



**Report on the Eastern Cape Media
Training Workshop on
Covering Gender Violence**

March 2002



SUMMARY

This report summarizes the Eastern Cape workshop on Covering Gender Violence convened by Gender Links and 11 – 15 March 2002. Nineteen media practitioners and non-governmental organisations participated in the training (see **Annex A**). The programme is at **Annex B** and the stories produced for a special supplement, "Our Write", are featured in **Annex C**. A summary of the workshop evaluation is attached at **Annex D**.

BACKGROUND

Gender violence is one of the most flagrant, yet under-reported crimes of our time. In 1998, SADC Heads of State signed an addendum to the Declaration on Gender and Development pledging to eradicate gender violence. Two years later, in December 2000, SADC member states met in Lesotho to review progress towards this objective. They found that while there is heightened awareness of gender violence in member countries, the number of reported cases has actually increased. While the media is playing an increasingly important role in exposing gender violence, it has often, through its own biases, use of inappropriate language and images, been part of the problem than of the solution.

A few months before the Lesotho conference, Inter Press Service, a global development news network, developed a manual on covering gender violence with the assistance of Gender Links, a Southern African NGO committed to the fair representation of women in the media. This manual was tested at a workshop comprising 35 journalists from the SADC region alongside the SADC conference in Lesotho. The workshop included producing a daily newsletter and final bumper supplement on the conference, widely distributed in hard copy and via the Internet. These journalists formed a network called the SADC Gender and Media (GEM) Initiative that is committed to improving coverage on gender violence in SADC media.

As a follow up to the workshop, Gender Links, with the support of the Ford Foundation, and working in close collaboration with SADC GEM members, is convening training workshops at a provincial level on covering gender violence in South Africa.

Objectives

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Raise critical media awareness on the way in which gender-based violence is covered;
- Provide practical training on covering gender-based violence;
- Demonstrate more sensitive approaches to covering the issue through the production of a supplement, radio and TV reports;
- **Generate increased reportage on the issue, through course requirements for coverage that takes place after the training.**

DAY ONE

Opening

Mrs. Tembani
Deputy Director
Department of Welfare.

The following is the speech made by Mrs. Tembani when she opened the workshop on 11 March.

"Ladies and gentlemen and colleagues, it is a great pleasure and honour for me to have been asked to open today's training workshop for media practitioners and communicators on the coverage of violence against women in our province.

In opening this training, I would like to earnestly thank Gender Links, the Ford Foundation, the SADC Gender and Media Initiative and Interfund for the forethought of taking this initiative and making this workshop happen in this province.

The workshop could not have taken place at a more opportune time in our province. I am saying this because of the upsurge in the numbers of violence against women, babies and the girl-child in our province. I am saying the time is right because of the powerful role I know the media, both broadcasting and print, can play in raising awareness about, as well as challenging, the myths and perceptions that surround the problem.

Ladies and gentlemen, the media plays a vital and critical role in shaping public opinion and can be used to the best advantage, particularly in relation to violence against women. The media are better placed to break the silence around violence against women. Because of the extent and magnitude of its readership, which extends over the whole of South Africa, it reaches millions of South Africans on a daily basis. Therefore it is a critical partner in the fight against violence against women.

In February 1996, shortly after the Beijing conference on the life and status of women in our society, the South African government and all its departments, including the Department of Communications, faced the challenge of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all media policies and programmes and developing gender sensitive training material for media staff, promoting access for women in all areas and at all levels of media, establishing professional codes of conduct and regulations that aimed to address the negative and degrading depictions of women in the media and advertising. They also aimed to promote positive images of women as key actors in the development process, support women's education and equal opportunities at all levels. Research into all aspects of women and the media is needed to define the areas needing attention. In addition to this obligation, section J of the Platform of Action, which our government is obliged to implement, commits the Department of Communications to take up this

research. For me, today's training is the beginning of a process to translate the commitments to action plans. We have, in my opinion, to start somewhere. The workshop will have profound spin-offs in shaping the direction that the Eastern Cape media take in relation to violence against women.

We must admit, ladies and gentlemen, that reporting on violence against women still poses a challenge for many journalists whose training perhaps emphasized the presentation of cold hard facts and information in order to sell their particular station or publication. The training workshop will, to me, assist then in terms of making the much needed paradigm shift in terms of reporting from a human rights and gender perspective. The kind of reporting this paradigm calls for is a balance between cold facts and human beings' experience, without compromising the safety and integrity of survivors. It requires and calls for a sophisticated interpretation and understanding of the effects of abuse and rape on the survivor. It is reporting that is free from bias, that respects and does not denigrate and objectify human beings, their cultures and sexuality, for commercial gain.

Ladies and gentlemen, I hope that you will embrace this challenge and meet it head on and with these few words, I declare this training workshop opened. Finally I would further like to encourage you to forge partnerships with gender and violence activists as well as people with a keen interest in seeing this problem addressed because it is only through a united voice that we can beat this scourge.

Thank you.

INTRODUCTORY SESSIONS

What is gender equality?

Participants were asked to introduce themselves and to list the reasons why they thought that the workshop was important and why they had decided to attend it.

Many indicated their deep concerns about the high levels of violence against women and the failure of many sectors, including the media, to address it in effective and meaningful ways. Others also indicated their desire to learn more about gender and the linkage between gender inequality and violence against women.

A short session on the meaning of gender took place immediately after the introductions. Each participant was asked to think about the first time he or she could recall being thought of as a boy or a girl. During the session, it became clear from the examples given by the participants, that gender roles are often imposed by society. Examples given included stricter rules for girls who wanted to go out at night, domestic chores being seen as "women's work" and boys being told that they should not cry or show any weakness. This discussion allowed the participants to begin to understand gender as a social construct and to unpack the role that the media has played in contributing to these stereotypes of men and women.

The discussion also began to locate the various sites of gender inequality – it was clear from the examples that for many women, their first taste of inequality occurred within their families, and later in the workplace, and other public places.

Sharing of examples of media coverage

Participants had been requested to bring examples of press clippings to the workshop to share them with other participants.

It was concluded, after discussions of the various examples, that:

- Women were often stereotyped, with journalists choosing to describe what the woman was wearing or the colour of her hair, when these were not relevant to the story;
- Many stories failed to provide a gender perspective at all;
- Stories that were important to women were often not given prominence, but located in the body of the paper, often in a single paragraph.

RESEARCH ON THE MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE RAPE OF BABY TSHEPANG

As a result of the wide coverage of the rape of Baby Tshepang in the Northern Cape in 2001, Gender Links commissioned the Media Monitoring Project to analyse the coverage, with a view to highlighting the gender issues.

Baby Tshepang, a nine-month-old infant, was raped in late 2001. Initial reports indicated that she had been gang raped by six men, who were arrested shortly after the assault. Early reports also suggested that her mother, a minor, was not present at the time of the assault and could have been drunk at the time. Later, the six men were released when DNA tests failed to link them to the assault. A suspect was later arrested in March 2002.

HIV/AIDS AND GENDER VIOLENCE

Dr Elizabeth Musaba Empilisweni-Woodlands Healing Centre

(Empilisweni Centre was established as an AIDS and Health Education Centre two years ago in an impoverished rural area of the Eastern Cape, the poorest province in South Africa. Through discussion groups, workshops and educational campaigns, Empilisweni is reaching people in seventeen traditional Xhosa villages in Woodlands and surrounding areas).

Dr Musaba began her presentation by acknowledging the importance of the media as a terrain of struggle against HIV/AIDS and violence against women.

She provided a definition of violence against women:

"Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion and the arbitrary deprivation of liberty"

She stated that presently South Africa is experiencing twin, parallel epidemics – HIV/AIDS and violence against women. Although the links between the two are beginning to be made, there is a lack of research in these areas.

She then examined some of the key issues for women:

- Prevention – the Department of Health has prioritized the so-called ABC campaign (Abstain, Be Faithful, Condomise). Dr Musaba stated that this message is extremely problematic for women – many do not have a say in how and when sex happens and many experience violence in their intimate relationships. They are unable to negotiate an abstention from sex. The Be Faithful message did not address the issue of mutual fidelity or acknowledge that many women are faithful, while their male partners are not. The message also did not deal with whether women are in fact able to demand fidelity from their partners. The Condomise message was also predicated on the assumption that women are able to negotiate how sex happens, when often they are not. Dr Musaba also raised the relative unavailability of the female condom and its relative expense. She recommended that this message be re-thought to accommodate women.
- Voluntary testing and counseling – Dr Musaba highlighted some of the barriers that women experience in gaining access to these services – many have to get permission from their partners, and this may result in mistrust and violence within the relationship.

