Breaking The Chain Of Silence

2nd – 4th March 2005
Nairobi, Kenya
Report by Louise Khabure
TAMAR: A POEM OF COMMITMENT

Tamar,
young and strong woman of Africa!
Tamar,
analytical and articulate woman of Africa!
Tamar,
cultural and theological icon of Africa!

Tamar,
we recognise and raise your name;
we share and name your shame!

Tamar,
your violation is our violation;
your desolation is our desolation!

Tamar,
we have heard your voice;
Tamar,
we have made our choice!

Tamar,
your story shatters your silencing;
your story breaks our silence!

Tamar, our sister,
we will not be silent;
we will not be still!

Dr Gerald West, Nairobi, March 2005
“Violence is encouraged domestically by women due to inferiority complexes over their husbands. I’ve personally been starved emotionally and feel that you women cause domestic violence.”

“For women not to grow horns they must be beaten”

“Violence is not only physical but psychological and mental. Violence against women can be stopped by tolerance and talking to each other and change [in] our cultures which condone physical violence. Let the public be informed that it is a crime”

Quote from, report KENYA Rape- The Invisible Crime
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION
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WELCOME AND KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The four day training workshop on the TAMAR Campaign whereby contextual bible study is used as a tool to discuss and address concerns in sexual and gender based violence begun with prayers and mediations by St. Paul’s United Theological College lead by Ms. Caroline Wickens.

The TAMAR campaign whose aim is to;

• To encourage Churches to openly speak out against abuse and violence
• To promote Bible studies that are centred on violence against women
• To sensitise women to the kind of abuse that exists and to propose ways of dealing with this abuse
• To encourage church ministers to preach against abuse and encourage activism around issues of abuse especially during the Sunday services
• To create an awareness on the link between gender violence and HIV/AIDS

Brought together both male and female theologians, pastors and reverends from Malawi, South Africa, Uganda, Kenya, Mozambique, Benin, Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone, Madagascar, Liberia, Sudan, Zambia, Angola, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Nigeria, Togo from the African continent and other delegates from New Zealand and Geneva.

This was followed by a welcome address by Dr Timothy Wachira, Principal St. Paul’s United Theological College. In his address Dr Wachira recognised the fact that the issue of violence against women has for a long time been begging for attention. He however noted that the media and civil society in Kenya seem to have responded in part to the issues by highlighting and pushing for laws that would protect survivors of rape, incest and domestic violence.
He acknowledged the importance and timeliness of the training workshop particularly for the church in Africa which he feels has remained silent in the face of increased incidences of violence and he hoped that the training would bring a significant effect in reducing the cases of violence. He quoted the Jesus manifesto i.e. *the spirit of the Lord is upon me and because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed to proclaim the year of the lord's favour—Luke 4: 18-19*. This manifesto he says has a focus on those who are spiritually and physically marginalised of the human being. He also confessed on behalf of himself and other men for being part of marginalising women. He attributed the marginalisation to aspects of community tradition and culture, where physical violence and social economic structures often do more harm than good by perpetuating poverty and oppression of women.

Finally Dr Wachira expressed gratitude for the privilege to co-host the very crucial workshop on violence against women and children, he added that St Paul’s College had been involved in other campaigns in HIV/AIDS and in issues of disability. To show their continued commitment to such pressing social issues he stated that the college would ensure the incorporation of these issues into the curriculum of the theological education.

Dr Nyambura Njoroge, the Global Coordinator of Ecumenical Theological Education at the World Council of Churches- WCC (sponsors of the workshop) further gave the focus, objective and rationale for the workshop. Dr Njoroge first started by asking the participants the expectations and reason for being at the workshop and some of the responses from them included;

**Reasons for attending the workshop, response from various participants**

- Some as victims and others victimiser felt that the workshop will assist them in learning ways of responding actively to situations of violence
• Some were trainers so they felt that through the workshop they will be able to seek ways in which to transmit the knowledge in their training to the communities that they work in

• Some hail from countries where violence is either on the increase or are from post-war situations and see the workshop as a place to share experiences on how to effectively respond to the situation of violence against women

• The need to create linkages between poverty, violence against women and HIV/AIDS

• Some are facilitators and have been working on the TAMAR campaign

• The need to be updated on the current issues so as to respond effectively to issues

• Some are working with the marginalized and women and children in violent situations makes the attending the meeting important

• Some want to hear the stories of women who are suffering, disadvantaged, destitute and marginalized then share the pain and be able to do something about it

• As women activists some are here to make a difference and are therefore committed to following closely the issues that pertain to women

• The need to be able to take the problems back to various curriculum’s and schools that are represented

• To acquire experience to see various approaches to combat violence against women and how we can start to say NO

• As pastors and church representatives, peer counsellors it is important to learn so that they can address the concerns and challenges of women suffering in the congregation

• To develop effective mechanisms of creating awareness even within the family

• Some are involved in the children’s ministry and as they are a vulnerable group they see the participation at the workshop as the channel through which their concerns can be effectively incorporated
• Some are involved and committed to matters of human rights and domestic violence they see this meeting as crucial

• Some want to seek ways in which to incorporate African values as a means of curbing domestic violence

• To address those with physical and mental abuse and disability in the context of gender

• Seek ways of liberating both women and men

• To look for holistic ways of addressing women’s issue

• To strengthen and identify research studies and areas respectively

• To interact with theologians and practitioners and concerned women theologians

• To represent the different sectors of society represented

**REMARKS FROM SPONSORS**

**Focus, Objective and Background of the Workshop**

Dr Njoroge described the focus of the workshop as a means to:

Explore methodologies and strategies of breaking the conspiracy of silence and ending sexual violence on all female and children’s bodies within the family, church, and society at large. She identified sexual violence as a heinous crime which women have described as being “worse than death”. The methodology identified to address these concerns is one used by the Ujamaa Centre for Community Development based in the School of Religion and Theology, University of Kwa- Zulu Natal, Pietermeritzburg, South Africa. This methodology is called the Tamar Campaign whose model is to train facilitators on contextual bible studies that brings together socially engaged scholars and theologians with “ordinary readers” of the bible, who share resources in order to find empowering and liberating ways of living.
This method Dr Njoroge says has produced outcomes in facilitating theological, biblical, ethical and pastoral resources that restore the dignity of survivors of gender-based violence and the empowerment and liberation of women and their families.

From the development of the African woman’s theological and ethical voices under the umbrella of the Circle of Concerned Women Theologians (The Circle) women’s issues that were not part of the theological discussions are now being highlighted. Through the Circles Theological writings, the different kinds of violence women experience in their daily lives has been addressed in a comprehensive manner to include the psychological, cultural, social, economic, political, and sexual forms of violence against women.

She made mention of the fact that the circle has further emphasised and recommended the need to ensure cultural hermeneutics as a prerequisite to biblical hermeneutics as this will give a push in confronting issues such as power and gender inequalities, injustice and sexual violence in particular. She added that the secular voice i.e. the global women’s movement in 1993 in Vienna, ensured a specific consideration of women’s rights as being human rights, this global campaign highlighted the sixteen days of activism on gender based violence and this she says has contributed in creating awareness on gender based violence and has also given women the courage to speak out even though church people may not agree.

The journey that led to this workshop Dr. Njoroge said begun in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1998 during the Journey of Hope in Africa workshop celebrated at the eighth general assembly meeting facilitated by the WCC, and was followed by another continental activity that took place in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2002 under the auspices of the Education and Ecumenical Formation team at WCC where an action plan was crafted. The workshops’ commitment was to contextualise theological education through taking on board community concerns such as violence, HIV/AIDS and other killer disease, gender issues, NEPAD and ecumenism.
These workshops Dr. Njoroge continued then generated discussion between herself, Dr Esther Mombo of St Paul’s Theological College and Karimi Kinoti previously of Fellowship of Councils in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa (FECCCLAHA) and currently with the Christian Aid where as Kenyans they noted the increased incidence and reportage of rape, incest and child sexual molestation and they decided to follow-up on their plan of action using the Tamar campaign methodology which is spearheaded by the Ujamaa Centre.

**Remarks from the Ujamaa Centre for Biblical and Theological Community Development and Research**

Dr Gerald West gave a background of the Ujamaa Centre and the Tamar Campaign. He however started by applauding and recognising the presence of colleagues from all over the continent and he stressed the need for the church to know the story of Tamar-the centre of the campaign. He gave the history of The Ujamaa centre which is in its 16th year of using the biblical context to reflect on the lives of people and to bring about the kingdom of God as it on earth. The Ujamaa Centre is an intersection between socially engaged biblical studies and ordinary (mainly black) African readers of the Bible. The particular focus of Ujamaa is using the Bible as a resource for individual and social transformation in communities of the poor, the working-class, and the marginalised. The vision that drives Ujama is to see change brought about by using bible and theological transformation. The other Ujama programmes are in Economic Justice, Leadership, Women issues, HIV/AIDS, Research and Capacity Building.

