

School Fan





GENDER POLICY



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ACRONYMS

AIDS	ACQUIRED IMMUNODEFICIENCY SYNDROME
CBO	COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATION
COSATU	CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS
HIV	HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS
EI	EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL
GBV	GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
GENCOM	GENDER COMMITTEE
LGBTIQ	LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, INTERSEX, QUEER
NGO	NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION
SADC	SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
SADTU	SOUTH AFRICAN DEMOCRATIC T EACHERS UNION
SGP	SADTU GENDER POLICY
STI	SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS



1. PREAMBLE

We, the members of SADTU, have committed ourselves to the transformation of education and dedicated ourselves to the development of both men and women, the eradication of discrimination based on gender, sexism and sexual harassment of teachers, education workers, learners and staff members.

Further recognising the deeply embedded class and gender disparities in the South African society, SADTU commits itself to eliminating all forms of discrimination in the union, in education and society and strive towards a free and democratic education and South Africa. SADTU strives for gender equality and help to develop a strong democratic and inclusive union.

2. VISION

To strive *for unity in leadership and freedom of participation* in a non-racial, non-sexist, non-discriminatory *environment*, not discriminated against by gender, sexual orientation, disability or religion, for a just and democratic society wherein women and men will participate equally without barriers in the union, workplace and society.

3. MISSION

To empower members, promote their professional development and increase their leadership potential, to contribute to union growth, and create safe and mutually respectful learning



environments that promote quality teaching and learning to advance education and pave the way towards the economic emancipation of our societies.

4. POLICY GOAL

To provide guidelines for institutionalising and operationalising gender as a key development strategy for achieving gender equality, equity and women's empowerment within SADTU.

Eradication of gender-based violence and other forms of violence against women, girls and boys is key to the attainment of gender equality.

Recognition of and provision for special needs of members such as disabled persons, people with chronic health conditions including HIV and AIDS.

5. POLICY FRAMEWORK

The policy is informed by and consistent with the following documents:

National

- a. The SADTU Constitution
- b. The SADTU Education, Gender & Labour Policy Conference 23-25 March 2012
- c. The SADTU HIV and AIDS Workplace Policy
- d. First Draft SADTU Gender Policy



- e. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- f. Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998, as amended
- g. Protection from Harassment Act, No. 17 of 2011
- h. COSATU Gender Policy
- i. SADC Gender Policy 2008

6. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles of this policy are based on commitments SADTU has made through its constitution, policies and resolutions to achieve gender equality. Specifically guiding principles are:

- a. Women's rights are human rights
- b. Breaking social norms, patriarchy, gender stereotypes and challenging power dynamics are key to achieving gender equality
- c. Eradication of gender-based violence and other forms of violence against women, girls and boys is key to attainment of gender equality
- d. Men and boys have a positive role to play in achieving gender equality
- e. Gender equality can be achieved if there are enhanced partnerships, networking, collaboration and coordination between and among all stakeholders, both male and female



- f. Gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment are key development strategies for achieving gender equality and equity
- g. Gender equality and equity is the key to achievement of development, peace and sustainability
- h. Women's increased participation in decision-making positions is key
- i. Eradication of sexual harassment within the union
- j. Gender equality is key to HIV and AIDS mitigation

7. SITUATION ANALYSIS

The South African Democratic Teachers' Union has its female membership as higher than 60% of the total number of members.. Despite being the majority in terms of membership and the 50/50 policy, the executive structures are still male dominated. The analysis of the situation shows that gender inequalities persist in structure. Generally, women do not occupy positions of chairperson or secretary in the union structures. Despite efforts made through the 50/50 resolution to improve the situation, several specific constraints account for this state of affairs. These include, but are not limited to:

- a. Women not availing themselves to be elected in positions
- b. Limited male involvement or availability to be gender convenors



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- c. Negative portrayal of women and women's issues in the media
- d. Multiple roles of women *in society*
- e. Unequal power relations due to strong patriarchal attitudes and male domination in decision-making
- f. Broad and lack of clear roles of gender portfolio in the constitution
- g. The lack of women organizers and male gender conveners to promote gender equity
- h. Low morale and general lack of support for gender programs
- i. Inadequate financial, human and material resource allocation to gender
- j. Lack of capacity building mechanisms for women and continuous programmes
- k. Poor implementation of gender programmes in some provinces, regions and branches
- l. Sexual harassment and absence of a legally binding policy to expel teachers and not reappoint offenders and/or expel members from union
- m. High incidences of STIs and HIV and AIDS infection rates especially among women and girls.



