

MASIMANYANE WOMEN'S SUPPORT CENTRE

HALF YEAR REPORT (January - June 2002)

Introduction

The first quarter of 2002 was very challenging. We did an in house evaluation of the previous years work and began to talk through the planned activities for 2002. We worked towards improving the overall understanding of what we wanted to achieve in 2002. This process led to the development of additional training for staff who said that they needed more training on women's human rights. We initiated a process of discussing the organisation's strategic plan and linking individual goals into the strategic plan. It is an on-going process.

We appointed a new finance person who provides an internal auditing function as well as financial oversight. We had our annual audit completed in February/March. Both activities were focussed on identifying the short comings of the financial management systems and introducing new systems which would strengthen the financial management and reporting mechanisms.

The processes which we began highlighted the fact that because the organisation has grown so much, lines of communication were sometimes blurred and strategies had to be developed to give everyone equal access to information. As most big organisations know, this is always a huge challenge. We have started the process and we are committed to trying our level best to encourage everyone to input into the process.

Counseling/ Community Outreach programme.

The goals for 2002 for the counseling are as follows:

- ❖ To contribute to the increased utilization of counseling facilities. We planned to achieve this by providing in-service training to staff and by organising refresher courses for staff on rape, domestic violence and IV/AIDS.
- ❖ To increase the access to the Child Grants made available by government
- ❖ To create heightened awareness of the New Domestic Violence Act and the Maintenance Acts.
- ❖ To inform women of their rights under the new Customary Marriages Act.

We conducted a basic counseling course early in the year which some staff members attended. They found it very useful saying that it gave them greater confidence in the counseling environment. In total 22 people from our out reach offices were trained. Four of these were men.

Two staff members attended a course in Nigeria on Sexual and Reproductive Rights and they trained fellow staff members on the learning gained from the Nigerian workshop.

One staff member has had training on the Public Protectors office. She is preparing a workshop for staff to improve their knowledge on the Public Protector and the support women can receive from this office.

The training provided to staff was aimed at building greater knowledge bases and encouraging the counselors to facilitate and host workshops in communities. This leads to greater knowledge of the organisation and increases women's access to information and interventions. At one of the out reach offices we set a target to increase the client load. We put a staff member in place with the brief of going through the courts and sharing information on the work which our office does in that court. We have seen an increase of more than 400% in that office. This demonstrates how successful focused strategy can be.

Some of the counselors participated in radio programmes where they discussed the various new acts. This led to many women having access the information and the response is almost immediate. Women travel to the offices after hearing such programmes and seek help with problems. We are looking at expanding the work on radio and more staff are being encouraged to participate.

We did not print brochures or pamphlets as we planned to do but we have designed the pamphlets. Printing and distribution will take place in the second half of the year.

Support Mechanisms for staff

We have initiated two processes aimed at providing staff with additional support and helping them with difficult cases. The Legal Coordinator meets with staff for an hour and a half each week to discuss difficult legal cases which they have and to suggest strategies which they can employ. Staff report that this is very useful. The drawback is that not all staff have access as the offices are scattered. We are looking at how we can create equal access for all.

We also introduced training on gender based violence and human rights. This is aimed at linking the actual cases which women present to the human rights framework in general and the South Africa human rights mechanisms (laws) in particular. We also used the space to talk about personal visions and linking these to the work which the organisation does.

Community Outreach Offices

The Community Out Reach offices participated in a Retreat in February at which we discussed the achievements and challenges which the offices face. We discussed the training needs and agreed upon a development/training plan for staff.

We discovered that many of the staff in the Out Reach offices had not had basic counseling training or gender and human rights training. In February some 17 women and three men were given basic counseling training. Since then Masimanyane has conducted

gender and human rights training in Peddie and Cathcart which will continue until the end of July. Masonwabisane (Butterworth) will receive the training from August.

Empilisweni managers its own training and capacity building programmes and has achieved great success in this area.

The Out Reach offices of Scenery Park and the two Magistrates courts are closer to Masimanyane's training facilities so they benefit from the training on offer to staff.

The Out Reach offices in the rural centres have out grown Masimanyane to a large extent. Through our extensive training and the inclusion of these offices in all of our activities, they have developed their own networks and they have developed funding bases. This has led to some confusion as to the relationship between Masimanyane and each office (the relationship to each office is different) and to the support which they want or need from Masimanyane. We have engaged a consultant to assist us in working through this organisational development process.

Two of the offices have indicated their need for continued support which varies. Both Peddie Women's Support Centre and Empilisweni is dependent upon Masimanyane for financial support of the greater part of their programmes while Peddie also requires technical support and training.