**What inspired the idea of the Tamar Campaign?**

During the Ujamaa Centre’s biennial workshop in 1996, participants were drawn from African Christians from churches, Christian organisations, and bible study groups to reflect theologically upon major issues confronting societies in South Africa. The workshop under the theme “Women and the Bible in southern Africa” was further
divided into sub-themes: Women and Culture, women and Violence and Women and the Church where devotions and reflections on 2 Samuel 13:1-22 were carried out. It was during this workshop after plenty of discussion between the participants and the facilitators Dr. Gerald West and Phumzile Zondi- Mabizela that this biblical text on Tamar gave birth to the Tamar Campaign.

Gerald West and Phumzile Zondi- Mabizela have been carrying out this campaign ever since and they that they been overwhelmed because the bible study has had an impact that has grown over the years, and that has now expanded although it begun in a small church in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. Phumzile has been a major part of the campaign in getting it off the ground. Others involved are students with the school of religion and theology where the facilitation of the Tamar campaign is a prerequisite for their community work. Also encouraged during these Tamar moments is the creation of a “safer space” where grassroots communities can speak for themselves and express their views in a language and manner that makes them feel most comfortable.

Dr West concluded by saying that the facilitation of the campaign is one that is an integrated process of action and then reflection.
CASE STUDY 1

2 Samuel 13: 1-22

The case study begun with the neglected and marginalised text of 2 Samuel 13:1-22, which is found in few lectionaries and seldom publicly read (and never on a Sunday), being read out aloud, after which the participants in groups responded to the following questions.

• What do you think about the text?
• Who are the main characters in the story and what do we know about them?
• What is the role of each of the male characters in the rape of Tamar?
• What does Tamar say and does Tamar do?
• Are there women like Tamar in your church and/or community? If yes tell their story?
• What is the theology of women who have been raped?
• What resources are there in your area for survivors of rape?
• What will you now do in response to this bible study?
And it came to pass after this, that Absalom the son of David had a fair sister, whose name was Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her. And Amnon was so vexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin; and Amnon thought it hard for him to do anything to her. But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David’s brother: and Jonadab was a very subtil man.

And he said unto him, Why art thou, being the king’s son, lean from day to day? wilt thou not tell me? And Amnon said unto him, I love Tamar, my brother Absalom’s sister.

And Jonadab said unto him, Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyself sick: and when thy father cometh to see thee, say unto him, I pray thee, let my sister Tamar come, and give me meat, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it at her hand.

So Amnon lay down, and made himself sick: and when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come, and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand.

Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon’s house, and dress him meat.

So Tamar went to her brother Amnon’s house; and he was laid down. And she took flour, and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes.

And she took a pan, and poured them out before him; but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, Have out all men from me. And they went out every man from him.

And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother.

And when she had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, Come lie with me, my sister.
13:12 And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not force me; for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this folly

13:13 And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go? and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee.

13:14 Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice: but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her.

13:15 Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone.

13:16 And she said unto him, There is no cause: this evil in sending me away is greater than the other that thou didst unto me. But he would not hearken unto her.

13:17 Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this woman out from me, and bolt the door after her.

13:18 And she had a garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king’s daughters that were virgins appareled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her.

13:19 And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that was on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying

13:20 And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother; regard not this thing. So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom’s house

13:21 But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth.

13:22 And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad: for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.

13:23 And it came to pass after two full years
The Responses

What do you think about the text?

Responses from participants were that they felt the text was about:

- Male domination, plot against selfless women
- Hatred
- Selfishness
- Protection – she was not rejected by the brother
- Rape and incest
- Misuse of power
- Violence happens within somebody that you know and trust
- No consideration of culture
- Self deceit and pretence
- Violence within the whole society i.e. consequence of violence against women follows in violence in the whole society
- Impunity i.e. no action from the King or Tamar brother
- Story about a respectable home and the conflict within
- Tamar understood the cultural and legal context she was in
- Myth about the family and home being safe and the victimisation of the victim for revealing the home is not safe
- Alienation of Tamar by being sent away
- Violation of innocence
- Betrayal of Tamar
- Humiliation and trauma
- Helplessness of Tamar
- Emptiness of sin
- Ill advise
- Mutation of Tamar
- Genetic recurrence of sin
- Temptation
- About relationship between parents and children
- Verbal abuse
- Silencing
- Ungodliness
The Responses
Who are the main characters in the story and what do we know about them?

**Tamar**
- is the victim
- she is caring
- respectful
- loved
- she was a virgin
- she appeals to culture to protect and save her
- she is a fighter
- she was also naïve
- she is very young
- she speaks out

**Absalom**
- he is Tamar’s brother and he tried his best after the rape of his sister to maintain the integrity of the family by stopping her from making the issue public
- his intentions was politically motivated
- he was revengeful with a bitterness to Amnon
- he grieved over Tamar’s rape but lacked skills to assist her,
- he didn’t appear to understand the impact of rape
- Absalom and Tamar have the same parents

**Jonadab**
- He was a bad advisor with a traces of jealousy and revenge
- He is trying to bring Amnon down and disgrace him
- He is a cousin to Amnon
- He is pushed his friend to sin

**David**
- His children have no access to him and appears to be a poor parent
- A traditionalists and narrow minded by accepting
- He does nothing about the rape
- He is an irresponsible king
- Amnon to be fed by Tamar’s cooking

**Amnon**
- He is the first born son of David and half brother of Tamar and a friend of Jonadab
- He is loved by David, he is lovesick and tormented by his love
- He is a selfish pretender
- A conspirator
- A rapist
- He abuses power

**Servant of Amnon**
- obedient and when he asked to send Tamar away he did not question
The Responses

What is the role of each of the male characters in the rape of Tamar?

**Amnon**
- His role was to conspire with Jonadeb
- He abused power
- He loved Tamar but after violating her he hated her
- He refused to listen to Tamar after raping her then he asked her to leave

**David**
- He provided an environment for rape
- Silenced the whole matter
- He gets angry but takes no action
- He does not console his daughter

**Jonadeb**
- He was a strategist who knew how to archive what Amnon desired
- He was a male conspirator
- He was playing a double game
- Through his plot he has achieved something by making himself favourable by the one who will be in power

**Absalom**
- He worked the best he could to protect Tamar
- He had his suspicions and out of his silence he had a lot of revenge and bitterness
- He protects himself as he tries to protect her
- He facilitated the cover-up of Tamar rape and the servant was also a facilitator in the cover-up and thus can be described as a co-rapist

**King David**
- He disregards the law
**The Responses**

What does Tamar say and what does Tamar do?

- She appeals to cultural and feminine,
- She may have probably liked Amnon but by him raping her he ruined her life
- She fought and then challenged the matter, saying it was wrong and also through the action of putting ashes and tearing her robes
- She demonstrated her sorrow
- She refuses to move out
- She tried to reason with the brother, but the he advises her to hold her peace, rationally she tries to appeal to her brothers judgements and complies
- She doesn’t hide it and speaks out in a nonverbal way – she spoke out and acted Tamar turned the violence into herself by tearing the clothes
- She condemned the rape as wicked and disgraceful to the person engaged in it
- She deals with her grief theologically, relationally., culturally, emotionally
- She is open and transparent
- She became silent by tradition
- She was helpless by insisting to Amnon that he doesn’t send her away
- It seems that culture is not silent but there are provisions but they are ignored.

In this session the participants were asked look into their communities for similarities and solutions to Tamar’s case.

**Are there women like Tamar in your church or community please tell their story?**

All the participants had had similar cases within their communities and some of the examples of cases given were;
The Responses

What resources are there in your church or community for survivors of rape?

• A church elder used his position to take advantage of single mothers and widows and the church dealt with him by removing him quietly from the church
• Pastor also raped a church worker because of his position and the church so as not ruin its reputation kept it silent
• Within the family a son raped his sister but the blame was placed on the devil
• Girl 17yrs raped by three friends who were drunk and she kept it secret because she did not want boys punished
• 5 year old boy raped by domestic worker and father beat up the worker,
• Girl went to the police to report her rape and assault case but the police raped her again
• Woman raped by armed robbers and when the matter became public she committed suicide
• A woman was raped and she became an alcoholic
• One was raped and got married and then set up a an anti- rape organisation together with her husband,
• 5 month old girl whose mother had died from HIV/AIDS related infection was raped by her surviving HIV/AID infected father who believed the myth that sex with a baby will result into a cure to HIV/AIDS

In concluding the participants discussed that some of the war –torn and post war societies have experienced horrific cases of sexual violence meted upon girls and women and in other cases it was learned that rape is rampant even within the safety of the home, where fathers, sons , in-laws, male cousins and uncle continue to expose the females in the home to one form of sexual abuse and violence or another.
The Responses

What is the theology of women raped?

