



Division for the Advancement of Women



***"Violence against women: Good practices in
combating and eliminating violence against women"***

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**Building Promising Practices: campaigning, awareness raising and
capacity building to combat violence against women - a human rights
approach**

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1 Introduction

Violence against women (VAW) is universal but it is not inevitable. A recent World Health Organization report points out that communities that condemn violence, take action to end it and provide support for survivors have lower levels of violence than communities that do not take such action. In a comparative study of 16 countries, researchers found that levels of partner violence are lowest in those societies with community sanctions (whether in the form of legal action, social approbation or moral pressure) and sanctuaries (shelters or family support systems).¹

All over the world women's rights activists have led efforts to expose VAW; to give victims a voice; to provide innovative forms of support; to force governments and the international community to recognize their own failure to protect women; and to hold all those responsible to account. They have shown that organizing to combat VAW can make a real difference. In March 2004 in partnership with the women's movements Amnesty International (AI) began its six-year Stop Violence Against Women (SVAW) global campaign mobilizing its more than 1.8 million members and supporters worldwide to add their voices to this struggle to stop VAW².

This paper describes some promising practices for successful campaigning. It describes a human rights framework to hold states accountable under due diligence, giving an example of how this approach has been used in Sweden. It looks at two awareness raising projects, in Liberia using participatory theatre, and in the UK targeting young men. It also describes a capacity building project in South Africa bringing together experts, professionals and human rights defenders for a medico-legal workshop on the care, treatment and forensic medical examination of rape survivors in Southern and East Africa.

2 Campaigning to stop VAW – a human rights approach

A human rights approach provides a framework within which governments and others can be held to account and which can be used to demand women's rights:

- Human rights are universal - they belong to all people equally.
- They are indivisible - no one right is more important than another rights. All rights are of equal value and they cannot be separated.
- Human rights cannot be taken away or abrogated - the exercise of some rights can be limited, but only temporarily and under very exceptional circumstances.
- Human rights are interdependent - the promotion and protection of any one right requires the promotion and protection of all other rights.

One of the main reasons for using a human rights framework to oppose VAW is the credibility it lends to the claim that challenging VAW is a public responsibility, requiring legal and social redress. It also makes the more powerful appeal that VAW, no matter the cultural context, is not a legitimate practice and that the individual woman's body is inviolable. Often, making this point has required courageous work on the part of women's organizations.

Human rights law offers women more protection against violence than is usually recognized³. Some states lack the political will to translate international human rights treaties, which they have ratified, into effective domestic laws that protect women from violence. Some fail to allocate adequate resources to implement laws even

¹ WHO 2002, footnote 73, p.176

² *It's in our hands, Stop violence against women* Amnesty International ACT 77/001/2004

³ For details of this please see *The Duty of States to address Violence against women* (AI Index ACT 77/049/2004).

where these exist. Often, there is no integrated approach among enforcing agencies. But laws to protect women from violence do exist and they can be enforced. In fact, the introduction of national legislation on VAW has been one of the key achievements of the women's movements and others over the past decades.

Under international law, the state has clear responsibilities for human rights abuses committed by non-state actors where it has failed to prevent, stop or punish them⁴. The legal concept of due diligence clarifies the state's responsibility to make rights a reality in cases where neither the perpetrator nor the victim is a state agent. This includes family violence and violence by armed groups and individuals during armed conflict. Due diligence means that states bear responsibility for human rights abuses when they know, or ought to know, about abuses, and fail to take appropriate steps to prevent, stop or punish them and to ensure reparations for victims. National governments are responsible for taking action to prevent the abuse of women's human rights – including VAW – as well as for bringing perpetrators to justice, after abuses occur. This means that governments are responsible for educational, legal and practical measures to reduce the incidence of violence. This includes improving street lighting in an area where women have been raped or providing information on women's rights, for example.

Some countries wrongly interpret international human rights law as meaning that their responsibility is limited to making sure that people acting on their behalf (state actors) comply with human rights law. In fact, they are required to prevent, investigate and punish abuses by both state and non-state actors. This means that states are responsible for preventing and prosecuting human rights abuses committed by individuals. This is key to combating VAW, which is often perpetrated by husbands and partners, employers, family members, neighbors, and other individuals or non-state actors. This means that states can be held responsible for violence within the family – the most commonly reported type of VAW – and VAW by both state and non-state actors in conflict. These responsibilities are enshrined within the established requirement to exercise due diligence to respect, protect, fulfil and promote human rights⁵.

Exercising due diligence includes taking effective steps to prevent abuses, to investigate them when they occur, to prosecute the alleged perpetrators and bring them to justice in fair proceedings. Due diligence also means providing adequate reparations for the victims, including compensation, rehabilitation and redress and ensuring that justice is secured without discrimination of any kind. In the context of armed conflicts, this means that states must not only refrain from acts which constitute violations of human rights law, but also must take all necessary measures to prevent other actors (enemy forces, armed groups, paramilitaries, organizations and individuals in a woman's community or family) from committing such acts. Where states have failed to prevent such abuse, they must ensure reparations and rehabilitation for victims, and strive to bring perpetrators to justice, whether nationally or internationally.