Ikhwezi has secured funding for a period of three years and is now able to work autonomously. Masonwabisane has extensive networks and alliances some of which have brought in funding. This means that they no longer need the support of Masimanyane to the degree that they have in the past. Part of the work which the consultant is doing is to redefine the individual relationships.

HIV/AIDS programmes

Masimanyane has arranged refresher counseling courses for all counseling staff. Women who seek our services largely require legal support for matter relating to HIV. For instance, many women are excluded from the family home when they disclose a positive status. Some women are left stranded with children even though they know that they have acquired the virus from their partners. We are negotiating with the Legal Aids Network to conduct training for the counselors which will assist them. Having to deal with legal issues of which they have limited knowledge is very stressful.

We were introduced to the a concept called INTERSECT. This is a coalition of organisations which works on violence against Women and HIV/AIDS. Intersect originates in the USA and Masimanyane hosted the first Intersect meeting in Buffalo City (formerly East London). At that meeting people shared views on coalition building, or issues on violence against women and HIV which intersect with one another. The meeting decided that the concept was good and it offered an opportunity to work together on various issues. Masimanyane agreed to assist with initial coordination of this coalition and a second workshop was held in April. This workshop focussed on how

represented organisations could develop strategies for working together. It looked at the obstacles to coalition building. As Task Team was elected to take the process forward.

This Task Team met and discussed a possible campaign which could draw people/organisations together while providing the services to communities which were needed. A workshop took place in June to discuss the proposed campaign.

In addition to this, the public education officers are conducting educational programmes in schools and churches and other community structures on HIV/AIDS.

Public Education

Masimanyane had four goals for the first half of 2002.

- ❖ To develop a radio programme for a weekly slot which it had been given by Imonti Radio station.
- ❖ Train community members such as teachers, nurses and clergy on violence against women and HIV/AIDS
- ❖ To continue work on the Leaders of Tomorrow programmes (LOT) in local schools
- ❖ The coordination of campaigns on commemorative days - International Women's Day, Youth day etc.

We did an extensive reflection on our Public Education programme. Some critical issues were raised. We asked ourselves what we wanted to achieve with our public education programmes? We also thought through whether our current programmes are effective in reaching this goal? We spoke extensively about how we can better work to achieve the level of awareness and improved community response to address violence against women. We then formed a team which included the Trainers to design a more appropriate model for our public education and training programmes. A three level training programme has been designed. We are piloting this programme in all our communities. The thinking behind it is that there will be uniformity in our approach and methodology. It will also make for easier monitoring and evaluation of our work.

Radio programme

Imonti radio, a community radio station, offered us a weekly slot saying it was free of charge. We were excited and the entire staff wanted to participate. They began to prepare topics for their input. Imonti then came to tell us that we were misinformed and in fact, we would have to pay. This was a problem as we did not have funding for this activity. It was widely publicised that they did not have funding and through this, funders came forward and made pledges to the radio. It is now operating fully and we once more have a regular slot. The women have reported huge successes after radio broadcasts. Immediately after a broadcast the offices are contacted either via telephone or by personal visits by both men and women.

The counselors are very excited by the response which the programme is having. Many women are reached by this means as most of our province is rural and radio is an important communication strategy.

To date we discussed the Domestic Violence Act, the Maintenance Act and the Customary Marriages Act. The response to these radio talk shows has been enormous and many more women are utilising our services.

Advocacy and lobbying

Masimanyane consolidated its report on CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for action in the period January – March 2002. Two presentations were made to the Joint Monitoring Committee on the Improvement in the Quality of Life and Status of women which is the parliamentary committee who commissioned the research. The committee made its comments and asked questions with regard to specific issues which the report raised. Some of the findings of the report were included in the report which this committee submitted to parliament. A copy of the committee's report is included with this report.

Masimanyane was given the assurance that the information which the CEDAW report contained was vital when assessing government's implementation of CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action. Extensive use of the report has been made already and it will be included in many more discussions which the committee will have with ministers and government departments.

Office on the Status of Women

When Masimanyane made its second presentation at parliament, the Office on the Status of Women was invited to make a presentation on its work which is to oversee the mainstreaming of gender with government departments. The OSW said that their work was really just starting as they had concentrated on doing a gender audit and developing a national gender strategy. They spoke of the fact that the gender machinery in the country was weak and their office in particular had never been properly equipped with human and other resources. What was very worrying was the fact that the OSW said that it had been agreed that South Africa would not report to CEDAW until 2004 as so little had really been done. They saw this as a weakness which they felt they first had to rectify. Most of the activists present at the meeting expressed concern at this attitude saying that it defeated the purpose of CEDAW which is precisely to find the weaknesses and to try to assist governments to identify corrective measures. This could be seen as a positive strategy for advancing the gender agenda.

