NATIONAL CONTEXT

There were two major national developments for women in the year 2000. The first was the passage of a new law on rape, which was long lobbied for by a range of women’s groups and NGOs. The lobbying finally began to bear fruit in 1999, but it was necessary for the NGO community to remain active and vigilant to ensure that the bill continued to move forward, and to ensure that the provisions of the bill were responsive to NGO concerns about rape and rape survivors. The lobbying process was marked by a greater openness on the part of government to NGO input than on previous women’s issues, and by better strategising on input from the NGO community. The LAC played an important role in mobilising this input by making clear information about the bill available very quickly after its release, and by convening a forum for discussion and summarising NGO input in an appropriate form for presentation to government. This lobbying strategy could serve as a future model.

The second major national development was the introduction of new gender structures. The former Department of Women Affairs became a new Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Welfare, and the National Assembly transformed its Standing Committee on Human Resources into a Standing Committee on Human Resources, Equality and Gender Development. Both of these steps signal a government commitment to women’s issues. It is too soon to assess the impact of these new structures, but the Gender Research and Advocacy Project (GR&AP) has held familiarisation meetings with both of them to discuss potential areas of future co-operation.

It must be noted that the scourge of violence against women in Namibia continues unabated, with repeated news reports of grisly murders of women by ex-boyfriends including some murder-suicides. This problem surely continues to rank as one of the nation’s foremost human rights violations. It is also noteworthy that the government has increased the number of Woman and Child Protection Units (specialised police response units aimed primarily at sexual assault and child abuse cases) to seven.

ACTIVITIES

NAMLEX

The 2000 NAMLEX update was completed and published in the first quarter of the year.

RAPE

The Combating of Rape Bill became law in February 2000, along with amendments to the Combating of Immoral Practices Act, after a final flurry of lobbying activities aimed at fine-tuning the bill. Almost all of the amendments proposed by LAC and the coalition of NGOs it worked with on this bill were incorporated into the final act, which should be considered a tremendous indicator of success.
We published a newspaper article on the key changes made by the new law. This article also appeared in the first edition of the LAC newsletter. The new act came into force on 15 June.

In a related project, we published a short information paper on medical issues for rape survivors. This paper covered HIV prevention (known as PEP), STD prevention and pregnancy prevention in the wake of a rape. It was serialised in The Namibian (in 5 parts) in June. In the second half of the year, the article was published in Afrikaans, with the inclusion of new information pertaining to recent successful trials of PEP. The Afrikaans version was serialised (in 2 parts) in Die Republikein in November.

With funding secured from the US Embassy, the LAC co-hosted two one-week workshops planned by the Office of the Prosecutor-General to train police, social workers, prosecutors and magistrates on child witnesses. This portion of the workshop was facilitated by two South African experts, Karen Muller and Karen Hollely, authors of the recent book Introducing the Child Witness. The LAC used a half-day at each workshop to present training on the new rape law and to promote protocols (formal guidelines) for each of the four professions. The workshop participants were given a background paper on protocols prepared by LAC, and then invited to prepare a draft protocol using an outline prepared by LAC on the basis of protocols from other countries. Senior officials in respect of each of the four professions were consulted about the project in advance of the workshop and gave their support. In 2001, the draft protocols will be taken forward for further consultations and eventually finalisation. In conjunction with the LAC’s AIDS Law Unit, we intend to use a similar process to introduce protocols for medical professionals dealing with rape survivors in 2001.

Two educational booklets on the new rape law were produced – a detailed Guide to the Combating of Rape Act and a shorter booklet aimed at the general public. Both are illustrated publications written in simple English. They will be translated into Afrikaans in 2001.

