

# **Gender, Human Rights and Economic Policies in Post-Apartheid South Africa**

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Much has been written about gender and human rights. It is arguable, however that the relationships between the two have not been adequately understood. Nor are they being reflected in policy prescriptions. Thus there is a widespread and deepening attention to the promotion of democracy and the fulfillment of human rights in ways that recognize the importance of gender equality.

However economic policies are creating a disabling environment for women to enjoy human rights. The paper focuses on the interconnections between economic policies and women's substantive fulfillment of human rights and develops some ideas of what a 'rights-based approach to development' might mean for women. The analysis is based on two different ideologies – that of human rights and that of economic efficiency and examines the experiences of women in particular poor women in the era of globalisation oriented economic policies. It considers alternative approaches to economic policy that would provide a more enabling environment for gender equality for women.