⁴ General Recommendation 19 of the United Nations (UN) Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (paragraph 9) states: "Under general international law and specific human rights covenants, States may also be responsible for private acts if they fail to act with due diligence to prevent violations of rights or to investigate and punish acts of violence, and for providing compensation."

⁵ Due diligence has developed through the resolutions, observations and comments of international and regional bodies and human rights courts. It is used by the various organs of the UN and regional human rights bodies to monitor states' implementation of human rights treaties and is a way to measure whether a state has done enough to fulfill its human rights obligations.

It takes more than recognizing state's responsibility to stop VAW; if the state is not taking its obligations seriously pressure needs to be brought to bear to create change. AI has produced a step-by-step guide to using due diligence as a campaigning tool to stop VAW⁶. In practical terms, invoking the standard of due diligence:

- Gives campaigners a way of using the human rights framework to stop VAW by invoking state responsibility for violations by state and non-state actors.
- Provides a concrete framework for demanding a range of reforms, from bringing non-state perpetrators to justice to preventative measures.
- Can be invoked at the local level, and sets the basis for dialogues with local authorities, politicians and other leaders.

This guide is supported by two legal documents that are guides to human rights law and standards relating to women's rights not to suffer violence. One covers domestic violence, violence in the community, criminal law, addressing VAW and appropriate remedies for victims and survivors of VAW, and the other international standards to VAW in conflict.⁷

2.1 A campaigning example - Sweden

The issue of VAW has been widely debated in Sweden and the government has implemented many positive measures. However, VAW remains serious and widespread, with many Swedes not recognizing VAW is violation perpetrated also by Swedes – reportedly the most gender equal country in the world.⁸ Using the framework of due diligence to hold a government to account, AI Sweden has produced two research reports with visible outreach actions to highlight the level of violence within the family in Sweden and the failure of the state to address it effectively.⁹

In April 2004, AI Sweden published a report entitled *Men's VAW in close relations: An outline of the situation in Sweden*.¹⁰ Using publicly available official sources, particularly the excellent criminal statistics in Sweden that are produced yearly as well as interviews with officials and other sources it challenges myths regarding VAW in Sweden, e.g. the widely held belief that VAW is a cultural phenomenon or perpetrated only by alcoholics. The report covered the prevalence and widespread nature of VAW, looking at the multiple discrimination women face as a result of: age, disability, ethnic origin, sexual identity, and mental illness. The report also looked at Swedish legislation, which is progressive, but not implemented effectively. It highlighted the need for help and support services for women at risk from violence. Finally, it examined the gaps in the educational system.

The report was launched at a media seminar with experts, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and members of parliament, including the Secretary of State in the Ministry of Justice. The launch was covered by more than 80 newspapers and by national radio and television. On the same day, campaigning events were held in at least five cities. In Stockholm and Uppsala, there were "human installations" with

⁶ See *Campaigning to stop Violence against Women*, AI Index: ACT 77/052/2004.

⁷ For further information see: *ibid*, *The Duty of States to address Violence against women*, AI Index ACT 77/049/2004); *Violence against women in armed conflict*, AI Index ACT 77/050/2004. These documents together with four human rights education manuals form the Activist's Toolkit - a set of materials to assist activists working to stop VAW.

⁸ *Women's Empowerment: Measuring the Global Gender Gap*, World Economic Forum 2005.

⁹ An approach they took after extensive consultation with women's organizations, academics and others.

¹⁰ *Men's Violence against Women in Intimate Relationships. An account of the situation in Sweden*, AI Sweden 19 April, 2004.

women wearing white wedding dresses. Every fourth woman had black roses for her wedding bouquet and a black bridal veil representing violence in marriage. In Gothenburg and Lund, women's rights groups and AI members collected hundreds of handprints, (the symbol of AI's campaign), on a huge white cloth. The Section was not prepared for the interest that the report generated, not only locally but also nationally. It was greater than any other report AI Sweden has produced. Within a month all 2000 copies were sold out.

The day after the launch of the report the Ministry of Justice issued a press release, stating that a working group with representatives from four different ministries was being set up that very day. In the press release the Minister for Gender Equality Affairs, Mona Sahlin, stated that: "*Amnesty's report on men's VAW shows that the tightened laws concerning men's VAW are not implemented the way they should be. Many battered women are left with no support from society. This is unacceptable and we are going to change this.*" AI was invited to meet the working group.

