



Overview of the Integrated Domestic Violence Training Program of South Africa

Introduction

The Integrated Domestic Violence Training Program is a four and a half day skills development and capacity building program that is basically founded on the notion that 'effective integration starts in the classroom'. Development of the program started in 2000, as a partnership of the Sexual Offences and Community Affairs (SOCA) Unit in the office of The National Director of Public Prosecutions of South Africa with the Law Courts Education Society of British Columbia, with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency. The SA National Integrated Domestic Violence Committee¹ became a project partner shortly thereafter.

It is a global-aligned training model, using internationally recognized best practices, that seeks to capacitate all the intersectoral stakeholders in order to establish sensitivity, accuracy, uniformity, integrated support, coordination, efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act of South Africa, 1998. Its major focus is on the promotion of the multi-disciplinary approach in the management of domestic violence cases. For the first time in South Africa, all service providers within the domestic violence sector will be trained together under one roof in order to work effectively together. However, it is not only designed to build and improve the capacity of those who directly get into contact with the victims, but also to develop properly qualified trainers in this sector, especially in the rural and disadvantaged areas.

Strategic Objectives of the IDVTP

- To improve skills development and capacity within the domestic violence sector,
- To establish and improve the multi-disciplinary management of domestic violence cases,
- To improve the referral system,
- To improve the reporting and the conviction rates in domestic violence cases.

Operational Objectives

The operational objectives are directly linked to the content of the five different Modules of the Integrated Domestic Violence Manuals, and they are:

¹ This Committee was established in 1999 mainly to monitor the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act, 1998. All service providers in the domestic violence sector are represented in this committee.

- To educate participants with the social context within which domestic violence occurs (Module 1),
- To educate participants about the laws and policies applicable to domestic violence (Module 2),
- To establish the common knowledge and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all service providers within the justice system (Module 3),
- To educate participants on how to support victims and plan for their safety (Module 4),
- To build and improve the interviewing skills of the participants (Module 5),
- To promote information sharing and sense of co-operation among the intersectoral service providers.

Learning Package and Training Topics

The Learning Material is a package of soft (PC CD-Rom) and hard copies of:

- Participant's Manual & Resource Reference
- Trainer's Manual & Visual Aids

Each Manual is categorized into the following five (5) Modules: -

- Module 1: Social Context in Domestic Violence
- Module 2: The Domestic Violence Act (No. 116 of 1998)
- Module 3: Roles and Responsibilities of All Role-Players in the Justice System
- Module 4: Support and Safety Planning for Victims/ Survivors
- Module 5: Interviewing Skills

The trainer's Visual Aids include:

- Hard and soft overheads
- VHS cassette containing four training footages.

As the first cycle of training is the Train-the-trainee program, the participants will be provided with both the Participants' and the Trainers' Manuals.

Development of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

The SOCA unit is currently in a process of developing a MoU with all the participating stakeholders in this program, which include the Dept of Justice and Constitutional Development, Dept of Safety and Security, Independent Complaints Directorate, Dept of Correctional Services, Dept of Social Development, Dept of Health, Dept of Education, and the SA leading NGO's in the domestic violence sector, which are the National Network on Violence Against Women, Pelo-Tshwaana Consultancy, Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, Men For Change, Themba Lesizwe Network, Tshwaranang, and Inter-Trauma Nexus.

Role of the Canadian Partner in the Project

The Law Courts Education Society, working with the SOCA Unit, undertook to secure the funds necessary to develop the first draft of the training materials and then organize two pilot training workshops in South Africa. This involved the recruitment of Canadian subject area experts and the management of the development of the first draft of the resources.

To save costs, the Society was able to secure on a voluntary basis the expertise needed from the Victims Services Branch of the Ministry of Attorney General and the Justice Institute of British Columbia. The SOCA Unit covered the salary costs of their project staff. Once the draft materials were developed, the Ministry of Attorney General of B.C. also donated the time of the two trainers for the pilot workshops. The draft materials, after being tested in the pilots in Pretoria and Durban, were then modified by the SOCA UNIT and the SA National Integrated Domestic Violence Committee

Generic Version of the Program

The Law Courts Education Society has produced a generic version of the resources that can be modified for use in other countries. Sections of the Social Context and local laws need to be added to complete the training package. The Society is interested in working with interested partners in other countries so that these resources can be shared broadly.