



# LEAVING HOME: FACING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

**CHANGE THE STORY: REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS SPEAK AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE – TALKING POINT NO.1**

There are no jobs and no food in the cupboards, so Chipo leaves home, leaving the brothers and sisters she cares for behind, to travel to a neighbouring country so that she can make enough money to send home. However, things turn sour for her when her boss starts taking advantage of her vulnerable position. With no friends or family, not knowing the country and difficulty speaking the language, she remains quiet about the ongoing rape and violence. She gets help from a neighbour who has information about a nearby Thuthuzela Care Centre (TCC).

## ISSUES RAISED

- Sexual harassment
- Vulnerabilities at work
- Seeking help

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

According to the United Nations, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment. Sexual harassment includes touching, unwelcome sexual jokes, unwanted questions about your sex life, rude gestures, requests for sex, or staring at your body in an offensive way. In April, 2013 a new act which seeks to protect against harassment came into play in South Africa. It progressively includes harassment via SMS or email. Sexual harassment can at times escalate into sexual violence. Migrant women who work in homes are especially vulnerable to this kind of abuse, but because of economic reliance and the difficulty of finding work, many experience sexual harassment or sexual violence in different kinds of employment.

## KEY MESSAGES

- As Africans stand together against sexual harassment, if you see someone in trouble, extend a helping hand.
- If you have been sexually assaulted, help is out there.
- Speak up about injustices, don't be afraid to confide in people, breaking the silence helps and in many cases can lead to getting the help that you need.
- Any kind of sexual harassment is by law not allowed, nobody

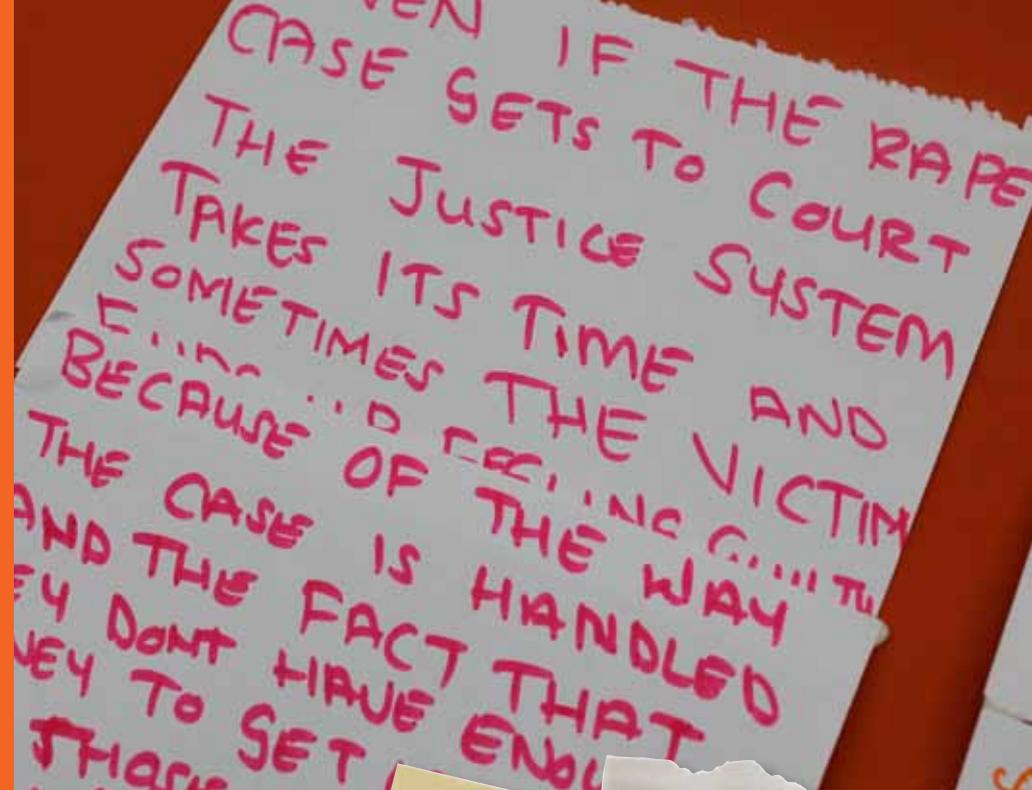
**“WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAFETY AND SECURITY, NO MATTER WHERE WE ARE FROM. THIS DRAMA IS PART OF A SERIES PRODUCED BY AFRICANS STANDING UP TO SAY NO TO GENDER VIOLENCE, NO TO SEXUAL ASSAULT AND DOMESTIC ABUSE. THESE ARE OUR EXPERIENCES. BUT TOGETHER, WE CAN CHANGE THE STORY.”**

has the right to force you to do something that you do not want to do. If you don't like something, speak to someone about it, you have the right to say NO!

