



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

The Year of Becoming

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01.

OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE

STATISTICS

2000+

women assisted through our legal advice unit

890 000+

people reached through social media

15

cases in litigation

15

future feminist lawyers trained through our feminist clinic

02.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

– *Charlene May* –



How do we ensure that the work that we do has the impact needed to make real change in women’s every day lives? This question guided us throughout 2025.

Alongside managing a leadership transition, 2025 also marked the end of our five year organisational strategy. We knew it would be a year of introspection and reflection. While this period could have presented multiple seemingly insurmountable challenges, there is such a deep rooted commitment among our staff to the organisation, its vision, and its mission that, despite some apprehension, we moved forward with a shared sense of resilience.

We undertook a process of redefining what it means to work for the Women’s Legal Centre and what our shared values and organisational culture should look like as a feminist workplace. Defining these values, and committing ourselves to living them both within our organisation and through our work, strengthened our bonds and united us around a shared value base.

We also assessed the impact of our work and reflected on our previous strategy. This allowed for honest reflection on the work we do, the impact we seek to achieve, and way in which we work. Collaboration and being a participation in networks have always been central to our approach, but through this review process we came to appreciate the importance of being even more intentional about the partnerships we build and the networks we engage in.

The review also reaffirmed that we do meaningful and impactful work, while highlighting the need to dedicate time to monitoring, evaluating and learning. Strengthening these areas will deepen our impact and enable us to better understand, measure, and appreciate the effectiveness of our strategies and ways of working.

The journey of building our organisational resilience has only begun. The leadership transition and the process of reconnecting with ourselves, the values we hold dear, and our vision and mission, would not have been possible without the wonderful support of Jesse Turton, who held us with kindness and grace; the team at Intrac, for believing in our impact; and the formidable duo of Rikki Minyuku and Rosie Motene, who reaffirmed our purpose and made us dance.

By dedicating time to understanding ourselves as feminists, activists, and lawyers, we are confident that we will enter our new organisational strategy with clarity, purpose, and a strengthened commitment to advancing substantive equality for women in all their diversity.

This period of transition did not hinder our ability to continue our work. Throughout the year, we continued to influence policy and law, while ensuring women’s voices were heard in courts and tribunals across the country.

The pages of this Annual Report capture some of the highlights of our work. None of it would have been possible without the support of our donor partners, who believed in us and chose to invest in changing the lives of women in South Africa.

03.

ABOUT THE WOMEN'S LEGAL CENTRE

The Women's Legal Centre (WLC) is an African feminist legal organisation that has championed women's rights and equality for over 25 years. We are the only public interest law firm dedicated to advancing women's rights in South Africa. Our dedicated team of attorneys, paralegals, and support staff specialise in feminist litigation, using strategic legal interventions to effect systemic change. Based in Cape Town, the WLC's impact extends nationally, regionally, and internationally, fostering collaboration and driving progress in the pursuit of equality for women.

04.

OUR VISION

We envision a world
where all women in their diversity can fully
and equally realise their rights.

05.

OUR VALUES

INTEGRITY & TRUSTWORTHINESS

Guided by our feminist principles, we act with integrity, building trust and credibility in who we are and the work we do. At the WLC, integrity means aligning our actions with our feminist principles, and holding ourselves to the same standards of justice, fairness and equality that we demand of the systems we challenge. Trustworthiness is the outcome of this integrity.

BRAVERY

Bravery is not the absence of fear, but standing firm despite it, with audacity and commitment to challenge injustice and the systems that fail women.

ACCOUNTABILITY & TRANSPARENCY

Taking responsibility for our work and being accountable to the women we serve, our funders, partners, and ourselves through communication that creates openness and clarity.

RESPECT

Valuing other’s feelings, wishes or rights even when we differ. Listening to learn as opposed to answer. Consistent actions regardless of who they are.

INTERSECTIONAL FEMINIST LENS

Recognising the multidimensional identity of women, enabling the creation of a more inclusive environment that nurtures and embraces the full diversity and identities of our employees, clients, and partners.

COMPASSION

Holding space by seeing and understanding what others are going through with empathy, responding with kindness and care, while also supporting our own well-being. Being present, gentle, and grateful for the opportunity to support one another and grow together through our shared humanity.

COLLABORATION & SOLIDARITY

Working together while respecting each other’s agency and differences, to achieve a shared vision of substantive equality.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Enhancing personal skills, knowledge, and attributes to maximise potential and improve quality of life, contributing to the empowerment of women. We are committed to developing new skills, fostering self-awareness, autonomy, ownerships, goal setting, and confidence in the decision-making of women.

06.

HOW WE WORK

WE LITIGATE

Our litigation is grounded in African feminist principles, including intersectionality and substantive equality. We centre lived realities of women in our work, recognising that women experience violence and discrimination differently based on race, class, socio economic status, identity, sexual orientation, and nationality.

Through this intersectional lens, we are able to understand the compounded vulnerabilities that women experience because of where they are based in society. We prioritise legal support for black women in South Africa, recognising that they remain in the forefront of discrimination in South Africa.

Our strategic litigation addresses both systemic and interpersonal forms of violence and discrimination. We place the historical and patriarchal context of the law at the centre of our cases, particularly where courts and justice systems further harm women through secondary victimisation.

The Women’s Legal Centre works to challenge legal systems and social attitudes that continue to treat women with caution when they report violence, where survivors are too often disbelieved, blamed, and where their evidence needs to be corroborated before they are believed.

WE ADVOCATE

Our work in this area includes written and oral submissions to the South African Parliament, regional and international human rights treaty bodies, and other relevant organisations.

We also participate in conferences, workshops, and discussions to advance our work on the rights of women. In addition, our media advocacy has proven a valuable tool in spreading our message and amplifying our reach through online and mainstream media.

WE PROVIDE FREE LEGAL ADVICE

At the heart of our work is the Legal Advice Unit (LAU), a lifeline for women seeking justice and a compass for identifying systemic barriers. Every day, women from all walks of life reach out to us via walk-ins, phone calls, emails, WhatsApp, and social media. Our dedicated team of paralegals provide tailored legal advice, ensuring financial barriers don’t stand in the way of justice.

The LAU does more than address immediate legal needs, it sheds light on the systemic issues women face in the workplace, in relationships, and in accessing justice. These daily insights inform our strategic litigation, advocacy, and policy reform efforts, ensuring that our work is deeply rooted in the realities of South African women.

WE COLLABORATE

We support women’s rights organisations and the broader feminist movement with the aim of strengthening women’s voices and advancing women’s rights. By providing legal advice to the social justice sector, women’s organisations and civil society networks, nationally, regionally and internationally, we play a role in ensuring that the state and the private sector uphold their responsibilities in terms of the law and women’s rights.

Knowledge is power, and collective action is transformative. Through community partnerships, training, and workshops, we strengthen grassroots access to justice. By equipping human rights defenders, community activists, and first responders with the tools they need, we empower communities to support women effectively.

WE EDUCATE

The WLC is committed to training the next generation of black women lawyers.