Masimanyane was invited by the Women's Caucus of the provincial government to make an input on the work which Masimanyane does. This provided an opportunity for the organization to share with the provincial government the research findings and the planned activities of the organization. The Women's caucus expressed an interest in the work of Masimanyane and suggested that on going contact be made to share plans and activities.

Masimanyane secured a meeting with the provincial Office on the Status of Women to discuss the provincial strategy and to ask for input on how Masimanyane can support the work which the OSW does in the province. This meeting was hugely informative about the work which the OSW is doing. Some ideas were shared on how Masimanyane and the OSW can work strongly together.

Masimanyane participated in the screening process for a provincial manager of the Commission on Gender Equality.

Men's Programme

The Men's project is developing steadily. The activities are gaining momentum. The objectives and progress made in 2002 follows.

Objective one: To develop men's understanding of all forms of Violence Against Women

We have continued the work with the Outreach offices and both the field officer and the coordinator have met with the men's groups in the out reach offices to continue the work started in these offices last year. The work this year has so far addressed issues of Human Rights and the men's understandings of them. We continue to be confronted with ideological opposition based upon cultural and traditional beliefs. Some of the participants in our workshops have included men with very strong ties to conservative religious groupings. This creates challenges which take time to work through. Fortunately the way in which the men's project has been structured provides for training to take place over a number of months rather than one workshop of 3-5 days. This model helps men to engage in reflection and discussion over a long period of time . Training has also continued in the prisons.

Many stakeholders in the Buffalo City community have been contacted with a view to establishing new training groups during the second half of the year. Trade union members, teachers and community organisation's have indicated their interest in the work being done.

Objective Two: An assessment of the training and workshops conducted during 2001. A process has begun with participants in last year's training course to evaluate the effectiveness of the training.

There have been a number of difficulties in reaching some men who have moved out of the area. Part of the evaluation includes talking to the partners of those who had attended the training course.

Objective Three: To document the lessons learnt while conducting training and workshops.

We keep records of all our meetings with men and community groups and will have this documented by the end of September as planned.

Objective Four: To develop educational materials for working with men

We are continuing to develop our materials. Based on the work we conducted last year, we have modified our training programme for the second half of this year. Notes for clergy and youth have been completed. The manual for clergy is being revised in light of

recent discussions with clergy and Christopher's involvement in a Church counselling training programme.

Objective Five: To make the Men's Project more visible within the Buffalo City Metropolitan area

The Men's Project was the subject of a major article in the Daily Dispatch following a training course for journalists. This proved to be an effective way of bringing more people on board. The Dispatch reporter has promised us that she will include more articles when we provide her with the required information.

The planned national conference which Masimanyane is coordinating has found a sponsor and will take place from 2-3 December 2002. Those we have spoken to about the conference express much interest in the project.

Objective Six: To develop coalitions at a local, national and international level, of men working to end violence against women

The work which is underway is creating strong alliances and partnerships. These will eventually lead to the formation of a national network. In the second half of the year a process of meeting with men's groups throughout the country will take place and this will enable Masimanyane to develop national networks.

We have identified the need for us to engage more with the staff of Masimanyane around the work that we are involved in. We believe that this will assist the staff to develop not only a greater understanding of our work, but also assist them with the difficulties that are being faced in dealing with men.

Training

The objective for 2002 has been to develop a three level training programme and to write the manuals which can then be used by all staff engaging in training of communities. The idea is to standardize the training so as to ensure consistency and uniformity. This has been done and the programme has been piloted in Peddie and Cathcart.

Two health care centers have been included in the training for the first half of the year and nurses including psychiatric nurses have received this training.

A basic counseling course took place in February for 22 people and another is planned for the second half of the year.

Conclusion

The first half of 2002 has been challenging from a number of perspectives. The organization is a learning organization and so every challenge creates an opportunity for reflection and evaluation which leads to changes being effected. The biggest challenge which the organization faces is that of securing the services of a manager. All emphasis will be out on concluding this matter. It would improve the operations of the organization as too much responsibility falls upon the small management team.

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Executive Director - July 2002.

