



**Institute for Security Studies**  
**Institut d'Etudes de Sécurité**

Knowledge empowers Africa • Le savoir émancipe l'Afrique

# RECENT INITIATIVES IN ADDRESSING GENDER VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

*Louise Jackson,*

*Intern (1996), Crime and Policing Policy Project, Institute for Security Studies*

Occasional Paper No 14 - January 1997

---

## INTRODUCTION

The election of a new government has brought a significant change in the official attitude towards crime and policing issues. The ANC-led Government is committed to uphold human rights and to the empowerment of marginal groups, and is increasingly becoming aware of the needs of victims of crime. The National Crime Prevention Strategy expresses a commitment to victims, and particularly women and children.

The central importance of addressing the needs of victims of crime has been emphasised elsewhere in the world, and in South Africa these needs have primarily been recognised by non-government organisations. They have tended to focus on victims of gender violence and child abuse, rather than victims of crime in general.<sup>1</sup>

A small number of special police units have been set up to deal with the needs of victims of gender violence, but for the most part, the response of the South African Police Service (SAPS) has been inadequate. Victims' contact with the criminal justice system normally ends with the reporting of the crime.

The police have generally understood their duties towards rape victims to comprise the laying of charges, accompanying victims to the district surgeon, investigating the case, and submitting evidence and preparing for court.<sup>2</sup>

There is no clear police procedure in respect of domestic violence. Section 3.1 of the Family Violence Act of 1993 requires a "*peace officer*" to serve an interdict on any person accused of family violence. This is intended to protect abused women and their children against further assault. If the suspected perpetrator violates the conditions of the interdict, he may be imprisoned or fined.<sup>3</sup> However, very few members of the SAPS are aware that they are supposed to serve such interdicts, and the relevant forms are not available at all police stations.<sup>4</sup>

Section 5 of the Act also provides that a husband may be convicted of the rape of his wife. However, the Act does not refer to relationships outside marriage.

The public and service organisations complain of ineffective policing and bias in the police's handling of crimes against women. Training policemen how to treat victims of gender violence is widely considered to be an integral part of the transformation of the police service. Janine Rauch has commented that "*police attitudes towards women in general, and to violence against women in particular, require further attention.*"<sup>5</sup>

As the first point of contact with the criminal justice system, the police have a vital role to play in determining how much stress a woman suffers, and her potential for recovery. The insensitivity of the police to the needs of victims of gender violence is often experienced as secondary victimisation. Police hostility and the contemptuous treatment of female victims,

coupled with ignorance of the legal provisions protecting women reporting a crime, can result in feelings of helplessness and a reluctance to turn to the police. There is a stark contrast between the rate at which gender violence cases is reported and estimates of actual instances of rape and particularly domestic violence in South Africa.<sup>6</sup>

In response to growing concern, training programmes aimed at addressing the needs of victims of gender violence have been initiated. This paper will concentrate on the existing support systems for victims of gender violence and those envisaged by the Ministry of Safety and Security. The paper will examine training programmes for SAPS members that seek to change bias among policemen and enable officers to deal more effectively with those who have suffered gender crimes. The idea that "victim empowerment and support could prove to be one of the most effective ways of addressing the increasing crime rate" will also be examined.<sup>7</sup> The impact of the training will be assessed, and a set of guidelines and standards formulated to facilitate the evaluation of gender sensitivity training in the future.

## **THE EXTENT OF GENDER VIOLENCE: DEFINING THE PROBLEM**

There is no clear definition of gender violence in South Africa, in part because of the way in which acts of violence against women are recorded. For example, a knife attack on a woman by her partner will be recorded as "*aggravated assault*", or "*assault with intent to commit murder*". Depending on the degree of violence, the attitude of the investigating officer and the weapon used, the police will document domestic violence as common assault, rape, general sexual harassment or murder. This makes it difficult to assess how much domestic violence is reported, and the response to it. Police members dealing with victims often do not regard rape and domestic violence as crimes, while the police have traditionally used inappropriate crisis intervention techniques that avoid arrest and seek to reconcile the assailant and the victim, rather than separating them. Where the police and courts do respond, action is generally ineffective, and guided by vague and inconsistent policies.