- n. Lack of policy to address gender sensitive issues such as childcare and reproductive health, making it difficult for young women to avail themselves to participate in union meetings which are often held after working hours.

These challenges are significant, but as a union working together, progress is inevitable. A national and practical approach to change is the most productive and the gender policy will be an important instrument in achieving progress.

8. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the SGP are:

- a. To encourage the implementation of programmes and equal participation by men and women to reduce gender inequalities in the union;
- b. To advance women's participation in decision making, education and training;
- c. To promote the inclusion, participation, respect and dignity of all union members and workers irrespective of race, gender, class, age, disability, sexual orientation and nationality, amongst others;
- d. To establish, promote and strengthen international, regional and national partnerships, networking, collaboration and coordination;



- e. To strengthen human resource capacity for gender mainstreaming within SADTU's structures, policies, programs and activities at national, provincial, regional, branch and site level and;
- f. To create a conducive environment for the eradication of gender-based violence and other forms of violence against women with effective dialogue on gender issues in SADTU.

6. STRUCTURES

The gender committees are sub-structures of an executive structure. They are recommending structures and don't have decision making powers.

The gender structures will be as follows:

9.1 NATIONAL GENCOM

Shall comprise of:

- Deputy General Secretary
- VP for Gender
- Provincial Gender Convenors
- National Staff Members



9.2 PROVINCIAL GENCOM

Shall comprise of:

- Provincial Deputy Secretary
- Provincial Gender Convenor
- Regional Gender Convenors
- Provincial Staff Members

9.3 REGIONAL GENCOM

Shall comprise of:

- Regional Deputy Secretary
- Regional Gender Convenor
- Branch Gender Convenors
- Regional Staff Member(s)

9.4 BRANCH GENCOM

Shall comprise of:

- Branch Deputy Secretary
- Branch Gender Convenor
- Portfolio Convenors from sites



10. THEMATIC AREAS

10.1 GENDER, CONSTITUTIONAL, LEGAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

POLICY COMMITMENT:

SADTU shall promote an environment that guarantees human, legal rights, constitutional and legal protection to women and men equally.

To achieve in this area SADTU undertakes to:

- a. Design outreach programmes to promote and protect women and men's constitutional rights.
- b. To provide continuous gender sensitization training for leaders and members.
- c. To provide workshops aiming to eliminate all harmful traditions and practices that infringe on women's and girl's rights.

10.2 GENDER GOVERNANCE, REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION

POLICY COMMITMENT:

SADTU shall work on increasing and improving representation of women in all executive and decision-making structures

To achieve this SADTU undertakes to:



- a. Implement the 50/50 policy to achieve gender balance in all union structures.
- b. Design mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress and assessing the impact of the 50/50 policy.
- c. Invest in capacity building programmes for women in leadership in order to equip them with the skills necessary to enable them to play effective leadership roles in the union, schools and society.
- d. Invest in research on barriers, future trends and conditions required for women's participation in decision-making.
- e. Develop and implement programmes to eliminate discriminatory attitudes and practices that discourage women from holding decision-making positions at all levels.
- f. Promote capacity building and mentoring for young women and men to motivate them to take up leadership positions at all levels.
- g. Promote exchange of information and sharing of experiences between women leaders in all levels of the union, regionally and internationally.
- h. Develop and strengthen support systems for women and men in leadership positions such as parental rights, childcare system and special health needs including reproductive health needs.



10.3 GENDER AND EDUCATION

Education and training on understanding gender issues to challenge stereotypes should be provided for all union members. This empowerment makes men and women aware of the nature of women's oppression and supports women to take their place in the struggle for women's emancipation and gender equality, in solidarity and collective action within the union.

POLICY COMMITMENT:

SADTU shall promote the participation of women and men in all training programmes and processes in order to strengthen their contribution to benefit from educational development agenda.

To achieve this objective SADTU will undertake to:

- a. Adopt gender responsive strategies for reviewing educational methodologies and eliminate gender stereotypes in order to ensure women's empowerment.
- b. Promote scholarship programmes for men and women to be administered at institutions of higher learning.
- c. Promote measures increasing access to education by girls and children with special needs and people living with disabilities.
- d. Promote activities and measures on zero tolerance to



gender-based violence and other forms of violence in schools targeting and enforcing appropriate punishment for educators and support staff who abuse school children.

- e. Integrate women's rights into the curriculum and education programmes.
- f. To influence the changes in curriculum to include the concept of GBV and other forms of violence and their devastating impact and means of gaining self-esteem and confidence and to combat them.

