



## **Cabinet Calls On Men to Fight Abuse**

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Cabinet has called for men to unite against women and child abuse ahead of the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children campaign.

In the cabinet meeting held Wednesday, a call was made for men to participate in the planned Million Men's Marches in cities throughout the country on Sunday, the launch of the 16 Days Campaign.

The national event is set to take place in Bloemfontein and thousands of men from across the country are expected to march to show their support for the campaign against women and child abuse.

This year's campaign also coincides with other international events that will take place during December. These include International Aids day on 1 December and the International Day of Disabled Persons, 2 December.

The 16 Days Campaign will run till 10 December and will be marked by provincial and national events.

Other campaigns to be promoted in conjunction with the campaign include the One Man Can Campaign, which calls on individuals to make a difference in the fight against gender abuse.

Launched last year in conjunction with the 16 Days Campaign, the One Man Can Action Toolkit includes a resource directory, workshop materials and information on how to develop healthy relationships and how to support victims of violence.

It has been used widely across the country in the last year, including the Free State, Gauteng, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape.

The toolkit was developed by Sonke Gender Justice Network with support from the Social Dialogue and Human Rights Directorate within the Provincial Government of the Western Cape's Department of the Premier, Western Cape Department of Housing and Local Government, UNICEF, South African Development Fund, the Ford Foundation and International Organization on Migration.

Sonke's Programme Co-ordinator, Nyanda ka-Khanyile said that the organisation's research and their successes in reaching men over the last year showed that many men and boys are concerned about the widespread domestic and sexual violence and want it to stop.

"We, men and boys, do worry about the safety of women and girls including their partners, sisters, mothers, girlfriends, wives, co-workers, neighbours, classmates and fellow congregants, and want to play a role in creating a safer and more just world.

"As one man you can demand justice, love passionately, stop AIDS, and end violence, you can stop violence on your own and form a street committee," said Mr ka-Khanyile.

He said the kit will be useful for any man concerned about these issues adding a need to go back and say your pain is my pain.

'When a woman is abused and it goes unchallenged, that means all women are vulnerable to abuse too, my mother and sister and yours, and we as men and boys, have to stand up and stop the abuse perpetrated by other men,' Mr ka-Khanyile said.

The toolkit includes information stickers on the campaign, music with anti-abuse messages, slogan t-shirts, video clips, posters and fact sheets that those involved in the campaign can use and distribute.

It also provides information and strategies on how men can support a survivor of abuse, use the law to demand justice, educate children early and often, challenge other men to take action, make schools safer for girls and boys, raise awareness in places of worship and build a human rights culture.