



Sexual Violence Research Initiative

(SVRI)

Annual Report 2006

For more information email us at svri@mrc.ac.za or visit www.svri.org

A Word from the Secretary

A key undertaking of the Sexual Violence Research Initiative is to promote and support good quality research in order to better understand the many aspects of sexual violence, and to ensure sexual violence remains on the agenda of decision makers and donors.

The SVRI does this in a number of ways, but primarily through an online discussion, a website that serves as a technical assistance research centre and building capacity to undertake sexual violence research and supporting and generating funds for sexual violence research.

2006 has been an exciting year for the Sexual Violence Research Initiative. We have continued to identify key areas of research through the commissioning of desk reviews, and supporting research proposal development. We have developed and circulated widely a research agenda on sexual violence which can be used by researchers, policy makers, donors and others as an advocacy tool for research in sexual violence.

We have transferred the secretariat site to our new host, the Medical Research Council in South Africa, and begun strengthening the management and administration of the Initiative through the drafting of rules and regulations and an evaluation framework. This year, the SVRI welcomed two new members to the SVRI Coordinating Group.

Over the year, the SVRI list membership grown by over a third. We now have 786 members from over 74 countries. To broaden our reach, we have translated the website into Spanish and begun a process of identifying and translating key research outputs into other languages. The website is continually updated and reviewed.

These are just a few of our key achievements for the year. We plan to make 2007 even more successful, and through our efforts hope to strengthen and promote much needed research on sexual violence, with a view to better responding to the needs of survivors and ultimately preventing it from happening in the first place.

Sexual Violence Research Initiative

December 2006

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Annexure 1: SVRI Coordinating Group

1. History and Current Status of the SVRI

In May 2000, with the support of the Global Forum for Health Research, the Key Centre for Research on Women in Melbourne, Australia, hosted a meeting of representatives from all regions of the world and several networks of organizations working on sexual violence. The group reached consensus on the need for a global initiative to raise awareness of and give legitimacy to sexual violence research. A Coordinating Group of experts from different disciplines and regions was set up to guide the work (See Annexure 1 for more information on the SVRI Coordinating Group). In its meeting in April 2003, STRATEC approved funding for the Sexual Violence Research Initiative's (SVRI) first year of operation.

The SVRI was initially hosted by the World Health Organization's Department of Gender, Women and Health. The tenure of the SVRI Secretariat at WHO ended on 31 December 2005. After a competitive process, the Medical Research Council, South Africa took over the hosting of the SVRI. The new programme officer began work in March 2006. During this reporting period, the WHO based secretariat worked with the MRC hosts in order to ensure a smooth handover to the MRC. The MRC based secretariat is now managing the email list, website and all new SVRI activities. This report documents the achievements of the SVRI during January – September 2006, including those of the MRC and activities initiated by the WHO.

2. Aim and objectives

The overall aim of the Sexual Violence Research Initiative is:

To promote research on sexual violence and generate empirical data that ensures that sexual violence is recognized globally as a legitimate public health problem.

The specific objectives of the Sexual Violence Research Initiative are to:

- a) Improve knowledge and understanding of sexual violence internationally
- b) Build capacity in sexual violence research
- c) Increase awareness through communication and information.
- d) Strengthen the support base for research on sexual violence

3. Activities and achievements 2006

The activities and achievements for this reporting period will be presented according to the expected results for year 1 of the SVRI as outlined in the original SVRI/MRC funding proposal to the Global Forum for Health Research:

3.1 A fully operational secretariat in new host site:

In addition to the employment of a new SVRI project officer, and the handover of the SVRI, the following achievements have been made and reflect a fully operational SVRI secretariat:

Strengthening Organisational Management of the SVRI

Key documents that seek to strengthen the management of the SVRI have been drafted and circulated for comment to the SVRI Coordinating Group. These include, i) SVRI evaluation plan, ii) SVRI Rules and Regulations, and iii) SVRI operational plan. Feedback on these documents has been received and revised version of the documents will be re-circulated for discussion and adoption at the next Annual Coordinating Group meeting. The SVRI has also established an executive committee to ensure that work proceeds effectively and timeously.