From their research and the response to it AI Sweden identified implementation and access to services, particularly in municipalities, as the key issues. The law states that it "*shall provide services to victims of crimes, including partner abuse*". In their second report AI Sweden decided to establish if this was indeed the case. They did a study to establish whether enough was being done at a municipal level using AI groups in each municipality. The 290 municipalities were divided between AI groups and guidelines were prepared for AI members, including a questionnaire, suggestions for letters, whom to contact in the municipality and so on. This was to ensure that the approach was consistent across the country. The Section encouraged groups to meet with municipalities and call on local media to cover the issue. Information was obtained on 75% of the municipalities. Replies to the questionnaire were all forwarded to the Section and formed the basis of the second report, *Not a Priority Issue. A Review of the Work of Swedish Municipalities to Combat Men's Violence against Women*.¹¹

The questionnaire covered the following issues: Is men's VAW included in discussions at a political level? Do municipalities have plans of action? What is the level of cooperation between different authorities and NGOs? How high is the prevalence of VAW in municipalities? What is the role of non-profit women's shelters? What resource does the municipality contribute to shelters? What service is provided to women with special needs who cannot obtain help from a shelter? Is there information available about where to seek help? What measures are being taken to raise awareness?

The report was launched on 7 March 2005. The number of visible outreach activities grew from five to 25 cities for the launch. The report received a lot of media attention – including in the US – because Sweden is seen as a progressive country on VAW and the report challenged that perception. It also initiated a lot of local debate with politicians, particularly with women who run shelters; drawing attention to the situation in their local municipalities.

In response to the reports the Swedish government said, "*AI has shown that this is a problem and we will work to solve this*". The focus on the municipalities forced the government to look closely at local provision and whether legislation was being implemented. In mid-March 2005 the government stated that they would work to introduce a new law in Sweden that will set a minimum standard for services and

¹¹ *Not a Priority Issue A Review of the Work of Swedish Municipalities to Combat Men's Violence against Women*, AI Sweden, March 7, 2005.

protection in all municipalities. In addition, there has been another very positive success of this campaign – men are now getting involved in Sweden, with men-only demonstrations against VAW taking place for the first time in 30 years.

3 Promising practice in human rights awareness raising

Stopping VAW will not be achieved by government action alone; good practice requires that legal and policy reform be combined with changes in attitudes, prejudices and social beliefs that foster and reinforce VAW. Anti-violence activists – from grassroots, community-based initiatives, to large national and regional networks to international organizations and UN agencies -- have engaged in a wide variety of efforts to break the silence about VAW, educate women about their rights, teach men that VAW is a human rights abuse and a crime, and mobilize communities to take responsibility for ending VAW.

Raising awareness, or more accurately changing awareness, is an important precursor for behavioural and attitudinal change. This must be a two-way approach as a top-down, information based approach does not work. Raising awareness is not a matter of lecturing on human rights but of involving people in analysing their problems and identifying ways to improve their lives by relating those problems to universal human rights. This can only be achieved through processes, rather than one-off events. Detailed below are two examples of promising practices in awareness raising that have had impact.

3.1 Training project for rural human rights volunteers - Liberia¹²

This training project is a partnership between AI Netherlands and the National Human Rights Center of Liberia (NHRCL) aimed at raising human rights awareness and mobilising people in rural areas to claim their rights and resist abuse of power. It began only after extensive consultation, which led to a real partnership. Sharing information on the strategies and approaches used by similar organisations in Africa had a positive impact on the quality of the programme and allowed for the development of directly relevant approaches. AI Netherlands has been working from many years on awareness raising activities in Africa through its Special Project on Africa and this training project is part of a larger project on West Africa, which has an integrated gender dimension, but is not solely focused on women's rights or VAW.

In September 1998, when the first preparations for the project began, there had been no fighting for more than two years, but respect for the rule of law remained weak. Government militias and security forces were increasingly involved in harassing civilians, in an attempt to silence political opponents. Offices of newspapers, human rights organisations, and others were searched and often vandalized and the most vocal human rights activists were threatened and forced to leave the country. It was in these very difficult circumstances that the Project started in 2000. A baseline assessment was carried out in two of the three selected counties and in 2001 the first training of trainers and training of human rights volunteers took place. Initially, the success was remarkable despite the constraints.

The training programme was implemented as planned until 2002 when increased rebel activity resulted in the vast majority of Liberians fleeing their homes, including almost all of the volunteers and trainers. The then Project Officer and four colleagues were arrested in November, he managed to escape and flee to Ghana. During this period neither government nor rebel groups showed the slightest regard for human rights. Unarmed civilians were indiscriminately killed, children and youth were

¹² See *Human Rights Volunteers in rural Liberia. Lessons Learned of a training program*. NHRCL and AI Netherlands 2004.

forcibly conscripted into militias and armed groups committed rape and other forms of sexual abuse against mainly girls and women with impunity.¹³ The August 2003 Accra Peace Agreement ushered in a National Transitional Government and the deployment of 15,000 United Nations peacekeeping forces throughout the country allowing civilians to move more freely and disarmament and demobilisation is being carried out. The Project Officer returned to Liberia in September 2003 and the project began again in November.

