# Women Hold Up Half the Sky

Commemorating Women in the Struggle

### **EXHIBITIONS IN THE CLASSROOM**





This guide for educators is based on, and accompanies the third in a series of SAHA exhibition kits available for loan to heritage, educational and community organisations interested in hosting commemorative events and celebrations.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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For more information about SAHA's other exhibition kits, educational products and projects, please visit www.saha.org.za

#### **ACCESSING THE EXHIBITION ONLINE**

There is an online version of the **Women Hold Up Half the Sky** exhibition kit that includes downloadable copies of many of the primary sources – posters, photographs, pamphlets, reports, speeches - that appear in the exhibition panels.

To view this virtual exhibition, please go to www.saha.org.za/women.



### INTRODUCTION

This guide for educators is based on the SAHA portable exhibition kit entitled **Women Hold Up Half the Sky: Commemorating Women in the Struggle**, in which artefacts from SAHA's archives provide a lens into decades of women's resistance to apartheid.

This guide is intended to help educators to use the exhibition as a starting point to explore with their learners:

- the role of women in the struggle against apartheid
- · threats to the rights of women and girl children today

When interacting with this exhibition, we should think about two different notions of 'struggle'.

- **The struggle:** This is a term that refers to the political activism where people challenged and resisted against the system of apartheid. In this sense, the exhibition examines the important and often critical role played by women in the struggle against apartheid. They were activists in the political arena and challenged the apartheid state and its laws in a variety of ways. With the achievement of democracy, this women's struggle became part of history.
- **Women's struggles:** as mothers, grandmothers, daughters and wives, women have struggled to survive against harsh economic conditions; against gender discrimination; and against domestic violence. These are on-going struggles that women today continue to confront.

The guide includes different kinds of activities linked to each of the 16 exhibition panels:



#### **PAUSING FOR THOUGHT:**

This icon indicates questions intended to encourage internal reflection by the learners.



#### **READING THE PAST:**

This icon indicates activities where learners are required to analyse textual primary sources, such as reports, letters or pamphlets, included in the exhibition.



#### **VISUALISING THE PAST:**

This icon indicates activities where learners are required to analyse visual primary sources, such as photographs or posters, included in the exhibition.



#### **WORKING TOGETHER:**

This icon is used to identify opportunities for learners to work together in the classroom.



#### MAKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PAST AND PRESENT:

This icon identifies activities where learners are required to identify patterns and make connections between the past and present, finding similarities between conditions then and now.



#### **WORKING AS A HISTORIAN:**

This icon identifies activities intended to develop learners' skills in conducting oral history interviews.



#### **LEARNING MORE:**

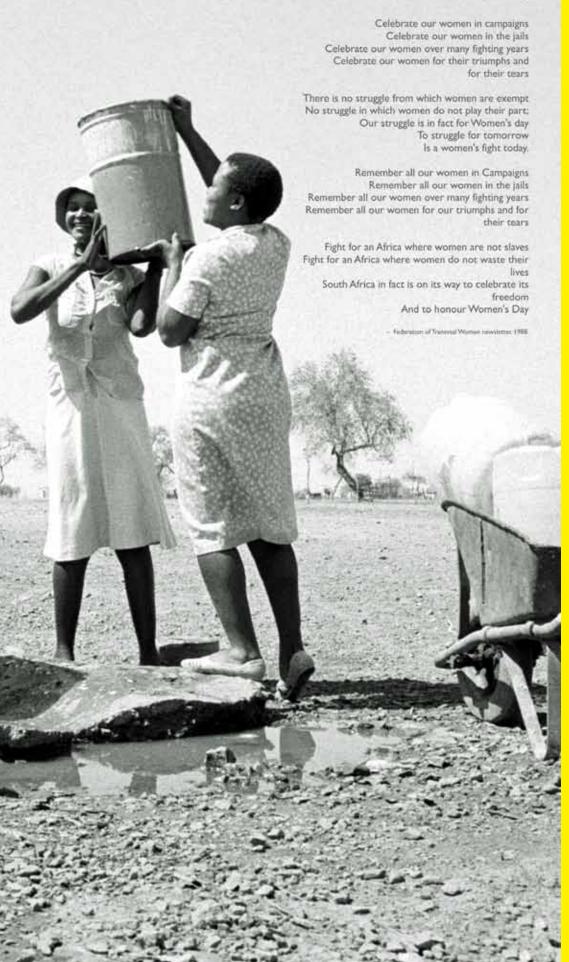
This icon indicates other SAHA educational publications and products to consult for more information and primary sources relating to this topic.

# Women Hold Up Half the Sky

Commemorating Women in the Struggle

#### Women's Day Song





#### Women Hold Up Half the Sky: Commemorating Women in the Struggle



Let us think about the title of the exhibition for a moment. What does it mean to say that 'women hold up half the sky?

Do you think this is a good title for this exhibition? Explain your answer.

The title also talks about commemoration. Commemoration refers to remembering a person or an event, usually in the form of a ceremony. This is slightly different to a celebration where one does something special to show that a person or an event is special. Keep this difference in mind when you read the song that opens up the exhibition.



## SOURCE: 'Women's Day Song', extract from FEDTRAW booklet 'Unlock Apartheid Jails', date unknown.

This is a moving song that calls on all South Africans to celebrate and remember women.

Read the song carefully and then answer the questions that follow:

- 1. Find two references in the song that suggest that the song is both celebrating and commemorating the women of South Africa.
- 2. The poem talks about women's 'triumphs' and their 'tears'. In what way does this relate to the different ideas of 'struggle'?
- 3. The last line talks about 'to honour Women's Day'? Do you think it is important to have a special day to honour the women of South Africa? Explain your answer.



#### Create a living poem.

- 1. The teacher should read the song aloud in the class.
- Then the teacher should read the poem again, but this time, while the poem is being read aloud, each learner needs to listen and write down a word or phrase from the poem that has moved them in some way.
- 3. Go around the class and each student reads out their word or phrase.
- 4. This becomes a new living poem that emphasises the importance of the words for the students.
- 5. The teacher should then write down the words that each student says (in the order in which they were said) so that a record of this living poem is kept. Write it on the board, so that students can copy it down and have their own record.



## SOURCE: 'Women and children collecting water, Bloedfontein, Limpopo, 1986.' Photograph by Gille de Vlieg.

Photographs are important visual aspects to any exhibition. Without them, the exhibition would be somewhat lifeless and boring. Photographs are also important representations of the past. They help us to visualise the past and draw meaning of past actions.

- 1. Look at the photograph that appears on panel 1. Do you think this is a good image to open the exhibition? Refer to elements in the photograph to answer the question.
- 2. If you were designing this exhibition, what kind of image would you like to place as the opening image? Explain your answer.



In groups, design your own opening panel for an exhibition on women in the struggle. It should contain the following elements:

- an appropriate title for your exhibition
- an appropriate image. (This may be a photograph, a graphic design or a drawing).

**Remember:** The panel should be bold and eye-catching. It should make people want to explore the rest of the exhibition.







Artefacts from the South African History Archive (SAHA) provide a lens into decades of womens' resistance to apartheid. Development of this SAHA exhibition kit was funded by the National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund and the Atlantic Philanthropies. To view the online version of this exhibition kit, please go to www.saha.org.za/women.





#### Representations of women

Black women in South Africa symbolised strength, struggle and endurance.

From the earliest days, black women in South Africa were the caregivers who looked after their children. In the rural areas, especially from the early 20th century when men moved to the cities to work as migrant labourers in the mines, women were left to take care of the homestead. They looked after their children and worked in the fields to produce food for their families. They often spent a large amount of their day walking to fetch water as there was no supply in their rural villages. They were forced to do this without the support of men and in increasingly difficult conditions.

When food supplies dried up in the rural areas, many women were forced to migrate to the cities in South Africa in search of work. They were forced to leave their children behind in the care of the grandmothers. Thus poverty played a central role in shifting their identity from being mothers and caregivers to being workers in a city where they were not wanted.

In the cities, women faced discrimination from the white government authorities who did not want women in the urban areas. Because women tended to settle permanently in the urban areas, the government saw them as a threat to their vision of white cities where black people worked temporarily before returning to the rural areas. Life for women in the cities was a struggle for survival.

Nevertheless, women made a place for themselves in the cities. Formal work was often difficult to find. Up until the mid 1930s, black men and not women worked as domestic servants. So women were forced to work in the informal sector. They found work as washerwomen or selling goods as hawkers. Others brewed beer, which was considered illegal, and sold the beer to workers on the weekends in lively shebeens. Music and dance became part of this new urban culture, made possible by women. In this way, women managed to survive and earn money to send back to the rural areas for the care of their families.



#### Look carefully at the photographs on this panel and then answer the questions.

- 1. Identify how women are represented in each of these three photographs.
- 2. Provide a caption or a heading for each photograph.
- 3. Which photograph has the most impact on you? Explain your answer.



#### Think about the lives of black women today and in the past.

Do you think the role of women has changed if:

- women still live in rural areas?
- women live in poor informal settlements around the cities?
- women live in the suburbs or wealthier parts of the cities?

