

ELECTION UPDATE 2004

SOUTH AFRICA

number 9 ·17 May 2004

editorial

In the *Election Updates* we have discussed various aspects of the South African election 2004, in some detail. The previous issues of this bulletin have carried vital information covering the electoral process prior to, during as well as the immediate aftermath of the polling phase of the election. What we have not yet done in sufficient detail is to provide some information and analysis of the gender dimensions of the entire electoral process and its outcome.

This ninth issues of *Election Update 2004* aims precisely to address this missing link in our discussion thus far. The focus of our discussion aiming to address this dimension of the 2004 election is important for purposes of unravelling gender aspects of political participation in South Africa. It is worth noting that South Africa is one of the signatories to the 1997 SADC Declaration on Gender and Development which commits member states to equal gender representation in all key organs of the state and at least 30% representation of women in these institutions by the year 2005. It is interesting to note that South Africa has already surpassed the 30% target in terms of women's representation in Parliament. From 27.7% in 1994 to 30% in 1999, the representation of women in Parliament has soared to 32.8% following the 2004 election. Since 1994, the

top position in Parliament namely, the Speaker of the House, has been occupied by a woman; first by Dr Frene Ginwala and now followed by Mrs Baleka Mbete-Kgositsile, both of whom are political heavyweights from the ANC stable.

Furthermore, following the 2004 election, the representation of women in the South Africa cabinet stands at an impressive 41.2 percent, only 8.8 percent shy of the 50% mark (i.e. equal gender representation which is the ultimate goal of the SADC Declaration). It is also interesting to note that of the nine provincial Premiers, four are women (about 50% women representation).

What should be noted, however, is that despite this improvement in women's political participation and representation in key organs of the state, only the ruling ANC has a voluntary quota system that allows for gender inclusivity. None of the other opposition parties have any institutionalised mechanism for gender equality or balance.

Two major problems present themselves here. First, it is imperative that all parties, both ruling and opposition, adopt and adhere to deliberate policy and institutional mechanisms that promote women's participation and representation in the political system. So far only the ruling party has put

this system in place whereby every third person on the party list is a woman. Second, it is well and good that the ruling ANC has put in place a voluntary quota system. However, this situation could be further improved by introducing a mandatory legislated quota system to which all the parties have to abide and adhere to with clear sanctions stipulated for non-compliance.

Khabele Matlosa

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EISA Editorial Team

Jackie Kalley, Khabele Matlosa,
Denis Kadima

published with the assistance of
OSF-SA and NORAD

NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

WOMEN AND THE 2004 ELECTION

*Professor Amanda Gouws
University of Stellenbosch*

After the 2004 elections, South Africa now ranks eleventh in the world with regard to the number of women in Parliament by having women in 131 seats. The relatively high number of women in Parliament can be attributed to the proportional list electoral system and the acceptance of a one third voluntary quota by the governing party, the ANC. The benefit of a proportional list system is that it ensures that women and small parties have access to representation. However, what really makes the difference in South Africa is the ANC's quota. Without the ANC's quota there would have been far fewer women in Parliament. None of the opposition parties have accepted a quota for women's representation.

Women have become quite a significant constituency with 1 982 876 more women than men having registered to vote. This means that probably more women than men have voted. Research on previous election results has, however, shown no significant gender gap between men and women when it comes to voting

behaviour. A gender gap exists when a significant larger number of women than men vote for a certain party or on grounds of certain issues. There are many issues that could contribute to a gender gap such as the fact that women die in larger numbers from HIV/AIDS than men, the impact of unemployment on women as primary caregivers, basic needs issues such as housing, water, electricity and education and violence against women. The lack of a gender gap can probably be attributed to a lack of alternatives among the different parties. During the 2004 election most parties dealt with the same issues and most of them did it in a gender blind fashion.

While the ANC is the party with the best track record for delivering on gender issues, no party really attempted to mobilise the women's vote, even though women have the power to swing an election. Voters are not mobilised by their gender identities. Racial and class identities and their intersection with gender and party loyalty play a more important role when it comes to voting behaviour in South Africa.

With a 69.68% of the vote going to the ANC it attained 279 of the seats with 107 are filled by women. This is

82% of the total number of seats held by women. In total there are 131 women in Parliament in contrast to the 119 elected in the 1999 election. Women, therefore, constitute 32.8% of the National Assembly, mostly due to the increase in the ANC's share of the vote and its commitment to a one third gender quota. In this election the ANC put women in "electable" positions as nearly every third name on the national candidate's list was that of a woman. The 50/50 campaign spearheaded by the Gender Advocacy Campaign (GAP) has demanded that 50% women be elected to Parliament by 2005 in order to obtain parity with men. Even though the campaign raised consciousness about women's representation and helped in getting the women's vote out, it did not succeed in getting 50% women in Parliament because a zebra list of every second name on the list, a women's name, was not used.

The opposition parties managed to get a few more women into Parliament. The DA has 10 out of 50 women, the IFP 6 out of 28, the UDM 3 out of 9, the ID 2 out of 7, the NNP 1 out of 7, the ACDP 1 out of 6, the UCDP 1 out of 3, the MF 1 out of 2 and the FF+, AZAPO and the PAC 0. In the bigger

opposition parties, women may not be placed strategically on the list.

Women in cabinet are approaching the 50% mark with 41.2% ministers and deputy-ministers. With 4 premiers out of 9, women make up 44.5% of the premiers. President Mbeki has shown the ANC's commitment to gender equality by appointing 10 women ministers and 12 deputy-ministers. Women now fill some of the most powerful ministries in government such as Justice (Bridgette Mabandla), Foreign Affairs (Nkosazana Zuma) and Education (Naledi Pandor). These portfolios are not the "soft ministries" usually assigned to women. Other ministries headed by women are Agriculture and Land (Thoko Didiza), Housing (Lindiwe Sisulu), Home Affairs (Nosivivwe Mapisa-Nqakula), Health (Manto Tshabalala-Msimang), Minerals and Energy (Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka), Public Service (Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi), Water and Forestry (Buyi Sonjica), and Communications (Ivy Masepe-Cassaburri). While the social portfolios such as health and housing are also run by women, all these portfolios together form the key to social transformation in South Africa.

The President made it clear that he needs ministers who can deliver on policies that will form the cornerstone of

the ANC's "contract with the people". Putting women in these important portfolios also expresses his faith in their ability to deliver. Many of the women ministers have a strong gender consciousness and may contribute to monitoring the gender sensitivity of the policies they have to implement. A relationship between women in Parliament and the National Machinery for Women is very important to ensure the necessary monitoring work on gender issues. In this regard, the Joint Standing Committee on the Quality of Life and the Status of Women (JSQLSW) has done excellent work in the past. Unfortunately government has lost two of its gender stalwarts, in the persons of the previous speaker, Frene Ginwala, and the Chair of JSQLSW, Pregs Govender. The loss of their experience is a loss to all women in South Africa.

