

Pick of the day



Dispatches: The Lost Girls of South Africa

9.00-10.35 C4

★★★★★

According to the Solidarity Helping Hand charity, a child is raped every three minutes in South Africa. A Medical Research Council survey, meanwhile, has found that one in four men admit to having committed at least one rape. This gruelling documentary patiently and sensitively explores some of the human consequences of these resoundingly grim statistics. Deborah Shipley's film ventures into the townships and follows four girls aged between 11 and 13 as they attempt to deal with the aftermath of sexual assault. Two of the girls have been raped by their fathers. In conditions of extreme poverty, these men are also family breadwinners. Moving away isn't necessarily an option.

Tiny, terrified Ntombi knows her attackers by their first names. Because they're under 18, they're 'serving their sentences in the community'. Accordingly, she sees them all the time. She lives in constant fear of a repeat performance and is ostracised at school by other kids who suggest she may have encouraged the assault. In its way, a superb and compassionate film. But you may decide you can think of less taxing ways to spend your Sunday evening. *Phil Harrison*