Coordinating Group

The 2005 Coordinating Group meeting was held at the MRC offices 30 January-1 February 2006. The minutes for this meeting have been circulated. The next Coordinating Group meeting has been scheduled for 31 January to 2 February 2007. The process for soliciting new nominations to fill vacant spaces on the Coordinating Group has also been completed during this reporting period. Two new members were selected and are now active members of the Coordinating Group. They are: Nduku Kilonzo, Director of Policy and Performance, Liverpool VCT, Kenya and Deborah Billings, Senior Associate, Research and Evaluation, IPAS Mexico. We are very excited by their willingness to join the SVRI and are sure they will provide dynamic leadership and actively participate in the strengthening of the SVRI.

3.2 Re-establishment of a Web Home Page, and List-serve:

SVRI website

The SVRI website has been successfully transferred from the WHO site to its new domain of www.svri.org. Structural changes to the site have been made in order to make it more user-friendly. We have also made key additions to the site including the creation of 78 country pages, a tools page, and an increase in the availability of documents translated into languages other than English. We have also translated the website into Spanish, and have begun the process of identifying additional key documents for translation into Spanish. The website is updated almost daily with new resources and edits. We have also put extensive effort into sharing the new SVRI site with other relevant sites (such as Eldis, Development Gateway and Population Council) to inform people of our new home and the great resources that the site provides.

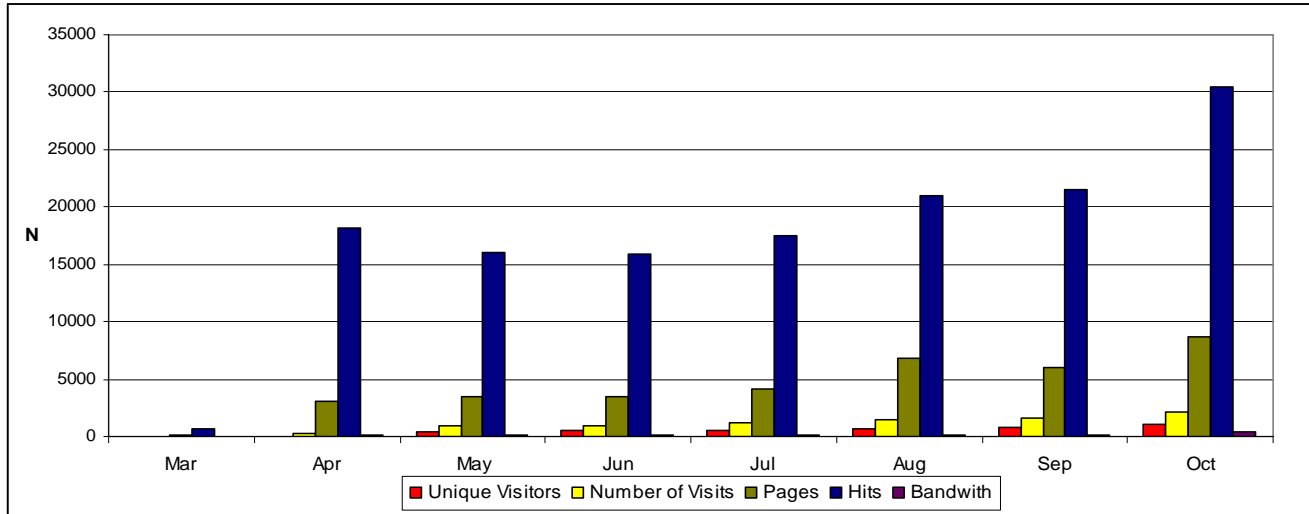
SVRI Web-based Questionnaire

The SVRI has initiated a research project on service providers' perceptions of sexual violence services. The online survey is hosted by the SVRI website, and we have recently had the questionnaire translated into Spanish, which is now available online. Initial findings from the research were presented at this years Forum 10 conference in Cairo.