Dr Musaba indicated that it was important to understand the impact of gender-based violence on women's health as a whole, and not just in the context of HIV/AIDS. She said that it was possible to divide these consequences into two categories:

- I. Fatal – including femicide, HIV/AIDS, murder, suicide, maternal mortality;
- II. Non-fatal – including injuries, disabilities, disfigurement, unwanted pregnancies, miscarriages and related health consequences, anxiety, depression, eating disorders, alcoholism.

She emphasized the fact that the psychological consequences of gender-based violence are often ignored.

She then examined the health consequences of rape for women – these include sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancies, miscarriages, abortions and their related health consequences, emotional stress, including depression, substance abuse and suicide which in turn may lead to high-risk sexual behaviour, including multiple partners, high-risk sex and sex work.

Dr Musaba concluded that although strategies have been developed to deal with the issues that she raised, it appears that these have not been successful. She questioned why, with large amounts being spent on education and awareness raising, the figures, in respect of both HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence, continue to grow.

She suggested that it is important to deal with the root causes of epidemics and made the following recommendations:

- Women must be provided with accurate information and information that is specifically tailored to meet their needs;
- The impact of poverty cannot be discounted and women need to be economically independent – if they are not, they will continue to remain in dangerous relationships;
- Cultural and social factors must be addressed e.g. women are viewed as possessions of men and as instruments of sex; women are seen as having a lower status than men;
- Rape must be recognized as a vector for HIV infection – although some research has been conducted, it is insufficient; this area of research must be prioritized;
- Men's involvement – this is a critical challenge, particularly with regard to the prevention of HIV.

Summary of the discussion

- The question of the empowerment of rural women was raised and it was suggested that it is important to allow rural women to participate fully in deciding what their priorities were, before a programme was developed and implemented;
- The role of poverty and its impact on health and gender inequality was discussed;
- The role of men and the need to ensure that programmes are targeting them, was seen as a critical intervention, both in terms of alleviating gender based violence and in the HIV epidemic; the role of culture and how it impacts on the behaviour of men was also discussed;
- The question of the use of women's bodies to "save children" was also discussed and the need to ensure that women are able to make choices about their bodies and their health.

HIV/AIDS AND GENDER

By Liesl Gertholtz AIDS Law Project

Ms Gertholtz indicated that she wished to raise three key gender issues that have been highlighted in the AIDS epidemic:

- Issues around the transmission of HIV between mother and child – this debate has centred on the role of women as mothers who infect their unborn children, which may contribute to the stigmatization of women – there is a need to

broaden this debate to include the role of fathers as parents and some activists have suggested that mother-to-child transmission be renamed parent-to-child transmission; the question of women's choices has been neglected in the debate and little thought has been given to providing alternative options to pregnant women with HIV; a further, critical issue, particularly with regard to women with children is the question of women's access to treatment;

- Access to post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for rape survivors – participants were provided with a brief description of how PEP works and why it is an option that should be put to survivors of rape and sexual violence; it is also a gender issue since the majority of rape survivors are women and women are generally more biologically vulnerable to HIV infection; the convergence between the HIV and gender based violence epidemics has increased the risk of HIV infection for women;
- The burdens of women as a result of the HIV epidemic – it would seem that women bear the burden of the epidemic in ways that men do not – they continue to be responsible for the care of the sick and dying and for the orphans in their communities; their access to resources is more limited than men's and this has implications for decisions they make around their own health; the impact of the epidemic seems to be particularly severe for the girl-child, and may reverse gains made in terms of increasing her access to education and employment.

DAY TWO

CUSTOM, CULTURE AND RELIGION

Chief Mtsipa

Culture is not similar for all clans, each has its own customs and traditions that help define each and how to do things. Some common customs are very important for families as it guides them for example when a girl turns of age there is a ritual of "ukuthonjiswa" that she goes through. This ritual can be interpreted as expectations of womanhood. If the girl is found not to be a virgin then she has to be cleansed so that when she gets married she can be accepted though already "tainted". Self definitions and culture has changed because of other cultures thaw have internalized to our own detriment. We have forgotten our origins and who we are hence we see behavioural problems in our society. Even our attire reflects our loss of identity. The use of English as a foreign language forces us to forget our traditions as they sometimes do not have direct English translation.

Priests colonised us for they brought the bible and took the land, now we are left with the bible and they have our land. We were forced to retreat from our own kind of religion (Qamata) thinking that we shall have better opportunities under the western God, this is not so. Therefore it is very difficult to balance our culture and religion with the new conditions. It is important for young people to get back to their roots.

Question asked: What is the role of chiefs in the elimination of gender violence and involving women in structures?

Chief: Ward committees in which women now participate in especially as the quota system is being applied. There have been workshops that have helped the youth and the rural community to change attitudes though it is slow. Chiefs also participate and now know the need for transformation though it is necessary to have an an approach that persuades people but not forces them. Young people are very brilliant in the villages but the educated ones leave the villages and they are crucial to the development of the village. We need them to plough back their knowledge into the communities. Traditional authorities now intervene in family disputes even against men who beat up their wives. Socio-economic development plays a vital role in changing attitudes. Workshops facilitated help in the removal of western stereotypes of backward villagers. Women now sit in the imbizo, share experiences and there are now women chiefs. The "ukungenwa" custom (woman forced to marry a male relative after husband's death) is not so strong but done with agreement of woman who also does not want to leave the family.

Thenjiwe Mtintso
Chairperson
Gender Links

Ms Mtintso drew together the issues of gender and culture.

She spoke about the role that religion and culture can play, indicating that for many people it provides a map for their lives and a system of shared ideas and meanings. It was however important to recognize that culture was not a static thing, but rather was diluted and enriched by other influences, which was not necessarily a bad thing.

The importance of this workshop, complex topic under discussion, need to take discussions and training into our communities, important role of media, traditional leaders and community based organisations and NGO's.

CONCEPTS

Definitions

- **Religion** is a set of organised beliefs mediating a person's relationship with a supernatural power guiding behaviour. It is a system of faith and worship, providing believers with meaning, values and purpose in their lives with definitions of right or wrong/belief in a superhuman controlling power entitled to obedience (ukholo)
- **Culture** is a system of shared ideas/beliefs and meanings that underlie the way people live; way of life and totality of values of a particular group; learned behaviour passed on from generation to generation forming a whole body of beliefs, world view, self definition of a particular group/society translating into and informing their behaviour, attitudes, ideas, institutions etc. (creates boundaries between groups and societies). Culture contains several aspects e.g. modes of dress, activities etc; basic values and interpretations of nature, life and society; organising principles of society (customs)
- **Customs** are organising principles, rituals and activities of a particular cultural group.

There is a need for all of these – sense of identity, belonging, responsibility; respect means not giving food with a left hand or not sitting down when an elder needs a seat in the Xhosa culture. While this may be just a technical/practical issue but it identifies us Africans; an inbred respect for each other; e.g. ubuntu and communalism is not only a culture but a way of life which enables us to address socio-economic issues e.g. there are no "nkedama" (orphans) amongst Africans, the community is supposed to take care of those who have lost their parents even if the community itself is in dire poverty, we share the little that we have. People must believe that it is important to be one thing and not the other even amongst our neighbours we choose how we bring up our children. The totality of what makes us and is fundamental to us as a group not in a

way that undermines the others; it also gives us a map of the sense of good and bad, right and wrong.

How they had been used – abuse under colonialism

The current context – a society in transition, what may seem bad or oppressive to some may not be so to the in group, thus there is need to understand other's culture. But culture is not static it is influenced by the changing society, socio-economic conditions etc; what used to be good during feudal systems cannot hold under capitalism. RSA needs negotiated values there should be no superior or inferior culture or the need to mould and build from each other's positive elements. We need to move away from using culture or misinterpreting it as an excuse for abuse/domination/discrimination against others.

Relationship between the above and gender oppression

Where do you draw the line between the obvious human need for people to indulge those tendencies that give them an identity and for society to regulate itself in an equitable manner: the baseline is HUMAN RIGHTS. Gender oppression is the denial of women's rights.

