

ABUSE

62,000 Ugandan Children Defiled

By Haruna Mawa Papique

June 2009

Just two years after Uganda amended the law on defilement to deeply punish the child sexual offenders, the latest report into the vice indicates up to 20,935 more children have been defiled.

The figure which was released by the African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) on June 16, 2009, shows on average 10,000 children are reportedly defiled each year in the country where the juvenile population constitutes 57% of the total 30m people.

According to ANPPCAN Uganda Chapter, a regional NGO working to protect the children from abuse and neglect, child sexual abuse is the most rampant form of crime against children in Uganda. This is due to the failure by the government to speed up the prosecutions of the suspected offenders. Last year although the reported defilement cases dropped by 29%, however 97.2% of the suspected offenders were not tried.

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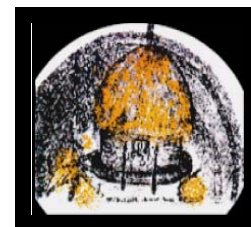
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“It’s absurd that in the last six years a total of 61,888 children have been reportedly defiled. While the statistics of the married children stands at 65,000 it’s equally worrying,” ANPPCAN Uganda’s Executive Director Deogratias Yiga, said in the press statement.

According to the police crime report for 2008, a total of 10,365 sex related crimes were registered. Defilement cases were 8635, however out of this figure just 4,124 cases were taken to courts and only 333 (3.8%) convictions were recorded. While rape cases also increased from 599 cases in 2007 to 1,536 in 2008 the state managed to proceed 241 cases to court and out of these only 52 convicts were made.

This high incidence of child sexual abuse has resulted into more children contracting HIV/AIDS, and other sexual transmitted diseases, increased child pregnancies, early marriages and high school drop out rates. The statement emphasised that child sexual abuse denies children their basic right to survival and development.

Practice escalates

Over the past six years, the trend has just escalated. In 2007 a total of 12,300 children were defiled, this was an increase from 2006 where 11,923 defilement cases were recorded. Similarly in 2005, the police force reported 7,844 defilement cases down from 13,929 in 2004 and in 2003, the vice saw 7257 children abused.

Although the amended Section (129) of the Penal Code Act 2007 provides for a death penalty to the person found guilty of defilement, most of the offenders have walked free. Local NGOs say this is due to the unfriendly justice system in the country.

Recently the Thematic Group, an association comprising 15 NGOs fighting against child sexual abuse and lead by ANPPCAN Uganda concluded that most child survivors of abuse are required to give evidence in the strange and often intimidating court environment without prior preparation of the child about the court proceedings. This they argue put children in very difficult procedures to deal with the intrusive defence lawyers and prosecutors who are ill trained to communicate with the children.

Government reacts

Speaking on UBC radio, a government owned station during a talk show on the rights of children On June 18 in which ANPPCAN participated, the Minister for Children Lt. Jessica Alupo admitted that there is a gap in the local justice system. “This problem cuts across all sectors of the government and needs every person’s intervention. For instance, this court issue is handled by the Justice Ministry, but we are collectively working to address the

children’s concerns,” She said.

Alupo appealed to the public to work closely with the government and inform the authorities about any suspected case of child abuse. She said the highest percentage of child sexual abuse suspects are the people close to the children citing the close relatives.

However, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in Uganda which handles aspects of social protection and child fare remains among the least funded ministries in Uganda.

http://www.anppcanug.org/?page=ugandans_raped



Uganda: 1,000 Kenyan Teachers Sacked Over Sex Abuse

The Monitor
9 October 2010

More than 1,000 teachers have been sacked in Kenya for sexually abusing girls over the past two years, the authorities say. Senior government official Ahmed Hussein told the BBC that most of the victims were aged between 12 and 15.

He said a nationwide confidential helpline set up to help victims had revealed that the problem was much more widespread than previously thought. Most of the cases have occurred in rural primary schools. "Initially we were not able to know what was happening in the country because of the poor communication, but now mobile phones are across the country," Mr Hussein, from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development, said.

Last year, 600 male teachers were dismissed and so far this year 550 teachers have lost their jobs for either kissing, touching or impregnating girls out of 240,000 teachers countrywide. "A number of them have been taken to court, and they have been sentenced," he said. Brian Weke, the programme director for the Cradle, a child rights foundation in Kenya, agreed the problem was widespread.

He gave an example of a case in Nyanza province last year: "I found that in one primary school we had over 20 girls who were pregnant and nearly half the numbers were impregnated by teachers."

However, he said the officials investigating the abuse were not passing vital information to get convictions. The BBC said teachers who are caught defiling their students end up paying the parents to prevent cases reaching court.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201010111962.html>



AFRIKAN SPIRITUALITY

Egypt: Ancient History of African Philosophy

THEOPHILE OBENGA



The traditional shrine as a symbol of our cultural history

The Problem

It is a mere prejudice to believe, that the philosophical epoch of humanity begins first among the Greeks in the fifth century BC. This prejudice implies that other ancient people did not engage in speculative thought. Undoubtedly, speculative thought transcends experience, but it always attempts to explain, interpret, and unify it in order to systematize it. Speculative thought, using aphorisms, allusions, metaphors, negative or positive methods, and dialectics, can be oral or written, and it is necessarily connected with the problems of life. Thus philosophy can be defined as "systematic reflective thinking on life" (Yu-fan 1976: 16).

The spirit of Chinese philosophy, Indian philosophy, African philosophy, European philosophy, and Maya philosophy can differ greatly in their treatment of a subject, but philosophy always deals with human knowledge, and the elevation of the mind. The future philosophy of the world must then take into account the great speculative systems of all humanity.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to gain some acquaintance with the traditions of African philosophy from the remote times to the contemporary era. I am going to try to present the ancient history of African philosophy by bringing into focus the speculative thought of ancient Egypt.

Method

African philosophy as a historical fact must be understood within a historical frame. The origin, evolution, and development of African philosophy follow the streams and currents of African history. The long history of African philosophy has shown connections with other continents, chiefly with Europe, since the Graeco-Roman world. In remote times African philosophy was mainly located in the Nile Valley, that is, in Kemet or ancient Egypt, and in Kush (Napata/Meroe). Philosophy flourished in Egypt from about 3400 BC to 343 sc and in Kush (also known as Nubia or Ethiopia by the Greeks) from about 1000 sc to 625 ac.

The task of the historian of philosophy requires valid methods for clarifying the ideas, concepts, and speculations of the philosophers of the past, and to push their theories to their ultimate conclusion in order to show their effectiveness. But the historian of philosophy is himself to some extent a

philosopher, because his work is not only a mere historical investigation, but also a creative one. The historian of philosophy thinks about the ideas and theories of the past. Thus the analytical and critical methods of history undergo mutations to become a productive method of philosophy.

The Question of Ancient Egypt

The question of the ancient Egypt connection with the rest of Black Africa was opened to an intensive discussion involving opposing points of view in 1974 during an international symposium organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) held in Cairo and Aswan. Present were more than 20 of the best Egyptologists in the world. All the outstanding scholars and specialists at the Cairo symposium, although they took opposing sides about other items, came, in spite of that, to agreement regarding the following significant points.

First, Egyptian language as revealed in hieroglyphic, hieratic, and demotic writings, and Coptic, that is, the old Egyptian language in its latest developments, as written in the Greek-Coptic script, and modern African languages, as spoken nowadays in Black Africa, constitute the same linguistic community broken into several parts. Comparative grammar and the method of internal reconstruction allow scholars to reconstruct certain features of the language spoken by the origin, an unseparated community, on the basis of corresponding features of the descent languages. The comparative method in historical linguistics is still a valid method for defining change and determining earlier forms of two or more related languages to prove their precise relationship. Technically speaking, no scholar, using the method of internal reconstruction, has proved objectively that the Semitic, Egyptian, and Berber languages are descended from a common ancestor. The so-called "AfroAsiatic family," or "Chamito-Semitic family," which has gained wide

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FEATURED ARTICLES

Zimbabwe: 'African 'Tradition' and Women's Oppression

By Tafataona P. Mahoso

The Herald, December 8, 2010



THERE is a problem with the way the oppression of women and girls is explained which, if not challenged, will mean that gender will become a racket, an industry, without even reducing, let alone stopping, the degradation of the majority of women.

For those who believe that clear thinking, accurate and scientific explanation and research are important steps in the pursuit of freedom, this problem is the use of so-called "African tradition" or "African culture" as a catch-all explanation for the suffering of women.

Debate is needed because it appears that now, as in the colonial past when white settlers invented the myth of the African community as permanently "traditional" and white settler community as forever modernizing and progressive, the idea that African "culture" is responsible for women's suffering and oppression has become the easiest expression of one's implied approval of existing so-called "modern" social and political arrangements.

Despite the worsening brutalisation of women and children through existing contemporary power structures and institutions, the idea is that the present donor-dominated and NGO-congested system is all right. The problem is in the "tradition" of the African male in particular.

The December 5 2010 issue of The Sunday Mail carried stories on two documents originating from the

US Embassy, Harare.

One of these is the classified cable of July 2007 by former US ambassador to Zimbabwe Christopher Dell, which WikiLeaks released as part of a slew of US government cables covering 274 countries.

The second is former US ambassador James McGee's Fiscal 2010 Strategic Plan for the same US Embassy which has also been leaked from another source in a manner similar to WikiLeaks.

The first cable demonstrates that what the US government does and says in public may be the exact opposite of what it says and does secretly or privately; and that the purpose of a policy stated in public may be the opposite of the real purpose.

US officials will praise certain groups and even arrange for honours, prizes and awards to be showered on persons, parties and organisations they despise or look down upon, as long as they believe that such inducements and pretences will enable the US government to secure selfish US interests.

The second document itemises the means which US officials employ to achieve their objectives and purposes in other countries. For instance, in Zimbabwe they "created" 29 new NGOs in 2007, 32 in 2008 and 35 in 2010; they exerted pressure against the Government of Zimbabwe while assisting certain forces, including parties, who oppose the same Government; and they offered relief to some of the people who suffered as a result of the pressure exerted against Government, pressure which includes illegal economic sanctions.

In simple language this means US officials presuming that the people who make up the Government of Zimbabwe are not the same as the people of Zimbabwe and that hurting the Government will not hurt the people.

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However, just in case that presumption is wrong and the people really get hurt together with their government, the US Embassy's strategic plan includes a huge relief programme of nyaradzo and chema for the "suffering people," a programme also meant "to use the fight against HIV/Aids to create a good image among the suffering people of Zimbabwe . . ."

In plain language this means that the US and its allies employ illegal sanctions and other "pressures" in order to destroy or diminish the capacity of the Government to assist and protect its people. Then, through Usaid and the proliferating NGOs, the US government and its allies offer relief to the same people, which is to say they try to offer themselves as a better alternative to or a better replacement of the elected Government.

All these diabolic tricks together seek to achieve what the McGee document calls "transformational diplomacy goals".

Transformational diplomacy goals is a polite phrase referring to the fact that the culture and values of the people of Zimbabwe remain an obstacle in the path of foreign-sponsored regime change.

The culture and values which united African men and women against white settlerism and imperialism, the culture and values of the people which motivated them to overthrow apartheid and UDI, the culture and values which inspired the people to reclaim and repossess their white-stolen land after one hundred years, the culture and values which caused the people to refuse to be taxed for the purpose of paying back the land thieves -- that culture, those values, have to be "transformed", wiped out, before illegal regime change can succeed and produce a "fresh start".

The US and its allies know that, for the last 100 years of settlerism, that culture, those values, have been nurtured and protected by African women. So these women are a critical factor in the creativity and resilience of the African social and political order which the US and its allies call "the regime".

The legacy of Queen Nzinga, the legacy of Mbuya Nehanda, the legacy of Joice Teurai Ropa Mujuru, the legacy of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, the legacy of Chimbwido, refers to a real living history.

In the eyes of the US government and its sponsored NGOs, these real African heroines have to be replaced by NGO-groomed nannies who are willing to be awarded meaningless prizes for collaborating with imperialism. These are the likes of Beatrice Mtetwa, Jestina Mukoko, Jenny Williams, Ellen Sirleaf Johnson and Betty Makoni. That is what "change" or a

"fresh start" would mean.

What all the leaked cables together create is a picture of US foreign policy as dictatorial, destructive, intolerant, totalitarian and narcissistic. Even the tragedy of HIV/Aids has to be exploited for the selfish ends of the US empire.

There is clear evidence, for instance, that structural adjustment since 1990 and sanctions since 2000 worsened the brutalisation of the majority of women and children together with men and that there is nothing African or "traditional" about this programme or the sanctions. Yet the symptomatic appearances and effects of this brutalisation in society are still being explained as consequences of African tradition.

It is time we pointed out that the men and women who so casually claim that women and girls are oppressed because of African "tradition" are, in fact, saying they like the current social system (with its structural adjustment, corporate cannibalism, illegal sanctions and land inequity) so much that they believe it would lead to a perfect society if it was not for the backward "African traditional values" which keep intruding upon this otherwise happy existence on the edges the neoliberal global "market economy".

African "culture" has become for the women's freedom movement what the myth of the communist "evil empire" was for the Western rightwing during the Cold War.

When the former Soviet Union collapsed, two paradoxes emerged starkly and they still haunt rightwing propagandists: First, this communist evil empire, which most Western leaders always said was about to take over the entire world and impose its tyranny, could not in fact hold on even to its Second World War borders.

Second, the evils for which this empire was being blamed around the world have, in fact, become much more prevalent and overwhelming: genocide, wars, terrorism, hunger, mass poverty, tyranny and capitalist anarchy.

Just look at Haiti, Afghanistan, Gaza, Sierra Leone and Iraq. In fact, there may be a link between the embarrassing disappearance of the demon of the communist evil empire as the main cause of the world's suffering and the need now to find a new and equally irrational explanation of women's oppression in the form of African tradition.

In the Muslim world the demon has been identified by the same Western-funded forces as "Islamic fundamentalism". Yet Muslim women who fled to modern France find themselves vilified and excluded by the liberated French women.

My first appeal to the open-minded journalist therefore is to adopt the attitude expressed in the African proverb: "One does not go begging for palm oil with a gourd without an opening."

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FEATURED ARTICLES

Abuse

Including child abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, verbal abuse

Definition

Abuse is defined in the dictionary as "an evil or corrupt practice; deceit, betrayal, molestation, violation" and comes in many forms, eg sexual abuse, physical abuse, child abuse, abuse of power, bullying, harassment, stalking, rape, torture, etc. All abuse is violent, be it physical, emotional, psychological, or a combination. I define seven types of abuse below. The common denominator of all abuse is the collection of behaviours I call bullying.

Anxiety

The abuser is an individual who lives in a state of unusually high anxiety and who has not learnt to deal with that anxiety in the way normal people have. The abuser is insecure, immature, and inadequate, especially in the areas of interpersonal and behavioural skills. If the abuse is of a sexual nature, the abuser is usually sexually inadequate.

The high anxiety seems to be the result of an inability to relate to other people combined with the fear of exposure of that person's inadequacy, immaturity and insecurity. This leads the abuser to want to control and dominate others, having never learnt how to interact with others in normal ways. Often, the abuser is psychopathic (physically violent) or sociopathic (psychologically violent) and despite being fearful of exposure, doesn't show the normal activation of the fight or flight mechanism.

Upbringing

Abusers are usually brought up in a dysfunctional family. The more abusive the adult, the more dysfunctional the family. Often, the father, if present, is violent and abusive. Perhaps the mother is co-dependent, a successful survival strategy when living with a violent partner; however, co-dependency also perpetuates the violence as it avoids dealing with the issue. Usually one or both parents are sociopathic or psychopathic. Occasionally, the child is over-protected, usually by the mother, and thus never allowed to develop as an individual human being. Sometimes, the child is ignored in favour of a sibling.

Before blaming the parents, the reason parents are dysfunctional is because they were brought up in dysfunctional families. The more dysfunctional the parent, the more dysfunctional were their parents ... and so on. Most people are never taught parenting skills. The sole teachers of parenting skills are thus ... our parents. It's not that we actively teach our kids to parent - kids learn by example. We grow up and repeat what they did to us. If all you have ever known is abuse, that is the only way you know how to behave. Human beings do not automatically know what is right and what is wrong; we have to learn it.

The child lives in a dysfunctional environment where abuse, violence or neglect are the norm; as the subject of abuse, the child cannot predict the behaviour of the responsible adults, and therefore has no control. The child learns, usually from an early age, that using bullying behaviours brings relief from anxiety. With so few people able to recognise bullying for what it is, and with strategies of denial, distraction and feigning victimhood perfected by about the age of five, the child has found a successful strategy for reducing anxiety, and thus surviving. Controlling other children through violent behaviour means brings a sense of power (control) to the child; he can't predict or control his parents but he can control other (smaller or less physically strong) children. His targets also become useful objects onto which he can freely displace his own aggression.

Abuse

I identify seven types of abuse:

1. **Physical abuse**, including assault and any deliberate act resulting in physical injuries, including beatings in the guise of corporal punishment but which are delivered with fists or to the child's head. The work of Lewis and Pincus in the States is relevant here - in many violent criminals, especially serial killers, they've found evidence of brain damage during childhood from parental beatings and accidents which have resulted in a

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smaller than normal cortex, with consequent lack of ability to control violent tendencies.

2. *Sexual abuse*, including incest, rape, buggery or any paedophile activity for the gratification of the abuser. The abuser usually has a sexually dysfunctional or unsatisfying relationship with their partner; sexual relations may be violent or inadequate or non-existent, and the child becomes a convenient substitute.

3. *Tactile abuse*, where there is little or no physical contact between parent(s) and the young child, and any contact tends to be violent, punitive, unjust and inappropriate. Physical contact seems to be especially important in the first five or six years. Some children enjoy a cuddle into their teens. Sadly, with abuse coming into the open, many parents (especially fathers) now fear that physical contact with children may be regarded and misconstrued as abuse.

4. *Existence abuse* where the existence and rights of the child are ignored

- Neglect of needs:
physical (food, clothing, shelter)
intellectual (education)

psychological (self-development, self-confidence, self-esteem, maturity)

behavioural (company, friendship, interpersonal and communication skills, relationships)

- Ignoring the child's existence
- Rejection as an only child
- Ignoring one child and loving all others (rejection)
- Ignoring the child as a separate human being and using the child as an extension of one's own existence (as in MSBP, Munchausen Syndrome By Proxy - almost killing the child then rescuing them in a dramatic attention-seeking manner by arriving at hospital casualty at the last minute, then revelling in the adulation of the concerned mother who nearly lost her child)
- abandonment

5. *Religious abuse or cult abuse*

- The child is forced to accept the narrow, exclusive religious views of the parent or guardian to the exclusion of any other belief or possibility of any belief
- Any behaviour by the child not in line with the parents' rigid religious zeal is met with punishment and abuse

- The child is starved of development in interpersonal skills and relationships in the name of religion
- The child is subjected to strange, unnatural and often perverse beliefs on sexual matters and sexual development in line with the religious belief
- The child is discouraged or prevented from associating with any person not sharing the religious belief of the parent or guardian

6. *Emotional abuse*, including

- refusal or unwillingness or inability to express love
- deliberate withholding of love
- conditional love (eg "I don't love you when you behave like that")
- loving one child to the exclusion of all others
- cocooning and smothering, denying the child the opportunity to develop as a separate individual
- being forced into any conflict between parents
- being used as a pawn by warring parents
- being forced into a caring or caretaker role at an inappropriate age
- witnessing alcohol or substance abuse, especially on a regular basis, perhaps being forced to participate
- witnessing violence between parents or adults

7. *Psychological abuse*, including

- constant criticism of a trivial and unjustified nature
- unjustified blame, often for things which have no connection with the child (scapegoating)
- refusal to value
- refusal to acknowledge the child and their achievements
- refusal to praise
- inconsistency in judgement
- unclear, shifting and inconsistent boundaries, sometimes no boundaries, at other times very tight boundaries
- refusal to make eye contact with the child over a long period
- refusal of parents to agree with or support each other when dealing with children

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FEATURED ARTICLES

Domestic Violence, including Legislation, Statistics and Attitudes toward Domestic Violence; The Availability of Protection and Support Services Uganda:

Legislation

Uganda ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1985 (UN n.d.; The Monitor 10 Feb. 2008; AI 30 Nov. 2007, Sec. 3.1). In addition, Uganda's Constitution accords women "full and equal dignity of the person with men" and prohibits "[l]aws, cultures, customs or traditions" that undermine their welfare, dignity or status (Uganda 1995, Art. 33; AI 30 Nov. 2007, Sec. 3.2). Nevertheless, Amnesty International (AI) indicates that there are certain customary laws and practices concerning land ownership, marital customs and child custody norms that conflict with CEDAW and women's constitutional rights (ibid.). For example, marital rape is not recognized under the Penal Code, since consent to marriage is interpreted as consent to sexual activity under customary law (ibid.). According to AI, domestic violence including marital rape may only be dealt with under the lesser criminal charge of assault which carries with it a lower maximum sentence of up to five years imprisonment and does not deal with other forms of domestic violence, including sexual and psychological violence (ibid.).

Uganda has no specific law in place prohibiting domestic violence (The Monitor 10 Feb. 2008; US 11 Mar. 2008), and a draft domestic violence bill has "languished" for years in parliament (Freedom House 2007; The New Vision 28 Sept. 2007). The domestic relations bill was tabled in December 2003, but was shelved in 2005 after it came under attack from both legal and parliamentary affairs committee members and the public (WorldChanging 1 Dec. 2007). In 2006, President Yoweri Museveni declared that the bill "... was not urgently needed" and debate was halted (ibid.).

However, following a mission to Uganda in March 2008 by the African Women Leaders Project (AWLP), an 18-month initiative by the Club of Madrid to support women leaders in four African nations including Uganda, President Museveni reportedly made a public

call for its "speedy passage" (AWLP May-June 2008). Cited in AWLP's May-June 2008 newsletter, the Speaker of the House of Assembly indicated that he would ensure the bill's passage before the end of parliament (ibid.).

In the Kawempe Division in Kampala District, a by-law was passed in October 2007 (Raising Voices n.d.a; The New Vision 9 Oct. 2007), that makes it possible to impose a fine on or demand compensation from a perpetrator of domestic violence (ibid.). The by-law also provides for a fine to be imposed on anyone who "abuses or physically hurts" a community member or authority figure who intervenes or comes to the aid of a victim (ibid.). According to Raising Voices, a non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Kampala that works toward preventing domestic violence (Raising Voices n.d.b), it is the first by-law to be passed in Uganda that addresses domestic violence (ibid. n.d.a). Raising Voices is a project of the Tides Center, a registered American charitable organization (ibid. n.d.b.).

Statistics on and attitudes toward domestic violence

In August 2007, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics published a report indicating that 68 percent of ever-married women aged 15 to 49 years had experienced some form of violence inflicted by their spouse or intimate partner (Uganda Aug. 2007, 293-294). A 2006 study by the Uganda Law Reform Commission yielded similar data, indicating that 66 percent of both men and women respondents had experienced domestic violence (CEDOVIP 2007). The United States (US) Department of State reports in its Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2007 that a 2006 survey indicated that 70 percent of women had been physically or sexually abused (US 11 Mar. 2008, Sec. 5). This survey also found that 60 percent of men and 70 percent of women in Uganda condone "wife beating" (ibid.). This attitude reflects statistics published by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in its 2008 report, which indicates that 77 percent of women aged 15 to 49 years feel that spousal

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violence is justified for a variety of reasons, such as if the woman burns food or refuses sexual relations (UN Dec. 2007, 147; see also *The New Vision* 28 Sept. 2007). According to the 2006 Uganda Law Reform Commission study, domestic violence is most common in northern Uganda, where it is reported to have occurred in 78 percent of homes (CEDOVIP 2007).