How would you explain these changes or continuities?

# WOMEN UNITE FOR PEOPLE'S POWER! MAKHOSIKAZI MANYANANI UKWAKHA AMANDLA ABANTU! VROUE STAAN SAAM VIR DIE MAG VAN DIE MENSE!

The Federation of South African Women (FSAW) launched the Women's Charter at its inaugural conference on 17 April 1954. FSAW united the ANC Women's League, the women's wing of the Coloured People's Congress of South Africa, the South African Indian Congress and the Congress of Democrats. FSAW supported the Bantu Education boycotts and campaigned against rent increases, housing problems and passes for women. FSAW was never banned, but it was hard hit by the banning of its major affiliate, the ANC Women's League on 7 April 1960.



we call our women...

er call our some share ever they may be.

In our communities, in our courses,

We call our women on the farms, in town and country. In the trade union

Homen, let us rathe our votces high ageinst Soths's her Deal. A does which will only oring handship to our people. A deal which has brought us EST. A tax which will pay for

Let as say no to our sons and prother who will be forced to go and fight on the borders for Aparthaid.

dur somen and unlimber are starwing in the rural areas. Doutands are threatened with removals and resettlements. This new deal will not change anything.

OH Sth Aug. 1956, 20,000 women marched to Fratoria to may be to passes for women. Thirty years later, knownhof's STTIs Will have the bass laws harder.

women unite against

Botha's new deal

Federation of South African Women Invitation and program, Warnardy Day Communication, 9 to 12 August 1984.

# WOMEN'S CHARTER

THIS DOCUMENT WAS DRAWN UP TO UNITE WOMEN IN ACTION FOR THE REMOVAL OF ALL POLITICAL, SOCIAL, LEGAL AND ECONOMIC DISABILITIES.

WE SHALL STRIVE FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- \* THE RIGHT TO VOTE WITHOUT RESTRICTION OR DISCRIMINATION IN A FREE AND UNDIVIDED SOUTH AFRICA
- THE REMOVAL OF ALL LAWS THAT RESTRICT FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION
- \* THE RIGHT TO FULL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND TO JOIN THE UNION OF ONE'S CHOICE
- EQUAL RIGHTS WITH MEN IN RELATION TO PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN
- \* ACCESS TO PROPER HOUSING AND ALL AMENITIES OF MODERN LIFE
- \* THE DEVELOPMENT OF EVERY CHILD THROUGH FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION FOR ALL
- \* THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE CHILDCARE AND OTHER SOCIAL FACILITIES
- \* TO BUILD AND STRENGTHEN WOMEN'S SECTIONS OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT
- \* TO EDUCATE SOCIETY ON THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSI-BILITIES OF WOMEN
- \* TO STRIVE FOR PERMANENT PEACE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD
- TO CO-OPERATE WITH ALL OTHER ORGANISATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA WHICH HAVE SIMILAR AIMS

~ FEDTRAW ~

Federation of Transval Women pamphles.
 Women's Charme 17 August 1954





#### PANEL 3



The Federation of South African Women invites you/ organisation to its focus week on women - 9th Aug. to 12th August, 1984

The 9th August is National Women's Day. It is the day when we remember the struggles of our women. A day when we pay tribute to our women for their truimphs and their tears.

This year, the Federation is celebrating its 30th Anniversary. And, we invite you to share in this very special celebration of a rich tradition of organisation of women to fight for our rights and the rights of all our people.

Aug 9. is women's day

Sign THEMAS

#### Women Unite for People's Power - The Women's Charter

When the National Party came into power in 1948 and introduced the policy of apartheid, discrimination and oppression against black people intensified. Women began to take up a more active political role against the government.

In the 1940s and 1950s, a number of women's organisations came into being, all of which linked up with the broader anti-apartheid struggles that were taking place.

1943 – The ANC Women's League (ANCWL) was formed. It played a leading role in the Defiance Campaign of 1952 where both men and women challenged the unjust apartheid laws.

1954 – The Federation of South African Women (FSAW) was formed. It brought together women of all races from different political organisations. It aimed to address women's issues more directly. Dora Tamana was elected as President and Ray Simons, a trade unionist and member of the Communist Party, was elected as the first Secretary of FSAW.

1955 – The Black Sash was formed. This was an organisation of white women who protested against changes in the constitution that removed the right of Coloured people to vote. They later became active in providing support to people who were arrested for pass laws and other injustices.



#### SOURCE: The Women's Charter. FEDTRAW pamphlet, date unknown.

The Women's Charter was adopted at the launch of the Federation of South African Women in 1954. This original document outlines the aims of this charter. Read the charter and then answer the questions.

1. Fill in the following columns in order to identify which aims of this charter related to women's struggles and which related to the role of women in the struggle.

The role of women in the struggle	Women's struggles

2. Do you think it is important that women have their own charter separate from men? Explain your answer.



Discuss in groups the concerns and difficulties women in South Africa face today. Create a new charter for women in South Africa in the 21st century.



# SOURCE: Federation of South African Women invitation and programme, Women's Day Commemoration, 9 to 12 August 1984

In 1983 P.W. Botha introduced a new constitution. This called for a Tricameral Parliament in which there would be three houses – one for white people, one for Indian people and one for Coloured people. Black people were excluded from any political involvement. Instead, the Koornhof Bills allowed for Black people to vote for town councillors who were meant to look after their interests. Elections for this new parliament were meant to take place in September 1984. It was in this context that the commemoration of Women's Day took place in August 1984.

Read through this source and answer the questions.

- 1. What are the main issues that this invitation is calling on women to challenge?
- 2. How does this invitation reflect the political role that women played in the struggle?



Look at the photographs on this panel. The photograph on the left shows a woman's protest against the pass laws. The photograph on the right shows the release of women from the women's jail after they had been detained during the Defiance Campaign in 1952.

How do they reflect the non-racial\* ideology of the struggle against apartheid?

# Wathint' Abafazi, Wathint' Imbokotho

(You have struck the women, you have struck the rock)

This famous song of the courage and resistance of South African women was first sung on August 9, 1956. The leaders of Fedsaw were banned, exiled, imprisoned

and charged; effectively silencing the organisation.

Three decades later, women's organisations have taken a new form and have survived despite the detention of the officials and members and constant state harassment. Women have organised in the community to resist unjust rents, rising living costs, transport issues, removals, unemployment, the Koornhof Bills, police and army in the townships, unfair work conditions, and the detention of children. In fact, it is often the women in the community who must organise resistance, as they are the most affected during the prolonged absences of men.

Despite the detentions and repression, women are continuing to struggle and to fight back. The detentions of women and their families have shown that women have the strength to survive, to resist, and to organise. The continuing repression has

politicised women as never before.

In the 1980's, women's organisations all over the country began uniting in regions. The membership democratically determined the objectives based on regional conditions and issues. Women were adamant that women's issues be seen as integral to the political issues in the country. The launch of the UDF Women's Congress and the revival of FEDSAW both occurred during 1987. These major national federations are committed to the basic principles of non-racialism, non-sexism, and democracy and to the development of women's participation in grassroots organisations.

- Federation of Transvaal Women report, Unluck Aportheid Julis, date unknown.



PANEL 4

#### You Have Struck the Women, You Have Struck the Rock!

Why is Women's Day celebrated every year on 9 August?

This date is significant because it was on this day, 9th August 1956, that about 20,000 women marched to the Union Buildings to protest against the apartheid government's decision to extend passes to black women.

Before the 1950s, only black men were required to carry passes. This gave them permission to be in an urban area. Only people who could find work were given a pass. This allowed the government to control the influx of black men into the cities. The pass law was one of the most hated of the apartheid laws. Men were repeatedly arrested under this law and it had the effect of turning the majority of the population into criminals.

In 1952, the government announced that black women would also have to carry passes. Women actively resisted this. The idea began in 1955 at a meeting of FSAW, where a suggestion was made:

# "Let us go to Pretoria ourselves and protest to the Government against laws that oppress us."

This idea found expression in the Women's March of 1956. This march symbolised the courage and strength of women who refused to give into increasing oppression without some form of protest.



What would be the implications for black women if they were forced to carry a pass?

Why do you think women's resistance against passes was stronger than men's resistance to passes?



# **SOURCE:** Extract from FEDTRAW booklet 'Unlock Apartheid Jails', date unknown Although the exact date is unknown, this report was written in the late 1980s.

Read the report and answer the questions.

- 1. How did the government respond to the Women's March?
- 2. In the years after the Women's March, how did women respond to growing oppression?
- 3. Make a list of the issues that women organised around during the 1980s.



Using the list of issues that you identified from the source, find and/or create pictures and images that would reflect some of these issues. Then create a collage that highlights the political activities of women in the 1980s.



