



**Annual Report for the  
Gender Research and Advocacy Project  
of the Legal Assistance Centre**



**2010**



## ***Mission statement for the Legal Assistance Centre***

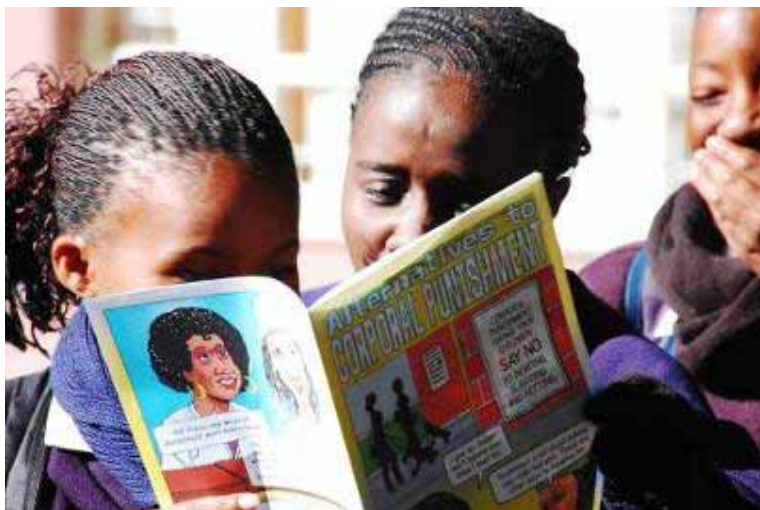
*We, the Legal Assistance Centre, being a public interest law centre, collectively strive to make the law accessible to those with the least access, through education, law reform, research, litigation, legal advice, representation and lobbying, with the ultimate aim of creating and maintaining a human rights culture in Namibia.*

*The Legal Assistance Centre has the following departments:*

- 1. Human Rights and Constitutional Unit*
- 2. Gender Research and Advocacy Project*
- 3. Land, Environment and Development Project*
- 4. Aids Law Unit*

## ***Mission statement for the Gender Research and Advocacy Project***

*The Gender Research & Advocacy Project seeks to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women through legal research, law reform and related advocacy work.*



## *Overview of 2010*

In 2010 the Gender Research and Advocacy Project continued to implement its 2.5 year project on the **empowerment of women and children** funded by the Dutch government Millennium Development Goal 3 fund. With the project running from 2009 to mid 2011, 2010 was the midpoint of the project and the department maintained a high output of work to meet the objectives of the programme. Major activity themes for the year included advocating for the use of **alternatives to corporal punishment** and a focus on **family relationships** with the department conducting research on domestic violence, cohabitation and step-children. In addition to this main project, GR&AP undertook a series of smaller projects such as updating Namlex to June 2010 and obtaining funds to take our film on alternatives to corporal punishment to a further three regions using funds sourced from two new donors. The section in the report entitled “**GR&AP by Numbers**” shows that our focus on publications distribution in 2010 proved successful, resulting in a 365% increase for distribution from 2009. Our outreach through workshops has also been successful allowing us to reach over 11,000 people. The number of workshops we conducted remains similar to the number conducted in 2009 but this year we focused on reaching larger groups, particularly at the film screenings. This has resulted in a 566% increase in attendance workshops compared with 2009. At the same time, we also tried a new workshop paradigm involving repeated contact with four small, relatively isolated communities. Our media outreach has also been strong, maintaining an average of 8 radio, 4 television and 4 print appearances per month. As a result, it is clear that in 2010 GR&AP continued to have considerable impact on information and awareness around gender-related laws in Namibia, though a wide range of interventions.



# GR&AP by Numbers

<i><b>Distribution</b></i>	
<b>Total number of publications distributed</b> <i>This is a 365% increase from 2009. This increase was achieved due to generous funding from the Dutch Government which allowed us to place 11 comics in 3 languages as inserts in the newspapers in 2010. Unfortunately this funding will end in 2011 and we are unlikely to be able to sustain this level of distribution in the future.</i>	807 654
<b>Publications distributed through the newspaper</b> <i>This is a 344% increase from 2009.</i>	657,000
<b>Publications distributed through other means</b> <i>This is a 479% increase from 2009.</i>	150 554
<i><b>Workshops</b></i>	
<b>Total number of people reached through workshops, conferences or presentations conducted by GR&amp;AP</b> <i>Percentage increase from 2009 = 566%</i>	11,907
<b>Total number of workshops/trainings/presentations given</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Average participants per workshop: 183 (min: 10 max: 1200)</li> <li>○ Average workshops/month: 5.4 (consistent with 2009)</li> </ul>	65
<i><b>Media</b></i>	
<b>Total number of radio shows, television appearances and print coverage</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radio shows: 101 (average 8/month)</li> <li>• Television appearances: 47 ( average 4/month) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Print: 54 (average 4.5/month)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	203

# *New publications produced in 2010*

## **Research**

- *National and international perspectives on corporal punishment*
- *A family affair: The status of cohabitation in Namibia*
- *Monograph 5: Beliefs and Attitudes towards Gender, Sexuality and Traditions amongst Namibian Youth*



## **Materials on alternatives to corporal punishment**

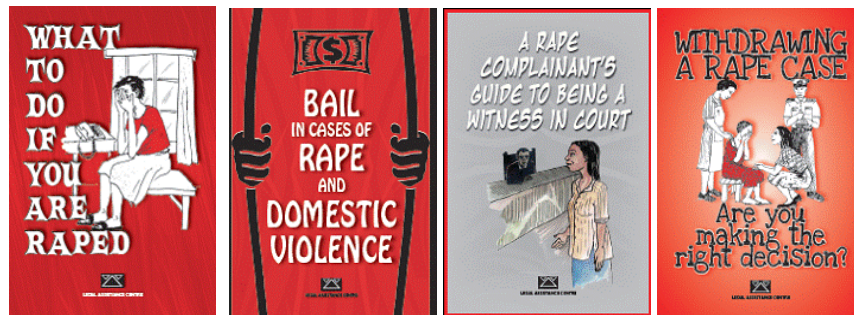
- A 45-minute film entitled A Betta Way & accompanying discussion guide
- Two comics (in three and five languages respectively)
- A poster/factsheet (in three languages)
- A training guide for adults
- *Corporal punishment: National and International Perspectives*