Protection and Resources Available

Most women do not report cases of domestic violence to authorities (*The New Vision* 28 Sept. 2007; Freedom House 2007) and police rarely intervene or investigate (ibid.; US 11 Mar. 2008, Sec. 5). Country Reports 2007 indicates that many law enforcement officials consider spousal battery "a husband's prerogative" (ibid.). Other reported reasons for women's reluctance to file a complaint include fear of reprisal, embarrassment, poverty, ignorance of the law and lack of information on where to make a report (*The New Vision* 28 Sept. 2007).

A report released by AI in 2007 indicates that women living in the north have limited access to protection from any form of violence because "[p]olice posts and stations are few and far between" (AI 30 Nov. 2007, Sec. 1), and because it is normal practice for police to demand money to take action on any complaints (ibid. Sec. 5.1.2). In cases of domestic violence, AI notes that victims often do not complain to police because they depend on their partners for financial support (ibid. Sec. 4). Another option for victims of spousal abuse is a traditional familial reconciliation process, which may involve a form of paid compensation to the victim called luk (ibid.). Women interviewed by AI indicated that the informal process was ineffective as husbands would not pay luk and would often continue to abuse their wives (ibid.).

In an attempt to address the problem of domestic violence, the Uganda Police Force established a Gender Desk in 1986, which became the Child and Family Protection Unit (CFPU) in 1989 (CEDOVIP 2007). The Uganda Police Force has also developed a handbook in cooperation with the Center for Domestic Violence Prevention (CEDOVIP) (ibid.), an NGO based in Kawempe that collaborates with other stakeholders in the community to advocate for changes in attitudes and behaviour toward domestic violence (ibid. n.d.). In June 2007, the handbook entitled *Responding to Domestic Violence* was published to assist the community and police in handling such cases (US 11 Mar. 2008, Sec. 5). CEDOVIP is also working with Raising Voices in implementing the National Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative, a training program being offered to ten organizations located throughout Uganda (Raising

Voices n.d.c). The program is aimed at enhancing community-based prevention efforts (ibid. n.d.c).

In February 2007, *The Monitor*, a Kampala-based daily newspaper, reported that a home had been constructed in the Kayunga District to accommodate fifty victims of domestic violence (4 Feb. 2007). Police statistics reportedly indicate that at least one woman is killed in Kayunga as result of domestic violence every two months (*The Monitor* 1 May 2008). Further information on the existence of shelters for victims of domestic abuse elsewhere in Uganda could not be found among the sources consulted by Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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Continued on page 15

The knowledge needed for emancipation is as precious as palm oil. We cannot develop it if we start with the popularised conclusion that women's suffering is caused by African tradition, without even defining and locating such tradition. This sort of explanation goes back to the arrival of the first missionaries and settlers here. Yet another African piece of wisdom we may consider is the proverb: "One should not first defeather a bird and then ask the elders for its name."

In other words, those who insist that they have found the cause of women's oppression in African tradition may be themselves involved in distorting or even destroying the evidence needed to carry out a proper inquiry, just as the kid who destroys the feathers of an unknown bird before asking the elders to help him name it is also involved in the destruction of the true identity of the bird.

The next step is to ask questions which may open up the debate on women's oppression, at least for the men to think about how they should do their part to deal with the growing contemporary oppression of women.

- In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA, a white man called Dahmer lured, captured, starved and mutilated young women. He stored their body parts in his flat for a long time before he was caught.
- In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA, in the 1980s another white man lured, captured, raped, mutilated and starved young women of African descent and hid their bodies in the basement of his house. He had killed several before he was discovered.
- In the late 1990s a white Belgian man lured, captured, sold, molested and killed little girls. He was also a dealer in little girls as sex slaves.
- Recently also, sex slavery using children has become so advanced in Western "democracies" that it is now carried out through the computer and Internet, the most modernised, anti-traditional and sophisticated of all modern technologies.

Significantly, our feminists, our journalists, our academics and human rights activists accept on its face value the Western explanation that what happened in Milwaukee, Philadelphia and Belgium -- what goes on, on the internet all the time too -- are just isolated cases of individual madness which have nothing to do with the moral quality and culture of the societies in which they take place. Even former US president Bill Clinton's sexual involvement with an intern on his staff was explained away by women in terms of the president's personal psychology and history and not as an integral feature of modern US culture today.

Our writers accept the Western explanation that child pornography and sex slavery promoted through the internet are the justifiable price which free societies have to pay in order to enjoy the freedom of expression and access to information which this latest technology represents. No tradition is involved there. And therefore there is no need to look at the degradation of women as part of Western "democratic culture"!

The same feminists, journalists, academics and human rights activists often tell us, however, that when African men are accused of acts of barbarism similar to those of Dahmer or similar to those promoted on the internet, these must be the results of African traditional culture and that most of them constitute something called "ritual murder." White men in Philadelphia, Milwaukee or Belgium could not commit "ritual murders" because they are "modern", not traditional or primitive. You see.

Besides, defining what happened in the USA and Belgium as "ritual murders" would automatically mean that the source of the practice and the values it represented came from the larger society. White people are individuals who commit private and individual sins. Society has nothing to do with them. But when it comes to reporting Africa, the link between the murders or rapes and the whole society is automatic, while a white president who engages in sex with his intern is explained in terms of personal insecurities from his childhood which have nothing to do with superior Anglo-Saxon "democracy"!

More peculiarly, if we examine the majority of cases of the worst brutality against women and girls in Zimbabwe, we discover that the men involved are not "traditional" at all.

They are the types of men of whom the white missionary, the white native commissioner and the white expatriate teacher would be very proud; because they have "evolved" completely away from communal African culture. They speak English, even to peasants. They are fiercely ambitious in the best sense of what our colonisers call having an "entrepreneurial culture".

That means they are the most aggressive hustlers and common colonialism has ever groomed. They are superbly individualistic and alienated. They use convenient symbols of "tradition" the same way advertisers use them to sell jam or beer. That is entrepreneurship.

In fact, The Herald editorial of August 4 1999 pointed out that the men who hire the rapists and murderers who get caught and convicted are themselves rarely caught because they bribe everyone, including the police. They are like the tycoons who hire pimps.

The pimps are usually the lumpen proletariat who are as alienated from communal culture as their handlers. Neither could be correctly described as motivated by African communal culture. Culture is only a raw material, a natural resource, to be used in one's con business.

The outrage which often mobilises whole communities against these criminals and conmen, when the crime is finally exposed, means that the crime is not condoned by the community as part of "tradition." These rapists and murderers always have to be protected by the neo-colonial courts and the police, not the African "traditional" community, when their crimes become known.

Because of the overwhelming involvement of donor-funded NGOs in the HIV/Aids awareness programmes, there were two obvious risks for the African community:

In the name of combating Aids, donors would use the HIV/Aids pandemic and mass disaster as an opportunity to attack and overturn those African values they have always feared or viewed as obstacles to their influence.

Therefore, the confessional and individualistic approach to communication in HIV/Aids programmes and advertisements was a real risk, since it tended to vilify African society in the name of fighting stigma against individuals. It treated a mass disaster as a matter of individual fate and personal rights. It would not be possible to dignify and protect the individual sufferer while denigrating or defaming the society and community.

In 2004 the United Nations Fund for Population Activities and the University of Zimbabwe published a booklet called *The Zimbabwe Male Psyche with Respect to Reproductive Health, HIV, Aids and Gender Issues*.

The publication signalled three significant developments:

- The neoliberal conversion of UN agencies into mere conduits for Northern donor funds and donor policies;
- The donor-funded prostitution of academic work, whereby it became difficult to separate academic research from donor propaganda; and
- The donor manipulation and interpretation of the real existing suffering and oppression of women in pursuit of what the US government and Usaid call "transformational diplomacy goals".

Indeed, although both men and women, boys and girls

were experiencing similar oppression and suffering as a result of the same macro-economic and social and political factors, the booklet focused on women against men.

In that 2004 UNFPA booklet, the authors -- P Chiroro, A. Mashu and W. Muhwava -- wrote as follows:

"It was hypothesised that the Zimbabwean male psyche is characterised by an internalised, insatiable and self-centred desire for sex with multiple partners, coupled with an intolerant attitude towards women who are perceived to be, primarily, objects of sexual gratification and child bearing."

Without any reference to control studies based on other societies elsewhere in the world, the authors concluded thus:

"The results of the study provide strong support for the research hypothesis in that the Zimbabwean male psyche appears to be characterised by an internalised, insatiable, self-centred desire for sex with multiple partners, coupled with an intolerant attitude towards women who are perceived to be, primarily, objects for sexual gratification and child bearing. In addition, the results of this study showed the following:

- Most Zimbabwean men and male youths hold very poor sexuality standards which are characterised by a strong reluctance to engage in safe sex practices during high risk sexual encounters.
- The study reveals that the majority of Zimbabwean men and male youths view women as inferior to men. Adversarial sexual beliefs and gender role stereotypes are used to justify violence against women and to deny their sexual and reproductive health rights.
- The culture and legal system in Zimbabwe provide a fertile ground for the propagation and perpetuation of adversarial sexual behavior among men and male youths. This exposes them and their partners to the risk of contracting the HIV virus as well as compromising women's human and reproductive health rights."

In simple language, what was this UN agency and the three university researchers trying to say? The English dictionary meaning of psyche is the human soul, mind or spirit. So, in what way could the UNFPA claim to have pinpointed and isolated a definite factor called the soul of the Zimbabwean male or the spirit of the Zimbabwean male, which could then be made responsible for the spread of HIV/Aids in this country?

Indeed, the UNFPA and its consultants attempted to tell the whole world not only that there was definite, separable power called the Zimbabwean male psyche; but also that they had demonstrated that this definite force or power was

Continued from page 11 -- Zimbabwe: African Tradition...

responsible for promiscuous sexual behaviour, lust, discrimination against women, abuse of women and girls and the spread of HIV/Aids. They also meant that the Zimbabwean male psyche was so different from the psyches of other societies that it could be identified as typically Zimbabwean.

What the authors also implied was that we could select indigenous African foods such as dovi, muboora, nyemba, madora and grains such as mhunga, mafunde and rukweza for use in fighting HIV/Aids; but the culture which created the ingredients forming this healthy diet was no good, especially in its male form. That culture had to be suppressed together with the virus itself.

Since that time, the defamation of the African in HIV/Aids campaigns and adverts here has followed that highly questionable theory of African tradition and the presumed inherent nature of the African male psyche and male sexuality as responsible for the spread of HIV/Aids.

Although it does not require a great scientist to prove that the allegedly inherent African male psyche is neither typically African nor typically male and Zimbabwean, too many African scholars have complained privately and never dared to challenge this racist re-invention of the 400-year-old myth of African sexuality for fear of losing donor support and fear of being labeled male chauvinist pigs.

Yet, one simple way to demonstrate that this thesis of an inherent Zimbabwean African male psyche is a fraud would be to look at scholarly studies of sex and sexuality in non-African societies in other countries.

Re-Making Love: The Feminisation of Sex, is a book published as far back as 1986 by North American white female researchers and dealing primarily with what can be called the response of the white middle class woman to the so-called sexual revolution of the 1960s.

Chapter Six of that book is called The Politics of Promiscuity: The Rise of the Sexual Counter-Revolution; and it documents cases of sexual promiscuity and sexual aggressiveness among white North American women.

The promiscuity and aggressiveness are almost identical to the sexual promiscuity, aggressiveness and casualness which UNFPA and the UZ writers chose to present as caused by a typical Zimbabwean male psyche.

In the North American book, the chapter on The Politics of Promiscuity opens by introducing Ellen (34), who thinks she has made "a nice little life for herself", because she has earned enough to buy a small house and because she has "what used to be called All-American good looks

--straight, gleaming hair, and clear blue eyes" which enable her to attract the lovers she wants. "Her present relationship is just one more phase in her continuing sexual exploration." She was "randy as a teenager" and it "was a relief to let my sexual needs explode . . . I made a lot of demands on men too. I chose them for their sexiness and sensuality."

But readers may say that is just one woman; what about collective surveys? Redbook magazine sent out a sex questionnaire to which 100 000 women happily responded in 1975. And "a considerable number were having affairs while happily married to men they loved and nine out of ten of the young women . . . were engaging in intercourse before they married".

Five years later in 1980, Cosmopolitan magazine also sent out a sex questionnaire to which 106 000 women responded, reporting that "on average, they had had nine lovers". One of them was quoted as saying, "I have lovers because what else is there in life that's so much fun as turning on a new man, interesting him, conquering him?"

By 1983, three magazines -- Playboy, Family Circle and Ladies Home Journal --- decided to survey married women whom they described as "sexually enthusiastic, confident, romantic and satisfied". Whereas in 1958 Alfred C. Kinsey had reported that 6 to 26 percent of married women were engaging in extramarital affairs, the 1983 surveys showed that the percentage had jumped to between 21 and 43 percent, depending on the type of magazine doing the survey and the type of readers. "Among Playboy's readers, young married wives were 'fooling around' more often than their husbands."

The attack on the Zimbabwean male by UNFPA and its sponsored authors can be explained by quoting a passage from Re-Making Love:

"These experts all assumed that women hated casual sex and [were mere victims of male lust and aggression], but they offered no explanation for why so many women were engaged in it."

One woman tried to correct the misperception about men saying: "If you [as a woman] go ahead and give in to your desires [not his desires] . . . and you do go to bed with him, then lots of times you really will lose the man because they [the men], without even realising it, feel like you've been too quick and too easy."

It is also implied in the foreign-modelled HIV/Aids campaigns that the societies whose donors fund our pseudofeminists here have solved the problems of gender violence. In fact, they are very sick violent societies. Here is a description of US society borrowed from a male scholar

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by feminist Professor Mary Daly for her book called Pure Lust: Elemental Feminist Philosophy.

"Culturally, the emergence of male homosexual sadomasochism from underground has coincided with a burgeoning of overt sadism against women in all the communications media. This coincidence has not been by chance. While gay activists were campaigning against stereotypical images of 'gay people' in the media, male homosexuals who have direct access to media have been promoting with a vengeance all stereotypes of female masochism.

We are witnessing [throughout Western society] the convergence [coming together] of what was once deemed a gay sensibility with what was once deemed a 'heterosexual sensibility.' That convergence . . . now reveals itself as fully thriving on female degradation."

It therefore means that the UNFPA and its UZ consultants put forward a generalisation which can be dismissed objectively as a fraud. They failed to separate and define such concepts as culture, instinct, drives, habits and needs.

They presented an ideological assault on the African male as if it were a new scientific discovery. In doing this, they adopted a racist strategy and technique established way back in the days of slavery.

When it ceased to be feasible to justify slavery on the basis of religion, white society invented anthropology as a pseudoscience to do the job, because a "scientific" justification would appear to be unquestionable.

This is indeed the subject of Professor Bernard Magubane's book Race and the Construction of the Disposable Other.

The disposable other in the UNFPA study is the resurgent African male whose energies need to be separated from the energies of the resurgent African woman in order to keep Anglo-Saxon imperialism in power for a bit longer.

There is therefore a need for a different approach to Zimbabwe's struggle against HIV/Aids.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201012080006.html>



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- unpredictable behaviour on the part of the parents

Violent adults tend to be those whose childhood was characterised by experiencing the above behaviours on a regular basis, combined with lack of affection and lack of expressed love. The three influencers of stress, namely control, prediction and expectation are pivotal (see section on stress response on the health page). Where a child is brought up under these constant conditions, those areas of the brain which deal with interpersonal, behavioural and social skills simply fail to develop normally. In many cases of violent offenders (eg serial killers), their brain's frontal lobes - which modify and mitigate violent urges - are measurably smaller than in normal people. See the work of Dorothy Otnow Lewis and Jonathan Pincus for further insight into violent adult behaviour and its origins in childhood.

A child who is subjected to regular abuse, even if entirely non-physical, needs an outlet for their consequent aggression; frequently they will act out their violent impulses on another child at school (bullying), or sibling, or family pet. Being violent towards others because they are violent towards you combined with the fact that you are unable to deal with other people's violence is called displacement aggression. Violence towards animals (eg torturing the cat or killing the dog) is now recognised as a common early warning sign of forthcoming violence in adulthood.

We're all guilty of some of these things (especially the emotional and psychological abuse) some of the time, either unwittingly or when we are stressed. However, children are resilient and if you avoid physically punitive responses (eg use restraint and the promise of a bonus or reward for good behaviour rather than punishment for bad behaviour), educate them in how to show dignity and respect, teach them the skills of assertiveness (which include psychological self-defence), talk to them and assure them of your love regularly, they're likely to grow up to be normal, well-adjusted and intelligent people - who will then pass on these benefits to their children.

Gratification

The aggressive anxious adult learns that bullying results in relief from anxiety, which produces that nice warm feeling called satisfaction. Gratification is the indulgence in the feeling of satisfaction resulting from relief from anxiety brought about by bullying. Bullying is therefore emotional and psychological displacement aggression.

Gratification is a behaviour loop in which the adult is trapped, and is the common denominator behind most forms of violence, especially sexual abuse and sexual violence.

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Corporal punishment and sexual assault

"No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment." Article 5, Universal Declaration of Human Rights Adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948

Corporal punishment, the "English vice", has been a feature of the British education and class system for over a century. Only recently (mid-1998) was corporal punishment in schools finally outlawed by the UK Parliament. Incidentally, this is a century after Parliament decreed it illegal to beat animals.

Corporal punishment is usually administered on an intimate part of the child's body, usually the buttocks, which are often undressed or partly undressed for the purpose. The child is forced, by a person in a position of authority, to adopt a submissive pose, eg bending over, so that control, subjugation and humiliation are absolute. The feeling of power and the ability to inflict pain on their victim is, to the abuser, sexually stimulating.

The person who uses corporal punishment, especially males, will later use the memory of administering the punishment as part of his visualisation during sexual activity, including masturbation. Anyone who advocates corporal punishment, and especially anyone who practices it, is almost certainly - and unwittingly - revealing their propensity towards sexually abusive behaviour.

The child who is physically punished, especially if regularly - and parents who hit their children (perhaps describing it as "tapping", "smacking", "correcting", or some other euphemism to disguise the violence) often repeat the hitting, especially if it has the desired effect, which it frequently appears to in the short term. The child is wholly dependent on their parent(s) and the parent(s) possess, in the eyes of their child, a god-like status; in the eyes of the child, the parent can do no wrong. Therefore, when the child is smacked, he or she is unable to say "I am being unjustly sexually assaulted by a grown-up person who hastily resorts to violence because they have never learnt (or been taught) how to help me develop positive behaviours and correct inappropriate behaviours in a non-violent way". In many countries, including the UK, the child might add "Whilst there are laws against hitting animals and grown-up men and women, there are no laws protecting me from violence if my parents choose to call it 'smacking' or 'discipline'." Without this vocabulary and insight the child resolves the injustice by coming to believe that "I am bad and I am therefore being justly punished by my good parent". Later, the child may

add "...and when I grow up I am going to punish bad people in the way I've been punished". Well, it never did me any harm. This line of reasoning has also failed to make a crucial distinction: no person can ever be bad; it is their behaviour which is bad. We have control over our behaviour and can modify our behaviour at will, but we cannot change the person we are.

For many, relief from the pain - or memory of pain - of corporal punishment during the person's own upbringing can only be achieved by inflicting it on others. This is known as displacement aggression; he hit me and I can't hit him back so instead I'll hit somebody else. Pass on the aggression, repeat the cycle. This is evidenced through the justification "It never did me any harm" - except to convince the person that it's OK to abuse children through inflicting pain. Whilst corporal punishment may appear to work in the short term, it is merely control by fear. The lesson that it teaches in the long term is that violence is an acceptable solution to any problem.

Pornography

Pornography has always been a traditional outlet for sexual frustration, and probably always will be. It's acceptability is determined by current social values. Whilst most people do not object to "soft" porn (and may even secretly indulge occasionally, perhaps just to see what they are missing), many doubt the value and wisdom of "hard" porn (except those who make their living from the profits thereof). However, the harder the pornographic content, the more abusive it tends to be.

It could be said that an individual's need, and hence dependency, on pornography is directly proportional to that individual's inadequacy. Others may regard it as a substitute for lack of opportunity.

Reporting abuse

Why don't targets of abuse report their abuse? There are many reasons:

- abuse is a betrayal; the target trusted and depended on the integrity of another (eg child on adult, pupil on teacher, subordinate on manager) and that person betrayed them. The target fears and anticipates, often with justification, that when they report the abuse, they will be betrayed again.
- those in authority did nothing to prevent the abuse while it was happening, nor did they do anything subsequently. Very often it was the person in the position of authority who was the abuser. Trust in authority is low, with justification.
- the target fears, with justification, that no-one will believe them

Continued from page 14 – Abuse

- disbelief and denial are everywhere; people not trained in abuse and with no experience of dealing with abuse find it easier to disbelieve and deny the abuse
- if the target reports the abuse, and initiates legal action, prospects for future employment may be impaired
- abusers often operate in networks, sharing information, and even, in paedophilia, sharing victims; sometimes the networks are loose, sometimes they operate covertly within organisations, especially those of a secretive nature
- the abuser relies on compulsive lying, Jekyll & Hyde nature, and charm and uses denial, counter-attack, projection and feigning victimhood to evade accountability. Charm has a motive - deception.
- the target felt fear at the time of abuse and continues to feel fear - fear of violence, fear of loss of job, fear of humiliation, fear of what others will think, etc.
- the target feels ashamed of what happened, having been encouraged by the abuser to believe that they were responsible rather than that the abuser was responsible
- because abuse can be of an intimate nature (eg as in sexual abuse), the target feels embarrassed about what happened and continues to feel embarrassed talking about it now (embarrassment is a function of society's attitudes to sexual behaviour)
- the target felt and continues to feel guilty about what happened, having been encouraged by their abuser to believe they were responsible
- fear, shame, embarrassment and guilt are how all abusers control their victims; they are instruments of power
- the target may have been encouraged to withdraw from legal action by the abuser feigning victimhood and playing on their target's forgiving chord and other people's sympathies
- the target probably has unusually high levels of naivety which are heightened by the trauma and which the abuser has exploited and continues to exploit;
- the target feels bewildered and often still cannot believe that it happened; the target often feels responsible in some way, as evidenced by the nagging thought "Why did I let it happen to me?"

- abuse causes trauma which prevents the target articulating what is happening to them.
- trauma and fear also prevent the target from being able to find the right words to identify, unmask and call to account their tormentor
- abuse causes Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and any thought, memory or reminder of the abuse immediately results in the sufferer experiencing the following PTSD DSM-IV diagnostic criteria:

B4. intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolise or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event

B5. physiological reactivity on exposure to internal or external cues that symbolise or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event

as well as

C1. efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings or conversations associated with the trauma

C2. efforts to avoid activities, places or people that arouse recollections of this trauma

C3. inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma

D3. difficulty concentrating

PTSD is a normal and natural emotional reaction to a deeply disturbing and shocking experience. It's possible half the population suffers PTSD to varying extents; mostly it is diagnosed as "stress" and "anxiety". Many supposed mental illnesses are probably symptoms of PTSD resulting from abusive experiences in childhood and should more properly be regarded as psychiatric injury.

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Continued from page 9 - The Availability of Protection and Support Services Uganda

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Domestic Violence Statistics – Children Face Long-Term Harm

Lawrence DiVizio

June 22, 2010

The overwhelming victims of domestic violence are women, but what is often ignored is the long-term impact that it has on children in the home.

Though they may not be the direct victim, it is painfully obvious in study after study that the damage done to the youngest victims is something that lasts a life time.