Listen to the radio documentary about Lillian Ngoyi, available on the SAHA CD Voices from our past and online at http://www.saha.org.za/publications/voices\_from\_our\_past.htm

# Sharpeville 21 March 1960

In 1960 the ANC and PAC started new campaigns against the hated pass saystem. On the morning of 21 March 5 000 people gathered at the Sharpeville police station near Johannesburg to start the PAC campaign. They had come to hand in their passes to the police and asked to be arrested. The people were angry, but peaceful and quiet.

Suddenly the police opened fire without warning. The first haif of bullets struck home. Everybody scattered, running fron the police. More bullets were pumped into people. 69 people lay dead. 180 were wounded.

In Langa the police also shot at a peaceful crowd and killed two people.

All over the country people were angry about these killings. There were mass stayaways and protests. In Cape Town over 30 000 people marched from Langa to Parliament. 60 000 workers from Langa and

Nyanga went on strike for nearly 3 weeks. But on 30 March the government struck back. A state of emergency was declared. 11 000 people were detained and 18 000 were arrested for defying the pass laws.

On 8 April 1960 the ANC and PAC were banned. The government was determined to stop all peaceful protest by the ANC.

The ANC decided that it can never listen to the government and give up the struggle for freedom. Their only choice was to go undeground and continue the fight. In 1961 Umkhonto we Sizwe (the Spear of the Nation) was formed to take up armed struggle.

Today it is clear that the government cannot ban the ANC from the hearts of the people. The ANC is still recognized as the most popular political organisation in our country.

ISSUED BY " DEFEND UDF COMMITTEE"

PRINTED BY STS PRINTERS 67 BELGIAVIA PL



Dutressor scenar with "absorbed" scenario in her parabook turnom also excess



Women binning har psolocolin the sowering 1960, Chief Lastfull was also first so born for page followed by AFAC leasters Opinis Reviews, Welton Study and Nestron Hamilton.



In December the police fired on the consell of periodic processes, belong 65 and something furnished; more if they recome very short in the back at they first an 21 february 1960.

# **LEADING WOMEN**

On the eve of the Sharpeville protest, Walter Sisulu asked Frene Ginwala to help organise Oliver Tambo's departure from South Africa. The ANC had decided to smuggle its deputy president out of the country into Tanzania ahead of what seemed its inevitable banning.

In exile, Ginwala sounded out the incoming Tanganyikan authorities under Tanzania's leader-to-be Julius Nyerere: would they accept the establishment of an ANC external mission in their country? With decolonisation in Southern Africa, the ANC engaged Ginwala to establish the ANC's department of information & publicity. She was based at various times in Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique and England as an ANC official. Her work included journalism and university lecturing, with published research into women and development studies and societies in conflict. She served as speaker of parliament for the first ten years of democratic rule in South Africa 1994 – 2004.

Winnie Madikizela-Mandela was married to Nelson Mandela, the leader of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC). She spent the better part of 27 years confined to live in the town of Brandfort in the Orange Free State. In 1969, she spent eighteen months in solitary confinement at Pretoria Central Prison. Madikizela-Mandela was elected president of the ANC Women's League when it was re-launched in December 1993.

After the state of emergency, that followed the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960, Ruth First was banned. In 1963 she spent 117 days in solitary confinement, making her the first white women to be detained under the ninety-day detention law. Ruth First went into exile where she was active in the Anti-Apartheid Movement. In November 1978 she took up a research post at the University of Eduardo Mondlane, in Mozambique. Here she was assassinated by order of Craig Williamson, a major in the South African Police, on August 17, 1982, when she opened a letter bomb that had been sent to her university.





#### PANEL 5

#### Leading women in the wake of Sharpeville

The unjust pass laws continued to be challenged by black people in South Africa. Political organisations such as the ANC and the PAC began to organise protests against the pass laws. On the 21st March 1960, members of the PAC planned to march peacefully to the local police station at Sharpeville. Using the methods of non-violent protest, the protestors aimed to hand in their passes and offer themselves up for arrest. The police fired on the large crowd, killing 69 and wounding 180 people.

Sharpeville is seen as a major turning point in the struggle against apartheid.

The apartheid government imposed a state of emergency and banned the ANC and the PAC. Both the ANC and the PAC decided to embark on an armed struggle. They both formed military wings – the ANC formed Umkhonto we Sizwe and the PAC formed Poqo. Both were prepared to use sabotage and violence to overthrow the apartheid government.



#### SOURCE: 'Sharpeville, 21 March 1960' - Defend UDF Committee pamphlet, date unknown.

Read the clipping on Sharpeville and answer the questions.

- 1. What actions did the apartheid government take in response to the Sharpeville Massacre?
- 2. Why do you think the government acted in this way?
- 3. Find evidence from this clipping that suggests that it is biased in favour of the ANC?



#### SOURCE: Leading women (exhibition text).

Frene Ginwala, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela and Ruth First are examples of women who played prominent roles in this escalating struggle against apartheid in the wake of the Sharpeville Massacre. Each of them made enormous personal sacrifices in order to take up this struggle.

Read their short biographies and then fill in a table that looks likes this:

	Political actions	Personal sacrifices
Frene Ginwala		
Winnie Madikizela Mandela		
Ruth First		



Come up with a list of 5 women leaders you consider to have been leaders in the struggle against apartheid who do NOT appear in the exhibition. Include reasons for your nominations.



Do some research on women activists in the world today. What kind of activism have they been involved in and what were some of the personal costs of their actions?



Think about whether you would be willing to make personal sacrifices for something that you strongly believed in.

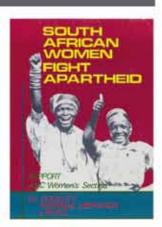


Discover how other leading women in South Africa have been memorialised on the SAHA / Sunday Times Heritage Website – http://sthp.saha.org.za

# 'In our beleaguered country the place of a woman is in the battlefront of the struggle.'







Women continued to join the ranks of Umkhonto We Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC, in ever-growing numbers. Fighting side by side with their men they have played an invaluable role in armed revolutionary struggle.

'Women of South Africa, we pledge ourselves to intensify the struggle until apartheid has been eradicated, until the last bastion of colonialism and imperialism on the African continent has been overthrown and until South Africa is a free, democratic, non-racist and non-sexist country that truly belongs to all who live in it.'

- Frankrice Maleika, ANC Woman's Section

# Africa Gains Independence

Egypt - 28 Feb 1922 Ethiopia - 5 May 1041 Libys - 24 December 1951 Sudan - I January 1956 Morocce J Harch 1956 Tunisia - 20 Murch 1955 Cameroon - I January 1960 Senegat - # April 1965 Hall - 22 September 1966 Madagascar - 26 June 1960 Coope (Kinshasa) - 30 June 1960 Somalia - 1 July 1960 Benin - 1 August 1966 Niger - 3 August 1960 Burking Favo - 5 August 1990 Côte d'Ivoire - 7 August 1906 Chad - 11 August 1960

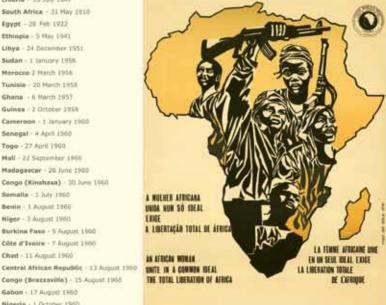
Congo (Brezzaville) - 15 August 1966

Gabon - 17 August 1960

Nigeria - 1 October 1980

Mauritania - 28 November 1965

Liberia - 26 July 1847



Reranda - 1 July 1952 Alperia - 3 July 1663 Kenya - 12 December 1963 Material - 5 July 1964 Zambia - 24 October 1964 Gambia - 18 February 1965 Botswana - 30 September 1966 Lesotho - 4 Ortober 1966 Hauritius - 12 March 1968 Equatorial Guinea - 12 October 1968 Guinea-Rissau - 10 Szetember 1974 Mozambique - 25 Juni 1975 Compres - 6 July 1975 50o Tomé and Principa 12 July 1975 Seychelles - 29 June 1976 Dillhouti - 27 June 1977

Zimbabwe - 18 April 1988

Namible - 21 March 1990 Eritros - 24 Nay 1993

Burundi - 1-1/1/2 1962

# Africa Is Not Free Until Women Are Free

#### PANEL 6

Liberia - 26 July 1847

South Africa - 31 May 1910

Egypt - 28 Feb 1922

Ethiopia - 5 May 1941

Libya - 24 December 1951

Sudan - I January 1956

Morocco 2 March 1956

Tunisia - 20 March 1956

Ghana - 6 March 1957

Guinea - 2 October 1958

Cameroon - 1 January 1960 Senegal - 4 April 1960

Togo - 27 April 1960

Mali - 22 September 1960

Madagascar - 26 June 1960

Congo (Kinshasa) - 30 June 1960

Somalia - 1 July 1960.

