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PROGRAM NAME: WOMANITY – WOMEN IN UNITY

GUEST NAME: PROFESSOR LIEZEL FRICK – CENTRE FOR HIGHER & ADULT EDUCATION – DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM STUDIES – FACULTY OF EDUCATION – STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

SPEAKER	TRANSCRIPTION
DR. MALKA	Hello, I'm Dr. Amaleya Goneos-Malka, welcome to 'Womanity– Women in Unity'. The show that celebrates prominent and ordinary African Women's milestone achievements in their struggles for liberation, self-emancipation, human rights, democracy, racism, socio-economic class division and gender based violence.
DR. MALKA	Joining us on the line today is Professor Liezel Frick from the Centre For Higher and Adult Education, Department of Curriculum Studies in the Faculty of Education at Stellenbosch University . Welcome to the show Professor Frick!
PROFESSOR FRICK	Thank you so much Amaleya, if I may, it's really an honour to be here, to be invited and to be part of this initiative, thank you.
DR. MALKA	When I was thinking and planning about our show, it came to mind that on the 11 th of October it was International Day of the Girl Child ; on the 15 th of October it was International Day of Rural Women ; given your focus on education and thinking about aspects in conjunction with human rights and the type of rights that are afforded to women and girls, wherever they may be, be that rural, be that urban and delving at the same time into the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that everyone has the right to education and education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Education Department clearly echoes this sentiment; please can you tell us about some of the responsibilities that come with your portfolio in education?
PROFESSOR FRICK	Yes, I think as I sit here and as I was listening to you, we all have these really complex identities which I think is what make us really interesting and the topic that you've addressed is something that I am truly passionate about, because I sit here wearing many hats. I am a professor of education, so obviously that makes me very passionate about education, I'm also a woman, I'm a mother, I grew up in a rural area, I still live in a rural area so I have a great affinity for the education of women and girls in, obviously in urban areas, but also particularly in rural areas. I grew up with an agricultural background so I am very passionate about women in agriculture and women in education and in all walks of life. For me there are so many facets to the kind of question that you asked; in terms of my professional portfolio I would say that my focus is on higher and adult education, post-school education; in that area we look particularly at how people learn, when they learn, when they do not learn and how we can engage more people into taking part in both formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts and in my capacity as a professor of education, the centre that I'm the director of, we run a couple of post graduate programmes focused on higher and adult education and mostly at master's and doctoral level. In those programmes we emphasise the importance of education for all and then and particularly in post school settings. As somebody coming from an adult education background, lifelong learning is obviously a passion for me and I think we continue to learn throughout our lives and I think learning is connected to all these

	<p>different things that you've spoken about; how do we enable equality in society, how do we change systems so that people can continue to learn and I think the current circumstance in which we find ourselves in, in a global pandemic has really highlighted the importance of being flexible, being able to learn and adjust to circumstances, having to re-learn and unlearn certain things and behaviours, knowledge and behaviour, and I'm truly very passionate about enabling education so that we can take it forward and make society for all, a better place</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You have a very diverse portfolio with multiple interests. One aspect which comes through very clearly though and perhaps it's one of the triggers that I have is this notion of lifelong learning; often we tend to, I would suppose, think about education as being purely for young people, but the fact that you focus on adult education, it just shows that life continues, that learning continues, that knowledge development continues and we can frame ourselves into becoming anything that we choose to.</p>
PROFESSOR FRICK	<p>Yes, I totally agree and I think it's so important, again, the current circumstance in which we live where so many people have lost their jobs and have to find alternative ways of looking after themselves and their families and that often requires that they need to retrain, re-educate themselves, but not only that, if we look at younger generations and I'm quite fascinated about how do we enable lifelong learning for also younger people. More and more young people are asking what's the point of formal education, because the circumstances have changed so much, you often don't keep one job for your whole lifetime at the same place and in the same area, people have become way more mobile, people change jobs more often, they change careers and so how do we think about both higher and adult education as a kind of lifelong and life-wide learning opportunity and just to come back to sort of older people, one of my favourite people in the world was a prior PhD student of mine who did her PhD after she had formally retired from her job and she created a whole new career for herself where she is doing wonderful work and giving back to the professional community in very different ways and I think she's such a shining example for us that, you know, you never stop learning.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Stellenbosch University is well-known, it's got a fantastic reputation from a South African point of view; how would you say that the African continent features in the faculty's strategic plans?</p>
PROFESSOR FRICK	<p>That's an interesting question. It features very prominently in the university as a whole, because part of the university's vision is to have much more stronger and sustainable footprint across the continent. I think because of our colonial past we have got, you know, good links across the world, which are of course in important, but we haven't in the past had strong links with our counterparts across the continent and that is something that we are actively working towards and that happens in a variety of ways. The first way of course is through internationalisation of the student body and so we are seeing more and more students from other African countries coming to Stellenbosch to study and they bring with them a wealth of continental knowledge and experiences that we can learn from, you know, and hopefully there's something that they can take from their experience within our university back to their countries of origin or wherever they go and this is an interesting point, if you just look at doctoral students, some reports seem to suggest that the doctoral students across the African continent are some of the most mobile students in the world, partly driven because there aren't that many well-resourced</p>