According to domestic violence statistics compiled by U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs, when there are children in the home, 40 per cent of the time they witness the event. Of this 22 per cent are on hand when an assault takes place.

Domestic Abuse Affects Children

It is through a further study undertaken by the UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund, formerly the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) that shows the true damage this causes. The study and resulting publication; Behind Closed Doors: The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children is the first undertaken by the U.N. to create a global look at the problem.

Of course there is the danger that the child becomes a victim of abuse in the situation, but further damage that is not as apparent also takes place.

According to the UNICEF study, "children who are exposed to violence in the home may have difficulty learning and limited social skills, exhibit violent, risky or delinquent behavior or suffer from depression or severe anxiety."

And this damage can be done to children at much younger ages than had been previously thought.

Infants and very young children exposed to the stress of domestic violence in the home can experience problems as their young brains continue to develop, which the report stated could, "impair cognitive and sensory growth."

Childhood Disorders and Domestic Violence

In a study undertaken for The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, by Joy D. Osofsky, it was found that a bevy of problems can be manifested in a small child exposed to such an environment. They can include, sleep problems, fear of being alone and problems with toilet training and language development.

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FEATURED ARTICLES

South Africa: Life after Human Trafficking

By Otilia Anna Maunganidze

15 December 2010

GenderLinks

Cape Town — At Pretoria-based Tshwane Home of Hope, the jubilant young faces of the girls who live there hide the truth of the horrors they have encountered. On the premises is a trauma centre - aptly dubbed by one of the residents as "the hope sanctuary" - here the girls meet with a resident social worker and psychologist to share their stories, stories that will never leave the four walls of the room.

The Home receives new girls often - most are walk-ins, while the police bring others in from the street corners on which they would have been working. The youngest girl is seven and the oldest is 21; they hail from South Africa, as well as places further afield like Zimbabwe, Burundi, and Democratic Republic of the Congo. Their reasons for coming to the centre are as diverse as their backgrounds. However, they all have one thing in common - they want to be safe.

While not all these girls have been trafficked or once worked in the sex industry, they are all at the Home because they have run away from violence.

Tendai Joe, director of the centre and also a former street child, works tirelessly to ensure the girls receive adequate protection, go to school and live a life they deserve.

The scourge that is human trafficking and modern-day slavery continues to gnaw at the moral fabric of our society. Globally, according to research conducted by the United States State Department, more than one million people are trafficked annually. How many of those are in Southern Africa is not known.

Human trafficking by its very nature is a form of gender-based violence, not least because the majority of those trafficked are female, but also because physical and sexual violence are its bedfellows. While there are many forms of human trafficking, the most common is sex trafficking of women and children. Though some of the women trafficked willingly participate in sex work to escape poverty, a 2005 International Organisation for

Migration (IOM) study found that most are led into sex work because they are lied to, told they will be able to pursue an education, get married or get the job that will help them out of poverty.

In the sub-region, South Africa is the main destination for trafficking victims, with women and children coming from neighbouring countries and conflict zones further afield. Poverty and desperation coupled with a culture of patriarchy means that women are doubly vulnerable not only to trafficking, but to the violence that comes with it.

Most disconcerting are the findings of a 2008/9 Wits University Law Clinic study on access to gender-based violence services in South Africa by migrant women. It found that two thirds of South African organisations that provide services to gender-based violence survivors offer their services exclusively to South African citizens. Therefore the plight of immigrants is compounded by the institutionalised xenophobia they face. Yet, reports abound of rapes and other forms of gender-based violence, especially at the country's borders.

The South African 1 in 9 campaign advocates for women to speak out if they are raped, this is based on the fact that only 1 out of every 9 South African women who has been raped reports the crime. When it comes to victims of trafficking, it is difficult to collect data because of the underground nature of sex trafficking and the fear on the part of most sex workers that if they speak out they will be arrested, deported or abused or raped by police.

Organisations like the Sex Worker Education and Advisory Taskforce (SWEAT), which advocate for the decriminalisation of sex work, contend that until sex work is decriminalised it is unlikely that efforts to counter human trafficking will yield results. The victimisation of sex workers stems primarily from the fact that their profession is not afforded any protection.

"Moral" arguments against sex work notwithstanding, if

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human trafficking is to be curbed, the inherent contradictions that exist between attempting to counter human trafficking and the continued criminalisation of sex work need to be resolved.

In February this year, sex workers from ten African countries assembled in Hillbrow, Johannesburg to share their experiences and discuss their needs.

This was the first ever meeting of this kind on the African continent. At the conference a Ugandan sex worker voiced her concern over the way in which sex workers are treated "like dogs" by the police.

Many indicated that the abuse did not only come from police, but also from health service providers, clients and the pimps they work for. The irony of the criminalisation of sex work in Africa is that it is the woman who offers the service who is stigmatised and abused, while those who pay for her illegal services go scot-free. It is one of society's entrenched patriarchal paradoxes.

According to Cape Town based NGO Anex-CDW, which works closely with the IOM in its human trafficking project, most of the cases are reported by third parties and often the victims deny the allegation or refuse to talk about it. The wall of silence is almost impenetrable.

While the girls of Tshwane Home of Hope did not share the horrors of their lives, their presence at the Home speaks of an untold story of violence and fear. The Home is one of several sanctuaries for girls scattered across South Africa. In an ideal world homes such as this would not have to exist, everyone would be free from fear and want; everyone would be safe. The reality is we are not.

Ottilia Anna Maunganidze is a consultant for the International Crime in Africa Programme at the Institute for Security Studies. This article is part of a special series on the 16 Days of Activism for the Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Service that offers fresh views on everyday news.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201012160568.html>



Uganda Named in Human Trafficking

By Steven Candia

25 February, 2010
New Vision

UGANDA is among the several African countries named in a report on human trafficking from Africa to the UK.

The report was compiled by Africans Unite Against Child Abuse (AFRUCA), a UK-based charity, which expressed concern over the growing trade and called for action against the problem.

Figures released by the UK Human Trafficking Centre showed that between April and December 2009, over 200 Africans were referred to the agency by charities as victims of human trafficking.

Some of the victims were children. A total of 89 victims were trafficked from Nigeria, 13 from Sierra Leone, (5) Kenya, (3) Ghana, (16) Zimbabwe, (5) Eritrea, (14) Uganda, (5) Somalia, and (1) Sudan.

Most of the victims had been exploited as sex slaves, for domestic servitude or used to claim government benefits.

"The figures reveal just the tip of the iceberg. We are certain that many more victims are trapped in exploitative and abusive situations and have no access to help," said Debbie Ariyo, the AFRUCA director.

The report stated that the victims are compelled to take oaths of allegiance, secrecy and confidentiality to bind them to their traffickers.

The oath also ensures compliance and guarantees the repayment of money claimed to be owed for transporting the victims to Europe and for their upkeep. "Fearful of the repercussions of the oath taken, victims are compelled to endure the suffering in silence without access to help and support," a statement from the organisation read.

The fear of witchcraft makes it extremely difficult for agencies to support the victims and for authorities in the UK to investigate and prosecute suspected traffickers," the statement read.

Cherifa Atoussi, an official of AFRUCA, said: "Most victims are trafficked by fellow Africans. They are exploited, abused and brutalised by fellow Africans in what is a multibillion dollar transnational criminal enterprise.

<http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/13/711182>



Defilement Crime on the Rise in Uganda

Even Katine has not escaped an increase in sex crime against juveniles in north-eastern Uganda, after a local teacher was arrested and then released in an out-of-court settlement with the child's parents - common practice in poverty-stricken areas

Joseph Malinga

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Continued from page 18 – Defilement Crime on the Rise in Uganda

Guardian.co.uk
7 October 2010

Hardly a day passes without an African newspaper, radio or TV report focusing on a fresh case of defilement, a sex crime against juveniles that seems to thrive on widespread poverty. In parts of Uganda, it's on the rise.

Ugandan law defines defilement as the act of having sex with a girl under 18, while rape is having sex with a woman without her consent, usually by force. Often defilement involves relatives, married men or professional people in the community. Worse still, some men rape or defile their own daughters. Rape and defilement can lead to infertility, trauma, contraction of HIV/Aids, terminal illness or even death.

In fact, defilement is a capital offence in cases where the victim has been infected with HIV/Aids virus or is very young and has been defiled by a relative — categorised as aggravated defilement. Those defiling children aged 14-18 get prison sentences if convicted.

Peter Georges of the St Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund, writing about child poverty in Uganda, says defilement of school-age girls is common. "Rape is always a danger as girls travel to and from school through risky neighbourhoods at dawn and dusk. Defilement is not always involuntary.

"Because of extreme poverty, many girls are tempted by the promise of a little money to buy food or clothing. The most at risk are girls in the upper primary classes (P/5-P/7). Some are well into their teens by the time they reach sixth or seventh grade because their academic progress was delayed due to lack of school fees."

Georges argues that the cost of secondary school is prohibitive for most families and these girls see no hope for their future. This then makes them vulnerable to the advances of unscrupulous men. The St Nicholas children Fund is a non-government organisation providing orphans and vulnerable children with education, nutrition and healthcare.

Cases are common in Uganda. For example, a couple of months ago in Katine sub-county, in the north-eastern part of the country, communities were shocked after news emerged that a local teacher had defiled one of his pupils. The event caused a lot of anger, with many residents threatening to tear up the teacher — as if the child affected had been their own. Interestingly, weeks later the same residents were advising the girl's parents to forgive the teacher.

One-night affair

The issue came to light after 17-year-old Judith (not her real name) told her parents she had had a one-night affair with her teacher in a cassava plantation near her school. The revelation followed the parents' decision to flog her after they discovered she had slept out away from home. Judith's parents then took her to the local police to make statements and this led to the arrest of the teacher.

Police have since refused to give details of the case, saying they needed permission from the Soroti regional office. However, Katine sub-county chairman Jorem Eboku confirmed the incident, saying he had asked police to investigate and have the accused prosecuted. In fact, the police released the accused after the girl's parents opted to settle the matter out of court. The girl's head teacher said that, despite being released, the teacher was no longer employed at the school.

In Uganda, most parents choose to negotiate with those suspected of defilement because of material gain. The negotiations are usually illegal, but the high rates of illiteracy linked with poverty in rural communities like Katine make residents ignore legal proceedings.

According to the police spokesperson for the eastern region, Hassan Nyene, statistics indicate a general hike in crime rates in the area, with 5,515 of cases recorded from January to June 2010. Of this, 2,564 are under investigation, 1,745 appeared in court, and 1,721 suspects have been charged, while 388 convictions have been secured. 1,422 suspects are awaiting trial. In the same period, 535 suspected defilement cases were registered (205 went to court, 209 cases are pending, while only seven convictions have been secured). In cases taken to court, 154 suspects were adults and 51 juveniles.

Soroti district, which includes Katine, with 23.5%, follows Kumi district on Soroti's southern border on 28.7%, Bukedea district 15.7%, Katakwi 12.3%, Kaberemaido 11.2% and Amuria 7.7%.

"The incidents of defilement are high because stakeholders are not helping police to sensitise the community on the dangers of the crime," said Nyene. In some instances, he says, parents don't report cases of defilement to police as they opt to settle out-of-court - in other cases, "even if they report, most of them withdraw the cases."

He adds that in a poverty-stricken community such as Katine, justice often takes second place when families have the chance to receive considerable sums of money from suspects willing to pay to avoid imprisonment or worse.

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The withdrawal of Judith's case means the police are unlikely to pursue it further as there are no witnesses, says Nyene. He adds that there are no initiatives to help rehabilitate defilement victims, most of whom end up in early marriages that drop them further into poverty. "As police, we only talk to parents of the infected victims and take [the victims] to Taso, an organisation helping to treat HIV/Aids patients."

'Some take the message, others don't'

Many schools support the Ugandan government's Presidential Initiative on Aids Strategy for Communication to Youth (Piascy), a programme designed to educate young people against early sex. "This is helping in sensitising pupils," said a teacher at one of the participating schools in Katine." "We are telling these young people that early sex is not good. Some take the message but others don't. You find a girl in primary five going out a man older than her father."

The African Medical Research Foundation, which is implementing the Katine community development project, funded by Guardian readers and Barclays Bank, is also helping to spread the message through its education programme and use of role models.

Sadly, defilement is one of the most common crimes in Uganda, according to the non-government organisation (NGO), Save the Children Uganda. The police's 2007 Crime Report says 12,230 defilement cases were reported in 2007 against 15,385 in 2006. This implies that "over 25 children are defiled every day in this country which further translates into two children every hour," says the NGO.

The charity says the statistics are alarmingly high, given that most defilement cases are never reported. Worse still, of cases reported, it says few use the courts for redress, partly because the prosecution often fails to verify the age of the defiled child.

"Many children in Uganda are victims of defilement, child prostitution and early marriages due to lack of proof of age," it says. They have no birth certificates. Further, parents of the defiled victims accept bribes and connive with alleged offenders to alter the child's age to pervert the course of justice.

The NGO argues on its website that "the government urgently needs to put in place an effective birth registration programme to combat child sexual abuse."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/katine/2010/oct/06/uganda-katine-defilement>



When the study looked at children who had difficulty reading, 40 per cent came from homes where they were exposed to domestic violence. When compared to the major cause of reading problems such as dyslexia, it becomes obvious that domestic violence plays a key role in the disruption of normal developmental processes of children.

Domestic Violence and Violent Teens

More troubling are the findings of an Australian study by M. James (Domestic Violence as a Form of Child Abuse) involving teenage children. Up to 40 per cent of "chronically violent teens were exposed to extreme domestic violence." This in turn creates an entirely new generation of probable abusers.

And this relationship between children exposed to domestic violence and the probability of the child becoming either an abuser or abused is well established. In examining this connection, the UNICEF study found that this exposure was the "best predictor" of the child emulating the abusive behavior or of becoming the victim as an adult.

This damage continued in the development of the child's social and ethical skills, the report stated.

"Some children lose the ability to feel empathy for others," the authors of the report wrote. "Others feel socially isolated, unable to make friends as easily due to social discomfort or confusion over what is acceptable."

A Child's Refuge from Domestic Violence

But as damaging as domestic violence is to the child, the UNICEF study showed that anti violence programs presented in elementary school could help break the cycle. A substantial drop in violent encounters was found to take place in children who took part in the programs.

Combined with these programs, it is imperative the children exposed to the trauma of domestic abuse in the home have the opportunity to find "safe harbor" with an adult. This can include teachers, social workers, relatives and of course, a parent.

In a [World Health Organization study](#), this relationship between children able to cope with a violent home and those who could not was well established.

"Children who have an adult who gives them love, warmth and attentive care cope better than those who do not," the study showed. "Children who are exposed to violence in the home need to know that they are not alone and that the violence is not their fault."

It was also noted that in many cases, adults who were

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exposed to domestic violence or abuse as children are actively opposed to violence of all kinds.”

And it is only through public acknowledgment of the problem of domestic violence, public programs and governmental initiatives that this problem can be combated, the UNICEF report concludes.

<http://www.suite101.com/content/domestic-violence-statistics--children-face-long-term-harm-a252500>



Uganda: Sexual Crimes Go Unpunished

Rosebell Kagumire

17 November 2010

Kampala — Thousands of women were raped during Uganda's civil war but there have been few government efforts to assist them, especially with psychosocial and counseling services.

Anna Grace Nakasi, recently chosen to contest next February's local council elections for Tubur subcounty, in Soroti district in North Eastern Uganda, contracted HIV when she was raped during the war.

Nakasi was gang raped on three different occasions - first in 1987, then 1988 and 1990 - by soldiers who formed a heavy military presence in her village.

"The first time was in 1987 when I met nine soldiers on patrol who gang raped me until I lost consciousness. I later woke up in a hospital bed," she told IPS. "I could tell they were government soldiers."

Nakasi contracted HIV and developed a fistula. She was rejected by her husband and family and lived alone in a forest for many years. She overcame her trauma with the support of different aid groups that have also supported her in campaigning for women's economic empowerment and fighting stigma.

She runs paralegal activities, often following up cases of sexual violence in the area and encouraging women to face their offenders. She has a large support base for her candidature for council due to her work with people living with HIV and AIDS.

"I have so far managed to follow-up a case and have a man jailed for rape," she says.

Little support for victims of war-time rape

But Nakasi's story of her rise from victim of sexual gender based violence to survivor and leader is a unique one.

The two-decades long war in northern Uganda between government and the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) resulted in the internal displacement of about 1.5 million people and the death of thousands. Women in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps suffered sexual violence from government soldiers and civilians. Although there are no official figures on the numbers of women affected, reports show this was wide spread. The rebels are well known for child kidnapping for use as child soldiers and the abduction of girls as sex slaves.

The war affected the north and north-eastern parts of Uganda until 2007 when the LRA rebels were pushed out to DRC after failed peace talks with the government mediated by the government of South Sudan.

A recent government post conflict recovery programme launched last year lacks a component on addressing the effects on victims of sexual violence in the war.

Further, recommendations calling for reparations for victims of sexual violence made by a commission of inquiry into violations of human rights in Uganda, covering the period from independence in 1962 through the second Obote Regime (1980 - 1985), have never been implemented.

Inadequate penalties

And according to a Uganda United Nations Security Council (UNSCR) Resolution 1325 monitoring report released on Nov. 9 by the Kampala-based Center for Women in Governance (CEWIGO), many cases of sexual violence in Uganda go unprosecuted. UNSCR 1325, which last month marked its 10th anniversary, acknowledged, for the first time, sexual gender based violence in conflict as a war crime and a crime against humanity.

The report, aimed at tracking Uganda's progress on the implementation of the resolution, found that many cases are not reported. Rape is the least reported sexual offense in Uganda and the Ugandan law still does not recognise marital rape.

Of those cases that are reported, about half are prosecuted and very few carry penalties at the end of the day.

In 2009, Uganda registered and investigated 619 rape cases. Of those, 37 percent (228) were prosecuted and only five percent were penalised. More than seven thousand cases of the rape of children were reported and only 467 of these cases resulted in a penalty. Five hundred and fifty women reported indecent assault and only 79 were penalised.

An injustice to victims of sexual violence

Maude Mugisha from CEWIGO says most families can

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not afford to take victims for medical examination or to transport the police to the crime scene. As a result, they opt to negotiate with the perpetrator. Criminal justice in Uganda requires any person who has been a victim of sexual violence to have a medical test, which is pertinent to the success or failure of a case.

However, only authorized police surgeons can carry out the examination. Not only are the police surgeons insufficient but victims must also pay between US\$15 and US\$25 to be examined.

"This is the greatest injustice that the survivors of sexual violence are subjected to in Uganda," says Judy Kamanyi, a consultant in gender and development issues.

Rebecca Kadaga, the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament concurs. "It cannot only be a police surgeon that can examine a victim if we are to deliver justice. The examination services should be even carried out by midwives so that women stop paying so much money to access justice."

Kamanyi says government should put in place shelters for women whose lives are in danger and also come up with an emergency plan for abused women and children that caters for their safety.

Access to justice for survivors of gender-based violence is also limited by the fact that sexual offenses are only tried at high court level and these are found in only in five regions of the country. Victims travel long distances to access the courts only to find there is no police surgeon present for the hearing. As a result, sexual offenses cases can take years to be heard.

According to CEWIGO, these gaps in delivery of justice to women victims of sexual violence show that Uganda is far from implementing regional and international instruments meant to safeguard women's lives, especially in the case of war time rapes.

Miria Matembe, a founder member of CEWIGO says women must continue to pressure governments, especially in the Great Lakes Region of Africa, to implement resolution 1325.

"This resolution remains extremely important for us ... We are a continent still infested with conflict with high levels of gender based violence," she says.

The LRA rebels remain active in DRC, Central African Republic and South Sudan where they continue with abductions.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201012021041.html>



Congo-Kinshasa: Women's Bodies 'Battleground' in Nation

Tanya Castle

7 December 2010

Bukavu — Maria Malele, 20, looks down at her hands while she explains in her native Swahili how she was gang-raped by rebels in her home in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), six months ago.

I had returned home in the morning from our hiding spot in the forest to get some food. Two rebels entered the house and two stayed outside, they asked me, "where's your husband and I said "he's not here, and then they grabbed me, threw me to the ground and raped me. I tried to fight them off but they were much bigger than me and I was nine months pregnant. So, I couldn't and three of them raped me. All of this time my child was sitting next to me crying and calling for his dad.

When they left, Malele was left bleeding and semi-conscious on the floor of her home. Shortly after, she went into labour with her husband and child at her side. She gave birth to a stillborn baby.

Half a year may have passed since her rape, but for Malele, the pain has not gone away. She lost her child, her strength, her dignity and potentially her husband and livelihood.

Malele is from the mineral rich region of Shabunda in South Kivu Province, Eastern DRC. For years, the bodies of women in Eastern DRC have provided the battleground for armed groups.

Rape is a cheap, effective and easy weapon used by foreign and local armed groups, as well as the Congolese national army. During the 20 years of fighting in DRC, hundreds of thousands of women and girls have been raped. On average more than 1,500 women are raped every month by armed groups in Eastern DRC and increasingly by civilians, as rape has become a rule and not the exception.

As soon as an armed group considers that the civilian population it is confronted with is against its presence, it will commit crimes against it, including sexual violence. It is a form of terrorism that is employed by armed groups, specifically in areas where there is no authority, says Aziza Aziz-Suleimani, of the United Nations Population Fund, the UN agency tasked with mapping sexual violence in DRC.

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Armed groups rape women to terrorise populations, force them to flee, control them, and to punish them for alleged support of the enemy. These rapes are often extremely violent. Women are tortured, gang raped, and mutilated by perpetrators. Often they are left disabled for life.

We receive women who have been raped, some by two, three, even ten rapists. We have cases where women have been raped vaginally, anally, orally, and then some are forced to have sex with their children, even their grandparents. There are others that are taken to the forest and tortured. We see the signs from their torture, marks from being tied up, burnt and even cut repeatedly by machete, says Esther Munyerekana Nakashunjwe, a nurse at the Panzi hospital.

Adophine Mwanza, is 48-years-old. Like Maria she was also attacked in Shabunda.

I was tilling the field when four combatants approached me and told me they were going to kill me. I said, ~please don't kill me, I'm like your mother, I have children like you, but they didn't listen and one after the other they raped me.

The widespread and systematic use of rape as a weapon of war by armed groups has led to a multitude of physical, psychological, socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. Physically, women can catch sexually transmitted infections, HIV and AIDS, fall pregnant, or suffer from fistulas or other complications from violent sexual acts.

Since being raped Malele suffers from a severe fistula. Despite two reconstructive surgeries her incontinence continues.

The doctors told me I have two holes, so it going to take longer, she says.

Psychologically women who have been raped are more likely to become substance abusers or develop depression, anxiety or post-traumatic stress.

The women that come here are traumatised, they feel rejected, like that have no value, they are ashamed, embarrassed and often will isolate themselves, says Munyerekana Nakashunjwe.

According to Aziz-Suleimani, the number of rapes in Eastern DRC could be much higher, as many cases go unreported due to the stigma, shame and fear. Women who have been raped run the risk of being rejected by their husband and family.

Socially, a woman who has been raped is victimised two

times. She is considered as an adulterer, and if she is not abandoned by her husband she can be asked to pay a fine by her husband because she had sexual relations with another man, even though it was out of rape.

After crawling to her home, Mwanza was abandoned by her husband, her child and her community.

Malele tells me she was lucky because her husband did not leave her after she was raped, but it has now been six months since she has seen him and she is beginning to doubt their marriage.

I'm worried now that he's left me because the whole time I've been here, he has never come to see me. During both of my surgeries he never came so maybe he's left me without telling me. Before I go back, I would like to find out.

