



# Women and Law in Southern Africa **Zimbabwe**

FEBRUARY EDITION 2021



## National Development Strategy.....and the fight for gender equality

The year started with the battling of mounting cases and deaths from the COVID19 which saw the nation retreating into lockdown. The new cases resulted in the sanctioning of restrictive measures that limited face to face interactions with communities

WLSA adjusted to the new working environment by taking to the radio, national television and online platforms to engage with communities. With the support of UN Women Zimbabwe, WLSA embarked on the National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1) awareness campaign. The campaign sought to discuss the NDS1, centering on monitoring accountability to women's rights and gender equality. The guests additionally agreed on the need for measures that need to be taken for the strategy to fulfil the gender equality target.

The various conversations spoke to the challenges of the NDS1, highlighting how the inadequate resources and underfunding of women empowerment programs may deter the gender equality goal.

Two radio programs were conducted on Star FM and one on national television, ZBC. The shows unpacked a simplified version of the provisions of the strategy and additionally, explained the provisions for women in the same document.

[Click links to watch the recordings](#)

**Mai Chisamba**

**ZTN Programme 1**

**ZTN Programme 2**



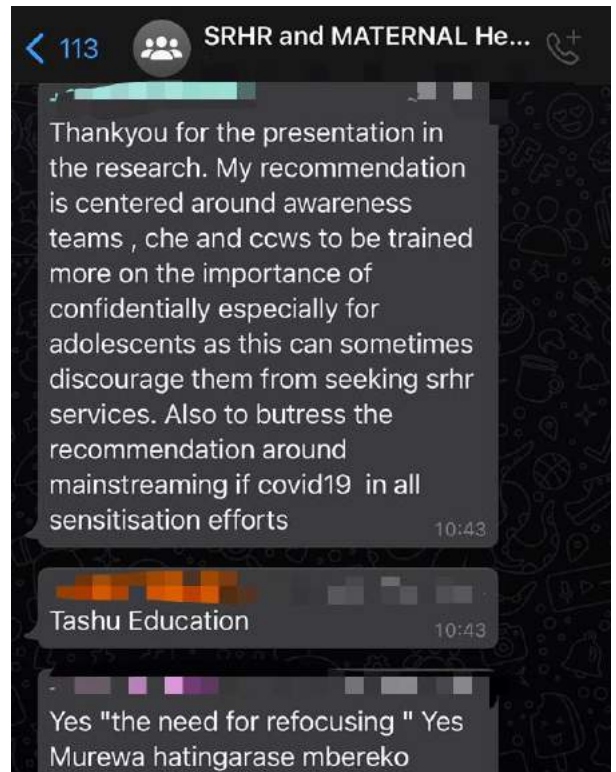
## "WhatsApping" matters

WLSA continues to think outside the box to reach the women in marginalised communities. The focus was shifted from face to face engagements to creating communities using the popular messaging platform "WhatsApp"

After realising how other meeting platforms such as zoom and microsoft teams were not easily accessible for these women, the organisation decided to take advantage of WhatsApp as a means for community engagement. The initiative was highly welcomed by the various groups which were observed through the active participation of the women,

Many sessions that were conducted using this methodology addressed issues of Sexual and Reproductive Health rights and maternal health. " True, Family planning pills must be given for free and I think no one will promote the black market. The government must declare free and available" said one participant identified as Mhofu.

From the meeting, it was evident that service delivery concerning SRHR and maternal health is still a challenge for women to access. The women continually resounded the need for the government to fulfil responsibilities to the citizens.



**WhatsApp group conversation extract**



**Social media flyer**

## The joy of being online

After the president pronounced the national lockdown at the beginning of the year, WLSA carried out virtual help desk services assisting clients across all provinces. The lockdown restrictions indicated that clients could not physically visit the courts and hence they assisted virtually via the toll-free and WhatsApp numbers.

WLSA relied heavily on the multisectoral approach where the Ministry of Women Affairs and the police were referral channels for any clients that needed further assistance. About 637 clients were assisted in January and February 2021. 541 women and 96 men total the beneficiaries assisted through the help desk.

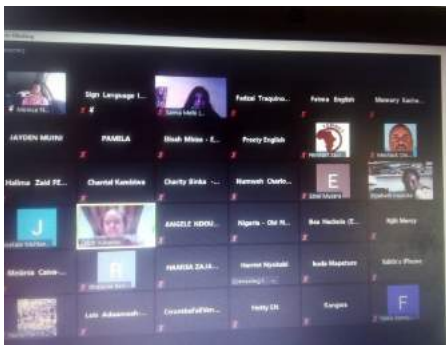


Distribution of PPE's at Milton Park Police Station

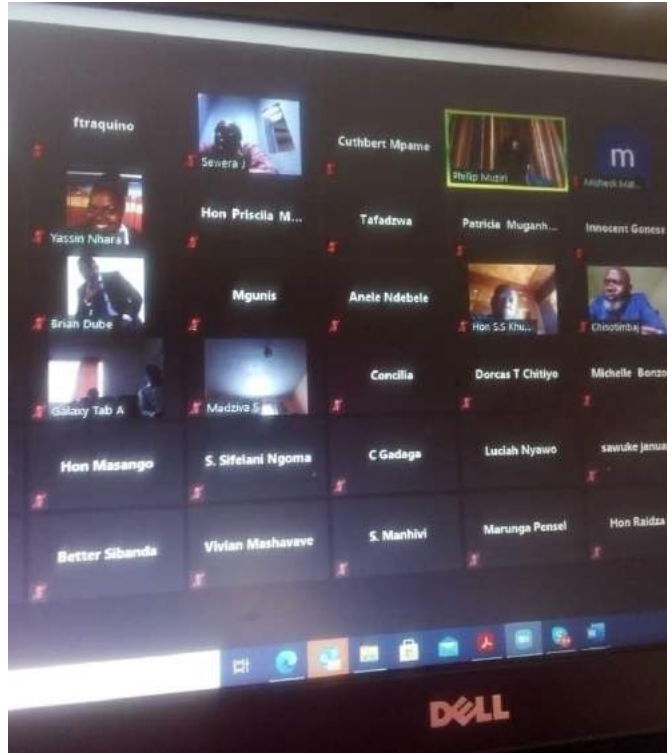
## COVID19 Interventions

While we remain mindful of the continued existence of the coronavirus, WLSA decided to lend a helping hand to its stakeholders. Zimbabwe Gender Commission, VFU police, Ministry of Women Affairs, Chief Magistrate, NPRC, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare –PVO section are some of the partners that received PPE's courtesy of the organisation.

The stakeholders were recipients of masks and sanitizers



Pre CSW65 Africa CSOs Virtual Meeting to co create a common advocacy position WLSA is coordinating the Southern Africa CSO group together with Gender Links



Screenshot of the meeting participants

WLSA participated in advocacy on Independent and Complaints Mechanisms Bill with CSO and Parliament. The meeting was hosted by SAPST. WLSA shared the gender gaps and recommendations on behalf of Women Coalition of Zimbabwe.

Reminder

source: World Health Organization

**Do's**

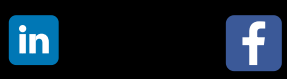
- ✓ Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water before touching the mask
- ✓ Check the mask for any tears or holes
- ✓ Find the top side where the metal piece or stiff edge is

Even though the restrictions have been relaxed, it is our responsibility to keep the community safe.

#MaskUp



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