



ACTION UPDATE

MARCH 2014

I AM THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE the launch of JDI-South Africa (JDI-SA). As the cover story in this *Action Update* highlights, JDI has been working for years with South African prison officials, advocates,



and policymakers to address rampant sexual violence in the country's detention facilities. Now, JDI-SA is poised to expand those efforts and ensure that prisoners in South Africa are safe from abuse.

A great deal of work remains to be done. Prisoner rape in South Africa is a human rights crisis, and it will take dramatic culture change to eradicate this violence. It's a massive challenge, but JDI-SA's extraordinary team — led by Sasha Gear, South Africa's leading expert on prison sexual violence — has the talent and dedication to succeed.

As we celebrate JDI-SA's launch, we must not lose sight of the ongoing sexual violence in U.S. prisons. A new federal report, released in January, revealed that shockingly few staff perpetrators are held accountable for raping inmates. This is true even when internal investigations showed clearly that they had committed the abuse.

Sexual abuse is a global problem — and it will take a global effort to end it. Thank you, JDI supporters, for being a part of this movement!

Lovisa Stannow
Executive Director

A Global Movement Needed to Eliminate Prisoner Rape

JDI-South Africa Officially Opens Its Doors

IN 2004, THREE CORRECTIONS officers at South Africa's notorious Pollsmoor prison in Cape Town formed a group called Friends Against Abuse. They were appalled by their prison's high level of sexual violence — and the indifference among many of their fellow staff members toward this abuse. Putting their own careers in jeopardy, they started transferring vulnerable inmates out of the facility's most dangerous units.

These officers' efforts to stop sexual abuse were nothing short of heroic. But the problems at Pollsmoor were deeply rooted and Friends Against Abuse soon realized that they needed outside help. They tracked down the only organization in the

world dedicated to ending prisoner rape: Just Detention International. Soon after that first contact, JDI came to Pollsmoor prison to train selected staff members, launching what was to become a long-term partnership with South African officials and activists aimed at transforming the nation's prisons.

Since the Pollsmoor training, JDI has emerged as a leader in the fight to stop sexual abuse in South Africa's prisons. In collaboration with local partners, JDI has trained hundreds of corrections officials and prison ombudspersons nationwide, developed a sexual abuse policy framework for the Department of Correctional Services, and pushed for greater legislative oversight of prisons. JDI co-founded a national network of al-

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South Africa's prisons, just like those in the U.S., are rife with sexual abuse. JDI-South Africa, which opened its doors in November 2013, is poised to lead the effort to end this violence.

Los Angeles Police Department Works with JDI to Prevent Abuse

EVERY YEAR, MILLIONS of people across America are arrested and placed in police lockups. For many, these short-term detention facilities are their first contact with the criminal justice system. Arrestees are often intoxicated, injured, mentally ill, and fearful about what's going to happen next. If they are treated well and with respect, a police lockup could be their first and maybe their last detention experience. If they are ill-treated, even a short stint in a police holding cell could have a devastating impact on their future. As such, police lockups are a focus of JDI's work to keep detainees safe.

In October 2013, JDI launched a flagship project with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), to ensure that all LAPD lockups are free from sexual abuse. LAPD is one of the country's largest law enforcement agencies, overseeing a population of 3.8 million people in dozens of communities spread across an area 15 times the size of Manhattan. In addition to its community policing responsibilities, LAPD runs five detention facilities, which hold more than 100,000 people each year.

“While people are in our custody, it is our job to keep them safe.”

“The Los Angeles Police Department is committed to reducing crime,” said Captain David Lindsay, the Commanding Officer of LAPD's Jail Division. “That also includes keeping our jails as free from crime as possible. While people are in our custody, it is our job to keep them safe, and that includes sexual abuse. The partnership with JDI will help us do that job even better.”



LAPD Captain David Lindsay

Like jails and prisons, LAPD has a duty to implement the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). By teaming up with JDI, LAPD has made it clear that this duty is a priority. JDI's goal is to help LAPD facilities comply fully with the U.S. Department of Justice's groundbreaking PREA standards, which JDI helped develop. JDI is working with LAPD to analyze and update its policies and practices aimed at ending sexual violence and to train LAPD staff — from top-level officials to recruits fresh out of the academy — in sexual abuse awareness.

“JDI's collaboration with LAPD is primarily about ensuring that detainees are safe from sexual abuse. But it's also about stopping the devastating cycle of incarceration in which so many arrestees get trapped,” said Linda McFarlane, JDI's Deputy Executive Director.

The impact of the LAPD-JDI partnership will be felt far beyond Los Angeles. The project's overarching goal is nothing less than transforming law enforcement practices nationwide. “We believe that this is important,” said Lindsay. “We are proud to be part of the effort to make lockups safer across the United States.”

JDI-South Africa

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lied organizations — the Detention Justice Forum — to fight for the human rights of prisoners, and worked with Sonke Gender Justice, a South African nonprofit organization, to produce the first-ever public testimonies of South African prisoner rape survivors.

To deepen its work in South Africa and build local expertise, JDI established JDI-South Africa (JDI-SA) as an independent entity. JDI-SA — which was incorporated in November 2013 — is separate from JDI, but with the same mission: to end sexual abuse in all forms of detention. The JDI-SA team already has strong ties to leading activists and, following JDI's example, will rely heavily on the wisdom of survivors of rape in prison.

South Africa's prisons, just like those in the U.S., are rife with sexual violence. First-time inmates, as well as gay and transgender prisoners, are targeted with alarming frequency — a grim echo of U.S. prisons and jails. Again like in the U.S., the impact of prisoner rape in South Africa extends far beyond prison walls; upon release, inmates bring all their experiences back to their families and communities. Among prisoner rape survivors, these often include untreated trauma and HIV.

