



International Rural Women's Day

Held on 8 October 2010, Mavise School, Chirumhanzi

Introduction

Commemorations of the Rural Women's Day in Zimbabwe were held at Mavise School in Chirumhanzi District of the Midlands Province. The idea to commemorate rural women's day originated from the United Nations Conference that was held in Beijing in 1995 and takes into cognisance the value that the rural woman has in development circles. Women in rural areas have multiple roles ranging from productive, reproductive and community roles. Recognition of that burden led to commemoration of the day. ZWRCN commemorated rural women's day in collaboration with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development and other civil society groups. The event was graced by Members of Parliament in the Women's Caucus and the respective constituency's leadership.

Attendance

Vice President Honourable John Landa Nkomo

Minister of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development Dr Olivia Muchena
Minister of State for Special Affairs Responsible for Land and Resettlement Programme Honourable Flora Buka,

Minister of Defence and Resident Minister for Chirumhanzi, Honourable Emerson Munangagwa

Resident Minister and Governor of the Midlands Province Honourable Machaya

Women's League chairperson Cde Oppah Muchinguri.

Gender Machinery at national and district levels

CSOs and CBOs

The general populace of Chirumhanzi

Objectives of the Commemoration

The objectives were to:

- Increase participation of women and CSOs in influencing public policies.

Workshop strategies

Participatory approaches were adopted, through local group dramas, song and dance, showcasing and speeches.

Highlights of proceedings:



Craft work by rural women



Speakers at the event were Dr Olivia Muchena, Cde Munangagwa, and Cde Nkomo.

Dr Muchena indicated that great strides have been made by the government in promoting gender equality as shown by the turn out and contributions by women to the supreme law currently being drawn. A new dimension of rural women has been reflected. Further highlighted was that rural women constitute about 70% of the women in the country and a quarter of the world population. More so these women are the sole providers for food and security in families, hence the need to economically empower them and make use of their potential contribution to economic development.

The other speaker also reiterated the fact that rural women need support to have their work realised and participate meaningfully in development.

What do you perceive as ZWRCN's Role?

ZWRCN is one of the key organisations practicing gender mainstreaming in Zimbabwe and also an information hub for gender and development issues hence, has to participate meaningfully in informing the rural woman through dissemination of information to grassroots level.

Overall impression of this workshop/meeting:

The event was an eye opener to the program in terms of highlighting the gaps for the rural woman. It was also a platform for awareness raising on the need for the rural woman to participate in public policy.