Without a husband, a woman's future is bleak in Eastern DRC. A woman's cultural, social and economic worth is determined by her husband and without one, particularly in the countryside, she will face considerable hardship.

In June 2008, the UN Security Council demanded the immediate and complete cessation by all parties to armed conflict of all acts of sexual violence against civilians, and called for sex crimes to be exempt from any amnesty provisions within peace agreements.

Despite Resolution 1820 and the inclusion of rape as a war crime and crime against humanity in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, rape continues unabated in Eastern DRC.

Every day we receive new cases, it never ends says Munyerekana Nakashunjwe dishearteningly.

Tanya Castle is a Canadian journalist based in the DRC. This article is part of a special series on the 16 Days of Activism for the Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Service that offers fresh views on everyday news. For more information on the 16 Days Campaign go to www.genderlinks.org.za

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201012071233.html>



Uganda: Edna's Story - Living With Disabilities in Uganda

Shantha Rau Barriga

1 December 2010
Human Rights Watch

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Continued from page 23 –Living with Disabilities in Uganda

Edna seemed shy, rounding her shoulders protectively over her baby. She was breastfeeding, and I could see the burn scars on the top of her head. Despite her initial self-consciousness, she told us her story, starting with the fire that led to her blindness.

She had lived in a rural village that she said had been attacked by the Lord's Resistance Army, a notorious rebel group. The rebels burned down her house with 12 people inside, she said. She was one of the few to survive, but her burns left her blind and partially deaf.

Despite the hardships she endured, Edna still smiled, emanating personal warmth. As she told me how she supported her children by begging, I thought of my own baby, a bit younger than Edna's, living in very different circumstances in the United States.

An estimated 20 percent of Ugandans have disabilities. This figure is probably higher in the war-torn north, where government troops fought the LRA. The government forced people into squalid camps, which cut off their access to health care and led to an increase in disabling diseases like polio. Many people also lost the use of limbs due to landmines or gunshot wounds.

In Uganda's primarily agrarian society, women with disabilities are often labeled "useless" by family and neighbors. They often can't fetch water or work in the fields. Many don't go to school. I spoke with one deaf woman whose children were avoided by neighbor kids because they didn't want to catch 'deafness.'

As Ugandans in the north struggle to reclaim their lives, women with disabilities are being left behind.

These women tend to be isolated and shunned, hidden in their communities. No one drops by to see how they are, to offer to help them in the fields, or to take them to the doctor. It's as if they're invisible.

I was shocked to find out how many of the women with disabilities I spoke with had been abandoned by their men. Other men would use them for sex. Some women said people in their village taunted men whose partners had a disability.

More than one-third of the 64 women and girls with disabilities we interviewed said that they had been sexually abused, beaten, or raped. Their disabilities made them vulnerable to attack - they couldn't physically defend themselves, and they were isolated from their communities. People view them as weak and stupid, an easy target. Such assaults increase their risk of HIV infection, as does the abandonment by their sexual partners.

But the voices of people with disabilities in Uganda are growing stronger. The government has ratified a major international treaty on disability rights and is actively consulting people with disabilities on issues that affect them. The key is to ensure that the government takes women with disabilities into consideration while planning Uganda's post-war reconstruction.

After we released our report, the UN Population Fund agreed to do more training about disabilities with their staff working on violence against women. The agency also pledged to compile data on the number of women with disabilities who experience violence in Uganda. This is an essential step - without knowing this number, it's impossible to know whether programs meant to help women with disabilities are reaching them.

Human Rights Watch is supporting local disability groups as they develop an anti-discrimination campaign and a project on violence against women with disabilities. We are regularly in contact with the state minister on disability and elderly affairs and UN agencies.

Additionally, the committee monitoring the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) raised concerns with Uganda's government about how women with disabilities are faring, drawing even more international attention to the issue.

Edna continued telling us her story. The father of her first child, now 6, was killed by the LRA. Her baby's father, ashamed of being associated with a blind woman, abandoned her when she became pregnant. When she went to a clinic for prenatal care, Edna learned that she was HIV-positive. When I asked her how she coped, she said her 6-year-old has to lead her to the hospital to collect her antiretroviral drugs.

After our conversation, Edna walked us out of her home. I couldn't believe how much she had dealt with - the brutality of the conflict, her loss of sight, living with HIV, being a single mom, living in poverty.

Despite it all, she had found a way to take care of herself and her family with such grace. It's people like Edna who really inspire me to do this work. I just hope that our research and advocacy will lead to changes that will empower the millions of women like Edna.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201012011161.html>



In the U.S., over 1 million people a year are abused in some way. We're including sexual abuse, physical abuse, and psychological or emotional abuse.



South Africa: Speaking Out Against Gun Violence

Deborah Walter

15 December 2010
Analysis

Johannesburg — Sharing her story at the recent launch of the book "Speaking out can set you free: the South African experience," Mmabatho Moyo recalled the day a chance turn of her head saved her life - the bullet from her husband's gun lodged close to her scalp, rather than going straight into her brain. Waking four months later in a hospital, she stayed there another nine months. The physical recovery included speech therapy and physiotherapy; the psychological trauma meant seven more months at a mental institution.

Mmabatho Moyo is not her real name, but the pen name she used when writing her story in 2008 during Gender Links "I" Stories project, an annual initiative in which survivors of gender violence write and publish personal narratives. With great confidence, Moyo introduced herself, with her real name, and once again told her story to more than 100 women and men gathered to launch the retrospective publication. She recalled how after years of abuse her husband arrived home late one night and demanded tea. Standing on a chair to reach the cup, she says, "I don't know what made me turn at exactly that moment, but it's lucky that I did."

Like many similar cases, her husband used the gun as a threat prior to the actual shooting. Perhaps unlike other stories, she first met and was impregnated by him when he raped her at gunpoint when she was just 17-years-old. The new book, based on more than 170 personal accounts written by survivors of gender violence published in nine books and hundreds of media articles, illustrates a need for much more speaking out on gender violence. As Moyo's story shows, this includes taking a serious look at gun violence in the country.

According to a United Nations survey of 69 countries, South Africa has one of the highest firearm related homicide rates in the world, second only to Columbia. Solid updated data is lacking, but a 1999 Medical Research Council (MRC) study found that a woman was killed by her intimate partner every six hours - the highest reported rate anywhere in the world. In that year, one in three women killed died because of a firearm; of those, half were shot by their intimate partner; 71% were shot in their own homes.

In South Africa, the rate of intimate femicide followed by perpetrator suicide also greatly exceeds reported rates

elsewhere.

Yet the links between guns and gender violence go beyond femicide statistics. "The term 'gun violence' includes gun deaths, injuries as well as incidents in which guns are used to intimidate persons, for example like in situations of domestic violence," points out Natalie Jaynes, National Director of Gun Free South Africa. "While shootings and killings are the most common forms of gun violence, even more women encounter gun violence at home in terms of intimidation with a firearm."

Beyond the obvious need to simply reduce the number of guns in circulation, restricting firearm ownership by known offenders is an effective, but widely unimplemented, strategy to save lives. The Domestic Violence and Firearms Control Acts have provisions to help prevent threats from progressing to use of force. "A woman can request the removal of a person can be deemed 'unfit to possess a firearm' if a protection order has been issued, or if the person has expressed an intention to kill or do harm with the firearm," adds Jaynes. "This small provision, if exercised, could save lives."

In some cases women may be unaware of the right to request removal of a firearm. In other cases, it is evident that victims still encounter significant obstacles attempting to have a firearm removed, echoed by several women writing during the "I" Stories. "He would even point his gun at me. Many violent times followed. Each time I reported these to the local police station, I got no joy. They would tell me that I had no physical evidence such as a 'blue-eye.'"

Surprisingly, statistics show that legally-owned firearms are very often the problem. One woman writer told of her added predicament, her abusive husband was also a policeman. "He went to his safe took out his gun and went outside he then shot in the air. He came back inside, pointed the firearm at my nose, and told me to smell the smoke that came out of the gun. He told me that he was going to shoot the baby and me and then pointed the gun at the baby."

Gun threats are also used in sexual assaults. Natasha Kangale was just 12 when she was raped by a stranger. "I felt a gun on my back, so I had no choice. He took me to his place in Berea. There he raped me," she recalls in her story. "It was not easy getting home but I managed to get there. Before going in the house, he threatened me by saying that 'if you tell anyone about what happened. I know you... I will kill you.'"

Getting to the heart of gun violence will mean challeng-

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ing many of the gender norms existing in society. As Jaynes points, out, "Violence is often used as a way to affirm masculinity and gain respect and control. Firearms can play an important role in this, because in many contexts they are symbols of status, power, and self-protection."

Elmien Durieux of the Foundation for a Safe South Africa (FSSA) agrees, and points to the next generation as a source of hope. "If we begin at an early age to change the stereotypes associated with being manly and womanly, we will produce a new generation that thinks of the different genders as equal and thus less likely to commit gender-based violence."

FSSA has pioneered the creation of Youth Zones, across the country, recognising that young people will determine if the future is a safer one.

"Young people need to say no to guns - be at the forefront of advocacy for a gun free South Africa for their generation; they need to tell when they are, or they know of people who are being sexually harassed or abused - be each other's protectors."

Like most aspects of gender violence, addressing gun violence will require a myriad of approaches. Reducing the numbers of guns on the street, must be accompanied by the implementation of existing legal frameworks. Public awareness and communication campaigns need to address not only lack of knowledge on the issue, but also seek to counter deeply engrained gender norms that make this kind of violence socially accepted. There is an old notion that violating the human rights of one of us, violates the human rights of all of us. As long as we continue to accept guns in our midst, none of us will be free to live in a safer South Africa.

Deborah Walter is the Director of CMFD (Community Media for Development) Productions. This article is part of a special series on the 16 Days of Activism for the Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Service that offers fresh views on everyday news.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201012160583.html>



Researchers who study abuse victims agree the impact of abuse can last a lifetime. Many live with the shame of what happened to them and may suffer with a myriad of mental health problems like depression, addictions, and dissociative disorders. They have trouble with relationships, some self-injure. Others may become abusers themselves.



Uganda: Male Victims of Domestic Violence Need to Speak Out Too

Susan Oregede

3 December 2010

Opinion

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a result of socially constructed power differences between men and women. When those who have power abuse it, it often causes GBV. Many cultures in Uganda give more power to men through the process of socialisation and distribution of rights and privileges. But unlike in the past, more men today say they are experiencing GBV.

Gender based violence manifests itself in different forms including rape, defilement, and domestic violence which includes emotional, physical, economic and sexual violence. Others include harmful traditional practices such as forced widow inheritance, courtship rape, female genital mutilation, and early or forced marriage.

According to the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey of 2006 and the Uganda Law Reform Commission's Report of 2007 respectively, 68 per cent and 78 per cent of women in Uganda experience domestic violence.

Today, some men are increasingly complaining that campaigns against GBV focus on women and ignore them. What both men and women should recognise is that there is factual and documented evidence that majority of the people who experience GBV globally are women.

The subordinate position of women in many cultures and the gender roles assigned to them by society increase their vulnerability to GBV compared to men. Although it is true that some men are experiencing gender violence, there is little documented evidence to prove this claim.

The few cases where women have been blamed for perpetuating violence in relationships are often a result of women's reaction to long histories of physical, sexual and emotional violence perpetuated against them by their male partners. Many have been reluctant to seek legal redress due to ignorance of the law or lack of trust in justice institutions and enforcers. We hope that the Domestic Violence Act will work to protect the lives of men and women experiencing domestic violence.

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Need to Speak Out**

Recently, I was in a GBV prevention workshop in northern Uganda in which both men and women reported that violence against men had become common. When asked why men do not speak out or report to the police, several participants stated that it was considered shameful for a man to report that he is experiencing gender-based violence because culturally, men are not supposed to cry - they are supposed to be "strong". We encourage men who are experiencing GBV to break the silence and publicly share their experiences.

The 'We Can Campaign' is a global campaign that aims to reduce the social acceptance of gender-based violence and is calling upon women and men from all walks of life to join the fight against GBV by changing negative attitudes and practices that perpetuate or condone the practice. Men and women need to work towards making GBV a public rather than a private matter and engage everybody to play a role in ending it.

In places such as Kasese and Bundibugyo in western Uganda where the We Can Campaign has been implemented since earlier this year, we have seen rising numbers of both women and men who experience GBV starting to share their experiences in public without shame. This self-awareness has sparked off a process that we hope will bring lasting change in attitudes, beliefs and practices that condone GBV.

Men who are experiencing GBV should be open about it and seek assistance from duty bearers like the local councils, the police or someone they trust. Both men and women are encouraged to make GBV a public rather than a private matter and speak out whenever they experience it. Speaking out mitigates the grave consequences associated with GBV, including the risk of HIV infection. Until we break the silence and stigma associated with publicly speaking about GBV and begin to challenge people around us, this evil will continue to thrive.

Ms Oregede works with Oxfam where she coordinates the 'We Can End All Violence Against Women' campaign

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201012030115.html>



Trust Drug may cure Social Phobia

A nasal spray which increases our trust for strangers is showing promise as a treatment for social phobia, say scientists from Zurich University.

21 May 2008

They found that people who inhaled the "love hormone" oxytocin continued to trust strangers with their money - even after they were betrayed.

Brain scans showed the hormone lowered activity in the amygdala - a region which is overactive in social phobias.

Drug trials are under way and early signs are promising say the scientists.

Nicknamed the "cuddle chemical", oxytocin is a naturally produced hormone, which has been shown to play a role in social relations, maternal bonding, and also in sex.

Lead researcher Dr Thomas Baumgartner said: "We now know for the first time what exactly is going on in the brain when oxytocin increases trust.

"We found that oxytocin has a very specific effect in social situations. It seems to diminish our fears.

"Based on our results, we can now conclude that a lack of oxytocin is at least one of the causes for the fear experienced by social phobics.

"We hope and indeed we expect that we can improve their sociability by administering oxytocin."

Powerful effect

Previous studies have shown that participants in "trust games" took greater risks with their money after inhaling the hormone via a nasal spray.

In this latest experiment, published in the journal *Neuron*, the researchers asked volunteer subjects to take part in a similar game. They were each asked to contribute money to a human trustee, with the understanding that the trustee would invest the money and decide whether to return the profits, or betray the subject's trust by keeping the profit.

The subjects also received doses of oxytocin or a placebo via a nasal spray.

After investing, the participants were given feedback on the trustees. When their trust was abused, the placebo group became less willing to invest. But the players who had been given oxytocin continued to trust their money with a broker. "We can see that oxytocin has a very powerful effect," said Dr Baumgartner.

"The subjects who received oxytocin demonstrated no change in their trust behaviour, even though they were informed that their trust was not honoured in roughly 50% of cases."

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/ft/-/2/hi/health/7412438.stm>



FEATURED ARTICLES

Rape Rampant in U.S. Military

Statistics and soldiers' testimonies reveal a harrowing epidemic of sexual assault in the US military

By Dahr Jamail

Aljazeera

24 December 2010

Sexual assault within the ranks of the military is not a new problem. It is a systemic problem that has necessitated that the military conduct its own annual reporting on the crisis.

A 2003 Air Force Academy sexual assault scandal prompted the department of defense to include a provision in the 2004 National Defense Authorization Act that required investigations and reports of sexual harassment and assaults within US military academies to be filed. The personal toll is, nevertheless, devastating.

Military sexual trauma (MST) survivor Susan Avila-Smith is director of the veteran's advocacy group Women Organizing Women. She has been serving female and scores of male clients in various stages of recovery from MST for 15 years and knows of its devastating effects up close.

"People cannot conceive how badly wounded these people are," she told Al Jazeera, "Of the 3,000 I've worked with, only one is employed. Combat trauma is bad enough, but with MST it's not the enemy, it's our guys who are doing it. You're fighting your friends, your peers, people you've been told have your back. That betrayal, then the betrayal from the command is, they say, worse than the sexual assault itself."

On December 13, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and other groups filed a federal lawsuit seeking Pentagon records in order to get the real facts about the incidence of sexual assault in the ranks. The Pentagon has consistently refused to release records that fully document the problem and how it is handled. Sexual assaults on women in the US military have claimed some degree of visibility, but about male victims there is absolute silence.

Pack Parachute, a non-profit in Seattle, assists veterans

who are sexual assault survivors. Its founder Kira Mountjoy-Pepka, was raped as a cadet at the Air Force Academy. In July 2003 she was member of a team of female cadets handpicked by Donald Rumsfeld, at the time the secretary of defense, to tell their stories of having been sexually assaulted. The ensuing media coverage and a Pentagon investigation forced the academy to make the aforementioned major policy changes.

Report reveals alarming statistics

Mountjoy-Pepka often works with male survivors of MST. She stated in a telephone interview that four per cent of men in the military experience MST. "Most choose not to talk about it until after their discharge from the military, largely because the post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in over 60 percent of MST cases is too overwhelming," she informed Al Jazeera.

Last week the Pentagon released its "annual report on sexual harassment and violence at the military service academies". At its three academies, the number of reports of sexual assault and harassment has risen a staggering 64 percent from last year.

The report attributes the huge increase to better reporting of incidents due to increased training and education about sexual assault and harassment. Veteran's Administration (VA) statistics show that more than 50 percent of the veterans who screen positive for MST are men.

According to the US Census Bureau, there are roughly 22 million male veterans compared to less than two million female vets.

In Congressional testimony in the summer of 2008, Lt. Gen. Rochelle, the army chief of personnel, reported

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the little known statistic that 12 percent (approximately 260) of the 2,200 reported rapes in the military in 2007 were reported by military male victims.

Due to their sheer numbers in the military, more men (at a rough estimate one in twenty), have experienced MST than women.

Shamed into silence

Billy Capshaw was 17 when he joined the Army in 1977. After being trained as a medic he was transferred to Baumholder, Germany. His roommate, Jeffrey Dahmer, by virtue of his seniority ensured that Capshaw had no formal assignment, no mail, and no pay. Having completely isolated the young medic, Dahmer regularly sexually assaulted, raped, and tortured him.

Dahmer went on to become the infamous serial killer and sex offender who murdered 17 boys and men before being beaten to death by an inmate at Columbia Correction Institution in 1994.

Capshaw reflects back, “At that young age I didn’t know how to deal with it. My commander did not believe me. Nobody helped me, even though I begged and begged and begged.”

The debilitating lifelong struggle Capshaw has had to face is common among survivors of military sexual assault.

Later during therapy he needed to go public. Since then he says, “I’ve talked to a lot of men, many of them soldiers, who are raped but who won’t go public with their story. The shame alone is overwhelming.”

In 1985 Michael Warren enlisted in the navy and for three years worked as a submarine machinist mate on a nuclear submarine. One day he awoke to find another soldier performing fellatio on him.

He recollects with horror, “I was paralyzed with fear. I was in disbelief... shame. When I reported it to the commander he said it was better for me to deal with it after being discharged. Nobody helped me, not even the chaplain. The commander at the processing centre wouldn’t look me in the face. When I filled out my claim later they didn’t believe me. It’s so frustrating.”

Armando Javier was an active duty Marine from 1990 to 1994. He was a Lance Corporal at Camp Lejeune in 1993 when he was raped.

Five Marines jumped Javier and beat him until he was nearly unconscious, before taking turns raping him. His sexual victimization narrative reads, “One of them, a corporal, pulled down my shorts and instructed the others

to ‘Get the grease’. Another corporal instructed someone to bring the stick. They began to insert the stick inside my anus. The people present during this sadistic and ritual-like ceremony started to cajole, cheer, and laugh, saying “stick em’ – stick-em’.”

Extreme shame and trauma compelled him not to disclose the crime to anyone except a friend in his unit. He wrote in his account, “My experience left me torn apart physically, mentally, and spiritually. I was dehumanized and treated with ultimate cruelty, by my perpetrators... I was embarrassed and ashamed and didn’t know what to do. I was young at that time. And being part of an elite organization that values brotherhood, integrity and faithfulness made it hard to come forward and reveal what happened.”

The reality of being less equal

Women in America were first allowed into the military during the Revolutionary War in 1775 and their travails are as old. Drill instructors indoctrinate new recruits into it at the outset by routinely referring to them as “girl,” “pussy,” “bitch,” and “dyke.”

A Command Sergeant Major told Catherine Jayne West of the Mississippi National Guard, “There aren’t but two places for women - in the kitchen or in the bedroom. Women have no place in the military.”

She was raped by fellow soldier Private First Class Kevin Lemeiux, at the sprawling Camp Anaconda, north of Baghdad. The defense lawyer in court merely wanted to know why, as a member of the army, she had not fought back.

The morning after the rape, an army doctor gave her a thorough examination. The army’s criminal investigation team concluded her story was true. Moreover, Lemeiux had bragged about the incident to his buddies and they had turned him in. It seemed like a closed case, but in court the defense claimed that the fact that West had not fought back during the rape was what incriminated her. In addition, her commanding officer and 1st Sergeant declared, in court, that she was a “promiscuous female.”

In contrast, Lemeiux, after the third court hearing of the trial, was promoted to a Specialist. Meanwhile his lawyer entered a plea of insanity. He was later found guilty of kidnapping but not rape, despite his own admission of the crime. He was given three years for kidnapping, half of which was knocked off.

The long term affects of MST

Jasmine Black, a human resources specialist in the Army National Guard from June 2006 to September 2008 was raped by another soldier in her battalion when she was

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stationed in Fort Jackson, South Carolina. She reported it to her Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) and the Military Police, but the culprit was not brought to book.

After an early discharge due to MST and treatment at a PTSD Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (PRRTP) facility, she was raped again by a higher-ranking member of the air force in February 2009.

Administrator for a combat engineering instruction unit in Knoxville, Tennessee, Tracey Harmon has no illusions. “For women in the military, you are either a bitch, a dyke, or a whore. If you sleep with one person in your unit you are a whore. If you are a lesbian you are a dyke, and if you don’t sleep with other soldiers you are a bitch.”

Maricela Guzman served in the navy from 1998 to 2002 as a computer technician on the island of Diego Garcia. She was raped while in boot camp, but fear of consequences kept her from talking about it for the rest of her time in the military. “I survived by becoming a workaholic and was much awarded as a soldier for my work ethic.”

The VA denied her claim nevertheless, “Because they said I couldn’t prove it ... since I had not brought it up when it happened and also because I had not shown any deviant behavior while in the service. I was outraged and felt compelled to talk about what happened.”

While it will go to any length to maintain public silence over the issue, the military machine has no such qualms within its own corridors. Guzman discloses, “Through the gossip mill we would hear of women who had reported being raped. No confidentiality was maintained nor any protection given to victims. The boys’ club culture is strong and the competition exclusive. That forces many not to report rape, because it is a blemish and can ruin your career.”

The department of defence reported that in fiscal year 2009, there were 3,230 reports of sexual assault, an increase of 11 percent over the prior year.

However, as high as the military’s own figures are of rape and sexual assault, victims and advocates Al Jazeera spoke with believe the real figures are sure to be higher.

Veteran April Fitzsimmons, another victim of sexual assault, knows what an uphill battle it is for women to take on the military system. “When victims come forward, they are ostracized and isolated from their communities. Many of the perpetrators are officers who use their ranks to coerce women to sleep with them. It’s a

closely interwoven community, so they are safe and move fearlessly amongst their victims.”

Her advice to women considering joining the US military?

“The crisis is so severe that I’m telling women to simply not join the military because it’s completely unsafe and puts them at risk. Until something changes at the top, no woman should join the military.”

Research support was provided by the Investigative Fund at The Nation Institute.

<http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/features/2010/12/2010122182546344551.html>



Military Sexual Abuse 'Staggering'

In part two of our series, Al Jazeera examines the often hidden world of rape and abuse in the US military.

