

## Phaphama Initiatives' Gender Reconciliation Report for 2010 March 6, 2011

Woman, You are Africa, You are the first in the world, Woman  
Mother of civilization is you

Your courage has raised great sons and daughters of the earth  
Mother of civilization is you

Though you were struck with an earthquake or hate and destruction  
Mother of civilization is you

I hear your song in the distance, you have turned your pain into stepping stones  
Mother of civilization is you

I say rise up and blow the horn, beat the drums and add your new song to your new song,  
because Mother of civilization is you!

(Poem written by the men to honour the women  
during the closing ritual of a gender reconciliation workshop)



Women and men celebrating together in song and dance their increased understanding of one another, and their healing and reconciliation

## Executive Summary

This report assesses a new social innovation in South Africa called Gender Reconciliation. Founded and developed by the Satyana Institute, Gender Reconciliation is a powerful new methodology for healing and reconciliation between women and men. Several of our senior staff at Phaphama Initiatives have been trained by Satyana Institute, and are now implementing Gender Reconciliation workshops in diverse venues in South Africa. Recent programmes conducted for various target groups include: NGO organizations, communities, social work students at the University of KwaZulu Natal, religious leaders in Cape Town, a high school in Etwatwa township, and prisons in the Johannesburg area.

Two years ago we conducted our first evaluation of the Gender Reconciliation programme. At that time we concluded:

Not only does this work have the potential to heal relationships between men and women; it also . . . is a powerful tool in the fight against HIV/AIDS; in fact, the only tool that addresses the root causes of HIV/AIDS rather than just the symptoms. There is a great need to roll-out gender reconciliation work on a much broader scale in South Africa.<sup>1</sup>

Based on this finding, we proceeded to raise 70,000 Euros from Stichting Porticus (Netherlands) to implement Gender Reconciliation more widely. Now with more experience in this work, we are coming to the view that the Gender Reconciliation programme has the potential to prevent communities from self-destructing because of gender violence and HIV/AIDS.

To assess the impact of the Gender Reconciliation programme over time, we conducted three focus groups between three and eleven months after the workshops. Results were impressive, with many reported life-changing impacts:

- Most participants reported healing effects within their families, including greater trust and improved communication in some of their most challenging relationships.
- Many male participants reported a positive shift in their attitudes and relationships with women and girls, and several reported a whole new understanding of women's pain. Some of the men reported that they are taking responsibility to curb their own gender-based violence, and in some cases that of their male friends.

This last finding is especially encouraging, because statistics show that the majority of violence against women and girls is perpetrated by male family and community members, rather than strangers.

These auspicious results suggest a strong need for wider implementation of Gender Reconciliation programmes in South Africa, and beyond.

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<sup>1</sup> Report on the Gender Reconciliation Intervention by Satyana Institute, Phaphama Initiatives, Johannesburg, June, 2009. This report is an assessment by Phaphama Initiatives of Satyana Institute's Gender Reconciliation programs in South Africa conducted in February - March, 2009.

## Introduction

Phaphama Initiatives is currently half-way through a two-year (2010 and 2011) funding cycle with Stichting Porticus for our gender reconciliation programme.

Phaphama is engaged in this training with our partner, the Satyana Institute, a U.S.A.-based NGO, who are the originators of this form of gender reconciliation work. We are grateful to Satyana for their willingness to work with us as an implementing partner of this work in South Africa and we value their close mentorship of and cooperation with us.

In 2009, Phaphama facilitators (of our Alternatives to Violence Project) attended a Basic and Advanced gender reconciliation workshop with the Satyana Institute, and then participated in two further workshops with Satyana: one in a school in a township east of Johannesburg (Daveyton); and one with male inmates in Leeuwkop prison. We chose these two target groups (prisons and schools), as these most clearly reflect our very troubled society.<sup>2</sup> These are also the two main sectors we normally work in and it was our wish to see how the gender reconciliation work could deepen the Alternatives to Violence training already begun there. A report has been written on this and is available on request.

The positive outcome of these workshops convinced Phaphama that we wanted to become trained to do gender reconciliation work on a larger scale in South Africa. After discussions with the Satyana Institute, it was agreed that a core of experienced Phaphama facilitators would be selected to attend the Training for Facilitators (T4F) modules to be held for Phaphama in 2010. The criteria for selection were as follows:

- these facilitators must have attended a 5-day Basic and a 5-day Advanced workshop,
- they must have experience in group facilitation, and
- they must be committed to a spiritual practice of their choice.

As such, nine facilitators were chosen.

This report details the activities and outcomes of Phaphama's gender reconciliation programme in 2010, as well as it plans for 2011 and beyond.

## Workshops conducted in 2010

The following T4F modules were conducted with Phaphama facilitators:

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<sup>2</sup> "A 1998 survey found that one in every three Johannesburg schoolgirls has experienced sexual violence at school." Andersson, N., Mhatre, S. Mqotsi, N., & Penderis, M., Prevention of sexual violence: A social audit of the role of the police in the jurisdiction of Johannesburg's Southern Metropolitan Local Council. Johannesburg: CIET Africa, 1998.

Dates	Module
9 - 13 April	1
8, 9, 10, 25 and 26 November	2
5 - 8 December	3

Will Keepin and Cynthia Brix of the Satyana Institute conducted the Training for Facilitators (T4F), which was held at Phaphama House in Soweto. We found the training to be very professionally conducted. The modules were carefully planned to build upon one another: Module 1 focused on the facilitation of specific activities in a Basic gender reconciliation workshop and the skills and attitudes that a facilitator of this work needs to cultivate. Modules 2 and 3 continued providing opportunities for us to learn to facilitate this work, but also deepened our understanding of the very sensitive issues that can arise in gender reconciliation workshops, namely pornography (access to which is growing at an alarming rate globally, especially among young people) and lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/intersex issues. Role-plays, debriefings and discussions were the predominant mode of training, and was very effective in conveying the important concepts in this kind of facilitation, which demands a high level of skill, neutrality, compassion and sensitivity. A significant amount of time was also spent on the ethical considerations that facilitators are obliged to agree to before embarking on this work. Where necessary, specialist facilitators were brought in to deal with specific areas that need attention in this work, for example, in how to deal with trauma that surfaces in a workshop. For this reason, we were also extremely grateful that much time was given to experience, develop and enhance different interfaith spiritual practices of mindfulness, centering and healing: crucial elements if we as facilitators want to give of our best in this work and not burn ourselves out in an arena that is fraught with immense pain, anger and grief.

