



FACT SHEET

JUSTICE AS A RIGHT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (JARSA)

CHALLENGE

In Southern Africa, people with access to resources and those without are likely to experience “justice” in different ways. In many countries, especially those with high levels of corruption, the elite manipulate the law in their favor. In several countries in the region, there is an egregious lack of respect for human rights. Basic socio-economic rights - to food, water and shelter- remain unrealized, while a lack of respect for human and political rights issues is demonstrated through negative attitudes and violence towards people of targeted ethnic groups, women, people in same sex relationships, and people living with HIV/AIDS.

APPROACH

Under a five year, \$8 million cooperative agreement, Freedom House focuses on building respect for democratic institutions and ideals. Through enhancing rule of law the program is able to promote peace, stability and sustainable development. Beginning in 2010, the program develops regional networks of like-minded defenders of human rights and the rule of law. The program seeks out best practices, innovative approaches and opportunities to support existing and new regional platforms that promote the rule of law, judicial independence and human rights.

OBJECTIVES

1. To increase independence of judges to uphold constitutional and legal rights in reaching just decisions.
2. To enhance abilities of Southern Africa’s legal community to promote and protect human rights, and uphold the rule of just law.
3. To encourage active civic participation in domestic and regional judicial processes.



RESULTS

- Over 300 judges and justice sector personnel trained in human rights and rule of law.
- Successful judicial assessments and advocacy for independence done in Lesotho, Swaziland and Malawi.
- Strong network of human rights defenders and organizations established, with 15 organizations across the SADC region.
- Successful impact litigation across the region, including judgement against forced sterilization of women in Namibia.
- Comprehensive advocacy approach to empowering civil society in Swaziland undertaken and successfully under implementation.

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