Examples of some of these.

- Mpozolo and my aunt (how she was forced to be married to my uncle under the pretext of culture and the so called "ngena custom").
- Women as ancestors (the story of Nise Malange – her mother in death was not accepted as an ancestor)
- Denying women freedom of movement e.g. amongst Xhosas, women are not allowed to move near the "ubuhlanti" (kraal) and yet this is where meetings of the community take place and if women can't get near there how can they participate in community discussions? Denial of women to eat certain foodstuffs.
- Marriage and lobola are both positive and negative
 - historically sealing the relationship between the two clans, extending friendship and the role of the cattle;
 - male control and authority over women, buying her productive capacity (the story of Nomsebenzi my cousin from Goqwana);
 - marital fidelity from women and polygamy for men;
 - subsume your husband's identity – name and surname change;
 - women as appendages and subordinates of not only the men they marry but of all the men in the family including even their own sons.
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- Mores/ izithethe and songs (taken as natural or as our tradition)
 - umakoti ngowethu, uzakusiphekela (this daughter in law is ours she is going to cook and work for us)
 - the in-laws and attitudes – owning umakoti
- Xhosa examples but universal experiences – international and within SA

Relationship between religion, culture, custom and tradition and violence against women.

Abuse is not basic to any culture, yet culture and custom is used to defend abuse in most of societies.

- Learned behaviour is interpreted as culture or custom.
- Examples: uNojayiti Wam, virginity tests; women burnt as witches; dudlu nongenankomo uyayidla inyama (sexual harassment taken as a norm or even tradition/culture)
- Migrants who beat up their women upon returning home from the urban areas under the belief that in the period of the husband's absence she definitely must have done something that warrants her being beaten.
- Young men who believe that they have to discipline their girlfriends and young girls who believe that if their partners beat them it is a sign of love.
- Women who earn their own income being forced to give it to their husbands to distribute since they as women cannot make decisions about expenditures or anything in the family. Men who even beat up their wives because they do not give them the money they earn or decide on how to use it.
- 'Privatisation and commodification of women' e.g. can't get out of the house without permission of the men and conjugal rights (meaning sex) forced on her.

The role of the Media

- Media mirrors society
- Media plays a positive and negative role but it is not a passive conveyor belt, stories express the values and culture of the journalist; policies reflect all the above;
- It has boundless possibilities to transform and help transformation of society
- It reinforces stereotypes, which socially define roles of women.

What's to be done?

- Redefinition of culture, religion and custom.
- Public education especially on human rights and changing culture and environment.
- Gender training.
- Interaction and training of traditional leaders.
- Transformation of the socializing institutions e.g. family, schools, churches, workplaces, media and society.
- Transforming the media.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Joan Marshall
Director
Lifeline

(Lifeline offers 24 hour telephonic counseling and has counseled 58,000 people. Recently, it has begun to offer face-to-face counseling.)

Ms Marshall began her presentation by sharing the words of a song with the participants:

*"I began to lose control
I'm so in love I'm willing to hurt you.
I did not mean to hurt you.
I'm just so jealous
I did not mean to hurt to hurt you
I'm sorry that I made you cry.
I'm just so jealous"*

She spoke about the cycle of violence that often manifests itself in abusive relationships – a violent incident will happen; this will be followed by the so-called honeymoon period when the perpetrator will be remorseful and the victim will believe that the violence will not happen again; the tension then begins to build again until another violent incident takes place. Often the level of violence will increase with each incident.

Ms Marshall indicated that this cycle was a difficult pattern to break and also a very stressful one for women to live in. Women would walk on eggshells for days, weeks and months, knowing that a violent incident was going to happen. They also know that even when it is over, the cycle will start again. Many women do want to change their lives, but during the honeymoon period, it is very difficult to leave. The perpetrator will apologise, bring gifts and make promises and it is here that many women go back into the relationship. This makes counseling of survivors of domestic violence very difficult.

It is a complex situation and there are no easy solutions. Some organizations have tried to find ways to deal with the cycle e.g. in Port Elizabeth, one organization has a rule that any woman coming into the shelter can only go there once.

If a woman is going to get out of an abusive relationship and stay out, she needs to be empowered. If the cycle has been going on for a long time, she may feel guilty and all these things need to be addressed. Counseling must be viewed as long term, not as a quick fix. There is no quick fix. The survivor needs to be encouraged to join a programme that will keep her on the road for years to come and which will ensure that she does not get out of one abusive relationship into another.

It is also important to recognize that domestic violence occurs in all sections of society. Wealthy women may simply get better gifts during the honeymoon period. It is in every society. A secret that we all keep.

Ms Marshall also indicated that it is important to acknowledge that women can also be perpetrators.

TESTIMONY OF A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVOR Ntombizodwa Skepu

Skepu got married in 1989 and her husband took her to school to finish matric. The abuse began in 1991 after she had a child. Her husband started sleeping around, gave

money away to girlfriends. He used to physically and verbally abuse her and at times he never came home. Her neighbours tried to help but she could not leave because the church told her not to question but serve her husband. Hence the reason for accepting the abuse. She was abused even when she was subservient to her husband.

She then decided to move out her house when the husband wanted to abuse the child and started her own business selling liquor. The husband used to take all the proceeds made. He then moved out to stay with his girlfriend. When the second child was born, she hoped that her life would improve but instead it deteriorated. When angry, her husband used to hang himself. Our child then began imitating his father's behaviour when he was in trouble. At one time he hanged himself for real but the neighbours were there to help him. Her husband was an attention seeker for he always got into fights and often pretended to be sick so as not to go to works. She was always there to take care of him.

Skepu then experienced health problems due to stress and was advised by someone to seek help at Masimanyane. Her husband was referred to a counselor but he refused but he finally went with his wife. This proved to be ineffective for he said she was cruel and vindictive as she was narrating her story to a Masimanyane counselor. She went on to say that she never had a honeymoon period during her marriage for she was constantly assaulted. The husband used to violence charges against him from other women but as his wife she always protected him and provided an alibi. Even at his workplace, she would call and tell them lies about his whereabouts. The husband then stayed with another woman but always came back to threaten her with a gun.

They were married for thirteen years and for five years there was no sex between them and she tolerated this because of church teachings. She feared contracting HIV/AIDS for the husband was having multiple sexual relations. At one time her husband was arrested and she had to run around for money to free him. Prior to this arrest, she had filed a case against that went to court but he never showed up. One night he came and forced a man into some house and claimed that he was having an affair with her. The following night he burst into this man's house and found a sleeping couple and shot at them. The case is still pending. He was even suspicious of his male friends accusing them of having an affair with the wife.

Skepu moved to another house and he went to different houses looking for her and assaulted anyone who stood in his way. She feared that he was going to kill her. There were murder charges pressed against him. As wife, Ntombizodwa went to borrow R500 for his bail. Upon release his release, he went to Ntombizodwa's home and was refused entry. It was then that he began to assault everyone in the house. Police were called and he threw himself in front of cars. He was admitted to hospital and when Ntombizodwa went to visit him, she found his girlfriend at his bedside and a fight ensued. When he was discharged from the hospital, Ntombizodwa was the one who nursed him back and her husband used to mix tablets with liquor in attempts of killing himself. Her husband retired from work and got his financial packages but he never told her about the money he got. At times he used to ask her to withdraw money for him but never supported her or their children.

The husband later disappeared to Port Elizabeth where he has two other children. Till this day he has never supported his children with her. He keeps threatening to kill her because of the interdicts and warrants against him. The South African Police Service is not doing anything. Her husband came back to their house and took all the furniture and wanted to reconcile with Ntombizodwa on condition that she buys him a gun. She fears that he wants to kill her and he is falsely accusing her of assaulting him. She was arrested for that allegation. She was kept in the cells for four days, the police refused to take a statement from her claiming she was a nuisance. They verbally abused. Later she found out that these policemen were friends of her husband. Her neighbours came to her rescue.

Her case against her husband is continually postponed. The one policeman who verbally abused wants to have a relationship with her yet he is her husband's friend. The magistrate released her husband and yet she and her sister were found guilty of assault. As a result she does not trust the police anymore for when she reports cases of assault by her husband, the police do not believe her. Yet when her husband makes false allegations against her it is taken seriously.