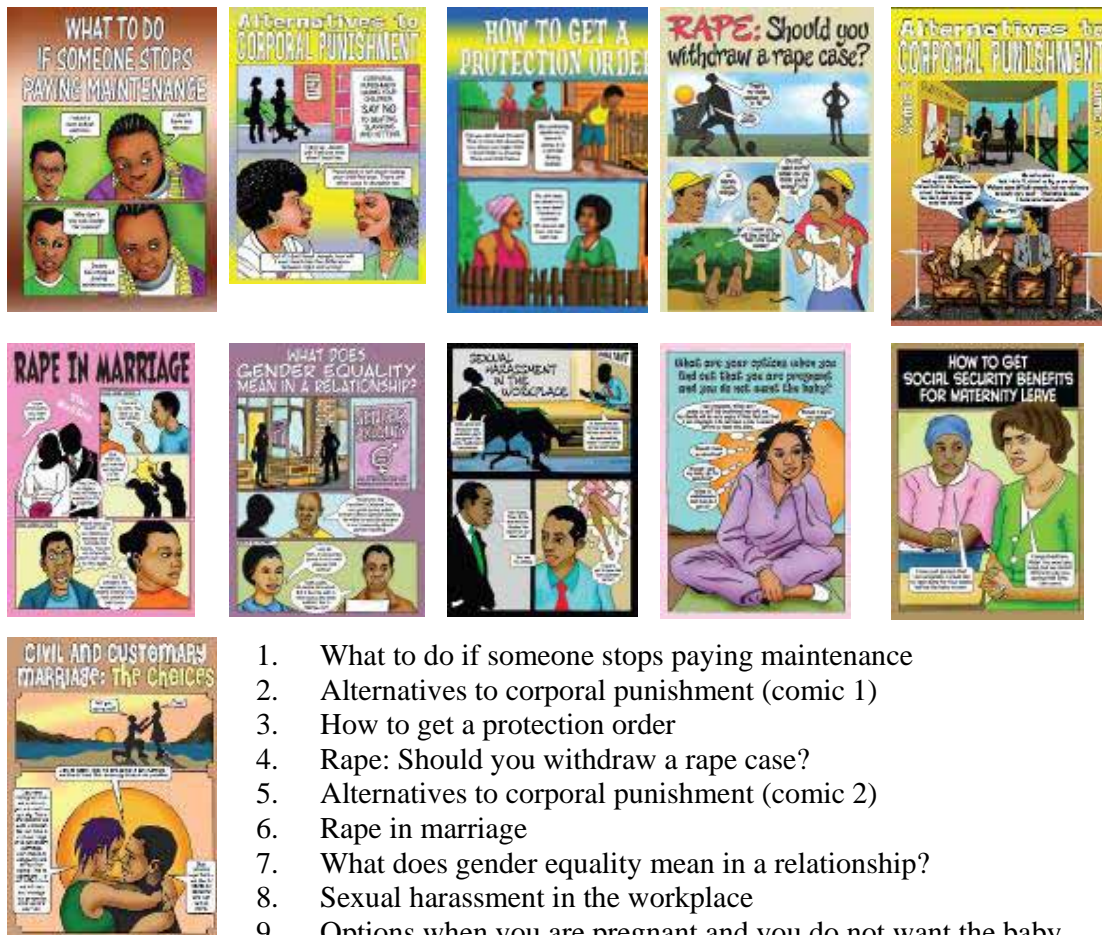


**Set of information booklets on rape (available in English, Afrikaans, Oshiwambo and Otjiherero)**

1. What to do if you have been raped (information for immediately after the rape)
2. Bail in cases of rape and domestic violence
3. A rape complainant's guide to being a witness in court
4. Withdrawing a rape case: Are you making the right decision?



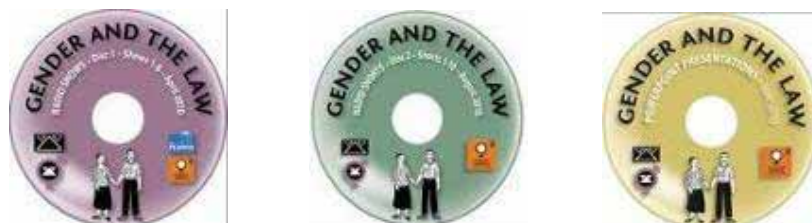
**Comics (available in English, Afrikaans and Oshiwambo)**



1. What to do if someone stops paying maintenance
2. Alternatives to corporal punishment (comic 1)
3. How to get a protection order
4. Rape: Should you withdraw a rape case?
5. Alternatives to corporal punishment (comic 2)
6. Rape in marriage
7. What does gender equality mean in a relationship?
8. Sexual harassment in the workplace
9. Options when you are pregnant and you do not want the baby
10. How to claim social security benefits for maternity leave
11. Civil and customary marriages: The choices

## CDs

- Pre-recorded radio shows: Gender and the Law CD1
- Pre-recorded radio shows: Gender and the Law CD 2
- PowerPoints on gender laws in Namibia (*presentations on domestic violence, maintenance, rape, the Married Persons Equality Act and gender and the labour law*)



## Posters and one page factsheets

- (1) Basic facts on the Married Persons Equality Act (poster)
- (2) Basic facts on the Maintenance Act (poster)
- (3) Basic facts on the Combating of Domestic Violence Act (poster)
- (4) Basic facts about corporal punishment (poster; in three languages)
- (5) Basic facts about the rights of domestic workers (factsheet)
- (6) Can a child claim maintenance? (factsheet)
- (7) How to claim maintenance during pregnancy (factsheet)
- (8) Can I claim maintenance if the father of my child is not working? (factsheet)





## ***MDG3 Project: The Empowerment of Women and Children***



The MDG3 project is a multi-component programme that is running from January 2009 to June 2011. It consists of the following activities:

1. research (2 major research projects and 5 small research projects)
2. 3 films
3. information booklets and guides
4. comics on gender-related laws
5. workshops for community members and organisations
6. advocacy and law reform.



## *Research*

### **Large research projects**

The funding under this budget line allows for 2 large-scale research projects. These are on (1) the implementation of the law on **maintenance** and (2) the status of **step-children** in Namibia.

#### *(1) An assessment of the operation of the Maintenance Act*

The aim of this project is to assess the effectiveness of the Maintenance Act. The research on maintenance will be the largest research project supported by the MDG3 fund. The report will include recommendations to improve service provision.



In 2010 we finalised data collection from 18 courts across the country. Nine interns assisted with the data collection (Jessica Sun, Krissy Bochicchio, Elizabeth Summers, Sarah Ramig, Laila Hassan, Thomas Wood, Tessa Harris, Christina Beninger and Zoila Hinson). In addition to data collection, the interns conducted focus group discussions in some of the towns visited to gauge public opinion about positive and negative aspects of applying for a maintenance order. The data will be analysed and written up in 2011.



*Whilst collecting the data, the researchers also distributed our range of materials on maintenance. The white and green poster visible in the centre of this photograph was produced using funds from the MDG3 project. (The posters at left and right were produced by GR&AP in previous years with other funding.)*

One of the most important features of the MDG3 project is the potential to integrate the different components. For example in 2010 we also produced comics, training materials and a poster on maintenance, and started production of a film about maintenance. We also spoke about maintenance a number of times during the year on television and radio. Combined, these activities and materials create a comprehensive outreach strategy on maintenance that benefits both service providers and community members. Some of the materials produced were distributed to people who participated in our research activities, to ensure that the research process was of some immediate benefit to those who were willing to become involved.



## ***(2) The status of step-children in Namibia***



The research project on step-children will consider questions such as: what is the definition of a step-child and a step-parent?; should step-parents be able to acquire any form of parental rights and responsibilities?; should step-parents have a duty to pay maintenance?; and what duties do step-parents have towards a step-child if the parents subsequently divorce?. The research will also assess whether step-children are vulnerable to any particular forms of abuse, as compared to other children. In 2010 *Lawyers without Borders* intern Andrea Russell conducted initial investigations, and visiting Canadian lawyer Christina Beninger assisted GR&AP with the main data collection and desk-based research. The research will be finalised in 2011.

As with the maintenance project, we have also used the research as a means to engage public awareness through the media. *The Namibian* newspaper wrote an article about step-children using our research as motivation and we discussed the issue on television and radio.

