



Joint Monitoring Committee on the Quality and Status of Life of Women, Children, Youth and Disability

Current Context & Background [Status of VAW in SA present day]

South Africa possesses some of the most progressive laws in the world but the issue of violence against women and children has not changed for the better. Implementation is our biggest challenge. Little focus is given implementation or resources allocated to it.

- Every 6 hours a women is killed by an intimate partner in South Africa
- 1 in 4 women are raped.
- 1 in 4 men have raped.
- Boys learn to abuse by the age of six.

Major milestones

- Other Acts that have enhanced the Act and improved the state responsibility towards the protection of women.
 - ❖ Women can be granted shared residence
 - ❖ Broadened description of domestic violence
 - ❖ Inclusions of all types of intimate and domestic relationships

What are the successes of the Act?

- Percentages of women using Protection Orders.
- Compliance by the police force.
- Compliance by the judiciary.
- Support for standardised training

What are the challenges of the Act?

- Lack of physical protection for the act.
- Still more training for personnel in the charge office.
- Still bad attitude from SAPS members
- Lack of resources to support implementation
- Still confusion between interdicts and laying a charge on issues of domestic violence (role of police versus of volunteer in trauma rooms)

Sexual Offences Act

Major milestones

- Passing of the Act
- Success of the Thuthuzela Centres

Successes of the act

- Broadened definition of rape
- Inclusion and specification to children
- Very progressive law in many ways
- The Offender register.

Challenges of the act

- Lack of practice in courts / courts still conservative



- Lack of protection in court
- Conviction rates still not high
- Allocation of resources still a challenge
 - ❖ TV's
 - ❖ Intermediaries
 - ❖ Training for magistrates

What are the oversight opportunities?

- Parliament to engage with the Act for oversight role
- Justice Committee to be monitored
- More money for research

Femicide (Killing of women by their intimate partner)

Though there is no new research to give us a picture of what the situation is, there is no indication that it has gone down in anyway. It seems to be the opposite as stories of female partners or mother and children killed by an intimate partner feel the papers. The law also does not do anything about parents that neglected their children or had put their children lives in danger to extent of abuse of murder by their friends and partners.

There is also not much support for women who have chosen to leave abuse partners, so they end going back to gain access to financial support and a home. Women who go back should do so as a choice of giving their partner a chance, not out of desperation.

Child Murders

There has been a tremendous growth of child murders in the Western Cape that is raising concerns. These children are both girls and boys. They are most of the time found raped and killed. In most cases the perpetrator is known in the community or is a very close friend. This raises questions of response and investigation from the police and the community.