After Module 1 one person dropped out of the training and one chose to remain on the training but not to facilitate in workshops. A further two facilitators did not complete each of the modules due to other work and personal commitments, and will need to do so before they are fully accredited by Satyana. Two facilitators from Phaphama were designated as lead facilitators in this work (one male and one female), and since they had already conducted three workshops on their own (i.e. without Satyana staff being present), it was agreed that Phaphama could schedule further workshops as training opportunities before Modules 2 and 3 a few months later. The other five Phaphama facilitators expressed a willingness to help facilitate these workshops, so as to practise and refine their facilitation skills. In 2010, therefore, Phaphama organized the following workshops, which were either facilitated only by Phaphama staff or with Satyana staff when they were available:

Date	Target group	N o . o f participants	Facilitation
17 - 19 February	Gender-related NGOs	16	Phaphama

26 - 28 February	Gender-related NGOs and Phaphama associates	22	Phaphama
7 April	University of KwaZulu-Natal 4 <sup>th</sup> -year social work students	86	Phaphama and Satyana
23 - 24 October	Phaphama facilitators and associates (including school learners)	30	Phaphama
22 - 24 November	Boksburg Prison	32	Phaphama and Satyana

As can be seen from the target groups listed above, Phaphama's strategy was to identify and reach out to a range of related sectors where this work is most needed i.e. in:

- capacitating NGOs that are already involved in addressing gender-based violence with this new form of gender work that brings men and women together in a forum for truth-telling and reconciliation
- broadening the perspectives of social work students so as to make them better social workers in the field
- addressing issues of masculinity and gender-based inequality by working predominantly with men (the prison workshop did, however, also have some women participants from Phaphama)
- capacitating our own large base of facilitators and associates with a deeper understanding of gender-based violence in our country, with the aim either to strengthen our facilitation skills in the Alternatives to Violence Project, or to make us more effective peace activists in our homes and communities.

In addition to these workshops, Phaphama also set up and/or supported (either financially and/or with support facilitation) the following workshops in Cape Town:

Date	Target group
3 and 4 March	Taster workshops for religious leaders from the Cape Town Interfaith Initiative and the Western Cape Religious Leaders Forum, and NGOs
12 - 14 March	Community workshop

The administrative load placed on Phaphama to organize these seven workshops was such that it demanded the help of an administrative assistant. Phaphama, therefore, contracted the services of an intern, Anna Lerner, who had worked with us previously. Her task was to network with gender-related NGOs and set up the workshops in Johannesburg and Cape Town. Anna worked on this for two months and set up a well-researched database of over 70 NGOs, government institutions and education institutions working or interested in this field. Anna also managed to secure the participation of representatives from the Joint Gender Fund (HIVOS) (who

funded this work in 2009) <http://www.jointgenderfund.co.za>; Potter's House Women's Shelter - a division of the Tshwane Leadership Foundation [www.tlf.org.za](http://www.tlf.org.za); the Ceasefire Campaign, Action [www.ceasefire.org.za](http://www.ceasefire.org.za); Khulumani Support Foundation [www.khulumani.net](http://www.khulumani.net); the Olive Leaf Foundation [www.olf.org.za](http://www.olf.org.za); The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation [www.csvr.org.za](http://www.csvr.org.za); Sangonet [www.sangonet.org.za](http://www.sangonet.org.za); and social workers from the Department of Correctional Services.



Participants in a workshop

### Some workshop highlights

Without describing each workshop separately (they all essentially followed the same training structure of building a safe space; sinking into an in-depth exploration of the experiences and issues; then coming through the pain into an honouring of the courage to do this work; and a commitment to changed attitudes and behaviour), we have chosen to comment on the significant highlights of some of the workshops: either highlights that give us the confidence to implement this work with new target groups, or highlights that reveal a considerable depth of healing and reconciliation achieved in the workshop. We would also be happy to comment on the lowlights, except that there were none for us in this series of workshops. Any negative

participant feedback comments, however, have been included in the relevant section below.

Two of the workshops were markedly different in structure to the tried and tested workshop model comprising between 12 and 36 participants, with roughly an equal balance between men and women, and running over three full days. The University of KwaZulu-Natal workshop was a one-day workshop comprising 86 students, 7 of whom were men. Because of this significant imbalance between the genders, as well as the short duration of the workshop we were particularly concerned that the men may find it difficult to speak their truth in the presence of so many women. This was not the case, however, and we were satisfied at the end of the workshop that enough of a safe space had been created for all to make their voices heard and for authentic, respectful listening to take place. Please visit the following YouTube link to hear the students and their lecturer speaking of their experience of the workshop: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8G-hcWj-Eek>. Our other concern about the adaptability of the workshop exercises to such a large group was unfounded, as the activities worked just as powerfully with the higher numbers of people. Our experience in this case validated Satyana Institute's finding that the methodology works well with larger groups up to a few hundred people.

The other workshop, which followed a different structure, was the one in the all-male Boksburg prison. Because this work, by its nature, requires the presence of both men and women, Phaphama brought in seven women from outside the prison and four female social workers from within the prison, who had not attended this workshop, to be part of the workshop.