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD JULY - DECEMBER 2002

Introduction

The period under review proved to be a challenging one for the organization. Extensive work was done and there were some remarkable accomplishments. Some innovation was also embarked upon which could have a positive impact on the organization in the long run.

Community projects

The Community projects comprises four offices in East London (Zanempilo centre, Scenery Park office, East London magistrate's court and the Mdantsane Magistrate Court) and four in the rural areas of Butterworth, Cathcart, Peddie and Woodlands location. The four offices in East London operated very well in the first half of 2002. Some difficulties arose in the latter part of the year which will be discussed here.

Zanempilo Masimanyane Centre

The year started with the move from the Porter Street offices which was the birth place of Masimanyane. This was a very difficult move as Masimanyane was known to be located in Porter Street. The old offices had become unsafe for the workers and clients following the rape of a young woman in the vicinity.

The new offices have very good space including an excellent training room. The building is a health centre and therefore medical support is available if ever needed.

Zanempilo has maintained a steady client base but no marked increase in clients has been recorded. In addition, the client load at the East London magistrate's court sky rocketed and at times was double that of Zanempilo.

It was not possible to analyse why the client numbers at Zanempilo was static as there was no manager in place until the very end of the year. It does appear that the establishment of offices in communities such as Scenery Park and the two magistrate's courts has taken some of the clients away from Zanepilo.

We also found that the Public Education offices were working in remote semi rural areas which did not make Zanempilo accessible to them. This has a direct bearing on the low client numbers.

The staff at Zanempilo worked without a manager and showed good discipline over the course of the year. They attended to clients in a professional manner and managed the centre very well.

Some problems which arose were with the staff supervision. We found that one of the psychologists providing the staff with supervision was inciting them causing rifts between staff members and between management and staff.

The year had begun with a weakness in the management of statistics. Attempts were made to strengthen this aspect of the work. Some progress was made but inconsistencies still exist. A social worker was employed in the latter part of the year and she is attempting to improve this system. In 2003, both the social worker and the manager will focus on strengthening the documenting of statistics. Currently the system records the number of clients seen per day but it does not break down accurately the types of cases which are attended to.

East London magistrate's court

This is one of the most successful offices in the Masimanyane umbrella. The office sees more clients than Zanempilo. The nature of the intervention here is largely different to Zanempilo because clients using these offices require some legal mechanism to assist them. Either they are applying for interdicts (restraining orders) or maintenance grants or some other form of legal support. A limited number of clients require extensive counseling.

The office had only one counselor but this has been increased to two counselors. The women work very closely with the court personnel and the two teams have developed good support systems for clients seeking assistance. The women work with magistrates and clerks who assist them to fast track clients requests. This has led to better services for the women and more efficient court processes.

In some instances the counselors have to provide court support to women and girls who have been raped. This service has been greatly valued by the females who utilize it.

One of the counselors studied for the certificate course, Women and the Law, through the University of South Africa. This has given her great confidence and improved her ability to engage in advocacy at the local level.

The high number of clients who present at court, indicate that more women are gaining knowledge about the laws which are aimed at protecting them. Huge numbers of women come to the courts to seek assistance in obtaining maintenance. Many more apply for interdicts (restraining orders) than did in previous years and rural women seek help from the courts in the city relating to cultural and/or traditional law. Women seem to have knowledge and information about the constitution and the new laws which exist and they try to access them. Of course we still see many instances where women's rights are abused.

Women from rural communities are coming to the courts to complain about customary practices such as inheritance laws, forced marriages and lobola (bride price). This too indicates the increase in women's knowledge about the laws in South Africa.

Mdantsane magistrate's court

This office struggled at the beginning of the year. By the end of the first quarter it was decided that an additional counselor should be placed in this office with the express objective of increasing the client load. This strategy worked very well. The appointed

counselor engaged with the various office within the court system and drew in many clients who required support services such as those offered by Masimanyane. Client numbers increased quite dramatically. Some public Education activities were undertaken and this too led to more people becoming aware of the office and the services it provided.

The office began to play a vital role in the court system. Some challenges presented such as the reluctance of some court officials to recognize the Masimanyane staff as support people. Much advocacy had to be used to gain an understanding of the various roles played by each stakeholder and the benefits to the clients when both services provides could work together. Other difficulties experienced were that of “apathy” and disinterest of court service providers. This difficulty has been recognized by the chief magistrate who had various strategies of addressing it.

In September the second counselor absconded from work and has never returned resulting in her being dismissed. This was a great loss to the organization as the woman had been one of the founding employees. After extensive searching, Masimanyane was able to establish that she had moved to another area to live with a new partner.