## Small research projects

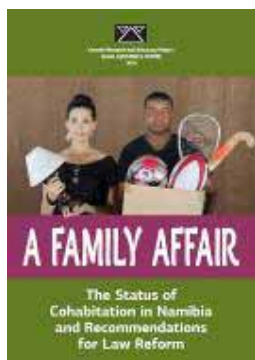
The funding under this budget line allows for 5 small-scale research projects to be conducted. The projects are as follows (1) Input on a new inheritance bill for Namibia; (2) The status of cohabitation in Namibia; (3) National and international perspectives on corporal punishment; (4) Input in proposed law reforms for the Communal Land Act; and (5) Beliefs and attitudes towards gender, sexuality and traditions amongst Namibian youth.

### *(1) Input on a new inheritance bill for Namibia*



In June 2010, GR&AP was asked to give input for the Law Reform and Development Commission on an early draft of the Intestate Succession Bill prepared by Master of the High Court. GR&AP wrote a 30-page memo on the law providing information about inheritance based on Namibian research as well as recommendations based on laws in other countries including the United Kingdom, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

### *(2) The status of cohabitation in Namibia*

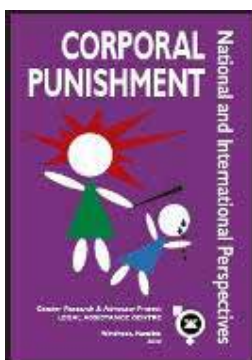


This research was conducted in co-ordination with the Law Reform and Development Committee. The purpose of the research is to obtain information on legal changes needed to better protect people who are cohabiting as opposed to being married.

Field data for the report was collected in 2009. In 2010 interns Laila Hassan, Thomas Wood, Jessica Sun, Sarah Ramig, Kristin Bochicchio, Christina Beninger and Zoila Hinson conducted desk-based legal research and assisted GR&AP with the finalisation of the report.

Again we used the research as a means to engage public awareness through the media. *The Namibian* newspaper wrote an article about cohabitation using our research as motivation and we discussed the issue on television and radio.

### ***(3) National and international perspectives on corporal punishment***



The purpose of this report is to provide relevant information on corporal punishment to policy-makers, stakeholders and other interested parties. Written in an accessible style, it discusses research findings on the impact of corporal punishment, the international and national framework which surrounds corporal punishment and public opinion on the issue in Namibia – particularly from children. It presents new data on the opinions of Namibian children based on input from over 2000 children collected as part of the public consultation process around Namibia’s Child Care and Protection Bill. The Ombetja Yehinga Organisation (OYO) collected much of the youth data which was analysed, in a successful example of co-operation between Namibian NGOs. The monograph also reports how a range of countries have addressed the issue of corporal punishment in their legal systems, with an emphasis on developments in Africa, to provide insight into options for addressing the issue of corporal punishment in Namibia. Finally the report provides a chapter on alternatives to corporal punishment.

#### **Contents of the report:**

- The effects of corporal punishment
- Responding to defences of corporal punishment
- Corporal punishment in Namibia
- International standards
- Current Namibian law
- Examples from other countries
- Promotion of alternatives to corporal punishment
- Conclusion and recommendations.

The report was launched in October 2010 at the Windhoek College of Education. Many stakeholders were invited, but there was an emphasis on utilising the launch to inform student teachers at the College about national and international perspectives on corporal punishment. Dancers from OYO performed a specially-choreographed dance piece for the launch. The launch was reported in the daily newspapers and on radio.

#### **Impact**

The report has been well-received by stakeholders, with particular interest from the Ministry of Education. The Ministry held a national conference on corporal punishment in December 2010. It invited GR&AP to make a presentation at the conference and requested copies of the monograph for all 80 conference participants.





*Dancers from OYO performed a specially-choreographed dance for the launch.*

This report is just one of the many materials produced on alternatives to corporal punishment in 2010. As noted above, we also produced two comics (produced in 3 and 5 languages respectively), a poster/factsheet (produced in 3 languages), a educational-drama on DVD with a discussion guide, and a training session for adults. These materials have been widely disseminated both nationally and internationally.



#### *International dissemination*

- The organisation **Children's Rights Information Network (CRIN)** posted our corporal punishment materials on their website and advertised them in their weekly email.
- The **African Child Policy Forum** circulated the comic to its regional contacts and reported on our activities in their newsletter. The **Save the Children, Sweden regional office** also circulated our material to their contacts.
- The **Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment** requested our permission to put the details about LAC on the 'Reform' section of their website. Our report was also mentioned in their newsletter.
- See our section on **Citations** for a list of publications showing the publications LAC work on alternatives to corporal punishment has been cited in.

#### ***(4) Input on proposed law reforms for the communal land act***



In July 2010, GR&AP gave input on a draft Land Bill intended to replace the Communal Land Reform Act and the Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act. GR&AP wrote a 20-page memo on the law, providing information about communal land laws in countries such as Tanzania and Zimbabwe and making extensive recommendations for alterations to the proposed draft – particularly with respect to the protection of widows. We used this report as the basis for

input at a consultative meeting held by the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement and wrote an opinion piece about the Land Bill which was published in *The Namibian* in August. The Ministry has indicated that our input is being seriously considered.

#### ***(5) Beliefs and attitudes towards gender, sexuality and traditions amongst Namibian youth***



In 2010 we finalised a report on the beliefs and attitudes towards gender, sexuality and traditions amongst Namibian youth. The research, which took place at several Namibian schools was led by visiting academic Dr Suzanne LaFont, Professor of Anthropology at City University of New York, Kingsborough Community College, and the project was a cooperative one between the Gender Research & Advocacy

Project and the Ombetja Yehinga Organisation (OYO). The report will be formally launched in 2011 alongside our second film which deals with teenage relationships. The goal of the report is to provide contextual information to inform and improve educational and social programs concerning HIV prevention, gender equality and sexual rights. The report also helps to identify areas of potential legal and social reform.

## ***Film***

GR&AP received support to produce three films under the MDG3 fund. The first film, finalised in 2010, is on **alternatives to corporal punishment**. The second film, to be released in early 2011 is on **gender and relationships** and the third film, to be released mid-2011 is about **applying for maintenance orders**.

### ***Film 1: A Betta Way - A film about alternatives to corporal punishment***



The use of corporal punishment as a form of child discipline is common in Namibia. According to a recent research study, it is estimated that 40% of people spank, hit or slap their children with a bare hand and 30% spank, hit or slap children with something such as a belt, hairbrush, stick or other hard object. Parents consider beatings justifiable for things like disobedience, talking back or not wanting to go to school. While many people still argue that corporal punishment is the only effective means of discipline in the country, there have been cases in Namibia where excessive physical force has been used against children in the home. There are cases where children have been seriously injured or burned by means of such “discipline”, and some children have even been beaten to death. To help address these problems, GR&AP produced a film, *A Betta Way*, to raise awareness on why corporal punishment is a problem and what alternative forms of discipline can be used – with the ultimate aim of making Namibia a less violent society, and ensuring that children are treated with respect so that they will grow up knowing how to respect others.

