



16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children 2020

#16Days2020



KEY MESSAGES AND TALKING POINTS

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International Theme: Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!

- a. The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign is an international campaign that's takes place each year from 25 November to 10 December.
- b. 25 November is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and 10 December is Human Rights Day.
- c. It was originated by activists at the inaugural Women's Global Leadership Institute in 1991 and continues to be coordinated each year by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership.
- d. Violence against women and girls, in particular, domestic violence has escalated during the Lockdown phase in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- e. There has been an alarming increase in multiple forms of violence against women and girls, especially physical, psychological, sexual and economic forms of domestic violence fueled by household economic and food insecurity and confined living conditions due to lockdown and social isolation measures. (United Nations Concept Document).
- f. School closures, financial and food insecurity have heightened the risk of violence for girls including sexual exploitation, harassment, and child marriage.
- g. The theme calls on funding for GBV organisations, NGOs and support initiatives, that respond to survivors and preventing gender-based violence.
- h. We must be responsive in our policies, and responses to GBV by being survivor-centred, show respect, consent, elements of safety and confidentiality are upheld.
- i. Work to prevent violence against women and children by developing and implementing evidence-based prevention programmes. Work on moral regeneration programmes that building communities.

- j. Collect refers to collecting stories and telling the stories of survivors. Create opportunities between activities, policy makers and private sector organisations. Feature stories and look at creative approaches to ensure the stories of survivors are not forgotten.
- k. Hold virtual seminars and opportunities to hold conversations and raise awareness on GBVF.

Call to Action – Build a Society where Morality takes Prevalence

- a. Preventing gender based violence and femicide before it happens is critical. Key to this prevention is moral regeneration. Moral regeneration involves recognition and application of universal values as found in section 1 of the Constitution.
- b. Moral Regeneration is aimed at encouraging people to recommit to efforts of building communities grounded on positive values and rededicate to building a caring society in pursuit of creating lasting peace and prosperity in the country.
- c. As part of prevention mechanisms, we need to eradicate ills and build a society where morality takes prevalence. Therefore, a Call to Action to the nation, as well as a thread for media conversations and coverage must hinge on the Call to Action: **Build a Society where Morality takes Prevalence**
- d. We need men and women who understand the true meaning of words such as honesty and integrity, and who have respect for the rights of others. We need to foster greater religious tolerance and cooperation for moral renewal.
- e. Those in authority are obliged to exercise their powers in accordance with the constitution and the law. The property and resources of the state must be optimally used for the benefit of all.
- f. The media must promote positive stories of moral courage and renewal. We need to make our education system highlight moral formation as one of its core functions, both in theory and in practice. The youth are the ones who bear the brunt of moral decay. They are often perceived as agents of immoral behaviour or helpless victims who need some external intervention.
- g. Addressing the complex development challenge of gender-based violence requires significant learning and knowledge-sharing through partnerships and long-term programmes. We need a proactive approach through investment, research and collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

Pillar 1 of NSP: Accountability, Coordination and Leadership

- a. All members in the public service must reflect on how frontline workers have a critical role to play in realizing Pillar 1 of the National Strategic Plan on GBV, which speaks to accountability, coordination and leadership.