Benin - 1 August 1960

Niger - 3 August 1960

Burkina Faso - 5 August 1960

Côte d'Ivoire - 7 August 1960

Chad - 11 August 1960

Central African Republic - 13 August 1960

Congo (Brazzaville) - 15 August 1960

Gabon - 17 August 1960

Nigeria - 1 October 1960

Mauritania - 28 November 1960

Sierra Leone - 27 April 1961

Tanzania - 9 December 1961

Burundi - 1 July 1962

Rwanda - 1 July 1962

Algeria - 3 July 1962

Uganda - 9 October 1962

Kenya - 12 December 1963

Malawi - 6 July 1964

Zambia - 24 October 1964

Gambia - 18 February 1965

Botswana - 30 September 1966

Lesotho - 4 October 1966

Mauritius - 12 March 1968

Swaziland - 6 September 1968

Equatorial Guinea - 12 October 1968

Guinea-Bissau - 10 September 1974

Mozambique - 25 June 1975 Cape Verde - 5 July 1975

Comoros - 6 July 1975

São Tomé and Principe - 12 July 1975

Angola - 11 November 1975

Western Sahara - 28 February 1976

Seychelles - 29 June 1976

Djibouti - 27 June 1977

Zimbabwe - 18 April 1980

Namibia - 21 March 1990

Eritrea - 24 May 1993

#### **African Women Fighting for Independence**

The 1960s brought great changes to Africa. Harold Macmillan, the British Prime Minister in 1960, spoke of the "winds of change" sweeping through Africa. What he meant by this was that many African countries were challenging colonial masters and overthrowing colonial rule. A strong spirit of nationalism swept through Africa as more and more African countries gained their independence. Ironically, at the same time, the white government in South Africa tightened their control over the black population.

In 1961 the leadership of MK was arrested and charged with treason. In 1963, the eight trialists (Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Dennis Goldberg, Ahmed Kathrada, Elias Motsoaledi and Andrew Mlangeni) were found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment. Black leadership in South Africa was silenced.



#### The place of a woman is in the battlefront of the struggle.

The ANC went underground and established the ANC-in-exile. They began recruiting people to join Umkhonto we Sizwe. Unlike many armies, MK welcomed and encouraged women to join the armed struggle. The posters on this panel reflect this attitude.

1. If you were a young black women in the 1960s, which poster would be the most persuasive to make you join in the armed struggle? Refer to elements in the poster that make it effective.



Why do you think some armies do not use women as combat soldiers? Do you think that women should be used as soldiers fighting in war situations?



## SOURCE: 'Africa Gains Independence', poster produced by Pan-African Women's Organisation, date unknown.

This exhibits shows when African countries broke free from their colonial chains and gained independence from colonial rule. Yet the poster also suggests that Africa cannot be free until African women are free.

In large parts of Africa today, women continue to be oppressed in a number of ways. Here are a few examples of this oppression.

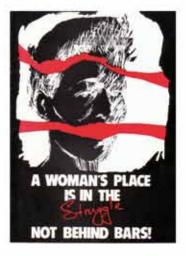
- Female Genital Mutilation (also called female circumcision) is a procedure where the external female genitalia are cut off on young girls. It is an attempt to control women's sexuality by reducing their sexual desire.
- In many war zones in Africa, men use rape as a weapon of war.
- Many young girls in Africa are not given access to education. They are brought up to be wives and mothers from a young age. These women come from strong patriarchal societies that believe that women should be kept ignorant and that their place is in the home.
- In large parts of Africa, women live in extreme poverty and struggle to feed their children.



Choose an aspect of women's oppression in Africa today. Create a poster calling for an end to this oppression. The design of the poster should be eye-catching. It should have a bold headline and a strong image that will persuade people to take up this issue and fight for change.



Do you agree that Africa will not be free until its women are free? Explain your answer.





Hamba Kahle Comrade Jabu

The Struggle for Peace Continues Umzabalazo Woxolo Uyaqubheka

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Albertina Sisulu is a leader in FEDTRAW and the UDF. She has been involved in FEDSAW since the fitties and suffered detention and restrition.

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Women political activists. He their male counterparts, often pay a heavy price for their stookement.

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Women have consistently corbprised only 12% of the total number of detainees. This is parily due to the fact that most leadership positions in progressive organisations are held by men. To understand the motivation for a campaign concentrating on women prisoners, we need to look beyond the statistics and focus on the conditions under which women are kept. Conditions relating to men and women political prisoners are very different despite the fact that they have the same "rights" in prison.

moltiers and elementicant of activists. Sometimes they are the one behind bars. How often do you hear of a man who has walled 15 years for his worked to come out of 1477.

In the decade of the Rivonia trial, Dorothy Nyembe was sentenced to serve 10 years in Kroonstad prison. While conditions on Robben Island improved because of the international attention focussed on the Rivonia trialists, Dorothy's imprisonment received scant attention. Even her family did not give support since it was regarded as unacceptable for a woman to go to prison. She served her sentence in virtual isolation.

The bijantrial of Dr. Neville Alexander received world attention, but Betty van der Heydien, who was sentonced in the same trial, served her sentenced and very little support. The only visits she received were from her mother. When her mother was no longer able to visit, she seceived no visits or support from the outside world.

Generally male prisoners are held together while women are often kept apart. Trialist Jenny Schreiner went on a hunger strike before she was allowed to spend one hour a day with other women prisoners.

Men have been given study rights almost automatically, while no such rights have been given to women. Very basic needs and requests are often denied to women. For example, during Hamadan (a holy period for Muslims) the me were allowed to cook special food, while Yasmina Pandy, who is also Muslim, was denied this privilege.

One of the reasons behind the different conditions is the amount of campaigning and world attention being focussed on particular prisoners and prisons, eg Robben Island and its inmates. Another reason is that women's position in society makes them more invisible than men.

Fedular is committed to light for the release of all postical prophers and delaineer. In the short term we hope that this compage will help to improve conditions under which women are held in prison.

We also hope to focus the attention of the world on the new form of imprisonment - restrictions.



Helen Joseph was a leader of FEDSAW in the fittees and is still acfive in the women's struggle. She has suffered bannings, houseariest and imprisonment.

Findersteam of South African Winness bentile (Warnes) Flore in the Druggle Net Belond Son, ship unknown





#### PANEL 7

#### welcome home friend compatriot comrade

Dorothy Nyembe was born in 1930, joined the ANC in her early twenties and became a women's organiser in the ANC. During the Defiance Campaign she served two prison sentences; in 1956 she led the contingent of Natal women who protested against the Pass Laws in Pretoria on August 9. In 1959, she was endorsed out of Durban. During the 1960 State of Emergency she was detained for 5 months. In 1962 she represented the Women's Federation at a conference on Labour problems called by SAC-TU. In 1963 she was arrested and charged with furthering the aims of the ANC and sentenced to 3 years imprisonement. First banned for 5 years in 1963, she was re-banned in 1968. In 1968 Dorothy was again detained and in February 1969 charged in Pietermaritzburg under the Terrorism Act and the Suppression of Communism Act, accused of harbouring freedom fighters and assisting two co-defendants. In March 1969 she was sentenced to 15 years imprisonement, and is due for release in 1984.

#### **Women in Detention**

We have already seen that the apartheid government began to impose tighter security measures on the black population after Sharpeville. In 1963, the government introduced the General Law Amendment Act. This gave the government the right to detain a person without a trial for ninety days. As a result, it became known as the 90-day detention law. In the next few months over 1000 men and women were detained under this law.

This meant that detainees had no access to legal advice, which meant they were stripped of their legal rights. It also meant that they could not prove whether they were innocent or guilty of any crime.



#### 'Welcome Home Dorothy' - extract from poster produced by the ANC, 1984.

Dorothy Nyembe serves as a good example of a woman who dedicated her life to the struggle against apartheid and played a heavy price for this. The text in the poster explains the harsh treatment she experienced by the apartheid state. Yet she continued to work for the freedom of South Africa. Read the text in the poster and in the rest of the exhibit carefully.

- 1. List the actions taken against Dorothy Nyembe during her life of struggle against apartheid.
- 2. Why did Dorothy Nyembe suffer severely during her imprisonment?
- 3. Provide some reasons why conditions for women in prison tended to be worse than men's.



#### SOURCE: Extract from FEDSAW report Women in Prison, date unknown.

Read through the text of panel 7.

Choose three phrases or sentences from the text that are most important to you.

Explain why you chose these phrases or sentences.

Use these phrases or sentences to form a paragraph that reflects what you feel about detention without trial.

Albertina Sisulu is a leader in FEDTRAW and the UDF. She has been involved in FEDSAW since the fitties and suffered detention and restrition.

Women have long been in the forefront of opposition to apartheid. Some names which spring to mind include Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Albertina Sisulu and Ruth First.

Women political activists, like their male counterparts, often pay a heavy price for their involvement.

Women are harassed, detained, jailed and restricted. Some live in exile; others like Dulcie September, Victoria Mxenge and Jenny Schoon, have been assasinated.

The Western Cape region of the Federation of South African Women (Fedsaw) launched a campaign in mid 1988 to focus attention on the plight of women political prisoners.

Women have consistently comprised only 12% of the total number of detainees. This is partly due to the fact that most leadership positions in progressive organisations are held by men. To understand the motivation for a campaign concentrating on women prisoners, we need to look beyond the statistics and focus on the conditions under which women are kept. Conditions relating to men and women political prisoners are very different despite the fact that they have the same "rights" in prison.

