in-South-Africa.pdf</u>.

¹⁴¹ Afrobarometer, 2020, 'Africa's digital divide and the promise of e-learning' *Afrobarometer policy paper no* 66:<u>http://www.idcppa.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/433/PP66-</u>

<u>Africa%27s%20digital%20divide%20and%20the%20promise%20of%20e-learning-Afrobarometer%20policy%20paper-14june20.pdf</u>. ¹⁴² Statistics South Africa, 2019, 'Inequality Trends in South Africa. A multidimensional diagnostic of inequality':

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

Population Group	2009	2017
Black African	14.8	58.1
Coloured	28.1	64.1
Indian/Asian	58.9	78.4
White	70.4	90.3
RSA	23.9	62.2

 Table 3: Proportion of households with internet access by population group of household head, 2009

 and 2017¹⁴⁵

In 2020, access to the internet in South Africa remained affected by location, with those living in South Africa's metropolitan municipalities most likely to have access, and those in rural areas least likely. As of 2020, 74.1% of South Africans had access to the internet anywhere, but just 8.3% had access to the internet at home.¹⁴⁶ Many South Africans access the internet using their mobile devices (cellular telephones or mobile access devices such as 3G cards) as the primary source and are more likely to access the internet at work or at an internet café or educational institution than at home. This has been a trend since 2017.¹⁴⁷

More than half (56%) of South Africans use the internet, above the global average of 51.4%.¹⁴⁸ This is predominantly thanks to high access to mobile phones. In 2019, the number of mobile cellular subscriptions was in excess of 150 per 100 South Africans, and the number of active mobile broadband subscriptions was 102 per 100 citizens.¹⁴⁹ Mobile phone access has significantly expanded access to the internet for South Africans.¹⁵⁰ Mobile devices have made the internet much more accessible for rural areas than it was in the past. Affordability is a major barrier for both men and women to use the internet with 39% of women and 32% of men citing it as the top barrier to mobile internet use.¹⁵¹ Awareness of the potential to access the internet is also important for improvements in digital literacy. Around nine in ten South Africans are aware that they can access the internet via a mobile phone (85% of women, 89% of men).¹⁵²

The table below reflects access to the internet by place of access, urban/rural status, and province as of 2020. It reflects vast differences in access to the internet by province, with access being highest in the Western Cape, and lowest in the North West.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

 ¹⁴⁶ Statistics South Africa, 2021, 'General Household Survey, 2020' : <u>http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0318/P03182020.pdf</u>.
 ¹⁴⁷ Statistics South Africa. 2019 Inequality Trends in South Africa above n 182.

¹⁴⁸ International Telecommunication Union, 2021, 'Digital Trends in Africa 2021': <u>https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/opb/ind/D-IND-DIG_TRENDS_AFR.01-2021-PDF-E.pdf</u>.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Rowntree, O, & Shanahan, M., 2020, 'Connected women. The Mobile Gender Gap Report 2020' GSMA and Ipsos:

https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/GSMA-The-Mobile-Gender-Gap-Report-2020.pdf. 151 lbid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ There are no metropolitan municipalities in the Northern Cape, North West, Mpumalanga or Limpopo. Data is not reported by race or gender.

Place where	Rural/urban		Province								
internet is accessed	status	wc	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP	RSA
	Metro	25.1	11.3	-	13.6	3.8	-	14.0	-	-	14.0
Athoma	Urban	11.9	1.5	8.0	3.0	7.8	1.9	16.3	1.4	5.6	6.8
At nome	Rural	6.2	0.1	8.8	4.5	0.4	0.3	0.0	1.2	0.5	0.8
	Total	20.3	4.4	8.2	6.2	3.4	1.0	14.2	1.3	1.5	8.3
	Metro	17.0	16.8	-	17.5	31.6	-	29.1	-	-	26.1
At work	Urban	17.5	12.2	18.1	9.5	27.5	14.8	16.4	13.9	14.5	16.4
	Rural	24.1	6.4	10.2	9.2	4.3	3.5	0.0	3.2	4.1	4.8
	Total	17.5	11.4	15.9	11.7	20.3	8.4	27.3	7.9	5.9	17.5
	Metro	64.2	53.7	-	52.3	59.6	-	72.1	-	-	66.8
Using	Urban	69.7	59.2	62.4	64.2	77.1	73.0	79.8	73.0	77.8	71.6
devices	Rural	55.8	47.4	64.6	44.8	50.9	48.9	58.1	65.3	52.2	52.9
	Total	65.4	52.2	63.0	59.0	60.2	59.3	73.1	68.7	56.9	64.1
At internet	Metro	16.9	16.7	-	15.0	47.1	-	28.7	-	-	28.2
cafes or	Urban	12.8	9.1	9.0	10.2	11.4	8.8	25.8	15.9	6.1	13.1
educational	Rural	21.4	04.	0.4	9.9	3.3	3.3	0.0	10.4	3.8	4.9
facilities	Total	15.9	6.6	6.6	11.6	22.6	5.6	28.2	12.8	4.2	17.6

Table 4: Access to the internet by place, province, and rural-urban status 2020¹⁵⁴

In terms of access to technology, although nine in ten households (90%) had access to the main electricity supply in 2020, Statistics South Africa data suggests that only a quarter of South African households (26.8%) owned a computer. Computer ownership is most likely in South Africa's metropolitan municipalities (35.2%), followed by urban areas (28.9%) and ownership of a computer is least likely for rural households (11.8%).¹⁵⁵

In terms of education, there are a number of ongoing challenges for digital education including limited access to the internet, a lack of adequate bandwidth and storage, limited access to devices and restructures for these devices, a lack of training in digital literacy for parents and learners, inadequate reading and writing literacy, a growing need for teacher support and training, and outdated government guidelines for eLearning.¹⁵⁶ As a result, South Africa was ranked 6th on Afrobarometer's index of remote-learning readiness.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Statistics South Africa, 2021, above n 186.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Massey, A., 2021, 'The digital divide: Overcoming barriers to digital learning in post-COVID-19 South Africa' *Biz Community:* https://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/499/217529.html.

¹⁵⁷ Afrobarometer above n 181.

There is also a gender gap in the number of men and women in frontier skills professions – i.e. those careers that are linked to the fourth industrial revolution – suggesting that the gap in digital literacy persists in education and the workplace. Women are less likely than men to register for STEM subjects at university and women made up just 43% of those employed in frontier professions as of 2020. The table below presents the gender gaps in frontier skills jobs as of 2020.¹⁵⁸

	Share of women	Share of men
All categories	43	57
People and culture	75	25
Content production	56	44
Marketing	45	55
Sales	50	50
Product development	36	64
Data and Al	28	72
Engineering	14	86
Cloud computing	14	86

Table 5: Gender Gaps in Frontier Skills Careers, 2020¹⁵⁹

Source: World Economic Forum, 2020

In terms of technology infrastructure, South Africa was ranked 15th in Africa by Afrobarometer, with 71% of South Africans surveyed saying they had access to cellphone service and electricity, 4% saying they had cellphone service only, and 25% saying that neither was available.¹⁶⁰ This data was not sex-disaggregated.

The AU, in recognising the nuances and importance of digital skills has observed:

"The report by the Pathways for Prosperity Commission on digital readiness stresses that harnessing the digital age requires two types of skills to develop at the national and continental level. The first set of skills is Digital Skills. Each society will need to have a sufficiently large group with advanced digital knowledge and engineering skills. These skills are also required at the government level in order to be able to make decisions, support and take advantage of emerging opportunities. For the broader workforce, digital literacy is essentially required. For this, expanding access to the internet is essential for basic digital skills. The second set of skills that need to be cultivated is Digital Complementary Skills. Those skills that cannot easily be automated or codified will be increasingly in high demand in the digital economy. Skills such as empathy, personal communication, business consulting, communication and language skills as well as creativity and adaptability. Socio-emotional interpersonal skills, as well as hard cognitive skills that are difficult to computerize, would need to be developed and nurtured further. These are the skills of the future that any of the countries in Africa need not underestimate and seek to capitalize on in terms of crafting clear and strategic policy in making themselves digital-ready."¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ World Economic Forum, 2020, 'Global Gender Gap Index 2020' <u>https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf</u>.
¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Afrobarometer above n 181.

¹⁶¹ AU, 2021 above n 197 at page 16.

4.3. Reduction in gender disparities vocational training in digital skills and lifelong online learning

At an early stage, South Africa recognised the disparities in access to training opportunities. The 2002 **National Research and Development Strategy** acknowledges that women and people from previously disadvantaged communities have not benefited sufficiently in terms of access to, and participation in, science, engineering, and technology.¹⁶² The Information and Communication Technology Research & Development and Innovation Strategy, commit to putting in place specific measures to encourage women researchers to pursue research careers and higher degrees¹⁶³. It affirms that ICT can contribute to fostering empowerment and participation in government processes through sharing among people and organisations and within government.

In 2016 the **Human Capital Development Strategy for Research Innovation and Scholarship**, notes the decline of black female students in science from honours to doctorate level.¹⁶⁴ In order to enhance skills development, the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA) was created as a specialized institution to transfer skills in television and broadcasting.¹⁶⁵ NEMISA evolved out of a 1998 government intervention targeting previously disadvantaged persons, especially women to participate in broadcasting. NEMISA offers training in various disciplines related to film and television production, interactive media, animation, graphic design, and radio production.¹⁶⁶ According to its 2020/21 Annual Performance Report, NEMISA has specific target indicators to train women, youth and persons living with disabilities (PWD) (Table 6)¹⁶⁷.

Indicators	Total Annual	Target Groups			
	target	Women	Youth	PWD	
Number of citizens trained in basic digital literacy	30.000	20,000	25,000	10	
	(100%)	(67%)	(83%)	(0,03%)	
Number of citizens trained as creative media practitioners	114	60	80	N/A	
	(100%)	(53%)	70%)		
Number of citizens trained in specialized technology	800	500	700	5	
	(100%)	(62,5%)	(87,5%)	(0,6%)	
Nr. of employees of government and public institutions	500	275	300	10	
participating in campaigns for digital transformation	(100%)	(55%)	(60%)	(2%)	
Total NEMISA planning of annual digital skilling	31.414	66%	83%	0,7%	

 Table 6: NEMISA Indicators and Target Groups for planned annual training (2021)

Source: Own compilation from Nemisa, 2021

¹⁶² Department of Science and Technology, 2002, South Africa's National Research and Development Strategy: <u>https://www.dst.gov.za/images/pdfs/National%20research%20%20development%20strategy%202002.pdf.</u>

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Department of Science and Technology, 2016, 'Human Capital Development Strategy for Research Innovation and Scholarship': <u>https://www.dst.gov.za/images/Human-Capital-Development-Strategy-for-Research-Innovation-and-Scholarship.pdf.</u>

 ¹⁶⁵ NEMISA, 2021, 'Advancing Digital Skills for South Africa's Future': <u>https://www.nemisa.co.za/</u>.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ NEMISA, 2021, 'Annual Performance Plan for 2020/21 Financial Period and (the MTEF)':

https://static.pmg.org.za/NEMISA_Revised_APP_2021.pdf.

Currently, NEMISA plays a key role in the process of accelerating capacity building and training of the future workforce in the digital economy. Table 6 shows that NEMISA's targets set for digital training and capacity building for women are over average, which is a good strategy to compensate for the overaverage loss of jobs for women due to digitalization.

The targets set by NEMISA for People living with a Disability (PWD) are very low. According to the South African Human Rights Commission, people with a disability currently account for 5,1% of the population aged 5 years and older in South Africa. "They continue to lack access to adequate health and basic education, and are at risk of economic isolation with no prospect of securing employment."¹⁶⁸ They could be elevated from this situation with a job in the digital economy. NEMISA's target of 0,7% for PWD is far too low and should at least be 5,1% for fair participation of PWD in the opportunities for training and capacity building for the digital economy.

In November 2020 Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams of the DCDT launched free online courses for digital skills training opportunities to young people at the educational platform Coursera. This initiative, coordinated by NEMISA is part of the Minister's commitment in her 2018 Budget Vote Speech, to train one million people in data science and related skills, to ensure that they take up opportunities presented by new digital technologies. The free courses include Data science, Coding, App development, Digital marketing, and Artificial Intelligence, and their duration range between four and eight weeks. In her video message, the Minister expresses her intention to remove as many barriers as possible and enable young people to fulfil their dreams and career aspirations, and therefore, encourage them to take up these opportunities¹⁶⁹.

The **Science Engagement Strategy** mentions four centres set up to promote science and technology.¹⁷⁰ At the provincial level, some initiatives exist such as the Lwazi Digital Literacy Training Project to provide young women with digital skills training by the Telecommunications department in the Northern Cape.¹⁷¹ In addition, the Lwazi Digital Literacy Training Project also set up a website to support women to access ICT jobs, include their business profiles, access business information and increase their networks¹⁷². The UK-South Africa Newton Fund in partnership with Development in Africa with Radio Astronomy (DARA) Big Data programme, is an intervention to increase Africa's research and skills base in data-driven science and associated technologies. The intervention deals with very large data sets. An analysis of the intervention showed that over 60% of the female participants were not confident about their submissions or performance during the application process. The findings indicate that many of the female applicants experience some form of self-doubt in their technical skills that may inhibit them from applying to Development in Africa with Radio Astronomy (DARA) Big Data initiatives.

¹⁶⁸ South African Human Rights Commission, 2021, 'Disability': <u>https://www.sahrc.org.za/index.php/focus-areas/disability-older-persons/disability</u>.

¹⁶⁹ Link to video note by Minister Stella Ndabeni- Abrahams: <u>https://youtu.be/BZNy5swsX9o</u>

¹⁷⁰ Department of Science and Innovation (2015), 'Science Engagement Strategy'

https://www.dst.gov.za/images/Science_Engagement_Strategy_-_SES.pdf.

¹⁷¹ ITU Digital Inclusion Division, 2017, 'Lwazi Digital Literacy Training Project to train women in Northern Cape':

http://digitalinclusionnewslog.itu.int/2017/04/21/lwazi-digital-literacy-training-project-to-train-women-in-northern-cape-south-africa/.

The South African government supports several NGOs to provide free Wi-Fi in locations, such as Lotus Park and Harare Square, while others provide opportunities for young people to increase their digital literacy through workshops in **Monwabisi Park and Harare Square**.¹⁷³

One of the many interesting civil society initiatives is the **GirlCodeZA**.¹⁷⁴ This volunteer-led organization provides a platform, safe space and learning opportunities for girls nationwide to obtain digital skills, such as weekend coding clubs for high school girls to learn basic programming, an online coding Bootcamp consisting of workshops for the 6-month weekend that offers hands-on and in-person training on how to become developers. And lastly, the GirlCode ZA also offers skills in hackathons. The GirlCodeHack is an annual event hosted on the first weekend of August, in commemoration of Women's month by GirlCode designed to spark, renew and elevate interest in coding amongst young women and girls.

