



Women's Month

Advancing Gender Equality at the Local Level

Local government is uniquely positioned to contribute to gender equality. As a representative structure of the community and citizens, municipalities are able to lead, guide and facilitate local initiatives that promote the participation of all women in key decision-making processes that affect their lives and communities.

Local governments, as the grass-roots level of government to the people, are also best placed to advance gender equality through policy and programming. This means that gender considerations must inform municipal Integrated Development Planning (IDP) and budgeting processes in a way that takes into account the specific needs, priorities and views of women.

The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, issued by the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women and signed by South Africa contains key commitments that governments all over the World should comply with.

Among the key strategies advanced to realize gender equality is gender mainstreaming, which ensures that the needs and rights of women are represented in all policies, programmes and strategies across all levels of government.

It is against this background that the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and the broader local government sector, sees August, Women's Month, as an opportunity to reflect on the progress that has been made towards gender equality and to identify what still needs to be done to overcome the remaining barriers.

The theme this month for SALGA TV will be geared towards the challenges facing women at the local level and how municipalities can contribute to the goals of gender equality and women's empowerment.

SALGA Council of Speakers (SCoS)

The SCoS will be convened on Tuesday, 24 August 2021 and a whole raft of issues impacting on local government are on the table for discussion, including the recent report commissioned by the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC), having recommended that municipal elections be postponed to no later than February 2022 in response to the ongoing COVID-19 condition.

The SCoS will be held through a hybrid sitting with a limited number of delegates attending in person at the Matjhabeng Municipality in Welkom, Free State. This to comply with COVID-19 protocols whilst ensuring the safety of all delegates.

The SCoS serves as a forum through which Municipality Speakers can consult one another in matters of common interest to improve governance and service delivery within local government.

SALGA Women's Commission (SWC) National Seminar and Local Government Women Leadership Development Masterclass Series.

The SWC will from Wednesday, August 25, 2021 to Friday, August 27, 2021 be convening a virtual seminar under the theme: "The Year of Charlotte Maxeke: Reflecting on Tangible Solutions for Gender Equality in Local Government (Past Achievements and Future Goals)".

Seminar goals and objectives:

- Reflect and report on the SWC Journey and progress with the implementation of the SWC resolutions during 2016 – 2021 term of office;
- Reflect on the gender parity (representation and participation) of both political and administrative leadership positions in local government;
- Reflect on the achievements and challenges experienced by women in local government;
- Propelling women leaders to the forefront of organizational change efforts; and
- Unleashing leadership potential in women for better service delivery.

Commemorative events:

- National Women's Day South Africa is celebrated annually on the 9th of August. On this day, South Africa commemorates the day on which 20,000 women of colour marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against amendments to the Apartheid laws.

This year, Women's Day will be celebrated under the theme: "The year of Charlotte Maxeke: Realizing Women's Rights". This is in recognition and celebration of the 150th birthday anniversary of Mme Charlotte Makgomo Manna Mxeke.

The concept of Generation Equality is a global campaign and links South Africa to global efforts to achieve gender equality by 2030.

- In 1994, the United Nations General Assembly decided that the International Day of the World's Indigenous People shall be observed on 9 August every year to raise awareness and protect the rights of the world's indigenous population. This event also recognizes the achievements and contributions that indigenous people make to improve world issues such as environmental protection.
- August 31 is African Traditional Medicine Day. For the past 11 years, countries in the World Health Organization (WHO) African Region have marked the African Traditional Medicine Day by advocating for strengthening the linkage between traditional medicine and institutionalized care in line with the WHO strategy.

Follow hashtag:

#20YearsOfDemocraticLocalGovernment and look out for more activities planned for the 20 Years of Democratic Local Government on the SALGA website: www.salga.org.za and all our social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.