SILENT NO MORE
The untapped potential of the church in addressing sexual violence

Event report

Hosted by The Archbishop of Canterbury
At Lambeth Palace, London

In collaboration with Tearfund, Christian Aid, Restored and The Anglican Communion

www.wewillspeakout.org

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Summary
Silent no more is a report that was launched on the back of a Tearfund research report. This report looked at the challenges and potential for the worldwide church to address sexual violence based on research commissioned originally in Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi.

The report was launched on the 21\textsuperscript{st} March 2011 in partnership with Lambeth Palace, the Anglican Communion, Restored and Christian Aid. These organisations are all members of the We Will Speak Out Coalition that was founded as a result of the same Tearfund research report.

The coalition website is [www.wewillspeakout.org](http://www.wewillspeakout.org)

Event Aim
The objective of the event was to officially launch, ‘Silent no more’ and present the findings of the Tearfund research to an audience of international church leaders, church societies, international mission organisations, international NGOs, national government representatives and international donors.

The event aimed to highlight the ongoing situation of sexual violence in countries across the world and to host working group discussions which looked at some practical steps to help the church to achieve its currently untapped potential.

Event format
The event was held from 9:30am-4:30pm. The schedule was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MORNING SCHEDULE</th>
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<tr>
<td>9.30-9.50</td>
<td>Refreshments upon arrival</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.50</td>
<td>General Welcome</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10.00</strong></td>
<td>Welcome – The Archbishop of Canterbury</td>
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<td><strong>10.05 – 11.00</strong></td>
<td>Lyn Lusi, HEAL Africa</td>
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<td>Natalie Collins, Restored</td>
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<td>Michel Sidibe, UNAIDS</td>
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<td>The Most Revd Henri Isingoma, The Archbishop of DRC</td>
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<td>Mme Mugisa Isingoma</td>
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<td><strong>11.00 – 11.45</strong></td>
<td>Video: Silent No More</td>
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<td>The Most Revd Bernard Ntahoturi, The Archbishop of the Province of Burundi</td>
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<td>David Pain, Christian Aid</td>
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<td>Veena O’Sullivan &amp; Matthew Frost, Tearfund</td>
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<td>Dr Rowan Williams, The Archbishop of Canterbury</td>
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11.50 – 12.15 Questions from the floor  
12.20 - 13.20 Buffet lunch will be served in the foyer

AFTERNOON SCHEDULE  
13.20 – 15.00 Working Group Discussions  
15.00 – 15.15 Refreshment break  
15.20 – 16.00 Feedback from discussion groups  
16.00 – 16.20 Conclusion – David Bainbridge (Tearfund) and Rachel Carnegie (Lambeth Palace)  
16.20 – 16.30 Signing of Commitment Statement

Key Outputs
- Launch of a Tearfund report, ‘Silent no more’ that outlines the challenges and untapped potential of the church to address sexual violence in their churches and communities.
- Acknowledgement by key church leaders within the Anglican Communion to speak out against sexual violence and share some of the hope they have for a church-based response.
- Networking opportunity for faith groups, international NGOs, mission organisations, etc.
- Facilitated space to discuss possible practical action plans for implementation at the country national and local level.

Summary of speakers

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams

The Archbishop of Canterbury welcomed everyone and also summarised the morning following on from the speakers.

In speaking about how the church can help end sexual violence and stigma, Dr Rowan Williams said “It is of the first importance that churches and all communities of faith continue to hold before the world’s eyes the absolute priority for justice and dignity for all. We need to equip people to become agents of change and agents of hope. I hope this is the beginning of the church being what it ought to be and should be.”

What is the situation in Congo - Lyn Lusi, HEAL Africa, Goma, HEAL AFRICA

Why start with Congo?
Since 2008, HEAL Africa have seen 68,063 individuals.