Mozilla's Women and Web Literacy Program is a non-profit international community of allies, executives and young leaders who are actively advancing the principles of the open Internet by supporting women in technology, increasing web literacy, and supporting gender equality and inclusion online.¹⁷⁵

The non-profit **Molo Mhlaba Schools** support young girls with an innovative Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and design, and Mathematics (STEAM) curriculum, by establishing quality low-fee education, independent schools in underserved communities. "Molo Mhlaba provides South Africa's most vulnerable group – black girls – with access to quality STEAM-focused education and career orientation, going beyond standard educational targets to strive for excellence and innovation."¹⁷⁶

LEAP Science and Maths Schools¹⁷⁷ provide free education to students from grade 8 – 12 in underserved communities and aim to guide young people towards a successful future. The schools require that all students study mathematics, science and English. Students are actively engaged in developing self-awareness and confidence, as well as in community activities. They have an extended school day (8:15am to 5:15pm), Saturday classes and formal holiday programmes. "Every LEAP school is partnered with a more privileged school as well as township schools in the community the school serves. This three-way collaboration makes for stronger, better-equipped schools and the opportunity to share excellence in all spheres".¹⁷⁸

WomEng is a South African social enterprise developing high-skilled girls and women for the engineering and technology industries. It promotes engineering and technology from primary school to industry and emphasizes that cognitive and behavioral skills are vital for the engineering workforce. WomEng provides

178 http://leapschool.org.za/schools/

¹⁷³ Kargol, M., 2021, Bridging the Gap: Technology Access in South Africa. In: *Borgen Magazine*, March 12, 2021 <u>https://www.borgenmagazine.com/technology-access-in-south-africa/</u>

¹⁷⁴ GirlCode: <u>https://girlcode.co.za/</u>

¹⁷⁵ Mozilla, 'Women & Web Literacy': https://mozilla.github.io/womenandweb/?source=post_page-------.

¹⁷⁶ https://molomhlaba.org/our-schools/

¹⁷⁷ LEAP schools originated from the Langa Education Assistance Program (or LEAP) in 1990, that aimed to provide one hundred black students from Langa with support tuition from Pinelands High teachers in English, maths and science. The first LEAP Science and Maths school was established in Langa. Throughout the years the schools expanded to other areas in South Africa. Currently there are 6 LEAP Science and Maths schools: Langa, Gugulethu & Crossroads, Alexandra, Diepsloot, Jane Furse, and Ga-Rankuwa. http://leapschool.org.za/schools/

an online hub that allows women and girls in engineering to have mentorship and leadership development opportunities peer group support and role modelling in STEM fields.¹⁷⁹

More examples of peer group support, role modelling and mentoring opportunities for girls to develop and retain interest in STEM subjects are listed in the recently published **Gender Assessment of the World Bank Group and DWYPD**¹⁸⁰, including:

- **SENTECH**, a State-owned Enterprise provides disadvantaged students with scholarships accompanied by mentoring in the field of electronics and information technology engineering.
- The **Techno Girl program**, a public-private partnership between UNICEF and several government departments and a private sector implementing partner (Uweso Consulting) aims to promote girls' participation and learning in STEM.
- The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Experiential Training, Internship and Development Programme strengthens the capacity of young women to enter the agriculture sector. Between 2014 and 2018, women benefitted from 59 percent of the 1,115 internships, and 61 percent of the 507 bursaries from the Department's External Bursary Scheme. Following their studies, they are expected to work in the department.

4.4. Gender balance in a career in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

In South Africa, the proportion of women to men who graduate with STEM-related (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) degrees is small. Women are underrepresented in mathematics and statistics (4:5), ICT and technology (2:5), as well as engineering, manufacturing and construction (3:10)¹⁸¹. Only 22% of computer science graduates are women, yet only 2.9% get jobs in the technology sector¹⁸².

Consequently, there is a significantly smaller pool of female STEM talent, restricting the potential of South Africa's technology sector. Research shows that the male-female ratio in South Africa's scientific workforce is 56% male to 44% female¹⁸³. It also shows that 78% (133) of publicly visible scientists are white, and 63% (78) were men.¹⁸⁴ Only 8% (17) of Black women were identified as publicly visible scientists.¹⁸⁵ By gender, the scientists are 63% men and 37% women.¹⁸⁶ In terms of research, only 1% (211) of South African researchers are visible in South Africa.¹⁸⁷ Of these, Black scientists make up 42% but only 33% are visible.¹⁸⁸ By gender, women constitute 44% of research scientists but only 34% were

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¹⁷⁹ https://www.womeng.org/about-us

¹⁸⁰ Smout, J., Sijapati, B., and Hemat. S., 2022, South Africa: Gender Assessment. Department of Women Youth and People with Disability and World Bank Group. April 2022. Appendix I. Additional Information: Taking Action to Bridge Priority Gender Gaps <u>https://www.dwypd.gov.za/images/doc/South-Africa-Gender-Assessment-April-2022-FINAL.pdf</u>

¹⁸¹ PwC South Africa, 2021, 'Women remain under-represented in emerging tech': <u>https://www.pwc.co.za/en/press-room/changing-gender-perceptions-and-behaviours-in-the-workplace.html on 3 Oct 2021.</u>

¹⁸² SAIIA, 2021, 'No women left behind: The gender digital divide technology': <u>https://saiia.org.za/research/no-woman-left-behind-the-gender-digital-divide/</u>.

¹⁸³Joubert, M., 2017, 'In the footsteps of Einstein, Sagan and Barnard: Identifying South Africa's most visible scientists' South African Journal of Science 113: <u>https://sajs.co.za/article/view/3873</u>.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid. ¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

visible.¹⁸⁹ Challenges that impact women's involvement in scientific engagement do not differ from what has been discussed earlier in the report. But in addition, lack of appreciation by male peers of the role of female scientists, stigmatizing of women in public science communication and placing more value on male scientists compared to their counterparts also impact the participation of women in the science sector.¹⁹⁰

Studies show several gender differences in public science communication; normative influences that cause men and women to respond differently to public engagement activities; perceptions of women relegated to outreach activities, and that public engagement of female scientists could hinder their progress, perceived lack of confidence and knowledge, negative stereotypes that women are not suitable for public engagement, and that the role of men is more about workplace policies, legislation, contracts or regulations that concern information.¹⁹¹

South Africa's **National Research and Development Strategy**, indicates, there was recognition of the fragmentation of policies to support women in the science sector, and the need to be consolidated into a programme of empowerment for women.¹⁹²

Evidence suggests that South Africa has 13% of women with undergraduate degrees in engineering, science and technology.¹⁹³ The research explored reasons why women pursue a career in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Female participants attributed their interest in STEM to their personal capability to undertake and perform well in STEM-related subjects at school and at the university level (53.3%). And 17.6% of survey participants attributed their interest to support received from a teacher, while 25.9% indicated that a parent, family member or friend played an influential role in their decision to pursue a STEM career. The findings of this survey are similar to earlier ones that show that young girls who want to undertake a career in technology hardly get encouragement from their families or schools, which contributes to a lack of interest in the field.¹⁹⁴ Student participation in school level biology, chemistry, physics, and mathematics reflects students' attitudes, interests, self-efficacy, and ability.¹⁹⁵

Other challenges identified that discourage women from pursuing the STEM career include the absence of role models and mentors for encouragement, lack of scholarship opportunities and financial resources to continue professional development towards a STEM career.¹⁹⁶ Furthermore, the perception that

Leiden:https://dro.deakin.edu.au/eserv/DU:30133486/tytler-internationalview-post-2019.pdf.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

 ¹⁹² Department of Science and Technology, 2002, South Africa's National Research and Development Strategy above n 212.
 ¹⁹³ Makola, S., & Kgosinyane, E., 2020, 'How Women End Up in the Information Technology Sector: The Perspectives of South African Women' Academy of Strategic Management Journal 4:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/345632208_How_Women_End_Up_in_the_Information_Technology_Sector_The_Perspectives of South African Women.

¹⁹⁴ Maharah.M., 2021, 'Intersection of Gender-Based Violence and Cyber bullying in South Africa: Problem but no Solution?': <u>https://www.africanwomeninlaw.com/post/intersection-of-gender-based-violence-and-cyber-bullying-in-south-africa-problem-but-no-solution</u>.

¹⁹⁵ Freeman, B., Marginson, S., & Tytler, R., 2019, 'An international view of STEM education' in Sahin, A. and Mohr-Schroeder, M. (ed), STEM education 2.0 : myths and truths--what has K-12 STEM education research taught us?,

¹⁹⁶ South African Radio Astronomy Observatory, 2021, 'Women in Data Science Report. A Case Study of the UK - South Africa Newton Fund Development in Africa with Radio Astronomy (DARA) Big Data Programme': <u>https://www.sarao.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Women-in-Data-Science-Report-FINAL-min.pdf</u>.

women are less competent than their male counterparts also contributed to the low participation of women in STEM careers,¹⁹⁷ as well as the lack of self-confidence by some women to pursue a career in STEM.¹⁹⁸

4.5. Conclusions and recommendations

Access to affordable internet and digital literacy are two sides of the same coin; one cannot thrive without the other. The pandemic has shown that the quickest and easiest way to get people involved in e-governance and the digital economy is bringing down the prices for access to the internet. Additionally targeted measures are needed for the most marginalized groups in society, and to bridge the digital gender gap in STEM and vocational training in digital skills. To enhance the process of digital inclusion and equal access to the internet, gender transformation and digital transition must go hand in hand to avoid gender inequalities and intersectional discrimination being taken over by computer learning processes and consolidated in the future digital economy.

To support the South African process towards increased access to digital capacity building and skills, the following recommendations are given to Development Partners to South Africa, including the EUD:

- Engage in the regulations and support changes in these regulations that reduce the high cost of devices and the price of data services offered by the operators, particularly for low-income groups.
- Promote gender-inclusive digital education frameworks and policies by:
 - Boosting relevant education opportunities and digital skills development for women and girls in innovation, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and sustainable product design, Mathematics (iSTEAM) to narrow the gender digital divide
 - Enhancing the participation of women and girls at the level of design and decision making in the digital economy and society.
 - Supporting initiatives to review education curricula according to current needs and trends in the digital society, with a focus on iSTEAM, e-governance and e-business skills, Management skills for people- & environmental-centred flat, flexible decentralised organisations, across all areas of learning.
- Support programmes for the upskilling and reskilling of women who lost their jobs due to the digital transformation.
- Support programmes that encourage girls and women to believe in themselves and in their personal capabilities to start up an e-business, or to undertake STEM-related subjects at school and at the university level, including awareness-raising among teachers, family members, and others about the vital role they can play in the full development of girl's and women's talents and abilities.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹Concrete examples and areas of action to implement this recommendation are listed in Appendix 1 of Smout, J. et al, 2022, 'South Africa: Gender Assessment' Ibid.

- Promote peers-to-peers support, providing girls and young women with information about **STEM career pathways and opportunities** that encourage girls to enroll and remain in STEM at a tertiary education level.
- Support CSOs that empower girls and young women from marginalized communities and lower the threshold towards digital access, capacity building and skills. Strategies may include communication to promote new role models, mentorship, scholarship opportunities and financial resources to continue professional development and/or initiate start-up businesses in the digital economy.

SECTION 5: ACCESS TO INTERNET AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

The internet and digital technologies are indispensable tools for realising an array of human rights, overcoming inequality, and accelerating development and human progress.²⁰⁰ South Africa is viewed as a regional leader in terms of availability (quality and breadth of available infrastructure required for access and levels of internet usage), affordability (cost of access relative to income and the level of competition in the internet marketplace), and readiness (capacity to access the internet, including skills, cultural acceptance, and supporting policy).²⁰¹ However, notwithstanding increased efforts to move towards an inclusive digital environment, South Africa still faces considerable challenges in advancing access and connectivity, with existing inequalities and barriers to access replicating structures of discrimination prevalent in the country.²⁰² The 'Digital 2021 of South Africa'²⁰³ estimates that 64% of the population has access to the internet. There is room for improvement to ensure access to the internet and digital technologies that enables all persons in South Africa to unlock the full array of opportunities offered by the digital environment.

This section provides an overview of the policy landscape and highlights some of the disparities in access, use and benefit of ICT services and tools. It shows that there are inequalities between different population groups in terms of access to, use of and impact of ICT. It further discusses the link between access and empowerment.

5.1. Legal and policy context and strategy to expand the digital infrastructure

South Africa has an evolving policy context with strong indications that digital infrastructure is set to be a priority going forward. In his State of the Nation Address for 2022, President Cyril Ramaphosa references key reforms set to "revolutionise the country's technological development, making faster broadband access to more people and reducing the costs of digital communications."²⁰⁴ This includes ongoing plans for the rapid deployment of broadband frustrate and the auctioning of high-frequency communications spectrum.

Before turning to the recent policy developments and proposed strategies, it is useful to briefly unpack the relevant legislative framework of South Africa's thinking around issues of access to ICTs:

• The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act establishes the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA). Through this Act, ICASA is tasked with regulating broadcasting and telecommunications in the public interest.²⁰⁵ As will be discussed

²⁰⁰ United Nations Human Rights Counsel, 2011, 'Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression', page 22: <u>https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/17session/A.HRC.17.27_en.pdf</u>.

²⁰¹ The Economist, 2021 'Inclusive Internet Index: 2021': <u>https://theinclusiveinternet.eiu.com/</u>.

²⁰² Paradigm Initiative above n 3.

²⁰³ Digital 2021: South Africa (2022), <u>https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-south-africa.</u>

²⁰⁴ President Cyril Ramaphosa: 2022 State of the Nation Address: <u>https://www.gov.za/speeches/president-cyril-ramaphosa-2022-state-nation-address-10-feb-2022-0000</u>.