By Dahr Jamail

Al Jazeera
24 December 2010

Every year, rape increases at an alarming rate within American military institutions – and even males are victims of the cycle.

In fact, due to raw demographics, one can roughly surmise that most victims of sexual abuse in the military are male.

Regardless of gender, reports of victims of military sexual assault have been increasing. In 2007, there were 2,200 reports of rape in the military, whilst in 2009 saw an increase up to 3,230 reports of sexual assault.

Many of the victims suffer from Military Sexual Trauma (MST) and are shamed into silence, with numerous cases not even reported.

A disturbing trend, however, is how military officials seem to be sweeping this damaging issue under the rug and deflecting blame.

Blaming the Victim

Kira Mountjoy-Pepka of Pack Parachute, a non-profit organisation which assists sexually abused veterans, explains that the military system favours the perpetrator. "What we're seeing now, and what we've seen for decades, is when someone is assaulted, the military investigators create false or misleading crime reports. Then the case is dismissed, and the command persecutes the victim for false reporting."

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She cites the Feres Doctrine (Feres v. United States, 340 US 135 [1950]) that made it impossible for the survivor to sue the investigators since it, "essentially prohibits people from suing the military and/or petitioning any non-military legal authority for interdiction without the military's prior and explicit agreement and consent."

"If you're a victim and you report this crime and the military mishandles the investigation, you can't sue them," she explains, "I feel if this were taken up by Congress as an issue it would be exposed that the military is operating against the Constitution by denying victims their first amendment rights. The military always has their own investigators investigate [these cases], and that doesn't seem like justice to me."

The military goes to great lengths to protect the perpetrators, and that deters survivors from reporting. The incidences of sexual trauma in the military are staggering.

The Department of Defence claims to have a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual assault in the ranks, but figures indicate otherwise.

According to the US Department of Veterans Affairs, the rate of sexual assault on women in the military is twice that in the civilian population. A Government Accountability Office report concluded that most victims stay silent because of "the belief that nothing would be done; fear of ostracism, harassment, or ridicule and concern that peers would gossip."

While a civilian rape victim is ensured confidential advice from his or her doctors, lawyers and advocates, the only access a military rape survivor has is to a chaplain.

Compared with a 40 per cent arrest rate for sex crimes among civilians, only eight per cent of investigated cases in the military lead to prosecution.

After Congress mandated it do so in 2006, the Pentagon started a comprehensive programme to track incidents. That year, there were 2,974 reported cases of rape and sexual assault in the military. Of these, only 292 cases resulted in trials, and those netted only 181 prosecutions of perpetrators.

Nearly half the cases are dismissed for lack of adequate proof or due to the death of the victim. Less than 11 per cent of the cases result in a court martial. Often, those prosecuted merely suffer a reduction in rank or pay, and 80 per cent receive an honourable discharge nonetheless.

The victim, on the other hand, risks ending his or her career when they file charges.

Signed, the commander

Faced with the threat of possible persecution and losing their jobs and professional credibility, most soldiers prefer to remain silent about their traumas. Not that silence helps, because records reveal that less than one-third of the women have been able to maintain their careers in the military after having been assaulted.

When presented with these dismal statistics in an interview with ABC News last year, former Principal Undersecretary of Defence for Personnel and Readiness, Michael Dominguez said, "Yes, we absolutely have to get better. Secretary [Robert] Gates himself is driving this initiative this year to improve our ability to investigate, to prosecute and convict. This is not where we want to be."

Dominguez's replacement, Clifford Stanley, issued a Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2010-12 on December 30, 2009. It addresses the need to "Establish a culture free of sexual assault", and puts forth goals of 90 per cent "awareness" and 80 per cent "confidence" in the sexual assault prevention and response program by the end of 2015, with no specific mention of the means to accomplish these goals.

Those plans do not fill Susan Avila Smith with confidence. She is director of the advocacy group Women Organising for Women and she projects a dismal picture.

"The people I work with go all the way back to WWII. The stories are almost exactly the same. It has always been covered up. Still the drill sergeants, chaplains, and doctors appear to be the worst perpetrators. So when these guys are convicted, rather than punishing to the fullest extent, they can give them a letter of reprimand which means Tommy was bad, signed The Commander. That letter comes out of his personnel file before he moves on to the next unit, so it's like nothing happened."

Military 'aware' of the crisis

Pentagon spokesperson Cynthia Smith assured Al Jazeera, "We understand this is very important for everyone to get involved in preventing sexual assault, and are calling on everyone to get involved, step in, and watch each others' backs. We understand that one sexual assault is too many in the Department of Defence (DOD). We have an office working on prevention and response"

The office she alludes to is the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO), which is responsible for the oversight of the DOD's sexual assault policy.

In 2008 Kaye Whitley, Director of SAPRO, was subpoenaed to testify at a hearing of the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs but was ordered by the military not to do so. *Continued on page 32*

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At a second oversight hearing she did appear and confessed to the members of Congress, "I was given a direct order by my supervisor to get back in the van and go back," she said.

At an MST Congressional hearing on February 3, 2010, highlighted was what many see as the problem – the military investigating itself for criminal acts of sexual assault and rape committed by its personnel, as well as the naming of Task Force members and the work of the Task Force being delayed for three years.

Due largely to Mountjoy-Pepka's work in the wake of her experiencing MST and taking action, in October 2005 then-Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld authorised the DOD Task Force on Sexual Assault in the military.

However, the DOD took three years to name the Task Force, and the group's initial meeting did not occur until August 2008. During that period, 6,000 service women and men were sexually assaulted or raped.

This same Task Force told Congress's Military Personnel Subcommittee that, "DOD's procedures for collecting and documenting data about military sexual assault incidents are lacking in accuracy, reliability, and validity."

Task Force leaders also told Congress that "neither victims nor other military personnel were routinely informed of the results of disciplinary actions relating to sexual assault", and "Commanders generally did not communicate case results to members of their command, and that this lack of information often led to misperceptions, rumours, and assumptions that allegations were unfounded."

Fighting back

Anuradha Bhagwati, the executive director of Service Women's Action Network (SWAN), a group that helps military women who have been victims of sexual violence, contradicts claims by the DOD that their new programs will slow the number of MST victims. "We are seeing a disturbingly steady flow," Bhagwati said .

In addition, she told Al Jazeera, "Contrary to DOD claims that they are making it easier for MST survivors to get help, MST survivors have a much more difficult time than other vets because of the burden of proof being on them. There are concrete legal barriers in place that prevent MST survivors from getting help."

The DOD defends the policy, saying it ensures that soldiers get retained, promoted and their careers aren't destroyed.

SWAN has draft legislation in place to get rid of this

policy.

Bhagwati concludes that nothing short of "radical systemic change" will solve the MST crisis in the military today.

Susan Burke is an experienced litigator in Washington, DC who served as lead counsel in five actions brought on behalf of the torture victims at Abu Ghraib prison, as well as a suit against Blackwater for killing 17 Iraqis in Baghdad

She urges us to think of MST this way: "Think of the victims - it is a double blow - first they're physically assaulted, then the institution that is supposed to care for them does not care for them."

She claims that the DOD has done little more than give lip-service to tackle the problem. "They created different positions, SARC, SAPRO, but the problem is that there is no genuine political will to change things. It's a paper tiger...the will doesn't exist. When you look at the career paths of perpetrators compared to the victims, the former are rising up the ranks, and the victims are leaving the military."

She is putting together a class action suit against the DOD for failure to protect service-members from MST, aims to file it in February, and hopes the case will bring significant and lasting reform in the DOD's stance on MST.

They've been saying for years that they just need more time, that they're getting their act together," Burke adds, "You can't expect to have a properly functioning military without discipline problems being addressed, and if you can't address rape, you have a real problem."

1995: Archives of Family Medicine revealed that 90 per cent of women veterans from the 1991 US attack on Iraq and from earlier wars had been sexually harassed.

2003: American Journal of Industrial Medicine surveyed women veterans from Vietnam to the 1991 Iraq attack and found that 30 percent of them had been raped.

2004: According to a study published by the Journal of Military Medicine, of veterans from Vietnam and all wars since, 71 per cent of women soldiers have been sexually assaulted or raped while serving.

2007: The Miles Foundation, a private nonprofit organisation that provides support to victims of sexual assault in the military, received 976 reports of sexual assault in the Central Command Area of Responsibility, which includes Iraq and Afghanistan.

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Christine Hansen, executive director of the foundation, said at the time that there was a steady upward trend in the number of reported cases of sexual assault, of 10 to 15 per cent each quarter.

2008: The Pentagon reported nearly 3,000 cases of women assaulted sexually in Fiscal Year 2008, an increase of 9 percent from 2007. For women serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, the increase was 25 percent.

2009: The annual report on sexual assaults states, "In FY 09, there were a total of 3,230 reports of sexual assault involving military Service members as either victims or subjects, representing an 11% increase from FY 08."

2009: Admission by the Pentagon that approximately 80 per cent of rapes are never reported - making it the most under-documented crime in the military.

<http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/2010/12/20101223113859171112.html>



African Women in UK Silently Suffer Domestic Violence

By Mariama Kande

15 December 2010

London — Martha Kanu* bowed her head and sobbed, fighting to get out the words to explain what's become of the marriage she once thought would be everything she always wanted.

Kanu is one of many African women living illegally in the United Kingdom while waiting to get residency papers. Because many are dependent on husbands or relatives for support or documentation, they are more likely to stay in abusive relationships. Because of this they are also scared to seek help or report domestic violence to the authorities.

"I never thought I was going to be treated this way. I thought he loved me," she explained.

Kanu has been working full time since she came to UK but her wages go into her husband's bank account and he won't allow her to open her own. "He convinced me that as a married couple it is wiser to have a joint bank account but later I realised he has more than four different accounts," she said.

She said her husband regularly beats her and once broke her ankle. Yet she can't leave him, she said. "Whenever I try to leave, my relatives both here and in Africa will encourage me to bear with it and wait until I get my

definite leave to remain here."

Although there is little data on domestic violence in the UK, a British Crime Survey study carried out on behalf of the UK Home Office estimates that one in every four women in the UK are likely to have experienced some form of non-sexual domestic violence.

Furthermore, a House of Commons 2007/2008 Home Affairs Committee report on domestic violence, forced marriage and honour-based violence noted that only a tiny proportion of victims of domestic violence will contact statutory authorities, particularly criminal justice agencies, making measurement of the scale of abuse even harder.

Kanu's husband, who brought her to the UK more than a year ago, asked her to marry him after he saw her picture in a mutual friend's photo album. Kanu saw it as an opportunity to leave behind the poverty of her native Sierra Leone and start a new life.

Yet after she tried to leave her husband, Kanu's relatives accused her of becoming westernised and greedy. They told her she should consider herself lucky to have a husband who brought her so far away from Africa.

"I am fed up with him beating me and swearing at me all the time," she said, her head dropping into her hands. "He told me he will not help me get my papers here and that if I insist he will tell the immigration people that he has nothing to do with me anymore and they will deport me. I don't want to go back to Africa. Life was not easy for me. I dropped out of school at form two and was helping my aunt selling at a market in Freetown."

Christyn Brown of Central London Action on Sexual Health (CLASH) believes most abused women are afraid to inform authorities for fear of being deported back to their home country. Brown emphasised the need to reach out to abused women, noting that many of them end up in commercial sex work in a bid to gain financial empowerment and get away from their abusive partners.

She said victims of trafficking or those in abusive relationships are almost always without their passports or travel documents and usually have rehearsed a false story to explain their situation.

"They are timid and always very careful about what they say," she said, noting they often work six or seven days a week and their money ends up in the pockets of the men abusing them.

To make matters worse, the African community maintains a culture of secrecy around issues of domestic violence, especially when it involves married couples.

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Continued from page 33 - African Women in UK Silently Suffer Domestic Violence

After she moved to London from Nigeria, Grace Anyanhu* also suffered domestic violence but when she tried to leave her marriage she found it impossible to continue living in the UK because her visa didn't allow her to work.

When her husband burned her with an electric iron she went to the police but he told the court she had showed up in the UK with the scars. She was scared of deportation and of being shunned by her community so she didn't go to court to identify her husband as the perpetrator. The case was dismissed and she later sought asylum.

It is difficult for local organisations to help women in such circumstances.

Refuges, a safe house for women and children escaping domestic violence, has a separate home from women from African and Caribbean backgrounds. It provides immigration and asylum seeker support and attempts to help women mitigate family, community and religious pressures. Meanwhile, Southall Black Sisters, a resource centre offering services to women experiencing violence, estimates it is approached for help by more than 600 women every year.

Sadly, the struggle of some African women does not end when they leave Africa, where a good number suffer similar abuses every day. For those like Kanu and Anyanhu, the dream life they thought they would find in Europe has become a nightmare worse than the one they left behind in Africa.

***Names have been changed.**

Mariama Kandeh is a Sierra Leonean journalist currently living in London. This article is part of the Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Service.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201012160570.html>



Uganda: Domestic Violence and HIV Bedfellows - the Tale of Kalangala's Battered Mothers

By Chris Kiwawulo

8 December 2010
New Vision

When Florence had a domestic brawl with her husband

two years ago, the man beat her up and she left their home.

Florence had come with her 13-year-old daughter of another man from Masaka to Bunyama Island in Kalangala district, but on leaving, she left the girl behind. On returning after six months, her husband had defiled the girl, impregnated her and infected her with HIV/AIDS. The man, Stephen Minaani, was arrested and is now facing trial in Masaka High Court as the girl is fighting for her life with HIV.

This appalling story is one of the dozens of cases that happen on several of the 84 islands that make up Kalangala district, where the HIV/AIDS prevalence is currently estimated at between 17 and 20%, reveals Dr. Edward Muwanga, the district HIV focal person. "The prevalence was as high as 30% between 2001 and 2008 and more in some areas."

The national prevalence stands between 6.5% and 7%. In other cases, Muwanga says, married men go for sex workers or women other than their wives after they have had brawls at home. The head of the Police child and family protection unit in Kalangala, Grace Night, says they receive about five cases of domestic violence every month and about four cases of defilement by fathers (both biological and step).

"Worryingly, majority of the fathers who defile their daughters are HIV-positive," Night says. Police, together with NGOs, have, therefore, started a sensitisation campaign to curb domestic violence as a proactive measure to avert the spread of HIV, especially among young girls.

The biggest challenge is lack of funds to access all the islands that make up Kalangala district. She also notes that some men run to the mainland or other islands after committing crimes. She, therefore, calls for funds to establish a mobile court that will enable islanders access justice and deter more crime.

The HIV prevalence rate worsens in Kalangala when new people with infections go to the islands. In a cramped environment where the population of women is way lower than that of men, sharing is a common practice which has largely contributed to the rise in the prevalence rate. For every 150 men, there are 100 women, says Muwanga, adding that the presence of high risk populations like sex workers, fishermen, boda boda riders, truck drivers and shambaboyes working in palm oil plantations exacerbates the problem.

The island's population is about 63,000 people and this is what Government budgets for when it comes to health

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service provision. But, due to a continued influx of new people to the island, Muwanga says pressure on drugs has increased and as a result, the district experiences drug shortages, especially for antiretroviral drugs (ARVs).

Consequently, many people end up dying due to failure to access drugs although some other patients fail to access ARVs due to transport constraints. Betty Nantale from Kisujju island in Bujumba sub-county says she has to part with sh20,000 to come to Kalangala Health Centre IV to get ARVs.

The situation gets worse when it comes to patients who live on distant islands like Mazinga near the Uganda-Tanzania border. The cost of transport is very high since a litre of fuel costs as high as sh6,000 on majority of these islands. They need a minimum of sh40,000 to get to the ARVs' collection point in Kalangala.

To this, Muwanga suggests that the Government steps in to organise mobile clinics to ensure that HIV patients access drugs and live positively. Otherwise, he argues, the deaths from HIV/AIDS have resulted in an increase in the number of child-headed families in the district. Muwanga reveals that Kalangala has the highest percentage of child-headed families in the entire country at 6.1% of the district population.

Interventions like the Kalangala Home-Based Voluntary Counselling and Testing (KHBVCT) programme have come in place and tested over 50% of the people in the district. The Kalangala district Forum of People Living with HIV/AIDS Network (KAFOPHAN) has also bailed out many living with HIV.

Funded by Action Aid Uganda, the Civil Society Organisation, Kalangala District Development Programme and the National Forum of People Living with HIV/AIDS, KAFOPHAN has so far reached out to 1,800 residents in Kalangala's seven sub-counties.

"Our aim is to reach out to all people living with HIV in Kalangala and to ensure that they access ARVs so that they can live longer like other normal human beings," says Molly Mulaaza, the chairperson of KAFOPHAN. Mulaaza, who tested HIV-positive in 1992 after her husband died, says it has always been her wish to unite HIV-positive persons in Kalangala. Mulaaza, a mother of seven, is now able to look after her children and four other orphans. Although there are 84 islands in Kalangala, the Government has only gazetted 62 landing sites yet the rest also need help,

Mulaaza points out.

With ActionAid, KAFOPHAN offers Kalangala residents counselling, training in prevention, care and treatment of HIV patients. Ssanyu Kalibbala, the ActionAid Uganda communications co-ordinator, says people living with HIV need extra care in terms of social service provision like feeding and health care. "A person who is HIV-positive needs three times the energy of a normal person to perform a given task," Kalibbala notes.

She urges the Government to ensure that people living with HIV in Kalangala access ARVs so as to live longer. ActionAid started the Kalangala district initiative project in 1999 with the aim of improving health and sanitation in the district. They later changed into an integrated project with child sponsorship funding in 2001 focusing on agriculture and education. In 2007, the thematic focus changed to education and HIV/AIDS, an area Kalibbala says service delivery was unjust and inequitably delivered.

Because of ActionAid's continued advocacy for increased health service delivery, some mothers like 29-year-old Lillian Basirika, who is HIV-positive, was able to have an HIV-negative baby when she accessed the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV service. Basirika, whose son is now nine months, says she tested positive in 2006 and she started taking septrin immediately.

Her husband is also positive and through sensitisation, he has been made to accept the condition instead of turning violent like many men in Kalangala do on realising that they are positive. "I tested at Kalangala Health Centre IV. But since I asked him to come with me, he was counselled and he did not turn violent when we got the results," Basirika, a resident of Bujumba village in Bujumba sub-county says.

With a vision to ensure a world without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys their right to a life with dignity, ActionAid thrives to work with poor people to eradicate poverty by overcoming the injustice and inequity that cause it.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201012090973.html>



South Africa: It Does Not Pay to Be an Abuser

By Thabo Mofokeng

7 December 2010

Johannesburg, South Africa — In life there are those who

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are abused and those who are abusive.

Abuse manifests itself in different ways from beating your young children for no reason to ill-treatment of your partner. I am a reformed perpetrator of gender-based violence and other forms of violence and can now tell you from experience that as an abuser one does not realise that they are doing wrong and may think that they are doing the right thing by punishing someone, including verbally or physically.

I remember when I used to date someone a long time ago, our relationship began on a happy note but along the way things changed. I loved her but I used to fight with her all the time. I used to beat and insult her including her parents, family and friends. As a result she left me and now does not allow me to see the baby we had together. She does not trust me anymore and feels that I am not man enough.

It is really sad because this child will grow up without a father. I am afraid that this is going to affect the child in the long run. Every child needs to grow up with their biological parents or someone who loves them unconditionally. The mother gets emotional when asked about the father of the child because she is still traumatised mentally and emotionally by what I did to her.

I used to beat her up while our child watched. Now that I reflect on it I regret it because many times children who witness violence repeat it when they grow up. They adopt the thinking that the only way to solve issues is to beat or insult one another. You unknowingly create a monster.

I have experienced this through my nephew. As he grew up he was told that the man who was staying with his mother was not his father. His father had died some years prior, before his mother met his stepdad. This was said, not knowing that it could affect the young boy's life. He eventually spent his youth life in prison because he began disrespecting his stepdad and stealing from him. This problem even manifested itself at school and he was expelled.

After he was expelled from school, he ganged up with other young boys who were not going to school. They started to rob school kids, despite knowledge of the law and the consequences arising from breaking it. Today as I write this, he is in prison.

Unfortunately, my nephew was also physically abused by an elderly person who lived in their community. I am trying to encourage all adults with child responsi-

bilities not to abuse children in any way, because that will kill the future of our country and destroy the moral fabric of our societies.

It is as bad when you abuse a woman. I once fell in love with another lady who was working as a domestic worker. I worked next to where she stayed.

However, this did not last, though I loved her so much. We enjoyed each other's company, until I became abusive. I was so jealous that I did not want to see her with any other man, except me. I would beat her up for that and other petty things such as if she didn't pick up her phone. When she asked that we break up, I refused and beat her up for suggesting it. It was getting out of hand.

I became abusive to her friends as well. I suppose her friends wanted the best for her and raised their concern regarding the abuse. They knew that I was beating her up, so they decided to join forces and started insulting me.

A huge fight resulted. I went after her friends, beating them up. To me I was doing this out of love, without realising that I was abusing her and her freedom. I felt her friends were the reason why we were fighting all the time. I was lucky because they never took the matter to the police.

What I am trying to say is stop all abuse. It will end up affecting you as a perpetrator in many ways. I am not proud of being an abuser and I regret all that I have done

My message to all is that abusing a woman does not make you a real man.

Instead you are a man who cannot stand his ground without using force because you are insecure and always feel intimidated. I have changed for the better and hope that my last girlfriend and her friends will forgive me. I was out of my mind, thinking the only way to make sense to be loved and viewed as a man by a woman was to beat her. I see that it did not solve anything, but it created enemies for me. Now I am hurt. I feel I am being neglected and treated as a social outcast because of all the wrong things I have done to people and the hurt I have caused.

This "I" Story is part of a special series on the 16 Days of Activism for the Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Service that offers fresh views on everyday news. For more information on the 16 Days Campaign go to www.genderlinks.org.za

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201012071225.html>



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HAITI: SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN INCREASING

Amnesty.Org
January 6, 2011

Women and girls living in Haiti's makeshift camps face an increasing risk of rape and sexual violence, Amnesty International said in a new report released today.

One year after the earthquake which killed 230,000 people and injured 300,000, more than one million people still live in appalling conditions in tent cities in the capital Port-au-Prince and in the south of Haiti, where women are at serious risk of sexual attacks. Those responsible are predominately armed men who roam the camps after dark.

More than 250 cases of rape in several camps were reported in the first 150 days after January's earthquake, according to data cited in the Amnesty International report, *Aftershocks: Women speak out against sexual violence in Haiti's camps*.

One year on, rape survivors continue to arrive at the office of a local women's support group almost every other day.

"Women, already struggling to come to terms with losing their loved ones, homes and livelihoods in the earthquake, now face the additional trauma of living under the constant threat of sexual attack," said Gerardo Ducos, Amnesty International's Haiti researcher.

"For the prevalence of sexual violence to end, the incoming government must ensure that the protection of women and girls in the camps is a priority. This has so far been largely ignored in the response to the wider humanitarian crisis."

Sexual violence was widespread in Haiti before January 2010 but this has been exacerbated by the conditions since the earthquake. The limited assistance the authorities previously provided has been undermined by the destruction of police stations and court houses. This has made it more difficult to report sexual violence.

Over 50 survivors of sexual violence shared their experiences with Amnesty International for the study.

One 14 year old girl, Machou, lives in a makeshift camp for displaced people in Carrefour Feuilles, south-west Port-au-Prince. She was raped in March when she went to the toilet.

"A boy came in after me and opened the door. He gagged me with his hand and did what he wanted to do...He hit me. He punched me. I didn't go to the police because I don't know the boy, it wouldn't help. I feel really sad all the time...I'm afraid it will happen again," Machou told Amnesty International.