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<tr>
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<th>Nord Kivu</th>
<th>Maniema</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Identified and received</td>
<td>18586</td>
<td>10526</td>
<td>29112</td>
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<tr>
<td>psycosocial support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Treatment</td>
<td>14581</td>
<td>10254</td>
<td>24835</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post exposure prophylaxis</td>
<td>2343</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2343</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judicial response</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>757</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic reintegration</td>
<td>1108</td>
<td>8169</td>
<td>9277</td>
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<td>VVF repair</td>
<td></td>
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Where is the church?
Lyn introduced us to the stories of some of the many women who have entered through HEAL Africa’s doors.
- Amina, who was raped at 13 and became a mother as a result
- Drocella, who was raped and rejected
- Donatienne, who has no choice over her multiple pregnancies
- Elise, who was married at 12 years old

Challenge to the church worldwide
- Follow the example of Wilberforce in 1807
- Gender equity – rights and opportunities for men and women
- Church leaders model and teach partnership as God intended
- Proverbs 32: “Who can find a good man? His price is above tantalite. He uses his strength to protect the weak; he refuses to use violence against women; he will not stay silent or look the other way when violence is used against women.”

"Attitudes to women need to change if a woman's lot is to get better. The challenge for us and the church is to follow the example of William Wilberforce in making the change for justice for men and women.

It's about partnership as God intended, and understanding one another's roles. The church needs to be a model for this partnership."

God’ people can change the future for the girls of Congo

The situation in the United Kingdom - Natalie Collins, Restored

Sexual violence is not just happening in post conflict countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is also happened in the UK. Natalie spoke from her own personal story as a survivor of sexual violence from within her marriage.
Natalie is now the Development Officer for Restored, an international alliance to transform relationships and end violence against women. We are working primarily through Christians and churches as they are our key target group. Natalie has been an integral part of the effort to band together a Christian response to violence against women.

For more information on the work that Restored is doing, please go to:  
www.restoredrelationships.org

♦♦♦

Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS

“People forced into sex are automatically denied the means to protect themselves against HIV. Women and girls are most affected and are most vulnerable to HIV. UNAIDS will work closely faith based organizations to ensure the dignity and protection of women and girls."

♦♦♦

The Most Revd Henri Isingoma – The Archbishop of the Democratic Republic of Congo and his wife, Mme Mugisa Isingoma
The Most Revd Bernard Ntahoturi – The Archbishop of the Province of Burundi

Both Archbishops and Mme Mugisa spoke of the need to learn from the inspiring examples of some church leaders and community responses to sexual violence. That faith communities, supported by governments and other agencies, need to strengthen the attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence, through awareness raising and advocacy, through the care and re-integration into society of survivors of violence and work with perpetrators of violence.

♦♦♦

David Pain, Christian Aid
Veena O’Sullivan & Matthew Frost, Tearfund
Both Christian Aid and Tearfund spoke of their commitment to working with faith groups to ensure that sexual violence is addressed and that potential of churches are realised.

The report, 'Silent No More' by Tearfund highlights the largely untapped potential of the church in preventing and reducing the impact of sexual violence. The report documents that whilst many churches have deepened the impact of sexual violence through silence, worldwide churches have the potential to respond as they are a key part of community life.

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**WORKING GROUPS**

Purpose of the working groups:
To discuss the key areas within each topic, what potential goals there are and practical steps that could be taken to achieve the goals.

Each group comprised of 8-10 people who chose to discuss each topic. The groups were facilitated by an individuals from a coalition member organisation.

The main outcome was to have practical action points for each of the following topics:

1. **Leadership** - How can the church show positive leadership?
2. **Equipping the church** - How can the church be equipped to provide appropriate care and support?
3. **Partnerships** - How can the church and donors/governments/aid agencies work together well?
4. **Overcoming stigma** – How can the church model care and compassion instead of stigma within communities?
5. **Creating a protective environment** – How can we build trust in the church and create an environment that people find as a ‘safe space’?
6. **Resourcing work** – What do we need and how can we mobilise this?