In general, the main stories shared by participants were around experiences of child, women and men abuse, robbery, theft, rape, drug dealing and abuse, the influence of bad company at a young age, and the loss of loved ones. During an activity known as the Truth Mandala, a number of very powerful and poignant stories were shared: a young man shared about the beautiful relationship he had had with a girl who had really loved him; "And how did I thank her? I gave her HIV!" Another young man spoke of how he used to beat his girlfriend - on this particular day he beat her from 20h00 till she collapsed at midnight and then she died. Yet another man spoke about the influence he had been on his cousin who got involved in criminal activities, was arrested and killed in another prison. He lives with the knowledge that the cousin's family blames him and cannot forgive him for this.

For men the main issue underpinning many of their stories was guilt and shame for the hurt they had caused and how they could now make reparations for what they had done. Closely related to this shame was the fear of one day being released and how they would then have to face their families, communities and friends.

The women's stories carried the underlying emotion of fear: fears for their own safety, for the safety of their children and of other women. Interestingly, some women were also seriously concerned about their male children and whether they would

succeed in bringing them up differently in the face of very destructive male socialization patterns. One woman shared how she had been raped and could not tell her son who had been conceived through that rape.

As with the earlier workshop in an all-male prison the previous year, we found that while there are more men than women in these workshops, the presence of at least a few women who are prepared to speak truthfully to their experiences of being a woman, impacts very powerfully on the men, many of whom have committed the very crimes and violations that the women are speaking of. In fact, as is apparent from the participants evaluations (see below), it is by hearing what women have suffered that men begin to take responsibility for their actions and, more importantly, change the way they see themselves in relation to women. Two testimonies of these changes of heart are given here:

I want to say a thousand apologies for sexually, emotionally, physically abusing women; from now on I will stand for them.

I was tough in my ways and I want to apologize but I feel it is too little for what I did.

Having social workers from the correctional facility as part of the workshop worked both to our disadvantage and to our advantage: for the first day they were unwilling to fully participate in the workshop, possibly because the level of sharing that was required of them made them feel too vulnerable in front of the inmates, with whom they have a professional relationship. On the other hand, however, the social workers were amazed at how the workshop process, in three days, revealed stories that they had not heard in all their years of working - on a daily basis - with the inmates. An example of this was when two inmates shared that they were HIV+ - and admitted that this was the first time they had disclosed this information. Many inmates also testified how this workshop was so much more effective than any of the anger management courses they had attended. So, in a way this work exposed the inadequacy of the social work interventions in the prison, and it is to the credit of the social workers that they recommended this work be done for other inmates and for all the social workers.

It was, however, the NGO workshops that were the most exciting for us as we were working with people who clearly already had much experience in this field. We were keen to see how this work would be received by them and it became apparent from Day 1 of the workshop that having men and women in the same training challenged perspectives on interventions that address gender-based violence. This was particularly so for some of the more radical feminists in the group who were used to dealing with gender issues from a women's rights-based approach. Therefore we were very gratified when these activists reported afterward that the workshop was a breakthrough, and something much needed which they hadn't experienced before. "It restored my dignity as a woman," exclaimed one of the feminist activists. Please see the YouTube link <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-s804jretcY> for comments

on the workshop by some of the participants.<sup>3</sup>

The workshop with Phaphama facilitators was an intense experience of honesty, love and healing. Care had to be taken in the first session to build a safe space for participants as it became clear that the Silent Witnessing exercise was not as powerful as it could have been: particularly the women had not felt safe enough to stand honestly for many of the gender injustices that they had suffered in their lives. This, however, became a constructive learning experience for the whole group when in the debriefing, one man shared how he had sensed that the women had wanted to stand for their truth, but had not had the courage to do so. This gave the women the opportunity to admit this, and explain why this had been the case for them. It was also a positive learning experience for the men to realize how much courage it takes for women to be able to speak out (even if not in words) about their pain.

The Truth Mandalas, when women and men were in separate gender groups, gave each gender the protection to speak with one another as sisters or brothers, and in this forum the women were very ready to share their stories.

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<sup>3</sup> Interviewees from left to right are: Simphiwe Shabalala (Khulumani Support Foundation), Collet Ngwane (CSVR), Grace Makhudu (Tshwane Leadership Foundation), Letty Mayephu (Potter's House), and Phumlani Mngomezulu (Olive Leaf Foundation).



Women supporting one another in their truth-telling

Participants shared their experiences of rape (including date rape), physical, emotional and financial abuse, absent fathers, broken families with the concomitant abuse of children by stepmothers/fathers, families where all the siblings have different fathers, poverty, using one's power at work to gain sexual favours, fear of not being able to keep a family together or play the desired role of a father because of unemployment, and abduction and prolonged exposure to emotional and physical violence driven by a revenge motive. Most of the men's stories were again characterized by intense feelings of shame and guilt, with one man sharing how he was living with regret at the suicide of a girlfriend whom he had exposed to alcohol and drugs at an early age. One young girl said she felt it would be better to kill her father and spend time in jail than continue having him abuse her and her mother at home.



A young girl sharing her anger and pain

It may be questionable whether it is helpful to bring people back into their pain, which they may have found ways of coping with in the past. Many participant comments, two of which are listed below, speak to this:

Even if I was crying but inside I was happy for having a platform to speak because it healed me.

We let the pain that we have bottled up for so long out and we feel relieved and free.

The rituals were a beautiful honouring of one another through song, poetry and dance, with the men writing the poem that heads this report, for the women. There was a simplicity about the rituals, which made them immensely moving in their affirmation of the other gender.



In a ritual to honour the women, men draped the chairs beautifully and created a candle-heart for the women

Please visit the following YouTube link [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5Sz-hp\\_w\\_c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5Sz-hp_w_c) for a brief overview of the gender healing and reconciliation work in South Africa in 2010.

#### Participant feedback

Below are a summary of comments from participants in all the workshops:

What was your most valuable learning in this workshop? Please be specific, and explain why.

