



LEGAL ASSISTANCE CENTRE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Improving Namibia's Response to Victims of Gender-based Violence

Between 19-27 June, the Gender Research and Advocacy Project of the Legal Assistance Centre with funding from the U.S. Embassy through the President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (PEPFAR), will be visiting seven magistrates courts in Namibia to discuss with service providers how Namibia can improve its responsiveness to cases of domestic violence.

Members of the media are invited to attend the inauguration of the roadshow at the Katutura Magistrate Court June 19th at 9:00 a.m. If you would like to attend the inauguration, please meet at the entrance of the Katutura Magistrate Court June 19th at 9:00 a.m. where LAC representative Grace Kapere will be waiting to direct you.

LAC will spend one day at each court to engage key personnel, including magistrates, clerks, prosecutors, police and social workers. LAC will be joined by an expert from South Africa who will discuss mechanisms used in South Africa to address similar problems. The roadshow will use the findings of LAC's recent research report *Seeking Safety*¹ as a basis for discussion.

The roadshow begins at the Katutura Magistrate Court June 19 and continues to Rehoboth, Gobabis, Okahandja, Otjiwarongo, Grootfontein and Otavi courts.

PEPFAR is a U.S. government initiative to save the lives of people living with HIV/AIDS and prevent new infections. PEPFAR is the largest commitment by any nation to combat a single disease internationally. Gender-based violence (GBV) is a serious problem—more than one third of women report violence from a partner in Namibia. There is a clear link between GBV and HIV because women experiencing such violence face a 50% increased risk of acquiring HIV, and women who test positively for HIV are increased risk of being targeted.

¹ <http://www.lac.org.na/projects/grap/grapviolence.html>

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