FEMINIST CLINIC

The Women’s Legal Centre acknowledges the lack of feminist education and training within legal education frameworks at universities, which contributes to the absence of a gendered lens when addressing the barriers and discrimination faced by women in courts and legal practice. Through the Feminist Clinic, the WLC creates a space for young women in law to engage practically with concepts such as intersectional feminism, gender justice, and transformative legal practice. The Clinic aims to mentor and empower future feminist lawyers while building a network of change makers committed to advancing women’s rights and substantive equality.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

By providing internship opportunities to young women studying law, we can influence how they view the law and encourage them to use it as a tool to advance the rights of women in the future. In turn the WLC benefits from the perspectives and contributions of young women, ensuring that our strategy and work continue to be informed by the diverse experiences and realities of women.

07.

OUR FOCUS AREAS

Guided by the lived realities of women, particularly Black women and those from marginalised communities, we focus on systemic challenges that hinder equality. Our work is a catalyst for transformative change in four critical areas:

THE RIGHT TO LIVE FREE FROM VIOLENCE

At the WLC, we stand firm in our commitment to address violence against women through litigation, law reform, advocacy, protection, and access to justice. In South Africa, women face grave violations of their rights to safety, dignity and privacy which impacts negatively on women and society at large. We take action to combat these infringements, focussing on improving access to state protection from violence, particularly sexual and domestic violence, for women and (girl) children. Our goal is to establish an accessible justice system that acknowledges and supports the unique needs of women affected by violence. We strive for optimal service and protection provided by both the state and private entities, aiming to reduce secondary victimisation.

WOMEN IN WORK

Our focus lies in advocating for the recognition and protection of labour rights, with a special emphasis on women who work in precarious conditions, such as domestic workers, migrant workers, farm workers and sex workers. Despite existing labour laws in South Africa, women continue to face barriers with regards to accessing employment and securing decent working conditions, making our mission even more crucial.

EQUALITY IN AND OF RELATIONSHIPS

We focus on the advancement and recognition of women’s independent rights in, and on the dissolution of, a relationship, so as to ensure fair and equitable access to resources and rights within the relationship, as well as once a relationship may end.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

We understand that navigating the healthcare system can be daunting for women, hindering their ability to make autonomous choices about their physical and mental well-being. Furthermore, there is a lack of accountability mechanisms within the state healthcare system. We take on cases that champion women’s rights to make reproductive choices and advocate for non-coercive, violence-free, and discrimination-free access to reproductive healthcare.

08.

MEET OUR TEAM

OUR LEGAL TEAM



CHARLENE MAY
DIRECTOR



BRONWYN PITHEY
ADVOCATE



CHRISCY BLOUWS
ATTORNEY



KHENSANI MOTILENI
ATTORNEY



KHULISO MANAGA
ATTORNEY



ANDREA-JOY JANTJIES
JUNIOR ASSOCIATE



SHEILA MATROOS
PARALEGAL



BUSIWE NKOLOZA
PARALEGAL



ARETHA LOUW
LITIGATION SECRETARY

OUR ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM



ANNETTE BROOKS
FINANCE OFFICER



RUTH DAVIS
OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR



NWABISA NTSHIBELO
RECEPTIONIST



LETHUKUTHULA NGWENYA
JUNIOR FINANCE OFFICER



ESTELLE MALGAS
OFFICE ASSISTANT



ZAKKIYYA ABDURAHMAN
GRAPHIC DESIGNER

OUR TRUSTEES



ANIEKA GAMIET
BOARD CHAIRPERSON



JAMEELAH OMAR
TRUSTEE



DEIRDRE SMYTHE
TRUSTEE



REBECCA HLABATAU
TRUSTEE



NOXOLO SILEVU
TRUSTEE



SIPHOKAZI MTHATHI
TRUSTEE

09.

LITIGATION

HISTORIC JUDICIAL CONDUCT TRIBUNAL

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN OUR COURTS: THE CASE OF A JUDGE PRESIDENT

The first sexual harassment matter to be dealt with by a Judicial Conduct Tribunal in South Africa’s constitutional era.

This landmark matter exposed the realities of sexual harassment within our courts and demonstrated that members of the judiciary are not immune from abusing their positions of power and authority. As the first Tribunal convened to address sexual harassment allegations against a sitting Judge President, it highlighted the devastating impact of unchecked power and privilege in the very institution where justice is meant to be upheld. The bravery showed by one woman demanded this critical moment of reckoning to advance accountability within one of South Africa’s most powerful constitutional and democratic institutions.

In January 2023, our client, a Judge’s Secretary based at the Eastern Cape High Court, Makhanda, lodged a complaint of judicial misconduct against the Judge President of the Court. She alleged that between June 2021 and November 2022 she was subjected to repeated sexual harassment, including unwanted sexually explicit WhatsApp messages, crude images, and inappropriate conduct both in the workplace and after hours.

The harassment had severe emotional, psychological, physical, and financial consequences for our client and violated her rights to dignity, equality, and a safe working environment. She reported feeling powerless to stand up for herself and feared losing her job. This fear continued after she reported the unwanted conduct to other senior officials in the workplace, who advised her to not pursue the matter further. Despite the fear, intimidation and immense power imbalance she faced, she chose to come forward and seek accountability.

The Judicial Conduct Tribunal sat over three phases during 2025:

- 13 to 24 January
- 05 to 16 May
- 30 June to 11 July

During this time, our client faced secondary victimisation, intimidation, and death threats at her workplace and was ultimately relocated to another province for her safety.

This case challenged a culture of silence that has historically protected powerful individuals and discouraged survivors from reporting abuse. The Tribunal processes was, at times, confusing and inconsistent. Initially, a decision

was made not to broadcast the proceedings, but this was later reversed, allowing both media access and public broadcasting. An evidence leader was appointed from the National Prosecuting Authority but, unlike other Judicial Conduct Tribunals, was not provided with additional support to gather and lead evidence. One of the most concerning procedural aspects was that while the Judge President’s legal team was permitted to extensively cross examine our client, we were not afforded the same opportunity to cross examine the Judge President. As a quasi-judicial process, the Tribunal had broad discretion to determine its own procedures, resulting in significant uncertainty throughout the proceedings.

Beyond the tribunal itself, important conversations were taking place across the media and broader society about the evidence being led and the discriminatory stereotypes women continue to face when reporting sexual harassment and abuse. The matter also highlighted the urgent need for a dedicated sexual harassment policy governing members of the judiciary, exposing a concerning lack of understanding about what constitutes sexual harassment and how it should be addressed. Importantly, this matter reaffirmed that no

individual, regardless of their position, is above accountability. It also demonstrated the importance of transparent processes in restoring public trust in the judiciary and strengthening protections for women in workplaces across South Africa.

Throughout the proceedings, WLC attorneys appeared across national television and radio stations, helping to unpack the legal significance of the matter and the systemic barriers survivors face when reporting abuse by powerful individuals. Coverage included interviews on SABC News and CapeTalk Radio. Through this media engagement, we were able to extend the impact of the Tribunal beyond the hearing itself, using our client’s experience to educate the public and advocate for safer working conditions for women.

