Newsletter

QUARTER 2 / ISSUE 02
2024

GBVF RESPONSE FUND

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Welcome

Welcome to the Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Response Fund1's Newsletter. Together, let's stay informed, engaged, and committed to creating a world free from violence and inequality.

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Message from the CEO

Sazini Mojapelo
CEO GBVF Response Fund1

Dear Stakeholder,

The first half of 2024 posed numerous challenges on social, economic and geopolitical fronts and with the elections there has been an air of uncertainty. This has left many of us feeling a bit concerned about what the future holds. However, it is pleasing to see that the outcome of the election was declared free and fair and most importantly, the voices of our people have been noted and change has entered our country.

I write this noting the current political shifts and with the hope that the renewed leadership and partnerships will ensure much-needed progress in the development agenda of our country. As the future of our beloved country hangs in the balance with the detailed modalities of the government of national unity in its first phase of implementation, it is crucial to keep key social challenges such as GBVF front and centre.

I received the news of President Ramaphosa signing the National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Bill into law with cautious optimism. Rightfully so, as most of the changes and questions raised during the consultation process were not taken into account. Unfortunately, the Bill signed into law makes no provision for the establishment of a Fund, meaning the National Council will be established as a coordinating structure under the Ministry of Women.

The work of the Fund has become more critical than ever, and we remain a trusted partner to the private sector and philanthropic organisations in the fight against GBVF. Together we take pride in pioneering an initiative that has established a funding mechanism to support life-saving interventions and services, contributing significantly to the NSP.

On this note, I would like to express my gratitude to the companies that continue to support the work of the Fund, leading to the successful launch of a second Request for Proposals (RFP2), and enabling us to realise our strategic objectives.

> **“Together we take pride in pioneering an initiative that has established a funding mechanism to support life-saving interventions and services contributing significantly to the NSP.”**

Dankie. Siyabonga. Enkosi. This continued support gives us glimmers of hope!

Earlier this year, I represented the Fund at the 68th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) Conference held at the United Nations headquarters in New York. Joining government and several civil society organisations, we formed part of the South African delegation and participated on platforms that amplified the call for strengthening investments and access to funding opportunities for CBOs. Our participation highlighted the importance of the private sector’s role in contributing to the fight against gender

inequality and GBVF.

I invite you to read the thought leadership article I wrote on my CSW reflections, published in Section 7 of this newsletter.

To commemorate International Women's Day, The Fund formed part of the unveiling and launch of a Thuthuzela Care Centre in Cradock in the Eastern Cape, to enable post-violence care and support for the community.

We also strengthened our advocacy campaign RESPECT, through continuing and new partnerships with entities such as the South African Broadcast Corporation (SABC) and the Constitution Hill, Human Rights Festival.

Looking ahead, the Fund will continue to fundraise, mobilise in-kind resources, and cultivate partnerships with current and prospective donors to ensure maximum reach and impact for communities affected by GBVF.

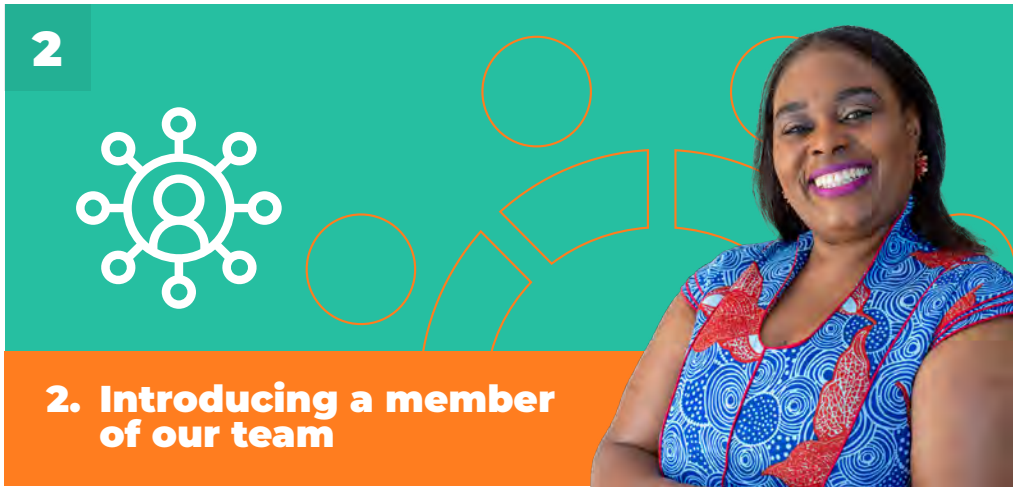
I trust this second edition of our Newsletter will give you insight into the impactful work of the Fund.