The United Nations Declaration on Violence against Women defines gender violence as "*any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life ... Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family and in the community, including battery, sexual abuse of female children, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence, violence related to exploitation, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women, forced prostitution, and violence against women perpetrated and condoned by the state.*"<sup>8</sup>

South Africa is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, but has yet to ratify it. By supporting victims and addressing their needs, and by enacting laws that favour victims and ensuring that action is taken against offenders, the state can send out a powerful message that rape, domestic violence and femicide (female homicide) are considered to be serious crimes and human rights violations.

## **THE INCIDENCE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA**

South African women experience increasingly high levels of violence, although official statistics indicating the extent of these crimes are often ambiguous, or grossly underestimate the actual occurrence. Police statistics of rape cases in Gauteng show that 4 965 rapes were reported in January - June 1994, 5 546 cases in the same period of 1995, and 5 467 cases in the same period of 1996. The breakdown by area for January to June 1996 was:

- North Rand – 555;
- Pretoria – 932;
- West Rand – 566;
- Johannesburg – 693;
- East Rand – 881;
- Vaal Rand – 636; and
- Soweto – 1 204.

The slight drop in the number of cases reported during the 1996 period may be due to under-reporting — the Johannesburg branch of People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA) estimates that one in twenty cases of rape is reported to the police.<sup>9</sup> National statistics for rapes reported between 1990 and 1995 show a gradual increase every year from 20 321 to 36 888.<sup>10</sup> Certain women's organisations estimate that as many as a third of South African women may have been raped.

Because so many rapes are not reported, official statistics should not be considered an accurate reflection. Failure to report can be ascribed to factors such as lack of faith in the police, feelings of shame, and guilt and pressure placed on victims by peers or family members.

The apathetic, insensitive or even mocking response of the authorities to domestic violence was underscored at a workshop in 1983 on women battery hosted by NICRO's Women Support Centre in Cape Town. At this, a female lawyer revealed that the response of one judge had been to say: "*Why complain? Women in the coloured community are used to being beaten up. Violence is part of their nature.*" Cultural norms and myths are often used to protect perpetrators of gender violence. Female circumcision and the lobola and dowry system are still practised in African society, with the latter remaining widespread in South Africa.

## **THE INCIDENCE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST GIRLS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The Nedcor project on crime, violence and investment has found that children and teenagers are two and a half times more likely to be raped than adults.<sup>11</sup> Recent statistics compiled by the Child Protection Unit of the police provide alarming evidence that a significant percentage of the violence committed against children consists of sexual abuse. Between January and May 1996, 8 038 cases of sexual abuse of girls were reported to the police, of which 5 390 were recorded as rape. While boys are more likely to suffer physical assault, girls are more likely to be sexually abused, with street children being the most vulnerable to rape and prostitution. Social workers at the trauma centre of the Centre for Violence and Reconciliation believe children are psychologically more at risk than adults when exposed to violence, and are more likely to display symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder a year or two after a violent incident. The child's developmental age and cognitive and emotional inability to comprehend violence can prolong the time taken to recover. As with battered women, children are often victims of repeat abuse. The perpetrator is in most cases a family member. The new approach of the SAPS includes provision for the needs of children who have been sexually assaulted.

## **THE EFFECTS OF CRIME**

Women and girls are often victims of repeat abuse, while other distinguishing features of gender violence are that women are more likely than men to know their attackers, are more likely to be attacked in their own homes, and are more likely to be blamed for the crimes against them.<sup>12</sup>

Cultural and economic factors affect the prognosis for recovery. The psychological effects are often transmitted to other family members, as reflected by the deviant behaviour of many children exposed to family violence. The Government's National Crime Prevention Strategy remarks that "*victimisation itself lies at the heart of much retributive crime, and the absence of means of victim aid and empowerment play an important role in the cyclical nature of violence and crime in South Africa. Whilst victim aid is often regarded as a remedial rather than a preventive measure in dealing with crime, this view is dangerously misleading. Victims of past or current criminal activity, if untreated, frequently become perpetrators of either retributive violence or of violence displaced within the social or domestic arena.*"<sup>13</sup>