Scenery Park

This office has maintained steady growth. A second counselor was assigned to this office and the counselor who provides the service there felt overwhelmed by the number of clients who used the services and she felt that she was unsafe working on her own. A Public Education programme was also introduced to thi services and the women from the community have said that they appreciated being exposed to the human rights framework (new laws passed and institutions established) which protect the rights of women and all people in communities.

The biggest difficulty facing this office was that of space. The rented space did not provide sufficient counseling space and it did not ensure confidentiality as it was right next to a crèche. It took a long hard search to find suitable offices and to negotiate a lease agreement. The office will shortly move into the space which was found and secured via a lease.

Rural offices

At the beginning of 2002 Masimanyane and the rural offices went through a little difficulty. The offices had grown tremendously and were displaying their independence. Masimanyane did not read this transition and was still treating the offices as their off shoots. Some tension developed and it took more than four months to get to the root of the problem.

Basically the rural offices felt that the communication channels were unclear and infrequent. They also expressed a great need to work independently of Masimanyane Women’s Support Centre.

Much discussion took place as to how this could be best managed and a staged process was embarked upon to ensure the smooth take over of the projects by the project

personnel. By the end of the year this process was complete and the relationships were once more fully restored.

The most significant shift in the rural projects have been that two of the offices requested to work independently and this “separation” from Masimanyane has taken place. What the separation means is that the offices have their own legal status, their own Board of Directors, their own auditors and they manage all of their programmes and management systems themselves. Masimanyane’s role is that of a technical advisor and supporter and they assist on request from the centres.

Peddie Women’s Support Centre

Peddie Women’s Support Centre has done exceptionally well. The centre was selected by government to be one of its pilot project’s in a rural development programme. Many consultants and trainers have gone to the centre providing skills building, capacity building and organizational development support. While government has made various interventions in the project, it has yet to formally being the proposed pioot project or provide some financial assistance to the centre.

The centre is growing having taken on new staff some of whom do very good work especially with youth and men.

Extensive training of staff has taken place at Peddie with Masimanyane providing the training and other technical support. It is envisaged that this office will become autonomous and independent by the end of 2003.

Masonwabisane Women’s support Centre

Masonwabisane is growing very quickly. The centre has become a vital resource in the Butterworht area. It now services some 6 little towns in the district. Some important liasions have been made including a partnership with the Love Life campaign. The centre continues to be compromised by inadequate space. While this is being addressed, not much space is available in the city centre so the process cannot be brought to an end. Some promisese have been made by the chief magistrate which could translate to the offices being relocated to the new court building.

This office has taken on more than 5 new staff members. This is very worrying. It is unclear as to whether sufficient funding is available to pay salaries beyond a period of 1 year. It is also unclear as to whether there is s fund raising strategy in place. Masimanyane is in the process of having a consultant assess the project so that theses issues can be addressed. A fund raising strategy will then be developed and put in place.

This office requested that it become independent in the course of 2002 and the separation took place at the end of December 2002. The office continues to enjoy the support of Masimanyane Women’s Support Centre and through this partnership receive much training, capacity building and mentoring.

Ikhwezi Women's Support Centre

In October Ikhwezi Women's Support Centre began operating independently of Masimanyane Women's Support Centre. It has secured good funding for a period of three years. The centre staff have received training from Masimanyane and they appear to be managing the project really well.

Ikhwezi has opened a satellite office in a township called Kolomane. They are in the process of training women from these two communities so that they can have their own support services for the women from this community.

Empilisweni Aids Care and training centre

This centre focuses essentially on HIV/AIDS care and support. It has grown in leaps and bounds over the past year with more than 90 people having been trained in basic counseling, HIV/AIDS education and training. Many teams of people now offer support to people living in villages across the area. A partnership with St John's Ambulance has ensured that good training is given and support is available to home based carers.

Because food security was cited as a critical issue to be addressed for this community, extensive income generating projects were established. Partnerships with the Department of Labour were formed and skills training was provided to the women and men on the project. The women and men were trained in sewing, chicken and pig farming and bead work. Community gardens have also been established. Many people within the villages now work on this project making clothes, beaded jewelry etc.

Public Education Programmes

The public Education programme has accomplished much this year. The Leaders of Tomorrow programme (LOT) focusing on young people was successful. Some 20 schools were worked with over the year. The programme included support groups in schools, peer counseling training, teacher support programmes and life skills training for young people

Two (2) weekend camps were held for young people. Life skills through interactive and creative work were taught. At both camps the youth were given talks on sexual abuse and HIV/AIDS.

