

# **CURBING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

## **A MODEL FOR CULTURALLY SENSITIVE COUNSELING IN CENTRAL UGANDA**



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**A MODEL FOR CULTURALLY SENSITIVE  
COUNSELING IN CENTRAL UGANDA**

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Justice and Peace Department  
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# List of Acronyms

AIDS	-	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CAFOD	-	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CD	-	Community Dialogue
CIID	-	Criminal Investigation & Intelligence Department
DV	-	Domestic Violence
GBV	-	Gender Based Violence
LC	-	Local Council
HIV	-	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IRCU	-	Inter Religious Council of Uganda
IPV	-	Intimate Partner violence
J&P AOK	-	Justice and Peace Department Archdiocese of Kampala
MDG's	-	Millennium Development Goals
MI	-	Motivational Interviewing
NCCJP	-	National Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace
PEP	-	Post Exposure Prophylaxis
PTSS	-	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
STD	-	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
RECESVID	-	Rehabilitation Centre for Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence
UJCC	-	Uganda Joint Christian Council
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

# A message for peace in our homes to peace in our nation

*If peace is to take root in our communities and countries, it must begin from the family which has rightly been called the nucleus of society. A society built on a family scale is the best guarantee against drifting into individualism or collectivism, because within the family the person is always at the centre of attention as an end and never as a means. It is patently clear that the good of persons and the proper functioning of society are closely connected “with the healthy state of conjugal and family life” (Cfr. Catechism of the Catholic Church CCC §1603 and Vatican Council II, *Gaudium et Spes* No. 47 § 1). Without families that are strong in their communion and stable in their commitment peoples grow weak. In the family, moral values are taught starting from the very first years of life, the spiritual heritage of the religious community and the cultural legacy of the nation are transmitted. In the family one learns social responsibility and solidarity.*

*Unfortunately, the family today is faced with many challenges and pressures both from within and from the bigger society itself that are slowly but surely destroying the family at its foundation. One of the greatest threats to family life today is domestic violence. It causes not only physical and psychological damage to those involved but also blurs the original purpose of marriage and family life: ‘the good of the spouses and their children’. No wonder many young people today are reluctant to embrace family life for fear of getting hurt. Many are nursing deep wounds of domestic violence. To such individuals, Pope Francis in his address to the World Youth Day Volunteers in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) on Sunday, July 28 2013, had the following words of encouragement:*

“God calls you to make definitive choices, and he has a plan for each of you: to discover that plan and to respond to your vocation is to move forward toward personal fulfillment. God calls each of us to be holy, to live his life, but he has a particular path for each one of us. Some are called to holiness through family life in the sacrament of Marriage. Today, there



His Grace Dr. Cyprian Kizito Lwanga  
ArchBishop Kampala Arch Diocese  
Patron, Justice and Peace

are those who say that marriage is out of fashion. Is it out of fashion? In a culture of relativism and the ephemeral, many preach the importance of ‘enjoying’ the moment.

They say that it is not worth making a life-long commitment, making a definitive decision, ‘for ever’, because we do not know what tomorrow will bring. I ask you, instead, to be revolutionaries, I ask you to swim against the tide; Yes, I am asking you to rebel against this culture that sees everything as temporary and that ultimately believes you are incapable of responsibility; that believes you are incapable of true love. I have confidence in you and I pray for you. Have the courage ‘to swim against the tide’. And also have the courage to be happy.”

Indeed standing for the true family values today implies ‘swimming against the tide’ and requires faith, hope and courage. I thank all those who support the cause of the family. Take courage and do not lose heart for what is at stake is not only our cultural and social values but the very future of our human society as well. The Cultural Sensitive Counseling Model offers all of us a useful tool in the fight against domestic violence. For any social and cultural approach/model intending to promote justice and peace for human dignity and honour, it must not overlook the social responsibility of the family. It is therefore imperative that all

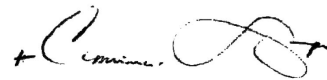
approaches/models to curb domestic violence consider the role of the family in sustaining the society and the state and that it is mandatory for society, the state and the Church to support couples live sustainable harmonious and stable marriages. This could ensure that the family fulfils properly its responsibilities. The Catholic Social Teaching states that *“The family, then, does not exist for society or the State, but society and the State exist for the family”*.

The Catholic Church which promotes a just and peaceful society has undertaken initiatives to address the challenge of domestic violence through its structures from the Episcopal Conference down to the Small Christian Communities. This is because domestic violence erodes the family which is the basic foundation of any society and state. At this juncture, I would like to acknowledge and congratulate the Justice and Peace Department of Kampala Archdiocese for their interventions aimed at combatting human rights violations including Domestic Violence. This has stimulated action and advocacy by the Archdiocese to undertake preventive and responsive measures in the parishes to advocate for the gender equity. The Justice and Peace Department (J&P AOK) works also closely with cultural structures to curb domestic violence given that culture has a role in the promotion of harmony in homes. Other mechanisms adopted by the Justice and Peace Department to address domestic violence include an approach like community dialogue from which they have developed a cultural sensitive model to counseling both perpetrators and victims of violence in homes and communities...

Uganda being a culturally diverse country with each ethnic group attaching importance to their own traditional values and norms, the Archdiocese acknowledged the importance of building on culture to ensure justice and peace in families. Consequently, the J&P AOK through a consultative process developed a Cultural Sensitive Counseling Model for curbing domestic violence. The model, enriched by the Catholic Social Teaching, proposes a

process of counseling going through: truth telling, forgiveness, repentance, seeking reconciliation, and guarantees non-reoccurrence of violence.

I am honored to present to you this Cultural Sensitive Counseling Model and hopeful that it will contribute significantly towards helping couples and families towards reconciliation and harmony.



**+Cyprian Kizito Lwanga**  
**ARCHBISHOP OF KAMPALA ARCHDIOCESE**

# Foreword from UNESCO

Human beings world over yearn for peace and justice. Yet daily everywhere, their common experience at family, community, institutional, state and inter-state levels is that of victim, witness or perpetrator of violence of one form or another. Indications in Uganda are that violence at family level or domestic violence is on the increase but, because of cultural and other considerations it is often covered or passes unnoticed and unreported.

In an effort to promote peace and development many players at the global and local levels put in place interventions to curb violence in any form. It is in this context that the Justice and Peace Department of the Archdiocese of Kampala (J&PAOK) in collaboration with the Uganda National Commission for UNESCO (UNATCOM), and with the financial support of UNESCO, conceived this project to develop a model to assist counselors handle domestic violence in a culturally sensitive manner.

Many interventions aimed at curbing domestic violence tend to focus on the plight of the victim and pay little attention to the perpetrators of the violence. Both victim and perpetrator need help, particularly to address situations that may lead to recurrence of the violence. This counseling model, titled Curbing Domestic Violence: A model for culturally sensitive counseling in Central Uganda, has been developed to fill some gaps of previous interventions. It aims at addressing domestic violence in a holistic manner; that takes into account the victim, the perpetrator as well as other significant stakeholders like the cultural and religious leaders and community.

While the focus has been the cultural sensitivity in the Central Region of Uganda, the model can be applied in other regions and cultures. The multi-cultural nature of the Central region also helped to take into account cultural and other diversities while developing the model.

This model is the work of a Think Tank of technically competent, experienced and committed people from diverse disciplines

and backgrounds, including religious, cultural workers, psychologists and others. We owe lots of gratitude to them for accepting to share their time, knowledge and wisdom.

This model is our contribution to championing peaceful coexistence in our homes and communities, and for the promotion of peace, human rights and human dignity and sustainable development in society.

We thank all those who made invaluable contributions in one way or another in the development and final publication of this model.



Augustine Omare-Okurut  
Secretary General  
Uganda National Commission for UNESCO



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In the same regard, the Department is thankful to His Grace, Dr. Cyprian Kizito Lwanga, Archbishop of Kampala and His Eminence Emmanuel Cardinal Wamala, for their moral and technical guidance in the field of reconciliation.

This model is the result of the tremendous work of a think-tank group comprising of the following institutions and resource persons:

## **Political Leader:**

- Mr. Mohamed Kiseka LCIII Chair Person Kakiri Sub-County

## **Cultural Leader:**

- Mrs. Apollonia Mugumbya (Former Minister of women affairs and Community Development Buganda Kingdom)

## **Religious leaders:**

- Rev Fr. Kato (Head of Ecclesiastical Court Kampala Archdiocese)
- Sr. Christine Bahati: (Missionaries of Our Lady of Africa, Family Counsellor, Bunamwaya Parish, Archdiocese of Kampala)

## **Police Officials:**

- Ms. Hope Atuhaire: (Assistant Supt. CIID in charge of defilement cases)
- Ms. Katy Nandi (Assistant Supt. Family Support Unit)

## **Counsellors:**

- Mr. Augustine Ssekibuule (Married Couples Leader & Counsellor Uganda Prisons)
- Mr. Tim Rwothogeyo (Social Worker at RECESVID)
- Mr. Vincent Asiimwe (Social Worker)
- Ms. Margaret Ntakalimaze (Hope after Rape)

## **Religious group leaders:**

- Mrs. Mildred Kulumba (Ggaba Parish AOK)
- Mr. Denis Bukenya (Nakulabye Parish AOK)
- Ms. Mary Nankabirwa (Bunamwaya Parish AOK)
- Mr. KalungiYahaya (Pearl FM, Dawa Deputy head Department)

## **Civil PeaceAdvisor:**

- Mrs. Sophie Schrowange-Mercier (J&PAOK)

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# I Introduction

## 1. Justification for developing a model for culturally sensitive counseling of persons who use violence and victims of domestic violence

Over the past three decades, Uganda has made tremendous efforts towards promoting human rights with emphasis on the rights of children and women. As a signatory to various international instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform of Action, Uganda also subscribes fully to the third MDG of promoting gender equality and empowering women. These and other commitments are entrenched through the Uganda Constitution, and domesticated in the Domestic Violence Act 2010 and 2011 Domestic Violence regulations

However, the Uganda Law Reform Commission report of 2006 established that domestic violence still occurs frequently in 66% of homes in Uganda. Urbanization greatly contributes to this especially in the Central Region with a rate of 52%. “The Intimate Partner Violence Attitudes and Experience among Women and Men in Uganda Report 2009” shows that more than half of men and nearly three quarters of women have attitudes supportive of wife beating. This scenario is partly attributed to the fact that prevention and response approaches do not emphasize a cultural healing aspect and therefore those measures are not embraced by the local community.

In addition, a research was conducted by the national centre on domestic violence, Trauma and Mental Health in Chicago March 2013 and found that specific to victims of domestic violence, the Traumatic reminders or second trauma take often place in courts environment. Specially when the survivors have to tell what happened in front of a public that they don’t know. This may be also triggered by being in the same very uncommon and sterile environment as the perpetrator like the court.

Culture and religions could therefore hold out the promise for justice and play an essential role to support men and women in the society. In the same vein, they agree that domestic violence hurts women, children, men and families by creating a culture of fear and mistrust that leads to lack of understanding and safety in relationships. Because of the seriousness of the problem, it requires a collective responsibility among different stakeholders in embracing both preventive and responsive measures that embrace a cultural sensitive counselling method/model for perpetrators and victims of domestic violence. Culture, should be informed by wisdom, education, religion and the laws governing a country such that those aspects of culture that are dehumanising and increase domestic violence are eliminated. Culture is a unique componet because it empowers persons to choose to respond to domestic violence in a positive way. Since human beings all seek to belong, culture has given them that belonging which they therefore value and forms or impacts on the way they live and behave.

This model is intended to help the counsellor be aware about the cultural experiences of the clients, know their values, beliefs, cultural heritage and also the fact that culture gradually affects the way persons respond to violence .

It is against this background that the Justice and Peace Department decided to call for contributions of relevant stakeholders and develop a cultural sensitive counselling model for perpetrators and victims of domestic violence which can help to create peace and reconcile partners.

Further more to understand the importance of using a culturally sensitive model is

## 2. Understanding Culture

According to Gerard Hendrik Hofstede Dutch social psychologist in his publication, “Exploring Culture: Exercises, Stories and Synthetic Cultures. (Intercultural Press, 2002)”, culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving. We have a diversity of culture in Uganda, since domestic violence affects everyone, regardless of cultural background, we would like to ensure that the stakeholders who will use the model, will build their cultural sensitive skills so as not to cause conflict during counselling sessions.

“Culture and traditions provide strength for families and individuals. The culture that we grow up in affects our beliefs, values, behaviors, and how we deal with problems. Our culture, ethnic group, religion, and economic background all contribute to forming a complicated set of influences, constraints, and resources.” Clenin, K. (2001), “Cultural Strengths and Challenges.” While culture can strengthen a family, cultural influences may also create obstacles when working with parties in a domestic violence situation. Understanding a person’s culture and belief systems can be helpful in successfully working with that person.

There are cultural considerations in recognizing and responding to situations of domestic violence. The key is to be sensitive to people’s beliefs and actions. A counsellor who knows about peoples cultures can assist in responding sensitively.

However when we speak about culture, most of us think of behaviors, words, customs, traditions, and beliefs - such as fine arts, literature, drama, music, dancing, games, cooking, language and dress. These aspects of culture are really only the tip of the iceberg. The bigger part of that iceberg includes our values, assumptions, thoughts, feelings, and processes - such as ideas governing child-raising, rules of descent, conception of justice, incentives to work, notions of leadership, patterns of group decision making, concepts of past and future, nature of friendship, ordering of time, and concept of self. [www.cobar.org/index.cfm/ID/21097](http://www.cobar.org/index.cfm/ID/21097). (An Overview: Culturally Responsive Teaching, Jefferson County Public Schools, 1998.)

(According to Hofstede G, Culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving.

Culture is further, perceived in the following ways according to Bharat Kumar:

### a) Culture is Shared

Culture in the sociological sense, is something shared. It is not something that an individual alone can possess. For example customs, tradition, beliefs, ideas, values, morals, etc. are shared by persons of a group or society. The invention of Arya Bhatta or Albert Einstein, Charaka or Charles Darwin, the literary works of Kalidas or Keats,



Dandi or Dante, the philosophical works of Confucius or Lao Tse, Shankaracharya or Swami Vivekananda, the artistic work of Kavi Verma or Raphael etc. are all shared by a large number of people. Culture is something adopted, used, believed practised or possessed by more than one person. It depends upon group life for its existence.

**b) Culture is Transmissive**

Culture is transmitted from one generation to the next. Parents pass on culture traits to their children and then in turn to theirs and so on. Language is the main vehicle of culture. Language in its different forms like reading, writing and speaking makes it possible for the present generation to understand the achievements of earlier generations. But language itself is a part of culture. Once language is acquired it unfolds to the individual a wider understanding. Transmission of culture may take place by intuition as well as by interaction. For instance, in the Ganda culture there are have proverbs, idioms, some of which are transmitted through story telling.

**c) Culture is Continuous and Cumulative**

Culture exists, as a continuous process. In its historical growth, it tends to become cumulative. Culture is growing completely which includes in itself, the achievements of the past and present and makes provision for the future achievements of mankind. Hence, some sociologists like Litton called culture the social heritage of man. As Robert Brerstedt writes culture or the money of human race.

**d) Culture is Consistent and Interconnected**

Culture, in its development has revealed a tendency to be consistent. At the same time, different parts of culture are inter-connected. For example the value system of a society which a society is closely connected with, its other aspects such as morality, religion, customs, traditions, beliefs and so on.

**e) Culture is Dynamic and Adaptive**

Though culture is relatively stable, it is not altogether static. It is subject to slow but constant change. Change and growth are latent in culture. We find amazing growth in the present Indian culture when we compare it with the culture of the Vedic time. Hence, culture is dynamic.

Culture is responsive to the changing conditions of the physical world. It is adaptive. It also intervenes in the natural environment and helps man in his process of adjustment. Just as our house shelters us from the storm, so also does our culture help us from natural dangers and assist us to survive. Few of us indeed could survive without culture. Let's take an example of domestic violence, surely having two people from different cultural backgrounds one can say that there will be times when disagreements will come up; domestic violence takes a process, for someone to get violent there must be a driving force. Many of us can attest to the fact that violence in families also existed back in olden days. Still, many of us ask why.

**f) Culture is Gratifying**

Culture provides proper opportunities, and prescribes means for the satisfaction of our needs and desires. These needs may be biological or social in nature. Our need for food, shelter and clothing and our desire for status, name, fame and money etc are all, for example, fulfilled according to the cultural ways. Culture determines and guides the varied activities of man. In fact culture is defined as the process through which human beings satisfy their wants.

**g) Culture varies from Society to Society**

“Every society has a culture of its own. It differs from society to society. Culture of every society is unique to itself. Cultures are not uniform. Cultural elements such as customs, traditions, morals, ideals, values, ideologies, beliefs in practices, philosophical institutions, etc. are not uniform everywhere. Ways of eating, speaking, greeting, dressing, entertaining, living etc. of different sects differ significantly. Culture also varies from time to time. No culture ever remains constant or changeless.

Looking at the above definitions of culture by Bharat Kumar we can see that culture has great potential in helping both men and women put in place preventive and responsive measures that ensure reconciliation, peace and harmony among couples.

For culture to help, it should be informed by wisdom, education, religion, law, and in this respect duty bearers and counsellors should be informed to consider the cultural diversities in Uganda.

Culture is a unique component because it empowers persons to choose to respond to domestic violence in a positive way. Since all human beings seek where to belong, culture gives them that belonging which they therefore value. It forms or impacts on the way they live and behave. Cf: Hofstede, G. (1997). *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the mind*. New York: McGraw Hill.

For example, “*Tosala gwa kawala nga tonawulira gwa kalenzi*” (Do not pass judgment based on the lady’s side of the story before hearing the man’s) in domestic conflicts, according to the traditional Ganda culture, a woman is often the first to approach her in-laws with her complaints, and there is a tendency to feel sorry for her or to be swayed to her side before the in-laws get a chance to hear from the husband. This proverb warns against passing judgment before thoroughly examining both versions of a conflict, since there are always going to be two or more sides to each story. One should hear all versions before taking action.

Lubaale mbeera nga, n’embiro kw’otadde ( Help me God, but continue running) The Baganda understood that acts through mediations, many of which were sought for the (mediators /elders ) help, hence the interdependence.

### 3. Understanding the Family

To understand Domestic Violence, let's first define some key background information on Family, Marriage, the Ugandan Perspective of Marriage and Family with focus on central Uganda.

