

MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE

MEDIA STATEMENT

Monday, 25 August 2014
Attention: News Editors

LEGISLATURE CONDUCTS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

Women from around Tonga chanted "Wathint' abafazi, wathint' imbokodo" as they welcomed the delegation from the Legislature led by the Chairperson of the Select Committee on Women, Youth, Children and People with Disabilities, Ms Gabisile Shabalala during an awareness workshop aimed at assisting and educating about women rights and statutory rape. The workshop is also aimed at empowering women to speak out about gender related violence.

"We are here to educate women on how to defend themselves against crime and abuse. We are here to listen to your problems so that as the Legislature we can endeavour to assist you," said Ms Shabalala as she outlined the purpose of the workshop.

Women listened attentively as representatives from the departments dealing directly with issues affecting women made presentations. These included Department of Health, Department of Social Development, The National Prosecuting Authority, Department of Justice and the Department of Safety and Security.

Mr Mbuso Shabangu, a representative from the Department of Justice, explained domestic violence as violence happening in a home environment. He encouraged women to report incidents of domestic violence and that they must not protect people who perpetrate such kind of violence irrespective of them being family members.

He also said "Although children have rights but they also have responsibilities. I urge you to report children who are abusing you at home,"

Ms Judy Ngobeni who works in the maintenance court, mentioned three groups of people who qualify to claim for maintenance saying these are women, children and siblings.

"I urge you women to know the full names of a person you are in relationship with, their residential and work address so that it can be easier to locate them for maintenance purpose," she said.

Women were also encouraged to report abuse against children and to motivate their children to go to school.



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During the day, there were government services like; the Mobile Clinic which was at the venue where people were tested for sugar diabetes and hypertension. These diseases are regarded as the silent killers.

Women from Tonga complained that cases opened at the local police station were not given the necessary attention by the police and that discourages reporting cases.

The Committee promised to refer their problem to the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison. Similar workshop will be held on Wednesday (27.08.2014) at Arcornhoek under Bushbuckridge Local Municipal .

Ends

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