


Cyberdialogues – Tuesday 8th March 2005  
Gender-based Violence

## GENDER VIOLENCE CYBERDIALOGUES PANELISTS

Good morning to everyone and welcome to the Cyber Dialogue on gender based violence. My name is Lydia Levin and with my colleague Colleen Lowe Morna, we will be facilitating this chat session. Greetings on International Women's Day. The format of the chat is that we will post a question and ask the panelists to make contributions. Participants will then also be able to chat on the topic. Our panelists are.

Noleen Heyzer, Executive Director of UNIFEM, who will be joining us a bit later,  
Jessica B Nkuuhe, Associate Director of Isis-WICCE, Uganda,  
Cheryl Gillwald, Deputy Minister of Correctional Services, South Africa, and  
Sara Nordstrom, the 16 Days Campaign Coordinator at the Center for Global Women's Leadership

**What steps is your government taking to implement laws on gender-based violence in your country? Are your country's laws adequate or appropriate?**

 Tibanyendera :

Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa marked the International women's day this morning. It was a colourful event with women in government departments.

Kurei (Sheila Meintjies) South Africa has a 'woman-friendly' legislative framework - with good Domestic Violence legislation - the difficulty lies with implementation, partly because the police need training and because the co-ordination of different agencies needs to be more carefully orchestrated

Tibanyendera : The event was attended by various leaders of government at Dar es Salaam. They have expressed their concerns to support women initiatives and encouragement to take part in various socio-economic activities. The event was aired live on radio and Tvs. Very encouraging for Tanzanian women! Can others learn from Tanzania?

CherylGillwald1 :

South Africa has a slew of progressive legislation that affirms the rights of women. Our primary challenge is reducing the gap between these ambitious legislative measures and actual service delivery on the ground. One of our more effective measures has been to cluster relevant line functions to ensure a holistic and integrated response to the needs of the service user. This integrated approach poses certain coordination challenges, but is essential for service delivery. Within the Criminal Justice System, for instance, a client will move from one line function the other and while his/her needs remain constant, the number of service deliverers required to ameliorate the impact of, for instance, domestic abuse are derived from a range of disciplines. We have undertaken to develop specific protocols that will regulate relationships and

responsibilities between departments where they interface with one another at joint-delivery service points.

Indian Paliament is yet to pass the Domestic Violence Bill. Currently domestic violence is covered under the cruelty provision ( criminal law) in the Indian Penal Code

Tibanyendera :

Gender violence laws are highly challenged in Tanzania. The laws have been amended from time to time to discourage gender based violence. In addition, women activist groups have taken a lead in a fight agaist gender violence on women.

Nomaphelo :

Hallow, I'm a councillor from City Of Jo'burg; could everyone, both women and men, the world across engage in an engendered gender programme against women and children violence including the question of gender representation both at corporate and political spheres.

mashigo :

HEY ladies in Tanzania go for that 50/50 these men must see that we mean bussiness.

CherylGillwald1 :

Our Sexual Offences legislation is undergoing quite radical revision. The SA Law Reform Commission has canvassed widely the weaknesses of the existing legislation and has made proposals on amendments. The Bill now lies before parliament and the consultative process is ongoing. The legislation is expected to be finalised this year.

alicia :

Jessica. South Africa's Sexual Offences Bill will hopefully go before the parliamentary portfolio committee soon. We've been waiting for many years!

KURIE :

In South Africa, women at grass-roots level have been very pro-active in establishing 'victim support groups'. These are often based at Magistrate courts, where the CBOs have been granted a space to interview survivors and provide them with advice and support in for example laying complaints or in getting protection orders. Research has shown that some officials are not always familiar enough with the legislation and insert their own interpretation which sometimes subverts the purpose of the legislation - in for instance making partners come togetehr to the court to discuss matters...

Jessical :

Agriculture s the mainstay of Uganda's economy and Uganda and women make up the bulk of the workers on the land. Unfortunately, most of them have no control of the land and many have no access. Land has been a cause of violence against women, and the the Land Act in place did not rectify this situation. This has negatively affected women's ability to produce, and the little they produce is controlled by men.