#### a) The Family

The family is the smallest and basic unit of a society. It is comprised of husband, wife and children as God's will. According to Goldenberg et al (2004), a family is far more than a collection of individuals sharing a specific physical and psychological space. He defines it as a natural social system that occurs in diversity of forms today and represents a diversity of cultural heritages. A family is referred to by the US Bureau of the Census (1997) as any two or more persons related by birth, marriage or adoption and residing together (Goldenberg, 2000). Families can be either nuclear or large (extended). African and Ugandan families are generally large (extended). Ackerman (accessed on Saturday, 27/08/2011) argues that the term family comes from the Middle English familie, that originates from the Latin term familia, that means household (including servants as well as kin of the household), from the word famulus meaning servant of the 15th century. It is on the basis of these notions that the family concept is defined.

Hornby (2007) asserts that family is a group of people staying in one roof and usually under one head or consisting of one or two parents and their children; the other members of family, close relations/relatives. It can be termed as all the people who are related to each other.

Uganda National Development Plan (2010) defines a household as a group which brings together all those who are related by blood that is a man, his wife or wives and children and their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. These are people who are connected biologically. However, Nyamiti (1987), argues that the term "family" in Africa evokes not only blood communal membership of few living members, but also the themes of clan, tribe, affinity, maternity, patria potestas, priesthood, ancestors (involving the themes of mythical time, archetypes, heroes, founders), initiation and hence fecundity, life, power and sacral. This involves everyone who is related to a given family. Kayongo-Male and Onyango (1994) asserted that the family is the basic and social institution. The family is a foundation and fundamental ground of essential and initial formation for every human being.

Gichinga (2007) emphasized that an extended family involves cousins, or any other nuclear family members such as brothers and sisters, of father and other relatives outside the nuclear family who are maintained through adoption, visiting or economic support and house servants. Shorter (1998), defines family as a "Minimal effective group of relatives by blood and/or marriage and analogous groups" (p. 83). By analogous groups, he means, those members who are not related by blood or marriage, for example adopted children. Mbiti (1975), says that: "Each person in African traditional life lives in or as a part of the family" (p. 175). Kitembo (1998), asserts that: "the family community was the fundamental element of the African, this basic sphere of action, through which he became integrated with the larger human community he always acted from within the sphere of the family" (pp. 202-203).

Shorter (1998, p. 83) sees nuclear family as autonomous and operating without reference to other relatives. The community approaches are essential in building family life in the African family systems. Mbiti (1969) says that:

“For African people the family has a much wider circle of members than the word suggests in Europe or North America. In traditional society, the family includes children, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters who may have their own children and other immediate relatives” (p.106).

The family system in Africa is inclusive in nature in that everyone is an active participating member who contributes the community wellbeing. This is done by the community members identifying the roles that are best suited for each member. In African context everybody was a worker and had work which was in correspondence with one's age, sex, gender and personal attributes.

Shorter (1998), Mbiti (1969, 1975) and Kisembo (1998), all show that the wide cycle of family members promoted and enhanced rights and obligations. Each family member drew strength from the other family members. This kind of interpersonal relatedness created a sense of belonging to one another and a sense of responsibility. This was an egalitarian philosophy that Mbiti (1978) captured in his famous statement of “I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am”

## **b) Marriage**

Marriage is defined by Mbiti (1969) as a socially recognized and approved union (social, economic, emotional, and sexual) between man and woman who commit themselves to each other with expectations of a stable and lasting relationship (union) and with parental rights and duties. He considers marriage as a focus of existence, a point where all members of a given community meet that is the departed, the living, and those yet to be born, a place where the drama of history is repeated, renewed and revitalized.

Previously, marriage in most of the African traditional cultures was a communal activity including the parents and close relatives of the individual involved in finding mates for their children. This corresponds with what Dalfovo A. T, et al. (2002) said that African traditional culture has always had the communal dimension of life and ethics which acted as a strong and healthy asset. Traditional refers as long established elements that are indigenous that is say originate from within the culture. In most traditional African societies marriages at times formed alliances and the children married whoever the family chose or who is best for the family without necessarily regarding the children's preferences or happiness. Polygamy was accepted in these cultures because of the communal way of life. Families were large including uncles, cousins, grandparents and even clan members who may be directly related. Marriage in most African societies is a validation for the lineage which has to be continued and therefore careful analysis was necessary for the right people to produce the right descendants with qualifying pedigree. It is seen as a social duty that enhances community linkages and kinship.

Marriage thus helps form the society. In marriage, the union which exists between the husband and wife is called conjugal love. This is the love shared by the partners without reservation. It is not based on the external appearances or qualities of a person. It appreciates the whole person regardless of his or her weakness.

Conjugal love involves mutual concern, mutual self-giving, and sensitivity for the



other, to be present for the other. Conjugal love implies, therefore, mutual giving and mutual receiving. From a psychological point of view, it is giving in a receiving manner and receiving in a giving manner.

Conjugal union has two dimensions. First, the horizontal dimension concerns the union of husband and wife and this is called conjugal society. Secondly, the vertical dimension involves the union of parents and children, giving rise to what is referred to as parental society.

As a contract, marriage is an agreement in which the man and woman on the basis of their personal love relationship exchange vows or promises publicly or formally to love and honor one another exclusively and permanently. This agreement entitles the partners to certain rights and entails duties towards each other concerning cohabitation and sexual intercourse. But without conjugal love, even sexual intercourse loses meaning because this love is important regardless of whether it yields children or not. However, children are the climax in marriage (Coontz, Stephanie, 2005).

The teaching of the Second Vatican Council 1964 (see Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, n. 48ff) placed special emphasis on understanding marriage as a covenant, while not ignoring that every marriage also involves contractual obligations between the spouses. Placing a covenant at the heart of a marriage shows that the interpersonal relationship of the couple, their unitive love, is what makes all other dimensions of a marriage possible and in some cases, bearable.

Marriage is a covenant which establishes between husband and wife a “partnership of the whole life” in which they “mutually hand over and accept each other” (see Code of Canon Law, c. 1055 and c. 1057). It is a special union (a) sacred in the plan of God; (b) permanent, faithful and fruitful; and (c) a living symbol of God’s love for his people. Marriage as covenant must guarantee sexual exclusivity as well as permanence. Being aware of human fragility and weakness, the couple should strive to give one another a love that is guided by self-giving, friendship, proper love of self, sexual desire and erotic aspiration. Furthermore, their commitment should be directed at the growth and complementation of each other and this requires that they embrace faithfulness, openness, honesty, trust, patience and willingness to forgive.

Having seen what marriage as a covenant and contract entails, we proceed to see marriage as a state, which results from the above. This implies that marriage is a society or a lasting union of a man and a woman. In this regard, the state of marriage has four main conditions namely: It is a union of opposite sexes. Hence, no male and male or female and female can marry; Marriage is a permanent union; Marriage is an exclusive union in which the husband and wife agree to share sexual relations only with each other; and lastly both covenant and contract guarantee its permanence and exclusiveness so that the difference between cohabitation and marriage comes out so well.

### **c) The Ugandan Perspective of Marriage and Family**

Barlas and Yong (2009) argue that in Uganda, marriage was considered as an important aspect and a man who was unmarried was regarded as incomplete. In most of the Ugandan ethnic groupings polygamous marriage, (allowing a man to be married to

multiple women simultaneously) was highly regarded in the society. Among some of the ethnic groups today, marriage is also polygamous and marriage is still arranged by the parents. The boy is usually consulted, and sometimes, the consent of the girl is required too, but often marriage is arranged by both sets of parents without the consent of the boy or the girl. Families often choose children's spouses early in life (normally when the boy is initiated), and some cultures demanded that all unmarried girls be virgins. Having a child before marriage was frowned upon.

In the past, some Ugandan ethnic groups had other forms of marriage that were also socially acceptable. Gafuta was a type of forced marriage, in which the boy is physically carried away the girl. Another method was that the boys of the same age identify a particular girl and forcefully elope her to the home of the particular boy who desired her for marriage. When the boy slept with her, she became his wife, and further arrangements would then be made with the girl's parents. The reverse of this was ukwijana (oo-wee-JA-na), when the girl would sneak away from her parents and go to the boy's home to get married. If the husband died, sometimes one of his brothers would take on his responsibilities, including his wives.

Halvorson(2007) argues that HIV/AIDS has devastated much of Uganda. It has caused unexpected and terrible impact on families as a consequence of an old Ugandan custom that has, for centuries, protected the families. The custom has been that when a man dies, his children immediately become his brother's children and his wife or wives become his brother's wife or wives. That approach kept families strong and intact in past generations. In some tribes there wasn't even a word for an "orphan" because it was not needed. Due to large families, there was almost always a surviving brother or uncle, so the Ugandan children always had a father.

HIV/AIDS, however, turned that custom of caring to a cycle of dying. Why? The odds are high that when a man dies of HIV/AIDS, his surviving wife is infected. If that wife automatically becomes his surviving brother's wife, the new husband also gets the virus. If that new husband dies before all of his wives are dead, the set of surviving wives from that husband goes on to the next brother and then to the uncles.

(Barlas and Yong 2009) explains that in olden times, parents would initiate and conduct marriage arrangements for their children. Before the marriage, an important clan ceremony, okwanjula (ok-wan-joo-la), would be held. In this ceremony, the husband to be, escorted by relatives and friends would visit the relatives of the woman's side to introduce his line of clan and relatives.

Among the Baganda in the event of divorce, dowry would be repaid. The amount depended on the length of time the wife had stayed married and whether she had any children. But today young people are often allowed to make their own choice of partners and arranged marriages are less common. Among the Bakiga tribe it was forbidden to sell any animals given as wedding presents. Such animals could be used only to obtain wives for the bride's brothers or father.

Ocitti (2011) argues that Ugandan families are understood as Nucleated Villages. He argues further that understanding of family and marriage in Uganda was also understood in terms of hierarchical units. The explicit example is the Acholi hierarchical units comprising of family unit, the neighbourhood unit and the village unit.

\* ***The family unit***

This first unit or the household unit, is of say 10 family households of closely related people. These could be the family houses of married brothers under one family head such as father or grandfather.

This gathering is traditionally called “wang ho” meaning “open air fire place”. Every evening most of the people in this group will gather by that open air fire place for a group meal and conversation.

\* ***The neighbourhood unit***

The next in the hierarchy is a group of five units (that is ten houses each), making one hundred family units. The group of fifty would also have their centre which could be a kiosk or social hall.

\* ***The village unit***

Everybody in the village would still be related to each other or the members of a sub clan. This had very important socio cultural implications. A good example of this type of relationship is found in a few of the sub clans of the Patiko clan in Aswa County in Gulu district. A number of sub clans (the Pabwo, Pugwenyi, Kal, Pachwa, Panyagira, etc.) make the Patiko clan of the Acholi tribe. A typical sub clan such as the Pabwo would contain the 100 households. This village of 100 households or family units has a definite family land around it (Ocitti 2011).

\* ***In Buganda***

Marriage is what everybody would like his or her daughter/ son to acquire. When a girl makes 20-30 the parents start looking around for a suitable man to marry her off. It is the paternal aunt who always plays this role. For the boy it's at 34-36 when the parents start getting worried, it is at this age when he is expected to own a home with some developments, yet it is believed that he cannot do it alone; he needs a partner to work with. This is none other than a woman. Among the developments, he is expected to own a home (house), children and a plot or chunk of land, farm etc. When the boy doesn't show any sign of getting married, the paternal aunt together with his grandfather (if still a live) talk to him about his plans of getting a partner. It is at this stage, when the aunt looks around for a suitable girl to marry her nephew. Marriage is then arranged between the aunts from both sides.

In case where a girl finds a suitable boy to marry, she still goes to her paternal aunt, who breaks the good news to the parents and the boy does the same. The introductory ceremony is then arranged [it used to be of 5 people from the boys side and may be 7 seven on the girl's side, including: the 2 neighbors on the sides (to avoid speculation), the father, maternal aunt and paternal aunt]. All is about the boy to be known by the girl's parents (It is taken to be a secret, not until that day they wed. This was done in this manner to avoid people of ill feelings, who may not be happy about the boy or girl's marriage). The boy is told to visit other paternal uncles and the Grand's at their homes, so that he learns more about the girl's family. (This process, normally takes three months) And he takes gifts to all these people in their individual homes. Wherever they go, they receive counseling in a friendly manner. It is in recognition that a child or the girl in this case was brought up by the entire extended family or clan.

In the preparation of marriage, the boy goes to his grandfather; it is believed that the grandfather can be very open to the boy as he calls him his “brother”. He initiates him in the new life awaiting him. The girl goes to the paternal aunt, who takes the responsibility to initiate her culturally, and more so in marriage life.

On the wedding day, many family members from either side celebrate, and feast over the marriage. They give the couple sorts of gifts, to start off their new life.

When a conflict arises, either the boy or girl, go first to paternal aunt of the girl “SENGA OW’ENSONGA” and this is usually on the wife’s side. It doesn’t matter whether it’s the husband being reported or the wife, its only and always the “Sengaow’ensonga” who intervenes before any other person. When the aunt finds the case too difficult for her, she involves the parents of both sides. The case is normally held at the Senga’s place, as it is believed to be a neutral. In most cases the conflict is dealt with and solved. BUT if one side is not satisfied he/she takes his/her grievance to the head of the clan (This is rare). The clan leader holds a meeting, at night, its normally done during the last funeral rites eve. This is normally a big meeting which includes the parents of both sides who had the 1st hearing of the case, the head of the house hold “omukuluw’oluggya” and some elders, heads of the clan.

They all handle the case in a re-uniting manner. At the end of it all, either the wife pays a fine to the husband (it is normally A COCK) and if it is the man, (it is usually a she- goat and a piece of cloth, “a gomesi”). To the court it is a calabash of banana beer.

In case of death of the husband, the widow is brought to the elders on the funeral rites eve, she is then consulted on her future in the home. She is asked whether she wants to be inherited by one of the brothers (in case she is still young), this is believed to be a protective measure of the children and the woman herself. She is asked whether she wants to go back to her family, and in most cases this means remarrying elsewhere. The last option is whether she wants to stay and take care of her children as a widow and never ever have a love affair with anybody (i.e. having a love affair or have a lover brought in the late husband’s house/ home). Her choice is normally respected. She is free to choose one option.

In case of the death of a wife, the man does not have to go through all this, only when he feels like marrying the heir to his wife, he can ask the parents of the girl to have her for a wife. Usually it is the upbringing of children left without a mother. If the heir refuses, her word is respected. But in most cases the parents hardly give her a chance to make a decision. This is done to avoid GBV.



## 4. Understanding religious teachings on marriage and family life

vital in counselling, below are religious beliefs supportive of gender equity, marriage, respectful behaviour among partners and harmony in the couple:

### a) Christian Teachings on Marriage and Family Life

#### ***Gender equity:Genesis 1:26-28***

Then God said: Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the tame animals, all the wild animals, and all the creatures that crawl on the earth. God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and God said to them: Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that crawl on the earth.

Before God we are the same, the power of managing the resources was given to both man and woman. God created both: man and woman in His own image and before Him we are equal. We must avoid despising each other because of either being male or female.

#### ***Marriage:Genesis 2: 18- 24***

The LORD God said: It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suited to him. So the LORD God formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each living creature was then its name. The man gave names to all the tame animals, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be a helper suited to the man.

So the LORD God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The LORD God then built the rib that he had taken from the man into a woman. When he brought her to the man, the man said: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called 'woman,' for out of man this one has been taken." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body. Marriage is instituted by God we should struggle to maintain it.

#### ***Violence free homes: Colossians 3: 18-21***

Wives, be subordinate to your husbands, as is proper in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and avoid any bitterness toward them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, so they may not become discouraged.

Violence has no place in the family set-up. Not in the past, not in the present times.

#### ***Dealing with anger:James 4:1***

Where do the wars and where do the conflicts among you come from?

Is it not from your passions that make war within your members?

Self-control is crucial in order to avoid conflicts; being hard-hearted is not human. We shall turn to God when we can't help it. Turning to God helps divert attention from violence.

***Behavioral change: Isaiah 43:19***

Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not; See, I am doing something new!

Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

In the wilderness I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers.

Word of wisdom, calling for behavioral change

***Proverb 14:29-30***

Long-suffering results in great wisdom; a short temper raises folly high. A tranquil mind gives life to the body, but jealousy rots the bones. Those who oppress the poor revile their Maker, but those who are kind to the needy honor him. The wicked are overthrown by their wickedness, but the just find a refuge in their integrity. Wisdom can remain silent in the discerning heart, but among fools she must make herself known. Justice exalts a nation, but sin is a people's disgrace. The king favors the skillful servant, but the shameless one incurs his wrath.

Good behavior is what makes you win all your battles'; being unjust has consequences which can ruin one.

***Forgiving: John 8: 4-7***

They said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."

A call to learn to forgive and be tolerant to one another. We must avoid violent discriminatory justice. The offended should forgive while the offender reforms.

***Mathew 5:9,***

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Philippians 2:3-4 – Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourself. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

James 3:17-18 – Wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness

Peter 3:8– Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

**b) Islamic Teachings on Marriage and Family Life**

**The Qur'an**

The precedent of a marital relationship based on care, mercy, kindness, mutual consultation and justice was set by direct examples from the life of Prophet Muhammad and is well documented in the books of hadith. The Prophet Muhammad said, "The believers who show the most perfect faith are those who have the best behaviours, and the best of you are those who are best to their wives.

## **The Islamic Perspective on the issue of Domestic Violence**

The Qur'an represents a comprehensive model to protect the human family from any type of oppression. The essence of the Islamic paradigm is grounded in the concept of tawhīd, which refers to the Oneness and Uniqueness of God.

Muslims believe that God created human beings- men and women- to worship and serve Him as khalifahs, representatives or vicegerents, of God: "Behold. Thy Lord said to the angels. 'I will create a vicegerent (trustee) on earth.'" (Qur'an 2:30).

The only aspect by which one person is deemed better than another in the sight of God is that of piety:

"O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other). Verily, the most honored of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you..." (Qur'an 49:13).

Qur'anic teachings clearly outline the gender roles and relations through major concepts such as: Zawjiya (Pairing), which establishes equality and cooperation:

"O mankind! Reverence your guardian-Lord, who created you from a single soul. Created, of like nature, its mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and Women fear God, through whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (that bore you), for God ever watches over you" (Qur'an 4:1).

### **Islam and Gender Roles:**

The Qur'an emphasizes that all people are created equal in worth and value regardless of race, ethnicity, gender or class.

Islam, as the final message from God to humankind, came to light in a brutal and cruel environment.

Violence was a common practice in Arabia and around the world at that time. The weak and needy, orphans and widows, slaves and servants had no defined rights in such a world.

Islam came to establish justice and mercy in the heart of a cruel world and prohibited any oppressive behavior.