SVRI Website Statistics

Figure 1 provides a summary of the number of visitors/hits the website has received since the move to its new site. The number of visitors to the site has increased steadily overtime, from 266 in April to 2,164 in October, as have the number of hits, from 620 hits in March to 30,397 in October. Moreover, the page hit rate seems to indicate that visitors to the site are staying longer.

Figure 1: SVRI Website Statistics, March – October 2006



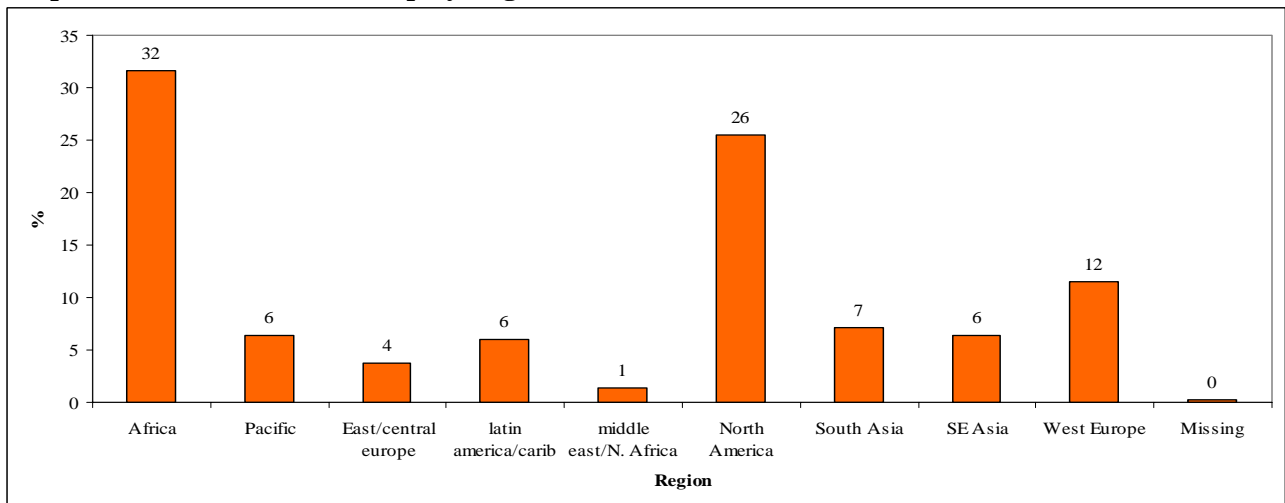
Transfer of SVRI Discussion List

Another key achievement during this reporting period has been the smooth handover of the email list-serve. The MRC based programme officer is now actively moderating the SVRI list-serve. In so doing, we have implemented a number of new updates for the SVRI list, these include a compilation email on relevant sexual violence research resources, a sexual violence in the news emailer and the continuation of a monthly SVRI resources and publications circular. We have also initiated an on-line discussion on the use of research findings to inform sexual violence advocacy campaigns. Feedback from members on these changes has been positive. List members provide a useful platform for sharing information about activities, best practices and information resources, and for obtaining answers to and stimulating debates on specific questions/issues.

Expanding the SVRI network

The transition of the SVRI network has not impacted negatively on membership numbers. We currently have over 786 members from over 74 different countries. This represents a 33% increase in membership from December 2006, when there were 590 members from over 50 countries. Graphs 1 and 2 below provide details on current list membership by region and by country.

Graph 1: SVRI List Membership by Region November 2006



3.5 Research reports received from initial seed-funded proposal development project

Proposal Development Grant – Ford Foundation

The SVRI received funds from the Ford Foundation in 2005 for a competitive process to disperse as seed funds for planning multi-country research. Of the 103 applications received in response to our call for proposals, three proposals have been selected. These are for projects in Brazil and Bolivia; Kenya and several southern African countries and India and Pakistan. WHO has disbursed funds to the successful applicants and work is ongoing.