The Women’s Legal Centre is proud to have represented our client in this historic matter. Her courage has not only challenged abuse within the judiciary but has also contributed to contributed to creating public dialogue on women’s rights in the workplace and created awareness on the need for safer working conditions for women.

ADMISSION AS AMICUS CURIAE IN THE DECRIMINALISATION OF SEX WORK LITIGATION

In September 2025, the Women’s Legal Centre was admitted as amicus curiae in the High Court litigation seeking the full decriminalisation of sex work in South Africa. The matter was brought by sex workers on behalf of themselves and others.

Our intervention in this case advances a feminist and constitutional argument in support of full decriminalisation and the protection of sex workers’ human rights.

- Through this litigation, we are advocating for:
- The right to safe and decent working conditions for sex workers in the profession
 - Women’s rights to bodily autonomy and freedom of choice
 - The right to dignity and equality
 - The right to work free from violence

Our legal team, led by Charlene May, Chriscy Blouws, Khuliso Managa, and Andrea Joy Jantjies, is participating in the matter on behalf of the Women’s Legal Centre and the Triangle Project.

Our legal analysis is grounded in substantive equality and transformative justice. We believe that the criminalisation of sex work entrenches violence, stigma, and systemic discrimination against some of the most marginalised women and persons with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and sexual characteristics in society.

This case represents an important opportunity to challenge harmful legal frameworks that are rooted in colonialism and apartheid and to advocate for laws that recognise the dignity, agency, safety, and constitutional rights of sex workers in South Africa.

CONSENT AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE LAW TO ACHIEVE JUSTICE

THE EMBRACE PROJECT V MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND OTHERS

In September 2025, the Women’s Legal Centre appeared before the Constitutional Court as amicus curiae in The Embrace Project v Minister of Justice and Others, alongside several social justice organisations working to strengthen South Africa’s response to sexual violence.

This matter challenged how South African law understands consent and intention in rape cases and provided the Women’s Legal Centre with the important opportunity to advance a survivor centred and constitutionally grounded interpretation of sexual offences law.

Building on our work in Director of Public Prosecutions Eastern Cape v Coko, where the Supreme Court of Appeal confirmed that consent must be clearly and affirmatively given, the Women’s Legal Centre continued to advocate for a legal framework that properly reflects women’s rights to dignity, bodily autonomy, equality, and freedom from violence. Our purpose in this matter was to engage with how sexual offences law should be interpreted, particularly in relation to the definition of rape and the elements that constitute the crime.

Our submissions focused on the role of intention in rape cases and argued that rape is not a crime of accident or negligence. Sexual violence occurs within a society shaped by deeply entrenched gender inequality, harmful stereotypes, and violence against women, and our legal system must recognise these realities when interpreting and applying the law. We affirmed that any other interpretation or application of the law fails to recognise the purpose of criminalising sexual offences against women, and unfairly burdens survivors in the justice system.

We also reminded the Court that myths about the “perfect” or “reasonable” victim continue to influence how rape cases are understood and decided. These harmful assumptions often undermine survivors’ credibility and create barriers to justice.

Importantly, the proceedings also highlighted serious concerns about state accountability. Despite gender-based violence being recognised as a national crisis, the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development did not meaningfully engage on key legal questions

relating to consent, intention, or the adequacy of the current legal framework in one of the country’s most significant legal debates on rape law. Disappointingly, on the day of the hearing, the Minister declined to make any legal submissions to the Court. As a result, organisations such as the WLC were left to ensure that women’s positions were represented and that the Court understood the importance of considering the matter through a gendered lens.

For the Women’s Legal Centre, this case represented more than a legal debate. It formed part of our ongoing work to dismantle systemic discrimination and barriers within the justice system, and to advance a system that is accountable, survivor centred, and responsive to the lived realities of women.

This matter reinforced the importance of sustained feminist legal advocacy in shaping laws that protect survivors of sexual violence and uphold the constitutional rights of all women in South Africa

10.

ADVOCACY

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IS A SYSTEMIC FAILURE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT

SOUTH AFRICA HAD THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF REPORTED RAPE CASES IN THE WORLD IN 2022.

SAPS data confirms:

40,035

rapes in 2017 - 2018

42,780

rapes in 2022 - 2023

42,569

rapes in 2023 - 2024

SOURCE: CEDAW COMMITTEE REPORT ON SOUTH AFRICA



For more than 12 years, the Women’s Legal Centre has used international law to hold the South African government accountable for its failure to prevent and respond to violence against women.

Through the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) process and the GRACE Project, we investigated whether South Africa’s laws are truly protecting survivors in practice.



ABOUT THE RESEARCH

In 2024, the Women’s Legal Centre and The George Institute, conducted a national qualitative study to assess how South Africa’s domestic violence laws and policies are working in practice. Working with MOSAIC, the research included 20 key informant interviews with civil society advisers, women’s rights activists, government and judiciary actors, and human rights institutions involved in South Africa’s CEDAW review process. The findings reveal a justice system where legal protections exist, but survivors continue to face systemic barriers when seeking safety, accountability, and support.

KEY THEMES EMERGING FROM THE RESEARCH

- Laws are good on paper, but poorly implemented
- Lack of accountability among State actors
- Broken protection mechanisms for survivors
- Tensions between government and civil society
- Limited visibility of CEDAW in local practice



LAWS EXIST. PROTECTION DOES NOT. “Police officers don’t even understand what domestic violence is.” - Research respondent Activists have ensured that South Africa has progressive legislation addressing domestic violence and gender-based violence. However, our research found that implementation is undermined by poor training, weak accountability, chronic underfunding, and inconsistent enforcement across the justice system.	SURVIVORS CONTINUE TO BE FAILED “She went to the police. She got a protection order. She was murdered anyway.” - Research respondent Protection orders remain one of the most important legal tools available to survivors, yet research participants described widespread failures in enforcement, delays, and institutional neglect.	ACCOUNTABILITY REMAINS WEAK “We’re put on the back seat – yet we’re the ones holding the line.” – Research participant in civil society The research revealed major gaps in accountability across institutions responsible for implementing the legal framework and ensuring the protection of women. Civil society organisations continue to carry much of the burden of supporting survivors, while government systems remain fragmented and under resourced.
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These findings paint a picture of systemic failure.

An effective and responsive justice system recognises that a legal framework needs to be underpinned by an equally effective, responsive and accountable implementation system. Despite our progressive laws intended to protect women from violence, the systems that underpins access and which is responsible for implementing those protections remain fragmented, under resourced, and inconsistent across duty bearers on the side of the state. From police stations to courtrooms, survivors continue to encounter systemic barriers that place their safety and dignity at risk and which effectively denies them access to their rights to safety, security, and bodily integrity.

The research confirms what women’s rights organisations and survivors have long known: legal reform alone is not enough. Without political will, accountability, proper resourcing, and survivor centred implementation, protection on paper does not translate into protection in practice.

For the Women’s Legal Centre, this work remains about more than documenting failures. It is about continuing to hold the South African government accountable to the rights and protections it has committed to under both domestic and international law.