It revolutionized the status of women at the time by critically analyzing and reforming various global and local customs and traditions related to gender relations at that time. Whereas women were not even considered human beings in pre-Islamic Arabia, Islam recognized women as full human beings and equal to men before God. Chapter 4, verse 1 of the Qur'an reads,

"O mankind! reverence your Lord, who created you from a single soul, and created, of like nature, its mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women; reverence Allah, through whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (that bore you), for God ever watches over you." One of the most grotesque abuses against females at the time was female infanticide. Men who were ashamed of their daughters buried them alive.

The Qur'an abolished this horrific act of violence. Moreover, women were considered the property of men. If a man died, for example, his brother or adult son could "inherit" the wife and take her for himself without her consent.

The Qur'an established men and women's inherent rights

1 Quran, 16:58 and 81:8-9.

2 Recite Quran: 4:19.

Equality before God, thus prohibiting such practices and illustrating instead that men and women are distinguished and honoured not by their gender, race, ethnicity or socio-economic class, but only by their taqwa, piety. O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other)). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things) (Qur'an, 49:13).

Further, the Qur'an considered men and women to be partners of each other. In chapter 9, verse 71, God makes it clear that men and women both have a mutual obligation to enjoin what is right and forbid what is evil. Men have no level of moral authority over women. Both are obliged to keep each other on the straight path and prevent each other from going astray:

"The Believers, men and women, are protectors of one another (awliya): they enjoin what is just and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practice regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is exalted in power, Wise."

The Qur'an not only deconstructed unjust practices, but offered practical and healthy alternatives for each custom. Furthermore, it provided rights for the needy, orphans, widows and slaves. Consequently, most of the first followers of Islam were among the poor, the slaves and women. Shortly, a justly balanced community evolved, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. For example, in pre-Islamic Arabia, it was considered a socially acceptable punishment for a man to kill his wife if he suspected her of having an affair.

The Qur'an prohibited this unfair act of violence against women and introduced reforms to protect the wife and those who were accused of immoral conduct by introducing less destructive ways to address the problem. Chapter 24 of the Qur'an establishes the legal procedures for the prosecution of adultery. A man's testimony against his wife is equivalent to her testimony in defense of herself. Even if a woman is lying, her testimony claiming innocence is enough to avert her punishment in Islam.

Furthermore, the same chapter in the Qur'an prescribes a severe punishment for men who accuse chaste women of adultery without bringing sufficient evidence (four witnesses of upright character who witnessed the act of sexual intercourse firsthand). By establishing procedural principles for the prosecution of adultery and other charges often raised against women, the Qur'an conveyed that husbands had no right to take the law into their own hands. If male witnesses could not produce sufficient evidence or if a wife denied the charges made by her husband, no punishment was enacted.

Provisions in Islam against Domestic Violence:

In the authentic ahadith (Prophetic traditions) in which the Prophet prohibited domestic violence. For example, the Prophet said, "Never beat God's handmaidens (female believers)."

The Prophet was known to never hit a woman or a child.

"And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect" (Qur'an, 30:21).

## The Islamic Perspective on Marriage

Marriage in Islam is noble and universally necessary because it brings tranquility, progeny, and continuation of life with purity and responsibility. Marriage is an act of worship; it provides a legitimate relationship between a man and a woman, and most importantly, it provides a vehicle for the fulfillment of humankind's divine purpose as God's vicegerents through procreation and human relations.

The foundation of an Islamic marriage and its purpose are described in the following verse from the Holy Qur'an: "And among His signs is this: that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts). Verily in that are signs for those who reflect" (Qur'an 30:21).

This verse can be taken as a reminder that spouses are inherently equal, and that the union between them is a peaceful and compassionate one.

The Allegory of the garment: A daily witness of complementarities between husbands and wives

The Qur'anic Model for Harmony in Family Relations", God said:

"They are your libas (garments) and you are their garments" (Qur'an:2:187).

A garment protects one from the dirt and grime of the outside world. Garments are the closest to our bodies, wrapping us in comfort. Being naturally conscious of appearance, people take time to choose the style, color, and they take time to clean, iron, and generally maintain it. When the various meanings of libas are translated into the context of a relationship, the parallels are obvious. Men and women are mutual garments for each other. They cover each other's weaknesses, serve as protection and comfort from the harsh elements of reality, and safeguard the precious intimacy and secrets shared between them.

"Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because God has given the one more (strength) than the other and because of the sustenance they provide from their own means..." (Qur'an 4:34).

Men and women are partners in the endeavor of maintaining a healthy family unit in which children are raised to be God-conscious members of society.

The Qur'an sets up the framework for different roles that are equal in value and are complementary. Each gender has special qualities that, in general, allow each gender to be better qualified for a particular role. The Qur'an says, "And do not covet that by which Allah has made some of you excel others; men shall have the benefit of what they earn and women shall have the benefit of what they earn; and ask Allah of His grace; surely Allah knows all things" (Qur'an, 4:32).

The fact that husband and wife have different roles to play in the family does not in any way suggest that men are better than women, or have God-given power over them. Furthermore, the roles of men and women are not mutually exclusive. Both parents must be involved in raising the children. Although each may participate in different aspects of the child's upbringing, both are equally responsible for the overall welfare of the child.

## The "Shura" Mutual Consultation

Shura (mutual consultation) is an important practical principle and tool rooted in the Islamic teaching. The implantation of shura, as essentially a decision-making process among equals, is based on equality among those consulting in order to reach a collective decision.



The fact that women are the primary managers of household affairs does not mean that husbands should not help, or that women are restricted exclusively to this role. Qur'an 2:233, 42:38.

Prophet Muhammad, the model husband, used to help with domestic chores such as sweeping and mending his clothes and his wife Aisha became noted as a leader and a teacher who many men consulted after the Prophet's death.

#### Distortions of Religious Teachings

Islam frequently and decisively prohibits any form of oppression, which could be defined as "an unjust or cruel exercise of authority or power."

The Qur'an emphasizes good communication. Muslim men who abuse their wives completely neglect and misunderstand the verses.

Religion is never a cause of domestic violence. While Muslim men may try to justify their abuse according to some verses, the truth is that the motive for their abuse is not and can never be religion. How can one's relationship with God, which is the essence of religion, be a motive for someone to inflict harm or violence against another?

"And as for those women whose ill-will (nushuz) you have reason to fear, admonish them[first]; then leave them alone in bed; then hit them (lightly) [daraba]; and if thereupon they pay you heed, do not seek to harm them. Behold, God is indeed most high, great! And if you have reason to fear that a breach might occur between a [married] couple, appoint an arbiter from among his people and an arbiter from among her people; if they both want to set things aright, God may bring about their reconciliation. Behold, God is indeed all-knowing, aware."(4:34-35).

The cultural sensitive counselling model shall give an overview on how to utilize among others the Christians and Islamic teaching in curbing domestic violence.

## 5. Understanding Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior used by a perpetrator to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, education, religion, disability status. It can happen to couples who are married, living together or in a dating relationship. This abuse can take many forms and often begins by the abuser exerting control over certain parts of their partner's life; the abuse then progresses in frequency and intensity. Despite the awareness others may have of a woman's ongoing experience of abuse, violence against women is identified as a private concern. In Buganda there is a proverb "ebyomunju tebittottolwa"; "issues in the home are not to be exposed to anyone outside the home". This clearly shows that family matters are private issues. From this perspective, violence is seen to be a matter of individual responsibility, and the woman is perceived to be the one responsible for violence as dictated by cultural norms and beliefs.

Domestic violence has been framed and understood exclusively as a woman's issue; however it has devastating consequences for other members of society and societal institutions. Men can also be victims of domestic violence, children are affected by exposure to domestic violence, and formal institutions face enormous challenges responding to domestic violence in their communities. The effects of domestic violence on victims are more typically recognized, but perpetrators are also affected by their abusive behavior as they stand to lose children, damage relationships, and face legal consequences. Cf: Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, Children's Bureau. Caliber Associates. Bragg, H. Lien. Year Published: 2003.

### a) Domestic Violence Tactics

The types of domestic violence actions perpetrated by abusers may include physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and psychological tactics; threats and intimidation; economic coercion; and entitlement behaviors. Examples of each are provided below. Some of the behaviors identified in the list below do not constitute abuse in and of themselves, but are frequently used tactics used in a larger pattern of abusive and controlling behavior.

Physical Tactics	Sexual Tactics	Verbal, Emotional, and Psychological Tactics
Pushing and Shoving; Restraining; Pinching or pulling hair; Slapping; Punching; Biting; Kicking; Suffocating; Strangling; Using a weapon; Kidnapping; Physically abusing or threatening to abuse children	Raping or forcing the victim into unwanted sexual practices; Objectifying or treating the victim like a sexual object; Forcing the victim to have an abortion or sabotaging birth control methods; Engaging in a pattern of extramarital or other sexual relationships; Sexually assaulting the children	Using degrading language, insults, criticism, or name calling; Screaming; Harassing; Refusing to talk; Engaging in manipulative behaviours to make the victim believe he or she is "crazy" or imagining things; Humiliating the victim privately or in the presence of other people; Blaming the victim for the abusive behaviour; Controlling where the victim goes, who he or she talks to, and what he or she does; Accusing the victim of infidelity to justify the perpetrator's controlling and abusive behaviours; Denying the abuse and physical attacks

Economic Coercion	Entitlement Behaviours	Threats and Intimidation
Preventing the victim from obtaining employment or an education; Withholding money, prohibiting access to family income, or lying about financial assets and debts; Making the victim ask or beg for money; Forcing the victim to hand over any income; Stealing money; Refusing to contribute to shared or household bills; Neglecting to comply with child support orders; Providing an allowance.	Treating the victim like a servant; Making all decisions for the victim and the children; Defining gender roles in the home and relationship	Breaking and smashing objects or destroying the victim's personal property; Glaring or staring at the victim to force compliance; Intimidating the victim with certain physical behaviours or gestures; Instilling fear by threatening to kidnap or seek sole custody of the children; Threatening acts of homicide, suicide, or injury; Forcing the victim to engage in illegal activity; Harming pets or animals; Stalking the victim; Displaying or making implied threats with weapons; Making false allegations to law enforcement.

Bitangora, B. (1999). "Rape, the Silent Cancer among Female Refugees". In: Conveying Concerns; Women Report on Gender-based Violence. Washington: Population Reference Bureau, (2000) MEASURE communication.

Child Protection in Families Experiencing Domestic Violence: The Basics of Domestic Violence  
 Author(s): Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, Children's Bureau. Caliber Associates. Bragg, H. Lien. Year Published: 2003

## b) Understanding Male violence

All of us have explanations for male violence, based on our experience, on what we have heard or learned. There is not one right explanation, in most cases, it is probably a whole series of factors that lead to violence in personal relationships.

Some people believe male violence is part of men's genetic make-up based on different hormones, for instance. Research has shown that boys and girls show no significant difference in aggressive feelings, but do show differences in how they act on them. Boys show more aggressive behaviour. This means we have to be careful to make a distinction between aggression (emotions) and violence (behaviour).

Some explanations are focused on the society: in patriarchal societies there is more inequality between women and men, more violence against women and children and sometimes a glorification of male violence as something normal or even admirable. Part of this viewpoint could include the influence of 'gender beliefs'; the stereotypical thinking that excuses male violence. Some explanations focus on the exposure of children to a culture of violence in movies and TV. Other explanations focus on the learning experience, children who are beaten themselves might be more prone to using violence themselves, and on the intergenerational aspects: children who witness violence at home might imitate their abusive father. Further explanations focus more on the psychological development of abusive men, and look for the specific personal history that explains why one boy becomes violent and the other doesn't. And then there are theories that try to explain violence in intimate relationships by looking at the dynamics between the partners. In this module we do not choose for one explanation only, we want to keep in mind the complexity of the issue of domestic violence, and look at explanations on different levels, and the interaction between them.

**\* Explanations of male violence can be:**

1. Patriarchal society, inequality between the sexes
2. Gender beliefs (stereotypes about male violence)
3. A culture of violence
4. Learning experiences
5. Intergenerational influences
6. Psychological development as children
7. Dynamics in intimate relationships
8. Masculine psychology
9. Personality disorders
10. Combat trauma (or other war related problems)
11. Other explanations, like alcohol abuse

**\* To give a short introduction into the levels that were mentioned above:**

1. In a patriarchal society the control of men over women is taken for granted. Men have more economic and political power, and usually they have the support of the system for keeping 'their' women (and children) in control. In the worst cases women are seen as the property of men.
2. In every society there are dominant but mostly unconscious notions about 'normal' masculinity and femininity. For instance: men need sex, men can't control their aggression, and it is natural for them to be aggressive when they get angry. Or: women are the caring sex. If the relationship does not work, she has not loved her man enough. Women should stand by their men, try to make them happy, and love them unconditionally.
3. In some societies more than in others, there is a subculture of young men in which daring and violence is an accepted way to show masculinity. Young men learn to be aggressive from their peers.
4. Boys learn to be violent because they are faced with violence, starting in their family of origin. They watch their father beat their mother. They watch violent scenes on television. They might try themselves to beat up a smaller boy. If they succeed they learn that violence works.
5. Boys who grow up in a violent family often are battered themselves. If they are not battered themselves they are witnesses, and this affects them also.  
Children who grow up in violent families can be seen as traumatized at an early age, and might develop symptoms that affect them still as adults.
6. Research has shown that abusive men, especially the perpetrators we call 'cyclical batterers', have had a father who humiliated him, and a mother who was only partly emotionally available.  
These children have not had a chance to form a stable and safe attachment pattern.
7. Another way to look at violence in intimate relationships is to look at the dynamics between partners, as in the 'cycle of violence'.  
In keeping a violent relationship going, women have their own responsibility, in 'enduring', understanding, and in feeling that keeping the relationship is more important than their own safety.
8. In this case having to keep control is part of normal masculine behaviour.  
Aggression might be one outcome if men fail to live up to their own standards of normal masculinity; if they are not care workers?, or if they are afraid they will lose their partner and have to face their own, denied dependence.

9. Most of the violent men can be defined as having an 'anti-social personality'. They behave aggressively not only in their home. Often they tend to criminality, and they seem not to have developed a normal conscience about the effect of what they are doing to others. Another personality disorder is psychopaths who like violence for the power it gives them. They have not developed any empathy for others.
10. Men who have been in combat are often traumatized. Outbursts of aggression can be one symptom of PTSD?. Men who have been captured and tortured can also be traumatised.
11. And of course there is a multitude of other, more personal or individual explanations. Alcohol is often mentioned, although we know that alcohol might trigger aggression, but does not cause it.

However much the most predominant form of violence is perpetrated by men in the family setting, we acknowledge that some men are also victims of female violence in intimate relationships.

### **c) Understanding Female Violence**

Women also often use violence against men in intimate relationships. However, male victims of family violence and abuse by women - often face many barriers to disclose it. They are likely to be told that there must be something they did to provoke the women perpetrator's abuse. Men who experience intimate violence by women suffer shame, embarrassment and the social stigma of not being able to protect themselves. They fear that if they disclose the abuse there will be nowhere for them and their children to escape to. In cases of intimate partner violence, they can fear that if they disclose the abuse or end the relationship, their partner might become more abusive and/or take the children. In fact, they can feel uncertain about where to seek help, or how to seek help. Service providers are less likely to ask whether a man is a victim of family violence, and when they do ask, they are less likely to believe him indeed many health departments have mandatory domestic violence screening for young women, but no such screening for young men.

Abuse of men takes many of the same forms as it does against women - physical violence, intimidation and threats; sexual, emotional, psychological, verbal and financial abuse; property damage and social isolation. Many men experience multiple forms of abuse. Men, more so than women, can also experience legal and administrative abuse - the use of institutions to inflict further abuse on a victim, for example, taking out false restraining orders or not allowing the victim access to his children. Because of these barriers, men are much less likely to report being a victim of family violence than are women (and women also frequently don't report violence against them).

### **\* Forms of abuse against men**

Abuse of men takes many of the same forms as it does against women - physical violence, intimidation and threats; sexual, emotional, psychological, verbal and financial abuse; property damage and social isolation. Many men experience multiple forms of abuse. Men, more so than women, can also experience legal and administrative abuse - the use of institutions to inflict further abuse on a victim, for example, taking out false restraining orders or not allowing the victim access to his children.

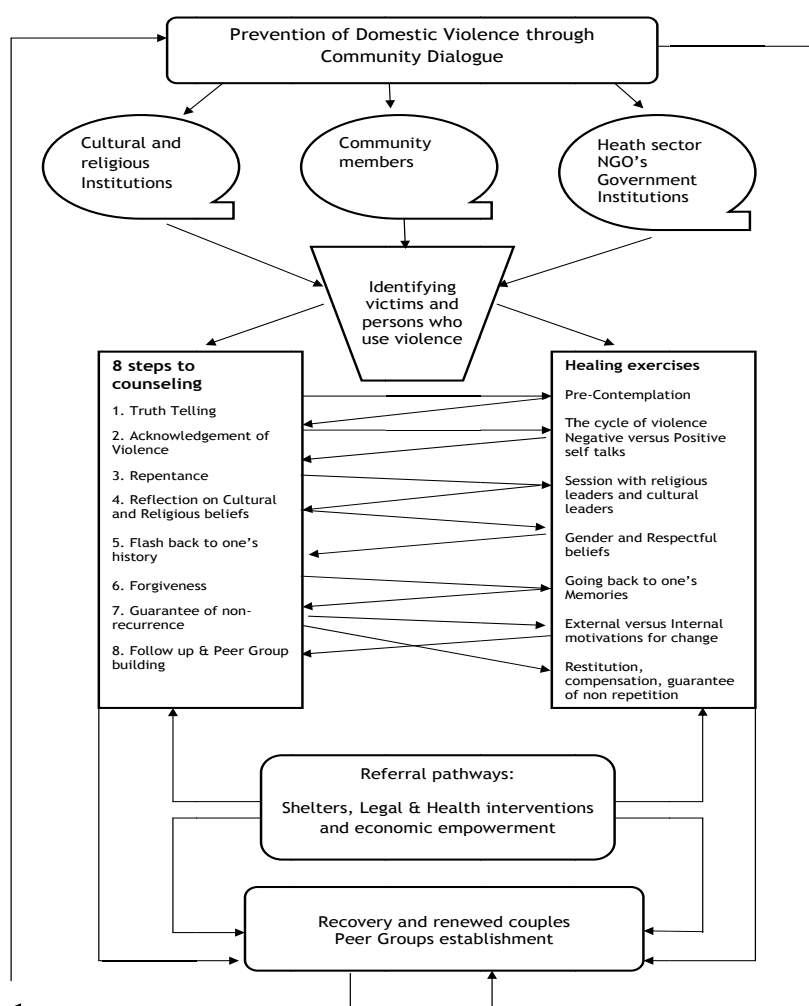


\* **Impacts of abuse on male victims**

The impacts of family violence on male victims include: fear and loss of feelings of safety, feelings of guilt and/or shame, difficulties in trusting others, anxiety and flashbacks, unresolved anger, loneliness and isolation, low self-esteem and/or self-hatred, depression, suicidal ideation, self-harm and attempted suicide, use of alcohol or other drugs, physical injuries, sexual dysfunction and/or impotence, loss of work or home, physical illness and among others.