The responses from participants gave the following analysis, that a woman who is raped has problems with the theological understanding of the presence of God i.e. his omnipresence and omnipotence and thus they question, if God is omnipresent then where was he when I was being violated? This some of the participants agreed, makes women revolt against the Christian faith and they begin to say there is no God. Further, some of them deny any offspring from such a situation. The other similarly difficult challenge is whether to procure an abortion if rape results in pregnancy, because as Christians abortion is a sin against God.

The theology of lament features prominently also in a woman who has been raped, other theologies are those of death and fear or being married and having sex, if the woman is unmarried and if married the fear of dealing with the problem with her husband i.e. will he accept her or reject her.

The theology of victim particularly when the survivor chooses to blame herself and some resort to devaluing their lives and end up getting into destructive habits such as drinking or promiscuity others on the other hand transform this energy into something positive by say assisting others and use the trauma for something good.

The participants although felt that the theology of forgiveness needed to be encouraged so that they can move on with their lives.
The Responses

What resources are there in your area for survivors of rape?

Most responses from participants spelled the lack of social support facilities, limited hospital equipment to respond physical needs to the crisis faced by survivors of violence in domestic and sexual abuse and lack of a legal framework to bring the culprits to book.

Within the churches it was learnt that both financial and human resources are wanting and the survivors have difficulties expressing the problem to pastors who are mainly male. In addition to this it is a subject that is not usually discussed in public and is usually dealt with privately. While in other cases the pastors themselves are the perpetrators of the crime. And in situations where are kept in centres run the risk of getting stigmatised when visiting these centres.

In concluding the participants felt that the church should be empowered and be bold enough to acquire a proactive approach towards issue of sexual and gender based violence by reinforcing the issues within theological curriculum, to collaborate actively with women’s organisations, to get involved in regional networking, address the new challenges where violence is also being meted on boys and the issue of mixed schools, seek ways of sharing the contextual bible studies with children and finally most of all utilise its most powerful resource, prayer.
TAMAR – HOPE OF AFRICA poem by Joseph Bosco Bangura

TAMAR Campaign Launch and Workshop
February 25th 2005, Nairobi, KENYA

She is called Tamar
Beautiful, young and virgin
Raped, abused and hated by wicked Amnon,
Who is thought to be a half brother,
But turned out to be a full monster

Tamar- though raped yet your courage was erased
Though abused sexually,
Yet your strong voice of protect lives on
Though adorned by the prettiness of traditional Jewish buoyancy,
Yet the pain of your ordeal was visible in the ashes on your face

From Somalia to Sierra Leone from Cairo to Cape Town
The daughters of Africa continue to grow
Under the evils of sexual violence
Their voices of protest are swallowed up by tradition,
So that no one hears their unspoken pain
No one, not even the church

Just like Tamar protested saying
Don’t do this wicked thing
So too must the church rise up
And speak out for her abused daughters

Oh! Tamar you are hope and inspiration
For the daughters of Africa, who flock our churches
In fear mixed with hope
Oh! Tamar you are hope for Africa
SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE
by Sylvia Nduna

Ms. Nduna started by stating that sexual and gender based violence is a form of violence that affects the mind, body, spirit and the community at large. So to be able to deal with it one must be provided with medical, physical, social, spiritual assistance. In the case of spiritual assistance to comments that it is usually omitted but often survivors ask questions about God in lament but at the same time see God in their experience because the surrounding is so violent and they find that they have survived and they have gone through it because of God.

She refers to the biblical reflection where some question the presence of God while others have their existence is based on God. The passion that can give the energy to do something about it is the desire to make a difference for others and not the negative influence she says. So the pain of having gone through a violation makes one desire to make a change so that it does not reoccur and also because they have understood the pain.

She gave an example of an encounter she had with a woman in Burundi who was raped and brutally tortured during her eighth month of pregnancy after her assailants killed her husband and children. The woman was rescued by a Good Samaritan who took her to a refugee camp in Tanzania where she resided for two years. On being interviewed by Ms. Nduna she did not cry and this was because the pain of her ordeal had gone deep into the core of her soul and could not be soothed by tears. In such cases Ms. Nduna says that counsellors and psychologists are at a loss of words when counselling women such as in the above example.
Key Terminologies and Definitions

Ms. Nduna felt that if it is through the non church world where services are offered for the church to effectively engage in these issues then they should understand the language used in the field of sexual and gender-based violence.

**Gender** – it is about male and female, masculine and feminine social roles, and is determined by society. i.e. society constructs them and this results in the consequent power relationships determining how each is treated and how they interact, the maleness and femaleness determines the values, type of life you will have for e.g. woman born into kinship society and it is not respected as the male kinship.

**Violence**- it refers to forced power i.e. it is negative and can be emotional, economical, physical, social and sexual.

**Survivor** – Synonymous with victim, for instance if you take a case of rape to court make sure you remove the word survivor, victim connotes someone who needs help while survivor gives a sense that the person through their own capacity have survived the incident and can continue to live. I these terms the survivor then is the person is the pivotal centre

**Perpetrator** – one who orchestrates the crime, usually in cases of seduction – the perpetrator has an independent mind to do the crime, some men when they see a ‘green light’ to go even when actually it is red, the concepts of seduction send the signals e.g. It is often said that a woman in African culture says no when actually she means yes, the concept of seduction makes people argue that a man cannot be raped when violence is forced power. The theories that for a man to engage in sex his mind must be part of the process while for a woman her mind doesn’t have to, so how do men suffer sexual violence if they need to be seduced first and aroused.

Another example was given through the bible story of Ruth and Boaz where Ruth was there at his feet and he still did not violate her which is to exemplify the fact that a man can also say no.
Ms. Nduna continues to question whether a man who rapes a child is sick and she answers that rape is a more premeditated crime, very well planned and thus by saying that such a man is sick is simply to make excuses for him. So she recommends that there should be laws that will allow one to think about rape as a crime.

**Gender based violence** – violence directed towards a person because they are male or female e.g. in war time in Sierra Leone it is used a form of humiliation for men, pregnant women. It is very systematic and that gender type cannot be reversed and cannot happen to both genders

**FORMS OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE:**

**Sexual Violence** – it is an act of forcing another individual, through violence, threats, deception, cultural expectations, weapons or economic circumstances to engage in behaviour against her will. Usually in sexual violence a person has no choice to refuse or pursue other options without severe social, physical, emotional or psychological consequences, at time it could even be loss of life. Also the degree of violence, the past behaviour nor relationships of the survivor does not determine sexual violence as an offence or not

**DIFFERENT FORMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE:**

**Rape** - Is an aggressive, violent criminal act where one person forces another to engage in a sexual act without an informed consent and that is why a prostitute can be raped , in a marriage also one can be raped, not giving sufficient information in the form of rape when one says no and no means no, the level of violence does not determine rape , it is a criminal act e.g. the fact that two married people share a bed does not mean automatic sex without communication , and the issue of wife submit to your husband and husband love your wife, it is socially construed e.g. In Ghana on the domestic violence bill the current debate is the issue of rape in marriage and whether that exists. The challenge here is the need to have proper sexual education and theology is lacking.