### Synopsis



Depicting a battle to change the opinions of a whole community, the film is not only an educative tool but also a compelling story to watch. Set in a rural community school, Paulus and his friends are subjected to almost daily beatings at school and beatings at home. When Paulus comes across a comic about alternatives to corporal punishment, the information starts him thinking. Paulus sets out to change the attitudes of his teachers and his family. In the humorous events that follow, the audience learns that there are better methods for disciplining children. Paulus challenges the norms of his community in a daring attempt to change their opinions. But will Paulus' plan to change the attitudes of his community work, or will he just get one more beating for his troubles?

### Supporting materials

As reported above, GR&AP has produced a series of materials on alternatives to corporal punishment. A key feature in the film is that the comic Paulus reads has really been produced



and at every screening the participants were given a copy of the comic to take away.





The film was launched 10 June 2010 at Hochland High School. Schools within the vicinity of Windhoek were invited to attend, as were stakeholders from NGOs and representatives from donor organisations. The film was extremely well received and a lively debate ensued after the film. Three of the actors were able to attend the launch and were very popular with the learners.



#### *Screening of movie on national television – three times*

We received considerable media coverage of the entire initiative around alternatives to corporal punishment in the form of print, television and radio coverage, and the LAC film *A Betta Way* was shown on the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation television in July and August 2010 and again in January 2011. *A Betta Way* was also a contender for the 2010 Namibian Film awards but sadly not a winner.

#### *Screenings at 9 schools*

Following the launch of the film, we screened the film at a further 8 schools during the month of June. Group discussions were held after the screenings. Learners also spoke with the Legal Assistance Centre on a one-to-one basis afterwards for more information and support regarding how to deal with situations of corporal punishment. We found that many of the schools visited still use corporal punishment and many

teachers do not agree with the ban on corporal punishment. We estimate that these initial screenings reached a total of 4270 learners and teachers.

I took time to watch A Betta Way and would like to congratulate LAC for another job well done, it is original but bringing the message across very strong. The fact that it is local characters make children to identify with them. I will definitely use it in my trainings.

*Veronica Theron, Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare*

*Film screenings funded by Movies that Matter (Amnesty International)*

We also received funds from Movies that Matter to screen the film in two other regions (Kavango and Caprivi). Overall under the Amnesty budget we were able to screen the film a total of 15 times to 1446 people. This project included screening the film at the National Theatre of Namibia (with the event being hosted by a popular local radio DJ), screening the film at teacher training colleges, and running a trainer of trainers session. The project also included funds to print a poster about alternatives to corporal punishment in three languages and to hold a one-day training session on alternatives to corporal punishment. Combined with the initial screenings, between June and August 2010 we held 23 events with 5716 people.



*Local DJ Matilda Riruako with children who attended the screening at the National Theatre of Namibia.*

*Film screenings funded by Save the Children, Sweden Southern Africa regional office*

We also received funds from the Save the Children, Sweden regional office to screen the film in one further region (Hardap). This allowed us to screen the film to a further 4982 adults and children. Using these funds we were also able to place the corporal punishment factsheet in the newspaper in three languages (English, Afrikaans and Oshiwambo), print more copies of the posters, reproduce copies of the DVD, produce the first comic on alternatives to corporal punishment as a double-page newspaper spread in two additional languages (Damara/Nama and Otjiherero) and reprint our Guide to Domestic Violence in English.



*Children from a local school in the Hardap region watching the DVD*

**Overall *A Betta Way* was screened to approximately 11 000 people in 4 regions**

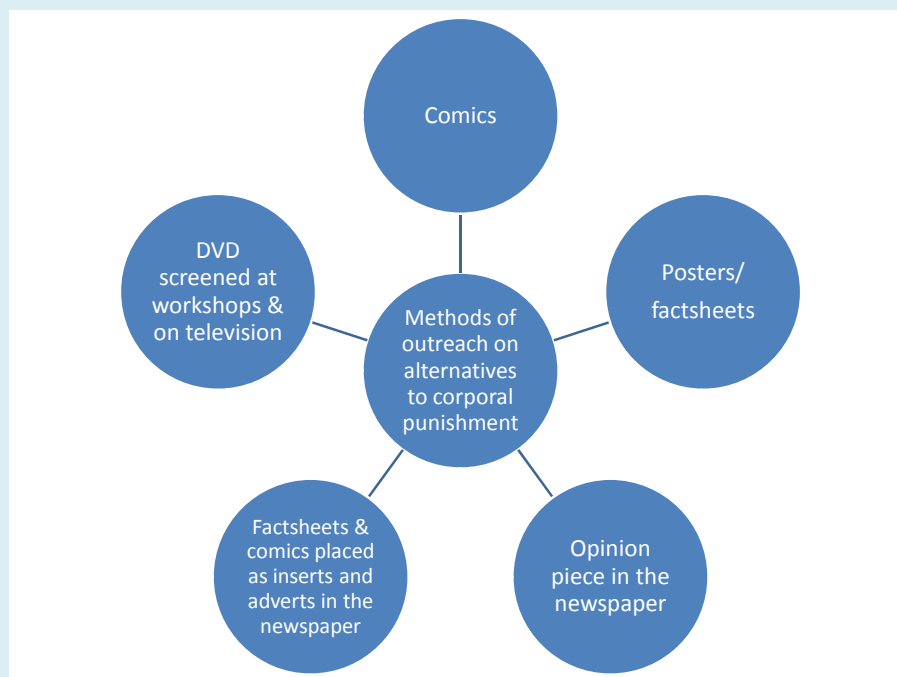


## Impact

The film *A Betta Way* is a sustainable outreach tool. NBC has already screened the film three times and we expect they will continue to show the film again in future. In addition to the core funds from the MDG3 project, we sourced funds from two further donors which has allowed us to continue our outreach. The trainer of trainers session conducted in June allowed us to increase the number of people who have the confidence to screen the film and facilitate a discussion on their own.

There is a great need for debate on the use of corporal punishment in Namibia. During the school screenings it become clear that the use of corporal punishment in schools is even more widespread than we had anticipated, despite the practice being banned by a Supreme Court decision in 1991, reinforced by a ban in the Education Act 16 of 2001. Young people also often reported violence at home at the hands of parents and other adult caregivers.

At each event, the most frequent question was where can a child go for help if they face violence at school, in the community or at home? The fact this question was continually asked illustrates a lack of awareness about avenues for help available to children who are living with violence. Of those who were aware of possibilities for reporting violence, many questioned the effectiveness of such reporting, particularly within a family setting.





***Film 2: Think Twice – A film about relationships***



We are making our second film, *Think Twice* in partnership with the Ombetja Yehinga Organisation (OYO). The project consists of two stories, ‘*Sex and Chocolate*’ and one still untitled. Both stories aim at making people reflect on the consequences our actions can have on our lives.

**Synopsis**



*Sex and Chocolate* looks at four university students. While Kandi and Peter share a healthy loving relationship, Kandi’s friend, Lucy, finds herself confronted with a dilemma. She is deeply in love with David

but comes to know that he has another girlfriend, Sharon. Will she stay in the relationship, knowing she will always be number 2, or will she move on?



The second film looks at the lives of a group of learners about to finish school. Sylvia is deeply unhappy at home, especially since her mother began drinking and beating both Sylvia and her dad. At school, she meets Tony, a shy learner. They start a relationship and are happy with one another. Yet, other learners try to convince them that they should be having sex. When Tony finally finds the courage to ask her to have sex with him, Sylvia doesn’t know what to do. Will she agree to this against her better judgment, or will she break up with him?