In Uganda, according to the Uganda Law Reform Commission, 41% of the victims don't report cases of DV. 23% report to relatives only while 20% report to the police or the court. The Demographic and Health Survey - 2006, indicated that 66% of women experienced DV perpetrated by their intimate partner. In Rakai, a survey showed that out of 1536 cases of DV which were reported to the police, only 52 were convicted.

# II Diagrammatic presentation of the Cultural Sensitive Counseling Model



## The Counselling Model works through eight steps of healing.

The model envisages different prevention methods before starting with counselling in order to find couples in the communities who can come out and speak about their experience.

The counselling section takes the couple through 8 Steps which are elaborated in a progressive way to acknowledge the violence, deliberate the truth and understand why domestic violence occurs the way it does among the couple.

In the second part of the model, the counsellors work on reflecting over the history of the couple, cultural and religious gender beliefs which work to enhance peace among couples. The third part of the model emphasises the reflection on the motivations for a behavioural change, how to put it in place and heal the wounds.

Using referral pathways is also important as a strategy to implement in parallel to the 8 steps of the counselling process in order to strengthen the economic, health and legal sustainability within the family.

Finally, it is important that couples who have experienced a change can be drivers of changes for others. Therefore, the model suggests that peer groups of former persons who ever used violence or were victims can serve the cause and participate as testimonies and witnesses of the change for others.

# Presentation of the Cultural Sensitive Counseling Model

## 1. General approaches to community involvement in curbing DV Community Participatory approaches

### a) Community Dialogue (CD) Approach

Community dialogue as a tool in the prevention and response to Domestic violence. It is an interactive participatory communication process of sharing information between people or groups of people aimed at reaching a common understanding and workable solution. Community dialogues can take place at schools, at market places, in places of worship and village meetings. They are intended to foster change in the attitudes of individuals and consequently foster change in behavior. Community dialogues are platforms for institutions and stakeholders to partake in decision making on issues concerning them. Communities analyse their issues and forward them to specific institutions and service providers to respond and take appropriate actions on the demands of the community.

#### **What is community dialogue (CD)?**

Community dialogue is a continuous mutual exchange of views, ideas and opinions between people or groups of people aimed at developing mutual understanding and seeking a solution. It recognizes existing knowledge, skills and capabilities of communities that can be used to improve or change their situation for the better.

It aims at promoting family and community practices that would enhance people's quality of life. It also seeks to change attitudes of service providers for improved service delivery. Furthermore it engages planners and political leaders at different levels in ensuring that policies, programmes and budgets are responsive to community needs and concerns.

#### **Why this Community Dialogue (CD) approach as a preventive measure?**

Community Based dispute resolution is a key mechanism for redressing domestic violence due to proximity since they are within the community and the confidence people have in the religious leaders and family elders.

Most cases of domestic violence are first reported to religious leaders, elders and family members, who decide on punishments such as fines and cautions against the perpetrators.

Community Dialogue (CD) is a proven method of addressing and improving the power relations between men and women, girls and boys. It creates a greater understanding within the community of the incidence and causes of domestic violence and encourages community participation in eradicating domestic violence. The approach encourages the deliberate involvement of communities in problem identification and redress.

- Community Dialogue engages community in collective thinking about an issue until they realize that it's a concern that needs to be addressed.
- Problems arising out of traditional values and practices can best be addressed by the affected communities themselves- change must come from within.
- Community dialogue's human rights approach to programming appeals to the survivors, perpetrators and actors as duty bearers and/or rights holders/claimants.
- The use of existing channels (such as faith based, health workers) in Community Dialogue makes it possible to dialogue on domestic violence as a concern and finding

solutions that are within the means of households, communities or even institutions such as schools and religious.

- The ultimate goal of community dialogue is behavioural change in this case the abandonment of domestic violence
- The authorities concerned on security and judiciary need to dialogue on issues of timely prosecution.
- Ministries, local governments, CSOs, Faith based organizations and other stakeholders need to dialogue on issues of one stop centres and referral systems.
- Dialogue on strengthening referral systems and once effected there is need for sustained dialogue.
- The use of existing channels (service providers) including house holders would solve issues of stigma, privacy and survivor blame.
- The use of sparks (posed questions) in community dialogue is to provoke communities to identify their concerns that are key in dealing with misconceptions and myths.

Changing the women's behaviour regarding their rights to live free of violence may be just as necessary as changing the behaviour of legal officials or their perpetrators on these rights. While laws and policies on domestic violence inevitably play a big role in combating domestic violence the greatest hope lies in engaging the key stakeholders, perpetrators and survivors in genuine dialogue. We therefore need community dialogue approach.

#### **b) Theatre for Development/Theatre Forum**

Here is a sequence of a piece of Theatre Forum that the Justice and Peace Department Archdiocese of Kamapala has been using to enhance dialogue in the community and raise voices of women on issues of domestic violence that they face in their homes.

"Picture a woman. She might live anywhere in the world. She could be part of any socio-economic group, of any ethnicity, of any religion. On a typical day this woman starts her day before the sun rises. She works for 8-12 hours in a store or on a farm or at a factory or in someone's home for a small wage, but her children and elderly relatives depend on her income for survival. When she comes home, she asks her children what they learned that day at school and what they want to be when they grow up. She spends hours bent over a small stove or fireplace preparing meals for an extended family. In many parts of the world, she also grows the food that feeds everyone at her table. In Uganda, for example, almost 13% of women reported time lost from crucial household work because of violence from an intimate partner." Hillary Clinton, in her letter to the Guardian Newspaper - 10th Dec 2011

That is just one, among the so many scenarios that a victim of gender violence (especially women) may go through. Now, let us also look at a scenario under which a typical perpetrator may undergo. The most interesting part in the scenario below is that the perpetrator (many times a man) is so also many times a victim of GBV himself;

Picture a man; he may live anywhere in the world. This man lives home early in the morning and returns late evening - upon his return, conflicts soon arise between him and his wife. This man is aggressive, hated, and condemned by those that experience his amoral deeds, yet at the same time when he calms down and begins to share his life with those paying him audience; they (the audience) start to understand that that

man is a victim himself, exploited by his boss at the workplace. He's searching for recognition and respect. This ambivalent character is difficult to understand, difficult to influence and we see the desperation in people's eyes when they fail to convince him to change his attitude and behaviour.

Given the above two differing scenarios, oneself will need to engage a platform that a "provokes" both the victim and the perpetrator without any of them getting offended. This platform is theatre - under various forms, arts, games. As theatre changes roles and forms relating to life experiences, people start to internally take responsibility for their actions. In our cultures, theatrical gatherings are well received compared to other methods, are easy to understand. Local norms and cultures can also be easily embedded in a theatrical setting.

Theatre can strengthen the emotional and psychological appeal of messages and provide a believable and interesting way to explore sensitive issues. It can change the way a person thinks and acts. Theatre engages the audience, focuses the attention of the spectators and actively involves them in a vivid and touching experience. Active involvement means that the emotions of the spectators, and not just intellectual or cognitive skills, are affected. It is this ability to touch the heart and soul that allows theatre to influence attitudes in ways that traditional instruction cannot.

We've used theatre not only to address issues of GBV, but also to counsel its victims and perpetrators. This technical model that involves special art forms has been applied as follows.

To conclude, Theatre forum is a theatre form that only mirrors real life situations and engages both actors and audiences in swapping roles, and probing the issue at hand to find and suggest lasting hopes and solutions to both the wronged and the wrong-doer. We should note that people don't want to be blamed (even if they are in the wrong). This method creates a platform and situation where people get blamed without any of them getting offended. Touching actors in an impressive authentic performance leave their clients judging themselves, and it so happens that a married client who comes to watch a play on GBV without his/her partner will at end of it continuing questioning the soul "I think my husband/wife would have loved me more if we had attended this exercise together"

### **c) Parent Teachers and Guardian Education**

The experience of domestic violence manifests itself in the behaviour of school pupils in a variety of ways. Children and young people who live in domestic abuse situations may have an increased risk of being bullied or be unable to fully participate in school life. Their anger and distress may also lead them to bully other pupils, and educational attainment often suffers. Parents, teachers and guardians should build the capacity to and strengthen young people so that they can make the right choices out of personal decisions freely taken and well motivated. Parents, teachers and guardians should understand their role in having dialogue with the youth/children about their role in society and as well there responsibilities. Young people and adolescents are the most vulnerable groups that need to be empowered with knowledge on every issue in society so that they respond to issues positively. Parents and guardians should give their children consistent love and attention, communicate openly with their children



and encourage them to talk about all aspects of their lives, set clear standards for children's behaviour, and be consistent about rules and discipline, and being role models.

**d) Sexual education with teenagers, (Straight talks, Ebisaakate, Holiday camps, Ekyoto)**

Sexual education is important and a concern of everybody in society. In the African traditional society, sex education was given during the initiation that marked the passage from childhood to adulthood. It was given gradually by relatives and it was meant to enlighten young people on the meaning of the bodily psychological changes taking place in that period of their life and on the attractiveness of the other sex in this period. Its aim was to prepare for marriage and not for intercourse before traditional marriage. Nowadays, African societies have substantially declined in sexual morality education, in spite of claims for inculcation. Changes are mainly, due to foreign influence and to a false concept of progress and modernisation. Such changes demand a reassessment of the situation and the establishment of clear directives for the good of our young people who are often misled. This cultural model will address the above need. Faced with a culture that largely reduces human sexuality to the level of something common, since it interprets and lives it in a reductive and impoverished way by linking it solely with the body and with selfish pleasure, the educational aspect of parents must aim firmly at a training in the area of sex that is truly and fully personal. For sexuality is an enrichment of the whole person-body, emotions and soul and it manifests its inmost meaning in leading the person to the gift of self in love. (The Family in the Modern World, Encyclical letter Familiaris Consortio of Pope John Paul II pg 50 1989)

**e) Couple Retreats**

These are very important meetings to be attended by both men and women. They give both a platform to reflect upon the relationship, see what they have been doing, what they have not done, what is still lacking to make their relationship better, what they can change. We have two categories of people, extroverts and introverts, both of these respond differently to conflict. At a retreat guided by a counsellor or someone the couple trusts (informed in wisdom of culture) the couples gets a chance to freely open up. Much as we all live such busy lives it is very vital to set some time off to reflect upon your life and your relationship. The couple should feel free to suggest how often they can meet, who they are comfortable to share with and therefore come up with solutions to either prevent or respond to conflict and ensure peace and reconciliation. Just like a body that needs check-ups to ensure it is in a good health condition, relationships too need a counsellor to help the couple reflect. An African proverb says there is no wall without supporting poles.

**The concept of understanding time for couples**

According to Socrates, an unreflected life is a waste of time, this too can be applied to relationships; meaning time should be set apart to reflect upon the relationship. Look at where you have come from, where you are and where you want to be. Take time to understand each other, listen to each other and learn how to tolerate each other. Your personal feelings during this time are expressed using I (I felt like....). This ensures a healthy dialogue where the blame game (you did...) is totally eliminated. This can be done as often as possible.

#### **f) Human Rights Awareness in the School Curriculum**

This is one of the ways in which we can prevent Domestic Violence in families. By educating young children about their rights, duties and responsibilities so that they grow up knowing them, respecting them and also recognising domestic violence tactics. Furthermore, this equips children with knowledge of how to recognise domestic violence and where to seek redress.

Creating opportunities for adolescents and parents to learn positive forms of behaviour for relationships by creating awareness through debates, social media, conferences that the youth and parents have easy access to and should be considered by both females and males.

#### **g) Duty Bearers Holistic approach**

Because of its cultural and social norm aspects, Domestic Violence needs to be addressed by different stakeholders undertaking different interventions. That is why, prevention and responsive measures with persons who use violence and victims shall be conducted in conjunction and ensure the involvement of religious and cultural leaders, the health and social sectors.

##### **\* Religious leaders roles:**

Preaching on issues pertaining to human dignity, rights and aspirations, transformation of the heart and peace in families is a crucial contribution towards curbing domestic violence.

Inculcating good morals in the mind of the believers is also the task of religious leaders in curbing the curse of domestic violence.

To incorporate premarital counseling with instruction about healthy relationships and negotiation skills.

According to Pagelow & Johnson (1988): "Silence within the religious community has served to keep the lid on the simmering pain that not only immobilizes victims but encourages the behavior of the perpetrators".

We cannot understand domestic violence or any other types of violence merely as a sociological phenomenon, nor can we seek solutions through social efforts alone. Violence, at its very core, is a spiritual malaise and can only be fully eradicated through personal conversion leading to ongoing transformation.

A Pastoral Letter on Domestic Violence by Most Rev. Ricardo Ramírez, C.S.B. Bishop of Las Cruces SPEAKING THE UNSPEAKABLE calls upon religious leaders to play an active role in curbing domestic violence. He mentions that domestic violence exchanges the natural bonds of love and nurturing, for the unnatural relationships of aggressors trampling mercilessly on the dignity, rights, and aspirations of those they have promised to love and cherish.

The nature of domestic violence has been a tragic element in the evolution of the world's civilizations and continues to be a plague of epidemic proportions. Many people in our society have experienced and continue to experience the terror of living in fear of being attacked by another family member. For generations, violence in the home was common and went virtually unchallenged. It took courageous women and men to bring the ugly reality of domestic violence into the public forum. Religion comes into help victims and perpetrators know that,

the redemption of Christ touches every aspect of human experience and brings about a transformation of the human heart. Our human hearts are no longer ruled by the wound of sin and hatred. We are not to seek domination of others. Human violence, rooted in insecurity and fear, can now be healed by the love of God that has been poured into our hearts (cf. Rom. 5:4).

In Jesus Christ, our restored relationships are based on respect and trust and, above all, on love - a sacrificial love that seeks the good of the other. This is the foundation of all our relationships, and in particular, of the relationship in Christian marriage and family life.

There is no religion that preaches violence; the church knows that the family is the basic unit of society and the stability of the family influences the social, political, and economic development of a country.

Religion has values that everyone who believes in a certain religious faith conforms to. These may include love, humility, obedience, forgiveness, tolerance, respect and honor.

**\* Cultural leaders' roles:**

The role of cultural leaders is broad, one of which is to resolve conflicts among members of their communities. One of them is DV which is addressed by mechanisms involving the Ssengas, Kojjas etc...

They are also responsible for sensitizing the community during ceremonies like: "KwalulaAbaana" (Clan naming), birth rights, "Kwanjula" (traditional introduction ceremony), clan reunions or at last funeral rites.

Like religion, culture too aims at ensuring that peace and reconciliation exists. Previously unlike today where family issues are settled in court and despite Uganda's multi-ethnic set up, all the tribes therein have a common way of responding to domestic violence through the family structure. For example, in the Ganda culture, disputes in families are settled by its members who include the "Ssenga" (aunts) and the "Kojja" (uncles); if these fail the parents come in. If they also fail, the clan heads ensure that parties reconcile and exist in a respectful manner.

In cases where a man or a woman's conduct is not acceptable, he/she will be called by the elders, who will listen to the matter, and if a punishment is required it is given in the presence of the family members.

**\* Health sector role:**

The health centers are put in place to manage and handle cases of Domestic Violence by offering health services, through creating awareness, screening and making referrals to relevant service providers.

**\* Law enforcement:**

The role of law enforcement is to ensure law and order in accordance with Art 2.12 of the 1995 constitution which lays down these cardinal roles:

- To protect life and property
- To preserve law and order
- Prevent and deter crime; and

- Cooperate with the civilian authorities and other security organs established under the constitution and with the population generally.

The Domestic Violence Act 2010 was enacted specifically to provide for the management of such issues as:

- Protection and relief of victims
- Provide punishment of perpetrators
- Provide procedures and guidelines to be followed by the courts of law in relation to protection and compensation of victims ...
- Provide for enforcement made by court orders
- Empower family and children courts to handle cases of domestic violence

Domestic Violence regulations 2011 were made to operationalize the DV Act 2010.

The law is fully operational to cater for all forms of Domestic Violence.

\* **Methods of actualization:**

- Apprehension and prosecution of perpetrators
- Management of victims and affected families (care, protection, providing referral pathways)
- Sensitization of the public by community policing through the media, barazas, seminars, crime preventers and any probable gatherings

## 2. The Pre-conditions to counseling

The model considers counseling as a sustainable way of dealing with DV because it avoids stigma, minimises recurrence, heals deeply and promotes harmony and reconciliation.

What could be the pre-conditions to work with perpetrators and victims?

For many persons who use violence, the majority of their relationships are conducted in a respectful manner, which indicates that they already know how to practice respectful treatment of others when they decide to.

Our belief is that, beside the justification they give for using violence (alcohol, poverty, frustration at work, peer pressure etc...) they, actually decide that it is socially acceptable to use, abuse and control their partner and children in order to get what they want in the immediate situation.

They think that the short-term gain is more important and they don't think about the long-term losses they may experience because of the abuse (separation, imprisonment etc...).

Counselors should therefore dwell into their clients' belief systems and help them explore alternatives to those beliefs; especially by reflecting on how their cultural background supports nonviolence among the couple and within the family.

In addition, counselors should explore the support of the extended family emphasizing on the roles of the "Ssenga" in the Buganda culture for example.

First take time to contact the "Ssenga" after pointing out such an option to the client and see if they agree.

Take time to get to know the Ssenga and her relationship with the client and other members of the family (parents of the clients etc...). Explore a strategy to follow in handling the case. However, the Ssenga shall also be made aware of the violent behaviors of DV perpetrators and that's why this paper is important as general knowledge.

Non-abusive responses are based on the beliefs that abuse of a partner or child is not acceptable; that respect is not predicated on the responses of others, and that the long-term costs and losses because of violence are high and destructive to both the abuser and the survivor.

### **Abusers who want change will need to go through a process of healing:**

- First, they need to take responsibility for their own behavior, particularly their abusive and controlling behavior.
- Second, they will need to express a willingness to exercise their role at home differently and will have to explain how they shall do it and change.
- In case of failing to do so, the counselor can confront the client to bring out actions to take.
- Third, they need to work cooperatively with their partner to settle differences and resolve disagreements in a respectful manner.