FROM PUNISHMENT
TO PROTECTION:
REFRAMING CHILD
RELINQUISHMENT,
ADOPTION, AND
CHILD MARRIAGE IN
SOUTH AFRICA

On 25 October 2025, the Women’s Legal Centre made submissions to the Minister of Social Development on the Children’s Amendment Bill 2025, calling for a feminist, rights-based approach to child protection and reproductive justice.

Our submissions focused on three deeply interconnected issues:

- Child abandonment and safe relinquishment
- Adoption processes
- Child marriage

Together, these issues are at the heart of our fabric as a society, because they reveal the ongoing failure of South Africa’s social development and public health systems to adequately support women and children. Grounded in the lived realities of women, particularly young, poor, Black, rural, and marginalised women, our submissions challenged punitive and outdated approaches that continue to criminalise women instead of addressing the systemic inequalities that shape their ability to make choices.

Child Relinquishment Cannot Be Understood Outside of Systemic Failure

Child abandonment in South Africa must be understood within the wider context of poverty, gender inequality, limited access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, and inadequate social support systems.

Our submissions highlighted how healthcare and social welfare systems continue to fail women through:

- Contraceptive stockouts
- Limited access to safe abortions
- Inadequate adoption services
- Stigma and discrimination in healthcare settings
- A widespread lack of rights based reproductive information and support

These failures often leave women without safe, lawful, or accessible alternatives.

What many South Africans do not know is that child abandonment is a criminal offence. Yet despite the intention that criminalisation would act

as a deterrent, it has had little impact. Almost weekly, we continue to read reports of babies and young children being relinquished.

In our submissions, we argued that abandonment should not be viewed simply as a criminal act of malice, but rather as a manifestation of deep social inequality in our communities, compounded by systemic barriers to accessing reproductive health care and the state’s failure to provide a functioning child care system through its foster care and adoption system.

Criminalising societal safety nets:

The Women’s Legal Centre rejected the Department of Social Development’s proposal to classify the use of baby savers or baby boxes as a form of abandonment.

This approach dangerously conflates acts of preservation and compassion with neglect and risks driving safe relinquishment practices underground, leading to unsafe abandonment and preventable infant deaths.

We further argued that the criminalisation of abandonment disproportionately punishes women who are not in a position to raise the children they birth, while ignoring the structural conditions that place them in crisis.

Our submissions therefore called for the Children’s Amendment Bill to move away from punishment and toward protection by:

- Explicitly recognising and regulating safe relinquishment
- Protecting women who safely relinquish infants from prosecution
- Ensuring relinquished infants are swiftly integrated into child protection and adoption systems

The continued criminalisation of child abandonment without lawful safe relinquishment provisions is inconsistent with the rights to dignity, equality, reproductive autonomy, and the best interests of the child protected under the Constitution.

It also conflicts with South Africa’s obligations under international and regional human rights instruments, including CEDAW and the Maputo Protocol.

Continued from page 31

Adoption Systems Must Protect Dignity and Choice

Our submissions further emphasised that child abandonment and adoption are not separate issues. Both reflect the consequences of a system that has failed to provide women with safe, accessible, and non-punitive reproductive choices.

A functional adoption system that protects privacy, dignity, and autonomy would help prevent unsafe abandonment by ensuring that women have meaningful alternatives when they are unable or unwilling to parent.

However, our submissions highlighted that South Africa’s adoption system remains marked by:

- Administrative delays
- Excessive bureaucracy
- Lack of confidentiality
- Stigma surrounding adoption

At the same time, the number of adoptions continues to decline despite growing numbers of children in need of permanent care.

In response, the WLC recommended the inclusion of a new section, 229A, in the Children’s Act to explicitly recognise the rights of parents, particularly mothers, within adoption processes.

This provision would affirm the right to private and confidential adoption processes and require social workers to respect those rights.

We also opposed proposed amendments to section 234 that would expand post adoption agreements to include extended family members and interested parties. We argued that these amendments risk reintroducing harmful practices and undermining the rights and autonomy of birth mothers and adoptive parents.

Ending Child Marriage Requires Closing Every Legal Loophole

The Women’s Legal Centre welcomed the Bill’s proposal to prohibit child marriage, but argued that the amendment does not go far enough.

Despite constitutional protections and international obligations, child marriages continue to occur in South Africa through loopholes in existing legislation that allow children under eighteen to marry with consent under certain circumstances.

This practice violates children’s rights to dignity, equality, education, and freedom from violence and exploitation.

We therefore recommended that the Children’s Act be amended to explicitly prohibit all forms of marriage or engagement involving persons under the age of eighteen, under any law, religion, or culture.

We further proposed that any child involved in a marriage or forced union be recognised as a child in need of care and protection.

Through these submissions, the Women’s Legal Centre called on the Department of Social Development to reject punitive and regressive approaches that criminalise women and children for circumstances rooted in systemic failure.

Instead, legislative reform must move toward compassion, care, accountability, and meaningful support systems.

The law cannot claim to protect women and children while punishing them for the failures of the state itself.

The link to our full submission is available [here](#).

NXME HIM:
CHALLENGING A
LAW THAT SILENCES
SURVIVORS

In South Africa, a person accused of a sexual offence cannot be named publicly before they plead in court.

Section 154(2)(b) of the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977 provides that:

“No person shall publish in any manner whatever any information which reveals or may reveal the identity of an accused who is under the age of 18 years or of a person against whom an allegation that they committed a sexual offence has been made, until such accused or person has pleaded to the charge.”

In practice, this law has become a tool that silences survivors, supporters, and the media while shielding accused perpetrators from public scrutiny.

Unlike other serious crimes like murder or armed robbery, where the accused can be named immediately after arrest, only cases involving sexual offences and extortion are subject to this kind of legal secrecy. While extortion is included in the provision, it is sexual violence complainants who are most harmed by its silencing effect.

The consequences are devastating: Survivors who speak publicly risk criminal charges carrying potential fines or imprisonment for up to 3 years.

THE CATCH: It can take months or usually years for the accused to plead in court.

During this time, survivors and supporters are unable to publicly identify the accused, making it far harder:

- For other victims to come forward and expose serial rapists
 - To gather eyewitness or other witness testimony
 - For new forensic evidence to be collected
- Effectively, justice is delayed or denied altogether

