

Memories, Machinery and Manifestation:

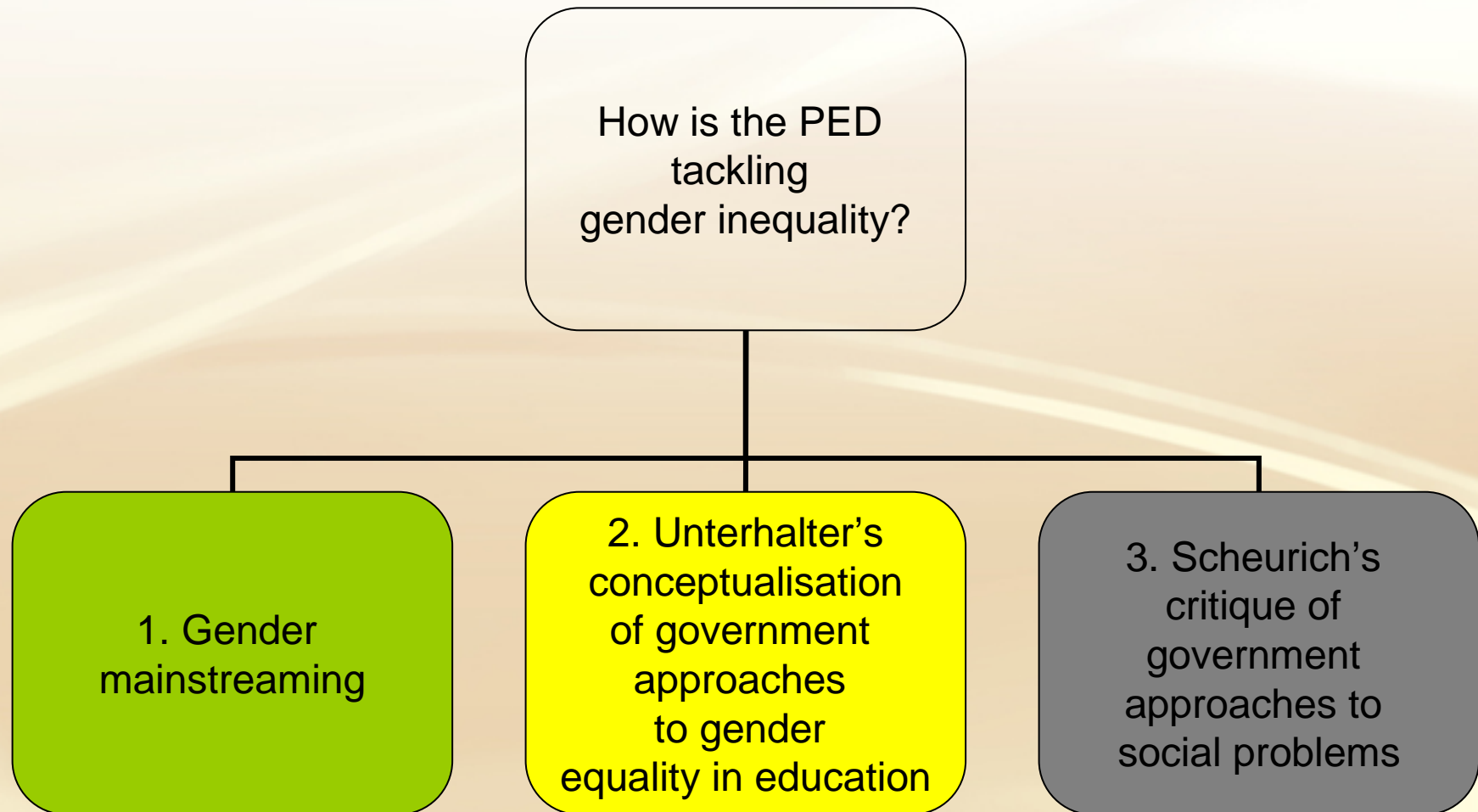
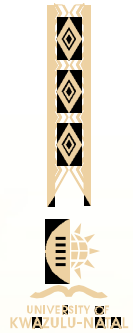
Mainstreaming Gender in a South African Provincial Education
Department