3.6 Technical assistance provided to research proposal development process

Technical Support to Ford Grant Recipients

Coordinating Group members have spent significant time in reviewing the proposals received. Through the provision of ongoing technical support, this project will undoubtedly produce good quality, fundable multi-country research proposals.

3.7 Fundraising for future core funds from new donors initiated

Production of Promotional materials for the SVRI

As already noted, the SVRI secretariat has put great effort into fundraising during this current reporting period. To complement these activities, we have developed a number of promotional materials for the SVRI. The development and revision of a range of marketing materials is essential for informing people, particularly donors about the SVRI. These include the development of a logo, and a SVRI brochure. We have also developed a banner for the SVRI which can be used when presenting at conferences, and in other similar platforms. We are delighted to report that the UN Photo Library has given the SVRI permission to use a number of their photographs in our publications at no cost.

3.8 Other SVRI Initiated Products and Activities:

Desk Reviews on Priority issues for the SVRI: Three desk reviews on alternative justice interventions, client responses to services and medico-legal responses to sexual violence were commissioned by the WHO based SVRI secretariat and drafts are currently being finalized by the consultants.

Sexual Violence Research Agenda: A key output for the SVRI is the development of a research agenda to guide research globally. It is available online at <http://www.svri.org/en/agenda.pdf>.

Ethics and Sexual Violence: The SVRI has begun adapting the WHO ethics guidelines on gender based violence to sexual violence. In the meantime, we have begun discussions with international experts on the drafting of guidelines on ethics and research with perpetrators. It is envisaged that this product will be available March 2007.

Situational Analysis Guide: The guide for conducting a situational analysis on sexual violence services has been completed and is now available online on the SVRI website at: <http://www.svri.org/analysis.htm>. It includes a step by step guide to undertaking a situational analysis of health services for survivors of sexual assault along with the tools to do so.

Evaluation Tools for Sexual Violence: We have contracted Ipas Mexico to undertake a review of evaluation tools for sexual violence. A report has been submitted, and a webpage will be available early 2007.

Special Session and Launch of the SVRI at Forum 10: The New Woman Foundation, in collaboration with Sexual Violence Research Initiative held a special session on sexual violence. The SVRI was successfully

launched at Forum 10. Dr Pramilla Senanayake, Chair, GFHR Foundation Council, Professor Lenore Manderson, one of Australia's leading medical anthropologists and Professor Rachel Jewkes, Director Medical Research Council, Gender and Health Research Unit and Executive Secretary of the SVRI, spoke briefly on the issue of sexual violence and research.

3.9 Planning and Fundraising for SVRI Conference

The SVRI secretariat has held meetings to discuss the proposed SVRI conference. We will continue to plan for the conference and to meet and discuss the possibility of supporting the SVRI conference with donors.

4. Proposed planned activities for 2007

The following key activities are proposed for 2007, and will be detailed in the SVRI 2007-2009 Strategic Plan:

- Continuation of list-serve
- Continuation of web-page that serves as a technical assistance resource centre
- Information bulletins on research studies and sexual violence in the news
- Identifying and initiating desk research guided by the sexual violence research agenda
- Support initiation of research informed by the sexual violence research agenda
- SVRI Conference
- SVRI Annual Report
- Technical Workshops
- Fund-raising
- Evaluation of the SVRI
- SVRI management activities including new members for the Coordinating Group and annual meeting
- Other activities will be undertaken as resources permit

Annexure 1: SVRI Coordinating Group

Dr. Amal Abd El-Hadi:

Dr. Amal Abd El-Hadi is a physician by training and is a human rights and feminist activist. She has worked on issues related to sexual violence - particularly Female Genital Cutting in Egypt. She has also published several books in Egypt and contributed chapters to other publications. Her most recent research was on the response of the medico-legal system in Egypt to sexual violence. She is a board member of the New Woman Foundation, which is one of the few NGOs in Egypt to break the silence around issues of violence against women including Female Genital Cutting which are otherwise considered taboo.

