

Gender Justice

By Loveness Jambaya-Nyakujarah

In its early years, GL played a key role in placing the Sixteen Days of Activism campaign on the regional agenda through strategic communications training for activists that included using IT (the cyber dialogues) and mainstream media.

The need to measure the impact of such campaigns led to pioneering efforts in partnership with the Gender and Media Southern African (GEMSA) Network in four Southern African countries- South Africa, Mauritius, Namibia and Zimbabwe - to develop National Action Plans to end Gender violence.

This approach- strongly backed by the 2006 report of the UN Secretary General on violence against women and children across the globe - is being replicated across the region. In tandem with its governance programme, GL is also conducting pilot projects for localising such plans. Progress at local, national and regional level is tracked through a monthly Gender Justice Barometer.



National Action Plans

At the launch of the South Africa 365 Day National Action Plan (NAP) to End Gender Violence, the Deputy President, Phumzile Mlambo-Ncquka remarked that she wanted to see a situation where "Every day, somewhere in South Africa", an activity is taking place aimed at addressing gender violence until every corner of the country is reached. She challenged all stakeholders to develop a year-long calendar of events that would reflect this ideal and enable her to participate in monitoring the implementation of the action plan as well as in tracking progress. So there is really no time to nap as NAP sees Sixteen Days of Activism stretched to 365 Days of Action.

In the 2005 annual report GL shared background information that led to the drafting of the plan. Briefly, in 2005, GL conducted an audit of commitments made by decision makers and civil society during 2004 Sixteen Days Cyber Dialogues in South Africa and identified actions that still needed to be taken to tackle gender violence. The audit led to growing support for a National Action Plan to End Gender Violence.

Outputs

In May 2006, GL, the National Prosecution Authority (NPA) and UNICEF convened a ground breaking multi-sector conference: 365 Days of Action to End Gender Violence that led to the identification of key priorities for ending gender violence and the establishment of a multi-sector task team to work towards this end. Stakeholders including deputy ministers committed to this process by signing a declaration now widely known as the Kopenong Declaration.



A Programme Management Unit (PMU) in the office of NPA was set up to serve as the secretariat for stakeholders of the action plan. Following further development of the plan, it was launched by Mlambo-Ncquka on International Women's Day, 8 March 2007.

Outcomes

The ambitious national project has posed its challenges. But stakeholders should not relent. The 365 Day NAP is backed by best practice from around the world which suggests that what is required is a concerted, multi-sector, multi-stakeholder action plan with concrete targets and measurable outputs.

In fact, the UN Secretary General's 2006 report on violence against women aptly highlights the significance of:

- Comprehensive and coordinated National Action Plans driven by governments.
- States should build and sustain strong multisectoral strategies, coordinated nationally and locally.
- Work to end violence against women requires not only a clear demonstration of political commitment but also systematic and sustained action, backed by strong, dedicated and permanent institutional mechanisms.
- States should build on the work done by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), scale up and institutionalize it and share experiences with other countries.

In partnership with GEMSA GL is conducting training in for Southern African countries to replicate the 365 Day NAP approach each year since 2006. Three countries have already held workshops: Mauritius, Namibia and Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe the process sought to find ways of strengthening an initiative that had already begun.

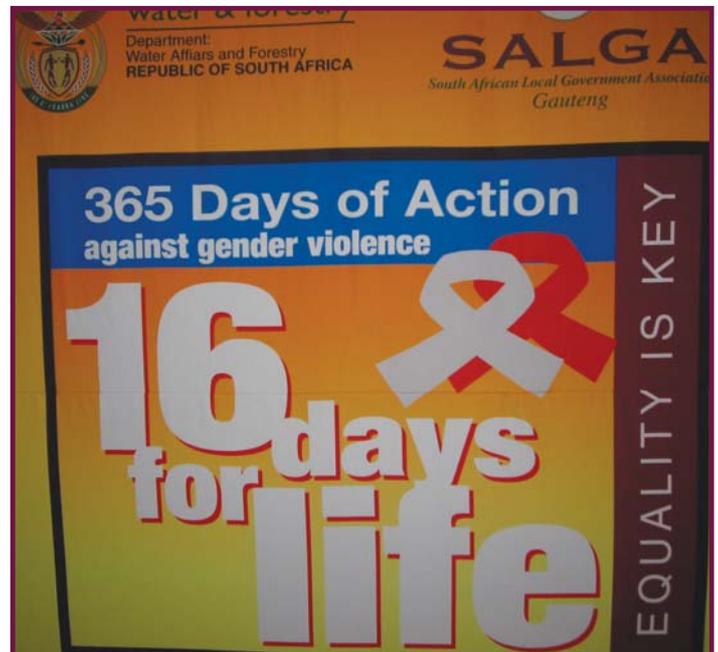
Measuring change

For two years now GL has produced the *Gender Justice Barometer*, an E newsletter that tracks progress in ending gender violence. The newsletter covers laws, services and public awareness campaigns for ending gender violence, based on the gaps identified in the audit by GEMSA ahead of the 2004 Sixteen Day campaign. The targets include: policy makers, service providers, activists and advocacy groups as well the media.

Gender Justice

Next steps

- **Extending NAPs:** GL plans to work with GEMSA in four Southern African countries each year for the next two years to develop National Action Plans for ending gender violence. These efforts will be considerably strengthened by the campaign to have the Declaration on Gender and Development elevated to a Protocol. The Protocol has concrete targets for addressing gender violence in the prevention, response and support clusters.
- **Localising the National Action Plan:** The action plans are only as good as it is implemented at local level. GL will play a major role in localising National Action Plans with specific focus on local government's role in ending gender violence in South Africa because it is the sphere of government that is closest to the people. Training models are being developed through linking the gender justice and governance programmes through pilot projects to localise the National Action Plan, using the City of Johannesburg Women's Development Strategy that GL assisted in finalising as an entry point. Work has already begun with South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA) National office, SALGA Gauteng and SALGA North West. GL facilitated the SALGA Gauteng's 365 Day Conference at Gallagher Estate in November 2006. At the time of writing, GL is facilitating district consultative workshops in the North West Province that will culminate into a provincial plan to be adopted at a 365 Day Provincial Conference to be hosted by SALGA North West.



The Sixteen Days of Activism campaign

As GL focuses more on policy and the networks more on campaigns, the justice programme is not as focused on the Sixteen Days of Activism campaign as in the past. However, GL continues to see this campaign as critical for raising awareness on National Actions Plans and rekindling energy around these.

In 2006/2007, GL organised a "Taking Stock" forum on the eve of the Sixteen Day Campaign. GL, GEMSA and the One in Nine Campaign collaborated in the Take Back the Night march that mobilised networks across South Africa and the region. Activists presented sixteen demands for the sixteen days of activism.

The cyber dialogues continued to be a galvanising tool. The "I" stories (see accompanying piece) have also become a key feature of the campaign that many of the GEMSA chapters are taking up. GL will continue to provide support, capacity building and expertise in the running of Sixteen Day campaigns as a strategic moment for reflecting and repositioning in the fight to end gender violence.