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## **2020 Women's Month Programme: Virtual Seminar**

### **Concept Note**

**Topic:** Violence against Women & Children: Impact on the ECD Sector

**Date:** 24 August 2020

**Time:** 5.30 – 7.30pm

**Duration:** 2 hours

#### **Objectives**

To spotlight the ECD sector because it represents almost entirely the most vulnerable in our society, women and children.

To interrogate the impact of the various forms of gender-based violence on women and children within the ECD sector.

To continue to add our voices to the multitude of CSOs' demand for greater government support (funding, expertise, policy implementation plans, intersectoral commitment and accountability, etc) for ECD to redress the historical and current disadvantages of women and children in the sector.

#### **Context**

Violence against women takes many forms - physical, sexual, economic, psychological - and all of these represent a violation of human dignity and human rights and have lasting consequences for women themselves, their children and their communities.

South Africa has the highest number of cases of violence against women in the world and is, therefore, regarded as one of the most unsafe places in the world to be a

woman. This incursion against women and children has been referred to variously by President Cyril Ramaphosa as a situation akin to a “war”, a “second pandemic” and women and children “under siege”.

The scale and intensity of this social scourge beggars belief and has penetrated all sectors and levels in our society. The ECD sector, comprising children and a larger majority of women, is one that is particularly vulnerable to violence against women. Historically, women in communities have borne the responsibility of providing ECD services, especially when the apartheid government abdicated its obligation to Black children. The sector’s workforce continues to be populated almost entirely by women, mostly in underserved communities. It remains, at best, a poorly supported sector and, at worst, a neglected one. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought out into the open the terrible plight of all those in the sector bedevilled by this relative unimportance and its associated disadvantages.

In light of these circumstances, it is our contention that this sector and its susceptibilities be spotlighted during Women’s Month. The special focus areas under discussion will be: Impact of violence against women and children; Inequities as violence against women and children in ECD; Economic conditions as violence against women in ECD; and, violence against women workers in ECD.

## **Participants**

**Dr Chandre Gould:** *Impact of violence against women and children.*

Chandré Gould is a senior research fellow in the Justice and Violence Prevention Programme at the Institute for Security Studies (ISS). She has a PhD from Rhodes University. Since 2006 her work has focused on violence prevention and criminal justice in South Africa. In 2015 she completed a multi-year life history study of violent offenders. Since 2008 she has played a leading role in a community-based organization, the Seven Passes Initiative, that works to prevent violence through a range of programmes. She convenes the multisectoral Violence Prevention Forum in South Africa that aims to inform and support the scale-up of evidence-based violence prevention programmes nationally.

**Professor Hasina Ebrahim:** *Inequities as violence against women and children in ECD.*

Hasina Banu Ebrahim is an outstanding early childhood scholar and Professor at the University of South Africa (UNISA) in Early Childhood Education. She is a rated researcher with the National Research Foundation in South Africa and her research focus is on Early Care and Education policy, practice and teacher education. Since 2017, Prof. Ebrahim co-chairs, with Prof Alan Pence (University of Victoria), the UNESCO chair of ECD.

**Professor Eric Atmore:** *Economic conditions as violence against ECD practitioners.*

Eric teaches at the University of Cape Town and is Adjunct Associate Professor in the department of Social Science. He founded the Centre for Early Childhood Development, a national non-profit ECD organisation. He is also Extraordinary Associate Professor in Education Policy Studies at the University of Stellenbosch. Eric has a PhD from Stellenbosch University on Early Childhood Development Policy in Post-Apartheid South Africa. His areas of research are non-profit organisations, early childhood development, social policy, funding and resource mobilisation and has written extensively on critical issues in ECD.

**Ms Christine Radebe :** *Violence against women workers in ECD.*

Christina Radebe is an owner of an ECD centre for the past 27 years and has worked as both a Practitioner and a Matron. Currently, she is President of the South African Congress for Early Childhood Development (SACECD), a national, democratic body for ECD in South Africa. She also holds the positions of Mayoral Committee member in the Matjhabeng Local Municipality and ambassador for human rights.

**Moderator:** Ms Patsy Pillay

Patsy Pillay, anti-apartheid activist and advocate for early childhood development for the past 39 years in South Africa has a deep passion for children and women's development. She holds an MEd and is the founding Director of New Beginnings Training Development, with extensive experience and expertise in ECD. Patsy has received many accolades and recognition for her work in ECD including featuring in the Mail & Guardian Book of 100 women leaders in 2011. Patsy has presented widely, locally and internationally, on a range of ECD issues.

**Format**

The seminar will be moderated and will commence with a brief contextualisation of the topic and a general introduction and welcome to the speakers. Each speaker will be given 10 - 12 minutes for their inputs, which will follow in the order of appearance on the programme. This will be followed by a carefully managed Q & A session, with brief and concise questions to a particular panellist or the whole team. The moderator will summarise the key points of the discussion and round off. The time schedule is as follows:

Introduction & Welcome: 5 mins

Panellists Inputs:  $12 \times 4 = 48/50$

Rounding off and moving to Q & A: 5 mins

Q & A: 45 mins

Summation of key points & Closure: 10 mins

Exit: 5 mins

Total: 120 mins