Within each topic, the questions to discuss are:

1. What are the challenges we face now?
2. How can we overcome the same?
3. What is the vision, the ideal?
4. What are the practical steps we can take to achieve this?
**Working Group Feedback: Leadership**

**Vision:**
That the church can show positive leadership, including demonstrating positive roles within marriage

**Challenges:**
- Women in leadership roles: what can be practically done by the church to increase the number of women in these roles
- How to help leaders become more vocal on issues of gender based violence. It takes courage to speak out on the issues
- Educating leaders to understand and become more aware of sexual violence.
- Of how to create open discussion spaces within churches

**Practical action points:**
- Include sexual violence education as part of theological training for all clergy
- Make current information and reports available and make full use of what is available
- Clergy conferences on sexual violence at the national and international level to engage pastors
- Create a space for people to share their stories at the community level
- Track and monitor case studies of improvement
- Release high level inter faith statements speaking out against sexual violence
- Include youth groups within training sessions

**Working Group Feedback: Equipping the church**

**Vision:**
That the church will be equipped to provide appropriate care and support as required by individuals

**Challenges:**
- There is often a ‘theology of power’ existing in churches which prevents appropriate care being offered
- The church feels overwhelmed by the scale of the issue
- Sex is still a taboo subject and not easily spoken of within the church environment

**Practical action points:**
- The church needs ‘sensitising’ at a national level
- Champions (Archbishops, bishops and church leaders) leading seminary programmes → identify male and female church leaders to champion to cause
- Champions within the community
- Bible studies that can be applied and be catalysts for action
- Youth programmes
- Engage couples, men and youth
- Positive empowerment of men in a way that helps women
- Create partnerships between churches, NGOs and local organisations to work together to equip the church

Working Group Feedback: Partnerships

Vision:
That churches may work alongside other church denominations, local and national governments, aid agencies and NGOs. That these partnerships may be equal partnerships which help to utilise strengths and build the capacity of the local church.

Challenges:
- The current use of language surrounding sexual violence and also ‘us’ and ‘them’ views which are polarised
- There are many different approaches
- The church can ‘over spiritualise’ programme responses
- A lack of organised structures and capacity building forums to share learning and strengthen knowledge
- Gender inequality in service provision (for example, men are paid workers and women are volunteers)
- Lack of understanding on what the church can do and the capacity needed
- Poor communication between churches/FBOs and secular organisations
- Churches often seen as part of the problem
- The need for dialogue on real partnerships and how this looks in practise
- Churches don’t communicate what they do → they need to be more visible and reflect and evaluate what they do more often
- Press and government don’t share the churches beliefs and hold misconceptions and assumptions
- There is suspicion on both sides

Practical action points:
- Mapping of the churches contribution and evidence of the work that the church does
- Unity and a single voice from the church
- The church to present case studies at international platforms eg. CSW 2013
- Regional forums to share information and for coordination between churches and FBOs
- Engaging men in church responses, role models and teaching
- Global collaboration
- Focus on goal/shared objectives rather then on differences within partnership
- Shared training and education
- Clear church policy and strategy – from within the church, based on the bible with transparent and strong leadership
Working Group Feedback: Overcoming Stigma

Vision:
That the church would model care and compassion instead of stigma within communities

Challenges:
- ‘us’ and ‘them’ mentality between churches and survivors
- Gender inequality → men have power, women are victims
- Morality intertwined with sexuality
- Bad interpretation of theology
- Women not seen as of equal value as men
- The church is silent on issues surrounding the subject of sex

Practical action points:
- The creation of a denominational sex offenders register
- Train church leaders (all types) on domestic abuse, gender equality, gender based violence including in theological colleges
- Purposeful, loud and clear communication from churches and church leaders to speak out against sexual violence against men, women, boys and girls
- Legal teams working with churches
- Forums for churches to talk about sensitive issues
- Teaching on masculinity
- Advocating for changes in law and enforcement of laws
- Emergency contraception and HIV testing kits available in churches as part of a broader program/initiative
- Addressing sexuality issues within churches

Working Group Feedback: Creating a protective environment

Vision: That the church will create an environment that people find as a ‘safe space’ and that people have complete trust in the church to protect them, speak out for them and support them.

