



## WEBINAR REPORT

# “Silencing the Guns Project in Botswana: A focus on Gender-Based Violence - 1st Workshop”



**Date and Time:** Wednesday, 27 April 2022, 10AM (CAT)

**Location:** Online (Zoom)

**Topics:** Gender Based Violence, Human Rights

**Host:** HWPL Gangwon Branch

**Speakers:** Honourable Councillor Joyce Tumagole, Councillor, Gaborone City Council

Ms Abisola Shofoyeke, Volunteer, International Peace Youth Group

**Webinar was held to educate Botswana youth on the current status of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Botswana, highlight the causes of GBV and to give them practical ways to address this GBV in their communities.**

*“the probability of children who have witnessed their parents’ violence becoming violent themselves as a parent to their children or to their partner is extremely high. In addition, those children don’t know how to solve conflicts with anything but violence, and they tend to find themselves in relationships where they continue being victims of violence.*”

**Ms Abisola Shofoyeke**

## **Introduction Webinar**

On 27 April 2022, a virtual workshop to enable intergenerational dialogue to break the long-standing cycle of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) was held in Botswana.

The workshop is a joint initiative between an international peace NGO called Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light (HWPL), International Peace Youth Group (IPYG), and Volunteer Hub (VH), a social enterprise that contributes to alleviate socio-economic and environmental challenges in Botswana.

GBV is a serious issue that the international community is paying attention to amid reports of a surge in violence against many women and children globally during the pandemic. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), more than 67% of women in Botswana have experienced gender-based violence, which is over double the global average. And globally, an average of 1 in 3 women will experience physical or sexual abuse jeopardizing their sexual and reproductive health.

Councillor Joyce Tumagole expressed her gratitude for such a youth dialogue platform on behalf of the Gaborone City Council Office of the Mayor "As many of us are already aware, GBV has unfortunately continued to worsen in recent years. Today, we are here, as the people of Botswana, to take charge to equip ourselves with tools that will allow us to address GBV in our communities by understanding how to approach it with peace as a goal."

## **Background Information**

GBV undermines a women's health, dignity, security, and autonomy. But according to the UNFPA, the bigger problem is that the seriousness of GBV is shrouded by a culture of silence and normalization. So this project is rated as an attempt to address these major problems such as a lack of education and information in Botswana.

During the main presentation on the Peace Education values, Abisola Shofoyeke from the IPYG said, "the probability of children who have witnessed their parents' violence becoming violent themselves as a parent to their children or to their partner is extremely high. In addition, those children don't know how to solve conflicts with anything but violence, and they tend to find themselves in relationships where they continue being victims of violence."

Abisola Shofoyeke suggested the Peace Education of HWPL which teaches youth to know their duty, role, value, and influence within society to break the cycle of violence. "All creation lives in harmony. All people are connected to each other, and they influence one another. Depending on how they look at others, the influence they have may differ", she added.



## **Points of discussion**

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## **Highlights**

Young Attendee: "Botswana needs places where more platforms where people can speak and be heard and needs more organisations that tackle this head on."

Young Attendee: "I just want to appreciate this approach because it gives us hope and it boost our confidence to make an impact when fighting GBV because like I said it starts with a person"

Young Attendee: "GBV is complex and likely to take place even in places we least expect (circles of support) and hence from this session, I would say we ought not to judge those in the situations instead we ought to be supportive and not victimize those who have been victimized already"

Abisola Shofoyeke: "Something else that we can learn from creation is that - all creation lives in harmony because they receive help from each other and fill each other's needs. A person cannot live alone."

## **Next Steps**

We will continue with this campaign until September, there will be a continuous online campaign to raise awareness. There will also be one more workshop in July and an Inter-generational dialogue in September to present all that has been learned and come to a consensus on the way forward.

## **Contact Information**

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