KURIE :

In our discussions today about some of the challenges we face, one of the issues raised was the lack of a Sexual Offences Act - the Bill has been in draft form for nearly seven years. So it is good news about finalisation - but we hope that it will not be watered down.

CherylGillwald1 :

About 2 000 volunteers from NGOs and CBOs provide victim support services in our courts and police stations daily. Their contribution has proven invaluable and has provided examples of best practice that have been refined and incorporated into the responses of government at various service levels.

mashigo :

Muntu SOUTH AFRICAN want you see this judiciary really transformed. Where did you see a man being fed to the lions.

Deepa from India :

[KURIE, I'm a little confused. Are you saying you don't have legislation against sexual offences like rape, sexual abuse, etc.](#)

sinah :

I want to say that what I have realised is that our Police, courts, need training. Some of these guys are traumatised themselves so they need counselling training to capacitate them. The issue of Beijing plus must be looked into so that we can take it to rural urban communities so that they must take part in decisions taken.

jennifer1 : Are there any other countries represented here who have a volunteer culture for victim support?

Jessical :

The worst form of violence is domestic violence and this is meted out on women by their most intimate partners. Most Ugandan women will not report this kind of violence, and it ends debilitating many women completely. We need some suggestions and energy from women elsewhere to be able to report this kind of violence, and not withdraw the cases once they are reported. Women are culturally raised to be subservient to men, and many have not jumped this hurdle.

Deepa from India :

[We have one , very strong in my state of Tamil Nadu which was started over 8 years back.](#)

Dudu Chili: am a councillor with the City of Johannesburg we are with Cyberdialogues we have been discussing about violence against Women and children did you discuss about this topic at the conference

Llydia11 :

[Does your country have programmes to deal with perpetrators of violence against women and what suggestions can you make? Do you think that resources should be spent on programmes for men?](#)

Jessical :

But then, friends, legislation is one thing, and practice is quite another. Are those laws in Tamil Nadu working effectively for women? How are the women using this strong law to their advantage?

KURIE :

Deepa, We do have a Domestic Violence Act that defines violence in broad terms - but we do not have a Sexual Offences Act - this is what the Deputy Minister, Cheryl Gilwald was talking about. It has been drafted and circulated widely for comment. There was a lot of controversy about it, because the latest draft took out a clause on the availability of Post-Exposure Prophylaxis for rape survivors. This is what I meant about 'watering down'. But we need the Act - with the right clauses.

nomaphelo :

Hi! I'm Nomaphelo, from Jo'burg Municipality South Africa, girls and boys, can we all work together as one people of the world for a gender violence free world. I'm speaking from Region 4 Centre Jo'burg City where representatives from City Of Jo'burg Council, Gender Links, SABC and Media Monitoring Project are together celebrating the International Womens Day.

mathoma :

South Africa is on board with gender issues we like the world to join us to fight against men and child abuse

CherylGillwald1 :

Encouraging victims/survivors of violence to report (and stay with) cases of violence is an ongoing challenge worldwide. Sound legislation is essential, the response of the service providers (courts, police and social workers for e.g.) must also provide affirmation and support. Bringing the violence out of the home into public discourse is essential. Victims must not feel further stigmatised by the revelations about violence and abuse - the court and police service processes must also not become an arena for secondary violence. If women and children feel confident that a just, fair and victim-survivor centred process is available; they will use it.

Jessical :

Three cheers for South Africa! Not only are you ahead on legislation to combat violence against women, you are well logged on and discussing the issue well. How did you get to this point? We need to learn from some best practices.

alicia :

Jessica, My exposure to VAW is through my students and indeed family survivors has taught me that sometimes it is not as simple as culture. Sometimes it has more to do with women not feeling valued and failure on the part of people who are meant to uphold the law to give survivors of violence the support they need.

Chijaka :

Happy International Women's Day to all. Its Nyaradzai from Nairobi. I want to dedicate this day and session to my mother (Chijaka) and all women especially african women who continue to survive violence amidst poverty and violence. I have just come from celebrations of IWD in Kenya where the chair of Kenya Women Parliamentarians Association called for the resignation of a constitutional commissioner who did beat a female constitutional commissioner last week in a public meeting!!!