*The stories each have two endings, depending on the choices made by the protagonists.*

### **Impact**

The making of the *Think Twice* package has been a participatory process as a group of young people were invited to help develop the script and the play was taken on tour to schools in Windhoek (15 to 17 September), the Kavango region (20 to 25 September) and the Ohangwena region (26 September to 02 October) before being recorded as a film. This has ensured that the content of the film is a good reflection of the needs and views of young people in Namibia.

### ***Film 3: Maintenance Stories (working title)***



Our third film was in the early stages of production at the end of 2010, with a draft script in place. The film centres around the activities at a fictional maintenance court. The central character, a kind but strong-willed maintenance officer, takes us through her daily life as she meets clients from all walks of life. The film is intended to be an entertaining drama whilst educating the public about problems that are commonly experienced when applying for maintenance. The underlying message is the need to focus on the needs of the children in question, rather than on the disputes between parents.

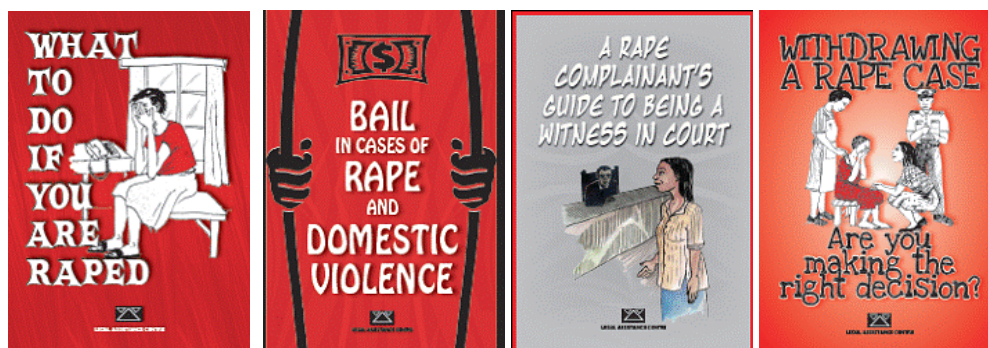
## *Information booklets*

The budget allows us to produce three sets of information booklets on the following topics (1) Rape; (2) Birth registration; and (3) a topic still to be confirmed in 2011. Each of the information pamphlets are produced in English and translated into three Namibian languages.

### *(1) Pamphlets on rape*

This information package is a set of four pamphlets on the following topics:

1. What to do if you are raped (information for immediately after the rape)
2. Bail in cases of rape and domestic violence
3. A rape complainant's guide to being a witness in court
4. Withdrawing a rape case: Are you making the right decision



Great. You guys are not sleeping. I like the two on bail and the guide for witnesses. We appreciate all your efforts. This makes our job much easier. Big thanks  
*Veronica Theron, Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare*

Thanks a lot, this is very helpful. I forwarded them to our AIDS programme as well.  
*Claudia & Dirk Harman, Basic Income Grant Coalition*

## ***(2) Birth registration***

This information package is a set of two pamphlets on (1) registering the birth of your child and (2) how to change the surname of your child. We worked closely with the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration to produce these pamphlets as the law itself (the Birth, Marriages and Deaths Registration Act 81 of 1963) contains insufficient practical information. In light of this we are making recommendations to the Ministry to revise the Act. The pamphlets will be released in early 2011.

## ***Reprints***

We also received funds from the ***MDG3 project*** to reprint materials and in 2010 reprinted the following materials in English using this budget. All the materials were reprinted in English as 52% of materials are distributed in English:

- (1) Guide to the Combating of Rape Act
- (2) pamphlets on pros and cons of withdrawing a rape case
- (3) comic on how to claim maintenance
- (4) pamphlets on domestic violence and maintenance
- (5) posters on domestic violence, maintenance & Married Person's Equality Act

The ***Embassy of Finland*** also gave us money to reprint materials, which allowed us to reprint the following items in English:

- (1) Guide to Maintenance
- (2) comic on how to claim maintenance
- (3) comic on what to do if someone stops paying maintenance
- (4) pamphlet what to do if you are raped
- (5) posters on maintenance

In 2010 we reprinted over 79 000 copies of our materials.



## *Comics*



The MDG3 budget allows us to produce a total of 19 comics. We produced and released 11 comics in 2010, with a further 6 in production for release in early 2011. The final two comics will be developed in 2011. The comics produced in 2010 are listed below:

1. What to do if someone stops paying maintenance
2. Alternatives to corporal punishment (comic 1)
3. How to get a protection order
4. Rape: Should you withdraw a rape case?
5. Alternatives to corporal punishment (comic 2)
6. Rape in marriage
7. What does gender equality mean in a relationship?
8. Sexual harassment in the workplace
9. Options when you are pregnant and you do not want the baby
10. How to claim social security benefits for maternity leave
11. Civil and customary marriages: The choices
12. A new approach to the prevention and management of learner pregnancy in schools (*to be released in 2011*)
13. Child abuse (*in production*)
14. Preventing underage drinking (*in production*)
15. Child labour (*in production*)
16. Bail in rape cases (*in production*)
17. How to register the birth of your child (*in production*)



### ***Pre-testing***

Each of the comics is pre-tested with a sample target group prior to finalisation. This allows us to ensure that the messaging is clear. The pre-testing is also another means of outreach and many of the participants find the pre-tests extremely informative.

### ***Distribution***

Each of the comics is distributed as an insert in *The Namibian* newspaper in English and Oshiwambo and in *Die Republikein* in Afrikaans. In total approximately 65 000 copies of each comic is distributed in this way (in the three languages together). It is estimated that on a Thursday *The Namibian* has a readership of 320 000 people – which is nearly one quarter of the population of Namibia. Therefore the distribution of comics in this manner is an extremely effective way of reaching the widely-dispersed population of Namibia.



**In 2010 we distributed a total of 725, 605 copies of the comics through the newspapers and direct to the public and stakeholders.**

### ***Feedback***

We include post, email, fax, telephone and sms contact details on the back of each of the comics. Individual reports on the feedback received have been written on each of the comics. The sms line has been extremely popular with the public and with each comic we receive many queries, requests and thank-you smses. On average we receive 50 smses on the first day each comic is released, with the most smses received in one day being over 150. Many of the smses asked specific questions related to the topic; for example, on the maintenance comic people had queries relating to their individual situation. Responding to clients by sms allows us to access a much greater population than if we met all the clients in person and has allowed us to have a national reach, in contrast to our physical presence which is limited to the Windhoek and Ongwediva offices.

### ***International exposure***

As with our materials on alternatives to corporal punishment, our comics have also gained international exposure. Our child-friendly comics have been particularly popular with the Children's Rights and Information Network.

We love the comics - I hope one day we can have our very own CRIN cartoonist and can send cartoons of the week's news out with the CRINMAIL.

*Jenny Thomas, Children's Rights and Information Network*

### ***One –page comics***

Based on the success of our 8-page comics, we also created single-page comics that were placed as full-page adverts in *The Namibian* newspaper. The purpose of these comics was to address common issues, suitable for coverage in a shorter space, arising from the responses received from the previously-inserted comics. We hope to find funds in 2011 to print these one-page comics as posters.