SEXUAL OFFENCES AND THE LAW

Detective-Inspector Donnie Smith South African Police Services

(The unit was established in 1994, with a staff complement of four people, specifically to investigate child abuse. It is now called the Sexual Offences Unit and it is also involved in education and awareness raising).

Detective-Inspector Smith related an incident where a child who had witnessed domestic violence, began to act out this behaviour and she indicated that this is a constant danger for these children.

She defined child abuse as physical, sexual and emotional, indicating that emotional abuse is particularly difficult for the police to deal with, although they are aware that it goes hand in hand with physical and sexual abuse.

The police investigate a range of offences, some created by the Child Care Act e.g. abandonment and neglect and some common law crimes e.g. rape and indecent assault.

She indicated that the work does require dedication and commitment and members of the SAPS have to deal with both child victims and child perpetrators. There are many difficulties that arise with child perpetrators.

It is important for children to know their rights and to be treated with respect. They need to be taught the difference between "good" and "bad" touching and the correct names for their genitalia. It is also important for children to know that they can talk about abuse – this may be very difficult for parents, as they may feel guilty. However,

children who feel that they cannot talk about the abuse may begin to feel that they will not be believed or that they will be punished for talking about what happened to them.

Detective-Inspector Smith spoke about some of the myths that surround children in the criminal justice system. These include that view that children always tell lies and that they make bad witnesses. She also spoke of the measures that can and should be taken to ensure that children are able to testify in court – these include an understanding of the trauma that they have experienced and the use of closed circuit televisions and testifying through an intermediary.

Ursula Crisp
Legal Co-coordinator
Masimanyane

The law regarding rape is in a state of flux – it was reformulated some time ago by the Law Commission but has not yet been implemented. There is also a concern amongst women’s organizations that some of the good features of the draft bill will be removed from the final version that is sent to Parliament.

The present position is that the cautionary rule with regard to the testimony of women in rape cases has been scrapped. However, it still applies to cases where there is a single witness – this means that the evidence of the single witness must be treated with caution. In the majority of cases involving rape or sexual assault, the victim will be the only witness. This rule has meant that some rapists may be acquitted because of a lack of corroborating evidence.

Cases involving children suffer from a similar predicament – the courts also regard the evidence of children with caution – there is a belief that children embellish and exaggerate. It is therefore very important that, in cases involving children, the forensic evidence is properly collected and presented to the court.

A district surgeon should collect the forensic evidence, but the prosecutor must call for it. If the prosecutor does not call for the evidence, it will not be led. Prosecutors however do not always call for the evidence. It is also important to make sure that the doctor who collects that evidence knows how to do this – many do not.

Ms Crisp also raised the question of appropriate sentences. Judicial officers need to be sensitized to gender issues – many men have sympathy for a male perpetrator and are reluctant to impose a prison sentence. The most recent and glaring example of an inappropriate sentence was the Foxcroft judgement where a father was sentenced leniently because he had raped his daughter and the judge therefore did not regard him as danger to society.

Finally, Ms Crisp raised the issue of the impact of child rape and child abuse on adults, which is severe. Ms Crisp gave as an example a woman of 37 who was raped by her father when she was eleven. Her family refused to believe her and as a result, she is a drug addict and has also been in prison on a number of occasions. It is very important

for survivors of child abuse to know that their families, and particularly their mothers, acknowledge that the abuse did take place.

Summary of discussion

The discussion was enriched by the presence of two other members of the SAPS who had joined the workshop for this session.

- The need for information was raised as a concern for survivors of violence – many do not know what to expect from the criminal justice system; it is especially important for survivors to receive regular progress reports from the SAPS;
- The role of male investigators in sexual assault cases was discussed – in certain circumstances, the unavailability of a female officer can be problematic for a survivor of violence, although it was noted that there are male members of the SAPS who respond sensitively to survivors; the ideal situation would be for survivors to be able to choose who they wish to give a statement to;
- The need for an education programme for children was discussed – Detective-Inspector Smith outlined the work that she does in schools, but agreed that many children are afraid of the SAPS; this year, they will be prioritizing schools in rural areas; the problems with under-staffing and over-work are barriers to these programmes;
- The length of time taken to finalise sexual offences cases was discussed, with many participants raising this as a key concern for women who choose to report rape and other crimes;
- The position of mentally challenged survivors of violence was raised as a concern;
- The question of bail and how the procedure worked was raised, as there is a perception that bail tends to favour the accused.

DAY THREE

The participants were sent out to conduct field research for the stories they were going to write.

Participants were given a choice of visiting one of the following:

- The home of a person living with HIV/AIDS;
- The offices of the Child Protection Unit of the SAPS; and
- The One Stop Shop in Mdantsane.

A small number of participants elected to conduct their own field research.

THE ROLE OF MEN

Christopher Doans Masimanyane Women Support Center

Masimanyane started in January 1996 as a crisis and support center for women victims of domestic violence, rape and sexual assault. The first facility offering a gender specific service to victims and survivors of gender based violence in the region. The vision of the organisation is to contribute towards a safe, free, secure and gender sensitive environment where violence against women is completely eradicated and Women's Human Rights are protected. Programmes extended to include crisis intervention, public education and training, community outreach programmes, networking, research and advocacy and lobbying. The organization has a legal co-coordinator that provides information to communities about the law and domestic violence.

Why work with men?

There is a widespread belief among women activists of the need to include men in the fight against gender violence.

It has become a politically correct thing to do since we began men's project. Major problems have developed and the following are examples of difficulties faced:

- "Ag shame" phenomenon – poor men oppressed by implementation of women's human rights, we understand why they do the things they do. Women are said to have taken too much power away from men and so we need to excuse men when they are unable to control themselves and beat their wives.
- Men do not listen to women's experiences.
- Men often take over the process.
- There is over utilization of scarce resources.
- Lack of social analysis regarding women's position in society and experiences.

Beliefs and operating principles of the programme

Pro-feminist:

- acknowledgement that men have power and privilege in a male dominated society.
- Patriarchal values and belief systems that oppress women and children and dehumanize men themselves.
- Need to challenge that power.

Anti-sexist:

- sexist ideas and practices effect both women ad men, even if very differently.

Anti-patriarchal

- male dominated societies
- hierarchy of men over women
- also hierarchy of some men over other men.
- Social organisation and ideologies that explain, give meaning to, justify, and replenish a created reality of male dominance.

Anti-masculinist:

- clearly male affirmative, just as we are female affirmative
- men's agenda must not only support the visions of feminist women and the needs of women and girls, but must also enhance the lives of boys and men, that will allow men to be better partners, fathers, caregivers and nurturers.

Accountability:

- to women,
- to those women who have been hurt because of the abuse,
- to the wider communities of which they are part, and
- to justice, welfare and other statutory authorities.

Responsibility:

- choice that men make to exert power over others and is therefore a men's issue.
- Choice to remain silent in the face of violence.

Respect:

- do not engage in anti-men language.
- counter-productive to our ability to engage with men.
- interventions that are disrespectful to either party inadvertently contribute to the maintenance and even exacerbation of such behaviour.
- do not believe that all men engage in acts of violence or are abusive to women.
- Provide a space for men to challenge traditional ideas of masculinity and to make their voice heard in opposition to violence.

Social analysis:

- social systems (include cultural, traditional, religious, political systems) support the private and institutional oppression of women.

- Necessary to challenge societal values and address political, cultural, legal, spiritual and economic concerns.

ROLE OF MEN

Nicholson Mkohlakali

Planned Parenthood Association of South Africa

PPASA has been in existence since 1936 and operates in eight provinces. It has recently introduced the Men as Partners, MAP programme that hopes to change men's attitudes and reduce gender violence. Issues covered include STD, HIV, unwanted pregnancies and even cervical cancer, as this is also a concern of men. Training includes focus group discussions: "men tend to listen to men". Truck drivers have been especially targeted. Twenty five peer educators have been trained. PPSA is working closely with school children and programmes such as Love Life. PPSA measures its impact through community profiling entailing finding the available resources (clinics, police stations, sanitation, water resources etc) focus group discussions, pre and post workshops (looking at male attitudes and behaviour in the form of questionnaires) and evaluation surveys conducted by outside experts.

DAY FOUR

Participants were tasked with writing stories and producing radio programmes that were in a gender sensitive manner. The written stories were featured in a newsletter. Facilitators from Gender Links and the IAJ assisted them.