²⁰⁵ Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act 13 of 2000: <u>https://www.icasa.org.za/uploads/files/Independent-Communications-Authority-of-South-Africa-Act-2000.pdf.</u>

below, ICASA is central to a spectrum auction that is set to increase broadband activity in South Africa and lower the costs of voice and data communication.²⁰⁶

- The Electronic Communications and Transactions Act (ECTA) provides for, among other things, the development of a national e-strategy for the country.²⁰⁷ ECTA further promotes universal access to electronic communications and transactions and the use of electronic transactions by SMMEs. Part 1 of ECTA on the National e-Strategy, sections 5-9, cover the National e-strategy and how it relates to issues around universal access, previously disadvantaged persons and communities, the development of human resources, and SMMEs.
- The Electronic Communications Amendment Act deals with, among other things, promoting
 effective competition, and enabling access in schools, educational institutions and public health
 establishments. Further, this Act seeks to promote broad-based black economic empowerment –
 with particular attention to the needs of women, opportunities for the youth, and challenges for
 persons with disabilities.²⁰⁸
- The **Competition Act** enables the Competition Commission to investigate, evaluate and control competitive practices in the country. As will be discussed, the Competition Commission has played an important role in addressing high data prices in South Africa.²⁰⁹

From a policy perspective, the **National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper** is a primary policy paper detailing government strategies to facilitate access and enable participation in a digital society.²¹⁰ A key theme of the White Paper is "[f]acilitating access by everyone to the opportunities offered by the Internet."²¹¹ In the White Paper, the characteristics of basic services for universal access are defined by the following principles:

- Availability of networks and coverage;
- Affordability that includes the ability to pay for access;
- Accessibility and the ability of all people to use and access services regardless of education, disability, age, gender etc.;
- Awareness by users and potential users of what is available and the benefits of these;
- Ability to develop digital literacy to improve the quality of life;
- Quality of service should be good according to acceptable standards.²¹²

Further and recent policy initiatives suggest that the South African government is working towards meaningful access and connectivity in the country. In 2021 a draft **National Infrastructure Plan 2050** was published by the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure and released for public comment.²¹³

https://www.icasa.org.za/news/2022/brief-on-the-process-for-the-imminent-auction-of-high-demand-radio-frequency-spectrum.

²⁰⁶ ICASA, 2022 'Brief on the process for the imminent auction of high-demand radio frequency spectrum':

 ²⁰⁷ Electronic Communications and Transactions Act 25 of 2000: <u>https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/a25-02.pdf.</u>
 ²⁰⁸ Electronic Communications Amendment Act 1 of 2014:

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/37536act1of2014eleccommamend7apr2014.pdf.

²⁰⁹ The Competition Act 89 of 1998: <u>https://www.compcom.co.za/the-competition-act/</u>

²¹⁰Department Telecommunications and Postal Services, National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper, 2016, <u>https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201610/40325gon1212.pdf</u>

²¹¹ Ibid at page 48.

²¹² Ibid page 29.

²¹³ Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, 'National Infrastructure Plans 2050 ("NIP 2050") for comments', 2021: <u>http://www.publicworks.gov.za/PDFs/44951 10-8 PublicWorksInfras.pdf</u>.

The Plan reflects on the status of digital infrastructure delivery in 2021 and records that while there have been some improvements, digital access remains poor, noting that despite broadband availability across the country, it is "not easily accessible to most households in a way that would indicate meaningful digital connectivity."²¹⁴ According to the plan, over the next 30 years, high-speed broadband should be universally accessible, full digitisation of government services and buildings, and robust ICT-skilled society.²¹⁵

The Ministry of Communications and Digital Technologies is also embarking on digitally aligned policy initiatives and has published a draft **National Data and Cloud Computing Policy** for public comment in 2021.²¹⁶ This Draft Policy seeks to "put in place a conducive and enabling environment for the data ecosystem to thrive" to ensure a "data-intensive and data-driven South Africa".²¹⁷ Notwithstanding the important policy aspirations, there have been concerns around this policy, and its impact on data protection and privacy.²¹⁸ Following the public participatory processes, it is likely that further developments on these policies will emerge in the coming months.

5.2. Barriers to equal access to affordable and secure broadband, technology, and digital tools

The Department of Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) most recent General Household Survey indicates that access to the internet using mobile devices sits at 66.8% in metropolitan areas, 71% in urban areas and 52.9% in rural areas.²¹⁹ Additional data suggests that there are 41.19 million internet users in South Africa, which amounts to an average internet penetration rate of 68.2%.²²⁰ Previous statistics (2018) revealed that 10.4% of South African households had access to the internet at home, with the figure sitting at 1.7% in rural areas.²²¹

Violence Prevention Through Urban Upgrading, an area-based community development programme, explains that the "stark digital divide" in South Africa has one in which "internet access, education, skilled employment and technological innovation are stratified along with class and racial lines, thus reinforcing apartheid-era inequality."²²² They further observe that a "digital divide exists not just between those people with and without internet access. A divide also exists between those with digital literacy skills, the ability to produce content online, and the financial resources for optimal internet usage, and those without these." Race, socioeconomic status, and education were found to have a direct impact on access to technology. Persons in high-income areas and those with higher levels of education are more likely to

²¹⁴ Ibid at page 38.

²¹⁵ Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, 2021, 'Draft National Infrastructure Plan 2050': <u>https://altadvisory.africa/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/National-Infrastructure-Plan-2050-released-for-comment.pdf</u>.

²¹⁶ Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (2021) Proposed Data and Cloud Policy,

https://legalbrief.co.za/media/filestore/2021/04/44411_01-04_TeleCommunication.pdf.

²¹⁷ Ibid Section 5 and section 7.

²¹⁸ Research ICT Africa, 2021, 'Submission on Proposed National Data and Cloud Policy', <u>https://researchictafrica.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/RIA Submission DATA and Cloud Policy.pdf</u>.

²¹⁹ Statistics Souths Africa, 2020, 'General Household Survey':

http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0318/GHS%202020%20Presentation%202-Dec-21.pdf.

²²⁰ DataReportal, 'Digital 2022 Report: South Africa' 2022: <u>https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-south-</u>

africa#:~:text=South%20Africa's%20population%20in%202022.of%20the%20population%20is%20male.

 ²²¹ Statistics Souths Africa, 2018, 'General Household Survey': <u>http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0318/P03182018.pdf</u>.
 ²²² Violence Prevention Through Urban Upgrading, Bridging the New Digital Divide', 2019: <u>http://vpuu.org.za/ict4d/digital-divide-south-africa/</u>.

have access to regular computers than those in less affluent areas and with less education.²²³ The information shows that 35% of those who cannot access the internet were due to the high costs of the equipment.224

While the gender-digital divide is not as prevalent in South Africa as in other parts of the region, it exists with an estimated internet penetration rate of 60% access for men and 52% for women.²²⁵ Of further concern, it appears that South Africa is among the countries where the gender digital gap is widening.²²⁶ This is notwithstanding data from the ITU digital development dashboard, that finds that in South Africa, 80% of the women and 77% of the men own a mobile phone.²²⁷ However, men own more smartphones than women in South Africa. As will be discussed further under section 6, a major concern in the context of digital exclusion relates to online gender-based violence, which can force women out of online spaces and off the internet. Women have lower digital literacy, less access to internet-based technologies, and less relevant online content than men²²⁸. This suggests that women may not equally reap the rewards of the fourth industrial revolution. The table below shows the gender gap in access to digital technology and financial inclusion.

	National	Men	Women
Mobile phone	72	83	85
Feature phone	8	7	10
Smart Phone	47	50	43
Internet access	53	57	50
Bank account	60	58	56
Use Mobile money	19	19	19
Saved at a formal institution	22	26	19
Credit card	9	10	8

Table 7: South Africa: Gender gaps in ICT access and financial inclusion (%)²²⁹

Table 7 shows that women have less access to smartphones compared to men, which also contributes negatively to their access to the internet. Therefore, the report notes, that there is a need to increase women's access to smartphones. An earlier report states that the gender gap in mobile ownership is negative, as more women than men own mobile phones.²³⁰

https://www.theafricareport.com/16047/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-risks-leaving-women-behind/. 229 Research ICT Africa et al, Covid-19 Responses for Equity Initiative - Brief 2, June 2021, South Africa

https://researchictafrica.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/CORE-final-draft-gender-financial-inclusion-SA-Nigeria.pdf ²³⁰ Research ICT Africa, 2019, 'Understanding Digital Access and Use in the Global South': https://idl-bncidrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/58175/58311.pdf.

²²³ Boregen Magazine, 2021, 'Bridging the Gaps: Technology Access in South Africa': https://www.borgenmagazine.com/technology access-in-south-africa/.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Sornger et al, 2020, 'Bridging the Gender Digital Gap': https://www.g20-insights.org/policy_briefs/bridging-the-gender-digital-gap/. 226 Adams, R., 2019, 'The Fourth Industrial Revolution Risks Leaving Women Behind', The African Report:

https://www.theafricareport.com/16047/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-risks-leaving-women-behind/.

²²⁷ ITU Statistics, digital development dashboard, retrieved 17-11-2021:

https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Dashboards/Pages/Digital-Development.aspx. ²²⁸ Adams, R., 2019, 'The Fourth Industrial Revolution Risks Leaving Women Behind', The African Report:

EUD stakeholders' consultations in September 2021 revealed that access to technology for rural women is limited, as one participant noted; "rural women and girls, who do not have access to technology, who do not have access to the infrastructure that provides access to technology in these far-flung areas... It's a critical empowerment need for them". However, even when rural women have devices, connectivity can be a challenge. One participant at the EUD consultation noted: "Just before the COVID pandemic, we actually gave some of the organisations we work with, we provided them smartphones in this village, and data so that they could access the internet, email, et cetera. And when we went back, and we monitored how that was going, they were all saying these phones are just lying there because the data coverage is so poor". In addition, it was noted that "It's not the coverage it is about getting them connected in ways that they have ownership".²³¹

By age, earlier reports suggest that the high level of access to phones by girls in their puberty was associated with intergenerational sex for money.²³² It was found that half of 9–18-year-olds of both genders and about 90% of 19–25-year-olds owned phones.²³³ The same study found that in rural areas, phones were purchased for adolescents by their absent parents working in urban areas, to maintain linkages with their children. Phone ownership was also associated with maintaining family networks, and personal relationships. Women were more likely to use their mobile phones to find work compared to men²³⁴. Mobile phone coverage increased (wage) employment by 15% mainly due to increased employment among women, especially those without significant childcare responsibilities.²³⁵ Compared to men, mobile phone coverage induced a shift from agricultural employment to other sectors.²³⁶ Access and usage are 2 different things. In terms of the mobile phone, the research found that between 2007/8-2013/14, phone usage in South Africa for women expanded by 24%, while for men, it was 51%.²³⁷ As of 2017, access to the internet for women was 49% compared to 51% for men.²³⁸ Later data show that access coverage is higher in the urban areas compared to the rural areas²³⁹. Men are 12% more likely to access the internet than women.

The AfroBarometer 2021 survey shows that the frequency of accessing the internet on a daily basis was 52.8% in the urban areas compared to 35.3% in the rural areas. Similarly, daily access to Television was 75.8% in the urban and 66.3% in the rural areas, and to social media was 52.8% and 35.3% respectively. Age could also partly explain the difference between rural and urban, because urban population is younger on average. By sex, more men (51.3%) than women (43.3%) accessed the internet daily to get news. However, there were no significant differences in access to social media, the radio and television. The results are illustrated in the next Table.

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 ²³¹ Online consultation meeting on the digital transition in South Africa with national key resource persons, 13 September 2021.
 ²³² Porter,G et al., 2019, 'Mobile phones, gender, and female empowerment in sub-Saharan Africa: studies with African youth', Information Technology for Development: <u>https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02681102.2019.1622500</u>.
 ²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵World Development Report, 2016, *Digital Dividends*, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, Washington<u>https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/896971468194972881/pdf/102725-PUB-Replacement-PUBLIC.pdf</u> on 1 Oct 2021

²³⁷ Porter,G above n 271.

²³⁸ Statista (2021), Distribution of internet users in South Africa as of March 2017, by gender

https://www.statista.com/statistics/253490/distribution-of-internet-users-in-south-africa-by-gender/#statisticContainer on 13 Oct 2021 ²³⁹ Freedom House,2020, 'Freedom on the Net: South Africa':<u>https://freedomhouse.org/country/south-africa/freedom-net/2020 on 14 Oct 2021.</u>

Medium	Urban	Rural	Men	Women	Total
Internet	52.8	35.3	51.3	43.3	47.1
Social media e.g. Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp etc.	57.3	41.9	51	53.5	52.3
Radio	61.4	63.8	62.4	61.9	62.2
Television	75.8	66.3	72.2	73.2	72.7

Table 8: South Africa: People who get news from the following sources <u>daily</u>, percentages (2021)²⁴⁰

Interestingly, the AfroBarometer also sought to establish people who never get news about politics and other issues from different media by location and by sex. The table below shows that by location, there were significant differences between those who did not access the internet for news in the urban (26%) and rural (43.6%) and access to social media in the urban (23.5%) and rural areas (38.4%). There were marginal differences among those who never accessed the radio and television. By sex, there were significant differences between men (28.8%) and women (34.4%) who never access the internet for news, and for those who never accessed the radio for news (8.8% women and 12.6% men). For those who never access social media and television for getting news, there were no significant differences between men and women. (Table 9).

Table 9: South Africa: People who never get news from the following sources, percentages (2021)²⁴¹

Medium	Urban	Rural	Men	Women	Total
Internet	26	43.6	28.8	34.4	31.7
Social media e.g. Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp etc.	23.5	38.4	28.8	27.9	28.4
Radio	11	10.3	8.8	12.6	10.8
Television	6.8	9.8	7.7	7.9	7.8

A study in three disadvantaged communities in South Africa found that women's views differed in terms of access to ICT. Some women attribute less access to ICT, because it is a male field, while others thought it was because it was due to social norms.²⁴² Other gender barriers include the lack of digital identification documents, lower financial independence, little control over resources, a lack of digital and financial capability, and greater risk aversion.²⁴³

As evidenced above, barriers to access, connectivity, and digital skills run along various lines in South Africa, some are occasioned by historical structures of oppression, others are tied to socioeconomic factors, and there are some gender discrepancies. However, the most common barrier that cuts across all these relates to high costs.²⁴⁴ Freedom House reports as follows:

https://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Summary%20of%20results/saf_r8.sor_6oct21_1.pdf

²⁴⁰ Own compilation with data from. Data retrieved 16 Nov. 2021 from AfroBarometer, Round 8, Survey in South Africa, 2021, compiled by Plus 94 Research. Page 83-90

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Pokpas, C., et al., 2019 'Women and ICT in South Africa: Mental Models on Gender and ICT in Marginalised Communities', *IST-Africa* Week Conference (IST-Africa): <u>https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/8764828</u>.

²⁴³ Chinembiri, T. & Ahmed.S, 2012, 'Navigating COVID-19: African women and digital financial access in South Africa and Nigeria", *Covid-19 Responses for Equity Initiative - Brief 2 July 2021:* <u>https://researchictafrica.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/CORE-final-draft-gender-financial-inclusion-SA-Nigeria.pdf</u>1.

²⁴⁴ Freedom House, 2021, 'Freedom on the Net: South Africa': <u>https://freedomhouse.org/country/south-africa/freedom-net/2021</u>.