Thank you for your continued support in our efforts to combat GBVF.

Sazini Mojapelo
CEO GBVF Response Fund1



The Fund's CEO at the 2024 Human Rights Festival



Tirhani Manganyi
Programme Manager

1. **What inspired your decision to join the Fund, and how has that motivation evolved since you started this part of your journey?**

The Fund is a unique and innovative public-private partnership to advance the gender equality and women empowerment (GEWE) agenda.

The Fund's mandate resonates with my passion as a gender activist and expert in the development and humanitarian space. I've had opportunities to contribute to various contexts around the globe and being allowed to contribute in my own country, is unmatched.

2. **Before joining the Fund, what professional experiences or roles shaped your career, and how do they contribute to your current role?**

Gender and Development (GAD) was introduced to me during my PhD studies at the University of Florida (UF), USA. During that time, it was possible to study towards an elective set of courses that led to obtaining a GAD certificate, which I took.

During my time at UF, I engaged in a variety of activities and projects aimed at promoting gender equality among students and beyond. My first hands-on experience with GAD was through a project focused on integrating gender mainstreaming within an international NGO's North American Programme. This involved data collection across five southeastern states, developing strategies, and building staff capacity.



CBO Inception Workshop

After UF, I transitioned to working for an international NGO, where I oversaw a new GAD project aimed at integrating gender mainstreaming into community-based initiatives. Gender equality then became a central aspect of my management role, particularly as I oversaw portfolios across nine Southern African countries.

Afterward, I became the Programme Manager for the global flagship programme of What Works. This programme, funded by the UK government and designed to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls (WW-VAWG), represents an innovative partnership between prominent researchers and NGOs.

Our work focused on implementing and evaluating a range of interventions aimed at reducing GBV and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). The programme's impact and influence were underscored by the adoption of its outcomes in policy, programmatic approaches, and strategic funding decisions by host governments, policymakers, donors, implementing partners, and others. For instance, several interventions proven effective in combating GBV and VAWG have been integrated into the UN RESPECT Women framework.

Following this role, I transitioned to a home-based consultancy supporting UN Women's New York office, specifically aiding the Action Coalition on GBV as part of Generation Equality.

Throughout my career, gender equality has been a central theme and my passion. It is widely recognised that GEWE as outlined in SDG 5 are pivotal and must be integral to development agendas to realise broader developmental goals.

3. Considering your unique perspective, how do you believe we can enhance greater collaboration to achieve the Funds mandate?

The Fund is a multi-sectoral initiative that brings together the private sector, policymakers, donors, philanthropies, civil society organisations (CSOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), and others to advance SDG 5. It serves as a unique ecosystem demonstrating the successful integration of multistakeholder initiatives like Generation Equality within national contexts, such as South Africa.

Following the recent signing of the National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Bill by the President in May 2024, it is critical to enhance leadership, coordination, and accountability mechanisms to effectively monitor the contributions of the diverse stakeholders involved.



The Fund's team at the Iris House All Ability Centre

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Advocacy Work

The Fund partnered and participated in several strategic platforms and impactful advocacy initiatives on national and international levels. This was to maximise our catalytic and convening role to accelerate action in response to GBVF.

