



POLICY BRIEF

CALL FOR A NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN ON GENDER- BASED VIOLENCE SHADOW FRAMEWORK

A coalition of civil society organisations, aiming to create critical mass through mobilising communities to take a stand against gender-based violence (GBV) and creating public and political will to develop and implement a fully-costed, inclusive and multi-sectoral National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence (NSPGBV) in South Africa.

Recommendations

1. Expand the **definition** of gender-based violence
2. **Fill the gaps** in implementing existing laws and policies
3. Improve and expand **psycho-social services** for survivors
4. Significantly **increase investment** in prevention, intervention, research and documentation
5. Establish robust **accountability** mechanisms and sufficient resources

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy brief comes out of the National Strategic Plan (NSP) Shadow Framework Report, developed by Civil Society in 2014, under the Stop Gender Violence Campaign. The Campaign calls for the involvement of local communities and civil society to put pressure on the government to act and make sure that the voices of those affected by gender-based violence are taken into account.

This brief integrates the perspectives of the NGOs and beneficiaries that took part in provincial dialogues on the barriers to accessing services, gaps and weaknesses in service delivery and the attitudes of service providers. Set against the Integrated Programme of Action addressing Violence against Women and Children of the Department of Social Development, the NSP Shadow Framework outlines five service implementation priorities.

The purpose of this brief is to inform decision-makers of identified trends and challenges in service provision by the police, health providers and members of intersecting government departments. It calls for the development of a National Strategic Plan (NSP) to end GBV that could address the challenges. An NSP will align the country around a set of clear strategic priorities and create an accountability mechanism for the performance of government, the private sector and civil society organizations in addressing GBV. The Shadow Framework will address the weaknesses and gaps in the Integrated Programme of Action and make recommendations accordingly.

If developed through broad-based national consultations and engagement, the plan to end GBV could be a powerful lever of change.

The Department of Social Development's engagement with other workstreams paves the way for this collaborative process.

Background

GBV is a persistent global challenge that transcends culture, race and gender. In recent years, progressive steps have been achieved in developing laws and policies to address GBV and broadening the concept to be inclusive of a wider spectrum of victims and acts of victimisation. 'Gender-based violence' has become an umbrella term, including all forms of physical, verbal, emotional, economic and sexual harm perpetrated against women, girls, men, boys, LGBTI persons and other vulnerable groups (such as sex workers, refugees, prisoners, and HIV-positive people).

While the psycho-social impact of GBV is difficult to measure currently, KPMG has estimated that GBV costs South Africa between R28.4 billion and R42.4 billion per year – or between 0.9% and 1.3% of GDP annually (KPMG, 2014). Further, the most recent NSP on HIV, TB and STIs (2017-2022) shows a disturbing trend; with GBV said to be a significant driver of HIV acquisition among young women – 'of concern are gender based discrimination including community attitudes that permit this'. In sum, safety is said to be the foundation of an effective response to violence against women in the context of HIV.

In December 2012, the South African government committed to developing a national plan to address gender-based violence. The Cabinet-approved National Council on Gender Based Violence (NCGBV) was established to draft the plan. But since its formation, the NCGBV has been destabilized by political changes and lack of funding to execute its mandate.

There has been no word on its status since 2014 when Minister Susan Shabangu was appointed as Minister of Women and the Ministry has failed to reconstitute the Council.

Parallel to the NCGBV, an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) was formed, housed within the Department of Social Development (DSD), to draft a national plan to address violence against women and children. This led to the development of the Integrated Programme of Action addressing Violence against Women and Children in 2013.

Methodology

A vast amount of research exists on the nature of gender-based violence in South Africa and on the weakness of the national response. There are also many NGO and government reports, inputs from provincial consultation meetings under the Stop GBV NSP Campaign, offering recommendations on how to improve this response. The strategies that are adopted by the Stop GBV NSP campaign flow from the rich history of women mobilising for their emancipation and franchise. Although civic activism has produced the current democratic dispensation, it has also exposed contradictions in gender relations that have shaped the unbearable levels of GBV in South Africa. An NSP on GBV cannot be ahistorical, it should recognise and place the contribution of women in politics and how class, race and sexual identity intersect in the context of GBV. The Shadow Framework analyses existing research and moves towards a formulation of how these critiques and assessments should be channeled into a National Strategic Plan on gender-based violence.

**GOALS AND
PRIORITIES
FOR 2018-2022**

The NSP is designed to address GBV on multiple levels; including response, prevention and intervention efforts from civil society as well as government. The Stop Gender Violence Campaign calls for a multi-sectoral, inter-departmental and inclusive approach to the implementation of the strategic plan. The NSP must set out a list of core, achievable and well-defined goals for the period 2018-2022.