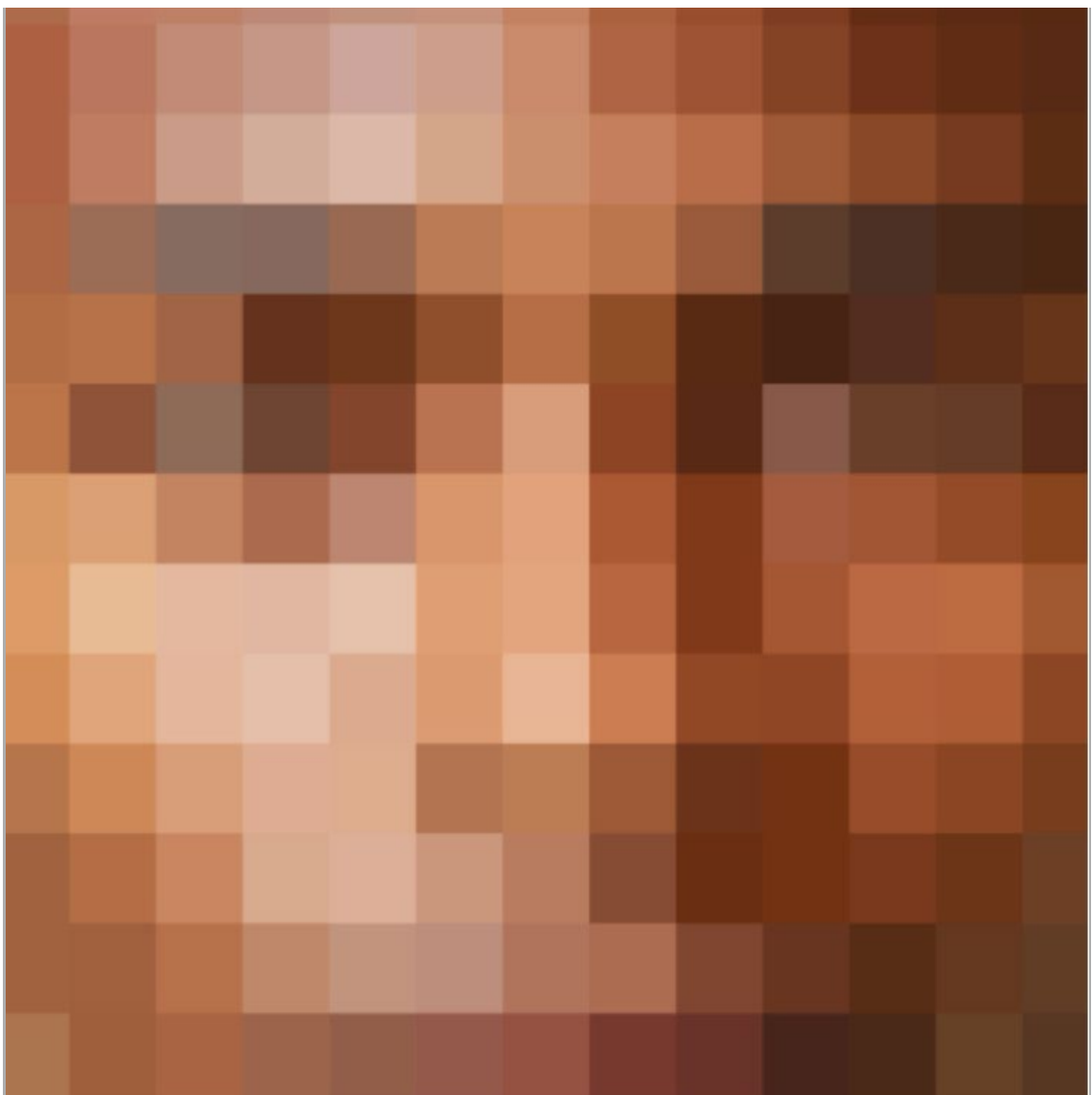
A FEMINIST CONSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGE

The Women’s Legal Centre is challenging the constitutionality of section 154(2)(b) as part of a broader feminist litigation strategy confronting systems that punish women for speaking out about violence. One of these matters involves community activist Ms Caroline Peters, who publicly named the alleged perpetrator of a rape survivor she was supporting before he had formally pleaded in court.

The accused subsequently laid criminal charges against Ms Peters for allegedly violating section 154(2)(b).

Our litigation argues that the provision:

- In South Africa where most victims of sexual violence are women, this law disproportionately harms women and undermines their credibility as survivors.
- Violates women’s constitutional rights to equality and freedom of expression



- Discourages survivors from speaking out and undermines investigations and prosecutions
- Furthermore, this law reinforces harmful stereotypes that women make false reports against men, and that protecting the reputations of men matters more than seeking justice.

This litigation is being brought in solidarity with survivors, feminist activists, and allies who believe that naming a perpetrator is an act of courage, not a crime. Our aim is to dismantle the legal silencing of survivors and affirm their constitutional rights to freedom of expression, dignity, and equality.

A STORY OF MODERN DAY ACTIVISM

During the 16 days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children we launched Nxme Him, a national public awareness campaign designed to expose the absurdity and harm of section 154 (2)(b) of the Criminal Procedure Act and the effect of the law is that it silences survivors and potentially opens them up to criminal charges.

A key feature in this campaign was the development of the world’s first civil disobedience AI, which enabled survivors across South Africa to symbolically nxme accused sexual offenders through the use of an uncrackable emoji code. This act of civil disobedience enabled women to publicly find their voice.

Why emoji’s?

Because everybody knows emojis are a language and have hidden meanings. For the survivors who joined our campaign it enabled them to use this language of symbols as a form of defiance, reclaiming their voices, through NXME Him.

The Campaign Included

- A national social media awareness campaign
- The Nxme Him website and emoji generator
- A public protest outside the High Court
- A Change.org petition calling for legal reform
- Media advocacy across radio, digital, and news platforms

With only 19 social media posts and minimal paid boosting, the campaign reached more than 304,640 people across platforms and generated national conversation around the silencing of survivors.

The campaign sparked widespread public discussion and attracted coverage across radio, print, and digital media platforms. WLC attorneys appeared on outlets including SAfm, CapeTalk, Channel Africa, and Radio 786, unpacking the constitutional challenge and the harmful impact of laws that silence survivors of sexual violence.

The campaign and litigation were also featured in national print and digital media, including the Cape Times, helping to amplify public awareness and engagement around the issue.

One of the campaign’s goals was to draw the attention of State actors. We succeeded.



Tweet from Deputy Minister of the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Mmapaseka Steve Letsike

Unfortunately after reaching out we were unable to secure a meeting with the Deputy Minister to discuss the issue, but our advocacy continues.

You can explore our emoji generator [here](#)

DECODING DAY:	Our hope is that one day this unjust law will be overturned, and it will no longer be a crime to name an accused rapist. When that day comes the code can be decrypted and rapists identified	approached the Women’s Legal Centre because they believed deeply in the cause and urgent need to challenge laws that silence survivors of sexual violence.	supporters to symbolically nxme accused sexual offenders through encrypted emoji codes.
	Our Partners: Avatar Agency, Spitfire & Aces Up Nxme Him would not have been possible without the partnership, creativity, and generosity of Avatar Agency, Spitfire, and Aces Up, who came together to support the campaign on a completely pro bono basis.	Together, the teams conceptualised and developed the Nxme Him campaign from the ground up, transforming a complex constitutional issue into a bold and culturally disruptive national campaign.	The partnership also produced a powerful short film for the campaign, bringing together the emotional and political weight of the issue through storytelling, film, animation, and visual activism.
	Avatar Agency, one of South Africa’s leading black owned full service marketing agencies,	This included the creation of the campaign identity, visual language, social media assets, protest materials, and the development of the world’s first “civil disobedience AI” emoji generator that allowed survivors and	This collaboration demonstrated the power of creative activism and what becomes possible when legal advocacy, storytelling, and strategic communications come together in pursuit of justice.