The importance of the ANC's quota system cannot be underestimated in delivering a large number of women to Parliament. Yet, this is a voluntary quota. The danger of voluntary quotas is that if a party's support declines, the number of women also declines, or if the electoral system changes women may lose out. A legislated quota would be more effective in ensuring that women remain in government. It will also force opposition parties to

accept a quota. With the problem of accountability in the PR system the electoral system may be changed to a mixed PR and district system as recommended by the Van Zyl Slabbert Task Team. The number of women in Parliament will then decline. Evidence of this already exists on a local level where more women are elected from the PR lists rather than in the wards.

The transformation of the electoral system should be effected with the gender dimension in mind. Failure to do so will result in the gains South Africa has made on the representation of women in government possibly being lost.

PROVINCIAL ROUNDUP

GAUTENG

Gender and Elections in Gauteng

Sydney Letsholo
Electoral Institute of
Southern Africa

Introduction

The 2004 election has come and gone. The representation of parties in both national and provincial parliaments has also been established in accordance with the performance of each party in the election. However, the representation of women has attracted attention in order to ascertain how South Africa has performed to conform with the SADC requirement that there should be at least 30 % of women represented in parliaments and other government structures. Equally important to note, is that the voters roll for the 2004 elections totalled 20.6 million eligible voters. This reveals that 54.8% were female voters with only 45,2%, male. It is this particular aspect of the South African society that gave President Thabo Mbeki solid material for his pronouncement during his inaugural speech: we cannot have democracy without a fair representation of women in government institutions. It is therefore interesting to see how parties lived up to that

challenge in the Gauteng Legislature.

Women Representation in the Gauteng Legislature

Women empowerment seemed to have been a priority among the different political parties in the province. Below is table that compares the general representation of women in the Gauteng Legislature in the period 1994 to 2004.

Election Date	Seats	Women	% Women
1994	86	25	29
1999	73	25	34.2
2004	73	31	42.4

<http://www.genderlinks.org.za/gelections>

The ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC) topped the chart as far as women representation in the legislature is concerned. The ANC has 22 women representatives, followed by the Democratic Alliance with 5. Other parties with women representation are the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) with 2; and the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) and the United Democratic Movement (UDM) have one each.

Gauteng also has performed well in comparison to the other provinces.

In the table below, Gauteng ranks first with 31 women,

followed by Kwazulu-Natal with 21. As it stands, Gauteng has outperformed all the provinces in terms of women representation in the legislature. Given this encouraging vote of confidence in women, it is rather disturbing though to note that the lack of visibility of nominated women during the pre-election period, especially during the campaign trail as women were not present. Since political parties use party lists to nominate candidates - in most cases those who showed loyalty and worked hard for the party during campaigns - get nominated for position either in government or in Parliament. The impression one gets from the increase of women in Parliament whilst the pre-election period revealed almost a total absence of women, is that women were sidelined at that stage. This argument could also be wrong considering that women were probably working behind the scene in other capacities. It would be advisable, however, for parties to create more space for them to be visible during campaigns as most of the women currently in the Gauteng Legislature are relatively unknown.

The above mentioned recommendation does not in

any way detract from the commendable efforts in making gender balance a priority in the province. Nationally, we have also seen a large proportion of women occupying senior and key government posts. President Thabo Mbeki's cabinet comprises twenty two women (Ministers and Deputy Ministers) and twenty seven men (Ministers and Deputy Ministers). Political commentators rightfully assert, however, that more still needs to be done.

With the local government elections scheduled for 2005, it is at this level that efforts need to be concentrated on improving the representation women at the ward level.

Province	2004		+/-	
	Seats	Women	% Women	
Gauteng	73	31	42.4	8.2

Source: <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/gelections>

Conclusion

Following the 2004 elections, half of the parliamentarians in the Gauteng Legislature are women. We observed an increase of 12% from 1999. Gauteng also leads in this regard in comparison with the other provinces. This is a significant improvement and needs to be applauded. Through the efforts of their respective political parties, women are now more visible in Gauteng's political arena.

However, there is still more to be done in as far as women representation in the

provincial Parliament is concerned considering that women represent the majority of the South African population.

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Kwazulu-Natal

GENDER ISSUES IN KWAZULU- NATAL

Shauna Mottiar
Independent Political Analyst

A central challenge for emerging democracies is the achievement of gender equality. Election periods are generally illustrative of the levels of gender equality reached by a democracy as they highlight the amount of women who participate in elections as opposed to men as well as the number of women who formally assume political roles as a result of the election.

Of the 20,674,926 registered voters in South Africa 11,334,228 were women – this effectively means that the amount of women registered to vote in the 2004 elections outnumbered the men. This trend prevailed at a provincial level with regards to KwaZulu-Natal where out of 3,819,864 registered voters, 2,176,061 were women.¹ Clearly, South African women seem to be more politically motivated than South African men. Despite this however there are fewer women in political positions both nationally and

provincially than there are men.

The African National Congress (ANC) is the only political party in South Africa with a quota for women. After it secured a higher majority of the vote in the 2004 elections than it had in 1999 and 1994, the ANC has increased its number of women in Parliament. This is a trend that has been continuous since 1994 – opposition parties on the other hand have proportionally decreased the amount of female representation they have in Parliament as they secured lower percentages of the vote in 1999 and in 2004 respectively. The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) is a case in point. In the 1994 elections it secured 43 seats in Parliament and allocated 10 to women. In the 1999 elections it secured 33 seats in Parliament, 9 of which were filled by women. In the 2004 elections the IFP secured 28 seats in Parliament and only 5 are filled by women. Table 1 below illustrates that this trend has prevailed for the New National Party (NNP) but not for the Democratic Alliance (DA) or the United Democratic Movement (UDM). Notwithstanding the fact that neither the DA nor the UDM have quotas for the representation of women in their parties, they are both

making strides in balancing gender representation.²

Representation of women in the legislatures of the various provinces is outlined in Table 2 below. For the most part it seems that gender proportionality is becoming consolidated with all the provinces showing a gradual rise in the number of women in the provincial legislatures. It is interesting to note that the two provinces not previously ruled by the ANC show certain unique trends in the representation of women. Former IFP stronghold KwaZulu-Natal doubled its number of women in the legislature after the 1999 election. After the 2004 election however the number of women in the legislature has remained the same. The Western Cape – former DA/NNP stronghold held the same amount of women in the legislature in 1999 as it did in 1994 but increased slightly in 2004

With the IFP's loss of KwaZulu-Natal, its future as a political force in South Africa has come into question – consequently gender issues have not been uppermost on the party's priority list. This can be seen with its filling its quota of MEC positions with men.