Prof. Jill Astbury: Jill Astbury has recently taken up the position of Research Professor in the School of Psychology at Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia. Before joining Victoria University, Jill was the Deputy Director of the Key Centre for Women's Health in Society, a WHO Collaborating Centre in Women's Health. Her research has focused on identifying the determinants of women's mental health using a gender and human rights perspective. In particular, she is concerned with exploring the relationship between gender based violence including sexual violence and gender disparities in mental health including increased rates of depression, anxiety and post traumatic stress disorder. Her publications include 'Crazy for You: The making of women's madness' (Oxford University Press, 1996), 'Women's mental health: an evidence based review' (WHO, 2000) and 'Gender disparities in Mental Health (WHO, 2001).

Deborah L. Billings, PhD

Deborah L. Billings is a Senior Associate in Research and Evaluation, Ipas/Ipas Mexico (www.ipas.org), where she has worked since 1995 in Mexico, Bolivia, Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa. Over the years she has coordinated research and training workshops on abortion, post-abortion care, gender-based violence, sexual violence, and sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people. Since 2000 she has collaborated with a group of Mexican NGOs to form the Alliance for the Right to Decide or *andar* (www.andar.org.mx), dedicated to improving women's access to safe abortion services, including in the case of rape. Dr. Billings has served as a consultant to Mexican state-and federal-level ministries of health working to initiate comprehensive care programs for survivors of gender-based violence as well as to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to develop a community-based lay health advisor program aimed at newly established Latino communities. She is an Adjunct Associate Professor in the University of North Carolina School of Public Health, Maternal and Child Health and provides technical guidance to Masters and PhD students at the National Institute of Public Health (INSP) in Cuernavaca, Mexico. Dr. Billings is a graduate of the University of Michigan with a Ph.D. in Sociology. Her research examined the process of Guatemalan women's political organizing while in exile in southern Mexico, including their creation of a movement to respect women's rights as human rights and to eradicate gender-based violence.

Mary Anne Burke

Mary Anne Burke, Health Analyst/Statistician, Global Forum for Health Research, Geneva, with responsibility for Resource Flows for Research for Health and Equity portfolios. Career positions include: Director of Research, The Roeher Institute, York University, Toronto; Coordinator of the Gender-based Analysis (GBA) Initiative and Senior Policy Analyst, Health Canada; Senior Analyst, Statistics Canada; Founding team member and editor of Canadian Social Trends, Statistics Canada; Policy Analyst, Status of Women Canada; Social Statistician, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, Florence, Italy. Published widely in the areas of public policy, social conditions and human rights. Developed Gender-based Analysis (GBA) tools and processes for

the Government of Canada, and tools for studying the inclusiveness of public policies programmes and services. Recently developed the "*BIAS FREE* Framework", an analytical tool for examining and eliminating biases in health research that derive from social hierarchies based on gender, ability, race, age, class, caste, etc., with Margrit Eichler, Gender & Equity Studies OISE at the University of Toronto. Current work in this area, with the support of the Global Forum for Health Research, includes the development of publications and training curricula to encourage applications of the Framework to enhance equity in health research. Also undertaking work focused on the tracking of global expenditures on research for health, aimed at promoting a more adequate allocation of resources to research for the health needs of low- and middle-income countries and to neglected areas of research on health and how it is created and sustained.