- Finally, they must de-emphasize their self-centred goals, and instead develop goals with their partner and other members of the family reflecting everyone's needs and desires.

Before considering counseling it is important that the counselor understands the way he or she is going to help the perpetrator or the victim to express his and her problem.

For that, Motivational interviewing is a very effective tool for counselors to get better results.

**a) Reflecting on: Motivational Interviewing- Internal/External motivations for change**

Motivational interviewing (MI) refers to a counseling approach in part developed by clinical psychologists, Professor William R Miller, Ph.D. and Professor Stephen Rollnick, Ph.D.

The concept of motivational interviewing evolved from experience in the treatment of problem drinkers. Motivational interviewing is a semi-directive, client-centered counseling style for eliciting behavior change by helping clients to explore and resolve ambivalence. Compared with non-directive counseling, it is more focused and goal-directed. Motivational Interviewing is a method that works on facilitating and engaging intrinsic motivation within the client in order to change behavior. The examination and resolution of ambivalence is a central purpose, and the counselor is intentionally directive in pursuing this goal.

Motivational interviewing recognizes and accepts the fact that clients who need to make changes in their lives approach counseling at different levels of readiness to change their behavior. If the counseling is mandated, they may never have thought of changing the behavior in question. Some may have thought about it but not taken steps to change it. Others, especially those voluntarily seeking counseling, may be actively trying to change their behavior and may have been doing so unsuccessfully for years. In order for a counselor to be successful at motivational interviewing, four basic skills should first be established:

- The ability to ask open ended questions
- The ability to provide affirmations
- The capacity for reflective listening
- The ability to periodically provide summary statements to the client.

Motivational interviewing is non-judgmental, non-confrontational and non-adversarial. The approach attempts to increase the client's awareness of the potential problems caused, consequences experienced, and risks faced as a result of the behavior in question.

Alternately, counselors help clients envision a better future, and become increasingly motivated to achieve it. Either way, the strategy seeks to help clients think differently about their behavior and ultimately to consider what might be gained through change.

Motivational interviewing focuses on the present, and entails working with a client to access motivation to change a particular behavior, that is not consistent with a client's personal value or goal. Warmth, genuine empathy, and unconditional positive regard are necessary to foster therapeutic gain (Rogers, 1961) within motivational interviewing.

Another central concept is that ambivalence about decisions is resolved by conscious or unconscious weighing of pros and cons of change vs. not changing (Ajzen, 1980). It is critical to meet clients where they are (Prochaska, 1983), and to not force a client towards change when they have not expressed a desire to do so.

Motivational interviewing is considered to be both client-centered and semi-directive. It departs from traditional Rogerian client-centered therapy through this use of direction, in which therapists attempt to influence clients to consider making changes, rather than non-directively explore themselves. Motivational interviewing is based upon four general principles:

- **Express empathy:**  
Empathy involves seeing the world through the client's eyes, thinking about things as the client thinks about them, feeling things as the client feels them, sharing in the client's experiences. Expression of empathy is critical to the MI approach. When clients feel that they are understood, they are more able to open up to their own experiences and share those experiences with others. Having clients share their experiences with you in depth allows you to assess when and where they need support, and what potential pitfalls may need focus on in the change planning process. In short, the counselor's accurate understanding of the client's experience facilitates change.
- **Develop discrepancy:**  
This guides counselors to help clients appreciate the value of change by exploring the discrepancy between how clients want their lives to be vs. how they currently are (or between their deeply-held values and their day-to-day behavior). MI counselors work to develop this situation through helping clients examine the discrepancies between their current behavior and future goals. When clients perceive that their current behaviors are not leading toward some important future goal, they become more motivated to make important life changes. Techniques used can include decisional balance sheets where the counselor writes the changes the clients want to undertake.
- **Roll with resistance:**  
The counselor does not fight client resistance, but "rolls with it." Statements demonstrating resistance are not challenged. Instead the counselor uses the client's "momentum" to further explore the client's views. Using this approach, resistance tends to be decreased rather than increased, as clients are not reinforced for becoming argumentative. MI encourages clients to develop their own solutions to the problems that they themselves have defined. In exploring client concerns, counselors may invite clients to examine new perspectives, but counselors do not impose new ways of thinking on clients. Rolling with resistance allows therapists to accept client reluctance to change as natural rather than pathological.
- **Support self-efficacy:**  
This guides counselors to explicitly embrace client autonomy (even when clients choose to not change) and help clients move toward change successfully and with confidence. As clients are held responsible for choosing and carrying out actions to change in the MI approach, counselors focus their efforts on helping the clients stay motivated, and supporting clients' sense of self-efficacy is a great way to do that. One source of hope for clients using the MI approach is that there is no "right way" to change, and if a given plan for change does not work, clients are only limited by their own creativity as to the number of other plans that might be tried.

Ensure the following-up of the person who uses violence and victims in order to curb down side effects of the experience of DV (Trauma, Stigma, Suicide etc...)

Change often takes a long time, and the pace of change will vary from client to client. Knowledge alone is usually not sufficient to motivate change within a client, and relapse behaviors should be thought of as the rule, not the exception. Ultimately, counselors must recognize that motivational interviewing involves collaboration not confrontation, evocation not education, autonomy rather than authority, and exploration instead of explanation. Effective processes for positive change focus on goals that are small, important to the client, specific, realistic, and oriented in the present and/or future.

While there are as many variations in technique as there are clinical encounters, the spirit of the method, however, is more enduring and can be characterized in a few key points:

- Motivation to change is elicited from the client, and is not imposed from outside forces for example, the Baganda expect a high level of respect, humility and patience. It means that the counselor will have to insure such attitude.
- It is the client's task, not the counselor's, to articulate and resolve his or her ambivalence. For example it is important to give the client an opportunity to decide on his/her best way of life as much as possible in order for the task to be self driven.
- Direct persuasion is not an effective method for resolving ambivalence. There should be a conviction not a persuasion. With a person from the central region of Uganda, the understanding and conviction is core for motivation driving.
- The counseling style is generally quiet and elicits information from the client. There should not be an imposition of the counselor on the client towards goal settings.
- The counselor shall transpire as a model for the behavioral change of the client. This enables the client to learn new ways of effective behaving from the counselor. In that they help the client to examine and resolve ambivalence.
- Readiness to change is not a trait of the client, but a fluctuating result of interpersonal interaction. The Baganda prefer interactive encounters so that they initiate themselves the readiness for change.
- The therapeutic relationship resembles a partnership or companionship. The people from the central region in Uganda value companionship, socializing in the attempt to resolve malfunctioning behaviors. This should be done with the significant others in their life (Ssengas, Kojja etc...)

**b) Preparing and setting a counseling session.**

Each of the following elements that are called “**Ethical Procedures**” have to be reflected upon for a successful counseling session.

Element to consider before starting a counselling session	Success	Questions to be reflected upon
<b>Willingness of the client to enter counseling and open up</b>	The client will talk about his/her problem. He/she will identify, recognise it as his/her problem. This phase is important so that the counseling doesn't start on denials  Preparedness of the client to accept the outcome	Get client ready for any outcomes
<b>Constructive thinking of the client</b>	The client shall be encouraged to engage in a constructive thinking process and not a destructive one. The counselor's attitude will help him or her to keep constructive.	Dealing with emotions of the clients, cyclic emotions within the period of counseling
<b>Confidentiality</b>	The counselor does not share what was said during counseling session with client  Confidentiality shall be broken when it is necessary to refer the client to a specialist	1 Counselor does both counseling; the 2 partners can bring problems afterwards. Willingness of one to know what's going on with the other partner. Counselor may find himself in difficulties Male Counselor with wife? Women Counselor with Husband?  Problems of referrals the client is handled by too many actors at a time. It may confuse the client
<b>Trust</b>	Create a rapport give a positive welcome Take care of your body language (smiles, attitudes etc...)	
<b>Conducive environment</b>	The Room or space where the counseling shall take place should be isolated and accepted by the client to be comfortable, not distractive and safe  The counselor shall keep information about the client to himself  If a file is used for recording, explain the purpose of using the file: It should be used to gather information to enable the counselor to know at which stage the counseling is at and to see what was worked upon during the former sessions  The file is used for referring purposes so that all information from other instances dealing with the same client are available	Where should this file stay?  Who has access to the file?  Breaking the confidentiality, releasing of the content should be explained to the client in advance (example in case of criminal acts, defilement will be brought to the police, or legal aid etc...)  Confidentiality is broken in a child's case because he/she will be referred from an adult/the counselor has to explain to the child?
<b>No stigma</b>	Avoid a stigmatizing approach it is destructive	Be conscious to which referral structure you refer the client to
<b>Respect Values or Religious beliefs</b>	Don't encourage or do anything that is against the clients beliefs unless it is for security reasons	Don't give solutions/give options; Deal with what the client suggests; Explore her/his solutions
<b>Working relationship</b>	Strengthen relationship with the client:	To be handled by the counselor

<b>with the person affected</b>	<p>Its good to have a relationship but it has to have limits</p> <p>Counselor should go with the client through the process go at the same pace. Counselor should not rush the client or be too slow to understand where the client is</p>	<p>personally, to which extent are you close to the client</p> <p>Counselors find themselves in burn out situations because they have given too much of themselves</p>
<b>Support of the other partner</b>	<p>Sometime we get couples who are supportive for one another's problem. Explore this opportunity of having a partner who supports the counseling process you conduct with his/her partner</p>	
<b>Getting perpetrators and victims to realise that there is a problem and that they want to handle it</b>	<p>Use community dialogue approach, conscientization workshops and sessions in the communities, general counseling, Advocacy should be taking place through GwangaMujje (drum when there is a problem in the community)</p> <p>Sagalaagalamidde (community work) done by the youth for example</p> <p>Use last funeral rites of the Baganda where sessions are given about issues</p>	
<b>Get to the core issue</b>	<p>Probe deeper into the words of the client to find the core issue rather than the upper side of the ice-berg. Usually clients show only the surface of their problem and hide or aren't conscious of the real problem</p>	<p>Define how to deepen counseling sessions, how to ask questions, how to find the right questions</p>
<b>Appreciate and bring forward good sides of the parties</b>	<p>Being non partisan.</p> <p>Guiding the person who uses violence in reflecting on his/her abusive behavior</p>	<p>Following the concept of "No one is to blame"</p>
<b>Explore the solutions that the client has used before and which have worked</b>	<p>Dig and explore what has worked and what has not worked in living positively</p>	<p>The clients may have found themselves having positive experiences towards change</p> <p>How did it work? how can we use it for the future</p>
<b>Explore support system existing in the cultural setup</b>	<p>Explore: capacity, presence and willingness of the support system (elders, support groups, peer groups who had the same problems, , Enyumba (household), Oluggya (family), Omutuba (extended families), Olunyiriri (clan, llineages)</p> <p>Get their expertise on a certain problem among the cultural and religious structures</p> <p>Identify traditional healers working on counseling of domestic violence who have the expertise and guarantee respect of human rights</p> <p>Use the spiritual counseling/guidance of the church priests</p>	



<b>Physical Follow-up</b>	<p>making home visits should come at a certain time of the counseling process, (the counselor has talked to the husband and wife before coming to the house, he/she has inquired from the neighbors how the relationship is improving)</p> <p>Use witnesses or significant others (people who matter in the issue for getting right the right data)</p> <p>Put in place a trusted association with the 3d party for seeking information</p>	<p>Which part of the counseling process is appropriate for home visits</p> <p>Try to see if the significant others are relevant persons (cultural leaders, religious leaders)</p> <p>The counselor works according to the religious and cultural background</p> <p>Their religious and cultural norms should be in line with human rights</p>
<b>Referral systems in place</b>	<p>Structures are existing and operational, within various institutions: cultural, religious, which offer accessible and affordable services</p> <p>Counselors should meet together with staff of those institution before and explain his/her work so that he/she knows with whom he/she may likely have the best working relationship and competences</p>	<p>Referral system can be tracked</p> <p>Client could be confused because he/she has to tell his/her story to so many agents!</p> <p>Those entities are often corrupt, demand for fuel, payment for their services while it should be free of charge</p> <p>Some are not appropriate because they disregard the cultural and religious background</p>
<b>Monitoring Changes</b>	Create a Monitoring tool for monitoring behavioral changes	Define and create criteria's to monitor behavioral changes
<b>Phone/Communication</b>	<p>Use the right mode to address the client</p> <p>Agreement with the client from the beginning how, where, when, with whom the counseling will be taking place; every time all this will be decided by both counselor and client</p> <p>Put off phones during counseling sessions</p>	<p>The counselor designs a specific way of communicating with the client</p> <p>Set up a rule that if the session fails 3 times continuously case will be dropped</p>
<b>Official Documents</b>	Write a constitution, guidelines, work agreement, or an ethical manual etc... which will be used for every institution	
<b>Personal skill of counselor</b>	<p>Being sincere/transparent</p> <p>Get the client background before starting (where does he/she come from, which religion, which class of the society, status, age, work, family, who told him/her about the counseling you offer etc...)</p> <p>Welcome greetings should be culturally and religiously appropriate for winning the client. Show hospitality</p> <p>If the counselor doesn't get the background, then He/She has to be sincere and ask how do we greet in your culture, are there any things that are against your culture that you would like me to know and respect</p> <p>Good listener</p> <p>Show empathy</p>	<p>if the counselor is not able to work he should reschedule for another day</p> <p>If counselor deals with a person of status, age etc... which are above him/her, he/she has to talk about it and make agreements with the client</p> <p>Say that: I am a counselor and we work here for a certain purpose I am aware that you are a renamed person or you could be my father/mother but it will not affect our working relationship, we respect one another for who we are in these particular sessions.</p>

	Consistency of the counselor should be the same all through stages of the counseling and follow-up	
<b>Specialisation and analytical skills of the counselor for DV cases</b>	Be conscious and clear about our own biases (women handling women, women having biases in front of men) Not all counselors are good for all DV situations  Personal Limits to work with specific situations; forward the case to another counselor who can deal with the problem.	The counselor shall be sincere to him/herself if he/she can't handle a case then he/she better ask someone else to do the work  Ex working with paedophiles, perpetrators of rape, killing etc...
<b>Supervisions</b>	Counselors need supervision to understand their work and what is going on in their counseling work as well as to keep distance	get supervision sessions as a team or with others doing same job, go and discuss/sharing with people you trust ex: elders, keep confidentiality  Use rituals to leave bad/negative energies Find strategies that are good to switch off: reading, praying, meditation, sport, relaxation, changing environment, move around, cook, making mats, handcraft, gardening, singing, energy exercise: take deep breath for some time

### c) Ethics of a counselor

Ethics mean moral principles that control or influence a person's behavior; a philosophical discipline that is concerned with human conduct and moral decision making. According to Akinade (2005) ethics are normative in nature and focus on principles and standard that govern relationships between individuals, such as counselors and clients.

It is important to insist on and underline the qualities that a counselor should have in order to do good specially in critical situations like Domestic Violence

#### Personal qualities of a counselor

##### Realistic:

It will take time to achieve complete personal stability and healing. Don't expect immediate miracles or a magic pill to bring instant results.

You should be aware that even after successful counseling, it is normal for grief or anger to be triggered occasionally--even years afterward. That is to be expected.

Encourages wellness. Each session ends with genuine encouragement and hope. Good counselors know their clients are fragile and they bolster them with comforting assurance. Believing that you'll survive and thrive has a positive influence on outcome.

"I'm going to be okay" is a powerful mantra, crucial to eventual recovery; celebrate healing. Ethical counselors work hard on the job, urging clients in positive ways to get past their obstacles and to move on to greater happiness. The most trusted and successful counselors celebrate their own success and that of their clients.

##### Congruence and warmth:

A counselor should be agreeable and act appropriately to provide the client with a comfortable foundation for the counseling relationship. Only by creating a friendly atmosphere can the counselor encourage interaction and disclosure.

- Maintain warmth and genuine understanding.
- Use appropriate body language such as a non-threatening posture, while maintaining eye contact and respecting the client's personal space.

- Maintain a reassuring and comforting way of speech - the tone of voice, speed of speech and style of delivery.

### **Respectful:**

Counselors must at all times show respect for clients and their welfare. They must also remain impartial and non-judgmental.

A client must feel comfortable, safe and confident that confidentiality will be maintained at all times and also that the counselor is committed to helping, encouraging and supporting.

Whilst maintaining a professional focus a counselor must be able to show a genuine openness.

### **Have a positive attitude:**

It is of vital importance in the counseling relationship that the counselor demonstrates a positive acceptance of the client and that the client is valued and respected.

A positive, unconditional regard for the wellbeing of a client is the basis from which clients can explore their thoughts, feelings and experiences, and develop an understanding and acceptance of their emotions.

A counselor must not judge in any way. This may be difficult in some situations, but is the basis of a counseling relationship built on trust.

Accepting a client shows the individual that you are there to support them through the counseling process, regardless of their weaknesses, negativity or unfavourable qualities.

### **Should keep in mind important values:**

At all times counselors must show a commitment to values such as the following:

- Human dignity
- Alleviating personal distress
- Appreciating the differences in culture
- Appreciating the differences of faiths
- Remaining non-judgmental
- Ensuring the integrity of the client/counselor relationship
- Maintaining client confidentiality and ethical principles.

### **Should have Personal skills:**

Each counselor will bring their own unique abilities, qualities and skills into a counseling relationship to help ensure that their client feels safe and supported.

These may include:

- Active listening skills
- Good interpersonal skills
- The ability to question, reflect and challenge attitudes and beliefs
- A genuine interest in providing support.

Every normal human being has a desire to be respected, recognized and accepted. The counselor must have qualities of a good personality, good character and wholesome philosophy, health, emotional stability, approachability, sympathetic understanding of relationships, intelligence, social culture, broad knowledge and interest in guidance and personal working conditions and understanding of social economic conditions.

### 3. The 8 Steps of the counseling process

This cultural sensitive model to curb domestic violence incorporates elements and aspects of culture and religion that counseling often forgets or counselors are not aware of.

It is designed to be used by members of the communities who carry specific leadership roles either in the church, mosques, sub-counties, and families (like the Ssengas) or clans.

As a basis, the cultural sensitive counseling approach to curb domestic violence, uses a model of reconciliation process known on the African continent to address conflicts and sustain peace.

The phases of reconciliation processes include: Truth telling, Repentance, Forgiveness, Reparation and Compensation.