1. International Women's Month Commemoration (Cradock TCC Launch)

The Fund participated at the International Women's Day Commemorative event in the Eastern Cape, alongside esteemed partners Vodacom and the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA). The event marked the launch of the Thuthuzela Care Centre at Cradock Provincial Hospital, a significant milestone in our collective efforts to combat GBVF.

The launch was attended by Vodacom CEO Mr. Sitho Mdlalose, the NPA's National Director of Prosecutions Adv. Shamila Batohi, and the Deputy Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development Hon. John Jeffery, alongside other distinguished stakeholders.

The establishment of the Thuthuzela Care Centre is a direct result of Vodacom's R10 million commitment made at the inception of the Fund in 2021. This pledge underscores the substantial impact of enduring corporate partnerships in addressing critical gaps and enhancing public-private collaborations for societal benefit.

2. Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) Participation



The Fund joined the South African delegation at the 68th UN Women's Commission on the Status of Women in New York City, led by the Minister of Social Development and the Director-General of Women, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities. We actively engaged in discussions and initiatives aimed at combating GBVF and promoting women's rights. A significant highlight of our participation was co-hosting a dialogue with Ilitha Labantu on the theme "Strengthening Access to Funding Opportunities for NGOs Working towards the Elimination of GBVF."

This dialogue provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss, exchange insights, and explore ways to enhance support for organisations dedicated to addressing gender-based violence. Our involvement at CSW demonstrated our commitment to advancing our mission on global platforms through advocacy, resource mobilisation, and collaboration.

3. Constitution Hill Collaboration

To commemorate National Human Rights Day, the Fund collaborated with Constitutional Hill for its Human Rights Festival (21-24 March 2024.)



Human Rights Festival

The Fund hosted a panel discussion, ran an information exhibition stand, and disseminated the RESPECT campaign's messaging to festivalgoers, increasing the awareness of the campaign and engaging over 5000 people in attendance.

The Fund's participation in the "We the People" march alongside other NGOs in the social justice sector strengthened collaboration towards a common human rights agenda, emphasising the significance of united action against GBVF.

4. International Finance Corporation - RESPECT@Work Launch

The Fund participated in the launch of Respect@Work South Africa, led by the International Finance Corporation (IFC). Respect@Work is a 15-month initiative aimed at assisting South African private sector companies in improving business and social outcomes by addressing workplace violence and harassment. Each of the participating companies, totalling at least 20 from South Africa, will implement gender-smart commitments through peer-to-peer learning sessions and practical tools, fostering safer and more equitable working environments.

The launch featured opening remarks from Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, former South African Deputy President and former Executive Director at UNwomen, and Ms Nathalie Akon Gabala, Global Director of Gender and Economic Inclusion at the IFC. The Fund's CEO, Sazini Mojapelo, participated in a panel discussion alongside stakeholders such as the JSE, Absa, and Shared Value Africa Initiative (SVAI).

In addition to our partnership with the IFC in the Respect@Work South Africa initiative, our Strategic Private Sector Coalition (PSC) has evolved and forged partnerships with the Presidency, International Labour Organisation (ILO), Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), and UNFPA to support the implementation of policies promoting respect and equality in the workplace.



RESPECT@Work Launch

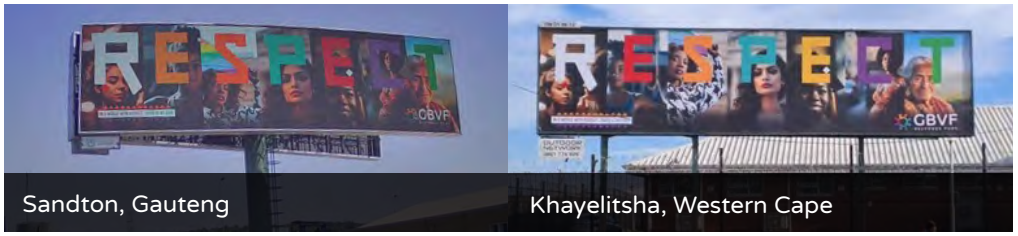
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Campaign News

1. Flighted multiple billboards to celebrate International Women's Month (March).

To celebrate International Women's Month, the Fund flighted the RESPECT campaign across 5 prominent billboards in Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal, and the Western Cape. The billboards reached an audience of approximately 41.5 million people across all five billboards, significantly expanding the reach and visibility of our social behavioral change initiative.