DAY FIVE

Reflection on field visits, production of stories

Participants emphasized the importance of gathering facts before writing about gender violence based stories. It is important to adopt a sensitive approach when interviewing gender violence survivors. They also mentioned that when dealing with government departments or institutions one has to be sensitive to their respective rules and regulations. For community radio, technical training is essential for recording of interviews.

They made the following comments about the newsletter and the community radio programmes that were produced:

- The newsletter is well packaged and shows that stories were thoroughly researched
- Stories that are newsworthy should be placed on the front page.
- Community radio programmes were well presented through the use of different voices and complementary music. Presentation of information was objective yet persuasive.

WAY FORWARD

Gender Links promised to make copies of the newsletter available to the participants' organisations. The radio programmes will be edited and sent back to radio stations for programme use. The participants committed themselves to form a network for communicators on Gender Violence for the Eastern Cape region. As per course requirements, participants are to produce two-stories/radio programmes post the training.

EVALUATION

Participants filled an evaluation form. Analysis of these is attached to **ANNEX D**.

CLOSURE

Department of Welfare

Mrs Tembani

Ladies and gentlemen, we have come to the end of our five-day training workshop for media practitioners and communicators. As the department of Social Development, I would like to reiterate our excitement about these kinds of training forums for our province. I would have like to see more people from the editorial benches who determine what the final product will look like. Though this is the case, we are still excited about the workshop for the simple reason that it means an increase in the number of partners who will be engaged in addressing the problem of violence against women. The media is not just any partner as you have over the past five days been constantly reminded through your interactions and interrogations of some news briefs and news broadcasts. It is next to one's family of birth perhaps the most powerful socializing force that could help shift societal mindsets that have become impediments to the advancement and empowerment of women. It is a force that could facilitate a smooth transition.

Having said that I would like to briefly take you back to the purpose of why we had the workshop: it was basically to take stock of the way we have perhaps un/intentionally helped to reinforce, perpetuate and perhaps maintain the present balance of power be it men or women. I truly hope you have successfully managed to achieve and gained better insight into how you have done this. I also hope you have been assisted to develop and design implementation interventions that would begin to address your reporting style in terms of the angle your stories take.

Ladies and gentlemen this is not going to be easy, it will take time to undo and unlearn a lifetime of ingrained values and behaviours. You are engaged in the process of change that is much needed by society in terms of masculine and feminine construction, which renders women to all kinds of abuses. I would suggest that all of you before leaving exchange telephone numbers and emails so as to form a partnership that will meet quarterly or whenever suitable that will monitor the way gender violence is reported. Also to monitor gains that result in you advocacy and to give advice to each other.

In closing, I would like to thank you participants for taking time off your busy schedules to make this workshop feasible. I thank Gender Links for organizing this workshop and for its excellent facilitation. Organisations that made presentation during the course of the workshop must be thanked as well for providing us with in-depth presentations of their work.

ANNEX A: PARTICIPANTS

*Ursula Crisp works as a legal officer for MASIMANYANE. Contact details phone: (043) 743 9169, fax: 743 9176, maswsc@iafrica.com

Tembela Dolonga works as counselor at LIFELINE. Contact details 072 309 0178, fax: (043) 743 7266

Zanele Dundu works for MASIMANYANE. Contact details phone: (043) 743 9169, fax: (043) 743 9176, maswsc@iafrica.com

Sue-Anne Eastrace works as a social worker for NICRO. Contact details phone (043) 722 4123, fax: (043) 743 6270

B. Fihlani works as a youth volunteer at CREATIVE YOUNG WOMEN. Contact details 083 369 3497, fax: (043) 743 9743

Justine Gerardy works as a reporter for the DAILY DISPATCH. Contact details phone: (043) 702 2251, fax: (043) 743 5155, justineg@dispatch.co.za

Patrick Godana works as a life skills trainer for the PPASA. Contact details phone: (041) 487 2672, fax: (041) 484 4083

Precious Joni works for KHULULEKA COMMUNITY MEDIA. Contact details 082 429 4719, fax: (043) 733 2747, npjoni@ananzi.co.za

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Nokulunga Mtwaphi works as a radio journalist for IMONTI FM. Contact details phone: (043) 743 1593, fax: (043) 743 1593, imonti@mailbox.co.za

Pakama Ngconjana works as a radio journalist for UNITRA COMMUNITY RADIO. Contact details phone: (047) 502 2829, fax: (047) 502 2801, npaks@yahoo.com

Ayabulela Ngoqo works as a radio journalist for IMONTI FM. Contact details phone: (043) 743 1593, fax: (043) 743 1593, imonti@mailbox.co.za

*Vuyelwa Spaidile works as a radio journalist for VUKANI COMMUNITY RADIO. Contact details phone: (047) 877 0204, fax: (047) 877 0143

Nokuthula Tshibo works as a radio journalist for KHANYA FM. Contact details phone: (047) 491 0466, fax: (047) 491 0466

ANNEX B: PROGRAMME

TIME	EVENT	WHO INVOLVED
DAY ONE	MONDAY 11 MARCH	
8:30-9:00	Opening	Department of Welfare Mrs Tembani
9:00-9:30	Introduction and icebreaker	
9:30-10:30	What is gender equality? Why is it important to the media	Liesl Gertholtz
10:30-11:00	TEA	
11:00-12:00	Sharing examples of coverage of gender violence in the South African media	All participants
12:00-13:00	Media Monitoring Project Research on baby rape	Liesl Gertholtz
13:00-14:00	LUNCH	
14:00-15:00	HIV/AIDS and Gender Violence	Dr Musaba (Empilisweni AIDS Education & Training Centre) Liesl Gertholtz (AIDS Law Project)
15:00-15:30	TEA	
15:30-17:00	Group discussions based on the training manual	Liesl Gertholtz
DAY TWO	TUESDAY 12 MARCH	
8:30-9:00	Eyes and ears; recap	Liesl Gertholtz
9:00-10:00	Custom, Culture and Religion	Thenjiwe Mtintso (Gender Links) Chief Mtsipa
10:00-10:30	Group discussions based on the training manual	GL Facilitator
10:30-11:00	TEA	
11:00-12:30	Domestic Violence	Joan Marshall (Director, LifeLine) Survivor of domestic violence
12:30-13:00	Group discussions based on the training manual	GL Facilitators
13:00-14:00	LUNCH	
		Donnie Smith, Child Protection Unit, South

14:00-15:00	Sexual Offences	African Police Services Ursula Crisp, Masimanyane
15:00-15:30	Group discussions based on the training manual	GL Facilitators
15:30-16:00	TEA	
16:00-17:00	Closure and logistical arrangements for the field work	GL Facilitator
DAY THREE	WEDNESDAY 13 MARCH	
8:30-13:30	FIELD EXERCISES Visit to the home of a person living with HIV/AIDS Child Protection Unit Offices One Stop Centre	Buyiswa Mhambi Superintendent Calitz Mrs Mbabu
13:30-14:30	LUNCH	
15:00-16:00	Role of men in combating gender violence	Nicholson Mkohlakali PPASA Christopher Harper Masimanyane
16:00-16:30	TEA	
16:30-17:00	Group discussions based on the training manual	GL Facilitator
DAY FOUR	THURSDAY 14 MARCH	
8:30-16:00	WRITING, PRODUCTION AND EDITING STORIES AND RADIO PROGRAMMES	GL and IAJ
DAY FIVE	FRIDAY 15 MARCH	
8:30-9:00	Eyes and ears; recap	GL Facilitator
9:00-11:00	Feedback on stories	All participants
11:00-11:30	TEA	
11:30-12:30	CLOSURE	Department of Welfare Mrs Tembani
12:30-13:00	LUNCH	

ANNEX C: STORIES

Rape survivors denied AZT for "political reasons"

By: Zanele Dundu / Tembela Dolonga

There is a key missing link in the chain of services offered by the Thutuzela one stop center for rape survivors at Cecilia Makiwane Hospital.

Unlike a similar project in the Western Cape, survivors of rape are not informed of the possibilities of HIV AIDS, nor are they offered AZT, which has been shown to greatly reduce the chances of AIDS infection if administered soon after the ordeal. Ironically, Cecilia Makiwane is one of the pilot projects in the province for the issuing of nevirapine to HIV positive pregnant mothers.

