The Role of the Community in Preventing Gender-Based Violence and Femicide: A Case Study of Northern Cape Province, South Africa

Dr. John Motsamai Modise
South African Police Service

Prof. (Dr.) Derek Taylor, Prof. (Dr.) Kishore Raga
Professor Emeritus: Nelson Mandela University

Abstract:- This article aimed to discusses the role of the community in preventing gender base violence and femicide in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa.The study was a descriptive survey in its design and adopted qualitative research methods. The study site was the Northern Cape and the total sample size was seventeen (17). Members was involve in the study with four (4) focus group discussions were held to collect data.The researcher recommends massive sensitisation on the subject of domestic violence, all perceived community leaders need to be educated on domestic violence so that they take part in prevention efforts, the Northern Cape Ward Councilors Committee must immediately initiate strategies on domestic violence prevention and also women economic empowerment is urgently required in the Northern Cape Province as economic dependency on men was cited as a major contributor to domestic violence. The researcher also recommends that there is an urgent need to implement the National Plan of Action on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) of 2020-2030 which has elaborated on community participation in eradicating GBVF.

Keywords:- Gender-based violence, Violence prevention, Emotional/Psychological violence, Community, South Africa.

I. INTRODUCTION

South Africa is a deeply violent society and continues to wrestle with the impact of decades of institutionalised racism, sexism, exclusion, structural violence and other factors that have continued to undermine human development and positive social cohesion. The unacceptably high levels of gender based violence and femicide in South Africa are a blight on our national conscience, and a betrayal of our constitutional order for which so many fought, and for which so many gave their lives. During the course of 2018 and 2019, South Africa has increasingly acknowledged the crisis of GBVF and its profound impact on the lives and well-being of survivors, children, families, communities and society as a whole. There is increasing recognition that this context demands a whole of society approach in understanding, responding, preventing and ultimately eliminating GBVF. Furthermore, it is recognised that the role and duty of the state to fulfil its constitutional obligation, is paramount.

Gender-based violence and femicide hereafter referred to as GBVF, has been and continues to be a social ill with far-reaching repercussions. Mahlori, Byrne, and Mabude (2018:1) state that GBVF is one of the most pressing social issues affecting South Africa. While GBVF is a worldwide phenomenon, the Human Rights Watch (2010) labeled South Africa the "rape capital" of the world. In this study, South Africa is the only country of focus, given the spike in recent years of reported and mediatised cases of GBV, and on a more practical level, given that the author lives in the country. South Africa has one of the world's highest rates of GBVF, Including femicide, rape, and intimate partner violence (Matzopoulos, Abrahams, Bowman, Shai, Prinsloo, Salau, Bradshaw, & Gray, 2019:382). Gqola (2007:118) further argues that GBVF in South Africa is omnipresent and commonplace and is normalised through the dominant public discourse. Violence against women is the most pervasive yet least recognized human rights violation in the world (Heise, Ellsberg, Gottmoeller, 2002: 5). Gender-based violence (GBVF) refers to violence directed towards an individual or group on the. Basis of their gender. Gender-based violence was traditionally conceptualized as violence by men. Against women, but is now increasingly taken to include a wider range of hostilities based on sexual.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative research procedures which consists of a set of interpretative, material tests that make the thought-world visible and therefore measurable. Qualitative research includes field notes, conversations, recorded interviews, photographs and memos, amongst others. It involves an interpretative, representational approach to ordering the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, "attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). The study interrogated five key questions on the role the community plays to prevent domestic violence in the Northern Cape Province.

The study site was The Northern Cape five district municipalities namely, Namakwa; Pixley ka Seme; ZF Mgcawu; Frances Baard; and John Taolo Gaetsewe. The sample size was (17) participants and in-depth interviews was conducted with them to collect data. These interviews aimed to capture the nature and understanding of participants' experiences, opinions and points of view. The

rationale here was that the experiences of those required to oversee the safety of the community would be important. The data collected was analysed using content analysis. Data from both interviews and surveys were analysed and consolidated into the pre-determined themes for effective interpretation.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender based violence is described as being physical, emotional and psychological, or using verbal abuse, bullying, engaging in sexual violence and adopting corporal punishment (Leach 2002; Leach and Humphrey, 2007).Physical violence is defined as pushing, grabbing, slapping, choking, or hitting. Emotional violence was defined as being put down, made to feel bad about oneself, being isolated from friends and family, or acting in a possessive manner. Sexual violence was defined as being pressured, coerced, or forced into having sexual contact (Forke, Myers, Catallozi, & Schwarz, 2008: 635).

