



**Launch of the UN Women Africa UNiTE Campaign,
Regional Creative Artist Advisory Council
in support of ending Violence against Women**



Members of the UN Women Regional Creative Artist Advisory Council from Top Left: Hem Matsi (Namibia), Linzy Bacbotte (Mauritius), Bonisile Nxumalo (Swaziland) Neesha Fakir (UN Women), Jennet Kem (Africa UNiTE Campaign Manager), Agnes Phiri (UN Women), Richard Rasolofoarimanana. From Bottom Left, Urny Mathiot (Seychelles), Rosie Motene (South Africa), Sampa Kangwa Wikie (Zambia), Jamie McLaren Lachman (South Africa), Albert Nyathi (Zimbabwe), Tsipiso Tsikoane (Lesotho), Valdemiro Jose (Mozambique), Berry Heart (Botswana), Maria Chidzanja-Nkhoma (Malawi)

UN Women SARO launched the first ever Southern Africa Regional Creative Artists Advisory Council on 31st October, following a 3 day consultative meeting, from 29-31st October held in Johannesburg, South Africa. Attended by 13 creative artists representing 12 SARO countries, and nominated by the UNCT and Government, the participants welcomed the involvement of their sector to harness the power of the creative artists to prevent, eliminate and eradicate violence against women. The artists represented in RCAAC represent various artistic professions such as play writers, actors, filmmakers, poets, fashion designers, sculptures, puppeteers, clowns, graphic artists, musicians and radio presenters and producers.

HOW RCAAC will operate: The Regional Creative Artist Advisory Council will be coordinated and managed by UN Women SARO with the support of the Africa UNiTE Campaign Secretariat. It will catalyze

the initiatives of different organizations and individuals in a coordinated, multi-layered and multi-sectoral actions to prevent, eliminate and eradicate violence against women.

In an effort to unlock the potential for this new platform for EAW, UN Women SARO seeks to promote creative strategies that foster real collaboration in leveraging the arts to contribute and get involved in the achievement of the Africa UNiTE Campaign to **End Violence against Women and Girls (EVAWG)**.

The Achieving Plan culminated in a commitment from all artists to run with initiatives that include promoting of fashion shows in support of ending violence against women, developing communications and publicity materials such as radio series and shows in support of EAW, utilizing the power of laughter, play, song and poetry to address the linkage between VAW and HIV and promoting the UNiTE Campaign's **Orange Day** in support of ending VAW/G.

All 13 Artists committed to spearhead country initiatives during the 16 days of activism in support of ending violence against women and girls from 25 November- 10 December.

The Consultative engagement concluded with an evening of Artists showcasing their talent and work to EAW to an audience attended by UN agencies, embassies, private sector and Civil Society. The UN Women Regional Programme Director Ms Nomcebo Manzini and Africa UNiTE Campaign manager Ms Jennet Kem emphasized the importance of the partnering with Creative Artists in making violence against women a public issue.

The Members of the Regional Creative Artist Advisory Group who participated the consultative engagement include:

- ✓ Hem Matsi a fashion designer (**Namibia**)
- ✓ Linzy Bacbotte an advisor in the Ministry of Arts and Culture (**Mauritius**)
- ✓ Bonisile Nxumalo a poet and GBV activist (**Swaziland**)
- ✓ Richard Rasolofoarimanana, puppeteer and leader of NY Voharty Troop (**Madagascar**)
- ✓ Urny Mathiot a graphic designer (**Seychelles**)
- ✓ Rosie Motene, an actress, radio presenter and GBV Activist (**South Africa**)
- ✓ Sampa Kangwa Wikie, UNECA communications officer and actress (**Zambia**)
- ✓ Jamie McLaren Lachman Executive Director of Clowns Without Borders (**South Africa**)
- ✓ Albert Nyathi a poet and writer (**Zimbabwe**)
- ✓ Tsipiso Tsikoane a radio presenter and GBV activist (**Lesotho**)
- ✓ Valdemiro Jose a singer and UNiTE Campaign Champion (**Mozambique**)
- ✓ Berry Heart a poet and musician (**Botswana**); and
- ✓ Maria Chidzanja-Nkhoma a poet, singer, songwriter, activist and radio presenter (**Malawi**)

The Regional Creative Artist Advisory Council will also support the development of critical **leadership skills among artists** and empower all women, men, girls and boys alike, to become individual agents of change, and advocates of gender relations that are free of violence, based entirely on equality.

Ultimately, the overarching objective of the Regional Creative Artist Advisory Council is to mobilize political commitment, ignite public awareness and initiate active participation from society in contributing to the prevention, elimination and eradication of **violence against women and girls at all levels**.

The 2012 SADC Gender Links Barometer reports **that violence against women** is one of the most flagrant violations of human rights and a severe threat to the attainment and realization of gender equality in the region.

For more details on this initiative contact Neesha.fakir@unwomen.org or agnes.phiri@unwomen.org and visit www.unwomen.org or follow us on twitter: [@unwomen](https://twitter.com/unwomen).