	<p>doctoral programmes available at a wide variety of universities in all the countries on the continent and I want to very much emphasise that I don't see the meme of Africa as a country, you know, there's such diversity across countries and even within countries that we need to acknowledge and that we need to be aware of when we talk about, for example, an African Footprint, what do we mean and it may mean very different things in different areas and context. So the diversification of the student body is one way, but I am also collaborating in, as part of my portfolio, with Professor Sarah Howie at the African Centre for Scholarship at Stellenbosch University, as well as various colleagues, Professors Jan Botha and Johan Mouton at CREST, the Centre for Research and Evaluation and Science and Technology and so together with Sarah I'm doing workshops across, and seminars, across universities in nine different countries that we have a partnership with in helping enabling supervisor development, doctoral supervisor development, and we have had a couple of hundred, I think at the moment we're just over five hundred supervisors that we have trained across the African continent far and wide, so that's been highly successful. So I think we are more and more looking at these kind of tripartite arrangements where we have South-South and North-South collaborations and I'm very excited about that because I am learning so much from my African counterparts in the different countries and I hope that they are too taking some value from what we can offer them. So really exciting times for us and I think it's a case of capacitating at various levels within adult and higher education people to be able to help themselves, I suppose.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And through that rich range of collaboration I'm sure that you're able to accelerate capacitation and once you can accelerate that it just means that everything is going to go so much more quickly.</p>
PROFESSOR FRICK	<p>Absolutely, I think it's so important, you know, that you don't hold onto knowledge and capacity, that you actually are able to responsibly but also freely give it away, because only together can we go forward. I think exposure helps us so much to respect each other and so I think I've been in a really fortunate position where I've been part and continue to be part of many North-South collaborations but then also to be able to have the South-South collaborations and I've recently contributed a chapter to a book on global citizenship education in the South and I think it's a fascinating topic that we still have a lot more work to do.</p>
AD BREAK	
DR. MALKA	<p>Today we're talking to Professor Liezel Frick from the Centre for Higher and Adult Education, Department of Curriculum Studies in the Faculty of Education at Stellenbosch University. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter: @WomanityTalk.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Talking about publications, when I looked at your profile, I think of eighteen pages, seventeen were lists of publications and outputs, you publish widely across a range of different topics, drawing on two for a moment, one aspect of your research has encompassed women in technical and vocational education and training, leadership roles and you've also explored educational needs of adult learners in Ghana; can you share with us a few of the key findings and their significance in the real world?</p>
PROFESSOR FRICK	<p>Well I think those particular projects that you've mentioned were in collaboration with some of our postgraduate students, the one from Ghana and the other more locally and I've been so fortunate to work alongside them and co-publish with them because they also brought their knowledge and background into these projects. I think in terms of</p>

