



WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND REPRESENTATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MUSIC SECTOR

Final Report

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FOREWORD

Women have long struggled to find their rightful place at the music revenue and royalty table, despite the role they have played and continue to play in the rich history of the South African music industry. It was hoped that with the advent of democracy, the special form of discrimination faced by African women in particular would abate, and that a new model of inclusive participation honouring women would emerge. These hopes have, sadly, not been realised. Indeed, they appear to remain far-off.

To invigorate the work needed to be done to be able to finally recognise the essential role of women artists and their vital contribution to the industry, SAMRO has embarked on a process to better understand the causes of failure to change the unfair position women artists still find themselves in, and to play a leading role in improving the situation and advancing women in the industry.

It is hoped that this comprehensive study on the rights and responsibilities of women in the South African music industry, conducted by gender-equality consultants Tara Transform, provides a foundation for further work so that women take their rightful place in a more equitable industry.

Mark Rosin

SAMRO CEO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite the prominence of female artists and music makers in the music industry, and the creative industries having a reputation for being liberal and tolerant, women are poorly represented in formal organisations working in the industry, are largely excluded from key decision-making positions within the industry and face numerous challenges that has led to their marginalisation in the industry when compared to their male counterparts.

In a survey conducted in March 2021, SAMRO confirmed that only 18% of the organisation's members comprise women. In embarking on this research process, SAMRO seeks to provide a more detailed, qualitative picture of the experiences and views of women in the industry through the eyes of a selected group of women music makers, thus adding depth to the findings of the 2021 survey and better understanding the gender imbalance in its membership. This more detailed study of women's perceptions and experiences in the industry represents the first step of a broader initiative of ongoing research, the ultimate objective of which is to find solutions and create relationships with appropriate gender-based organisations to improve women's representation, participation, and leadership in the sector.

The research involved a desktop analysis of local and international literature on the participation of women in the music industry and the issues they face; a series of 10 in-depth interviews with a selected group of women in the industry; and two focus groups, one with male and one with female respondents. The interview respondents comprised:

- 5 artists
- 2 arts and culture journalists
- An artists' manager/publicist
- A lawyer and activist in the industry
- A music executive/publisher

Certain recurring themes emerged from the various data sources.

Certain challenges in the operating environment in the industry affect all artist alike, men and women. The digitisation of the music industry has shifted the revenue chain for artists from recording to live performances on the one hand, but also created opportunities for artists to connect audiences to their own platforms, and for women, to avoid some of the gatekeepers and toxic masculinity encountered in live spaces. Other prominent challenges all face include financial insecurity, difficulties accessing funding for performances, the arts not being taken sufficiently seriously by government and the media, and the structure of the industry itself which lacks core functions such as rights education, outreach and awareness of how to monetise talents of those who created the work that makes money for the industry.

Gender issues in the music industry

Respondents identified a host of issues affecting women in the industry. These range from stereotypes and assumptions about how women must look and behave, about career paths in the industry and in music education. Media portrayals of women are also driven by stereotypes.

Sexist notions on what is respectable for women pervade. Since much of the work in the industry takes place at night, in clubs where there is alcohol, and probably drugs, women are perceived to be loose or easy. Women artists believe they are not taken seriously and have to accept unacceptable behaviour from men. For example, at recording sessions male musicians may arrive drunk or are

disrespectful to women artists. This is changing as more women become band leaders, producers, or produce their own music. Women are not always recognised for their creative input.

Women are not represented in certain creative careers, as well as on the business side of the industry. In the classical arena, historical biases against women composers have ensured that they are not on concert repertoires or studied in academic curricula. There are not enough women role models in certain occupations, such as producers, directors, instrumentalists, and composers. The music industry is a male-dominated space. Men generally believe it is their concern to empower women, and women feel they must push twice as hard as men to get the same result.

Many women believe that there are pay disparities between them and men in similar positions, and that they have less power in negotiations because they are not taught the negotiation skills men may acquire, which puts them at a disadvantage. Desperation to earn any income also leads to women earning and accepting much less. Economic vulnerability affects women's ability to be economically independent, also making them vulnerable to gender-based violence.

The industry is dominated by informal networks and boys' clubs, which women find hard to penetrate, or if they are in those spaces, they feel uncomfortable. The nature of work, where most women are freelancers or self-employed elevates the importance of being well-networked, and works against those who are not. However, the establishment of women specific networks is starting to make a difference in creating a safe space to learn and network.

Sexual harassment, as well as expectations about sexual favours, emerged repeatedly as an issue women had to face in the industry. Women are often subjected to unwelcome attention. At times it is overt, but it is often more subtle, taking the form of inappropriate comments that are seen as normal. Music spaces are often sexualised environments, with strong male energy making it difficult for women.

Most women artists do not feel safe in the industry. On the whole they do not feel safe in South Africa, but safety issues are exacerbated in the industry because events take place mainly at night where alcohol is involved, and the environment is very male-dominated. Safety in the industry also concerns support workers at clubs and venues who have to get home in the early hours, and have no safe transport.

Internationally, composers are well supported with commissions, song writing camps and festivals, but this is not the case in South Africa. There are very few other formal structures offering support to women in the industry to strengthen their business skills and to enable them to grow in traditionally male dominated professions in the industry.

The music industry is a key example of how patriarchal mindsets have led to systemic and structural discrimination which has held women back for decades. The way in which the music industry is structured, and who holds decision and financial power, has resulted in women remaining marginalised post-democracy. The deep absence of women in powerful roles, and the strong male power dynamic and spaces in the industry has forced women to endure abuse of their professional and personal rights – forcing women to accept conditions that continue to make and keep them vulnerable.

Positive changes for women in the industry

It is generally acknowledged that conditions for women have improved in certain respects in the last 10-15 years, although there is still a long way to go to achieve gender equality in the industry.

- There are more women in different roles in the industry, including on the business side, in production, and there is greater acceptance of female DJs.
- There are increasing numbers of women and of younger people in the jazz sector.
- Women are more vocal about their rights and are being heard in greater numbers.
- There is more collaboration and networking among women, which requires a collective will. The formation of music collectives such as the Women in Music¹ website (a platform for women to showcase who they are and what they do), and Women in Music South Africa, a local chapter of an international organisation² (which provides networking and education opportunities) are examples.
- Women are embracing opportunities presented by the digitisation of the industry, and connecting to their audiences and releasing music on social media without having to work with gatekeepers who may have hindered them, or made them feel unsafe.
- There are a number of women doing ground-breaking work in the industry and they can be supported to scale their impact to reach other women. However, they are largely ignored or invisible in the system.

While there is little optimism about social security or financial relief for artists, informal employment arrangements make it difficult or impossible for many artists to access assistance from financial institutions and medical aid. Government policies to assist the self-employed are necessary in this regard.

Recommendations

Women want changes to come from within organizations and from leaders across the music industry through diversity, policies, and culture.

In addressing gender-based violence, the most practical starting point is in creating female-friendly resources and safe workspaces to address gender-based violence and sexual harassment.

Beyond this there is a need for co-ordinated and legislated policy interventions in South Africa to address systemic gender inequality because of hostile environments and lack of safety. Such interventions include industry codes of conduct that need to be followed to access funding, and more robust implementation of existing and new legislation designed to protect women³.

Support networks are seen to be able to give women a stronger industry voice and need to be strengthened. Although findings in the literature suggest that many women would rather be a part of the group dynamic and increase their representation than create specific spaces that exclude men altogether, the women interviewed and focus group participants felt the opposite. They expressed frustration at how hard they had to work to be included in support networks, or where they felt they were there to make up the numbers, and how much more effective women-only networks had been in helping them and giving them the confidence to ensure that their voices were heard. Men who

¹ <https://womeninmusic.co.za/>

² <https://www.womeninmusic.org/>

³ Ankoma, A. (2020). That's not OK: Gender-based violence and policy making in the arts. <https://www.news24.com/arts/culture/thats-not-ok-gender-based-violence-and-policy-making-in-the-arts-20201211>

want to be allies need to take the responsibility, reach out to their female colleagues, and be far more intentional about how they make spaces more inclusive.

Respondents overwhelmingly support the application of quotas, which are needed in targeted funding for festival and concert line-ups, support for training initiatives, and selection and adjudication panels.

The current regulatory framework for copyright management organisations does not require them to provide explicit gender-disaggregated data on differential impact of membership, royalty rate setting and royalty distribution. It is strongly believed that requiring gender-disaggregated data would ensure that representation of women requires ongoing monitoring.

Education, training and support is needed for women to acquire both technical skills, and skills in the business aspects of music in order to be able to better protect their rights and earn money from what they do more fairly.

The government's role should be about creating policies and guidelines on accessing industry-related funding. There is also strong support for funding being made available for women-only spaces and events, especially for women at the beginning of their careers.

Recommendations on SAMRO's specific role in addressing the issues contributing to their poor visibility among women, and paucity of women members includes more women in leadership; advancing women in male-dominated roles in the industry; rights awareness, education and protection; creation of safe spaces and offering counselling specific to the industry, and perhaps legal advice; a specific code of conduct within SAMRO; outreach and training to women composers who have never heard of SAMRO; using their voice to influence others as SAMRO occupies a powerful position in the industry for example proposing an Industry Code of Conduct relating to women, asking licensees and SAMRO members, venues and other service providers to sign a clear agreement on women; training and support on business and management; practical support for collaborative initiatives; and leveraging male allies to work intentionally to support women in the industry.

Concluding comments

This research has highlighted that the music industry, like the broader society, struggles to advance gender equality in a meaningful way. Issues highlighted by the study point to structural and systemic barriers and discrimination that keep women in the industry stuck in survival mode.

In an increasingly globalized and interconnected world, utilizing all social and economic assets is crucial for success. Yet, despite progress, women continue to confront discrimination, marginalization and exclusion, even though equality between men and women stands as a universal international precept—a fundamental and inviolable human right. (UN Women, Women Empowerment Principles)⁴

UN Women notes that while much has been accomplished through the integration of principles and actions on corporate responsibility, diversity and inclusion, *“the full participation of women*

⁴ UN Women. (2011). Women's Empowerment Principles: Equality Means Business. United Nations Global Compact.

throughout the private sector – from the CEO’s office to the factory floor to the supply chain – remains unfulfilled”. The Women Empowerment Principles agreed in a partnership initiative of UN Women and UN Global Compact (UNGC), provide a set of considerations to help the private sector focus on key elements integral to promoting gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community. We suggest that SAMRO (and the music industry more broadly) consider using these principles as a guide to addressing and transforming a sector that has deeply entrenched gender discrimination and sexism that has been accepted as the way things are. The response to these illuminating findings must be structural and systemic, not tokenistic. For example, while gender-based violence is a serious concern, it is not the root cause of women’s insecurity as the research has highlighted.

The Women Empowerment Principles could also be applied to advance women’s rights and gender equality in the broader industry, and cover 7 broad areas :

- Leadership promotes gender equality through direct top-level policies which are gender-sensitive, with targets and progress reporting requirements, and that corporate culture advances equality and inclusion.
- Equal opportunity, inclusion and non-discrimination.
- Health, safety and freedom from violence.
- Education and training.
- Enterprise development, supply chain and marketing.
- Community leadership and engagement.
- Transparency, measuring and reporting

1 Introduction

Despite the prominence of female artists and music makers in the music industry, and the creative industries having a reputation for being liberal and tolerant, women are poorly represented in formal organisations working in the industry, are largely excluded from key decision-making positions within the industry and face numerous challenges that has led to their marginalisation in the industry when compared to their male counterparts.

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Findings presented in this report are the outcome of this process, which comprised the following elements:

- A desktop study.
- 10 interviews with selected women in the music industry, which have been written up as individual case studies.
- 2 focus groups – one with male musicians and one with female musicians.

The report provides a brief outline of the research methodology followed to gather and analyse data, a desktop study, the ten individual case studies, the focus group findings, and an analysis of the broad themes that emerged from all these data sources.

Suggestions and recommendations from the desktop study, interview respondents and focus group participants have been collated in the section on Recommendations, followed by Concluding Remarks, which includes input from Tara Transform on addressing the underlying structural issues behind much of what emerged as the causes of gender inequality for women in the music industry.

Feedback from this report will inform further interventions in the longer term.

2 Definitions⁵

Ageism

Any attitude, action, or institutional structure, which subordinates a person or group because of age or any assignment of roles in society purely on the basis of age.

Gender-based violence

The general term used to capture violence that occurs as a result of the normative role expectations associated with the gender associated with the sex assigned to a person at birth, as well as the unequal power relations between the genders, within the context of a specific society. GBV includes physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and psychological abuse or threats of such acts or abuse, coercion, and economic or educational deprivation, whether occurring in public or private life, in peacetime and during armed or other forms of conflict, and may cause physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or economic harm.

Gender Mainstreaming

Defined by the United Nations as the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programmes, in any area and at different levels. It is a strategy for making women's and men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

Patriarchy

Patriarchy is a system of relationships, beliefs, and values embedded in political, social, and economic systems that structure gender inequality between men and women. Attributes seen as "feminine" or pertaining to women are undervalued, while attributes regarded as "masculine" or pertaining to men are privileged. Patriarchal relations structure both the private and public spheres, ensuring that men dominate both.⁶

Sexual harassment

Behaviour characterised by the making of unwelcome and inappropriate sexual remarks or physical advances in a workplace or other professional or social situation.

Social Norms

Unwritten rules that regulate acceptable behaviour in a group. Social norms define what is expected of a woman and a man in society; they are both embedded in institutions and nested in people's minds.

⁵ Unless stated otherwise, definitions are obtained from RSA. (2020). *National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide*.

⁶ Nash, C.J. (2020). *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*.

3 Methodology

This research used a qualitative interpretive paradigm to gain a deeper understanding of the views and experiences of the sample selected to participate, using a case study approach.

Individual case studies were developed for each of the ten women selected to participate. Data was collected by means of an in-depth interview with each one, which was recorded and transcribed. These interviews were developed into case studies, which provide narrative but try as much as possible to use the voice of the respondents, through quotes.

Findings from the two focus groups have been written up and presented as a separate section in the report.

To protect their identity, none of the respondents have been named. All consented to participate in the study, and to have the interviews recorded. Most of the interviews, and both focus groups were conducted on Zoom, which allowed a greater geographical spread, and enabled interviews to be conducted at respondents' convenience.

Both interview and focus group discussion guides adopted a semi-structured approach, which allowed the interviewers and moderators to probe or respond to issues as they arose. As the interviews were allowed to flow, it also meant that responses were not necessarily given in order. In certain interviews there were also some questions that respondents did not answer, or they repeated an answer they had given for a previous question. The interview and focus group discussion guides used are attached to the report as appendices. Initially, it was intended to ask focus group participants to rank items that had emerged from the literature and interviews in terms of importance, but as the first group unfolded, it became apparent that more discussion about the issues that respondents raised would be more useful, and the guide was adjusted accordingly.

3.1 The sample

SAMRO selected the interview and focus group respondents through a hybrid process of selection and cold calling. The first step was to identify suitable respondents in the music sector. SAMRO Board member, Mr Ryan Hill, who is also a director at Universal Music, suggested some names, and the SAMRO team comprising Anriette Chorn, James French, Nandipha Mnyani and Naseema Yusuf added additional names. SAMRO approached potential respondents with information about the study and requesting their participation. The research team then contacted the respondents to arrange the interviews.

Interviewees and focus group participants drew from a broad cross-section of the sector including those who work in the industry for example as promoters, composers, performers, sound engineers, instrumentalists, journalists, and publicists. As subcultures attached to certain genres also impact the way women are portrayed the team worked to keep an element of genre diversity in the small pool of respondents. 10 Women were selected for interviews and a further 10 were invited for a focus group. Gender was an important consideration. To prevent one sided research, a similar selection of approximately 10 men who work in the music industry were invited in a similar way for a further focus group. To ensure positive engagement the men were selected on the basis that they would be open to providing solutions to the persistent male domination of the industry. Although challenges facing women specifically and members of the LGBTQIA+ community often intersect, they are not always the

same. Members of the LGBTQIA+ community face additional levels of discrimination and violence. While this particular study targeted women specifically, respondents may be members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Other than their identification as women other aspects of gender and sexual identity did not form part of the criteria for selection to participate.

The interview respondents comprised:

- 5 artists
- 2 arts and culture journalists
- An artists' manager/publicist
- A lawyer and activist in the industry
- A music executive/publisher

A more detailed overview, including their genres are presented later on in the report with the case studies.

Two focus group sessions were held, both on zoom to allow for ease of attendance for respondents not in Johannesburg. One group comprised 6 male respondents, the other 7 female.

The male respondents included:

- a musician/composer/producer/ run a music studio
- a musician/composer/performer/teacher
- a sound engineer
- a teacher/director of a youth festival
- a lawyer, legal manager for a record label
- a producer, DJ, composer and head of an institution.

Among the women's group were:

- an educator/performer
- an attorney in the entertainment and intellectual property space
- a performer/composer/social activist
- a composer/academic/ head of music collective
- a jazz radio presenter/events co-ordinator;
- a singer/songwriter/producer
- trombonist/singer/composer

3.2 Limitations

Although the use of Zoom technology was advantageous in allowing for greater convenience, and for getting focus groups together with people who were not in the same location, it did present some limitations. Such limitations were largely related to issues such as load shedding interrupting interviews, and low bandwidth on the part of some respondents which made it difficult for the one of the interviewers to keep her camera on. This can affect the rapport between the interviewer and the respondent.

In the focus groups, not everyone stayed for the duration of the session, especially in the male group. Although in-person sessions minimise distractions, the focus groups and interviews ultimately worked well on Zoom, and the researchers were able to obtain the necessary data.

4 Desktop review

4.1 Introduction

The documentation reviewed for this study shows that gender-based challenges for women in the music industry resulting from general societal norms, and poor representation in decision-making positions, pervade both in South Africa and throughout the world. Although these challenges are gaining increased recognition, many remain poorly understood and unsolved. The COVID-19 pandemic has also exposed the deep fault lines in gender equality that have intensified the impact of the pandemic on girls and women.

In South Africa, the composition field is dominated by men, with women earning less than 8% of the royalties paid out by SAMRO. Fewer than 20% of SAMRO members are women. Patriarchy abounds in the industry with sexual favours are often demanded of women, and songs sung by women credited unfairly to their male counterparts.⁷

Similar patterns are found elsewhere in the world. Studies on gender inequality in the United States music industry by Tulalian⁸ and the USC Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism⁹ show that while there are many women in the business, what is promoted is overwhelmingly decided by men. Tulalian quotes data that in 2018, 97,7% of all producers in the United States were men, as are the judges of music awards such as the Grammys. The USC Annenberg report notes that only 22,4% of all performers across the 600 most popular songs from 2012-2017 were female. Women were more likely to receive credit as solo artists, and rarely appeared in duos or bands. Fewer than 10% of all Grammy award nominations during that time were female, with none nominated for Producer of the Years since 2013.

In the Australian music industry, Cooper, Coles and Hanna-Osborn note the pervasiveness of male advantage, with women earning less than male counterparts, receiving less airplay on radio, featuring less on festival line-ups, less likely to be honoured in music awards and under-represented on boards of national music bodies.¹⁰

Common themes emerging from both the local and international documentation reviewed on the many ways women are marginalised in the industry include:

- Sexual harassment and gender-based violence as result of poor safety and security. Results of an international survey of 401 female music creators including in the US, UK, Canada, Mexico,

⁷ Maweni, N. (2020). *Patriarchy in the music industry has cheated female artists of their royalties*. <https://www.iol.co.za/news/opinion/patriarchy-in-the-music-industry-has-cheated-female-artists-of-their-royalties-98f71128-6b93-439a-b26e-9fdfae282184>

⁸ Tulalian, I. (2019). *Gender inequality in the music industry*. *Backstage Pass*, 2 (1), <https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/backstage-pass/vol2/iss1/14>

⁹ Smith, S.L & USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. (2019). *Inclusion in the recording studio*. <https://annenberg.usc.edu/news/research/men-make-music-study-reveals-womens-voices-are-missing-popular-charts>

¹⁰ Cooper, R., Coles, A. & Hanna-Osborne, S. (2017). *Skipping a beat: Assessing the state of gender equality in the Australian music industry*. Sydney University Business School.

Russia, New Zealand, Turkey, the Philippines and other countries released in 2021 by Midia Research¹¹ on behalf of TuneCore¹², showed that almost two-thirds of female creators identified sexual harassment or objectification as a key challenge, making it by far the most widely-cited problem. In her research on women in the music industry in post-apartheid South Africa, Moelwyn-Hughes interviewed 28 women, but did not anticipate the extent to which intimate and sexual harassment and rape issues were raised. What emerged overwhelmingly was the constant battle women musicians wage against the stereotypes of male behaviour and belittlement, and against the expectation of providing visual stimulation for males.¹³

- Sexist attitudes. TuneCore’s survey showed that sexualization and objectification are a consequence (or symptom) of unbalanced power dynamics, as shown by the next ‘big three challenges’: ageism, lack of access to male-dominated industry resources and lower pay.¹⁴
- Lack of access to spaces for female artists to perform. Festival line-ups tend to be dominated by male performers. Concerns for their safety in certain areas, and family responsibilities also act as barriers for women to perform in certain male-dominated spaces.
- Assumptions about women’s ability to use instruments or sound and production technology.
- Male domination of production, composition and sound. Women creators feel excluded from the composition and production, which makes this aspect of music creation highly ‘genderized’. Women do not receive sufficient credit as composers.
- ‘Boys clubs’ that make it hard for women to access information and networks.
- Unequal distribution of royalties, and poor representation in awards, songs on lists (e.g. Spotify) and female artists being played less on radio.

As well as drawing attention to the ways women experience inequality in the industry, this review will shed light on some of the structural reasons that entrench such inequality. Although the issues mentioned above apply internationally as well as to South Africa, general societal norms in South Africa with respect to gender provide the context against which gender issues in the industry in this need to be viewed as well.

In compiling this review, Tara Transform appraised a combination of published and unpublished academic literature, industry journals, annual reports, reports to government articles, news articles and blogs, all available in the public domain. The confinement of the review to secondary data was a limitation especially in being able to report on the representation of women in certain industry bodies, as information was not available. A further concern was that much of the data reviewed on women in

¹¹ Midia Research. (2021). *Be the Change: Women Making Music*. TuneCore.

[be-the-change-women-making-music.pdf \(tunecore.com\)](https://www.tunecore.com/be-the-change-women-making-music.pdf)

¹² TuneCore is a global platform for independent musicians to build audiences and careers -- with technology and services across distribution, publishing administration and a range of promotional services. It is owned by Believe, a digital music company.

¹³ Moelwyn-Hughes, C. (2013). *Women, gender and identity in popular music-making in Gauteng 1994-2012*. University of the Witwatersrand: Unpublished Masters’ Dissertation.

¹⁴ Midia Research. (2021). *Be the Change: Women Making Music*. TuneCore.

[be-the-change-women-making-music.pdf \(tunecore.com\)](https://www.tunecore.com/be-the-change-women-making-music.pdf)

the industry in South Africa is fairly old, thus information on how things may have changed was not available from secondary sources. That is one of the gaps that the in-depth interviews tried to address.

4.2 Challenges in the operating environment

4.2.1 The digitisation of the music industry and the changing value chain

The changing nature of the music industry worldwide has played an enormous role in the difficulties faced by all music-makers.

Online music platforms such as Spotify and Apple have revolutionised the music value chain, with artists arguably not getting their fair share of revenues. In 2019, Spotify paid artists an average of \$0.0032 per stream, a bit below the industry average of \$0.005. A successful band such as Stolen Jars had more than 22,000 monthly listeners on Spotify, but earned only about \$1,500 to \$2,000 every year from streaming services. Successful classical violinist Tasmin Little earned around \$15.50 (R273) for six months during which she had just over 3.5 million streams¹⁵. For many musicians, paying to keep an album on a streaming or digital sales platform costs more than the cents they receive from it.¹⁶

Distribution arrangements are often particularly unfavourable to women, who may not even own the rights to their work. Many artists exchange the rights to their work in exchange for a company's expertise in dealing with streaming services and other distribution channels. A high-profile example is that of Taylor Swift who re-recorded old songs and albums due to a dispute about ownership and rights to her music. Swift signed her first record deal when she was 14, giving the company rights to the 'master recordings' of her songs in return for a cash advance. As a result, the company alone profited from all copies of the master track on CDs, and tracks used on platforms like Spotify and Apple Music.¹⁷

Furthermore, music makers need live performances to earn. Data cited earlier revealed that women all over the world featured less on radio, at live performances and at festivals. The informality and exclusiveness of the industry often make it difficult for all artists, but especially women, who may not be part of established networks, thus losing further earning opportunities.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic shut down venues, music shops were closing and the industry was struggling with piracy and music streaming online. In two articles in *Ground Up* from November 2021, Niki Moore described the hollowing out of the South African music industry, how live

¹⁵ Cush, A. (2020). *How Musicians Are Fighting for Streaming Pay During the Pandemic*
<https://pitchfork.com/features/article/how-musicians-are-fighting-for-streaming-pay-during-the-pandemic/>

¹⁶ Ansell, G. (2019). *Amapiano: people power plus WhatsApp breaking the legacy music value chain*
<https://sigswenjazz.wordpress.com/2019/11/17/amapiano-people-power-plus-whatsapp-breaking-the-legacy-music-value-chain/>

¹⁷ <https://www.itv.com/news/2021-11-12/why-is-taylor-swift-re-recording-her-old-albums>.

performances are key to bringing in money for musicians, the decline in independent record labels, and how revenues are not reaching artists.¹⁸

Digital technologies also have a positive effect in enabling artists to engage more directly with audiences, thus directing them to income generating opportunities on their own platforms, and in many cases providing a safer space for women to release music. In the South African context, and exacerbated by COVID-19, however, those with decent access to technology and data were able to adopt technologies to sustain themselves from online music, while those who did not were unable to. A further perceived lack of efficiency, integrity, effectiveness and practical industry understanding among all levels of government officials has hampered the ability of many music-makers to adapt to take advantage of digital technologies.¹⁹ A notable exception to this has been *amapiano*, the first grassroots dancing sound to take advantage of WhatsApp for distribution²⁰.

The regulatory framework for collective copyright in South Africa, according to Chijioke Okorie²¹, was formulated in response to issues of accountability and transparency, focusing on legal and economic functions, and is thus largely gender blind.