- b. The National Strategic Plan on GBV is government and civil society's highest document in coordinating our response to GBVF.
- c. The NSP on GBV comprises of 6 Pillars with Pillar 1 focusing on accountability, multi-sectoral coordination and collaboration across different tiers of government and sections of society.
- d. Public Servants play a critical role in ensuring coordination of efforts to support government's efforts to respond effectively to GBV.
- e. Upskilling of Social Workers, Police Officers, Officials working in the judiciary system to be able to deal with survivors of GBV with sensitivity, offering a victim-centric service, is a very important step in preventing secondary victimization of survivors of GBV, as well as preventing further long term negative mental health effects.
- f. First responders, and support of officials supporting survivors of abuse plays a critical role in minimizing undue strain on survivors of abuse, when being taken through the process of reporting abuse, rape, sexual harassment, attempted femicide.
- g. Accountability and Leadership in the Public Service speaks to senior managers recognizing the seriousness of GBV and ensuring that funding and resource allocation to efforts to respond to GBV are not reduced to respond to COVID-19. GBV is often referred to as the first pandemic South Africa is facing and it is only through decisive leadership in ensuring that GBVF response is adequately resourced that we can succeed.
- h. Public Servants also play a vital role in ensuring that cases of GBV are documented, reported and accounted for.
- i. A strengthened Public Service gives better effect to the pillars of the NSP and impacts directly on the lives of thousands of women.
- j. Public Servants must hold each other accountable for responding adequately to GBVF in South Africa. We all have a role to play in responding to GBV.
- k. Sexual Harassment in the workplace must be eradicated in the Public Sector. Public Servants must hold themselves to highest standards of professionalism and set the benchmark for professionalising work spaces.
- l. Patriarchy and Toxic Masculinity has no place in the Public Service. Public Servants have a duty to report incidents of sexual harassment in the workplace. A strong Public Service relies on bold leadership and ensuring that cases of sexual harassment are treated seriously and handled in a way that preserves the dignity of the complainant.
- m. Pillar 3 of the NSP on GBV speaks to Public Servants working in the Justice, Safety and Protection Cluster to ensure that spaces are safe for women.
- n. Pillar 4 of the NSP refers to Response, Care, Support and Healing – Public Servants must remain impartial, supportive, sensitive and committed to the needs of survivors of GBV.

- o. Public Servants have a major role to play in educating families, friends and communities on GBV, denouncing toxic masculinity, and breaking stereotypical thinking that undermines or reduces the worth and rights of women in society.

Pillar 2: Prevention & Rebuilding Social Cohesion

- a. Pillar 2 of the National Strategic Plan on GBVF titled, **Prevention and Rebuilding of Social Cohesion**, focuses on the elimination of social acceptance of all forms of violence against women, children, and LGBTQIA+ persons through developing and implementing evidence-based programmatic interventions. The NSP states: *Effective prevention means addressing the range of risk factors that drive gender-based violence, femicide and violence and contribute towards the normalisation of violence* (Page 44).
- b. South Africa must Strengthen delivery capacity to roll out evidence-based prevention programmes
- c. Men and boys must form part of these programmes and must voice out condemnation of acts of violence and harassment.
- d. Changed behaviour & social norms within key groups as a result of the rollout of evidence-based prevention interventions must be felt in civil society. We need a society strengthened on moral regeneration values.
- e. We must shift away from toxic masculinities towards embracing positive alternative approaches for expressing masculinities and other sexual and gender identities
- f. There must be optimally harnessed Violence against Children (VAC) programmes that have an impact on GBV eradication
- g. Increased cross fertilisation & integration of prevention interventions on violence against LGBTQIA+ persons with broader GBVF prevention & violence prevention interventions
- h. Strengthened programming that addresses the restoration of human dignity, builds caring communities & responds to historic and collective trauma. This response of healing must be strengthened to ensure functioning communities support survivors of abuse.
- i. Public spaces are made safe & violent free for all, particularly women, LGBTQIA+ and children.
- j. There must be no space in South Africa where gender-based violence is a taboo topic. We need everyone to play their part in condemning acts of violence and reporting all acts of abuse or harassment.
- k. We must address pervasive patriarchal norms that encourage the use of all forms of violence as a socially acceptable practise.

- I. We must debunk ideas of femininity that promote subordination of women in society, and encourage complicity with violence.

Pillar 5: Economic Power

- a. Building women's economic power is critical to elevating women's status in society. Building economic power is not about employment of women, but also about recognition of women as equal players in the economy, as well as being able to contribute to the development of the country in jobs and industries that are male-dominated.
- b. Government and Civil Society must accelerate programmes that address women's unequal economic and social position.
- c. Everyone has a role to play to ensure equal representation of women on boards and bodies, as well as ownership of assets, by women.
- d. Economic opportunities are available for women leaving abusive relationships and situations that have arrested their development.
- e. Reforms in the land and agrarian funding model to ensure equal ownership.
- f. Shelters and housing to be allocated to women, linked to support and development.
- g. Mechanisms to address gender-related inequality in the economy.
- h. The concept of economic justice intersects with the idea of overall economic prosperity. There is a belief that creating more opportunities for all members of society to earn viable wages will contribute to sustained economic growth. When more citizens are able to provide for themselves and maintain stable discretionary income, they are more likely to spend their earnings on goods, which in turn drives demand in the economy.
- i. When women have sustainable incomes they invest in their communities and families buying or growing more and healthier food, investing in their family's health care and medicine, and using their income to pay for their children's education or training. Economically empowered women create healthier, more sustainable, and more equitable societies.
- j. Economic empowerment also allows women agency, and to be able to exit from abusive relationships. Due to economic dependency women find themselves in situations where they must 'tolerate' abuse just to get a plate of food to eat. This is a sad reality and a shame on patriarchal socio-economic systems that place women in harm's way on a daily basis.