Gender based violence is the use of fear of violence by the perpetrator on their victim (Leach & Humphrey, 2007). Furthermore, Seedat, Van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla, and Ratele (2009) explain that there is no fixed definition of gender based violence and describe it as being a complex phenomenon which involves deprivation, neglect, and physical, emotional and verbal violence. gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) (2020-2030:1), The general term used to capture violence that occurs as a result of the normative role expectations associated with the gender associated with the sex assigned to a person at birth, as well as the unequal power relations between the genders, within the context of a specific society. GBVF includes physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and psychological abuse or threats of such acts or abuse, coercion, and economic or educational deprivation, whether occurring in public or private life,in peacetime and during armed or other forms of conflict, and may cause physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or economic harm. GBVF comes at a high cost not only at the individual level with victims suffering from physical and mental harm, loss of earnings and increased healthcare costs; it also has wider societal costs, such as lower productivity and reduced economic output and growth, leading to heightened pressure on social and health services (Findano, 2012).

IV. THE CORE TYPES OF GENDER BASE VIOLENCE

GBVF can take many forms including physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence and needs to be seen as a part of a continuum of violence that violates internationally recognised human rights such as the right to life, freedom from torture, equal protection before the law, liberty and security of person, the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and the right to be heard. It also violates the victims' right to control their sexuality.

A. Emotional, and verbal abuse

This refers to a pattern of degrading or humiliating conduct towards a complainant, including repeated insults, ridicule or name-calling, making derogatory remarks about a victim's body or parts of a body, or making derogatory remarks about the victim's family members:
- repeated threats to cause emotional pain;
- repeated obsessive possessiveness or jealousy, which is such as to constitute a serious invasion of the complainant's privacy, liberty, integrity or security.

Conduct in this category that constitutes an offence includes conduct which amounts to crimen injuria and criminal defamation.

V. HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL HARRASMENT

This means engaging in a pattern of conduct that induces fear or harm to the complainant and repeatedly:
- watching or loitering outside of or near the building or place where the complainant resides, works, carries on business, studies or happens to be;
- making telephone calls or inducing another person to make telephone calls to the complainant, whether or not conversation ensues; or
- sending, delivering or causing the delivery of letters, telegrams, packages, facsimiles, electronic mail or other objects to the complainant.

Harassment and sexual harassment are also defined in EU Directive (2002: 73). Harassment is said to occur "where an unwanted conduct related to the sex of a person occurs with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment".

Sexual harassment is "where any form of unwanted verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature occurs, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, inparticular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment

A. Socio Economic Deprivation

This includes the unreasonable withholding of economic or financial resources to which a complainant,
- is entitled under law; or
- which the complainant requires out of necessity, including household necessities for the complainant, and mortgage bond repayments or payment of rent of the shared residence.

The unreasonable disposal of household effects or other property in which the complainant has an interest. Conduct in this category that constitutes an offence includes conduct which amounts to theft and fraud (GBVF ACT, 2011).Typical forms of socio-economic violence include taking away the earnings of the victim, not allowing them to have a separate income (giving them *housewife* status, or making them work in a family business without a salary), or making the victim unfit forwork through targeted physical abuse.

Socio-economic violence in the public sphere is both a cause and an effect of dominant gender power relations in societies. It may include denial of access to education or (equally) paid work (mainly to women), denial of access to services, exclusion from certain jobs, denial of pleasure and the enjoyment of civil, cultural, social and political rights. In the case of LGBT+ people, they may even be subject to criminalisation.

B. Sexual Assault/Violence

Sexual violence is any sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act by violence or coercion, act to traffic a person, or act directed against a person's sexuality, regardless of the relationship to the victim.Sexual abuse consists of any conduct that abuses, humiliates, degrades or otherwise violates the sexual integrity of the complainant. Conduct in this category which constitutes an offence includes conduct which amounts to rape, indecent assault, crimen injuria or criminal defamation (Watts, 2002).

C. Physical Violence

Physical abuse consists of any act or threat of physical violence and includes any slapping, punching, kicking or choking by the respondent. It also refers to slamming against the wall or injuries caused by a weapon or an object. Brutal beatings can result in bruising, lacerations, broken bones or even death.

This form of domestic violence constitutes a criminal offence, e.g. assault, assault with the intent to cause grievous bodily harm or attempted murder. In cases where domestic violence consists of physical abuse, a member should consider opening a docket so that the matter can be fully investigated (GBVF ACT, 2011).

VI. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES TO PREVENT FAMILY VIOLENCE

While appropriate services and responsive institutions are important components in the effort to counter family violence, it takes more than that to generate and sustain real change. But those who are most affected by the violence—the families and communities that live with it—have largely been left out of discussions about the solutions. Yet they are the ones who know all too well how violence affects their daily lives, their environment, their relationships, and their ability to move freely in their neighborhoods and among their peers.

