



Gender Studies & Human Rights Documentation Centre

GENDER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GENDER STUDIES & HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

8th Edition, June 2013



**WHEN WE ALL WORK TOWARDS
ELIMINATING VAW, EVERYONE IS HAPPY**

IN THIS EDITION:

- Violence Against Women: Progress or Retrogression?
The proposed Ghanaian HIV and AIDS prevention and control law: a gender-insensitive double-edged sword?
- The dream of a beautiful adult life: through the eyes of an orphan in Seikwa Tainso
- A wife's last respects to her late husband
Editor's Apology

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- A look at the training programme under the Women in Leadership project
- Progress on the Promoting Quality Education Delivery and Safe School Environment Project: Views from the communities

EDITORIAL BOARD

- Dorcas Coker Appiah
- Joyce Lena Danquah



EDITORIAL

We are happy to welcome you to the 8th Edition of our newsletter, The Gender Lens. This publication remains one of the key communication tools of the Centre in addition to our website, facebook page and YouTube channel.

The first half of 2013 saw several reported incidents of spousal and women killings around the country. We also read of children who were brutally abused and who suffered varying degrees of bodily injuries as a result of violence meted out to them.

Violence against women indeed persists across the world and the case of a young woman in India who was brutally raped and assaulted and finally died from her injuries sent shock waves across the world.

Indeed, it will be a great error for anyone to assume that this social vice is suffered only by women of a certain socioeconomic status. Evidence abounds throughout the world that women of all classes suffer gender based violence and that perpetrators also come from all strata of society.

For the past four decades, the issue of violence against women has occupied the attention of women globally and women's rights movements have advocated putting it on the human rights agenda. Over the decades international treaties, conventions and conferences have all come out with proposals and actions to address this phenomenon and yet it still continues to persist.

This year, the 57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, had as its theme "The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls", further reemphasising that the problem is still with us and a lot more needs to be done to deal with it.

We at the Gender Centre still hold on to our commitment to respecting the fundamental rights of all persons, including women and the recognition of the inalienability, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights. We hold firmly to the belief that women are entitled to the same rights as men in all areas, be it civil, political, social, economic, cultural or any other field and they must not suffer discrimination of any form just for the mere fact that they have been born female. We will continue to work towards a society where women's rights are fully promoted and protected, and where they are able to participate in national development at all levels.

This edition is dedicated to the issue of violence against women and we hope by reading the lead article and the story of the young boy Kwame, you will be encouraged to stand up against violence against women and children wherever and whenever it occurs.

FEATURES AND ARTICLES 1

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: PROGRESS OR RETROGRESSION?

DORCAS COKER-APPIAH, (LLB. HONS),
*EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GENDER STUDIES &
HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTATION CENTRE,*

Violence against women persists in all countries around the world and has persisted for centuries. It was viewed a private issue that the state could not interfere in and therefore women did not have any recourse to state intervention when they found themselves subjected to violence. Whilst the state took steps to intervene in violence that occurred outside the home, in the public domain, such as rape of a woman by a stranger, it did not intervene in cases of violence that occurred in the home or domestic setting, especially when the woman was in an intimate relationship, as a result of marriage, with the perpetrator. A clear example of the invisibility of violence against women in the early part of the twentieth century is the fact that the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which was adopted in 1979 had no reference to violence against women.

In the last two decades of the twentieth century, violence was recognized as a discrimination against women and a violation of their human rights and an obstacle to achieving equality between women and men. The advocacy work of women's rights organizations around the world succeeded in moving the discussion on violence from the private to the public domain and largely influenced the work of the United Nations and its agencies as well as work at the regional and national levels. Women's rights organizations used international conferences and instruments to pursue their mission of recognition of violence as a discrimination against women and a violation of human rights.

In pushing for the full acceptance of violence against women as an issue of discrimination, the CEDAW Committee, at its 8th Session in 1989 requested States Parties to provide information on violence against women in their reports (General Recommendation 12). In 1992, the CEDAW Committee again took the important step, at its eleventh session, of including gender-based violence under gender-based discrimination in its General Recommendation 19, thus establishing clearly the link between violence against women and human rights violation. Paragraph 7 of GR 19 states:

'Gender-based violence against women is violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman, or violence that affects women disproportionately. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty'

"Gender-based violence, which impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of human rights and fundamental freedoms under general international

law or under human rights conventions, is discrimination within the meaning of article 1 of the Convention.

Since the 1990s, Women's rights activists have used various international conferences to push women's human rights agenda forward. In 1993, at the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna, the theme for women was "women's rights are human rights." The recognition that the human rights of women are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights is one of the significant milestones of the Vienna conference and one that was forcefully restated at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing. The Vienna conference also stressed the importance of efforts to eliminate violence against women in public and private life and to eliminate all forms of sexual violence. Indeed "violence against women is a violation of their rights" became a rallying call for women at the Conference. The global Tribunal organized by the Centre for Global Women's Leadership at the conference at which survivors of violence gave live testimonies of their experiences was a turning moment for the doubters who did not believe that violence against women was an issue that needed urgent attention at all levels, and especially by states. The Conference called on the General Assembly to adopt a draft declaration on violence against women and urged states to combat violence against women.

The Declaration on Violence against women was proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993. The Declaration stresses that violence against women is an obstacle to the achievement of equality, development and peace, a violation of the rights and fundamental freedoms of women and a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men.

Article 1 defines the term "violence against women" as "any act of gender based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life". The Declaration invites states to pursue, by all appropriate means and without delay, a policy of eliminating violence against women.

At its 50th session in March 1994, the Commission on Human Rights adopted resolution 1994/45, entitled "The question of integrating the rights of women into the human rights mechanism of the United Nations and the elimination of violence against women" in which it decided to appoint, for a three-year period, a Special Rapporteur on violence against women, including its causes and its consequences. The Special Rapporteur was given a broad mandate to:

- (a) seek and receive information on violence against women, its causes and consequences from governments, treaty bodies, specialized agencies, other special rapporteurs responsible for various human rights questions and inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations, and to respond effectively to such information;

- (b) Recommend measures, ways and means, at the national, regional and international levels, to eliminate violence against women and its causes and to remedy its consequences;
- (c) Work closely with other special rapporteurs, special representatives, working groups and independent experts of the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and with the treaty bodies, taking into account the Commission's request that they regularly and systematically include in their reports available information on human rights violations affecting women, and cooperate closely with the Commission on the Status of Women in the discharge of its functions.

The mandate of the Special Rapporteur continues to this day.