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The later trial of Dr. Neville Alexander received world attention, but Betty van der Heyden, who was sentenced in the same trial; served her sentence with no political recognition and very little support. The only visits she received were from her mother. When her mother was no longer able to visit, she received no visits or support from the outside world.

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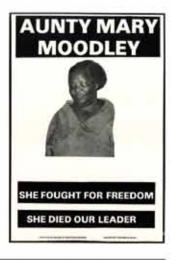
One of the reasons behind the different conditions is the amount of campaigning and world attention being focussed on particular prisoners and prisons, eg Robben Island and its inmates. Another reason is that women's position in society makes them more invisible than men.

Fedsaw is committed to fight for the release of all political prisoners and detainees. In the short term we hope that this campaign will help to improve conditions under which women are held in prison.

We also hope to focus the attention of the world on the new form of imprisonment - restrictions.







### **DETENTION UNDER SECTION 29.**

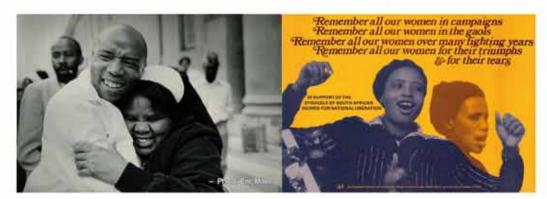
This section of the Internal Security Act is used to detain people the police want to interrogate. Detainees are kept on their own in police cells. They are not allowed to see their lawyers or their families and are not allowed any reading or study materials.

Some of the worst abuses take place during this form of detention. The detainees are cut off from the outside world and the police have total power over them.

Many people spent more than a year in solitary confinement under Section 29.

Every year hundreds of people were detained under Section 29. They were usually kept for about six months and then charged or released.

- Federation of South African Women Western Cape Region report, Women in Prison, date unknown.



Sister Bernard was held in solitary confinement under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act for over one year, spending a total of 16 months in detention. Sister Bernard was more concerned with the plight of her women codetainees than her own situation. Women are separated from their children at home when they are detained, many worry for weeks or months about who is caring for theit children. Children are traumatised by not knowing or understanding why their mothers have suddenly disappeared. Then there are those women who had to give birth in detention and had to keep their infants with them under appalling conditions, or have their babies taken away from them when they are still being breast fed. Sister Bernard recalls:

'Our prisons are man-made hells on earth, places of torture and suffering...

You need a strong spirit when you have lost all of your civil rights'.

- Federation of Transvaal Women report, Unlock Aportheid Julis, data unknown.





#### **Detention under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act**

In 1982 the apartheid government passed the Internal Security Act, which gave the state wider powers of control and coercion. Section 29 of this Act allowed for people to be detained indefinitely. This was a clear violation of the rule of law, which called for the protection of people's personal freedom by allowing people who have been arrested access to lawyers and to a fair trial.

#### Solitary confinement

The security police interrogated people detained under Section 29. They used extreme methods of torture to try to gain information. One severe form of torture was to place people in solitary confinement. This meant that the detainee was kept alone in a cell, with no access to other people. They were not allowed to have visitors nor were they allowed to have books to read or radios and newspapers. With no access to the outside world, the detainees very soon became disorientated, confused and depressed.

Some detainees died in detention. They mostly died because of police torture during interrogation. Yet the government always claimed that they had died as a result of suicide or strange accidents.



#### Posters and pictures relating to detention.

Look at the various posters and pictures on panel 7 and 8. Many of these images were created to protest against the detention of large numbers of women who were detained or arrested during apartheid.

1. Which poster or picture makes the biggest impression on you? Explain with reference to the main elements in the poster or picture.



Create your own poster that opposes detention without trial. The poster should contain the following elements:

- a powerful slogan
- a strong image that will draw people's attention to the poster



#### SOURCE: Extract from FEDTRAW report: 'Unlock Apartheid Jails'.

What was Sister Bernard's main concern in relation to women who were detained?



If you were able to interview a woman who had been detained, what five questions would you ask her? List your questions and explain why you chose these questions for your interview.



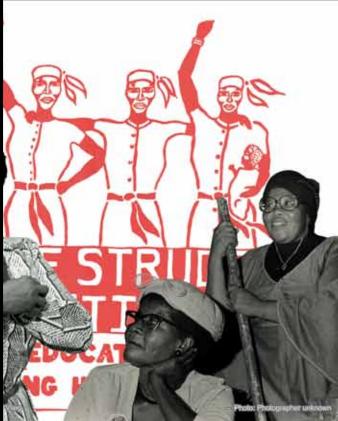
Listen to some interviews with women who were detained during apartheid on SAHA's DVD: Between Life and Death – stories from John Vorster Square or online on SAHA's virtual exhibition 'Death in Detention'on the Google Cultural Institute website at http://www.saha.org.za/publications/between\_life\_and\_death.htm'





Helen Joseph and Dorothy Zihlangu (chair of the United Women's Organisation) called for women's organisations to unite under the UDF.





In 1983, Albertina Sisulu was involved in the launch of the UDF and she was elected as one of the three co-presidents, even though she was in jail at the time of the election.

"The UDF is most inspiring because it unites all the people of South Africa despite race or class as we did with the Congress Alliance in 1955."

- Francis Baard, UOF Launch, 20 August 1983.

Dorothy Nyembe sitting in front of Victoria Mxenge at a welcoming service in 1984 for Nyembe who had spent 15 years in prison.

Victoria Mxenge, was a lawyer and prominent member of the Natal Organisation of Women. She was also part of the defence team for the UDF and the Natal Indian Congress in the Pietermaritzburg Treason Trial of 1985, before she was brutally murdered.



#### Women and the UDF

On the 20th August 1983 the United Democratic Front (UDF) was formed. At its launch in Cape Town, both Alan Boesak and Frances Baard made impassioned speeches which provided inspiration to the 15,000 people who attended.

The UDF believed strongly in the principle of non-racialism and supported the ideals of the Freedom Charter. It brought together over 600 different smaller organisations as affiliates. This meant that these smaller organisations were officially attached to the UDF and supported its ideals.

A wide range of women's organisations affiliated themselves to the UDF and the UDF itself drew many women into its organisation. Women played a central role in the structures of the UDF as well as in the day-to-day campaigns that the UDF became involved in.



#### SOURCE: 'UDF Resolution on Women', 1983.

This resolution was a call for unity of women by drawing women's organisations into UDF structures.



#### 10. RESOLUTION ON WOMEN

#### This conference notes:

- that the exent to which women are organised is a barometer of the level of struggle as a whole;
- that many of our finest and bravest of women have been forced into exile by the apartheid system;
- that this system thrives on divisions, one of which the division between men and women created by unequal wages and conditions of employment; inequality before the law and vicious applications of removals and pass laws against women.

#### WE BELIEVE:

- that the goal of full recognition of all women; of freedom, happiness and security for our children cannot be achieved in the present political and economic situation;
- that oppression in South Africa cannot be wholly removed without removing the oppression of women.

WE THEREFORE CALL on all women to bring their organisations into the United Democratic Front, so that we can make real our commitments to fight shoulder to shoulder with our menfolk in the common struggle against race, class and sexual discrimination.

Read the resolution and answer the questions.

- I. 'The extent to which women are organised is a barometer of the level of struggle as a whole.'

  Do you agree with this statement from the resolution? Explain your answer.
- 2. What was the UDF Resolution on Women trying to achieve in terms of women in the struggle?



In each of the three photographs of women in this panel, they are standing in front of a particular background.

- 1. Identify what the background is in each of the photographs.
- 2. Does the background add to or detract from the power of the photographs? Explain your answer.



What kinds of oppression and discrimination exist for women today?

Do you think that women had a better chance of addressing their oppression in the past because there were organisations established to organise around their oppression?

Should young people today be thinking about forming an organisation that will address women's issues and struggles today?



Imagine that you have created a women's organisation to address women's issues today.

- 1. Identify the central issue that this organisation would address.
- 2. Using the structure of the UDF Resolution on Women as an example, create a new resolution which calls for actions that should be taken to address the central issue of your organisation.



To learn more about the formation of the UDF, consult 'The UDF and the National Forum' booklet in the SAHA in the Classroom series that uses primary sources to explore South African history 1976 - 1994



#### Women embraced the UDF's Million Signatures Campaign

YOU AND THE UDF'S ONE MILLION SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN

A Volunteer's Handbook

Welcome to the UDF MILLION SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN.

By collecting signatures you :

- are helping to prove to the world that we reject apartheid and are determined to be free .
- (2) are helping to prove that the UDF has more followers than P.W. Botha , Mantanzima, Rajbansi, Hendrickse and Tshabalala.
- (3) are helping to educate millions of our people about the evils of apartheid.
- (4) are taking an <u>active</u> part in this great struggle for freedom. In short, your dedication and hard work is helping to make history.

SIGNED: AN Jedula

Albertina Sisulu

Popular History Trust



WE, the breedom-lesing South Ablicans, declare for the selecte world to know that

WE stand for the residence of a near-sailst democratic South Africa Iree of appearance, economic exploitation and reclaim.