By leveraging these platforms, we have amplified our message and connected with diverse audiences, ensuring a national footprint.



Sandton, Gauteng

Khayelitsha, Western Cape

2. SABC PSA Flighting & Tractor Outdoor Media

To extend the reach of our RESPECT campaign, the SABC continued its invaluable pro-bono support, valued at approximately R1 million, by airing our public service announcements (PSAs). These PSAs reached over 30 million people in 11 official languages across 18 SABC radio channels, aligning with our goal to engage diverse communities across demographics, geographies, and social strata.

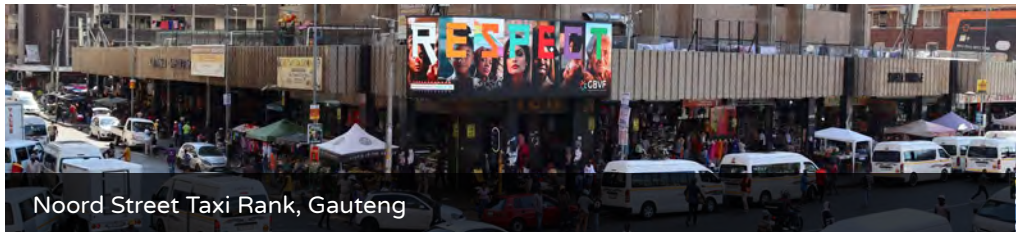
In addition to the above-the-line efforts, our RESPECT campaign has gained significant visibility and impact thanks to the generous support of our pro-bono partner, Tractor Outdoor Media (Tractor).



Parow, Western Cape

Through their CSI initiative, Tractor has donated over 254 digital billboards across South Africa since the campaign's inception. These billboards, strategically placed in airports, high-traffic areas, and petrol stations, ensure continuous exposure to our campaign messaging.

Partnering with Tractor Outdoor Media has not only broadened the reach of our campaign, but also heightened its impact by engaging communities across the country. Tractor's estimated contribution to the campaign is valued at approximately R2 million.



Noord Street Taxi Rank, Gauteng

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vodacom

Q&A with our Funding Partner

1. What role does your organisation play in reducing Gender-Based Violence and Femicide?

Vodacom is a purpose-led brand committed to transforming societies through partnerships with the Government and civil society organisations. We aim to reduce GBVF by leveraging technology and fostering coordinated efforts among government, civil society, and businesses. Our support for the GBVF Response Fund1 exemplifies our dedication to collaborating with the public sector to eradicate GBVF in South Africa.

As an organisation, we have made an ongoing commitment to tackling GBVF as part of our gender empowerment strategy, which is tied to our purpose pillar of inclusion for all. Through our encompassing GBVF ecosystem approach, which includes prevention, response, victim support, and empowerment, we aim to achieve sustainable results and make a lasting positive impact on the communities we serve.

2. To drive social change, what decisive action can corporate South Africa take to prevent and monitor GBVF in the world of work?

Corporate South Africa can drive social change by implementing comprehensive policies and support systems for employees affected by GBVF. Companies should introduce measures such as fully paid leave, counselling services, and workplace safety modifications for victims of GBVF. This is because the impact of violence or abuse does not just stop at home, it also has a considerable impact on the work life of those affected.

Additionally, internal training and awareness programmes on domestic violence and abuse are essential to foster an informed and supportive work environment. Corporations should also collaborate with government and civil society to establish robust frameworks for monitoring and addressing GBVF, ensuring a unified and effective response to this societal issue.