The aim of the project was to create a network of human rights volunteers at community level in three counties. To ensure sustainability people already active in their community and belonging to a local organisation or group such as community development organisations, religious groups or women's groups were targeted and trained. This group also had the advantage of being familiar with the local cultural and social dynamics and so better able to assess the problems and possibilities for change within their communities.

Trainers selected from each of the counties received an initial training of trainers workshops and went on to provide training to volunteer activists¹⁴. Training was also provided to some local theatre groups to support the volunteers in their community based activities. Training was provided in raising human rights awareness, mobilising people against injustice and monitoring and reporting human rights violations. To strengthen the rural base of the networks in each county a County Coordinating Committee (CCC) consisting of three to five local NGOs, including women's groups, organised the training and follow up meetings of volunteers, provided support to the volunteers and helped coordinate their activities. A Project Officer provided overall coordination of the Project who in turn receives support from other NHRCL members and staff. The Project involved volunteers in three kinds of activities:

- *Raising human rights awareness*: to ensure people knew their rights to enable them to resist abuse of power by the authorities and to claim their rights. It was agreed that this process should also aim to promote equality, tolerance and respect for diversity, including gender, religion and ethnicity.
- *Mobilising communities to claim their rights*: Volunteers were expected to play a facilitating role in this rather than acting on behalf of others, e.g. assisting the community to find ways to demand their rights are protected and respected.
- *Monitoring and reporting human rights violations*: Volunteers were expected to regularly write reports about the human rights situation in their community and give these either to the CCC, one of the trainers or directly to a visitor from the NHRCL. They were asked to report serious human rights violations immediately.

In addition to the network of rural volunteers, the project also included the promotion of the use of drama in human rights work in rural areas, the production of simple materials to raise human rights awareness in rural areas and capacity building for Monrovia-based human rights organisations including on VAW. Two theatre facilitators were contracted to provide drama and human rights training to two local theatre groups in each county. Two human rights activists assisted the theatre facilitators in designing and providing the theatre training. A total of 60 persons

¹³ At the time of the Project was evaluated in April 2004 many of the volunteers and trainers were still in Internally Displaced Persons camps and most of their parent organisations remained dissolved.

¹⁴ To ensure the trainers understood the nature of the problems and the economic, social and cultural context, trainers from the same county did the training.

participated in the drama workshops.¹⁵ Participatory theatre is an effective way of engaging women and men to start raising awareness, particularly in rural areas.

One of the major successes of the Project has been the inclusion and involvement of women. Approximately 45% of the volunteers and trainers are women. This was largely due to applying a quota system, which generated a heated debate. Some felt that human rights work was too risky for women. It has had a strong positive influence on the kinds of issues that volunteers work with at community level and also the way issues were tackled. The rights of women have come to prominence, including issues of domestic violence and this is now more broadly and easily discussed. It has also enhanced women's confidence to participate, which was in evidence during the evaluation workshops and discussions. The whole training program had a gender dimensions and therefore all the men who were involved in the project received gender awareness training and have subsequently been involved in supporting survivors of sexual violence and reporting rape case. The documentation of VAW in Liberia is very limited and to strengthen this a specific training on monitoring and documenting VAW was held in April 2004 for women's rights activists from organizations working with survivors of violence. To facilitate documentation further AI Netherlands has been linking up these organizations with HURIDOCS.

The Liberia project is a good example of awareness raising and mobilizing with impact. The Project's initiative to promote human rights awareness and encourage monitoring and reporting of violations was widely welcomed by the rural population, including active support from women, youth and children. One indication of its relevance is the fact that rural citizens; especially women, young people and children have become actively involved in advocating for their rights. The project demonstrated that training and supporting a volunteer network of human rights activists is a viable strategy, which can be highly effective in tackling human rights abuses, including VAW. By integrating it into existing community-based organisations, it has proven resilient and relevant in the difficult context of the Liberian conflict and it has provided a foundation and catalyst for the growth of the human rights movement in rural Liberia. The project continues.

3.2 Targeting men through a public communication campaign - UK¹⁶

For too long the public debate on the issue of VAW has deconstructed the behaviour of women. There is a need to shift the agenda from focusing on women to one that focuses on men and the role men can play in the elimination of VAW, helping men to *identify, understand* and *accept* the role they can play in challenging the normalisation of violence against women. Following extensive consultation¹⁷ AIUK identified targeting men as an area in which they can add value from a public communication perspective to campaigning on this issue¹⁸. The engagement of men and boys has been recognised by the women's sector and the international community as a critical component in the eradication of violence against women. However, engaging this audience as part of the solution to violence against women is challenging, and importantly, needs to be taken in stages.

¹⁵ A guide for participatory theatre has subsequently been developed by AI Netherlands, which includes ways of highlighting specific types of VAW, has just been produced for use by theatre groups in Africa.

¹⁶ See Violence Against Women Public Communication Campaign Overview, AIUK, September 2003 and *Problem? What problem?* AIUK, 01 February 2005.