- Tenderness of love, support and respect.
- I really value the respect and patience that we had as a group of both men and women. The fact that men felt strong to share their fears and even shared their fears to us as women. And it is valuable again to see that there are still good and caring men out there who trust women enough to share what they have shared with us through the workshop.
- That it enabled me to see the other gender in a very different eye. Powerful and eye opening.
- Women's and men's circles helped me to take out things that I've been keeping to myself and pretending that I can deal with them.
- Having to share about things that I couldn't talk about. I feel like a new person. I am leaving bad memories behind and I'm ready to face the world.
- That also men need love and care just like us women and they are also victims.
- The workshop was good in a sense that it gave each person a space to look from the self and be able to evaluate from own experiences.
- The workshop was powerful, soul searching and informative. I would suggest that you invite couples and youth groups.
- I've learned that as a man I must break down and cry, and not bottle things up.
- Got to know that men and women are both abused and abusers.
- Spending time with women and getting inside on how they feel about certain issues that concern both of us.
- Having people who are giving you full attention without judging.
- Men are not all the same.
- My valuable learning this weekend was that you don't need to be tough to be a man, but you need to take full responsibility of your acts and be man enough to accept your wrong.
- It helped me to believe in men again.

- The Silent Witnessing because I realised that the things I go through as a woman other women go through and also the men go through. I have learnt to understand the opposite gender.
- My valuable learning was I let go of the anger and refresh.
- I learnt that it's possible for men to put their ego's, their pride aside and ask for forgiveness.
- To explore the inner me more often so I can learn more about the fear, hope, sorrow and anger within me.
- The openness on both sides (men and women).
- Trust, love, honesty and respect - these are the most things that I loved because some of them were not familiar to me but I only experience them in this workshop.
- I enjoyed the fact that I could swallow my pride and talk about the issues which affect me the most. I also enjoyed the fact that I got an opportunity to listen to the issues men have.
- Company of people whom you do not know but have shown unreserved affection.

What did you not enjoy or not find valuable? Please be specific, and explain why.

- I would be lying if I said there is something I did not enjoy.
- I didn't enjoy the fact that I couldn't open up because I don't want to be judged and I'm afraid of resentment.
- I don't know because the workshop was well balanced and each aspect of it contributed to its success in its unique way
- Time allocation is not very much especially for the separate group discussion.

What feedback would you like to give your facilitators?

- Guyz you rock - I'm looking forward to having the skill you guys have. You were great every moment of the experience. I believe this step you've taken us through will help change the gender imbalances in our country and n the world. Thank you very much.
- Thanks a lot for being strong, courage and have patience for different people coming from different background.
- They were all great and I would love to come back to this kind of workshop without hesitation.
- The workshop was great, you ran it with passion.
- Nicely facilitated with utmost sensitivity and patience. Get to the point quicker, especially when everybody has understood what is asked of them.
- Go on and make us and others to find their inner beings.

A particularly touching verbal comment from one inmate was the following: "For the first time in years I laughed from my heart, not just lips moving, thank you."

#### Workshop follow-up

Participant evaluations are by their nature limited because of their subjectivity: it is almost natural that participants who have had a profound workshop experience where they have been opened up in ways which are deeper than usual, and where they have been listened to without judgement, will comment positively on the workshop. While this is encouraging for us in that it confirms that the workshop model is successful, it is not reliable enough to take participants' evaluations (done straight after a workshop) as the sole measure of the effectiveness of the work.

We, therefore, decided to conduct a number of focus group sessions a few months after the workshop to see how participants had sustained or deepened the learnings they had made in the workshop. Three focus group meetings were held: one at Phaphama House, one at the school and one in Boksburg prison. Participants in these sessions had attended the gender reconciliation workshop three to eleven months prior to the focus group.

We gave serious thought to who should conduct these focus group meetings: at first, for the sake of objectivity, we thought it would be best to contract the services of an "outside", neutral facilitator. On further consideration, however, we decided against this, thinking that participants would not feel free to share very sensitive stories with a "stranger" whom they did not know. Finally - and in an effort to not completely compromise the subjectivity issue - we came to the conclusion that we would ask a Phaphama person to convene the meetings, who had not herself facilitated the

workshops, but who was also not a total stranger to the participants. In the prison, we did likewise with one of our male facilitators. We are reasonably satisfied that this was the best option at the time. In future, we may try a different option.

Please see the focus group questions in Appendix 1 below. In the two-hour focus group meeting, participants were asked to spend the first thirty minutes (after an explanation of the procedure and a translation of the questions where necessary) writing responses to the questions. They were encouraged not to plod through each question in the order they were given, but only to respond to questions with which they resonated, and which they found interesting or stimulating. After thirty minutes, a half hour was given for open discussion, where participants could share with the group anything that they wished to share from their writing. Then another thirty minutes was given to continue writing, either to finish off what they had started or to write down anything new that the discussion had sparked for them. Finally, there was a little time left for closing comments. Written responses were collected, with participants asked not to give their names on their sheets of paper. A total of 36 people attended these focus groups.

The exercise proved to be very fruitful for Phaphama in that we were able to make a much more realistic assessment of the impact of the workshops, as opposed to just measuring outcomes through workshop evaluations. Furthermore, it seemed as if the opportunity to reflect (both in writing and verbally) on the workshop from a distance enabled participants to “bed down” some of the concepts and learnings they had made. Finally, it was a very valuable opportunity for us to follow up with participants who had been through considerable pain in the workshop, to see how they were doing now, and whether they needed any form of more qualified trauma support - particularly with some of the inmates who were hardcore criminals, and who are serving life sentences (or multiple life sentences) after the death sentences given under the Apartheid regime were commuted in 1994. This exercise has convinced us that we need to do this with all gender reconciliation workshops in future.

