



Promoting an Integrated Approach to Combat Gender-Based Violence: A Training Manual

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As Gender-Based Violence (GBV) continues to be endemic in different forms, the need for various tools to combat it is enormous. In a move to contribute towards adopting a holistic approach to the fight against GBV, the Commonwealth Secretariat has produced a training manual entitled *Promoting an Integrated Approach to Combat Gender-Based Violence*.

The 88-paged manual is meant for training managers, middle level professionals, development workers, extension workers and policy makers and planners in general. It aims to assist and encourage all relevant organisations, state and non-state agencies, traditional and non-traditional organisations to work together. This includes women's human rights organisations, civil society, parliamentarians, the private sector and all government ministries.

The problems inherent in current strategies to address GBV are addressed, especially the lack of collaboration between different agencies and individuals combating this kind of violence. It draws on experiences from workshops and consultations facilitated by the Commonwealth Secretariat in Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia,

Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and with the SADC (Southern African Development Community) Secretariat.

The manual is based on the Commonwealth Secretariat's model framework for an integrated approach to combat violence against women, and draws on the strengths of the Gender Management Systems (GMS) principles, a Commonwealth approach to gender mainstreaming. The integrated approach is designed to assist governments, the private sector, civil society and other agencies to understand GBV as a multi-faceted problem that should be addressed in a holistic manner.

The argument and emphasis in the manual is that an integrated approach improves co-ordination and collaboration among different stakeholders and subsequently enhances efficiency in delivering services in support of victims, survivors, and perpetrators of GBV. The integrated approach also enables governments to address violence against women as a complex social problem that requires an overall national policy framework and plan of action.

The publication thus aims to promote policy coherence and development of comprehensive programmes to eliminate GBV at local, national and regional levels. The manual is divided into five sections: a background which includes the concept, definition and causes of GBV; a statement of the purpose of the manual; suggestions about the duration of a training programme; the suggested training approach, goal and objectives; and a facilitator's guide which includes notes that can be given to participants as handouts, and references.

There is reference to key regional and international human rights standards and commitments to address GBV, and the role of governments in curbing the problem and meeting their obligations as spelt out in, amongst others, the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development (1997) and its Addendum: Prevention and the eradication of violence against women and children, the Beijing Declaration and Platform For Action (BDPFA); and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

There is no doubt that the *Promoting an Integrated Approach to Combat Gender-Based Violence* is key in providing new directions for policy and programme review, formulation and implementation, and in fostering closer strategic links between stakeholders. The manual is a timely contribution towards the achievement of the Beijing commitments and goals, as the world moves steadily towards the end of the UN Women's Decade (Beijing + 10) in 2005.