Causes and risk factors:

Paragraph 118 of the Beijing Platform for Action states: "Violence against women is a manifestation of the historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to the domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of women's full advancement. Violence against women throughout the life cycle derives essentially from cultural patterns, in particular, the harmful effects of certain traditional or customary practices and all acts of extremism linked to race, sex, language or religion that perpetuate the lower status accorded to women in the family, the workplace the community and society."

The social context in which violence against women occurs provides the most important set of factors for understanding the issues. Historically, enduring attitudes and values about men and women have shaped a patriarchal society, one which sees men as naturally superior to women and consider it a man's right and responsibility to control women's behaviour. These attitudes and values have become embedded over the centuries and are reflected in particular social structures and norms, such as culture and religion, the gendered division of labour, institutional policies and the legal framework which discriminates against women. For example, in some countries, the legal system and law enforcement have functioned in a way that often excuses a man's abusive behaviour toward women. Violent behaviour in the home has frequently been considered a private domestic problem. There has therefore, been a reluctance in the past to press charges, despite the fact that if this same behaviour occurred between strangers on the street it would be treated as a criminal act.

Religion and culture further reinforce social attitudes and values about women as objects and minors and therefore subject to man's control and discipline.

Increasingly the media, whether print or electronic perpetuates stereotypes by representing males as tough, unemotional, powerful, controlled and aloof and representing females as seductive, passive, weak and little-girl-like. These stereotypes are harmful as they affect our attitudes and expectations of others.

Whilst violence against women has traditionally been seen as occurring within the context of the family or the domestic setting, it has over the last three decades been known to occur in other contexts, such as war or conflict situations. Examples of violence against women in situations of conflict or war, specifically sexual violence, can be found in different places across the world, in Bosnia, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Rwanda. Sexual violence has been used as an instrument of war and has been perpetrated by protagonists on both sides of a conflict. It has been used to humiliate and intimidate opponents, as a tool for ethnic cleansing. Whatever the motive behind sexual exploitation, it is women and girls who suffer the most.

Perpetrators of violence against women straddle various sectors of society, family members, people in positions of authority such as teachers, employers and humanitarian workers. For example, following serious allegations of widespread sexual exploitation and abuse of refugee and internally displaced women and children by humanitarian workers and peacekeepers in West Africa, an interagency committee established six core principles, representing agreed principles and standards of behaviour that humanitarian agencies, United Nations or NGOs expect of their staff.

Forms and consequences

It has been well established now that violence manifests in various forms, physical, sexual and psychological. Paragraph 113 (a) and (b) of the Beijing Platform for Action list violence to include sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other harmful traditional practices, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution. Women may be subject to multiple forms of violence at the same time.

At the international level, the adoption of The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court which expanded the scope of violence against women to include sexual slavery, enforced prostitution and enforced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and other sexual crimes as crimes against humanity when perpetrated as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed at a civilian population is an important development. The International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda in two cases (*The Prosecutor v. Jean-Paul Akayesu and Prosecutor v. Dragoljub Kunarac, Radomir Kovac and Zoran Vukovic*) recognized sexual violence, including rape, as acts of torture, as crimes against humanity and an element of genocide in certain circumstances. The Special Court of Sierra Leone's inclusion of forced marriage as an act of violence is also an indictment.

Globalization and the increasing disparity between the developed and developing countries leading to escalating poverty in developing countries has led to increase in trafficking of persons, especially women and children for purpose of labour and sexual exploitation. Trafficking is recognized as a form of violence that takes place in multiple settings with multiple actors. While efforts have been made in most countries to address most forms of violence against women, trafficking in women and forced

prostitution appear not to have received much attention in the past. However, since the coming into force of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, a number of states have adopted national legislation against trafficking.

As the world develops, new forms of violence may emerge that need states' attention such as internet sexual offences.

Violence against women has far reaching consequences not only for women but for their children, their community and society as a whole. Violence does not only have physical consequences but also have psychological impact which may be more devastating than the physical effects. Women may suffer both physical and psychological effects of violence. Women may also suffer multiple health consequences of violence, as well as reduction in their economic capacity and ability to participate in public life. Their children may also suffer health consequences and/or behavioural disturbances. Violence against women can affect the cost of health care not only for the woman but for society as a whole.

Addressing violence against women:

The elimination of violence against women is and remains a state responsibility as has been repeatedly stressed in a number of international instruments. The Declaration on Violence by the General Assembly, the Beijing Platform for Action, the Millennium Summit Declaration are all commitments made by states at the international level to work towards addressing violence against women and its harmful consequences.

The commitments undertaken by states at the international level have been taken further at the regional level. Regional declarations, conventions and activities have been taken by various regional groupings. South Asian states have agreed to South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Convention on Prevention and Combating the Trafficking in women and Children for Prostitution and the Dhaka Declaration for Eliminating Violence against Women in South Asia. The Organization of American States adopted the Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, (Convention of Belém do Pará), and Africa, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women. In fact, the Convention of Belém do Pará is the only convention dedicated specifically to addressing violence. The Convention asserts the rights of women to be free from violence in both private and public and imposes a number of obligations on states in this regard.

The work of international mechanisms, such as the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda and the Special Court of Sierra Leone have enhanced the role of international criminal justice in ensuring accountability for violence against women in situations of armed conflict.

The work of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against women over the years has been one of the important mechanisms for addressing violence against women. In fulfilling her mandate, the Special Rapporteur over the

years focused on a number of issues and reported on them. These are:

- Violence against women in the family
- Violence against women in the community
- Trafficking in persons
- Violence against women perpetrated and/or condoned by the state
- Policies that impact on violence against women

In all these reports, the Special Rapporteur came up with recommendations directed at states parties at the international and national levels aimed at the elimination of violence against women.

States have an obligation under international law to respect, protect and promote human rights and with regard to violence against women, their responsibility includes prevention, investigation and prosecution of all forms of violence against women and protection of women from such violence. States are responsible for the actions of their agents or non-state actors. In its consideration of reports and in its constructive dialogue with States Parties, the CEDAW Committee has consistently questioned them on actions taken to prevent and eliminate violence against women. With regard to its duty to promote human rights, the CEDAW Committee's recommendations include elimination of stereotypes that exacerbate violence, awareness raising and gender sensitivity training of the general public, the judiciary and law enforcement agencies. Without exception, the Committee has made various recommendations to States Parties relating to domestic violence, sexual violence and exploitation, trafficking, female genital mutilation and other harmful traditional practices. While it cannot be said that States Parties have responded to all recommendations of the Committee, there is also enough evidence to show that some States Parties have taken steps to address some, if not all the recommendations.