The LAC participated in an international study of laws on marital rape conducted by the UK-based group CHANGE. We provided Namibian materials and information, as well as input on the design of the questionnaire, and will receive the overall study in due course.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

A paper based on a questionnaires about domestic violence sent to the police by the Law Reform and Development Commission (LRDC) was published jointly by the LRDC and the LAC, with joint copyright, in an unprecedented manifestation of co-operative effort. This paper is entitled “Domestic Violence Cases Reported to the Namibian Police: Case Characteristics and Police Response”. It was completed in 1999 but released to the public after coming back from the printers in early 2000. Dianne Hubbard wrote a newspaper article for The Namibian summarising the key findings of this report.

Research on television violence on NBC and its possible impact on children in particular was completed and published in the form of a newspaper article in The Namibian in early 2000. This article appears to have stimulated expressions of concern about violence on television from high-ranking government officials.

Dianne continued to work throughout the year with members of the LRDC on questions and revisions made by the LRDC as a whole to the draft bill on domestic violence prepared by the LRDC Sub-committee on Domestic Violence (of which Dianne was a member) in 1999. The LRDC has now reportedly finished its work and made a report to the Minister of Justice, which should soon be
publicly available. The last version of the draft which was viewed by the LAC was still drawn heavily from the recommendations made by the GR&AP in its September 1998 publication on domestic violence.

On 21 September 2000 the GR&AP hosted a one-day workshop in Windhoek entitled “Domestic Violence Legislation: Lessons from South Africa”. This workshop featured South African guest speakers Helene Combrink of the Community Law Centre at the University of the Western Cape, Lillian Arzt of the Institute of Criminology at the University of Cape Town, and Deborah Quenet and Lulama Nongogo from the Women’s Legal Centre in Cape Town. All four women have been involved in monitoring South Africa’s new domestic violence legislation, which was implemented in December 1999. The workshop, held at the Parliament buildings, was well-attended, with about 90 participants from various sectors involved with domestic violence, including police, social workers, counsellors, academics and men and women from community-based groups – as well as a Minister, a Deputy Minister and several members of the LRDC. A newsletter article on the workshop appeared in the third LAC newsletter for 2000. The workshop also provided a good opportunity for Dianne to meet with the South African participants individually, to discuss the South African position in more detail. The GR&AP hosted a small dinner for the South African guests, to allow them to meet with other women from the relevant NGOs in a more informal setting.

Both Dianne and Willem have given legal advice on domestic violence to several clients. Willem accompanied one woman who was in a potentially life-threatening situation to the police station after she encountered resistance on the part of the police to taking a statement in Afrikaans, which is the only language she speaks. It should be noted that in South Africa, police refusal to take statements in the complainant’s home language has been a major obstacle to the effective implementation of domestic violence legislation. This problem may need to be raised in Namibia in conjunction with forthcoming domestic violence legislation. (This issue is part of the draft protocol for police on rape which is under discussion.)

Preparatory work is underway for a domestic violence advocacy campaign which will feature radio serials and video production in indigenous languages aimed at rural audiences. The British Government has provided almost 100 000 British pounds for this project. The company Quiet Storm has been engaged to produce the media material under the supervision of the LAC, following on our successful partnership in producing the maintenance videos. Willem is acting as liaison between the local British High Commission, Quiet Storm and the LAC. Consultation, which serves an awareness-raising function in itself, began in September with a half-day workshop in Windhoek attended by representatives from government, NGOs and community-based groups. This was followed during October-December with focus group discussions and personal interviews in Oshakati, Rehoboth, Keetmanshoop, Okakarara, Khorixas, Otjimbingwe, Walvis Bay and Rundu. Collette Campher has been closely involved with the consultation process, which is also providing her with some valuable experience on gender issues and research techniques. The local workshops have been video-taped and can be drawn on for a variety of purposes, as they provide a gauge of attitudes and understandings about domestic violence in different communities.

A newspaper article on domestic violence courts in Ontario, Canada (by Dianne) appeared in The Namibian in September.