## *Workshops*

GR&AP convened or facilitated a total of 65 workshops in 2010. Details of these workshops are provided on the following pages. Whilst the majority of the workshops listed below were funded by the MDG3 budget, some of the workshops were partially funded by other donors or organisations. The screenings funded by Save the Children and Movies that Matter (already discussed above) are included in the table below to allow the total number of workshops conducted to be calculated.

	Number of workshops	Number of participants
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>11,907</b>
Community workshops	50	11,454
Stakeholder workshops	15	453





Community workshops		Number of participants
1-4	Village workshops held in Stampriet, Gibeon, Maltahöhe and Mariental	246
5-7	Three CCPA children's feedback workshops at Hochland High, Eros Children's Village and the SOS Children's Village	40
8-9	Gibeon and /Uibes from 9 – 13 March 2010 at the local schools: //Oabes S.S.S. for 3 days and /Uibes Primary School for 2 days	71
10	Maltahohe from 13 to 15 April 2010	40
11	1.5 hour presentation at UNAM to the Violence Awareness Raising Campaign group.	30
12	Hochland High School (launch of film <i>A Betta Way</i> )	700
13	Pioneers Boys School	90
14	Shifidi Secondary School	800
15	Higher Technical School (HTS)	635
16	Jan Jonker Afrikaner Secondary School	90
17	Goreangab SS	100
18	Michelle McLean Primary School	115
19	David Bezuidenhout	1200
20	St Andrew's Primary School	540
21	ChildLine conference- presentation on domestic violence	55
22	Namibia Women's Summit	100
23	Married couple's training	10
24	I-tech video conferencing on rape	64
25	Namibia Medical Society Congress	100
26-35	Corporal punishment workshops (funded by Save the Children)	4982
36-50	Corporal punishment workshops (funded by Movies that Matter)	1446
Total people		11,454

### Uibes – A problem we can't hide

***“A doctor comes once a month and abusive men know when the doctor comes and avoid the time immediately before that to inflict abuse”***

This might be a familiar story for many of the poor and rich Namibians, as twenty years after independence many of the small villages are still ‘not part of our independence’. When the Gender Research & Advocacy Project (GR&AP) of the Legal Assistance Centre had its annual year planning meeting at the beginning of this year, I never thought that I’ll be introduced to a small isolated village called /Uibes and its 350 residents. Situated 120 km from Mariental, the residents of /Uibes know little about how the laws of Namibia can protect them and what their rights are as Namibian citizens. Most of the residents don’t know anything about the world outside /Uibes and things are done the way they have always been done.

One may hope that in such a community problems of gender-based violence would be less common than in urban areas, or even non-existent, but unfortunately this is not the case. So please allow me to bring you a clearer picture of the situation in /Uibes. Alcohol, unemployment and domestic violence are major stumble blocks for the community. Many of the community members are not educated; there are no police in /Uibes. The police have to come from Gibeon (over 60 km’s away) and such a journey is often *not* made in the middle of the night for cases of domestic violence or rape. Even calling the police for help is a challenge. There is no mobile phone reception unless people climb a very high hill near the village where there are many poisonous snakes. There are a few landlines but they are all connected to the old pre-independence system of “*number asseblief*” (number please). This means that people can listen in to private conversations. A doctor comes once a month; abusive men know when the doctor comes and avoid the time immediately before then to inflict abuse on their wives and partners. There is one electrical outlet in town which is in the Principal’s house and residents have to rely on battery-run radios to get their news. These are the barriers of /Uibes.

In fulfilment of its objectives to work towards the protection and empowerment of the most vulnerable in society (women and children), GR&AP held a workshop in /Uibes on gender-related laws in March 2010. The participants’ faces lighted up in smiles when the information was given to them in their own language, Khoekhoegowab (Nama/Damara), as if they wanted to say ‘*this is specially for us*’. The input GR&AP has made with this workshop will give victims of domestic violence and rape in /Uibes a knowledge and choice of options that are simple to implement. The workshop participants now know how to apply for a maintenance order (for child support from absent fathers) or a protection order (forbidding domestic violence), and how to ask the police to give the perpetrator a formal warning or to lay a charge.

But while the law provides support to people who are ready to seek help, the true causes of gender-based violence are deeply rooted in the Namibian culture and many people continue to suffer behind closed doors. Change is often the most successful when communities stand together and support each other, and through numerous workshops, GR&AP has helped communities achieve this goal. As a result of the many workshops and training programmes provided by the department, hundreds of people in remote areas have had access to information about domestic violence, rape, maintenance and gender equality in their indigenous languages.

*The visit to /Uibes in 2010 is part of a new workshop initiative which GR&AP is piloting. Our aim is to access a few remote farms and villages at a time and to provide continuous support to the residents of these places. Whilst some people in Namibia seem to be suffering from ‘workshop fatigue’, there are all too many people who have never even attended a workshop, such as many of the people in /Uibes. Through these workshops and other complimentary outreach activities such as the production of easy-to-read booklets about gender-related laws in indigenous languages, GR&AP hopes to change the lives of many people in Namibia, particularly those people living in remote communities.*

Stakeholder workshops		Number of attendees
1	One-week workshop in Otjiwarongo for Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare community activists	13
2	Training for Women's Action for Development community activists	20
3	Young Women's Christian Association	15
4	International Planned Parenthood Federation	50
5	International Planned Parenthood Federation second workshop	58
6	Overview of gender laws for new VSO volunteers	10
7	Presentation on the difficulty of implementing gender-based laws for 25 people from the Millennium Challenge Project	25
8	Overview of gender laws for SWAPO women's league	24
9	My Future My Choice workshop (law on rape)	14
10	Peace Corps presentation	30
11	My Future My Choice second workshop	15
12	Namibian Planned Parenthood Association	11
13	One-week workshop for Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare Community Activists (second workshop)	38
14	Urban Trust	50
15	Ministry of Education national conference on corporal punishment	80
<b>Total people</b>		<b>453</b>

I would like to thank you all again very much for the excellent presentations. Special thanks for your willingness to spend the morning with MCA-N [Millennium Challenge Account, Namibia]. From the feedback, I think the participants benefited from the presentations and have some new food for thought. I was hoping that the presentations would help participants develop their "gender lens", and you made sure of that!

Dee Dee Yates, organiser

On behalf of Peace Corps Namibia, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for delivering your "Sexual and Gender Based Violence", "Child's Rights" and "Overview of Namibian Acts" presentations to our group of 31 Peace Corps Volunteers at their Reconnect workshop. The volunteers commented on how much they enjoyed your presentation, and how they are anxious to share this information with their Namibian counterparts, supervisors and host communities.

We are truly grateful for the collaboration between Peace Corps and the Legal Assistance Center.

Anne Haviland, PTO/APCD Health , US Peace Corps, Namibia

### **Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare Gender Laws Training**

GR&AP trained MGEWCW community activists and staff members twice in 2009 and twice in 2010. Each week-long workshop built on the previous training, with the goal of deepening the participants' knowledge of the gender laws in Namibia. GR&AP is extremely pleased that the MGEWCW has continually requested our services and we hope to continue this relationship in 2011.



#### ***Workshop materials***

The MDG3 workshop budget line also allowed us to develop workshop materials for distribution such as PowerPoint presentations (on CD), factsheets and posters. We also reproduced copies of our DVDs *Whispers in the Wind* and *Love and Respect* for use by other trainers in their workshops. The use of our DVDs as workshop material has proven to be very popular.