"Prepaid mobile data remains unaffordable for most South Africans. In 2020, the average cost of 1 gigabyte (GB) of mobile data was 2.17% of the average monthly income in South Africa, according to the Alliance for Affordable Internet. In the first quarter of 2020, the average cost of 1GB of mobile data was \$6.51, which places South Africa 33rd out of 46 African countries for which there are figures available on the affordability of mobile data. Though mobile operators are gradually providing more low-cost data packages to lower-income customers, the vast majority of South Africans without internet access are those earning less than 7,200 South African rands (\$470) per month (representing 42% of the population). Those without internet access have pinpointed the high costs as the main reason for their lack of connectivity."²⁴⁵

As of April 2022, MTN and Vodacom, prominent mobile network operators in South Africa charge around R85 (€5.33) for 1GB of data, and Cell-C appears to charge R65 (€4.08) for 1GB of data.²⁴⁶

It is important to note that there have been various factors that have contributed to the lower data costs, with more efforts likely to emerge in the coming months. Following recommendations of the Competition Commission that data prices in South Africa were too high and that pricing structures are "anti-poor", mobile telecommunications networks began decreasing their prices.²⁴⁷

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were several commendable responses from the government concerning access.²⁴⁸ Through the adoption of regulations, ICASA temporarily released a high demand spectrum to assist with easing network congestion, ensure good quality broadband services, and facilitate the lowering of costs for internet users.²⁴⁹ Further regulations were published on zero-rating health and educational sites.²⁵⁰ The private sector also participated, MTN and Vodacom provided zero-rated access to websites providing health and educational resources.²⁵¹ However, while these efforts are commendable, and South Africa was indeed ahead of the curve regionally when it came to finding ways of advancing access, the responses did not explicitly address gender-related concerns.²⁵²

https://www.cellc.co.za/cellc/get-databundles

²⁵² Power above n 3.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ See, MTN, 'Bundles': <u>https://www.mtn.co.za/Pages/Reduced-bundles.aspx</u>, Vodacom, 'Our Data bundles': <u>https://www.vodacom.co.za/vodacom/shopping/data/prepaid-data</u>, Cell-C, 'Buy Bundles and Recharge Online':

²⁴⁷ Competition Commission Data Services Market Inquiry, 2019: <u>http://www.compcom.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/DSMI-Non-Confidential-Report-002.pdf.</u>

²⁴⁸ Paradigm Initiative, 2021 'Londa: Digital Rights and Inclusion in Africa: South Africa', page 94: <u>https://paradigmhq.org/wp-</u> content/uploads/2021/05/Londa-Digital-Rights-and-Inclusion-in-Africa-Report-2020-Ir.pdf.

²⁴⁹ Information and Communications Technology ("ICT") COVID-19 National Disaster Regulations Notice 238 of 2020,

<u>https://www.icasa.org.za/legislation-and-regulations/ict-covid-19-national-disaster-regulations</u>. See ICASA, 2020, 'Fees for the extended use of the temporary radio frequency spectrum': <u>https://www.icasa.org.za/news/2020/fees-for-the-extended-use-of-the-temporary-radio-frequency-spectrum</u>.

²⁵⁰ Amendment of ICT COVID-19 National Disaster Regulations 43707 of 2020,

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/202009/43707gen500.pdf.

²⁵¹ Business Tech, 2020, 'MTN announces massive price cuts and free data',

https://businesstech.co.za/news/telecommunications/383443/mtn-announces-massive-price-cuts-and-free-data/, and Fin24, 2020 'Vodacom to slash data prices by at least 30%, clients get free access to some websites',

https://www.news24.com/fin24/Companies/ICT/vodacom-to-slash-data-prices-by-at-least-30-20200310.

Most recently, ICASA has concluded its long-awaited auction of licenses for the state-controlled radio frequency spectrum.²⁵³ 2005, was the last time South Africa released the spectrum. This further release of the spectrum is regarded as crucial to expanding internet connectivity and reducing prices in South Africa.²⁵⁴ It is further important to note that it appears that the South African government will require winners of the country's recent broadband multibillion-rand spectrum auction to zero-rate all mobile content provided by public benefit organisations.²⁵⁵ This measure, which forms part of the licence requirements for the auction represents an important commitment to enabling people to download education, health, and welfare resources on their own phones at no charge. The new licence conditions are a continuation of the existing social benefit requirements rolled out in the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, which enabled thousands of people to connect to public service institutions such as schools and police stations.256

5.3 The empowering potential of access

Box 6: A seven-point plan für universal access

In recognition of some of the major access barriers in South Africa, civil society and interested groups sought to develop an appropriate response. In 2019, members of the coalition of organisations – Media Monitoring Africa, the South African National Editors' Forum, the Interactive Advertising Bureau of South Africa, the Association for Progressive Communications, and ALT Advisory, developed a 7-point plan to realise universal access to the internet in South Africa. The aspects of the seven-point plan are as follows:

- Free public access to the internet at government sites;
 - Zero-rated access to government websites and data; Free public wi-fi;
- Provision of free basic internet as a municipal service;
- Digital literacy programmes;

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- Minimum protections in the provision of free access to the internet;
- Oversight and monitoring of the progressive realisation of free access to the internet.

While some of these points are being realised (or are on their way to being realised), it is clear that more work is needed to ensure universal access to online information and digital tools.

Media Monitoring Africa et al, 'Universal Access to the Internet and Free Public Access in South Africa: A Seven-Point Implementation Plan', 2019: <u>https://internetaccess.africa/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UA-Report.pdf</u>

"I'm not an online expert, but I do see the power that access to information and technology holds for the empowerment of women and girls".²⁵⁷ South African based research observes that the widespread use of digital media technologies and social media platforms such as Twitter by female youth to voice their concerns and promote their businesses could attribute to them being socio-economically empowered.²⁵⁸

https://altadvisory.africa/2022/03/24/south-africa-telecoms-regulator-concludes-long-awaited-spectrum-auction/.

²⁵⁵ Business Day Live, 2022, 'Zero-rated online content for public benefit bodies hailed as breakthrough':

²⁵⁷ Participant at the EUD virtual Consultation in September 2021.

²⁵³ ICASA, 2022, 'ICASA concludes successful spectrum auction and collects more than R14.4 billion proceeds':

https://www.icasa.org.za/news/2022/icasa-concludes-successful-spectrum-auction-and-collects-more-than-r14-4-billion-proceeds. ²⁵⁴ ALT Advisory, 2022, 'South Africa: Telecoms regulator concludes long-awaited spectrum auction':

https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/education/2022-03-30-zero-rated-online-content-for-public-benefit-bodies-hailed-asbreakthrough/.

²⁵⁶ Internet Service Providers' Association, 2020, 'IPSA Statement: Supporting Internet Users during Covid-19 Disaster': https://ispa.org.za/press_releases/supporting-internet-users-during-the-covid-19-disaster/.

²⁵⁸ Makananise, F.O., & Madima, E.S., 2020, 'The use of digital media technology to promote female youth voices and socio-economic empowerment in rural areas of Thohoyandou, South Africa', *Gender and Behaviour*, Vol.18, No.2.

Access and connectivity can enable the full array of fundamental rights and can empower individuals, advance agency and open an array of meaningful opportunities.

The following table illustrates the major platforms active in South Africa:

Table	10:	Digital	platforms	active in	South	Africa	(2020)	259
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Digital platforms	Examples	Function
Online search platforms	Google, Yahoo and Bing	Provide an online search platform between web users and advertisers
PC operating systems	Microsoft	Provides a software platform that allows transactions between independent software vendors and users
Smartphone operating systems	Android and iOS	Provide an interface between users of the device and content providers such as application developers
e-Government platforms	eTshwane and Department of Home Affairs	Used by government departments or spheres to deliver online services to citizens
Messaging platforms	Outlook, Google Mail, Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, WeChat	Provide messaging services
Share-economy platforms	Uber, Bolt, InDrive, Point A2B, Yookoo Ride, Taxi Live Africa, CheufHer, YoTaxi, AirBnB, SweepSouth	Provides for peer-to-peer based acquiring, providing, or sharing access to goods and services (including accommodation, transport, cleaning services)
Social networking platforms	Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, WhatsApp, YouTube, TikTok	Provide an interface for social networking and sharing of content
Online shopping platforms	Takealot, Superbalists, Bid or Buy, Zando and Amazon	Connect customers willing to buy products online with product suppliers of the products
Financial services platforms	All major banking apps, StokFella	Provides for various financial services including transactional banking, crowdsourcing, obtaining loans, investing, access to stock markets
Streaming platforms	Netflix, Showmax, Amazon Prime TV	Provide for sharing of audio-visual content including movies and TV series
Video game platforms	Sony PlayStation or Nintendo	Provides software tools that enable publishers to develop games and a device on which consumers can play the games
Foodservice platforms	UberEats and MrD	Provide for the delivery of food service from restaurants
Payment platforms	SnapScan, Zapper, Masterpass, PayFast	Provide a payment system between merchants and customers

Access to the above platforms and online spaces facilitates the realisation of various rights, ranging from access to information, freedom of expression, access to educational material, and the ability to associate and share information and ideas. These platforms also enable access to various services. Access to these services and to the array of information and opportunities has significant empowerment potential.

²⁵⁹ Competition Commission South Africa, 2020, 'Competition in the Digital Economy': <u>http://www.compcom.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Competition-in-the-digital-economy_7-September-2020.pdf.</u>

Research on internet access in South African schools explains "the internet can, for example, promote individuals' right to health by providing previously unconnected individuals with knowledge about health information, medical care, and accessing services".²⁶⁰ An issue paper on universal free access to online information in South Africa explains that access to online spaces "enables people to engage in an array of learning experiences, build information and knowledge societies, foster public and private debate, establish organisations, and contribute to public interest innovation. Through the internet, all people with access, including those in remote and marginalised communities, are better able to exercise and protect their rights and realise their potential. Conversely, those without access are deprived of such protection and enjoyment.^{"261} Moreover, the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development has expanded upon some of the economic benefits that accrue when people have access to the internet: "this includes creating possibilities for economic development by the creation of online services, businesses and applications which concurrently create jobs; enhancing education as the internet provides a platform for exchanging information and learning from others; benefiting healthcare by giving people, especially in rural areas, fast and direct access to consult about basic health questions; contributing to cultural and social development; and enhancing political engagement.^{"262}

It is necessary to emphasise that access to the internet entails two interconnected dimensions: the first is about accessing the physical infrastructure that enables access to online content, and the second is about the ability to access and disseminate content online.²⁶³ In order for access to be meaningful, and to enable empowerment opportunities, both elements must be met. This requires affordability and connectivity criteria to be met, as well as the advancement of digital literacy skills and an enabling online environment, free from harm and discrimination. The sections above on economic empowerment through digital transformation, and the importance of digital literacy capture important empowerment considerations aligned with access to the internet and digital tools. The following section on online harm will speak to some of the concerns around safety and inclusivity. In what follows, are some brief examples of the empowering potential of access.

Opportunities for empowerment can manifest in various ways. Some studies suggest that female youth in Thohoyandou (a semi-urban town in Limpopo) rely on social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp to voice social concerns, which in turn may contribute to socio-economic development.²⁶⁴ Moreover, the study showed that young women rely on social media platforms to advertise their products and services which contributed to socio-economic empowerment. Further, the finding of the study recorded that adolescents and young women use digital and social media to advocate for equality and nonsexist values and behaviour.²⁶⁵ This study suggests access to digital media by young and adolescent women is indicative of the great potential for empowerment.

²⁶¹ Media Monitoring Africa et al, 2019, 'Universal Access to the Internet and Free Public Access in South Africa: A Seven-Point Implementation Plan': <u>https://internetaccess.africa/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UA-Report.pdf</u>.

²⁶⁰ Guruli N et al, 'Access Denied: Internet access and right to education in South Africa' 2020, <u>https://internetaccess.africa/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Access-Denied-Report-2020-FINAL-min.pdf</u>.

²⁶² United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2013, 'Internet Broadband for an inclusive digital society': <u>https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/dtlstict2013d4_en.pdf</u>.

²⁶³ Media Monitoring Africa et al, 'Universal Access to the Internet and Free Public Access in South Africa: A Seven-Point Implementation Plan', 2019: <u>https://internetaccess.africa/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UA-Report.pdf.</u>

²⁶⁴Makananise, F.O.,& Madima, E.S.,' The use of digital media technology to promote female youth voices and socio-economic empowerment in rural areas of Thohoyandou, South Africa', *Gender and Behavior*, Vol.18, No.2, 2020,pp. 15851 - 15861 ²⁶⁵ Ibid.

Another study showed that telecentres (public spaces where people can access the internet and certain digital tools) were sites of empowerment for rural women users in terms of psychological, information and economic upliftment.²⁶⁶ The study found that women who accessed telecentres were more informed about developments in their communities²⁶⁷. Some women users found telecentres to be sites of social empowerment as they strengthened social relations, knowledge sharing and computer skills²⁶⁸. The study concludes that enhancing women's information capabilities is vital to their well-being.

A UNICEF study with young people in South Africa further reveals the empowering potential of access to the internet for promoting access to information about health, particularly sexual and reproductive health information.²⁶⁹ When asked if "you could use the Internet for free on your phone, would you use it to look for information about sexual health?", an overwhelming 84% of participants in the UNICEF study said yes, illustrating the eagerness of young people to be informed about sexual health, as well as their eagerness to use free online sources to obtain such information. It is hoped that the recent announcement about public benefit sites will enable more young people to access such information.

5.4. Conclusions and recommendations

It is well accepted that enhanced, and meaningful access will lead to greater economic and social inclusion moving forward as the country moves into the digital age.²⁷⁰ The 7-point plan for universal access to the internet in South Africa as proposed by a coalition of organisations in 2019 remains relevant, although some progress has been made.²⁷¹ More efforts are needed to ensure universal access to online information and digital tools. Not only is this important for growth and economic sustainability, but it is crucial for human development, empowerment, and agency, and can assist in overcoming entrenched forms of inequality. South Africa has not explicitly addressed the gender digital divide, although its overall promotion of access is a step in the right direction. South Africa's policy commitment is on track, however, costs, implementation, improvements to infrastructure and issues around digital literacy must be urgently addressed.

With this and the above context in mind, the following recommendations are made to development partners including the EUD

• Encouraging improved plans for ICT infrastructure development: Poor distribution of telecommunications infrastructure hinders access at the basic level. It is recommended to support the development of viable infrastructure plans, by providing strategic guidance to the South African government on feasible, practical, and implementable infrastructure plans and design, and by assisting with resources, capacity, and skills transfer.

²⁶⁶ Alao A, et al., 2017, '*Telecentres Use in Rural Communities and Women Empowerment: Case of Western Cape*'. In: Choudrie J., Islam M., Wahid F., Bass J., Priyatma J. (eds) Information and Communication Technologies for Development. Advances in Information and Communication Technology, vol 504. 2017, Springer, Cham. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-59111-7 11.

²⁶⁷ Ibid

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ UNICEF, mHealth and Young People in South Africa', 2017: <u>https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/media/236/file/mhealth-and-young-people-in-South-Africa.pdf</u>

²⁷⁰ Competition Commission, 2019, 'Data Services Market Inquiry':

https://cisp.cachefly.net/assets/articles/attachments/80825 data market inquiry summary.pdf.

²⁷¹ Media Monitoring Africa above n 304.