**Statutory rape** – person unable to give informed consent because they are under a statutory age and traditional age.
Incest – Is rape committed by family member against family member

Early and forced marriages - Where one is expected to start sexually servicing a partner robbing them from growing emotionally and psychologically

Female Genital Mutilation - It is not the same as male circumcision, it does more harm to a woman unlike in men where it is actually healthy, it is known to deform women’s genital parts. It was seen as a negative African culture and it took time to work directly and understand why it is called mutilation as a person has no choice

Domestic Violence - Refers to violent threats of violence experienced within a family and which may be physical, sexual, emotional, economical or psychological. It makes the home dangerous for survivors and is usually directed towards women and children, numbers are not known because of the silence around it. It is a major contributor to miscarriages, disabilities and even deaths if it occurs is not connected with domestic violence. It is broad and is refereed mainly femininely because the majority are women and girls

Selective Abortion - Practised in China for instance, if the child is female, in Africa the female is starved and they are neglected, others are killed due to preference for sons

Sexual exploitation – usually called polygamy, i.e. is a sexual relation where because of age or development or economic or social status is in relation of responsibility, trust of power, it is therefore it is a trust relationship that takes advantage of the power relationships, it is usually sometimes subtle and so one conforms to avoid stigma and also because they do not have negotiating power

**THE FORMS OF VIOLENCE THAT WOMEN ARE VULNERABLE TO AT DIFFERENT STAGES**

**Pre Birth**- Sex selective abortion; battering during pregnancy, forced pregnancy

**Infancy** – Female infanticide, emotional and physical abuse, differential access to food, medical care and education

**Adolescence**- Violence during courtship; economically coerced sex, sexual abuse in the workplace, arranged marriages
**Reproductive age** - Forced pregnancies, abuse of widows. Physical, psychological and emotional violence

**Elderly** – Accusation of witchcraft, burden of caring for orphans, physical violence

* These crimes are committed by anyone and it is a myth that sexual and gender based violence is committed by strangers and by violent or sick individuals rather they are commonly committed by people known to the survivor. It happens anywhere in offices, at home, in the church, schools, market, police station, hospital etc and anytime of the day

**Why does it happen** – Ms. Nduna explained that it happens in order to humiliate, dommate, control, punish, overpower and to punish the societies of the survivor families societies, etc, for revenge, to deliberately infect one with HIV/AIDS in connection to the myth that you get cured of the disease, used as a weapon of war Sierra Leone, Uganda, DRC etc and is used as a weapon of war because it goes with immunity, impunity, to cause terror, kill souls and It obviously has no positive aspects to a community but is known to perpetuate another form of violence.

E.g. case of a man who protects his wife from being raped, and they were both raped by thieves and this resulted in the man beating the wife, and i.e. it continues to be perpetuate itself in other forms of violence, fear of blame, stigma, rejection keeps them silence, the legal procedure causes survivor to be more questioned than the perpetrator. The form of humiliation makes one just give up the case, our socially construed ideas give guilt, shame, blame, rejection and fear from the perpetrator who chooses to keep quiet. The silence is complex and huge. The fear, loss of faith in one health i.e. one loses confidence in their own health and relate any disease with that one brought by the perpetrator. Some of the questions asked by the lawyers are too detailed, e.g. Having a 14yr who is not a virgin but is raped and thus making it appear as though she is promiscuous and making the rape appear justified.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Ms. Nduna recommended that the participants
Need to know the laws in the country i.e. in some cases if there was no penetration by a penis then it is not seen as rape, what happens immediately after that etc. e.g. in some countries they can access prophylactic drugs for HIV/AIDS’s but if survivors do not inform the authorities then they will not have access of these drugs
Familiarise yourself with the conventions; is that even in your own country the lawyer can use these convent, if they ratified them that can be used for procesecution.
Seek ways of addressing the root causes so as to permanently resolve the problem including looking at other factors such as the socially construed power imbalance and other religious factors

She challenged the notion that economic empowerment of women will address the problem by saying that women should be empowered to say no more than anything. She concluded by saying that the Church is body of Christ and marriage is presented as a cornerstone of family and family life but it has been identified as one of the lethal institutions where women acquire HIV/AIDS, undergo domestic violence, child abuse so the church needs to wake up to this fact and speak up so as to restore image of marriage and emphasise the spirituality of the family and go back to the foundations where love is the foundation.
TREE PLANTING: A Commemoration of the Women and Children Survivors of Violence in Kenya
by Rev. Sam Githukuu

In marking the launch of the Tamar Campaign, this session was carried out at the St. Paul’s Theological College and was presided over by Rev. Sam Githukuu who is also from St. Paul’s. Trees were planted as a symbol to actualise the pain of violence, the hope despite the dark picture, recognising Tamar’s champions and also identifying the place where the tree are planted as a Tamar centre.
The participants were also given a summary of the some of the reported cases of violence since the beginning of the year.

Examples of which include:
• Aibu, who is a young school girl, her father has been raping her frequently. She informed her mother who had him arrested. However her father convinced her mother to settle the case out of court. Her father is now a free man as she lives with the pain of rape, her story was reported in the Daily Nation of 25th January 2005
• Machozi, a standard four pupil from Nyahururu, her teacher raped her in the staff room. The magistrate freed the teacher on the basis of ‘lack of evidence’. She is probably infected with HIV/AIDs. Only God knows her pain and that of their children like her. Her story was reported in the nation paper of 25th January 2005
• Huzuni, she and her two sisters live in the village. The three sisters aged between two and five years were repeatedly raped by their father while their mother concealed this heinous act in fear of her father. The poor children can hardly walk, the neighbours have informed the police but the poor mother has no money to take them to hospital. The story was in the Nation paper of 10th February 2005.

What was noted by some of the examples was that the cases were from the beginning of this year and this go to show how grave the situation of violence against women is.
CASE STUDY 2
2 Samuel 11: 1-27

11:1 And it came to pass, at the return of the year, at the time when kings go out `to battle', that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried at Jerusalem. 11:2 And it came to pass at eventide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. 11:3 And David send and inquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? 11:4 And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her (for she was purified from her uncleanness); and she returned unto her house. 11:5 And the woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, I am with child. 11:6 And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David. 11:7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David asked of him how Joab did, and how the people fared, and how the war prospered. 11:8 And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess `of food' from the king. 11:9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house. 11:10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Art thou not come from a journey? wherefore didst thou not go down unto thy house? 11:11 And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in booths; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open field; shall I then go into my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing. 11:12 And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to-day also, and to-morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow.
had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk:
and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but
went not down to his house. 11:14 And it came to pass in the morning, that
David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. 11:15 And he
wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle,
and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die. 11:16 And it came
to pass, when Joab kept watch upon the city, that he assigned Uriah unto
the place where he knew that valiant men were. 11:17 And the men of the
city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people,
even of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also. 11:18 Then
Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war; 11:19 and he
charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling all
the things concerning the war unto the king, 11:20 it shall be that, if the
king’s wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore went ye so nigh unto
the city to fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall? 11:21
who smote Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast an
upper millstone upon him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? why
went ye so nigh the wall? then shalt thou say, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite
is dead also. 11:22 So the messenger went, and came and showed David all
that Joab had sent him for. 11:23 And the messenger said unto David, The
men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were
upon them even unto the entrance of the gate. 11:24 And the shooters shot
at thy servants from off the wall; and some of the king’s servants are dead,
and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. 11:25 Then David said unto
the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease
thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another; make thy battle more
strong against the city, and overthrow it: and encourage thou him. 11:26
And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she
made lamentation for her husband. 11:27 And when the mourning was
past, David sent and took her home to his house, and she became his wife,
and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased Jehovah.
The Responses to Questions

1. What are the themes of the text?
2. Who are the main characters in the story and what do we know about them?
3. How many people/men did it take to make Bathsheba David’s son

Retell this story from Bathshebas perspective.
Are there women like Tamar in your church and/or community? If yes tell their story?
What is the theology of women who have been raped?
What resources are there in your area for survivors of rape?
What will you now do in response to this bible study?

In introducing this text, the students from St Paul’s College of Theological studies performed a short play depicting the text. The play was interesting, funny and well presented and it certainly set the stage for the discussion questions.

What are the themes of the text?

- violence
- abuse of power
- murder
- weakness and helplessness
- absolute impunity and cruelty
- treating one as an object and not as a person
- sexual exploitation
- treachery and conspiracy
- power drunkenness
- King David is rewarded for his crime
- irresponsibility
- chain effect of sin
- lack of integrity
- double standards – he sets the rules and breaks
- child born out of rape
- God’s displeasure
2. Who are the main characters in the story and what do we know about them?

The main characters were David, Bathsheba, Uriah, Joab, servants and God

**David** – he is idle, proud, a strategist, full of lust, an absolute ruler, morally loose, full of covetousness, a manipulator,

**Bathsheba** – Beautiful, obedient, young, a victim and a survivor, she eventually became queen

**Uriah** – he is a victim of circumstances, strong enough to obey the King, person of integrity and faithful servant of God, aware of his religious commitment, as a Hittite he kept the law, more than the King, he is self controlled

**Joab** – an obedient young man who is strong

**Army** - They are Amnonites used to execute Uriah

3. How many people/men did it take to make Bathsheba David’s son?

David, Joab, servants and armies, Uriah, Bathsheba’s son

4. Retell this story from Bathsheba’s perspective

The participants were asked to be creative in trying to retell Bathsheba’s story in her perspective.
Some groups performed short plays, told monologues/stories, others wrote a letter, and others recited lamentations as shown below
BATHSHEBA RETELLS HER STORY

My husband went to war and while he was away, there was terror in the land and fear loomed all over. Even to have a shower you had to do it in broad daylight in fear of what might happen in the dark.