## **TRADITIONAL RESPONSES TO VICTIMS OF GENDER CRIMES BY POLICE AND OTHER SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

Some argue that the criminal justice system and its agents, such as the police, are patriarchal: the state is male, and the law sees and treats women the way men see and treat women.<sup>14</sup>

Most laws have been rooted in traditional attitudes to the roles of men and women and sexual mores, reinforcing the belief in the sanctity of the nuclear family, and preventing women from bringing charges of assault against their husbands and partners. South African criminal law does not enable partners to lay charges for the specific crime of domestic violence. Because of the culture of the police force, in which violence against women is not considered a serious crime, cases of gender assault are often treated lightly. The attachment of the term 'domestic' to violence within homes allows the State to shrug off its responsibility to protect all citizens. The vulnerability of women is reinforced by inadequacies in the legal response to gender violence.<sup>15</sup>

### **NGOs and Welfare Organisations**

The task of helping victims of gender violence has traditionally fallen to service organisations. The new emphasis in the police on an "*integrated and multi-agency approach*" – including the involvement of civil society – has not yet had much effect, but does serve to encourage a more active role by NGOs in policing, where their specialised skills and knowledge can be put to use. However, their future role has been placed in question by their difficulties in securing funding.

### **Police Intervention in Gender Violence**

Section 205 (3) of the South African Constitution, as adopted in May 1996, and the Police Service Act of 1995 describe the role of the police as the prevention of crime, the investigation of any offence or alleged offence, the maintenance of public order, and the preservation of internal security.

The extent to which the police use their discretion in law enforcement is frequently guided by a code of conduct and internal policy set by individual station commanders, which often depends on the personality of the commanding officer. Because, it is argued, laws cannot be automatically translated into policing practice, lower-ranking policemen have to use their discretion – with the inevitable consequence that discrimination and malpractice occur.<sup>16</sup> Serious concerns have been raised, particularly by the women's movement in South Africa and abroad, about the absence of a uniform police attitude and response to gender violence, which is ascribed to police discretion. Training in gender sensitivity has only recently been introduced to the curricula of some police personnel, and young and inexperienced officers are often considered unsuitable to deal with victims of domestic violence.

### **Police Response to the Needs of Child Victims**

The police are often reluctant to pursue cases of child abuse – and especially those involving the sexual assault of children – against family members. This may lead community members to take the law into their own hands. A more positive community response has been to put pressure on the SAPS to take action. In one of the Gauteng townships, women recently marched on the local police station to demand action against a man alleged to have sexually assaulted his four year old daughter. The police, who had declined to act on grounds that they lacked sufficient evidence, arrested the man after the women's protest and the intervention of a social worker. There is frequently a lack of co-ordination between welfare services and the police, and the police response to victims is often hampered by unnecessary red tape.

## **LEGISLATION RELATING TO GENDER VIOLENCE AND GENDER SENSITIVITY**

The Prevention of Family Violence Act of 1993, currently being amended to deal more effectively with support for victims, seeks to help victims of domestic violence. It enables women to interdict abusive partners from having contact with them for a specified period of time, without having to go through a lengthy and often costly process, as in the past.

A survey carried out in Natal by Lawyers for Human Rights and the Advice Desk for Abused Women showed, however, that of the sixty per cent of SAPS station commanders aware of the Act, only one had informed staff of its provisions. Only a few stations had interdict forms

available.<sup>17</sup>

Many NGOs working with women, complain that the police are ignorant of laws designed to protect the rights of women. One monitoring organisation notes that "*police culture works against women ... the attitudes and assumptions that the police have about women undermine the proper functioning of the law.*"<sup>18</sup>

The recently passed Gender Commission Act has important consequences for the protection of women's constitutional rights. It provides for the establishment of a Commission on Gender Equality that can make recommendations to the national parliament or any other legislature on the promotion of women's interests, and can investigate violations of women's rights. It is expected that the Commission will have a significant impact on legislation in the near future.