- In keeping with one of the aims of the Thuthuzela Care Centres – we should all work towards communities of respect, comfort, restoring dignity and ensuring justice for children, women and men who are victims of sexual violence.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What factors made Chipo vulnerable to abuse, and what can be done to help address some of these?
- Why are migrants and refugees sometimes more vulnerable to sexual harassment and sexual violence?
- Mrs Bridget admitted she had been hearing noises for a long time before she confronted Chipo about what was happening, what prevents people from stepping in to help when they know abuse is happening?
- What are reasons that women who are raped keep quiet? How do we help them open up and speak up about what they go through?
- Are there other forums in your local area that victims can come together and help each other heal?
- What are the rights of each and every employee? How does one address vulnerabilities in the workplace?
- What are the steps to follow when one is being sexually harassed in the workplace? Are these different for anyone?
- How do we promote knowledge of rights among all people living in South Africa?
- Have you ever been sexually harassed? What happened?

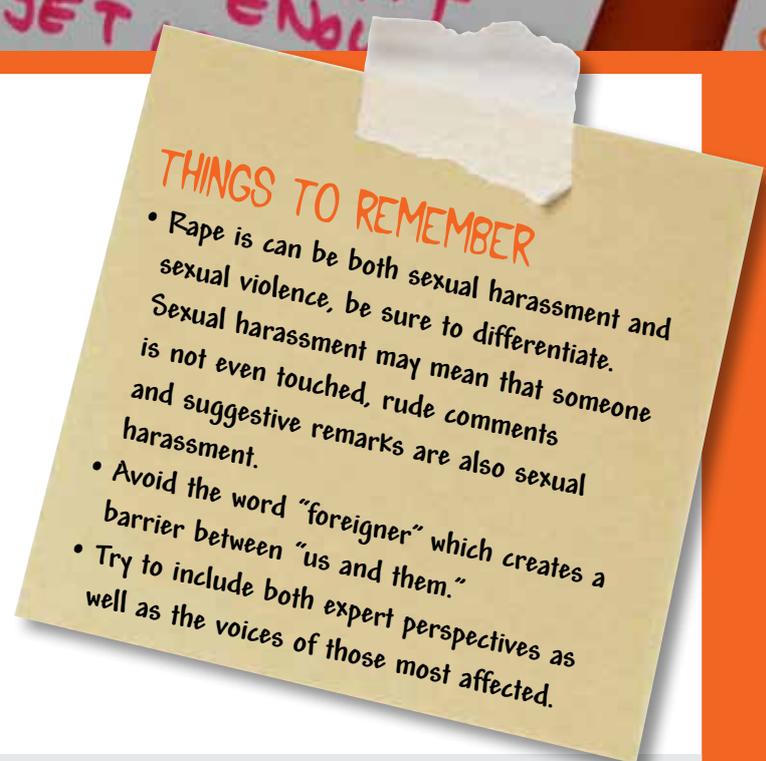


### POSSIBLE GUESTS

- **Sonke Gender Justice** is happy to be a guest on the show, or to put you in touch with other possible sources.
- **Lawyers/ prosecutors** who can share insight on sexual harassment in the workplace as well as the way the law deals with sexual harassment and rape.
- **The Thuthuzela Care Centres** site coordinators or counsellors may be available for interviews & panels. To enquire, contact the Care Centre nearest you (refer to the Thuthuzela Care Centre brochure) or contact the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) at 012 845-6136/1 or Tel (012) 845 6000.

### TIPS FOR THE SHOW

- Provide an overview of the different factors that make refugees and migrants, both cross border and internal, vulnerable to abuse.
- Discuss the various impacts of sexual violence – short term and long term, physical, emotional, psychological, economic, etc.
- Involve men as part of the solution – feature role models of men who stand up to say no to violence.



### ABOUT THE SERIES.....

The radio dramas series and talking points were produced for Sonke Gender Justice Migrant Health and Rights project, by CMFD Productions. The dramas were written during a participatory workshop process, and voiced by, those most affected – refugees and foreign nationals themselves.

### CONTACT

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#### Dangerous Borders: Vulnerable in Transit

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#### Music

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