I was terrified when the King called me, I expected the worst news from the battlefield. My husband what had happened to him? Last evening I had missed the news! Trembling for the worst the King seduced me to lay with him. Terrified, there I lay wondering what might happen next.

And then problems began after I had defiled my marriage, I conceived, how will face my husband when he comes back? As I was struggling the news came, more people had been killed at war. My husband had died.

Widowed, pregnant, abandoned, what next God? The King sent for me once again heavy with child he pronounced me Queen is it a blessing in disguise?

BATHSHEBA RETELLS HER STORY

I am Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, married to a military hero, Uriah, a Hittite. My husband in loyalty to the country had gone off to war. I was alone in the house. So I decided to have a late bath and just when I completed, I heard a knock at my door. Karibu, I said, the servant of the King came in with a message from the King, the King was in need of me. Me? What have I done is Uriah dead? Oh god, I rushed trembling and with trepidation I entered into the palace. The king came and my heart started beating fast, I thought what is he going to tell me? You are beautiful he said, and he started caressing and fondling me. I am a married woman, married to your loyal soldier, the King, the monarch full of passion would not listen. He overpowered me and had sex with me. I felt dirty, what would Uriah say. One month passed, I did not have my period, alas! I am pregnant. I sent a message to the King. While I was worrying about my plight, what to do with the pregnancy, what to tell Uriah, then a terrible message came, Uriah was dead. Dead! I smelt a rat, the King might be the cause of this, but I have no clout, who will tell me what actually happened. I mourned with questions on my mind. After awhile what I dreaded happened. The King forced me into marriage. I am now the wife of a King but I am desolate, poor in the midst of plenty.
25/02/2005

My dear Hannah,

It is with a heavy heart that I am writing you this letter. Please bear with me and read it please. I am so confused, ashamed and embarrassed.

You know that I have been married to Uriah for a year now. I have been looking forward to having a child with my beloved husband but that did not happen. Six weeks ago I had my period and I was so disappointed. I went to the stream to wash myself and be clean as custom demanded. That was when my trouble started.

Suddenly, I saw a man who called me woman. I was so shocked. I tried to cover my nakedness and run away, but he told me to stay quiet. Hannah, I could not speak nor move.

Then I heard him mention something like the King wanting to see me. What has a king to do with a simple woman like me? I was so afraid for I cannot say no to the King. I was so confused I thought Uriah in the war front. I am married to him and he was at the war front fighting for our country. It would be wrong for me to go to the King for his pleasure.

I started trembling but the man urged me to move on. As an ordinary woman I had to go and this strange men who happened to be his servant took me to him.

I was forced to have sex with him. I cried and cried and cried. I felt so dirty and unclean. I went home and washed and washed myself.

Hannah, do you think I will ever be clean again? What would Uriah say? What would Israel say? What do I do now? I need your help.

It is two weeks now since that happened. I am now feeling so tired and sick. I think I have an STD or HIV. It is horrible.

Just this morning I found out I was pregnant. Hannah I just want to die and I wish it were Uriah’s child. I have been looking forward to having a child. Now this! Please help me. I am looking forward to seeing you

Please come

Your confused sister
Bathsheba.
What is the theology of a raped woman?

- Some use the experience to assure others
- Questions about the love, powerlessness or presence of God
- Some blame themselves and become very bitter with men and with God
- Many lose trust in the goodness of humankind
- Acute feelings of guilt, shame

Are there other women in your church community who have gone through this and let us briefly share their story?

- The disabled in the churches they give themselves because they are scared or those infected with HIV/AIDS, some with no one to care for them so are vulnerable to those in the Church who can help them, those who are unable to meet their needs
- Girls in church who have been taken advantage of by the pastor and have fallen pregnant and are then forced to perform abortions usually with approval from parents and pastors because they are ashamed
- Story of key leader in the church who was lustful and he was seen as a grandfather by the young ones and one day took he advantage of the girl and raped her and he asked her how she felt, for the girl it appeared as though she was having an adventure with a big man in the church, someone got wind of the story and he ensured that the pastor was sent was away from the church and in the end he lost all the glory and respect that he had been receiving
- Woman who had marital problems and sought counsel from the pastor and then developed a relationship and had a baby by the pastor, the same pastor who was father of the child preside over the baby’s baptism, and on learning this her husband sent her away and now in the church husbands do not trust the pastors
- Church minister defiled a girl and she got pregnant but the Parish Council intervention was stopped by the vicar who reinstated the same minister meanwhile his wife had a difficult challenge in trying to support her husband in public although in
private she did not condone the deed he had done

- The story of an African president who had an affair with someone wife and even after complaints he continued having the relationship
- Stories about college girls who are lured by politicians because of money.

**Are there any resources for women like these in your area?**

The resources within the church are very limited in terms of the capacity to respond to the emotional needs of those violated, because many are not trained to deal with the issues. A lot of the time most pastors also have inadequate knowledge of the problem. The centres of rehabilitation in some areas do not exist, although in the case of Kenya there appears to be a centre while some are lucky to have counselling centres within the hospital or in the churches.
KENYA CASE STUDIES:

In Kenya today violence against women is widespread where everyday as it has been depicted in the cases from the tree planting session; women are physically and sexually abused. Rape occurs in all social and ethnic groups. In this regard Coalition of Violence Against Women (COVAW) and the Nairobi Women’s Hospital - Gender Violence Recovery Centre are organisations working in Kenya to seek ways of addressing this increased incidences. The presentations made by the representatives of these organisations will assist the participants in seeking ways of acquiring resources and share experiences of the challenges faced in this intervention.

A. Nairobi Women’s Hospital- Gender Violence Recovery Centre by Lucy Kiama- Counsellor and Social Worker

Ms. Kiama gave a background and history of the centre which started in 1991 mainly as a corporate social responsibility initiative, where free medical and psychological services were provided to survivors of violence. To avoid stigma she said, the hospitals receive them as normal patients and the cases they receive range from rape which covers vaginal penetration and sodomy, insertion of foreign objects in private parts, they also address verbal abuse during the counselling sessions. The hospital also offers HIV/AIDS tests, Hepatitis B, Pregnancy test, Venereal test, urinalysis, carry out rectal/vaginal swabs to establish whether there are other infections, all these were done to enable prescriptions for medicine and for the development of medical reports that will be used for legal procedures.

Some of the difficulties faced in the counselling department narrates Ms. Kiama, is helping survivors establish whether they have been raped or not say in the case of date rape, in cases where children have been raped assist them in their confusion, address issues of anger, trust, fear, powerlessness and depression. Other issues in counselling are those who actually get sick or pregnant and so are required to be referred to other
medical units. Cases of abortion also coming up, children come with genital tears, tears of perennial lining, intestines protruding and counselling helps them accept the reality of what has happened.

In cases of those who want to seek retribution Ms. Kiama outlined the provisions which include FIDA- the women’s legal rights organisation, CREAW – for temporary shelters, WRAP- for women and girls who have been raped and Goal Kenya also for children.

And for signs and signals that people should look out for people who have been violated or raped include a broken hymen, genital injuries /tears, cracked perennials, low anal muscles, persistent infection, pregnancy, anger, anxiety, tearing/ crying sessions, withdrawal symptoms in children one must find out what is going on, sleep disorders /nightmares, relapse in bed wetting

To respond to the needs Ms. Kiama advised the participants to be close to their children and be friends with them so that in instances when something happens they can share with you and to empower children to feel free to discuss their sexuality. She finished by saying that they receive up to 140 cases a month which go up around festivities and holidays with 94 % being women and girls.

Coalition of Violence against Women – COVAW by Caroline Kamau

Ms Kamau introduced the discussion by urging the church to get engaged in the issues of violence against women and children. COVAW is a human rights organisation whose mandate is women and girls, who deal with violations of women, domestic violations, emotional trauma, economic violence, legal representation and engage in advocacy and legislative change to change laws for women to receive justice. She asserted that African women have problems accessing justice because the systems of the law or
tradition usually hamper the rights of a woman where instead of justice in cases of these violations arbitration is preferred thus making what is criminal be seen as civil.

She feels that education to the public is lacking so as to address cases of violations where children have no inkling for instance and also help victims deal with violations that have no physical evidence. To address this COVAW has been involved in activism to ensure the security of women in a country where women are raped every 30 seconds and they liaise closely with the media, police and the community at large. She says that to handle trauma and the state of confusion that happens people need to be understanding and non-judgemental and thus it is important to appreciate that some may not realise what happened.