	<p>thinking about leadership development in technical and vocational education, we have really seen that there has been a lack of focus on a gender perspective and that a lot of the leadership work that's been done has reflected that women have been underrepresented in leadership roles, not just in technical and vocational education but in higher education more broadly speaking and so I think the value of that work lies in highlighting the experiences of the few women who are actually in those leadership positions and to tell their stories, where we looked at a select number of women who had achieved leadership positions and what we could learn from their career pathways and from their experiences of moving into those leadership positions and staying there and making a contribution and offering a gender perspective on that. In terms of adult education, the one in Ghana, which was a really interesting study, what was interesting there is to look at how universities don't cater for adult students, from the evidence that we've seen universities, especially at an undergraduate level, often don't cater for more mature students; students that for a variety of reasons come back to university either to complete or to study something totally different and so we looked at ways in which universities can be more accommodating of more mature students and I think that is something that I can also carry into my daily practice with students, because the majority of my students at a master's and doctoral level aren't students that have come straight from undergraduate programmes, they are students that come back after a whole number of years, in industry, in various educational settings and from a variety of disciplines. It's absolutely fascinating how you have to work very differently with them and often where our pedagogy might be accommodating but often the systems aren't set up in a way that is accommodating and so how do we change those systems and think about those students and I think it's going to become more and more prevalent with students that move in and out of formal education settings at various times in their lives.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Yes life certainly becomes more complicated the older one gets and the more that one has to do, but as you've indicated, that people come in and out of education according to their needs and I've always considered education to be a ticket to empowerment. When we've had our conversation thus far you've mentioned aspects of some students, potentially younger, feeling that maybe a formal education isn't going to do it for them, but maybe they need a different type of education or learning or skills and I sometimes wonder what shape our economy would be as well as other countries would be if everybody had access to quality education and I stress that word quality and to be able to manifest their knowledge productively.</p>
PROFESSOR FRICK	<p>That's a very good question and I'm really glad that you highlighted the quality issue, because quality is a double-edged sword here. Yes, in principle I agree totally that if everybody had access to high quality education, you know, that we could really take our society as a whole forward, but what does quality mean and that is something that I am struggling with as a mother of a young child, as a scholar in education and on so many levels, you know, what does quality education mean and we need to be critical even of what we consider currently as so-called high quality education. Quality education for me is not solely about academic marks or about the kind of intellectual and cognitive content that you offer students, it's got a lot to do with the kind of pedagogical approaches that are used and I want to explain what I mean by pedagogy, because it is one of those complex jargon words in education. In very simple terms pedagogy is the interplay, if you take...if you think about education as a</p>

	<p>play put on a stage, what can you take away for education to still happen, it's not about the technology that we use, I think we get so easily distracted about the technology, technology is wonderful of course, but we can still have education without technology. So, can we have education without a classroom, of course we can have education without a classroom, so if we take away all these bells and whistles, what do we need for a play to happen? We need an actor and an audience and an interaction between the two, the same applies to education, we need a student or somebody who wants to learn and that's important, who wants to learn and we need an educational medium which could be in the form of an educator, but of course we get self-directed learning as well, but there needs to be this interaction between what is offered or who offers it and somebody who is learning and so I'm really interested in that interaction and to me, if we talk about quality, it lies within that interaction, it doesn't always lie in like I said, the technology or the amount of content that we can offer and quite often I think we get distracted by those things and we think, or the buildings you know, in which it happens, the grander it is the more higher quality the education is, that's not necessarily true. I think quality education lies in the quality of the interaction of the learner and the educator and the learning materials that are available and if we can pinpoint that really back to the basics, I think then we can build systems that do meet the needs of the learners in ways that challenge them in a constructive way, because learning is not easy and fun, that's not what I'm on about, it should be challenging and it should be really engaging, you know, we don't need a lot of content necessarily because people can go and search for content, we need to enable them to think critically about the content that they are able to acquire and I think many education systems fall short in that regard. For me if education is to be empowering, then we need to get that right.</p>
	<p>AD BREAK</p>
<p>DR. MALKA</p>	<p>Today we're talking to Professor Liezel Frick from the Centre for Higher and Adult Education, Department of Curriculum Studies, in the Faculty of Education at Stellenbosch University. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter: @WomanityTalk.</p>
<p>DR. MALKA</p>	<p>Prof Frick, building female leadership capacity is important for the future of women in Africa and across the world and sometimes we do that through role models, through being able to influence policy as well as acquiring economic empowerment. You mentioned earlier in our conversation about the TVET study and the lack of women in leadership roles within that environment. We know that there are few women in academic leadership positions; in your opinion, what do you think needs to happen to ensure that more women make it to the top?</p>
<p>PROFESSOR FRICK</p>	<p>Well, you know, there are many things that we can say we need to do and that we need to do differently, but I want to come back to who are we talking about when we talk about the "we", you know, and I think that gender equality also in leadership is not a women's issue or a women's problem, I think it's a systemic issue and it's a societal issue and it's everyone's problem and everyone's issue that we need to think about. I have been very fortunate throughout my life to have wonderful mentors in both men and women and I have been very unfortunate to have had bad examples, sometimes that's a good thing because you know what you don't want to be like, but in both men and women, so I think if we can think as a society, what would enable everyone to move forward and have equal opportunities. Then things like for example child care, wouldn't be</p>

