

Kampala Declaration

Prevent Gender-based Violence in Africa

We are representatives of NGOs, women's groups, cities, municipalities and United Nations agencies from 10 countries in the Horn, Eastern and Southern Africa.

We gathered in Kampala, Uganda from September 4th to 6th, 2003 to conduct a Regional Dialogue: *Preventing Gender-based Violence: Sharing Experiences, Breaking New Ground*, organized by Raising Voices and UN-HABITAT's Safer Cities Programme.

We call for action to prevent and eradicate gender-based violence in Africa.

GIVEN THAT:

- ❑ Gender-based violence is a violation of basic human rights.
- ❑ Gender-based violence results from an imbalance of power between women and men and is deeply entrenched in some cultural practices and intimate relationships.
- ❑ Gender-based violence is not a private issue but one that involves society as a whole and therefore calls for a holistic approach promoting preventive solutions.

WE RECOGNISE THAT:

- ❑ Efforts must focus on preventing rather than merely responding to gender-based violence since prevention addresses the root causes of violence, has farther-reaching effects and is ultimately more cost effective.
- ❑ Prevention efforts must be holistic in conception and comprehensive in design. They need to engage a broad cross section of the community through a range of methodologies.
- ❑ Programmatic tools need to be developed in order to implement effective programs, to document practical experiences, to monitor and evaluate progress, and support practitioners and local authorities.
- ❑ The civil society has a catalytic role to play in mobilizing communities, promoting women's rights, building the bridge between policy and practice and facilitating change at the grassroots.
- ❑ Local authorities have a crucial role to play in mainstreaming gender in safety policies, supporting and allocating appropriate resources to gender-based violence initiatives, and promoting women's access to strategic positions within local government.

WE RECOMMEND:

- ❑ **Community Mobilization:** Strive to engage the whole community from women, men, youth and children at the grassroots to community leaders and professionals within local institutions. Address gender-based violence as a community's responsibility instead of making it a 'women's issue' and use multiple strategies to reach out to all sectors in society.

- ❑ **Awareness Raising:** Harness community creativity, expertise and resources and tailor initiatives to different cultural contexts in order to make them more successful in changing attitudes. Develop sustained follow-up activities to take advantage of momentum generated and link awareness with action.
- ❑ **Media:** Forge positive relationships with the media establishment. Proactively and constructively involve them in the process of planning communication strategies. Pay close attention to the intended audience and use traditional, mainstream and new media to reach out to diverse groups.
- ❑ **Working with Men:** Work *with* rather than against men to develop more inclusive, relevant and cost effective responses to violence prevention that will benefit entire communities. Use benefits-based approaches and identify male allies in communities, local government and non-government organizations to improve impact and institutionalization.
- ❑ **Strengthening Existing Community Structures:** Harness communities' social capital by involving all community stakeholders such as citizens, traditional and religious leaders, lawyers, police, and other professionals. Work with these structures to integrate the work of violence prevention in their policies and practice.
- ❑ **Encourage Partnership between NGOs and local governments:** Develop stronger relationships with local governments who are well positioned to effect sustainable change by facilitating city-level action and mobilizing resources to this effect.
- ❑ **Local government capacity building:** Strengthen local governments' role and ability in social crime prevention, fighting violence against women, and increasing women's involvement through training and sensitization activities.

WE THEREFORE, CALL UPON:

- ❑ The **United Nations**, through its mechanisms and agencies, to promote such initiatives and to document the progress made in gender-based violence prevention.
- ❑ All members of the **African Union** to ratify and take concrete measures in their respective countries to operationalize the Women's Rights Protocol, with specific attention to Article Four on the Rights to Life, Integrity and Security of the Person which calls for the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence.
- ❑ **Governments**, at the central and local level, to commit to actualize policy and legal provisions on gender-based violence at the grassroots level.
- ❑ **Funding agencies** to support prevention efforts of NGOs recognizing that changing attitudes and behavior is a long-term process.
- ❑ **Practitioners and activists** to continue building partnerships between stakeholders working on gender-based violence through dialogues, exchanges and networks.

Such efforts would allow us to monitor our progress, reaffirm our commitment and lead the way in preventing and eradicating gender-based violence throughout Africa.