



ELECTORAL GENDER QUOTAS:

Equal representation does not always mean equitable participation

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Category: Media COE

Mauritius SADC GENDER PROTOCOL SUMMIT

GENDER EQUALITY BY 2015, YES WE MUST!

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF **MEDIA HOUSE**

- Location (urban)
- Type: print
- Circulation (very wide-international audience)
- Higher prominence of women sources



Your submission

- Local Government Act: Introduction of electoral gender quota system to ensure more equitable gender representation. (1 / 3 candidates = women)
- Job over???
- Distinction to be made between equal representation and equitable PARTICIPATION of women in the electoral process.
- Need for proper capacity-building frameworks to translate this representation into an effective and competent political participation of women.

Your submission

<u>HOW IT IS:</u>	<u>WHAT CAN BE DONE?</u>
No real guarantee that they will be elected. OR Unfairly grouped together at the bottom of the decision-making ladder	-Sanctions for failure to respect the quota -Reserved Seats for women at the different decision making positions?
Lack of information and training on the resources/strategies available to them.	Promote gender-mainstreaming training and capacity building programs to allow them to better represent women's interests

HOW DOES YOUR SUBMISSION CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE 28 TARGETS OF THE SADC GENDER PROTOCOL?

PROTOCOL TARGET	COUNCIL ACTIONS
<p>ARTICLE 12: Ensure equal representation (50-50) between men and women in all decision-making positions in both the public and private sector.</p>	<p>Amendments to the Local Government Act: Introduction of a minimum gender quota of 33% of female representation in the village and municipal council elections.</p>
<p>Article 13: Ensure equitable PARTICIPATION of women in all electoral processes. The ultimate goal is to establish structures to enhance gender mainstreaming.</p>	<p>Need for the elaboration of support structures to build capacity amongst female candidates and to formulate more gender-aware policies.</p>

Background

- The article was formulated in the wake of the village council elections which witnessed the first implementation of the electoral quota imposed by the Local Government Act.
- The aim of the article was to measure the impact of this provision, in the light of the continuing discrimination and the perpetuated stereotypes which women face in politics even today.

Objectives

- The ultimate objective was to show that numbers do not matter.

- What is needed:
 - The establishment of structures to form female politicians to promote a more gender sensitive view of politics (legal sanctions/placement mandates?)

 - The empowerment of women to make them agents of change



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Targets

- The article has, as target audience, the average Mauritian women and aims to increase their awareness with regards to their fundamental rights.
- The legislator and all political deciders are also targeted with a view to sensitizing them to the need for a more gender balanced view of politics.



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Process

- The principal sources used were the different pieces of legislation: The Local Govt Act, The Equal Opportunities Act, The Constitution of Mauritius, The SADC Protocol on Gender.
- Secondary sources include press articles, official statistics and reports amongst others.

Feedback



- Positive reactions from other colleagues at Genderlinks.

Follow up

- Follow political and legislative debates with regards to eventual amendments to the laws ensuring gender equality in Mauritius.
- Declaration of the Prime Minister during the International Women's Day regarding a possible amendment to the Constitution to ensure equal representation of women within the parliament.