The CEDAW Committee has, under the two procedures of the Optional Protocol made some important advances with regard to state responsibility in addressing violence against women. In an Inquiry Procedure under article 8 of the Optional Protocol, the Committee considered the issue of violence by private actors in its report of the situation in Ciudad Juarez in Mexico.

In its decision in the communication AT v. Hungary, the Committee found that the lack of specific legislation to combat violence and sexual harassment constituted a violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, particularly the right to security of person.

In spite of the many commitments made by states at the international and regional levels, much still needs to be done, especially at the national level. States are required to enact legal and policy framework that would promote and protect women's human rights and bring them in line with the international human rights instruments that they are party to. Unfortunately, it appears there is lack of political will and commitment on the part of state leadership to translate international commitments to substantive enjoyment of human rights at the national level. Laws and policies must be backed with adequate resources, both human and financial to ensure effective implementation. Victims must be provided with and have

access to services, such as medical and psychological services, legal aid and shelters. Access to justice is therefore an important component of the state's responsibility.

Commission on the Status of Women:

Over the years, the issue of violence against women has occupied the work of the United Nations and its institutions. The Security Council has also over the years adopted several resolutions, 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000, 1820 (2008) of 19 June 2008, 1888 (2009) of 30 September 2009, 1889 (2009) of 5 October 2009 and 1960 (2010) of 16 December 2010 on women and peace and security and all relevant Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict, including resolutions 1882 (2009) of 4 August 2009 and 1998 (2011) of 12 July 2011 on armed conflict and post-conflict situations.

In addition, Human Rights Council, in its resolutions 17/11 of 17 June 2011 on accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women: ensuring due diligence in protection, 20/6 of 5 July 2012 on the elimination of discrimination against women and 20/12 of 5 July 2012 on accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women: remedies for women who have been subjected to violence has also joined the fight against violence against women.

At its annual meeting held from 4th - 15th March 2013, the Commission on the Status of Women had as its theme "The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls". This is not the first time that the Commission has devoted its session to violence against women and girls. Previous sessions in 1998 and 2007 also were on eliminating violence against women and girls. At the end of the meeting, the Commission agreed on areas that need to be addressed in ensuring that violence against women and girls will be effectively addressed.

The agreed conclusions of CSW57 focused on four areas, namely

- A. Strengthening implementation of legal and policy frameworks and accountability;
- B. Addressing structural and underlying causes and risk factors so as to prevent violence against women and girls;
- C. Strengthening multi-sectoral services, programmes and responses to violence against women and girls; and
- D. Improving the evidence base

That the CSW managed to end with agreed conclusions was nothing short of a miracle, considering efforts by some states to turn the clock back in the progress made on women's rights in the last two decades. The effort of Iran, Russia, Syria and the Holy See in this regard was instructive. At some point, it looked like the meeting will end without any agreed conclusions, as had happened in the previous meeting.

However, there were gains that suggest progress in the right direction. One of the most significant was new text on protection for female human rights defenders – women working and campaigning for women's rights who face violence both because of their work and because of their

gender. Unsurprisingly, given the records of rights abuses in many of the countries present, there was push-back on this and its inclusion caused genuine celebration among the activists present, many of whom face backlash and hostility every day.

One of the hardest fought areas in the document was sexual and reproductive rights. This was one of the key rallying points for conservative forces, including anti-choice organisations that piled enormous resources into influencing the process. Hundreds of collective hours were put into combating their efforts by women's organisations, and some progress was made.

Most notable was new language recommending that emergency contraception is provided for women who have been raped, an absolutely vital and humane basic service.

Another striking victory was a call for the development of comprehensive sex education. Often portrayed by opponents as teaching kids to have sex, it is important that countries were able to see past the misinformation and recognise that this is about ensuring that young people have the information they need to make informed decisions and protect their health.

Conclusion:

The last two decades have seen a tremendous growth in the recognition of women's rights as human rights at the international, regional and national levels. All this would not have been possible without the activism of women's rights organizations across the world. But our work is not done. It appears we are losing ground to religious and cultural fundamentalism.

Promoting women's human rights is not only the state's responsibility, but it involves the collective effort of all, men, women, communities, women's rights activists, United Nations and its agencies, as well as multilateral and bilateral agencies. In this regard, women's rights organizations have a key role to play, using the reporting mechanisms of the treaty bodies, especially the CEDAW, to hold states accountable. In her report to the fifty ninth session of the Commission on Human Rights, the former Special Rapporteur, Radhika Coomaraswamy stated in paragraph 82

“In the end, the success of activism with regard to any human rights rests on the enjoyment of these rights by people in their communities. While a great deal has been done at the international level, it is now important to take the fight to individual communities, to involve all social and political actors and to ensure that mechanisms are set up at the grassroots level so that all women are protected from violence”

Indeed we would have failed if women are not protected from violence at all levels and are able to enjoy all their fundamental human rights and freedoms as full citizens of their country. As a country, Ghana has passed the

Domestic Violence Act, 732 but we know that implementation of the Act is really a challenge, especially since the legislative instrument that needs to be passed to ensure the implementation of certain provisions of the Act is yet to be passed.

The Government of Ghana needs to take its obligation to respect, protect, promote and fulfil women's human rights seriously. As civil society and women's rights organisations, our work is not done. We need to continue the fight and hopefully in the end, we shall overcome.

- A. Strengthening implementation of legal and policy frameworks and accountability;
- B. Addressing structural and underlying causes and risk factors so as to prevent violence against women and girls;
- C. Strengthening multi-sectoral services, programmes and responses to violence against women and girls; and
- D. Improving the evidence base

That the CSW managed to end with agreed conclusions was nothing short of a miracle, considering efforts by some states to turn the clock back in the progress made on women's rights in the last two decades. The effort of Iran, Russia, Syria and the Holy See in this regard was instructive. At some point, it looked like the meeting will end without any agreed conclusions, as had happened in the previous meeting.

However, there were gains that suggest progress in the right direction. One of the most significant was new text on protection for female human rights defenders – women working and campaigning for women's rights who face violence both because of their work and because of their gender. Unsurprisingly, given the records of rights abuses in many of the countries present, there was push-back on this and its inclusion caused genuine celebration among the activists present, many of whom face backlash and hostility every day.

One of the hardest fought areas in the document was sexual and reproductive rights. This was one of the key rallying points for conservative forces, including anti-choice organisations that piled enormous resources into influencing the process. Hundreds of collective hours were put into combating their efforts by women's organisations, and some progress was made.