- Prioritising digital literacy skills across all sectors of society: Digital skills facilitate meaningful and active participation with online services - this is a crucial component of access to the internet and digital tools. Supporting the media and information literacy skills, and the integration of improved digital literacy training into the school curriculum from an early stage, through to the university level is critical. Supporting the setting up of outside-school ICT clubs, or the distribution of low-cost computers with preloaded courses and applications is a useful contribution. A focus on women and girls is encouraged to ensure that the gender-digital divide closes. Capacity community centres and existing structures such as the telecentres can also boost access and skills. Providing financial and technical support to relevant ministries in South Africa can go a long way in realising meaningful and skilled access to the internet.
- Enabling access to the empowering potential of ICTs: Along with improvements to • infrastructure and digital literacy training, access to the empowering potential of ICTs must be made available to all persons. This requires careful consideration of the type of digital tools, the platforms and services available online and how these can assist and support women and girls. Accordingly, ensuring that gender-mainstreaming is incorporated into decisions relating to the use and enjoyment of ICTs and digital tools is imperative, and could be achieved by requiring a gender impact assessment of all projects and programmes that gualify for support by the EUD and other development partners to South Africa.

SECTION 6: ONLINE HARMS

Online spaces, initially envisaged as accessible and safe spaces, have in many ways become harmful spaces rife with violence, discrimination, misogyny, racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia. New forms of violence and harm are emerging, which are committed, abetted or aggravated by the use of the internet, social media platforms, and other ICTs.²⁷² This may include stalking, bullying, sexual harassment, defamation, hate speech and exploitation, or any other online controlling behaviour.²⁷³ These forms of online gender-based violence (OGBV) amount to abusive conduct, that humiliates, degrades, and violates the dignity and sexual and bodily integrity of a person.²⁷⁴ South Africa, like the world over, is grappling with these contemporary forms of harm, with increased attention from lawmakers, courts, activists and researchers.

This section explores the evolving notion of online harms and OGBV, and the disproportionate impact of these harms on women, girls, and gender and sexual minorities. This section further unpacks recent law reform developments that have, to varying degrees, sought to enhance protection against harms facilitated, abetted, or aggravated by the use of ICTs. Focusing on OGBV, this section further considers the need for improved digital literacy, and the need for a comprehensive approach aimed at addressing these evolving harms, inclusive of proactive and reactive measures to ensure that online spaces are safe and inclusive.

6.1. Legal and policy framework to combat online harms and promote online safety

South Africa's response to OGBV and online harm should be considered in the context of the gender-based violence (GBV) crisis in South Africa²⁷⁵. Mounting pressure from women's groups, activists, civil society, and the public at large for urgent action to be taken in light of South Africa's unacceptably high rates of GBV prompted notable policy and law reform processes. In 2018 the first Presidential Summit on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide was convened, resulting in the establishment of an Interim Steering Committee in 2019 that produced the **Gender-based Violence and Femicide National Strategic Plan** (GBVF-NSP) to establish a strategic framework to guide the national response to the hyperendemic GBVF crisis in which South Africa finds itself.²⁷⁶ In 2020, a comprehensive law reform process was initiated, with calls for public comment on three Gender-Based Violence (GBV) bills: Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act Amendment Bill, Domestic Violence Amendment Bill and Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Bill.²⁷⁷

²⁷³ Iyer, N., Nyamwire, B., and Nalubega, S, 2020, 'Alternate Realities, Alternate Internets African Feminist Research for a Feminist Internet': page 10: <u>https://www.apc.org/sites/default/files/Report_FINAL.pdf</u>.

²⁷² Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD), 2020 'Gender-based Violence and Femicide National Strategic Plan (GBVF-NSP)', Page 12 : <u>https://www.justice.gov.za/vg/gbv/NSP-GBVF-FINAL-DOC-04-05.pdf</u>.

²⁷⁴ Power Singh Inc. 2021 'Deconstruct: Online Gender-Based Violence Toolkit', pages 6-7: <u>https://powersingh.africa/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/1-Online-Gender-Based-Violence-FINAL.pdf</u>.

²⁷⁵ More information on this crisis is included in the Gender Country Analysis of South Africa: Gawaya, R. and Van Osch, T., 2021, South Africa: Gender Country Profile. European Union, FWC on Human rights, democracy and peace, Ref. Nr.: 2018-3672, International Consulting Expertise (ICE) and Bureau for Institutional Reform and Democracy (BiRD GmbH).

²⁷⁶ Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD), 2020 'Gender-based Violence and Femicide National Strategic Plan (GBVF-NSP)', Pages 2-3: <u>https://www.justice.gov.za/vg/gbv/NSP-GBVF-FINAL-DOC-04-05.pdf.</u>

²⁷⁷ Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2020 'Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Bills' : <u>https://pmg.org.za/call-for-comment/967/</u>).

Turning to OGBV, South Africa has adopted several policy developments and legislative responses that strengthen efforts to combat OGBV. The GBVF-NSP makes several references to OGBV and has set notable targets for the next 5-10-year period. For example, the plan aims to ensure that technology intermediaries observe human rights standards and protect women's rights on online platforms.²⁷⁸ Moreover, the GBVF-NSP envisages the rollout of cyber-awareness programmes that are disabilityaccessible and responsive to online safety issues, as well as capacity building programmes for police, prosecutors and the judiciary on emerging cyber threats so that they are able to better appreciate the nature of the crimes and respond effectively to emerging forms of harm online. The plan further sets a target of focusing on research in order to develop a "deepened understanding of the impact of online violence on women and LGBTQIA+ persons and potential strategies to address it". 279

From a legislative perspective. South Africa has a patchwork of legislation that, to varying degrees addresses online harms and cybercrimes.²⁸⁰ The Cybercrimes Act, signed into law in 2021, is the primary legislation that addresses criminal conduct that occurs online.²⁸¹ For present purposes, chapter 2 of the Cybercrimes Act deals with cybercrimes and malicious communications and includes a provision on the sharing of non-consensual intimate images. This provision criminalises the unlawful and intentional sharing, by means of an electronic communications service, a data message of an intimate image of another person without their consent.²⁸² The Cybercrimes Act provides further protection to victims or survivors of the non-consensual sharing of an intimate image by enabling them to approach a Magistrates Court for an order prohibiting any person from sharing or resharing the intimate image.²⁸³ Through this provision, victims or survivors can also get an order which requires the service provider hosting the image to remove or disable access to the image. While South Africa has enacted domestic legislation to combat cybercrime and is a signatory to the Convention on Cybercrime, 284 South Africa has not signed or ratified the Malabo Convention - the African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection.285

The Protection from Harassment Act, which came into force in 2013, is notable for its recognition of harassment via electronic communication(s), enabling victims and survivors to obtain protection orders (restraining orders) against certain forms of online harassment.²⁸⁶ This Act also allows for a court to order an electronic service provider to give certain information to the court in instances where the harassment

281 The Cybercrimes Act 19 of 2020: https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/202106/44651gon324.pdf ²⁸² Ibid at section 16.

²⁷⁸ Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD), 2020 'Gender-based Violence and Femicide National Strategic Plan (GBVF-NSP)', page 90: https://www.justice.gov.za/vg/gbv/NSP-GBVF-FINAL-DOC-04-05.pdf 279 Ibid 105.

²⁸⁰ See ALT Advisory, 'Endgbv.Africa: South Africa', 2022: https://endgbv.africa/mapping/south-africa/. See also, Nwaodike, C & Naidoo, ' Fighting Violence Against Women Online: A Comparative Analysis of Legal Frameworks In Ethiopia, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, and Uganda', 2020: https://www.apc.org/sites/default/files/Legal_Analysis_FINAL.pdf.

²⁸³ Ibid at section 20. Magistrates' Courts are South Africa's lower courts which deal with criminal and civil cases. They are divided into Regional Courts and District Courts.

²⁸⁴ Convention on Cybercrime, 2004: <u>https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list?module=treaty-detail&treatynum=185</u>. South Africa is also a signatory to the Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, 2006: https://rm.coe.int/168008160f.

²⁸⁵ African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection, 2014: <u>https://au.int/en/treaties/african-union-convention-</u> cyber-security-and-personal-data-protection.

²⁸⁶ The Protection from Harassment Act 17 of 2011: <u>https://www.gov.za/documents/protection-harassment-act</u>. See Power Singh, 'Deconstruct: Online Sexual Harassment Toolkit', 2021, Pages 10 - 11: https://powersingh.africa/2021/06/18/online-sexual-harassmenttoolkit/.

occurred through some form of electronic communication, and the identity or details of the perpetrator are unclear.²⁸⁷

The recently enacted **Domestic Violence Amendment Act** recognises the role of online spaces and electronic communications in facilitating or enabling domestic abuse.²⁸⁸ Following an extensive public participatory process, in which activists, technologists, policymakers, researchers, and feminists, made submissions focusing on the need for responsive legal protections against online harms, the amendment Act provides improved protection against an array of online harms.²⁸⁹ Three key changes to this Act relate to online harms.²⁹⁰ First, key definitional amendments to 'electronic communications', 'intimidation' and 'sexual harassment' have resulted in the relatively comprehensive recognition of the extension of harms into the digital world. Second, the Act relies on gender-neutral language, such as "they" instead of "he/she". This is the second time in South Africa's recent history that the legislature has adopted gender-neutral language (the Cybercrimes Act being the first). The inclusion of appropriate and inclusive terminology is an important step forward for ensuring protection to some of the most vulnerable and marginalised members of society. Third, the Act recognises the role of technology in accessing justice. For example, victims and survivors can apply online for protection orders. The Act also provides for electronic communications service providers to provide information.

From a more child-centric perspective, the **Films and Publications Amendment Act**, which came into effect in March 2022, addresses the sharing of child sexual abuse material through its prohibition of the filming and distribution, through any medium, including the internet and social media of films and photographs depicting sexual violence and violence against children.²⁹¹ The non-consensual distribution of private sexual photos or films on the internet or social media is also prohibited in terms of this Act.²⁹² It appears that further law reform efforts are underway to address online child sexual exploitation materials.²⁹³ In March 2022, the South African Law Reform Commission published its report on Sexual Offences: Pornography and Children.²⁹⁴ The report addresses some of the legal and regulatory gaps relating to children's child sexual abuse material. Further developments on this issue are likely to unfold in the coming months.

²⁸⁸ Domestic Violence Amendment Act 14 of 2021: <u>https://www.justice.gov.za/legislation/acts/2021-014.pdf</u>

²⁸⁷ Protection from Harassment Act 17 of 2011at section 4.

²⁸⁹ Joint Submissions by Research ICT Africa, Association for Progressive Communications, ALT Advisory, and Members of the Feministing While African Network, 2020: <u>https://altadvisory.africa/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Domestic-Violence-Amendment-Bill-B20-%E2%80%93-2020-Joint-Submissions-by-RIA-APC-ALT-FWA.pdf</u>, and Joint Submissions by Research ICT Africa and ALT Advisory (Endorsed by the Association for Progressive Communications, Media Monitoring Africa, Chenai Chair, Mutondi Mulaudzi & Samantha Malunga), 2021: <u>https://altadvisory.africa/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/ALT-Advisory-Research-ICT-Africa-Joint-Submissions-Domestic-Violence-Amendment-Bill.pdf</u>.

²⁹⁰ Power T,. 2022, 'The DVA Act: one step closer to online safety' ALT Advisory Insight: <u>https://altadvisory.africa/2022/02/22/the-dva-act-on-step-closer-to-online-safety/</u>

²⁹¹ Films and Publications Amendment Act 11 of 2019: <u>https://www.gov.za/documents/films-and-publications-amendment-act-</u> <u>commencement-1-march-2022-english-afrikaans-25-feb</u>

²⁹² Ibid at section 18F.

 ²⁹³ Comins, I 'Commission proposes tightening South African laws to protect child pornography victims', Mail&Guardian, 2022: <u>https://mg.co.za/news/2022-03-30-commission-proposes-tightening-south-african-laws-to-protect-child-pornography-victims/</u>.
 ²⁹⁴ South African Law Reform Commission, 'Report: Project 107 – Sexual Offences Pornography and Children', 2022: <u>https://www.justice.gov.za/salrc/reports/r-pr107-Pornography-Children-29March2022.pdf</u>.

6.2. Gender aspects of online harm

Online gender-based violence (OGBV), online harms, and cybercrimes are in many ways part of the continuum of violence against women, girls, and gender and sexual monitories that occurs offline.²⁹⁵ It is another manifestation of oppression occasioned by pervasive and systemic unequal power dynamics. Accordingly, many of the prevalent forms of gender-based discrimination, harm, and violence are being replicated and reinforced in online spaces. Women and girls, women journalists and activists are at risk of online harm by virtue of them being women. Moreover, "women from marginalised communities, including LGBTQIA+ people, women of colour, and Black women, in particular, are often disproportionately targeted with online abuse, which means their voices are silenced more often than other women."²⁹⁶ With the Covid-19 lockdown, a survey found that 1/3 of women in South Africa had experienced OGBV²⁹⁷. This finding was consistent with data on OGBV in 4 other countries including Uganda and Namibia. OGBV disproportionately affects women, girls, and LGBTQI+ persons²⁹⁸. This is reflected through body-shaming, verbal abuse, threats of physical and sexual violence, and general enforcement of negative gender stereotypes. In what follows, this sub-section unpacks various examples of the prevalent forms of OGBV and online harm in South Africa.

At this stage, there is a lack of adequate data relating to OGBV, however, recent research reports and case studies, suggest that OGBV, online harms, and cybercrimes are being experienced by women in South Africa. For example, a 2020 study conducted to document the prevalence, experiences and responses to OGBV, across five African countries, found that 23.3% of South African women interviewed had been a victim of OGVB.²⁹⁹

An ongoing case about Twitter posts, being heard in the Equality Court in South Africa's Limpopo province, has highlighted that "misogynistic and harassing conduct undermines substantive equality, dignity and infringes women's right to safety and security. It constitutes a form of violence against women, and creates and entrenches the patriarchal structures, institutions, attitudes and practices that enable violence against women."³⁰⁰ The case relates to a series of tweets posted in 2020 which the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) argue constitute harassment in terms of section 11 of the Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act. The SAHRC argues that the tweets include serious, demeaning and humiliating comments against women and black women in particular.³⁰¹

²⁹⁷ The Observer, 2020, 'Gender Based Violence has gone online- report':

https://observer.ug/news/headlines/66241-gender-based-violence-has-gone-online-in-africa-report.

²⁹⁸ Maharah.M., 2021, 'Intersection of Gender-Based Violence and Cyber bullying in South Africa: Problem but no Solution?': <u>https://www.africanwomeninlaw.com/post/intersection-of-gender-based-violence-and-cyber-bullying-in-south-africa-problem-but-no-solution</u>.