## ***Media outreach***

Our media output has also been strong and on average we make 8 radio, 4 television and 4 print appearances per month.

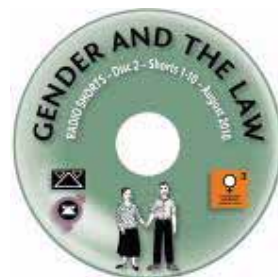
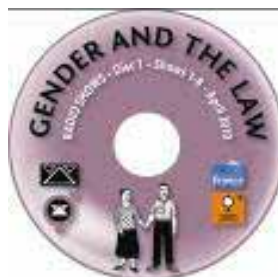
<b>Total number of radio shows, television appearances and print coverage</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Radio shows: 101 (<i>average 8/month</i>)</li><li>• Television appearances: 47 (<i>average 4/month</i>)</li><li>• Print: 54 (<i>average 4.5/month</i>)</li></ul>	<b>203</b>
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### **Radio**

Each week GR&AP records a show for *Your Rights Right Now* (NBC National Radio) which is broadcast the following week. We also appear weekly on two live shows - *Young and Cool* (NBC National Radio) and a talk show on *NBC Damara-Nama Radio*. Both live shows are popular with the listeners and each week we receive a number of smses during and after the show with questions about the topics under discussion. In addition to these regular slots we conduct a number of radio interviews on request.

### ***Pre-recorded material***

We also develop pre-recorded material for radio and in 2010 released 2 CDs of shows. Our first CD consists of 8 slots between 5-10 minutes long on gender law issues. Our second CD consists of



10 shorts each under 1 minute long. The CDs have been used by both government and commercial stations.

### ***Radio workshops***

We also held four radio workshops in 2010. Three of the workshops (held in Windhoek and Rundu) were intended to (1) assess listenership patterns; (2) brainstorm why and how radio can be used for human rights education; and (3) allow

participants to practice presenting a radio show. We also contacted a number of radio show presenters and interviewed them regarding their opinions about effective radio presentations and how the LAC can best partner with them to distribute human rights information. These interviews have been very useful in giving us in insight into how to develop further radio work. The fourth workshop was held with 11 young people who created, prepared and recorded the radio shorts used on our second CD.



### **Television**

We have a weekly slot on the NBC breakfast programme *Good Morning Namibia*. Each week we cover a different human rights-related issue. We are also regular guests on the *Tupopyeni* evening discussion programme.

### **Print media**

Our presence in the print media is a mix of opinion pieces, articles and interviews in national newspapers and local magazines. In 2010 we wrote articles on a range of issues including corporal punishment, communal land, stalking and rape.

## *Advocacy*

### *Child Care and Protection Bill from January –June 2010*



In 2009 GR&AP was engaged to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare for the revision of the Child Care and Protection Bill. This project was completed in November 2009. However in 2010 further work has been needed to progress the bill and GR&AP spent a substantial amount of time on advocacy work in this area. Activities have included attending meetings, making amendments to the bill (particularly on the issue of inheritance following liaison with the Master of the High Court), legal research, comparison of the Namibian bill with children's legislation in other countries (for example, Zanzibar recently released their new draft legislation) and report-writing. In August we were invited by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare to attend a meeting with the Cabinet Committee on Legislation to discuss the bill. Towards the end of the year, in partnership with the Ministry and UNICEF, we released the final report on the consultation *Public Participation in Law Reform: Revision of Namibia's Draft Child Care and Protection Bill*. This 256-page report provides a comprehensive summary of the intensive consultation involved in the project.



### *Ministry of Education policy on the prevention and management of learner pregnancy*

In 2008, GR&AP was engaged to consult on and draft a new policy for the Ministry of Education on the prevention and management of learner pregnancy. The policy was approved by Cabinet in October 2009. However little progress has been made on the policy since then. In 2010, GR&AP continued to lobby for the promotion of this policy. Activities have included meetings and continued contact by email and telephone with Ministry officials. As reported above, GR&AP also produced a comic about the policy using donor funds. As a related activity, GR&AP lobbied for the inclusion of information about the new policy in the updated version of the school-related programme *My Future My Choice*. The lobbying was successful



## *Babydumping*



GR&AP has been instrumental in helping to co-ordinate ministries and the LAC. The MGE CW will be conducting an assessment of the problem and MoYSS will be continuing school-based work. The Ministries to plan for these projects, including assisting with the questions to ensure useful input.

Intern Cindy Cho, a visiting Fulbright Scholar, contributed to a significant portion of the advocacy work around the rights of domestic workers, which was sparked by an invitation to attend the University of the Western Cape conference *Exploited, undervalued and essential –the plight of domestic workers* in South Africa in May 2010. The project rapidly expanded and by the end of 2010 consisted of the following components:



- 36



We received positive feedback on this project from a range of stakeholders as well as members of the public - including the Namibian Employers' Federation, a Parliamentarian (Hon Margaret Mensah), Namibia Institute for Democracy, Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, Ministry of Education and the European Union. We also received a number of requests for copies of the factsheet or contract by email.

I read your article in "The Namibian" about Domestic worker's rights and appreciate it very much. Indeed domestic workers are really among the workers whose rights are less recognized. We are happy to know that we are among the 30 % of the population that have our domestic worker registered with the Social Security. We have tried during the 11 years we've employed our domestic worker to recognize her rights and treat her accordingly. The idea of having a fact sheet page on the rights of the domestic workers is a very good one. It will really give us clear guidance to update and to continue to follow the law in dealing with our worker. Please let me know how can we receive one. Can you send us a copy through my e-mail address?

Member of the public (details recorded)

Our work has helped the Labour Research and Resource Institute (LaRRI) to increase their outreach in this area, and at the end of 2010, LaRRI started outreach which we understand will be in the form of regional workshops with domestic workers. This is an example of how our work is often "seeding", in that we are able to assist other organisations to take on gender issues where they may have excess capacity or funding, but less of the background in law or research needed to initiate a project involving gender and the law.

### ***Other***

Following a conference held in Lusaka, Zambia in January 2010 GR&AP made recommendations on how to address **gender-based violence** to the conference organisers and to the UN Special Rapporteur for Gender-Based Violence.

GR&AP gave **advice to the National Council on a proposed Constitutional amendment** that would mandate 30% female representation in elected bodies and /or decision-making positions. (This was ultimately shelved by the National Council, but may come up again in future.)

Throughout the year GR&AP maintained close contact with the **Law Reform and Development Commission** and gave input on a number of issues including the finalisation of recommendations for the revision of the Combating of Rape Act and comments on the Marital Property Bill which is based on GR&AP research.

GR&AP Co-ordinator Dianne Hubbard presented a lecture on “**Celebrating 20 years of Progress towards Gender Equality in Namibia**” in March 2010 as part of a lecture series organised by the Office of the President.



I think as a ministry I have to thank you all for a well researched presentation.  
*Ms. Sirkka Ausiku, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare*

Thanks very much for the lecture last night it was great.  
*Rosa Namises, Women's Solidarity*

Following a request for assistance from the Namibian Defence Force, GR&AP compiled a legal memo on options for integrating the proposed **sexual harassment** policy with the Defence Act and the Military Discipline Code.

GR&AP maintains an active presence on the **LAC Facebook page**, stimulating public awareness and debate through this medium. We also uploaded many of our publications to the **Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare !Namwiki website** and reports from the Ministry show that many of our materials are downloaded by users from the site.