Most notable was new language recommending that emergency contraception is provided for women who have been raped, an absolutely vital and humane basic service.

Another striking victory was a call for the development of comprehensive sex education. Often portrayed by opponents as teaching kids to have sex, it is important that countries were able to see past the misinformation and recognise that this is about ensuring that young people have the information they need to make informed decisions and protect their health.

THE GENDER AGENDA

THE DREAM OF A BEAUTIFUL ADULT LIFE: THROUGH THE EYES OF AN ORPHAN IN SEIKWA TAINSO

Growing up we all have dreams of what we want to become in future. Whether our dreams are fulfilled or not depends on a number of factors including the availability of a parent or guardian and poverty. As the story (derived from a conversation with a school pupil in Seikwa Tainso in the Tain District of Ghana) below tells us, poverty and or the death of a parent can totally dash the beautiful dreams of a child.

ADAY SOME TEN YEARS AGO

(A group of three teenage boys are having a serious discussion under a huge mango tree).

Kofi: Me, when I grow up I will be a Doctor. Charley if you come and see me in my white cloak and that thing that they put around their neck, you naaa you will check me out.

Kwesi: Kai! You, Kofi a doctor? Apuutor! Look me I will be a big time businessman. I will be going to London and coming back like from here to Sunyani. Charley you naa when you see me with the dough (cash) you will be shy self. I will make sure people like Kwame receive very painful injections. (Both boys laugh out).

Kwamei: (With a sober tone). Me I know I am the next IGP of the Ghana Police. My father says I am very clever and vigilant. So don't be surprised if I become the IGP. I will make sure all the wrong things being done here are stopped.

A few months after this scenario, disaster strikes. Kwame the would be IGP loses both parents and this wish becomes a mirage. Today this is Kwame's story.

My name is Kwame Dominic Fofie, a sixteen year old JHS1 pupil of the Seikwa Tainso LA JHS in the Tain District of the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana. I lost my parents some years ago and now living with my grandparents who are farmers.

Life is really hard for us. My grandfather is hardly able to buy me any clothes and food. I can count all the clothes I own on my five fingers. What is a balanced diet? I have not experienced it yet if it exists. Banku today, banku tomorrow and banku I will have the day after. Don't talk about fish, if a grass cutter or any game crosses my path whiles I am on the farm, so be it. My soup will smell good.

Madam please could you give me some money? You mean I should ask my grandfather? (Giggle) he doesn't have anything. My needs? Did you say my needs? These are by no means issues of priority or even importance to my grandfather. He has his own to contend with. Mine are

mine alone. So how do I feel? I don't know. Did you say my grandfather says I am a bad and recalcitrant boy? Why shouldn't I when I am left to fend for myself? What does he do for me? You think if my parents were alive, I will be in this condition? He is old and he needs someone to take care of his needs as much as I also do.

Did you ask me how I fend for myself? Well I work as a farm labourer on people's farms to earn money to feed myself and also go to school. I earn GHC5 a day which I spend for 5



Always the odd one out (Kwame Fofie stands second from left)

days. This is why I am not a regular attendant to school. Everybody thinks I am a truant, lazy and not interested in school but it is not as easy as that. How can I pay attention to lessons on an empty stomach? I can't mention anything I like about my school or schooling for that

matter. My focus now is on how to fend for myself. For now I am not sure that my dream of becoming a policeman can be a reality.

Thank you Gender Centre for providing me with a school uniform, school bag, footwear, books among a host of other personal items to support my stay in school. I promise to now go to school more regularly. Previously, I hardly went to school because I didn't have these basic needs and also money to take care of my personal upkeep. As you can see, I have



NOW: Dominic Kwame Fofie in his new school uniform

been hospitalised. I need to undergo a surgery but because of the absence of financial support the surgery cannot take place. I will soon be discharged and resort to herbs with the hope that by some divine intervention, I will be well.

My advice to my friends is that they should take their schooling seriously. I would if it is possible.

End of Kwame Dominic's narration.

Continued on page 9 ►

The proposed Ghanaian HIV and AIDS prevention and control law: a gender-insensitive double-edged sword?

In Ghana, an increasing number of people are living with HIV/AIDS. Statistics that were revealed during the two-day *National Policy Dialogue on human rights, HIV and law in Ghana*, which was held on the 3rd and 4th of April 2013, showed that presently 1.5% of the Ghanaian population is infected with HIV. Two-thirds of this group is made up of females. The infection rate is also higher among so-called Most at Risk Populations (MARPs). For example, 17% of male and 11% of female sex workers are infected.

Combating HIV/AIDS in Ghana

In order to combat HIV/AIDS, the Ghana Aids Commission (GAC) is implementing the National HIV & AIDS Strategic Plan and the National Strategic Plan for MARPs (2011-2015). Notwithstanding these plans, the GAC, which operates under the office of the President, as well as several civil society actors are of the opinion that a specific national law should be developed to prevent and control HIV & AIDS more effectively. As a result of these beliefs, an *HIV and AIDS prevention and control law* is currently being developed. During the *National Policy Dialogue* – at which the Gender Centre was represented – this proposal was discussed and recommendations regarding its contents were made. To take these recommendations forward, a Technical Working Group was created as well.

Developments at the regional level

During the dialogue, it was emphasised that Ghana is one of the last West African countries to adopt a specific law on HIV & AIDS. The proliferation of the adoption of such specific laws can be traced to the creation of a model law or 'legislative template' on HIV & AIDS in N'Djamena in Chad in 2004. This model law is consequently called the N'Djamena African model law. Most of the HIV & AIDS laws that have recently been adopted in West Africa are clearly based on this model. It aims to protect the human rights of people living with HIV and outlaws discrimination. Given these aims, it is very striking that some of the provisions in the model law are problematic when one examines them from a human rights perspective. In addition, they are gender-insensitive.

Mandatory testing and disclosure of status.

For example, the model law recommends mandatory testing of, amongst others, pregnant women, rape victims and when necessary to solve a marital dispute. It also recommends the mandatory disclosure of a person's HIV status to their spouse, regular sexual partner and doctor within six weeks of diagnosis. From a human rights and gender perspective, these recommendations are unacceptable. Firstly, forced disclosure and coerced testing violates people's right to privacy and freedom and their right to bodily integrity. Secondly, these recommendations will have especially severe consequences for women and put their lives in danger. For example, women may decide to not access ante-natal care out of fear for being tested HIV positive. Moreover, as a result of coerced testing during pregnancy, women will usually know and are expected to disclose their status



first. They can consequently be accused of bringing the virus into the family. Abandonment, violence and other forms of oppression may be the result.

