

# Seasons Greetings and Launch News from SAFFI

On behalf of our Patrons (Archbishop Dr Thabo Makgoba, Imam Dr Rashied Omar and Rev Mpho Tutu) and the SAFFI Board, we wish you and your family Peace and Joy this Festive Season!

We are delighted to report a successful national launch of SAFFI during the recent 16 Days of Activism Campaign 2010. We are most grateful to the USA Government for bringing Rev Dr Marie Fortune (Founder and Senior Analyst of FaithTrust Institute, Seattle, USA) as our visiting keynote guest. This is particularly significant; since Rev Fortune pioneered this work of engaging religious leaders in the quest to end gender based violence (GBV) way back in the 1970's in the USA. It was during our Founder, Ms Elizabeth Petersen's Fulbright Humphrey Scholarship programme in 2008/9 in the USA, that a partnership with FaithTrust Institute was established to strengthen SAFFI's initiative of being a resource to religious leaders and faith



communities on addressing the faith issues pertaining to violence against women and children in South Africa.

SAFFI's launch programme started with a Domestic Violence Training workshop on 24 Nov 2010 which addressed how faith communities might intervene with GBV Survivors and Offenders. We then embarked on various roundtable discussions, listening sessions and talks with local religious leaders in communities such as Bishop Lavis, women of faith in communities such as Kuilsriver and YMCA young people in Kraaifontein. We also engaged GBV activists, Academics and senior Government officials on the faith issues of GBV and the importance of making every effort to advance culturally informed collaborative initiatives which include the faith sector to end GBV.

The Cape Town official launch was held at UWC Library Auditorium on 2 Dec 2010 which really set the tone for the sort of dialogue that SAFFI is bringing to the GBV discourse. Participants were invited to join a roundtable discussion on either: Voices of Survivors; Intervention with Perpetrators; Abuse within LGBTI Relationships; GBV, HIV & AIDS or Sacred Text & Religious Teaching. These roundtable discussions had participants explore religious leaders and faith communities as a resource in addressing GBV. Religious Leaders were then invited to sign a Pledge of Commitment to Collaborate to End Violence against Women. Other roundtable discussions were held in Johannesburg and Durban. Rev Fortune was very well received at St. Mark's District Six Anglican Church and Way of Life Ministries in Khayelitsha where she gave short sermons stressing the critical role of contextualized faith as a resource in combating GBV. We concluded the national launch programme in the form of a dinner celebration and lecture at Erin Hall in Rondebosch on 10 Dec 2010.

## Volunteers and Partners:

For providing leadership and coordination to our team of volunteers who were mostly women from WeCAN, we thank Jacqueline Hoorn, Rev Gail Avery, Linda Hoorn and Susan de Vos. We thank our musicians and singers Nicolene October and Elton Jansen for their contribution.

Our thanks are expressed to Prof Chris Lombard and the team from UWC for offering their expertise.

A special thanks to our partners i.e. Western Cape Religious Leaders Forum; National Religious Association for Social Development; Cape Town Interfaith Initiative; UNODC: VEP; Western Cape Network on Violence Against Women; WeCAN; University of the Western Cape: Dept Theology and Religion; Kwa-Zulu Natal Network on Violence Against Women; Sonke Gender Justice Network; Brothers for Life; US Consulate Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban; Department of Rural Development & Land Reform and Cipla Medpro (PTY) LTD.

## SAFFI Website

Currently you will see a presentation on our website which gives you an overview of SAFFI. We are grateful for our graphic designers, Perform Rewards, who is working on the development of our website which we will launch early in the New Year. Your patience is appreciated. We must add our sincerest acknowledgement to Isaac February and his staff for creating all our marketing material and in so doing they help to give visual voice to the work of SAFFI.