As another basis, the cultural sensitive counseling approach to curb domestic violence uses a model developed by Kate Iwi, (a Director of CAFOD (Catholic aid agency) in the UK) and Todd J Zimmer (a lawyer) in 2000.

Their manual for Domestic Violence Interventions is used by a number of projects which specifically work on DV. Their model involves a series of stages that deconstruct most of the levels on which domestic violence is supported. These stages are designed to be worked through in order to sustain behavioral change. But each step need not be completed before moving on to the next. However, it is important that in the process of going further into the steps, previous steps should be revisited subsequently. This model therefore proposes to move 2 steps ahead and one step back.

Each steps doesn't mean one session. The counselor may find spending different sessions on the same step.

This cultural sensitive counseling model proposes to work through a number of phases and steps by counseling perpetrators and victims of domestic violence. Following the pattern of a reconciliation process, the counseling model will start with the initial step of Truth Telling and end with the last element of Reparation and guarantee of non-recurrence.

Conducting the counseling process must involve an Option/Goal setting stage or setting a plan. (Like the ones that Wobboldinghas defined "eight qualities of viable plan in counseling")

SAMIICCC

- Simple
- Attainable
- Measurable
- Immediate
- Involving the clinician in appropriate ways
- Controlled by the client
- Reflecting commitment
- Consistent or respectable

This Goal setting has to take place at the beginning of the counseling process but also at the end of each session, specific objectives regarding behavioral change will have to be mentioned and agreed upon by the counselor and the person who uses violence or the victim

But before we go further into the steps, we have to understand a number of concepts.

### **Justice**

Justice is a concept that refers to the principle of fairness. A treatment is considered just or fair when it is administered in a transparent and non-discriminatory way and in accordance with generally recognized rules or accepted norms. Justice is founded on the principle that all human beings are equal in dignity and therefore deserve to be treated equally and fairly. The preamble to the Constitution of Uganda recognises social justice along with democracy, liberty, unity, equality, human rights, and social progress as the main pillars upon which a better Uganda founded on sound socio-economic and political order can be built.

Although justice is a universal human attribute, it is a concept that is influenced by cultural and religious perceptions. There are significant variations in how justice is understood in the African, Western, Oriental and other jurisdictions and also among different religious communities.

### **Peace**

Peace in its most basic sense means the existence of a state of harmony between and among people living together as members of the same community or as neighbors. In theory, all human beings share a place on earth and desire to live in peace. However, history shows that peace has eluded humanity since time immemorial. Whenever conflict arises between individuals or groups peace is shattered and people suffer. The history of the Second World War (1939-45) and other wars such as the Rwanda Genocide are stark reminders of the levels of cruelty to which human beings can descend, acting callously and inflicting pain upon their fellow human beings.

Whenever peace is threatened the lives and property of people are exposed to danger. One of the greatest challenges facing humanity today is to devise means through which people can live together in peace and resolve whatever differences that may exist between or among them amicably without resorting to war or other forms of violence, for violence begets violence.

### **African Concept of Justice**

Uganda consists of more than 56 ethnic communities. Studies show that many communities in Uganda had elaborate justice systems. Although these systems are not well documented, their basic elements have been preserved through oral literature. Many traditional justice systems in Uganda were largely based on the principles of mercy, love, and restoration of broken relationship. The system promoted community participation in the settlement of conflicts and ensured ownership of decisions. They also sought to rehabilitate and reintegrate the offenders into the community instead of isolating or condemning them to death sentence or life imprisonment. The system also sought to re-unite communities who are affected or torn apart by conflict.

For example, in the Greater Northern Uganda communities of Acholi, Langi, Madi and the Iteso had similar criminal justice systems. The systems were designed to facilitate and promote amicable resolution of conflicts. Unlike in the western world, criminal responsibility was generally based on the principle of collective responsibility. If a member of a clan committed a crime, the whole clan would assume both moral and legal obligations for the crime committed. The rationale for this was that a perpetrator of a crime such as murder or theft did it as a social misfit whose clan



failed to exercise due diligence to ensure that he or she was brought up properly. The clan was viewed as the custodian of good morals. In that regard, it was held responsible for the development of character and personality of all its members. Studies also show that certain crimes including murder were considered an abomination. The intentional killing of a fellow human being was regarded as a very wicked and reprehensible act that brought not only shame but also a curse upon all members of the clan. A distinction was often made between intentional and accidental killing. A person who killed intentionally was regarded as an outcast. Such a person had to undergo a ceremony of cleansing before he or she could be re-admitted into the fellowship of the clan. There was however no death penalty or imprisonment for murder or other serious crimes. Dialogue and restitution was the norm. An offender was expected to speak honestly and truthfully, apologize to the offended family and seek forgiveness. In the event of a refusal to cooperate with the clan in resolving the matter, which was rare, a person could be banished from the community.

### **A Religious Perspective of Justice and Peace**

Love and forgiveness are the defining features of Christianity and other major religions such as Islam and Buddhism. In the Bible, all believers are commanded to love one another, to forgive and to work for peace, hence the maxim “Happy are the peacemakers” (Mat 5.9). Believers are also expected to be peaceful and friendly and always show a gentle attitude towards everyone (Titus 3.2). There is no religion in the world which advocates indiscriminate violence. All the major religions advocate peace and condemn all forms of injustice. Although violence has been used and is being used in some parts of the world to further religious causes, this in our view is a perversion of religion and a manifestation of man’s inherent weakness and moral depravity.

### **Reconciliation**

This includes conducting rituals which are given from the cultural as well as religious background. Those are to be conducted in conjunction with the family members and/or cultural & religious leaders in order to set clear boundaries between the past, the present and the future.

Many people in Uganda have been affected by conflict.

It has been pointed out that reconciliation and healing are difficult processes. It involves listening, truth-telling, repentance, forgiveness and a sincere commitment to faith and justice. It involves healing in the midst of struggles for justice and reconciling members of families/couples seeking renewal for it is the spirit of reconciliation that will support the approach of using an alternative counseling model.

### **The following are some of the advantages of using a cultural sensitive model:**

- It offers a flexible, accessible and cheap procedure for all (involvement of specific members of the families, clans, churches, mosques etc...)
- It ensures community participation in resolving the conflict
- It promotes mutual healing and restoration of broken relationships
- It ensures satisfaction of both perpetrators and victims
- It addresses the concerns of the victims through payment of reparation
- It insures against the culture of impunity because perpetrators of crimes that are

unwilling to cooperate are subjected to the contemporary justice systems.

- It ensures creative collaboration with cultural and religious institutions

**The cultural sensitive counseling model proposes eight steps and a number of healing exercises to reconcile couples**

**a) The Eight steps of the cultural sensitive counseling model**

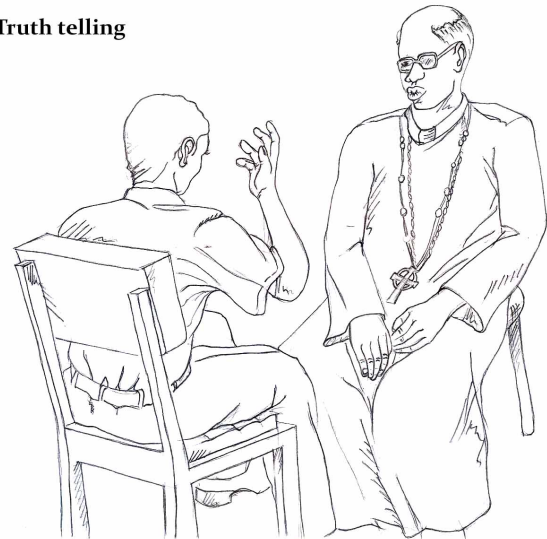
- **Step one:**

**Truth telling**

It involves helping the person who uses violence to acknowledge his violence and abusive behavior, challenging minimization/denial and creating within him/her the motivation to stop abusing.

A full history of the client's violence and abuse is elicited, to enable him to accept the seriousness and impact of his behavior.

Truth telling



- **Step two**

**Acknowledging violence**

Is to increase the person's awareness of his/her build-up towards violence, teaching him/her to recognize his growing hostility and anger towards his/her partner and to make an effort with himself/herself to stop it.

- **Step three**

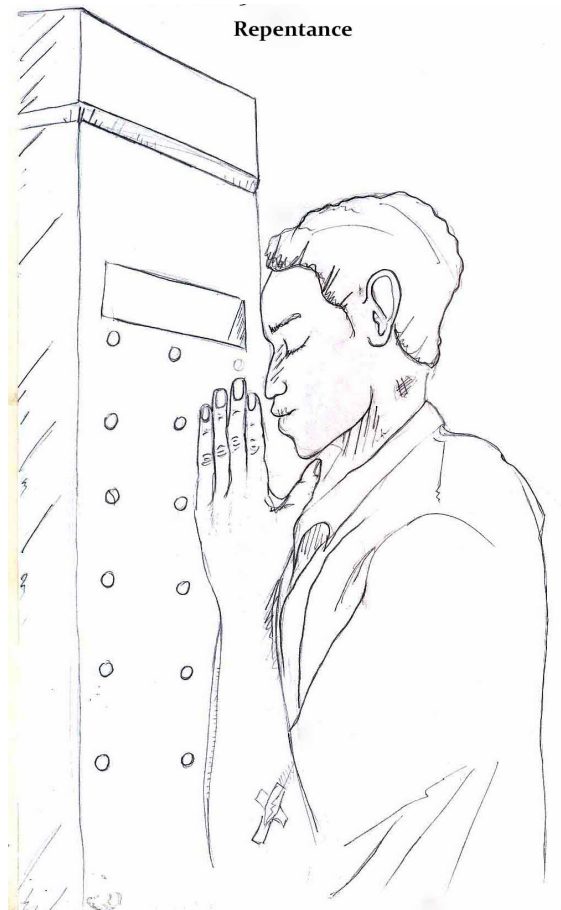
**Repentance**

It is asked of the person who uses violence, to feel sorry for what he/she has done to the victim and apologize to him/her.

This involves exploring the barriers to honest disclosure, increasing empathy through hearing the victim's experiences and accepting the gains and losses of giving away responsibility.

This step also helps to reduce denial in all its forms (including denial of responsibility), so that it becomes easier for the person who uses violence to deal with feelings such as guilt, shame and remorse.

Repentance



- **Step four:**

**Reflecting on Cultural and Religious Beliefs**

Is to develop in the person who uses violence an understanding that his/her violence is part of a system of abusive behavior.

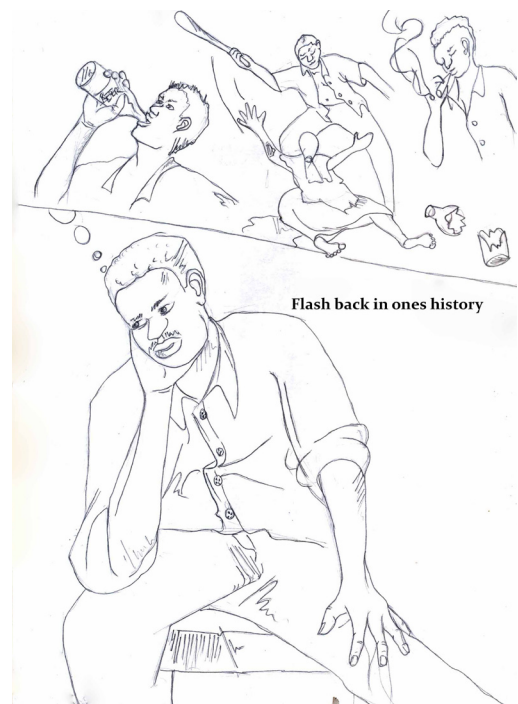
This involves extending his definition of abusive behavior to include non-physical abuse, and making him/her understand that the same belief systems and processes underlie both physical violence and non-physical abuse. Here the person who uses violence and the victim will reflect on their cultural and religious beliefs which support violence or which promote peace.



- **Step five**

**Flash back in ones' history**

Focuses on helping the person who uses violence to reflect on his/her past and its influence on today's behavior and change expectations that underlie his/her use of violence and abuse.



- **Step six**  
**Forgiveness**

This is to increase his/her ability to adopt new non-controlling behaviors.

This step involves rehearsing situations in his/her life, developing non-abusive ways for him/her to deal with his/her feelings and enabling him/her to feel angry yet remaining respectful.

The session shall end at revisiting the positive past when the couple was in love and emphasize the moment of forgiveness.

## Forgiveness



- **Step seven:**  
**Reparation, guarantee of non-recurrence and Reconciliation**

Is to enable reparation of the victim.

This includes conducting rituals which are given from the cultural as well as religious background. Those are to be conducted in conjunction with the family members and/or cultural, religious leaders in order to set clear boundaries between the past, the present and the future.

- **Step eight:**  
**Follow-up and building peer support groups**

This final step helps the couples to help others who face the same challenges and build up peer support groups

Follow up peer group support



## **b) Starting Counseling**

To start an efficient counseling process, the person who uses abusive behavior towards his/her partner will need to acknowledge the problem and be ready to do something about it.

### **The person will need to:**

- expresses a willingness to give up control in his/her relationship under specific conditions which are in line with his cultural roles and responsibilities.
- takes responsibility for their own behavior, particularly that which is abusive or controlling.
- works cooperatively with their partner to settle differences and resolve disagreements in a respectful manner.
- must de-emphasize their self-centred goals, and instead develop goals with their partner and others that reflect more than their own needs and desires.

### **The victims of DV will also need to be ready to:**

- see the problem and be ready to be helped and help him/herself.
- take responsibility for their own behavior, particularly that which trickles the abusive or controlling behavior of the perpetrator (breaking patterns of DV)
- understand the background of the abusive behavior
- work cooperatively with their partner to settle differences and resolve disagreements.

## **c) The eight steps and their healing exercises**

### **Step one: Truth telling**

It involves helping the person who uses violence to acknowledge his violence and abusive behavior, challenging minimization and creating within him/her the motivation to stop abusing.

A full history of the client's violence and abuse is elicited, to enable him to accept the seriousness and impact of his behavior.

This step needs to be undertaken separately with the person who uses violence and the victim.

Pre-contemplation with the person who uses violence and the victim (separately)

The counselor warmly welcomes and introduces himself/herself to the person in order to create and build confidence.

He/she inquires from the person if he/she would like to pray for spiritual guidance (Respect his/her decision)

To welcome the person, the counselor, can offer water, milk, coffee beans depending on cultural traditions of welcoming people.

### **The counselor shall first ask and talk about:**

How did you know about us?

Assure the person of confidentiality and where and when it can be broken. example: health problem, legal implication, child/minor and vulnerable person for purposes of protection.



How do you think I can help?

You can add as a counselor: “I think you are here because...” or “I believe you can build up a better relationship with your wife/husband, with your children etc...”

If the client is a Christian, help him/her by invoking Christ in his/her life.

If he/she is Muslim, use the quotations from the Qur'an in the annexes.

Don't stop the person from talking when he/she is in the process but rather encourage them to open up.

If the person shows lots of emotions, offer him or her empathy.

If the person doesn't want to talk/shuts down completely, we say, “Brother or sister, let's leave it for today, when do you think we can meet or when are you ready to come back?”

Silence management skills are needed as a therapeutic measure in such instances.

When the person is opening up but distancing him / herself from the problem, then ask a confrontational question. Ex: “now, what is your problem actually?”, “Please tell me the real problem”, “Would you mind telling me?”

After the introductory part, the counselor should present an exercise on the types of abuses to assess the situation and help the person to acknowledge and define the abusive behavior taking place at home.

Which form of Abuse does the person use? The person shall just put a cross in the chart according to his/her response



List of hurtful behaviors:

	No	Yes	Which
<b>Psychological abuse</b>			
Yelling			
Swearing			
Intimidating			
Using disrespectful expression or gestures			
Shouting			
Criticism			
Name calling			
Mocking			
Putting down another			
Ridicule			
Accusations			
Blaming			
Verbal Threats			
Non verbal Threats			
Direct Threats			
Implied Threats			
<b>Harassment</b>			
Checking up on the partner in an uncomfortable manner			
Embarrassing the partner in public			
Isolation, Preventing the partner from talking or seeing friends and family			
Criticising the partner's friends or family			
Making jealous comments or accusations			
Preventing the partner from work outside home			
Monitoring the partner's phone			
Pressure tactics Using guilt or accusations to get your way			
<b>Economic Abuse</b>			
With holding financial support			
Withholding money			
Making your partner account for spending too much money			
Using household funds for alcohol			
Having a veto over financial decisions			

<b>Emotional With holding</b>			
Defining partner roles and behaviors			
Being unfaithful			
Never giving compliments			
Expressing anger rather than emotions			
Staying out late			
<b>Physical violence</b>			
Slapping			
Punching			
Grabbing			
Kicking			
Choking			
Pushing			
Pulling hair			
Biting			
Arm twisting			
Rape			
Threats			
Intimidation Blocking your partner if she/he wants to escape			
Using threatening or scary gestures			
Using your manhood to control and intimidate			
Punching things etc...			

With this table we have an overview of what happens in the couple's life and we can assess in which situation the victim's life is potentially in danger and explore with the victim the potential places she/he could escape for a while during the beginning phase of the counseling process.

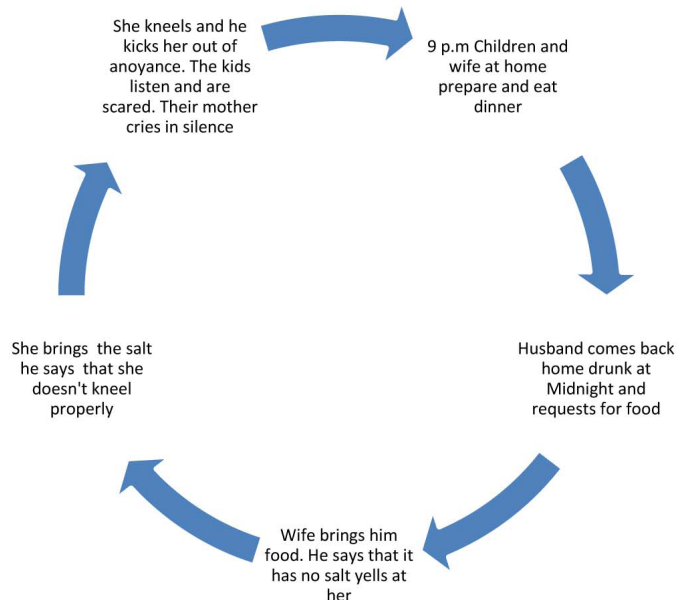
After this, draw a table with a time frame of a week and ask when does the violence occurs during the week

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Morning</b>							
<b>Afternoon</b>							
<b>Evening</b>							
<b>Night</b>							

Often Domestic Violence occurs in the same patterns; help the person draw it (here is an example)

**Example:**

Looking at the 3 charts, the person may be able to explain what motivates him/her to change the situation.