¹ Statistics from Joseph Fataar - Communications Officer KwaZulu-Natal Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)

² Lowe Morna, C, "The Beginning of Complacency: Gender and the 2004 Elections," Gender Links Website

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SA- Representation of women in Parliament 1994 to 2004	1994			1999			2004		
	PARTY	Total	Women	% women	Total	Women	% women	Total	Women
ANC	252	90	35.7	266	95	35.7	279	104	37
DP/DA	7	1	14	38	6	15.7	50	13	26
IFP	43	10	23	33	9	27.2	28	5	18.5
NP/NNP	82	9	10	28	4	14.2	7	0	0
UDM				14	1	7	9	4	44.4
ACDP	2	0	0	6	2	33	6	2	33
FF				3	0	0	4	0	0
UCDP				3	1	33	3	0	0
PAC	5	1	20	3	0	0	3	0	0
Other				5	2	40	4	0	0
TOTAL	400	111	27.7	400	120	30	400	131	32.75

Source: Gender Links

Table 2: Women in Provincial Legislatures in SA

	1994			1999			2004			+/-
	Seats	W	%W	Seats	W	%W	Seats	W	%W	
KZN	812	11	13.6	80	21	26.2	80	21	26.2	0

Source: Gender Links

The uncertainty surrounding the IFP's continued role in KwaZulu-Natal came to an end in the first week of May when the IFP finally agreed to accept the ANC's offer of three cabinet posts. The three portfolios are to be filled by Nkosi Ngubane for Social Welfare and Population Development, Narend Singh for Culture and Tourism and Blessed Gwala for Public Works. In the interim, the party has had to stave off rumours that Mangosuthu Buthelezi is to step down as leader of the IFP following the party's loss of KwaZulu-Natal to the ANC. According to an article in the *City Press* citing sources within the IFP,

Buthelezi had decided to quit the IFP because the election results were, in his opinion, a vote of no confidence to his leadership. The article claims that "an emotional Buthelezi is reported to have cried as he lashed out at his lieutenants saying they had deceived him by not telling him the truth about people's feelings and the need for a change in leadership." The IFP dismissed the article labelling it, "fictitious and completely without any foundation".³

³ *Natal Witness*, May 6 2004

Elected by the women, but government of, and for, the men

Dr Laurence Piper

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus

In his famous Gettysburg address of 1863, American President Abraham Lincoln spoke of defending 'government of the people, by the people and for the people'. This phrase has come to represent the meaning of democracy for many. Election 2004 hints that we may have a peculiar version of this in KZN: a government of the men and for the men, but elected by the women.

According to census 2001 there are 5,016,925 women in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) to some 4,409,091 men. This is a difference of more than half a million. In percentage terms this means that women comprise 53.22% of the province's population to 46.78% of men. In election 2004 this female dominance was even more pronounced as proportionately more women than men registered. Thus some 2,176,061 women registered, representing 56.97% of voters compared to 1,643,600 men or 43.03%. This number of female voters is the second highest of all the provinces after Gauteng and represents

19.2% of all women registered in 2004 and 10.5% of all voters nationally. We are talking about a lot of voters.

However, despite this, gender issues and women's issues more specifically were conspicuous by their absence in election 2004. Indeed, despite being the majority, and a good majority of registered voters, women barely impacted on KZN politics prior to 2004. In many ways KZN is not peculiar. All provinces, and South Africa as a whole, have more women than men and more registered female than male and yet women leaders and women's issues barely dented the national consciousness during election 2004. The clearest testimony to this was the media's pleasant surprise at Mbeki's appointment of women to cabinet.

So stark was the contrast between the volumes of women voters and the silence on gender in election 2004 that one is tempted to conclude that gender is not an issue in KZN politics. But can this really be so? In KZN women bear the brunt of HIV/AIDS, sexual assault, poverty, unemployment, under-education, not to mention child-rearing. These claims are born out by census data and research and acknowledged by political parties. Why then the silence? Is it that women feel that other issues related to

race and class are more important? Or is it that women's issues do not matter to men and men are more important? Are women silent or silenced?

Gender and Government Prior to 2004

As revealed by a cursory glance at the KZN *Hansard*, gender politics, usually understood as women's issues, featured infrequently on the agenda of the provincial Parliament prior to 2004. Further, if and when such issues did arise, they were often symbolic rather than substantive. Examples include vague commitments to increasing the representation of women in Parliament or various functions in honour of women's day. According to ACDP MPP Joanne Downs, only once in ten years did the KZN legislature schedule a week long sitting around women.

There were various structures in the KZN government dedicated to women. These included the Office for the Status of Women, based in the Premier's Office. However, according to Downs it suffered from benign neglect, especially a lack of resources. Similarly, female parliamentarians formed a women's caucus which pulled together MPP's from various parties under the leadership of Peggy

Mkondeni of the ANC, Loretta Ngcobo of the IFP. While Parliament supplied minute-takers and paid for attendance at these meetings, it did not recognise the women's caucus an official Parliamentary Committee and thus the chair was not paid and the reports not reviewed by the legislature. According to Downs this was because it would have given the ANC one more committee chair than the IFP and this was intolerable to Mtshali. Further, after the floor-crossing in early 1993 other issues came to dominate the KZN politics, pushing the women's caucus off the agenda.

In general, Downs was not terribly impressed with the operation of the caucus. 'It discusses the Beijing documents and those kind of things, lots of very general things... It also raised the issue of the representation of women in Parliament', she added, 'on the assumption that having more women would change the issues discussed'.

Downs seemed sceptical of this view, pointing to what she saw as the failure of existing women MPPs to grapple with specific issues facing women in KZN. 'I've long been concerned about the rape of women and children in this province,' she added, 'and tried for years to get protocols for treatment to be improved. If the committee had been

fighting for these things then we could have probably changed things, but they haven't. In general there was a lot of lip-service to women's issues by the provincial government but very little was done. Maybe that will change now.'

Perhaps they will. Although if campaigning for election 2004 was anything to go the prospects are not that bright.

Gender and the 2004 Campaign

As noted above, the only noise about gender issues in election 2004 was a deafening silence. The major parties said very little about gender.

Run pretty much as a national campaign, the DA's manifesto, pamphlets and posters in KZN contained very little on women's issues. According to KZN DA organiser Penny Tainton, 'we kept meaning to raise gender issues but ran out of time – but none of the parties raised it here really'. The one way that gender issues did emerge for the DA was in their phone canvassing where many women, but especially Indian women (up to 50% according to one source), would indicate that political issues were left to their husbands. Typical responses were, 'I don't know who I'm voting for I haven't discussed it with my husband', or 'phone back when my husband' is home'.

In its national manifesto, the IFP did not mention women other than as mothers or in the context of HIV/AIDS, although the cover featured Buthelezi in protective, grandfatherly pose behind a multi-racial group of women. The IFP's 'Growth and Development Plan for KZN' did talk more about empowering women as one of seven priorities of the Office of the Premier. Perhaps the ANC did the best job of all in its manifesto, referring to non-sexism as a principle and 'mainstreaming' women into the many issues it identified. In this respect Women'sNet gave the ANC the highest grade of all parties, a B+. The only party to present women leadership in its posters were Patricia De Lille's Independent Democrats.

Over and above this, almost nothing was done by political parties in KZN. An attempt by a journalist lecturer at the Durban Tech to organise a debate on women's issues elicited a very poor response, with only one party representative attending. Not that there were no opportunities to raise gender issues. For instance in May 2003, the IEC nationally organised a 'take a girl to work day' to do something practical to encourage gender equality. In January 2004, the ANC Women's League in KZN held its second provincial congress, failing to attract

any media attention. Closer to the elections, in March, three commissioners on the Commission for Gender Equality appeared on the ANC lists prompting *This Day* newspaper to call for their resignation. Again this failed to elicit a response from parties in KZN. Lastly, a survey of articles on election violence in KZN failed to find any reference to the impact on women, leading the researcher to comment suggested that 'the region's women species are long extinct' (Magwaza 2004).