¹⁷ An external advisory group of women's organisations, academics and others operating in the violence prevention sector played a key role in helping AIUK to identify where it could add value to the work of women's and other organisations in the UK.

¹⁸ This project is one of a number of activities AIUK is doing as part of AI's SVAW Campaign.

The overall goal of AIUK's public communication campaign is to "assist men to realise their roles and responsibilities in challenging and eradicating violence against women in the UK thereby changing the nature of the existing debate to one of men's responsibility rather than the deconstruction of women's behaviour"¹⁹. This is a very broad campaign goal, and in order to achieve it a range of specific campaign objectives have been set. Pre-campaign research undertaken has enabled AIUK to design targeted, measurable and realistic objectives based on benchmarking statistics, so that informational and attitudinal change can be measured. AIUK is not seeking to achieve a behavioural change in the primary target audience. Behavioural change unfolds over a long period of time, and in the case of VAW, which is such a normalised element of society, they do not realistically expect to achieve behavioural change in the space of two years. What they do expect to achieve is to provide information to men about the role they can play in the eventual elimination of VAW and to change their attitudes about their roles and responsibilities. By communicating that men have an important role to play in the eventual elimination of violence against women, AIUK hopes to appeal to the primary target audiences to reflect on the issue and use their peer and familial networks to begin shifting attitudes right across the community.

AIUK's male activists were identified as a key target and the campaign's messages are also aimed at them as members of the primary target audience. This group is particularly important because they have a commitment to defend human rights and play an important role in taking the campaign's messages into their communities, social networks, families and local press to further strengthen the campaign. Young women are a secondary target of the campaign. Existing research shows that women also display reasonably high levels of tolerance of violence against women. They play a key role in bringing the issue 'home' to the primary target audience. AIUK has also used its members in over 300 groups and professional network, such as the trainer's network, to take the campaign messages to their communities.

In the UK, as with most other places throughout the world, men's attitudes and (non-perpetrating) behaviours have been absent from the public debate on the issue of violence against women. This has reinforced the belief amongst this audience that violence against women is a women's issue and therefore nothing that affects their lives. A key target of this project is men who don't identify themselves as *perpetrators* of violence against women, and consequently believe it has nothing to do with them.

To communicate successfully with this audience, it is essential to know as much as possible about their existing attitudes, opinions and behaviours. Very little attitudinal research has been formally conducted in the UK. The two most notably are Zero Tolerance and Teenage Tolerance;²⁰ however these studies were conducted with young people. The BBC conducted a small research project in 2003 called 'Hitting Home' as part of its series on domestic violence in the UK, and used similar questions to those used in Zero and Teenage Tolerance.²¹ The findings were comparable, which isn't surprising as collective societal attitudes are learned and reinforced across generations. There appeared to be unacceptably high levels of tolerance and acceptability of violence against women, accompanied by the typical stereotypes that blame women for the violence they experience.

¹⁹ Op cit AIUK, September 2003.

²⁰ *Zero Tolerance: a study of young people's attitudes towards violence, sex and relationships*, The Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust 1998. *Teenage Tolerance: The Hidden Lives of young Irish People*, The Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust, 2001 www.zerotolerance.org.uk/index.htm

²¹ *Hitting Home*, BBC 2003, www.bbc.co.uk/health/hh.

AIUK commissioned further attitudinal research in order to identify how best to develop the project, further explore the attitudes and opinions of this audience as well as testing out a variety of message types to determine how best to engage their attention on the issue of violence against women. The research presented the following findings:

- A strong unwillingness to talk about violence against women.
- Sophisticated 'avoidance' techniques when it comes to engaging in a discussion about violence against women.
- A superficial response ("yes, violence against women is certainly a bad thing"), which when challenged, revealed a low level of understanding about what violence against women actually is as well as a limited awareness of the true extent of violence against women.
- Presentation of the usual negative stereotypes and myths, including blaming women for the violence they experience.
- Anger at being made to feel guilty or to blame for violence against women.
- Refusal to believe the statistics regarding violence against women.
- Eventual recognition of seriousness, but inertia/torpor regarding taking any steps to remedy the problem.

Clearly evident was the seeming lack of concern about violence against women as a problem. It was also obvious that the hidden nature of violence against women in the UK aided men's ability to avoid it. AIUK has therefore focused on getting the issue of violence against women onto their radar, into their consciousness, and into their lives. The approach has been to take what is 'private', and make it 'public' so that men can no longer deliberately avoid it. The target group's behaviour was identified as being 'pre-contemplative', i.e. largely unaware of the role they can play in eliminating VAW in the stages of change. (See Appendix II for details of the Campaign Framework and Stages of Changes Model.)

AIUK identified that the issue of violence against women is one that by its very nature alienates men. They either think it's a women's issue and dismiss the messages, actively ignore them because they don't see the relevance to themselves, or else feel that they're being accused and take a defensive stance. Emphasis was therefore placed on creating messages that would engage men's interest, without leaving them feeling accused, blamed or guilty.