ORGANISING MEN AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The GR&AP worked together with the LAC’s Legal Education Programme (LEP) to host a national conference on this topic on 23-25 February 2000. This workshop was attended by 250 men from
virtually all parts of Namibia, as well as by guest speakers from Zimbabwe, South Africa and Canada. Further details on the conference are contained in the conference report [downloadable from GR&AP page in pdf format] and in an article in the first LAC newsletter. The conference was successful in inspiring men in the various regions to begin work around the issue of violence against women, and (as hoped) it has also led to the formation of a national men’s organisation – Namibian Men for Change (NAMEC). The event received excellent media coverage, including coverage of a night vigil in which Namibia’s “real men” demonstrated (and ululated!) against violence against women outside the High Court building, and which featured a stirring keynote speech by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Namibia (UNAM).

Since the conference, the GR&AP has assisted the LEP with some follow-up activities pertaining to the establishment of the national men’s organisation (advising on the constitution of the new group, facilitating links with other men’s groups and with funders, etc).

After a mid-year visit to Canada, Dianne drew up a report for NAMEC and MMC members on issues relating to the mobilisation of men against violence in Canada. During the visit, Dianne also made several contacts in Canada which could lead to training and/or exchanges for interested men from Namibia.

In November, Willem attended a conference in Switzerland hosted by the World Council of Churches and the YMCA. The aim of the conference was to create a “Global Network of Men in Solidarity with Women”. The outcome of the conference was very positive in the sense that closer ties were created with men’s groups from all over the world. Organisations in Zambia and Zimbabwe indicated that they would like to create a closer regional link with NAMEC. Willem will follow up on this issue with NAMEC.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN GENERAL

Dianne prepared a section on law reform on rape and domestic violence for the 2000 UNDP Human Development Report, which is about violence against women in Namibia. Dianne also gave detailed feedback to the UNDP on successive draft outlines for this report. The publication was delayed by the UNDP and may appear only in 2001. For the second consecutive year, there has been friction between UNDP and many of the local people who have been asked to work on the UNDP report, in part because of UNDP’s insistence on unrealistic time frames for contributions from local groups and because of a growing sense that UNDP is inappropriately taking advantage of local goodwill. Because of UNDP’s timing, the present report is expected to be merely a summary of existing information rather than a source of any new information. Future institutional involvement on the part of LAC in these reports should be carefully assessed, to weigh the time and effort involved against the utility of the output from the LAC’s perspective.

Following on Dianne’s visit to Canada, negotiations are underway with Mandy Bonisteel of George Brown University to visit Namibia to organise advanced training in the counselling of persons who have experienced rape and domestic violence as part of the UNAM curriculum for nurses and social workers, and in other forums for grassroots women. Mandy has already successfully transferred components of the Canadian course she teaches to Bosnia. Her visit to Namibia is tentatively scheduled for February 2001.

Nicky Marais has been engaged as a consultant to arrange art therapy workshops for community-based paralegals, to equip them with techniques for dealing with the emotional aspects of violence which are inevitably intertwined with the legal issues brought to them by their clients.
This technique has proved to be very successful in South Africa, particularly for women who may have trouble discussing such matters because of their cultural background or lack of education. The GR&AP will be hosting two free workshops for training of grassroots level trainers, and one fee-paying workshop for local artists, psychologists, etc. The idea behind this initiative is to ensure that appropriate support services are in place to deal with the increased disclosure of violence expected in light of the new law on rape and the forthcoming law on domestic violence.

VULNERABLE WITNESSES

Provisions concerning vulnerable witnesses originally included in the rape bill have been moved to a separate and more extensive Vulnerable Witnesses Bill which will apply in all contexts. The GR&AP continued to make input into this bill throughout 2000, in the form of internal meetings with the drafter, the Prosecutor-General and the Minister of Justice. On issues where government officials were in disagreement, the GR&AP has conducted additional research and attempted to draw up alternative proposals to facilitate internal discussions. The invitation to play this role is a mark of confidence in the input of the GR&AP, which has for its part respected government confidentiality in respect of such internal discussions. The draft bill is not yet publicly available, but is in its final stages as of the end of 2000.

MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND OTHER FAMILY LAW ISSUES

The long-awaited report on proposals for divorce law reform [downloadable from GR&AP page in pdf format], which includes a draft bill, was finalised in June and launched with a press release in early July. A summary of the report which is suitable for public education purposes accompanies the report and is being disseminated separately to interested persons and groups. Press coverage of this issue has been fairly good and radio interviews on the report were done by Dianne in English and by Willem in Afrikaans. Willem also gave a presentation on the research to the Divorce Club organised by the Namibian Women’s Association (NAWA).

Canadian Lawyers Association for International Human Rights (CLAIHR) interns Melanie Demarte and Treena Sikora have begun comparative law research on marital property regimes for a paper planned for 2001.

The LAC in its role as a member of the Southern African Legal Assistance Network (SALAN) will be hosting a workshop in Namibia on marriage, divorce and inheritance under civil and customary law tentatively scheduled for 6-8 March 2001. Preparations for that workshop have already begun, including attempts to secure to attendance of an experts on customary law from Australia who has written extensively about developments in the South African region.

Dianne arranged a meeting between Michelle O’Sullivan and Lulama Nongogo of the Women’s Legal Centre in South Africa and members of the LRDC Subcommittee on recognition of customary marriage, to discuss the South African experience in this area. The meeting proved to be a fruitful forum, as several important technical problems were raised and discussed.

The GR&AP participated in mock parliamentary hearings on the Married Persons Equality Act, organised by NDI as part of a training exercise for parliamentarians. This proved to be a good introduction to the new Parliamentary Committee on Gender. The documents prepared for the mock hearings were adapted for use in educational material. Ruth assisted with this project after the venue for the final portion of the exercise was moved to Oshakati.
Two educational booklets on the Married Persons Equality Act were produced – a detailed guide and a shorter booklet aimed at the general public. Both are illustrated publications written in simple English. They will be translated into Afrikaans in 2001.

MAINTENANCE AND CHILDREN’S LEGISLATION

The stalled Maintenance Act suddenly and unexpectedly began to move again in November. Dianne is assisting Mr Truter of the Ministry of Justice with fine-tuning of the section of the act rejected by Cabinet more than a year ago, so that this bill can return to Cabinet and get back on track. The involvement of the GR&AP at this level is a sign of the government’s confidence in our ability to make an important contribution.

Lobbying on the long-delayed Maintenance Act and children’s legislation continues, although we have been encouraging other organisations to take a lead here. Sister Namibia spearheaded a march and petition to the President highlighting these issues on International Women’s Day in March, and we helped to draft the petition on these points. We have also given the Multimedia Campaign on Violence against Women and Children a written list of suggested lobbying activities which other groups might consider. The GR&AP continues to respond to many queries for information on these bills, and to give media interviews on them as requested, while encouraging such interviews to be shifted to other groups where possible.

Prudence Negumbo has been engaged as a consultant to prepare a report on maintenance guidelines for Namibia, as a means to raise the level of maintenance awards which currently appear to bear little relations to the actual cost of living.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Dianne has been advising the Women’s Manifesto Group on legal issues relating to the 50/50 campaign on affirmative action for women at all levels of government.

LAND

With input from Norman Tjombe of the LAC Land, Environment and Development Project (LEAD), Dianne and previous LAC director and LEAD co-ordinator Andrew Corbett, Willem is in the process of completing a study of gender and land issues on resettlement farms allocated in terms of the Commercial (Agricultural) Land Reform Act. Data has been collected through interviews with residents at Tsintsabis, Excelsior, King Kauluma, Skoonheid, Drimiopsis, Mangeti Dune and Gam. Monica has assisted Willem with most of the interviews. Two students, Moses Bonza and Nangula Kauluma, also helped with interviews. This paper will probably be published in early 2001.