4.3 Structural issues contributing to gender inequality in the sector

4.3.1 General societal norms with respect to gender

At a macro level relating to policy and law

At a macro level, South Africa has a strong legislative and policy environment aligned to international conventions seeking to promote women's rights. At the same time, a comprehensive set of government programmes and dynamic civil society organisations are providing essential services to women.²²

South Africa is a signatory to a plethora of international and regional commitments and much of this is translated into domestic law. It has ratified key international and regional instruments promoting and protecting the rights of women including the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Maputo Protocol (The Optional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa) in 2004, the African Heads of State Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa and the Southern Africa Development

¹⁸ Moore, N. (2021). Catastrophic decline in the South African music industry, *Ground Up*, 24 November 2021. And Moore, N. (2021). SA music industry exposed: the money is not going to the artists, *Ground Up*, 26 November 2021

¹⁹ South African Cultural Observatory. (2020). *Impact Analysis: Live music and its venues and the South African Economy during Covid-19*. Pretoria: Department of Arts and Culture.

²⁰ Ansell, G. (2019). *Amapiano: people power plus WhatsApp breaking the legacy music value chain* <https://sisgwenjazz.wordpress.com/2019/11/17/amapiano-people-power-plus-whatsapp-breaking-the-legacy-music-value-chain/>

²¹ Okorie, C. (2020). Gender equality in South Africa's creative sector through the regulation of collective management organisations, *Africa Portal*, 2 October 2020. <https://www.africaportal.org/features/gender-equality-in-south-africas-creative-sector-through-the-regulation-of-collective-management-organisations/>

²² CSVR. (2017). Violence against Women in South Africa: A Country in Crisis, <https://www.csvr.org.za/pdf/Full-report-to-client.pdf>

Community Protocol on Gender and Development of 2008 and the SADC Regional GBV Strategy and Framework for Action 2019-2030.

South African policy is aligned with the United Nations' Sustainability Development Goals, expressed in its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2022 SDG Gender Index, produced by Equal Measures 2030, provides a snapshot of where the world stands linked to the vision of gender equality set forth by the 2030 Agenda²³. Equal Measures 2030 is an independent civil society and private sector-led partnership that uses data and evidence to influence policy to ensure that governments deliver on the promise of gender equality by 2030. The indicators are both those that are gender-specific, and those that are not, but nonetheless have a disproportionate effect on girls and women.

While SDG 5 specifically refers to gender inequality, the goals are interdependent, and many of them intersect. The SDG Gender Index, goes beyond SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and measures the state of gender equality aligned to 14 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 129 countries and 51 issues ranging from health, gender-based violence, climate change, decent work and others.

In the 2022 SDG Gender Index, South Africa ranked 52, with an overall score of 70.9. The closer a country's score is to 100, the more gender equal it is, according to the criteria used in the index. South Africa's ranking improved from 71st place in 2019 and a score of 64.9. Of all countries rated, Finland ranked highest at 90.4, with Chad the lowest, ranked 129, at 35.6. South Africa ranked second in Africa, behind Mauritius which scored 75.3. The country's highest score was for SDG 5 (Gender equality), Reasonable scores were achieved in SDG7 (Affordable and clean energy) and SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth). It fared most poorly in Peace and institutions (SDG16) and Inequalities (SDG 10).

Key data that speaks to the lived realities of women and girls around the world centre particularly around SDGs 3 (sexual and reproductive health rights), 4 (education), 5 (representation of women in government and leadership), 8 (laws on inequality in the workplace) and 16 (safety).

South Africa's high score on Gender Equality (SDG 5) is primarily due to the proportion of senior ministerial and government posts held by women, with South Africa reaching parity between men and women in cabinet positions. More needs to be done to ensure women's fair representation in the private sector, which stood at 32.1% in 2017. However, levels of reported physical and sexual violence against women remain high, and they still carry disproportionate responsibilities for unpaid domestic and care work.

Despite South Africa's progressive constitution and entrenched rights for women, and accompanying legal frameworks, national and international agreements, South Africa remains a highly unequal society and has a complex gendered landscape. The Gini coefficient of household per capita income is typically well above 0.6. A score of 0 is perfect equality, and 1 is complete inequality. The World Population Review released in 2021 ranked South Africa as the most unequal society in the world, with an inequality ration of 0.63.²⁴ The largest contributors to inequality are the racialised and gender-biased labour market. The mean real earnings between 2011 and 2015 amongst employed black

²³ Equal Measures. (2022). *2022 SDG Gender Index: Back to normal in not enough*.
https://www.equalmeasures2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/SDG-index_report_FINAL_EN.pdf

²⁴ World Population Review. (2022). *Gini Coefficient by Country 2022*.
<https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/gini-coefficient-by-country>

Africans was R6 899 per month. For Coloureds and Indians/Asians, the corresponding figures are R9 339 and R14 235 per month, respectively. Amongst whites, it was R24 646 per month, or more than three times as high as it was amongst black Africans. Female workers earn approximately 30% less, on average, than male workers.²⁵ Intersecting factors create and perpetuate vulnerability of women in South Africa, such as social norms that prescribe women and men's role in society (i.e. women stay at home to care for children), access to education, sexual and reproductive health (i.e. HIV status), availability of housing, knowledge of and access to services, and migrant relationship patterns within rural communities. These are all exacerbated in marginalised groups.

South Africa is a particularly violent society, with a very high rate of sexual violence. Increasing sexual violence increased enormously as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns. According to the South African Police Service (SAPS) Crime Statistics report of 2018, femicide increased by 11% between 2016/17 and 2018/19. Rape cases reported and recorded increased from 39 828 in 2016/17 to 40 035 in 2017/18 reflects that 138 women were raped per 100 000 women, making this the highest rate in the world.²⁶ The actual rate is likely much higher due to underreporting as a result of shaming and intimidation by the perpetrators. It is also estimated that between 43% and 56% of women in South Africa have experienced intimate partner violence and 42% of men report perpetrating it.²⁷ Between April and June 2021, the number of reported cases rose dramatically, by 72%, largely resulting from domestic violence as a result of lockdowns due to Covid-19. The minister of police noted that this number drops drastically to 2.8% if comparison was made to the normal period prior to lockdown.²⁸

Intense lobbying of various organisations and groups has forced government to take the issue more seriously. As a result of pressure from various women's organisations and growing public outrage at the persistently high rates of gender-based violence, a Presidential Summit on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide was convened in 2019, resulting in the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (NSP GBVF) being released in 2020.²⁹ The NSP GBVF argues that structural violence against women and girls has remained hidden, is often overlooked, and is underpinned by exploitation of labour, undervaluing of unpaid work, under-funded social protection, unequal pay for equal work, inflexible labour policies, the high costs of living, unsafe and unhealthy working environments, inhumane working hours, poor regulation of the minimum wage and precarious jobs impacting particularly on women.

In their 2018 *Framework on Gender-Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing*, the Department of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities outlined the primary factors influencing the prevailing gender norms in South Africa³⁰:

- **Patriarchy and unequal gender relations.** The impact of structural patriarchy has led to a country that still struggles to uphold women's rights and respect gender diversity. A major challenge in

²⁵ Statistics South Africa. (2019). *Inequality Trends in South Africa: A multidimensional diagnostic of inequality*.

²⁶ Statistics South Africa. (2018). *Crime Statistics Series Volume: Crime Against Women in South Africa*, p. 8.

²⁷ Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. (2014). Policy Brief, p. 1.

²⁸ RSA. (2021). *Quarter One Crime Statistics 2021/2022*. <https://www.gov.za/speeches/minister-bheki-cele-quarter-one-crime-statistics-20212022-20-aug-2021-0000>

²⁹ RSA. (2020). *National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide*.

³⁰ Department of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities. (2018). *Framework on Gender-Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing*.

realizing gender equality in South Africa lies in dismantling patriarchy, with its underlying logic of male control over women, and its effects; addressing and eliminating the high levels of violence against women and girls and femicide; and in breaking the cycle of dependency of those women who continue to be marginalised and who remain vulnerable.³¹

- **The legacy of racial oppression and marginalisation resulting from colonialism and apartheid.** The apartheid system denied all Africans, especially African women, equitable access to land, housing, property, healthcare, social services, educational opportunities and employment.³² A legislated migrant labour system, accompanied by influx control laws that forced men to leave their families in rural areas all of which disrupted and destabilised family life, the effects of which continue to be felt. Gwen Ansell offers much detail on these factors and how they influenced the way the music industry developed in the country in her book *Soweto Blues: Jazz, Popular Music & Politics in South Africa*³³.
- **Unequal access to ownership and control of productive resources such as land.** Successive laws have resulted in Africans, and women in particular, having little opportunity to own land in South Africa. Under apartheid, Africans were prohibited from owning businesses outside of certain limited categories. Gender inequality in access to land and property is substantial due to discriminatory inheritance practices and land access under traditional and customary law, as well as unequal access to land markets and gender-biased land reform. Despite the existence of enabling policies, South African women desiring land ownership and access through land reform instruments generally struggle to do so. This situation occurs irrespective of South Africa being a signatory to various international and regional treaties that ensure the human, social and economic rights of women since 1994.³⁴
- **The unequal burden of unpaid (care) work that women bear.** Sex stereotyping and the gendered nature of women's roles, responsibilities and work continues to impede their full enjoyment of their freedom and rights and is a barrier to their full emancipation. Women are often defined in relation to motherhood, and are regarded as socially responsible for caring for others and the provision of basic services such as water, sustenance and education.
- **Changing education landscape.** Differential education outcomes between boys and girls further entrench inequality and are a significant determinant of greater economic dependency on male partners and diminished control in the relationship. Women who have completed secondary schooling are less likely to be victims/survivors of intimate partner violence. Likewise, men are less likely to perpetrate physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence if they have completed secondary schooling. Girls face greater dropout rates from secondary school, with high rates of teenage pregnancy among school-going girls. Many teenage mothers do not return to school, or if they do, they are subjected to household and child-care responsibilities after hours.³⁵

³¹ DWYPD. (2019). *South Africa's report on the progress made on the implementation of the Beijing platform for action 2014-2019*.

³² The Presidency. (2019). *Towards a 25 Year Review*

³³ Ansell, G. (2005). *Soweto Blues: Jazz, Popular Music & Politics in South Africa*. New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc.

³⁴ United Nations Country Team (UNCT) *Report to the CEDAW Committee for South Africa (2020)*.

³⁵ RSA. (2020). *National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide*.

- **Religion and culture.** South African society is heavily influenced by religious and cultural notions of the role of men and women with a pervasive acceptance that women are not equal to men and men have a right to make decisions on behalf of women.

Moelwyn-Hughes' research into women, gender and identity in post-apartheid Gauteng highlights how Black women music makers experienced many of these factors in their formative experiences.³⁶ Societal attitudes played a large role in encouraging or discouraging women to enter the music industry between the 1930s and 1990s, with perceptions of performers as "loose" or "wild" pervasive. Families may have preferred women to go into more "respectable" professions such as nursing or teaching. Women had to balance traditional cultural expectations of being a "good wife" with a stage career, and they suffered economic exploitation at the hands of record companies. Most destructive were the effects that apartheid legislation had on artists' lives. In terms of performance and music making, the Group Areas, Separate Amenities Acts, the pass laws and liquor laws were particularly destructive, documented as well in Ansell's *Soweto Blues: Jazz, Popular Music and Politics in South Africa*.³⁷

Importantly, Moelwyn-Hughes notes that although gender power relations in the country in general have influenced the masculinisation of the industry, women were not just passive victims, but used their own agency and what they had at their disposal to both challenge and reproduce stereotypes. South African Black women musicians both acquiesced to and worked within male defined roles, but also circumvented and manipulated and thus were able to challenge established rules.

The evidence from this review suggests that such factors remain as obstacles for women in the industry. Although Moelwyn-Hughes concludes that women are less impeded in their career choices in the past and have better and more varied career paths due to better access to education, there remain other structural impediments and difficulties confronting women in the industry, applicable both in and outside of South Africa. These will be addressed in turn.

4.3.2 The informal nature of work in the industry

The music industry is characterised by a largely gig economy with most creative people working on a freelance, contract or part-time basis, and ultimately self-employed. The precarious nature of such work is typical in creative industries, and becoming more common in all areas of work. The absence of regulations that might protect or assist people leads to disadvantaged gendered outcomes. There may be more people who work formally on the production, intellectual property and technical and prestigious creative jobs, but these tend to be men.³⁸

In the gig economy, word of mouth, and informal recruiting networks are important in getting work. People neither comfortable nor able to join the networking-game are often excluded. Women may not be able to join late night events or parties due to family commitments, and informal hires are often similar in profile to the person doing the hiring, who is likely to be male. Thus, the practice of

³⁶ Moelwyn-Hughes, C. (2013). *Women, gender and identity in popular music making in Gauteng, 1994-2012*. University of the Witwatersrand: Unpublished Masters Dissertation.

³⁷ Ansell, G. (2005). *Soweto Blues: Jazz, Popular Music & Politics in South Africa*. New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc.

³⁸ Willrodt, A. (2016). *Gender and labour in the music industry: An exploration into why the music industry has a gender problem and what can be done to change*. University of Agder: Unpublished Masters Dissertation.

'gifting' or sexual favours as appropriate forms of marketing in order to access networks is prevalent. Informal hiring tends to disadvantage women.

4.3.3 Parenting responsibilities and Relationship Challenges

Parenting responsibilities often clash with long hours, travel, weekends away, and affect women disproportionately. Women are still expected to take on the primary role of parenting duties, and if they are working in the industry, they require a strong support system. Internationally, the TuneCore survey quoted earlier found that although the overall representation of women in society has increased over the past few decades, 84% of women still feel that the music industry wants female artists to be young – partly a symptom of the industry's youth obsession, but also so that women become successful before they are presumed to decide to take on the role of motherhood.³⁹

Motherhood may affect the choice of jobs women musicians take on, as do women's experiences of being dropped if pregnant, or of not being able to be around smoky areas. Moelwyn-Hughes' research found that having supportive partners was key to many women's success in the industry. Many women she spoke to mention the support of their partners, and she quoted Yvonne Chaka Chaka who noted that her husband's willingness to care for their children while she was performing had been crucial to her career. The women Moelwyn-Hughes interviewed negotiated motherhood and relationships in different ways, some only taking work that allowed them to be home earlier than they would have otherwise, while others highly dependent on a support system around them. Moelwyn-Hughes found that while the extreme sexism and patriarchy that artists such as Dolly Rathebe, the top jazz and blues singer of her generation, faced when her partner's parents would not allow her to marry the father of her child, has receded, jealousy, control and tensions in many relationships in the industry still prevail.⁴⁰

4.3.4 Music Education

Strong and Raine's 2018 research into gender politics in the music industry sheds light on how structural issues in education policies influence outcomes as to who is more likely to succeed in the music industry.⁴¹ In her earlier research on the South African music industry, Moelwyn-Hughes shows how music tuition usually depends on the family backgrounds and support systems available. If it is offered at all, stereotypes persist. For example, boys are directed towards instruments, girls towards voice, although there are increasing numbers of young women, including African women playing instruments at school level and enrolled in university music departments in South Africa. In 2013, the director of the National Youth Jazz Festival estimated that there were 40% females playing jazz at school, 20% at university, and 5% playing at a professional level.⁴² Data obtained in 2022 from the same director in one of the focus groups carried out in this study suggests that things have changed

³⁹ Midia Research. (2021). *Be the Change: Women Making Music*. TuneCore. [be-the-change-women-making-music.pdf \(tunecore.com\)](https://www.tunecore.com/be-the-change-women-making-music.pdf)

⁴⁰ Moelwyn-Hughes, C. (2013). *Women, gender and identity in popular music-making in Gauteng 1994-2012*. University of the Witwatersrand: Unpublished Masters' Dissertation.

⁴¹ Strong, C and Raine, S. (2018). Gender politics in the music industry, *Journal of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music*, 8(1)

⁴² Moelwyn-Hughes, C. (2013). *Women, gender and identity in popular music-making in Gauteng 1994-2012*. University of the Witwatersrand: Unpublished Masters' Dissertation.

since then, but not sufficiently to indicate gender parity. He estimates 40% females playing jazz at school, 30% at university, and between 10-20% playing professionally, although the default is around 10%. This data suggests that there are young girls in high school who are good enough to get into the national band, who don't necessarily go to university but then also drop off. The drop off keeps on going all the way from high school to university to professional.

4.3.5 Gendered occupations

Occupations in the cultural industries are strongly gendered, driven by stereotypes and characterised by pay gaps. In the United Kingdom in 2011, 61% of the people working in the industry were male with men typically working in prestigious technical or creative jobs such as A&R (artists and repertoire), artist manager or producer. Women are often found in marketing, public relations, production, or retail. Women also experience difficulties in getting promotions⁴³. The effects of conscious or unconscious bias in music education have already been alluded to, and as Moelwyn-Hughes notes, playing the piano or teaching music was traditionally accepted for a woman, while playing instruments perceived to be traditionally masculine (such as the trumpet, saxophone, guitar or drums) was considered a novelty. Anecdotal accounts about women jazz musicians especially in South Africa suggests that this has changed since 2013, although there was not data readily available to provide more details. The structural discrimination in the education system that prevents equal access remains, however, in place. Furthermore, music education in South Africa has been discontinued from the formal curriculum and is usually only available in better resourced or private schools.

4.4 Conclusions

Although this review has highlighted the structural obstacles women face in the music industry, and how these affect their careers, earnings and personal safety, it is worth repeating Moelwyn-Hughes' observation that gender issues affected women both positively and negatively. Her research showed that some artists felt that having a sexually appealing and glamorous image had been favourable to them, while others did not feel recognised, or selected for roles based on their talent. Women musicians may have found a niche giving live performances at corporate events. They have also learned to play certain roles to cope in predominantly masculine and often sexist environments.

The TuneCore survey's concluded that the issues, challenges and experiences highlighted in its report are not simply women's problems to be solved just by women in the music industry. Its findings articulate a systemic inequity in the music industry, requiring thoughtful consideration, commitment to change and courageous action. This is required not of any one faction of the industry, or by women alone, but by all the industry's organizations and constituents⁴⁴. While TuneCore's survey was targeted at an international sample, it is just as pertinent to South Africa.

⁴³ Willrodt, A. (2016). *Gender and labour in the music industry: An exploration into why the music industry has a gender problem and what can be done to change*. University of Agder: Unpublished Masters Dissertation.

⁴⁴ Midia Research. (2021). *Be the Change: Women Making Music*. TuneCore.
[be-the-change-women-making-music.pdf \(tunecore.com\)](https://www.tunecore.com/be-the-change-women-making-music.pdf)

5 Case Studies.

5.1 The Case Study Respondents

Respondents usually performed more than one role in the industry. Although they all had made valuable offerings, there were key themes or concerns about women's rights and representation in the music industry that recurred for each one. These have been captured in the table below.

Respondent Number	Role in Music	Key Issue/s
1	Opera singer, educator	Ensuring more female representation in repertoires and studies in academia.
2	Jazz artist – vocalist, pianist, lecturer.	Women need education in the music business to have more control of their music and therefore shift existing power relations in the industry.
3	Artists' manager/publicist.	The importance of having one's voice heard, professionalism and formalising processes in the industry.
4	Arts and culture journalist/co-ordinator of music and DJ collective.	Improving journalistic standards, the precarious nature of freelancing, ensuring more women are represented in all music spaces.
5	Music writer and researcher.	Sexism, the loss of serious arts and culture journalism, importance of quotas to ensure greater representation of women through funding.
6	Lawyer and activist in the entertainment industry.	Women need to understand the business side of music to be able to break glass ceilings there.
7	Multi-disciplinary creative artist – performer, composer, storyteller. Mixes genres to include soul, jazz, and contemporary folk.	Importance of women in business, management and instrumentalist side, and as producers. Women must be educated to learn about the business of music and take control of all aspects of what they do.
8	Veteran music maker – singer, song writer, guitarist, storyteller. New age African sound with influences of jazz and funk.	Artists, especially women, are not getting royalties and what is owed to them. Others take credit for their music and are stealing their concepts. Outreach from SAMRO is needed to reach women artists where they are and to educate them about their rights.
9	Pop (Afro-pop) singer/song writer.	The nature of employment keeps artists in a survivalist mode. Women need education in the business of music so that they can set up alternate spaces rather than always having to fight for their space in male-dominated ones.
10	Music executive/publisher/ runs women's organisation in the industry.	Representation of women in the industry, pay gaps, sexism and gender-based violence. Women need better understanding of the music business to become more empowered.

5.2 Respondent 1

Case Study Respondent 1

5.2.1 Background information

R1 is an opera singer doing concerts and recitals. Relatively fresh out of university, she is also a vocal coach and teaches at several schools.

She is particularly passionate about female composers. At university, she was approached by an impresario with a proposal to champion female composers in a programme she was already preparing.

The overwhelming response that I got from people enjoying it was they wish that there'd been even more music by those female composers, or other female composers. And so that set me on the path and got me thinking.

In 2018 she repeated the concept at the Fringe Festival of the Grahamstown National Arts Festival. This time, the line-up comprised entirely female composers. All four concerts were sold out. She used the concerts as a basis for her honours research paper, to do with:

Where are the women in academia? Where are they on stage? Why aren't we learning about them at school level as well as tertiary level? Do academics know where to find the information about them so that they can teach us in the first place?

Her research involved getting feedback from audiences, interrogating them on their musical tastes, and what they knew about women in music.

What was so interesting is that most of the audience were actually not music practitioners or academics, which opened my eyes to the fact that audiences can be incredibly influential in demanding what they want to hear, and what music they want to be performed. They can put a lot of pressure on academics and on organizations to do that which in this context, is very good thing.

5.2.2 Entry into the music industry

R1 has always sung, ever since she was little, with the professional elements coming later.

At school I did choir and drama. By matric, I was in four choirs, national and school choirs. I had my first solo training lessons in matric. Before that, it was all choral. I got solos in the choirs, but it was very much a choral focus. But I really am glad I had that. Because it also means that in relation to music syllabus, I really know what I'm talking about when I say the women are not there.... I'm talking to current teachers, and it's still not there. I look at the ABRSM list, and the Trinity list. And they some of them are there, but it's nowhere near gender equality on standard repertoire.

Born and raised in Hilton, Kwazulu-Natal, she trained at Rhodes University for four years where her interest in female composers was supported by one of her lecturers.

Ms X was fabulous. She always encouraged me to do my own performances and actively championed me when I when I started running with this focus on female composers. There were some lecturers who would caution and say don't put yourself out there too soon. But Ms

X didn't put me in that box. She said, fly, run with it. Everyone knows you're still a student, that's fine. But you've got the stage presence.

After graduating, R1 worked on a freelance basis, doing mainly voice coaching and concert performances. A move to Cape Town in 2020 in the hope of auditioning for more prominent positions, such as at the Cape Town Opera Company, was halted in 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic. R1 returned to KwaZulu-Natal and found good teaching positions that provided employment and enabled her to continue to run with other creative projects that she enjoyed.

5.2.3 Challenges in the operating environment

Prior to being interviewed, R1 reached out to others in her network to obtain their views on issues facing women in the music industry, specifically in the music teaching, classical and opera arenas.

Access to funding affects all musicians, but is especially difficult for young up and coming artists, “*a lack of opportunity or funding in a country will affect everyone's musical experience of that country*”. The limited funding that does exist goes to established musicians or known entities, and in the classical music area to funding large expensive opuses or works.

They [established musicians] will take most of the funding that there is, and this therefore, reduces the number of opportunities that are available for more people.....a solution to that was that we fund small ensembles and quartets. And we do interesting pairings of instruments, because obviously, pairing unusual instruments together immediately adds an element of added interest, and gives students and practitioners ideas about what they could do could prompt further compositional outputs.

5.2.4 Gender issues in the industry

Representation and education are the greatest challenges that R1 sees for women in music.

If women don't see themselves in headlines, if they don't see themselves making panels, if they don't see themselves comprising a large part, if not equal part or more of SAMRO, then immediately in their heads, there is a gap. There is a barrier. And there's a question mark about why. Why is it that much harder for women to knock on the door?

There are stars enough in the sky for everyone. And recognizing that there is a gender gap is not a threat to mankind. Nor is saying that women are not on the standard repertoire list, and women are not being performed, and women are not being appointed to positions of leadership. It's not saying men, now it's your time to shuffle off. It is saying, all voices matter.

She bemoans the lack of knowledge on who exists “*past and present*”, and an inconsistent focus on women.

We've all got social media platforms currently but I think women composers back in the day already faced gender barriers. They weren't allowed to have careers as women. And then, as we progressed in music history, just because of the work of 1970s feminist musicologists, we had that revival of a focus on women in music, but then it went again. And it's almost like we have bursts of interest, followed by passivity.

I see this in my classroom, there is a light that goes on in students' eyes when they see themselves and hear themselves in the music that they are studying. It automatically adds a further incentive and interest and passion. If they see women of colour, for example,

performing opera, and they themselves are of colour. Same thing goes for instruments and instrument focus. So it's all very well to just be learning about orchestral and symphony and ensembles. But people also want to hear vocal music from back in the day and not just currently because of talk about female composers.

In terms of education, not all schools and universities have resources and access to knowledge about women in music.

When I conducted my research, the academics that I interviewed, at prestigious universities, did not have in their libraries any books on women in music, on female composers. They didn't know where to access them online. They didn't know what they didn't know and didn't have any independent central database of names of female composers and practitioners they could look at. If we don't have equal access to knowledge, and if we don't share what we know, then we're doomed to fail and to keep doing the same things over again.

Even though information and resources on women is well known, it is not in school or higher education syllabi.

With the work of 1970s feminist musicologists, the information is all there. And again, it boils down to accessibility, accessibility will spout representation. You can't have one without the other.

At school level, children are not exposed to different career paths within the industry. For example, conducting is not addressed as something exciting.

When they think of music, often people will say I'm either going to be a practitioner, or lecturer or a teacher... and then we wonder why there's a gender gap or the lack of representation because we don't talk about the other sectors within the music industry as viable career paths.

When we are dealing with education, it's not about the music educators' tastes. And it's not about ABRSM, Trinity, Unisa, etc. and their musical tastes. It's actually about exposure. In the lessons, people need to hear and see a variety of music, a variety of performance, and a variety of instruments. Whether those pieces are big or small is irrelevant, whether they are internationally, nationally lauded, or little known is neither here nor there. Education is the time for exposure.

There also exists a **historical bias against women composers**, even though there are more women composing now.

