



government
communications

Department:
Government Communication and Information System
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM FOR NO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN KEY MESSAGES

BRIEF:

The annual 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children Campaign is set to take place on 25 November and 10 December 2025 under the theme: ***“Letsema: Men, Women, Boys and Girls working together to end Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF)”***. The theme is anchored on the Positive Masculinity Dialogue which was hosted in the margins of the G20 Ministerial Meeting on 30 October and taking forward G20 outcomes of relevance to GBVF.

This year’s campaign will be marking the 27th anniversary since its adoption. The campaign has over the years raised awareness of the devastating impact that Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) has on women and children, and the social fabric of our society. It has also been used to highlight the societal and systemic causes of GBVF, and to mobilise action at local, national, and international levels to eliminate all forms of gendered violence.

The campaign coincides with the global initiative supported by individuals, organisations, and governments held every year from November 25th (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) to December 10th (International Human Rights Day).

During this period, we are urged to report suspected abuse to the nearest social workers or police station or call the toll-free Crime Stop number: 086 00 10111. Victims of violence are encouraged to use the 24-Hour Gender-Based Violence Command Centre hotline 0800 428 428 to report any abuse. All members of society regardless of gender or age are therefore called upon to actively participate in ending GBVF.

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
<i>GBVF is not a “women’s issue” it is a societal crisis.</i>	• The 16 Days of Activism campaign creates awareness on what needs to change to prevent gender-based violence and femicide in our society. • The campaign is a significant tool for raising awareness and advocating for the rights of women and children. • It mobilises all sectors of society to collaborative action and responsibility towards ending GBVF. • We are called upon to become part of the solution and report all incidents of rape and abuse of vulnerable groups, especially children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. • Our actions can stop the cycle of violence and abuse and deter perpetrators of violence to stop repeat offences and getting away with crime. • We encourage business, community and faith-based organisations to advocate for behaviour change in dealing with the challenge of GBVF. • We appeal to the men of our nation to take a stand and play their part in ending the scourge of violence. • Men can also play a more active role in their families, particularly in raising their sons to be respectful of women.
<i>Government is deeply concerned about the high levels of Gender Based Violence and Femicide in the country.</i>	• Despite concerted efforts by government, civil society, businesses and communities to tackle the scourge, South Africa continues to grapple with alarming rates of GBVF. • In response to high levels of GBVF, government in April this year launched the 90-Day Gender Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) Acceleration Programme to ensure rapid and coordinated action against GBVF and fast track the implementation of the National Strategic Plan on GBVF. • The 90-Day programme which was led by JCPS Cluster proposed urgent and impactful interventions, some of which are already being implemented to reverse the upward trend of GBVF in the country. These are: ○ Re-establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) to serve as the central coordinating structure to fast-track government interventions on GBVF and ensure cooperation in the implementation of the GBVF- National Strategic Plan. ○ President Cyril Ramaphosa has since reconstituted the IMC with the Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities as well as the Minister of Social Development serving as Co-Convenor and Co-Chairperson of the IMC. ○ A dedicated GBVF Priority Committee within the National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure (NATJOINTS) has been formed to enhance the coordination of frontline security and protection interventions.