One woman, Suzie, recounted how she was living in a makeshift shelter with her two sons and a friend when they were attacked around 1am on 8 May. Suzie and her friend were both blindfolded and raped in front of their children by a gang of men who forced their way into their shelter.

"After they left I didn't do anything. I didn't have any reaction... Women victims of rape should go to hospital but I didn't because I didn't have any money... I don't know where there is a clinic offering treatment for victims of violence," Suzie said.

Suzie lost her parents, brothers and husband in the January earthquake. Her home was also destroyed.

Amnesty International's report highlights how the lack of security and policing in and around the camps is a major factor for the increase in attacks over the past year.

The response by police officers to survivors of rape is described as inadequate. Many survivors of rape recollected how when they sought police help they were told officers could do nothing.

"There has been a complete breakdown in Haiti's already fragile law and order system since the earthquake with women living in insecure overcrowded camps," said Gerardo Ducos.

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“There is no security for the women and girls in the camps. They feel abandoned and vulnerable to being attacked. Armed gangs attack at will; safe in the knowledge that there is still little prospect that they will be brought to justice.”

Amnesty International is calling for the new government to urgently take steps to end violence against women as part of a wider plan to address the humanitarian effort. The report states that women in the camps must be fully involved in developing any such plan. Immediate steps include improving security in the camps and to ensure police are able to respond effectively and that those responsible are prosecuted.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/report/haiti-sexual-violence-against-women-increasing-2011-01-06>



Sexual Violence in Haitian Camps of the Displaced, Beyond the Numbers

By Chiara Liguori

Caribbean researcher for Amnesty International

March 22, 2010

Since the first days of the earthquake, many humanitarian and human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, have issued warnings about the increased risk of gender based and sexual violence.

The risks are well founded. Thousands of displaced people are sleeping in public spaces in just one square meter or even less; women are obliged to bath almost naked under the eyes of the other residents and passers-by; children sleep alone at night because they are unaccompanied or their mothers are working outside the camps in order to feed them.

However, since the earthquake women’s organizations have registered a drastic reduction in reported cases of sexual violence. The self-organized camp management committees confirmed to Amnesty International that sexual violence is not an issue and that security commissions to patrol the camps at night have been set up. Most of the women in the camps interviewed by us did not express concerns about sexual violence.

So what is happening we asked ourselves. Have we got it wrong? Have we over-estimated the risks? Or, is it that women are too scared to report? Are we talking to the right people?

It was Malya, one of the co-founders of KOFAVIV, a women’s grassroots organization dealing with the medical and psychological needs of rape victims, who started to clarify the issue. Malya’s house and office were destroyed in the earthquake, together with Eramithe, also a KOFAVIV co-founder, she is living in Champ de Mars, one of the biggest makeshift camps in Port-au-Prince.

Even though they have lost all their belongings, they have not lost their will to fight sexual violence against women and girls. In two months, 19 women and girls living in their section of the camp have reported cases of rape and sexual assault. Even though they encouraged women to lodge complaints with the police, none of them would. They were too afraid, either because the attackers were living in the camp, or in nearby areas, or because they had no other place to go.

Not trusting the police to protect them and knowing that the justice system is paralysed since the earthquake, they preferred to keep quiet. Those who have relatives in other parts of the country chose to quit. The victims are fleeing while the perpetrators are still around, probably looking for the next victim.

In the absence of a centralized system for recording cases of sexual violence, grassroots organizations working in the camps are the only source of information. Living alongside women and girls in the camps, they are able to identify who needs help.

Margaret, a social worker for the organization Zanmi Timoun (Friends of children) has reached out to dozens of girls living in camps who have been victims of rape and incest either before or after the quake. We interviewed 5 of them.

The sadness of these girls, their low voices, their pains and their fears speak clearer and louder than any data or number. One of them is pregnant, another is afraid of being pregnant, some are terrified of being killed by their attackers. They look resigned and submissive. When we asked them what they want most in life, all of them assertively said they wanted to continue to go to school. One of them gave us a message to pass to the authorities: “You need to protect the girls, because I don’t want anybody to suffer what I have been going through”.

<http://livewire.amnesty.org/2010/03/22/sexual-violence-in-haitian-camps-of-the-displaced-beyond-the-numbers/>



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is physical, emotional, sexual or economic abuse between intimate partners.

Why does it happen?

Domestic violence happens when one partner chooses to act in a way that is hurtful, frightening or threatening to their partner. Domestic violence is the responsibility of the person who is behaving violently or abusively. It is not the responsibility or fault of the person who is abused, no one can force or provoke another person to be violent.

Who does it happen to?

Domestic violence happens in all kinds of homes – rich or poor. Although both women and men can experience this violence, it happens much more frequently to women. It may be happening to your mother, sister, daughter, friend, colleague or neighbor.

Types of domestic violence

There are many types of domestic violence, many of the kinds are not physical or cannot be noticed easily. This does not mean that they are less damaging or serious. All types of domestic violence are unacceptable. Here are a few of the most common types:

Physical

- Pushing
- Hitting
- Slapping
- Grabbing
- Beating
- Hair pulling
- Kicking
- Choking
- Burning
- Twisting arms
- Use of any type of weapon
- Banging head on the floor or wall

Emotional

- Shouting
- Swearing
- Insults
- Threatening violence
- Name-calling
- Humiliating
- Embarrassing
- Belittling
- Making fun of her
- Criticizing
- Accusing her of affairs

- Threatening to hurt the children
- Locking her out of the house
- Extreme jealousy
- Threatening to leave
- Constant questioning about her activities
- Having affairs

Sexual

- Forcing sex / marital rape
- Unwanted touching
- Grabbing sexual parts of her body
- Making her do sexual things against her will
- Coercion
- Hurtful sex
- Unfaithfulness
- Inserting objects into private parts
- Refusal to have protected sex

Economic

- Withholding family finances
- Stopping her from getting or keeping a job
- Making her ask for money or an allowance
- Demanding her money
- Not allowing her to have money

Indicators of Domestic Violence

Women experiencing violence may show some of the following characteristics or behaviors:

- Lack of self-confidence
- Reducing or ending her participation in activities
- Not wanting to see friends
- Visible physical injuries
- Making excuses for physical injuries
- Sadness and loss of energy
- Loss of appetite or inability to sleep

Children may experience violence directly or be witness to other violence in the home. Children living in violent homes may show some of the following characteristics or behaviors:

Problems in school

- Fear of the dark
- Clinging to mother or siblings
- Increased violent behavior
- Difficulty in getting along with other children
- Withdrawal from activities, play or friends
- Verbal abuse or talking back
- Shyness
- Oversensitive or easily upset

What are the consequences of domestic violence?

Domestic violence hurts us all. Women in abusive relationships cannot fully participate in community life.

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circulation, has no scientific foundation at all. There is no proof of an "Afro-Asiatic historical grammar." One may recall here what Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) called "the prejudice of the prestige of the multitude," that is to say, the supposition that what everyone says must be true. In the human sciences "scientific" circles often make claims not based on any objectively verifiable grounds but rather just on this kind of prejudice.

Second, ancient Egypt was a flourishing ancient kingdom of Northeast Africa, located in the Nile Valley, nowise in "Asia Minor" or in the "Near East." The Egyptian civilization of the Pharaonic period (3400-343 Bc) was intrinsically, that is, in its essential nature, an African civilization. on account of its spirit, character. behavior, culture, thought, and deep feeling.

As we know, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), who was not a historian. but a great philosopher, stated in his lectures delivered in the winter of 1830-1 on the philosophical history of the world: "Africa is no historical part of the world: it has no movement or development to exhibit Egypt . . . does not belong to the African Spirit" (1956: 99: emphasis mine). This view of the Hegelian philosophy of history has become almost a common opinion and an academic paradigm in Western historiography. A great culture or civilization cannot be produced by African (Black) people. Moreover, African people have never made any kind . of contribution to world history. Even some brilliant African minds still accept as true Hegel's incongruous statement. In modern times the primary document concerning the "question" of the ancient Egyptian connection with the rest of Black Africa was, until the Cairo symposium, Hegel's Philosophy of History. Thus, it took one century and 44 years, from Hegel (1830) to the Cairo symposium (1974), to change the paradigm installed by the German philosopher. The Cairo symposium was, then, a turning point in African historiography and philosophy.

Ancient Egyptian Concepts of "Philosophy"

It was said above that philosophy could be defined as systematic reflective thinking on life. There is not a single philosophy that could be excogitated except in relation to life, society, existence, and universe. Even abstract reasoning about the condition or quality of being nothing ("Nothingness") still deals with something in the universe, since the universe is the totality of all that is. Human beings always need to discern hat is real, true, right, or lasting. Such insight is wisdom, because understanding what is true, right, or lasting necessarily elevates the mind. This is why "philosophy" was under-

stood by the Greeks as "love of wisdom," and "philosopher" as "lover of wisdom." To philosophize was not just to speculate about life and reflect on nature, but also to be engaged with love, intense desire, and strong enthusiasm in the investigation of causes underlying reality in order to build up a system of values by which society may live.

Philosophy is more important in its essential function than in its mere methodology as a critical or analytical inquiry into the nature of things. The basic notion of philosophy in ancient Egypt referred precisely to the synthesis of all learning and also to the pursuit of wisdom and moral and spiritual perfection. Philosophy in the ancient times of Pharaonic Egypt was, then, a kind of pedagogy fielding the wise teachings (sebayit) of the old sages, who were scholars, priests, and officials or statesmen at the same time.

Indeed, the verb rekh (written with the hieroglyphic signs of "mouth," "placenta," and "papyrus rolled up, tied and sealed") means "to know" or "to be aware of but also "to learn." Human beings know by learning, that is, through experience or conditioning, schooling or study. The word rekh (when written with the hieroglyph of a seated man) means "wise man." that is, a learned man, an erudite, a philosopher. Thus the concept rekhet (written with the hieroglyph for abstract notions) means "knowledge," "science," in the sense of "philosophy," that is, inquiry into the nature of things (khet) based on accurate knowledge (rekhet) and good (nefer) judgment (upi). The word upi means "to judge," "to discern," that is, "to dissect." The cognate word upet means "specification." "judgment," and upset means "specify," that is, give the details of something.

In the Egyptian language "wisdom" and "prudence" are expressed by the same word: sat (the hieroglyphic determinative is very characteristic; it is of a man with hand to mouth). Indeed, to be wise (sai) is to be prudent (sai); it is to be almost "silent," that is, sagacious in handling matters, and exercising good judgment. Wisdom and prudence imply knowledge (rekhet) and the awareness of the principles of moral conduct and sociable behavior. The wise man (rekh or sai) grasps in his mind with clarity and certainty what is known distinctively to him.

The wise man or woman, of course, loves truth (mast). He or she is shrewd, marked by a keen awareness and a penetrating intelligence, because he or she has received formal instruction. In the Egyptian language, the word seba (written with the symbol of a "star") means, "to teach," suggesting methodological teaching and an arduous learning process, such as at school.

To teach (seba) is to open the door (seba) to the mind of the pupil (seba) in order to bring in light, as from a star (seba). Egyptian concepts concerning the topic under consideration are precise:

Seba: "to teach"

at seba: "school," literally "house of teaching." (A famous school director was Kemhu, who lived during the 13th Dynasty, 1782-1650 BC. His statue from Abydos is now in the Egyptian Museum at Cairo.)

seba, also sebaty: "pupil"

sebayit: "written teaching," "instruction," "wisdom," also pedagogy, that is, theta of bringing pupils from darkness to light in intellectual and spiritual life

rep-heseb: "correct method"

This last methodological concept, rep-heseb, occurs in the very title of a scientific text, the so-called "Rhind Mathematical Papyrus," copied by the scribe and teacher Ahmes in about 1650 ac from writings dating from about 200 years earlier (see Gillings 1972).

From the concepts clearly defined above, it is obvious that Egyptian thinking created the terminology for the formulation of a system of abstract thought by using a graphic and concrete symbolism. Egyptian thinking was graphic and abstract at the same time. Pictures were used as symbols of thought. The tangible signs, pictures, and symbols were related to ideas and meanings. They were, in fact, semiotic structures. The Egyptians did develop a kind of semiology by studying the relationship between signs and pictures, using material objects to represent something invisible or abstract. This is not to say that the Egyptian philosophers thought "in" graphic and concrete terms. They made use of graphic and concrete forms to think abstractions. This may seem quaint for the modern mind, because of the alphabetical system of writing. In fact, semiotic structures in hieroglyphic signs were a fine equipment for precise abstract thinking. And the earliest abstract terms for expressing transcendental ideas known in the history of philosophy appear among the Egyptians of the Pyramid Age, that is, during the Old Kingdom (2686-2181 BC). One is referring to ideas, such as the goodness of God (nefer netcher), moral obligation, and high ideals of social equity (maat). Notable also are the ideas of human kingship (nesyt) and of the concept of the Supreme Principle, or God (Ra), symbolized by the sun.

The First Definition of a "Philosopher" in World History

The ancient Egyptians meant by rekh or sai a "wise

human being" or "philosopher." It was not just a question of words.

Two thousand years ago in ancient Egypt, without a doubt, the "inscription of Antef" gave the first clear and distinct statement conveying the fundamental meaning of a "philosopher." This is a demonstrable fact. The German Egyptologist Hellmut Brunner translates the "inscription of Antef," which gives the definition of a "philosopher," as follows:

[He is the one] whose heart is informed about these things which would be otherwise ignored, the one who is clear-sighted when he is deep into a problem, the one who is moderate in his actions. who penetrates ancient writings, whose advice is [sought] to unravel complications, who is really wise, who instructed his own heart, who stays awake at night as he looks for the right paths, who surpasses what he accomplished yesterday, who is wiser than a sage, who brought himself to wisdom, who asks for advice and sees to it that he is asked advice. (Inscription of Antef, 12th Dynasty. 1991-1782 ac)

The heart *ib*, also *Katy*, in the Egyptian language was conceived as the seat of thoughts and emotions. The word for heart also meant "mind," "understanding," and "intelligence." Reason, emotion, spirit, mind, and body were not conceived as separate antithetical entities. Matter and spirit were not opposites in conflict. Thus, in their inquiries philosophers can draw on all the resources of their being, including reason and feeling. In this way they can expect to achieve fulfillment.

The reference to being deep into a problem indicates that philosophical thinking is a critical undertaking. Philosophy is not concerned with what is apparent, obvious, shallow, or insignificant. Thinking deep means dealing with substantial issues. And what a philosopher does in life, he must do within reasonable limits, not at all being subject to radical or extreme views. A philosopher champions moderate views or judgments, as he or she loves truth (*maat*).

A great philosophical and scientific tradition existed in ancient Egypt. The philosopher was regarded as one who could penetrate ancient writings and avail himself of the instructions available therein. These works constituted a philosophical tradition, that is, a set of teachings (*sebayit*) viewed as a coherent body of precedents influencing the present. The history of philosophy was thus already a system of philosophy. Imhotep, Hor-Djed-Ef, Kagemni, and Ptah-Hotep in the Old Kingdom (2686-2181 BC) built the first philosophical tradition in world history. Their wisdom or philosophy did them credit, because a thousand years after they had passed away they were still remembered with reverence:

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Books of wisdom (i.e. philosophy) were their pyramids,
And the pen was their child...

Is there anyone here like Hor-Djed-El?

Is there another like Imhotep?

They are gone and forgotten,

But their names through their writings cause them to be remembered.

(Papyrus Beatty IV, Version)

Imhotep was grand vizier to King Djoser (2668-2649 Be), 3rd Dynasty. He was also high priest at Heliopolis, the main city of the Sun-God, Ra. He designed, as chief architect, the step-pyramid at Saqqara, which is the first construction in hewn stone in world history. Hor-Djed-El was a royal prince, son of Khufu (2589-2566 BC), 4th Dynasty. He was connected with the greatest pyramid of Giza.

Women too were involved in the intellectual, scientific, and philosophical tradition. Lady Peseshet was the first woman doctor of medicine in world history. She lived during the 4th Dynasty or the early 5th Dynasty (2584 or 2465 BC). Her titles indeed included *imy-t-r swnwt*, that is, "the lady director of lady physicians." She was also a funerary priestess.

On the ancient Egyptian model, philosophers are not just critical analysts, scholarly minds able to read ancient texts. They must also be prepared to ask for advice and look for the right paths. In addition, they must surpass their own performance by conducting the investigation of causes underlying reality always in a detailed and accurate manner. But beyond this, the philosopher must betake himself to wisdom, that is, to what is true, right, and useful to the community. Thus, for ancient Egypt, philosophy implies the critical building of knowledge, intellectual penetration, and profundity, but also, and perhaps above all, modesty and moderation, humility, and an endless desire for perfection. This is wisdom and still a valid conception of philosophy today.

Hieroglyphic Signs and Philosophy

Plotinus (205-70 AD), Egyptian-born Roman philosopher and writer who founded Neoplatonism, wrote during the third century AD that the "Egyptian sages showed their consummate science by using symbolic signs Thus, each hieroglyph constituted a sort of science of wisdom." On this showing, Plotinus considered hieroglyphs to be a writing system that recorded real things and ideas without confusion. Apparently, hieroglyphs have no hidden and

impenetrable mysteries. What hieroglyphs disclose is of unique interest in the intellectual history of humanity.

There are more than 800 hieroglyphic signs; they describe all the classes and categories of beings and things held by creation. Hieroglyphs are the complete and systematized conceptualization of all that is; they are an all-embracing knowledge of reality. Egyptian hieroglyphs express the universe, as it is known and as it exists; they mean, refer to, the totality of things. It is because of the universe that there are hieroglyphs. In a sense, all things are hieroglyphs, and hieroglyphs are all things. This is why it was impossible for the Egyptians to conceive the idea of non-existence in the sense of the absence of the existent. Since the universe is beauty, abundance, plentitude, diversity, harmony, and unity, hieroglyphs reproduce by drawings all these manifestations of the universe.

Everything is in hieroglyphs, such as, in random order, man and his occupations, woman and her activities, deities, mammals, birds, amphibious animals, reptiles, fish, insects, plants, trees, sky, earth, mountains, water, buildings, ships, domestic and funerary furniture, temple furniture and sacred emblems, crowns, dress, staves, warfare, hunting, butchery, agriculture, crafts and professions, rope, fiber, baskets, bags, vessels of stone, earthenware, cakes, writing, games, music, geometrical figures, etc. Hieroglyphs, being about reality in all its diversity, also feature abstract concepts, such as spirituality, consciousness, love, sexuality, happiness, beauty, ugliness, rites, eloquence, loyalty, sovereignty, joy, life, power, birth, death, immortality, motion, wind, knowledge, silence, wisdom, flame, light, day, night, darkness, fear, alteration, smell, perfume, truth, justice, etc.

The hieroglyphic script is a most complete semiotic system - complete, that is, systematic, and comprehending everything in the universe. Studying the Egyptian hieroglyphic script is like being in communication with all that exists. The discipline of Egyptology involves the learning of the Egyptian system of writing. Egyptian hieroglyphic writing is found everywhere: on temple walls and columns, tombs, sacred monuments, and so forth. Painted inscriptions do exist, illustrating the aesthetic sensibilities of the Egyptian scribes. Egyptian writing reached its full development around 3200 BC, and thereafter remained fundamentally unchanged for a period of 3,000 years.

The universal human need for communication and self-expression was graphically crystallized in the Egyptian script, which sought to represent the form of

the universe itself. This is impressive from both a semantical and a philosophical standpoint. Africans, at all events, must study the Egyptian language and script.

The Dynamic Character of Egyptian Thinking on "Existence"

Verbs expressing existence are not static but dynamic in Egyptian philosophy. They are basically verbs of movement, stressing duration and referring to moments of time. Verbs like "to exist," "to be," "to be stable, enduring," and "to become" were dominant in Egyptian speculation about life and the existence of the universe.

The verb *wnn* (*unen*): "to exist," "to be"

The verb *wnn* (*unen*), written with the hieroglyphic sign of the long-eared desert hare, means "to exist." "to be." This verb expresses being or existence in a full-blooded sense. Originally, it meant perhaps "to move," "to run." To be a true being, something always has to be moving or running. Therefore, non-being is not.

This means that existence excludes illusion, delusion, and mere sense impression. Existence is the prodigious dynamic of all being. The synthesis of rest (*hotep*) and movement (*shemet*) is the entirety of being, and it is unalterable and indestructible like the divine life. The concept of "existence" is closely related to that of "eternity," that is, the manner of being of that which may be called the perfect (*nefer*), that is, the god Ra.

Ra is the highest being, imperishable, eternal, possessing full reality, that is, power, beauty, truth, perfection, and goodness.

"To exist" as duration is also a dynamic process referring to any point of time. This is why one and the same sentence can be understood in a past, present or future sense, according to the particular context and the intention of the text. For example, the sentence *wnn pt wnn. t hr. i* (*unen pet unen. etj kher. i*) means:

"The sky existed when you were with me" (Past)

"The sky exists, and you are with me" (Present)

"So long as heaven shall exist, you shall exist with me" (Future)

(Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums, IV, 348, 9)

Existence, whether absolute or relative to some situation, is always a dynamic process. The name given to the resurrected god Osiris (*Usire*) was *Wnn-4r* (*Unennefer*) meaning "He who is continually happy," or "He whose life was regenerated." Here, the verb *wnn* (*unen*) "to exist," "to be." evokes the immortality of

Osiris, who died and was reborn. The main goal of human life (*ankh*) was to come to exist as a good (*nefer*) divine being in order to become Osiris, that is, immortal and eternal. The distinction between "being" and "non-being" was only a "semantical" distinction. It had no ontological significance in Egyptian philosophy.

The verb *d d* (*djed*) "to be stable," "enduring"

Columns in the temple stand: that is, they are stable (*died*). But standing is viewed as the result of a rising. The "standing" of the columns in a temple is not a static image, because the mind is always thinking of the firmness and stability of the columns as a process. Indeed, movement is conceived to be carried from the earth to the sky through columns. This means that humanity, by building civilization and spirituality on earth, must reach up to the world of Truth (*maat*) and eternity (*diet*). The "being" of a column as it stands (*djed*) in its stability (*djedet*) is, in fact, analogous to the cosmos itself. So, indeed, is the entire temple. The hardness of a column is a revealing reality because truth (*maat*) constitutes the real (*maa*) being of the column.

By the art of the sculptor, a statue (*tut*) is not something "static," as it is perceived to be in Western thought. A statue is a living image (*tut ankh*), a real (*maa*) becoming. Indeed, to carve (*se-ankh*) is to make life (*ankh*) itself as a real thing. A statue comes to be a power: it is the localized existence of the power (*ka*) of someone. King Tut-ankh-Amon and his golden statues are all of them "living (*ankh*) images (*tut*) of Amon," "an imaged life of Amon." Everything described as durative (*djed*) is, in fact, a dynamic expression of life. and a manifestation of truth itself. Beauty (*nefer*) is not just an aesthetic category, but also the manifestation of a transcendental force.

The pillar (*died*) projected eternal life because it was a symbol of Osiris. As a matter of fact, the Nile was but the source and visible symbol of that fertility of which Osiris was the exemplification.

The verb *hpr* (*kheper*) "to become"

The notions "learn" (*rekh*), "ignore" (*khem*), and "love" (*mer*) imply continuity, but "know," "not know," and "wish" are regarded in Egyptian grammar as definitive occurrences resulting from "having learnt," "failed to learn," "conceived a wish." Thus, as in some examples noted above, basically the same grammatical form is used to express the continuity of a contemporaneous occurrence and the pastness of a past occurrence.