In an effort to fully understand the impact of the workshops, we have summarised the findings of the focus group meetings under different themes. This is obviously an interpretive exercise and we are open to - indeed, we would welcome - other interpretations.

There were impressive examples of how this work has helped participants address gender-based conflicts in their lives.

Being used as a slave at home and not having much time to do my school work. I told my mother that me and my brother have to be treated equally cause we are both human. The workshop helped me by teaching me not to hold on to things, but tell people what is eating me.

Yes, I was able to address the incident positively. The scenario was my friend wanted to propose [sex] to the other girl and this girl was not interested and

then the guy decided to say negative stuff towards this girl. I tried to stop him - fortunately I win him.

There was a young man assaulting his big sister because he knew that she can't fight for herself because she was afraid and we ended up calling the police and he was arrested.

I have taught my friends how to respect women.

One day I found my neighbour's wife sitting outside the door she was beaten up by her husband. I intervened and spoke to the husband and told him that this is not the way to solve family problems, he should talk to his wife and he agreed and they spoke in the house everything was back to normal.

Despite the anecdotal nature of these stories, they are particularly noteworthy as they indicate the multiplier effect of this work. This effect is, however, far greater than just about numbers. Ours is a country with the shameful distinction of having one of the highest rates of gender-based violence in the world: a root cause of our very high HIV rate.

South Africa is in the midst of one of the fastest growing HIV epidemics in the world. In the year 2000, an estimated 40% of deaths in adults aged 15-49 were attributable to AIDS, making it the single highest cause of death in South Africa. In the year 2002, there were more people living with HIV in South Africa than in any other country in the world. Simultaneously, South Africa has been the site of growing alarm at the high levels of rape reported from various sources, and the issues of sexual violence against women.<sup>4</sup>

In recent years, research is slowly showing us that if we are to address these epidemics (HIV and sexual violence), we will need to move away from simply targeting individual risk behavior to changing the notions of masculinity and maleness.

Rape is an interesting case in point here: in a study conducted by the South African Medical Research Council, quoted in Time Magazine, more than a quarter of South African men admitted to having raped.<sup>5</sup>

The problem of rape in South Africa as Wood and Jewkes (2001) show has to be understood within the context of the very substantial gender power inequalities which pervade South African society. Rape is a manifestation of

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<sup>4</sup> Kim J., Martin L., and Denny L., Rape and HIV Post-exposure prophylaxis: addressing the dual epidemics in South Africa, Reproductive Health Matters 2003:11(22), pg. 101

<sup>5</sup> Time Magazine, June 20, 2009.

male dominance over women and as Jewkes et al (2006) claim rape is an assertion of that position.<sup>6</sup>

Clearly, as long as women are in an unequal power relationship with men, it is not enough to address the prevalence of rape by making women more aware of risk factors - or by telling men that “no” means “no”. Instead, it is by getting conscious men to raise the awareness of other men about the notion of power in relationships, and to challenge social and cultural norms around this notion (as the above testimonies indicate), that we will begin to make some inroads into the dual diseases of gender-based violence and HIV.

Let it also be said that for a man to be able to do this with other men assumes that there is a growing confidence and resolve within him compelling him to take action among his brothers: a confidence that can only come from a more positive self-image. More importantly, however, it assumes that his inner compass with regard to gender relationships has reoriented itself.

I used to take women like nothing, but now I think they also have what I have in life.

I now see myself as a respecting man, a man with care and think about other people. A man who loves and cares for the opposite gender.

I have stopped lying to people I love and who also love me in return and they are supportive to me - I have learned to be faithful.

Males sometimes think that they are better than the opposite gender and the fact is that we all equal human beings.

What I think about women now is that we need to protect them and love them.

I have learnt to honour women.

You cannot say you love your woman knowing very well that you are hurting her.

Many of the comments above - in particular those that indicate a changed relationship between men and their intimate partners - are highly significant because statistics of gender-based violence show that most of the violence that women experience is at the hands, not of strangers, but of men who are their partners.

Existing data suggests that it is young women who are most commonly raped...rape perpetrated by a stranger reflects only a small proportion of

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<sup>6</sup> Bhana D., “AIDS is rape!” gender and sexuality in children’s responses to HIV and AIDS, *Social Science and Medicine* 2009 (69), pg. 601

women's experiences of coerced sex. In fact, the most common forms of sexual coercion are those most vulnerable to under-reporting. These may occur within marriages, dating relationships, families or where sex is agreed to after blackmail, threats or other forms of coercion.”<sup>7</sup>

Some men may not yet be at the point where they are able to positively influence other men. This may still require more courage - but at least the first steps towards this have been made as men become more aware of the gender-based violence in the world around them.

Men abuse women unnecessary. Men treat women as slaves. Men demand things from women, if women don't give them what they want, they violence against women.

The raping of women in Rwanda and Republic of Congo, and the abuse that was happening in my own home where my mother was being assaulted by my father.

Women are kidnapped and turned into sex slaves.

For other men (and women) this awareness has been turned inwards to examine one's self-responsibility as a perpetrator of gender-based violence.

I would say that going to these workshops is not an opportunity to get back at men, this is an opportunity to rectify your wrong doings. I have stopped hurting other people's feelings.

It changed my life a lot in a sense that I never respected a woman before; I always thought that men were always right not knowing that what I was doing was unacceptable at all. But now I am singing a new tune, what is left is to reconcile with my victims.

I am glad that I have seen women shedding tears about the way they have been violated by men because I myself have done a lot of this in the past, and now I know how much pain it causes them.

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<sup>7</sup> Kim J., Martin L., and Denny L., Rape and HIV Post-exposure prophylaxis: addressing the dual epidemics in South Africa, *Reproductive Health Matters* 2003:11(22), pg. 103



The forum in which the men witness the women speaking their truth

While this last comment does not specifically speak of HIV, it is key in the struggle to end violence against women. Here is a man who, because he has heard women speak of their pain, “gets it”; i.e. he now understands the impact of his behavior towards women. Research is showing that this is how we will fight the HIV epidemic.