## **TRAINING IN THE SAPS AND THE POLICE CULTURE**

Historically, police training in South Africa has been of a military kind. Police officers have been isolated from civil society and are often positioned in opposition to it, a tradition that community policing forums have been established to change. At national and provincial levels, SAPS management has been addressing the issue of appropriate and effective training. However, many police officers – and particularly those who have been in the force for more than ten years – are resistant to change.

Training courses provided by the SAPS include basic training, training for trainers and advanced courses. It is estimated that, nationally, 26 000 police officers are illiterate, mostly those who have recently been absorbed into the SAPS from the former homelands. Not everyone undergoes training. As a result of inadequate resources at training centres, recruits are often given the barest details of what their jobs entail, and are left to find their own way. Compact and user-friendly training manuals have not been compiled as an emergency alternative or supplement to basic training.

At some centres training is still racially segregated, and there are disparities in the quality of training and the resources available to support training programmes. Not all centres reflect the demographics of South Africa and the political changes in the country. Statistics show that 54 per cent of the personnel employed in 1995 by the SAPS were African, and eight per cent coloured.<sup>19</sup> In view of the high illiteracy rate, especially among black police officers, and the high incidence of rape in African and coloured townships, uniform and effective gender-sensitivity training should form a vital part of basic training. Also of concern is the retraining of the police employed in the previous system.

Organisational culture in the SAPS. There is great optimism about the effect that training will have on the reform of ineffective and unaccountable policing, especially in the black townships, and the SAPS is spearheading many of the current changes in the criminal justice system. However, training alone cannot address such factors as the deep sexual and racial bias in South African society, the fact that aggressively male personality types are attracted to police work as a career, and the assumption that rape and other gender violence should be dealt with by female police officers. In reality, relatively few police women work in charge offices or flying squads where the first contact is often made with victims of gender violence.

It is hoped that training in how to deal with victims of gender violence will help reduce this kind of crime. However, it will have to be coupled with advances in gender equality in society at large and the "forced incentive" of legislation. Recent training in the SAPS in race relations has had some impact on some officers who are resisting change.

## **TRAINING IN GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

A number of initiatives are in place to address the training needs of officers dealing with victims of gender violence.

### **The SAPS Training Programme at the Ncedo Centre in Port Elizabeth**

The Ncedo Centre was opened in February 1996 as a means of addressing the needs of victims of gender violence. A range of NGOs, including Rape Crisis and Lifeline, share

premises with the police in order to offer a more holistic service from the moment the crime is reported through to later consultations with victims. The centre is fairly close to one of the crisis points in the area. The first training course for police personnel was based on the six-day SMOT (*Sensitiewe Misdaad Onderzoek Tegnieke*) course, adapted for victims of gender violence. Experts assisted convenors in the initial course. The training was offered to sixteen police officers working in the area. There were problems regarding the ability of certain personnel to implement the training, particularly women, who resisted shift work as it affected their marriages. Other members have, however, been trained to fill this gap. Marieke Mostert, who co-ordinates the Centre and is a legal adviser there, believes the training does not adequately address the question of sexually transmitted diseases, from which victims often suffer. A concern raised by other organisations working with victims of gender violence is that the centre should encourage participation and consult the community more widely to ensure that it is user-friendly and accountable.

### **Initiative in Pretoria**

The Sunnyside Police Station in Pretoria has also taken a lead in responding to victims of rape and domestic violence. A number of police women launched a gender violence section at the police station, to which victims are referred. The three police women in charge of the section are specifically trained to deal with victims, with the SMOT course forming the foundation of their training. Some have also been trained in victim care through the Gauteng gender-sensitivity programme. Their sterling efforts, under stressful circumstances with high caseloads and excessive overtime, are often not acknowledged by their colleagues and superiors.

### **The Role of NGOs in Training**

NGOs that focus on crime against children, young people and women, especially NICRO, POWA and Rape Crisis, have been involved in sporadic gender-sensitivity training of police personnel. This is often on an ad hoc basis, depending on whether gender violence is seen as a priority. The community has also been drawn in on occasions as a way of stimulating people to respond to crime in their areas. The training is not intensive, and largely takes the form of educational workshops. It should, however, be seen as a vital part of the gender-sensitivity programme, as it lays a foundation for the programme and helps identify important actors in the area of gender violence in particular localities. The role of NGOs in monitoring and ensuring that the state is accountable to civil society should be upheld. They can help ensure that the constitutional rights of women are strengthened by the enactment of laws.