Actually, at the beginning of the 12th Dynasty (1991-1782 BC) the two verbs *wnn* (*unen*) ("be") and

kheper ("become") were used with a past reference and also with a future or prospective reference. The following clause is an example of the first usage: iret kheperu neb mery. ef kheper im. ef ("the making (iret) of all changes (kheperu neb) in which (im. ef) one may wish (mery. ef) to be involved (kheper)") (Urk, V. 4).

We must then devote special attention to this verb kheper not only because it occurs very frequently in the Egyptian texts, but also because the grammatical points discussed above are concentrated in this verb. The verb kheper expresses being or existence in all its possibilities. It thus means both "becoming" and "effecting." Included also in the meaning of the verb are the ideas of cause and effect. It is in this sense of the verb that the creator says to himself. "I exist, and in me possibilities become existents" (kheper.i kheper kheperu). The existent exists because of the existence of the creator. The existence (kheperu) of the creator manifests (kheper) itself as "becoming" and "effecting."

There is no genesis, but co-genesis, in the sense that the existent exists by the simple fact of its inner nature. Coming into being by itself (kheper. ef dies. ef), the existent brings out, at the same time, the entirety of existence. The one and the many are interlaced by the same dynamic power of the existent. One implication of this is that "matter" and "spirit" are two aspects of the same reality. Try to deal with "matter" without "spirit," and what you have is incomplete, because "matter" and "spirit" do not just lie side by side. They are inextricably connected together.

As an intransitive verb, kheper means "come into being," "change into," "occur," "happen," "be effective," also "go by," "be past," always with the idea of continuity. Kheper also means, as noted earlier, "to exist," "to be." As a transitive verb it means "bring out."

The dynamic character of kheper is generally clear. Its connotation contains the unity of being, becoming, and effecting. Within it, the gap between becoming and being is closed by virtue of "effecting." In the universe everything is full of power (ka) and effectiveness (kheper). The ka is the dynamic essence of each existence or being in the universe.

We can understand now the dynamic character of the ancient Egyptian conception of the world. Things do not have the fixity and inflexibility that we believe they have. Things are changeable and in motion on the earth, in the sky, under water, etc. The earth and the sky themselves move.

The Egyptian Conception of the Universe

Because of the dynamic nature of its thinking on "existence"

and the universal semiology of the hieroglyphs, Egyptian philosophy was of a solar and cosmic orientation. The material sun was known as Ra, that is, the "sun-god." Many deities were associated in some way with the sun-god Ra, such as Ra-Atum, the creator; Khepri, a winged beetle or scarab rising in the east; Horus, the son of Ra; Hor-akhty, the Horus of the two Horizons; Amon-Ra. the god Amon of Thebes solarized.

In the beginning the sun-god as Atum or Ra-Atum had appeared from primeval waters known as nun by his own power of self-development. Note that "spirit" is thought of here as a self-development of "matter." The sun-god begat Shu, the wind, and Te jnut, the first woman. Of these two were born Geb, the earth-god, and Nut, the goddess of the sky, whose children were the two brothers Osiris and Seth, and the sisters Isis and Nephthys. Osiris and Isis will give birth to Horus, the dynastic divine falcon. The Pharaoh himself assumed the title "Son of Ra" (sa-Ra) from the 5th Dynasty (2498-2345 ac) onward. Maat, the goddess of Truth or Righteousness, was a daughter of Ra (sat-Ra). The conception of Truth and Right occupied a prominent place in thought about Aton, a solar deity. Hathor, the goddess of beauty, love, dance, and music, was the "eye of Ra." The pyramid was the chief symbol of the sun-god Ra. It was believed to help the Pharaoh in his transition from the earthly to the celestial realm.

In the philosophy of the ancient Egyptians these elements of myth and cosmogony contain their basic ideas about the world.

TIF modern European mind conceives of "chaos" and "cosmos" as antithetical concepts. Chaos is defined as a disorderly mass, a jumble that existed before the ordered universe, the cosmos. On the other hand, for the Egyptian mind, there is no such thing as chaos in this sense. In the beginning there was primordial space and time, the Nun, from which the sun-god Ra emerged by his own energy to start the existence of all beings. Nun, the primeval flood or water, was a god, existing before the sky came forth (kheper), before the earth came forth. before humans came forth, before the multitude of gods were born, and before death came forth (Pyramid Texts, §§ 1466-8).

The sun-god's life-giving power brought forth (kheper) all in existence, and his creative power continues to bring forth (kheper) life and force even in "inanimate" things. This life-giving power of Ra is the constant source of life and sustenance. Ra is present on earth as a beneficent power; the Pharaoh, son of Ra, expresses his own consciousness of the god's presence by performing rituals in the temple.

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In Egyptian philosophy, therefore, Nun is the primordial element that existed prior to creation and Ra the source of life and rationality. These cosmological concepts are original with the ancient Egyptians.

The Universe as an Endless Boundary

The word djeru (drw) means: "boundary," "limit," "end." The "universe" is self-contained, that is to say, it is its own boundary. The "universe" is, then, endless because it has no boundaries; it is its own limit. This is why the word djeru (djer) means also "the all," "the universe." The expression ne6-er-djer means "Lord of All," that is, Lord of the universe, an endless boundary.

The Universe as an Endless Totality

Being without a boundary within itself, the "universe" (tem) is complete (tem) that is, entire and all-comprehending (tem). Because the "universe" is all-comprehending, it is a totality. The expression neb tem also means "Lord of All," that is, Lord of the universe, the totality of all that is. The "Creator of All" is named kema tem, that is, he who created (kema) everything, entire, complete, and sound.

Being total (tem), the universe has, in fact, no limit, except its own totality. The boundary (djer) of the universe is its totality (tem). All is then djer or tem, also djer and tem. Constituting the whole, the universe is entire, but its entirety is limited by the universe itself; that is, the universe is an endless totality.

Egyptian Logic

Logic designates a specific branch of philosophy that deals with the study of the principles of reasoning. The quality or condition of being rational - that is, having or exercising the ability to reason - is rationality. In the history of Western philosophy, rationality has often been blended with philosophy itself, so that philosophy and rationality have become merged into one, namely, rationalism. Much Western philosophy, from Aristotle (384-322 ac) to Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951), is deeply rooted in the notion that reason, rather than emotion, sense experience, authority, or spiritual experience, provides the only valid basis for action, and is the prime source of knowledge and spiritual truth. Other civilizations are usually judged by the criteria of this Western rationalistic attitude.

If, as Descartes (1596-1650) remarked, good sense or reason is equally distributed among all human beings, it is then unjustified to believe that some groups of the human race are deficient in logic or point-device reasoning. The so-called "native" or "primitive mind" is but a racist prejudice, based on the belief that a particu-

lar human population or race is superior to others.

When Egyptian mathematics, for example, are not smattered or studied superficially, one can find that Egyptian mathematicians dealt rationally with the problems. Indeed, the Egyptians made use of logic as a tool of precision in constructing and developing their mathematics. In geometry - that is, the mathematics of the properties, measurement, and relationships of points, lines, angles, surfaces, and solids or three-dimensional figures - all the problems were arranged in a clear and consistent manner. There is always a logical coherence among the parts of a problem. The basic structure of a problem always consisted of the following parts:

1. tep: The Given Problem. This is the precise enunciation of the problem to be solved, with elucidatory examples.

2. mi died en. Ek: Literally, "if one says to you that." This is the stage of definition, where everything is made clear and distinct, and all the relevant terms are explicitly and precisely defined. The expression mi djed means "according to that which is said," that is, the process of reasoning is to be addressed to a precisely formulated problem. '

3. peter or pety. Literally, this means "What?" In Egyptian grammar ptr (peter) stands at the beginning of questions with the function of eliciting a logical predicate (Gardiner 1957: 406, §497). A question is an expression of inquiry that invites a reply or solution. At this stage, then, the student is directly required to ponder and analyze (ptr (peter)) the problem under examination.

4. iret mi kheper: Correct Procedure. This is the stage of demonstration, that is, the mental process of showing something to be true by reasoning and computation from initial data. The process of calculating is based on a careful set of mathematical formulas.

5. rekhet. ef pw: The Solution. This is knowledge (rekhet) found, and grasped in the mind with clarity or certainty. The solution is regarded as true beyond doubt. The student has shown the requisite know-how, that is, the knowledge and skill required to do something correctly. The solution is evident, thanks to the demonstration by a dependable logical procedure.

6. seshemet, seshmet: Examination of the Proof. This is the review of the whole body of evidence or premises and rules that determine the validity of a solution. Such an examination of a logical proof always leads to a further conceptual generalization. Thus the ancient Egyptians had the technique of forming concepts inductively.

7. gemi. ek nefer: Literally, "You have found good." This is the concluding stage. To be able to do something, and

find it correctly done, means that it was done as it should be done. To find (*gemi*) is to obtain by intellectual effort, and bring oneself to a mental awareness of what is correct, precise, perfect (*nefer*). To arrive at a logical conclusion and find that the conclusion withstands critical scrutiny is an achievement in the art of deduction.

The adverb *nefer* ("well") implies that the solution is convincing, so that a contradiction is impossible. The concluding observations are mainly confirmatory. Nevertheless, the rigor of the entire process is evident in the method, and the result is objectively known in all truth.

The Being and Essence of the Cosmos and of Humans

How did the cosmos come to be? What is the fundamental nature of a human being? These philosophical questions deal with the being and essence of the cosmos and of humans. It is, then, of importance to turn our attention now to ancient Egyptian thinking concerning these questions. The Egyptians conceived the origin of the universe and all things in it as an evolution, but also as a physical emanation of the divine power.

Genesis or "Creation" as an Evolution

The Nile and the sun are the two phenomena that dominated the Egyptian intellectual and spiritual life from the earliest times. However, long before the Nile and the sun came into existence, there was, in Egyptian cosmogony, the primeval Nun, an ethereal substance that existed before all else. It was from this original substance that Ra-Atum originated. Nun is a dense and opaque substance, neither transparent nor translucent, impenetrable by light. But, with the appearance in it of Ra-Atum, there comes light and spirit. Ra-Atum has within itself a force, a power of nature. Thanks to this power of nature, gods and goddesses, heaven and earth, animals and human beings gradually will come into existence. There is no God standing at the beginning as a conscious and moral personality, and as creator of heaven and earth.

Nun itself is an uncreated fluid or substance ("primeval water"). But the world and all things in it are brought into being out of Nun. The created comes gradually from the uncreated. Contrary to the usual supposition, here "spirit" comes out of "matter." Nun, a physical substance, and Ra-Atum, an intellectual and spiritual force, are different, with opposite properties, but complementary to each other. Nun can be described as being, and Ra-Atum as movement. The complementarity of "matter" and "spirit" clearly illustrates the unity of opposites in various processes within the universe. Nevertheless, there is an

epistemological problem of the greatest difficulty.

As noted above, the historical development of the universe, in ancient Egyptian cosmogony, goes back to Nun as the original "matter" and Ra-Atum as the first "form" from which other forms are made or developed. This is an evolution, that is to say, a natural process in which something changes into a different more complex or better form. In the present case what we have is a process of cosmic evolution, and the fundamental elements may be grouped as follows:

1. Nun, the primordial "waters" existing prior to the emergence of the creator-god: Huh, the boundless stretches of primordial formlessness; Kuk, darkness, and Amon, "the hidden," representing the intangibility and imperceptibility of precreation existence.

2. Ra-Atum, the self-emanating creator-god from Nun. In the Book of Genesis (Old Testament) the creator-god existed alongside chaos. The earth was chaos, waste, and void (*weha' arets hayetha thohu wabhohu*, in Hebrew). By contrast, Atum was alone in Nun: Alum was Ra in his very first appearance, a king in full glory (*kha*), one who existed before Shu had even lifted heaven from earth. Alum means "everything," and it means also "nothing." Atum is what is finished, completed, and perfected. It means both all-inclusiveness and emptiness.

3. Geb and Nut, earth and sky. These represent the created things of this world, whether divine, cosmic, human, animal, vegetal, or mineral.

Genesis or "Creation" as a Physical Emanation from the Divine Power

The qualities of the creator-gods (Alum, Ra, Ptah) are: might (*6au*), radiance (*hedjut*), prosperity (*udjau*), victory (*nakhtu*), wealth (*useru*), plenty (*asha*), sanctity (*djoseru*), readiness (*aperu*), creativity (*iri*), intelligence (*ib*), adornment (*djeba*), and stability (*djedet*). These qualities appear also with the *ka*, "spirit," at royal birth (Brugsch 1968: 996ff.). Because of all these qualities, the creator-god is able to bring a new being into existence by the act of naming it. The name is a thing of individuality and power; the act of uttering a new name is an act of creation.

In the text Memphite Philosophy (a mutilated stela now in the British Museum, London, no. 797, formerly no. 135), we find clearly articulated a broad philosophical system about the nature of the universe, emphasizing the divine word that brought forth the world. Creation is explained strictly in physical terms. Creation is an act of thought (*hatiu*) which came into the heart (*i6*) of a god and the commanding utterance (*udjet-medu*) which

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brought that thought into reality. This creation by thought and utterance is like a physical emanation from God himself.

The divine word is treasured in ancient Egypt because of its sensible nature and its enormous power. The divine word is clearly the ever-active divine power proceeding out of the mouth of the divinity. The divine word appeared in Egypt as a corporeal emanation from the creator-god:

It was he who made every work, every handicraft, which the hands make, the going of the feet, the movement of every limb, according to his command, through the thought of the heart that came forth from the tongue. (British Museum. stela no. 797, trans. James H. Breasted, 1912)

A pair of related attributes of the creator-god, which were themselves personified as deities, were Hu, "authoritative utterance," or the commanding speech which brings a situation into being, and Sia, "perception," the cognitive reception of an object, idea, or situation. Perception in this dynamic sense and authoritative utterance were together the ongoing creative principles of the universe which involved the heart (ib), which conceived thoughts (hatiu), and the tongue (nes), which produced the command (udjet-medu).

The world is first an idea conceived in the "heart," i.e. mind, of the divinity. All things first existed in the thought of the god, and then assumed objective reality by the utterance of the "tongue." The utterance of the thought in the form of a divine "let it be done" brought forth the world. This Egyptian conception of creation by thought and word was stated many centuries before the Logos doctrine of the New Testament, which has it that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

The Egyptian Conception of Immortality

According to the Egyptian conception of the origin of the universe (by evolution or divine emanation), everything is in eternal movement: gods and goddesses, human beings, nature, and the world. The totality of existence is kheper, that is, transformation and becoming through time and space. All sources of being and life (ankh) are in God, the only true one (maat). Egyptian thought made the greatest achievements in the fields of philosophy (wisdom) and science, i.e. astronomy, medicine, architecture. But spirituality ("religion") and morals were not neglected. In all these fields the Egyptians sought truth and certainty through rational inquiry. They combined the capacity for logical reasoning with deep

psychological understanding.

Harmony, and self-control, movement, life, deep emotion, power: this is the Egyptian way. Human beings were conceived as being ennobled with spiritual entities such as ka, "spiritual essence," ba, "the soul," i.e. the power to make the dead a "mighty one," and akh, a spiritual equipment for greatness. The idea of a life beyond the grave - that is, the belief in the immortality of the soul and the resuscitation of the body - was first explicitly expressed among the ancient Egyptians. It is evident that the Egyptians had developed a psychology of the dead for the first time in human history. Mortuary priests and priestesses knew from a study of manuals the right rituals and procedures for reconstituting, one by one, the faculties of the dead, so that they will be able to live again in the hereafter. For the Egyptians, death was a kind of process of self-consciousness in which humans attain an identification with the gods whose reaction is summed up as "One of us comes to us" (Pyramid Texts, pyramid of Mer-en-Ra, 6th Dynasty).

The celestial and mortuary teachings on the Kingdom of the dead and teachings on moral values in the affairs of living human beings were never separated in ancient Egypt. This is why the earliest chapter in the moral development of human society is to be found in Egypt, "a chapter marking perhaps the most important fundamental step in the evolution of civilization" (Breasted 1972: 165-6).

The Metaphysical Problem of "Evil"

In the beginning, the creation was neferu, that is, "perfection," "beauty," and "goodness." The ka or spirit of the universe was nothing but good. How then can it become evil?

When an individual being, god or goddess, human being, animal, or tree, comes into existence, a certain ku ("soul," "spirit," "essence") is inherent in him or her or it. This ka makes a being what he, she, or it is and constitutes his, her, or its nature or personality. Hence, "human nature" is simply the ka of humanity that is inherent in each individual. The ka was thought to be a person's god, sometimes godhead in general, and sometimes a specific god (netcher; Coptic nute, nuti). The ka is, then, the divine force within humans that governs their behavior. How then can it be evil?

Egyptian women and men were beings possessed of value in themselves. Eternal life was the great goal. Spiritual and mental vigor was very deep. How then can there be evil?

A remarkable text gives four good things the supreme God did in order to silence evil:

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1. The creator made Wind, i.e. life equally available to all humans.
2. Water being a crucial factor in the formation of the Nile Valley, an assurance of equal access to water meant basic equality of opportunity.
3. All humans are created equal ("I made every human like his or her fellow"). This means that the creator had not intended that humans do evil.
4. The final good deed of the supreme God was to call human attention to the kingdom of the dead, the region of eternal life and to the god-worship and rituals that must be performed in order to attain that immortality.

In full, the verse on the third good deed of the supreme God runs as follows:

I made every human like his fellow.

I did not command that they might do evil,

But it was their hearts that violated what I had said.

That is (the third) of the deeds.

(Adriaan de Buck, CofinTexts, VII, 1130: 461-5)

It is clear that humans are the flock of God. He made heaven and earth so as to satisfy their desires and wishes. He made the breath of life for their nostrils. Humans are God's image fashioned out of the divine body. Plants and animals, fowl and fish, were made in order to nourish human beings, How then can there be evil?

Evil comes from humans themselves. Their own hearts (haty, "heart," hatiu, "thoughts," fb, "heart," "mind," "understanding," "intelligence," "will") have devised wrong. Social inequality is no part of God's plan. Equality is a divine dispensation, but wrongdoing is a human act. Human beings must bear the responsibility for the latter alone.

Evil is not a divine principle in the world. The origin of evil is to be found within the nature of human beings themselves. Human nature (ka) is good, but the first thing in life is consciousness (ib). The mind (ib) can have various activities, such as thinking and feeling, but to think and feel well depends on consciousness. In human beings the principle of humanity, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom belongs to consciousness. Human beings can distinguish between what is right and wrong, thanks to their consciousness. They are given light is the human mind and its consciousness (ib). For capable of having commiseration, forgiveness, and also of being ashamed of wrongdoing. The flame of a candle depends

on how the candle has received the rich tallow that gives light. The flame is the ka, but the tallow that really all these reasons, education (seba) is very necessary.

Maat, the Keystone of Egyptian Philosophy

Ancient Egyptian society lasted almost 35 centuries. During this long span of time, there was no social discrimination between men and women, no human servitude or slavery, no detention in jails, and no capital punishment. This was possible because of Maat, the keystone of the Egyptian philosophy.

Symbolism of Maat

The goddess Main, wearing a tall ostrich feather upon her head as her symbol, was called the daughter of Ra, or the eye of Ra. She was also known as lady of the heavens, queen of the earth, mistress of the underworld, and mistress of all gods. Ritual scenes depict Egyptian kings presenting a statuette of Maat to the gods as a supreme gift.

Maat as the Embodiment of Perfect Virtue

Maat basically means "the real," "reality," that is, that which is genuine and authentic as opposed to artificial or spurious. Maat is reality as a whole, that is, the totality of all things possessing actuality, existence, or essence. Maat is that which exists objectively. In fact, Maat is that which has necessary and not just contingent existence. This is why Maat is everywhere and pervades all creation (er-djer). It means also that Maat is pertinent to all the spheres of reality, the divine or sacred, the cosmic, the physical, the political, and the familial. In short, Maat is an exhaustive and comprehensive concept.

This inclusiveness makes it an orderly and aesthetically coherent whole: which is why Maat also means the orderliness of the totality of existence. Accordingly, everything in the universe that is real and orderly is the expression or manifestation of Maat.

In particular, when in society human beings conduct themselves in the proper way or perform in the correct way, they are manifesting Maat. Hence these other meanings of Main, as "truth," "justice," "righteous-ness," "rightness." Maat is the highest conception of physical and moral law known to the ancient Egyptians.

Thus it is that the goddess Maat was the personification of law, order, rule, truth, right, righteousness, canon, justice, straightforwardness, integrity, uprightness, conscientiousness, and perfection. Egyptian civilization was built upon this very inclusive concept, with its great fecundity of meaning. However, to talk Maat is of no use, if it is not practiced. In truth, AUK is a way of life and spirituality.

Maat is more than Ethics or Moral Philosophy

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The Pharaonic state was organized according to the political principles of Maat. Because of this, people did not live in what Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) called "the state of nature." In philosophy, ethics designates moral philosophy, that is, the principles of right conduct theorized as a system of moral values. But Maat can be understood as a transcendental moral philosophy, because it is already divine. Maat has nothing to do with what is called in Western philosophy "moral values," "ethics," "imperatives," etc. A Pharaoh was not a "political animal" or a "moral leader," but truly a real (maa) king, a divine leader, and a spiritual king, concerned with the divine principles governing the world. The kings of ancient Egypt upheld the laws of the universe and of human society, which Maat embodied, i.e. cosmic order, truth, justice, harmony, perfection, and spiritual strength.

Maat is, thus, more than "ethics" or "moral values," because the creator-god himself lives by Maat. Things change (kheper), both in the world of nature and of human beings, but Maat, underlying and regulating the changes, remains (men) unchanging as long as the creator-god Ra exists. An ancient Egyptian text runs:

- O Ra!*
 - Master of truth (Maat)*
 - Living of Truth (Maat)*
 - Rejoicing in Truth (Maat)*
 - Vaunted in Truth (Maat)*
 - Formed of Truth (Maat)*
 - Eternal through Truth (Maat).*
 - Abundance by Truth (Maat)*
 - Powerful by Truth (Maat)*
 - Constant in Truth (Maat)*
 - Rich by Truth (Maat)*
 - Adorned by Truth (Maat)*
 - Shining by Truth (Maat)*
 - Satisfied by Truth (Maat)*
 - United to Truth from his beginning.*
- (Litany of the god Ra)*

The Immanence of Maat in African culture

The honor and awe in which the Egyptians held Maat was tremendous. In fact, Maat is still one of the principal forces in the development of African societies. The fundamental

role of Maat is manifested nowadays in the language of various African ethnic groups:

Ancient Egyptian	maat, "truth"; maa, "true"
Coptic (Egypt)	me, mee, mie, me!, meei. "truth," "justice," and also "truthful." "righteous"
Caffino (Cushitic, Ethiopia)	moyo. "motive," "reason" (truth and reason are inseparable)
Kongo Congo)	moyo, "life," "soul." "mind" (same semantic field)
Ngbaka (Central African Republic)	ma, magic medicine (in order to know the truth)
Fang (Equatorial Guinea, South Cameroon, Gabon)	mye, mie, "pure" (tabe mye. "to be physically and morally pure")
Mpongwe (Gabon)	mya, "to know" the truth
Knowledge," which the Delphic oracle also enjoined	(mya re isome, the self nothi seauton)
Yoruba (Nigeria)	mo, "to know" the truth (knowledge)
Hausa (Nigeria)	ma, "in fact." "indeed" (affirmative truth: ni ma na ji, "I in fact heard it")
Mada (North Cameroon)	mat, "genie," "goblin" (semantic specialization)
Nuer (Nilotic, Sudan)	mat, "total," "sum up"; "forces" (ro mat. "to join forces with. "Maat is indeed the total of all virtues, all forces as ideals to guide man in his personal and spiritual life).