Closing of gaps in gender inequalities

- a. We must work to remove the barriers which prevent women from entering and thriving in the labour market as well as other male dominated spaces in society
- b. The promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment is central to government's efforts to combat poverty and stimulate sustainable development.

- c. The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities is a centre of government department which oversees the work of government departments in funding and driving programmes that promote gender equality.
- d. South Africa views violence against women as a violation of human rights and perpetrators of these vile acts must face the law.
- e. All South Africans must act to prevent abuse and to ensure a safer society for women and children.
- f. Government alone cannot eradicate this scourge and calls on all sectors to partner with it in creating safer communities.
- g. Gender-based violence is a societal issue, and must be addressed by all sectors of society.

Government is committed to ending GBV which women and children

- a. Government has a zero-tolerance approach towards abuse.
- b. Government condemns all forms of gender-based violence and calls on all men to respect women's inherent dignity.
- c. Various forms of abuse like economic abuse, blesser syndrome, illegal labour practises, emotional abuse, physical abuse, continue at alarming levels.
- d. Government has set up Thusong Service Centres as one stop centres for services, and these services extend to women requiring help with reporting cases of GBV by facilitating engagements with SAPS and Social Workers.
- e. The Khuseleka Centres offer a continuum of services to victims of crime and violence.
- f. Thuthuzela Care Centres have staff on call to support victims of abuse, rape and violence
- g. White Door Centres serve as immediate shelter for victims of gender based violence in communities.
- h. Victims of gender based violence can call 24 hour toll free number – 0800 428 428.
- i. You can also report gender-based violence to 0800 428 428 for investigation and further action. You can remain anonymous.

Domestic Violence

- a. Domestic violence is the most common form of GBV among partners. It refers to forms of abuse which include physical abuse; emotional, verbal and psychological abuse; economic abuse; intimidation; harassment; stalking; damage to property; etc.
- b. The complainant of domestic violence must be or must have been involved in a domestic relationship with the respondent to qualify for a Protection Order.
- c. In terms of the Domestic Violence Act of 1998 (as amended), a domestic relationship means a relationship between a complainant and a respondent if they:
 - are or were married to each other in terms of any law, custom or religion.

- are of the same or opposite sex, live or have lived together in a marriage or single relationship.
- are the parents of a child or are persons who have or had parental responsibility for that child.
- are family members related by blood relation, affinity or adoption.
- are or were engaged, dating or in a customary relationship.
- share or recently shared the same residence.

Formation of the National Council on GBVF

- In March 2020, Cabinet approved the National Strategic Plan on Gender-based Violence and Femicide (GBVF-NSP). Cabinet also approved the establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Gender-based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) to establish the National Council on GBVF (NCGBVF) and oversee the implementation of the GBVF-NSP.
- The GBVF-NSP is available at www.women.gov.za and www.gbvf.org.za

Women with Disabilities and GBV

- Persons with disabilities must have access to justice and support measures in police stations to enable them to report GBV .
- GBV must be appropriately addressed in Post School Education and Training (PSET) institutions through advocacy, communication, prevention at various levels including security, and support of survivors.
- National organisations of shelters for abused women must provide reasonable accommodation especially women with disabilities, who are GBV victims.
- Women with disabilities who reside in institutions, inclusive of children in boarding school facilities, adults in residential care facilities and adults and children in mental health institutions, have an increased vulnerability to GBV.
- Court-based victim support services and witness protection are available for GBV victims and survivors, particularly in rural areas.
- Emanating from research on GBV in PSET institutions, GBV further manifests in the following ways: Grading or rating of appearance by verbal comment, wolf-whistling, or other noises and the use of work (either academic or administrative) as an excuse for inappropriate, private meetings, etc.