



LEGAL ASSISTANCE CENTRE

Recipient of the UNICEF Maurice Pate Human Rights Award - 1997

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IN RECOGNITION OF WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY – RELEVANCE TO NAMIBIA

The purpose of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) is to raise awareness of elder abuse throughout the world. There is little discussion about the incidence of elderly abuse in Namibia. However we would like to bring people's attention to the following findings from our forthcoming report *Seeking Safety*:

- One in ten people who apply for a protection order are over the age of fifty
- Violence between a parent and child or grandparent-grandchild is the second largest relationship between complainant and respondent after intimate partner relationships.
 - Within this group, there are more cases of violence by a child/grandchild against a parent/grandparent than a parent/grandparent against a child
- The study showed that elderly people who applied for protection orders requested provisions such as no communication, custody of grandchildren, limitations of access by the abuser to grandchildren and temporary maintenance.



The data illustrates the fact that domestic violence affects people of all ages. The Combating of Domestic Violence Act states that if you are over the age of 21 but for some reason are unable to make an application for a protection order in person, someone else can do that on your behalf provided that this person has your written consent. This might be useful for an elderly person who may find it difficult to travel to the court to make the application. The person who helps could be anyone who is having an interest in the well-being of the person being abused, such as a friend, family member, pastor or social worker.

“Often, these older people are asked for money and if it is not given then physical violence is used”

A comment by a clerk of the court

Please note that the person in the photograph is a model.

Trustees of the Legal Assistance Trust:

Clement Daniels (Chairperson) Elize Angula Esi Schimming-Chase Nico Kaiyamo
Tangeni Amupadhi Norman Tjombe Toni Hancox (ex officio)

Bisey Uirab

Seeking Safety is a study of the application of the Combating of Domestic Violence Act, with a view to assessing whether the law is serving its intended purpose effectively. The study is based on research which included data from

- court files of 1122 protection order applications opened during 2004- 2006, from 19 of the 31 magistrates' courts in place at the time of the study, located in 12 of Namibia's 13 regions;
- 46 key informant interviews in 19 locations, mainly with magistrates and clerks of court involved in applying the law;
- group discussions with traditional leaders, police and magistrates;
- 14 follow-up interviews with clerks of court, social workers and a magistrate; and
- an examination of reported and unreported court judgements to see how the Combating of Domestic Violence Act features in criminal cases.

The report will be released in mid-2012. Please contact Dianne Hubbard (dhubbard@lac.org.na) or Rachel Coomer (rcoomer@lac.org.na) for further information.