One of the biggest sexist arguments back in the day in music history was a snobbery and sexism about whether women were capable of writing big works and opuses. Women were thought only to be able to write little songs, lieder. And in the same breath, there's also a double sexism now where people say, oh, no, but why are you only featuring little songs? Because if we look at standard repertoire lists on ABRSM, Trinity, Unisa, in terms of concerts and competition repertoire, some of those songs are little and they happen to be composed by men. So why is there a double standard in terms of female composers now?

The **pay gap** between men and women was mentioned.

We need, potentially, to have a pay scale, where there's also accountability and transparency, so that we aren't being paid less for the same job when we are equally skilled.

One of R1's colleagues noted the **lack of women** in director roles. Directors are usually choir masters or pianists, and usually men.

They say that in terms of instrumentation and leadership levels, often the director is male, and has to have a certain skill set, which kind of limits things somewhat. And in South Africa, any limitation is going to hurt us. I think it's a one-dimensional expectation, because it stunts opportunity. And it narrows the field of who could do the job just as well. Just with a slightly different skill set or a slightly different focus or angle.

One woman in R1's network often finds that when she is asked to accompany or adjudicate competitions or performances, she has to ask to be paid, whereas male colleagues do not have to. In her experience it is often assumed that she will do things for free.

5.2.5 Support for women in the industry

R1 is part of a network, called Women's Music Collective, founded by Dr Clare Loveday, a South African composer. This network is comprised of women practitioners, academics, instrumentalists, and teachers "who are all passionate about bringing women more prolifically into music, on to stage, into concerts...and into positions of leadership."

She is creating a platform listing women who are active in the music industry in South Africa, who they are, what they've done, what they've created, what they're about. It's another bridge to making people aware of who's out there who's doing what, so that there is no excuse for people to say, oh, no, but I didn't know that you existed. On that platform, women share links, opportunities, job opportunities, they share links to an interesting e-resource that they've found on female composers. They share their own performances as they launch their own tracks, and albums, so that we can all support one another.

5.2.6 What should be done

Role of SAMRO

R1's own experiences of SAMRO have been mixed. Although a beneficiary of a SAMRO scholarship, she did not find them helpful when she needed information on copyright issues especially in relation to international law vs South African law. She was fresh out of university and did not understand everything to do with copyright.

They kind of just gave me the impression that they expected me to just muddle on through and figure it out for myself.

She believes SAMRO could have a much more prominent role in reaching out and teaching people about the music industry from the ground up.

Not expecting professionals to know it all, or to have equal access to it all and to the understanding of how the industry works.

She felt this research is an important step in the right direction, but hopes that SAMRO will open it up more broadly.

Opening it up and allowing people to submit their thoughts and their experiences will be incredibly helpful, using technology to open the platform to a wider voice, because I can only speak from my context. And there may be some really untapped gems that would have a lot

to say about specific niches in the music industry, and make it make it better represent all of us, not just some of us.

Role of Government

The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture has a large role to play. R1 advocates for government incentivising and creating opportunities that will enable young musicians to flourish, for example, more competitions aimed at younger musicians to promote a future generation of musicians.

For example, in my context with my documentary that I am making, there are so many women that I want to feature, and so much diversity of voice, instruments, performers and composers that I want to feature but with a limited budget. You can't feature each of them. If there were more funding opportunities available, or at least platforms that were more national or international, incentivized by government, people could submit what they are doing, so that we can all help one another to get more recognition and more notice, and therefore more accessibility, and more support... You can't do it one on one.

5.3 Respondent 2

Case Study Respondent 2

5.3.1 Background information

R2 is a jazz artist. A vocalist, she plays the piano, and is a lecturer in jazz studies at a South African University. R2 has both a comprehensive music education, and a business education. She graduated with a BMus and LMus from UCT, and has recently completed an MBA from the Henley Business School. She served on the board of the SAMRO Foundation for four years.

I thoroughly enjoyed that, it was something that refined me as a professional outside of the stage.

An accomplished performer, R2 has released two award-winning albums with Universal Records, and hopes to record a third later in the year.

5.3.2 Entry into the music industry

R2 started learning classical piano at the age of 12, continuing through high school, and began formal voice training at the age of 16.

I was very musical from a young age. I'm not one of those who could sing when I was five but I knew from a very early age that music was something I wanted to do with my life. That gift was from the training I had. I didn't apply to study anything other than music, I didn't have a fallback plan.

From the time she began studying music at a post-graduate level, R2 was being paid as a professional artist.

In music school you form that community of musicians when you start doing gigs. At first they weren't necessarily paying, but you just formed bands, you're studying, you have ensembles. And then, you know, you start performing at these little dingy places in Cape Town. And then you take it from there. So that's how I got into music. It was very streamlined from music school into the industry.

She did not really struggle to break into the industry as her first album, which won a music award for best urban jazz, “propelled me into the industry”. She had already started performing before releasing an album. R2 believes that being a jazz musician may have made it easier for her than it would have been if she was a pop artist.

I was very much alive to the fact that I wasn't a pop artist. I wasn't going to be on the covers of magazines, I'm a jazz artist. At the time it was even more niche than it is now.

R2 predominantly manages her own affairs.

That's something that just happened, not because I chose to, but back in the day to get someone to manage your affairs was the preserve of the already established.

Her record label doesn't get involved in her industry work, "they are purely involved at a recording, release and distribution level." At the time she signed with them, independent artists had not really started releasing music on their own digital platforms.

I realized very early on that it cost a lot of money to put music out and that it's not really something that an artist can do on their own. It was helpful to me to be attached to a record label, it gave me leverage. I didn't need to spend money on recording, releasing and distributing. I was very fortunate because the label didn't interfere in my artistic identity. I very much had carte blanche to record the kind of music that I wanted to.

Although she manages her affairs herself, R2 works with an agency for larger events and festivals. When signing contracts she has always used a legal representative, but over time has learned what she needs.

I never look at a contract on my own and sign it, and I always have someone look over it for me. But obviously over time, you develop a very clear understanding of what should be in the contract and what should not be. I often find that the simpler the contract, the better. You don't want these contracts with elaborate long clauses. You've got to have some flexibility, but you must decide, as an artist what, for you, are the core aspects that you want in the contract.

Music education is what has helped R2 the most, helped by mentoring from established musicians and academics.

It would be disingenuous of me not to acknowledge that's why I have come as far as I have. I wasn't one of those people whose voice was naturally nice. My voice has been trained.

I've also learned street smarts from people inside and outside of the academy. I think about mentors like the late Sibongile Khumalo, people who I have always observed and learned from. My master's supervisor has always been my go-to person, not just for writing and researching, but also articulating myself, and being able to identify good quality in the work that I do. So for me, everything I've done to get to this place has revolved around my education, and I've been hungry to learn.

R2 started an MBA because she felt that she needed to understand the business of music, and intends incorporating what she has learned from that into her academic work at the university.

I can sing, I can write music, I teach music and all that but I need more. I need to understand how the ecosystem around music works...I wasn't taught the business of music when I was at university. Now as an academic, I am taking everything I have learned and trying to consolidate it into an elementary business course that hopefully in years to come will grow to become a full-fledged part of the curriculum.

5.3.3 Gender issues in the industry

R2 has not experienced particular gender challenges in the industry, "either I was lucky, or I was completely oblivious and unaware." Once again she attributes her **education**, as well as **being an instrumentalist**, to giving her a particular status.

When people first came to know about me, it was a bit like gosh she graduated from UCT. I think there was already the thing that said jazz graduates from UCT were the stuff. I stood on the shoulders of those artists who came from UCT.

I always knew what I wanted when I came to work with musicians in Joburg. I could sit at the piano and tell musicians; this is what I want. I want to play like this and this and that. Then there wasn't really much room for anyone trying to belittle me because I was a woman.

She does believe that women learning to play instruments would stand them in good stead, but is careful to note that they should not have to.

Women shouldn't be discriminated against in the industry because they are women period. Whether you play an instrument or not you deserve respect by virtue of being a human. We don't want to fall into this trap of if you play an instrument, then, you know, you'd be more respected as a woman, surely that's not what we're trying to advocate.

Stereotyped images of women need to change.

Perceptions need to change because women historically were just pretty faces singing in fancy tight dresses. And they were not really considered musicians, just singers and they needed to look nice and sexy...we often describe women singers as sexualized, sultry, sensuous, voluptuous. These are really strange kind of adjectives that are not afforded to men.

Having said that, you also must be okay with the women who just want one thing, to sing and look nice. You have to respect those choices, you don't have to play an instrument if you don't want to, but the reality is that there are there are pros, and there are advantages to being able to do those kinds of things. It's a question of, are you prepared to do them? How far do you want your artistry to go? Do you just want to be a singer, or do you want to be a session musician where you can actually work in different environments? I think for me, the latter's definitely a better option. I like to look nice on stage. I like to look sexy on stage, I embrace that. I embrace my femininity and everything that comes with it. I think it's my power. It's a superpower to be a woman on stage. You know, but at the same time, I know a couple of other things as well.

Women in the industry have visibility, but do not have the **economic standing** commensurate with that visibility. R2 believes decisions on revenue are made elsewhere.

We are good at what we do but we are not really at the table that decides where the money goes, and how much goes to who. We're not players in the economy of music. We are players in the pop culture, in the popularity stakes and the mainstream, the fame, the influencers., We've been featured but we're not really sitting in the back room deciding on the revenue... There are obviously exceptions where you have women who own their own record label or run their own operations, but there are only a handful. The majority of women in the industry do not.

R2 also alludes to women not being given **recognition for their creative input** when they are featured on DJs albums and tracks.

There are so many things about the inner workings of that that are proving to be problematic. Women are seen as appendages to their male counterparts. If I'm featuring on a DJ track, the natural assumption is that that song is the DJ's. And I just came into feature and wouldn't be where I am, had it not been for that DJ.

The solution, argues R2, is to frame women's participation in different language. She has used a specific, well-known case to teach her students the difference between being a feature and a co-composer on a song.

And it's interesting, because that's where you start to see this kind of very gendered language being assigned. It is assumed that she was just a feature and was paid for her feature. Meanwhile, when you look deeper, you realize that no, actually, if the song split is 50/50, then it can't be a feature. A feature is never going to earn 50% of the royalty. Once we language it correctly, then ownership is assigned correctly. Once ownership is assigned correctly, royalties are paid accordingly.

How does what we read and its language continue to perpetuate gender stereotypes in the music industry? It's what keeps women at the back? You know, she was paid. Now she wants more, now she's getting greedy. No, she was just a feature. It's problematic.

Another well-known artist noted in conversation with R2 that women are not calling themselves composers, but writers.

Until we start to call ourselves by what we truly are, nothing is going to change and we will just be seen as features. We need to step up how we refer to our contribution, to be bold and completely correct.

Ultimately, gender issues in the industry are about **power**.

The short answer for me is that the structural issue is power. It's a one-word answer, it's power. The whole thing about expectation of special favours is power. The whole thing of women signing contracts and short-changing themselves, it's power. The people in the positions of power create an environment where the way women either take it or leave it. And that's why the power needs to shift, there needs to be an equal spread and dissemination of power. And there isn't now, the power rests with men in the industry. The structural deficiency of the music industry is power.

5.3.4 What has changed

The jazz scene, especially in Cape Town, is fairly small and people know each other. R2 has, however, seen increasing numbers of younger people entering into the jazz space which she hopes will bring a greater collective will to recognise women.

It's no longer the space that's consumed and occupied by old people. Jazz is becoming fresher and fresher. It's really exciting to see jazz and the jazz space being occupied by young people. That gives an injection of fresh energy to it. Jazz musicians are starting to collaborate more. I think that's exciting, but it's still very much a man's world. It requires collective will to recognize women in the jazz in fraternity.

5.3.5 Decision-makers in the industry

R2 has observed from her experience that the music industry is run by corporates and businessmen, and not musicians, which she remarks may not necessarily be a bad thing, however most of these executives are male. She believes that it is important to have women in leadership positions because they may be more attuned to issues that women face in the industry.

I've yet to come across a company or a record label where women are sitting at the helm. I might be completely wrong but I haven't I haven't encountered it yet. I think more artists need

to understand how that operation works so that we take ownership of the decisions that we make. It's not so much that the industry is run by men but a question of do we understand the decisions that we make?

When we have women in these in these positions, there's an empathy that comes with it. I've always found it so gratifying to have business-related conversations with other women. You're not dealing with other stuff of people condescending or dealing with inappropriate kinds of thing... You're constantly thinking about how men will look at you if you're having a meeting. Are you marketable? Do you look good? Are you small enough? Are you pretty enough? There's all this other stuff that you're constantly aware of whether it is there or perceived.

R2 believes women root for each other, and she would like to be someone other women approach to talk about something, or if they are struggling in the industry, without being concerned about other issues being present in the conversation.

5.3.6 What should be done

Women should be encouraged to acquire business skills so that they become interested in assuming leadership positions in the industry.

It'll be nice to see more women study the business of music and really have an appetite to be in those positions. We need more spaces where we're able to influence decision-making from a more empathetic perspective, and who can say that we can't have this discussion in the way it is framed.

She believes the low numbers of women members of SAMRO is abysmal, and attributes it to ownership which must change.

It boils down to what I was talking about ownership. Women are not being registered as owners of music, and their contribution to music still doesn't enjoy the level of ownership that it should enjoy. Because how else do you explain that 80% of royalties go to men. It's basically saying that women don't create music, but are just featured.

5.4 Respondent 3

Case Study Respondent 3 (R3)

5.4.1 Background information

R3 has been an artists' manager and publicist for over 20 years. An ex-radio broadcaster, she still does speaking events.

5.4.2 Entry into the music industry

She explains how she moved from radio broadcasting to managing artists.

I was really a radio broadcaster. Then I moved to organizing gigs, informal club parties and venue parties. Whilst I was doing that, I started doing promos for artists. And I guess it worked hand in hand. They would ask me to organise a birthday party or a single listening session, that type of thing. Then I started taking ownership of certain days in different clubs, where they have different teams on different days. One time DJ X asked me to manage him. And that's how my journey in artist management started.

When introduced into the music industry, she noticed that there were no standard ways things were done.

There was no formality. You meet artist A and this is how their things run, you meet artist B, that is how their things run, you meet at C and D, it is the same. Everyone is doing what they feel is right. That interested me. I started hosting artist management workshops, to try and make sure that everybody speaks in one way, not just for people wanting to get into artist management, but also for artists to also know exactly the steps that they needed to follow.

At the time there were very few people in the music industry guiding artists and giving them direction, so she saw a gap.

I feel that's why society thinks the music industry is in a situation where to get your music played you probably need to sleep with someone or do favours for somebody and stuff like that. But there are processes that can be followed so that an artist can go far without having to compromise themselves. That was the one reason. The other reason was that I was already working with a lot of artists, through gigs, events and promos. I think it was just a natural progression of things, I could tap into that space.

In advancing her career, R3 had to overcome stereotypes about women, and assumptions about how she found it easy to run events because she was working with certain artists.

People do not know that nobody goes to negotiate for you. You have to negotiate for yourself and the artists that you work with.

At the time, the mentality was that nightlife is literally run by men. Where we come from, a woman is supposed to be at home in the kitchen. So here I am at night, I'm not in the kitchen, and I'm not even at home. Where am I? I'm at a gig trying to make sure that gig takings, performance schedule and everything else is running smoothly.

5.4.3 Challenges in the operational environment

It is difficult for artists to make a living in the industry, which is why R3 feels it important for people to have a manager.

People are forgetting the fact that some people are just talented, they don't understand the business side of things. That's when they need a manager who will be able to see the things that they don't see while they are busy being a creator.

The lack of formal employment, and informal ways of finding work are the biggest challenge artists face. On the one hand, it encourages artists to seek help from people who are not properly set up and qualified to help them, and on the other hand, it makes it difficult for them to access assistance from government and other financial institutions.

The informality of things is one of the reasons why an artist will go to a random somebody and say I want you to manage me. That person might say okay, give me R2000 per month and I'll help you. And then six months later their career and music is nowhere because they are not formalizing things. Anyone can just jump in and say oh, I can do this.

Artists were particularly hard hit but COVID-19 because they couldn't do live performances.

A whole lot of artists were coming forward to say we are in trouble. Our houses have not been paid, our cars, our this and that, because we're not able to perform. And I saw how society, how social media, Twitter specifically, responded that you are artists, why must you get any special treatment. That also makes you realize just how much society does not necessarily understand how the entertainment space works. The assumption is that because you are an artist, naturally you make a lot of money, but they don't know that not all artists make a lot of money.

5.4.4 Gender issues in the industry

- **Expectations of sexual favours**

R3 explains how in a male-dominated industry like music, with its informality and dependence on networks, expectation of sexual and other favours is commonplace.

There are certain places where the people know you need them, and they try to play you, a favour for a favour kind of vibe. But the most important thing that I've said to myself is that if I was to go that route, then it means I do not believe in the product that I'm selling.

- **Informal networks and boys' clubs**

As with many other industries, male networks and boys' clubs are prevalent in the music industry, and are perhaps even more so because of the informal nature of work arrangements in it. Women tend to find it very difficult to penetrate these networks.

We don't form boys' clubs. Guys will go out together, whether they are playing golf, or they meet and drink their whiskies and things like that. Because we are not there, they end up forming cliques that we obviously are not part of and that's possibly how they end up doing each other favours.

In general terms, guys will have a day, maybe on a Tuesday at 6pm, where they go and play soccer. At 6pm, we are home, you have to attend to your family, you have to cook. When he comes back from that soccer, his meal must be there. And you've got children and stuff like that. There are a lot of other dynamics that possibly make it harder for women.

- **Women have to push twice as hard to be heard**

Women find it difficult to break into male networks, and to be respected as equals in the industry.

It's not like you're trying to say I also want to hang out with you, but you are saying, I want you to respect me. Look at me as an equal so that I don't want favours. I want to compete with you on the same level. It means the same doors that you're going to knock on, realistically speaking, I'm going to have to knock twice as hard. If a man was to go to a music compiler, he could submit and make a phone call tomorrow. I don't make a phone call, I have to go there again, tomorrow, and the following day, and the following day, just to check. So unfortunately for us females, we've had to push twice as hard.

- **Stereotypes in how women should look**

Women are not respected for their talent alone. R3 has learned that looks are important for a female in the entertainment industry.

Certain DJs that are categorized as pretty, beautiful, or sexy, often end up being more successful. I know an awesome, award-winning DJ whose career is nowhere. People know their name, and recognise the message, but they are not as respected as those particular female DJs that, for example, look hot or wear that kind of hair, or dress a certain way.

It's possibly one or two artists that people will give a chance because their talent is extra, so people will end up saying you know what, I recognize her more than I recognize their looks .

She feels that may be off-putting for women artists

There's a whole lot of other talented females, but they're not coming up because they might want people to focus more on their talent than on how they look.

- **Gender-based violence and sexual harassment**

Gender-based violence within the entertainment industry is rife, as is sexual harassment. R3 offers an example of women artists arriving in Gauteng with no place to stay, and who may be desperate if they have not started making money after a month or two.

A female artist will come from outside of Joburg or outside of Gauteng into this space because they're trying to be an artist. When they arrive here, there may be family that can accommodate this person for a month or two. But after that you're supposed to have made a plan and possibly move out. But because you are not yet making money through your craft you end up in a very desperate situation. Now you're forced to be abused by these men because you need accommodation. They may go and ask a guy for help, but as they are accommodating you, what return do they expect?

- **Notions of respectability in family situations**

R3 has seen women artists who have successful careers as single people, but once they get involved in a relationship, get married, or have a baby, they either face pressures from their partners, or their music stops being played.

I know of formidable artists, female artists that would come into the music space as a single person. We all know who they are. They are doing very well, their career is picking up until they say I'm getting married, I'm settling, I'm having a baby and stuff like that. Suddenly, that artist is nowhere to be found, or stops releasing music. It's not rocket science, you start thinking so what happened? Does it mean that the man in that talented female's life has now said I don't want you to go out and perform. Because when you go to perform, there are men who will be looking at you.

Those are some of the struggles that I feel as women, it's probably even going to take us a while to overcome. Some of us are African and especially African men still believe that the female's place in the kitchen and I don't want other guys to idolize you, I want to be the only one who sees you. That is abuse too.

- **Pay gaps**

R3 does not know definitively about pay gaps between men and women artists but believes that remuneration depends on how it is negotiated.

I don't know that much. But I can safely tell you that everything is always dependent on how you negotiate for it. If you're confident enough, you can always say this is a take it or leave it situation.

She sometimes finds it a challenge to convince her clients that they need to value their skill, especially when they need the money.

The pay gaps might or might not be there. But ultimately, I think when you understand your worth, be it you're a male or a female, you should be able to put a stop to it.

5.4.5 What has changed

R3 has seen changes in the industry regarding women, recounting an experience she had from her radio broadcasting days.

I was based in Durban at the time and our station had an event in KwaMashu. This always stands out for me because it's one of those things that makes you realize that being a woman in entertainment has always been trying in a way. We go to the venue, and it was my turn to DJ, to entertain the crowd. There were men that could not understand why I was there. But not just that, they also they want to touch. It's as if there was a sense that this a male-dominated space, a woman is not supposed to be there. I'm talking around 1995.

To see now how current women DJs are being celebrated, it makes you realize that there, has definitely been a shift. It might not be a 100% shift, because by virtue of you being a woman there are still gender and sexual insinuations, and women have to look a certain way, but it gives us hope that we are going in the right direction.

A further change is that women are slowly beginning to network with each other, share knowledge and experience and give guidance to other artists. The *Women in Music* organisation is one place where this is happening, but R3 acknowledges it is not always easy to unite women.

Women come together to network, but also to give guidance to other artists. There is the hope that now you've created this network, you guys will be able to bond and, and build from there.

She has also seen more women coming into different spaces in the music industry where they were not before.

There are more women occupying the music management space. Even if it's not necessarily in management, but also somewhere in music. One is in publishing, another in corporate identity, or in copywriting. It's a beautiful thing to see.

5.4.6 Decision-makers in the industry

R3 points to the power of big brands, and social media, to influence decisions and make things happen in the industry.

Society takes a very big chunk of the decisions about where the industry is supposed to go. Remember it's their taste that pushes whatever genre we like.

The rise of *amapiano* music is an example.

We woke up one day and there was the amapiano genre. It was a totally different generation altogether that said we don't listen to x and y, but we are listening to this. But without the backing of certain brands, using certain amapiano artists in their campaigns and as ambassadors, then amapiano would not have been able to soar like it did.

She feels that big brands have to power to change things if they put their weight behind campaigns, for example, against gender-based violence and abuse.

I think it was Black Label, the one that came up with a campaign not to abuse women. I think the big slogan was 'no excuse'. Remember that no excuse campaign. The point I'm making is that people on the ground can say whatever it is that they are saying, but if big brands don't put it in your face, then it's not going to be a serious thing that people will talk about on the ground. It might as well be another organization or NGO on the ground that is saying no to abuse and stuff like that.

If certain brands were, for argument's sake, going to work with an abuser, someone that has done women wrong, by default, people would think oh, so it means it's okay. It means there's nothing wrong with what we know that this person has done. We've also seen how people will rise up when a certain brand is working with a certain artist with a history of abuse. People will come up and say no you can't give this person the platform when this person has done this and that.

R3 was not aware how low the representation of women was among SAMRO membership, and was surprised at the figure, but believes it is possibly due to artists not understanding what SAMRO does, or how collection organisations work. She also believes that the ratio of successful male and female artists heavily favours males, with females used as features in mixes. Once again, she uses *amapiano* as an example.

Look at this amapiano genre that has just popped up. How many guys are in it? Lots, you know, and you can practically count the women on one hand.

5.4.7 Strategies for coping

When faced with harassment, R3 has learned that the best strategy is to push back, maintain a professional demeanour, or just walk away. She advises her clients of the dangers of giving in to harassment and demands for sexual favours, and as an artist manager ultimately has to work on client's own sense of self-worth and personal development.

What I've also learnt is that men gossip. You know, for a fact that if we were to ever go that route, you will dent your career. You must understand that you are breaking laws, not just for yourself, but for the ones that are coming.

But it goes deeper than that. You are responsible to make sure that you build someone's brand, you build their name. So you also tell them how to behave and how not to, how to dress in public and how not to, how to be cognizant of time, how to relate to their friends. These are the little things that we do every day that possibly people take for granted. You have to do that in the artist management space.

So the point here is simple. Number one, you must know your worth, you must understand the implications of you doing those favours. Remember, people are people and they will still talk. Some of us do not have that kind of gossip around us twenty years later because we keep it strictly professional. There are many ways men will push boundaries to try to get sexual favours, but as a woman, you have to know your worth.

5.4.8 Support for women

R3 is not aware of any formal support for women in the industry. People have to identify those who can help or mentor them on their own.

Networks of support for women in the industry could be very helpful, as would efforts by women in entertainment to collaborate and use their collective voice, as well as social media, to address issues that affect them.

Currently we just rely on very vocal individuals that also happen to be in the entertainment industry. Individually we support them, but we live in times where there are things like gender-based violence. We need to learn to speak up collectively. And when people raise issues, we need to support them. We know that likes and retweets are very important, and will make people listen.

5.4.9 What should be done?

As well as having women collaborate more formally in order to have their voices heard, R3 believes that greater visibility and representation of women in organisations in the industry is important, as is using their collective power on social media, and in supporting organisations such as *Women in Music* that bring women together.

- **Greater representation of women in organisations in the industry**

As a start women just need to be visible. Organisations also need to start recognizing women, not just by virtue of being women, but because they are capable. We've got knowledgeable

women that that know their craft. So I feel strongly that women first of all must stand up and take their places. Organisations need to look at representation in their offices and hire accordingly.

- **Support each other on social media**

Women need to also be visible on social media and stand up for women in the industry who may be treated badly.

- **Support formal efforts to organise women in the industry.**

Women in Music is one example.

That's an awesome network, not just to impart knowledge, but also to bring women together. Let's have sessions where we can impart knowledge, we can teach people how to enter the music space, but also how to survive.

5.5 Respondent 4

Case Study Respondent no 4 (R4)

5.5.1 Background information

R4 is a Cape Town-based arts and culture journalist at a media publication and the co-ordinator of a music and DJ collective which runs events, sharing music through vinyl records. She runs a radio show, which despite not being lucrative, offers her a good platform to showcase what she does. She freelanced for 10 years before starting work at the publication, during which time her journalistic work was supplemented by creative activities such as creating DJ mixes and podcasts or radio shows from interviews she had done. Since the end of 2020, when R4 was employed by the media publication her work has been more structured and less varied than it was when she was working exclusively on a freelance basis.