Women and KZN Government after 2004

Despite their parties often shabby record during the election most party representatives felt that women's issues would play more of a role in future KZN politics. Key here is the ANC Premier who, it is believed, will follow the national lead and make tangible moves towards gender transformation. At the moment there is one (and the first) women executive committee member in KZN, Ina Cronje from the ANC. However the Premier's Office is bullish that more of this sort of thing will follow Ndebele's State of the Province Address on 25 May. It also seems likely that the chair of committees and the chair of SCOPA will be a woman.

Notably the (likely) better representation of women in powerful positions is not due to more women being in the provincial Parliament. Despite the ANC doing better in 2004, the number of women MPPs remains the same as before – at around 20 or 25% of the legislature. Lastly, Joanne Downs believes it likely that the women's caucus will secure recognition under the new regime, not least as the ANC needs smaller parties to govern.

For its part the IFP has shed most of its women MPs, most of whom were junior and some of whom have since left for the ANC. Indeed it is probably the party with the least senior female leadership in KZN. Women leaders in the DA have begun to raise gender issues, beginning with the recent Federal Council meeting of the DA in Cape Town. DA Durban city councillor Lynn Ploes van Amstel clearly believes that the main obstacle to gender transformation is political will: 'if the city put half the energy of racial issues into gender then we'd have a transformed council. As it is council is now pretty close to Durban's racial demography but we've made almost no progress with gender transformation'.

While there is more optimism about the women and government after election 2004 it remains one

of the great paradoxes of KZN, and I suspect national, politics that the supporters of the more patriarchal parties like the ACDP but especially the IFP are mostly women; and in far greater proportion than for the 'non-sexist' ANC. This inverted relationship between gender ideology and women's actions reminds us of the uncomfortable paradox of election 2004: the deafening silence on the issues of the majority. Until now KZN has had government of men, for men, but elected by women. Time will tell whether this will change.

Free State

THE GENDER GAP AFTER A DECADE OF DEMOCRACY

Angelique Harsant and Willem Ellis
University of the Free State

Introduction

The majority of the world's population will be going to the polling stations in 2004. Five elections are scheduled to take place in 2004 in the Southern African Development Community, i.e. South Africa, Malawi, Botswana, Namibia, and Mozambique. As South Africa has just held the third democratic election, it is time for reflection as the country is celebrating a decade of freedom, liberty and human rights. There were 11,334,028 women and 9,340,898 men registered for the 2004 election in South Africa. Due to the fact that the majority of registered voters in South Africa are women and that the country is constitutionally committed to ensuring gender equality it is important to reflect on gender voting as an integral part of the voting process. In order to assess the gender voting in the Free State, the following issues will receive attention in this regard i.e., voter registration, candidates' lists, women representation in Parliament and women at grassroots

level in the province. These issues will serve as a guide to evaluating the progress made in terms of gender representation in the Free State.

Current Status of Gender Representivity

Upon reflection over the past decade of democracy in South Africa there are definite signs of progressive leadership with regards to gender equality. This progressive leadership is projected on a regional, national and local level. On a regional level, female representivity is averaged at 19,4% which is higher than the 15,4% global average. After the 2004 elections South Africa improved its global ranking from 15th to 11th position, obtained 1st position in SADC's ranking list based on women in Parliament and increased the national and provincial female representivity by one-third. Provincially there has been an overall increase in the last decade of gender representivity from 24% in 1994 to 32.3% in 2004⁴

The table below illustrates the evolution of gender representivity over the last decade of women in provincial legislatures in South Africa. The table indicates that in the 2004

elections, the Free State experienced the lowest gender representivity in the Provincial Legislature when compared to other provinces. In order to assess the Free State's performance in terms of gender representivity it is important to examine all the stages of the electoral process such as voter registration, candidates' lists, campaigning, parliamentary representivity and the effect on women at grassroots level in the Free State

Voter Registration

As was the case with the national voters roll, the majority of the voters registered in the Free State were women, with 700 000 women as opposed to 600 000 men registered for the 2004 elections. The majority of the presiding officers, voting officers and counting officers employed by the IEC were women

Campaigning

South Africa has committed itself to gender equity by signing the *Gender and Development Declaration* in 1997, initiated by SADC, which pledged to obtain 30% of women representivity with regards to political decision-making by 2004 and through the national campaign aimed at achieving a 50-50 female

⁴ Robinson, 2004:7 and Lowe-Morna 2004: Gender Links

representivity. Interestingly, this has not received priority in political manifestos or

campaigning strategies but seemed to play a role in striving for greater gender

equity on the candidates' lists.

Women in Provincial Legislatures in SA

	1994			1999			2004		
	Seats	W	% W	Seats	W	% W	Seats	W	% W
Free State	30	7	23.3	30	7	23.3	30	8	26

Source: Women in Provincial Legislatures in South Africa (Lowe-Morna, 2004:Gender Links)

Candidates Lists

The following table represents the gender representivity of women on the candidate's lists of political parties and compares the 1999 elections to that of 2004.

Party	% Women on lists 1999	% Women on lists 2004
ACDP	N/S	31.8
ANC	35	35.4
AZAPO	N/S	37
DP/DA	20	31.59
ID		30.33
IFP	22	31.82
NP/NNP	12-15	25.21
PAC	N/S	33.64
UDF	N/S	24.94
FF+	16	23.39

Gender representation on party lists (Women's Net 2004)

Despite the tremendous increase in gender representation on the candidates' lists of all the parties in the 2004 elections, some concerns are evident. Firstly, 79 % of women in Parliament come from within the ranks of the ANC and since the ANC achieved a majority there has been a general increase in female representivity in 2004. However, interestingly enough the Free State, where the ANC achieved 82% of the vote, is ranked the lowest in gender representivity in the country at 26%, which is

even lower than KZN or the Western Cape. However, the 8 women out of 30 members of the Provincial legislature are members of the ANC. The opposition parties in the Free State i.e., DA with 3 seats, the ACDP with 1 seat and the Freedom Front Plus with 1 seat, all failed to fill these positions with a female candidate.

Parliamentarian Representivity

The Free State may have the lowest gender representation of all the provinces but the

2004 elections have continued the tradition of a female premiership in the province. Beatrice Marshoff is the third female premier to lead the province.