KURIE :

With regard to programmes to deal with perpetrators - as far as I know there are none, except for some rehab programmes run by ADAPT an NGO working with both survivors and perpetrators in Alexandra Township in Jo'burg. They and a number of NGOs have programmes focusing on masculinity - and one very big research project has been running on Fatherhood - this is in the Human Sciences Research Council and includes a number of academics working on the issue.

Tibanyendera :

Sorry Mashigo. I am a man reporting. Of extreme importance I think is gender equality. Am I right?

mashigo :

PLEASE help us fight the drugs in our area.

jennifer1 :

We are interested to know if women's organisations are using Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to expose

KURIE :

We have to thank GenderLinks for getting us all connected to CyberDialogues - and to the Jo'burg city Council for promoting the whole thing. It is a wonderful example of how successful a process can be if you have a champion and really strong alliances - in this case the Champion is the Speaker of the Jo'burg Metro Council, and the allies are women and gender organisations and activists, including men, who together are trying to promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming at local level.

conny joined the room.

CherylGillwald1 :

With regard to the conference, Violence is one of the primary focus points. Everyone expressed the need to improve implementation and service delivery. Dealing with the problem remains a challenge across the board. Involving men and boys in the fight against violence was an area that enjoyed much discussion. Partnerships with civil society and government was also emphasised

moepi :

Men in our country are really men for the fact that they support issues about gender. .

modette :

in the philippines, we have anti-trafficking and anti-violence against women and their children. i guess it's a question of implementation. there are efforts towards gender mainstreaming.

Hi Everybody. I am Loga from Mauritius. I too would like to dedicate this day to my mum who still in hospital. Women are really strong. She had a stroke and she is fighting so hard that we know she will make it. I spent the whole day with her. Colleen knows her. She is a great lady

alicia :

Womensnet in South Africa are very involved in promoting ICT's for use by women. They are supported in this aim by SANGONeT which works promotes the use of ICTs for civil society.

lydia11 :

Sara - one of our panelists has just joined us. Welcome Sara. Please feel free to post your views

Chijaka :

Is the CSW coming up with new language, strategies and commitments to address impunity?

alicia :

Loga- I wish your mom a speedy recovery. I will keep her in my prayers  
Tibanyendera Connection Expired.

Loga2 :

If we do not get men on board, it will be difficult. The problem is with them and lots of them are prepared to listen and to learn. We need this new breed of men to help in the battle. Laws are not enough

lydia11 :

If you use acronyms, please would you spell them out so that everyone understands what we mean

malindima :

This is Mwiika joining in. Jennifer 1, in Zambia there is a lot of women groups using the media to support their efforts and fellow women. We have what is called radio listening groups and they work very well for rural women. they use them to collect and share information on issues of agriculture and other economic and social issues of interest

lyn joined the room.

alicia :


Cheers All. great chatting.

alicia left the room.

Tibanyendera joined the room.

conny :

Child and Women abuse should be in our agenda on a daily basis we should not wait for International days in order to highlight the plight of women and children by so doing we will eradicate it.

jennifer1 :

Thanks Alicia for the input on Women'sNet and SANGONeT. And Malindima -- great to hear about the radio listening clubs. Radio is still a powerful medium for sharing news and information for women.

moepe :

The people of Africa must all take part in solving abuse against women in SADC

KURIE :

Cheryl Gillwald has been one of the key Champions in government and she has driven the campaigns during the 16 days - she will have to stay in politics until she is old and grey (she is neither). without the combination of Champion, leading male allies and civil society gender activism, South Africa would not be as far along the road in terms of policy and legislation - and the 16 days has made a great impact, as research by the Media Monitoring Group in South Africa has shown. I think that is a good model. But we remain a highly patriarchal society - and have very high levels of abuse and gender based violence.

jennifer1 :

I have Ruth Ochieng here from Isis-WICCE, Uganda. They have recently introduced community radio listening club for men and women in rural Uganda to discuss pertinent issues such as violence against women.