Challenges:
- An assumption that church already is a safe place and ‘everyone is nice’
- Class perceptions of issue: lack of honesty about the churches current situation
- Some individuals do not understand they are being abused
- Abuse sometimes occurs within churches as well
- The subject is outside of people’s comfort zone and people don’t understand enough about the subject
- Leadership training on the subject is not mainstreamed

Practical action points:
- Creating education and training at church and community level as-well as mainstreamed among leadership
- Men openly talking the what is means to be a ‘good’ husband and father
- Churches not always focusing on women as those effected by sexual violence
- Stop marginalising those who ‘have problems’ or are ‘different’
- Understanding of roles and responsibilities within church, including roles that require confidentiality
- Practise tenderness and listening
- Be honest with how and what we are
- Place a public statement within church buildings
- Engage men in the church, less focus on women only
- Keep open and honest communications between church leaders and church members

**Working Group Feedback: Resourcing work**

**Vision:**
That the church and faith based organisations will be able to access resources required to enable to church to effectively address sexual violence worldwide

**Challenges:**
- Accessing funding for churches and FBOs is difficult
- Donors are reluctant to fund non operational organisations
- There is a lack of quantitative date and case studies regarding the work the church does and what they contribute too
- Resources are not just funding but also people and their capacity

**Practical action points:**
- Disseminate ‘Silent no more’ research and report
- Campaigning is a cross cutting issue therefore to mainstream campaigning and advocacy within the program implementation
- Publish quantitative data showing the contribution from the church
- Create toolkit enabling churches to conduct and publish research

**Way Forward**

Tearfund has committed to mobilise and support the church to respond to the need for advocacy for justice, care and support for survivors and the modelling of right relationships by church leaders. Sexual violence is one of the deeper root causes that drives the HIV epidemic and which the Tearfund revised HIV strategy includes as an area to identify and respond to.

Tearfund is a founding member of the ‘We will speak out’ coalition which has a growing membership of other faith organisations and NGOs who wish to support and equip the church to address sexual violence worldwide. The coalition works at a global, national and local level.
This event served to share the ‘Silent no more’ report and start partnering with interested church leaders, church societies, NGOs and donors. The following steps will be key components of the way forward.

**Next Steps**

- To disseminate the event report to key stakeholders and event participants
- To disseminate the country research reports to church leaders within the countries of research – Liberia, DRC, Rwanda and Burundi. This will occur within 2 day meetings in August (DRC, Rwanda and Burundi) and November (Liberia).
- Invite local and national government, international donor and aid agencies and local NGOs to the in country dissemination meetings.
- The outcome of the in country dissemination meetings is for participants to work on a practical action plan that can be implemented by churches in partnerships with government, aid agencies and NGOs.
- The coalition website ([www.wewillspeakout.org](http://www.wewillspeakout.org)) will become the hub for the key shared learning of all country meetings and the implementation of action plans.
- Potential opportunity to invite interested organisations to a side event at the International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA) 2011 to hear from the involved Archbishops regarding the journey the church in their country has been on since the Tearfund research was commissioned in 2010.

**Links and Resources**

Silent no more: The untapped potential of the church in addressing sexual violence
[http://tilz.tearfund.org/Topics/HIV+and+AIDS/HIV+and+AIDS+resources.htm](http://tilz.tearfund.org/Topics/HIV+and+AIDS/HIV+and+AIDS+resources.htm)

We Will Speak Out Coalition  [www.wewillspeakout.org](http://www.wewillspeakout.org)

Tearfund  [www.tearfund.org](http://www.tearfund.org)


