

Women attending the 36th Annual National Conference this year in Harare have called on the Union leadership to ensure that there are clear budget lines for women activities for the remainder of 2017, this is meant to increase women participation in ZIMTA activities.

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The women resolved that once a budget is in place, they would hit the ground running by holding an inaugural ZIMTA Women's conference at a location yet to be decided.

"We need the mindset to be changed, more women need to participate, the conference shall guarantee this participation because it will create awareness for women and remind them of their capabilities while those with leadership abilities and talents will be nurtured at the same time," said Elizabeth Mahiyana, the former National Women's representative on the side-lines of the women's caucus meeting.

During the caucus meeting the women called for ZIMTA to organise meetings during daytime so as to enable those who are restricted from participating in evening time schedules to fully participate during the day time, "this way nursing mothers, those caring for the sick and those living with disability will be able to attend in full force and contribute meaningfully" they chanted.

The women also demanded that one of the training workshops to be provided by ZIMTA for them, should be about, budgeting. "Once we get trained on how to carry out activity based budgeting, you will see that our programs are going to bring results, we want to build impact, we

are ready to deliver, we want training”, they reiterated.

The meeting also resolved that the Association must move with haste in tackling the issue of access to maternity leave prescribed by the employer which limits women to having 3 children in one’s working career. This is further buttressed by the provision that only 3 periods or sessions (of up to 3 months each) of maternity leave can be paid for in the teaching profession, unlike in other well-known professions, where women can have more babies

It was also agreed during the women’s caucus meeting that, women in ZIMTA needed to partner other women’s organisations’, and in particular women in the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions’ (ZCTU), for networking and knowledge transfer purposes.

Future establishment of fundraising activities, organising women’s networking, sports, cultural exchange and tourism trips within the SADC region, revamping of study circles that address gender issues and professional growth for women educators were some of the recommendations that women made during their caucus for the Conference to consider.

The women educators, whose composition consisted of young teachers, senior teachers, school headmistresses and women lecturers were also in agreement that they would involve their male counterparts, whose experience and expertise in organising other teachers in the union would presumably come in handy during the women in ZIMTA rebuilding and rebranding campaigns.