Families and community members play a crucial role in preventing family violence for many reasons:
- Studies show that abused women turn first to those closest to them—extended family, friends, and neighbors—before they reach out to an organization or professional service provider. Relatively few access shelter services. And they seek out government institutions—police, courts, and child protection agencies—last.
- Families that experience violence are often disconnected from traditional service providers and isolated from services offered outside their immediate neighborhood.
- Community members often know which families need help and which services can make a difference.

- Community members know the cultural values, traditions, and practices that support violence—as well as those that can be used appropriately to intervene and stop it.
- Communities include men, women, and youth who understand the connection between violence in the home and on the street and see family violence as a primary barrier to community development and revitalization.
- Most community residents and leaders have the willingness and capacity to develop the skills needed to conduct family violence prevention and intervention activities (Fullwood, 2002, Bazemore & Earle 2002; Blagg 2002; Kelly 2002; Pennell & Anderson 2005); Pranis 2002).

VII. PREVENT FAMILY VIOLENCE IN THE COMMUNITY

This means finding and building on community assets, using culturally appropriate messages and services, and cultivating and supporting local leaders who can advocate for and sustain change. The five main goals discussed here are intertwined, and most of the organizations cited work on several of them simultaneously:
- Raising awareness of the problem of family violence and establishing social norms that make violence unacceptable.
- Connecting community residents to services.
- Changing social and community conditions that contribute to violence.
- Building networks of leaders within a community.
- Making services and institutions accountable to community needs(Fullwood, 2002, Women of Color against Violence 2006; Kim 2002; Mills 2003).

VIII. RAISING AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM OF FAMILY VIOLENCE AND ESTABLISHING SOCIAL NORMS THAT MAKE VIOLENCE UNACCEPTABLE

The essential condition for any community-based efforts to function accordingly is for people to understand that family violence is a problem and learn about its tremendous impact. Without being informed, people are less likely to get involved or to even care about such issues. Unfortunately, domestic violence is still regarded by society and some institutions as a private family matter, one that doesn't require outside intervention, when in reality, domestic violence is a violation of the individual's human rights and, therefore, everyone's problem.While raising awareness can go a long way in helping communities understand the extent of the problem, awareness does not move things by itself. It simplybrings the discussion about family violence into the spotlight and increases the chances of something being done about it.

One of the first requirements in any community mobilization effort is to raise awareness of the problem. If people do not know that family violence exists in their community, if they don't understand its impact or know where to turn for help, they will be unlikely to get involved or to communicate the unacceptability of violence. Violence is often seen as a private matter, one that families are hesitant to talk about. But the organizations discussed here

discovered that families who have a safe place and opportunity to speak about violence have no reluctance to do so. Raising awareness allows people to think differently about the problem, and to own the issue as one they can do something about.

IX. CONNECTING COMMUNITY RESIDENTS TO SERVICES

Awareness is the first step towards preventing and reducing family violence. The next is to get help to the families who need it. Help can come from traditional and existing services, as well as from new programs developed by residents themselves. Assistance can be provided by both traditional and new programs designed to help victims of abuse get out of violent relationships and overcome feelings of confusion, guilt, or self-blame. The community can make sure that services such as counseling, legal help, services for children, support groups, health-related services, employment programs, and financial assistance are provided to families in need.

X. CHANGING SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY CONDITIONS

The majority of the organizations identified in this report are working in communities where poverty is prevalent. The most visionary and probably the most difficult goal is to engage community members in changing those conditions, such as poverty, that contribute to violence, while at the same time helping individual families get services to address specific needs.

Most organizations that offer support and assistance for victims of domestic abuse are active in poor communities. It is believed that poverty, substance abuse, mental and physical health issues, and other such factors contribute to maintaining a high domestic abuse rate. Therefore, the most challenging task of organizations that fight against violence is to change or try to eliminate conditions that favorize abuse, while making sure victims receive the needed assistance.

XI. BUILDING NETWORKS OF LEADERS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Leadership development is a core premise of any good community engagement effort and a critical task of all. Finding and fostering new leaders creates messengers who can help raise awareness about family violence and articulate the connections between child abuse and domestic violence. Leaders mobilize people to action, engaging them in new activities to identify and prevent violence. Development of new leaders from within each community also helps ensure that reform efforts will be sustained. Leaders mobilize people to action, engaging them in new activities to identify and prevent violence. Development of new leaders from within each community also helps ensure that reform efforts will be sustained."

