

## **MESSAGE OF SUPPORT OF 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST WOMEN'S AND CHILD ABUSE.**

**BY : HON T B MOTSHEGARE W/L NATIONAL CHAIRPERSON**

Allow me to send a heartfelt message of support to all the victims of abuse.

I stand here today in my capacity as a woman, a mother, a wife and politically the Chairperson of UCDP Women's League and would like to appeal to all South Africans to come out of their secluded corners and speak out about abuse wherever it happens.

Our silence perpetuates the abuse, as mothers we should be at the forefront to love and to protect ourselves and our children from the abusive partners, relatives or even strangers. In most cases a mother is the closest person to the child and she is the first to notice if there's anything wrong, physically or psychologically with the child.

The reason why this pandemic escalates and seems a futile exercise is the fact that most women do not act against it. They die in silence and make excuses for abusers. They blame themselves and stay in these relationships for wrong reason like financial security or with the hope that one day the abuser will change and it shall all become a thing of the past.

Women fear to seek help for different reason some are from rural areas and are unaware of their rights but there are also academics that do not want the world to know that they are also victims, they hide their pain behind the lavish lifestyles and live in denial, making excuses for the abuser.

The Department of Justice estimates that 1 out of every four South African women are survivors of domestic violence.

According to POWA 1 in every 6 women who die in Gauteng are killed by an intimate partner.

90% of the women interviewed had experienced emotional abuse: being humiliated in front of others was most commonly reported.

90% had also experienced physical abuse: being pushed or shoved and being slapped or hit were highlighted.

71% had experienced sexual abuse: attempts to kiss or touch followed by forced sexual intercourse occurred most often.

58% experienced economic abuse: money taken without consent was most common.

42.5% of women had experienced all forms of abuse.

60% of all cases of abuse were committed by partners, lovers or spouses.

-Emotional abuse-either as a category on its own or in combination with other types of abuse was referred to by 63% of women as being the most serious.

-According to a Medical Research Council study, young women are more subjected to assault (ranging from slapping to beating with objects and stabbing) and sexual coercion by partners and others.

All the above information is taken from POWA.

We at UCDP see these as heartening incidents, which need not to be overlooked.

Let us all be accountable and not seek political publicity but be the change that we want to see in the world as Mahatma Ghandi said.

It all starts with u. A journey of a million miles begins with one step.