Originally from Johannesburg, R4 studied a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). Her first choice, journalism, was not offered there at the time, so after graduating there she completed a post-graduate diploma in journalism at Rhodes University. After university, aged 22, she accepted an offer from the *Cape Argus* in Cape Town to be a music writer for its *Tonight* section.

5.5.2 Entry into the music industry

R4 had always been obsessed with music, “listening to everything, knowing everything about music, reading music magazines.”

Although Cape Town had a thriving music and arts scene, R4 didn’t feel like she knew enough about it.

I realized soon enough you can't just take a journalist and throw them into the arts, it's just not going to work. And that's unfortunately, the current landscape we have.

An arts journalism course, the only one in the country, offered by Gwen Ansell at the Standard Bank Jazz Festival was pivotal in R4’s development as an arts journalist.

Even though I was working as a music journalist, the course was so life changing for me... because it showed me the importance of why this work is important for our heritage and our history and showed me what's possible. We're not just writing about the latest Tik Tok person who's doing a dance and who's going out with that person. That's celebrity gossip, and entertainment, this is art. And it showed me the difference.

It was only a week. And then the next year, I went back and asked if I could squeeze in again, I kept trying to squeeze back into the class.

The arts journalism course was followed by a scholarship to the Annenberg School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Southern California to study a Masters in Arts Journalism. On her return, R4 was disappointed by the lack of employment opportunities, and had to accept freelance work. While freelancing, she and a few others formed a DJ collective, playing at an important jazz club in Cape Town.

But it's not really DJ through parties. It's DJ'ing to research South Africa's history, Africa's history. We collect records, all the histories on these albums. It's basically a non-academic research collective.

5.5.3 Challenges in the operating environment

The changing landscape of the arts and culture industry, and of the print media, have presented many challenges for R4 and affected her financial stability. The decline of print media is not an issue that specifically affects women, but men too.

Before I left (to study overseas) I was writing five or six stories a week...When I came back the landscape had changed a lot. A lot of the venues had closed down, a lot of the city regulations kicked in. The newspapers started getting rid of their arts writers. So it was rare to find a music journalist with a job or an arts writer with a job.

And I wrote for everyone in that time. It opened up my profile. I could write for Sunday Times, Mail and Guardian, for anyone. But nobody was really paying much. As a freelancer, you've got zero protection from anything. If you get a commission to do something, and they don't use it, you don't get paid.

I don't know one newspaper in South Africa that has a functioning arts team. And by team, I mean an arts editor and two arts writers. All of them have got rid of them. Either the editors are doing all the writing, or they rely on freelancers.

From a journalistic perspective, that lack of training and mentorship for arts journalists is a huge problem and symptomatic of how the arts is not taken seriously at all.

I think one of the biggest problems is the stigma that arts is just fun. It's like a hobby. You go to certain places in the world, European places and other countries in Africa, where they really value their music legacy, they value the artists, they value their poets, everybody on the streets can quote the poets that are part of the country. We have no cultural literacy, we really don't, and no pride in that literacy, besides the popular mainstream culture.

I've always felt from news rooms and editors that arts is just a fun thing you do on the side. They don't understand that South Africa's arts is linked to its history, which is linked to its politics. And that's why jazz is so interesting for me, because jazz is political music.

In R4's view, government does not take it seriously, so the universities, schools and alternative institutions who could make a difference do not either.

There is no training and mentorship. We are just creating bloggers who are journalists, we don't create people who feed back into the culture. And this has been a problem for a long time.

Lack of spaces, and the effect of COVID-19 on live arts and culture venues has affected R4's music collective, but her radio show, broadcast out of London, keeps the collective's name alive.

5.5.4 Gender issues in the industry

The lack of exposure and having places to perform is the biggest challenge for women artists, but R4 feels that the unsafe environment in the country contributes to that. Other gender issues arise from

the industry being male-dominated, sexism and racism, harassment and unprofessional behaviour, and the lack of personal safety.

- **Lack of exposure related to lack of safety.**

We have to just recognize that we live in a very unsafe environment, and even physically going into spaces can be dangerous. You know, even me going alone to an elderly man's house to interview him in the middle of the township, which is what I did last week, can be dangerous for me, I might not come out of there. We are putting ourselves at risk, I have to think about how I'm going to get to places at night, because I'm worried for my life. And it's my job that I'm thinking about doing, especially when I was freelancing, and I had nobody to take care of me, or nobody to answer to.

I don't want to be riding around late at night, going from club to club and hanging out with musicians late at night by myself, because they're not going to escort me home into my house.... unfortunately, if I felt safe, I would be going to a lot more places.

- **Male domination**

It's mostly a male dominated industry, people also tend to take guys more seriously, from the interview process to the writing process to what they'll tell you. It's just the way it is.

- **Sexism and racism**

You've got the sexist vibe, and definitely racist energy for me. A lot of times interviewing Afrikaner white males in Cape Town, they would not even speak to me in English...I felt very disrespected by a lot of those bands. Because I was covering rock music, alternative music, I was everywhere, interviewing guys backstage while they were drunk a lot. A lot of people will take it as discrimination, but I just took it as unprofessionalism. Sexism is everywhere. Racism is everywhere, discrimination is everywhere.

Being an Indian woman, and very young when she started out as a journalist compounded difficulties R4 experienced in being taken seriously.

In my particular instance, it wasn't only just being a woman, but it was being an Indian woman, and then also being younger than a lot of people I interview. I mean, I started when I was 22. I'm 36.

- **Notions of respectability.**

Perceptions about the type of women involved in the music industry persist.

Those stigmas around women still happen; you're either loose, or you want something, or you are just single woman's club...Whereas if it was a guy hanging around with a bunch of guys, there's none of that.

- **Confidence and role models**

When R4 started with her music collective, there were very few women, and she did not have the confidence to put herself at the same level as her colleagues.

I was fine to be the admin person, which is what women are always. I was like, dude, I'll organize it. I'm just here to listen, I'll make sure everything's great. I'll make sure this thing functions. You guys DJ, I'll come and support you.

When I started, there were no women, just guys playing vinyl records or turntables or whatever. There were no women that I could look to, so I just did my own thing.

The other members of the collective pushed her to DJ, showed her how to do it, and gave her the confidence to confront her fears.

- **Sexual harassment.**

Sexual harassment takes a number of forms and is not always obvious.

It's like somebody's texting you at inappropriate times, people calling you sweetie, honey, all of that kind of thing. They wouldn't do that for a guy... it's just that kind of inappropriate communication. That can sometimes happen. And I think a lot of girls fall into it.

She believes that the way she carried herself helped her to deal with sexism and harassment

I have definitely experienced it. Oftentimes, you have to be very professional and avoid advances or unprofessional behaviour, you have to just keep your head about you and know what you're doing.

5.5.5 Decision-making power in the industry and how it affects women

When asked where the decision-making power in the industry lies, R4 does not really know, but assumes that it is broadly held by white males. She also doesn't say how this affects women specifically.

I would say with white men. I don't know. I literally don't know any of them. We don't get to see them. We just work on the ground as the peasants you know.

It depends on the industry. Talking about media owners, as journalists, we never get to see who's at the top. And in terms of music vibes, it's definitely club owners and landlords and that kind of thing. And the government itself.

5.5.6 What has changed

R4 acknowledges that certain things have changed. Within the music scene itself, particularly jazz, there are more women musicians, and more women generally in other roles.

Women were always the singers, that was safe and easy. There are stories from the most popular singers in South Africa, like Miriam Makeba, and others, about how they were treated by people how they had to get protection at clubs, how their lives were at risk in that time. They were the songbirds, the nightingales.

Now there are younger musicians in their 20s, it's a very young scene. And what's very nice is that there are music schools now at universities, also at high school. They are encouraging people to play instruments and taking on other roles.

Having more women role models in different aspects of the industry is key to effecting change.

It's still small, but I think more gender norms are being broken. These women are examples to other people. At a party I DJ'd somebody told me that it's really good to see somebody look like me up there. I sometimes forget what representation means, other people will be encouraged by seeing you do it. And then they will do it. And that's all that needs to be done. We don't need to give long lectures and speeches, about what it is to be a woman in a public space. But the minute they see other women doing it, then they think, okay, cool, they suddenly have the confidence in us.

There are more women “of different shades and colours” in managerial roles, and global movements such as #MeToo and LGBTQIA+ movements have driven changes in helping to call out harassment and discrimination.

R4 notes how the #MeToo and cancel culture movements have made men more circumspect about their behaviour in public.

They still act in the same way. But where they can be exposed... it has made them be on their toes a bit. I think that they are a bit more cautious. It doesn't mean the behaviour has changed.

The LGBTQIA+ movement has achieved a greater awareness and acceptance of people of all sexual identities, although “we're very far away from getting equality with queer rights and representation”. She feels, however, that with the increased focus on LGBTQIA+ rights, an assumption exists that equality for women has been achieved.

I think sometimes especially in funding circles and university institutions, they focus so much on the queer politics, and they don't even realize we haven't even reached that level with women yet. I'm not saying that women are first but I'm just saying we can't pretend we are over that hurdle in South Africa.

5.5.7 Strategies for coping

R4 believes that always maintaining a professional demeanour has helped her to avoid or cope with inappropriate behaviour or harassment.

Of course, you are going to be harassed. I mean, if I carried myself differently, I would have opened myself up to those things...And I think every person or woman who has been a journalist has had to learn from mistakes. Sometimes you do fall into that... you could be writing about a very charming musician, very good looking, or whatever.

You know, it can happen all the time. But for me, it doesn't have to happen. Because it's like, how are you going to take me seriously to write about you if we are having this weird banter?

I know girls who write about the people they were sleeping with. They would be doing drugs, with the people and events, and then write about those people and get the stories because they were doing that, which is fine. No judgement there, but that's completely unprofessional. At the end of the day, I don't think the musicians trusted them to do the job, and none of the people I started with in Cape Town in 2008 have stuck to this field.

R4's enthusiasm for music or theatre or film was so great, that she coped with the discrimination she encountered.

5.5.8 What should be done

Training, support and mentoring would assist women in the industry in R4's view. Other types of support R4 suggests includes making access to equipment available, creating music libraries, and guidance on practical issues such as how to work independently, ensuring that you get paid. Workshops should be free and accessible because “so many people can't afford them”.

Government policy with regard to quotas is important in order to improve the representation of skilled black women. In addition, R4 believes there is a need for government to promote and encourage women-only events. For example, within the DJ space, to provide funding and support to women-run collectives, or performance line-ups.

The media needs to raise visibility and writing around issues affecting women in the industry.

We don't have any articles we can go to that speak to gender-based violence within the South African music industry. No one wants to talk about it. People are too scared of being beaten up again. And it's happening everywhere.

- **Role of SAMRO**

R4 has little faith that government could offer such assistance, although that should be their role. She is not sure what other forms of institutional support are available, but in their absence suggests that SAMRO could play a greater role and offer more training, which in turn could help them to attract more female members. R4 attributes the low numbers of women members to SAMRO's lack of visibility, and of people not knowing what they do and how to join.

Firstly, I think they need to make themselves more visible in terms of what they do, because nobody really knows anything about SAMRO. Number two, they need to have a section on their platforms, where they're promoting arts writing, as something that feeds back directly into what they're doing. Number three, they should definitely be organising workshops in communities, especially disadvantaged communities, where they have no access to anything.

If SAMRO was to get funding to do that, then it would be great, because I think that the reason there is such a small number of women is because people don't know how to get involved with SAMRO.

Although not directly related to copyright issues, R4 feels that everyone in the industry should be promoting safe environments, and perhaps work with others to provide some kind of support to victims of gender-based violence in the industry specifically.

I think if institutions like SAMRO offered support, specifically to artists who are women, no matter what they might be doing, whether they are doing sound engineering, art writing, mentoring and teaching in music, or classical music, conducting, different roles, PR, it needs to be opened up to a whole scope. They need to offer support, psychological and emotional support for people for women in the arts, specifically with responses by people who know how the arts work, not just like psychiatrist or psychologist who comes from anywhere. Specifically people who understand the landscape, it is very difficult to find somebody who gets that, but there's definitely a need for that.

5.6 Respondent 5

Case Study Respondent no 5 (R5)

5.6.1 Background information

R5 is a music writer and music researcher. She teaches academic writing, has her own blog, and writes for various publications, and

for just about anyone else who will pay... But it's still a side issue from teaching and researching, because of course, it does not pay the bills.

She trains journalist intermittently, which happens less than it used to because media houses don't have much money for that anymore. She also does research for a consulting firm, which she describes as a "cousin once removed of SAMRO and Concerts SA".

5.6.2 Entry into the music industry

She chose a career in writing, but enjoys music and therefore found herself writing about it. Before arriving in Botswana from England in 1983, she had some involvement in the music industry organising gigs and events in London, but since she was teaching, music was very much a hobby.

R5 describes how she began writing about South African music:

When I got to Botswana, I was appalled by how badly South African music was being written about. So I walked into a newspaper office and said, "You need somebody who knows what they're talking about". And then I got the desk.

5.6.3 Challenges in the operating environment

The greatest overall challenge to music makers, according to R5, is the changing structure of the industry, namely the migration to digital formats and distribution through streaming on the Internet. From the 1950's though to the 1980s, recording was the high value product in the industry. The Internet changed this, with live performance becoming the highest value product in the value chain, "and the things you could leverage off that like memorabilia, like live instant recordings that are sold after a show which lots of other countries were doing, South Africa not so much... That's a 20 year-old thing worldwide, including in South Africa, although South Africa was slightly slower. It was however, a very fast follower in terms of digital technology, as it was, for example, with digital banking. It wasn't a first entrant, it was a very fast follower. So it all happened faster than people think."

Presently, there is no work, and no money for musicians, but R5 sees that as the coming out of the COVID-19 period. Whether this continues is dependent on the pandemic, but "we are seeing an increasing number of new venues opening and that will mean more work."

Live performance is the prime driver of income in the environment. And it's the prime reason why COVID was so destructive. Had we been in an old-style industry, a 1970s industry, where the high value product was some form of physical recording COVID wouldn't have struck the industry so hard. But those days have gone completely.

R5 maintains that digital technology and streaming has not benefited musicians in the ways people think, and that "posting online is rigged against musicians".

*I'm actually involved in a research project on that. Everybody, including right from the World Intellectual Property Organization, who have published a really good report on this, now says that streaming is set up to **not** give musicians a living... the system's rigged against musicians worldwide, and it's more rigged against musicians in Africa, because we operate on the peripheries of global industry structures.*

The revenue goes into a pool, and then a very complex algorithm based on all kinds of things including genre, where you're posting from, where your audience is accessing from, and a whole range of other things, then decides how that pool of money is divided up. And that's why people operating on the peripheries in all senses, genre, gender, geography of the music, global music industry suffer worst.

According to R5, the Department of Arts and Culture has been slow to react to the changes, and is primarily concerned with piracy, which is already outdated:

If you look at how new music genres grow, actually having live product out often in forms that we would consider piratical like cell phone music, etc. have actually helped to grow the music industry. Brazil was the ground breaker here, with cell phone music being the engine behind the growth of BAILE funk. We are seeing the same thing happening in South Africa with "amapiano", where cell phone music is the driver of the growth of that, and that is becoming incredibly successful, not only here, but elsewhere.

Copyright is still very important, but it hasn't been leveraged yet in effective ways to give income back on the digital terrain. However, R5 believes that the changes in the industry are not the factors holding women back:

If I were to speculate wildly. And I promise you this really is wild speculation. I would say that actually making music at home and posting it online, is less threatening and has fewer of the negative factors than making music on a stage with other musicians for most women. But whether that has actually impacted or not, I absolutely cannot say.

5.6.4 Gender issues in the industry

"Sexism, pure and simple, at every level" is the primary driver of gender issues in the industry, in R5's view. How this manifests is outlined in the sections that follow.

- **Music education**

Sexism starts with music education and the stereotyping of certain roles in music for women, for example, women sing but men play instruments. According to R5 such stereotyping begins with teachers in primary school, who send girls to sing in the choir, and the boys to play instruments, although she acknowledges that that is actually an elite concern following the "evisceration" of music from the school curriculum. That has affected both girls and boys, with access to tuition at school level only available to very few children. With government not funding many independent music initiatives, there are few places children can go to learn to be musicians. Most music tuition is offered by non-profit organisations (NGOs) such as the Field Band Foundation, Busk-Aid, the Moses Molelekwa Arts Foundation, and the Gauteng Jazz Academy, but the pathways from there to higher education are more difficult than from school.

A conscious effort to recruit women instrumentalists from some of these NGOs has yielded positive results. R5 cites the example of the Gauteng Jazz Academy under the late Johnny Meko as key in advancing the careers of certain women instrumentalists.

Other factors outside of music that impinge on women include:

- **Notions of respectability.**

Music takes you out at night on your own, and in some quarters that is not perceived to be a respectable thing for a woman to do.

There's an assumption about women in music being easy. And it's kind of a circle you know, you have to go out at night to be a musician, then because you go out at night you must be easy. It's kind of a closed loop.

Sometimes you find, you know, people's partners actually saying, I don't want you doing music anymore when we are married because you'll be sleeping with all these other men. All those stories, after a while, you just want to close your ears.

- **Notions of having to look a certain way to be a female musician.**

R5 mentions an instance of a female saxophonist being told that her hair has to be peroxide blonde and she needs to wear a tight dress in order to get a job at a casino somewhere. R5 maintains this is a common occurrence.

The school and youth bands that compete have the girl singer out front. I don't know whose choice it is, but she has the heels and the dress. And you know, now who puts her into that box? Is it the largely male musicians and music directors around her? Is it she herself, perceiving that that's how she can get that singing gig? Is it her family wanting her to look nice in their stereotypical feminine image? You know, I don't know who makes those choices. It's a worrying choice because it perpetuates stuff.

- **Media portrayal of women musicians.**

How the media writes about, and photographs women in music is very driven by stereotypes and notions of having to look a certain way, “*the fact is that you only get your photograph in if you look cute.*” R5 quotes other instances where she has encountered jazz music writers in this country, who, for example, will describe male musicians as playing their instruments and the female in the band as making love to her instrument.

“So there's this kind of notion that when women do music, it's not intellectual, it's instinctual, and sensual.”

- **Sexual harassment.**

R5 mentions research conducted by Ceri-Moelwyn Hughes on gender in the music industry, that almost half the people she talked to had experienced some form of harassment or assault, and she was only working in one genre. Sexual harassment takes place at all levels, R5 offering examples from sound engineers, and at university.

Sound engineers asking you to be nice to them simply in order to do their job and give you a decent sound, which deters many women.

As a result, a number of women go into music education, because “a music teacher is, you know, a much more respectable thing”.

With music departments at university, the big head honcho music Prof would have a muse out of the first-year students every year. Do I need to elaborate on that? I probably don't, it hurts, you know. And then she gets discarded and the fresh one gets picked up in a new way. I know of a now-retired music prof who when his young female students used to come in for tutorials, there would be porn playing on his screen. He wouldn't get away with that now.

- **Power relations**

Power relations, even if not specifically about women, also play a role in prevailing gender concerns for both men and women, “because the power relationship between a music teacher and a protege is incredibly powerful”. “If you come from a poor home, you have talent, and a teacher says they can make you a star, it's a powerful doorway into abuse”. It may also be the bandleader or the producer who abuse their positions of authority.

The fact is, there's no shortage of talent. All these women are talented, but the only way that they may be able to get a gig is what used to be called a carpet interview. Can we meet for supper after the rehearsal? You know, all that is still there.

R5 related an incident from the book, *Soweto Blues: Jazz, Popular Music and Politics in South Africa*, quoting Thandi Klaasen about the late Kippie Moeketsi, who she really respected because he was a real teacher, and did not ask female artists to meet him at lunchtime.

- **Informal networks**

Informal networks, or ‘boys clubs’ can exclude women from planning and decision making about the band.

You know, the band leader will go off to a shebeen with his buddies in the band to plan a gig. And women in the band may have family responsibilities, or she may simply be very, very conscious that going to a gig and probably not rolling out till midnight is not a safe thing for her to do. So she won't be part of ... decision making.

- **Lack of safety.**

Safety is a key issue for women in the industry, but R5 stresses that women in music aren't just performers; the service workers in music are waitresses, the cooks, the receptionist, the people who make entertainment venues possible are also women in music.

The fact is, it is unsafe. It's unsafe for God's sake in South Africa to be a woman out at not even at night, even during the day. So you know, how much is that exacerbated by being in a minority, perhaps not having other women who can club together protectively with you being out at night, being in a venue where there is alcohol and boorish behaviour going on?

- **Pay disparities**

R5 believes women are almost invariably paid less, but that this is less true in jazz music than in pop music. The environment in jazz music is more equitable.

5.6.5 Decision-making power in the industry and how it affects women

Decision-making power sits with boards and directors which are predominantly male. In R5's view, one thing that has changed is that everyone pays lip service to gender equity because their funding depends on it, so things are changing but far too slowly.

R5 argues that women are not always well represented in organisations such as SAMRO because they are not all composers, and SAMRO is a rights organisation, making copyright payments to composers, and there are lots of people involved in the music industry who have nothing to do with music rights, and therefore quite legitimately would not be involved with SAMRO.

Think how many women are organizers, for example, of gospel music choirs and things like that. They are very strongly female, but not with any kind of affiliation to SAMRO. Think of how many traditional musicians don't have any connection with SAMRO. Think of how many women playing violin on the back row in orchestras don't have any connection with SAMRO.

R5 believes that historical factors might have also prevented older female musicians of colour, as well as males, from having links with the organisation in the past, despite SAMRO's best efforts to chase up who owns what music.

Despite SAMRO's representation of composers, R5 does not believe the numbers of women would go up much if other organisations were looked at, *"I think you will find similar numbers, maybe it might go up as much as 30%, but I doubt it would go up much more."*

5.6.6 Strategies for coping

Women in the industry use the resources or family connections they have for protection and to cope with a male dominated environment. For example, more independent musicians use their own representatives, and DJs own their own equipment, which allows them to bypass power issues from the band leader or producer. R5 also describes how deeply gendered, or patriarchal, masculine forms of protection actually protected many musicians, including herself.

One female DJ who is a member of a well-connected family could buy her own gear because she came from a fairly affluent, aristocratic family. This also protected her.

I'm very conscious of that in my own career at times when I was younger. The fact that many people I was hanging around with knew that I was in a relationship with a specific musician, who would shoot them if they tried anything on, I think worked to my advantage.

Young musicians working in a male dominated environment recount how more experienced older women protected them, and helped them to cope with issues such as sexual harassment .

There was a lovely interview that the late Dorothy Masuku gave when she was talking at the Sophiatown Museum. She was talking about how she was a school-girl when she was touring with Alfred Herbert's African Varieties and Jackets. And somebody in the audience asked her, did you get harassed? And she said, no. And she described this fabulous thing of all the older women who were on that tour who had all been through that. The Thandi Klaasens, even the Dorothy Rathebes, all of those people, forming a protective shield around her, not letting the male musicians get anywhere near her because she was like, 15, 16, she was still at school. She was very aware that had the Aunties not looked after her, she would have been endangered.

5.6.7 What has changed

As is the case in broader society, a new generation of far more identity conscious, female music writers and musicians has ensured that women are more able to insert their voices, are representing themselves, and therefore have been able to effect change, albeit incrementally.

I think what we can say to sum it up is there are some changes, particularly where women are becoming role players in music, education, and music media, as well as music itself. But it's not changing half fast enough.

So you know, some of the stuff people used to get away with they don't get away with so easily but a hell of a lot of it still goes on.

5.6.8 Support for women in the industry

R5 is aware of lots of support for women musicians internationally, but none in South Africa. International examples she refers to are composers' commissions, summer camps for women to go and learn music, festivals devoted to the work of women, and calls for women composers for festivals. She notes the importance of composing:

Composing by the way is incredibly important. Because without composing women don't have material.

Where workshops are offered, for example, at the Standard Bank Festival, when it's live, concern for safety of girls is present and may deter parents from sending their daughters.

The National Youth Jazz Band thing at the festival when it's live. They have a lovely one-week workshop, check how many women are in that workshop. And check how many parents are going to be worried about sending their school-aged daughters off to a workshop where it's mostly going to be boys, and they're going to be in dormitories, and you know, all that ...

The biggest problem, in R5's view, is the lack of leadership from the government:

The Department of Arts and Culture provides no guidance and no policy on this. It's very interested in numbers. If it's going to give you money. It really wants you to show that you've got women hanging around your project somewhere. But it gives no policy guidance.

5.6.9 What should be done

R5's top three suggestions for support for women in the industry are quotas, blind auditions, and media training for arts journalists.

- **Quotas**

I believe in quotas, though I know lots of people don't. But I believe in quotas. And I believe those quotas in educational opportunities should be hovering somewhere around the 1/3 mark minimum. There's no reason given our demographics, why it shouldn't be 52%. But I think that would be a hard sell.

R5 quotes research from a United States-based organisation called *We Have Voice* that suggests that you need to have 1/3 of any music community being female before women see it as a place where they're comfortable, or a place where they can seek role models and seek a profession.

- **Blind auditions**

Many countries are attempting blind auditions for college recruitment, for orchestra places and for everything else, *“so that you don't know whether the person behind the screen is male or female. It works.”* R5 feels that blind auditions might be less effective in South Africa because the industry is small and people know each other, but it would help address some of the sexism prevalent, *“it might still help a lot not to see something with curves, possibly wearing a dress playing your music, to decide whether you want them in your orchestra or not.”* COVID-19 has made blind auditions more feasible than they might have been before, as *“somebody you don't know at all might contact you online and say when you listen to my recital, listen without video.”*

- **Media training**

There is no training for arts journalists generally, and few specialist jobs in print media for them anyway because print journalism is shrinking.

I used to run an arts journalism programme at the Cape Town International Jazz Festival, the money for it got pulled before COVID. It wasn't just that we couldn't run a course because there was no festival. I ran that course for 18, 19 years. We ran majority female but how many of those people became arts journalists?

All-female environments, such as women-only bands, are not a solution, although R5 understands why they do it.

The Lady Day Big Band itself, looking at it from the outside, is stereotyped in how it presents itself, in the material it chooses, because that's the way to get gigs. Oh, look, we've got this bunch of good-looking women playing instruments, we will have them at our club. That happens to them too. And to an extent they can't worry too much about that, because they need the gigs. They need the money. So it's not a solution. Although it will give instrumentalists a place where they can not worry about the stereotyping and work on developing their instrument.

