



# Cycling to Break the Cycle of Child Abuse

## THE CHILD WITNESS FOUNDATION BACKGROUND

It is estimated that 1 out of every 3 children are victims of violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect and discrimination in every community, cultural, social or economic group in South Africa. These violations are under-recognised and under-reported barriers to child rights, and undermine the child victim's survival, development and participation. Both the physical and psychological effects of child abuse are far-reaching, leading to lifelong consequences and profound difficulties for victims.

Dr Karen Muller and Ms Karen Hollely of the Institute for Child Witness Research and Training have for the past 20 years dedicated their lives to institutional and individual child victim support (prevention, response, protection and increasing the conviction rates in cases of child abuse).

- *1 000 cases of sexual abuse reported per week in 2016*
- *Only 1% of rapes are reported to the police in South Africa*

The Institute is a registered service provider for the South African Department of Justice and

Constitutional Development (now Department of Justice and Correctional Services).

It has undertaken research, developed and participated in the development of national policies for sexual offences, including the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act of 2007.

They are a training provider for government departments on matters relating to sexual violence against vulnerable groups, including women and children – having supported more than a 1000 abused children and trained over 5000 social workers, magistrates, prosecutors, police, court interpreters, intermediaries and NGOs throughout South Africa. They were similarly contracted by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development in 2013 to compile a report on the re-establishment of Sexual Offences Courts, on behalf of the Ministerial Advisory Task Team on the Adjudication of Sexual Offence Matters. Twenty-two of these courts have now been established across South Africa, with a further 57 ear-marked for upgrading in the 2014/2015 financial period.

The Institute is now also a preferred training provider for the Forensic Social Workers of the South African Police Service. It is contracted by UNICEF South Africa to provide technical assistance on numerous government projects aimed at responding to and preventing sexual abuse of children. It is also a member of a national consortium of organisations working with the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund to address sexual violence against girls in schools (SEVISSA Project).

The Institute has also delivered research, training and consulting services to Governments and International Agencies (UNICEF, UNESCO, ANPPCAN) in Zambia, Swaziland, Namibia, Ethiopia, India, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, United Kingdom and United States of America.

It has developed 10 discipline specific training courses on child witnesses, written six textbooks on the topic of child witnesses and published over 50 accredited journal articles.



**INCREASING IMPACT**

The Institute and the Foundation on Justice for Child Witnesses are spearheading an initiative to mobilise local, regional and international support to increase awareness of this pandemic, to support victims of abuse, increase conviction rates of perpetrators and significantly increase its research and trainer capacity to address the challenges of child abuse and the protection of child witnesses – similarly becoming the national and global voice on justice for child witnesses in Africa. Child abuse can only be prevented and reduced if efforts are coordinated and local, regional and international support obtained to address the problem.

Dr Muller, Director of the Institute and International Expert on Child Witnesses, believes the challenges facing South Africa and Africa can only be resolved if a co-ordinated, multi- disciplinary approach is taken by governments, government departments, as well as local and international institutions supporting and having a role to play in child abuse.

Child abuse is an under-recognised and under-reported barrier to child rights. It undermines the child victim’s survival and development. At present role players do not follow a holistic approach to dealing with child abuse and services are fragmented. It is essential that role-players in the system become specialised to deal with these cases and to provide effective services to victims. Focussed research is lacking in this area and contributes to the difficulties experienced by children accessing the criminal justice system. To address these concerns, the Institute must produce ongoing credible research and provide accredited training and qualifications to ensure that the secondary traumatising of children in the criminal justice system is reduced and conviction rates are increased.



**\* LUCY \***

***Gangraped at the age of 6, forced to endure a total of 48 court postponements over a period of 9 years. At the age of 15, the case was thrown out***

***.....due to a Lack of Evidence.....***

A Foundation on Justice for Child Witnesses has just been established to support the Institute and victims of abuse.

**CHILD WITNESS FOUNDATION OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Foundation can be summarised as follows:

- To create international awareness of the child abuse pandemic and be a voice for abused children (drive an advocacy campaign)
- To mobilise international support (funding, partnerships, capacity, etc.) for the Child Witness Institute (Institute for Child Witness Research and Training to increase its capacity, as well as research and training output to impact significantly on the reduction of child abuse and to increase in the conviction rate of offenders.



# ROUND TABLE - CYCLE CROSS COUNTRY – PROJECT

THE 6000KM CYCLE TOUR IS AN INITIATIVE TO CREATE AWARENESS FOR THE RIGHTS AND DIGNITY OF CHILDREN AND TO RAISE R3 MILLION FOR THE CHILD WITNESS INSTITUTE AND FOUNDATION.