Conclusion

The serious and careful study of African philosophy from antiquity through the present era will reveal that African philosophy has a very wide scope. All the

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major issues that have engaged the attention of philosophers in Asia, Europe, America, etc. can be found in African philosophy. They were discussed through many centuries in ancient Egypt. during the great kingdoms of West, Central, and Southern Africa, in modern times and in contemporary times. Any doubt about reason and rationality in Africa was chiefly due to anthropological innuendoes. Philosophy as such was not, and has never been, a mystery to the African mind. The fact is that in human history philosophy has been everywhere a mark of the triumph of the human mind.

The central concept of the Egyptian philosophy is Maat, meaning "levelness, evenness, straightness, correctness," in the sense of regularity and order in the world. Flowing from this is the philosophical use of Maat to mean "uprightness, righteousness, truth, justice." In conformity with Maat, individual rights were fully recognized in ancient Egypt. Maat gave each human being an opportunity to realize himself or herself in this life and to have hope for a future life hereafter.

Since human beings belonged also to society, not to themselves alone, the key word for the wise person was "silence," with the meaning of calm, tranquillity, humility. The god Amon himself was "the lord of the silent, the protector of the silent." Since "ignorant and wise are of one piece," the right to self-expression must be used in the spirit of Maat.

The achievements of the ancient Egyptians in art, architecture, and government and their sense of geometric order, social justice, peace, love, and happiness are reflected in the intellectual, scientific, and spiritual heights reached by Egypt, thanks to the philosophy of Maat.

Ancient Egypt did contribute significantly to the continuing philosophy, ethics, or world consciousness of later times by receiving and educating many Greek scholars and philosophers. For example, Plato (427-347 Be) himself records that Thales (624-546 Be), the founder of philosophy, geometry, and astronomy in the Greek world, was educated in Egypt under the priests ("Th. epaideuthe en Aigupto hupo ton hieroon": Plato. The Republic X, 600 A. scholium).

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Traumatic Gynecologic Fistula Resulting from Sexual Violence

Traumatic fistula is a condition that can occur as the result of sexual violence, often in conflict and postconflict settings. There are no solid estimates of its prevalence, but traumatic gynecologic fistula can make up a significant part of the overall genital fistula caseload in places where sexual violence has been used as a weapon of war.

Rape, often aggravated by the thrusting of objects into the vagina, can result in a hole between a woman's vagina and bladder or rectum, or both, resulting in the leaking of urine and/or feces. Survivors of sexual assault may have additional, severe physical injuries and are at an increased risk for unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. Survivors live not only with chronic incontinence, but also with the psychological trauma and stigma of rape.

<http://www.fistulacare.org/pages/what-is-fistula/traumatic-fistula.php>



Rape Epidemic fuels Fistula Cases in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Due to thousands of rapes within the Democratic Republic of Congo women suffering from the health complications are now left hoping to be treated for traumatic fistula, an injury women can experience as a result of rape or force of objects to the genitalia.

January 10, 2010

Ongoing fighting in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) continues to take its toll on women's health.

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Throughout the conflict women have been brutalized by rape and sexual violence. An estimated 200,000 women and girls have been assaulted over the past 12 years, with more than 18,000 cases reported between January and September 2008. This past May, the U.S. Senate foreign relations committee held a hearing to address how rape is being used as a weapon of war in the DRC.

Physical Trauma

Often this rape takes on extremely violent forms and can cause injuries to a woman's reproductive organs. For instance, it can cause a health condition called vaginal fistula, which happens when the wall between a woman's vagina and the bladder and/or rectum tears. Also called traumatic fistula when caused by sexual violence, it's hard to know how many women in the DRC have this condition. But it's been estimated that thousands of Congolese girls and women have been impacted, and one assessment of six DRC provinces found that out of 432 fistula cases, around 14 percent were because of trauma.

Jim Bliss, blogging on The Quiet Road, elaborates on the situation. He says: In the rest of the world the condition [fistula] generally occurs due to serious complications during childbirth.

Most gynecologists and obstetricians will go their entire career without ever encountering a single case. In DRC, however, there's an epidemic. And it's not down to an increase in complicated births.

Many of the militias in DRC have adopted a deliberate policy of terror through mass rape...However rape – even violent rape – does not as a rule cause fistula. No, instead the militiamen, having already gang-raped the woman (often a huge number of times over a period of weeks or months) will deliberately inflict major damage to her genitals before sending her back to her village. More often than not this is achieved by carefully shooting the woman's vagina at point-blank range...Knives, broken glass or just sharp sticks are [also] used to cause as much damage as possible. Girls as young as 12 months have been subjected to this violence.

Medical complications for women with fistula can include being permanently incontinent, infertility, miscarriages, and other health problems. On top of this, women with fistula often face stigma because of their status as a rape victim, as well as their chronic incontinence.

Treatment and health care

Many wounded women are unable to get treatment, but there are some medical centers that treat rape-related injuries, including fistula. One such center is the Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, which was created in 1999.

Surgeons at the hospital performed 540 fistula repairs in 2005, 80 percent of which were due to sexual violence. In this video, a psychologist at the Panzi Hospital shows what life is like for women seeking treatment for traumatic fistula.

Endre Vestvik visited the hospital and took a series of photos of women and girls being treated for fistula. This is a photo of 4-year-old Vitonsi, who is preparing for fistula surgery. She was raped by soldiers when trying to cross the river with her pregnant mom and her sister.

Hope for the future

Despite the positive work being done by these hospitals, Emin Pasha, blogging on Congo Resources, felt highly discouraged after learning more about sexual violence in the DRC.

Little is being done about the problem, despite the fact that rape in eastern Congo has become such a well-known and well-publicized problem. Research on the topic remains preliminary; there are still only a handful of clinics and hospitals addressing the needs of the women; police and local authorities still don't have any capacity or willingness to protect the population; and overall it appears that the problem is getting worse not better.

Still, Brad MacIntosh, blogging on A wide-angle view of the DRC conflict, says his visit to the Panzi Hospital in June gave him a glimmer of hope.

It is hard to describe all the emotions as I walked through the open corridors of the hospital complex on a warm and sunny day. I headed towards the operating theatres and found that the second building is now fully operational. This operating theater is for surgical repair of women who have survived rape. Surgeries are performed by the head fistula surgeon, a gentle and wise doctor named Dr Yunga who I met previously. Beyond this building is a beautiful courtyard where survivors of rape have a place to call their own, where they have workshops, sing, cook and learn skills...I have seen evidence of remarkable progress at Panzi Hospital. Layers of progress in fact, which leads me to conclude it is a place of immense potential and optimism in city that has seen too much despair.

<http://www.conversationsforabetterworld.com/2010/01/rape-epidemic-fuels-fistula-cases-in-the-democratic-republic-of-congo/>

<http://globalvoicesonline.org/2009/07/29/drc-rape-epidemic-fuels-fistula-cases/>

COME BACK TO YOUR ROOTS

FEATURED ARTICLES

No One Can Value The Black Wombman More Than She Can Value Herself

Mama Mawusi Ashshakir

Guardian Director of the Body Temple Institute of Wholistic and Herbal Studies

Definition of Black Woman

by Sis LeTava Author of "The Black Woman's Agenda"
Posted on Monday, September 27, 2010 at 11:18am on Facebook.

Black woman: (n.) the only true wonder of the world; mother of the oldest people on the planet; inspiration or muse; ultimate contender; stand-in foreverything; fuel for evolution; the make-it-happen captain; The answer to the age old question, "which came first?"

Black woman: (v.) miraculous act of making something out of nothing; love in action; process by which a mighty nation is upped; means by which to "get shit done."

Black woman: (adj.) serves as the perfect modifier of any scenario, person, place or thing; signifies the quality of an object or environment; implies multiplicity and/or great extent; distinguishes something from "something else."

Black woman: (adv.) transforms every action, description, preposition, proposition, thought, phrase, clause or sentence; expresses the ultimate relationship of manner, quality, place, time, degree, quantity, cause, opposition, affirmation or denial; the complete trans-communication of a time and place for EVERYTHING.

For many years we have allowed ourselves to be referred to as "The Holy Ghost" while we birthed, bleed and begged for dignity. The ultimate dagger in our backs was and is still being dealt by the white man – the coldest pimp, drug dealer and people stealer in the course of written history – unconscious black men just follow suit.

Religion, politics and education help to perpetuate the outdated myth of the highlander who was born of The Father, The Son and a Holy ghost.

Sad but up held by unconscious Wombmen that allow themselves to be erased from chieftaincy by "Belief".

Allow me to update the Knowledge:

Mitochondria are structures inside cells which holds our "collective memory". Wombmen are human time capsules read on:

Mitochondrial DNA is Only Inherited from the Mother

What sets mtDNA apart is that, unlike nuclear DNA which is equally inherited from both father and mother, mtDNA is inherited only from the mother, because all our mitochondria are descended from those in our mother's egg cells.

This means that Mitochondrial DNA is passed from a mother to her children, which also makes it useful for tracing individuals' maternal lineage. So, that while both sons and daughters inherit mtDNA from their mothers, only daughters can pass their mtDNA to their children.

Mitochondrial Eve - Out-of-Africa Theory

Imagine the mitochondrial DNA of all women living today, then that of all their mothers, and their mothers' mothers. It is obvious that each set will be as small as or smaller than the previous set. Eventually the set will contain only the mitochondrial DNA of one woman - "Mitochondrial Eve".

The research group reported that genetic diversity in mitochondrial genes of all living humans could be traced back to one woman who lived in Africa approximately 200,000 years ago.

So to disrespect, disregard, disconnect yourself from the maternal source is to disassociate yourself from Afrika! The Black Wombman must hold herself in the highest regard as it takes a Highly Regarded Black Wombman to give birth to a Highly Regarded Black Nation!

Mama Mawusi Ashshakir, Master Herbalist, is a featured writer on the ATC Newsletters.

<http://thebodytemple.ning.com/> is her website.



Who's Stealing Little Black Girls?

by Amanda Kloer

August 13, 2009

Across America, young African-American girls are vanishing from homes, schools, and neighborhoods and reappearing in brothels, escort agencies, and strip clubs. But what's happening to them isn't magic- it's slavery. And the insidious part of the trick is that no one seems to be helping them.

Across America, about 800,000 children are reported missing each year, 33% of which are African-American. In New York City last year, half of reported missing children were black and 60% were female. And these aren't 17-and-a-half-year-olds; most of the girls were between 13 and 15. Other urban areas like Atlanta, Washington DC, Chicago, and Los Angeles with large African-American populations also have high instances of young black girls being kidnapped or "running away". But what's happening to these girls? Surely they don't vanish into thin air?

They vanish, in fact, into pimps' pockets; these girls end up as trafficking victims in the commercial sex industry. Some meet pimps on the street and are deceived or coerced into street prostitution. Others are forced into strip clubs or filmed for pornography. Still others are advertised on Craigslist, escort agency websites, and other corners of the Internet. They are just as much human trafficking victims as the Vietnamese women enslaved in brothels in Thailand or the Guatemalan girl held in a home in El Paso.

However, many law enforcement agents still understand human trafficking as an international crime and seek it out primarily among communities of immigrants. According to the AMBER Ready Inc./Foundation,

Law enforcement in general only discusses human trafficking in terms of the Asian and Latino immigrant population while ignoring the threat to young and under-aged indigenous Black and Latino women.

In addition to the lack of attention by law enforcement, significant public outcry has claimed [missing black kids are not featured in the national mainstream media](#) as much as missing white kids. In an entirely un-scientific study, I thought about the last few missing kids I remember, and yes, all of them were white. I live in Washington, DC, a majority African-American area, and all I can remember are stories of missing white kids. True, my memory could be faulty, but I think few would argue that missing black and white kids get truly equal

time on the national news.

So between a faulty understanding of human trafficking and a racially-biased national media, young black girls are falling through not so much cracks as gaping holes in America's safety nets. And at the bottom of those holes are pimps waiting to make money and johns wanting to "get lucky". At the bottom of those holes is a life of rape and abuse and slavery.

We know who's stealing little black girls, and they aren't magicians or illusionists. They're human traffickers, and it's time we put an end to their act.

http://humantrafficking.change.org/blog/view/whos_stealing_little_black_girls



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Their energy, ideas, skills, talents and opinions to their families, communities, places of worship, and the political process are lost when their bodies and minds are consumed by domestic violence. For an abused woman, violence causes health problems, sadness, isolation and a loss of self-confidence.

In families, domestic violence creates an unpredictable and frightening environment. Children learn to fear their fathers and worry about their mothers. Children growing up in violent homes learn that violence and aggression are acceptable ways of expressing emotion or resolving conflicts. These children are more likely to commit acts of violence on the street and in their own homes as adults.

Our community also pays a high price for domestic violence. Businesses lose money due to sick days and the ill health of female employees who are being abused. Substantial financial and human resources must be used for domestic violence intervention including law enforcement, health services, court and legal proceedings, and social services.

What can you do to prevent domestic violence?

Becoming informed about domestic violence is an important first step in addressing the problem. Learn as much as you can about the issue and share your knowledge with others. When more people understand and refuse to accept domestic violence it becomes more and more difficult for men to keep abusing. Here are other specific suggestions to prevent domestic violence:

If you know a woman who is experiencing domestic violence, reach out to her. Let her know you are there for her and that you are ready to give her non-judgmental emotional support. Remember, she must make her own decisions about her life, do not try to

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The Effects of Child Sexual Abuse on an Adult Survivor

Source: **Survivors of Incest Anonymous, Inc.**

Any sexual contact between a child and a trusted individual that damages the child, whether covert or overt, whether flirtation or sexual intercourse, needs to be dealt with assertively. It scars virtually all facets of the victim's life, since she is left with little or no self-esteem.

At least one out of five boys and one out of four girls will be abused before they reach the age of 18. The child's emotional growth will be stifled at the age of the first attack, and the victim will probably not begin to recover until adulthood, if ever.

Boys as well as girls can be victims of sexual abuse. Anyone can be an abuser, especially if he is perceived by the child to be someone in authority, including a brother, uncle, friend of the family, aunt or teacher -- the list is endless. However, for the sake of clarity, we will refer to the victim as a girl and the abuser as her father.

Some of the social maladjustments arising from incest are alcoholism, drug addiction, prostitution and promiscuity. Eating or sleeping disorders, migraines and back or stomach pains are just a few of the physical consequences that a victim may suffer. Food, sex, alcohol and/or drugs deaden painful memories of the abuse and expel reality temporarily. If a victim perceives obesity to be unattractive, and if she believes she was abused because she was pretty, she may overeat in a misguided attempt to defend herself from further sexual assault. "I felt like throwing up" is a common response among victims, and bulimia is a way of acting out that feeling. Anorexia is another form of self-punishment, eventually leading to the ultimate self-victimization, suicide.

Many emotional problems can emerge from the abuse, including inability to trust, perfectionism, phobias and avoidance of both intimacy and emotional bonding. The denial system that insured the victim's survival as a child now prevents her from enjoying an unencumbered adulthood. She doesn't trust her own perceptions; she was forced to become an expert in disbelieving her own senses.

She tries to convince herself that she overreacted--that nothing really terrible happened: "My daddy would never REALLY hurt me." When reality is too painful for a child's mind, she learns to fictionalize. It is extremely painful to give up a fantasy family, since children see themselves either in reflected glory or disgraced shadows. Therefore, the victim makes excuses for the abuser: "He was drunk at the time. He had it rough as a child." She takes responsibility for the assaults: "I was too pretty, too sexy." Her father probably reinforced her own nagging guilt and questions she had

concerning her own innocence.

Essentially, the victim defends her father by minimizing, rationalizing and taking the blame on herself. If she continues to use these coping mechanisms as an adult, she is set up to be abused in her current relationships. In Survivors of Incest Anonymous, she can learn to accept the fact that she was abused rather than loved by her father. She can then learn to seek out only healthy, loving relationships. She has been accustomed to accepting only crumbs, believing that she does not deserve anything better.

The victim may have parenting problems and be always second-guessing her decisions, which is another result of distrusting her own perceptions. A victim may avoid parenting altogether, try to be a perfect parent or repeat the abuse. The worst possible consequence is when a victim perpetuates the abuse onto the next generation.

Another repercussion of incest is that victims often regard authority figures with anxiety. Passivity is comfortable because it is familiar, and she may accept familiar misery rather than risk unfamiliar change. An experiment was conducted in which dogs were forced to endure painful electric shocks without any means of escape. A second group of dogs were compelled to endure shocks and quickly escaped when it was possible. When the first group was shocked again, with escape now possible, they did not leave. They had been conditioned to endure pain. This experiment suggests why so many victims are sexually abused as adults by therapists, counselors, doctors or bosses. Victims are accustomed to losing battles and feeling powerless. Victims do not believe they can win. Assertion is a difficult concept for an incest victim.

The victim's inability to trust affects her feelings about members of the opposite sex. Women who have been abused by men will often say, "I don't trust any men; they only want sex." Often, boys who are abused by more than one male feel compelled to believe they MUST BE homosexual. The assaults have been emotionally or physically pleasurable to the victim, and this fact reinforces the suspicion that he himself must be made a homosexual:

"Both my uncle and a male teacher were attracted to me, and since it felt good to me, I liked it, so I must be gay." In defense of the abuser, he may say, "I am the one who is gay and my abuser sensed it, that's all."

Another result of the conflicting messages of incest is that many victims confuse sex with affection and love. Many women will say, "The only time my father ever gave me any attention was in bed. I was special to him then. I felt loved." Since she desperately needs validation, this woman is likely to become promiscuous. She needs to know that a promiscuous child is often the result, but never the cause

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the cause, of incest. She believes that if someone has sex with her, then he automatically loves her. She has made an unfortunate mistake by confusing sex and love.

When the abuse is physically violent, maybe even painful, she may confuse sex with control and power. A typical comment might be, "When I have sex with someone, I feel like he is controlling my body. I feel that as I respond to him, he is manipulating me, and I am a puppet all over again." This woman may shut off all sexual feelings and retreat from all sexual contact; she fears so that no one would validate her.

Survivors of Incest Anonymous, a 12-step recovery program, is an available resource for the adult survivor. A statement read at the end of each SIA meeting reminds us: "The pain is temporary; denial and its consequences are forever." When the victim tires of the consequences and becomes willing to work diligently on the incest issue, she is then on the way to living her life as a survivor rather than a victim.

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/13941-sexual-abuse-and-incest/#ixzz1A9cUuc7A>



Continued from page 53 - Domestic Violence

force her to do anything. Guide her to services in the community that could also help her. If you know a man who is violent toward his partner, find an appropriate time and talk with him about it. Do not ignore the problem. Ignoring it means you agree with it. Share with him healthier ways of expressing emotion or dealing with conflict. Make it clear to him that the violence is unacceptable.

From: Mobilising Communities to Prevent Domestic Violence: A Resource Guide for Organisations in East and Southern Africa, Raising Voices 2003



CHILD TRAFFICKING

- Child trafficking is one of the fastest growing crimes in the world.
- There are 2.5 million child sex slaves in the world today, some as young as 4 and 5.
- More than 1,000,000 children worldwide will become victims of child trafficking this year.
- Over 100,000 children in the U.S. are currently exploited through commercial sex.
- The global market of child trafficking is over \$12 billion a year.

- The total market value of illicit human trafficking is estimated to be over \$32 billion a year.
- An estimated 14,500 - 17,500 foreign nationals are trafficked into the U.S. each year.
- Approximately 80% of human trafficking victims are women and girls and up to 50% are minors.
- 600,000-800,000 people are bought and sold across international borders each year; 50% are children, most are female. The majority of these victims are forced into the sex trade.
- There are open sex slavery cases in all 50 states.
- U.S. citizen child victims are often runaway and homeless youth.
- Runaways, orphans and the poor are targets for sexual predators.
- Approximately 80% of trafficking involves sexual exploitation, and 19% involves labor exploitation.
- There are more slaves today than ever before in human history.

<http://aheartforjustice.com/blog/2010/08/23/some-human-trafficking-statistics-and-stop-child-trafficking-now/>



Bystander Apathy

by ife piankhi

He hit me

*I don't know with which hand
but i remember the sound it made.
Time stood still as those around
buried their heads in the sand.*

*He turned around
apologised to the proprietor
'Sorry man'
a hand on his shoulder as if to say
'I know you understand'
He left.*

*I stood feeling heavy heat on my cheek
I hadn't seen it coming
Felt assured he wouldn't go there
in the presence of others
Why didn't they say anything?
I gathered my child
held her hand and she held mine
I knelt to meet her eyes
She cried as did I.*

Ife Piankhi is a performance poet and singer, creative writer, educator, facilitator who through her work aims to inspire, and encouraging us to enquire and question what we know as reality.



Mission Statement

Our aim at The African Traditional Herbal Research Clinic is to propagate and promote the awareness in Afrikan peoples at home and abroad of their health, biodiversity, history and cultural richness. We gather pertinent information on these issues and disseminate these freely to our people in Uganda, the rest of the continent, and anywhere in the Diaspora where Afrikans are located.... One of the main ingredients for increasing poverty, sickness, exploitation and domination is ignorance of one's self, and the environment in which we live. Knowledge is power and the forces that control our lives don't want to lose control, so they won't stop at anything to keep certain knowledge from the people. Therefore, we are expecting a fight and opposition to our mission. However, we will endeavor to carry forward this work in *grace and perfect ways*.

"Where there is no God, there is no culture. Where there is no culture, there is no indigenous knowledge. Where there is no indigenous knowledge, there is no history. Where there is no history, there is no science or technology. The existing nature is made by our past. Let us protect and conserve our indigenous knowledge."



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SPECIAL EVENT: CLINIC OPENING

PLACE: AFRIKAN TRADITIONAL HERBAL RESEARCH CLINIC

TIME:

Afrikan Traditional Herbal Research Clinic
54 Muwafu Road, P.O. Box 29974
Ntinda, Kampala, Uganda East Africa
Phone: +256 (0) 702 414 530
Email: clinic@blackherbals.com

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Herb of the Month

Herbs for Wound Healing

Gotu Kola, a member of the parsley family, has been used for thousands of years in both Ayurvedic and Chinese medicines. It is native to India and Sri Lanka, parts of Africa, and tropical regions of the New World. It has no known toxicity. It is a rich source of vitamin K, contains magnesium, calcium and other nutritional properties. **Gotu Kola** calms the body and is chiefly used to support the central nervous system. It helps to alleviate fatigue and reduces the effects of depression and insomnia. It is primarily used as a brain and nerve strengthening tonic to help improve memory and mental and physical stamina. **Gotu Kola** is a traditional blood purifier, antibiotic, tonic and diuretic. **Gotu Kola** contains asiaticoside, an antibiotic used in the Far East to treat leprosy, syphilis, psoriasis, cervicitis, vaginitis and blisters. Clinical trials have shown that it can promote and improve healing of infected burns and wounds; help those with chronic venous insufficiency; and prevent and treat enlarged scars (keloids). The tannin in tea, made from the herb, may be inactivated by the addition of milk or cream. **Aloe Vera**, **Aloe**, originating from N. Africa comes from a succulent cactus-type plant, is widely used nowadays for a variety of ailments and cosmetic purposes. **Aloe Vera** plant is easy to grow even in cold climates, however, and many people grow this attractive and useful succulent as a house plant. The mucilage from the central part of the leaf has a multitude of medical applications. **Aloe Vera** is a safe and potent remedy for stomach and gastrointestinal problems, superficial skin irritations and mild infections, and as a complementary treatment for more serious ailments such as diabetes and Irritable Bowel Syndrome. Its healing properties may be due to rehydrating, insulating and protective activities resulting from its high water content. **BHSN**



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