### **TRAINING CURRICULA OF THE SAPS**

SAPS training staff initiated a pilot programme in 1995 for new recruits. Module 5, lecture 4 was included in the police science syllabus to deal specifically with victims of crime, including gender violence, and the role of the police. It claims to be more skills based, and moves away from the more directive method of teaching. Recognition is given to the belief that working with victims of gender violence can be more stressful than with others. Training the police in how to recognise and deal with their own stress therefore forms part of this syllabus. It is, however, not on the same level as the current pilot project in Gauteng, and talks are under way to incorporate the latter programme in the SAPS basic training programme. Prior to this, sessions on victims, and more especially rape victims, comprised a small section of the basic training syllabus, forming part of the course entitled "*Background to Personality Development*". Police personnel were given brief, often biased and very theoretical accounts of rape victims, the myths surrounding rape and basic guidelines in dealing with rape complaints. An intensive study and critique of this course was done in 1995. One of the comments was that "*the subject of rape was emphasised for female trainees and taken less seriously by male trainees. This is because the SAP has a policy whereby policewomen deal with rape complainants if possible ... official discourse around rape is still highly masculine.*"<sup>20</sup>

A major breakthrough has been the inclusion of civilians in the teaching staff and an oversight 'guardian' committee for SAPS training. The latter was decided on at a national workshop on victim empowerment and support at the World Trade Centre in August 1996.

## **The Gender Sensitivity Programme – a Partnership between the SAPS, the Ministry of Safety and Security, and Civil Society**

This initiative, aimed at improving police support for victims of gender violence, was taken by the MEC of Safety and Security in Gauteng, Jesse Duarte, in February 1996. Together with the police and thirteen organisations from the Network on Violence Against Women, Duarte's Department drew up a training programme for the police. The initial aim of the programme is to provide 1 800 police members with more skills oriented training in gender sensitivity programmes. The programme consists of a three day training workshop, with about 100 police officials attending at a time. The pilot process is scheduled to run for eighteen sessions, from February 1996 until July 1997. Depending on its success and the availability of funds, this initiative will be repeated – with adjustments to meet local conditions – in other provinces. Inevitably there has been some growing pains. Problems include:

- a very low attendance rate – only 59 of the 100 police personnel expected turned up for the first workshops;
- SAPS members on the course are not all working with victims of sexual abuse and domestic violence; and
- evaluations expected from police management are not consistently carried out.

Because the course is voluntary, the target of 100 people per course has not been reached. The interest shown appears to reflect the attitude of individual police stations or station commanders towards gender sensitivity programmes. The highest and most consistent attendance has come from the Brixton police station in Johannesburg, where the station commander accompanies police officers on the training course. In some cases, police officials have been sent on the course as a form of punishment or have been sent for training when their work does not involve dealing with victims of gender crime. It is difficult to say whether the aims of the training would be better fulfilled if the course was compulsory. Consideration must be given to the questions of resistance to the training and cost-effectiveness.

## **EVALUATION OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES**

The purpose of police training is to provide recruits with practical skills and knowledge so that they can perform their functions, as defined by the Police Service Act of 1995. According to Morgan, attitude changes in the police or reforms of training manuals generally occur "... *not from any internal 'professional' or work ethos, but as a result of political pressure and expediency.*"<sup>21</sup> This is true of the restructuring processes current at work in various South African public institutions.