Despite the stark reality facing many South African inmates, JDI considers prisoner rape preventable — in South Africa, in the U.S., and worldwide. That conviction is a founding principle of JDI-SA, and it will always be at the core of its work.

JDI-SA will also continue to work closely with dedicated corrections officials. Prison staff who are human rights champions — like the officers who started Friends Against Abuse — are essential to stopping prisoner rape. As one of Friends Against Abuse's founders, Chris Malgas, put it, “These are human beings we are dealing with. Both the staff and the inmates, they can change. They will change, if we treat them with respect.”

New Federal Report:

Prison Officials Known to Rape Inmates Remain Above the Law

IT TOOK GREAT COURAGE for Ca'Linda to report that she was sexually abused. She was an inmate at a Kentucky prison, and her attacker was a high-ranking official at the facility. Having finally mustered enough courage to file a complaint, investigators did nothing. They called her a liar — if anything did happen, they said, it was *her* fault.

Ca'Linda's story is devastatingly familiar. JDI regularly hears from inmates who report a staff member for abuse only to see their concerns dismissed while their attackers get off scot-free. Ca'Linda's abuser was back on duty just two weeks after she reported him.

A new report from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) has confirmed that the failure to hold staff perpetrators of rape accountable is a widespread problem. Based on official records from prisons nationwide, the BJS found that nearly half of staff who are known to have committed sexual misconduct face no legal action. Indeed, 15 percent of known staff perpetrators — like Ca'Linda's abuser — kept their jobs.

The BJS study showed that in 2011, inmates reported 8,763 instances of sexual violence

through official channels. Only 902 of these reports, roughly 10 percent, were substantiated. The majority of cases were deemed to be “unsubstantiated,” or lacking in sufficient evidence — based on investigations conducted internally by corrections staff.

These figures represent only a fraction of the sexual assaults that occur in U.S. detention facilities. Using data from its most recent inmate surveys, the BJS estimates that roughly 200,000 people were sexually abused in prisons, jails, and youth facilities in a single year.

“If you look at what happened to Ca'Linda, it's not surprising that there is such a huge disparity between the number of official reports of sexual abuse and those made anonymously,” said Lovisa Stannow, JDI's Executive Director. “For those of us who live in the outside world, it's hard to fathom the obstacles to speaking out faced by prisoner rape survivors. Every day, inmates tell JDI that they don't report because they are threatened, or feel that nothing positive will ever come of it.”

Ca'Linda's abuser was finally fired — but only after he assaulted another inmate at the prison. That assault, like all sexual abuse in detention, could have been prevented. When corrections staff are above the law, no one is safe.



New Human Rights Tools for Corrections Officials and Advocates

EVERY PERSON HAS the right to be free from sexual abuse, no matter what. This idea — long championed by JDI — is at the core of a new inmate education video now being shown in prisons and jails nationwide: *PREA: What You Need to Know*.

PREA: What You Need to Know covers inmates' basic rights — and what facilities are required by the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) to do to safeguard their detainees. Developed by JDI, in collaboration with the National PREA Resource Center, the video features a range of presenters: prison and jail officials, JDI advocates, and former inmates — including members of JDI's Survivor Council.

The inmate education video is not the only new resource from JDI. In December 2013, JDI published *Hope Behind Bars*, a detailed guide for rape crisis counselors who are interested in working with incarcerated survivors. The manual gives extensive tips on how advocates can navigate the prison environment and support the drastically underserved inmate population.



No justice: Countless survivors, like Ca'Linda (pictured), see their abusers get away with the crime

PREA: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The video and the accompanying facilitator's guide can be found at bit.ly/1faiR53.



HOPE BEHIND BARS

Download a copy of the publication on JDI's website, at bit.ly/1cqtyOJ.

Your Words of Hope Made a Difference

Prisoner Rape Survivors Show Deep Appreciation for Holiday Messages from JDI Supporters



Over the holidays, JDI supporters sent thousands of messages to prisoner rape survivors. Many survivors — including the men and women pictured above — replied to express just how much these cards meant. (Clockwise from left): Pedro (raped by his cellmate); Maribel (sexually assaulted by a staff member); Juvencia (sexually abused and harassed repeatedly by staff); and Sarah (sexually assaulted by a staff member).

THE BEST PART OF Pedro's day is when the mail arrives. For Pedro, a sexual abuse survivor in a Wisconsin prison, letters are a precious link to the outside world. Over the holidays, there was one mail delivery that had special significance.

"At around 2:45, everyone gets kind of quiet and waits for the officer to pass out mail," Pedro told JDI in a letter. What happened next is a testament to the amazing holiday messages sent by JDI's supporters. "This envelope slides under the door. I started opening the JDI greeting cards and, after about the third one, my eyes started to water. It was as if all of you were here with me in this cell giving me hugs and saying the words I was reading."

Since the holidays, JDI has received countless letters like Pedro's. Ronald, an inmate at a California prison who was sexually abused by his cellmate, said, "I was grateful for the love and light JDI supporters sent into this dark

place called prison. I look forward to one day sending notes to someone locked up. It may be the only card they get, but like me, I am sure it will mean the world to them."

Juvencia, an inmate in Colorado who has endured ongoing sexual abuse and harassment by staff, wrote, "Just knowing that there are so many people who care about how inmates are being treated makes all the difference. I truly appreciate it — thank you."

Maribel, an inmate in California who was sexually assaulted by a prison official, wrote "The cards helped me to see myself and who I really am, and all my negative thoughts went away. I look at them whenever I'm feeling down."

Thank you so much, JDI supporters, for sending thousands of inspiring messages to prisoner rape survivors. Your compassion made a difference!

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