Jenni Karlsson
UKFIET 10th conference, 15-17 September 2009

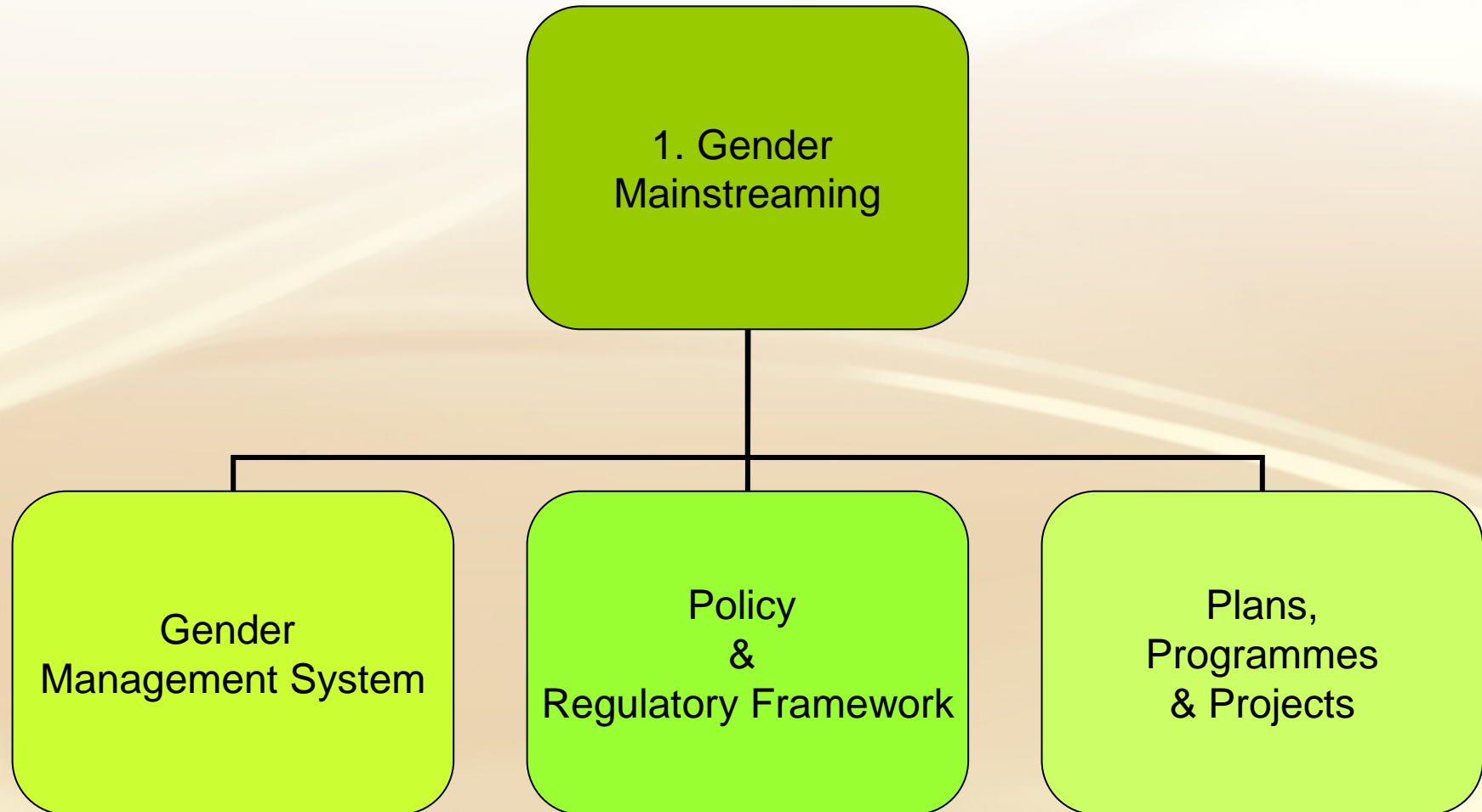
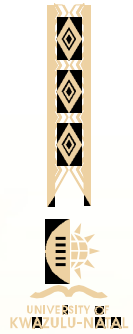
The Problem