The counselor shall end the session on a positive thinking note related to motivations and positive perspective of behavioral change.

**Step two Acknowledging violence**

Is to increase the person's awareness of his/her build-up towards violence, teaching him/her to recognize his growing hostility and anger towards his/her partner and to intervene with himself/herself to stop it.

In the same way, like step 1, this step is to be done separately with the person who use violence and the victim.

The counselor will use the same welcoming rituals.

Recap on the previous session and start with a new exercise which will retrace the history of the relationship.

Also draw it so that the person can see how the relationship started and where the relationship is now.

Help then the person to recognize in the drawings, the elements where DV started. (see the following example)

The Cycle of Violence (example of a perspective from a male perpetrator)

- 1: High expectations, new love. Both partners idealize each other and have romantic expectations of their relationship and the future.
- 2: First differences appear. The ideal relationship is showing flaws. The first disappointment is that the other is not living up to the ideal.

- 3: The woman tries to change the situation by stating her wishes or wanting to discuss what is wrong, to renew their romance.
- 4: The man feels attacked, feels he has failed. He gets angry with his wife for making him feel that way, or he withdraws.
- 5: The wife feels responsible for the situation starts to make up and keep harmony by doing what her husband wants from her.
- 6: The man relaxes, everything is as it should be, the romance continues.
- 7: The wife is getting frustrated but she tries to hide her anger. She is distancing herself from the relationship.
- 8: The man becomes fearful and angry because his wife withdraws and he starts to become violent.
- 9: The violence causes the woman to withdraw even more, to become silent, intimidated and isolated.  
She feels betrayed and sad, and mourns the loss of her ideal romance.
- 10: The husband fears he will lose contact with his wife and tries to regain it by using force and controls her.
- 11: The wife becomes more and more isolated, disillusioned and starts to 'dissociate'.
- 12: The husband uses more violence and force to keep control over his wife; he gets more afraid of losing her.  
He 'splits off' the violent behavior in his consciousness, as if his violent behavior is not really him.
- 13: The husband realizes that violence doesn't help. He tries to reward his wife. Brings gifts, giving rewards, going out with her etc...
- 14: Romance comes back
- 15: Strong expectations come back
- 16: Second difference/disagreement occurs and the circle goes back to the beginning, husband feels attacked by disagreement shown by the wife etc..

Some persons who use violence do not identify with this cycle of violence so much, because their awareness of what happens is different from the awareness of the partner who is a victim. These persons might identify more with The Cycle of Intolerable Feelings which means that they will give an explanation to why they use an abusive behavior. Many batterers have a very low tolerance for unacceptable feelings.

#### **Phase 1:**

Tension rises when he feels helpless, hurt, ashamed, incompetent or insignificant. Instead of facing up to these feelings, he develops defenses.

#### **Phase 2:**

Defenses go up. These can be: blaming others, controlling others, using alcohol and drugs, seeking excitement, starting to be abusive and violent, withdrawing emotionally.

Some men may alternate between emotional withdrawal and outbursts of anger.

#### **Phase 3:**

These kinds of behavior might give temporary relief. But since they are also destructive and harmful to him and to others the relief will not last.

**Phase 4:**

Problems will come back with a vengeance. The partner might be temporarily submissive, but also resentful. The relationship is deteriorating. Alcohol abuse might cause more problems. The man will feel again hurt, ashamed, and incompetent.

**Phase 5:**

And with these problems the tensions will rise again.

Part of the counseling will be to acknowledge this cycle, to learn to understand what makes these feelings so unacceptable, and to develop alternatives in behavior that will be more acceptable and less harmful.

After doing the exercise on the cycle of violence, the counselor may appreciate the exercise on:

**Negative versus Positive Self-Talk**

It helps the person who uses violence to identify the cognitive cues to violence (e.g., anger-arousing thoughts that precede an incident of violence).

**Purposes of exercise:**

1. Helps the person who uses violence to recognize thoughts which lead to abusive behavior.
2. Helps the person who uses violence to recognize that violence isn't a spontaneous act; it is preceded by negative self talk which paves the way for their violence.
3. Assist the person who uses violence in recognizing that they have control over how they act and think.
4. Build recognition of positive self-talk and the person who uses violence to responsibly, use it to avoid violence.

The counselor shall go back to the list of hurtful behaviors and ask what types of thoughts does the person who uses violence have before getting violent. Here are some types of negative self talks.

- Jealous thinking: *What are the jealous thoughts you have?*  
'She cares more about strangers than me'  
'She's seeing someone else'  
'Other people are putting ideas in her head'
- Negative thoughts about what your partner is saying or doing:  
'There she goes again'  
'She's like a broken record'  
'She never gives me credit'  
'She's over-acting'
- Blaming your partner: *What are the ways you blame your partner for your violent behavior?*  
'She's asking for it'  
'She leaves me no choice'  
'She doesn't give me any credit'  
'She doesn't do anything'

It is also important to see that the person who uses violence also has negative self-talk about himself/herself.

For example: What are ways you feel sorry for yourself?

Feeling sorry for yourself: (ask for examples)

'I shouldn't be here Why am I being singled out?'

'This isn't fair'

'Why do I have to get help?'

After listing these, re-emphasize that everyone has a choice about how to think about their partner and about the situation they are in.

To close the session on a positive note, the counselor shall try to identify and practice Positive Self-Talk. The person who uses violence is not violent with everyone. He/she chooses to be violent with his/her partner. Help him/her identify positive self talks that he/she has with someone else. The person who uses violence then compares it with the negative self-talk he/she uses with his/her partner and changes it into positive self talk.

Situation	negative self-talk	positive self-talk
a friend makes a mistake that affects you	<i>'you jerk!', 'idiot!', 'stop screwing up!'</i>	<i>'he didn't mean it', 'I've made mistakes like that'</i>
you hear your partner telling a friend about your violence	<i>'there she goes again, airing our dirty laundry!', 'she's putting me down'</i>	<i>'she needs someone she can talk to'</i>
your partner is yelling at you	<i>'she never gives me credit', 'she's abusing me', 'she's a bitch'</i>	<i>'at least she feels comfortable to get her feelings out', 'it's important for me to understand what she's upset about'</i>

Reflecting on the Self Talk Grid is an alternative method to address Negative versus Positive self talk.

The counselor does two different grids: the first one using an example that does not involve domestic violence, and the second that does.

If the counselor begins with a non-domestic violence related incident, it is often more likely that the person who uses violence will be able to identify and take in that example more easily than one which is more similar to their referral situation.

The counselor can usually easily fill in the negative portion of the grid, providing negative self-talk, actions, and then its effects.

The counselor can also reflect back with them on the different types of negative self talk mentioned previously. The counselor might also help them notice that some negative self-talk (and actions) is directed inward toward the abuser, while others are directed outward towards the person who is the focus of their self talk.

However, when one has more positive, or constructive, self-talk less violence will occur.

The counselor should help them focus on how the behavior which upset them may not have been directed towards them but could have been due to circumstances that they may not be aware of, or may even be based on feelings, thoughts or actions that the abuser has experienced at other times in their own lives.

When the counselor completes the second grid, he/she should choose a domestic violence related incident which led to negative self talk and abuse of some sort.

Due to the inflammatory nature of discussions about infidelity and jealousy, it is best not to choose incidents based on those experiences. Instead, the counselor might choose an example that focuses on his partner's continued unhappiness, and possible anger or other negative responses to the abuser, months after the abuse has stopped.



### Examples of constructive self-talk

“she’s had to accept a lot of crap from her friends and family because of me” “at least she is now willing to express angry or negative feelings, so maybe she’d trust me more not to respond abusively” etc.

### Negative and constructive Self Talk

Negative self talk	Action	Effect
Constructive self talk	Action	Effect

### Step three Repentance

It is asked to the person who uses violence, to feel sorry for what he/she has done to the victim and apologize to him/her.

This involves exploring the barriers to honest disclosure, increasing empathy through hearing the victim’s experiences and accepting the gains and losses of giving away responsibility. This step will be conducted together with the person who uses violence and the victim.

This step also helps to reduce denial in all its forms (including denial of responsibility), so that it becomes easier for the person who uses violence to deal with feelings such as guilt, shame and remorse.

At this stage, the counselor should bring both partners together in order for the victim, to express her/his feelings over the abusive behavior of his/her partner. Here, the presence of the Ssenga for example or of the religious leaders will be important because the session will be charged with a lot of emotions which will need the support of prayers and or of a traditional setting of truth telling.

As the victim expresses her/his feelings, the person who uses violence will have to acknowledge and repent in front of the members present. This will give confidence to the victim that everyone has heard and witnessed the apologies given to her/him.

If the session is accompanied by a priest, he can refer to Prophet Jonah Chapter III where we witness that people can change from bad to good and live a positive life.

In this session it is also important that the abuser puts himself/herself in the victims shoes. The Bully exercise here is probably the most adequate.

The counselor shall ask the abuser if he/she has ever been beaten by someone else and how he/she felt. Then this will enable him/her to feel the experience of his/her partner and understand the pain she/he always feels.

**Examples of questions which can be asked:**

- When you were young did it happen to you that a bigger boy beat you up?
- How did you feel as you saw him or met him after he beats you?
- Ask the person who uses violence to compare the situation with how the victim feels.

**Other examples:**

If your wife had an extra-marital affair how would you feel?

At this stage, it is important that in cases the couple has got issues of extra-marital affairs, members from the group who are present at this session should visit the other parties involved in the situation. For example if the husband had an extra-marital affair, the Ssengas shall meet the lady in question as well as her parents and urge them to correct the behavior of their daughter.

**Step four: Reflecting on Cultural and Religious Beliefs**

This session is to develop in the person who uses violence an understanding that his/her violence is part of a system of abusive behavior.

This involves extending his definition of abusive behavior to include non-physical abuse, and making him/her understand that the same belief systems and processes underlie both physical violence and non-physical abuse. Here the person who uses violence and the victims will reflect on their cultural and religious beliefs which support violence or which promote peace.

This step will be conducted separately with the person who uses violence and the victim.

Give room for discussing those patterns and cultural beliefs.

Use the following exercise to help the person reflect on his/her cultural beliefs:

**Male Gender Beliefs**

Write down the most important gender beliefs that excuse male violence, both from the men and from the women.

**Beliefs about obedience:**

- A woman should do what I say
- She should agree with me
- My wishes are more important than hers
- A man should have the last say
- A woman will not respect a man who gives in to her wishes

**Beliefs about superiority:**

- Men are smarter
- Men are tougher
- Men are more rational
- Women are more emotional

**Beliefs about servility:**

- Men deserve their wives full attention
- Women are there to fulfill men's needs
- A woman does not need friends when she has a husband
- Women should not pay attention to other people, especially not to other men
- A good woman keeps herself attractive

**Beliefs about blame:**

- Women overreact, are too sensitive
- Women are more aggressive verbally, they mostly start a fight by not paying respect
- Not normal that a man will accept being criticized by a woman
- I wouldn't have gotten angry if she hadn't been nagging

**Beliefs about submission:**

- There can only be one person in charge and that is me
- I earn more money so I have more say
- Women should not question a man's judgment

**Beliefs about care:**

- She should make me feel good
- She should not upset me
- A good wife can make her man happy
- It's a woman's job to please, have the house in order, cook
- A good woman is sexually available to her man

**Information:**

The following list gives some of the beliefs that usually influence battered women in their behavior and decisions.

**Beliefs concerning intimidation**

- If I leave him he will kill me and/or the children
- If I leave him he will hurt me and/or the children
- If I leave him he will find me and make my life unbearable
- If I leave him he will kill himself. Or break down, he can't live without me

**Beliefs that excuse the partner**

- It is all because of his unhappy childhood/ his drinking/ the stress in his job. He can't help himself
- Deep down he is really a good man, he doesn't mean to hurt me
- He can be sweet to me also, he really loves me, he really doesn't want to hurt me.

**Beliefs of self blame**

- He is right, it is all my fault, I make him angry
- I'm no good, no wonder he hits me and abuses me, it is my own fault he can't show any respect to me
- It's better to stay together because of the children. If we divorce it will make the children unhappy and that will be my fault

**Beliefs about morality, responsibility and sense of duty**

- True love conquers all
- I made the choice to be with him, I married him, now I must bear the consequences
- I'm not allowed to leave my family even if staying makes me unhappy
- Divorce is a sin
- I have to stay with him and save the marriage
- Keeping the house and making the marriage work is my responsibility

**Beliefs of demoralization**

- I'm too tired to fight anymore
- Nobody will believe me. They will think it is my own fault, or that I'm exaggerating
- Nobody will be able to stop him, he can do what he wants
- I have left him so often and returned to him, now nobody takes me seriously anymore. I don't take myself seriously
- I'm afraid of what a divorce will be like, and how I have to manage my life afterwards
- All men are violent and controlling. One or the other, they are all the same. So I might as well stick with this one

**Beliefs concerning denial, or belittling the problem, or unrealistic expectations**

- Some day everything will be right again
- I can change my partner
- If only this or that will change, he will change also
- May be he will stop by himself
- I have always been beaten. I can stand it. It's no big deal
- All marriages have their dark side. In every relation things like that happen once in a while

**Beliefs about being dependent**

- I'm nothing without him. I can't live without a man
- If I leave him I will be all alone
- If I leave him I will never find another partner
- If I leave him I will lose all my financial security and the house

The counselor will then try to explore what in the cultural background of the person promotes respectful behaviors and disapproves domestic violence.

Explore certain proverbs of the cultural group the person belongs to, as well as quotations from the Bible, verses in the Quran etc... which promote marital harmony and respectful gender beliefs.

To close the session on a positive aspect, the counselor shall do the exercise of the "Respectful relationship Beliefs" (These were formulated by a program for group treatment for abusive men. By Mary Nömmе Russell)

The counselor shall emphasize doing this exercise by exploring the traditional roles of men and women in the marriage which match with the list of respectful relation beliefs (below) and explain how they are culturally practiced. Are there proverbs or sayings which correspond to the list below?

In the same way, the list shall be considered from the angle of, (for example: the

Catholic Social teachings if the person who uses violence or victim is Catholic). Quote for example Mathew 19 - Mark Ch 10 or Corinthians Ch 7 Vs:10-12 on roles of men and women and the gift of being together.

For a Muslim person the counselor can use Chapter 9 Verse 71 of the Quran

“The Believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practice regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power, Wise”.

The counselor shall ask the person who uses violence or the victim what those beliefs, if practiced, could change practically in their relationship. He/she should mention specific results or give the vision of a peaceful marital relationship and by extension a peaceful family.

Please note: these respectful relationship beliefs are an ideal that probably no one has seen fully expressed in reality.

Leave room for feelings of skepticism, and doubts. This is a tool to work with, for men/women to find out how relationships could be different. It is not expected that abusive men/women will change overnight if we hand them the right values.

### **List of “Respectful Relationship Beliefs”**

Beliefs about the nature of the relationship between yourself and your partner that promote respect

#### **Connected but different:**

- It’s all right to differ
- She has a right to her own opinions
- Differences do not mean disloyalty
- Having different activities and interests make us better

#### **Equal:**

- I’m better in some areas and she is in others
- Sharing responsibility is better than carrying the whole burden alone

#### **Reciprocal:**

- We both need to care for each other
- Sometimes her needs come before mine
- We respect each other’s wishes

#### **Concerned about consequences:**

- I’m responsible for my actions
- My actions have effects
- The effect on her must be considered

#### **Collaborative:**

- It is better to make decisions together
- Judgment is not dependent on earning money
- We do things for each other

#### **Mutual:**

- I am as responsible for this relationship as my partner
- I need to understand my partner
- I need to spend time and effort on this relationship

### **Step five      Flash back in ones' history**

Focuses on helping the person who uses violence to reflect on his/her past and its influence on today's behavior and change expectations that underlie his/her use of violence and abuse.

Here the counselor will do a flashback with the person who use violence and/or with is partner.

They will reconstruct his/her history and see when and where the person has experienced violence in general and domestic violence in particular.

Retrospect, during his/her childhood all experiences of violence or DV that he/she witnessed or that he/she was a victim from.

The counselor should be aware that this session is also very much charged with emotion since it is a topic involving a lot of painful memories.

Prayers and proverbs regarding peace will have to be recited during emotionally charged statements. The presence of a religious leader is important in this session to add a spiritual healing aspect in the session.

A Flash Back helps to heal the person by opening up and pouring out emotions and at the same time to realize the background of their behavior. For example, often a person who use violence, reproduces scenarios and imitating hurtful behaviors that they have experienced in their past.

By understanding that, he/she reproduces violence or the same negative scenarios, the person will understand that the pain he/she felt in the past is the same that the people in their family suffer.

At the end of the session, the counselor shall come back to the previous sessions and discuss the respectful relationship beliefs to end on a positive note.

### **Step six      Forgiveness**

This step is to develop the persons' ability to adopt new non-controlling behaviors.

It involves rehearsing situations in his/her life, developing non-abusive ways for him/her to deal with his/her feelings and enabling him/her to feel angry yet remaining respectful.

The session shall end at revisiting the positive past when the couple was in love and emphasize the moment of forgiveness.

The first part of this session shall focus on the vulnerability of the person who uses violence and allow him/her to express all the burdens he/she has and how he/she may be overwhelmed and weak.

However, it is made clear to him/ her that this, still doesn't excuse the violent behavior.



In the second part of the session the exercise “External versus Internal motivations for Change” can be done.

The person who uses violence and/or the victim should reflect on those questions: The reflective faculties of the victim of violent acts facilitates one to develop new insights of how to avoid in the future occurrence of violence or being violated. The reflection further works as a stimulant for behavioral change. This is because the person who uses violence internalizes the significance and relevance of changing his/her maladaptive life style.

### **How can external motivations help change the situation?**

Most abusers for example can be motivated through external motivations:

- getting arrested
- being forced to attend any meeting with elders or clan leaders to expose the case “OmukuluW’oluggya”
- having their partner leave or threaten to leave
- Payinga fine in cash or in kind in accordance on what is stipulated in the bylaws
- Clan leaders to ask the person to give a fine or compensate the victim
- In Islam, the person will be punished depending on the crime committed for example: Being beaten, shifting and isolating the person etc...
- In the Christian community, the person may be forbidden from receiving the sacraments; the clergy may not conduct visits or prayers for a deceased person in their family or themselves
- The person may not be recommended to any church blessings and other activities.

