

Dialogue encourages Gender Equitable Curriculum in schools

A need for an embedded gender equality and anti-patriarchal culture is critical in families, schools, media houses, faith-based organisations, the economy and workplaces.



Image source: Getty Images

These were the remarks by Sediko Rakolote, Commissioner at the Commission for Gender Equality, during a dialogue challenging the culture of toxic masculinity in a bid to combat violence.

The dialogue, which was held on Tuesday by the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) in partnership with the Department of Social Development (DSD), seeks to highlight the role that the culture of toxic masculinity has in perpetuating Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF).

Rakolote said that some of the key drivers of toxic masculinity are some traditional, cultural, and religious practises that relegates women as the second class citizens.

He said that some media platforms and stories on TV often objectify women while men are given strong characters.

“We need to promote a Gender Equitable Curriculum and practices in schools from Early Childhood Development till post matric qualifications. We need to partner with media and use it as a tool to advance the promotion of gender equality,” he said.

He added that Multi-Sectoral Partnerships are important in the fight against toxic masculinity as no institution can be able to advance gender quality alone.

“This requires involving a whole range of stakeholders in the process: governments, multilaterals, the private sector, trade unions, civil society, religious organisations, non-governmental organizations, the army and the police, research institutes, community agencies and the media among others,” he said.

Rakolote emphasised on the need to campaign for a culture of recognition of human rights for all citizens, irrespective of their gender, race, and class.

He called on the mobilisation of men and women to create conversation space to reflect on the harmful effect of toxic masculinity to inspire change amongst individuals and communities.

Deputy Minister in Department of Social Development, Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu, said that a family structure is important when dealing with issues of toxic masculinity, among others.

She said that South Africa has normalised single headed households which end up contributing to women raising “angry boys”.

The deputy minister said that it remains a fact that toxic masculinity starts very young, and women often miss the signs when raising boy children alone.

She urged men and women to step in and address these issues from a young age and give children the right foundation and the right to parenting by both parents.

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