... about one in seven of new infections in women in Jewkes and colleagues’ study were attributed to either male partner violence or women’s lack of relational power. In view of the facts that the fastest growing sector of those infected with HIV across both Asian and African epidemics is women whose main risk factor is sex with a male partner.....and that expansion of treatment with antiretroviral drugs cannot keep pace with the ever-increasing number of people infected, the global HIV community must move to make targeting such male behaviours a central focus of prevention efforts.<sup>8</sup>

In terms of the workshop processes, it is amply clear that the feeling of support and solidarity enabled participants to shed the load they had been carrying for a long time and move towards self-healing.

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<sup>8</sup> Comment, Key to prevent HIV in women: reduce gender-based violence, The Lancet, 2010 (Vol. 376), pg. 6

I have sincerely recommended this workshop to my friends because you get to see that you are not the only one who has problems, and you get to share your problems with other people.

I have seen that keeping things inside your heart will kill you slowly, but to recover that you should tell someone in order to heal.

Being open to people you trust. I say this because people from the gender reconciliation workshop were very kind people, I felt free to tell them my story and from the pain I had before telling them I was happily free from pain.

Some focus group stories reveal how participants have taken, or would like to take, skills from the workshop directly into their own lives.

I spend more time with my family, and we speak more openly now than before. There is more affection now and the way we treat each other is wonderful.

I've stopped treating my girlfriend that I beat her and we have an open and respectful relationship.

I would like to keep the activity called [Truth] Mandala as a family culture so that we can often discuss family issues.

Finally, as the name of these workshops indicates, it is crucial that we look at the level of healing and reconciliation that has taken place - a few months later - between women and women, between men and men, and between women and men.

[My life] has changed in many ways, like for instance at home I am able to talk to my grandmother who used to abuse me. Even though she hasn't stopped abusing me I respect and love her the way she is.

It has changed my life for the better in my family because there are good relationships within the family and my father because before we didn't talk to each other.

Yes, I had a bad relationship with my dad that let us to not talking to each other for a period of three to four years. I know that I have done things that I am not proud of and I have hurt my family a lot for too long, knowing that if I ask for forgiveness they will forgive me. I went back and did it again which made my father angry and resented me for it. After some time thinking about everything that happened, I decided to take a bold step to speak to my father again and it paid-off because today me and my father are in good speaking terms and we managed to patch things-up, all thanks to Gender Reconciliation, this program made me own-up to my own mistakes and take the initiative and speak to my dad after so long.

I used to hate every man that I see but as a result of this workshop I'm completely a different person. I saw that not all men are the same, I've learned to respect men.

I have stopped looking at them [men] like dogs. I talk differently about them.

### Facilitator growth

After the first T4F Module, facilitators-in-training were asked to complete a self-evaluation on their personal, professional and spiritual growth in relation to this work. It was encouraging that all the self-evaluations were in line with the assessments given by the trainers to each facilitator.

Module 3 was completed in November last year, and as we have not conducted any further workshops since then, it is too early for us to comment on our growth as facilitators. Our aim is to have our own focus group meeting after having facilitated a few workshops (possibly two or three times this year) and reflect on our growth and our challenges. We look forward to Satyana's support in this exercise.

It may be helpful, however, to share with you the testimony of one of our young women facilitators who facilitated in the prison, as it captures at once the beauty and the difficulty of training in this work:

I loved facilitating this workshop because we were able to reach participants' hearts and feelings so that they could share personal life stories which were really touching and overwhelming. The challenge for me was my being emotional and carrying it along with me which made me a bit drained....but I am thankful for the opportunity to grow as a facilitator and a woman.

### Financial report

Please see the interim financial report for these workshops attached in the separate document, which accounts for an expenditure of R414,953 out of the total grant commitment of R666,196 (€70,000). Of this total grant amount, R390,196 (€40,000) was received on 20 April 2010.

### Proposed schedule for 2011

With the remaining funds from Porticus, Phaphama is able to do eight more workshops this year. We would like to build on the work done in 2010 by focusing on a number of strategic target groups. One such group is the social workers in Soweto: we have realised that because of the intensity of the work and the depth of gender-based violence in our communities, it is important to have a pool of professional social workers at hand who understand the work and who can be available for more extended trauma counselling when necessary. Police men and women working in

the gender violence and victim support units of the police stations in Soweto will be invited to this workshop, as well as members of the ANC Youth League.

We also wish, where possible, to conduct gender reconciliation workshops as a follow-on from our Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) workshops as we firmly believe that the basic human relationship and conflict resolution training given in AVP serves as an excellent foundation for the deeper, more challenging gender reconciliation work. To this end, we will be working with the Damietta Initiative; a refugee-support initiative in South Africa (in fact, throughout Africa) with whom we have done AVP for many years.

We will also continue working with our own facilitators and associates, in particular with our youth division; the HIPP Club. The gender-activist NGO, Potter's House, who sent representatives on one of the 2010 workshops, has also requested a further workshop for their staff.

We would also like to conduct at least one workshop in a school and a prison as these are our base constituencies which form part of our long-term vision (see below) for this work.

Finally, as an experiment, we would like to conduct one or two workshops in a rural community and have targeted Bushbuckridge in Limpopo, as we have a partner organization there [www.afrikaikalafe.co.za](http://www.afrikaikalafe.co.za) that is able to invite local government, church, educational and community leaders to a workshop.

