



Orientation Training Workshop for the Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, HIV and Governance Programme

BACKGROUND

With Financial support from Embassy of Sweden, the Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, HIV and Governance Project, approved by the 35th Plenary Assembly session in Mauritius has been fully integrated within the agenda of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, spearheaded by the Standing Committee on Human and Social Development and Special Programmes and the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus. The project aims to work with and strengthen the capacity of SADC national parliaments for a period of four years, to advocate for and influence national responses to SRHR and HIV and Governance in the SADC region.

In line with encouraging and increasing the number of women elected to political positions to be effective and competent in office once they are elected to parliament, this Project was designed to invest in women MPs as champions of SRHR and HIV related issues. The primary basis of this being the fact that increasingly women are expected to occupy an ever more prominent leadership role in promoting evidence-based responsive policy debates and legislation. As articulated by *Madeleine Albright, NDI Chairperson: "In the modern world, women's empowerment is not merely a goal, but a cornerstone of democratic growth. This is because women raise issues that others overlook, devote energy to projects that others ignore, reach out to constituencies that others neglect, and help societies move forward together."*

In view of the above, a stakeholder analysis was conducted in order to generate information on which organisations at regional and national level can better partner with and influence the work of parliament as they consider issues of national importance, and to exert influence on the project and its outcomes. The stakeholders identified are directly or indirectly affected by the issues related to SRHR and HIV and were considered to already be working on some critical issues that they could collaborate with parliaments on taking into account that they can also offer a unique perspective on areas that need parliamentarians oversight and intervention which may also lead to further engagement and participation.

This orientation Programme is therefore organised out as part of strengthening such partnerships between parliament and key SRHR stakeholders to work with parliamentary Committees and attract a higher level of prestige to training programmes for Women Parliamentarians and

Committees of parliament targeted through the national training programs on SRHR, HIV and Governance.