- International agreements for eradicating gender inequality in education
- Gender parity \neq gender equality
- Gender mainstreaming conceived as a strategic tool
- But Unterhalter (2007) says that relatively little is known about how organisations engage in & operationalise gender mainstreaming
So, my purpose is to explore how PED is tackling gender inequalities and thereby contribute to this under-researched field of enquiry

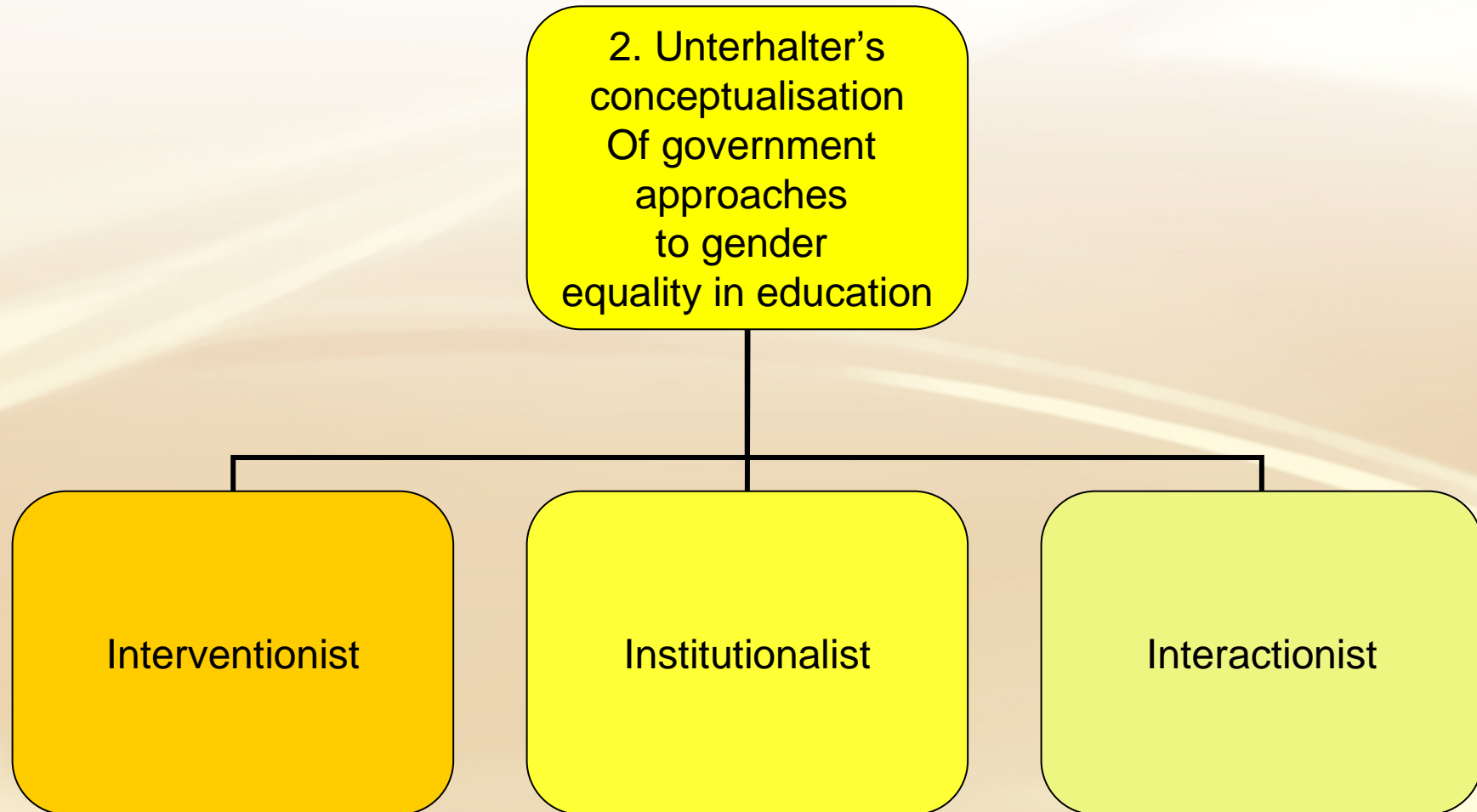
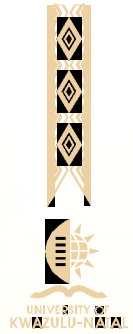
Conceptual Framework