Below is a schedule of dates and workshops for 2011:

Date	Target group
22, 23 March	Social workers, Katlehong
16, 17 April	Damietta Initiative
9, 10 May	Potter's House (Tshwane Leadership Foundation)
25, 26 June	Social workers, police staff, ANC Youth League Soweto
13, 14 August	School workshop
12, 13, 14 September	Prison workshop
21, 22 or 22, 23 October	Social workers, police staff, ANC Youth League Soweto or Ndlovu Community Health Centre, Elandsdoorn
tbc	HIPP Club (Phaphama Youth Division)
tbc	Local government and church, educational and community leaders' workshop in Bushbuckridge

The gender reconciliation initiative in Cape Town now has its own coordinator and steering committee and is in the process of looking at whether and how they would like to formalize themselves. Phaphama Initiatives will continue to support the facilitation in Cape Town when requested to do so and will also call on support facilitators from Cape Town as funds and people's availability permits.

Early in 2011 Phaphama also tendered for two gender reconciliation work contracts:

- One was issued by the national Department of Social Development, in which Phaphama will collaborate with another NGO, Footballers 4 Life, on implementing a gender advocacy programme for Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape
- Another issued by UNIFEM, in which Phaphama will collaborate with a public relations company, Adlib studio, to run a "Respect is Sexy" campaign for the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

We await responses on both these tenders.

#### Phaphama's long-term vision in doing this work

Phaphama's long-term vision is to do this work in a confined target group or geographical area over an extended period of time (at least three years) so that we can effectively measure the impact of the programme. Ideally, the gender reconciliation workshops conducted in this target group should follow on the Alternatives to Violence Project workshops, which means that the most ideal, effective and responsible form of funding would be that which supports both interventions. It would make sense to work in the Pimville community in Soweto where we are based and where we have worked for many years. This way we could target the four high schools in the area, doing pre- and post-surveys of the levels and type of gender violence in the schools. We could also do community workshops and use the local police station and clinic, with whom we already have good relationships, to provide us with statistics of the number of gender violence cases in the past few years, measured against the number of new cases opened during each year of our intervention. Local councillors and political youth structures would also be invited to participate in the programme, making it a whole-community intervention.

A further whole-community intervention could take place as part of Phaphama's Community Work Programme (CWP). Currently Phaphama is implementing partner of the Seriti Institute [www.seriti.org.za](http://www.seriti.org.za), managing a job creation, community development programme of 1000 people on a site west of Johannesburg, called Region C. We believe it would be very effective to conduct AVP and Gender Reconciliation training in Region C, as the site is already structured into wards comprising 50 working people; each ward administered by a coordinator. In fact, we see it as crucial that this kind of human relationship work is brought into the community to complement the income-generating aspect of CWP: without it the additional flow of income into the community has the potential to fuel gender-based

violence as men demand what their partners have earned and as the already unacceptable rate of alcoholism increases.

Another target group that Phaphama sees a possibility of working with is the community in Elandsdoorn, which is already heavily involved in an integrated community health and development programme under the leadership of Dr Hugo Tempelman's Ndlovu Care Group [www.ndlovucaregroup.co.za](http://www.ndlovucaregroup.co.za). This is an interesting partnership for us (Phaphama already has a relationship with Dr Templeman), as it would mean working in a defined geographical area where the outreach to an entire community and the gathering of statistics would be relatively easy. Also, the very substantial and effective HIV awareness and treatment work already done there since 1994 would provide invaluable support to this gender reconciliation programme, and vice versa. While it is highly likely that the community will receive this work positively because of all the community health interventions already being conducted there, what has not been addressed is the issue of gender-based violence and its link to the spread of HIV/AIDS. However, because of the community structures and development initiatives already in place in Elandsdoorn, it makes it the ideal target group to assess the efficacy of the programme. If the synergy of awareness-raising and development initiatives on the one hand; and life skills and gender healing work on the other proves successful, then there is a compelling model - perhaps the only model - of holistic community rehabilitation in Africa for every interested partner and for our government to unequivocally stand behind.

While we seek to further explore these possibilities and make them a reality, there are some things learnt from last year that we would like to bear in mind this year:

- Residential workshops are very expensive and, while they provide participants with an immersion opportunity, it is not viable to do them at this stage unless absolutely necessary
- Phaphama will work on facilitator guidelines for doing this work in prisons, particularly to protect our women facilitators who may train in all-male prisons
- While the two-day model (as opposed to the more traditional three-day model) has proved very effective for us thus far, we will remain critical of it until we are satisfied that the quality of such a workshop is not compromised.

Whatever Phaphama's long-term plans turn out to be, one thing is certain. We are committed to continue building and expanding this programme in South Africa and possibly on the continent of Africa in partnership with and under the guidance of the Satyana Institute. We are also encouraged by Satyana's confidence in Phaphama's role as an implementing partner in this intervention:

"It has been such a joy and privilege to collaborate with the Phaphama team, and we are deeply gratified by the encouraging results they are achieving in their application of the Gender Reconciliation model," said Cynthia Brix. "Our training of Phaphama staff in the Gender Reconciliation model was a terrific experience from start to finish, and it is wonderful to witness the flowering of

gender reconciliation work under Phaphama's skillful stewardship. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with Phaphama," said William Keepin.

## Conclusions

Has the Gender Reconciliation programme lived up to our expectations of it? Much more than we originally conceived. Initially we thought it was a powerful conflict resolution tool to heal relationships between men and women. Our first evaluation of the Gender Reconciliation programme was conducted two years ago. At that time we concluded as follows:

It is clear from the success of these workshops that there is a great need to roll-out gender reconciliation work on a much broader scale in South Africa. Not only does this work have the potential to heal relationships between men and women; it also has the power to give rise to a new generation of adults who will be far better equipped to take up the privilege and responsibility of parenting in a way which honours and nurtures the self-actualisation of the next generation of children. This combination of healing and reconciliation . . . is a powerful tool in the fight against HIV/AIDS; in fact, the only tool that addresses the root causes of HIV/AIDS rather than just the symptoms.<sup>9</sup>

Now with considerably more experience in this work, we are slowly beginning to understand that this programme has the potential, one workshop at a time, to prevent communities from self-destructing because of gender violence and HIV/AIDS.