The youth were encouraged to create dramas depicting what they had learned and they had to perform their scripts before their peers. The method was highly successful.

June 16 Youth Day

Three campaigns were coordinated by Masimanyane Women's Support Centre. Youth day (16 June) was commemorated with a programme focusing on crime prevention. Masimanyane partnered the Mdantsane branch of the South African Police services on this campaign.

National Women's Day

August 9, Women's day saw Masimanyane and all its staff and out reach offices attended the burial of Saartjie Baartman. This most important event was held in the Gamtoos River valley where Saartjie had been taken away on the promise of fame and fortune. She was virtually held captive in Europe and displayed as a circus animal until her death. Saartjie's story highlights issues of gender violence, human rights violations including racism. It was an excellent learning experience for all.

International Human Rights Day

On 10 December Masimanyane coordinated the launch of the Imbizo Intersect coalition. This coalition addresses the intersectionality of HIV/AIDS and Violence against Women Imbizo was initiated by Masimanyane at the beginning of 2001 and had undergone several transformations. The current product has been endorsed by many NGO's and local government. Work is being done in the community go Duncan Village with plans to expand into other areas in 2003.

The Public Education programme is undergoing more changes. The organization has worked in many areas across the province in the course of the year. Some of the areas are very far from the support offices and the result is that few of the people reached can access counseling or para legal support from the existing offices. In 2003 it is envisaged that small teams will go into selected areas and work with more and larger groups within a given community so that the impact is greater. In this way, the communities will be encouraged to start their own counseling services. It is thought that this way of working will also be cost effective in that less transport will be needed and fewer visits will be done.

HIV/AIDS campaigns.

Masimanyane Women's Support Centre hosted HIV/AIDS activist, Jesse Milan of the USA. Jesse heads a numerous national bodies in the USA which focuses on HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and education. He worked both in East London and in the rural areas.

Jesse made magnificent presentations to medical and health workers, development workers, to rural groups and to youth at local churches. His theme was abstinence, care and support of people living with HIV/AIDS and education. Mr Milan was really an excellent trainer and many people felt that they had gained greatly from his input.

Training

Extensive training programmes took place in 2002. Some focused on organizational development, some on project management and others issues relating to gender, violence and human rights.

Two **basic lay counseling** courses were conducted. One each in Xhosa and English. 48 people completed the training. This led to a strengthening of the services in many offices. People trained came from 22 organisations across the province.

Two **Leadership** courses were conducted. 45 people were trained.

Three **Project management** courses took place between June and December 2002. Some 60 people received the training. More than 30 organisations benefited from this training.

Board governance training. Two courses were held and 32 people trained.

Three workshops were held on **CEDAW** (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) and the national human rights instruments.

Directors Retreats two retreats were held. These retreats provided space for some women directors to get together to discuss the issues which they face as women in their organisations. The retreats also assist in providing rest and renewal for exhausted directors. The impact has been very positive and the process will be expanded in 2003.

A Master Training of Trainers took place on facilitation skills. Some 30 women and men participated. The training was a partnership between NISSA institute for Women's Development and Masimanyane Women's Support Centre.

Training programmes took place in communities with women's groups, men's groups and other community structures such as churches, hospitals, schools and businesses.

Research, Advocacy and lobbying.

The research done for the Joint Monitoring Committee on the Improvement in the Quality of life and status of women was completed early in 2002. The rest of the year was spent publicising the results of the research.

Masimanyane held a steady presence on the local and provincial policing forums. The organization continues to work with the SAPS and the Department of Justice to strengthen the criminal justice responses to gender based violence.

Contact was made with the Women's Caucus of the provincial government and Masimanyane was invited to share its programmes and activities with the caucus. This has led to an on going engagement with the caucus which is assisting both parties.

One of the most significant activities was a meeting which was held with the Deputy Minister of Justice and Provincial and Local Government. These two Deputy Ministers pledged their support of an international initiative on a World Tribunal on Violence against Women. The meeting took place in December and there has been a sustained conversation about carrying the process forward. Masimanyane played an extensive role in bringing about this meeting and is facilitating the on-going discussion.

Masimanyane held a consultation in December to discuss the feasibility of a World Tribunal on Violence against Women and girl children. Participants included leading

gender activist in the country and a representative from the national offices of the Commission on Gender Equality. The discussions were fruitful and the groups concluded that a "Hearing or Tribunal" would be useful in assessing how far the work had progressed in addressing gender based violence.

Networking and partnerships.