AIUK worked with an agency called Karmarama to create a number of pieces of communication aimed at assisting this audience to think about violence against women and to also reject violence against women. These include a range of posters designed to look like real cosmetic adverts advertising Cachez a fake range of beauty products designed for women who need to cover up and treat the effects of physical violence. The posters were displayed on the London Underground and received an overwhelming amount of positive media coverage from all over the UK. AIUK also received a large number of direct requests for the posters from local women's organisations, police, activists, and from the French Minister for Women and a letter of support for the campaign from Baroness Scotland, Chair of the Intern Ministerial Group for Domestic Violence.

Four short films were also developed and shown in a double-sided video booth located at Bluewater, a major shopping centre in Kent. Each film presents an individual (a father, a male neighbour, a female employer, a victim) talking about relationships that are obviously abusive, but in a way that causes the listener to realise these people don't realise there is anything wrong with the violence. Each film ends with a fact/statistic about violence against women and the end line: *Problem? What problem?* Responses to the films have been very positive, raising awareness of

domestic violence amongst adult men challenging societal complacency around domestic violence, and improving their knowledge about the true extent of domestic violence against women in the UK. Many of the men who watched the films stayed for a long time afterwards to talk about them to facilitators who said it is as if “they feel they have permission to talk about it and ask questions of us”.

The immediate response of this awareness raising campaign has been very positive and the materials produced have been widely circulated. It is now being followed up with activities designed to maintain attention and develop a relationship with the target audience so that they recognise and accept their role in eradicating violence against women. The public media campaigns will be supported next year by men only regional conferences and round tables on VAW facilitated by organizations that have successfully targeted men in other countries, e.g. the White Ribbon Campaign. These are aimed at men in professions that come into contact with women survivors of rape and other forms of sexual abuse and intimate partner violence, such as health workers, police and the judiciary. Further evaluation over the long term will be carried out as the campaign progresses to establish the effectiveness of this project.

4. Promising practices in capacity building — Southern Africa²²

Promising practices in capacity building can come from the effective exchange of skills, information and experienced between different professions working on a similar issue both within country and between countries. An example of this is the regional medico-legal workshop on improving access to justice and health care for rape survivors held in South Africa in 2002.

In June 2001 heads of state and government at a special session of the United Nations on the global crisis of HIV/AIDS issued a Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS in which it was noted that 75% of the people worldwide living with HIV/AIDS live in sub-Saharan Africa; that women and young adults and children, in particular girls, are the most vulnerable; that gender equality and the empowerment of women are fundamental elements in the reduction of the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS. The Declaration called on governments to promote and protect women’s human rights as a critical intervention against the spread of HIV/AIDS. This is particularly relevant to Southern Africa. Of the 26 million men and women aged 15-49 estimated by UNAIDS to be living with HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa at the end of 2001, 15 million were women, 11 million were men. Southern African countries, which have the highest level of infections in sub-Saharan Africa, have estimated infection rates ranging from 13% of the adult population in Mozambique through South Africa at 20% to Botswana at 38%. In all cases the number of women living with HIV/AIDS outnumbered men living with the disease.²³

These terrible statistics co-exist with evidence of widespread economic, social and legal discrimination against women and high levels of violence, including sexual violence against women and girls within the family and the wider community. The

²² See *Protecting the human rights of women and girls: A medico-legal workshop on the care, treatment and forensic medical examination of rape survivors in Southern and East Africa*. Report of the Proceedings of a regional workshop co-sponsored by AI, the Independent Medico-legal Unit and the UK Community Fund, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa 8-12 August 2002.

²³ AVERT.ORG, HIV & AIDS Statistics in Africa (accessed at <http://www.avert.org/subadults.htm>) drawing on UNAIDS figures for the end of 2001; UNAIDS: Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. *AIDS Epidemic Update December 2001*, Geneva 2001, online at: http://www.unaids.org/epidemic_update/report_dec01/index.html and UNAIDS: Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. *Report on the global HIV/AIDS epidemic July 2002*, Geneva, 2002, online at: <http://www.unaids.org/barcelona/presskit/report.html>.

increasingly observed and documented links between the lack of equality, gender-based violence and the spread of HIV/AIDS makes it all the more urgent for states to fulfil those responsibilities identified in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS.

Following the organizations 2001 International Council Meeting, AI has widened the scope of its work to include documenting and campaigning against violations of the rights protected under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, including the right of access to health on a non-discriminatory basis. As a consequence AI was able to raise, in November 2001, its concern with the South African government that it was acting contrary to its human rights obligations to ensure the best available standards of care for survivors of sexual violence. This was when it allowed the government of Mpumalanga province to obstruct the work of health care professionals in the state sector involved in the provision of anti-retroviral drugs to rape survivors at risk of HIV/AIDs.²⁴

Against this background AI worked with the South African-based Independent Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU) to co-host a regional medico-legal workshop on the theme of improving access to justice and health care for rape survivors.²⁵ A workshop was held in August 2002 in KwaZulu Natal attended by 46 health care workers, lawyers, police officers and human rights activists, including AI members, from Southern and Eastern Africa and AI staff from the International Secretariat in London, Kampala and Pretoria. The countries represented comprised Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The participants, who came together to share their expertise and concerns, came from a broad spectrum of backgrounds and included forensic pathologists and nurses, clinical psychologists, general medical practitioners, police officers, human rights lawyers and legal researchers, representatives from service organizations assisting survivors of sexual violence and human rights campaigners.

