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PRESS RELEASE

Dear News Editor

Botswana Federation of Secondary School Teachers is calling upon all women organisations in Botswana to strengthen their working relations with each other. In its meeting over the weekend, the resuscitated BOFESETE Womens Wing expressed the need for organisations to continue mobilising women so that they advocate and pursue womenfolk issues. The wing's concern is that there are numerous women issues that need to be tackled and handled with all the seriousness that they deserve.

Though apolitical, the Womens Wing is further calling upon all political parties to support and vote women politicians into positions of responsibility. The current trend is that there are few women in positions of responsibility and this has skewed the decision making process.

The wing has also come up with strategies of networking with other local women organisations such as Emang Basadi, Women in Law, Women's Coalition, Caucus for Women, Women's Affairs Department and so on. BOFESETE values networking and sees it as very crucial not only as its lifeline but for the actual existence and sustenance of women development. The networking strategy has therefore been adopted as a top priority.

Secondary schools women have also resolved to engage Emang Basadi to resource them on gender issues in a forthcoming workshop. Emang Basadi has been a champion in advocating and lobbying for the improvement of standards of living of women. BOFESETE women's wing therefore feels that it has to link up and join ranks with other women organisations and see to it that women succeed in their pursuit for justice and equal opportunities.

The wing also wishes to express serious concern about the frustrations that are so rampant in teaching. The government has neglected the teaching profession for so long and women teachers are hard hit because most of their households are female headed. As teachers, the wait for the separate pay structure and teachers' overtime allowance has been so excruciatingly painful. Teachers have lost their patience and if the cabinet is going to delay the release of the De Villiers commission and teachers overtime allowance, we are afraid time is running out and teachers are already bracing themselves for a bitter fight again.

Thank you.

BOFESETE Women's wing