²⁹⁵ Association for Progressive Communications, 2017, 'Online gender-based violence: A submission from the Association for Progressive Communications to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences', page 3: https://www.apc.org/sites/default/files/APCSubmission_UNSR_VAW_GBV_0_0.pdf.

²⁹⁶ Web Foundation, 2020, 'The impact of online gender-based violence on women in public life': <u>https://webfoundation.org/2020/11/the-impact-of-online-gender-based-violence-on-women-in-public-life/</u>.

²⁹⁹ Iyer, N., Nyamwire, B., and Nalubega, S, 2020, 'Alternate Realities, Alternate Internets African Feminist Research for a Feminist Internet': page 10: <u>https://www.apc.org/sites/default/files/Report_FINAL.pdf.</u>

³⁰⁰ Supplementary Affidavit of Azwidini Victor Mavhidula in South African Human Rights Commissions v Anthony Matumba, 2021 page 30 of the court bundle: <u>https://powersingh.africa/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/210812-Court-bundle-Part-I.pdf</u>.

³⁰¹ Court papers are accessible here: <u>https://powersingh.africa/2022/03/16/south-african-human-rights-commission-v-matumba/</u>.

Online harassment of journalists is prevalent in South Africa. The 2018 Gender Links Glass Ceilings Report highlighted that nearly a third of female participants reported experiencing some form of online violence.³⁰² Commenting on the Glass Ceilings Report the South African Government noted that "the advent of social media has also brought about a new threat acutely felt by women in the media - that of cyber misogyny". 303 South African journalist and editor Ferial Haffajee wrote about her experience with online harassment, noting "the designers and purveyors of cybermisogyny" are using online spaces, trolls, attacks to silence journalists.³⁰⁴ She explains that the online hate she experiences "could not get more stereotypically sexist".305 Regrettably, it appears that the situation for women journalists remains a cause for concern. Reporters without Borders 2021 World Press Freedom Index recorded that the online harassment of women journalists is a key challenge to press freedom in South Africa.306

Box 7: Court addresses Twitter harassment of journalist

The court case of Brown v Economic Freedom Fighters further highlighted the gender-based harassment experienced by female journalists in South Africa.¹ The leader of a political party, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), Julius Malema, shared the name and cell phone number of the late well-known journalist Karima Brown. At the time Julius Malema had estimated 2.3 million Twitter followers His Tweets suggested that she was not a journalist, but a spy of the ruling party the African National Congress (ANC). This occurred in the context of South Africa's 2019 national elections. Following the Tweets, Ms Brown was inundated with threatening calls and messages, including deplorable insults and threats of rape, assault, and death. Ms Brown approached the High Court for relief. The High Court condemned the actions of the EFF noting that "[t]heir conduct exhibited scant regard for the fact that Ms Brown, as a woman, was especially vulnerable to threats of rape and violence in a society in which gender-based violence is prevalent."

Brown v Economic Freedom Fighters and Others [2019] ZAGPJHC 166: <u>http://www.saflii.org/za/cases/ZAGPJHC/2019/166.html</u>

It appears there are increasing instances of online harassment and discrimination on grounds of gender and sexuality.³⁰⁷ Research on Cyber-Harassment victimization among South African LGBTQIA+ youth, indicates, that while "research concerning minority groups such as LGBTQIA+ and the cyber harassment that those groups incur is severely lacking.", there is evidence to suggest that members of the LGBTQIA+ community are being cyber harassed.³⁰⁸ Further research confirms this position, noting that sexual and gender minorities experience hatred, discrimination, prejudice and threats on social media platforms.³⁰⁹

http://www.womeninnews.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Glass-Ceilings-Report-19-October-2018.pdf.

 ³⁰³ South African Government, 2019, 'Media Development and Diversity Agency on gender discrimination in media': <u>https://www.gov.za/speeches/media-development-and-diversity-agency-gender-discrimination-media-15-feb-2019-0000</u>.
 ³⁰⁴ Haffajee, F, 'Twitter and the rest of social media are a rising threat to media freedom — and I am part of their roadkill', 2019:

https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2019-08-06-twitter-and-the-rest-of-social-media-are-a-rising-threat-to-media-freedom-and-i-ampart-of-their-roadkill/.

³⁰² Gender Links, 2018, 'Glass Ceilings: Women in South African Media Houses':

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ Reporters Without Borders, 2021, 'South Africa', <u>https://rsf.org/en/south-africa</u>.

³⁰⁷ Freedom House, 'Freedom on the Net: South Africa', 2021: <u>https://freedomhouse.org/country/south-africa/freedom-net/2021#footnote9_d39ba7k</u>.

³⁰⁸ Hendricks et al., 2020 'Cyber-Harassment Victimization Among South African LGBTQIA+ Youth" Conference Paper, Conference on e-Business, e-Services and e-Society' 2020: <u>https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-45002-1_12.</u>

³⁰⁹ Mkize et al., 2020, 'An examination of social media as a platform for cyber-violence against the LGBT+ population': <u>https://repository.up.ac.za/handle/2263/79461.</u>

Girls, adolescents, and teenagers in South Africa are also at risk of different forms of online harm. The 2016 South African Kids Online Report, following interviews with children across the country, found, among other things, that some children had been exposed to unwanted sexual experiences, of which many reported having a negative emotional response.³¹⁰ The study further found that more boys than girls experienced unwanted sexual contact, but more girls than boys had been asked unwanted sexual questions about themselves.³¹¹

In 2020, a thirteen-year-old South African girl approached the High Court for assistance following a series of gang rape and murder threats from an anonymous Instagram account. The young teenager and her family approached the High Court to compel Facebook to disclose the identity of the holder/s of several Instagram accounts in an attempt to obtain information about the perpetrator to protect herself.³¹² While the current status of the case is unclear, as there were reports of settlement discussions, this case highlights, first, that teenage girls in South Africa are exposed to OGBV, and second, it illustrates the substantially challenges victims and survivors face when seeking protection against such harms and threats of real-world violence.

Recent and ongoing law reform efforts suggest that OGBV and online child, adolescent and teen sexual exploitation and abuse remains a key concern for children's online safety.³¹³ In addition, online/cyberbullying appears to be a prevalent form of online harm in South Africa.³¹⁴ The tragic passing of fifteen-year-old Lufuno Mavhunga in 2021 placed the spotlight on cyberbullying in the country. Lufuno committed suicide shortly after videos of her being bullied went viral on social media.³¹⁵ Child online safety expert, Phakamile Khumalo, observed that Lufuno's passing "highlights the urgent need for schools to create a social media/internet policy that includes an intentional and aggressive strategy to deal effectively with incidents like this."³¹⁶

A final remark regarding forms of online harms relates to an emerging trend of silencing victims, survivors, and activists in online spaces. In recent months, South African courts have been dealing with various cases relating to the use of online spaces to share experiences of GBV. In August 2021, the Western Cape High Court dealt with a case that highlighted the "tensions that exist when alleged perpetrators approach the Courts to gag womxn and prevent them from exercising their right to freedom of expression".³¹⁷ In January 2022, the Johannesburg High Court went in a different direction. In that matter, the Court ruled in favour of South African music producer DJ Euphonik in a defamation case over social

³¹³ Power Singh Inc., 2021, 'Deconstruct: Children's Online Safety Toolkit': <u>https://powersingh.africa/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/3-</u> <u>Childrens-safety-online-FINAL.pdf</u>.

³¹⁵ Power, T,. 2021, 'Connected girls creating brighter futures: Reflections on current realities' *ALT Advisory Insight*: <u>https://altadvisory.africa/2021/04/22/connected-girls-creating-brighter-futures-reflections-on-current-realities/</u>.

³¹⁶ Khumalo, P, 2021, 'Suicide of Limpopo teen highlights urgent need for a social media policy for schools' *Daily Maverick*: https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2021-04-18-suicide-of-limpopo-teen-highlights-urgent-need-for-a-social-media-policy-forschools/.

³¹⁰ Burton, et al., 2016, 'South African Kids Online: A glimpse into children's internet use and online activities' 2016, *The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention*, page 55: <u>http://www.cjcp.org.za/uploads/2/7/8/4/27845461/south_africa_kids_online_full_report.pdf</u>).

³¹² Thamm, M., 2020 'Anonymously threatened with gang rape and murder, SA teenager takes Facebook Inc to court to disclose perpetrator' *Daily Maverick*: <u>https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-07-24-anonymously-threatened-with-gang-rape-and-murder-sa-teenager-takes-facebook-inc-to-court-to-disclose-perpetrator/</u>.

³¹⁴ Media Monitoring Africa, 2020, 'Children's Rights Online: Towards a Digital Rights Charter': <u>https://mediamonitoringafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/1.pdf</u> page 39.

³¹⁷ Women's Legal Centre, 2021, 'The WLC encouraged by WCHC landmark decision against an interdict seeking to silence rape survivor': <u>https://wlce.co.za/the-wlc-encouraged-by-wchc-landmark-decision-against-an-interdict-seeking-to-silence-rape-survivor/</u>.

media comments accusing him of GBV. In finding the Tweets shared by activist Nontsikelelo Mazwai to be defamatory, the Court cautioned that "the platforms for social activism in the realm of Gender-Based Violence must not be abused. The irresponsible use of such platforms inure to the detriment of this important movement for change and does not assist."³¹⁸ In the most recent jurisprudential development on this issue, the Western Cape High Court, in March 2022, overturned a gag order that prevented the appellant from speaking about her experiences of gender-based violence (GBV).³¹⁹ The Court found that the gag order of the lower court "perpetuated the notion that victims of gender-based violence should not speak out, should remain silent about their experiences and should be careful who they speak to." The Women's Legal Centre, representing the survivor, in this case, welcomed the judgment and confirmed they would support "efforts to ensure that women who experience sexual violence are not gagged, and silenced through abusive court processes that weaponise the law against them."³²⁰

Issues relating to safe spaces online, inclusive of victims and survivors sharing their experiences, are likely to remain key issues in South African courts for the foreseeable future, with a likelihood of potential policy responses.

6.3. Spaces where violence occurs

In addition to the case studies and examples above, research indicates that social media platforms are the primary sites of online harm. Online gender-based violence in South Africa happens primarily on Facebook and WhatsApp.³²¹ A commissioned report by Amnesty International found that "for some women users of Twitter in South Africa, threats of violence, abuse and bullying are a common part of their experience of the platform."³²² This report found that the various forms of harm forced the women to deactivate their Twitter accounts, change the way they used the platform, or resorted to self-censorship. Further findings confirmed the intersectional dimensions of online harm. Many interviews "observed or experienced the disproportionate number of abusive tweets that Black women receive". An LGBTQI+ activist remarked that the act of sharing the content of herself with her partner would result in "hate speech, verbal attacks based on sex, based on gender identity, and based on sexual orientation", as well as threats on her life.³²³ A qualitative study that examined data between 2017 and 2019 from LGBTQI+ Facebook groups and pages and semi-structured interviews found that Facebook is used as a platform by heterosexuals to make violent and hateful comments against the LGBTQI+ population.³²⁴

³¹⁸ Nkosi v Mazwai [2022] ZAGPJHC 129 para 17: http://www.saflii.org.za/za/cases/ZAGPJHC/2022/129.pdf.

³¹⁹ S v P and Others [2022] ZAWCHC 42: https://www.saflii.org/za/cases/ZAWCHC/2022/42.html.

³²⁰ Women's Legal Centre, 2022, 'High Court vindicates women's rights to speak about their rape experience as a critical way to combat the scourge of violence against women': <u>https://wlce.co.za/high-court-vindicates-womens-rights-to-speak-about-their-rape-experience-as-a-critical-way-to-combat-the-scourge-of-violence-against-women/</u>.

³²¹ lyer above n 315.

³²² Åmnesty International, 2021, 'South Africa: Twitter Scorecard: Tracking Twitter's progress in addressing violence and abuse against women online in South Africa' page 8: <u>https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr53/4722/2021/en/</u> page 8.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Mkhize, S.,Nunlall,R., & Gopal,N. 'An examination of social media as a platform for cyber-violence against the LGBT+ population', *Agenda*: <u>https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10130950.2019.1704485</u>.
6.4. Measures to combat online harms

In addition to the efforts of activists and researchers in advancing the law reform process coupled with the increased legal protections noted above, there are a few programmes and initiatives, that to varying degrees are seeking to address online harm in South Africa. Many are based on awareness and support:

- Rainbow Artificial Intelligence (rAInbow) is a South African AI-powered solution that provides a safe space for domestic violence victims and survivors to access information about their rights and support options, and where they can find help in friendly, simple language. It can be accessed 24/7 via Facebook Messenger.³²⁵ The platform has interactive quizzes, informative content, real-life stories and scenario-based stories, which help users identify patterns of abuse or harm.
- South African based public interest law firm, Power Singh Inc. developed a set of toolkits and resources, through their **Deconstruct** initiative that seeks to provide clarity on the different legal remedies, the technical options and psycho-social support structures available to survivors, victims, and persons affected by online harms.³²⁶ Launched in April 2022, **endgbv.africa** is a new web resource that maps out the steps taken by African states to protect those affected by GBV and OGBV during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.³²⁷ South Africa is one of the countries included In the research. The site is set to support civil society actors and lawmakers to access information on the measures taken to respond to GBV both on and offline.
- While not South African based, HeartMob provides real-time support to individuals experiencing online harassment and empowers bystanders to act.³²⁸ HeartMob allows users to easily document their harassment and maintain complete control over their stories, it also provides an array of useful resources on online harassment and digital safety.³²⁹
- **Real 411** provides a platform for the public to report digital harms including online harassment.³³⁰ The South African platform seeks to ensure that online content is assessed and addressed in an independent, open, transparent and accountable manner within the national laws and constitutional rights.
- The **Safer Schools** project, a community communication gateway that engages with over 4200 schools in South Africa by supplying free services, provides useful resources on digital rights, cyberbullying and steps for a safer internet.³³¹
- The **South African Police Services** (SAPS) has included information pages for child safety including tips on cyberbullying and internet safety for children and parents and caregivers.³³²
- The **Web Rangers** programme is a digital literacy programme designed to allow young people to gain critical skills and knowledge around online safety that they use to create innovative campaigns that promote safe internet usage and champion their rights in the digital world.³³³ The programme is about creating young digital citizens who know how to use the internet responsibly and

³²⁵ rlAnbow: <u>https://www.hirainbow.org/</u>.

³²⁶ Power Singh Inc., 2021, 'Deconstruct: Online Gender-Based Violence': <u>https://powersingh.africa/deconstruct/#toolkits</u>.

³²⁷ Endgbv.africa.

³²⁸ HeartMob: <u>https://iheartmob.org/</u>.

³²⁹ HeartMob Resources: <u>https://iheartmob.org/resources</u>.

³³⁰ Real 411: <u>https://www.real411.org/</u>.

³³¹ Safe Schools: https://www.saferschools.co.za/

³³² South Africa Police Services: https://www.saps.gov.za/child_safety/teens/teens.php.