To gauge the impact of the Gender Reconciliation programme over time, we conducted three focus groups between three and eleven months after the workshops. This provided a realistic means for assessing the lasting effects of the workshops, and also to determine whether key concepts and learnings were being applied in practical ways in participants' lives.

The results were impressive. Even several months after the workshop, participants' lives were significantly changed:

- Most participants reported healing effects within their families, including greater trust and improved communication in some of their most challenging relationships.
- Numerous participants reported life-changing impacts, and gave specific examples of how they are applying new skills from the workshop to move towards self-healing and to address gender-based conflicts in their lives.

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<sup>9</sup> Report on the Gender Reconciliation Intervention by Satyana Institute, Phaphama Initiatives, Johannesburg, June, 2009. This report is an assessment by Phaphama Initiatives of Satyana Institute's Gender Reconciliation programs in South Africa conducted in February - March, 2009.

- Several men reported a whole new understanding of women’s pain, and how they are taking responsibility for curbing their own gender-based violence, and in some cases that of their male friends.
- Many men reported a positive shift in their attitudes and relationships with their intimate partners, including new respect for the women and girls in their families and communities.



A man demonstrating in a role-play how he has moved from “blindness” to “seeing” the gender injustice around him

These last two findings are especially encouraging, because statistics show that the majority of violence against women and girls is perpetrated by male family and community members, rather than strangers.

We are also learning the pivotal role that a new generation of men will have in this struggle: men who have the courage to hear women tell their stories first-hand, and the courage to face their own pain - as we all come to terms with the fact that men are as much victims as they are perpetrators of this violence. In fact, research shows that "(i)t is not just women who will benefit if men’s lives are transformed. Statistically speaking, the majority of victims of men’s violence are other males.

Thousands of men and boys are murdered or assaulted each year, usually by other men. For example, 76 percent of victims of male homicide (in the U.S.) are other men, and 24 percent are women.”<sup>10</sup>

A visiting gender reconciliation facilitator from Kenya expresses this as follows:

When I went to co-facilitate [a gender reconciliation workshop] in a prison in Johannesburg this November and heard the stories of the men in prison, I realized the importance of gender reconciliation work. Most of the men spoke of absentee fathers or mothers and being left with no one to guide them when they were young. Other men said that there was no mentor in their lives to show or teach them how to grow as a man. They learnt about their sexuality from magazines and stories told by fellow young men who had no clue. In particular, all of the men talked of having no idea about how to relate to women. I am sure the story of these South African men is the same for many Kenyan men.

This is where the training comes in. It is CRITICAL that gender reconciliation workshops are done all over the continent of Africa, because the rupture in the male species is so deep.

Indeed, research shows the need to transform current notions of masculinity:

..it has been suggested the experience of trauma in childhood reduces men’s ability to form emotionally intimate relationships with women and as a result they develop a preference for impersonal sex...which strongly correlate(s) with increased perpetration of gender-based violence by young men....Our findings suggest that interventions which seek to explicitly transform ideas of masculinity that privilege heterosexual success with and control over women will be more effective than those that address only individual risk behavior...<sup>11</sup>

Through this work of Gender Reconciliation, we will continue to transform notions of masculinity - and femininity; perhaps one day to discover that they can be equally valued and harmoniously interwoven into a renewed social fabric.

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<sup>10</sup> Jackson Katz, *Tough Guise*, Media Education Foundation, Northampton, MA, 1999.

<sup>11</sup> Dunkle K., Jewkes R., Nduna M., Jama N., Levin J., Sikweyiya Y., Koss M., Transactional sex with casual and main partners among young South Africa men in the rural Eastern Cape: Prevalence, predictors, and associations with gender-based violence, *Social Science and Medicine* 2007 (65), pg. 1235



Healing between men and women

To our knowledge, this form of Gender Reconciliation work is unique in bringing men face to face with women's pain and challenges, and vice versa, and then skillfully moving through and beyond this collective wound to a genuine experience of healing and reconciliation. Herein lies great promise for the well-being of women and men in Africa and beyond.

The Phaphama team  
6 March 2011

### Appendix 1 - Gender Reconciliation Focus Group questions

1. Have you been able to use any of the skills from the workshop in your life? Please tell us how.
2. In what ways, if any, has your life changed since the gender reconciliation workshop? Think about your life in your family, in your school or workplace and in your community.
3. Which of these changes do you think are as a result of the gender reconciliation workshop? Why do you say this?
4. Are there any things you have stopped doing since the workshop?
5. Has anyone commented on a positive difference they have seen in you since the workshop?
6. Do you think you are a different man/woman now, as compared to other men/women, as a result of the workshop? If so, how are you different?
7. Do you find that you now talk differently about the opposite gender? Can you give an example of this?
8. Do you find that you now think differently about the opposite gender? Can you give an example of this?
9. When you look in the mirror, can you describe the type of man/woman you see?
10. Have you become more aware of gender-based violence in the world around you? If so, could you give two or three examples of this?
11. Have you been able to positively address any incident of gender-based violence that you have seen happening around you? If you have, please could you write down what happened?
12. Can you write down one example of a gender-based conflict in your life, which you were able to solve (or are in the process of solving) since the workshop? How did the workshop help you solve this, if at all?
13. Looking back at your life, would you sincerely recommend this workshop to your friends? Why? Why not?
14. If someone said to you, "I've learnt all I need to know about how to be a man/woman, and how to treat women/men, from my culture," what would you say to them?
15. Is there anything that you learnt in the workshop that you would like to keep as part of your values and lifestyle? What support do you need to do this? From whom do you need this support?
16. For men only: If men said to you that these workshops are a waste of time, or that they are meant to just teach you how to be nice to women, what would you say to them?

17. For women only: If women said to you that these workshops are a great opportunity to get back at men for all the ways in which women have been wronged, what would you say to them?