Jessical :

ICTs are Information Communication Technologies. The CSW is the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, which takes place around this time every year. This year, we are celebrating Beijing+10.

sandra :

Even men are victim of violence by women what do you think about that?

Loga2 :

What women need is the encouragement to come forward and to talk before it is too late. Women are being killed now in Mauritius. We have never had this before. Sandra, men are victim of violence but to a much lesser degree but this does not mean that we should not look after them.

Chijaka :

Ruth Ochieng, what are the critical issues you will be focusing on in your documentation of VAW in Southern Sudan

lydia11 :

Kurie - interesting examples of "champions". Has this worked in any other countries?

nomaphelo :

Zambian govt should transform their institution by deploying more women .  
Deepa from India joined the room.

KURIE :

Men are less likely to be abused in the same way as women - psychological abuse, where women nag, Sheila Rowbotham many years ago wrote that one of the ways in which women are able to assert themselves in situations where they have little power is to 'go drip, drip, drip' at him! But we have seen that where women respond in violent ways it is usually because they have been severely abused themselves - by their partners.

CherylGillwald1 :

Bye bye everyone - I have another commitment - it has been great chatting - thanks Genderlinks for this wonderful opportunity.

sandra joined the room.

conny :

Its a just a drop in a ocean and most pf the men are still logged in the cocoons they are afraid to speak out. My humblest appeal to men please speak out and you will definately get assistance. Be bold enough and speak.

Deepa from India :

[sandrasandra, it is true tha some men are vicims of violence but it is mostly women. Some famous victims of domestic violence are Abraham Lincoln and Bill Clinton!](#)

malindima :

Nomaphelo, please indicate how exactly you want Zambia to do this, because already even if there isnt so much done to empower women the environment is being made condusive for them. What we do not precisely know the levels of violence angainst women, we know for a truth that it is rampant but this is true of many countries if am not mistaken, what would you suggest here

lyn :

what about working with men as the perpetrators with a view to addressing gender based violence. maybe unless we understand these men we may not be able to address the issue. is anyone working with groups of men?

Loga2 :

[The 16 days campaign is indeed a powerful way to encourage survivors to come forward but they need support and a proper environment because once they come public about their trauma the situation becomes worse for them](#)

malindima :

Yes Deopa that is true and my uncle to ad to billeclinton too

Jessical :

Wome have been assisted to establish radio listening clubs in some parts of Uganda, and these have assisted them to start talking about issues of domestic violence. Isis-WICCE has been actively assisting rural women in this area. Some other rural women's groups have used tape recorders to get evidence of domestic violence and child abuse. Isis-WICCE has assisted them to take this information to the police. The Centre for Domestic Violence in Kampala, Uganda, and



FIDA-Uganda are also active in this area. But we are in dire need of effective government intervention.

Tibanyendera :

Bye everyone. I have another pressing issue. It was nice chatting with you. Bye

lydia11 :

Can international treaties, protocols and bodies help to protect women in war zones and conflict situations - if so, how can they do this most effectively?

simango Connection Expired.

jennifer1 :

Ruth Yes sis. Hi, WE shall focus on sexual violence and its effect to women's health. We shall also look at the gender roles pre, during war and post conflict time. It will be important to get their perspective of rehabilitation period. Land mines could be another area to investigate. I am chatting tomorrow on media, a tool we shall use in the documentation. please log in tomorrow!.

Loga2 :

I agree with Jessica, Government intervention is of great importance. Very often those who are supposed to protect us - the law makers are those who violate women even more.

malindima :

In Zambia we have the Young Women Christian Association (YWCA) that looks after the welfare of abused women and children. Its interesting to know that even men (Victims) are helped here

KURIE :

hi i am Kureish from South Africa, good afternoon all, hope you had a great women's day

malindima :

Lydia11 int. treaties are well respected and can influence responses in much bigger ways worldwide. It is important that groupings fostering women's rights in these war-torn countries and even at international level eg Amnesty to take them up and give help i suggest

Chijaka :

unifem partnered with Isis-Wicce in producing a documentary on women's experiences in conflict situation (Northern Uganda). Documentaries are a powerful tool for training. However, the mainstream media should be able to use some of these documentaries as part of its resource base on stories related to VAW

Maria joined the room.