10.4 GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Gender-based violence, including sexual harassment is a manifestation of unequal power relations between women and men and serves to perpetuate inequalities. Gender-based violence affects women's lives harshly and can take place at home, in the workplace or in public spaces. Sexual harassment is a violation of human rights, a form of discrimination, and a health and safety issue. Where it occurs, it must be recorded, seriously addressed and the victims protected. what about perpetrators?

POLICY COMMITMENT:

SADTU shall promote an environment of zero tolerance to GBV at all levels of the union and in the school community, in order to provide a secure country where women, men, girls and boys



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are safe and free to equitably contribute to and benefit from the country's development.

To achieve this objective SADTU will undertake to:

- a. Promote strengthening and implementing of laws against GBV, particularly domestic violence, sexual offences, relationships between educators and learners, enforcing stiff penalties for perpetrators.
- b. Implement the code of conduct of SADTU and adopt and implement the policy and procedures that prohibits sexual harassment in all structures.
- c. Facilitate increased recognition from structures, schools, communities and all citizens to eliminate it.
- d. Conduct gender sensitization and public awareness programmes on legal, human and women's rights and the legal, social and economic consequences of abusive behaviour as well as the impact on future generations.
- e. Design programmes for reaching out to vulnerable groups especially those with disabilities, people living with albinism, LGBTIQ people to protect them against GBV.
- f. Foster partnerships with organisations that deal with GBV amongst learners, from government, CBOs, NGOs and business sector.
- g. Design programmes aimed at addressing perpetrators of GBV and other forms of violence against women and girls



and campaign for courts and law enforcement to take violence against women and men seriously.

- h. Design and implement programmes aimed at eradicating all harmful traditional norms, beliefs, attitudes and practices that legitimise and exacerbate the persistence and tolerance of GBV in our society.

10.5 GENDER AND HEALTH

POLICY COMMITMENT:

SADTU shall promote healthy living amongst its members and staff.

To achieve this objective SADTU will undertake to:

- a. Promote mainstreaming of Health Screening programmes in its activities.
- b. Develop and implement programmes that address the critical issues affecting members including HIV and AIDS, STI's and other non-communicable diseases.
- c. Develop and institutionalise programs raising awareness around women and men's sexual reproductive health rights and general health problems.
- d. Promote programs on the prevention and treatment of STI's amongst members.



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- e. Develop and implement programs working with financial institutions on financial planning and financial well-being of members.
- f. Foster relationships with health practitioners on different health issues affecting members and staff.

10.6 GENDER AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

POLICY COMMITMENT:

SADTU shall implement measures for ensuring women's representation and participation with men in collective bargaining teams and matters.

To achieve this objective SADTU will undertake to:

- a. Train women delegates to enhance their capacity in negotiations.
- b. Ensure negotiating teams are sensitized on women's issues and gender concerns.
- c. Monitor gender impacts of provisions generally in collective agreements.
- d. Collect data on gender trends in education such as in promotions to underpin the agenda.
- e. Ensure that gender neutral language is used in drafting or writing of collective agreements.



10.7 GENDER AND HIV AND AIDS

POLICY COMMITMENT:

SADTU shall implement measures aimed at combating the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

To achieve this objective SADTU shall undertake to:

- a. Promote community based social programmes to address socio cultural and religious beliefs, norms, attitudes and practices that keep the HIV and AIDS epidemic going.
- b. Popularise the use of male and female condoms.
- c. Promote partnership programmes with civil society, NGO's, CBO's and other sectors to develop programmes on gender and HIV and AIDS in the union and workplaces.
- d. Build the capacity of gender convenors and leaders in gender sensitive health services including counseling and psycho-social support services.
- e. Facilitate establishment of mechanisms for promoting male involvement in HIV interventions through the creation of men-to-men networks for behavioural change promotion.
- f. Support and promote training in HIV and AIDS and gender to enable production of accurate and balanced stories to raise awareness and disseminate information and to reduce cultural barriers, stigmatization and discrimination.



11. DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Discrimination against people due to their sexual orientation, even in trade unions, is still rife. It is not uncommon to still find workplaces where a person is not employed or is dismissed simply on the basis of sexual orientation. We also find environments where LGBTIQ people are harassed and victimised, both by fellow employees and employers. The union can use its collective strength to fight homophobia in all spheres of life.

To that effect SADTU shall amplify the provision in its constitution to eradicate all forms of discrimination to strive for a free and democratic education in South Africa. SADTU affirms that it adheres and advocates for the provisions of the Employment Equity Act as espoused in section 6, in the prohibition of unfair discrimination.