A key objective of the workshop was for participants to present and share information and good practice:

- (i) about areas of common concern regarding the level and nature of violence against women and girls in the different countries and the relevant legal, medical and criminal justice contexts*
- (ii) on standards of medical and psychological care and treatment provided to rape survivors in the immediate aftermath of an incident and in the longer term (distinguishing the differing needs of adult and child survivors)*
- (iii) on procedures for effective forensic medical examination of rape survivors and the collection and preservation of evidence*
- (iv) on the effective medical management of or prevention of sexually-transmitted diseases, particularly HIV/AIDS, and related medical ethics issues; and*
- (v) on initiatives taken to reform laws and provide training to improve the efficiency of the police and the criminal justice system in the investigation and prosecution of crimes of sexual violence.*²⁶

By facilitating this exchange of skills, information and experiences on the above issues, AI hoped to show support for the work of the participants and their organizations and to contribute to strengthening their efforts to prevent violence against women and assist the survivors of gender-based violence. More concretely the workshop was intended to result in the identification of priorities and practical

²⁴ Op cit *Protecting the human rights of women and girls* p4.

²⁵ AI had previously collaborated with IMLU and the Department of forensic Medicine at the University of Natal Durban in a regional workshop on the medical documentation of human rights violations.

²⁶ Op cit *Protecting the human rights of women and girls* p5.

measures which could be implemented within the participant's country or in co-operation with participants from other countries in the region. This process would at the same time help AI's staff and regional members identify specific and general goals which the organization could help promote through lobbying or other actions targeted at national governments, intergovernmental organizations and other influential actors.

In terms of the objectives of the workshop the participants presented and shared information in considerable detail about areas of common concern, on standards of medical and psychological care and treatment provided to rape survivors, on procedures for effective forensic medical examination of rape survivors, and on the effective medical management/prevention of HIV/AIDS and related medical ethics issues. Discussion on the fifth theme area – on law reform and the provision of training to improve the efficiency of the police and criminal justice systems – could have been strengthened by the inclusion of inputs from additional police representatives and specialist prosecutors. That said, several presenters gave extensive information on progress as well as the pitfalls in law reform initiatives mainly in South Africa and Namibia, and two participants from the police services in Botswana and Lesotho provided information, particularly in the former country, on efforts to improve police investigations of rape cases.

The majority of participants were positive about the value of the workshop. Among the best features identified were the multidisciplinary nature of the workshop, the expertise available, the chance to exchange experiences with and to learn from others in the region, and the technical information presented. Many participants indicated that they had learnt something of value to take back with them to help them address local problems. For instance they had had an opportunity to hear about and see the benefits of taking an inter-sectoral/inter-disciplinary approach in seeking to improve laws, standards of medical examinations and the effective investigation of the crime of rape. The bringing together of two major issues, violence against women and the gendered nature of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, was seen by some participants as particularly valuable.

Plenary and working group discussions lead to priorities and practical measures being identified at country or regional levels and during the workshop possible co-operation in a number of inter-country /organizational initiatives were discussed and the workshop has resulted in collaboration between participants, for example on domestic violence legislation in Namibia. Following the workshop the participants from Swaziland organized a training by South African trainers in forensic nursing and have raised funds to support the building of an examination facility to complement their counselling facilities for rape survivors²⁷. A similar workshop was held in Kenya in 2003.

5. Conclusion

*"Campaigning fulfils all kinds of important functions in a flourishing democracy, from holding politicians to account to empowering the politically, economically and socially marginalized."*²⁸ Effective campaigning, awareness raising and capacity building can make a key contribution to stopping VAW if conducted effectively and efficiently and accountably. As the above examples indicate to achieve success in campaigning, raising awareness and capacity building it is important to have an understanding of how change happens. Successful campaigns require effective strategy and planning,

²⁷ They are working to improve the medical treatment for survivors.

²⁸ *The Good Campaigns Guide, Campaigning for Impact* Tess Kingham and Jim Coe, NCVO 2005.

clear immediate objectives on a longer term path to change, a thorough understanding of the context and an overwhelming belief and commitment in the campaign. This needs to be supported by timely, accurate research, innovative actions and targeted messages.

Attitudes are difficult to change and the process is complex. Individuals need to see that change is useful for them and be engaged in the process. But attitudinal change does not necessarily lead to change in behaviors for this to be successful incentives to change supported by legislative and policy frameworks are needed. These in turn need to be implemented.²⁹

Monitoring impact not outcomes is crucial. Initial indications from these projects are that they have achieved real impact and therefore could be described as examples of promising practice. However long term evaluation is required to establish if awareness raising has been successful and led to real, lasting attitudinal change.