Deepa from India :

Malindima, I disagree, despite the Geneva convention the US & alliance violation of it in Iraq and Afghanistan has not been covered widely

sandra Connection Expired.

abek :

Viva womans day viva we love you lots you are great with out you we wont making

lyn :

I am about to leave dear friends but as we celebrate IWD and as we have this opportunity to chat about gender based violence, lets bear in mind that every women is a potential survivor. certain risk factors such as conflict make certain women more at risk but definately we are all at risk. Mine is to call on governments and international community to treat GBV with the seriousness it deserves. It is the tsunami that hits millions of women everyday!

malindima :

One other thing, today is international women's day, i have seen and heard a lot of reports about women today thank heavens, but i want this to continue, the media should not only highlite these things on such days and forget other days. It is also important in the daily lives of these women to talk about there welfare in the media to bring their issues to the light of policy makers. mamao joined the room.

Carol :

Happy women's day! Great to have women who are ready to stand up for what they believe. Sexual violence is in the increase. Governments should come up with ways to protect women. In Kenya, it is just bad news.

Jessical :

International treaties would help if the belligerents paid attention to the fact that even wars have limits! Both governments and rebels tend to fight their wars on women's bodies, which exarcebates the situation of women. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that in a situation of armed conflict, violence against women is many times worse than that during "peace" times. Rape, sexual slavery, forced marriage, forced impregnation etc all take place with impunity in such situations. There is an effort to publicise the international treaties and protocols when conflict turns violent, but this is not enough. It is necessary to ensure that the promotion of these treaties, protocols and conventions remains an ongoing process. Maybe one day, belligerents will see the light. the work of the International Committee of the Red Cross in this area is commendable.

malindima :

Deepa these conventions have not been contested by int. orgs. there is need for more push or else they will be just talk, i agree too but something can surely be done especially that we know nothing is

lydia11 :

**Do you think that the UN Protocols on Trafficking are adequate? What do you see as the major issues? What can countries do to stop trafficking?**

Maria:

I agree with lyn, it is time the governments start recognizing the daily tsunami's that affect millions of women everyday!

Jessical :

Nyaradzai, we are leaving a copy of the DVD of the documentary, "A Lingering Pain" at the UNIFEM office in NY, hoping they will use it appropriately. We shall avail one to the Nairobi office as well.

Loga2 :

Government can come up with hundreds of laws but this is not enough. I insist that we need to encourage women to come out and talk. They are the victims and not the perpetrators for god's sake so why can't they be encouraged to talk instead of feeling that they are to be blamed. they need protection once they have talked

Loga2 :

I should add that once they are dead who will talk on their behalf?

modette :

it's hard to get government support in the philippines when (some) congressmen are the ones beating on women, be it wives or mistresses.

Faith Njama :

I agree with Maria, women are going through a lot of problems daily. We need to support each other and be there for one another and with the Governments support we will make it.

Chijaka : Jessical, thanks. I appreciate. On the use of international instruments for protection of women from VAW, it may be strategic for us to explore how we can have the international instruments applied in peace negotiations and

Jessical: UN protocols must be translated into enabling domestic laws to be of any use to women in the women in the different countries. When they remain "up there in the sky", they really cannot be of much use to women. So, we must educate ourselves on the UN treaties that are meant to protect women against violence, and continue lobbying our governments to domesticate these protocols. After the domestication, then it is the responsibility of all of us to ensure that women of all shades and classes are aware of the laws and how they can use them for their own protection.

Loga2 :

Electronic media is the best strategy as women very often cannot read and are more prepared to talk on radio as they are not recognised

Jessical :

I am strong supporter of radio for women's advocacy! They are even cheap enough for many women to own one, and we need to assure rural women that it is ok to own a radio, and not depend on the one that belongs to the men in their lives.

Deepa from India :

Implementation on the ground by countries in the South and Northern countries shouldn't use trafficking as a pretext for anti-immigration and asylum laws


Deepa from India :

We have one such programme thanks to a female CM in our state.