	<p>a woman's issue, it would be how, as a society, do we look after our children so that all parents have the opportunity to be able to make a meaningful contribution to society in whichever way or form they want to do that and the same applies to education, I think education is obviously a really important factor in conscientising people to the issues that we have in society, but education in and of itself isn't enough, there also needs to be opportunities for everyone and hope for everyone that they can access those opportunities and that is something that I'm thinking about a lot at the moment, is it's not good enough for us to offer education if it's in isolation, there needs to be opportunities associated with that and if I think for example of girls who live in rural areas and particularly in societies where there is still a lot of gender inequality, then I think yes, the first step would be to enable the girl child everywhere to have access to good quality education, access is important, that's the first step. Then we need to enable them to stay within education and make that education meaningful to them, but that is not enough, there needs to be opportunities linked to that education which gives them hope that they can actually reach their goals and those goals, it doesn't need to be a one size fits all, I think it needs to be diverse. For some it might mean that they want to move out of their communities of origin and be able to be mobile and go places and travel and work elsewhere, for others it might mean staying in their communities of origin, but I think kind of creating those diverse opportunities for everyone and it needs to be linked to education, is what I would say we need to focus on. Access is the first step, that's important, good quality education and whatever that means in a particular context is the second aspect and then thirdly the kind of opportunities and the hope that we create through and post education is equally important.</p>
<p>DR. MALKA</p>	<p>Yes, it's about acquiring the tools and having the opportunities for those tools to be put to use. We're coming towards the end of the show now and the question that I'd like to ask you is about your personal journey. Some of our guests who've reached tremendous achievements in their respective fields of expertise speak about factors that have attributed to their success, some being hard work, perseverance, others, particular people in their life. In your opinion what would you say have been some of the key drivers to your success?</p>
<p>PROFESSOR FRICK</p>	<p>So I think that's a really interesting question, firstly, how do you define success and I, you know, is a complex in itself, but if I were to think about the pathway that I have followed I would say that it hasn't been straightforward but I've been really lucky along the way to have people that believed in me, I think, so starting with parents that value education, I think that's a wonderful place to start and I think in both my mother and father I have people who have really supported me in so many ways throughout my life, from the day I was born and really people who valued education and encouraged me to pursue an education and then I think, you know, as you get older and this is something that I think particularly the audience being predominantly from the African continent, I think it's so important and something that we don't talk about, is the kind of family support that we offer people who are pursuing their education which often goes unacknowledged and I'm particularly thinking of the grandmothers, the goggos that look after children, I've seen so many students who, you know, come to do their postgraduate studies from a different country and they leave their children with their family back in their home country, which must be the hardest thing to do, for a mother or a father to do, but particularly a mother with young children I think and from my own experience I would never have been able to do the job</p>