From a human rights and gender perspective, mandatory testing and disclosure of status is almost never justified. People should instead be allowed to make their own decisions

about HIV testing and the disclosure of their status on the basis of full and accurate information. Still, forced testing and disclosure of status is a trend in West Africa as a result of the recommendations in the N'Djamena African model law.

Criminalisation of wilful transmission and exposure.

This law also recommends the criminalisation of the wilful transmission and exposure of HIV. However, defining and establishing proof of 'wilful transmission' has proven to be difficult and has led to unfair trials selectively targeting vulnerable populations. Moreover, criminalisation further stigmatises people living with HIV/AIDS, as they are regarded as harmful, disgraceful people and potential criminals from whom society needs protection. They will be further alienated from society and this will lead to more instead of less discrimination. In addition, criminal laws place the blame on one party, thereby undermining the public health message of individual responsibility for preventing HIV. Furthermore, since HIV in the majority of the cases spreads when two people have sex and neither of them knows that one has HIV, criminalisation does not curb the spreading of HIV/AIDS. Criminalisation could also deter persons from being tested, as lack of knowledge of one's status could be an important defence in a criminal lawsuit.

Additionally, criminalisation impacts women disproportionately as they – due to gendered and unequal power relations in the home – can usually not negotiate safe sex and condom use. Failure to disclose their positive status and to only have safe sex while they know their positive status (as a result of coerced testing) will put these women at the risk of being prosecuted for having transmitted HIV wilfully. Criminalisation is thus a gender-insensitive move. It is also a backlash against the efforts to combat HIV transmission and to encourage people to access HIV-related support and treatment. It will increase discrimination and lead to more violations of the human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS. **Moreover, the combination of mandatory testing and disclosure of status and the criminalisation of wilful transmission of HIV gives women an impossible choice: they either risk violence when they try to protect their husbands or they risk prosecution when failing to do so.**

Notwithstanding these human rights and gender-related problems, there is a tendency in West Africa to criminalise wilful transmission and exposure of HIV and to make testing and disclosure of status mandatory. Such provisions reflect insensitivity to gender and the current dichotomy between

Continued on page 9 ►



protecting and punishing persons living with HIV/AIDS. They are a double-edged sword; they are supposed to help and protect, but in reality can harm the

persons to whom they apply and violate their human rights. They also reflect a failure to address the roots of stigmatisation and discrimination of HIV positive people.

Developments at the national level.

The question now is: will Ghana follow the current trend, leading to a HIV & AIDS law that is a gender-insensitive



double-edged sword, too? During the *National Policy Dialogue*, a draft of the proposed law was discussed. It became clear that participants had very differing opinions regarding the issues above. Still, for the time being, it seems that Ghana is going to recommit itself to the trend of criminalising wilful transmission and exposure of

HIV. Clause 1Bii of the domestic violence act (732) of 2007 already made wilful transmission of HIV an offense and this is reconfirmed in clause 10 and 11 of the proposed HIV/AIDS law. Because of the human rights and gender-related problems discussed above, it is, however, preferable to resist criminalising wilful transmission and exposure of HIV and instead prosecute those individuals that intend to do harm on the basis of already existing criminal laws.

With regard to compulsory testing, it seems, however, that Ghana will not follow the regional trend. Moreover, in addition to prohibiting compulsory testing (clause 14 and 15), the draft does not make the disclosure of one's status mandatory and instead reaffirms the right to privacy and confidentiality (clause 22). From a gender and human rights perspective, these are very promising proposed clauses. What is more, the draft underlines the importance of public awareness raising and sensitisation (part I). It also reaffirms the human rights of people living with HIV & AIDS and outlaws discrimination (part V). In addition, it includes special measures to protect the human rights of vulnerable groups, namely children, women, MARPs and



prisoners (part VI). Nevertheless, it is to be noted that the term 'MARPs' is not defined, so that it is unclear whether these also include gays and lesbians. Furthermore, their activities are not decriminalised. Finally, most of these measures read as policy directives instead of laws. They should thus be rewritten in legislative language and establish concrete duties and rights of the people involved.

In all, the draft and the discussions during the *National Policy Dialogue* show that the normative discussion in Ghana regarding the foci and aims of a specific HIV/AIDS law is still on-going. Stakeholders continue to disagree: should the law focus on outlawing discrimination and protecting the human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS? Or should it focus on protecting society against these people and punish them in order to prevent and control HIV& AIDS more effectively? Or should and can the law-maker reconcile these different aims?

The way forward: re-assess the law with a gender and human rights lens.

With regard to these questions, it has to be noted that the law-maker should bear in mind that the offences and duties established by the new Ghanaian HIV/AIDS law should aim at human rights-based social and behavioural change that is gender sensitive. The law-maker should thus review all the clauses with a gender and human rights lens. While doing so, they have to focus especially on the specific gendered social, cultural, economic and legal factors that make certain groups in the Ghanaian society, including women, more vulnerable to HIV infection and discrimination as well as human rights abuses as a result. In addition to focusing on these root causes, the law-maker should resist blindly following regional trends in HIV/AIDS law-making and instead critically assess current regional developments. This way, Ghana's new HIV/AIDS law will be a big leap forward towards an enabling legal, policy and social environment in which the human rights of all are protected. It will be a single-edged sword that – when implemented effectively and correctly – successfully fights HIV & AIDS and the associated gender-based violence, discrimination and human rights violations.

Anouk Baron, Intern (anouk1008@hotmail.com).

Kwame's pledge to us that he will return and stay in school to us at the Gender Centre is questionable. How can he stay and concentrate in class with all those beautiful clothes, school bag and books and yet be on an empty stomach. The boy doubles as a farm labourer to eat.

It is our hope though that this clever boy who is full of potential is not denied the opportunity of serving his motherland to the best of his potential simply because the society into which he has been born and is being raised has classified him an orphan whose role is to suffer to fend

for himself from childhood through adulthood and by so doing be denied childhood because he is an adult in a child's body.

At the Gender Centre, we are committed to doing our bit to promote quality education delivery as well as improve the school environment for children under our Promoting Quality Education Delivery and Safe School Environment Project through which we believe children like Kwame Dominic Fofie will access quality education and a fulfilled dream.

FROM OUR PARTNERS

THE NKYINKYIM ANTI-VIOLENCE PROGRAMME IN THE ATWIMA MPONUUA DISTRICT: AN INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR'S IMPRESSION

The Gender Centre in 1999 published the findings of a nationwide research it had conducted aimed at identifying different types of violence experienced by women, girls and children in order to begin to explore social and cultural responses to such violence in Ghana and to outline a way of moving forward. The findings of this study gave birth to the Centre's ground breaking project **The Nkyinkyim Anti-Violence Programme: Combating, Preventing and Responding to Violence against Women in Ghana**".