In the Manenburg, Cape Town, Thutuzela project rape survivors are informed about the dangers of HIV/AIDS and are automatically given AZT. In contrast, Eastern Cape rape survivors are denied this right. According to Gcobani Ntshingana, senior project planner from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), "this is not easy due to party politics in this province."

Project planner Thembeke Mbadu noted that while rape survivors are still not being examined at the one stop center due to delays in getting this up and running (see accompanying story), they are examined in the trauma unit, but are not given AZT. For example, a 17 year old school girl who was gang raped on the night of 28 January 2002 went to Cecilia Makiwane hospital for examination and was refused the life- saving drug.

Mbadu noted that to prove that a rapist knowingly infected a victim with HIV it is necessary to undergo a test immediately after the ordeal to prove that the victim was negative at the time, and then a few months later, when the virus would show up in tests, if the infection took place as a result of the rape.

The law regards knowingly infecting a person with HIV/AIDS as tantamount to murder, meaning that the rape sentences that can be obtained in such cases are even stiffer than usual. But advice about the kind of evidence that would be required in court to prove this is also not being systematically administered to rape survivors at the centre.

Several attempts to reach the acting MEC for health, Max Mamase for comment proved unsuccessful. Expressing outrage at the failure by the government to offer adequate legal advice and medication to survivors of rape Tembi Zungu of the National Association for People Living with HIV AIDS (NAPWA) pointed out that AZT is issued to health workers for needle and stick injuries yet not to women who might be exposed to the virus through coercive sex. She called for a collective effort to follow this up on this with the directorate of health in the Eastern cape.

Masimanyane public educator Zanele Dundu said the center which provides support to survivors of gender violence plans to launch an advocacy campaign for the automatic issuing of AZT to rape victims. This would involve meeting with health minister EC, networking with stakeholders on the issue and disseminating information.

Still more than one stop at rape crisis centre

By Justine Gerardy

EAST LONDON: A multi-disciplinary rape crisis centre based in Mdantsane is still not fully operational eight months after the high profile launch of one of the few pilot projects in South Africa to help make the justice system work for victims of gender violence. But officials say the Thuthuzela centre should be functioning within a month after problems of red tape lack of personnel and delays over the purchasing of medical equipment are ironed out.

"This area is severely under-resourced. There are no material or human resources. Although there is commitment, commitment on its own is not enough," Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) senior project planner Gcobani Ntshingana said during a recent visit to the Mdantsane Thuthuzela centre. The BJA is an NGO attached to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Development that aims to "make South Africa's criminal justice system more effective and more humane."

The center, based on a similar concept developed by the BJA in Cape Town, aims to strengthen rape investigations with a "one-stop" facility at the Child and Family Centre at Cecilia Makiwane Hospital with transport facilities, doctors, police, counselors and prosecutors under one roof. But operations halted last year due to various weak links in the service chain.

Presently the Mdantsane Thuthuzela center only offers weekly medical examinations of child rape survivors. Police officers for child abuse cases and general counseling services are also available as these form part of the hospital's Child and Family center established in 1996. But there is no dedicated prosecutor. Ambulance facilities are sporadic.

The Bureau recently purchased the centre's medical equipment after delays by hospital management in doing so. This includes a machine that can provide evidence of swelling and tearing in rape cases critical in establishing the non- consensual nature of such cases.

Gcobani said there was commitment to have doctors on call despite a scarcity of staff. The prosecutor vacancy is being addressed after a prosecutor hired last year failed to fill the post.

The option of purchasing a vehicle for the centre is being considered due to bureaucratic delays about the operational areas of government ambulances in the area.

"Now that we have medical equipment we are under pressure to have all systems in place within a month," he said. Ntshingana stressed that good co-ordination is central to the concept of one-stop facilities for sexual offenses. This includes regular meetings around case assessments, implementation, and co-ordination and between the investigator, prosecutor and survivor.

HIV/AIDS – VIOLENCE AND POVERTY

By Muriel Nomachule Kutuka

Impuma Koloni yeyona ndawo ethwaxwa kakhulu sisifo esingumbulalazwe – UGAWULAYO. Ndiye ndatyelela e Duncan Village apho ndithethe noThembeka ominyaka iyi 47 olixhoba lika Gawulayo. Usichazele ukuba uminyaka mithandathu egula sesisifo. Ingxaki ahangabezana nazo, akanabantu bamxhasayo, bamphekele, bamhlambe, bamcocele nendlu. Izizalwane zakhe ziyagula (umama, utata nonyana wakhe) Uhlukuyezwa ngumntakwabo mihla l, uyamthuka amfanise nayo yonke into ekhoyo emhlabeni. Akukho nanto yokutya, namayeza akafumaneki esibhedlele.

Utshilo ukuthi uxholele ukufa kunokuba ahlupheke ngoluhlobo. Ziye zaphalala kum inyembezi kuba ibikoko kuqala ndihlangana nexhoba lesisifo. Ebekwimeko engentle empilweni kangakokuba uqhinile ukuba wehle kakhulu emzimbeni kwaye akanamandla. Ikanti ilele eziko.

Ngudade wabo yedwa omxhasayo emane efika ezomselisa amayeza. Yingxuba kaxaka le engenaisombululo kwaphela. Elikahaya liyafuna ukuhanjelwa kakhulu, neengcebiso ziyafuneka. Urulumente wethu siyamcela asibonelele ngoku kulandelayo:

- Athenge amachiza okunceda abantu abane sisifo,
- Ongeze indawo ze Counselling,
- Aqeqeshe abantu ngesisifo,
- Akhe ikhaya labantu abagula kakhulu sesifo ngoba emakhaya abamkeleki,
- Axhase ngemali amaziko ajongene nesisifo.

Nowhere to hide: Research reveals gruesome abuse of sex workers

By Pat Godana*

Violence against sex workers is one of the most common, yet unreported human rights violations of our time. The fact that sex work is illegal makes it virtually impossible for sex workers to obtain redress.

Recent research on the plight of sex workers in the Eastern Cape by the Planned Parenthood Association of South Africa (PPASA) shows that our province is no exception to this global trend. PPASA is an NGO that focuses on Sexual and Reproductive Health Services. Part of our work is to ensure that our services are accessible to high- risk groups.

The research included focus group discussions with 43 sex workers of different ages and race groups in PE Central Area, St. Georges Strand, Coega, Cookhouse, and Cradock. These are some of the stories and observations made by the sex workers, who asked to remain anonymous for security reasons:

- A sex worker who works at St. Georges Strand recounted how she was raped by a police officer at Swartskops Police Station within the police cells and forced to wipe herself using a dirty mop.

- A policeman on duty in Port Elizabeth raped an 18-year-old sex worker at gunpoint.
- A truck driver forced a commercial sex worker in Cookhouse out of a moving truck resulting in her losing a leg.
- Sex workers are often stabbed and robbed by criminal elements.
- They are frequently labeled and stigmatised by health workers.
- The stigma makes them miserable and causes them to resort to alcohol and drug abuse.
- They are forced by their clients not to use condoms with the hope of increasing payment, thus lead to the rapid spread of the Sexually Transmitted Infections including HIV/AIDS.

Plan Parenthood Association is committed in ensuring that the sexual and reproductive health rights guaranteed by the Constitution are respected for every individual in this country. As part of its activities, PPSA is mobilising groups at high risk, helping them to organise and providing training on HIV/AIDS, safe sex, gender and power relations, as well as life skills in general.

Godana is Provincial Life Skills Master Trainer, researcher for groups at high risk, and men as partners programme facilitator for the Planned Parenthood Association of South Africa.

Breaking the silence **By Nosisa Mbewu and Hombokazi Yini**

For 13 years Ntombizodwa Skepu suffered emotional, physical, sexual and financial abuse at the hands of her husband. He had marital affairs in the neighbourhood, came in and out of the home at will, and accused her of assaulting him, leading to her being jailed for four days.

Her family offered no support, saying that she had to make her marriage work. The church advised her to always submit herself to her husband and never to ask questions about where he had been.

Finally, when her husband threatened to shoot both her and her neighbour, whom he accused of having an affair with his wife, she went to Masimanyane for help. The centre advised her how to get a protection order and gave her counseling and support throughout.