Willem and Dianne met with consultants evaluating LEAD, and Dianne attended a feedback meeting with these consultants on behalf of the GR&AP.

Willem attended a workshop on Resettlement Co-operatives in August to discuss a forthcoming study by NEPRU.

Dianne and Treena attended the Roundtable Discussion on aboriginal title organised by LEAD in September.
Dianne conducted some informal research on gender and land at the request of the Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Welfare.

**FARMWORKERS AND DOMESTIC WORKERS**

The GR&AP is attempting to engage James Suzman as a consultant to analyse the impact of the LAC’s recommendations in the report of the Presidential Commission (which has just been released after a long delay on the part of the government), and to propose a strategy for follow-up action by the LAC.

**LAW REFORM AND ADVOCACY**

Dianne presented a summary of a lengthy academic paper at the UNAM Law Faculty Conference on Ten Years of Nationhood, held in September. The paper, which proved to be somewhat controversial, was entitled “Gender and Law Reform in Namibia: The First Ten Years”. It will be published in a book of the conference proceedings. This paper was also the basis for a presentation at an NGO conference organised by Sister Namibia and the Women’s Manifesto group in September, and a presentation at a Namibian Non-governmental Organisations Forum (NANGOF) Forum on Participatory Development in November. (The presentation was noted by means of a caricature of Dianne in *Die Republikein*.)

Willem (along with LEP co-ordinator Milly Jafta and Katutura Advice Office gender officer Monica Nganjone) attended a two-day workshop on advocacy skills organised by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the Co-operative for Research and Education in October at the Harmony Centre near Windhoek. The LAC participants have agreed to organise an in-house seminar for LAC staff on lobbying and advocacy in early 2001 to share ideas from this workshop.

Willem also attended a workshop on community organisation and mobilisation in September, organised by the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN). The need for closer research co-operation and information sharing between NGOs in Namibia was also discussed.

Dianne remained in regular contact with the LRDC Secretariat on various matters. Dianne also had ongoing contact with the Chairperson of the Multimedia Campaign on Violence Against Women and Children, Sister Namibia, the Women’s Manifesto Group and certain government officials on matters of mutual interest.

**GENERAL**

Dianne and Milly initiated a familiarisation meeting with the new Minister of Women Affairs and Child Welfare and the Permanent Secretary, in which a fruitful discussion about areas of future co-operation took place.

Dianne also initiated a familiarisation meeting with the new Parliamentary Committee on Gender to introduce the work of the GR&AP and to discuss future areas of co-operation. The input was well-received by the committee, which is chaired by George Kaiyamo.

Dianne and LAC lawyer Johann Malan held a meeting with a German parliamentarian to discuss AIDS and gender issues.
The GR&AP gave input for an **NGO Shadow Report on Beijing** which the NGO committee on Beijing planned to produce, but it is our information that this report was never completed because the consultant engaged for the task did not come through. (The government report astonishingly failed to mention maintenance at all, just to cite the most glaring shortcoming.) Treena attended a workshop held by the Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Welfare to allow for **NGO input into a government report in terms of the SADC Addendum on Violence against Women**, but the forum was not very useful as it was poorly attended and only the introduction to the final report was available for scrutiny.

Various staff of the GR&AP and LEP attended several meetings with Ursula Steller of the **North-South Institute** to discuss funding issues, with other **Austrian journalists and guests** which were directed to LAC by the North-South Institute.

Dianne reviewed an academic article on affirmative action in Namibia for the *International Journal of Women’s History*.

Perri Caplan has been engaged to **update the LAC’s website** and to put more LAC materials on line. This work will be facilitated by the GR&AP.

Dianne met with representatives of the **Ministry of Youth and Sport** to discuss possible joint work on legal issues around prostitution in 2001.