Masimanyane is in discussion with NISSA institute for Women's Development about a formal networking partnership. The two organizations have similar goals and objectives and methods of working. It is thought that a formal partnership would lead to skills transference which would benefit both organizations.

Masimanyane works closely with many local and national organizations including Gender Links, Ashoka, the Northern Cape Offices on the Status of Women, Vuka Uzithate in Kwa Zulu Natal, Sedibeng Training centre (Gauteng) and the Joint Monitoring Committee on the improvement in the Quality of Life and Status of Women. Regionally the organization is a member of the Amanitare Reproductive Rights network which provides extensive training to Masimanyane staff.

Internationally the organization works closely with the International Action Watch Asia Pacific, the Norwegian Shelter Movement and aMen's organisations called Alternative to Violence. Masimanyane hosted a delegation in December of its sister organizations. Codman Square Community Health Centre (Boston, Massachusetts, USA). Masimanyane and Codman square have a twinning agreement.

HIV/AIDS research

Masimanyane won a tender to conduct an HIV/AIDS prevalence study, an impact assessment and resources mapping for the Buffalo City Local government. This initiative is the first of its kind by a local authority in the country. The study is unique in that it attempts to address three aspects of HIV/AIDS with the intention of developing a profile of the disease and devising a response for it from local government.

For Masimanyane it has resulted in a big skills and capacity building exercise and it has led to the development of very useful networks and alliances. It is also generating an income for the organization outside of its traditional funding base.

The final output will be policy and programme development for the BCM local government.

Sexual Harassment study

Masimanyane Women's Support Centre in partnership with Fort Hare University is conducting research in two schools in the Eastern Cape on Sexual Harassment. The study has started in August and will be completed in May 2003.

The two schools selected are A.W.Barnes primary school in East London and Nathaniel Palma High school in Peddie. The projects aims to identify the extent of sexual abuse in

schools and to assist the learners and educators to develop a community wide response to ending the gender based violence.

Men's programme

The project aims to include men in the struggle to end violence against women and entrench women's rights. This takes place through the establishment of groups of men actively working alongside women in their communities and through a process of strengthening ties between organisations working with men.

Workshops have been held from July 2002 to December 2002 in nine communities throughout the Buffalo City Municipal Area. These were well supported by the local communities and great interest was expressed in the project. It was decided that initial training would begin in three of the communities owing to other organizational commitments. The other four groups would be trained during the first quarter of 2003. The in-depth training would also begin during this time.

Thus at present three groups have been fully trained. These groups have consisted of a total of 47 men across three communities. These groups have been based in Ilitha, Kwelera and Mdantsane. A twelve-week training programme with these groups has been completed. In stead of the planned 24 hours of training the participants received a minimum of 36 hours training. After listening to the thoughts, beliefs and values of people during the community meeting it was decided that more training time was needed.

Each group received a series of handouts the week prior to the session that enabled them to study the material beforehand and facilitate discussion.

Work has also been done with a group of 18 clergy concerning the issues of violence against women. There is currently no certainty as to whether the clergy will participate in the second phase of the project, but their involvement in this phase has been an important step in building support mechanisms for women in their communities.

Another objective of the Men's project is to establish a national coalition of men working to end gender-based violence against women, and to establish links with similar regional and international networks

So far, Masimanyane has met with groups and individuals nationally. The support that this has gained has been very encouraging. A number of sources of information for the database was initially identified but it was discovered that these were somewhat out of date, and in many cases incorrect regarding the nature of the work being conducted in these organizations. Four regional consultations/meetings have been completed and will continue in the course of 2003.

The Conference that the Masimanyane Men's Project had planned for December 2002 had to be postponed until late February 2003 owing to organizational commitments and funding difficulties. We will include the conference as was initially planned.

The project has targeted mainly youth in the 18 to 34 year old age group, although there are a number of older participants in the groups. This was done because it was found that this group would prove to be a more responsive group and dedicated to change. Our decision in this matter has been vindicated by the interest that has been shown in the project and the groups hopes for further co-operation with women's groups. The groups have also shown a willingness to begin development projects in their communities aimed at improving the general well being of their communities.

Favourable comments from people nationally and internationally have been received regarding the structure and planning of this project and the model is being used to establish a more community-oriented programme aimed at greater community involvement.

Staff Development.

Extensive staff development has taken place over the past year. Two staff members underwent management training by participating in a ten month Organisational Development course. The training included being away from one week per month over the entire period.

Two advanced counseling courses were held for staff to improve their HIV/AIDS counseling skills. An advanced gender training course was also held.

