‘Be more sensitive to plight of victims of gender violence’

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Law enforcement agencies have been asked to be more humane in handling cases related to gender-based violence.

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LAW enforcement agencies who handle issues of gender violence have been urged to be more humane in the discharge of their duties, and be more sensitive to the plight of the victims.

A Programme Officer of the Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre (GSHRDC), popularly known as the Gender Centre, Ms Esther Darko-Mensah, who made the appeal, also urged the law enforcement agencies to extend the necessary assistance to the victims to ensure that they get justice.

Ms Darko-Mensah, was speaking at a three-day training workshop for selected state agencies from the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abirem (KEEA), Agona West and East districts in Elmina.

She observed that sometimes, the reception the victims received from law enforcement agencies did not encourage them to continue with their cases.

Getting needed support

She explained that due to the stereotypes, people were unwilling to report violence against women and children and those who mustered the courage to do so, were not given the needed support to go through the process of ensuring that the perpetrators got prosecuted.

The workshop, which was on the theme ‘Tackling the pervasive social issues of violence against women and children using community structure’, was to give these state agencies a practical and an in-depth understanding of violence against women and girls and the underpinning socio-cultural structures that perpetuate violence in society.

It was also to develop inter-agency or appropriate protocols among state agencies to ensure effective collaboration and response to cases on violence against women and girls referred to them.

Participants

The training, was sponsored by the South African Medical Research Council, under its Violence Against Women and Girls Research and Innovative Fund. It attracted participants from the Ghana Education Service, the Ghana Health Service, the National Commission for Civic Education, the Domestic Violence and the Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service, the Social Welfare Department and the Commission on Human Rights and Administration Justice (CHRAJ).

The participants are to work in close collaboration with the Community-Based Action Teams (COMBATs) that have been set up by the Gender Centre in the project communities, for effective sensitisation and management of cases of violence against women and children.

Some of the topics treated were definition of violence, stereotypes, root causes of violence, types and forms of violence, and social and structural influences supporting violence.



• Ms Esther Darko-Mensah (standing) taking the participants through the training

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