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

Dianne Hubbard received an individual grant by the Ford Foundation for a 3-week trip to Canada in order to make contact with people working on relevant issues in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario. The trip took place in June and was extremely useful and inspiring.

Collette Campher has been appointed as a gender assistant to both the GR&AP and LEP.

The **Canadian Lawyers Association for International Human Rights (CLAIHR)** is planning to continue to provide legal interns who have completed their degrees to the LAC on a regular basis for 6-month stints, at no cost to the LAC. There were two consecutive interns during 2000 – Melanie Demarte and Treena Sikora. Melanie worked on finalising a report on television violence, helped plan Dianne’s trip to Canada, assisted with the men’s conference and did some comparative law research on marital property. Treena assisted with workshops, drafted some newspaper and newsletter articles, did background research on maintenance tables, prostitution and evidence law, and continued the comparative research on marital property. We are expecting two simultaneous interns from CLAIHR next year if Canadian funding for the programme is sufficient.

We have advertised for the new post of **trainee legal researcher**, and hope to appoint someone in this position to begin in early 2001.

**PUBLICATIONS**

*NAMLEX Update 2000* (the annual supplement to the Index of laws in force in Namibia)

*Domestic Violence Cases Reported to the Namibian Police: Case Characteristics and Police Response*, published jointly by the Law Reform and Development Commission (LRDC) and the LAC,
with joint copyright, completed in 1999 but released to the public after printing was completed in early 2000.

“Assault And Murder In Our Homes Daily: Violence On Namibian Television”, published as an article in The Namibian.

Proposals for Divorce Law Reform in Namibia, which is a companion to the paper published last year entitled Proposals for Law Reform on the Recognition of Customary Marriages [both of these publications are downloadable in pdf format from the GR&AP page on this website], and which also draws on the background paper entitled The Viability of Divorce Mediation in Namibia: An Analysis with Recommendations.

After The Rape: Preventing HIV, STDs and Pregnancy, published as an independent research paper published in English and Afrikaans, as well as being serialised in 5 parts in The Namibian and in Die Republikein.

Other newspaper reports in The Namibian:
- “Organising Men Against Violence Against Women” (January)
- “Rape Re-defined: A Summary of the New Combating of Rape Act” (February; reprinted in LAC newsletter)
- “When Violence Hits Home: Domestic Violence Cases In Namibia” (March; a summary of the report entitled Domestic Violence Cases Reported to the Namibian Police: Case Characteristics and Police Response)
- “Assault And Murder In Our Homes Daily: Violence On Namibian Television” (April; as noted above, the only form in which this research report was published)
- “Domestic Violence Courts in Canada: A Special Solution” (September)
- “Why the Law on Sodomy Should be Repealed” (November)
- “Gender Scorecard 2000” (December; downloadable in pdf format from the GR&AP page on this website)

“Gender and Law Reform in Namibia: The First Ten Years”, to be published in the proceedings of the UNAM Law Faculty Conference on Ten Years of Nationhood.

Towards the Development of Protocols for the Combating of Rape Act, a background document for police, social workers, prosecutors, magistrates and other professionals dealing with the act.

A Guide to the Combating of Rape Act, plus a shorter version of this document for the general public.

A Guide to the Married Persons Equality Act, plus a shorter version of this document for the general public.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

1. The influence of our research and lobbying is evident in the Combating of Rape Act, which includes almost all of the changes proposed by LAC and the NGO coalition which submitted joint proposals to Parliament.

Similarly, the current draft Domestic Violence Bill and the draft Vulnerable Witnesses Bill both draw heavily on LAC proposals.
2. News coverage of the work of the GR&AP is good, particularly on radio and in the print media, meaning that our research results are widely disseminated.

Our workshops have also been well-attended by a wide cross-section of participants, and have attracted prominent government policy-makers (such as Ministers, Deputy Ministers and the Ombudswoman).