In March 2019, Vodacom became the first company in South Africa to unveil a policy to support employees who are victims of domestic violence or abuse either inside or outside the workplace. This includes allocating 10 days of fully paid leave and access to resources, such as counselling. In March 2022, the policy was updated to allow employees and non-employees who are victims of any form of violence or harassment by a Vodacom employee to lodge a formal complaint with Vodacom.

Vodacom will also investigate and act against any reported incidents of violence occurring outside of the place of work if affecting the employment relationship.



Sitholizwe Mdlalose
CEO, Vodacom South Africa



Cradock TCC Launch

We aspire to deepen our partnership with the GBVF Response Fund by continuously enhancing our GBVF ecosystem approach. Our goal is to expand our initiatives, such as the Bright Sky app, a digital platform to provide support for victims of GBVF, and psycho-social support programmes in schools to prevent GBVF, bullying, and other forms of violence, to reach more individuals and communities.

Over time, we envision our involvement to include more innovative solutions, broader collaborations, and increased advocacy for policies that protect and empower victims of GBVF. By doing so, we aim to make a lasting and meaningful contribution to the fight against GBVF.

4. What's the one thing that you would change now so we can live in a GBVF-free South Africa?

If we could change one thing to achieve a GBVF-free South Africa, it would be to ensure comprehensive education and awareness about GBVF at all levels of society. This includes integrating GBVF education into school curriculums, widespread public awareness campaigns, and mandatory training for all employees.

By fostering a culture of zero tolerance towards GBVF through education and awareness, we can prevent violence before it occurs and empower individuals to take action against GBVF.

5. From your perspective, what are some of the obstacles that we still need to overcome as a society as we work towards gender equity?

As we work towards gender equity, we must overcome several obstacles, including deeply ingrained cultural norms and stereotypes that perpetuate gender inequality and violence. There is also a need for more robust legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable. Limited access to support services for victims, particularly in rural areas, remains a significant challenge.

Additionally, ensuring that businesses, government, and civil society collaborate effectively and share resources and expertise is crucial to creating a comprehensive and unified response to GBVF and promoting gender equity.

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Our Community-Based Organisation

GBVF Response Fund's CBO Inception Workshops: Empowering CBOs Across South Africa

In April and May 2024, the GBVF Response Fund's Programmes Team successfully conducted inception workshops with CBOs from all nine provinces in South Africa. These workshops marked the onboarding of 65 CBOs that were contracted and funded under RFP2, finalised in February 2024. The total allocation for this cohort of CBOs is R53 million over the next two years.

The primary goal of these workshops was to induct stakeholders, align projects with relevant interventions, and familiarise participants with the Fund's focus areas, specifically Pillars 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the National Strategic Plan (NSP). Through inclusive and interactive sessions, CBOs gained a deeper understanding of the Fund's objectives and how their projects contribute to the broader goal of combating GBVF.

These workshops facilitated valuable discussions, networking opportunities, peer-learning and a shared commitment towards impact driven community-led responses to GBVF. By hosting these provincial workshops, the GBVF Response Fund demonstrated its dedication to collaborative engagement, capacity building, and impactful programming. The Fund remains committed to supporting initiatives that address the complex issues surrounding GBVF, aligning with the NSP's strategic pillars, and fostering a culture of collective responsibility and action.

The continuous efforts of the Fund, including the support for CBOs, continue to yield success stories. An exemplary story is the journey of one of our CBOs, Community Keepers.

Impact story - Community Keepers



Fifteen years ago, Andre du Plessis, Chairman and co-founder of Community Keepers, was shocked to discover that only one state social worker and one psychologist served 45 schools and 30,000 children in the Cape Winelands.

Driven by this need, he established Community Keepers as a full-time mental health facility based in schools in marginalised areas, aiming to bridge this gap. These facilities are staffed by qualified professionals such as social workers, registered counsellors, or psychologists, supported by local community members trained in mental health first aid to provide immediate assistance.