STUNNED BY THE CHILD ABUSE PANDEMIC AND THE PLIGHT OF ABUSED CHILDREN, WE WILL EMBARK ON A 6 000KM CYCLING TOUR ALONG THE BORDERS OF SOUTH AFRICA. THE AIM OF THE TOUR IS TO RAISE FUNDS AND AWARENESS FOR THE CHILD WITNESS INSTITUTE AND FOUNDATION. THE PROJECT IS A COLLABORATION BETWEEN ROUND TABLE SOUTHERN AFRICA AND CYCLE CROSS COUNTRY.



## DETAILS OF CYCLING TOUR

THE CYCLE CROSS COUNTRY TOUR IS UNIQUE in the fact that the cycling is done *unsupported* and that the cyclists carry *all their belongings* including food supplies, camping gear and spare parts with them using a bicycle trailer or paniers which way up to 30 Kg when fully loaded.



The tour will commence in Vryheid at the Round Table Clubhouse on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2017. Following the borders of South Africa, we are expecting to complete the 6000-km tour in 100 days, arriving back in Vryheid in early October 2017.

[Click on the map for the full itinerary](#)

*Cycle touring is an adventure, combined with a worthy cause it changes lives. "I learned this through experience".*

<https://www.cyclecc.co.za>

## RAISING MONEY FOR THE INSTITUTE

By supporting this project, you will help the Child Witness Foundation and Institute to come to the rescue of abused children, create awareness of this pandemic, address shortcomings in the justice system and, importantly, raise a substantial amount of money to capacitate the Institute to continue and expand its important work. The Foundation is a registered NPO and PBO and will issue funders with Section 18A Tax deduction certificates (NPO 152-49, PBO 93051592).

## GET INVOLVED

### 1. PLEDGE PER KM AND CHALLENGE OTHERS

WE WANT TO RAISE MORE THAN R3 MILLION RAND THROUGH YOUR PLEDGES. YOU CAN PLEDGE PER KM TO SUPPORT THE CHILD WITNESS FOUNDATION. Individual and corporate sponsors will be challenged to sponsor the cyclist per kilometre travelled. Pledges will be based on 6000 KM – [Read More](#)



**2. DONATE TOWARDS TOUR EXPENSES:**

The riders need your support with basic expenses, we need to raise R50 000.00 for the project expenses. [Read more](#)

**3. FUNDING SUPPORT**

Due to a lack of funding and resources, the Foundation and Institute are challenged to extend its support for abused children. It will only be able, with support of funders, to develop the required capacity to execute these projects. It is estimated that the Institute needs an investment of R30m over a 5-year period. It's immediate need for 2017/2018 is R3m for operational expenditure. [Read more](#)

**WE ARE RAISING FUNDS TO:**

<p><b><u>FIND OUT WHAT'S MISSING</u></b></p> <p>We'll identify gaps in the services that address crimes against children, so we know exactly what needs to change.</p>	<p><b><u>FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING</u></b></p> <p>We'll undertake research and develop a profile of sexual violence in South Africa to create a better understanding of the victims, the offenders and the circumstances.</p> <p>This will help to prevent child abuse and enable more effective and sensitive responses when abuse does occur.</p>
<p><b><u>EDUCATE AND INFORM</u></b></p> <p>Information on child abuse is scattered and fragmented, and either too basic or too academic.</p> <p>We're developing an online information portal to share targeted knowledge with all stakeholders. This will enable better responses and a fairer adjudication of cases.</p>	<p><b><u>DEVELOP TOOLKITS</u></b></p> <p>We're creating toolkits to help children better understand the criminal-justice system and to have confidence in their role in the process.</p> <p>This can reduce the number of cases that are withdrawn because a child was judged as not being competent to give evidence.</p>
<p><b><u>RUN OUR PILOT PROJECT</u></b></p> <p>Starting in the Eastern Cape, our pilot project will run from 2016 to 2017. It will be rolled out nationally, then internationally. The baseline research data gathered will give governments, agencies and other organisations a better understanding of sexual violence, its victims and its triggers – an important first step towards helping to prevent and respond to sexual violence.</p> <p><b>OUR PILOT PROJECT WILL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the prevention of child abuse.</li> <li>• Form a baseline against which government and other organisations can respond.</li> <li>• Reform the criminal-justice system to accommodate and be responsive to the needs of children.</li> </ul>	