



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

COMMITTEE: HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAMMES



SUMMARISED REPORT AND FORWARD LOOKING DOCUMENT: 1 APRIL 2002 TO 31 MARCH 2003

The Office of the Premier, Western Cape (Directorate: Human Rights Programs) has in terms of its strategic mandate, the responsibility to mainstream the issues of Gender, Youth and Disability into the core business of all line function departments. This in essence means a more integrated and co-ordinated working methodology within a single planning framework.

Gender, Youth and Disability have similar core functions and responsibilities as it all relates to the **promotion, protection and enhancement of equality**. Thus, in order to ensure inclusivity, of the issues as mentioned into the core business of the Department's line function, the Departmental Human Rights Committee of Housing adopted a mainstreaming approach. (*Mainstreaming refers to that which has to be integrated into existing planning and service delivery frameworks*)

The practical implications of mainstreaming therefore suggest certain functional and structural changes, that is the development, organization and re-organization of strategies, mechanisms, structures, policies and departmental projects.

BACKGROUND

Focal Units have been established in both national and provincial departments. All 13 provincial departments of the Western Cape Government, as well as the Office of the Premier have initiated the formation of Departmental Gender Focal Units.

The Department of Housing formed a Human Rights Focal Unit in order to integrate and co-ordinate all Human Rights issues into a single framework. The unit's mission areas follow:

MISSION: To ensure the promotion and mainstreaming of human rights in the Department of Housing.

This Unit forms a link between the Western Cape Office for the Status of Women for Gender Equality (OSW), the Office for the Status of Disabled People (OSDP), the Office for the Status of Youth (OSY) and various Departments of the Provincial Administration of the Western Cape. Members of the Departmental Human Rights

Focal Unit are **not specifically dedicated to gender, youth and disability i.e. this role is fulfilled in addition to their existing line function responsibilities.**

The members are:

Mr C Jordan (Chair: Gender, Youth and Disability), Ms I Wani (Disability), Ms N Oosterwyk (Gender), Ms M Sampson (Youth), Mr AJ Canham (Youth) and Mr P Magcoba (disability).

The following mechanism and structures are in place to mainstream gender issues:

The HRFU do however not participate in any decision-making structures, although there is an open door policy communication between the chairperson of the HRFU and the Head of Department.

- The Focal Unit for the Department of Housing was established in October 1999. Presently the Unit consists of six members who represent each of the line function components of the Department excluding the Directorate Housing Settlement and the Directorate: Finances.
- The Focal Unit also attends various Management and staff meetings, as well as distributing information electronically to inform personnel of any Human Rights issues.

The broad aims of the Focal Unit are as follows:

To see to it that human rights issues are taken into account when dealing with routine strategic planning or any other form of planning that may take place within the department.

To see to it that human rights issues are reflected in business plans, service delivery plans and the MTEF budget.

To take responsibility for the revision of all departmental policy planning, projects and programs of action, in line with national and provincial policy and guidelines regarding gender, youth and disability.

To see to it that the department produces data which is broken down in terms of gender, race and disability. (e.g. the Employment Equity Plan)

To take responsibility for the sensitizing of staff regarding gender, youth and disability (capacity training).

To see to it that specific international, national and provincial gender, youth and disability conventions, policies, programs and actions are carried out within in the department.

To take responsibility for future human rights audits.

To take responsibility for the development of a specific departmental action plan regarding gender, youth and disability in line with national and provincial policy and guidelines.