Du Plessis and his team identified a growing issue of poor emotional literacy among people of all ages. They observed that lacking the vocabulary or tools to express feelings

verbally can lead to emotional regulation challenges and disruptive behaviour.

Their services are designed to foster a safe environment where children feel a sense of belonging, enabling everyone to thrive. Community Keepers now boasts over 150 practitioners who serve 90 partner schools, supporting approximately 85,000 learners annually.

Our funding has enabled Community Keepers to expand their focus on GBVF, building on initiatives with the National Development Agency and the Solidarity Fund. They have developed a resource library accessible to each school-based team, allowing tailored support to address specific school needs.



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Thought Leadership

Gender Equality at a Crucial Crossroads in Our Country
By Sazini Mojapelo, CEO GBVF Response Fund1

Leaving no one behind is the central promise of the Agenda for Sustainable Development, which all 191 UN member states agreed to achieve by 2030. With less than six years left, that promise is in jeopardy. Unless we act now, the 2030 Agenda will become "an epitaph for a world that might have been," as António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, lamented.

At the recent 68th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) Conference at the UN headquarters in New York, delegates reaffirmed their commitment to the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA). This framework aims to end discrimination, promote women's rights, and advance gender equality.

This year's focus was on SDG 5, which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. The theme was "Accelerating gender equality by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions from a gender perspective."

Delegates recognised with deep concern that we are lagging in our efforts. Current UN statistics show that only 15.4 percent of Goal 5's nine targets are "on track," while 61.5 percent are "at a moderate distance" and 23.1 percent are "far or very far off track" from 2030 targets. Global challenges such as geopolitical tensions, economic crises, the COVID-19 pandemic, food insecurity, climate change, and armed conflicts have disproportionately affected women and girls.

A key discussion focused on Gender Responsive Financing, which is crucial for empowering women. Despite progress in various sectors, gendered poverty remains a reality, manifested through the gender pay gap, limited economic opportunities, and discriminatory financial practices.

Reflecting on South Africa's progress from 2014 to 2024, I examined specific initiatives and outcomes across various sectors to evaluate our country's efforts in meeting targets 1, 2, 6, and 7 of SDG 5. These targets are essential for the work we are undertaking at the GBVF Response Fund.

Target 1: End All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and Girls

South Africa has enacted the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (PEPUDA) to prohibit discrimination based on various grounds, including gender. However, challenges remain in implementing and monitoring the Act, hindering progress in addressing and combating intersectional discrimination and societal norms that perpetuate inequality.



Ubuzwe CBO in Umlazi, KZN

Target 2: Eliminate All Forms of Violence Against Women and Girls

The government has implemented measures to address gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), including the National Strategic Plan (NSP) on GBVF and establishing the Fund. South Africa also ratified the International Labour Organisation's Convention 190 on The Elimination of Violence and Harassment in the World of Work. However, shifting from policy to action and monitoring remains a challenge.

The Fund engages stakeholders to turn policy into action, driving advocacy, best practices, and behavioral change campaigns to promote gender equality and eradicate GBVF in communities and institutions. We prioritise supporting Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) in under-resourced areas, showcasing the power of collaboration. GBVF remains a significant challenge, requiring sustained collaborative efforts to prevent and respond to violence.

Target 6: Ensure Universal Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

South Africa has progressive policies like the National Integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Policy and the NSP on HIV, TB, and STIs. These policies ensure access to services such as contraceptives, maternal healthcare, and HIV/AIDS treatment. Despite having the world's largest antiretroviral therapy (ART) programme, challenges like stigma and access barriers persist.

Target 7: Give Women Equal Rights to Economic Resources

South Africa has implemented policies and legislation to promote women's economic empowerment, including gender-transformative procurement policies and laws on land rights and access to financial services. The Women's Economic Assembly (WECONA) focuses on transforming value chain ecosystems to create pathways for women-owned businesses. However, gender disparities in economic resources and property ownership persist, requiring ongoing efforts to address institutional and structural barriers.