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WE want: THE RELEASE OF FR. SMANGALISO MICHATSHWA

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And, my goodness, how it greeks has grown, this child a ours that was born on August 20th, mind you, it was a goodsized baby even then with its 400 affiliates and representing more than a theorem people - and now it has 600 affiliates and represents some two million people - after only 9 months.

It cries loudly, too, this fast growing child of ours, it calls upon the government to release all political prisoners - NOW- and without conditions, not remission favours.

Helen Joseph speech, Million Signature Compagn, 1984







#### The UDF's Million Signature Campaign

The UDF and its affiliates were involved in a whole range of protests, campaigns and anti-government action during the struggle against apartheid in the 1980s. These campaigns had the effect of uniting a wide range of people in a common cause. One of the early campaigns of the UDF was the Million Signature Campaign.

The UDF hoped to achieve a number of things from this campaign.

- It hoped to gather one million signatures of people saying no to Botha's proposed constitutional reforms. In this way, the new constitution and Koornhof's Bills would be discredited.
- The campaign would "give voice to our rejection of apartheid, and to claim our right to a free, non-racial and democratic campaign".
- It hoped to popularise the UDF, to gain support its principles of non-racialism and rejection of apartheid policy.

Although the Million Signature Campaign only managed to get one third of a million signatures, it help build the image of the UDF in people's minds. It also involved an active demonstration of people's support. On the other hand, it also revealed some of the organisational weaknesses of the UDF and showed the UDF in what areas they needed to improve.



# SOURCE: Extract from Helen Joseph's speech, given during the Million Signature Campaign, 1984.

Read the extract and answer the questions.

- 1. Helen Joseph refers to the UDF as a child. What are the features of this "child", according to this extract?
- 2. Do you think this is an apt or appropriate metaphor for the UDF? Explain your answer.



#### SOURCE: Form filled out by supporters of the Million Signature Campaign, 1984.

This is a replica of the original form used by the Million Signature Campaign.

- I. What kind of source is this form?
- 2. What does the form say is the major purpose of the Million Signature Campaign?
- 3. Is this a valuable source for people wanting to research the campaigns of the UDF? Justify your answer.



In the previous panel, you identified a cause for a women's issue today. Using that same issue, create a form that you would draw up for people to sign that would bring the main issues into the ordinary people's awareness.

You should create a logo, a name for your campaign, and a set of principles or aims that you would want people to know.









The emancipation of women is not an act of charity, the result of humanitarian or compassionate attitude. The liberation of women is a fundamental necessity of the revolution, the guarantee of its continuity and the precondition of its victory. The main objective of the revolution is to destroy the system of exploitation and build a new society which releases the potential of human beings, reconciling them with labour and with nature. This is the context within which the question of women's emancipation arises.

- Federation of South African Women, poster inscription



#### **Women Fighting Racism and Sexism**

Black women in South Africa faced discrimination on two counts: they were oppressed by the apartheid government because they were black. But they were also oppressed by society because they were women living in a patriarchal society.

**Racism:** they were discriminated against on the basis of their race - because they were black. In this way they experienced the same discrimination and harsh treatment as black men. Thus under apartheid, black women (and black men) were forced to live under a wide range of repressive laws that denied them freedom in a political, social and economic context. Black women experienced the humiliation of the pass laws, the lack of choice of where to live under both the Group Areas Act and the homelands policy of the apartheid state. They endured forced removals, were treated shockingly by white employers and faced a future without any political representation. This political oppression on the basis of race led many women to join the struggle against apartheid.

**Sexism:** they were discriminated against on the basis of their gender - because they were women. South Africa was and remains a strongly patriarchal society. In a patriarchal society men hold the positions of power in wider society and in the household. Men are dominant and dominate women by making the decisions and determining what the structure of society looks like. In this way, women had to fight a struggle against the power and dominance of men.

As a result, women in most homes were treated as second-class citizens. They were expected to clean, cook and look after children and they were expected to submit to the demands of their husbands. They had very few rights within the household. Often women were subject to severe forms of domestic violence and they had no recourse to any kind of justice.



### **SOURCE:** Extract from FEDSAW poster on the emancipation of women, date unknown. Read the text and answer the questions.

- I. What does the author of this inscription mean by "the liberation of women is a fundamental necessity of the revolution."?
- 2. What steps could you take to help build a society that is free of gender and racial discrimination?



# SOURCE: 'A woman's work is never done', poster produced by See Red Women's Workshop, date unknown.

Let us examine this poster, keeping in mind what we have learnt about the nature of racism and sexism against women in apartheid South Africa.

- 1. How does this poster show the two dilemmas facing South African women?
- 2. Do you think this is an effective poster or not? Explain your answer.



#### Discuss some of these questions as part of a class discussion.

Do you think that women today are treated as equals with men? Explain your answer.

What achievements have women reached in twenty first century South Africa? When thinking about women's oppression in the present, do black women still suffer on the basis of race?

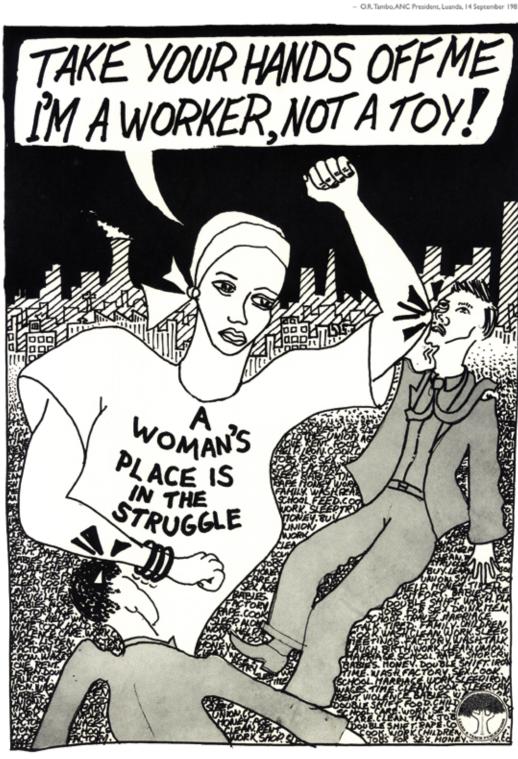
Do white women have more opportunities in the workplace?

Are all South African women in a better off position than in the 1980s in South Africa?

#### WOMEN RESIST TRIPLE OPPRESSION

Black women are chained by a triple yoke of oppression. Under apartheid each component of their existence as women - their sex, their colour and their class - combine to negate their right to social equality. Within the racist and sexist system women are not only oppressed in relation to men, but also in relation to each other.

"The struggle to conquer oppression in our country is the weaker for the traditionalist conservative and primitive restraints imposed on women by man-dominated structures within our movement, also because of equally traditionalist attitudes of surrender and submission on the part of women."



PANEL 12

#### Women resist triple oppression

We have already seen that black women in South Africa faced discrimination on the basis of their race and their gender. However black women also faced oppression and discrimination in the workplace. This became known as the triple oppression of women, where they experienced oppression on three counts.

- They were exploited in the workplace,
- · they were exploited at home and
- · they were discriminated because they were black women.

As the trade union movement emerged and developed from the late 1970s onwards, women workers were encouraged to join the unions. With the formation of COSATU in 1985, women workers took up the political struggle as well as the struggle for improved working and living conditions.

The trade union movement encouraged unity in the workplace. They emphasised workers' common exploitation by the bosses and encouraged women to take up activist positions such as shop stewards and union organisers.

Despite this, women in the trade union movement and on the factory floor were discriminated against because they were women.

- very few women occupied leadership positions within the unions, and meetings were largely dominated by men.
- Many women felt that they were not taken seriously because they were women.
- Some women experienced sexual harassment by men within the union movement.



SOURCE: Extract from pamphlet 'Systematic oppression, unyielding resistance' in *South African Women*, date unknown.

# "within the racist and sexist system women are not only oppressed in relation to men, but also in relation to each other."

- 1. Provide some examples of how women were oppressed in relation to men?
- 2. In what way do you think women were oppressed in relation to each other?
- 3. Do you think women today are still oppressed in relation to each other?



Although a number of advances have been made today in relation to women in the workplace, women are still not treated equally in the workplace. This is true for both working class women and middle class women. Why do you think women have not been able to achieve this kind of equality? What can working women do today to try to achieve this equality in the workplace?



SOURCE: 'Take your hands off me', poster published in *Learn & Teach* magazine, 1984 Study the poster and then answer the questions.

- 1. What do you think the woman in the poster means by saying "I'm a worker, not a toy!"?
- 2. Is this an effective poster in terms of women's protests? Explain by referring to all the elements in the poster.



Create a poster that addresses the inequalities of women in the workplace today.



#### MOTHER, WOMAN:

Walk and raise your fist,
Affirm, your desire to be free.
You are soil. You are sap.
You are strength. You are work.
Thus you are life.
In the fields,
In the factories,
In the home,

You have the truth of your strength From your life-giving bosom. Don't walk three yards behind Your comrade and the Revolution, Walk in front of them.

