

EC Partners

- Women Against Rape, Botswana

Facts and Figures

- EC Contribution: € 370,000 - 73% of the total costs over a 30 months period



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Gender

Women against rape

"Silence is violence"

"Education reinforces messages of gender equality and the need for all members of the community to confront the reasons why offences of harassment, assault and rape occur."

Counsellor, WAR



Context

Women Against Rape (WAR) provides support to women who are survivors of rape and other forms of violence. Rape is a degrading crime from which survivors struggle to recover. It not only harms the victim, but damages and weakens society.

Counselling forms the backbone of WAR's activities, which are offered to all clients who can contact the organisation for help. Rape has long lasting physical, emotional and psychological traumatic effects on whole families. Therapy can go a long way to address these traumatic effects and to improve the health of abused women.

Supporting women through the legal processes is one of WAR's demanding tasks. Another one is to provide skills training to economically empower vulnerable women, assisting them to run small businesses. WAR also works to rehabilitate perpetrators of rape and other gender-based violence.

WAR's activities have extended to preventive work through education and co-operation with other agencies. Education in gender equality for boys and girls is an important part of the "Silence is Violence" project which reaches out to the community.

Objective: Crisis intervention through counselling and education

- Economic empowerment
- Perpetrator rehabilitation
- Legal assistance
- Awareness raising in schools
- Advocacy and policy reform

Impact: What has been achieved?

- 255 clients went through the counselling process in 2006
- 120 women participated in skills training programs; 50 of these are already using the skills profitably
- 70 perpetrators of abuse were rehabilitated in 2006
- Clients' recovery from trauma and ability to carry on with life as well as increased rate of reporting and cases won in the courts

Gender

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“Silence is violence”

The story of a rape survivor

I am married with 3 children, the last of whom is the result of rape by an unknown person. After the incident, I felt so dirty and shameful I could not report it to anyone. When I discovered I was pregnant I informed my in-laws who held a family conference and informed my husband. He said he would accept the situation and treat the child as his.

Little did I know that the emotional trauma I had suffered could not be healed by my husband's acceptance alone. I continued to suffer and with time my husband distanced himself from me until he took most of the basic essential items from the home and deserted me. Family and legal intervention did not move him. He became verbally abusive whenever he felt like it.

I am thankful to WAR for helping me cope with my situation. Since my husband left me 11 months ago life has been difficult and stressful with 3 kids to take care of without a job. I went through intense counselling with WAR and started to rebuild my life. I realised then that I was still deeply suffering the effects of rape which were made worse by my husband deserting me. Through WAR I also enrolled for homeopathic medicine and got treatment which helped me a lot. The business management course offered by WAR helped me to improve my catering business.

I used to cry every day and wish myself dead. I saw myself as a useless mother since I could not provide for my children and used to leave them alone when going on my catering errands. WAR not only looked after me but also helped find daycare places for my children. Even though the issue between me and my husband is not over yet, I have no pain nor anger anymore. I love my children and enjoy the change I see in them. The rape issue is now just a scar whose wound has been healed.



Women and girls participating in courses to promote confidence and economic self-sufficiency