*Slide from the presentation given by Dianne Hubbard for the as part of a lecture series organised by the Office of the President.*

## Other projects

### Namlex



The goal of this publication is to make the law more accessible to the public. Its starting point was the *Index to the Laws of Namibia* published by the NAMLAW Project under the direction of the late Advocate ATEA Lubowski. The latest update provides new information on the laws from Jan 2005-June 2010. Interns Elizabeth Summers, Tessa Harris, Jessica Sun, Laila Hassan and Thom Wood assisted with the update.

### Research: The operation of the Combating of Domestic Violence Act

The Combating of Domestic Violence Act 4 of 2003 is an excellent piece of legislation designed to protect the most vulnerable. Unfortunately, the Legal Assistance Centre has received reports that applicants for protection orders are sometimes turned away, or that applicants experience long delays in urgent cases. In many cases no assistance is given in filling out the forms – which can lead to incomplete information and a refusal by the magistrate to grant a protection order. The terms of protection orders do not always suit the situation and protection is thus not afforded to those most in need. In order to assess the situation more comprehensively, GR&AP is in the process of finalising a study examining the implementation of the provisions on protection orders in the Act. The data will be published with an extensive literature review in 2011.

To help inform the final conclusions in the study, in 2010 we posted an advert in *The Namibian* newspaper to try and find out why so many protection order applications are not made final. *The Namibian* kindly placed the advert at no cost. This was a new method of collecting information from the public and it proved to reach a wide range of people. We will use such a technique again in future.



## *Cases*

GR&AP assisted numerous clients during 2010. Client queries ranged over a broad area including inheritance, custody, maintenance, domestic violence, adoption, domicile and rape. As a new initiative in 2010 we were also able to respond to client queries sent to us by sms. This method is cheap and easy to access by the public and vastly increased our contact with the individual members of the public. We hope to upscale this technology in 2011. In situations where clients experienced inadequate service provision, GR&AP wrote letters of complaint to the relevant government department or intervened using other methods. As a possible follow-up, we are in consultation with a legal scholar who hopes to conduct a Namibian study on improving methods by which the public can hold state service providers accountable in 2011 or 2012.

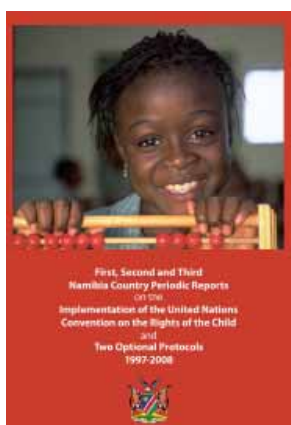


*Our weekly radio shows also stimulate many client queries*



## Citations

Reference to activities on **alternatives to corporal punishment** in Namibia, conducted by GR&AP, has been included in the following international publications:



GR&AP work continues to be cited in national and international publications. For example, the work of GR&AP was extensively mentioned in the **First, Second and Third Namibia Country Periodic Reports on the Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Two Optional Protocols 1997-2008** published by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare in 2010.

# Staff

## *Full-time staff*

### **Dianne Hubbard-Coordinator** ([dhubbard@lac.org.na](mailto:dhubbard@lac.org.na))



Dianne is a graduate of Harvard Law School. She also has degrees in English from the University of North Carolina in the USA and from Stellenbosch University in South Africa. She has been the Coordinator of GR&AP since its inception in February 1993. She taught a course in “Gender & the Law” in the Law Faculty at the University of Namibia for two years and currently serves on the boards of Sister Namibia and Ombetja Yehinga Organisation. In 2010 Dianne was invited to take up a 3-year term on the Law Reform and Development Commission and was subsequently elected Deputy Chairperson.

### **Rachel Coomer-Public Outreach Manager** ([rcoomer@lac.org.na](mailto:rcoomer@lac.org.na))



Rachel is a graduate of the University of Oxford and is currently finalising a Masters degree with the University of the Western Cape. Her role in the department is to manage all outreach functions including the development of educational materials, the dissemination of advocacy material and research findings, various trainings and media liaison.

### **Yolande Engelbrecht-Paralegal** ([yengelbrecht@lac.org.na](mailto:yengelbrecht@lac.org.na))



Yolande joined GR&AP at the beginning of 2009, having worked at the Ministry of Justice for a number of years. Yolande takes the main responsibility for running workshops on behalf of the department.

### **Grace Kapere-Project Assistant** ([gkapare@lac.org.na](mailto:gkapare@lac.org.na))



Grace also joined GR&AP in 2009. Grace takes responsibility for office administration and manages the logistics of publication distribution. Grace went on maternity leave at the end of 2010 and we were then assisted by volunteer Joy Sworn.



## *Interns*



**Cindy Cho:** Fulbright Scholar



**Shanisha Smith:** Lincoln University (USA) exchange student to the Polytechnic of Namibia



**Goderich Sikwana:** Media student from the Polytechnic of Namibia



**Andrea Russell:** Lawyer without Borders  
*Thanks very much to Andrea for her kind donation of a digital camera to GR&AP.*



**Tessa Harris:** Namibian law student studying at University of Cape Town



**Jessica Sun:** University of Pennsylvania Law School



**Krissy Bochicchio:** University of Pennsylvania Law School



**Elizabeth Summers:** Harvard Law School



**Sarah Ramig:** Harvard Law School



**Laila Hassan:** British lawyer, placement supported by the law firm Clifford Chance



**Thomas Wood:** British lawyer



**Christina Beninger:** Canadian lawyer, placement supported by the Canadian Bar Association Young Lawyers International Programme with the support of the Canadian International Development Agency.



**Zoila Hinson:** Fulbright Scholar



### **Anne Joyce-Education Outreach and Fieldwork Officer**

The organisation Voluntary Service Overseas arranged for Anne to have a one-year placement with the Legal Assistance Centre from March 2009-March 2010.



*A group photo from June 2010 with GR&AP staff and some of the interns who worked with us during the year.*

### ***Regular consultants and visiting researchers***

**Perri Caplan**, who provides design and layout services for most of GR&AP's publications.

**Christa Schier**, who provides statistical analysis as well as invaluable advice on all our quantitative research. In 2010, she advised on maintenance and domestic violence research.

**Dr Suzanne La Font**, visiting scholar with a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Yale University in the USA, currently an Associate Professor at Kingsborough Community College, City University of New York. In 2010, she led research on youth and sexuality in conjunction with GR&AP and the Ombetja Yehinga Organisation.



***Key partners in 2010***  
***(in addition to the donors listed on the following page)***

Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare

Ministry of Justice

Law Reform and Development Commission

Ministry of Education

Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration

Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture

Office of the Ombudsman

Ombetja Yehinga Organisation

Sister Namibia

Namibia Planned Parenthood Association

UNICEF

UNDP

Namibian Broadcasting Corporation

The Namibian

Die Republikein

New Era

Children's Rights Information Network

African Child Policy Forum

Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment

LifeLine/ChildLine

## *Donors for 2010*

- Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MDG3 fund
  - Movies that Matter, Amnesty International
- Save the Children Sweden, Southern Africa regional office
  - Embassy of Finland
- Self-regulating Alcohol Industry Forum of Namibia (SAIF) (reprints)



EMBASSY OF FINLAND  
WINDHOEK