Walk in front of them.

It's your place by right.

And when they want to exploit you,

prostitute, violate your naked body, refuse them,

fighting, refuse them.

Mother, woman: the Revolution is you. [Mozambique]

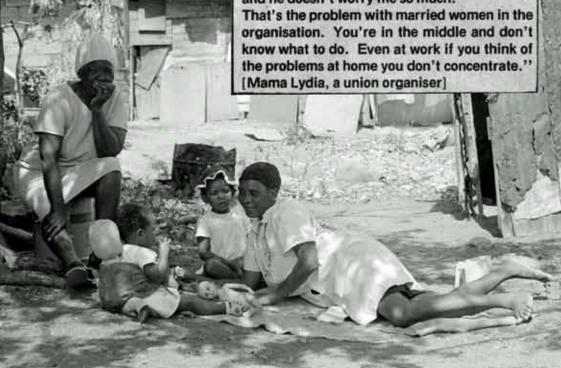
# SPEAK OUT

"After I became a shop steward we had excessive meetings, maybe twice a week. We'd have these meetings after work.

My husband got very unhappy and thought I was making excuses about meetings when I was going out jolling.

When we got dismissed it was worse because he felt I deserved it.

You know what husbands are like. He'd complain that I didn't do anything - cook, make tea or do washing for him. It's true that I preferred to do the washing at night rather than missing a meeting. I'd rather strain and overwork at night to satisfy him. But he was not too happy. He needed me to be with him. But he couldn't put me off because I felt it was important to carry on. Now he's got used to it and he doesn't worry me so much.



#### Mother, woman: the Revolution is you

This exhibition panel highlights the difficulties faced by women in the different spheres in which they operate, as activists, as soldiers, as trade unionists. The tension between two different voices, or roles, can be heard in the poem and in the interview, highlighting the difficulties women faced as a result of their activism.

Men struggled to see women in activist roles. Many came from conservative patriarchal societies which believed that women should occupy traditional roles. In other words, their place was in the home as mothers and wives. Even in the battlefields of the struggle, fellow comrades could not see women as equal. Often women in the MK training camps were abused sexually by their fellow comrades.

Women activists occupied a difficult space as Mama Lydia, the trade unionist expressed:

#### "You're in the middle and don't know what to do."

They were caught in a balancing act between keeping their family afloat within their homes and making a difference in the wider society.



#### SOURCE: 'Mother, Woman', poem from NOW newsletter, 1985.

Read the poem and answer the questions.

- 1. What is the main message of this poem?
- 2. Find three examples that affirm women (show them in a positive light).
- 3. Find three examples that suggest that women were not treated equally by their fellow male comrades.
- 4. Explain why some men in the struggle did not treat women activists with the respect they deserved.



#### SOURCE: Interview with Mama Lydia, Speak Out, date unknown.

Read Lydia's interview and answer the questions.

- I. Why did Lydia's husband resent her union work?
- 2. How did his attitude place pressure on Lydia?
- 3. How does the poet and Lydia deal with the sexism that they encounter?



#### Work in pairs.

Create a dialogue between a traditional husband who wants his wife to stay at home and the wife who needs to be involved in the political struggle against apartheid. In particular, you need to establish a good argument against sexist attitudes against women.

# Phambili Makhosikazi

### **Bush and Thatcher hear** the Truth!

About two months ago, Ma Sisulu ceived a personal lavitation from eorge Bush to meet him at the /hite House.
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What has been achieved?

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Ultimately, the major abjectives of the trip were fulfilled. In their meetings with Bush and Thatcher, human rights issues were highlighted. Some of the myths and confusion around the whole issue of mandatory stactions were clatified, as well as our position on negotiations and the necessary preconditions for such a process.

We can say with confidence that the trip undertaken by Mama and her dele-gation can only serve to strengthen the mass democratic movement. We can be assured that they maly echoed all our voices to the international con-

we salute Mama and her delegation for fulfilling such a mamoth task with such great success.







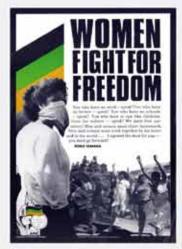


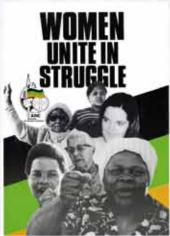












About two months ago, Ma Sisulu received a personal invitation from

White House. This invitation was a major breakthrough for the Democratic Movement for two reasons:

George Bush to meet him at the

1) This was the first invitation ever extended to the Democratic Movement to visit the White House.

2) The invitation was extended to a leading woman within the democratic movement, which is a real boost for the women's movement.

The invitation demonstrates the world-wide respect and credibility enjoyed by Ma Sisulu. It took a woman of the calibre of Ma Sisulu to create this opportunity for the mass democratic movement.

In response to the invitation, a delegation was put together consisting of Ma Sisulu, Sister Bernard, Titus Mofolo, Curnick Ndlovu, Azar Cachalia and Jessie Duarte.

#### **Women Forward!**



In this panel we see images of women who were recognised as major icons of the struggle. The four women from the top to bottom are Priscilla Jana, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Dorothy Nyembe and Amanda Kwadi. They are all giving the ANC salute – one fist raised in the air – which was the symbolic gesture of political activism.

What is an icon? It usually refers to a person who is representative of something. In this case, these women are representative of the courage, strength and determination of women in the struggle against apartheid.

However, when we see a person as an icon, we sometimes forget or overlook that they are human, make mistakes and act in ways that are not always representative.

Let us look at the example of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. During the struggle against apartheid she worked tirelessly and often in the most difficult of circumstances to challenge the apartheid state. She became known as 'the mother of the nation'. Yet in the mid-1980s it appears that Winnie Madikizela-Mandela seems to have lost her way. Together with her personal bodyguards – the Mandela Football Club – she was involved in the murder of 14-year old Stompie Seipei. She was also found guilty of fraud.



This raises questions of how we should remember someone like Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. Should her later actions wipe out her past achievements?



SOURCE: 'Bush and Thatcher hear the truth!', árticle from FEDTRAW pamphlet 'Women's Day Today, is Freedom Day Tomorrow', 1989.

Read the article and then answer the questions.

- 1. Why was it important for the women of South Africa to be recognised by Bush and Thatcher?
- 2. What did this delegation of women achieve?



Do you think that Margaret Thatcher was a good role model for the women of South Africa?



To learn more about how international pressure played a role in ending the apartheid regime, consult 'Resistance in the 1980s - international pressure' booklet in the SAHA in the Classroom series that uses primary sources to explore South African history 1976 - 1994

For Ma Sisulu, Sister Bernard and Azar Cachalia, this invitation provided them with their first opportunity in years to leave South Africa. It would have been far too embarassing for Vlok and his henchmen to refuse the passports of a delegation called in reponse to an invitation from the President of the United States.

This invitation also provided us with a further breakthrough. Mrs Thatcher, who up to this point had chosen to ignore the MDM, was forced to meet the delegation.

For years we have had other people talking to both the U.S. and British governments on our behalf. For the first time we were provided with an opportunity to speak for ourselves, to highlight our plight and defend our own position in the White House and No 10 Downing Street.

The objectives of this trip were to:

\* draw the world's attention to human rights abuses in South Africa e.g. restrictions, detentions, assassinations, hangings and the displacement of anti-Apartheid activists;

- inform the West of our view of the current state of affairs in South Africa;
- fight for the legal space for democratic organisations and activists;
- \* further isolate the racist regime internationally;
- \* clarify the position that has been taken internationally by the church on actions.

In addition to the governments of both Britain and the United States the delegation met a significant number of politicians and influential people.

What has been achieved?

Ultimately, the major abjectives of the trip were fulfilled. In their meetings with Bush and Thatcher, human rights issues were highlighted. Some of the myths and confusion around the whole issue of mandatory sanctions were clarified, as well as our position on negotiations and the necessary preconditions for such a process. Both Bush and Thatcher have given undertakings to address the issue of repression. The Bush Administration agreed to put a special focus on the South African problem. Margaret Thatcher re-iterated her anti-sanctions policy and her position on the whole question of violence.

The delegation also had the opportunity to meet members of opposition parties, leading members of congress and anti-apartheid organisations. Some of the significant consequences of this trip still remain to be evaluated over a period of time.

We can say with confidence that the trip undertaken by Mama and her delegation can only serve to strengthen the mass democratic movement. We can be assured that they truly echoed all our voices to the international com-

We salute Mama and her delegation for fulfilling such a mamoth task with such great success. Greetings from the members of the ANC Women's League Task Force.

This is "THE ROCK", the first newsletter to all our regions officially informing us on the relaunch of the ANC WL on August 9, 1990.

We command all women of our country organised in the ANC for the extensive task undertaken to organise women throughout South Africa and the subsequent launching of branch and regional committees of the ANC WL. To date we have, 000 branches launched in all the 15 regions of South Africa. In the next newsletter we shall give more detailed information on regional women's committees and branches launched in each.

visit branches, financial support facilities to visit branches, financial support for travel, violence and many others hampered the good work of the women. Nevertheless we can boast of some achievements made. A start has been made and that is that.