## **Methodology**

The method that has been employed in writing this paper, included the following:

- The writer conducted an analysis comparing the contents of the various training manuals, with specific reference to gender crimes. This revealed a greater emphasis in the police basic training course on victims of rape than domestic violence or femicide, which is consistent with the general observation that domestic violence is not considered a serious crime. This is likely to change, however, as the Commission on Gender Equality intervenes to ensure that crimes against women become a law enforcement priority in the same way as hijacking and robbery. The study was largely limited to Gauteng, but included a comparison with the training conducted at the Ncedo Centre in Port Elizabeth.
- A questionnaire was distributed at various police stations to assess the police response to gender-sensitivity training.
- Members of the SAPS were observed while dealing with cases of rape and domestic violence, mainly at the Sunnyside Police Station in Pretoria and the Ncedo Centre in Port Elizabeth.
- Interviews were conducted with representatives of the state and civil society on violence and policing.
- A local and international literature survey was undertaken on the subject of victimisation.

## **Constraints**

An important constraint was the absence of police statistics on domestic violence and femicide. As indicated earlier, these crimes were not distinguished from other forms of assault. Statistics provided by the SAPS also conflicted with the findings of NGOs such as NICRO and POWA, mainly as a result of the under-reporting of gender crimes.

Victims of gender violence were not surveyed, and findings were based largely on interviews with experts in the field. Other findings were based on the extensive research on gender crimes.

Those who answered the questionnaire generally gave good feedback, possibly because questionnaires were completed in the presence of station commanders.

The writer was unable to take part in the group sessions of the gender sensitivity course in Gauteng, as it was not open to the public.

### **Key Aspects of the Evaluation Process**

These included:

- the style of teaching;
- the contents of training manuals;
- the target group and their expectations;
- issues dealing with governance;
- the impact of training and its relationship with crime prevention and control; and
- the reform of the police service.

### **TRAINING METHODOLOGY**

Training in the past was mainly conducted by staff and academics in the SAPS. The teaching method was 'top down', with very little participation by trainees, if any. This has been widely criticised and attributed to the culture of the SAPS. "*The highly militarised police culture creates and reinforces a gendered style of police work which supports masculine values and practices,*" according to Rauch.<sup>22</sup> The current training in gender-sensitivity is a leap forward from past practices. The link forged between the Minister of Safety and Security and the National Network on Violence Against Women on the training curricula, contradicts the belief that the public has no access to transformation processes in the police. Training is a collaborative effort involving the State and civil society. The involvement of the Network as a legitimate body whose members have vast experience in this area makes the curricula relevant to victims' needs. The use of small groups as a training environment is more conducive to participation and contributes to the sense of partnership and owning the process of change.

### **CURRICULA**

A major difference between the gender-sensitivity training and Section 4 of the police science syllabus is that the former is more specialised, dealing with both police functions and victim empowerment. The training addresses the needs of victims, as well as recognising the stressful environment in which police officers work and affirming their needs. The gender-sensitivity course has been criticised for not being sufficiently skills-based. The aim of the pilot project is to reach 1 800 police officers in the Gauteng region by February 1997. A more skills-based and intensive course will only be possible at a later stage, when the course is introduced at training centres in all the regions and the training period is extended beyond the current three days. Another concern is that trainers from the Network are not fully acquainted with police procedures and structures. Briefing sessions by SAPS trainers and closer co-ordination between the parties could enhance the usefulness of the course.

### **TARGET GROUP**

Participants were given evaluation sheets after training sessions, in order to assess their understanding, and feedback on the relevance of the course and possible improvements was encouraged. The writer was not part of this process. Overall evaluation after each course was not conducted by the Network or co-ordinators from the Department of Safety and Security. The collation and analysis of the evaluation sheets would have been valuable and could have



affected later courses. The police station is not always the first place where crimes are reported – most cases are reported at the scene of the crime. This has implications for the selection of trainees. Emphasis is usually placed on police officers working in charge offices. It is vitally important that officers who are normally first at the scene of the crime should attend this course, so that they are better able to deal with victims of gender violence. The writer tried to assess which officers from specific sections and police districts were more likely to attend, by analysing the attendance list for the first three courses. This has been a tedious process, as the scope of police branches is vast and no category has been allocated on the list for work function. An attempt was also made to assess whether there was adequate attendance from areas with a higher incidence of rape. As attendance requirements were left to station commanders to decide, it was not clear what criteria were used.