Deepa from India :

CM = chief Minister

darling joined the room.

 Deepa from India :

This is on support for victims of violence.


 lydia11 :

What specific strategies do you want this conferent to take up during this week?

mamao Connection Expired.

 malindima :

Still on the issue of treaties, they are things used widely to say anything about int. rights for women, yet we still have problems. i need more suggestions just what new ideas

 Deepa from India :


Our entire state is networked via telephone and Self help groups.

 modette :


there's a lot of potential in bringing women's advocacy work on the internet, yet much needs to be done in initiating intergenerational discussions on issues like VAW. to get younger women involved, we must be familiar with how they make use of their net savvy. whereas older women may still be getting accustomed to the technology and would need to be encouraged to try it out. sometimes, it's a matter of access. Filipino women are spread out all over that they may not have as much immediate access to the internet as those in the more urban areas.

 malindima :

Am in hybernation for 20 minutes be back soon


 Deepa from India :

You can call a toll free number and report the gender violence anonymously and action is swift.

 Deepa from India :

The complaint is routed to an all women manned police station and they act on it.


Noeleen joined the room.

 darling :

I am chatting from Zambia, Hi Deepa and everyone else. Bringing Gender violence top a halt would require a more conceited bottom up approach were people from the grassroots can get involved as well.


 lydia11 :

Welcome to Noeleen the Director of UNIFEM


 Deepa from India :

We have two seperate hotlines statewide -- Child helpline and Women in Distress Helpline.

Sara\_16Days joined the room.

 Noeleen :

It is great to be here on International Women's Day!

 Jessica1 :

It is unfortunate that laws that are meant to protect women are often used against them. In all these issues, we really need to go to the root causes of women's powerlessness. Poverty issues must be tackled. Women need to join supportive groups that will enable them to speak out on the issues. It is interesting to note that when the Vice President of Uganda who was a woman admitted to being a victim of domestic violence, she was criticised for "ashaming" her family and demeaning her position. That was unfortunate. Speaking out leads to healing. Women must not allow themselves to feel guilty for experiencing domestic violence. Let's speak out and combat violence.

Deepa from India:

True Darling. But we need the infrastructure, don't we? If I witness an act of violence or know about it, but am required to file a report with the police station, most men or women won't do it. However, if I can call a number and file it anonymously, many would be more prepared to do it, won't they?

Yeta :

I am originally from Zambia but live in South Africa, My question to Darling is; how do we get the message across to the most underprivileged women in the remote areas. They are the ones who suffer the most because they have no voice

snoux :

I guys I agree with Jessica on the point of using radio for women's advocacy. Many are times when women are not considered stakeholders in society and looking at radio having a wide coverage, I truly think it would be effective.

Deepa from India :

This is especially true in villages and small towns where you know almost everyone and don't want to get into "trouble"

jennifer1 :

Deepa, what about the women who are far from a toll free number, how do you think we should help them? But I like your idea of all police stations being womaned !!

Noeleen :

The best way to protect women in war zones is to end impunity against violence against women, to address the root causes of war and to end the economies of war. International documents can only do so much.

darling :

Yeta the resolve before has been that of closed door workshops and high powered proposals that do little for those on the ground. We need legal aid clinics built in remote areas to enable abused women to access help for themselves and their families.

Chijaka :

Happy IWD Noeleen, from Nairobi. This week as you strategise at CSW, the issue of IMPUNITY is critical. Despite all the information coming out of Darfur, Sudan on extent of rape and other forms of sexual violence, this issue remains at the margins of the peace negotiations.

Deepa from India :

We have over 190 all women police stations in my state apart from the regular police stations, Jennifer. All villages have telephone booths and land lines are extremely cheap here. So the question of being away from a telephone doesn't arise, at least in my state. Water is a problem but not telephone.

jennifer1 :

Can we go back to the issue of violence against women rather than the means to communicate the problem. Violence is in the midst of our lives. Can we talk about how we can end it?

