

The SADC AND GENDER 2005 CAMPAIGN



- **Raise the current target of at least thirty percent women in decision-making by 2005 to fifty percent by 2020, in line with the AU position.**
- **Elevate the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development to a Protocol.**

What

The SADC and Gender 2005 campaign is a partnership that aims to raise the current target of women in decision-making from thirty to fifty percent, and to elevate the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development to a Protocol.

When

The main focus of the campaign is the SADC Heads of State summit in Gaborone from 17-18 August 2005. This will be preceded by a civil society forum from 13-15 August at which gender will feature prominently.

Why

The SADC Declaration on Gender and Development set a minimum target of 30 percent women in all areas of decision-making by 2005. The African Union (AU) has set a target of equal representation of women in all areas of decision-making. All SADC members also belong to the AU. These positions must be harmonised! While the SADC Declaration has helped to raise awareness, it only carries moral weight. An audit conducted by partners ahead of the SADC summit, which also coincides with the ten year anniversary of the Beijing conference reveals many gaps:

- Few countries have achieved the minimum 30 percent target for women in decision-making, nor have they put in place strategies for doing so.
- Laws, systems and services for addressing gender violence are inadequate. New forms of gender violence, such as trafficking, are on the rise.
- There are contradictions between customary law and modern codified law when it comes to women's rights and these contradictions are not addressed in most Constitutions.
- HIV/AIDS, the pandemic which more than any other has preyed on the gender disparities in the region, is negating positive gains made.
- In most countries, poverty is on the rise and increasingly has a feminine face.
- While there has been some progress in raising awareness and challenging gender stereotypes in the media and popular culture, as well as engaging men as partners, the battle to change mindsets is still far from won.

Who

Partners in the initiative include: Gender Links, the Gender and Media Southern Africa Network (GEMSA) CREDO, the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), Women in Law in Development in Africa (WILDAF), Women in Politics Support Unit (WIPSU), SAFAIDS, International IDEAS, SARDC/WIDSA and the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA), and UNIFEM.

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