After her husband opted for a severance package and moved to Port Elizabeth, Skepu stayed behind in East London. Things are tough: her only child, who is living with her

grandmother, is ill. She supports her unemployed sister's four children on her meager earnings as a domestic worker. At times it pains her to have to do the menial tasks of another woman. But the family she works for is supportive and she has hope for her future.

Speaking at a communications training workshop on covering gender violence convened by Gender Links, Skepu said she did not mind having her name used and telling her story if it would help to make a difference to other women who have not yet found a way of breaking the silence.

According to NICRO Victim Support Unit officer Nosiphiwo Gasu, breaking the silence on domestic violence is critical to dealing with this scourge. Some eighty percent of the cases she sees are the result of violence in the home. These are especially high on payday, when men get drunk and abuse their partners.

Of the 20 clients per day that Masimanyane, a women's support centre in East London sees, approximately eight concern domestic violence. Nonkosi Kweleta, a counselor at Masimanyane said " as a counselor one must understand the clients problem and offer support to the client. The way in which one approaches and responds to a client is also very important. One of the main services that Masimanyane offers is helping clients to apply for protection orders and refer cases to court."

According to Kweleta, Masimanyane offers workshops to empower women. They work closely with the police, psychologists and other professionals. Masimanyane runs awareness campaigns including radio talks shows, talks in churches and coverage in the mainstream media. Masimanyane's main message to women suffering from domestic violence is to report their cases, and to the rest of the community to break the silence in which gender violence finds a fertile breeding ground.

Femicide: Getting away with murder? By Buyiswa Mhambi *

A young female doctor tried to end her abusive marriage and left her marital home under the guise of reconciliation negotiations. Her estranged husband entered her home and strangled her in the bath.

Recently a young woman from Mdantsane was shot dead by her boyfriend after she laid a charge of rape against him. The police reportedly visited him in the school where he works but failed to charge him with rape and to arrest him.

A young Buffalo Flats woman was scared to leave her marriage because she believed her partner's threats to hunt her down and kill her if she did so. She died of brain hemorrhaging caused by repeated assault. The perpetrator went unpunished.

A shockingly high proportion of women in abusive relationships end up getting killed by their partners. Here are some of the signs that a case of femicide may be on its way:

- Women being afraid to leave their marriages;

- The husband moving in and out of the house at will, making demands and maintaining control despite his frequent absences;
- The direct threat, that if "you leave, I will kill you";
- The extended family taking the side of the man;
- The woman being blamed for the breakdown in the marriage;
- The community refusing to intervene in what they regard as a "domestic issue".

Women in the Eastern Cape who find themselves in this situation can go to:
 Masimanyane Women Support Centre [East London / Mdantsane / Scenery Park]
 Telephone: 043 – 7439169 / 7439241 / 7600342 / 7337006
 045 – 8432110 [Catchall]
 047 – 4912050 [Butterworth]
 0832480176 [Peddie]

Buyiswa Mhambi is a social worker from Masimanyane Women Support Centre in East London

NO one at home to turn to
By Sue-Anne Eastrace and Donni Smith

A six-year-old girl, Jenny, was raped by her uncle whom she knew and trusted under the roof of her very own home. The incident took place while Jenny's mother went out and left her alone at home with her uncle. According to Jenny (not her real name), her uncle laid her on the bed as though he were being affectionate towards her and then brutally raped her.

After the rape, Jenny told a friend who was approximately a year older than her about the ordeal. When Jenny's mother returned, Jenny's friend reported the matter to her. Sitting on a bed in her semi-furnished house, Jenny spoke with great difficulty to the Child Protection Unit as they questioned her about her ordeal. The six-year-old child conveyed a deep sense of insecurity, and of trust betrayed.

According to the Child Protection Unit, 97% of offenders are male and 80% of offenders are known to victims while 27% live in victims home. Inspector Donni Smith of the Child Protection Unit states "parents make a mistake by forcing children to speak about abuse and get angry when children do not tell them about abuse."

Children tend to be secretive about abuse because they feel ashamed, guilty or scared. Because most sexual abuse is committed by those within or close to the family system and those within or close to the family system and this fear is often reinforced by threats.

There are however symptoms that show that children have been or are being abused. Here are some of the behavioural and physical indicators of sexual abuse:

- The child displays age-inappropriate sexual play with toys, self and others.
- Age-inappropriate, sexually explicit drawings and/or descriptions.
- Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge.
- Promiscuity

- Prostitution
- Seductive behavior, directed towards members of the opposite sex.
- Unusual or excessive itching in the genital area.
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear may be observed if the child requires bathroom assistance.
- Pregnancy
- Injuries to the vaginal and anal areas, for example bruising swelling or infection.
- Venereal diseases

According to the Prevention of Family Violence Act 133 of 1993, any person who suspects that a child is being abused or neglected should immediately report such circumstances to the police or to a commissioner of Child Welfare or a social worker.

A place to call home **By Bonani Fihani and Malundakana Kuthala**

Isaiah 58 verse 6 bids us "feed the hungry and dress the naked." That is exactly what is happening at a home named after the biblical verse in East London that is making a difference to more than a hundred street kids, abandoned children and HIV/ AIDS orphans.

Andiswa, an eight- year- old girl, left home because "every time my mother was drunk, she beat me with electric wires and asked me why I did not wash the dishes".

Zintle is a healthy and pretty two- year old girl. When asked where her mom is, she points at Kulala Kutu, manager and social worker at the centre, and says: "that's my mom." Her real mom abandoned her.

Nkosinathi is a five- year old boy. His mother died of HIV/Aids and his younger brother is in hospital. His father is still alive. Nkosinathi has not yet been tested for the virus. According to Kutu, the majority of children at the home are victims of domestic violence – most of this perpetrated by men.

'It is hard to get through to a child's mind," she said. Children are able to go back to their homes on school holidays. Special programmes are run for those who remain at the centre. These include HIV/AIDS programmes for the older, sexually active children whom Kuta said are given advice and access to condoms. Established in 1989, the home is partly supported by the government as well as donations from various societies, churches and non- governmental organisations.

Isaiah 58 is appealing to all members of the public to offer their support through donations and visits to the children.

Stop hiding behind culture! **By Precious Joni**

Patriarchy is the common denominator of all cultures. In every country in the world, domestic violence has thrived for the simple reason that it is an "accepted" way of life.

In our own culture, a husband can have many wives and the wedding is celebrated at the bridegroom's home. Bride price (lobola) is frequently used to buy things for the whole family. The new wife lives under the strict control of her mother-in-law and has to observe many taboos. For example, she may not walk on the side of the room that her father-in-law sits, nor look directly into his eyes when she is talking with him.

When a wife gives birth, mother and a child are subject to various restrictions including having to remain in seclusion for up to ten days. After their seclusion they are ritually re-incorporated into society. The hut is sprinkled with medicines and a goat is slaughtered to appease the ancestors. After some weeks the father names the child, with the mother having no say in the matter.

When someone dies as a result of an accident, women are not allowed to attend the service at the cemetery. But when it comes to mourning, women are obliged to wear special clothes that symbolize grief. There is also the Xhosa ritual of *um ngeno*; the custom whereby when a husband dies the brother takes over the wife. This locks the woman into her husband's home and family after his death, leaving no room for choice over her future.

When a wife fails to give birth she is often chased away. Women are blamed for bearing children even though biologically they have no control over the sex of a child. As Thenjiwe Mtintso, Chairperson of Gender Links puts it: "It is the husband who decides how many children he wants to have and if the husband needs to have a boy the wife will keep on giving birth until the baby boy is born."

Mtintso points out that while culture is a map that guides us in our daily lives there are aspects of culture that are good and those that are bad. She suggests a simple measure for determining, which is which: Does the practice violate the human rights of women or, for that matter of men. If it does, it is wrong, and it is a practice that should be changed.

Culture is not only who we are, but also *who we want to be*. Similarly, gender is not biologically determined. It is a social construction: learned behaviours that can be unlearned. The time has come to stop hiding behind the culture as an excuse for oppressing women.

Men taking a stand **By Nicholson Mkohlakali & Celiwe Mgangala**

A growing number of men in the East London area are standing up to be counted in the fight against gender violence, according to a snap survey conducted during a media training workshop convened by Gender Links.

