



## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### SERVICE PACKAGE FOR VICTIM EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Victim Empowerment Programme (VEP) is a multi-faceted and inter-sectoral programme that seeks to ensure that the criminal justice system is responsive to the diverse needs of victims of violent crimes (especially Violence against Women and Children).

The aim of VEP is to provide a holistic and effective person centered support service for victims of violence & crime. Interventions of both preventative & curative nature are implied.

#### 2. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

To provide care and support services to victims of crime and violence.

#### 3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

VEP is guided by seven key principles. These principles are embodied in values that determine the nature and quality of services for victims, respecting their rights and applying the principles of Batho Pele. The principles are:

- Empowerment
- Human rights
- Participation and Self-determination
- Family-centered Approach
- Accountability, Effectiveness and Efficiency
- Restorative Justice
- Multi-disciplinary Approach

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

**Shelter:** A term used for any building or premises maintained or used for the reception, protection and temporary care of people in stressful circumstances, who voluntarily attend the facility but are free to leave (two weeks up to six months as the need dictates)

**Victim Empowerment:** Is an approach to facilitating access to a range of services for all people who individually or collectively suffered harm, trauma and/or material loss through violence, crime, natural disaster, human accident and/or through socio-economic conditions.

**Victim Support:** empathic, person-centered assistance rendered by an organization or individual following an incident of victimization.

**VEP Center:** a one stop multi-disciplinary centre primarily addressing the trauma related to a specific crisis with which a person has been confronted. (Offer only short-term intervention)

#### 5. LEGISLATIVE MANDATES

- Maintenance Act, 1998 (Act 99 of 1998)
- Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, 1998 (Act 120 of 1998)
- Justice Matter Amendment Act, 1999 (Act 26 of 1999)
- Prevention of Organised Crime Second Amendment Act, 1999 (Act 38 of 1999)
- Administrative justice Act (Act 3 of 2000)
- Access to information Act (Act of 2000)
- Promotion of equality and prevention of Unfair Discrimination (Act of 2000)
- Child Justice Act (75 of 2008)
- Children's Act 38 of 2005
- Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction Act, 1996 (Act 72 of 1996)
- Criminal Procedure Section Amendment Act, 1997 (Act 85 of 1997)
- Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1997 (Act 105 of 1997)
- Witness Protection and Services Act, 1998 (Act 112 of 1998)
- Domestic Violence Act, 1998 (Act 116 of 1998)
- National Prosecution Authority Act, 1998 (Act 32 of 1998)

- Prevention of Organised crime Act, 1998 (Act 121 of 1998)
- National Policy Guidelines for Victim Empowerment Social service providers
- Minimum standards for Service Delivery in Victim Empowerment
- Victim's Charter
- Sexual Offences Act 23 of 1957
- Older persons Act 13 of 2006
- Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependency Act 20 of 1992
- Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act ( Act 7 of 2013)

#### **Core intervention Strategies**

- Education and Training of personnel and consumers of the services.
- Establishing services and programmes.
- Render counseling services to victims of crime and violence
- Conduct awareness and preventative programmes at local schools and within communities.
- Assist victims of domestic violence with appropriate and suitable accommodation within shelters and safe houses.
- Give support to victims as witness during trial.
- Research, monitoring & evaluation.
- Building skills
- Capacitating management structures.
- Creating awareness/providing information.

#### **Prevention:**

Aims to stop violence before it occurs.

Outreach programmes,

- Awareness campaigns at schools, men's groups, women's groups, churches and community based organizations, radio talk and community campaigns.

Activities:

- Inform communities on availability of an access to resources
- Provide information on referral procedures
- Identify early warning signs
- Develop programmes that will protect young people, families and other community members from becoming potential victims or perpetrators.
- Counseling

#### **Early Intervention:**

This include parental skills development, debriefing and therapeutic services focusing on empowerment of women and children exposed to mild or moderate domestic violence within the onset phase of domestic violence.

Drop in centers: overnight shelter for emergency services for victims.

Safe houses in the community

- Debriefing
- Over night facility for survivors
- Meals
- Counseling ( lay and trauma)
- Home visits (follow up and monitoring)
- Establishment of support groups and group therapy
- Transportation of destitute clients.
- Support services
- Referrals

#### **Statutory: (court services)**

- Court preparation for victims
- Give support to victims at court
- Care and supervision of child witness at court
- Intermediary services
- Counseling

#### **Continuum of Care: (shelter services)**

Shelters

- Therapeutic and Rehabilitation programmes
- Skills development
- Promotion of healthy life style
- Family enrichment programmes
- Essential behavioral therapy and educational programmes for children.
- Counseling

- Referrals

**Re-unification services.** (reintegration services to the community)

- Counseling
- Family enrichment
- Home visits
- Reintegration

**Priority Targets**

- Violence against Women
- Abused Children
- Victims of Domestic Violence (Gender Based Violence)
- Victims of Sexual Assault and Rape
- Abused Older Persons
- Abused People with Disabilities
- Victims of Human Trafficking
- Victims of Hate Crimes
- Farm Workers and Dwellers
- Ex-Combatants

**6. INDICATORS**

- Number of victims of crime and violence in funded service sites
- Number of victims of crime and violence receiving psychosocial support

**7. REGISTRATION**

- Organizations rendering services to victims of crime and violence should be registered as NPOs with the NPO Act 71 of 1997.
- Organizations rendering services to victims of Human trafficking should be accredited by the Department of Social Development in terms of the TIP Act No 7 of 2013

**Key Stakeholders in VEP**

