

Domestic Violence and Police Work

THE TORORO RESOLUTION

Domestic violence is a crime prohibited under the Constitution of Uganda and the Penal Code Act.

There is evidence that domestic violence is one area where women's situation is worsening globally. It remains one of the most common crimes in our communities and the most hidden.

Domestic violence inhibits the fundamental enjoyment of women's human rights. It restricts the realization of their potential and full participation in society. Domestic violence destroys women's health and confidence. It affects children's survival and confidence. Domestic violence has a negative impact on our society and hinders development. In our society domestic violence is exacerbated by factors such as cultural practices which stress the subordinate position of women, economic conditions and inadequate laws. Police records in Tororo show 20 domestic violence homicides since 2000. Of these 10 were women, 6 were children and 4 were men.

It is for the above reasons that the MIFUMI Project in collaboration with the Children and Family Protection Unit, Uganda Police organized a week's seminar on domestic violence and police work. The seminar, sponsored by GTZ – the German Technical Co-operation, was conducted by Dr. Susanne Baer, Professor of Law and Gender at Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany. The seminar was first conducted in Tororo for police officers working directly with the public. A second seminar was held in Kampala for senior police officers engaged in administration and policy making. Mr Fred Yiga, Commissioner of Police in charge of Human Resource Development provided the opening remarks for the training. Mrs Dorothee Hutter, Head of GTZ spoke about the Security Sector reform program of GTZ.

During the week, the Mifumi Project and the Tororo Police officially opened the newly constructed Kirewa Domestic Violence Police Unit. The Police unit will promote community policing and will have police officers, including women constables especially trained to support women reporting domestic violence crimes. The Police unit was sponsored by the Human Rights Project Fund of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Ms Lynda St. Cooke, Second Secretary of the

British High Commission was present and delivered the key note address at the opening. Also present were Mr Oboth Sylvester, the district Chief Administration Officer, Tororo District and Mr Andrew Sorowen, District Police Commander, who both spoke on the need to work with the police to combat crime. At the end of the seminars in Tororo and Kampala, the police developed a resolution to fight the crime of domestic violence. A follow up of this work is planned to take forward the resolution hereby printed. We would like to thank all those who took part in organizing and participating in the seminar and all those who continue to contribute to the fight to end violence against women.

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