The following are some of the key findings of the interviews with twenty- two men in the Mdantsane area:

- All of those interviewed said they believed that gender-based violence is wrong. Comments included: "gender-based violence is wrong because it discriminates against women and leads to them not participating fully in society" and "it makes men regard themselves as superior."
- The men suggested that workshops be conducted for parents and elders so that they can pass the information to their children at home. Young men and women should also be involved in workshops on: gender violence, HIV/AIDS, marriage, manhood, customs, culture and religion. These workshops should target rural and urban areas.
- They advocated that men's organizations be formed so that they can take an active role in combating gender-based violence.
- They called for open lines of communication by social workers and psychologists.

Masimanyane and Planned Parenthood Association of South Africa (PPASA) are two Eastern Cape organizations working to involve men in ending gender-based violence. These organizations provide life skills training and peer counseling to young men. PPA has a Men As Partners (MAP) programme in which men are encouraged to take an active role in combating gender violence.

According to Christopher Harper of the Masimanyane Men's Programme, these efforts have hardly received any publicity because "we don't get on Felicia, like groups in Gauteng." But success can be measured in tangible ways, like the gratitude of the wife and children of an abusive husband and father who became totally transformed after he joined the men's group.

PPASA measures its impact through community profiling entailing finding the available resources (clinics, police stations, sanitation, water sources, etc), focus group discussions, pre and post workshops (looking at male attitudes and behaviour in the form of questionnaires) and evaluation surveys conducted by outside experts.

Media coverage of baby rape leaves much to be desired By Justine Gerardy

Failure to move beyond emotional outrage and the reinforcement of gender and poverty stereotypes characterized South African media's coverage of the Baby Tshepang rape case, according to a recent analysis.

The study by the Media Monitoring Project, commissioned by Gender Links, covered 80 newspaper reports, 75 percent in English and the remainder in Afrikaans.

Nine-month old Baby Tshepang was raped at her Louisvaleweg, Uptington home in October 2001 in the absence of her 16-year-old mother. Six men were arrested but released in January after DNA tests failed to establish that none of the accused had raped the baby.

Moral outrage dominated media coverage, which Gender Links' Liesl Gerntholtz said was initially appropriate, but which never developed further. The result was reportage that stayed at an emotional level.

This could be seen in the repeated portrayal of the six accused as guilty despite before any conclusive evidence had proven this. "The media became hysterical around these issues without ever really looking at the facts," said Gerntholtz.

In socio-economic profiles of Louisvaleweg, the media tended to create the impression that child rape only occurs in communities where people are poor, unemployed and heavy drinkers. The residents are also represented as victims of their situations. The myth that sex with a virgin is a cure for HIV-Aids was reported only after it was referred to by senior politicians but was never substantiated or challenged.

"It is important for us to start unpacking: does this happen, is there any evidence or is this just a myth?" said Gerntholtz.

The main role-players also suffered from stereotypical reportage with Baby Tshepang portrayed as a "broken little doll" whose innocence became the symbol of all rape victims. Her mother received mostly unsympathetic treatment — irresponsible, drunk, neglectful, promiscuous and young — but was never interviewed as a minor herself. The fact that she, as a minor with a child, might have been a victim herself was ignored.

"We made a lot of assumptions about this woman but no journalist sat down with her and said 'what happened,'" said Gerntholtz. The father on the other hand, in his only comment contained in the media analysed, was portrayed, as someone who should have protected the family while the mother was responsible for the attack.

The failure by all but one newspaper to seek out the father's comment supported the patriarchal assumption that mothers feel the greatest pain. The six accused were represented as ill-educated, belligerent drunks and despite the protests of innocence were discredited and portrayed as disreputable.

Once released from jail they began to be portrayed as victims as well but with no explanations in the sudden change in attitude. Gender stereotyping also influenced coverage of the police investigator who was described as having blonde hair. Gerntholtz said the reports analysed has presented strong victim and gender stereotypes. "In general the coverage was seen as unsatisfactory with little factual research," she said.

Hello, is there any justice out there for women and children?

By Ursula Crisp

The good news is that women and children can look forward to better treatment at the hands of the justice system. The bad news is that this may not happen soon.

Despite the passing of the Domestic Violence Act and all the awareness raising on gender violence over the last few years, precious few cases are ever reported, let alone

successfully prosecuted. When they are, judgments and sentencing often reveal heavy gender biases- like the lenient sentencing of a man who raped his daughter because in the judge's view that this happened in the home and therefore posed no threat to society!

The Thuthuzela Care Centre, a one stop centre for sexual violence and abuse (see story on page one) is one of a handful of pilot projects designed to overcome the many shortcomings of the justice system in dealing with gender violence through an integrated approach. The difficulties that have been encountered by the centre are a reflection of the many challenges that remain in transforming the justice system.

The idea of the centre is that all parties are under one roof and can be involved in the investigation from start to finish. The prosecution is therefore in a position to influence the investigation from the outset.

In practice a number of problems have arisen. According to Gcobani Ntshingana of the Bureau of Justice Assistance attached to the Thuthuzela project, the local centre has not yet taken off due to problems peculiar to this province. These include lack of human and financial resources as well as the bureaucratic complexities inherited from the former Ciskei and Transkei.

Beneath the surface, there are also clearly turf concerns between the Family and Child Centre and the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The inter-sectoral approach is failing in other projects in the province as people jealously guard what they perceive to be theirs.

The partnerships forged at national level between the Minister of Justice, Penuel Maduna, and the Minister of Safety and Security, Steve Tshwete, are not replicated at provincial level. For example, the Victim Empowerment Program is struggling to get going in the province as officials from other departments refuse to co-operate with the Department of Welfare, elected to lead the program by other departments and civil society.

Although local NGO'S participated in the discussions leading to the launch of the combined Child and Family Centre and Thuthuzela Care Centre in 2001, they are conspicuous by their absence from the centre as service providers.

The major handicap of the Thuthuzela Care Centre is that it caters for a limited clientele. Several rape survivors are therefore excluded from the project.

While there is a marked difference in the way that members of SAPS, especially those attached to the Child Protection Unit, as well as prosecutors and magistrates who have undergone sensitivity training handle gender violence cases, only a minority has received such training.

A bone of contention expressed by sensitive magistrates participating in such programmes is that their decisions based on their new found sensitivity are usually overturned on appeal by judges of the High Court, who are reluctant to attend these programmes. They guard the independence of the judiciary jealously and attend

seminars such as those hosted by the South African Law Commission on sentencing for the sole purpose of protecting their independence by strongly objecting to proposed minimum sentences for sexual offences cases.

For women and children who are not safe even in their own homes, justice is still far from being a given.

** Ursula Crisp is the Legal Co-ordinator of the Masimanyane Women's Support Centre.*

ANNEX D: EVALUATIONS

20 evaluation forms were received. Participants made the following comments on the training.

	<u>EXCELLENT</u>	<u>GOOD</u>	<u>FAIR</u>	<u>POOR</u>	<u>VERY POOR</u>
1. PROGRAMME DESIGN	16	4			
2. PROGRAMME CONTENT	15	5			
3. FACILITATION	14	6			
4. GROUP WORK	8	10	2		
5. DOCUMENTATION	12	8			
6. LEARNING OPPORTUNITY	12	8			
7.NETWORKING OPPORTUNITY	7	11	2		
8.ADMINSTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS	11	6	1	2	

COMMENTS

1. Which session did you find most useful? Why?

- 4 = All the sessions were useful and educational.
- 4 = The field trips because we applied all the theory to practice.
- 3 = Domestic violence survivor, it showed that this exists here not in far away places like Johannesburg.
- 5 = Writing and production phase, this provided the knowledge on how to produce our own newsletters.
- 4 = Custom, Culture and Religion, it showed how it reinforces gender inequality.

2. Which session did you find least useful? Why?

- 2 = The Lifeline presentation was very short.
- 1 = Sexual offences, it is part of my job.
- 2 = Group discussions on the training manual, some topics are not interesting and we could have had discussions on the presentations instead.

3. Suggestions for online training.

- Can people in rural areas be included as well?
- It will be useful for mentoring and learning about breaking news in other countries.
- It must also provide a forum of critique for journalists.

4. Suggestions for making workshops of this nature more effective in future.

- Provide accommodation for out of town participants.
- Ask panelist to make use of flipcharts and overhead projectors.

- You could also involve people from the religious sector.
- You could also ask the media practitioners to facilitate group discussions

5. Any other comments

- It was a good and educative workshop.
- The course helped me see gender stereotypes in my own organization.