Institutional Support

- **Role of SAMRO**

R5 believes that SAMRO's role is very much about encouraging those women who qualify for an affiliation with it to actually sign up, but in other arenas they could play a role as an influencer and adopt policies that sanction perpetrators of gender-based violence.

They are invited onto panels, they speak at events, they make inputs to policy, and need to be talking about this stuff more. But I think in terms of their own arena, I would also say they need to have public policies, which in some ways sanction people who are found to have gender unfriendly policies or convictions, and in some cases, it is convictions and it's called rape.

But for now, I don't see how they could sanction people, because I don't think their constitution would allow it. But again, they also give platform to people. And they could

certainly say no platform for anybody who has a bad gender record... there would be a number of ways in which they could say, we have very definite policies on these internally, we are going to be proactive about encouraging the involvement of women. And we are going to use our influence to campaign for these broader goals. I mean, if you look at the We Have Voice website, and the kinds of campaigns they have actually got going in the States, they are a good model.⁴⁵

In South Africa, the Women's Music Collective started by Claire Loveday has also tried to get together and do things for women, but was badly affected by COVID-19, *"I think a large motor vehicle was driven through the middle of their activities by COVID"*.

- **Role of government**

Government needs a policy. The draft of a new Arts and Culture White Paper was produced in 2017, but nothing has happened since, *"it still hasn't seen the light of day"*. The policy should deal mainly with quotas and music industry-related funding.

A further policy intervention from government should be one of safe transport home, which although not a specifically a gendered measure, would have huge gender implications.

If our metropolitan authorities had Night City policies, and you can look up Night City policies online, but basically taking the night economy of cities seriously, the clubs, the bars, the everything else, that would be a wonderful place in which to insert gender safe policies. And it is stuff like streetlights and, you know, buses.

If you live in the city, you can go to a club. If you live in the township, you are getting home at 12:30 at night, no lights, no transport that will take you exactly to your door. And even if there is, we can't always even trust Uber drivers, you know that. And the Uber drivers aren't always going to go there. Then you get victim blamed - well she was out at one o'clock in the morning.

⁴⁵ We Have Voice is a collective of US musicians, performers, scholars, and thinkers bringing an intersectional analysis to the Performing Arts culture. <http://www.wehavevoice.org/>

5.7 Respondent 6

Case Study Respondent no 6 (R6)

5.7.1 Background information

R6 is a lawyer and activist, specialising in legal and strategic consulting services to organisations in the entertainment industry. She has extensive experience, both in general executive management, and specifically in the business-side of the music industry. She runs two companies, is on the Board of a music investment company in South Africa and part of a US-based copyright collective management organisation. She has previously been CEO of numerous artists' rights associations.

5.7.2 Entry into the music industry

She chose the music industry as she has always had an interest in the Arts and had friends who were artists. With an LLB and LLM, she decided to marry her academic background with her enthusiasm for the Arts.

I'm just passionate about artists rights, fairness in the industry, fairness to artists, and I'm just genuinely interested in the in the field and passionate about it.

5.7.3 Challenges in the operating environment

With the industry being largely informal, R6 cites the lack of a social security structure for artists as a key issue in the operating environment.

There's a big gap in terms of enabling legislation or regulations that protect artists in the long run. So if you're not gigging, where are you getting money? There is no pension there is no UIF for artists.

R6 sees the lack of any social safety net as affecting women more because they are generally more economically vulnerable in society.

They are put in positions where they may have to compromise themselves, their principles, their standing in order to survive economically...which makes them susceptible to different types of abuse, economic abuse, sexual abuse, physical, everything. I think that that's a fundamental flaw in the way the system operates. And women are just more vulnerable.

5.7.4 Gender issues in the industry

When discussing gender issues in the music industry, R6 sees the industry overall as a microcosm of broader society, with issues facing women in the industry generally reflect prevailing gender norms in the country. However, there are also specific issues facing women.

- **Lack of representation** on the business side of the music industry.

The lack of representation of women on the business side, or the “engine of the industry” is problematic.

Women are seen as the talent. This needs to change to their being the minds and brains and strategists in the industry as well.

R6 is clear that women are not seen as equal players, and not worthy of certain positions. She was the first woman to hold all the positions that she has held professionally, and has had to fight both gender and racial stereotypes.

I've experienced it. You always have to fight harder, scream louder just to have your voice heard, to be valid in a room where you actually have more knowledge and experience than a lot of other people there. You're always coming from a deficit as a woman, and particularly as a black woman.

R6 was surprised about the low number of women members of SAMRO, “I don't believe that there are that low a number of women entertainers”. She presumes the reason to be a lack of access to empowering information.

Women artists are there but perhaps they're not accessing the necessary knowledge to get into the formal side of the music business, because that's where SAMRO and those kinds of organisations are.

- **Pay gaps** between men and women. Once again, R6 notes how societal norms around gender affect women, who are generally paid less than men.

Pay gaps are a microcosm of the societal issues that we have women face. Women generally earn less. I think that that's not unique to our sector. And men do get paid better fees, booking fees. That booking fee where the artist is not big enough of a name to command certain levels of remuneration. It is the same in every sector, women continue to get short-changed in these instances.

- **Expectation of sexual favours** from women artists and musicians is definitely a factor, with women being particularly vulnerable due to the informal nature of most work in the industry.

This sexual favours thing is very big not so much in the business side, but on the actual talent side of things. I don't think it's that easy for someone, a young girl coming up in the industry who wants to get a record deal, wants to get into a gig or wants to get work? You know, what I mean? It's unfortunately how it is. The less leverage you have, the more difficult it is.

There has to be will to root out that kind of behaviour. But in South Africa, our context is very patriarchal, misogynistic, that is the reality. A culture of calling things out where they are, I think is important. And just giving women a chance as fair competitors in the space so that they are not just seen as the talent, as the beautiful voice, as the beautiful girl, as the beautiful body, but just as equal colleagues.

It is in every other industry, but what makes this industry even more vulnerable is the nature of it. It's less corporate, less formal. People are not employed. There is no HR department to go to report sexual harassment... we don't have those processes and structures that are there in corporate or formal, structures.

- **The night-based nature of the entertainment industry**, contributes to the vulnerability of women music makers, and affects women in the creative side in particular.

A lot of things happen at night gigs, people are drinking, there's a lot of drugs. It's an environment that makes everyone vulnerable, and particularly women very vulnerable. That's just because of the nature of the industry.

- **GBV and sexual harassment**

Gender based violence (GBV) and sexual harassment are big issues in the industry. R6 says there are regular occurrences of GBV and sexual abuse. She personally has experienced an incident of sexual harassment in the workplace but never laid a formal complaint. Her senior position allowed her to deal with it on a personal level.

- **Urban/rural divide.**

She also sees an urban/rural divide, with rural women having to play traditional roles that may exclude them from having the information and means to access more formal music structures.

I don't know if that's been drilled down to see whether the women members are mostly in urban areas. I don't know but knowing the power dynamics and everything I've already mentioned, women in the rural areas are least likely to have economic access or informational access to more formal structures. Women in rural settings are often at more of a disadvantage because they play certain roles in the family, in the community. So even though they are artists, they do not take their art to that level. Maybe it's because there's an exclusion of non-urban based women artists, and composers, I don't know. It would be interesting to see who the women members are and then see who's not a member.

5.7.5 Decision-makers in the industry

Of the decision-makers in the industry, especially on the business side, R6 maintains that 95% of the heads of record labels, of publishing organisations, managers and even lawyers are male, although she does not have exact figures.

The people in power do not find it a particular concern to empower women, and I am not talking about having a women's day.

5.7.6 What has changed

R6 speaks to her experience with the business side of the industry. Although R6 believes that there has been some success with organisations, including SAMRO, deliberately recruiting women, she does not believe that has been sufficient change in the industry, with its informal nature being a particular challenge.

Before going in in 2009, I thought it was a lot more formalized and organized. But having now worked in the business side of the industry for over a decade in the most organized structures, I think it really does have a long way to go in terms of really formalizing itself, from a standards perspective. There are still a lot of gaps. Once I got into the business, I realized that there aren't any women in influential structures in influential positions, even though there are lots of women artists who are visible. There are a handful of strong women in the industry in this country. So that was a big eye opener for me. And just learning that it is a very patriarchal industry. But at the same time, you know, it's not impossible to penetrate, but it's not easy.

5.7.7 Strategies for coping

R6 talks about coping with sexual harassment, which in her experience she has been able to deal with by standing up for herself, and has never had to lay a formal complaint. She emphasises the significance of power dynamics.

This always boils down to power structures, power dynamics. In the positions I've been, I've been fortunate enough to be at a very senior level. So as hard as it's been, I've been able to deal with the situation head on with the person, without having to go to HR about it...We learn how to deal with it, you do promise yourself next time it happens, that you will react better, and create boundaries. I think that really helps, being able to create boundaries and remove yourself.

5.7.8 Support for women in the industry

R6 knows that there are networking opportunities for women, especially on the business side, but does not know how successful they are. She is aware of Women in Music, a platform created by academic Dr Clare Loveday.

5.7.9 What should be done

- **More women in leadership**

A strong will to prioritise gender issues on a sustained basis, and as part of long-term strategy, is necessary in the industry.

It's sexy to talk about it in women's month or whatever, but it should be a long-term strategic plan that involves all stakeholders within the industry.

R6 would like to see the industry no longer sexualising women, but key to that is a plan to help women economically, and to ensure that more women are in key decision-making roles.

To really, fully support women who are on the rise within the industry and not sexualize them. I think that's the issue, women should not be sexualized. If we can stop sexualizing women in our industry, then people can treat women as people for what they know, for what they have talent wise. And they are given an equal chance. There has to be a genuine effort to put to put women in positions of power.

The more women in senior roles, the easier it will be for others to penetrate what R6 sees as male networks, or 'boys clubs' controlling the industry.

Women are participating. They run the entertainment sector, but as talent not the business of entertainment. It's like there's a glass ceiling saying that women are good for singing and performing. It's not an easy choice to say, I want to get into music, the business side of things. It's hard because it's a boys' club. It's the same question we're trying to solve at a country level, and at an international level, how do we actually penetrate these boys' clubs? Firstly, with promoters, managers, label execs, these collective management organizations. You see women being put in positions, but it's like tokenism sometimes. Are the women really

empowered there in then that position? Are they being paid what their male counterparts get paid in that position? And most of the times, it's no.

- **Role of SAMRO**

There are roles SAMRO could play in using its position in the industry and organisational capacity to improve conditions for women, but R6 believes that SAMRO is not aware of the initiatives existing members are already undertaking.

SAMRO has a very big role to play because of the position that it's in. It's in a very powerful position to influence and to reach out, but I think someone needs to at least get more members, identify who's not a member, try and get them to be members. And then with the members they have, support the members' initiatives... SAMRO is not aware today of those initiatives.

We need to know what's happening on the ground, because that's when you know what initiatives you can tap into. Sometimes you don't have to recreate the wheel, you just have to support the current wheel, and what people are really doing, but you need to actually know what that is.

SAMRO could assist members' initiatives financially, and by giving them a platform.

The centre platform, not an alternative platform or outlier platform but the actual centre, and state that these are the women's issues we're dealing with.

SAMRO needs to understand who the musicians are who are not members and reach out to them with an understanding of the conditions and constraints they operate under and provide information and educate potential members about their rights, and what SAMRO can do.

SAMRO should make a concerted effort to go out and recruit women members, educate them about SAMRO, educate them about rights. I think women need to be educated about the rights that they do have in the works that they create, in what they do, and when and how they perform. To give them that confidence to assert their rights, to assert themselves.

I have a feeling that it's the rural women who are not members. SAMRO needs to go out and engage them and upskill them. You're going to go into that space and say to this woman whose husband does not want or expect his woman, his partner, his wife to taking taxis to Joburg to SAMRO meetings. So now you're going to go in and inform that woman and try and bring her on board. But depending on her social environment, and her home environment, cultural environment, whatever it is, it might be very difficult. But not impossible. And it's not everyone who will be in that predicament.

R6 is not aware of particular structures that can assist women who have been sexually harassed or are victims of gender-based violence, although she does suggest that SAMRO could have an anonymous hotline for abuse.

- **Role of Government**

R6 recommends key roles for government as the **creation of a social security net** and **recognising the particular vulnerability of people in the industry** both economically and in terms of GBV and sexual harassment. They are not the only players, but they do have a role.

Artists have been particularly badly affected by COVID-19, with not many being able to access relief funding.

It's been two years. Artists haven't been gigging. People are broke. Government had COVID relief funds, but that was also controversial, who got that money, who didn't, most people didn't. Yes, some people benefited, but generally the majority did not.

They need to be visible in their condemnation of and calling out the abuse in this industry, and being visible in saying that this is a particularly vulnerable sector. There's no HR in this industry unless you're an employee in a record label. But for artists, who are you going to talk to you if you are sexually harassed. I'd rather go to HR than to the police. Chances are, it'll work out better for me through the structures that my corporate has created for me. But artists don't have that.

5.8 Respondent 7

Case Study Respondent no 7 (R7)

5.8.1 Background information

R7 describes herself as “a multi-disciplinary creative artist”. She is a creative entrepreneur, singer, songwriter, storyteller, and television presenter. She mixes musical genres to include soul, jazz, and contemporary folk.

Music is definitely my primary medium or platform which I use to tell stories. And so, within music, I do share a bit of spoken word, a bit of poetry... Everything else follows after music. That includes designing and developing brands that tell stories for me.

She studied law before deciding to follow a musical career, obtaining BCom and LLB degrees. She is an independent artist who takes ownership of creative direction, and funds much of the marketing and promotion of her work herself. Although R7 is beginning to outsource aspects of her business to others, she stresses the importance of understanding and being primarily responsible for all aspects of her business so that she can make use of experts in particular fields.

I am the label, and have been self-managed and independent for the last 11 years. I have learned to outsource activities that are maybe other people's core strengths, like my publishing... In terms of music distribution, on the digital side I have always distributed myself. In the latest project that I am releasing I have pitched my music to digital service providers or companies who would go and do the work.

R7 is trying to groom young people to do the tour, road and project management aspects of her work, so that they understand all components of the industry.

I have a team of women who are interested in the art space who may very well also be singers, songwriters or artists themselves, who want to learn and see how they can accelerate their own growth in the industry. My current tour manager, road manager, is a young woman who assists me in pretty much everything that has to do with my creative affairs, whether it's picking up my passport, or applying for things, or researching grants. My project manager is also a woman, she is learning about the arts industry and how to bridge the world between brands sponsorship and marketing for the artist, whether it's product placement, or influencer marketing that's related to music or any platform that we're using.

Her current manager, a white male, is teaching members of her team. R7 also works with a top entertainment lawyer in South Africa who has been “working in the industry for years”, but she believes artists need to understand the entire process and work in partnership with others, especially for legal and copyright issues.

I think the expensive exercise is not taking care of your legalities first. So yes, I use a lawyer and I try to set up meetings with him and the parties involved so that they hear from him. And it becomes like a co-consult because I think there's a lot that gets lost in translation with artists not really understanding differences between their copyrights, between the actual masters, differences between actual sound recording, differences between mechanicals, needle time, etc. So I definitely need a mouthpiece to spell that out for people because I know that it always

comes when people don't actually have the knowledge base. And that causes so many fights and unnecessarily blocks the beautiful creative process.

5.8.2 Entry into the music industry

R7 discovered her love of music as a nine-year-old. During her school days she sang in choirs and played instruments in different ensembles. She chose a university because of its choir. She was doing a multitude of things in the arts, including communication, marketing and branding, but started her solo music career 11 years ago.

Deciding on a solo music career was about understanding that the best vehicle for change, and impact, or any kind of storytelling or communication was my voice... and since then shifting people's perceptions of me as a communication strategist into a singer, songwriter, musician, has been my main task, and sharing my work.

R7's music career was helped by her experience in the corporate world, which also enabled her to fund her work in music when it wasn't paying for itself. At that time she was funding from interior design work or corporate consulting but now tries to not make her music sustainable on its own from the live music space, gigging or corporate work.

I do feel that I did a little bit of a detour into corporate, and my project management, production skill and ability to be an executive producer of my own work has allowed me to be more productive, and to outlay the kind of budgets that you would outlay for any company into your own work and see them through. Because when you learn to spend big budgets on campaigns on the client side, when you look at what is necessary to make your own work, work, you then become unafraid to pay for publicity, for marketing, to put in the kind of design work that's required. You become unafraid to be truthful around the resources that you need and to manage the timings that it takes to get a project done.

There were also three particular people, two male producers and a female promoter, who helped her navigate her way into the industry when she was starting out.

I would say between those three people. They're not so much gatekeepers, but facilitators. These are people who see something and are excited about the art itself, and they can connect you with people who can resonate with you.

5.8.3 Challenges in the operating environment

The digitization of the music industry has presented enormous challenges for artists, and especially South African artists, who R7 maintains need to find ways to use the technology to connect directly to their audiences.

There's this weird super Americanised entertainment industry where success looks like Rihanna and Beyoncé. Our local people who are still music consumers, don't believe that you have a website that they can find you online. You almost have to teach them that. The difference now between us and getting to them is a marketing jive and PR.

She feels radio stations and presenters assume that South African artists who are on the airwaves have made it, and must have big crews behind them, "we are obsessed with what the American industry has taught us to think." They need to reference local artists more.

We require a lot from mass radio and mass marketers, like radio stations and TV platforms. The challenge is for them to really understand our needs, and for consumers to realize that we need them to stream the music, we need them to request the music, we need them to take note that when I say an African artist has punched through the weight of getting past a Justin Bieber song to have theirs played, actually, it's a big feat.

Mass media in South Africa needs to work together with artists in South Africa to educate consumers, in a similar way to what Nigeria has done with Afrobeat and Nollywood films.

Digitization has, however, also created opportunities for women artists to access listeners directly, eliminating the need for intermediaries or gatekeepers or male managers, which can be less compromising for women.

We have more power being do-it-yourself artists than when I started. So that's been a significant shift. Luckily the digital world has allowed us to stream, and audiences can come directly to us. And for me, as a woman in a male dominated industry and sort of looking for that male saviour and the male manager and the male record label, it's made it less compromising, for us to do our work. And for us to have access to the administration of the music business.

R7 has found it challenging reaching physical audiences because she believes her genre is in a particular niche which is unfamiliar to most South Africans. She therefore has to visit potential audiences at grassroots levels to promote her music.

I have to now become a promoter, I must put on my own shows, book my own venues, put up the capital in order to match the ticket sales, and grow the audience so that we can have direct access to them. When the audience goes through your ticket platform, they put in an email address, so over time, you get to have direct access to them. But that's not like mass media. It's a slow road. You can find out who the 1000 people streaming music in PE this week are, so you don't have to rely on Bay FM or Algoa FM to tell you because they also can't give you their names or the email addresses. So I think the challenge is in audience building and having a direct link to the audience.

Funding for artists is another serious challenge that affects men and women artists alike.

What artists need is the opportunity to work. We need money to put on shows, tours. We need money to travel overseas and share.

R7 notes that the music industry differs from the film industry, which may be doing better financially. She thinks it may be that the music industry is much more individualistic than the film industry.

Film is more of a collective, because in one film, you're hiring so many people from the stylist to the director of photography, camera, to the director. In the music industry you have a couple of people rallying around one person.

5.8.4 Gender issues in the industry

On the music production side, R7 believes male and female energies are received differently in the industry.

When a man comes on and says, aggressively, I'm successful, and arrogantly I'm this and I'm that, that energy is probably better received than when a woman comes out says, I've been

raped, or I've been generous or I'm suffering through depression. Women will probably be given less investment because nobody wants angry, aggressive, or feisty women. So we are being asked to be sultry and sexy and to sell all these things that are more palatable.

At the beginning of her career, R7 experienced a sexualised environment and energy, particularly in the performance space.

There was a time when there was a stigma, which sometimes generally happens, where male producers will say to female artists that I can unlock your career and I can create great stuff. But then it's sometimes that energy is sexualized, in a sense, and there's always that kind of navigational point between someone trying to sleep with you, to work with you, versus actually just working with you...There is sometimes that male-female energy barrier to the work.

Stereotypes and biases, even unconscious, are pervasive, but R7 believes that with more women band leaders, or in production roles, this is changing.

I do find that my male counterparts in that space, whether they come to live performance shows or come and work with me as session musicians, can be a bit disrespectful, even if they don't know they're doing it. It's like why are you a woman sitting in this position, and it will come out as little things, like where they get drunk when they come to a show, or they blatantly won't listen, because they are just being toxically male. So there are some challenges. But I still think that we are gaining more and more power in being band leaders, and hopefully demanding something more acceptable from our male counterparts in the way that they relate to us.

On the promotional side, R7 believes that women have less negotiation power.

There's that image of male promoters as bulldozers and boisterous, and they carve their own way, I see it all the time. The power of negotiation, as a woman, generally becomes lower in the space than when a man comes in and highballs it. We often under-cost or undervalue. And no one will tell us that we've done this, but a man might say I'm not doing that performance, if it's under 50k, or if it's under 500k. I think there are some disadvantages that as women that our negotiation points on the promotional and performance side may be far lower than our male counterparts will have.

5.8.5 What has changed?

As noted earlier, the digitization of the industry has created challenges, but there are growing opportunities for artists to embrace the digital shifts and connect directly with audiences especially through social media, even though it is not easy, and requires energy and capacity. After ten years in the industry the digital revolution has become her friend and she has learned to use it to work for her.

And there's so much to learn now, every day. Just embrace this thing. I'm there, but I just think the world is asking too much of us. But at the same time, if you wanted to do audience building without a mass radio platform, what is the best way to get there? Unfortunately, it means we have to unlearn and let go of these ideas we formed for ourselves, and find who we are within these curated platforms.

5.8.6 Decision-makers in the industry

R7 is not quite sure exactly who the decision-makers, or gatekeepers as she calls them, in the industry are, but feels that the industry needs younger people.

The industry is probably run by people of a generation who should retire because things are moving very fast. We need younger people to come into the space and make decisions for us as the world is changing.

There may be owners and executive decision-makers at a particular label who are predominantly white males. This can disenfranchise others in R7's opinion because even though artists may not work through the label anymore, they "may come and spend in a way or do the kind of big business that makes others pay more attention to them than to us."

Other gatekeepers are male promoters running jobs in "spaces with high income or commercial value such as clubs and hospitality spaces around the country."

They would prefer a more aggressive energy like a male DJ, or sometimes a male performer, whether that be hip-hop or something like that. In essence, I don't think that our energy as females fits naturally in spaces that they would be curating like clubs etc. So a male promoter is definitely a gatekeeper for us. When I think about spaces where a woman would perform well, definitely it's more gentle at a music festival. So in that sense, representation, it's far easier for men to go out about town and talk business, than it would be for them to make space for us.

Lack of awareness among women and not understanding the music management business, coupled with a romantic desire for someone else to come and take care of all the non-performing aspects of the business are the key reasons R7 offers for the low female membership of an organisation like SAMRO.

Awareness is understanding the framework for running your music business. Doing it myself has allowed me to open up and to be more aware of what is out there for me. What I've observed as a young woman, and how I came into the industry, there are thoughts and myths I had to dispel. Whether we'd like to admit it or not, it is true that we want someone who's going to represent us, is going to produce and who's going to bulldoze the doors for us. And that can give us a more relaxed energy. For a long time, I was sitting and waiting around for that person.

R7 believes women artists need to be far more concerned with the business side of their music themselves rather than become dependent on men.

I think there is a male saviour complex. We don't want to inquire about registering the music ourselves. We don't want to inquire about our copyright. We just want to sing, we romanticize this singing. And I hate to say it, but we romanticize fame and what we should be doing on the stage, whether that is to appear sexy or attract people by the way we look. We over-embellish the image side rather than actually diving into the business to see where you make money. We almost don't make it our concern. It's kind of like when you come into the patriarchy and the domestic household, we tend to easily say a man must pay for the shelter and must do this. We give them these very dominant roles and throw ourselves into dependency on them.

Greater inclusivity and representation of women in all aspects of the industry will act as role models and help women to see the different facets of their careers that they can tackle themselves.

5.8.7 Strategies for coping

R7 has empowered herself by getting involved in all aspects of her business, including registering a company which helps her apply for grants. She keeps her books in order, and has registered with SAMRO, taking control of her copyrights and her production. She is grateful for the advice of people at various stages of her career who encouraged her to do these things.

A female vocal coach advised R7 to register with SAMRO and to do her own administration.

If she had not told me that piece of information I'd be constantly trying to figure out how to keep my copyrights and my work personal to me... So I then registered and made sure that as I grow, I will collect directly and I will represent myself as the artist.

Taking control of her own production also empowered R7 to maintain control of her creative process and budgets. An engineer who had helped her to manage her budgets advised her to take more ownership.

Before I was giving too much power to my male music director. And I thought this guy is wasting so much money. He's not pursuing my creative ideas, he's shutting my stuff down. Now he and these guys are throwing their egos around. So I just threw everybody out of the room, and now am the one who directs everything, because I know what I want. And I learned the power of taking control in the studio. And that also eliminates any funny business and publishing and copyrights. So I definitely have created more functional ways of working by curating the music way in advance, they come in, they read the chart, they leave, they know they get a session fee. This means I get more control of what I'm doing and my creative direction in my creative rights

5.8.8 Support for women in the industry

Women in the industry generally do not have any kind of formalised support structures.

We are starting to have platforms where we can discuss the woman's narrative on things. It's still minimal. I am not part of any and have not been invited to any.

There are some unisex forums, but *"it's a balance between finding the women to share their indigenous knowledge over the men. They are so under-showcased that you have to work harder to find them."*

R7's own view is that women need to learn the technical and business sides of their music.

5.8.9 What should be done

R7 makes a number of recommendations for how women can advance in the industry, essentially relating to greater awareness and education of the kinds of opportunities available, what resources exist, and collaboration and collective thinking to break down existing silos in the industry. She believes that amplifying female voices and giving more power to women in the industry will address many of the challenges women face and will help them to operate more independently of constraints caused by sexism and even gender-based violence.

Music education has a key role to play for both music makers, and for women to make a career in the business of music. Women music makers need to become more engaged in the craft of music.

I mean playing instruments, becoming female sessionists as there is a huge lack...There's power in how that music is made... Maybe there is a barrier to entry because women tend to be the singers.