Two out of the ten MEC positions were allocated to women. The key portfolio of Education was given to Ouma Tsopo. She has served on the council since 1994 and has previously held positions in local government and housing, welfare, arts and culture and health. Another key portfolio i.e. Social Development,

previously a position held by the premier herself, was given to Patricia Dlungwana, a librarian from Qwa Qwa and a member of the Provincial Legislature⁵

Marshoff served under the previous premier of the Free State, Winkie Direko, since June 2001 as MEC of Social Development. Marshoff's political career dates to 1994 when she became a member of the National Assembly. Her expertise became evident during her service on various committees in Parliament as well as the period during which she served as chairperson of both the RDP portfolio committee as well as the sub-committee on health finance. These posts as well as that of MEC, provided ample opportunity for her to develop skills which would equip her in her new role as premier elect of the Free State. She is also a founder member of the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union in the Free State. Francis Beatrice Marshoff has given her pledge to fight HIV-AIDS, poverty and unemployment in the province. She has also come out strongly in favour of gender equality. The premier is supported in this regard by influential women in the province such as Nontsokolo Mohapi, mayor of the Motheo District in the Free State, who has made a significant contribution in the empowerment of women

⁵ Pretorius, 2004, p.1

by promoting gender equality in the province.⁶

Women at Grassroots Level

Marshoff, as a single mother, can identify with the struggles faced by women. She has singled out the plight of woman in rural areas and she has assured them of the support of the Free State Provincial Government. In her post as MEC of social development she personally experienced the plight of a woman who suffers deprivation due to severe poverty.

For Marshoff, the Free State has specific problems in regard to gender equality and she is determined to build on the work already done by the previous premiers, Ms Winkie Direko and Dr. Ivy Matsepe-Cassabury. For her, the greatest work lies in the area of unemployment. In this area she speaks of extended programmes of public works from which employment opportunities will emerge. Key focus areas will shift to the development of Thabo-Mofutsanyana (Eastern Free State) and Xhariep (Southern Free State) where poverty is reaching chronic proportions. The question is how she intends to alleviate the chronic poverty, especially among women in

⁶ *City Press*, 2004, p.10; Pretorius, 2004, p. 2; Coetzee, 2004, p.:2 and *Volksblad*, 200, p. 5

the rural areas. In a press release, she indicated that the answer lay with the Provincial Government promoting service delivery at local government level.⁷ Interestingly Pat Dlungwana, her newly appointed MEC for Social Development, originally comes from the Thabo-Mofutsanyana district in Qwa Qwa and has a clear understanding of the needs of the people and more specifically the women in that area.

Conclusion

The Free State is one of the provinces, where the ANC received 82,5% of the votes, but has the lowest female representivity when compared with the national statistics. Even though parties, especially opposition parties, have increased the gender representivity on the candidate's lists the concern is the strategic placement of these women on the lists. Opposition parties in the Free State, due to the small numbers of representatives in the provincial legislature, have failed to move beyond the lists to actual parliamentary representivity. It is also a concern among some sectors in the Free State that the premier was placed 23rd on the provincial candidates list and it still remains to be

⁷ Pretorius, 2004, p.2 and Coetzee, 2004, p.2).

seen what degree of support she will receive.

The Free State Province may be listed as the province with the lowest female representation when compared the other eight provinces but there is no doubt that the premier, her executive, and the people of the Free State have the political will and commitment to address the plight of women in the province.

Western Cape

GENDER AND ELECTIONS How Far from Parity?

Dr. Cheryl Hendricks
Centre for Conflict Resolution

Gender activists have been at the forefront in asserting the right to women's participation in decision making, especially in government. South African women lobbied for the inclusion of women's rights in the constitution, for the ANC to adopt a thirty per cent quota for women's representation in government and for a Women's Charter for Effective Equality. The quest for gender equality was extended to the SADC region in 1997 when the member countries signed the *Declaration on Gender and*

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Development. This document committed Heads of State to "ensuring the equal representation of women and men in the decision making of member states and SADC structures at all levels, and the achievement of at least a thirty percent target of women in political and decision making structures by 2005". Recent research indicates that many of the countries in the region will not fulfil this objective by 2005. A study edited by Colleen Lowe Morna found that only three countries, South Africa, Seychelles and Mozambique would meet the thirty per cent commitment, Tanzania and Namibia could possibly still do so, whilst the others were unlikely to do so⁸. Why is gender parity

and gender mainstreaming objectives worth striving for? How does South Africa measure up to the recommended quota, and how is the Western Cape performing?

The South African constitution commits South Africans to non-discrimination on the basis of gender. This principle concurs with international human rights standards. In the last decade, gender equity has become a precondition for good governance and democratisation. There is both a quantitative and qualitative reasoning behind this association. Women represent more than fifty per cent of the population and they therefore have a right to

⁸ Colleen Lowe Morna, ed. 2004. *Gender in Southern African*

Politics: Ringing up the Changes. Johannesburg: Gender Links.

be equitably represented in governing structures. A ‘critical mass’ of women in decision making institutions is necessary to effect transformation of institutions so that they will be responsive to the needs of women. Central to gender transformation is a change in power relations. This will only materialise when women are visible in the corridors of power. It is therefore not only the democratic right to participate in decision making structures that is being advocated, but also a

change in the values and *modes operandi* of institutions so that they focus on change that is meaningful to the development of women. See Table 1 below.

These statistics indicate that the ANC has maintained its obligation to ensure a minimum of thirty per cent of women in Parliament. In Parliament overall, too, the thirty percent mark has been reached. Forty percent of the national executive, i.e., Ministers, are women. There are ten women Deputy Ministers and four of the

nine premiers are women. On the whole, therefore, South Africa is leading the quest for gender equity by example. We have surpassed the thirty percent mark in many government forums. However, the yardstick for gender equity has also shifted, with calls for a fifty-fifty representation. It is therefore important for the South African government to continue to assert change in the gender power equation.

Table 1: Representation of women in Parliament 1994-2004

Party	1994			1999			2004		
	Total	Women	% Women	Total	Women	% Women	Total	Women	% Women
ANC	252	90	35.7	266	95	35.7	279	104	37
DP/DA	7	1	14	38	6	15.7	50	13	26
IFP	43	10	23	33	9	27.2	28	5	18.5
NP/NNP	82	9	10	28	4	14.2	7	0	0
UDM				14	1	7	9	4	44.4
ACDP	2	0	0	6	2	33	6	2	33
FF				3	0	0	4	0	0
UCDP				3	1	33	3	0	0
PAC	5	1	20	3	0	0	3	0	0
OTHER				5	2	40	(7)	(3)	(43)
TOTAL	400	111	27.7	400	120	30	400	131	32.7

Source: Gender Links⁹

⁹ Colleen Lowe Morna, 2004. “The ‘beginning of complacency’? Gender and the 2004 elections” accessed at Gender Links Website on 15/5/2004. www.genderlinks.org.za/whatsnew/apr-complacency.htm

It is also clear from the above statistics that many opposition parties are not heeding the call to effect women's participation. Parties that decreased their representation in Parliament (NNP and IFP) also showed a corresponding decrease in the number of women they have in Parliament indicating that women are the first to be dropped from their party lists. It is important that gender equity moves beyond a policy requirement of the ANC to one that is rooted in the society as a whole. This is important for many of the gains made by the ANC led government will be lost if any other party secures a majority in future elections.

The woman who received the most media attention during the 2004 election was Patricia de Lille. Political analysts believe that she was able to attract support from many previous women DA

supporters because of her gender. The party itself, however, has not been vocal on gender issues. In general, gender issues were played down by all the political parties, except those who were advocating for the outlawing of abortion and homosexual marriages. Although crime, unemployment and aids featured in all the party campaigns, few linked these to the differential impact on women. This begs the question of whether political parties believe that gender is no longer a pressing issue because the disparities have been breached, or have they retrogressed because they are simply not concerned with it? See Table 2 below.