A two year pilot programme was first initiated in three communities in the Upper West, Eastern and Ashanti regions of Ghana.

At the end of the pilot programme, it had become evident that the Rural Response System designed in the programme was hugely successful. Consequently the pilot project was extended to 15 other communities. In 2010, the Nkyinkyim project was again replicated in two communities, Daekrom and Mpatasie in the Atwima Mponua district of the Ashanti Region for another three year period (2010-2013). The project was funded by Womankind Worldwide of the UK. The project was implemented by Window of Hope Foundation (WHF) with the support of Gender Centre.

The project was aimed at reducing the incidence of violence in the two communities and improving the status of women and girls in these communities. Four outcomes were expected at the end of the project namely;

- a decrease in the incidence of domestic violence in the communities of Daekrom and Mpatasie;
- women in these two communities having better access to justice and other state services as well as being less likely to suffer secondary victimization from workers in state agencies;
- greater allocation of state funds for implementation of the Domestic Violence Act as outlined in the state action plan and
- documentation and dissemination of lessons learnt regarding best practices.

The project ended in March 2013 and an evaluation of the project has indicated that it was to a very large extent successful.

In the first instance, the evaluation report indicates a reduction in the prevalence of domestic violence in the two project communities. This was evident in the decrease in the number of cases brought before various authority figures including traditional/religious leaders and COMBATs for resolution. According to the COMBAT in the Mpatasie community, from a high of between 10 and 12 cases per month at the start of the project, the teams currently deal with an average number of 3 cases per month reflecting a 75% decrease in the incidence of domestic violence. Behind these numbers are the women whose lives have been transformed as they have gone

from living in a violent home to living in a peaceful environment. This has further reflected in improved marital relationships as there is improved transparency and trust among partners. This has greatly reduced the spate of mistrust and tensions which hitherto existed and which usually led to explosions of violent reactions.

Secondly, women in the intervention communities now have greater access to justice and other state services as well as being less likely to suffer secondary victimization from state agency staff. As a result of the various sensitisation programmes which discussed various human rights issues among others, community members have gained a better understanding and appreciation of the existence and functions of various laws and conventions that protect their interests and rights and how to access justice in the event of being violated or abused.

Access to justice is not only limited to women but has been



Women beneficiaries singing to express their joy for the peace they now enjoy thanks to the project

extended to men and children as well. Due to the increased spate of transparency between couples, wives are now more transparent with regards to funds raised from farming activities (women are the ones expected according to custom, to sell farm products) and these are fairly shared for the family good. Men are equally more accountable to their wives and children, having realised their obligations and the implications of abiding or not abiding by them. Children are now less resentful towards parents they hitherto considered simply too wicked and mean to meet their needs and the general well-being of communities can be said to have greatly improved. Socio cultural norms including gender roles have been better explored and understood and this has equally resulted in both women and men enjoying more access and control over resources and adherence to expected responsibilities.

Through the implementation of this project GC has succeeded in establishing a knowledge base through the documentation and sharing of key lessons learnt from the project. Over the project lifespan, newsletters and project annual reports have been produced on a regular basis which documented the lessons learnt. These newsletters have been shared widely with the activist community as well

Continued on page 12 ►

ON THE NATIONAL FRONT

REVISITING THE SUBJECT OF 'RAPE' AS DEFINED BY THE LAWS OF GHANA: THROUGH THE EYES OF A FOREIGN INTERN IN THE GENDER CENTRE

On May 11th, a level 200 Medical Student of the School of Medical Sciences at the University of Cape Coast was raped at knife point by an unidentified man. The Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service immediately began an investigation, urging the victim not to abandon the case and rather collaborate with the police in an effort to achieve justice. According to an article published in the *Daily Graphic*, public response to the incident was high and students carried out protests demanding the authorities to work towards improving security at their hostels.

As defined under the Criminal Code of Ghana, "rape" is the carnal knowledge of a female of sixteen years or above without her consent. The term "carnal knowledge" is the legal expression for sexual intercourse. Although figures and statistics from the DOVVSU indicate that boys are also sometimes abused sexually, males are not directly included in the definition of rape, since the vast majority of victims are females. Separate from rape, the Criminal Code defines "defilement" as the natural or unnatural carnal knowledge of any child less than sixteen years of age. The Criminal Code distinguishes between rape and defilement in an effort to protect the rights of children in Ghana.



Figures from the former Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWAC) from February of 2013, reported that the annual number of defilement cases is around 800 a year. However, according to the organization *Lights for Children Ghana*, this number only represents a small portion of the national tragedy. According to children's rights groups working on the issue, around 10 girls under the age of 16 are defiled every day in Ghana. Although defilement cases are reported in the media daily, these incidents only constitute a small portion of such abuses.

In cases of rape and defilement, gender plays an important role. Gender is about the socially constructed differences between men and women, which subordinates females. As a result, males feel they possess women, which leads men to exercise power and control over females. This leads directly to gender

inequality and violence. When rape occurs, there is a complete violation of several fundamental human rights of the woman, which are protected under the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. Outlined in the Constitution, every person in Ghana is entitled to his or her own personal liberty, which refers to control and freedom over their actions. Further, the dignity of all persons is guaranteed and no person shall be subject to torture or other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment. The act of rape is a direct violation of these protected human rights, since women experience a loss of dignity and self-control, while also being the victim of cruel and inhumane treatment. Although the process of reporting cases of rape and sexual assault to the police authorities may be considered cumbersome, it is important to record such incidents and fight for justice. Gender violence can result in severe psychological damage for the victim and traumas associated with rape are common.