For people who are not actually musicians, education in the business of music would encourage more women to get involved, and for this type of education R7 advocates separating the talent from the business through some form of a music business school.

I do think women would make far better music managers and label heads, so the music business should be pushed as a platform for learning. It can be profitable if it has the people who know how to run it as a business. A lot of platforms and marketers and brands rely on music to do their work. We need to figure out how to share in that pie.

I don't know how many people study music business, but I think most people in the university music schools go there to graduate as musicians... Maybe there's a management course that doesn't require you to go and play grade 8 level piano.

Greater collaboration among role players is necessary to grow the South African music industry as a whole.

The industry works in silos and we all seem to think we are fighting for the same space. I think we need to find a way where we can see industries thrive because we all exist. I've never seen an industry that suffers in silence like the South African music industry, and I've travelled all over the world. I'm in Kenya right now and people move in collectives for what they are trying to achieve, similar to how hip-hop started in the United States. And nobody speaks up to all the challenges we're all facing. Instead it's like, okay, I'm going to show you how I'm defeating the game, I'm going to show you how I'm rising above. So I think the more we really try to work together, we can organize ourselves to create the kind of conversations and barging through doors as woman as we should be.

Role of SAMRO

Institutions like SAMRO need to go out and talk to women more directly where they are and understand where they are losing women so that they can address that.

Go and start where they are creating music in the song writing and the production process. You will realize that's when you start losing them. So how do you expect them to register when they've already lost the battle to someone else? You know how many times we have to go and fight for masters and our separate songs. Some women may very well need a much safer space for them to continue.

Role of government

Government's role should be to fund opportunities for women.

Funding women at the beginning cycle of their careers, which is in the production process, and in the showcase process, would be a good place to put more women through the system to help their careers survive. Maybe some of them don't survive because they can't do it. They can't call in the favours, they don't have the resourcing.

5.9 Respondent 8

Case Study Respondent 8

5.9.1 Background information

R8 is a veteran music-maker, coming from a family of musicians and theatre practitioners.

I'm a singer, songwriter, guitarist, musical storyteller. I've done a lot of theatre work, from an early age with my parents, and overseas. I've done some movies. In the biggest of these I had a principal role.

Everyone in the family is a musician, from our parents to the grandchildren. Everyone is a practising musician, whether they perform or not, are doing it professionally or doing it for themselves.

Currently R8 writes and performs songs but is not registering or releasing them on her label, sharing music instead on social media.

5.9.2 Entry into the music industry

R8 has been in the industry for 55 years, performing on stage from the age of six.

I started working with the people outside of my family, whom I would make professional deals with, from the age of 16. Theatre, musical theatre, from my 20s. Then I continued on my own, with record deals and travelling the world from the age of 17.

She has been assisted by many people, both in and outside of the music industry. Her family of course helped her with performance. On the business side, she refers particularly to an entertainment lawyer, who still advises her.

He's so generous with guidance. Even if you don't have the money, he will just do it and wait for you. He's just respectful. He would wait maybe for you to ask, how much does that cost what I did, and then he considers, oh maybe she has some money, you know, he's that kind of a respectful, generous giver. In the early 90s, when I came back from the States, and I was setting up my publishing, he was guiding me all the way and giving me tips, which I did very well, but fell on the way because of these other things that bombard us.

The late Johnny Clegg is another, "who would just give and give and give guidance with the business and even the academics. He just pushed me to go that way." She mentions numerous others from political life and the music industry.

So those are the kind of people that even if I haven't seen them in many years, I just know from our history, that these are the people who had good intentions.

5.9.3 Challenges in the operational environment

R8 is angry and disillusioned with the music industry, as she feels she, and others like her, are not getting royalties that are rightfully owed.

I have my own label. When I started it around the early 90s, I had just come back from the US. I set it up and I was guided by an entertainment lawyer and I was so serious. I signed a number of artists, I signed myself to it with such enthusiasm. And I was administering people's compositions with my publishing. I've got it under SAMRO. But over time, you know, I did sign with a record label, but I'm not with them. Now, I just do things behind my own label. I was really getting tired, getting tired and discouraged.

She believes this affects women artists particularly who were, and are still, not, well-versed in the business of music. She offers her mother as an example.

Her music never received any money. She only received 701 rand for a song that was playing every day on Radio Zulu, I don't know for how many years. There was a story on radio that kept playing because people enjoyed that story. And that was the song to open and to close. The only money she received from that song, the producer delivered in cash. There have been too many crooked, dubious activities that happen behind closed doors when it comes to the business of music.

R8 also refers to a male musician from the rural areas, whose daughter has been unable to claim his rights after he died, despite her efforts sort it out with SAMRO.

He was the best Maskanda in South Africa. But nobody knew about him. I got some of his rights because as his publisher, things were printed there. No one was taking us seriously. His child wrote to me after he died, saying my father wrote me a letter and said that I have his rights.

She feels that if SAMRO had an outreach function that could engage with artists in their own environments, especially in the rural areas, it would help such musicians to formalise their rights and allow them to benefit financially from their music.

She is frustrated that she has been unable to get clear answers and explanations from SAMRO, about her own, and family members' royalties. Her sister is ill and has been trying to get an advance from SAMRO for her publishing.

No one is respecting us. Nobody's taking us seriously. And it's as if SAMRO is waiting for her to die and come out and give her that money.

5.9.4 Gender issues in the industry

- **Women not being taken seriously.**

R8's experience is that men in the industry do not take women seriously, especially African women. Certain men in the business have collaborated with her, but have then taken credit for her contribution as their own.

They take us as stupid children, most of these men. When we're in business, they take it as if we don't know what they're doing. You turn your back, they take your stuff, and they use it, and they move ahead. And they know that you will maybe just give up and you don't want the noise, you want to protect your heart.

- **Women artists overwork themselves.**

Women artists do not have sufficient resources and support in the work they do and tend to overwork themselves because they love what they do and want to work.

In this business, as in any business in the corporate world, you need to have the right assistance. I'm working on so many projects. Right now, I'm directing a children's musical, I need to have at least an assistant director, I need to have my personal assistant, I need to have an administrator, I need to have a bookkeeper. We don't have all those things as women. We are great creators, but we don't have the structure of the systems of this business. So we tend to overwork ourselves, we get tired, we get discouraged. And we just, let other things get taken by other people.

- **Women's economic position makes them vulnerable.**

R8 recounts instances where she has worked with women artists on projects where she has created structures and opportunities, but they have then signed with other males.

And I pay them from my own money. The same women who have now been bought by these men, I don't know whether they were love affairs or what. They're talking the language of 'they gave us money for transport...' They just want to go overseas and make their money. They don't have the same mission. So obviously I had to dump that group and I said to them, leave my repertoire alone, leave my record company, just go ahead and work with this guy, but don't use the name.

And women bought by the sneaky guys, they are also wrong to allow that. That weakness comes when people are poor and desperate. And they believe that they are poor in their minds, you know, and they can sell each other out. So that weakness also just made me so tired.

- **Ageism**

Mature artists are marginalised because of their age. R8 believes the industry needs to assist artists look after their careers as they age.

There is that when they say oh, they are old, or they are this. So that's why we just work on our own and we make things happen. And we trust that God will bring, you know, opportunities on our way. And when there is an application to make here, we try and it's a small amount and you can try and do some shows. So I can say that is that there is no one seriously looking up to say okay, let's plan now. Let's say X is 61, or Y is 65. What if they will live until 90 or 100? Let's plan a career now, let's sit with her and structure this. We don't have the right assistance within our teams.

Male promoters push younger, popular musicians at the expense of mature ones. In this respect, leaders and directors need to set the tone in what they will tolerate. R8 gives an example of a festival she was booked for, and where she was afforded little respect. Once the director took a stand and showed leadership and respect for her, the younger musicians acted in a more respectful way.

I was hired for this African continental thing. They were doing a festival in one of the theatres. I was booked to end the act. I had a director that recommended me because he says what I stand for is an African artist. But some male managers kept pushing their artists because they were young, and they were popular. And even their artists were walking tall, trying to walk all over me because male managers were trying to push them to be above me so that I don't end

the act. So I told them I just want to do my thing and do it right and finish and go, I don't care where I am. The director said 'we want your voice. Every song of yours speaks to Africa. Every song of yours tells us something about our values, things that we have forgotten, we have lost. So even if you like to open as an act, we want you to close'.

In no time those kids who were acting so pompous were coming into my dressing room. When I was warming up with my musicians and my backing vocalist, they were coming, being with us as young people who are respectful. So sometimes it happens that whoever is in the lead position, if they don't have their value system set up right in their heads as leaders, they can corrupt the young people, or they can corrupt other men who are abusers.

- **Sexism**

Women do not feel safe and comfortable to be themselves without being attached to a man.

There's that thing of not feeling safe and comfortable that you can be yourself. And you can stand without being somebody's something. Sometimes people feel they need to control you somehow, that maybe you have to be their woman or something.

- **Expectations of sexual favours**

Allied to sexism is the rampant expectation of sexual favours from women in the industry. When more assertive women do not respond favourably overtures, they are replaced.

There are very stupid expectations that the industry has. I'm talking about the opposite sex especially. There are things that it's just expected that we will deliver, and it's business for them, but it's not business for us. Most men do that. Even people who are married, they do that to their wives. It's as if it's expected that she's doing it for the men. I don't know how it turns out like that.

There are so many men who are doing these things. Some of the kids are not telling anyone because they're keeping their jobs. Now they're obliged. This doesn't happen only to kids. It happens to us at this age. We work with people in a meeting and at government level, co-operate in theatres, when they see that you're assertive, you're not going to move in that direction, of sexual favours that may be subtly, expressed, then somehow you're going to be replaced. So, that is happening a lot.

- **Gender-based violence**

R8 has been a victim of gender-based violence at the hands of a well know personality in the industry, and was assaulted until she passed out at one time. She was not alone in this, her abuser did it to others as well. She attributes this to a patriarchal entitlement, and power. She had little support at the time, apart from one man who jumped over her wall and tried to help her.

He thinks he's fixing me. But he's also using his power over these kids.

5.9.5 What has changed?

R8 acknowledges that the voices of women in demanding their rights are raised, and women are beginning to feel less afraid. She feels, however, that this has benefited younger artists more while her contemporaries still struggle to get what is due to them.

It is very obvious to me that the rights of women have been raised from those days of Beijing⁴⁶, when they raised their voices. We heard but we're not educated enough to understand how to take it and make it work for us. So there is a shift because they started speaking about it. And I can feel also we are getting the influence because the fear is starting to subside within us. The only thing is that we are old, most of us are like 60 and above. Most of the women that are now strong and they're signing deals with overseas labels and are busy recording with them.

5.9.6 Decision-makers in the industry

R8 generally refers to the decision-makers in the industry as men.

When asked why she thinks there are so few female members of SAMRO, she responds that there are many women musicians don't know what to do, how to join or what their rights are.

I think that's my answer why there are so few members. It's because the members are out there, but they don't even know what to do. We who can empower them because we can see them, because we can reach them, have no help.

She is angry at what she believes are disrespectful attitudes from SAMRO staff, who do not go out to where musicians are and explain things to them, and who don't respond to calls for assistance.

5.9.7 What should be done?

The most important recommendations from R8 relate to outreach to musicians to educate them on their rights and how they can monetise their contributions to the industry without being cheated, support in how to access funding and do proposals, and assistance with personal development.

R8 believes strongly that SAMRO should establish an outreach department that can go to where composers are, explain their rights and educate them, and how to manage themselves, *"just so that people can come and register and show them with baby steps, how their song will make money."*

There is no outreach space at SAMRO to go to the grassroots to see who are composers, and educate them. If they get into business with one another, to empower each other, to educate them to not stab each other in the back, because that's what's been happening.

We can't do it alone as artists and composers that know a little bit about the business, we still need support from SAMRO, so that we don't get the sharks.

SAMRO should meet people where they are and try to simplify the processes and offer support for people who are already experienced musicians.

Don't complicate the language, meet people where they are, and speak their language. If you want to tell me how the corporates work when it comes to publishing don't just put it down in writing. Look at a person's situation and say, oh, this is where you are now Ms X. Okay, so now you are on your own, you're doing it like this, you have an administrator, you have this and that. Have those things formed to guide the person. Do baby steps with them. They are already

⁴⁶ United Nations World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995

experienced musicians and singers, backing vocalists, they're here, they have experience, just support them to make their lives work. So if you invite other people to join in, these are their rights. It must be easy. It must not be hidden information, where it's afterwards that a person says later, oh my gosh, I should have known.

Empower them, let them know their rights and train them to be able to manage or understand where the song is going. From a time when they begin, whether it's a young person, or an old person that's already been abused in the industry, make corrections whilst we're still alive. It doesn't have to be just one sided that the only people who make it to make the riches are those who have the knowledge about the system. Once you have your song like this, it is already a complete song.

The big word actually is respect and understanding that we are in a partnership. The fact that you know something that I don't know, that helps you to make more money than me, and to guarantee your salary or your royalties forever. Also, if you keep my money that I'm not claiming for, or you haven't notified me then it will stay at least in my account.

Further support on how to do proposals would help many musicians, especially older ones. She refers to an opportunity she saw and responded to.

I wrote my whole proposal with a phone, you know, and I finished. But not all ladies can push and take a chance and get the proposal, some don't even know where to start. When I saw it, I forwarded it to most of them, the older ones, but not a single one of them was able to do what I did. And I think it was by God's grace that I managed, but my stomach was knotted.

The second recommendation R8 raised was for the industry to **offer programmes for personal development**. She wrote a book about self-management that she was hoping would be shared with others through a series of workshops, but she felt it was blocked.

I saw how learning about myself can take you very far. Because that saved me from smoking, from drugs, throughout 55 years in the industry. I've seen people doing cocaine in front of me, but because I know me, I don't even know what it tastes like, even if I put it in my mouth. That diary teaches you how to get into yourself, to not ignore knowing yourself, to know your weaknesses and your strengths, and using that to build yourself up.

R8 would like to see the industry brainstorm solutions to the issues she has described, so that “we can change the situation for all of us.”

5.10 Respondent 9

Case Study Respondent no 9 (R9)

5.10.1 Background information

R9 is a pop singer and songwriter from KwaZulu-Natal.

I would say Afro-pop because I sing in both English and Zulu, but it's more pop, pop'ish.

She was signed to a major record label, but “*from now until forever, I'm an independent artist*”. She manages her own affairs and has signed to an international publishing company.

Publishing is a different industry altogether. And I need somebody who really knows what they are doing.

I want my music to travel all over the world. I want to get sync deals internationally. More than anything, I want to do collaborations with other artists and songwriters internationally. So because they are based overseas, and they reached out and their focus right now is Africa, I felt it was the right fit for me.

She uses a lawyer who goes through all her contracts, “*as much as I know, I don't know enough*”.

5.10.2 Entry into the music industry

A love of music from an early age determined R9's career.

I didn't choose the music industry, the music industry chose me. Music actually chose me, not the industry. I just work in the industry.

Earning a living in the industry is incredibly difficult, and R9 attributes her continued survival to God's grace, and the help of good people.

I sometimes would not even know how I would get through a month as an independent artist, or as a signed artist, because it was, and is, really hard. It would literally be by God's grace, the fact that I pray and say Lord give me a gig or Lord the rent is due, I don't know what I'm going to do, my child's school fees are due, I am working really hard. So honestly if I were to speak from an honest place it's by grace and mercy that I've been able to stay sane in an industry that can drive you to insanity.

There are a lot of people who have helped me on this journey. There are amazing people in the industry who have stood by me and helped me. There are friends, and producers that I've worked with who would record a record for me without wanting payment.

Having said that, competitiveness, jealousy and the idea that you are climbing a ladder in the industry are destructive and contribute to a toxic environment. R9 believes that greater collaboration would benefit everyone.

I feel like we should eliminate the ladder altogether in the music industry. That climb creates monsters and that creates greed. And that creates people stepping on other people instead of just moving aside and allowing people to pass through. The climbing of the ladder is a term that is used a lot in the music industry, but someone should just take the ladder down.

5.10.3 Challenges in the operational environment

The greatest challenges for artists are the informality of work arrangements and the financial insecurity of the industry.

Self-employed artists are not recognised as being employed, which affects their ability to access housing loans and medical aid.

I go from hand to mouth. I don't have medical aid because there's no payroll structure for me. I go from gig to gig to gig, recording EPs (extended plays) and recording albums. But there's no structure where it's seen as I'm employed, as I'm somebody who is actually working. I don't qualify to buy a house, I've got to rent. For everything I want to purchase, I have to prove that I am working in some form or way, even if there is money in my bank account. So that's the biggest challenge. I've always had to rent as an artist, I've never had medical aid. If I'm sick, if I have to go to a private hospital, I have to pay cash. But when you are in that space of being an artist, and you make money, and then God forbid you get sick, and people say, oh you died a pauper or you died in a public hospital. It's seen as a shame, but there is no other option.

Live performance is the most important source of revenue for artists. Finding consistent spaces to perform is difficult, and has been made more so by COVID-19.

In my experience, it was a gig to gig to gig way. I'd get a call from a promoter and go to a performance. Now with COVID I've not seen a stage in two years. I put an EP out last year, but I've not performed anywhere to promote it, or had a call that we want you to perform.

Artists whose genres are different from what is currently trending find it even more difficult.

COVID is a big part, but the other part is sometimes I feel like the stages are not there. If it's not the kind of music that's hip and happening at the time, most artists and musicians fall off the wagon. Venues are not looking for mellow R&B or pop. They want what's selling and what's hot in the streets. So that creates a problem for people like me who don't do that music, gigs become fewer and fewer. Then you have to go into the space of creating work and going to venues and pleading your case, asking for space and sharing tickets sales with them. It is hard, but if you're an artist you want to be on stage, if you're an artist you want to sing, you want to promote your stuff. I feel that if we continue with the mindset of never giving up and creating work for yourself, then things will work out.

5.10.4 Gender issues in the industry

R9 has experienced difficulties as a woman in the industry where she was treated unfairly, but believes that women are now more vocal, and fighting more intelligently, and men are beginning to listen.

If this interview had happened today, five years ago, I probably would have given you a very different answer, and only because I was broken. I'd come out of a deal where I felt that as a woman, I was not treated fairly. But because I'm on the other side of that, I can speak with much more knowledge, and with much more experience.

I'm a grown woman now. But when I came into the industry, I was 22. I was very, very young. And when I look back, I would not want a 22 year-old girl coming into the industry to go through half the things that I had to endure to get to where I am. I'm happy that we are having

in this interview, post my trauma, because if we had had it then my answers would have been very angry and self-destructive, rather than looking to build and find solutions.

- **Expectation to behave in a certain way**

There are expectations for women in the industry to behave in certain ways, or to accept unacceptable behaviour.

You're expected to either behave in a certain way, or look past things that you should not look past, because it's seen as norm in the industry.

- **Shortage of women-owned or run spaces**

Most of the venues R9 has been to are owned by men, especially the larger ones.

I think there is a shortage of women owning performance spaces or running performance spaces. It's not that men should give up their jobs and we should take up that space; I'm just saying that when it comes to live performances and live gigging, there is a shortage of women who are in those positions as promoters to take up that space.

- **Sexual harassment and gender-based violence**

Sexual harassment is a big problem in the music industry worldwide, not only in South Africa. R9 notes also that it affects boys as well as girls.

It used to be predominantly female, but I think that's because most male artists would not be verbal, or would be too embarrassed to talk about it, although female artists also feel embarrassed.

She herself has experienced gender-based violence but was willing to talk only about how she dealt with it, which was to go home and turn to her family for help, rather than about the details.

5.10.5 What has changed?

R9 has seen some change in the industry with regard to women's rights, although there is still some way to go. In general, women are becoming more vocal about their rights. Women are more visible in roles they were not previously, especially in the talent and entertainment side.

The shift has been going on as far back as when Brenda Fassie was still alive, maybe even earlier. Women know their rights, are fighting for their rights, and are vocal about them. They are starting to immerse themselves in the industry in so many different ways. The shift is not entirely there, but we are progressing to creating a space in the industry that is safe for us.

We have more producers who are women, we have more women in record labels, we have more engineers, we have places in the industry where it's predominantly male-dominated. We can have an all-girl band, which is something that was frowned on because women were not seen as bass players or as drummers. So I feel like in the entertainment part of it we are immersing ourselves. In the business part of it we are slowly getting there.

5.10.6 Decision-makers in the industry

While R9 sees current decision-makers in the industry as obviously men, she also understands that there are other people in positions of power in the industry. These are the trend setters.

Who's in power? The trendsetters and trend-makers. They are the people on radio or on TV.

She believes that constantly fighting for their place has affected women badly, and that they need to change their approach.

It affects us badly. Our mindset should be one of education. These five people sitting at the top, they are qualified for their jobs. They are sitting there because they deserve the space. Yes, unfortunately, they are all men. What can I do if I want to sit at the table? Am I qualified to sit at the table? What am I doing to get a seat at the table? Because I feel like how I approached the music industry was one of anger. One of feeling like I deserve more, one of constantly pushing and pushing and fighting and fighting. And it has not done anything for me, just left me sad and broken.

5.10.7 Strategies for coping

R9's strategy for inclusion into the decision-making processes of the industry has been to educate herself and to look for alternate spaces for women, run by women.

I started thinking what if I didn't fight for the seat? What if I educated myself and created a new seat? Or what if I educated myself and created a new portal where it's for women by women. I'm not saying pro-women and no men, just saying that I need to have standing if I want to position myself or if I want to learn more. I think that that can be a way forward instead of us fighting against each other and wanting to dominate because I don't think we want to dominate the industry, we just want to have a seat at the table. I don't mean 20 males and one female. I mean proper representation because female musicians and artists may not require the same as male artists. We need women at the top to represent us as girls in the industry.

5.10.8 Support for women

R9 is not aware of organisations that specifically support women in the industry, especially in the areas of sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

There's no support in the industry because it's too embarrassing to talk about. Also because you know that there are other people who are going through it and they don't talk about it either. So either you keep quiet and you die with it or you find other outlets. I found my outlet packing up everything and going back to my family.

She knows about no systemic or institutional support for artists experiencing other difficulties.

5.10.9 What should be done?

The first thing that R9 recommends is that women empower each other by supporting other women artists, and by celebrating others who have released music without necessarily wanting things for themselves.

If I'm doing a writing session, I deliberately hire female photographers. That's what I did with my new EP. I deliberately had an all-female cast. I deliberately booked females, and I asked why have I not done this before? Because these people are in the industry. It's a small number, and you really have to look to find these people, but I did. And I think that's the first step. The balance is not there yet. But if we as female personalities in the industry, whether singers, songwriters, dancers, guitarists, can empower each other, that will be the beginning. That will be the beginning of empowering and giving each other work and starting a conversation and creating an industry where there are more jobs for females.

Women need to educate themselves in the music business so that they can create alternative spaces for themselves, and in that way have greater representation in the industry.

We've tried everything else, we've tried screaming about it, we've tried shouting about it, we've tried to force ourselves into positions that people don't feel we deserve. And I think that does not work. So we need to be smarter, we need to stand together, we need to come together, and we need to create new spaces that will educate and give us the knowledge we need of the industry.

As much as I can be a singer, if I don't learn the business part of it I'm just singing to entertain, I'm not singing to make money that will allow me one day to have a medical aid or buy my house.

A man can't represent me in things that are female. A man may not understand what I mean when I say that's offensive, or crossing the line on sexual harassment. If there's a female there, she can explain that and make them understand. In some things, men just don't understand, so we need more female presentation.

- **Support for artists in the business of music**

R9 believes that an organisation or institution supporting artists by educating them on their rights, on contracts and other business-related matters would assist many, both men and women, but especially women.

I think the support system should first be based on educating and preparing. You don't have an institute in this in this country that nurtures and protects talent. There's no institute that is available and either free or cheap enough for an upcoming nobody to go to and say I don't know what to do with this. I need help to look at a contract. There are no available lawyers that an artist and upcoming artists can go to and say I'm so excited, I got a record deal. I want to sign it. But I don't know if I'm signing my life away. I've got a publishing deal, but I don't think I'm signing my life away.

There are so many holes in the industry. We miss those holes because we're looking for fame. We just want to sing. We forget that we are the money, we are the talent. And that's where the institute that I'm talking about comes in.

Role of SAMRO

She does not know why there are so few women members of SAMRO, but is hopeful that growth will happen as SAMRO has helped her throughout her career.

I when I first signed with SAMRO, I had just come to Johannesburg. I was broke, I had no job, but I was writing songs... If you are a songwriter, musician, they had your back, they will

protect your intellectual property. I had nothing when I signed up with SAMRO, literally nothing but a book full of songs. I registered them as a nobody. And when I started recording and started working with big artists and building my career, even working with xx, I had that shield of knowing that there's a portion of my intellectual property that's protected.

SAMRO could play a role by providing a portal, or services such as those described above to upcoming artists that educate and empower them to succeed on the business side of the industry.

We don't have that in South Africa. I don't know internationally, maybe they do. But we don't have it in South Africa. And I think that's why we die broke. That's why we spend our money the way that we do. And that's why we don't care. And that's how we end up on drugs, alcohol, and sex becomes the biggest thing. Because you're numbing the real problem. The real problem is, I've been taken for a ride, and there's nothing I can do about it.

But if you are coming into the industry, if there's a setup or system that says, yes, we want you to sign record deals, we want you to succeed, but educate yourself on what you're walking into. That will force contracts to change, force better publishing deal. Artists will come with proper education and know their rights. I think that's what's missing in the industry.

Whether SAMRO has a role in addressing gender-based violence is more difficult to answer.

If SAMRO stepped into that space, they would have to do something profound, and not just the normal, let's talk about it, let's tweet about it, let's support it, let's support the victim or let's, let's stand up against the person who is actually doing this, because everybody does that. And it doesn't change anything.

Role of government

Government could play a role in creating policies for financial institutions that assist self-employed artists to access home loans and medical aids, and with some form of social protection.

It's not enough for us to perform at government events. Our livelihoods are literally hand to mouth. If we don't get a gig, we don't have money. If we put a record out and it doesn't sell, we don't have money. Not having a medical aid, or being able to buy a house or a car because I don't have a bank statement saying that I am employed is such a big issue. We pay tax, every performance that I have is taxed, every gig, or when I released my EP, I'm taxed. I'm paying tax, but I get nothing out of the government.