B. REVIEW OF PROGRESS MADE DURING 2002 -2003

1. *Training/capacity building*

Members of the Focal Unit attended various training sessions and workshops organised by the OSW, OSY and OSDP and various NGO's. The aim of these capacity building sessions was to build the capacity of the members and in so doing, equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfill the aims of the HRFU. Workshops and training attended and presented to the Department were:

- Provincial budget workshop on gender mainstreaming (Facilitated by Ms D Budlender and the Standing Committee on the NCOP, Women's Rights, Youth Matters, Constitutional Affairs and Affairs concerning Disabled Persons)
- One day Workshop by the National Youth Commission
- Two day workshop on youth mainstreaming presented by the OSY
- Two day workshop on gender mainstreaming presented by the OSW
- Two day workshop on disability mainstreaming presented by the OSDP
- Five one day workshops on gender and anti-bias presented by the HRFU for employees of the Department of Housing and Local Government. A total of 120 employees attended this workshop from post levels 2 -12.
- Five day "Free to Grow" training course in self development.
- The chair trained various gender focal units of the Departments of Transport & Works, Economic Development and Tourism, Agriculture, Finance, Education and Cultural Affairs and Sport on gender issues.
- A total of 7 employees of the Department are currently on a sign language training course in order to remove the communication barrier with our deaf clients. The officials will be requested to do a formal examination during April 2003 and will receive certificates if successfully completed.

2. *Participation in related committee's*

Due to their participation in the HRFU, various members are members of the following committees:

- Provincial Co-ordinating Gender Committee,
- Inter-departmental committee on gender,
- Inter-departmental committee on youth,

- Inter-departmental committee on disability,
- Provincial Subcommittee on Training regarding human rights mainstreaming. (Women in Management training package were developed and Human Rights Mainstreaming training package are still in progress),
- Provincial Subcommittee lobbying for the appointment of Diversity managers/Human Rights managers

3. *Participation in related conferences and exhibitions*

- Attendance of the launch of Child Protection Month (May 2002) facilitated by the Department of Social Services and Poverty Alleviation,
- Provincial Youth Consultative Conference (16 & 17 June 2002),
- Provincial Government and Gender -based Civil Society Partnership building and Consultative Planning Conference (12 & 13 September 2002),
- Access 2002 – A conference on Partnership in Disability (7 & 8 October 2002) – The Department had an exhibition on related housing issues. (www.access2002.co.za)
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities Conference (3rd of December 2002 in Kimberley) – The Department had an exhibition.

4. *Building Partnerships and Networking*

Partnerships and networking opportunities were formed and maintained with the following organizations and Departments:

- National Department of Justice, Correctional Services and South African Police Services
- All the Departments of the Provincial Administration
- Special partnerships with the Departments of Social Services, Health and Transport & Works
- Partnership with the United States Consulate on Women and Child Trafficking
- Partnership with Professor Hashimoto from the University of Japan on Gender mainstreaming (sharing and assist each other with gender best practices via e-mail and internet)
- Partnership with Professor Amanda Gouws from the University of Stellenbosch (Department of Political Science)
- Partnership with the Western Cape Network on Violence Against Women (Women in Shelters)
- Partnership with Closing the Cape (Disability Organisation)
- Partnership with GAP (Gender Advocacy Program)
- Partnership with Ilze Olckers (Human Rights Lawyer)
- Partnership with Shifra Jacobson from Full Stop Solutions (Gender Specialist)

5. *Audits*

Various audits were compiled on behalf of the department:

- An audit of Public Service Transformation: Service Delivery: Measuring Progress
- An audit to the South African Human Rights Commission
- An audit to the Provincial Gender Equality Commissioner
- An yearly report to the Office of the Premier (OSW, OSY, OSDP)
- A report to the Minister of Housing on Gender issues.

6. *Special Event - Women's Day – 9th of August 2002*

The HRFU collected clothes and toiletries (in collaboration with the Department of Transport & Works) and presented it on the 8 August 2002 to the following organizations:

Saartjie Baartman centre for abused women and children
Alfa & Omega Shelter (Beaufort West) for Women and Children living with HIV/AIDS

The Acting Head of Department Transport and Works, (Darryl Jacobs), The Head of Department Social Services and Poverty Alleviation (Virginia Petersen) and the Head of Department Housing (John Africa) were present at the handing over ceremony.