CAMPAIGN CREDITS

Creative Strategy, Campaign Development and Design **AVATAR AGENCY**
Film Production **SPITFIRE**
Animation and Post Production **ACES UP**

Watch the Nxme Him short film:
[Here](#)

11.

EDUCATION

AFTER DECADES OF EXCLUSION, MUSLIM WOMEN CAN FINALLY ACCESS JUSTICE

For decades, Muslim women in South Africa were denied legal protection when their marriages broke down. Without legal recognition of Muslim marriages, many women were excluded from rights and remedies available under South African law, leaving them vulnerable to economic insecurity, housing instability, and barriers to justice.

Between 1999 and 2014 alone, the Women’s Legal Centre provided legal assistance to more than 753 Muslim women affected by this legal exclusion. Since then, the number of women approaching the WLC for assistance has continued to grow, reflecting the widespread structural discrimination that disproportionately affects Muslim women

and their children, undermining their rights to equality, dignity, access to justice, and social security.

Women approached the WLC with complex legal challenges relating to divorce, maintenance, inheritance, marital property, pension claims, and the rights of children following the breakdown of a marriage. Many women were left without meaningful legal recourse or protection.

The legal consequences of non recognition were not abstract. They shaped the daily realities of women and their children:

“When your husband abandons you, people in your community treat you differently and make you feel less than a woman.”~ WLC client

“He just left and abandoned us as a family. I went into survival mode. I worked only to provide for my children. It was tough. It wasn’t easy.” ~ WLC client

“My children and I were starving. I had to go to court for maintenance.” ~ Woman at the Community Workshop

A LANDMARK CONSTITUTIONAL VICTORY

Following years of advocacy and litigation in Women’s Legal Centre Trust v President of the Republic of South Africa, the Constitutional Court ruled in 2022 that the failure to recognise Muslim marriages was unconstitutional. The Court found that Muslim women and children had been unfairly excluded from legal protections relating to divorce, inheritance, and property rights.

This landmark victory followed years of litigation through the High Court, Supreme Court of Appeal, and ultimately the Constitutional Court. In 2024, President Cyril Ramaphosa signed the Divorce Amendment Act into law, formally recognising Muslim marriages within the Divorce Act and extending critical legal protections to Muslim women and children.

TURNING LEGAL REFORM INTO PUBLIC EDUCATION

But legal reform alone does not guarantee access to justice. Women must also understand their rights and how to enforce them. In response, the Women’s Legal Centre launched a national public legal education campaign aimed to equip Muslim women and communities with accessible information about the legal recognition of Muslim marriages and the rights now available under South African law.



DIGITAL EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

The campaign included 11 social media posts and a five part video series featuring WLC attorney Khensani Motileni, who unpacked the legal, social, and personal realities facing Muslim women in South Africa following the recognition of Muslim marriages in law. The videos featured interviews with women, including a WLC client, who shared their lived experiences navigating divorce, maintenance, and legal exclusion.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The campaign extended beyond digital platforms into communities across South Africa. WLC attorneys were featured on Islamic radio stations nationally, helping Muslim listeners better understand their legal rights and the protections now available to them. Through interviews on platforms including Salaamedia and Radio 786, the WLC was able to reach Muslim communities directly, using accessible legal education to unpack issues relating to divorce, inheritance, maintenance, and the legal recognition of Muslim marriages.



COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

In partnership with ENS, the WLC also hosted a community workshop focused on divorce, maintenance, and inheritance rights, equipping women and community leaders with practical legal knowledge and tools to support vulnerable women within their communities.



LEGAL SYMPOSIUM

The WLC further partnered with Bowmans to host a legal symposium unpacking the Constitutional Court judgment, legislative developments, inheritance and maintenance rights, and ongoing challenges relating to Muslim personal law. The symposium brought together legal practitioners, advocates, and specialists working to strengthen support and referral networks for Muslim women.

For the Women’s Legal Centre, this work has never been only about legal recognition. It has always been about ensuring that Muslim women are able to live with dignity, equality, and meaningful access to justice. Through litigation, advocacy, and public legal education, the WLC continues to work toward a future where Muslim women no longer have to fight for rights that should have always been protected.

THE WLC FEMINIST CLINIC

BUILDING THE NEXT
GENERATION OF FEMINIST LAWYERS

Despite progressive laws, South African women continue to face significant barriers in accessing justice. Legal education in South Africa continues to lack a feminist perspective, leaving many legal practitioners unequipped to address gender-based discrimination and systemic inequality. The WLC is uniquely positioned to address this gap.

With over 25 years of experience in feminist legal activism, we have been at the forefront of dismantling oppressive legal structures and amplifying women’s voices in South Africa, the region, and internationally. Through the Feminist Clinic, we seek to mentor and empower a cohort of young black feminists in law, fostering a network that will extend beyond the clinic itself to create lasting change within the legal profession and to become change agents in the fight for gender justice.

The WLC hosted its third annual Feminist Clinic from 5 to 8 September 2025 as a residential convening in Cape Town, bringing together 15 law students from eight universities across South Africa. The Clinic created a space for learning, critical reflection, mentorship, and solidarity, while strengthening a growing network of young African feminist legal practitioners committed to advancing gender justice.

- The programme explored a range of issues shaping feminist legal practice, including:
- Feminist theory and legal transformation
 - Feminist solidarity and movement building
 - Feminist litigation in development our jurisprudence
 - Development of laws on violence against women
 - Practical exercises on domestic violence protection orders
 - Solidarity across movements advancing women’s rights
 - The right to education free from violence

The Clinic also connected students with experienced feminist lawyers, activists, and social workers, creating opportunities for mentorship, collaboration, and long-term movement building. More than a legal training programme, the Feminist Clinic is designed to strengthen the capacity of young women to use the law as a tool for social justice and systemic change. It encourages students to critically engage with the law, challenge patriarchal systems, and imagine more just and inclusive futures for women in South Africa.



Following the Clinic, students reflected on how the experience reshaped their understanding of the law, feminism, and their future role within the legal profession:

“I discovered new techniques to use when dealing with clients who are victims of gender based violence.”

“It is a great combination of practice and theory and it changes how you respond to patriarchy and how you approach the law as a woman and a feminist.”

“The Feminist Clinic is an amazing initiative for any woman in South Africa. The knowledge shared can be used to empower yourself and others.”

“Being in a space where you learn about being an African feminist lawyer is as vital as attending class at university.”

Through initiatives like the Feminist Clinic, the Women’s Legal Centre continues to build feminist leadership, strengthen solidarity across generations, and invest in a future legal profession grounded in equality, dignity, and transformative justice.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP ON FEMINIST LAW

Being present and participating in discussions where social justice is prioritised is essential to ensuring that the stories and lived realities of women in their diversity continue to inform rights based discourse

EXPERT SYMPOSIUM ON SOCIAL JUSTICE, HUNGER AND THE CONSTITUTION

~ Stellenbosch University

WLC Attorney Chriscy Blouws participated in a pivotal event addressing food justice in South Africa. The gathering, held on April 15, 2025, featured esteemed speakers including Prof. Thuli Madonsela, and focused on the systemic challenges affecting food security in our nation. Chriscy’s presentation, titled “Constrained Choices, Hunger and Substantive Equality”, focused on the lived realities of women working in precarious conditions and how these vulnerabilities impact their access to food. She highlighted the urgent need for a legal framework that centres the rights and dignity of women in the pursuit of food justice.

