



CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT

IN SOCIAL JUSTICE

A People-Centred Development

CDSJ GENDER-JUST CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROJECT

Public Engagement Leaflet

01

FAIRER JUSTICE FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN LESOTHO

Women and girls are increasingly harmed through phones, social media and other digital platforms. Yet police and prosecutors do not always have clear legal rules for recording, investigating and taking these cases to court.

Girls and young women can also be blamed alone in abortion, infant abandonment and child neglect cases, even when men or other people share responsibility. CDSJ is working to make the justice system respond more fairly.

OUR PURPOSE Clear rules for police, fairer treatment in court, legal help in a real case and stronger public action.

OUR THREE REFORM WORKSTREAMS

1



CLEAR RULES FOR ONLINE AND PHONE-BASED ABUSE

Help police and prosecutors deal properly with abuse carried out through phones, social media and other digital platforms.

LISTEN & LEARN Hold 2 focused discussions and review 3 real cases to understand where the justice system is failing.

PREPARE GUIDANCE Bring legal and justice experts together once to write clear legal rules and step-by-step police guidance.

TAKE IT TO LEADERS Meet justice leaders once and ask them to adopt and use the new rules.

CLEAR LEGAL RULES | PRACTICAL POLICE GUIDE | FORMAL SUBMISSION

2



FAIRER TREATMENT OF GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN

Challenge cases where a girl or young woman is charged alone, while other people involved are not held equally responsible.

LISTEN & LEARN Hold 2 focused discussions and review 3 real cases linked to pregnancy and child care.

WRITE THE CASE FOR CHANGE Meet once to prepare a clear paper showing what is unfair and what should change in the law.

SPEAK TO PARLIAMENT Present the paper to Parliament's committee responsible for law and public safety.

CLEAR REFORM PAPER | PARLIAMENT MEETING | PROPOSED LAW CHANGES

3



USE ONE REAL CASE TO PUSH FOR WIDER CHANGE

Give legal help in a deserving child neglect or pregnancy-related case and use what we learn to support wider change in the justice system.

FIND A DESERVING CASE Review 3 prison or court cases and prepare them carefully; support legal proceedings in 1 case.

WORK TOGETHER Bring civil society and women's rights groups together once to agree on a shared national action plan.

KEEP PEOPLE INFORMED Hold 2 radio discussions so communities understand the issues and public attention continues.

LEGAL HELP IN 1 CASE | SHARED ACTION PLAN | 2 PUBLIC RADIO DISCUSSIONS



LISTENING TO REAL EXPERIENCES



TURNING EVIDENCE INTO CLEAR RULES



TAKING THE ISSUES TO PARLIAMENT



PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND JOINT ACTION

WHY THIS WORK MATTERS TO COMMUNITIES



- Online and phone-based abuse can seriously harm women and girls, but unclear rules can stop a case from moving forward.
- Girls and young women can be blamed alone in pregnancy-related cases, even when other people share responsibility.
- Police, prosecutors and courts need simple guidance they can use in real cases.
- Legal help in one deserving case can expose unfair treatment and help show why the law must change.
- Public discussion helps people know their rights and keeps pressure on leaders to act.

PROTECTING PEOPLE WHO SHARE THEIR STORIES

We will ask permission, keep identities private, store information safely and avoid exposing anyone to further harm. The wishes and legal interests of the affected person will come first.

WHAT PEOPLE SHOULD EXPECT FROM THIS PROJECT

WHAT WE WILL DO

WHAT THIS MEANS IN PRACTICE

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|----------------------------|---|
| 1 Listen and learn | 4 focused discussions and 6 case reviews to show where people are being treated unfairly. |
| 2 Clear rules for police | Draft legal rules and a practical police guide for handling abuse through phones, social media and other digital platforms. |
| 3 Speak to justice leaders | A formal meeting and written submission asking justice institutions to use the new guidance. |
| 4 Take it to Parliament | A clear reform paper and one meeting with Parliament's law and public safety committee. |
| 5 Support a real case | Prepare 3 possible cases and provide legal support in 1 deserving case. |
| 6 Keep action going | A shared national action plan and 2 radio discussions for continued public awareness. |

WHO WE WILL WORK WITH

Affected girls and women | Women's rights organisations | Civil society | Legal practitioners | Police | Justice actors | Parliament | Media

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