



8 March 2022

Breaking the Bias this International Women's Day

International Women's Day, 8 March, is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. This day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity.

The day aims to:

- celebrate women's achievements
- raise awareness about women's equality
- lobby for accelerated gender parity
- fundraise for female-focused charities

This year's theme is **Break the Bias**. Whether deliberate or unconscious, bias makes it difficult for women to move ahead. Knowing that bias exists is not enough. Action is needed to level the playing field.

Here are a few key actions which the NBI's Social Transformation unit, through our **striving for equality and social cohesion** pathway, are taking to break gender bias in the corporate context:

- Partnering with companies to advise them on implementing Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) policies and strategies in the workplace.
- Contributing to the growing work on pay disparity through our Gender Pay Gap work, with key action points and support on how to close the gap.
- Conducting research baselines and developing meaningful partnerships that will accelerate behavioural and attitudinal change in the workplace.

- Establishing a strong research and strategy canon on the intersection between climate change and gender by interrogating the socio-economic inequities inherent in South Africa and how these complexities have an impact on just transition ambitions.
- Developing appropriate responses and support for companies to understand and address issues of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) within their organisations, value chains and broader society.
- Facilitating the NBI GBV Working Group towards collective action interventions and identifying existing gaps to enable a multi-stakeholder/ sectoral approach.
- Organising GBV dialogues with senior leadership and co-creating deeper conversations that prioritise the GBV agenda.

The NBI's Gender Pay Gap, Gender Equality and Gender Based Violence workstreams

As part of our strategy of driving social and economic transformation, we aim to address the structural barriers and biases to create an equitable and just society. Given our history and our current context of continued discrimination and exclusion, we recognise that fundamentally addressing gender inequality is a critical lever for change. Through our Transformation and Equity work, we aim to break current gender biases by prioritising the role business plays in addressing inequality and exclusion, while supporting social cohesion through the transformation of workplaces.

The NBI's Gender Pay Gap **pilot** sought to uncover the key factors contributing to pay disparity in South Africa to present a fact-based analysis of the pay gap, in partnership with the Southern Centre for Inequality Studies (SCIS) at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits).

Additionally, we provide strategic insights on GESI for numerous areas across the NBI. This intervention is important in ensuring that business operates from a place of accountability, building public trust and actively dismantling barriers faced by marginalised groups.

Our GBV work responds to the view that GBV is a human rights issue and therefore we urge South African companies to play an active role in eradicating this shadow pandemic. Companies have a strategic role to play in seeking solutions to these problems, by declaring a 'zero tolerance' approach for GBV in all forms, whilst also strengthening existing interventions through collaboration and accountability.

For more information on NBI's Transformation and Equity work, please contact Bridgette Mdangayi (Programme Manager: Social Transformation): BridgetteM@nbi.org.za or Khanyisa Nomoyi (Project Manager: Social Transformation): KhanyisaN@nbi.org.za



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