5.11 Respondent 10

Case Study Respondent no 10 (R10)

5.11.1 Background information

R10 is one of a handful of women music executives in the industry, concentrating on the music business side of the industry. She runs the publishing division of a company that provides boutique label services for independent artists.

We take care of our songwriters' copyrights. That involves the admin, collecting from the different revenue streams, and finding more opportunities for songwriters, and copyrights.

Having worked for a major international record label in the country, she has extensive knowledge and experience in copyright, public performance rights and the publishing side of the music business.

Hers is a very male dominated field and she always feel like she is swimming against the tide. It is for this reason that she has joined an organisation that aims to organise women across the value chain in the music industry.

5.11.2 Entry into the music industry

R10 says she chose the music industry because she has a passion for music. But the main driver for her was a deep desire to "know how it all comes together." She started working as a temp in 2004 and has been involved for 18 years.

The people who opened doors to her in the industry have been largely male, "mainly because they are in those positions, they are the gatekeepers." She would have liked to have had more female mentors.

A lot of women in the industry are not at those levels where they have power to make decisions. It's quite difficult to find female mentors.

5.11.3 Gender Issues in the Industry

R10's particular challenges relating to gender have been primarily about pay gaps and making herself heard in a male dominated industry.

- **Pay gaps**

Earning less than their male counterparts seems standard for women in the music industry.

I've always felt that when you are female you come in at a certain salary which is less than what your male counterpart is getting. So even when you land a new job, when you start negotiating, you're already negotiating at a lower level. I think that has always been a challenge.

Pay differentials are not unique to South Africa, and it is difficult to demand the industry standard because organisations are not transparent when it comes to pay practices. R10 feels that men are more comfortable at negotiating salaries because women are fairly new to those positions in the industry.

Our male counterparts have been given the skills to negotiate because they have been in those positions, or have been exposed to those opportunities far longer than us.

- **Being taken seriously**

In addition to a persistent pay gap in her industry, another challenge for R10 has been making her voice heard and being taken seriously, especially in a company that is male dominated in the senior and decision-making positions.

First of all, I've got a squeaky young girl tone, and you get in a room filled with your male counterparts who have deeper voices. They are used to hearing themselves speak and making decisions. So it's always a challenge to find your voice as a woman in the industry and to be taken seriously.

General challenges for women artists revolve mainly around lack of recognition, sexualisation and gender-based violence.

- **Lack of recognition**

R10 argues that recognition is mostly given to male artists. She refers to a recent social media post of a woman DJ, Uncle Waffles, which went viral. Reaction to her being a woman took centre stage and consistent reference was made to her "sexy looks" rather than being acknowledged and recognised as simply a good DJ.

One of the big artists made a statement that there are too many female artists these days. Why would you even make that statement? What is wrong with females wanting to be DJs? So obviously you get the sense that female artists are looked down upon, or don't get as much recognition as their male counterparts.

This kind of sexualisation women and lack of recognition of their talent, remains a problem in the music industry.

- **Gender-based violence, sexual harassment and lack of safety**

A scourge in the industry, is rampant sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

As a whole the country is dealing with that social ill, it obviously creeps into the music industry because that involves being out at gigs, alcohol and such things, and the fact that it's a male dominated industry.

It is her view that, "women artists are often subjected to unwelcomed sexual attention from music promoters, producers, executives and their male counterparts."

So there definitely have been some females who have come out to say they have been sexually harassed by a popular DJ, or even at work.

Here, R10 sees an opportunity for industry organisations to step in and create the safe spaces needed.

I've heard about how when you're a female artist, you could be backstage, for instance, and literally be the only female backstage. For me I already know I wouldn't feel comfortable in that kind of environment. And let's say you are performing at like, 11pm, that just doesn't sound safe.

5.11.4 What has changed?

Having worked in the industry for 18 years, R10 has a clear picture of how the industry has changed over the years. As far as women's rights and transformation goes, R10 sees more women being promoted to senior and executive positions on the business side of the industry. A similar shift is evident with women talent/artists, with women artists claiming spaces previously considered to be male preserves such as DJ'ing. This shift has allowed for women to significantly influence the dance music space.

Whilst these are marked shifts in attitude and the visibility of women in the industry, she does lament the fact that that much still needs to be done.

5.11.5 Decision-makers in the industry

R10 perceives the decision-makers in the industry to be men. The business side of the music industry, as already established, is male dominated which leaves decision-making entirely to them (men). The music publishing business is particularly patriarchal as it is mainly men who run such companies.

Mostly, you'll find the people that have the majority market share are basically sitting on all these boards for these organizations that serve the music publishing industry, CAPASSO and SAMRO are mainly men. They are the gatekeepers making decisions in terms of how the industry is shaped.

- **Poor Female Representation in SAMRO**

Reflecting on the weak representation of women as members of SAMRO, she puts it down to the fact that members of SAMRO are mainly authors, composers or music producers and publishers, who are mainly men.

She points to beat-makers, producers or people who put sound together being almost always male. That these fields of work are largely male, is problematic and proves a challenge to the industry to open up to more women and to have more training on music production. Technical know-how is still deemed to be a male preserve that needs to be made more attractive to women. This, according to her, will start to change the gender imbalance reflected in SAMRO membership.

So I think that's where the problem is. If more women and creatives could be taught how to produce their own music, then we would be increasing SAMRO's membership, because most of SAMRO's members are music producers, or authors. I think that's, that's where the gap is more than anything else. If more women were to write and produce their own music we would be able to close that gap... The environment is very male dominated, so I'm not too sure if that does not look attractive for women to then enter that space.

5.11.6 Support for women

R10 is involved in the South African chapter of an international organisation, which started in the United States, called Women in Music (WIM). She believes WIM has a pivotal role to play in addressing widespread gender inequality in the industry.

We were looking at the work that they do and reached out to them. It makes sense because we all go through the same challenges, believe it or not, even though their industry is much bigger than ours. But the challenges for women, you know, are still the same across the globe.

Launched in August 2020, the South African chapter seeks to have conversations about issues that directly affect women in the industry. These include mental health, releasing music, as well as teaching marketing and public relations strategy to women. She is not aware of other organisations that can do this in South Africa in a sustained, organised way.

I think that's why we felt the need to have a South African chapter. There are other events that happen now and then, to tackle issues around women, but we haven't had anything that's formalized.

The WIM model is attractive to R10 as she will groom someone to take over from her, which will give others opportunities to learn about running and organisation.

The whole point is to advance women and give each other opportunities to learn, to grow, to be exposed to running an organization. That's essentially what it is, we are making decisions for women in the industry who are our members.

Other key issues, efforts and initiatives in the pipeline for WIM include conferences on gender-based violence, mentorship programmes for women, music production workshops and networking sessions.

We are planning a GBV event and have invited females in the music industry who are going to speak about their experiences, work conditions, whether they are safe.

You can reach out if you are looking for assistance with anything. The other part of it is to provide education... There's educational material you can obtain, and also the networking part of it which is crucial for advancement.

I've actually just got out of a meeting with YouTube. We're organising a brunch for our members where they will be able to have a mini workshop and make contacts and network with some of the women who are part of YouTube...Then it is easy to have a conversation around digital content, what jobs are available, how to get in.

WIM has 63 members and is growing. Whilst women remain in precarious situations in the music industry, R10 is not aware of other collective efforts, although she acknowledges that there may be, to organise women to advance their rights.

5.11.7 What should be done?

The greatest needs are for coaching and mentoring of women in the organisations that exist in the industry, such as WIM, safe spaces to have conversations around issues facing women, and grooming women to take up powerful positions along the value chain.

For this to happen, there needs to be a clear shift in mindset from industry and open conversations about women's lived experiences in their respective fields and or areas.

Role of government

According to R10, the government also has a role to play in ensuring the meaningful inclusion of women in the music industry. Gender friendly legislation to help transform the industry should be prioritised to bring about that desired inclusivity, but business has to get involved to ensure that government will do this.

Government can only come in on a legislative role but needs to look at policies and enforce more inclusion. So, the more we change how we do business, and the more we change how

society thinks, and the more we create safe spaces, and the more we are inclusive, then the more the government is forced to also recognise that and impose that in the legislation. It's more of a hand in hand kind of thing. But I think it's more important for businesses to get more involved.

This signals a clarion call for decision-makers (men) to open up spaces and propel change as they have the power and access to do so.

As an industry executive, R10 sees herself as having a role to play in the transformation of the music industry. It is her desire to be that agent of change by grooming younger women with executive ambitions.

She sums up, "*basically, the organisations and the businesses just need to be more involved in these conversations, and even investing in the change.*"

6 Focus group findings

Respondents were asked for a top-of-mind response on what they believed were the greatest challenges that women faced in the industry. The groups then discussed these issues in greater depth, why women are so poorly represented in SAMRO, what support is available, and what can or should be done.

6.1 Challenges faced by women in the music industry

In **both** groups, the following issues were raised

- **Systemic patriarchy**

The challenges faced by women in the music industry reflect general systemic societal issues in South Africa, and the industry cannot be isolated from them. One woman noted the patriarchal nature of society, that *“it is a problem to be yourself, to think for yourself”*, another that *“men flourish under existing structural arrangements”*.

South Africa as a whole, is also very patriarchal. And there's expectations of certain kinds of behaviour in order to move forward and get things done. And not only sexual, but also kind of submissive, you can't just be yourself (female respondent).

Traditional notions of women defining themselves in relation to men is beginning to change, and still need to change more. However, *“women who have been socialised in a certain way should not be discriminated against”* (female respondent). Women have always been told to *“be more”* or *“be less”* and may be scared *“to be amazing”* (female respondent).

- **Stereotyping**

Stereotypes pervade all aspects of the industry.

Stereotypical thinking is very much key to all the problems. Stereotypical thinking around women in musical roles, in the music industry, from media through to musical instruments they should or shouldn't play (female respondent).

There is a view among the male respondents that women are more likely to be likely to be vocalists or in television, whereas the DJ, recording and producer space is dominated by men. There are very few women sound engineers. One male respondent teaches music production and the music business, how to DJ, to kids coming out of high school. He notes:

In a class of about 30, there are probably two or three female students. It seems like there are not a lot of females who want to pursue this aspect of the music industry as much as their male counterparts.

A question was raised, but not shared by all males, whether women were interested in the technology required for the music business. In fact, technological advances have actually lowered barriers to entry.

Physically in the technical production industry it's becoming easier. Equipment and speakers are becoming lighter. One female operator can really hang a PA by herself if she has the skill. You don't need 10 people to stack large amounts of loudspeakers anymore. It's becoming easier and the technology is becoming cleverer. I don't agree at all with this statement earlier

about not being interested in technology. I think it has to do with the stigma (male respondent).

Stereotyped views of what women artists should look like, feel and think pervade in the media. Women artists are rarely judged on their musical ability alone.

- **A male-dominated space**

The industry is male-dominated, as one male respondent noted “*men feel this is our space so women feel it is not their space.*”

Case in point, you go to a rehearsal, the backing singers generally are females. So if I'm playing a keyboard and the (male) guitarist comes to me and says, oh, what chord is that you are playing? Then I go out of my way to say, look at these other voicings for this chord. But if one of those female singers walked up to me and says, you played a certain chord what is that? Then the guy just rolls his eyes and thinks what do you care and what do you know? And that thing is very common. And it takes you answering that lady with interest, that can change the way they see themselves, and the way they then approach music (male respondent).

Women note that it is not easy to speak up or call out things that are wrong as this may not “*propel her own career.*” Women need safe spaces to do that.

The Women in Music⁴⁷ website has created a safe, sensible space where artists are really finding each other, and it's gathering momentum. I think that's a very positive example of how women do find spaces. But I just think it's a simplistic thing to think that women in any musical situation can be the change, you know, it does take both sides (female respondent).

Women also need to challenge male-dominated spaces, meet with gatekeepers and force them to add more women in these spaces.

- **Financial insecurity**

All respondents agree that it is very hard to make a living from music.

We don't make a living from music. Our music plays on the radio, we have gigs, but it doesn't pay the bills. Returns come from scale, and from consulting and other stuff. You have to differentiate your business. Either you are an artist with a record label, or you earn from entrepreneurial activities (female respondent).

I don't make a living from music, I make a living from all of my other skills (female respondent).

The changing nature of the industry and low revenues from streaming services affects everyone, and necessitates adaptation from musicians so that they have more contact with end users. One musician noted that she earns the rand equivalent of about \$20 every two months, despite having a huge fan base that downloads her music.

There are so many intermediaries which impacts on artists' ability to make money from their music. Streaming sites make the majority of the money from other people's music and

⁴⁷ <https://womeninmusic.co.za/>

intellectual property. By the time a musician gets the money there is hardly any left (female respondent).

Certain genres are not respected and get little airtime. For example, radio does not accommodate jazz shows and other aspects of culture. Stations are competing for the same content music-wise, with hits going on and off radio very quickly.

- **The informal nature of employment in the industry**

Central to the difficulty in making a living is the informal nature of the industry. Artists in general have to freelance and be entrepreneurial. There is little formal employment outside of the corporates in the industry, thus little financial and social security. Informality gives rise to cliques and networks that act as gatekeepers for others.

- **Boys' clubs**

Both men and women respondents agree that the industry is a boys' club and has been that way for a long time.

I've seen it with quite a lot of people that I've worked with, for a female to come into a studio that is filled with a bunch of guys, it gets uncomfortable unless you know the people and that's why women choose to go to spaces and people that they are more familiar with (male respondent).

Sexism and, societal systemic attitudes to women often lead to the fact that we don't notice why women aren't there. We don't notice the practices and even informal, relaxed conversations that we have can be exclusive. Even competitions that are open to everyone, women aren't there, and there's a reason. I'm hearing very strongly from this group that one has to be much more intentional about understanding what the role of these spaces is in excluding women (male respondent).

Informality also affects how people get to know about or are included in song writing camps.

It's a bit of a tricky situation, because there's not a lot of writing camps that happen. And for the ones that happen, it's predominantly a bunch of guys sitting in a studio writing a song together. And, you know, when you need vocals, we'd call someone who's a specialist in that part to just come into this session. But we never have that session with that person in mind from the beginning (male respondent).

It is hard for women to break into that space.

One of the biggest challenges to trying to infiltrate a boys' club is that your relatability to men and how they operate versus how they view you and how you operate generally would be different. There are also a lot of sexual advances that get made so it makes it difficult to try and even be a professional in a space where you are seen a certain way (female respondent).

Women therefore need to create their own spaces and share more with each other.

Men do it differently. They share information and knowledge on things. And women still need to get there to create our own girls club on such matters (female respondent).

I think we're starting to create the spaces and refining the ways in which we would create solutions that are meaningful. Everybody responds to the market. The market is very toxic, it's very patriarchal. It's not easy to access. We need to figure out how to not go down those roads

and also how not to focus on how frustrating it can be to be an artist who doesn't want to comply (female respondent).

- **There are not enough women composers.**

Women are not involved with SAMRO as composers and tend not to write for third parties. Where there are song writing camps, women are very seldom seen. It's not clear if they are not invited, or if invitations are informal.

The only time I bump into female composers is when they're involved as artists. They are never involved as composers in a work where they're not participating as artists. And I've never been quite able to put my finger on why that is the case (male respondent).

Women respondents generally have not heard about such camps.

- **The lifestyle**

One male respondent commented that the jazz industry is not conducive to families and the lifestyle that women like to lead. Discussions ensued about how to make the jazz space more accommodating for women, rather than expecting them to fit in with it completely. Women musicians felt that they need to be looked at holistically, as a mother and partner as well.

There is hardly ever place for women to bring kids at events. Women always have to make a plan. Especially when touring, there is so much juggling around family (female respondent).

Not many people touring have their children with them, there are few exceptions. Individuals have to advocate for that, but have not been given the chance (female respondent).

The women's focus group raised additional points:

- **Denialism**

A powerful denialism exists among men about the problems women in music face

I cannot tell you how often I've had to put up with mansplaining, denialism and downright aggression from men, including at SAMRO (female respondent).

- **Sexual harassment**

Sexual advances are frequently made to women in the professional space. Women often feel that the behaviour of men in the entertainment industry limits how much women can participate (female respondent).

- **Safety**

Lack of safety in general in society limits opportunities.

My own personal challenge has really been around safety, and just the behaviour of men in entertainment. And that really has a limitation on how much a woman can participate, even if they were willing to participate in that toxic space (female respondent).

- **Glass ceilings**

As women get older, there are limits on how far they can advance.

And as you get older, you smack into that glass ceiling, and there is just no going further (female respondent).

- **Access to finance**

Stemming from systemic issues in society, women have less access to resources, and face greater barriers to owning things that could make them more independent in the industry. Women face greater financial challenges, and have limited access to funding and finance.

There is an inability for independent artists or for women to scale and create bigger businesses and implement their dreams because of lack of access to resources. We are mostly turned down when we apply for funding. Banks are not responsive at all when applying for credit. We have to look at different areas for funding (female respondent).

There are many roadblocks and red tapes with regards to females being able to access any resources, particularly funding, to be able to do a lot of what we can (female respondent).

People who are making financial decisions are not gender-sensitive, even if they are women.

- **Ageism**

Society is very ageist in general, and against older women in particular. The music industry, with its obsession with stereotypical looks and youth is not “receptive to the idea that the older you are the more experienced you are, and the more value you add.” Older women tend to be discarded by the industry, with platforms created only for younger, prettier women.

6.2 Support

Women are starting to create networking spaces, and not only focus on their frustrations. One of these is Women in Music.⁴⁸

Women in Music is a website created by a South African academic and composer that draws together women from all walks of musical life to support, promote and publicise their work. It aims to educate and impart information to anyone in the industry.

It's not curated. If you are a practicing musician in South Africa, a composer or a performer sends me details, you'll go up on the website. And it has become very widely used interestingly more by the international community, much less by the local community. There's something quite resistant in South Africa about these kinds of things (female respondent).

While women all believe in the importance of networking spaces, they were not all aware of initiatives taken by others. A representative of another group called, also called Women in Music South Africa⁴⁹, was interested in finding out more about the website.

We're actually doing a lot in the space, talking to women, having information sessions, conferences, panels, and just generally inviting other women to join the organization. Our aim is to educate and to impart information from all streams of the music industry, whether you're on radio, a composer, a performer, or an executive in the industry (female respondent).

⁴⁸ <https://womeninmusic.co.za/>

⁴⁹ [Womeninmusic.org.za](https://womeninmusic.org.za/)

Woman in Live Music is another initiative, mentioned by a male respondent, to encourage and include females in the Technical Production Industry. It is a European platform and online community for women working in live music; this includes various 'behind the scenes' roles: Sound Engineers, Tour Managers, Lighting Designers, Riggers, Backliners, Stage Managers, Stagehands and more.⁵⁰

One woman cautioned that institutionalising support is not always the best mechanism to deal with issues, and that perhaps can lead to greater exclusion if it does not go out to operate where the people who need it are.

Referring to support specifically for victims of gender-based violence, one woman mentioned that she was working on a project for a law clinic, although not specifically for entertainers. This project was currently at the stage of getting funding.

We can teach people and give them information about their rights, the same with women in music, and where you are a victim of any sort of, you know, abuse GBV, anything of the sort, then you're able to reach out to the to the clinic, and we can then assist you with legal advice, and even taking your matter through the process (female respondent).

6.3 What should be done

- **Using digitisation of the industry to benefit musicians.**

Musicians need to look at the opportunities they can access from the same technology that the streaming services do. Finding ways to connect directly to audiences through social media is one way. Artists can learn what makes business sense, and how to use, or even create their own, apps so that they can have more control.

Streaming may expose artists, but it needs to link to other places where artists can monetise their work better (female respondent).

- **Quotas and government funding.**

Government can only play a role in the policy and funding arena.

Policies on quotas, tax incentives, and encouraging CSI-spend are important roles for government. There are requirements for ticking certain boxes if government is giving money to initiatives that support women, but people don't always do that. The informal and unstructured nature of the industry makes policy very important if it is allied to funding.

The general feeling around quotas in the industry is that they are necessary, although it was not clear how these could be implemented.

It's easier if you're sitting with something that needs to be legislated and it's a government role, then it's a bit easier to enforce quotas. If it's private entities that are doing these things on their own, to try and enforce a quota is going to be difficult (female respondent).

I got very tired of being the token woman on a judging panel (female respondent).

⁵⁰ <https://womeninlivemusic.eu/organisation/>

There is little, however, expectation of government funding. People realise that they will have to take initiatives at a grassroots level.

- **Data**

Data on the numbers of women on concert line-ups, and on selection and adjudication panels is needed. In general, data from various organisations in music needs to be disaggregated according to gender in order to ensure greater representivity of women and to obtain government funding specifically for women.

- **Female-only spaces**

Men need to intentionally and forcefully create spaces/opportunities that are sincerely pro-women... These could be performance spaces, or workshops. Maybe we need more female-only spaces to help people, and workshops for example teaching bass guitar (male respondent).

A respondent mentioned a successful story of a female-only band.

X recruited a female-only band and toured solely with a female-only band. This birthed the pianist Y who is currently popular in her own right (male respondent).

A discussion ensued in the male group about that case, and how men feel threatened.

The spaces where I was, the conversation amongst male musicians about Y was that, look at her, she's trying to prove a point. And that's exactly what I'm talking about. As men, we have a responsibility that, obviously will start with introspection. But that's an effort that we should be encouraging, actually. And ironically, I'm currently planning to start some basic development workshops, but only for developing female bass guitarists. And when I share this with male bass guitarists, they always protest and say, you know, why you're leaving us out. But the space we are in calls for that kind of effort (male respondent).

Women will come to spaces they feel are safe for them. Financial and other support should be offered for women-only events. Female fans are often artists' biggest supporters, they may like going to a women-only concert where *"there is security and they know they won't be harassed."*

- **Practical assistance to obtain information and assistance**

Women don't know what their rights are, or where to go to get help. For example, they may need legal aid for the more extreme issues they have had to face.

We need to think carefully about how women can get information in terms of their resources and rights, and how this information can best be communicated to women in ways they understand. The channels and languages being used are not reaching the right people (female respondent).

- **Song writing camps for women**

These exist overseas, but *"there is no song writing culture for women in South Africa"*. Perhaps targeted assistance could encourage more few female composers, of which there are few in South Africa.

- **Regarding gender-based violence**

A law clinic that could help women in the industry deal with gender-based violence was suggested. Although it was acknowledged that it would be impossible to overhaul the legal system as a whole to deal with gender-based violence more effectively, there are some places where more localised efforts could bear fruit. For example,

Look at police stations in areas where there is a high concentration of artists, and find ways to offer sensitising training there (female respondent).

- **Publicise women role models and create a culture of accountability.**

We can't underestimate the importance of role models. The lack of which is why there is a paucity of women in music. Women need to see other women doing music (female respondent).

- **What can men do?**

Male respondents felt that spaces that exclude women need to be normalised to be inclusive. This can only be done intentionally because often men are not aware of the issues. For example, conversations with event promoters about sexism in using pretty faces to sell tickets are important. They feel that they can be more deliberate about assisting colleagues to negotiate certain things, and that they need to do more to challenge male attitudes.

In this male-dominated, toxic and often dangerous space we need to stand up for women and challenge male attitudes...We all know these attitudes, language and comments that are degrading to women (male respondent).

And if we feel because of the male privilege that we've had for years, we've developed certain skills, make sure we impart those skills but it has to be intentional and really forceful (male respondent).

Women feel that if men want to be allies, the responsibility is theirs, not women's.

Women are a force and should be seen as a force (female respondent).

They will find us where we are. And if they want to be a part of it, they can be a part of it (female respondent).

Role of SAMRO

- **General**

Practical suggestions for what SAMRO could do to assist women include creating a database of organisations that can assist women hosting networking events, providing guidelines for doing business with people found guilty of sexual harassment or gender-based violence, assisting with ways to address mental health issues among women in the industry, and providing access to legal assistance.

- Create a database of organisations and institutions that help could women and add it to the existing things they send out (not create something else that people have to look for). This would not, however, reach more women, who at present only comprise 18% of their membership.

- Host networking meetings for women in music to meet.

If women meet and network, amazing things happen, I think we've already seen that. And if it's a little more formalized, and we know it's once every two months, you'll see the same people and form strong networks for them. This could be a real contribution by SAMRO (female respondent)

- SAMRO and other organisations should only do business with organisations that have greater female representation at all levels.
- With regard to gender-based violence, SAMRO could create guidelines and put certain policies and interventions in place for service providers.

While you are observing other laws, it is possible to create guidelines for your organization that allow you to be active in terms of gender-based violence. For instance, a policy that says we don't hire anybody that's been found guilty of a sex offense. Or we don't hire anyone that's been found guilty of sexual harassment in the workplace. And those are the kinds of interventions that as an organization can be put into place by SAMRO (female respondent).

- Try to create safe spaces for women, and address mental health issues for women in music, even though it is a general societal issue.

My experience has been that if you provide safe spaces, women just pull in and talk. And they do talk. And they talk about very intimate, difficult things that have happened to them. It's heart-breaking, and it's difficult to hear. But those safe spaces, I think are very, very necessary. I mean, not as a kind of therapy room, but as just a space for women to come together and talk about stuff. And the few times that I've experienced it has been very empowering, I think for the women involved to feel that people are listening to them, not cutting them down, not denying what they are saying. And I mean, of course this isn't going to solve the ills of society, that's an absolutely mammoth project. But I think making safe spaces by women for women are very, very important. And perhaps that's something SAMRO could assist with (female respondent).

Can you please provide a resource or a space to address women's mental health. Even though it's a societal thing, women have to deal with issues, different issues and in different ways. And we can't just generalize how we address mental wellness, but we need to package it for women (female respondent).

- **Legal assistance**

Women expressed a need for support on knowing their rights, and also for legal assistance in the event of gender-based violence

I mean, there also needs to be a little bit more legal aid. If you go to the very extreme end of what has happened to a lot of women, rape, sexual harassment, really hectic, hard things to deal with... So I do think just some basic support around what your legal rights are, or places to go and people to reach out to, just in case That could be a good starting place (female respondent).

7 Discussion: Recurring themes emerging from case studies and focus groups

This section summarises the key themes that recurred in the case studies and focus groups. This will be followed in Section 8 by recommendations arising from the various data sources (desktop review, case studies and focus groups). In Section 9, Tara Transform will offer concluding remarks and suggestions for further activities that can begin to address structural causes for gender inequality in the industry

7.1 Challenges in the operating environment for women (and all artists) in the industry

- **Digitisation of the industry**

On the negative side, artists are not benefiting financially from streaming services, but digitisation has also created opportunities for artists to connect audiences to their own platforms so that they can monetise their talents. For women, it has eliminated some of the gatekeepers and toxic masculinity they encounter in live spaces, and allowed them to release music on their own.