Since the fight to end gender violence and achieve gender equality is ongoing, the law continues to change. Yet these amendments have remained largely unnoticed by the vast majority of women in Ghana. For instance, originally section 42 of the Criminal Code stated that a spouse could not at any time in a marriage claim that her husband had raped her or that she had not agreed to sex. This clause acted as a marital rape exemption, and in short there existed no recognition of or penalties for rape within marriage. In an effort to repeal the marital rape exemption existing in the Criminal Code, amongst other concerns, women's movements pushed for the Domestic Violence Act. This act drew on the equality of rights guaranteed in Article 17 of the 1992 Constitution, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. After facing opposition from the government, the media, Parliament and Ghana's male-dominated society, the Domestic Violence Act was passed in 2007. However, the clause that would have invalidated the marital rape exemption in the Criminal Code was removed, and thus the marital rape exemption was not amended when the act was passed in parliament. Yet, in recognizing that wives needed to be protected from the use of force, Section Four was inserted into the Domestic Violence Act, which states that the use of force in a domestic setting is not justifiable on the basis of consent. Subsequently, the Revised Laws of

Cont. on page 12 ►

EDITOR'S APOLOGY

In our 7th Edition of the Genderlens, we inadvertently pictured Madam Angela Dwamena Aboagye, the Executive Director of the Ark Foundation as the Running Mate of the PNC presidential candidate Ms Helen Sanorita Dzatogbe Matervi. We sincerely apologise for the wrong picture. We wish to use this medium to express our sincerest apologies to both ladies and all entities associated with them for any inconvenience caused.

Ghana project went even further to protect women in marriage. The project had the authority to simplify, revise and delete laws that did not conform to the 1992 Constitution. As a result, Section 42(g), which addresses the use of force in cases of consent, was removed from the Criminal Offences Act, as it was considered unconstitutional. The continuous development of the human rights regime in Ghana has created new trends and challenges for what was so easily accepted in the past. Although the fight for women's rights is long, exhausting and at times defeating, the benefits and achievements are worth the fight. The amendments regarding marital rape in the Criminal Code for example, highlight these benefits. It is with courage and strength

that the women of Ghana begin to push the limits of society and challenge what is wrong.

Nevertheless, the power struggle between men and women remains a societal issue in the country. This conflict cannot be fought alone, but rather requires the support and encouragement from all members of society. Shifting cultural perspectives and changing the traditional outlook of men and women in society will help in creating more opportunities for women and will help in fighting gender based violence.

Chelsea Wadley, Erin Jardine and Anouk Baron
Interns

FROM OUR PARTNERS

as civil society organizations engaged in women's rights work. GC has also engaged other sector players at various fora including conferences and stakeholder workshops in discussing other models of coordinated responses to GBV in general and the GC's Rural Response to Violence model in particular which has been tested in different parts of the country. The fact that the state is now piloting a Rural Response to Violence model is testament to the success of our efforts.

Unfortunately, the project aim of advocating for an increase in the national budget allocation for implementation of the DV Act did not yield the desired result during the project lifespan. This is not surprising considering just how much of a tall order this goal was. Resources for the implementation of the DV Act, as with other social protection programmes in the country, come largely from donor agencies. The budgetary allocation to MOWAC for the most part covers emoluments, direct payment to beneficiaries of pro-poor programmes and very little beyond that.

Despite the above hitch, the State has recognized Gender Centre's unique approach to dealing with VAW and proposed for adoption the Centre's approach of coordinated community/district level response. This was captured in the National Domestic Violence Plan and Policy (2009 -2019) and was rolled out as a pilot in one region. Gender Centre provided technical expertise to the Domestic Violence Secretariat (then Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs) to establish a coordinated community, district and regional level response to deal with domestic violence in 12 communities covering 3 districts in the Brong Ahafo Region.

GC also serves on a technical committee set up by the Ministry to develop guidelines for the LI for the DV Act implementation. The Centre was also represented on a 3-member team assigned with the task of developing the TOR for research on the national prevalence of DV survey in Ghana. The Gender Centre also chaired a national conference on ensuring a coordinated response to gender-based violence (GBV) in Ghana held in Accra.

The Nkyinkyim project has taught us lessons that will always guide future interventions. These are that:

1. VAW is ultimately linked to the relatively low status of women and girls in a society and as such interventions must take a holistic approach to the issue and tackle not simply issues focusing on the status of women and girls, but also the issues that are prevalent in the community in so far as it affects family life in one shape or form
2. There is need to keep the conversations held during the community sensitization programmes centre stage in the minds of community members. This requires a continuous cycle of engaging on the issues discussed.
3. Behavioural change is a slow, tedious process that does not happen smoothly. Cultural practices and behaviours have been embedded into communities over decades and in some cases centuries of practice with little questioning whatsoever of why things are the way they are. Such behaviours cannot be unlearned in a short period of time. Re-socialisation requires time and the fixed tenure of projects need not be the sole yardstick for judging the success or otherwise of an intervention.
4. Finally, for such a project to be effective, all stakeholders, particularly traditional leaders in the community such as chiefs, opinion leaders and religious leaders, (who are viewed as the custodians of culture in the communities) should be brought on board from the very beginning.

The above lessons are further re-enforced by the evaluation recommendations which include that:

1. Future projects should make provision for at least a 2-year phasing out period during which communities are partially left on their own to run the programme with very minimal visits from Gender Centre
2. Training programmes should be extended beyond COMBATs who are not the only referral points in events of reported cases of violence
3. Community members' access to the training

programs will also mean they are aware of how to handle issues and probably how to avert them.

For us at the Gender Centre, our commitment to a society where women's rights are fully promoted and protected has not and will not change. We are still committed to eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls in order that they can participate in national development at all levels. Results from the Nkyinkyim project in the two communities have emboldened us not to give up on this noble cause but to be encouraged by results achieved, by accessing more funds to expand the project to more communities across the country.

1. VAW is ultimately linked to the relatively low status of women and girls in a society and as such interventions must take a holistic approach to the issue and tackle not simply issues focusing on the status of women and girls, but also the issues that are prevalent in the community in so far as it affects family life in one shape or form
2. There is need to keep the conversations held during the community sensitization programmes centre stage in the minds of community members. This requires a continuous cycle of engaging on the issues discussed.
3. Behavioural change is a slow, tedious process that does not happen smoothly. Cultural practices and behaviours have been embedded into communities over decades and in some cases centuries of practice with little questioning whatsoever of why things are the way they are. Such behaviours cannot be unlearned in a short period of time. Re-socialisation requires time and the fixed tenure of projects need not be the sole yardstick for judging the success or otherwise of

an intervention.

4. Finally, for such a project to be effective, all stakeholders, particularly traditional leaders in the community such as chiefs, opinion leaders and religious leaders, (who are viewed as the custodians of culture in the communities) should be brought on board from the very beginning.

The above lessons are further re-enforced by the evaluation recommendations which include that:

1. Future projects should make provision for at least a 2-year phasing out period during which communities are partially left on their own to run the programme with very minimal visits from Gender Centre
2. Training programmes should be extended beyond COMBATs who are not the only referral points in events of reported cases of violence
3. Community members' access to the training programs will also mean they are aware of how to handle issues and probably how to avert them.