In COVAW’s experience stigmatisation of survivors of violence, fear of backlash, the need to protect the perpetrators to safeguard a family name are some of the main reasons behind people not talking about their violations, another serious concern is the wrong methods of responding to rape – especially the church, where is a counselling desk but usually equipped with the a person with the wrong skills or understanding. She encouraged the church to get involved in collaborative efforts in curbing the challenges of violence and use the pulpit to send messages to the communities especially men.

**Comments and Discussion from the Participants**

Remarks about the role of the church in getting involved were that the mainstream churches have been involved and have condemned acts of violence, the church can get involved by enhancing psychological support, assist women in confronting their negative situations, urge that the responsibility for violence be placed where it belongs that is as a crime and nothing less, teach and encourage empathy and sensitivity towards survivors, address cultural practises the undermine or expose one to violence and also to open debate on issue that are difficult or sensitive to talk about such as abortion, incest.
On the issue regarding the psychology of the parents who violate their children it can partly be explained that in a home where a mother is not present or in a situation where a relationship has turned sour then the man vents out his frustrations to the children so as to punish the woman.

On the legal aspects, Kenya has now through the criminal law amendment act, synchronised the sentences of defilement and rape however the law has not made provisions for minimum sentences therefore it is up to the discretion of a magistrate to determine a rapist sentence.

It was also learned that the Nairobi Women’s Hospital is the only one of its kind in East Africa, but plan to expand to other parts of Kenya and that the main challenge is to get those from middle and high class sections of society who apparently fear stigmatisation more than those in the low income bracket.

To be able to address the challenges of working in this heart wrenching and emotionally taxing environment, the staff and counsellors have regular debriefing sessions with personal counsellors for themselves, they also take time off.

were dealt with in particular way but do not link with the current legal system, there were measures traditionally that checked incest, ie,e forms of practise that could check prevention, in arbitration is the problem with women being ostracised from society challenge is to merge tradition.
STEP TO CONSTRUCTION OF CONTEXTUAL BIBLE STUDY

In this session, participants are exposed to the Hermeneutical and pedagogical reflection where it is hoped that a cycle of action and reflection can be produced through the contextual bible study. This can be archived by following the steps below on constructing these studies as elaborated by Dr. West

**Step 1** – The contextual Bible Study will always begin with reality as it is experienced by the organised and marginalized poor, it therefore begins with a **theme** i.e. generated by the reality of your context especially the poor and marginalized who are mainly those that know how to talk back, challenge the issues and then tell you truly how the situation is. In cases where the groups are not organised, participants were urged to mobilise them.

The Bible readings will then come out of a real situation for instance the context of a woman struggling to live within structures that are controlling and constraining to their lives

**Theme** – need to hear the issues, struggles, needs of the particular context

**Step 11** – Once theme is determined, it is about how one brings the bible into engagement with the theme. Seeking a relationship between the theme and a text in the bible, it helps when unfamiliar texts are read e.g. the Tamar text hardly gets read on a Sunday, read familiar texts in unfamiliar ways as this enables engagement with aspects and parts of the biblical tradition that had previously not been accessed. The power of these unfamiliar texts is that they destabilise us while the familiar text seduce one and allows one to look at things in a different way.
Step III - The Bible Study is constructed on the basis of questions which are strategically designed to have two sides i.e. the questions require of you to go back to the text, as they are either contextual and textual questions which force in the case of the contextual create a critical consciousness and in the case textual creating an atmosphere for dialogue.

The collaboration between the socially engaged biblical scholars and the society is important Dr. West says, the knowledge and training is important but the poor and marginalized have useful knowledge and experiences that will go a long way in understanding the context.

Biblical scholarship has three sets of resources which are valuable in the way to engage the bible that is;

1. To explore world behind the text i.e. it becomes a resources for exploring the world behind the text
2. The world of the text – need for literary text, e.g. a focus on character plot, setting, voice of the narrator, are tools used to uncover how a text works as literature,

In front of the text – focus is not on the above two but on the major trajectories i.e., where the word is going

Dr. West uses these above resources to construct the contextual questions, beginning behind the text makes one dependent on the scholars, so begin with the text and that way, to allow the moment to lead people to move to the world of the text and move to the world behind the text and then sharing begins. It is important the Bible Study begins and ends with community consciousness it asks the question, i.e. begin and end with the knowledge of community, in the middle you have the textual questions. With reflection one asks and learns from past mistakes

Step IV – This methods work because each individual has a theology, living or embodied theology i.e. people live by possibly three theologies, the that lives with us, the one we work with and the one learnt through catechism.
Aspects of ones embodied theology are connected and often shaped by the church one is engaged with, it is further affirmed, articulated and enacted when you go to church on Sunday. Although there are other aspects of your embodied theology that are not fully fulfilled at the Sunday church so through reading of the familiar and unfamiliar by contextual bible study one is able fulfil this need.

**Step 5** – The idea of the contextual bible study is for it to end up in action and in individual transformation. Action is however sensitive i.e. it is not easy to confront men in the community, group needs to plan and control the action, need to come up with more practical ways on responding and the challenge is to get it into the public realm and the public theology? Where people are able to influence others and does it come into the life of the church, because until it does the church will remain an unsafe place where there is no affirmation etc. how do we shift theology.

**Comments From Participants**

To address the issue of double belonging within theologies, the embodied theologies needs to be part public and church theologies
The weaknesses of the contextual Bible Study can be that the facilitator may impose his/her view on the direction so to avoid this the must be read in full text at the same time we must allow the embodied theology to manifest itself.
Challenges are also faced when dealing with local language and expertise to facilitate so through action and reflection one is able to come up with appropriate questions and be creative

Participants saw that the contextual Bible Study allowed people to see the bible in a fresh way.
CASE STUDY III:
Mark 5:21- 6:1

Then the man went off and began to proclaim in the Decapolis what Jesus had done for him; and all were amazed. 21

When Jesus had crossed again (in the boat) to the other side, a large crowd gathered around him, and he stayed close to the sea. 22

One of the synagogue officials, named Jairus, came forward. Seeing him he fell at his feet 23
and pleaded earnestly with him, saying, “My daughter is at the point of death. Please, come lay your hands on her that she may get well and live.” 24

He went off with him, and a large crowd followed him and pressed upon him. 25

There was a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years. 26
She had suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors and had spent all that she had. Yet she was not helped but only grew worse.

She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak. 28
She said, “If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured.” 29

Immediately her flow of blood dried up. She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. 30

Jesus, aware at once that power had gone out from him, turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who has touched my clothes?” 31

But his disciples said to him, “You see how the crowd is pressing upon you, and yet you ask, ‘Who touched me?’” 32

And he looked around to see who had done it. 33

The woman, realizing what had happened to her, approached in fear and trembling. She fell down before Jesus and told him the whole truth. 34

He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction.”
The Responses to Questions

1. What do you think about the text?
2. Who are the main characters in the story and what do we know about them?
3. What do the two main woman characters have in common?
4. How does Jesus respond to these two women?

What are the similarities and differences between these two women and the women in your communities?
What does Jesus and this text say to women and men in your communities?

1. What do you think this text is about?
Who are the main characters in the story and what do we know about them?

The Main Characters

**Jairus** – he pleads for his dying daughter, married ruler of synagogue, has faith in Jesus, believed in Jesus, and was a responsible parent whose role moved Jesus to help

**Jairus daughter** – sick, loved by parent and comm... , healed by Jesus, and is dying

**Bleeding woman**- sick, suffered, touches Jesus garment and she is healed, determined courageous, her origin not known, was undergoing trauma and she needed love

**Jesus** – who healed both, encourages Jairus, miracle performer and healer, compassionate, plans are not known by those around him

What do the two main woman characters have in common?

- Both are sick in need of healing and both were restored to life
- They have terrible physical conditions one is dead another bleeding
- Are women who worn the favour of Christ
- The number 12 – 12 years of bleeding for the women and age 12 for Jairus daughter
- They are both old enough to bleed
- Unnamed – known by disease or father
- Both are healed by touch
- Both are restored to community,
- Both appear to have resources, girl comes from a good backgrounds and the woman had spent all she had
How does Jesus respond to these two women?