²⁹ *The Good Campaigns Guide, Campaigning for Impact* Tess Kingham and Jim Coe, NCVO 2005.

Appendix I

Campaigning to Stop Violence Against Women³⁰

The Campaigning to Stop Violence Against Women guide includes sections on how to:

- **Identify the problem in country**, by analyzing if national legislation and practice is in line with international law, using the legal guides as reference material.
- **Map the background context**, by analyzing the context in which the campaign will be operating, identifying what are the key factors that will affect the way objectives are chosen and the campaign is positioned. Recognizing the work of women's organizations and activists who have been working on VAW for many years, and working with them to build on that work. Identifying other potential allies such as medical and legal professionals and journalists and engaging men.
- **Set objectives**, ensuring they are SMART³¹, developing a strategy to help clarify what is trying to be achieved and planning activities so they achieve the results wanted and make evaluation easier.
- **Identify the critical steps in your campaign**, the critical pathway is a tool to help identify how that change set out in the objectives will happen and who will make it happen. Setting up milestones to help monitor the effectiveness of actions and to evaluate success.
- **Identify target audiences and approaches**, to help develop the critical pathway and how to deliver it. It is important here to differentiate between who has the power to make the changes needed, e.g. specific government ministers and who influences them, e.g. journalists or international donors. Messages used in the campaign will need to vary depending on who the target is.
- **Plan campaign activities** A wide range of activities are available to help win campaigns. The organization New Tactics provides information about effective tactics to use in campaigning, www.newtactics.org. Effective communication requires the use of the most appropriate medium and products and these must be related to the objectives, audience, influence, action, actors etc. The interests of survivors of violence must be at the heart of communications plans and activities.
- **Monitor and report back**. It is important for all organizations to monitor and evaluate their work. Evaluation helps ensure that the results generated reflect the activities undertaken, and also generates good news to feed into the communications strategy. It is a good idea to evaluate each campaign periodically, for example at the end of each phase or milestone, and use the information gain from the evaluation to improve the campaign.

³⁰ For further information see AI Index: ACT 77/052/2004.

³¹ Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound.

Appendix II

AIUK Campaign framework – Problem? What Problem?³²

Campaigns can raise issues but short term raising of public awareness cannot have long term effects. To be effective at this level, campaigns need to be combined with education and training. AIUK's aim is to influence the attitudes of the target audiences, with the view to being the first stage of an eventual behavioural change. AIUK has been very careful not to set objectives that talk about achieving behavioural change. Changing behaviour permanently can take a very long time – particularly when it comes to the issue of violence against women, which is based in the social and ideological construction of society as a whole.

AIUK's VAW campaign has been designed with reference to the Transtheoretical Model – also known as the Stages of Change Model (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983), which identifies six key stages to permanent behavioural change:

Stage	Characteristics	Sample Statement
1. Pre-contemplation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual has not yet considered changing their behaviour. Probably not even aware of the consequences of their action/inaction. 	<i>"I don't know anything about it. I don't hit my partner, none of my friends hit their partners, and I don't know anyone who has been a victim. It's not part of the world I live in."</i>
2. Contemplation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater and more accurate understanding of the pros and cons of changing the behaviour, but not yet ready to commit because the cons seem to outweigh the pros 	<i>"I understand that I can do something to intervene when my next door neighbour is abusing his partner, but I still don't think I will because I'm not 100% sure that he is hitting her and I am afraid that he will find out that it was me who reported him".</i>
3. Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting ready take action soon. Probably have a 'plan of action'. 	<i>"Next time I hear them arguing I am going to call the police"</i>
4. Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes concrete steps to change the behaviour but not yet consistent. 	<i>"I called the police. I hope I'm never in that situation again, but if I am then I think I will call the police again"</i>
5. Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally free of old behaviour May relapse but accept and commit to new behaviours as part of daily life 	<i>"I did call the police again. I was nervous about it, and almost backed out but I knew I had to"</i>
6. Termination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not tempted to return to old behaviour Complete confidence in ability to maintain new behaviour 	<i>"I'll never again hesitate about intervening when a woman is being abused"</i>

The above table provides a very clear illustration of the stages involved with achieving permanent behavioural change. It also illustrates the model's flexibility. This model allows individuals to 'enter' at any stage. For AIUK this means that some men who might already be at the contemplative stage may even be able to progress through to further stages if the campaign's key messages are clear, strong, and effective. It is useful to refer to a model such as this one when preparing a social marketing campaign because it provides a direct linkage for any evaluation that is undertaken during the campaign. Attitudinal testing at regular intervals will allow

³² Op cit. AIUK September 2003.

AIUK to see which stage the target audience is at, and how messages should be modified in order to move to the next stage.

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