After the 2004 provincial elections women's representation in the legislature has increased by 4.6 per cent. Women now constitute twenty eight percent of the provincial

parliament and thirty percent of the provincial cabinet. The Western Cape has historically been a province that has been at the forefront of challenging all forms of discrimination. It is also the province that hosts the national parliament that has, since its transformation in 1994, achieved a high representation of women. It is, therefore, unacceptable that gender representation in the provincial parliament will not reach the goal of the SADC *Declaration on Gender and Development* in the stipulated period. Although the Western Cape has been disadvantaged by previous governing parties who have not adopted the women's quota, and who continue to be the dominant opposition parties, the ANC in the Western Cape could have done much more in this election to at least meet the target.

Women MPLs In Provincial Legislatures

	1994			1999			2004		
Provinces	Seats	W	%	Seats	W	%	Seats	W	%
Western Cape	42	10	23.8	42	10	23.8	42	12	28.5

Source: Gender Links

The lack of a 'critical mass' of women in the provincial government shows through in the *Framework for the Development of the Western Province* document where there is a focus on the development of youth, but not women. The document is devoid of any analysis of

gender and therefore lacks a strategic perspective for the specific targeting of women for development initiatives.

The quota and proportional representation (PR) systems are primarily the means through which women have been able to enter decision

making structures. There are many debates on these systems with opposition parties claiming that the quota is not a necessity and academics that the PR system reduces accountability. Although other political parties have not adopted the quota

system, there is pressure for them to include women. If the quota system is dropped, this will negatively impact on the representation of women. Already, it appears as if parties are merely content with reaching the minimum number required.

To date, arguments about the PR system have been confined to the diminished ability of constituencies to keep their representatives accountable. If it is true that the PR system favours the incorporation of women then the debate on the PR system

needs to be revisited. We cannot do away with mechanisms that afford inclusion until such time as our societies have been normalised.

Eastern Cape

Women and Elections in the Eastern Cape

Dr Thabisi Hoene
Rhodes University

Introduction

This paper discusses issues related to gender, specifically those that affect women in the provincial electoral process. Its general thrust is to locate women in the political landscape of the province and interpret their role and impact through a reading of parties' policies in relation to these issues. The question is related to the national scene where appropriate.

First, the contribution discusses the national and provincial background to women by tabling and discussing statistics that locates women and their position in the political landscape of the country. It then specifically looks at registration figures as the most crucial indicator of the level of interest and

participation of women in politics, before discussing the relationship between women and the major political parties.

The post analysis section is devoted to a discussion of the ANC and gender issues both as the ruling party and government in the province.

Background: The National and Provincial Picture

Women are a significant force in South African electoral contests both at the provincial and national stage. Thus, it is crucial to determine their role and function by reference to some important statistics that reflect this position.

Nationally, 55 percent of all registered voters were women. At the national level, women make up 33 percent of all parliamentarians, up from 30 per cent in 1997. This places South Africa 11 from 15 in the global ranking of women represented in Parliament and first in the South African Development Community (SADC) region.

Four out of nine South African provincial premiers are women and this includes the Eastern Cape's Nosimo Balindlela. These figures are by local standards very impressive. However, according to the latest United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) *Human Development Report*, the rate of poverty amongst South African women that is calculated as individual earnings of three hundred and fifty four rands per month is 51 percent.

This is higher than the average national poverty rate, which is 49 percent. Therefore, there are serious economic problems that women face, and it is thus important to analyse the electoral process and results in conjunction with how this processes is related to women's issues provincially.

Registration

Judged against national statistics, the registration rate of women in the Eastern Cape is very impressive. Fifty eight percent of women

registered provincially, translating into a 3 percent difference with the national average of 55 percent. Most illustratively, these provincial figures are the second highest with only Limpopo recording the highest voting percentage of women, at 61 percent.

A significant feature to note on the national registration figures of men and women, is that between the age groups of 18 to 89 that are divided into eight groups of voting ages, the registration figure of women is higher than that of men, both at the national and provincial level.

That is, in all provinces of the country, registered women outnumber men in every age category.

The magnitude of the challenges facing women in the Eastern Cape is indicated by the fact that the UNDP reports notes that the Eastern Cape has the highest levels of poverty at 68 percent, 20 percent than the national average.

Women and Political Parties

Taking into account the high registration of women for the election and the response of the political parties to their needs and representation, the picture is not all that encouraging despite the fact women constituted an average of 31 percent on all party lists.

All the major parties with more than 300 candidates on their lists had 30 percent or more women candidates.

Nationally, the Socialist Party of Azania (Sopa) had the highest percentage of women on its list at 39 percent, followed by the UCDP at 38 percent. The ANC was third with 35 percent, while the DA female representation was 32 percent.

Two major parties the NNP and FF had lower than 30 percent women representation.

Amongst the major parties, at both the provincial and national level, the number of women on party lists in the top ten candidates ranged from 3 to 4 for each list.

The Eastern Cape had the highest proportion of women candidates at 37 percent with the Free State lowest at 25 percent.

It is open to debate whether the number of candidates and registration of women should be balanced and there are differing viewpoints on this issue from party to party. But quite clearly, there was a wide gulf between registration figures and women party candidates. For instance, Sopa, as the party with the highest percentage of women candidates at 39 percent had a 16 percent difference with the national

registration average of 55 percent.

The situation is accentuated with regard to the lowest province Free State that had 25 percent representation of women as against the national average of 55 percent- a staggering 30 percent difference.

In the Eastern Cape, although the ANC had the highest number of female party candidates at 37 seven percent, it still fell far short of the provincial average of registrations at 58 percent.

Regarding party manifestoes, predictably most political parties had something to say with regard to specific women's issues such the provision of anti-HIV drugs to pregnant women, joblessness, abortion rights and so on. The emphasis differed from party to party, with the ID having one of the most elaborate manifestos in this regard, unsurprisingly because it is the only major party led by a woman.

However, there was still criticism that most women's issues were being subsumed within the rubric of the major issues such the economy, joblessness, and crime. That is, there was not much sufficient attention to what specific policy issues should be driven with regard to women.

Post Election Scenario: The ANC and Women in Government

Following national trends, the ANC has tried to increase the number of women representation to the higher echelons of government, both at provincial and national level.

This was indicated provincially by the nomination of Nosimo Balindlela, the number three on the candidate list, as the first female premier of the province.

She was chosen over the incumbent premier Mkhonkhesi Stofile, who was later nominated as a national cabinet minister.

Although she does not lead the provincial branch of the party province, Balindlela's appointment to premier has raised the same kinds of debates in other provinces-mainly around how democratic this practice is and how it will impact on provincial politics, especially within the party and government.

The ANC reversed the policy it had adopted in 1994 of nominating provincial party leaders as automatic premiers after some serious internal party rivalries in the provinces of the Free State, Mpumalanga, the Eastern Cape and Limpopo. It argues that this new policy that was implemented largely from

1999 is meant to quell rife factionalism within provincial branches of the party.