7. *Departmental Gender Framework*

The chair attended a Conference at which it was requested that each Department should compile its own Gender Framework in line with the National Framework on Women's Equality and Empowerment. The Gender Framework of the Department of Housing will be presented to Western Cape Cabinet during the month of April 2003 for approval. The Final Draft is available on the Departmental website.

8. *Distribution of Human Rights Awareness Raising Material*

Members of the HRFU have been responsible for the distribution of pamphlets, posters and e-mail, pertaining to gender and disability related issues. The purpose of this material was both to inform personnel and to raise awareness around issues of gender and disability. For example, during the "16 Days of Activism on Gender Violence", the HRFU produced posters and encouraged personnel to wear white ribbons in support of the drive against Gender Violence. The HRFU also encouraged personnel to wear red ribbon on AIDS day and Yellow ribbon on Disability Day.

9. *Human Rights Budget*

The Department of Housing do not have a specific budget for gender, youth or disability issues, but do make use of a Departmental central fund as the need arises. This matter will be addressed when the mainstreaming of human rights becomes one of the Departmental Strategic Objectives.

10. *Evaluation/Monitoring of Departmental projects, programs and statistics*

The HRFU monitor and evaluate statistics regarding the gender and race distribution of the establishment on a quarterly basis. The Department did not make much progress during 2002 regarding the appointment of women in managerial positions and no disabled persons were appointed. Emphasis were placed on the appointment of employees according to race.

Various Departmental committees were monitored for their compilation according to race and gender. Committees like the Departmental Training Committee, the Selection Committees for appointments, the DITCOM committee and IMLC adhered to these principles. **The Departmental Tender committee however did not take gender into consideration**.

Departmental projects such as the SLP (Integrated Service Land Project) are also monitored on a quarterly basis regarding the appointment and training of women and youth on these community development projects.

Policies that were evaluated for their human rights implications were the Housing Act, Employment Equity Plan, HIV Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, SPMS Policy and the Concept Framework for the Orientation of New Employees. Suggestions were made and forwarded to the relevant officials. Overall the policies adhere to the principals of human rights.

The ISM building was also evaluated for its accessibility for disabled people. Overall the building complies with the necessary standards, however special parking should be arranged within the building for people with disabilities.

C. INPUT REGARDING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS UNIT FOR 2003/2004

1. *Communication*

Ensuring effective internal communication and external liaison by making use of the necessary departmental structures and lobbying for the appointment of a permanent Diversity/Human Rights Manager in order for him/her to implement the Gender Framework, the Provincial Disability Strategy and compiling a Youth Action Plan. The website will be used to communicate internationally and with related Human Rights stakeholders.

Awareness raising material will be used in the building to promote and mainstream gender, youth and disability.

The Minister of Housing's Roadshow will be used as a forum to communicate Human Rights and Housing issues to the communities of the Western Cape.

2. *Capacity Building/Awareness raising*

Ensuring the necessary capacity building of the unit, and sensitizing personnel by way of presenting various workshops on gender, disability and domestic violence.

It is also encouraged that the Department should embark on an awareness raising campaign on issues such as HIV/AIDS, Sexual

harassment and implement an HIV/AIDS program and Employee Assistance Program .

The Premier's Office is sponsoring the training of disability issues to two members of the HRFU. Mr Charles Jordan will attend a training session in Durban on the 24 -28 March 2003 and ms Irene Wani will attend training in Bisho during the month of May (3 days).

3. *Budget*

Compiling a business plan and seek the necessary funds by the Head of Department for the effective implementation of Human Rights mainstreaming.

4. *Human Rights Operational Plan*

The development of an Integrated Departmental Human Rights (Gender, Disability & Youth) Operational Plan.

5. *Evaluation/Monitoring*

The effective ongoing evaluation / monitoring of line function projects, programs and policies in order to promote equality. This will also include statistics on the employment of females in decision-making positions and the appointment of disabled people.