Loga2 :

What about women who are raped a second or third time in police station? this is quite common

Noeleen :

Laws to end violence is the first step. These laws must be implemented. However, the best way to cut violence at its roots is to deal with the inequalities that women face--the poor political, social and economic status of women and girls.

Jessical :

The idea of a hotline is great. But you need a telephone line in the first place! However, sooner or later, women will need to get the courage to speak out. What if the women who reported the violence anonymously is expected to testify against the perpetrator in court. Will she come out and speak out. We must tackle the issues of fear, powerlessness, and economic dependency that women are victims to.

jennifer1 :

I agree with you totally that is where we need to enforce the laws and make sure the perpetrators answer their charges

Deepa from India :

Not when it is all women -- from senry to inspector, Loga. This was why this particular program was started in my state

Yeta :

hi darling, thanks for that but as someone who comes from Zambia, do you think the issue of legal aid clinics in remote areas has been given enough thought and has anything been done about it. If not, what steps do you think the few women with information should do about this

darling :

I agree with Jennifer that the topic at hand should be focussed on coming up with interventions and strategies aimed at fighting these injustices as opposed to merely addressing the communication aspect.

Noeleen :

The institutions of the rule of law like the police stations are not friendly to women. We need to transform these institutions and make them more accountable or else women will not have trust in these institutions.

Loga2 :

Hotline ok. But way things are done especially at Government level one get the impression that women are violated only from 9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. i.e during working hours because before and after office hours there is nobody to take complaints and to answer telephone calls

Noeleen :

On the issue of trafficking, we need to link this to the difficulty of having economic security and the lack of protection and rights of migrant worker, especially those who are forced to be illegal migrants.

Chijaka :

In addition to the laws, we also need individual accountability of policy makers. The recent case in Kenya where the women's movement did seek an apology from the Minister of Justice who had made an unfortunate remark on "raping a woman who is only too willing", is instructive. The strong statements from the National Gender Commission was also critical. We need therefore strong institutions that monitor commitment towards gender equality.

Jessical :

Men who control women often prevent them from joining support groups. Such women need to be supported to come out and join other women for support. I have found that women who are economically independent have a greater chance of changing their situation. They can make the decision to chuck the perpetrator out of their lives rather than die in such relationships. They also will have the courage to report the violence. We need to work on the police to ensure that it is sensitive to women's issues and does not simply trivialize them. We must work on the next generation to ensure gender equality, both boys and girls, so that one day, violence against women will cease.

Noeleen :

To address the next steps on moving forward, our strategies must centre on dealing with how to bring about gender equality in an increasingly unequal world. We need to deal with the concentration of power, economically and politically. Or else we will not be able to understand why our world is becoming more and more violent.

jennifer1 :

Yes darling, interventions must be put in place immediately. Noeleen has given us one way to do this. We also need to prepare women to have the confidence to speak about the violations. Building the capacity of women to understand all forms of violation since some of them are still believe some of the violations are normal! Our medical professionals should also be ready to give time to an abused women, get the whole story and be able to providing some immediate counselling

Deepa from India : Noeleen, that is what I was saying. How do you make police stations and officers effective and sensitive to the issue of violence, how do you make sure laws are followed & implemented -- this is where women police come in -- not the regular officers but officers who have undergone specific training and work in all women police stations.

modette :

there's a women's hotline in manila that takes calls only up to a certain time. a friend of mine made a call, but it turned out that there was a staff meeting at the time. so no one was there to take the call, which left my friend frustrated because she really wanted to talk to someone about her situation.

lydia11 : **Following on Noeleen's point about power relations, does anyone want to comment on strategies for changing economic and political power for women**

Jessical :

Above all, our governments must be held accountable for their failure to put in place effective laws and policies that protect women against violence. We must admit that there is still lack of political will in many of our countries to combat violence against women. Gender inequality and women's dependency seems to suit our patriarchal governments. We must find new energy to work on new initiatives. These governments need our votes. Where are the women willing to challenge political leadership on these issues?

Deepa from India :

Jennifer, my connection expired when I typed my reply to your question. Women come forward to report in my state after the establishment of women police stations. Reporting of violence has gone up by 85% but this is only for my state and not the whole of India.