The frictions that have arisen from this policy change, are very important to any province so affected because this has the propensity to lead to party disunity which impacts negatively on government delivery. This problem is pertinent to the Eastern Cape, as the local ANC has been locked in these factional disputes that led to government and party intervention to resolve them. Most importantly the current premier, Balindlela was sacked from the position as a cabinet minister by Stofile in 1998 in a move which was seen to be resulting from these tensions.

This is a critical question in the Eastern Cape, as one of the first major policy decisions the premier took, related to the selection of her cabinet encountered serious problems. She was seen to be sidelining allies of the former premier by nominating to her cabinet people that were perceived not to be in Stofile's camp.

This led to the intervention of the national headquarters of the party and eventually a compromise was reached.

Thus, the ANC ability to deal with the critical questions that face women in the next five years in the province will depend largely

on how effectively Balindlela's administration tackles gender issues. It still remains to be seen whether her appointment as a woman, in and of itself, will necessarily lead to more visibility of women in government hence, increasing their capacity to influence policies affecting them.

Preliminary trends indicate so, with regard to the legislature where the two top positions the Speaker and Deputy are both female. The situation however is reflective of national trends as representation at in the provincial cabinet is still below 50 percent with four female provincial ministers out of ten.

The test in the next five years will be to what extent the provincial government will be able to address the challenges facing the government that include severe poverty, unemployment, HIV-AIDS and corruption.

Whether gender representation in itself will be able to resolve the serious problems that face the government is still open to debate.

Conclusion

Gender issues and elections in the Eastern Cape still revolve around the debates that are going on at the

national level and in other provinces.

The issue at stake is to create a balance between the participation of women in politics in processes such as

voting and how they are accommodated in making an impact within political parties and the government.

The Eastern Cape exhibits a high level of the former, with

women playing a significant role in politics in terms of their numbers.

NORTHERN CAPE

(En) gendering the Elections

Women and the 2004 Election in the Northern Cape

Kenny Hlela

Centre for Policy Studies

The number of women registered for the third national and provincial elections held on 14 April 2004 was higher than that of men. For example, in the Northern Cape, 227 524 women registered against 206 067 men. But this should be no surprise, since women outnumber men in all provinces. According to the 2001 census, women constitute 52,2 percent of the South African population. On average men also tend to die younger than their female counterparts. In spite of this, however, women are underrepresented in a number of spheres. In the past, it was generally accepted that women were in charge of the private sphere, while the public sphere was mainly reserved for men. Today a significant number of women are represented in institutions such as

Parliament, which were previously seen as a male domain.

Women and the Election

The participation of women in the election depends on a number of factors. For example, where there are high levels of political violence and intimidation we are more likely to see women staying away from politics. The introduction of a special vote has made it possible for those people who would find it difficult to go to voting stations or stand in long queues. One of the groups that benefits from the special vote is that of pregnant women. They are more likely to find it difficult to exercise their democratic right to vote on the day of the election. In the Northern Cape provincial election there were 15 544 special votes. The fact that the Independent Electoral Commission works on a limited budget means that the delimitation process is not always adequate. This is more pronounced in a province such as the Northern Cape – which is vast and sparsely populated.

A special vote is a relief to groups such as the elderly and pregnant women who might not be able to walk long distances in order to cast their votes. The special vote is in place to deal with some of the structural constraints that might prevent women from freely exercising their democratic right to vote.

South Africa has passed a number of progressive laws that are meant to make voting accessible to all. However there are other structural constraints that are difficult to identify and that might impact negatively on how women exercise their rights. Some of these constraints are more pronounced amongst the poor groups than the other groups in our society. The fact that the Northern Cape is largely rural might mean that access to information could be very limited further disadvantaging weaker members of the society. Even though women constitute the majority of those registered to vote; this would not necessarily translate into electoral dominance. This is one of

the reasons some political parties have set up quotas to accelerate female representation in public institutions.

One of the often-purported advantages of the proportional representation (PR) system in South African is that it allows for the representation of minorities and marginalised groups. Therefore, the increase in the number of women in the South African provincial Parliament might somehow be credited to this system. The other relevant factor is that the ANC has set up quotas stipulating that a third of its representatives should be women. Other parties do not have such policies. For example, the Democratic Alliance (DA) opposes quotas but it claims that it is trying to improve the number of its female parliamentarians. The DA has increased the number of its women representatives in the National Assembly from six in 1999 to 13 after the April 14 elections.

Women in Leadership Positions

South Africa is one of the leading countries in the representation of women in public life. We have a number of women in leadership positions and the Northern Cape has witnessed the swearing in of its first female premier. In the ANC provincial list for the 2004 election, a woman was at the

top of its list. The provincial list was headed by the then MEC for Education, Tina Joemat-Petterson, who is now the MEC for Agriculture and Land Reform in the new Provincial Executive Council (PEC). The chairpersonship of the provincial ANC was also taken over by a woman after the resignation of John Block who had been hinted as a possible successor to Manne Dipico. Dipico has since assumed a position of Parliamentary Advisor to President Thabo Mbeki. He had already served two terms – the maximum allowed by the constitution.

Representation of Women in the Northern Cape Provincial Legislature, 1994-2004

1994		1999		2004	
Seats	W* %	Seats	W %	Seats	W %
30	7 24%	30	8 26.6%	30	11 37%

Source: Gender Links *(W=Women)

The appointment of a female premier in the province has seen the elevation of a number of women into senior positions in line with the wishes of the top ANC leadership. For instance, the speaker and the deputy speaker are women. Former Safety and Liaison MEC, Connie Seoposengwe was elected Speaker and Grizelda Cjiekella as her deputy, while the Provincial Executive Council also has a number of women representatives.

The elevation of women into leadership positions has had

mixed responses. Some people see it as a vote of confidence in women. Smuts Ngonyama, the ANC national spokesperson, said the appointment of four women premiers could be interpreted as a vote of confidence in their competence. Colleen Morna Lowe of the Gender Links lauded President Thabo Mbeki for increasing the number of women premiers. She argued that there is a notable increase of women in the National Assembly. She further argued that her organisation believes that women and men should have equal representation. On the other hand, Douglas Gibson of the Democratic Alliance argued that this was a subversion of democracy and most of those who were appointed to lead their respective provinces were totally unknown except for two or three individuals. He argued that in democracies voters have the right to choose their leaders and this has not been the case with the ANC. He said that it was now clear why the ANC kept the identity of its premier candidates secret. Some of the proponents of higher women representation in places of power are concerned that the process to improve women representation is too reliant on the ANC. They argue that the ANC continues to contribute disproportionate number of women in Parliament. In the National Assembly, ANC women

legislators constitute 80 percent, which is higher than the ANC's overall voter support of almost 70 percent.

But without the intervention of the ANC it will be difficult to project the number of women that could be represented at both national and provincial level. For example, in the provisional provincial election list for the Northern Cape, the current provincial premier was outside the top twenty on the list. Therefore without a deliberative attempt by the ANC to empower women most of the women would be outside the levers of power. This is beside the point since the current provincial MEC for

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Mpumalanga

Gender Representation in the 2004 Elections

Thabo Rapoo
Centre for Policy Studies

The issue of gender appears to have been elevated to prominent status during this year's general election. However, in terms of the concrete action and gender

Agriculture and Land Affairs topped the ANC provincial list.