6. *Partnerships and Networking*

The HRFU will continue to form and maintain current partnerships with various individuals, organizations and departments. The Department will form new partnerships internationally and with the National Department of Housing and UWC and UCT's human rights units.

Partnerships will be maintained at the official gender strategic planning session taking place on the 12 & 13 March 2003.

7. *Special Events*

The committee will be this year once again involved with special events such as Women's day, "16 Days of Activism on Gender Violence", Disability Day, AIDS day and Youth Day.

8. *Audits*

The HRFU will once again have to compile an audit on issues gender, youth and disability to the Public Service Commission, the Office of the Premier and the Gender Equality Commissioner. The audits on gender and disability will be done on a quarterly basis.

In 2003/2004 it will be expected to report to the National Youth Commissioner and the National Office on the Status of Disabled People. These reports will be done via the Premier's Office.

South Africa will report to the United Nations in 2005 on all its gender issues and need to start generating a compiled audit as from 2003/2004.

9. *Special Projects*

Gender:

Homeless Women:

To launch a project in collaboration with the Western Cape Network on Violence against Women (NGO) in order to ensure abused homeless women's access to low cost housing. Many women and children are abused and abandoned by their husbands and after they have recovered in shelters, they are unable to return to their homes. They become homeless and do not qualify to apply for a housing subsidy. The project will consist of stakeholders such as Officials of the Unicity Housing section, Human Right Lawyers, Officials of the Network on Violence against Woman, Officials of Shelters for abused women and children and the members of the Departmental Human Rights Committee.

Women Group Discussions:

To host group discussions during the year facilitated by prominent women figures dealing with topics such as domestic violence, women in positions of power and sexual harassment in the workplace.

Men's March Pledge

To challenge the men in the Department of Housing to support gender equality and to participate in the march of 16 days activism against gender violence. (December 2003)

Women's experiences in Housing

To write an article on Women's challenges and struggles in the Housing environment (e.g. Minister Hangana, Charlotte Lamohr, Belinda Fortune, Pauline Houniet - Engineer and some woman contractors) and to place it in the Provincial Newsletter and on the Departmental website.

Youth:

Bursaries/Training for the youth in the Housing Sector

It is the idea to identify two outstanding youth leaders in the community who are involved in the Housing sector. We would like to give them the opportunity to attend one or two of the Housing courses presented by the Department. One of these courses could be the Peoples Housing Process being presented by the University of Stellenbosch.

Oudtshoorn International Youth Festival & Expo (3 – 12 July 2003)

The Provincial Government will be involved as a strategic partner in the international youth festival taking place during this year and will contribute R500000. The official patrons will be Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Ms Antjie Krog - Samuel. The former President of the United States, Mr Bill Clinton, will be the Youth Festival's senior international patron. The HRFU (one or two members) will be part of the delegation of the Provincial Government.

Disability:

Employment opportunities for the disabled:

The HRFU would like to meet with some of the schools for disabled learners. The idea would be to identify some of the learners who are trained in brick laying and to link them with some of the building contractors. We will encourage these building contractors to employ maybe some of these disabled learners.

D. CHALLENGES FOR THE FOCAL UNIT AND MANAGEMENT

- Empowering the HRFU to participate in the departmental strategic plan, service delivery plan and communication strategy.
- Improving service delivery to ensure that women, youth and disabled people benefit and gain access from services rendered by the Department.
- Implementation of a human rights budget for the Department for the financial year 2003/2004.
- Implementing the Gender Framework.
- Implementing the Provincial Disability Strategy.
- Developing a departmental Youth Action Plan
- The development of performance indicators.
- The appointment of a Diversity/Human Rights manager
- The appointment of a Disability consultant (Closing the Gap) in order to assist with the mainstreaming of disability, to assist with the recruitment of disabled people and to assist with the compilation of a departmental disability policy.