3. We have been included in a number of internal government forums, in the role of technical adviser on draft gender legislation. This is a strong mark of government confidence in the value of the LAC’s contribution.

Our efforts to form stronger links with the Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Welfare and the Parliamentary Committee on Gender were very well-received.

4. The work of the GR&AP has been favourably acknowledged both locally and internationally, as the information and quotes below illustrate.

- The following paragraph appears in the *Namibia National Progress Report on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action* prepared by the Department of Women Affairs (July 1999) at page 47:

> Another organ that has been in the frontline with gender- and law-related research is the Gender Research Project (GRP) of the Legal Assistance Centre. The GRP has continued to plan work together with the Multi-Media Campaign on Violence Against Women and Children, organising specific awareness and advocacy campaigns on domestic violence. These campaigns have been, so far, the most effective means of disseminating information to combat violence against women and children. In addition through the GRP it has been possible to advocate for the Combating of Rape Bill and the ‘Domestic Violence Bill’, which are two of the most important Bills to combat violence against women and children.

- The GR&AP published a report on a survey of television violence and its effects in *The Namibian* in March 2000. In June 2000, President Nujoma suggested that NBC TV should stop showing violent films on criminals, saying that they damage the minds of the nation’s children. Although the LAC study was not mentioned, clearly it may have been influential. In a similar view, Deputy Minister of Prisons and Correctional Services Jeremiah Nambinga stated, “It is a correct international perception that movies that depict crime and violence would have a direct influence on the behaviour of young people, even on the behaviour of some adults. There would thus be a connection between a public exposure to programmes depicting anti-social behaviour on our screens and the crime rate.” Unfortunately, these comments have arisen in a context where government appears to be seeking greater political control over the NBC and so have not had such a positive effect as they might otherwise have had (see *The Namibian*, 7 July 2000 column entitled “And Another Thing…”, also 27 June and 20 June 2000 editions).

- Deputy Minister of Justice Kawana stated in June 2000 that proposed legislation to do away with discrimination against children born outside of marriage should go to Parliament by the end of the year or early next year. The statement appears to refer to the Children’s Status Act which the GR&AP drafted in 1994 (see *The Namibian* 12 June 2000).

- “I think you are doing the most marvellous work” (Charlene Smith, well-known South African journalist, rape survivor and rape activist, email on 23 December 1999).
“On behalf of this rape survivor and all of us here who have been through some form of sexual violence – thank you for your commitment” (Charlene Smith, email on 10 January 2000).

The local office of the British Council sent the Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse Service Directory to the Gender Officer Andrea Murray at the head office of the British Council, to be used as a model for other countries. Ms Murray agreed that “it will be a good model and we will use it” (information from Gillian Belben on 9 December 1999).

The South African expert guests who attended the workshop on domestic violence enthusiastically praised the LAC research report on domestic violence and its accompanying recommendations for legislation.


A complaint laid by the LAC and sister NGOs (via the Multimedia Campaign on Violence Against Women and Children) about inattention to violence against women in the UNDP Human Development Report for 1999 led to a decision that the 2000 UNDP Report would concentrate solely on this topic. The complaint was cited by UNDP as being the catalyst for the decision in a July 2000 meeting.

The recently released report of the Presidential Commission on Farmworkers and Domestic Workers included a very favourable description of the research report and recommendations prepared by the GR&AP in collaboration with the Social Sciences Division (SSD) of the Multi-Disciplinary Research Centre at UNAM several years ago:

*Very comprehensive text which examines and reports on the status of domestic workers in Namibia. Built around a set of base-line data gathered through extensive research, it examines the status of domestic workers from a variety of perspectives. It incorporates a useful historical account of domestic workers and uses this to contextualise its more recent findings. It discusses the status of domestic workers in pre- and post-Independence Namibia by reference to key indicators relating, among other things, to hours worked.*

**Dianne Hubbard**  
Co-ordinator  
December 2000