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
	○ Accelerated rollout of Thuthuzela Care Centres across all provinces is being prioritised to ensure comprehensive, survivor-centred support services. ○ Renewal of JCPS structures in all provinces and the establishment of Provincial JCPS Committees, composed of security cluster members of the executive and senior officials, to ensure targeted and localised implementation of GBVF interventions. ○ Implementation of measures to address the systemic inefficiencies within the criminal justice value chain through streamlining, police, prosecutorial, and correctional services to eliminate delays in GBVF case processing. ○ Identification of critical institutional gaps by departments and clear and actionable proposals and time-bound measures by departments, like the Financial Action Task Force process, to strengthen the criminal justice response. ○ Consolidation of GBVF related statistics across the JCPS value chain, from arrest, prosecution, conviction to incarceration, into an integrated report for submission to the IMC, along with departmental intervention points. ● Six Workstreams have been established to focus on key areas of the response to gender-based violence and femicide, with targeted deliverables for each workstream. ● One of the targeted deliverables is to convene roundtable discussions which comprises national leaders, state departments, and civil society stakeholders to focus on GBVF, assess current gaps, and define a clear, actionable pathway to improve services and ensure justice for GBVF victims and survivors. ● The first-round table discussion was held in June 2025 in Atteridgeville to evaluate the effectiveness of services for victims of GBVF and the implementation of and progress of the National Strategic Plan on GBVF.
<i>The National Strategic Plan (NSP) on GBVF is our blueprint in tackling the scourge.</i>	● The National Strategic Plan on GBVF involves measures to strengthen the criminal justice processes and to prioritise the creation of economic opportunities for women who are vulnerable to abuse. ● The plan is based on an extensive consultative process to better understand the drivers of GBVF, the challenges and the proposed solutions, as understood by local communities. ● Since the launch of the National Strategic Plan in 2020, over 32 regional courts have been designated as Sexual Offences Courts in various parts of the country. ● Going forward, we are increasing the national footprint of sexual offences courts, particularly in rural communities with additional 16 sexual offences courts to be established soon.

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	• More than 3 500 investigating officers received specialised training on Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual crimes. • We have made significant progress in reducing the backlog in DNA processing and we have for the 2024-25 financial year processed 60 518 DNA samples to track and deal with repeat sexual offenders and serial rapists. • Furthermore, the number of shelters and care centres for survivors are being increased and adequately capacitated and funded. For 2024-25 financial year, 44 147 victims were supported at the 66 Thuthuzela Care Centers (TCCs) across the country. • For the 2024-25 financial year, we have recorded 3697 convictions in relation to sexual offence with over 79% convicted with direct imprisonment. • We are also introducing a system that enables the identity of arrested individuals to be verified using their fingerprints. It is then checked against the Department of Home Affairs records. • In 2022, President Cyril Ramaphosa signed into law three pieces of legislation to strengthen the criminal justice system, promote accountability across the state and support survivors. These are the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act Amendment Bill, the Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Bill, and the Domestic Violence Amendment Bill. • The National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Bill which facilitates the establishment of a multi-sectoral Council to provide strategic leadership in the fight against gender-based violence and femicide was also signed into law on 24 May 2024.
<i>Government is intensifying the fight against GBVF</i>	• Thus far the government has established Gender Based Violence Desks at most police stations to ensure that GBVF cases receive priority attention. • There are currently 1 161 designated Victim Friendly Rooms (VFRs) at police facilities which include police stations, contact points, satellite police stations, 2 international airports, and other Units. • The SAPS remains committed to ending the scourge with a dedicated Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Investigations Unit (FCS) consisting of 176 units across the country which falls under the Detectives division. • The role of the FCS Detectives in the SAPS is to ensure the effective prevention, investigation of FCS related crimes; and to ensure justice for victims. • We have increased the number of Thuthuzela and Khuseleka Care Centres for survivors and improved the capacity of our police to deal with crimes of gender-based violence. • Thuthuzela Care Centres offer medical examination, bath or shower facilities for victims to use.

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
	• They offer a safe space for an investigating officer to take a statement and a social worker to offer counselling. • The centres offer follow-up visits, treatment and medication for Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), HIV and AIDS.
<i>The economic empowerment of women is fundamental in our fight against GBVF.</i>	• The empowerment of women is an integral part of our efforts to achieving inclusive growth, creating jobs and expand economic opportunities for all. • By improving the economic circumstances of women, we are reducing their vulnerability to abuse and violence. • Economic empowerment is one of the most powerful routes for women to achieve their full potential and advance their rights. • A significant portion of funds from the National Action Plan continues to advance the empowerment of women through procurement, business support and access to economic opportunities to date. • Women's economic resilience will enable them to walk away from situations that make them vulnerable to GBVF. • We are driving the economic inclusion of women through public procurement by setting aside at least 40 percent of goods and services procured by public entities for women-owned businesses.