Strategic priorities

1. Expand the Definition: Create a more encompassing definition of GBV to include all groups of marginalized individuals affected by GBV and not only violence against women and children. GBV must be defined according to the international norms and relevant human rights treaties the state is obliged to follow.

2. Fill the Gaps in Implementing Existing Laws and Policies: Expand training, resources and accountability to ensure that SAPS, the Department of Health and the National Prosecuting Authority fill the gaps between the law and its implementation. The NSP must lay out a clear roadmap for how government will improve the scope and quality of services available to survivors and victims of GBV. Foremost is increased capacity and oversight of key government agencies that are already legally mandated to provide services.

3. Improve and Expand Psycho-Social Services for Survivors: Expand investment in and institutionalization of survivor services, especially psycho-social care and intervention services provided through the Department of Social Development (DSD), the Department of Health (DOH), and civil society partner organizations. The funding model for survivor services needs to be reviewed and rationalized, using the KPMG costing model to inform DSD's budget allocation to NGOs. Close monitoring of DSD expenditure on programmes is needed. Funds for services must also be ring-fenced to prevent them being diverted elsewhere, with increased inter-sectoral coordination between the DSD and the DOH in providing psycho-social and medical care to GBV victims.

4. Prevention, Intervention, and Research and Documentation:

Significantly increase investment in evidence-based prevention interventions at individual, community and societal/structural levels. The NSP should establish a GBV Prevention Fund that will manage a comprehensive portfolio of investments in interventions, and in research on the efficacy of those interventions. The National Council for Gender Based Violence should be revived and should be the primary recipient and manager of these funds, distributing the funds to specific departments and NGOs responsible for GBV prevention and intervention programmes.

5. Establish Robust Accountability Mechanisms and Sufficient Resources:

Commit to fully funding and developing the accountability mechanisms required to realize success in all priority areas, including a reconstituted, robust National Council on GBV to guide and be responsible for the national response.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the South African Government:

Information and Coordination: Develop a single, integrated information management system between police, health facilities, social workers, and courts; Create a Portfolio Committee (PC) in Parliament dedicated specifically to women's rights and gender equality; Reconstitute and revitalize the National Council on Gender-Based Violence as the primary coordinating and oversight body for the National Strategic Plan and associated new funding for GBV; Ensure that legislated commitments on GBV form part of departments' key performance indicators.

Funding: Significantly increase funding for the overall national GBV response through ring-fenced allocations; Allocate resources to reduce high caseloads, lack of equipment and court backlogs in the NPA; Establish a GBV Prevention Fund to support the scale up of evidence-based interventions and programmes that need to be researched and piloted; The National Council for Gender Based Violence should be the primary recipient and manager of these funds and sub-grant to government departments, community based organizations and NGOs.

Service Provision: Expand training for front-line rape responders within departments and civil society on their legal obligations; Institutionalize Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences (FSC) Units in police stations and Sexual Offences Courts within the NPA; Ensure that psychosocial services are offered to survivors of GBV, through coordination between the DOH and the DSD; Put guidelines in place for formalized intersectoral collaboration ensuring coordination between service providers at police stations, health facilities and courts.

To Civil Society:

Create a monitoring committee to track how departmental reports on the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 and the Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Act 32 of 2007 implementation are being submitted on time; View critically the interpretations offered by departments of their particular statistics, request explanations, and consider obtaining separate external analyses of this information; Play an active and engaged role in the relevant Portfolio Committees and the National Council on GBV; Document the programmatic interventions to prevent and mitigate the impact of GBV; Create and engage in GBV support groups and educational programmes, in an effort to challenge prevailing social norms and to provide care to GBV victims/survivors.

To the Private Sector:

Contribute specifically to the support and management of a GBV Fund; Provide project-management and technical support to coordination and integration of services; Put in place programmes that minimize opportunities for GBV especially in communities where private sector activities create environments conducive to GBV; Contribute more significantly to women's wellbeing by increasing support to services for survivors of rape and domestic violence.

Conclusion

GBV is a disturbing phenomenon that is both persistent and prominent throughout the world. Its prevalence appears to transcend borders, culture, race and gender. In the past, violence against women and girls was the key issue, and many international and domestic legal instruments were geared towards its prevention and eradication. In recent years, however, concern has been broadened to a wider variety of victims and acts of victimisation.

South Africa has some of the highest rates of GBV in the world. There have been several initiatives undertaken by the government to address GBV, however these have been either inadequate or ineffective. In response to this, as well as the surging scope of GBV, we call upon civil society organizations, the private sector and government to come together for the development, adoption and implementation of a costed, and fully-funded NSP for GBV.

The Stop Gender Violence Campaign welcomes the Department of Social Development's initiative in starting the consultative process with workstreams for input into the Integrated Programme of Action addressing Violence Against Women and Children (IPA) document, and will endeavour to collaborate with the Department.

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