JUST TRANSITION & CLIMATE JUSTICE: LEGAL STRATEGIES FOR LABOUR LAWYERS IN A WARMING WORLD

WLC Attorney Chriscy Blouws joined global legal scholars and practitioners in a closed webinar hosted by International Lawyers Assisting Workers Network. The theme: Just Transition & Climate Justice: Legal Strategies for Labour Lawyers in a Warming World. She reflected on the need for feminist legal strategies that protect women living in precarious circumstances, and why an inclusive climate policy must account for who is being left behind. We are proud to contribute to global conversations like this, because our work extends to all aspects that disproportionately affect women. This event was to launch a publication where the WLC produced a chapter reflecting on the importance of viewing climate justice through a feminist lens.

WORLD SEXUAL HEALTH DAY

WLC Attorney, Khuliso Managa joined a powerful line up of speakers from healthcare and youth sectors, where she unpacked the legal rights of adolescents to access Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights services. The webinar focused on the realities faced by young women, and the importance of accurate information to help them make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

SEMINAR: THE CASE TO DECRIMINALISE SEX WORK

WLC Attorneys Chriscy Blouws and Khuliso Managa in conversation with Nomfundo Ramalekana and Pierre De Vos, held a seminar with students at the University of Cape Town to unpack the case on decriminalisation of sex work in South Africa. The conversation reflected on the historical context of sex work and its criminalisation, including the history of advocacy towards decriminalisation, up to our admission as Amicus Curiae.

PUBLIC INTEREST LAW GATHERING

Theme: Signed, Ratified, Ignored – GBV and the implementation crisis across South Africa
WLC Junior Associate, Andrea-Joy Jantjies joined the discussion which examined how legal promises of freedom remain incomplete when governments fail to implement protections for women and marginalised groups. Andrea-Joy shared WLC’s research findings on the implementation of domestic violence legislation and the role of the CEDAW Optional Protocol in holding states accountable for their due-diligence obligations to ensure women’s safety.

12.

OUR LEGAL ADVICE UNIT

2,063
enquiries received

48%
of enquiries received
via WhatsApp

919
termination of
pregnancy enquiries

386
untraceable matters

ACCESS TO JUSTICE THROUGH DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Nearly half of all enquiries were received via WhatsApp, demonstrating how critical accessible and low-cost digital communication channels have become for women seeking legal assistance. Digital platforms continue to play an essential role in connecting women with legal information and support.

TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY

44.6% of total queries | Approximately 77 queries per month | Approximately 3.5 queries per day
Almost half of all enquiries received by the Legal Advice Unit related to termination of pregnancy, highlighting the continued barriers women face in accessing reproductive health services and rights-based information. The volume of these enquiries demonstrates the critical role the WLC plays in supporting women seeking information, referrals, and assistance in exercising their reproductive rights. The data also reveals the impact of public legal education. While social media content relating to abortion rights often receives lower levels of public engagement, the WLC consistently sees a noticeable increase in enquiries to the Legal Advice Unit following the publication of rights-based information on termination of pregnancy. This suggests that women are actively seeking information and support, even when they may not feel comfortable engaging publicly with the content.

UNTRACEABLE MATTERS

Nearly 1 in 5 women who contacted the WLC became untraceable. This is a story about vulnerability and barriers to justice. The 386 untraceable matters reveal the complex realities many women face when seeking assistance. These include:

- Women unable to speak freely or safely
- Women disconnecting before advice can be provided
- Women lacking airtime or stable contact details
- Women reaching out during moments of crisis

These matters remind us that access to justice is not only about legal rights, but also about whether women are able to safely access support when they need it most.

EQUALITY IN AND OF RELATIONSHIPS

Relationship related matters remained one of the largest areas of legal need, highlighting ongoing challenges relating to marriage, divorce, maintenance, and women’s economic security. A deeper analysis revealed that approximately 12% of these matters involved domestic violence contributing to the breakdown of the relationship. This highlights the interconnected nature of violence, economic vulnerability, and family law issues, demonstrating how the impact of violence often extends beyond the immediate harm to affect women’s long term security and wellbeing.

AN INTERSECTIONAL FEMINIST APPROACH

Together, these trends demonstrate why holistic legal support remains critical. Women’s experiences rarely fit into a single legal category, and effective responses require an understanding of how violence, poverty, reproductive rights, and family relationships intersect to shape women’s lives.

This is why the Women’s Legal Centre approaches its work through an intersectional feminist lens. Women do not experience violence and discrimination in isolation, but rather through multiple and overlapping forms of inequality shaped by factors such as race, class, gender, economic status, disability, nationality, and sexual orientation.

Violence is often a symptom of broader inequality. It manifests in many forms, including physical, emotional, economic, sexual, and systemic violence. Understanding these connections allows the WLC to respond not only to the immediate legal issue, but also to the underlying inequalities that continue to prevent women from fully realising their rights.

The work of the Legal Advice Unit extends beyond a single consultation. In some instances, women return to provide updates, seek further guidance, or share the outcomes of the support they received. These ongoing relationships reflect the trust placed in the WLC and demonstrate the power of women supporting women. By understanding the broader realities that shape women’s lives, we are able to respond not only to the immediate legal issue, but also to the underlying inequalities that continue to prevent women from fully realising their rights.

13.

COLLABORATIONS



CSW69

As African feminists, we know that our fight for equality and dignity is deeply connected to the struggles of women worldwide. In these critical times, as our rights to equality, sexual and reproductive health, and climate justice are being debated, we stand in solidarity with women across the globe.

WLC legal team Bronwyn Pithey and Chriscy Blouws represented the Centre at the 69th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York to ensure that women’s voices, especially those affected by inequality, are heard where global decisions about them are made.

Advocate Bronwyn Pithey joined partners, The George Institute, IWRAR-AP, and Jagori in an important panel discussion on turning gender equality commitments into action. The topic “From Recommendations to Reality: A New Tool to Track CEDAW’s Impact” focussed on how governments can be held accountable for their commitments under CEDAW and this new tool can help track real progress in advancing women’s rights.



WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP IN LAW CONVENING – KENYA

WLC Attorney Amanda Stemele, joined women from all over Africa, in Nairobi, Kenya, for the inaugural Women in Leadership in Law Convening, hosted by FEMNET and Co-Impact. The event, created by women, for women, centred honest conversations on the structural, institutional, and legal barriers that continue to hold us back from leadership in the legal field. Together, participants strategised on bold, actionable reforms to build a movement that is feminist, fearless, and focused on gender-just policy change. Amanda brought the voice, experience, and work of the WLC to this critical pan-African dialogue. Because dismantling the systems that silence us starts with leading and leading together.