- He responds with compassion and care
- Respond to their physical needs
- used the power of the word
- Spoke and reached out to them as they searched for him
- In the bleeding woman Jesus reacted with compassion and mercy and the little girl Jesus went to her
- The whole family was restored both pleaded to Jesus restored the whole family
- There was private and public interventions by Jesus
- The two are affirmed
- Both were in situations were there was no belief initially
- Jesus picked them both from the periphery and brings them to the centre
- He didn’t ignore the women
- Both women were called daughters and reintegrated into the community and they were marginalized culturally e.g. bleeding women unclean and the young woman unclean too
- Jesus respond by validating, restoring their dignity and breaks the traditions i.e. don’t touch a bleeding and dead woman, i.e. in this world he is politically incorrect he breaks tradition

What are the similarities and differences between these two women and the women in your communities?

Similarities

- Women are most marginalised by social, institutional structures but are seeking spiritual solutions for themselves and their family members,
- Issue of blood and death is always a woman’s issue
- These two women were having a direct contact but all women are marginalized and invisible
- Women are persistent
- The women are fearful
- women are unnamed i.e. mama so and so while in the bible are unnamed
Differences

• They don’t acknowledge problems
• They don’t accept situations i.e. that is the nature of men, in the bible they didn’t fear to death they made a step ahead
• Here women are persistent but in our community they are considered to be nagging
• Affirmation for the women but in our case we suffer alienation
• Parental father’s are now raping and women keep quiet but didn’t happen in the bible story
• Women do not have direct access to Jesus because of cultures but those days women had access to Jesus
• women in this world are more politicised while in the bible they were not as empowered to speak out they didn’t have to sneak up to

What does Jesus and this text say to women and men in your communities?

• We hear Jesus say I refuse marginalisation of all
• He says I respond to your needs, please articulate your needs
• He will not reject
• He is eager to meet and help
• He wants inclusion of all and no exclusion
• He says I don’t subscribe to an oppressive tradition
• What Jesus did would make men humble them and for the women it would liberate them i.e. coming down of men and coming up of women

7. How have you been challenged and how will u respond?

• To break the silence in churches by reading the text
• To read the txt holistically to see different aspects of issues of gender, class and age
• To sensitise people men in church and community
• Advocate for change to identify and challenge oppressive cultures and structure in society
• Identify oppressive and liberalative structures in communicate
• To encourage study of these issues in the community
COMMITMENT

TAMAR Campaign Launch and Workshop
February 25th 2005, Nairobi, KENYA

GO AND TELL

Of Tamar young, beautiful, obedient
Of Tamar who had faith and confidence
In family but was let down by that family
Of Tamar who look faith in family

Commitment:

Lord I commit to go and tell by your grace, by your power, by the Holy Spirit. Here I am (silence)

Of Tamar who was raped by her own Brother. Of Tamar who lost her virginity
In the prime of her life, Of Tamars cry
And call for help in her distress

Commitment:

Lord I commit to go and tell by your grace, by your power, by the Holy Spirit. Here I am (silence)

Of Tamar whose father turned a blind Eye, closed ears and a cold heart to
Her situation. Of Tamar who felt
Betrayed by her father

Commitment:

Lord I commit to go and tell by your grace, by your power, by the Holy Spirit. Here I am (silence)

Of the 21st Century Tamar s’ scattered
All over Africa, of African Tamars
Who are searching for answers to the question
Of violence against women and children
Answers to the question why

Commitment:

Lord I commit to go and tell by your grace, by your power, by the Holy Spirit. Here I am (silence)

Of HIV/AIDS which is a consequence
Of violence to women and children
Go and tell violence is a reality and
Must be stopped now
Commitment:

Lord I commit to go and tell by your grace, by your power, by the Holy Spirit. Here I am (silence)

Go and tell God is still God
God still sits on his eternal throne
God is the author of compassion
God is the author of hope
Go and tell of God’s abounding grace

Commitment:

Lord I commit to go and tell by your grace, by your power, by the Holy Spirit. Help me Lord (silence)

Tell of Amnon – the lustful brother
Who used his male power and strength to rape his sister
Amnon whose lust turned to hatred
Go and tell of the Amnons’ in Africa

Commitment:

Lord I commit to go and tell by your grace, by your power, by the Holy Spirit. Help me Lord (silence)

Go and tell that rape is wickedness
Go and tell that it dehumanises
Both the perpetrator and the survivor
Go and tell rape is an abomination to God

Commitment:

Lord I commit to go and tell by your grace, by your power, by the Holy Spirit. Help me Lord (silence)

Poem by Olivia Wesley
REGIONAL ACTION PLANS FOR THE TAMAR CAMPAIGN

The participants were finally asked to carry out a review and plan of action for the work they will do after this process of contextual bible study Plan of Action;

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- Firstly, to reach out to other Southern Africa countries not represented in the workshop
- To host a regional workshop to popularise contextual bible study as an avenue to discuss societal concerns particularly sexual and gender based violence
- To officially launch the TAMAR campaign in other parts of southern Africa other than South Africa within the year, the launch will involve key church leaders and all stakeholders and to ensure effective participation Portuguese translation and interpretation
- Through the Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, liase and collaborate closely with the Fellowship of the Christian Councils in South Africa (FOCISA), AMECEA (The Catholics) to coordinate programmes and ensure involvement of theological colleges, lay centres and other ecumenical bodies
- To spread the message of contextual bible study on the electronic media
- To develop a television program addressing issues of violence
- To launch a TAMAR campaign website

WEST AFRICA

- To incorporate the TAMAR campaign on the agenda of the Fellowship of Christian Councils of Churches in West Africa (FECCIWA) and other Christian bodies in West Africa
- Ensure incorporation of the TAMAR campaign and issues of sexual and gender
based violence on the curriculum of theological institutions
• To develop effective information gathering and dissemination of issues in sexual and
  gender based violence
• Implementation of the TAMAR campaign in local churches
• Active liaison with national councils, local NGO’s, diplomatic missions and national
  HIV/AIDS programmes

EASTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA

• To marshal and lobby financial and human resources for the TAMAR campaign
• To get involved in effective networking with other activist groups and to provide
  bible study materials
• To network with churches and institutions using contextual bible study
• Meet in 2006 in Uganda to assess progress of the programme
• Use local, national and regional church media resources to create awareness
• To influence the Christian Religious Education curriculum
• To get engaged in publishing of articles and publications on sexual and gender based
  violence

AS INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS

Seeing as most participants were representatives from various institutions and some
are pastors and reverends within churches, they felt the need to recognise their
accountability to each other and need to realise our investment that has been made to
facilitate the workshop, they also saw the potential that this gathering of dynamic and
influential people they decide to the do commit themselves to do the following:
• Carry out documentation and research on the issues of violence
• Interact with other theological consultants, other faith based organisations,
• Ensure ownership of the contextual bible study as a tool to address social concerns
• Ensure structures are put in place to carry out the Tamar campaign
• Share learning from the workshop especially with the Christian councils and through the pulpit
• Facilitate interdisciplinary seminars, conferences, around the theme of violence
• Ensure the issues of violence are incorporated in curricular
• Those involved with drawing up the lectionary will ensure the Tamar and other unfamiliar texts are read on Sunday
• Ensure similar launching of the Tamar campaign in individual countries
• Seek creative ways of using the media and use the Tamar text for discussions in panel meetings
• Promote small groups and bible study’s
• Create awareness on the issues especially among women within the structures of the ecumenical centres which has various offices ensure that the campaign is talked about
• Ensure continued information sharing amongst each other

APPENDICES
A. Participants list
B. Press statement
C. Seminar timetable
D. Speech by Dr. Nyambura at Tamar launch
E. Questions presented at Tamar launch by Dr. Sam Nthenya, Nairobi Women’s Hospital

Appendix B
PRESS STATEMENT
THE TAMAR CAMPAIGN: BREAKING THE CHAINS OF SILENCE

In the Biblical book of Samuel, Tamar one of King David’s daughters is raped by Amnon, her half-brother. What ensues is a tale of shame, deception and ultimately, revenge. The important lesson of the story however, is that despite the trauma suffered at the hands of her half-brother, Tamar speaks out against the dishonorable act and ‘puts ashes on her head’- a public demonstration of her ordeal.

The Church in Kenya as God’s instrument cannot afford to be silent in the face of escalating violence against women and children. Violence against women and children is an evil that is ignored, tolerated and even perpetrated by society. The Tamar Campaign seeks to acknowledge the existence of gender-based violence and to challenge churches to address the problem.
We have chosen Tamar as a symbol for our campaign against the abuse of women and children not only to remember her as a survivor of violence, but to remember also the often-forgotten fact that she actually spoke out against her abuse. She is therefore a symbol of strength and courage. Even in our present context, Tamar’s powerful act should encourage the Church in particular, and the society at large to speak out on violence against women and children.

