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Launch of Report on the Status of Gender-Based Violence in Southern Africa

Today marks the start of the annual 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence (GBV). The theme for this year is **"UNITE to End Violence against Women."**

To join the global campaign, the Southern Africa Trust has launched the **"Status of Gender Based Violence in Selected Southern Africa Countries"** Report. It highlights the magnitude of the effects of gender violence on marginalized groups in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zambia.

Findings from the five countries indicate that whereas incidences of sexual abuse may be higher, they go under-reported mainly because it is generally considered a private matter. Further, rape survivors are usually accused of being promiscuous, which makes them ashamed to file police reports. Equally, the continuous increase in GBV incidences in all five countries is attributed to inadequate implementation of legislation and interventions.

Based on these findings, the Southern Africa Trust is appealing for prioritization of collaborative action by governments, the private sector, civic formations, and communities in Southern Africa. The report proposes, among other interventions, revising and implementing legislation, policies, and plans to combat GBV. In addition, all five countries need to improve their management of knowledge, coordination of various implementing agencies' of GBV programs, and collaboration among stakeholders to combat GBV.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is of significant concern worldwide as cultural, economic, sociological, and environmental distress rises to high levels. The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development defines GBV as: "all acts perpetrated against women, men, girls, and boys based on their sex which causes or could cause them physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or economic harm, including the threat to take such acts, or to undertake the imposition of arbitrary restrictions on or deprivation of fundamental freedoms in private or public life in peacetime and during situations of armed or other forms of conflict."

Read the report here: <https://knowledgehub.southernafricatrust.org/research/the-status-of-gender-based-violence-in-selected-southern-africa-countries/>

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