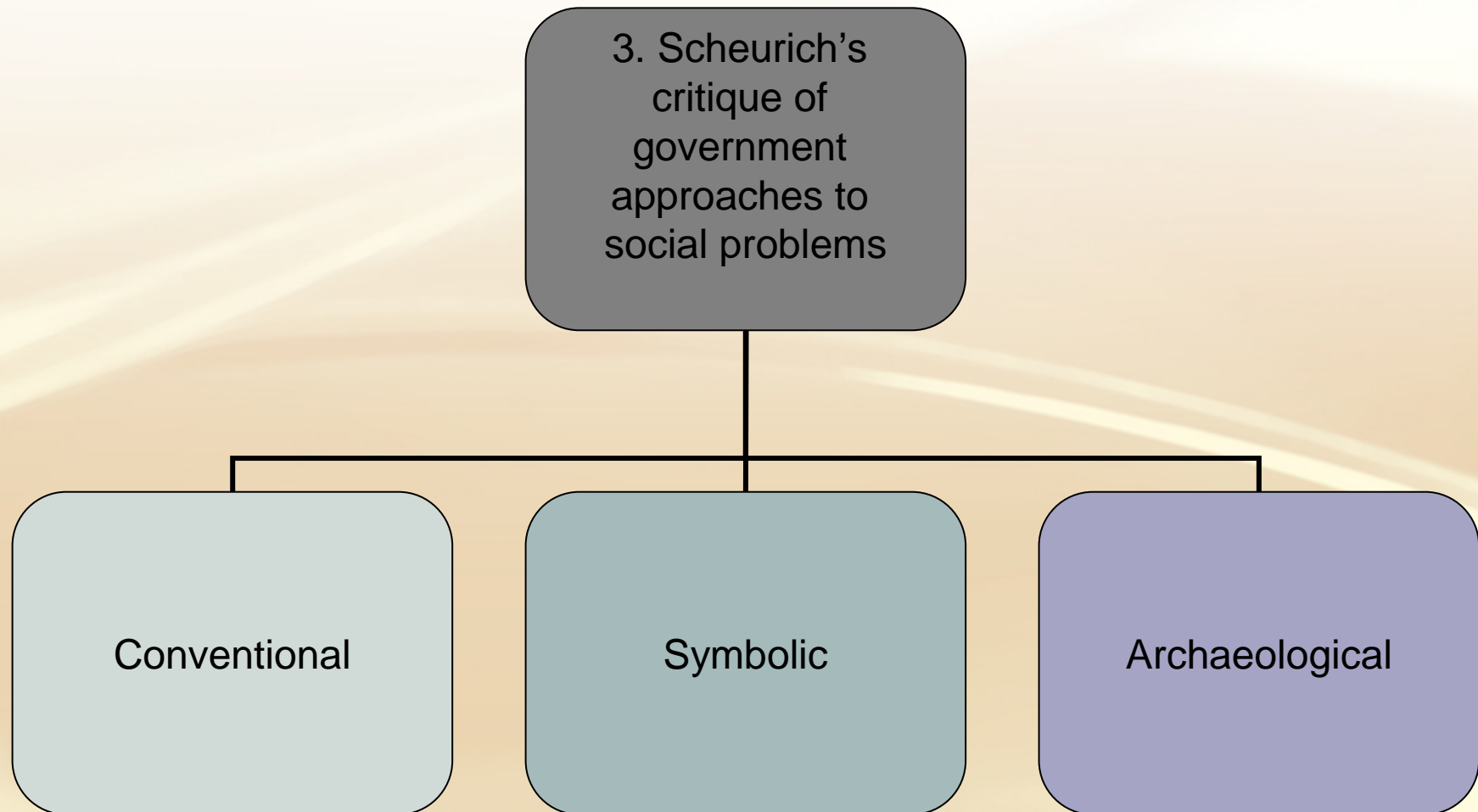
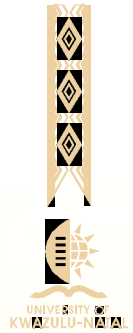
Conceptual Framework