Two staff members completed the UNISA course on *Women and the Law* with financial and other support from the organization. Both received distinctions in their studies.

Two counselors attended training on sexual and reproductive rights in Nigeria. Two women received training on HIV/AIDS Education in Kenya. The field officer of the men's programme went on an international exchange to the USA where he learned about different models of working with men.

The Director of the organisation was invited to participate in an international visitors programme of the USA. She was one of 18 women from 16 African countries who examined the participation of women in politics in the USA.

Four people involved in Public Education received training on Gender and the media during the course of the year. They were taught how to build and conduct a media campaign on Violence against Women and girl children.

Staff appointments

A social worker was employed in November to strengthen the counseling centre. An event coordinator was employed to arrange and coordinate the many training programmes and events which the organization undertakes.

The two women who work as support staff (cleaners) were formally employed. They worked via an agency which cost the organization a lot of money but was not benefiting the workers. The organization felt that the women were compromised and this conflicted with the organization's aims and objectives. The women have since been given access to medical insurance and a pension fund.

In December the long overdue appointment of a **Community Project's** manager was made. It is hoped that this appointment will result in an easing of the work load for the director and her support team.

Two staff members absconded from their jobs. One took up a job overseas and left without telling anyone. She left behind debt and angry clients whom the organization had to pacify. The second woman had been with the organization since it started. She left and the organization was unable to trace her for quite some time. She has called in once saying that she would come to the office but never arrived. The services of both women were terminated.

Financial management systems

The entire year was spent strengthening the financial management systems. A new company was engaged to provide financial management support to the organization and a marked improvement has been made. The area which still needs strengthening is on the budgeting process. This will be addressed in 2004.

Challenges

Political Environment

The organization faces many challenges in its operations. The political environment is constantly changing with government developing many new policies and programmes. Government has matured at a greater rate than NGOs have and it has become much more sophisticated. There continues to be limited support for NGOs throughout the country putting tremendous pressure on organizations to ensure their own growth and development. With limited human and financial resources, NGOs find it difficult to "read" the changes which take place and to adjust their programmes to this environment. This remains the greatest challenge to all NGOs. Organizations working on Violence against Women face bigger threats simply because the issue is being collapsed or submerged with HIV/AIDS programmes. As can be expected, far more funding is available for work on HIV/AIDS and less so for working with violence against women and girl children.

Programmatic challenges

The organization still needs to improve its management of statistics and its recording of activities. The development of relevant management systems is an on-going process. It does however take tremendous effort and time to develop these systems and it slows down the organisation. Also, when two or three processes run simultaneously, the stress on the organisation is even greater. In 2002, the financial management systems were reviewed and overhauled and a good measure of success was achieved. In 2003, the emphasis will shift to the recording of statistics and other activities.

Burnout

Burnout is a very real threat to the organization. Staff confront extreme trauma all the time and the effects of this are felt after some time. The organization has a good "care of carer's (prevention of burnout) programme but even this is not enough at times.

Two staff members displayed burnout symptoms and this was due to extensive overload over a period of time. The management facilitates retreats for staff experiencing burnout related problems. The services of a psychologist is also available and from time to time staff have utilised this support mechanism.

Personal difficulties tax the ability of staff to respond appropriately in their work situation. Some of the staff face difficulties such as relationship problems, violence in their lives, HIV/AIDS, alcoholism, financial difficulties etc. These social problems are so much a part of most staff members' lives that the organization has to provide support internally as well as externally. This puts a strain on both human and financial resources.

The spectre of HIV/AIDS is being felt by the organisation at a secondary level. Almost everyone knows of someone who is infected and affected by HIV/AIDS and it does impact on the organisation's output. The individual plight of clients is sometimes so bleak that the counselor or other related staff become very distressed.

The influence of Loan companies

Debt is causing tremendous stress in the lives of staff members. The rise of financial services or *loan companies* has exacerbated this problem. Many staff members have been enticed into taking huge loans from loan companies and this has led to them getting into difficulties. The organization is trying to find financial consultants to provide staff with guidance in these matters.

Programme implementation

In terms of its work, the organization has good programme implementation strategies. The challenge is therefore to remain vigilant of the ever changing environment and to ensure that the strategies developed and the programmes developed respond to the needs of the communities which Masimanyane serves.

Conclusion

Masimanyane operates in challenging times. The organization has maintained its professional integrity both in terms of its stated goals and objectives and its programme implementation. The organisation will have an evaluation and impact assessment in the first half of 2003 and this will be followed by a strategic planning session for the following 3-5 years.

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