³³³ Web Rangers: <u>https://webrangers.co.za/</u>.

encourage their peers to do the same. Topics of online safety, cyberbullying, and online grooming form part of the Web Ranger curriculum.

6.5. Conclusions and recommendations

The recent law reform process in South Africa marks an important step for the recognition of online harm. It appears that South Africa is leading the way regionally on questions of online harm. This acceptance has created scope for improved protection for those whose rights, freedoms, and dignity have been infringed. This is important for ensuring online safety. Moreover, the gender-neutral language used in both the Cybercrimes Act and the Domestic Violence Amendment Act is welcomed. This is in an inclusive approach that reflects diversity. The use of non-binary terms recognises the need for appropriate and inclusive terminology to protect the most vulnerable and marginalised members of society.

However, in order for these laws to have a tangible and meaningful impact, more work needs to be done. Digital literacy, training, and awareness for multiple stakeholders are necessary for the legal protections to be genuine, realisable, and tangible. Law enforcement officials, Magistrates, and Clerks may need support in understanding and navigating the nuances of online harm. Accordingly, various government stakeholders, including the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, along with civil society, and select Chapter 9 institutions should urgently embark on a digital literacy campaign to equip public officials with digital literacy training should be provided to members of the public. Recognising online harms, and knowing your options, is a crucial step toward a safer, accessible, and inclusive internet.

It is further clear that women journalists face increased risks online, further efforts are needed to curb harassment and violence against this group. Questions around defamation, the naming and shaming of perpetrators, and the use of online spaces as spaces for activism and healing by victims and survivors will likely remain at the fore, attracting the attention of courts, the public, and possibly lawmakers.

With the above context, the following recommendations are made:

- **Developing and supporting programmes to understand OGBV**: Reporting OGBV can be challenging as not everyone acknowledges the legitimacy of online harms. Those who have suffered OGBV deserve support and fair treatment. As right holders they should not be frustrated and suffer in secondary trauma due to lack of understanding by the duty bearers during reporting and judicial processes. Duty bearers need capacity building to deal with OGBV, including capacitating police officers, clerks of the court, and judges to appropriately respond and enhance protection in a very meaningful way. Providing support, through the financing and the development of programmes, to relevant stakeholders, such as police and members of the judiciary is recommended. This can enable improved and nuanced understandings of online harms and equip relevant duty bearers with the requisite knowledge and skills to appropriately respond to cases of OGBV.
- **Supporting and enabling the collection of accurate and disaggregated data:** Data on the prevalence and incidence of OBGV remains insufficient. Gender disaggregated data on the use

of ICTs in the perpetuation of violence, including specific data on violence against gender and sexual minorities are necessary in order to effectively respond to issues of online safety. This may require strengthening the capacity of Statistics South Africa, the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, the South African Police Services, and other relevant stakeholders to collect, use and disseminate sex-and gender-disaggregated data on online harms in South Africa. Collecting and utilising accurate and disaggregated data is a useful basis for evidence-based policies that can achieve meaningful change.

Providing research support and access to resources on the evolving context of online harms: South Africa must keep momentum in terms of its response to online safety. This requires authorities to be cognisant of the evolving nature of the digital environment and the evolving nature of harms and violence that may occur. As noted in recent submissions to Parliament, "besides the need to consider the local contexts, challenges related to responding to domestic violence facilitated by ICTs evolve at a significant pace, continuously introducing new governance and regulatory challenges. While addressing online harms might be a key priority for policymakers around the world today, it is important to also consider the ways in which 'new' technologies that underpin the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), like the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and additive manufacturing, might create new avenues for violence and abuse now or in the future."³³⁴ Accordingly, research support and access to resources on questions of evolving harms and evolving responses are critical and highly recommended.

³³⁴ Joint Submissions by Research ICT Africa, Association for Progressive Communications, ALT Advisory, and Members of the Feministing While African Network, 2020: <u>https://altadvisory.africa/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Domestic-Violence-Amendment-Bill-B20-</u> %E2%80%93-2020-Joint-Submissions-by-RIA-APC-ALT-FWA.pdf.

SECTION 7: KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This gender analysis of the digital transformation in South Africa explored the challenges and opportunities for gender mainstreaming in this process. It identified actors, priorities, and entry points to promote gender equality in the digital transformation to inform the programming of the EUD to South Africa with the aim of enhancing gender mainstreaming within the EU and EU Member States Development cooperation interventions in the country through dialogue and cooperation across the different instruments and investment frameworks.

Digital transformation in South Africa must infuse principles of accessibility, inclusivity, equality, opportunity and safety. For women and girls to be truly empowered in the digital environment structural changes must be addressed, including patriarchal perceptions, harmful socio-cultural beliefs, and systems and patterns that exclude the involvement of women and girls. To achieve digital transformation informed by feminist principles, infrastructural changes must be coupled with efforts to ensure digital and financial inclusion, access to education and opportunities. Gender-mainstreaming can indeed inform South Africa's growth in the digital era, however, by-in from all sectors is needed, and support from key stakeholders, such as the EUD is crucial.

7.1. Key Findings

Below is a summary of the key findings of this gender analysis of the digital transformation in South Africa:

- Roughly two-thirds of people in South Africa use the internet, with trends suggesting that the most common means of access is via mobile phones. There is a slight gender-digital divide, particularly when it comes to accessing the internet and accessing smartphones.
- South Africa's dual socio-economic structures are replicated in the ICT sector while there have been notable developments and significant potential for further growth, South Africa's digital divide continues to run along the lines and historical structures of discrimination, oppression, gender inequality and other socio-economic factors. The high costs of access to the internet remain the most common barrier that cuts across all these structural inequalities.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the gender digital divide. Regrettably, job losses were a negative outcome, with women being disproportionality affected. The lockdowns further exposed women and children to increased GBV. Moreover, marginalised groups on the 'wrong' side of the digital divide suffered considerably. More positively, access to the internet was free for basic e-government services (health, police, etc.), and the decentralisation of digital solutions to combine work with family responsibilities. The growth of e-commerce and digital service delivery generated new opportunities for employment and start-ups in the digital economy, which have been seized by young women.

- South Africa is one of the leading countries in the African continent in terms of e-government development. Its legal frameworks and policies on e-Governance are focused on achieving inclusive economic growth, although they are not fully gender mainstreamed.
- The Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT), which is the ministry that leads the digital transformation of South Africa, is driven by a majority of women at the top level, including the Minister herself. Women represent 55,5% of the employees at the Ministry, and there is a rather good gender and diversity balance at all levels.
- The bottleneck for advancing inclusive good e-governance is the digital divide, due to the need for improvement of the infrastructure, affordable prices for access to the internet, advanced digital literacy skills and for an online environment that is safe, protects privacy, and is free from harm and discrimination.
- The government of South Africa has made several steps in the right direction to promote access and connectivity, including new license conditions for the state-controlled radio frequency spectrum, which is crucial for expanding internet connectivity and reducing prices. These new license conditions require zero-rating of all mobile content provided by public benefit organisations.
- Within the last year two key plans and strategies have been published for public comment: The draft 'National Infrastructure Plan 2050', which pursues to achieve universal accessibility of high-speed broadband, full digitisation of government services and buildings, and a robust ICT-skilled society over the next 30 years, and the National Digital and Future Skills Strategy which sets out a structured series of initiatives to enhance digital capacity building of all citizens in South Africa and promote their readiness for the digital transformation of the economy and society.
- The gender digital divide is not only caused by limited access to the internet and devices. Evidence shows there is also a gender gap in STEM careers and vocational training on digital skills, a lack of training in digital literacy for parents and teachers, the continuation of traditional gender stereotypes, lack of encouragement of girls and women by parents and teachers to engage in new careers in the digital world, and little visibility of new role models.
- South Africa's National Digital and Future Skills Strategy (2020) sets out a structured series of initiatives to enhance the digital capacity building of all citizens. Gender mainstreaming is embraced governmental-wide, and the gender digital divide is of high concern, as reflected in many policies and actions undertaken by several Departments to increase the participation of girls and women in STEM and innovative careers of the digital economy.
- The empowering potential of access to the internet and digital tools for women and girls is emerging in South Africa. Tech start-ups, FemTech apps, and access to online resources and telecentres in rural areas are proving to be vital for enhancing women's wellbeing, their exchange of knowledge, digital skills development, and social empowerment.
- Online harms and Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV) through body-shaming, verbal abuse, threats of physical and sexual violence, and general enforcement of negative gender stereotypes

are in many ways part of the continuum of violence against women, girls, and gender and sexual minorities that occurs offline in South Africa. It is another manifestation of oppression occasioned by pervasive and systemic unequal power dynamics that are being replicated, amplified, and reinforced in online spaces. Women and girls, women journalists, and activists are at risk of online harm, particularly women from marginalised communities, including LGBTQIA+ people, women of colour, and Black women, who are often disproportionately targeted with online abuse, which means their voices are silenced more often than of other women.

 Recent law reform developments in South Africa mark important steps for the recognition of online harm and create scope for improved protection and online safety. Moreover, the Cybercrimes Act and the Domestic Violence Amendment Act are also praiseworthy examples of their gender-neutral and inclusive language. Institutional capacity building at all levels of the judicial sector is required to equip public officials with digital literacy skills that enable them to contribute to the effective implementation of these laws.

7.2. Recommendations for future programmes and targeted actions

- Support the plans of the government of South Africa to enhance access to and improve the affordability of digital technologies. To achieve a more inclusive digital world, the genderresponsive implementation of these plans should be strengthened by promoting gender capacity building of all stakeholders, and accountability on gender targets:
 - Blended financing of investments to implement the 'National Infrastructure Plan 2050' must foster a more inclusive digital world linking women to broadband and mobile networks, especially those in poor and marginalised communities.
 - Promote the inclusion of tangible targets for gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the industrial policy instruments for intentional regulation of fair competition in the digital economy, such as targets to enhance equal access of women and men to investment and incentive schemes, in particular state support, and to public preferential procurement.
 - Access-related policies should be coupled with gender-oriented targets for affordable broadband access at low costs, or no costs (e.g. more telecentres in rural areas, and digital hubs in public spaces) and usage to ensure equal participation of women and men in all their diversity in the digital economy. Clear accountability structures and gender-responsive reporting must be enforced to ensure targets for an inclusive digital world are delivered by all stakeholders.

• Support projects and programmes that bridge the gender digital divide in digital literary skills, and STEM careers:

- Support activities that provide digital literacy skills across all sectors of society, and that integrate improved digital literacy training into the school curriculum from an early stage in primary schools, up to the university level.
- Support the setting up of outside-school ICT clubs or the distribution of low-cost computers with preloaded courses and applications. A focus on women and girls is encouraged to ensure that the gender-digital divide closes. Digital hubs, capacity community centres and existing structures such as the telecentres can also boost access and skills to equip and train girls and women with the skills needed for the digital economy.
- Enhance activities to increase digital literacy and skills of the most disadvantaged groups and communities; monitor the access, use, and impact of e-governance services with a gender lens and enhance annual reporting on the gender digital divide.
- Expand a variety of training options for women to increase their employability and business opportunities, such as digital literary skills; e-commerce training for self-employed women, start-ups, and entrepreneurs; training for jobs related to e-Governance, or e-Business companies. Support public-private partnerships between institutions of learning, government, and the private sector that can help identify skills demanded by the labour market in the digital era and develop training for these skills.
- Boost relevant education opportunities and digital skills development for women and girls in STEM subjects to narrow the gender digital divide and enhance their participation at the level of design and decision making in the digital economy and society.
- Review education curricula according to current needs and trends in the digital society, governance, economy and labour market, with a focus on Innovation, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and sustainable product design, Mathematics, e-Governance and e-Business skills, Management skills for people- & environmental-centred flat, flexible decentralised organisations, across all areas of learning.
- Support programmes, CSOs, and SMEs aim to upskill and reskill women in general, those who lost their jobs due to the digital transformation, in order to increase their employability in the digital economy.

• Support gender-transformative projects and programmes targeted at poor women smallholders in the agricultural sector, linking the digital economy and the green transition:

- Support grassroots initiatives focussed on the empowerment of women smallholders, their capacity building and integration in the digital economy, to become drivers of change in the new value chains of organic food supply. Include investments in an innovative digital and green infrastructure (e.g. solar/wind/biogas energy powered water pumps, irrigation systems, household devices) and services (e.g. child care facilities, online information on health) that reduce women's burden of unpaid work.
- Build capacity to link the women smallholders to e-banking, online extension services, information on the weather, increasing their productivity, strategies for eco-labelling, market prices and demand for their products, etc. This would require a robust programme with a

range of grassroots organisations working on the ground, backed by the DALRRD and basket-funding from several partner countries.

Support the development of guidelines and tools on gender mainstreaming in egovernance:

- Leverage inclusiveness at all levels of G2G, G2C, G2E, and G2B, including the regulation and monitoring of compliance to standing policy on gender equality and women's empowerment within the digital process
- Promote gender-responsive governmental messages that address practical and strategic gender interests, including issues to address GBV/F, online harm, OGBV; messages to improve reproductive rights, health and safety, to support women's participation in decision-making processes, to enhance gender relevant labour rights and due diligence on gender equality issues by private companies.
- Support the enforcement of annual reporting on gender mainstreaming and gender targets achieved in e-governance by government departments, missions and agencies.
- Enhance capacity building in departments with poor gender performance.

• Support activities that visualise new role models in the digital economy:

- Support activities that visualize inspiring new role models of successful women in the digital economy, including activities of women's initiatives, organisations, and companies in strategic sectors of the digital economy that open new perspectives for girls and future generations of women.
- Support programmes that encourage girls' and women's self-confidence and the development of their capabilities to start up an e-business, or to undertake STEM-related subjects at school and at the university level, including awareness-raising among teachers, family members, and others about the vital role they can play in the full development of girl's and women's talents and abilities.
- Strengthen CSOs that support and empower girls and young women from marginalized communities and lower the threshold towards digital access, capacity building and skills. Support activities to promote new role models, mentorship, scholarship opportunities and financial resources for girls and young women to continue professional development in the digital economy.

Support capacity building on online harms and online gender-based violence (OGBV) in the judicial sector and create a safe environment for victims to report:

- Encourage the implementation of the recent law reform initiatives and work with CSOs to support victims and survivors with knowledge and skills to know how to report OGBV.
- Support gender training and capacity building of relevant stakeholders, such as police and members of the judiciary is recommended. This can enable improved and nuanced understandings of online harms and equip relevant stakeholders with the required knowledge and skills to appropriately respond to cases of OGBV.

- Strengthen the capacity of relevant stakeholders to collect, use and disseminate sex- and gender-disaggregated data on online harms in South Africa, from the offices of the South African Police Services, up to national Statistics South Africa, the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development. Collecting and utilising accurate and disaggregated data is a useful basis for evidence-based policies that can achieve meaningful change.
- Support key stakeholders including government and CSOs with guidance on emerging threats online and provide guidance on meaningful and appropriate responses to online harms.