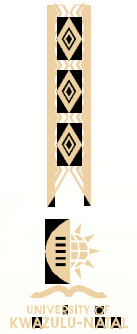
Conceptual Framework



Conceptual Framework



The Case of one PED



- The education system
- The social conditions
- The methodology

Findings

- Descriptive findings
- Critical findings



Gender Mainstreaming

Pillar 1: Gender Management System

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- Ministry (machinery)
- Management team
- Gender focal persons (GFPs)

- Inter-ministerial steering committee

- Parliamentary gender caucus
- Civil society formation

- ✓ **OSW & machinery mtg (Q)**
- ✓ **Provincial GenCom (Q)**
- ✓ **Special Programmes Directorate & district GFPs**
- ✓ **Provincial GFP attends National GenCom (Q)**
- **[beyond scope]**
- **[beyond scope]**



Gender Mainstreaming

Pillar 2: Policy & Regulatory Framework

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No policy text

Provincial GFP: **‘Eh, what if I’m hallucinating because I desire there to be? Maybe I’m talking from the perspective that says I remember... When we elected [at school], those [gender] desks were there. Maybe because I was so conscious about them, if I may be honest, if I can say to you it’s spelled out like that or it’s my wish is that it is like that, you know. I really have got to go back and check the guidelines.’**

Policy = An hallucination... a desire... a memory... a wish...

Gender policy is insufficiently legitimised so gender work can’t be clearly directed and thus advancing a gender equality agenda in the PED is in jeopardy



Gender Mainstreaming

Pillar 3: Plans, Programmes & Projects

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- Reporting implementation for 2006-2009 only
- Employee-related activities
 - Training (e.g. induction) by EMD directorate
 - PALAMA's 4-day gender mainstreaming course
- Learner-related activities
 - B-GEM Clubs
 - Teen pregnancy, Project Baby
 - TechnoGirl & TWIB competition
 - Peer educators & Life Orientation lessons
- Employee- & Learner-related activities
 - Gender-based violence & sexual harassment
 - Seasonal advocacy campaigns
- Partners



Re: Unterhalter's Conceptualisation of Government Approaches to Gender Equality

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- PED has moved beyond an interventionist approach of counting bodies and conceiving of gender as a noun (biological sex)
- PED has institutionalised gender in its structures – but is it sustainable given the resource constraints?
- PED interacts with other social agents – but are the partnerships real collaborations, ongoing and happening in all 12 districts?



Re: Scheurich's Critique of Government's approaches to Social Problems

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- PED works from 15-year old descriptions and statements of the problem & international obligations
Provincial GFP: **“...we’ve always been using the international policies because the GETT report, which was kind of like a forum, was trying to develop one draft. But we don’t have a clear policy on gender issues, besides that our country is signatory to those international policies and [that] kind of a thing, plus the existing structures, like your gender machinery, kind of Terms of References. But as a Department we have never finalised one.”**
- Most PED programmes & projects don’t go to scale or they are symbolic gestures
- PALAMA’s training programme may be an ‘archaeological’ start to weakening the deeper discursive currents of gender inequality in the PED’s workplaces, curriculum, classrooms, playgrounds, and on trips to school

Conclusion

The gender mainstreaming strategy is being rolled out within the PED, though it is a patchy implementation.

- The machinery system has parts missing and needs ‘fuel’ (personnel & funding).
- The policy must be a reality and legitimate, rather than a vague recollection, hallucination or wish.
- Symbolic and pilot manifestations of programmes and projects cannot yield sustained equality.

If these limitations and obstacles aren’t addressed, gender equality will be a sidestreaming strategy only!

Manager: “...unless you have the resources...[the policies] just remain on paper, and for me that is the challenge. I mean, if in the department you are talking about gender issues and there is just two people with other responsibilities, it doesn’t really demonstrate commitment to meeting those obligations.”

Acknowledgements

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Scheurich, J. (1997). *Research method in the postmodern*. London: Falmer Press.

Unterhalter, E. (2007). *Gender, schooling and global social justice*. London: Routledge.