For us at the Gender Centre, our commitment to a society where women's rights are fully promoted and protected has not and will not change. We are still committed to eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls in order that they can participate in national development at all levels.

Results from the Nkyinkyim project in the two communities have emboldened us not to give up on this noble cause but to be encouraged by results achieved, by accessing more funds to expand the project to more communities across the country.



A section of community members at a durbar



A community member expresses his impression of the project



Md Elizabete Adufour, WHF Exec Director, addressing a community durbar



Community members at a durbar

GENDER CENTRE NEWS

The first half of 2013 has seen lots of new faces in the Gender Centre. Kindly join us in saying a big AKWAABA to them all.

A NEW PROGRAMMES MANAGER:

The Gender Centre has recruited a new Programmes Manager, Evelyn Nuvor. Evelyn joins the Centre from the Ghana Integrity Initiative where she worked as a Project Coordinator. She has years of professional experience in project management, research, fundraising, monitoring and evaluation.



Whilst doing my masters, I was an intern at United Nations Women in Delhi, India. After this I decided to do another internship at a non-governmental organisation in Africa, which would provide me with invaluable insights into the operations of an NGO in another continent. I was very lucky to come to the Gender Centre. During my stay here, I hope to learn more about programme management and gender and human rights issues in Ghana and Africa at large. So far, I am absorbing a lot of new knowledge and I am developing new skills. I wholeheartedly support the principles and goals of the Centre and therefore will continue to try my best to combine my learning with doing tasks that are useful for the Centre. In all, I am sure that I will not be ready to leave the Centre or Ghana at the end of my internship: I simply love this workplace and country!



A NEW ACCOUNTS/ADMIN ASSISTANT:

In March this year our Accounts/Admin Assistant left the Gender Centre to pursue other opportunities. She has been replaced by Agyeman Antwi Nuamah. Mr Nuamah holds a BSc in Banking and

Finance from the Central University College. He joins the Centre from the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. His hobbies include swimming and listening to music.

This brings to two, the number of men on Gender Centre's staff roll. We say a big welcome to him and we promise to handle him with care.

FOUR NEW INTERNS:

Gender Centre is hosting four interns who are supporting our staff strength in the areas of research, documentation and direct projects implementation. They are happy to introduce themselves to our cherished audiences.

ANOUK BARON



My name is Anouk Baron, from the Netherlands. I am very interested in human rights issues, women's empowerment and international cooperation. I am a passionate volunteer for Amnesty International. I studied for my Bachelor of Arts degree in International Relations at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. There, I focussed on international law,

development and gender studies. This August (2013), I will complete my research masters in Modern History and International Relations.

ERIN JARDINE

My name is Erin M. Jardine, from Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. I had my schooling in Acadia University, in Nova Scotia, Canada where I got my BA Double Major in English and History.



I am excited to be a part of the Gender Centre for the summer months. The Gender Centre was assigned to me and I don't think I could have found a better fit, so much of my studies had to do with Feminist Theory and Ethics. My experience in journalism also fits into the organization and I hope my experience in both areas will help me research and write for the Gender Centre. As a Communications Intern I hope to gain experience in familiarizing myself with a different country and tailoring my writing skills to better affect a Ghanaian audience. However, above all I wish to be of service in any way that I can to help the Gender Centre run smoothly.

When I am not wrapped up in my studies, I enjoy reading, hiking and travelling. I am a huge animal person and enjoy Horseback Riding when I can.

CHELSEA WADLEY

My name is Chelsea Wadley and I am from Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. I have a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honours in Political Science from Acadia University. The primary focus of my degree was on the Canadian political system and its similarities and differences to other government structures. I also dealt largely with women's issues



and female representation in parliament. In the fall, I will begin my master's degree at the University of Toronto, where I will be studying Global Affairs. In my free time, I thoroughly enjoy reading and spending time with friends. I was awarded this position at the Gender Centre through an internship sponsored by my university and "Students for Development." I chose the Gender Centre internship however, since I felt that it best suited my area of interest and academic studies. While working at the Gender Centre, I hope to expand my knowledge of women and their role in developing countries as leaders. So far, I am thoroughly enjoying my experience!

ABUBAKAR SADIQ YUSSIF

I am Abubakar Sadiq Yussif. I begun my internship programme with the Gender Centre in April 2013. I was assigned the Gender Centre by The Initiative for Equal

Rights (TIERs) an NGO based in Nigeria having participated in their Leadership Development Programme in October 2012. TIERs works for improved health rights and protection of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual and Transsexual (LGBT) individuals. I am with the Gender Centre conducting a research on the experiences of LGBT persons in seeking justice with the Ghana Police Service.



Lighter Newz

A WIFE'S LAST RESPECTS TO HER LATE HUSBAND

There was a man, who had worked all his life, had saved all of his money, and was a real miser when it came to his money.

Just before he died, he said to his wife...'When I die, I want you to take all my money and put it in the casket with me.

I want to take my money to the afterlife with me.'

And so he got his wife to promise him, with all of her heart. Well, he died.

He was stretched out in the casket, his wife was sitting there - dressed in black, and her friend was sitting next to her. When they finished the ceremony, and just before the undertakers got ready to close the casket, the wife said, 'Wait just a moment!'

She had a small metal box with her; she came over with the box and put it in the casket. Then the undertakers locked the casket down and they rolled it away.



So her friend said, 'Girl, I know you were not foolish enough to put all that money in there with your husband.'

The loyal wife replied, 'Listen, I'm a Christian; I cannot go back on my word. I promised him.'

You mean to tell me you put that money in the casket with him!?!?!'

'I sure did,' said the wife.

'I got all the money together, put it into my account, and wrote him a cheque....

If he can cash it, then he can spend it.'

WOMEN ARE PRESUMED TO BE PHYSICALLY WEAK...BUT WHEN IT COMES TO EMOTIONAL STRENGTH, MASSA, DONT GO THERE!



CONTACT

**GENDER STUDIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS
DOCUMENTATION CENTRE (GSHRDC)**

LOCATION: NO. 8 GBATSONAA STREET
NYANIBA ESTATES, ADJACENT CHESTER'S PLACE

P O BOX CT8163, CANTONMENTS, ACCRA GHANA

TEL: 233 030 2 760688

TEL/FAX: 233 030 2 760687

EMAIL: info@gendercentreghana.org\
gendcent@yahoo.com

WEBSITE: www.gendercentreghana.org

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/
genderstudiesandhumanrightsdokumentationcentre](http://www.facebook.com/genderstudiesandhumanrightsdokumentationcentre)

YouTube: www.youtube.com/GSHRDC