Owing to various reasons beyond our control, we have had to postpone our conference until 1991, a date to be suggested by regions. To this effect, we shall be holding an extended meeting to which regions will be requested to discuss details of the state of our organisation and discussions on such issues as the - Draft Constitution, Women's Charter, our understanding of the NEC May 2nd

We call upon all the women of our country to be ready to assist in any way you may be called upon. To assist in every way possible in receiving our beloved ones, as they come in from long years of exile. Some will get back to find no mother, father and no home. The duty of the women in this case is to make sure that no one shall be turned into an orphan when we are still alive. How can we forget our dear ones? The victims of violence and our beloved from the apartheid dungeons. Let us be proud to be providing the love expected from us as mothers, sisters and friends; as we have always done during difficult times. "In our beleagured country, the place of a women is in the forefront of the struggle" O.R. Tambo 1984.

#### Respond to the call to join the ANC WL. We have a duty to build the nation.

- ANC Woman's Emgue newsletter 1, 1990



Adelaide Tambo (L) and 400 other delegates at Howard College, the day before the relaunch of the ANC Women's League.



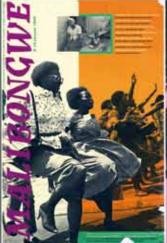
ANC Women's League Press Conference at Dakonia (9.8.90). L to R:



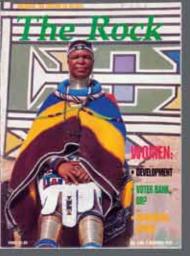
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PANEL 15

#### Women's Duty to Build the Nation

When the government banned the ANC in 1961, the ANC Women's League was dissolved. As we have seen, women found new spaces from which to organise and to take up the struggle.

After F.W. de Klerk made his historic speech in February 1990 where he announced the release of Nelson Mandela and unbanned all political parties, the ANC was able to operate legally once again. Large numbers of members of the ANC returned from exile. The ANC Women's League made a decision to relaunch itself. One of its main concerns was dealing with returning exiles.



#### SOURCE: Extract from ANC Women's League newsletter 1, 1994.

- 1. What problems did the ANC Women's League anticipate that returning exiles might experience?
- 2. How did the ANC Women's League plan to help returning exiles?
- 3. Do you think it was necessary for the ANC Women's League to relaunch itself?
- 4. The slogan for the relaunch of the Woman's League was 'Women in Action'. Do you think that was a good slogan for their relaunch? Explain your answer.



If you were able to interview a woman who had been in exile, what five questions would you ask her? List your questions and explain why you chose these questions for your interview.



Examine the three photographs of women at the bottom of the panel.

- 1. How do each of these photographs show a different aspect of womanhood in South Africa?
- 2. Provide a caption or a heading for each of these three photographs.



If women's organisations want to make a real difference to the lives of women, it is important that they not hide the experiences and failures that have affected women in the past. Rather than hide the history of the experiences of many women in exile, women's organisations should address the evidence that has emerged about sexual abuse of women in the ANC camps.

Nor should women's organisations sweep under the carpet some of the abuses within their own organisations such as Winnie Madikizela-Mandela being found guilty of trying to defraud the ANC Women's League. Women's organisations need to confront the past with the same honesty, courage and forthrightness that they displayed during the apartheid years.

Do you think that it is still important to address issues of abuse that took place during the struggle? Explain your answer.



#### Discuss the following questions in small groups:

What kind of women-led organisations exist in South African today?

What kind of organisations do women need to build in order to address issues facing them today?

How do we build organisations free from abuse and corruption?

### PANEL 16

# we thank the women makabongwe amakosikazi

# We pledge ourselves to strive together, sparing neither strength nor courage

### NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY AUGUST 9

Praise poem by Gcina Mhlophe performed in 1989 in honour of Nokukhanya Luthuli, widow of Chief Albert Luthuli – past president of the ANC in the '50s and Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1961

If the moon were to shine tonight To light up my face and show off my proud form With beads around my neck and shells in my hair And a soft easy flowing dress with the colours of Africa

If I were to stand on top of a hill
And raise my voice in praise
Of the women of my country
Who have worked throughout their lives
Not for themselves, but for the very life of all Africans
Who would I sing my praises to?
I could quote all the names
Yes, but where do I begn!

Do I begin with the ones
Who gave their lives
So that we others may live a better life
The Lilian Ngoyit, the Victoria Mxenges
The Ruth Firsts
Or the ones who have lost their men
To Robben Island and their children to exile
But carried on fighting
The MaMotsoaledis, the MaSisukus
The Winnie Mandelas?

Or maybe I would sing praises to
The ones whio, have had the resilience
And cunning of a desert cobra
Priscilla Jana. Fatima Meec, Beauty Mikhize
Or the ones who turned deserts into green vegetable gardens
From which our people can eat
Manphela Ramphele. Ellen Kuzwayo

Or would the names of the women
Who marched, suffered solitary confinement
and house arrests
Helen Joseph, Amina Cachalia, Sonya Bunting, Dorothy Nyembe,
Thoke Mingoma, Florence Matometa, Bertha Michige,
How many more names come to mind
As I remember the Defiance Campaign
The fights against Beer Halls that suck the strength of our men
Building of alternative schools away from Bantu Education
And the fight against pass laws

Playbe, maybe, I would choose a name just one special name that spells out light.

That of Marna Notokutharya Luthali.

Maybe If I were to call our her name.

From the top of the hill.

While the moon is shining bright.

No-Ku-Kha-nya!

No-Ku-Kha-nya!

Maybe my voice would be carried by the wind.

To reach all the other women.

Whose names are not often mentioned.

The ones who sell oranges and potatoes.

So their children can est and learn.

The ones who serub floors and polish executive desktops.

In towering office blocks.

While the city sleeps.

Saving lives, cleaning busilet wounds and delevering new babies.

And the ones who have given up.

Their places of comfort and the protection of their skin colour.

Martan Sparg, Sheena Duncan,

Barbarra Hogan, Jenny Schreiner.

And what of the women who are stranded in the homelands.

With a baby in the belly and a baby on the back.

While their men are sweating in the bowels of the earth!

May the lives of all these women.

Be celebrated and made to shine.

When I cry out Mama Nokukharya's name.

NO-KU-KHA-NYA!!

And we who are young salute our mothers Who have given us.

The heritage of their Queendom!!!

Margaret Daymond et al. (eds).
 Women Writing Africa: The Southern Region.
 Wies University Press, Johannesburg, 2002.



#### We Thank the Women!

The final panel of this exhibition acknowledges the critical role played by women in the struggle and thanks them for the sacrifices they made, the strength and determination they showed, and the special contribution that women made. Every year on the 9th August – Women's Day – it is important to take time to think about the role of women in the struggle and recognise their courage and perseverance. It also gives us the space to reflect on the on-going struggles that women face today.



#### SOURCE: Praise poem by Gcina Mhlophe.

Although the praise poem was written to honour Nokukhanya Luthuli, the widow of Chief Albert Luthuli, Gcina Mhlope honours all women in the struggle. She recognises the icons of struggle and the sacrifices they made and the suffereing they endured. But she also recognises the ordinary women who struggled to bring food home for their children, who worked and toiled to survive in a society that discriminated against them as black women workers. By ending the exhibition with this poem, it brings together the two forms of struggle that we identified at the beginning of the exhibition.

Read the poem and answer the questions.

- I. Find evidence in the poem that show some of the sacrifices that women made during the struggle against apartheid.
- Find evidence in the poem that show some of the struggles that ordinary women faced and still face today.
- 3. Find three words or phrases from the poem that meant something to you. Explain why these words or phrases are important to you.



#### SOURCE: 'We fought for the vote', poster published in Speak magazine, 1994.

Look at the poster and answer the questions.

- I. What is the main message of this poster?
- 2. Fill out the following table in order to show what rights women achieved when South Africa became a democracy and what rights women are still trying to achieve. Discuss this in groups before filling out the table.

Rights achieved	Rights that women are still struggling for



Once you have filled out the table you will hopefully have identified a range of issues and struggles that still confront women today. The struggle is not over!

Do you think it is important to commemorate the history of women in present-day South Africa? What does Women's Day mean to you?

This EXHIBITIONS IN THE CLASSROOM guide for educators is based on the SAHA portable exhibition kit entitled **Women Hold Up Half the Sky: Commemorating Women in the Struggle**, in which artefacts from SAHA's archives provide a lens into decades of women's resistance to apartheid.

This guide is intended to help educators to use the exhibition as a starting point to explore with their learners:

- the struggles faced by women living during apartheid
  - the role of women in the struggle for freedom
- the challenges faced by women and girls in South Africa today



Development of the SAHA exhibition kit was funded by the National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund and the Atlantic Philanthropies. Development of this EXHIBITIONS IN THE CLASSROOM booklet was funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies.