Education and assistance is needed for artists to be able to take advantage of the opportunities. Outreach is needed for those without access to particular knowledge and skills.

- **Financial insecurity**

It is difficult to make a living in the industry. Live performances are essential to be able to earn but spaces are limited, especially for certain types of music. Live performances were shut down by the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbating the financial pressures artists face. Artists are mainly freelancers and have little security or social assistance such as UIF. As a result they find it difficult to access banking services, or medical aid, which require proof of employment.

Since permanent employment is largely reserved for corporates and recording companies, artists have no recourse when they are faced with issues that they may be able to address with the human resource departments of a company.

- **Access to funding**

It is difficult to access funding for performance, especially for younger artists. Funding often goes to producers of large works, or to those within a particular clique or circle.

- **The arts are not taken sufficiently seriously**

The arts in general are not taken seriously. The changing landscape of print media towards digital has had a negative impact on both the quality and quantity of arts journalism. There is no training or mentorship for journalists, who could then promote the arts and highlight issues facing women in the industry.

- **The music industry is not structured to support artists**

All respondents generally agreed that the structure of the music industry does not serve industry professionals, but rather is self-serving. The lack of core functions like outreach, rights education and awareness shows that the industry does not prioritise taking care of those who make money for them.

7.2 Gender issues affecting women in the industry

- **Stereotypes**

Stereotypes underpin many of the issues women in the industry face. There are assumptions that women must look and behave in a certain way, there are stereotypes about career paths in the industry and in music education. This is about a lack of exposure to the possibilities that could exist for them. Media portrayals of women are also driven by stereotypes.

- **Sexism and assumptions about women**

Sexist notions on what is respectable for women pervade and are ultimately about power. Since much of the work in the industry takes place at night, in clubs where there is alcohol, and probably drugs, women are perceived to be loose or easy. They also face pressure from partners or family who do not want them to be in those spaces. African women in particular are socialised into certain traditional roles and may face a backlash from their families.

- **Women are not taken seriously**

Women artists believe they are not taken seriously and have to accept unacceptable behaviour from men. For example, at recording sessions male musicians may arrive drunk or are disrespectful to women artists. This is changing as more women become band leaders, producers, or produce their own music. Women are not always recognised for their creative input.

Ultimately systemic sexism is about power, and the power lies squarely with men, individually and institutionally.

- **Representation of women**

Women are not represented in certain creative careers, as well as on the business side of the industry.

In the classical arena, historical biases against women composers have ensured that they are not on concert repertoires or studied in academic curricula. There are not enough women role models in certain occupations, such as producers, directors, instrumentalists, and composers.

The music industry is a male-dominated space. Men generally believe it is their concern to empower women, and women feel they must push twice as hard as men to get the same result.

- **Economic vulnerability**

Women do not have economic standing in the industry and are not sufficiently represented in the business side of the industry. It is often expected that they will perform tasks for free, such as adjudication or sitting on panels, which is not expected of male counterparts. Many women believe that there are pay disparities between them and men in similar positions, and that they have less power in negotiations because they are not taught the negotiation skills men may acquire, which puts them at a disadvantage. Desperation to earn any income also leads to women earning and accepting much less. This economic vulnerability affects women's ability to be economically independent, also making them vulnerable to gender-based violence.

- **Informal networks**

The industry is dominated by informal networks and boys' clubs, which women find hard to penetrate, or if they are in those spaces, they feel uncomfortable. The nature of work, where most women are freelancers or self-employed elevates the importance of being well-networked, and works against

those who are not. However, the establishment of women specific networks is starting to make a difference in creating a safe space to learn and network.

- **Sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment, as well as expectations about sexual favours, emerged repeatedly as an issue women had to face in the industry. Women are often subjected to unwelcome attention. At times it is overt, but it is often more subtle, taking the form of inappropriate comments that are seen as normal. Music spaces are often sexualised environments, with strong male energy making it difficult for women.

- **Safety and gender-based violence**

Most women artists do not feel safe in the industry. On the whole they do not feel safe in South Africa, but safety issues are exacerbated in the industry because events take place mainly at night where alcohol is involved, and the environment is very male-dominated. Gender-based violence in music is a serious problem and has been experienced by a number of respondents. There are few safe spaces to report or to talk about it, and most women must deal with it on their own.

Safety in the industry also concerns support workers at clubs and venues who have to get home in the early hours, and have no safe transport.

- **Lack of development opportunities**

Internationally, composers are well supported with commissions, song writing camps and festivals, but this is not the case in South Africa. There are very few other formal structures offering support to women in the industry to strengthen their business skills and to enable them to grow in traditionally male dominated professions in the industry.

- **Gendered roles in the industry**

Both male and female respondents lamented how the music industry is deeply gendered in terms of the roles of men and women. Women are seen as (and often also believe they are) vocalists only; while men dominate in roles in the business side of music and highly regarded roles like composers and song writers.

- **Structural discrimination**

The music industry is a key example of how patriarchal mindsets have led to systemic and structural discrimination which has held women back for decades. The way in which the music industry is structured, and who holds decision and financial power, has resulted in women remaining marginalised post-democracy. The deep absence of women in powerful roles, and the strong male power dynamic and spaces in the industry has forced women to endure abuse of their professional and personal rights – forcing women to accept conditions that continue to make and keep them vulnerable.

7.3 Positive changes for women in the industry

It is generally acknowledged that conditions for women have improved in certain respects in the last 10-15 years, although there is still a long way to go to achieve gender equality in the industry.

- There are more women in different roles in the industry, including on the business side, in production, and there is greater acceptance of female DJs.

- There are increasing numbers of women and of younger people in the jazz sector.
- Women are more vocal about their rights and are being heard in greater numbers. A new generation of younger, identity conscious women are inserting their voices into spaces where they have previously been absent, calling out discrimination and demanding change. The increasing influence of the #MeToo and LGBTQIA+ movements are contributory factors to this. This has not, however, been enough to benefit older women substantially. In the United States, We Have Voice is a collective of musicians, performers, scholars, and thinkers bringing an intersectional analysis to the performing arts culture.⁵¹ We Have Voice has released a code of conduct to promote safer spaces in the industry.
- There is more collaboration and networking among women, which requires a collective will. The formation of music collectives such as the Women in Music⁵² website (a platform for women to showcase who they are and what they do), and Women in Music South Africa, a local chapter of an international organisation⁵³ (which provides networking and education opportunities) are examples.
- Women are embracing opportunities presented by the digitisation of the industry, and connecting to their audiences and releasing music on social media without having to work with gatekeepers who may have hindered them, or made them feel unsafe.
- There are a number of women doing ground-breaking work in the industry and they can be supported to scale their impact to reach other women. However, they are largely ignored or invisible in the system.

While there is little optimism about social security or financial relief for artists, informal employment arrangements make it difficult or impossible for many artists to access assistance from financial institutions and medical aid. Government policies to assist the self-employed are necessary in this regard.

⁵¹ <https://www.facebook.com/wehavevoice1/>

⁵² <https://womeninmusic.co.za/>

⁵³ <https://www.womeninmusic.org/>

8 Recommendations

Women want changes to come from within organizations and from leaders across the music industry through diversity, policies, and culture. Specific recommendations emerging from the documentation reviewed, interviews and focus groups are addressed here.

8.1 General recommendations

8.1.1 Addressing gender-based violence

The most practical starting point is in creating female-friendly resources and safe workspaces to address gender-based violence and sexual harassment.

Initiatives to address the symptoms of gender-based violence could be law clinics where women can access information and resources on the processes they need to follow if they have been victims of gender-based violence, and targeted sensitisation training in certain spaces. For example, police stations in areas where there is a high concentration of music venues and artists could undergo sensitising training on how to identify, prevent and address gender-based violence in their areas.

Beyond this there is a need for co-ordinated and legislated policy interventions in South Africa to address systemic gender inequality because of hostile environments and lack of safety. Such interventions include industry codes of conduct that need to be followed to access funding, and more robust implementation of existing and new legislation designed to protect women⁵⁴.

8.1.2 Support networks

Support networks are seen to be able to give women a stronger industry voice and need to be strengthened. A clear difference emerged between the consensus view of women participants in the study, and what was found in the literature about whether such support networks should be exclusively for women or include men.

Findings from the TuneCore survey favoured women-friendly over women-only women networks. Respondents felt that they would rather be a part of the group dynamic and increase their representation than create specific spaces that exclude men altogether, and that mixed-gender work environments would benefit from the separate and diverse skills of different genders.

The women interviewed and focus group participants felt the opposite. They expressed frustration at how hard they had to work to be included in support networks, or where they felt they were there to make up the numbers, and how much more effective women-only networks had been in helping them and giving them the confidence to ensure that their voices were heard. Men who want to be allies need to take the responsibility, reach out to their female colleagues, and be far more intentional about how they make spaces more inclusive.

⁵⁴ Ankoma, A. (2020). That's not OK: Gender-based violence and policy making in the arts. <https://www.news24.com/arts/culture/thats-not-ok-gender-based-violence-and-policy-making-in-the-arts-20201211>

8.1.3 Quotas for female artists

The documentation reviewed contained little discussion about the application of quotas for female artists in South Africa, but the TuneCore international survey found that 29% of women creators advocate 50% quotas for female artists on festival line-ups and label rosters, compared with 16% believing in 50% quotas at music industry awards.

Respondents in this research, however, overwhelmingly supported the application of quotas. Quotas are needed in targeted funding for festival and concert line-ups, support for training initiatives, and selection and adjudication panels. The difficulties of enforcing quotas especially in the private sector, and in such an unstructured industry, was raised.

8.1.4 Gender-disaggregated data from copyright management organisations

The current regulatory framework for copyright management organisations does not require them to provide explicit gender-disaggregated data on differential impact of membership, royalty rate setting and royalty distribution. Okorie's research into the regulation of collective management organisations in the creative sector concluded that gender disaggregated data can assist with planning and would likely result in policies that prioritise and address inequalities.⁵⁵

Further disaggregated data on the numbers of women on concert and festival line-ups, and selection and adjudication panels, as well as in copyright management organisations, would ensure that representation of women is requires ongoing monitoring.

8.1.5 Education and support

Education, training and support is needed for women to acquire both technical skills, and skills in the business aspects of music in order to be able to better protect their rights and earn money from what they do more fairly. All artists, and particularly women, need to use opportunities presented by the digitisation of music to benefit themselves, and may need training and support to be able to connect more directly to their audiences, use or even create different apps appropriate to their circumstances, and monetise their talent.

Many women in the TuneCore survey favoured learning and shared experiences through coaching and mentoring.

Women need more music education in general, on the instrumental side, and on the business of music. More music business education in particular would empower women to take control of and monetise their talent. Existing portals or spaces could be used to offer support and information.

⁵⁵ Okorie, C. (2020). Gender equality in South Africa's creative sector through the regulation of collective management organisations, *Africa Portal*, 2 October 2020. <https://www.africaportal.org/features/gender-equality-in-south-africas-creative-sector-through-the-regulation-of-collective-management-organisations/>

Specific issues mentioned were guidance on working independently, entrepreneurial skills, and personal development and self-knowledge programmes.

Media training for arts journalists would raise the visibility of women in the industry and help to highlight issues that affect them.

8.2 The role of government

The government's role should be about creating policies and guidelines on accessing industry-related funding. As mentioned earlier, there is strong support for quotas in government policy that can help to ensure funding, opportunities and relief for artists reaches women. There is also strong support for funding being made available for women-only spaces and events, especially for women at the beginning of their careers.

8.3 The role of SAMRO

Recommendations on SAMRO's specific role in addressing the issues contributing to their poor visibility among women, and paucity of women members includes:

8.3.1 More women in leadership

There is consensus amongst respondents that SAMRO is a male dominated environment that could benefit from more women's leadership in the organisation. Research has shown beyond a doubt that diversity, and more especially, the inclusion of women in leadership roles leads to the creation of more inclusive environments, where a diversity of voices are welcomed and heard, and policies and practices are more responsive.

8.3.2 Advancing women in male dominated roles in the industry

There is consensus amongst women in this research that SAMRO has the power to advance women's ability to be recognised in roles that are generally seen as male dominated. This includes song writing, composing and business professionals. SAMRO can play a role in addressing this deeply structural barrier in the industry.

8.3.3 Rights awareness, education and protection

The vast majority of respondents in the case studies highlighted that their economic vulnerability was directly influenced by the lack of understanding, and the protection of their music rights. They all agree that SAMRO should be doing much more to educate musicians about their rights, and support them to protect these rights effectively.

8.3.4 Creation of safe spaces and counselling

SAMRO could play a role in offering safe spaces for women and counselling specific to the industry, for example in cases of sexual harassment and gender-based violence. They could also establish a database of organisations offering support and send this out to members with their statements. A further suggestion for SAMRO in relation to gender-based violence and sexual harassment is for them

to offer legal advice and assistance to women in the industry. That would not only benefit their members, but also raise the visibility of the organisation to other women artists.

Making SAMRO itself a safe space with a specific code of conduct for own staff is an important beginning.

8.3.5 Outreach to where musicians are

There are women composers who do not know their rights and have never heard of SAMRO. Focused outreach, together with training on issues such as copyright, would attract more women members. Outreach would also assist members who are having difficulty getting information from SAMRO. Respondents felt that SAMRO generally should be more responsive to requests for assistance and information.

8.3.6 Using their voice to influence others

SAMRO occupies a powerful position in the industry. Development of their own policies on how they will address gender issues, particularly on gender-based violence and sexual harassment, and how they believe these should be adopted by their members and service providers, would be influential. Policies on safety in the industry in general would also have large gender implications.

SAMRO could propose an Industry Code of Conduct relating to women, asking licensees and SAMRO members, venues and other service providers to sign a clear agreement on women.

8.3.7 Training and support on business and management

SAMRO needs to reach out more directly to women and offer training about the industry from the ground up. All respondents agreed that being supported and educated on the business side of things is the biggest enabler for women in the industry. This support could include workshops on copyright, business management, how to do proposals, and financial and technical support for women-only song writing camps.

8.3.8 Education support

SAMRO can establish a better system of managing education support to benefit more women and facilitate greater representativity. Reporting on the gender of recipients of such support is a step in this direction.

8.3.9 Support for collaborative initiatives

SAMRO could offer physical space for women's networking events, which would help ensure their consistency, thus allowing women who attend to get to know each other over time and form networks. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected these organisations badly, and they need support to re-establish themselves and grow.

The measures suggested here ultimately address the symptoms of systemic and structural causes on gender inequality in the music industry. Tara Transform will conclude the report with further suggestions for changes that can be made to address those.

8.3.10 Leveraging Male Allies

Male respondents in the interviews were sympathetic to the difficulties facing women in the sector. SAMRO can play a leading role in creating awareness and leveraging male allies at all levels of the industry especially decision-making to sponsor, mentor and support women.

9 Concluding comments

This research has highlighted that the music industry, like the broader society, struggles to advance gender equality in a meaningful way. Issues highlighted by the study point to structural and systemic barriers and discrimination that keep women in the industry stuck in survival mode.

In an increasingly globalized and interconnected world, utilizing all social and economic assets is crucial for success. Yet, despite progress, women continue to confront discrimination, marginalization and exclusion, even though equality between men and women stands as a universal international precept—a fundamental and inviolable human right. (UN Women, Women Empowerment Principles)⁵⁶

UN Women notes that while much has been accomplished through the integration of principles and actions on corporate responsibility, diversity and inclusion, “*the full participation of women throughout the private sector – from the CEO’s office to the factory floor to the supply chain – remains unfulfilled*”. The Women Empowerment Principles agreed in a partnership initiative of UN Women and UN Global Compact (UNGC), provide a set of considerations to help the private sector focus on key elements integral to promoting gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community. We suggest that SAMRO (and the music industry more broadly) consider using these principles as a guide to addressing and transforming a sector that has deeply entrenched gender discrimination and sexism that has been accepted as the way things are. The response to these illuminating findings must be structural and systemic, not tokenistic. For example, while gender-based violence is a serious concern, it is not the root cause of women’s insecurity as the research has highlighted.

9.1 Women empowerment principles

While the women empowerment principles speak to the corporate/work environment (for SAMRO), they could also be applied to advance women’s rights and gender equality in the broader industry.

9.1.1 Leadership promotes gender equality

- Affirm high-level support and direct top-level policies for gender equality and human rights.
- Establish company-wide goals and targets for gender equality and include progress as a factor in managers’ performance reviews.
- Engage internal and external stakeholders in the development of company policies, programs and implementation plans that advance equality.
- Ensure that all policies are gender-sensitive – identifying factors that impact women and men differently – and that corporate culture advances equality and inclusion.

9.1.2 Equal opportunity, inclusion and non-discrimination

- Pay equal remuneration, including benefits, for work of equal value and strive to pay a living wage to all women and men.

⁵⁶ UN Women. (2011). Women’s Empowerment Principles: Equality Means Business. United Nations Global Compact.

- Ensure that workplace policies and practices are free from gender-based discrimination.
- Implement gender-sensitive recruitment and retention practices and proactively recruit and appoint women to managerial and executive positions and to the corporate board of directors.
- Assure sufficient participation of women – 30% or greater – in decision-making and governance at all levels and across all business areas.
- Offer flexible work options, leave and re-entry opportunities to positions of equal pay and status.
- Support access to child and dependent care by providing services, resources and information to both women and men.

9.1.3 Health, safety and freedom from violence

- Taking into account differential impacts on women and men, provide safe working conditions and protection from exposure to hazardous materials and disclose potential risks, including to reproductive health.
- Establish a zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of violence at work, including verbal and/or physical abuse and prevent sexual harassment.
- Strive to offer health insurance or other needed services – including for survivors of domestic violence – and
- ensure equal access for all employees.
- Respect women and men workers’ rights to time off for medical care and counseling for themselves and their dependents.
- In consultation with employees, identify and address security issues, including the safety of women traveling to and from work and on company-related business.
- Train security staff and managers to recognize signs of violence against women and understand laws and company policies on human trafficking, labour and sexual exploitation.

9.1.4 Education and training

- Invest in workplace policies and programs that open avenues for advancement of women at all levels and across all business areas, and encourage women to enter nontraditional job fields.
- Ensure equal access to all company-supported education and training programs, including literacy classes, vocational and information technology training.
- Provide equal opportunities for formal and informal networking and mentoring.
- Articulate the company’s business case for women’s empowerment and the positive impact of inclusion for men as well as women.

9.1.5 Enterprise development, supply chain and marketing

- Expand business relationships with women-owned enterprises, including small businesses, and women entrepreneurs.
- Support gender-sensitive solutions to credit and lending barriers.
- Ask business partners and peers to respect the company’s commitment to advancing equality and inclusion.
- Respect the dignity of women in all marketing and other company materials.

- Ensure that company products, services and facilities are not used for human trafficking and/or labour or sexual exploitation.

9.1.6 Community leadership and engagement

- Lead by example – showcase company commitment to gender equality and women’s empowerment.
- Leverage influence, alone or in partnership, to advocate for gender equality and collaborate with business partners, suppliers and community leaders to promote inclusion.
- Work with community stakeholders, officials and others to eliminate discrimination and exploitation and open opportunities for women and girls.
- Promote and recognize women’s leadership in, and contributions to, their communities and ensure sufficient representation of women in any community consultation.
- Use philanthropy and grants programs to support company commitment to inclusion, equality and human rights

9.1.7 Transparency, measuring and reporting

- Make public the company policies and implementation plan for promoting gender equality.
- Establish benchmarks that quantify inclusion of women at all levels.
- Measure and report on progress, both internally and externally, using data disaggregated by sex.
- Incorporate gender markers into ongoing reporting obligations.

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11 Appendices

11.1 Interview Guide

TARA Transform, on behalf of SAMRO

Women's Rights in the South African Music Sector

Introduction

Introduce yourself.

Thank participant for agreeing to participate in the study, go over research and its purpose, obtain permission to record the interview, and deal with confidentiality issues if any.

Ensure that consent letter has been signed.

Research Purpose

You are invited to participate in a research study that seeks to consider the South African Music Industry through the eyes of women professionals in the music industry, with the objective to find solutions and create relationships with appropriate gender-based organisations to improve women's representation, participation and leadership in the sector.

The research arises from a survey conducted in March 2021 that found that only 18% of the organisation's members comprise women. The SAMRO Foundation has been requested to better understand this gender imbalance, through a process involving in-depth interviews with a selected group of participants. Tara Transform has been appointed to implement the project and conduct the research.

Each interview will be written up as a separate case study, and analyzed together with the results of focus groups and desktop research. **Once we have written up the case study, we will share it with you to ensure that you are comfortable that it reflects the interview.**

When complete, the final research report will be submitted to the Board of SAMRO. It will also be available on the SAMRO website. In future, the study may also be presented at conferences, seminars and webinars.

SAMRO CSI has identified you as a potential respondent because of the insights you can provide that will add to their understanding of the opportunities, challenges and issues women in the music industry face. There is no payment for participation.

Background information

1. Please provide an overview of your own background, and what you do.
2. *If an artist*
 - a. Are you an independent or part of a record label?
 - b. How do you manage your own activities in the music industry? (Yourself, rely on partner, label or publisher to manage your affairs?)
 - c. How do you deal with legal matters and contracts (*generally deal with verbal agreements/provide own/sign contracts from employers/manager/label/publisher/obtain legal advice before signing contracts from others*)?
3. What made you choose the music industry as a career, and how did you get started? (*Probe how long they have been in the industry and what has shifted, if anything, in relation to women's rights*).

4. What helped you the most in your journey to where you are thus far, and who, if anyone?
5. What kind of challenges have you experienced? How have you dealt with them? *(It is often a struggle to break into the industry, how did you manage it?)*

Perceptions of gender issues in the industry

6. What do you think are the challenges in the operating environment in the industry overall at present? In your view do these affect women differently?
7. Who do you see as the decision-makers in the industry? How do they help to shape existing norms, and how do these affect women specifically?
8. Why do you think there are so few female members of organisations like SAMRO? *(give data only 18% of SAMRO members are female)*
9. How do you perceive gender issues in the industry? *(Probe what kinds of things females face, advantages, disadvantages etc. – probe things like structural issues such as pay gaps, informal nature of employment, existing networks, and also things like safety and hostile environments (GBV, expectation of sexual favors).*
10. How have you experienced these and dealt with them? *(if not already stated)*
11. Is gender-based violence and sexual harassment an issue? What has your personal experience been? *(probe how respondent coped, where support came from and what helped).*
12. How has your perception of the industry changed since you started? What have been your most valuable learnings?

Support for women

13. What kind of support is available for women in the industry? *(Probe which organisations they know about, and what they do, probe also what is systemic or institutional support and what is informal and related to women's networks, family and friends)*
14. What kind of support do you think there should be for women in the music industry?
15. How are women organized to advance women's rights in the music industry?

Recommendations

16. What do you think are the solutions to the issues you have raised?
17. What do you believe the industry should do to encourage more women to participate? Who should take action?
18. What role could organisations like SAMRO play?
19. What role do you think government should play?
20. What role should SAMRO play in GBV cases that involve music makers?
21. What do you think could be done to improve the experience of women in the music industry?
22. How would you go about improving women's rights and representation in the music industry in order to encourage improved gender equity?

*** As this interview is anonymous, if the participant wishes to include a specific quote, please ask them to provide it in writing either signed or by email.**

Thank you for your time

11.2 Focus Group Discussion Guide

Tara Transform on behalf of SAMRO: Women's Rights and Representation in the Music Sector

Preparation

Name tags (if live), need virtual whiteboard and someone to record responses or manage the tech.

Welcome

Introduce moderator and people who are assisting, thank respondents for their time. Describe the topic.

Thank participant for agreeing to participate in the study, go over research and its purpose, obtain permission to record the interview, and deal with confidentiality issues if any.

The group should take approximately 1,5 to 2 hours.

Ensure that consent letter has been signed.

Explain that they have been invited to participate in a research study that seeks to consider the South African Music Industry through the eyes of women/male professionals in the music industry, with the objective to find solutions and create relationships with appropriate gender-based organisations to improve women's representation, participation and leadership in the sector.

The research arises from a survey conducted in March 2021 that found that only 18% of the organisation's members comprise women. The SAMRO Foundation has been requested to better understand this gender imbalance, through a process involving in-depth interviews with a selected group of participants. Tara Transform has been appointed to implement the project and conduct the research.

There will be two focus groups, one comprising women and one men.

The focus group findings will be integrated into findings from case studies developed from interviews, and a desktop study. When complete, the final research report will be submitted to the Board of SAMRO. It will also be available on the SAMRO website. In future, the study may also be presented at conferences, seminars and webinars.

SAMRO CSI has identified you as a potential respondent because of the insights you can provide that will add to their understanding of the opportunities, challenges and issues women in the music industry face. There is no payment for participation.

For male FG – although topic is about women in the industry, it is important to get the views of men as well.

General guidelines

- There are no right or wrong answers, just differing points of view.
- As the discussion is being recorded, it is helpful to have one person speak at a time.
- The moderator will guide the discussion. Names will be used for the duration of the focus group, but in write-up and reporting participants will be anonymous.
- Online etiquette – mute your microphone, Keep cameras on if possible, use features to raise hand, or put it in the chat if you want to say something.

Opening

- Go around and ask each participant to give their names, what they do, and off the top of their head the greatest challenge women face in the industry (**just one**). **No more than 30 seconds**
- **Assistant write up on flipchart/jamboard**

Issues confronting women in the industry

- Further discussion of what has been raised
- What are the other issues that confront women

Support

- What kinds of support for women in the industry are people aware of? (look for formal and informal, discuss pros and cons of each thing raised)
- Think about some strategies that have been tried. What worked, what didn't?

Recommendations

- What should/ could be done? (also pros and cons, what is possible etc)
Discuss these things if they do not come up
 - Quotas/inclusion goals
 - Govt policy and frameworks
 - Support for organisations promoting equality (which ones, how)
 - Reporting on activities
 - Mentoring
 - Collective action
 - Personal action
- What should SAMRO specifically do?

General comments

- Is there anything else respondents wish to add, or has not been covered?

Moderator and assistants– sum up the broad issues that emerged in the discussion

Thank respondents for their contribution and time