OBSTETRIC VIOLENCE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

On 16 April 2025 we hosted a workshop on Obstetric Violence in collaboration with Callas Foundation and Mosaic. Obstetric Violence is a widespread but often unspoken form of violence against women experienced during childbirth and reproductive healthcare. We brought together human rights defenders, community activists, and social workers to unpack what Obstetric Violence looks like, how it impacts women’s rights, and how we can take collective action to end it.





GENDER-AFFIRMING HEALTHCARE WORKSHOP

The Women’s Legal Centre in collaboration with Gender Dynamix and PATHSA, facilitated a workshop focused on legal resilience and expert engagement in defence of gender-affirming healthcare in South Africa.

In recent years, healthcare providers find themselves navigating increasing hostile terrain where there has been a notable rise of anti-gender and anti-rights groups targeting both trans and gender diverse people and those who stand in solidarity with them.

The workshop built expert capacity around legal risk management, court readiness, and expert witness preparation in defence of gender-affirming care.

This partnership created a meaningful space to build legal capacity among gender-affirming healthcare providers, organise, co-create strategies, and collaborate in solidarity and shared commitment to this important work.

The workshop reaffirmed the urgent need to protect everyone’s constitutional rights, especially the right to bodily autonomy and access to healthcare.



WOMEN'S HUMANITY FESTIVAL

The Women’s Legal Centre, represented by Amanda Stemele and Aretha Louw, joined over 40 NGO’s at the Artscape Women’s Humanity Festival, which is a celebration of women’s voices, resilience, and rights.

At the event, we showcased our services and provided free legal advice to festival goers.

Events like these remind us that every conversation matters, and every connection is a step closer to a society where women can live and work free from violence and discrimination.



WOMEN’S LEGAL CENTRE X YORK UNIVERSITY UK

International Research Partnership Highlights WLC’s Impact In Advancing Women’s Rights

In 2025, the Women’s Legal Centre partnered with the Centre for Applied Human Rights at the University of York to assess the organisation’s impact in addressing violence against women in South Africa. The research formed part of the WLC’s five-year strategic review process and explored how the organisation advances access to justice, feminist legal reform, and survivor centred support.

Using qualitative research methods, postgraduate researchers conducted interviews with WLC staff, strategic partners, and survivors, alongside extensive desktop research examining the broader context of gender-based violence in South Africa.

The report recognised the WLC as a critical feminist legal organisation working at the intersection of litigation, advocacy, legal education, and movement building. Researchers found that the WLC’s feminist litigation strategy contributes not only to individual legal victories, but also to broader systemic change by influencing legal interpretation, strengthening access to justice, and amplifying the lived experiences of women.

The research highlighted the central role of the WLC’s Legal Advice Unit, which provides accessible legal information, referrals, and support to more than 2,000 survivors annually through telephone consultations, walk ins, email support, WhatsApp, and community outreach networks.

Researchers also identified the WLC’s innovative use of social media as both a public legal education tool and an important access point for survivors seeking assistance. The report noted significant growth in the WLC’s digital reach and highlighted campaigns such as Nxme Him, the Legal Advice Tips series, and



Women’s Rights in Muslim Marriages as important examples of accessible feminist legal education. Importantly, the study recognised the WLC’s holistic and survivor centred approach to justice. Researchers highlighted the organisation’s “basket of care” model, which combines litigation and legal advice with psychosocial support and strategic referral pathways to ensure survivors receive broader forms of care and protection throughout legal processes. The report concluded that the Women’s Legal Centre plays a critical role in advancing access to justice and shaping systemic reform in response to gender based violence in South Africa. It further recognised the organisation’s ability to combine feminist litigation, advocacy, education, and collaboration to create meaningful and lasting impact for women.

14.

WLC IN THE MEDIA

SHAPING PUBLIC DISCOURSE ON WOMEN’S RIGHTS AND GENDER JUSTICE

Throughout 2025, the Women’s Legal Centre continued to shape national and international conversations on gender justice, feminist legal reform, and women’s rights. Through media commentary, thought leadership, and expert legal analysis, WLC attorneys contributed to public discourse across digital and broadcast platforms.



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP & OPINION



INTERSECTIONAL FEMINISM AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

WLC Attorneys, Charlene May, Chricy Blouws, Khensani Motileni, and Senamile Madlala contributed to the latest issue of The Global Labour Rights Reporter. Their essay, “Intersectional Feminism as a Tool to Address Climate Change and a Just Transition for Women Working and Living in Precarious Conditions” highlights how gender, race, and class must be at the centre of climate justice efforts.

Tap [here](#) for the full article



FEMINIST LEADERSHIP & LEGAL TRANSFORMATION

WLC’s Director, Charlene May, was featured in the April edition of Quote This Woman+ where she reflected on her feminist legal journey and the work of the Women’s Legal Centre. From the fight for gender justice from landmark court wins to reshaping law and policy to reflect the lived realities of women.

Tap [here](#) for full article



WOMEN’S RIGHTS IN GLOBAL POLICY CONVERSATIONS

In a Forbes Africa Women’s Month feature on the G20 Summit, Charlene May highlighted the urgent need to centre women’s lived realities in economic and political decision making, particularly in relation to sexual harassment and violence in the workplace, economic inequality, and gender justice.

Tap [here](#) for the full article



LEGAL EXPERT COMMENTARY

- Government’s GBVF Funding Crisis
Bronwyn Pithey for **Mail & Guardian**
- The rise in violence against children
Charlene May for **Eye Witness News**
- House of Horrors: South Africa’s longest-running sexual abuse case
Bronwyn Pithey for **IOL**
- Maternity Pay & Economic Justice
Charlene May for **Mail & Guardian**

PUBLIC EDUCATION

- Legal barriers survivors of sexual violence face
Andrea-Joy Jantjies for **Voice of the Cape**
- Psychological impact of domestic violence
Andrea-Joy Jantjies for **Bush Radio**
- Forced and Coerced Sterilisation in South Africa
Khuliso Managa for **Radio 786**

15.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF 2025

WOMEN’S LEGAL CENTRE TRUST

(REGISTRATION NUMBER: IT 3486/98)
ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	NOTE(S)	2025 R	2024 R
REVENUE	8	14 294 616	15 527 008
OTHER INCOME	9	94962	170 256
OPERATING EXPENSES	10 & 11	(14 411 020)	(15 720 239)
OPERATING DEFICIT		(21 442)	(22 975)
INVESTMENT REVENUE	12	270 299	243 053
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		248 857	220 078

15.

FUNDERS & DONORS

**THE WLC WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR *Funders*
AND *Donors* FOR THEIR CONTINUED *Support*
AND *Contribution* TO THE CENTRE.**

- THE RAITH FOUNDATION • ELMA PHILANTHROPIES SOUTH AFRICA • THE RES FOUNDATION
- THE FORD FOUNDATION • BDP ATTORNEYS • FOLLOWME2AFRICA • FOUNDATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
- GENDER DYNAMIX • HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG • INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S RIGHTS ACTION WATCH
- MAISHA SOCIAL SOLUTIONS • NEDGROUP TRUST FUND • PENSION LAWYERS ASSOCIATION
- INDIVIDUAL GIVERS • ALL IN KIND DONATIONS OF TIME & RESOURCES
- CONSTITUTIONALISM FUND

17.

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