11.1. IN RELATION TO EI

- a. To champion LGBTIQ rights throughout all EI campaigns.
- b. To commit resources of EI to lobby governments to end the criminalising and persecution of LGBTIQ people and to campaign for human rights for all.
- c. To assist the work of EI member organisations in defending the rights of LGBTIQ students, teachers and education support personnel.



- d. To work actively with partner organisations to promote LGBTIQ rights.
- e. To collect, publish and disseminate evidence on the incidence and impact of LGBTIQ discrimination in education.

11.2 IN RELATION TO THE UNION AND ITS MEMBERS

- a. SADTU will ensure that there is no discrimination against LGBTIQ persons in the union.
- b. SADTU will create a conducive environment to allow LGBTIQ members to actively participate in programmes of the union.
- c. SADTU will have empowerment programmes to create greater awareness and advocacy on LGBTIQ issues.

11.3 IN RELATION TO THE PROFESSION

- a. SADTU will ensure that all forms of discrimination in relation to LGBTIQ are eradicated in all professional bodies and other entities where our members participate.
- b. SADTU will agitate that policies of all professional bodies and other entities adhere to the provisions of the constitution of the country.
- c. SADTU will ensure that there is no exclusion from participation of educators based on sexual orientation and gender identity.



- d. SADTU will advocate that a conducive environment is created so that LGBTIQ persons can participate freely in the activities of professional bodies and other entities.

11.4 IN THE WORKPLACE

- a. SADTU shall ensure that all forms of discrimination in relation to LGBTIQ persons are eradicated in the workplace.
- b. SADTU shall ensure that the provisions of the Labour Relations Act are adhered to.
- c. The union shall represent members in all forms of automatic unfair dismissals, unfair dismissal and unfair labour practices.
- d. The union shall fight all forms of discrimination as defined in the Employment Equity Act.

11.5 IN RELATION TO LEARNERS

- a. SADTU members shall create a conducive learning environment for LGBTIQ learners.
- b. SADTU members shall work tirelessly to ensure that schools and the curriculum promotes inclusive and non-discriminatory environments.
- c. SADTU members shall mobilize to eradicate homophobic bullying, cyber bullying and all other forms of bullying which harms all learners.



11.6 IN RELATION TO COLLEAGUES

- a. SADTU members shall always act professionally and in a non-discriminatory manner toward their colleagues.
- b. SADTU members shall speak out against homophobic behaviour towards colleagues and shall encourage that staffrooms be safe havens, free from discrimination and homophobia.

12. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SGP AND CREATION OF GENDER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

In order to implement the SGP, concerted effort among all SADTU structures is required. To achieve this, the gender structures in the union will be used. The gender structures shall ensure that gender considerations are integrated into all union policies, programmes and activities. The gender structures will recommend to executive structures gender mainstreaming with the objective of addressing women's empowerment as well as equity within the union in order to allow for women's full and equal participation at all levels of trade union.



12.1 COMMITMENT TO CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

SADTU shall create an enabling environment where all members are committed to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Strategies:

- a. Make gender equality part and parcel of all activities, programs of the union.
- b. Strengthen the gender structures so that it has capacity to implement the SGP.

12.2 COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING GENDER MAINSTREAMING PROCESS AND MECHANISMS

SADTU shall implement programs, policies and promote mainstreaming of gender in the union.

Strategies:

- a. Promote gender action plans with adequate budgets.
- b. Promote sensitive and responsive gender budget as a tool to attaining gender equality.
- c. Develop capacity building programs.
- d. Support strategic resource mobilisation for gender programs.



13. GLOSSARY

- Affirmative action** A policy, programme or measure that seeks to redress past discrimination through active measure to ensure equal opportunity and positive outcomes in all spheres of life.
- Discrimination** Any distinction, exclusion or restriction which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by any person, of human rights, and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field.
- Equality** The state of being equal in terms of enjoyment of rights, treatment, quantity or value, access to opportunities and outcomes, including resources.
- Gender** The roles, duties and responsibilities which are culturally or socially ascribed to women, men, girls and boys.
- Gender-based violence** All acts perpetrated against women, men, girls and boys on the basis of their sex which cause or could cause them physical, sexual, psychological, emotional



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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 peace time and during situations of armed or other forms of conflict.

- Gender equality** The equal enjoyment of rights and the access to opportunities and outcomes, including resources, by women, men, girls and boys.
- Gender mainstreaming** The process of identifying gender gaps and making women's, men's, girls' and boys' concerns and experiences integral to design, implantation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all spheres so that they benefit equally.
- Sex** The biological differences between females and males
- Women and men** A political term that denotes all people irrespective of their gender identity being male, female or queer.