While progress has been made against these targets, a fundamental shift is required. There's vast room for improvement, especially in addressing gender disparities in education, healthcare, economic participation, and political representation.



Koketso Rathumbu (Advocacy and Communication Manager GBVF Response Fund1) and Sazini Mojapelo (GBVF Response Fund1 CEO) at 68th CSW

In 2024, over 2 billion people in more than 60 countries, including South Africa, will head to the polls. Although we've never had a woman head of state, South Africa is often cited as a success story, with women's representation in Parliament around 50 percent. Gender equality, transformation, and women's empowerment have sparked public debates and protests, placing these issues at the forefront.

New leadership must prioritise poverty and inequality, understanding women-specific issues and the societal benefits of addressing them. There's a dire need to address barriers to women's political participation and representation within their party platforms and structures, ensuring implementation and compliance with global, continental, and regional policies, and national legislation aimed at advancing women's rights.

Our journey toward gender equality is at a crucial crossroads in our country's history. Urgent, concerted action is required to ensure inclusivity and tackle all forms of inequality. The road ahead demands our unwavering commitment, innovative strategies, and collaborative efforts to secure the rights and well-being of every woman and girl.

Let's heed the call to action and embark on this journey together, mindful of the challenges yet determined to realise the promise of leaving no one behind by 2030.



CSW68 Conference Session

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In the News

The act of love transcends a single month occasion, instead, should permeate every aspect of our lives, becoming our way of being

Gender equality at a crossroads in SA

SAZINI MOJAPELO: Gender equality at a crossroads in our country

SA has made progress in meeting sustainable development goal targets but there is still room improvement

30 APRIL 2024 - 05:00

by SAZINI MOJAPELO





She Unit Civil Organization welcomes Gender Based Violence and Femicide Fund

by highveldchronicle — April 19, 2024 in Crime, Crime, Editors Pick 0









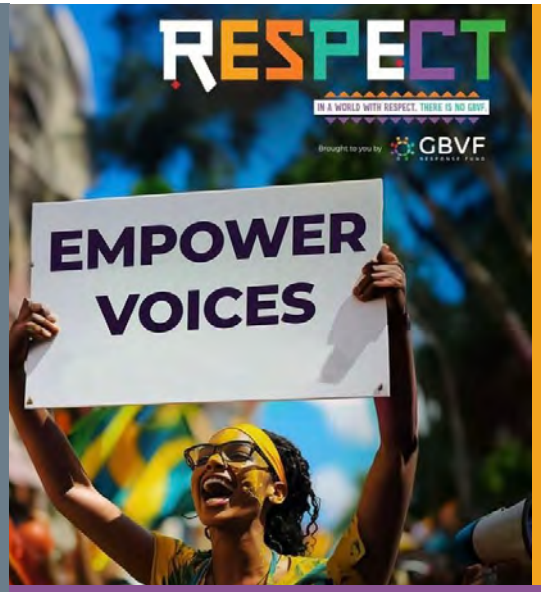


GBVF RESPONSE FUND

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Hotline Numbers & Links

• National GBV Helpline	0800 150 150
• National Counselling Line	0861 322 322
• POWA	011 642 4345
• Rape Crisis	021 447 9762
• TEARS Foundation (FREE SMS Line)	*134*7355#
• Childline	08000 55555
• SADAG	080 021 2223
• Toll Free Crisis Line	086 157 4747
• Rape Crisis	021 447 9762
• Emergency	107
• Skype address for members of the community	HelpmeGBV
• GBV and Femicide Complaints by SAPS	0800 333 177
• Child abuse call back request	SMS 'help' to 31022



Your Empowered Voice Can Save Lives

Take Action. Report GBVF to enable a world with RESPECT.

Our website GBVF Respond Fund – Together we can take action against GBVF. (gbvfresponsefund1.org)

Find us on:

https://www.linkedin.com/company/gbvf-response-fund-1/

X (Twitter) @GBVF_Fund

GBVF Response Fund1 | Facebook

Instagram: @gbvfresponsefund1

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