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Deepa from India :

This is not about a hotline alone.

Sara\_16Days :



yes and i think we can't allow the politics of the anti-violence movement to get lost in the push for government accountability - we need to keep reminding the world that violence against women is the most severe manifestation of gender inequality and patriarchy. i say this because sometimes it seems that when governments do get on board, there is a lot of rhetoric but no real practical changes. in the US, we have many laws in place meant to protect women from sexual assault and domestic violence, but i wonder how much the public consciousness has really changed around these issues. the government issued a "Stop family violence" postage stamp, yet there are no resources to support the local domestic violence response teams of which i am a part. we volunteers are called from our beds in the middle of the night to counsel victims, but our team has absolutely no financial support so we have to hold bake sales to keep going.

jennifer1 :

Deepa -- that is interesting about women police stations. It so often is about safe spaces for women to report abuse. A place to know that they will be supported and believed.

Noeleen :

On International Women's Day, let us mobilise for justice and security by asking for an increase of resources to invest in strategies that have worked in ending violence against women so that these may be upscaled. Let us also ask for property rights for women, economic security and decent work for all...no more sweatshops that that is economic violence. Let's work to strengthen women's leadership and have two women at every decision making table. WE must protect the spaces that women have for mobilisation.

Jessica1 :

Sadly, I don't think that the micro finance projects for women are the answer for economic power for women. They seem to be increasing the indebtedness of women. Women need bigger projects, but these need to come with the necessary education as well as the empowerment to ensure that their projects are not hijacked by the men in their lives. We already have the vote, but we are not using our numbers effectively to ensure that the issues close to our hearts are at the centre of politics.

Deepa from India :

That was why it was started in the first place. Another reason was to increase the no. of women in policing -- the gender ratio was low. We have all women SWAT teams too.

Ritah :

hi everyone, am rita from zambia, the topic is good and it will help a lot of women out there especially in rural areas. most women in rural areas lack information on gender violence, i suggest that each country should come up with policies and deliberate measures to help out voiceless women.

modette :

at one point, certain women's NGOs have worked on public consciousness by collaborating with Manila-based women's glossy magazines in anti-violence ad campaigns. while necessary since it brings visibility to issues like VAW, ironically, these are the same magazines that tell women to lose weight or give advice on how to please their man, etc.

Jessical :

Women police officers need to get gender training, and to learn how to treat victims of gender based violence sensitively. Let us not assume that a woman in that seat will of necessity be gender sensitive.

Deepa from India :

It is a compulsory portion of their training program Jennifer --gender sensitivity.

Deepa from India :

Apart from that AWPS( All women Police Station) officers have to go around spreading awareness about laws on gender violence and speak in rural areas about why gender violence is bad. They get the men to listen too.

Jessical :

Thanks everyone! I have enjoyed this chat. I hope those of us who have participated in the chat will do all we can to ensure that all violence ends in our lives, in the lives of the women we work with, and eventually, all women's lives. All power to women!!

Deepa from India :

It has been a very effective program in my state and other states are trying to implement this too after seeing its success here.

Chijaka :

the nexus between violence against women and HIV & AIDS is also critical to recognise as a new complexity especially in africa. HIV & AIDS national strategies must include concrete funded actions related to VAW.

This is Bruce chatting on Ritah's account I to comment on Yeta's concern over the effectiveness of Legal Aid clinics.it is absolutely workable and has been proved effective in various areas except in rural areas where the service has not been availed especially here in Zambia.

lydia11 :

Noleen has had to go, and was in the middle of writing a message when her computer lost power. Thank you Noleen and all other panelists and chatters for your contributions today. Please join us tomorrow for a discussion on media and communications. Let's start sharp at 8:00 (or your equivalent). If you want to get in touch with me before then, my e-mail is [lydia3@rogers.com](mailto:lydia3@rogers.com)

Jessical :

I couldn't agree with you more, Chijaka. It is still a question of power for women, plus the political will and gender sensitive budgets. Ruth will see you in Nairobi next week, and she sends her love. She'll give you the DVD.

Deepa from India :

The nexus between HIV/AIDS and gender violence -- can others tell more