**Aims of the Tamar Campaign**

Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa (FECLAH) and St Paul’s United Theological College in partnership with World Council of Churches will launch the Tamar campaign on the 25th of February 2005. The Campaign has the following objectives:

- To raise awareness among churches and other religious communities on the problem of gender-based violence and to encourage them to openly speak out against the abuse of women and children
- To encourage churches to provide support and opportunities for healing for victims of abuse
- To promote contextual Bible studies dealing with violence against women and children
- To encourage churches to collaborate with the police, hospitals, and civil society organizations and utilize community policing to address gender-based violence
- To create an awareness of the link between gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS
- To encourage treatment and rehabilitation of perpetrators of violence

**What do we mean by violence against women and children?**

Acts of violence against women are diverse in nature. They can be physical as well as psychological. Often, when referring to violence against women, most individuals do not recognize that psychological abuse - such as shouting, and verbal humiliation is also a form of violence. In addition, the term violence against women is used to refer to both acts of battery, as well as acts of a sexual nature, such as incest and rape.

Violence therefore involves the following:

- Wife beating
- Stripping
- Sexual harassment
- Rape
- Shouting and verbal humiliation
- Pushing and shoving
- Insulting the decency of a woman, for instance saying that a woman is a prostitute in order to lower her character in the eyes of other persons
- Intentionally touching the private parts of a woman without her consent
- Child molestation, defilement and sodomy

**What are the myths surrounding violence?**

One of the difficulties encountered in addressing violence against women is that society has adopted
many myths surrounding the topic, particularly in the context of domestic violence. Many people in our society believe these myths to be true, and by doing so justify the violence. The following are some of the myths surrounding violence against women and children:

- Domestic violence is just a way of ‘disciplining’ the wife.
- Women provoke wrath by their nagging
- Women deserve to be sexual harassed and raped when they dress in a provocative manner
- Only poor and uneducated men beat their wives
- Women who remain with their violent husbands enjoy being beaten
- Defiling or raping a virgin can cure HIV/AIDS

What are the consequences of violence?

The consequences of violence are far-reaching. Survivors of violence may suffer physical injuries as well as psychological trauma. In extreme instances, some victims are physically maimed for life, while violence may also result in death. In cases of sexual violation, survivors can contract sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS or end up with unplanned pregnancies.

The consequences of violence are felt not only by the survivor but also by those around her. In the home, children often witness or are even the direct targets of the violence. Children often experience psychological trauma as a result of living in an abusive environment.

Violence can also have consequences on the family’s income and livelihood. For instance, women victims of violence often skip work or are unable to engage in income-generating activities due to the effects of the violence. This not only affects home economics, but also the economy of the nation, which is estimated at 100 Billion Kenya Shillings (USD. 72.5 million).

What role can the Church and other religious bodies play?

The Church and other religious bodies have a central role to play in tackling violence against women. The following are some of these roles:

**Education:** The Church can educate its members on violence against women, targeting in particular some of the myths around the subject. The Bible and other religious writings can be used to demonstrate that violence against women is un-Godly and immoral behavior.

**Prophetic voice and lobbying:** The Church can play a leading role in advocating and lobbying for behavior change by perpetrators of violence against women. The Church and other religious bodies have a certain moral influence among the population that cannot be claimed by other institutions, such as the police, judiciary, or even NGOs. The Church should also be a key player in the anti-violence campaigns currently spearheaded by the women’s movement.

**Referral:** The Church can refer survivors of violence to other institutions, as necessary. These include the police, hospitals, women’s rights organizations, and counseling groups amongst others.

Most importantly, the Church should act as a *safe haven* for women survivors of violence.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of all the participants of Tamar Campaign Workshop in Africa taking place at Jumia Conference and Country Home, Limuru, who are gathered from several theological institutions and churches in Africa South of Sahara, allow me to address you in the words of our beloved brother and courageous church leader of our time Nobel Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa. In his inspiring book *God has a Dream: A Vision of Hope for Our Time*, Archbishop Tutu begins each chapter in these words: Dear Child of God. This is the way I wish to address each one of you tonight and at the same time share with you Tutu’s introductory paragraph to his book and I quote.

*Dear Child of God, I write these words because we all experience sadness, we all come at times to despair, and we all lose hope that the suffering in our lives and in our world will ever end. I want to share with you my faith and my understanding that this suffering can be transformed and redeemed. There is no such thing as a totally hopeless case. Our God is an expert at dealing with chaos, with brokenness, with all the worst that we can imagine. God created order out of disorder, cosmos out of chaos, and God can do so always, can do so now in our personal lives and in our lives as nations, globally. The most unlikely person, the most improbable situation  these are all “transfigurable” they can be turned into their glorious opposites. Indeed, God is transforming the world now through us because God loves us (end of quote).*
Dear Child of God, this dinner is hosted for only one thing: to call upon us all to make passionate commitment to end one of the most heinous crime of our time – the sexual violation of female bodies of all ages in this continent and to restore dignity and hope to many shattered lives. In other words, we are demanding accountability of us and the religious and political leaders to get involved in protecting and nurturing life of the most vulnerable citizens of this continent: girl-children and women because they were born female. By doing so, we wish to end the chains of conspiracy of deafening silence that comes from the churches when one Child of God is sexually violated because she is female, irrespective of where that violation takes place. We call on churches and all church-related institutions to become the site of the struggle to end sexual violence. As a clergy person, I would like to put it this way:

It is a scandal, unacceptable and sinful that those of us “set apart” to invite parents and guardians and believers to bring children for dedication and baptism (depending on the practice of the individual church tradition) remain dead silent when children’s bodies are violated and left for dead and/or we argue that, that is the work of law-makers and law enforcement. We have no right to invoke the name of God in blessing that child if we are not prepared to protect the same child when she is in danger.

It is unacceptable to say to a battered, raped woman, God loves you sister and then counsel her to return to the same circumstances. That is being irresponsible and unprofessional.

Dear Child of God, tonight we are here to say: If indeed rape and incest happened in the house of the anointed King of Israel King David as narrated in 2 Samuel chapters 11 and 12; David raping Bathsheba wife of Uriah in time of war and the rape of Tamar, David’s daughter by her half-brother Amnon, how much more does it happen in our homes of baptized women and men, including the home of the clergy? Through contextual bible studies we are saying the church has a big part to play in ending child sexual molestation, incest and rape and all kinds of sexual violence in our homes, churches and society. Similarly, we are saying that theological institutions and theological education programmes by extension are powerful forces that educate church leaders, theologians and theological educators and therefore they must play their role in educating students to develop skills that will enable them to dedicate, baptize and at the same time participate in protecting the same child when in danger of sexual perpetrators. Moreover, churches have a responsibility to reach out to the perpetrators of this heinous crime if indeed our homes, churches, other religious communities and society will become safe haven for us all. Security, safety, justice, healing and peace are on high demand in the lives of many who are a target of this evil deed. We must act now!

Dear Child of God, secondly, we are gathered here tonight to reach out and to build partnerships and alliances with all those who have made commitment to end the most heinous crime in our time. Our vision for hope is that we will become the beacon of light in the deep darkness experienced by all those who have been sexually violated and who yearn for healing, transformation and new life. Together we want to build Tamar Peace Movement to end violence and to restore dignity, hope and life in our bleeding land. Symbolically, we light a candle as simple reminder of our commitment and vision of hope.

Dear Child of God, we therefore invite you to journey with us in this terrain of nurturing healing, trust, hope and life. Today, earlier in the day, we planted a tree at the grounds of St. Paul’s United Theological College, Limuru, to mark the beginning of a new life, a new Movement, a journey that
will take us to unknown land. We encourage all theological institutions, churches and councils of churches represented here to plant a tree so that in the process of nurturing that tree they will be reminded to create theological, ethical, pastoral and liturgical resources that will be part of the balm that will bring comfort, healing and hope to bleeding bodies and shattered lives. In very concrete ways, we are summoned to join all those organizations that have paved the way for us in this daunting responsibility and a number of them are represented in this dinner. Thank you very much for coming and for setting a good example.

Dear Child of God, with these two symbols of light and new life a candle and a tree we bid you to do everything in your power to end this senseless invisible crime. Let us join all those individuals who have shared their painful stories to bring healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and peace in our lives, homes, churches and society at large. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are confident that we will overcome the many obstacles ahead of us and to face the future demands with courage and boldness to usher back our dignity, hope and life. May God our loving and caring Parent bless each one of us tonight.
Breaking The Chain Of Silence

Report by Louise Khabure