Dr. Nata Duvvury

Dr. Nata Duvvury is Director, Gender Violence and Rights at the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) based in Washington, DC. She works extensively on domestic violence, HIV /AIDS and violence and issues of gender equity and peacebuilding. Her current work also includes developing a framework for estimation of costs of violence. [International Center for Research on Women \(ICRW\)](#)

Prof. Rachel Jewkes

Rachel Jewkes is the Director of the MRC Gender & Health Group in Pretoria and currently SVRI, secretary. She is a public health physician who has a background in epidemiology and medical anthropology. She has spent the last decade researching gender and sexuality in South Africa, contributing to the literature of epidemiology, medical anthropology, and health systems research. She is best known for her research on gender-based violence. In recent years she has been trying to understand the nature and dynamics of the intersections between gender inequality, gender-based violence and HIV. This involves both an understanding of and demonstrating how gender inequality increases risk of HIV infection, and investigating whether it is possible to prevent HIV infections through improving gender dimensions of relationships. Her major project at present is evaluating Stepping Stones and HIV prevention intervention which seeks to prevent HIV through reducing gender inequality. [MRC Gender and Health Research Group](#)

Dr. M. E. Khan

Dr. Khan is the Regional Associate Director & Senior Program Associate, Asia and Near East Region, FRONTIERS Program, for the Population Council and a Visiting Professor, Department of Economics, Jamia Milia University, Delhi. He is widely published and has many years experience working in operations research in reproductive health, family planning, STD and HIV/AIDS, gender based violence, adolescent sexuality and male involvement, population and health policy research and Capacity Building. [Population Council](#)

Nduku Kilonzo

Nduku is currently the Director of the Policy, Research and Performance Department at Liverpool VCT, Care & Treatment (LVCT) Kenya. She has extensive experience, knowledge and practical skills in policy, planning and delivery of Sexual Violence Care services particularly in the context of HIV. Her research work in the area of Sexual Violence provided evidence for the development of public health facility Post Rape Care services that are currently offered in 13 public health facilities in Kenya, having provided care to 1,400 survivors in the last 2 years. Nduku has published on sexual violence issues and also acted in the capacity of Technical Advisor to two WHO Committees; 1) *the Development of International Policy & Guidelines on Occupational & non-occupational PEP* and; 2) *on HIV Counselling and Testing and Violence Against Women*. Her areas of interest include operations research for HIV counselling, testing, treatment and care

services in the health sector, with a focus on gender issues. She has expertise in design and management of qualitative research programmes and currently provides leadership to a team of 10 involved in 4 different operational studies.

Prof. Mary Koss

Mary P. Koss is a Regents' Professor of Public Health at the University of Arizona. She is Principal Investigator of the [RESTORE](#) Program, a victim-driven, community collaboration that offers an alternative justice intervention for selected sex crimes. She has worked in the field of sexual assault for more than 25 years, serving on the National Academy of Sciences Panel on Violence Against Women and co-chairing the American Psychological Association Taskforce on Male Violence Against Women. She has testified before the U.S. Senate twice on matters relating to sexual violence. In recognition of her contributions the American Psychological Association honored her with its Award for Distinguished Contributions to Research in Public Policy; and its Committee on Women in Psychology Leadership Award.

Dr. Claudia Garcia-Moreno

Dr. Garcia-Moreno is a physician from Mexico with a masters in community medicine from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. She has over 20 years of experience in health care delivery, research and policy. Her experience spans Africa, Latin America and some parts of Asia. For the last 10 years her work has increasingly focused on reproductive health, women's health and gender in health. She has been responsible for gender and women's health work in WHO since 1994 in different capacities and developed the Organization's work on violence against women. She is coordinator of the WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence Against Women, a multi-million dollar initiative involving research in 8 countries in Asia, Latin American and Africa. [WHO Department of Gender, Women and Health](#)

Prof. June Lopez

June Pagaduan-Lopez MD is a Professor of Psychiatry, at the University of the Philippines, Manila, focusing on stress and trauma psychology. She is presently the Department of Psychiatry's Training Officer, and works as a consultant for a WHO project to field test the WHO clinical guidelines on sexual assault. Her research work in the last 20 years has been in the areas of health and human rights, torture, sexual violence and the psychological consequences and rehabilitation in armed conflict and post-conflict areas. She has been a founder of several networks locally and internationally providing services for survivors of political and sexual violence. [University of the Philippines](#)