7.3. Recommendations for Policy Dialogue on a Gender Transformative Digital World

- Promote more inclusive access to the digital economy, by enabling spaces to consult and involve gender equality advocates and experts in the dialogue, hackathons, feasibility studies, and gender impact assessment for policies, plans, projects, programmes and investments in the expansion of the digital economy in South Africa.
 - South African feminist advocates and experts should be included at the outset in the development of strategies, policies and budgets to ensure policy development centred on women. Gender impact analysis must assess strategies, policies and implementation plans and recommend how to include gender equality considerations.
 - Gender-responsive implementation and monitoring processes must ensure gender equality perspectives in the future development of all strategies, policies and budgets. Supporting government and civil society to bring appropriate stakeholders into the room is an important process that can boost more inclusive access to the digital economy. The organisation of hackathons to outline a gender transformative digital economy could be part of this process.

• Advocacy and dialogue for a more inclusive e-finance:

- Access to finance is key for women's economic empowerment. This involves creating a conducive environment to empower women, ensuring women's access to finance for innovation, for starting-up digital enterprises, and SMEs business for online marketing of their services and skills. This can be achieved through advocating for the extension of ebanking to under-banked and unbanked women and men, especially in rural and peri-urban areas.
- Promoting advocacy and dialogue for a more inclusive e-finance sector, and support for the South African government in forging an appropriate path toward an inclusive digital economy.

7.4. Recommendation for further research

- More in-depth research is needed on online harm and online gender-based violence (OGBV) in order to underpin effective strategies to prevent and combat online harm. This research requires capacity building for the collection and use of gender/sex-disaggregated data on the prevalence, incidence, and impact of OGBV:
 - Data on the prevalence, incidence and impact of online harms and OGBV remains insufficient. Gender-/sex- disaggregated data on the use of ICTs in the perpetuation of violence, including specific data on violence against the LGBTIQA+ community are necessary in order to effectively respond to issues of online safety.
 - Research on online harms and OGBV should include specific data on violence against gender and sexual minorities, which may require strengthening the capacity of relevant stakeholders in the judicial sector to collect, use and disseminate sex-and genderdisaggregated data on online harms and OGBV in South Africa.
 - In the context of South Africa's aspirations for the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR), this research should be framed in the evolving context of online harms, violence and discrimination in 'new' digital technologies that underpin the 4IR, like the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and forms of surveillance economics, use of algorithms, and online marketing that might create new avenues for violence and abuse now or in the future.

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Annex 2: Consultation meetings and interviews

All consultations and meetings took place online. We thank Wiem Latrech and Dunja Speiser from BiRD GmbH for the technical support.

The writers of this report are deeply grateful to all those who have contributed to the Gender Analysis of Green Transition in South Africa. We thank all the participants of the consultation meetings and the resource persons who have been interviewed by us for their contributions to this gender analysis. In case we have not correctly reflected the visions and information they have shared with us we take full responsibility for that. Here we reflect the names of contributors, and we apologize in advance in case we have overlooked anyone.

17 June 2021: Online Consultation with the Gender Coordination Group of International Partners

- EU Delegation, Thomas Tiedemann and Aurélie Voix
- Embassy Denmark, Rebecca Ramsamy
- Embassy France, Alice Jansseune
- Embassy Germany, Elke Wolff
- Embassy Netherlands, Linda Diedericks
- Embassy Canada, Jennifer Cooper
- UNFPA, Siziwe Jongizulu
- USAID, Paula van Dyk
- Geraldine Reymenants
- Shakespear Mudombi
- (Consultants: Thera van Osch and Rose Gawaya)

28 June 2021 from 10:00 – 12:00: Online consultation meeting with CSOs

The topics discussed during this online consultation meeting covered:

- Gender based violence;
- Access to sexual reproductive health rights;
- Poverty and food security;
- Peace and security.

The sub-groups of the meeting were facilitated by Rose Gawaya, Thera van Osch and Aurelie Voix.

The following participants registered for this online consultation:

Participants online consultation meeting with CSOs, 28 June 2021 from 10:00 - 12:00

Name	Organisation	Function	
Dangor Zubeda	Nisaa Institute for Women Development	CEO	
Denile Samuel	AFIT	Project Manager	
Eister Thokozile	J-PAL Africa	Policy Associate	
Gysman Nomkhitha	ENG Foundation	Director	
Harding Joanne	Social Change Assistance Trust	Director	
Kasango Paul	SpaceLinks/Lajava	Director	
Lebjane Cincinantia	Resoketswe Lebjane Foundation	Director	
Loraine Odendaal	N/A	N/A	
Mmatshilo Motsei	N/A	National advisor to the government	
		on women and gender	
Nande Nodada	ENG Foundation	Volunteer Research Officer	
Ndaba Thokozani	Ntethelelo Foundation in Johannesburg	Founder and Executive Director	
Ndlovu Matilda	N/A	N/A	
Ndondo Bongiwe	Hlanganisa Institute for Development	Chief Executive Officer	
	Southern Africa		
Nelamvi Millicent	N/A	N/A	
Ngcobo Zinhle	Eshowe Child and Family Welfare	Project Coordinator and	
	Society	Administrator	
Nkomo, Phelisa	Generation Equality Economic Justice	Co-ordinating Team	
	and Rights Action Coalition		
Nokwanda Dlamini	Kathrada foundation	N/A	
Odendaal Loraine	N/A	N/A	
Poswayo Sibulele	Afesis-corplan	Project Coordinator	
Shozi Penny	Australian Trade Commission	Business Development Manager	
Skosana Nonhlanhla	SONKE Gender Justice	Community Education and	
		Mobilisation Unit Manager	
Smith Thandi	Media Monitoring Africa	Head of Programmes	
Tshabalala Masego	Department of Health	ARV Social Worker	
Thenjiwe Ngcobo	Incema NPO	Director	
Watson Joy	Parliament of the RSA	Senior Researcher	
Zisengwe Melissa	Civic Tech Innovation Network at Wits	Program Project Officer	
	Governance School		
Zulu Nobukhosi	Institute for Stretegic Litigation in Africa	Knowledge Production and	
		Capacity Strengthening Manager	



28 June 2021 from 14:00 – 16:00: Online consultation meeting with CSOs

The topics discussed during this online consultation meeting covered:

- Green economy;
- Land issues/marriage;
- Employment and social security;
- Education;
- Digital economy.

Participants online consultation meeting with CSOs: 28th June 2021 from 14:00 - 16:00.

(Consultants: Thera van Osch and Rose Gawaya)

Name	Organisation	Function
Coopoo Sikhander	Hard Black Cube	Project Manager
Gysman Nomkhitha	ENG Foundation	Director
Hayangah Awour Rosemary	Regional Director	Women Across Borders
Kasango Paul	SpaceLinks/Lajava	Director
Liggett Brian	Impande South Africa	Director
Nodada Nande	Environmental Learning	Research Assistant
	Research Centre	
Nokwanda Dlamini	Global Shapers Community	serves on the Board of
		Directors for Kwakha Indvodza/
		also Curator of the Global
		Shapers Community
Richards Ruben	Ruben Richards Foundation	Director
Samaai Seehaam	Womens's Legal Centre	Director
	(WLCE)	
Smith Thandi	Media Monitoring Centre	Head of Programmes
Spires Meggan	ICLEI	Director Climate Change:
		Energy & Resilience
Tshabala Masego	Department of Health	ARV Social Worker
Thame Rose	N/A	N/A
Thenjiwe Ngcobo	N/A	N/A
Zungu Zinhle	Eshowe Child and Family	Project Coordinator/
	Welfare Society	Administrator



27 July 2021 from 14:00 – 16:00h.: Online World Café on Green Transition³³⁵

The central question for the World Café was: How could the European Union best support a process of green transition that enables all people, in all their diversity, to participate in, contribute to and benefit from the green economy as equals?

There were 3 subgroups on the following thematic issues:

- What should be done to promote gender equality and social inclusion in sustainable tourism, biodiversity, and conservation?
 - Sub-group led by Rose Gawaya.
- What should be done to promote gender equality and social inclusion in circular economy?
 - Sub-group led by Aurélie Voix.
- What should be done to promote gender equality and social inclusion in transition to green energy?
 - Sub-group led by Thera van Osch.

The following participants registered for this online World Café on Green Transition:

Name	Organisation	Function	
Ford Micealah	Women on Farms Project	Coordinator, Women's Health	
		and Empowerment Programme	
Gysman Nomkhitha	ENG Foundation	Director	
Harding Joanne	Social Change Assistance	Director	
	Trust		
Hayangah Rosemary	Khulanikahle Trading	Managing Director	
	Enterprise		
Kasango Paul	SpaceLinks/Lajava	Director	
Lebjane Cincinantia	Resoketswe Lebjane	Director	
	Foundation		
Letlojane Corlett	Human Rights Institute of	Executive Director	
	South Africa (HURISA)		
Liggett Brian	Impande South Africa	Director	
Loraine Odendaal	Nlauma Institute for	Member	
	Integration Studies		

Participants online World Café on Green Transition: 27 July 2021 from 14:00 – 16:00

³³⁵ The method of World Café was an adjusted online version. Instead of moving participants from one group to the other, only the chairs of the subgroups moved. There were 3 subgroups for engagement (breakout groups of 5 - 7 persons pe). The chair of the sub-group introduced the topic of engagement. After 20 minutes of dialogue the chair left and went with her topic to the next group. A new chair came into the group with a new topic. She summarised the dialogue on this topic from the previous group and invited the group to continue their engagement on her topic. After 20 minutes the chairs switched again, and the subgroups were invited to discuss the third topic. When time was up, everyone came back in plenary and the chairs of the tables presented all the ideas, recommendations, and proposals in plenary. (Unfortunately, the method did not 100% work out as planned which caused some confusion).

Name	Organisation	Function
Louw Carmen	Women on Farms Project	Director
Mbangula Meshack	Ekurhuleni Environmental	National Coordinator
	Organisation	
Mmatshilo Motsei	Agisanang Domestic Abuse	CEO
	Prevention and Training	
	program (ADAPT)	
Mogale Constance	Rural Democracy Trust	National Coordinator
Moosajee Naadiya	Women in Engineering	Co-Founder
Mzamo Sindi	Circle of Global Business	Founder and Global President
	Women	
Ndlovu Matilda	N/A	N/A
Ndondo Bongiwe	Hlanganisa Institute for	Chief Executive Officer
	Development Southern Africa	
Ngcobo Zinhle	N/A	N/A
Nkosingiphile Solomon Thipe	N/A	N/A
Nokwanda Dlamini	Global Shapers Community	See above
Ntombi Ngobese	N/A	N/A
Odendaal Loraine	N/A	N/A
Patrickson Shela	WWF-South Africa	Public Sector Partnerships
		Coordinator
Poswayo Sibu-Sandile	Inequality Movement	Executive Director/ Gender
	(IMOVE)/ Border Rural	
	Committee (BRC)	
Sikhander Coopoo	Afesis-corplan	Manager Policy & Strategic
		Communication
Smith Thandi	Smith Thandi	Head of Programmes
Spires Meggan	ICLEI	Director Climate Change: Energy
		& Resilience
Thame Rose	N/A	N/A
Zungu Zinhle	Eshowe Child and Family	Project Coordinator/
	Welfare Society	Administrator



<u>16 August 2021: Online Consultation meeting with the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD)</u>

The online consultation meeting had the character of an open interview and was led by the consultant Rose Gawaya. On behalf of the DWYPD, the following officials participated in the meeting

Name	Role in the DWYPD
Shoki Tshabalala	Director General
	Deputy Director General and Chief Director of Policy, Research,
Ranji Reddy	Knowledge Management
Kelebogile Moruane	Chief Director International Relations
Mabelebele Phuti	Chief Director PWD
Bernice Hlagala	Chief Director for Development
Nhlalenhle Nhlapo	International RelationsDepartment
Nkosana Kose	Director: Director General's Office

Participants online consultation meeting with the DWYPD, 16 August 2021

13 September 2021, 10:00 – 11:30: Online consultation meeting Digital Transition

The following questions were used for the consultations in the online meeting:

- How are CSOs involved in discussions on gender-responsive ICT policies and plans?
- What measures are in place to address online abuse, violence and bullying?
- How can digitalisation contribute to reducing GBV?
- How can the digital sector contribute to avoiding discriminatory gender-stereotyping? (For example, in the use of algorithms, and in the digitalisation of decision-making in public and private organisations)
- How could equal access to digital education and training be improved, particularly in marginalised communities of South Africa?
- What measures are needed to create gender balance at all levels of the ICT sector?
- What should be done to make the ICT sector more attractive for women and girls?
- How to achieve equal access for women and girls to new jobs and entrepreneurship in the digital sector?
- How has access to e-banking evolved among men and women in all their diversity? (Gender, age, head of household, province, income, urban/rural, etc.)
- What added value can the EU provide in terms of enhancing women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the digital sector?

The following experts participated in this online consultation:

Participants online consultation meeting Digital Transition: 13 September 2021, 10:00 - 11:30

(Consultants: Thera van Osch and Rose Gawaya)

Name	Function	Organisation
Bird William	Manager	Media Monitoring Arica
Fortuin Celeste	Research, Monitoring and Evaluation	Dockda Rural Development
	Consultant	Agency
Manganye Winnie	Manager, International programmes	SALGA
	and partnerships	
N/A	N/A	Zanandele Leadership
Sipula, Mwaka	Intern	UNISA

Online Open Interviews:

(Consultants: Thera van Osch and Rose Gawaya)

Date	Name	Institution	Role
11 Aug 2021	Ramadimetja Lekganyane	DSBD	Consultant
16 Aug 2021	Makgotlho Nomvula	Department for Small	CD-Mainstreaming of
		Business (DSBD	disadvantaged groups
18 Aug 2021	Moleko Nthabiseng	Commission for Gender	Commissioner
		Equality (CGE)	
20 Aug 2021	Renee Scheltema	"Normal Is Over"	Producer/filmmaker336
		Foundation	
23 Aug 2021	Molopyane Kelebogile	Africa Beyond the Fourth	
		Industrial Revolution	CEO
		(ab4ir)	
24 Aug 2021	Geen Valerie	UNIDO	Project Coordinator
1 Sept 2021	Labet Ariane	EU Delegation to South	Programme Officer Green
		Africa	Transition
2 Dec. 2021	Carmen Mollmann	Gender Research	Director/gender experts
	Gracia Mackie	Alliance, South Africa	
15 Dec. 2021	Kgosi Motsoane	EU Delegation to South	Programme Officer Digital
		Africa	Transition

³³⁶ Film maker living in South Africa since 1998, and producer of the award winning Film 'Normal is Over' <u>https://www.normalisover.org/</u>.