Conclusion

The elevation of women into significant leadership positions in the Northern Cape legislature was interpreted by the recently elected Premier Dipuo Peters as a show of confidence by the President Mbeki on the ability of women to lead. This province has witnessed a number of women assuming important leadership positions and should there be a province likely to achieve 50/50 representation, it would be this one. The PR system has afforded the ANC the

Morna, C. L. 2004. "Long road to 50/50 in assembly," *Business Day*, 28 April

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<http://www.generlinks.org.za/gelections/pressrelease.asp?nid=7>

specific policies relating to gender representation among the major established political parties, the gains appear to have been confined mainly to the African National Congress both at provincial and national levels, as well as through President's Mbeki's policy choices for national cabinet ministers and provincial premiers. In other words, a slight increase in the

opportunity to increase the number of women legislators. Top-down reforms might not resolve the structural constraints that prevent women from competing for leadership positions but it is a step in the right direction. One of the factors that afforded the ANC a chance to consciously increase the number of its female legislators could be the continued increase of its support. The other possible explanation is that the women within the ANC are more organised than those in other parties, then using that strength to lobby for a higher female representation.

The Independent Electoral Commission

The Mail and Guardian Online, Friday 30 April 2004;
<http://www.mg.co.za>

The Star, 22/04/2004

representation of women has been experienced mainly due to the overwhelming victory by the ANC both at national and provincial level.

Women in Party Lists – Comparing 1999 and 2004

Many opposition political parties in general had increased the proportions of women candidates in their party lists, both national and

provincial. The table below shows the percentages of women candidates in the combined provincial and national lists of some of the major political parties that contested the elections for 2004 and this year. The table shows clearly that there has been a shift in thinking and prioritisation of women representation since 1999.

Proportions of Female Candidates in Combined Party Lists.

PARTY	% Women (1999 Party lists)	% Women (2004 Party lists)
ACDP	*	31.8 %
ANC	35	35.4 %
AZAPO	*	37 %
DP/DA	20 %	31.59 %
ID		30.33 %
IFP	22 %	31.82 %
NNP	15 %	25.21 %
PAC	*	33.64 %
UDM	*	24.94 %
FFPlus	16 %	23.39 %

*Gender not specified.
Source: Gender Links

Not only did the proportion of women candidates increase in 2004, but also more political parties are clearly indicating the proportions of women in their candidate lists. The table above also shows that among the top five political parties with the largest percentages of women in

their combined national/provincial candidates lists in 2004, AZAPO leads at 37%, followed by the ANC (35.4%), PAC (33.64%), IFP (31.82%) and ACDP (31.80%). The parties with the least proportions of women candidates were the Freedom Front (23.39%) in last position, followed by the UDM (24.94%) and NNP (25.21%).

In the case of Mpumalanga, the representation of female candidates in party lists was severely restricted. To illustrate this point, the top ten candidates in the provincial lists of the four major political parties are predominantly male. For instance, in the case of the ANC, three of the first top ten names in the party's provincial list are women. Even if this is in line with current party policy on gender representation, it is still limiting the representation of women. However, the ANC did much better than other political parties in the province. For instance, the NNP's candidates list for the provincial legislature had only one woman among the top ten names. Not a single female appeared in the top ten candidate's names for the DA and the UDM.

As a result of this limited representation of women in provincial party lists, the representational role of women in the Mpumalanga

provincial legislature is very limited and confined only to the ANC, as will be shown below.

Elected Women Members of Provincial Legislatures- Comparing 1999 and 2004

Despite the increased number of women candidates in party lists in 2004, only the ANC had a realistic chance of increasing the number of female MPLs at provincial level and this appears to have been the key explanatory factor in the slight increase of female MPLs at provincial level this year. The table below shows that in general, the number of female MPLs has been steadily increasing since 1994 where the total figure was 102 (24%), to 119 (27.7%) in 1999 and 139 (32.3%) in 2004. In the specific case of Mpumalanga, the number of female MPLs has also been steadily increasing since 1994 where the figure was 6 (20%), to 8 in 1999 (26.6%) and 9 in 2004 (30%).

A Comparison of Women MPs , 1994, 1999 and 2004 Elections

Provinces	1994			1999			2004		
	Seats	W	%	Seats	W	%	Seats	W	%
Mpumalanga	30	6	20	30	8	26.6	30	9	30

Source: Gender Links

It is clear that the major political parties contesting the elections in Mpumalanga did not have clear policies and strategies on gender representation. As indicated above, the ANC was the only party with a clear a policy of ensuring that a third of its candidates or every third candidate in its party election candidates lists is a woman. Even if in the past, this policy was not adhered to strictly and coherently, the party has nonetheless ensured that the principle is entrenched within its internal structures and as part of its philosophy. The other political parties, especially at provincial level, appear to still lack that clarity with respect to gender representation policies. Therefore, all the female MPLs in the past three terms of the Mpumalanga legislature have always been members of the ANC.

Inside the provincial legislature, the role of women has always been limited and remains so. As in the other nine legislatures, the Mpumalanga legislature has always been male dominated and remains so. Only nine of the current thirty MPLs are female and all of them are members of

the ANC: this means that over 70% of the membership of the Mpumalanga legislature is male. However, despite their limited representation, women have always played an import role within the legislature. Female MPLs have occupied positions of power and authority inside the legislature in the past. For instance, the position of deputy speaker has always been reserved for women members. The first ever deputy speaker of the newly established Eastern Transvaal, which later became Mpumalanga, was female - Cynthia Maropeng. She was later replaced my Pinkie Phosa, who has now become a speaker after this year's general elections. In addition, ANC female MPLs do regularly serve as chairpersons and deputy chairpersons of legislative committees, as well as party whips.

Not much has changed this year in terms of gender representation for women. The ANC remains the only political party with a clear gender representation policy and ability to carry it through. The party followed and adhered to this policy during this year's provincial

elections. Even the composition of the current provincial executive follows the same principle. Mpumalanga is not one of the four provinces currently led by a new female Premier. Therefore only three of the current ten members of the provincial executive are women – this maintains a longstanding tradition of male dominated provincial Executive Councils in the province where the number of female members has never exceeded four since 1994.

It is not clear whether or not such a limited role for women inside the legislature is a reflection of the underlying political unwillingness within the leadership structures of political parties or reluctance among women in society in general to take up politics as a career. However, one of the key factors limiting the representational role of women in the formal political institutions of government at provincial level is the overwhelming popularity of one political party (i.e. the ANC) and the corresponding inability of opposition parties to break this dominance. If this continues, then the representational role of

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women in formal politics and within democratic representative institutions will depend on the willingness of the ANC to increase the quota of women in its candidates lists, both at

national and provincial levels.

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2nd Floor The Atrium 41 Stanley Ave Auckland Park · PO Box 740 Auckland Park 2006
Tel 27-11-4825495 Fax 27-11-4826163
Email publications@eisa.org.za URL <http://www.eisa.org.za>

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