	<p>that I do and pursue the kind of collaborative projects that I enjoy so much if it hadn't been for the support of particularly my mother and father in helping to raise my child. So I want to acknowledge that in my circumstance, but across the continent, the role of grandparents and families and uncles and aunts and brothers and sisters and husbands and wives who really pitch in and enable education to happen, I don't think we could do it without that and they often don't get thanked and acknowledged in the way that I think is important. I think what is also important is to have people along the way that believe in you and that support you and that are selfless, who are paying it forward I suppose, and I have had in academic circles, not only in my own close circle, my late supervisor Professor Chris Kapp for example, who has been instrumental, my really good friend and colleague Dr. Ruth Albertyn who has been instrumental in my own development and so forth, but also across the world, people you come across and so in my own context I have had so many colleagues from different walks of life, from different contexts across the world who have opened doors for me along the way, too many to mention but I am so, so grateful for them and I think for me now I'm at the point where I can start opening doors for other people and I think that is really important for me, to be able to pay it forward to others and to have the selflessness that others have had with me and I think that is really important. I think it's also important to be in a context where you are encouraged and where your strengths are celebrated, where you have access to resources, I have been really truly thankful to my university for enabling me to do my work because it is a well resourced context, that's not the case everywhere, and I have the greatest respect for people who achieve success, whatever that may be, despite a lack of resources, despite a lack of support and I think one needs to think about how you can enable that and I think my work across the continent is also aimed at helping people to create those kind of environments for themselves and for those that come after them. I've got a colleague who often says you don't only think of where you are now, you always need to think how am I leaving this a better place for those who come after me and so I think you are part of a life cycle and there are people that have come before you and people that come after you, you have to honour the people who came before you and enabled you to do what you do, but you also need to create something that you can leave behind, I suppose some people call it a legacy, but that sounds very grand, I just think you need to leave a space and a circumstance for those that come after you that is better than the way you found it and I've been very lucky both in terms of family, in terms of the context in which I work that has enabled me to do that and I think you need to acknowledge that and I think there have been wonderful men and women in my life that have inspired me in many, many ways and continue to do so and I think one should celebrate and acknowledge their contributions to your own development.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You've painted such a holistic picture of the way I think the world should be, that we should honour those who have gone before us and recognise that we are not here forever and that we have to make a contribution that counts, not only to ourselves, but to the people that we leave behind in that form of legacy and payback. Lastly, as we close out the show today, please can you share a few words of inspiration that you'd like to convey to girls and women who are listening to the show today?</p>
PROFESSOR FRICK	<p>Shew, that's a tall order. I want to acknowledge that in many ways I come from a privileged background and society that has enabled me to</p>

	<p>achieve many things, but I also have to say that there is no substitute for hard work and the path that I have trodden hasn't always been easy, it hasn't always been plain sailing, there have been many obstacles along the way and I believe that one of things that has enabled me to achieve the things that I have, has been having value in things like persistence, having a really good work ethic and also being able to acknowledge the input of others and how they have enabled my own growth. So I think if I were to pay it forward and offer some sort of encouragement it would be that you really have to want it and put your mind to it, whatever you want to achieve and sometimes being really persistent, hardworking to the point of being bull-headed about it, that you are able to overcome the obstacles that do face you, but at the same time not to disregard if there is a helping hand offered to you, if that is offered as a way in which to enable you so that you can enable others. So, hard work, persistence and building on the work of others in meaningful ways I think is the encouragement that I would offer to others.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Thank you for that practical message. It's been a pleasure having you on the show today.</p>
PROFESSOR FRICK	<p>Thank you so much for this opportunity, I always enjoy chatting to you and it has just been an extension of all our other conversations, it feels like to me we share so many mutual interests and I really did enjoy this conversation and I'm really very passionate about the education of particularly the girl child in the African context and I really do hope that all of us can leave a legacy for girls across the continent to take us forward as a continent into a new and exciting world and thank you very much for this opportunity to speak to everyone, it's really been a privilege for me.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>It's certainly an agenda that we share on empowering women and making this world a better place.</p>
PROGRAMME END	