## **REFORM OF THE POLICE SERVICE**

Rauch comments that the "*potential for any new form of training has to be weighed against the effect of the police culture in negating training and reproducing the status quo.*"<sup>23</sup> The policing of gender violence has been, and still is, fraught with undemocratic and wrongful practices. This paper has noted the many cases when rape victims have given evidence of 'secondary victimisation'. Allegations are rife that police officers have protected rapists or failed to do their duty in cases of domestic violence. There have also been claims that policemen have sexually abused women in their custody or in the community they are supposed to protect. Training alone cannot transform bad policing or the culture of the SAPS. Ensuring that SAPS structures become more democratic and accountable to the community are only two aspects of transformation. It takes longer to change attitudes and human resource relations. The hope is that a different set of values will become entrenched in the police service that will serve as a yardstick for the measurement of right and wrong.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

Lord Scarman once expressed the wish for "*a higher level of social skills and professional ethos to be reflected in police training.*"<sup>24</sup> Ethics can be considered more a management than a moral issue. Programmes that include training in gender sensitivity and skills are thus vital both for the police old guard and new recruits.

The recording of gender crimes is crucial in determining the extent of the problem and in devising solutions. Cases of rape and domestic violence should be statistically recorded, as is the case with crimes such as armed robbery and fraud. Classifying gender crimes as assault has severe limitations.

Lessons can be learnt from the operating methods of the Sunnyside Police Station in Pretoria, which has developed its own system for the recording of crimes. Every instance of domestic violence and rape is recorded in detail, even where the complainant has a history of withdrawing charges.

Certain questions can provide guidance in assessing whether training in victim support and empowerment has had a significant impact on crime prevention and control:

Following preventive action, was there a real change in levels of crime?

How much of the change can be attributed to the preventive action? Were there any outside factors affecting the process of change? By what mechanism did the preventive action achieve the reduction in crime? What mediating variables may have accounted for or suppressed the measurable anticipated effects of the preventive action?

What were the side-effects of the action and its effects on other objectives?

How cost-effective was the action?

Can these answers be generalised to other circumstances? What contextual factors influenced the impact of the action?<sup>25</sup>

The impact of the gender-sensitivity training course can be assessed by the trainers when the pilot project ends at the beginning of 1997. It is hoped that they will develop techniques of evaluation, for example by assessing attendance by area.

## ENDNOTES

1. L Vetton, *Women and the Police: Support and Management of Victims*, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Johannesburg, 1995, p 4.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Family Violence Act, No 133 of 1993.
4. B Manby and B Nowrojee, *The State's Response to Domestic Violence*, Human Rights Watch, November 1995, p. 76.
5. J Rauch, *A Critique of South African Police Training for dealing with Rape Cases*, Centre for the Study of Reconciliation and Violence, Johannesburg, February 1996, p. 235.
6. Vetton, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
7. Camerer, *A Victim-centric Approach to Crime Prevention*, African Security Review, 5(4), 1996, p. 20.
8. United Nations, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, United Nations, New York, 1979.
9. POWA, Annual Report 1995, Johannesburg, 1995.
10. Vetton, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
11. Nedcor, *The Nedcor Project on Crime, Violence and Investment*, Nedcor, Johannesburg, June 1996, p. 8.
12. A Morris, *Women, Crime and Criminal Justice*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1987.
13. National Crime Prevention Strategy, 1996, Section 4.10.
14. B Mackinnon, in S Walklate (ed.), *Victimology*, Unwin Hyman, London, 1989, p. 162.
15. C Watts, S Osman *et. al.*, *The Private is Public: A Study of Violence Against Women in Southern Africa*, Barnaby, Zimbabwe, 1995, p. 49.
16. R Reiner, *Policing and the Police*, in *The Oxford Handbook of Criminology*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1994, p 724.
17. Mandy and Nowrojee, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 78.
19. SAPS, Annual Plan of the South African Police Service 1996-97, Department of Safety and Security, Pretoria, 1996.
20. Rauch, *op. cit.*, p. 228.
21. J B Morgan, *The Police Function and the Investigation of Crime*, Gower Publishing Company, England, 1990, p. 31.
22. Rauch, *op. cit.*, p. 225.
23. *ibid*
24. Lord Scarman in Morgan, *op.cit.*, p.30.