However, it is important that the person notices that those external motivations are not long lasting; they are just reasons which are shortterm and that can be perceived as a punishment if the person who uses violence is not changing his/her behavior. In addition, not being abusive because they are responding only to external controls, there is a danger of re-abusing.

### **How can internal motivations help change the situation?**

The interesting part of it, is to think about internal motivation which can help the person who uses violence in particular to own the behavioral change process. In this case, the counselor shall help the person who uses violence to realize that long lasting behavioral changes don’t come from changes he/she has to make, but from changes he/ she decides to make.

This exercise can for example focus on “what counts” for the affected couple and how the person who uses violence can change his/her behavior to maintain the relationship.

To end the session, an interesting exercise is to ask the victim or the person who uses violence to later on bring the video of their wedding or the readings that they had chosen for their wedding day and revisit that moment. This session will help them to feel what motivated them to wed and to keep together as a couple. “Re witnessing” the past shall help them rebuild for the future with a stronger assurance that the wedding was not only for a day but that the couple had made a promise to one another.

This moment is crucial to enhance forgiveness.

The victim will witness all the efforts that her/his partner is doing to change and therefore can forgive him/her for what happened. Here the person who uses violence may explain to his/her partner the decisions made to break the pattern of violence and the couple shall work on them when back home.

A one to one session between husband and wife can also be useful in enhancing forgiveness and bring them back together. This may actually be another opportunity for the person who uses violence to apologize, but this time not being forced to do it in front of others.

### **Step seven    Reparation, guarantees of non-recurrence**

Given that victims come from a diversity of backgrounds and experiences, victims' perceptions of reparations and the 'reparations process' are varied and multidimensional.

Victims in the midst of conflict will not have time to think about 'reparations'. Cultural differences may also impact on perceptions of reparations. In some cultures, active participation in criminal proceedings may be essential whereas in others, the admission of guilt by the wrongdoer will be most important. In some contexts, the fact that one can never undo what was done or make adequate reparations may mitigate against reparations, whereas in others, the symbolic effect is seen as extremely beneficial. The context of the violation may give rise to specific perceptions of what kind of reparation should take place.

#### **There are different forms of reparation**

A common misconception is that reparation is synonymous with compensation. Although compensation is common, other forms of reparation include: restitution, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition.

- Restitution seeks to restore the victim to the situation that would have existed had the violation not happened. This may include restoration of liberty, specific social rights, restoration of employment or return of property.
- Compensation is understood to include any quantifiable damage resulting from the violation, including "physical or mental harm, including pain, suffering and emotional distress; lost opportunities, including education; material damages and loss of earnings, including loss of earning potential; harm to reputation or dignity.  
Here the victim of DV may have special requests that the person who used violence shall provide.
- Rehabilitation is said to include medical and psychological care as well as legal and social services.
- Satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition include such individual and collective elements as revelation of the truth, public acknowledgment of the facts and acceptance of responsibility, the restoration of the dignity of victims through commemoration and other means, activities aimed at remembrance, education and at preventing the recurrence of similar crimes. This can be done in the clan or family setting in the case of domestic violence.

During the session, both parties shall be present and agree in which form and context reparation should take place. The expression of the victims wishes are at this moment very important and shall be negotiated in order to give the victim the feeling of real satisfaction.

The organization of the ceremonies that may be related to the agreed actions will be done later on.

However, even if these involve the clans or the family members, it is important that the couple make as well some commitment to renew their love for one another and plan special moments where they will regularly have the opportunity to show love to one another.

This can be: Invitation for “dinner for 2”, week-end “getaway”, a special gift etc...

For this, session, the counselor can also suggest “the List of Happiness”:

Review what to use to make the couple happy and which measures they should take to re-experience this happiness.

List all things that both like to do or what the other may like etc..

Later on, it is important that the counselor exchanges with the husband to reflect on the meaning of “Kwanjula” (bride price) as it should not be interpreted as apayment but rather as gifts which were given to the family of the wife.



## **Step Eight: Follow-up and building peer support groups**

This step facilitates the completion of the cycle of the counseling process stipulated in the model.

It also enables couples who have healed, to sustain peace and reconciliation in their relationship and for them to serve as new role models for other couples meeting the same difficulties in the community.

For the relationship to be sustainable if violence comes back, the counselor can also teach time out. This exercise helps the person to take time to break the pattern of violence.

### **Teaching Taking Time out:**

Time out means: “out of the scene”. When the person who uses violence feels that it is too much for him/her, he/she should take time out BUT be careful time out is also a tool of control as it gives the abuser the power to decide if he/she wants or not the situation he/she is in.

Therefore, it is important that, when the counselor teaches Time Out, he/she ask the abuser to always explain to the victim why he/she precisely at a specific moment needs time out.

For example: “I need to go out because I can’t talk about it now” or because “I don’t feel well here”, or “I need to be alone etc...” “because if it continues, I am going to be hurtful and I don’t want that that’s why I need a break”

A ‘time out’ can mean simply taking a few breaths in order to calm oneself down, or walking into another room, or leaving the premises during a conflict or uncomfortable arguments.

However, the person who uses violence shall make sure that he /she doesn’t use time out to engage in activities that will aggravate the situation: for example: drinking alcohol, or use any drugs, Do not do it in a spiteful or punitive manner, tell your partner where you are going, tell the victim you are leaving to calm yourself, don’t engage in extra-marital affairs, etc...It is not recommended for the affected couple to run away from the problem

Here are other suggestions to help abusers deal with difficult situations if they stay with the partner, or if they don’t decide to leave the premises.

### **Relax your Mood**

- Sit down if you can
- Make sure you are breathing deeply
- Keep your hands down on your lap or at your sides
- If you can’t sit, at least don’t pace

### **Practice active listening**

- If possible, let the victim talk first
- Let the victim explain her point of view without interrupting her
- Focus closely on the victim point of view
- Ask clarifying questions
- Summarize what the victim complaints or points of view are
- Ask the victim if your summary is accurate

### **When You Talk**

- Speak slowly and at low volume
- Take time to think about what you are going to say and how to say it
- Respond to the specifics of what she has already said
- Don't focus on the victim's behavior—no matter what she says or does you must be respectful
- Look for ways to compromise and/or negotiate
- Your point of view matters equally as the victim's and you are encouraged to express your opinion in a respectful way.
- Don't expect the victim to change his/her mind, give up her point of view or go along with what you want.

### **Below indicated are the means of perpetuating the counseling process.**

In order to perpetuate the effects of the healing process, it seems important that the counseled couples take part in healing others and participate in prevention programs to domestic violence.

Therefore follow-up sessions with couples, on an individual basis at first and then as groups of healed couples shall be put in place.

Those will serve as peer support groups which meet regularly to share their experiences among themselves but also participate in prevention activities like community dialogues or theatre forum to give authentic testimonies of their behavioral change and its effect on their relationship and their family at large.

In Parallele, of the counseling session, the counselor should make sure that he/she works as well through referral pathways to optimise the level of success of the recovery of the couple and their social and economic sustainability.

Hereafter we suggest several institutions referred as "referral pathways" that are found in Uganda and can give a broader help to the person who use violence and/or the victim.

## **IV Referral Pathways**

Referral Pathways are institutions, associations or organisations from different sectors that can intervene in the field of prevention and/or responsive measures to domestic violence

### **Government of Uganda:**

Ministry of Gender and Labour in Uganda in conjunction with Ministry of Health established referral pathways in 5 districts (Palisa, Mbarara Masaka Moroto, Lira) using the existing structure to manage and handle victims of domestic violence.

### **Ministry of Gender:**

- Established gender reference groups to enable all stakeholders to discuss best practices, challenges in the field of Domestic Violence and elaborate strategies to curb issues of domestic violence
- Developed regulations of the Domestic Violence Act
- Established and Developed guidelines for enabling the operationalization of shelters
- Train Community Development Officers at District level, police officers, Community Liaison Officers, Probation Officers

### **Ministry of Health:**

- Developed the Policy for Post Exposure Prophylaxis to protect victims of Domestic violence, rape and defilement from being further affected by HIV/AIDS and unwanted pregnancy. PEP is available at all Health centres IV and referral hospitals.
- Developed a training manual for health workers and train them to handle and manage the crisis of domestic violence, for instance conducting forensic evidence in case of rape or defilement.
- Doctors, clinical officers and mid-wives can be witnesses in court
- Create awareness in communities on Domestic Violence

### **Civil Society Organisations:**

- Action Aid Uganda have established a number of shelters in different districts: (Palisa, Mubende, Bwaise/Kawempe, ...). Their Head quarters is in Kansanga (Kampala)
- Hope after Rape provides psycho-social support services to victims of gender based violence in Kampala and the eastern region. Their office is in Nansana.
- MJAP: Provide counseling services and manage Post Traumatic Disorder in Kampala. They have a unit in Mulago Hospital Ward 5A and Mbarara. Their main office is in Kololo. They offer Post-Exposure Prophylaxis to survivors of defilement and rape.
- RECEDVIP: Offers counseling services to persons who use violence and victims of Domestic Violence. They follow-up affected families. Their office is on Bombo Road.

### **Child and Family protection Unit of the Uganda Police**

This sector of the police, handles and manages cases of victims and survivors of Domestic Violence through counseling services. They provide PEPS and make follow-ups.

They do community policing creating awareness on the services that they offer in



relation to Domestic Violence, Child neglect and the Law. They are in all districts of Uganda.

They have an AIDS clinics based at Kibuli Training centre where they offer counseling services and treatments on STD's but especially for HIV Positive persons. They make follow-up with the victims and affected families.

#### **Faith based organizations:**

- The Catholic Church provides pre-marital and post-marital counseling to couples through sessions with priests, counselors, married couple, women, men and youth group leaders. There are in all parishes of Uganda.
- Caritas offices offer economic empowerment and support communities with projects regarding: agriculture, livelihoods, justice and peace in all Dioceses of Uganda. Victims of domestic violence can benefit from their projects.
- The Muslim Islamic Medical Association offers counseling services and treatment to victims of Domestic Violence. Their office is in Wattuba.
- The Muslim Centre for Justice and Law offers counseling and legal aid services. Their office is in Mulago.
- FITRA: They train communities on the issue of Domestic Violence. They offer counseling services to victims of Domestic Violence. Their office is in Old Kampala in the Muslim Supreme Council. The directorate of Sharia is located at the same venue.
- Muslim Women Vision Association: Offers counseling services and economic empowerment to the victims of domestic violence and affected families.
- Mothers and Fathers Union Church of Uganda offers counseling service throughout all churches in Uganda.
- Pentecostal churches provide counseling sessions to the victims of domestic violence
- The Seventh Day Adventists Churches as well offer counseling sessions to the victims of domestic violence
- The Orthodox Church offers counseling sessions to the victims of domestic violence in all their churches. Some of them help victims in economic empowerment.
- Bahai Temple is in Kampala. They offer spiritual counseling and individual or group economic empowerment. The temple is situated in Kisaasi.

#### **Cultural Institutions:**

The cultural institutions have mechanisms to solve disputes in communities using their influential status to bring positive changes on issues regarding domestic violence.

In the Buganda culture particularly, the process in handling and managing domestic violence issue is to consult the Ssengas and Kojjas' of the couple first.

If the matters are too challenging and the situation is unsolved and escalates, the clan leaders are asked to intervene and mediate.

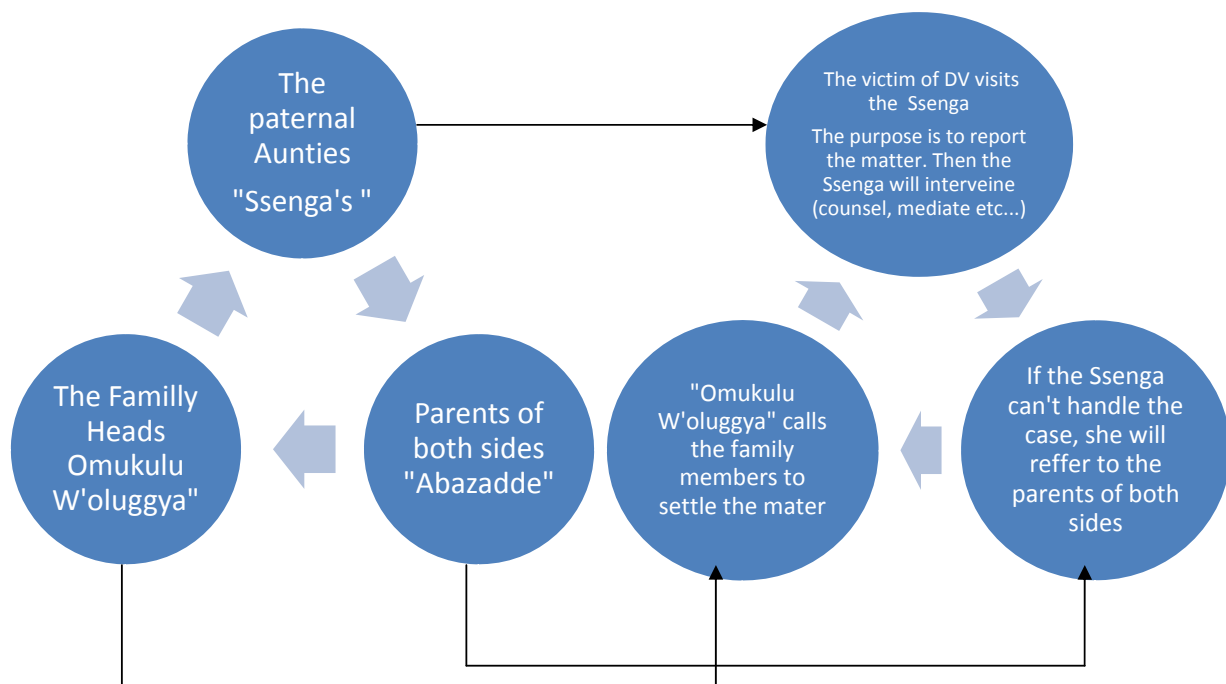
The cycle of handling and managing DV cases in the Buganda culture:

Different personalities who have an important role in the family setting, will handle the situation by:

- Listening to the issue raised by one of the couple member

## Important Personalities in the family/clan

## Their roles



- Consult the other part of the couple to verify the case
- Counsel the couple
- Use reconciliation rituals where compensation can be done
- Follow-up the couple.

Note: In case that the matters escalate, those refer to other referral pathways for further interventions.

- The “Kisaakaate” established by the Queen of Buganda “Nabagereka” provides counseling for children and youth (6-18 years old) who have experienced violence. Then the parents are called in for further counseling. These are organized youth camps. Bulange is the head office.
- “Akezimbira” is an institution where the youth get together and talk about issues concerning their lives, including issues of Domestic violence in their homes. These are found in all villages.

## V

## Conclusion

Over the past three decades, Uganda has made concerted efforts towards promoting the rights of women and children. This is evidenced by Uganda being a signatory to international commitments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and Uganda's commitment to the third MDG i.e. promoting gender equality and empowering women. In 2010, Uganda passed the Domestic Violence Act 2010 to domesticate these international commitments.

However, research shows that domestic violence is actually on the rise. According to the Uganda Demographic Health Survey - 2011, the prevalence of domestic violence in Uganda stands at 62% of women aged 15-49 reported having experienced some form of violence. Types of violence include sexual, physical, economic and psychological torture among others. Domestic violence is attributed to the implementation challenges of the Act, obstacles to access justice among women and children including culture and social exclusion, inequitable access to education and health services for women and girls, low empowerment among women. This is worsened by the limited funding from Government to increase awareness among the communities.

To effectively curb the practice of domestic violence, culture and religion have to be given due consideration because they play an important part in addressing and understanding the cultural norms and values that uphold domestic violence as an acceptable cultural practice. Due to the soaring state of domestic violence in Uganda, the different players have to embrace both preventive and responsive measures to curb domestic violence that are culturally sensitive to help heal and reconcile perpetrators and victims.

J&P AOK in conjunction with Uganda National Commission for UNESCO and with financial support from UNESCO has developed this model through a consultative process to help the counselors and other players to become more aware about the cultural experiences and practices of the perpetrators and victims of domestic violence, understand their values, beliefs and traditional norms. The model is enriched by the Catholic Social Teaching of truth telling, forgiveness, repentance, and the guarantee of non-reoccurrence. All these help perpetrators and victims to go through and embrace a process of reconciliation.

# The Justice and Peace Department, Archdiocese of Kampala

The Justice and Peace Department Archdiocese of Kampala, (J&P AOK) is the arm for the promotion of reconciliation, justice and peace in the social, political, economic, environmental and cultural spheres through out the Catholic Archdiocese.

Justice and Peace Commissions of the catholic church through out the world draw their mandate from the Second Vatican Council to promote justice, peace and human rights, in light of the Gospel and the Social Teachings of the Church. The Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace (Justitia et Pax) in Rome was established in 1967 by Pope Paul VI, after a proposal of the Council for the creation of a body of the universal Church whose role would be to stimulate the Catholic Community to foster progress in needy regions and social justice on the international scene. Pope John Paul II in June 1988 changed the name of the Commission to Pontifical Council that further directed the establishment of a Justice and Peace Commission/Department in each Catholic diocese of the world, as part of the diocesan hierarchy .

**VISION:** A Just, Peaceful and Charitable environment at all levels.

**MISSION :** To act justly, love tenderly, walk peacefully with God and your neighbor (Micah 6:8).

**Overall Objective:** To protect and promote human rights and human dignity

## **Specific Objectives:**

- Empower the disadvantaged communities with advocacy skills and mobilize them to speak out against injustices, bad policies, cultures, practices and monitor use of public resources in view of enhancing public accountability, equitable distribution of public goods and quality service delivery.
- Promote the gospel value based principles of democracy, good governance, civic education and encourage people's participation in decision making processes for the common good.
- Protect and promote the dignity of the environment to ensure that natural resources are used sustainably and with due regard for future generations.
- To enhance the organizational capacity in program and service delivery.

## **Activities:**

Promotion of Human Rights, Quality Family Life Program, Environmental Peace, Democracy and Good Governance, Civic Education. Transparency and Accountability Programs, Mediation and Promotion of Alternative Peaceful Conflict Resolution strategies, Advocacy, Community Based Legal Aid Services.

## **Target groups:**

The Justice and Peace Department works with elected Justice and Peace Leaders, Caritas group leaders, political leaders, religious leaders, ethnic elders, societal workers, counsellors, schools, the police, and health centres.

## **Network:**

Religious Leaders and Institutions (IRCU, UJCC, Uganda Muslim Supreme Council), Government Institutions: Uganda Human Rights Commission, National Planning Authority, Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development, National NGO Forum, Hope After Rape, RECESVID, NCCJP, CARITAS Kampala.

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