For victims of family violence and domestic abuse, being able to rely on the community for support is crucial in ensuring their health and wellbeing. To this purpose,

communities must learn to regard family violence as a priority and change residents' perspective upon the privacy of abuse, working together to design prevention programs that are in accordance with the current cultural context of the community. Changing society to eliminate violence is definitely the most difficult task, but it's not an impossible one.

XII. MAKING SERVICES AND INSTITUTIONS ACCOUNTABLE TO COMMUNITY NEEDS

Change in the Community Engagement sites often comes from and is led by community residents, those who know first-hand the problems and the potential solutions. But permanent change also needs to involve the state agencies and institutions formally charged with supporting families and protecting children and the community. Collaborating with grassroots organizations and placing workers in the neighborhood doesn't come easily to traditional social service systems. But there is a growing recognition among state and local officials that families will be safer when communities are involved. There is also a growing recognition on the part of some communities that the "system" is not the enemy.

XIII. KEY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study makes every effort to achieve the objectives set out above. This is all to address and answer the problem statement. The researcher was able to achieve the aims of the study. The participants were then asked to thoroughly explain further perceptions regarding domestic violence that is on the rise.

A. THEME1: PREVALENCE OF GENDER BASE VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE IN THE NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE
Johanna a community member says:
"…Our men are unemployed and therefore they drink alcohol excessively and are unable to put food on the table. Moreover, for those men who are employed, some still desert their homes in terms of welfare due to involving themselves in extramarital affairs. They spend their money on girlfriends instead of their family [sic]".

Madibane a young male answered:
"…Once a man becomes unemployed, it was highly likely that the wife would not submit to him, deny him sex and verbally be abusive. These issues are not talked about because we men have our pride but most of us are living a life of hell when we are not working [sic]".

Maserame a young lady said:
"…I dread when my husband comes home drunk because he becomes very abusive physically and verbally. He is a different character when he is drunk and I cannot reason with him. He sometimes beats me over trivial issues such as not opening the door as fast as he expects me to do it [sic]".

The Chairperson of the Ward Council Committee lamented:

"…the Northern Cape Province has high levels of poverty, unemployment and therefore, increased levels of domestic violence have robbed homes of peace as most men were failing to provide for families in terms of food and other essential commodities. When there is no food in the home, women become very nagging and blame men for not making an effort in looking for housekeeping money. This is because traditionally men are supposed to be providers. The stress put on men has made them very irritable and aggressive towards their spouses [sic]".

B. *THEME 2: GENDER BASE VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE IS A SERIOUS PERCEPTIONS BY WARD COUNCILORS COMMITTEE/COMMUNITY LEADERS*
According to one of the Ward Councilor members:
"…Other forms of baseviolence other than Physical violence are left to the couple, neighbours, family members and marriage counselors to resolve, but where a victim has been brutalised, people were now rushing to the police to save lives [sic]".

Mr Dirako a senior ward committee member remark:
"…The interventions against domestic violence were in many forms. For example, the zone leaders would caution the perpetrator of domestic violence and warn him of stern action and if he continued being unrepentant, he would be asked to leave the locality and look for an alternative place to live [sic]".

Addition to this, one female councilor asserted:
"In as much as we would like to intervene in situations where victims were experiencing economic violence, we do not have the capacity because the majority of people are living in poverty. To say the truth, we have no economic empowerment programmes currently as a committee, especially for women [sic]".

One councilor stated that:
"…When parents are embroiled in domestic violence, it is the children who suffer. Such children do not perform well at school and are likely to be perpetrators of violence in the future. This entails the Norther Cape will continue to lag in development for generations to come because children are not being raised as responsible useful future citizens [sic]".

Mr Mahlangule who work for social development remark:
"…Men usually apologise after beating a woman and so it becomes unnecessary to report a battery incidence to the police. Most women usually accept apologies from husbands as it is an indication that a man is still in love with the wife [sic]".

A female church leader argued
"…Marriage did not take place at the police and so it is not the police's business to resolve marital disputes. A couple should be given a chance to resolve their differences instead of rushing to the police [sic]".

Mr Snyders stated:
"…Some fights are brutal and need to be reported to the police to save lives and also act as a deterrent to the perpetrator. Even though the police are not trusted by many people to resolve disputes, their punitive nature sometimes can instill fear if perpetrators of violence know that even neighbours can report them to the police. Therefore, the community must be in the habit of reporting violent husbands to the police as a deterrent from further violence [sic]".

C. *THEME3 THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY IN PREVENTING GENDER BASE VIOLENCE: AND FEMICIDE WARD COUNCILORS COMMITTEE/COMMUNITY LEADERS*
The following were the outlined challenges by responders:
- "If someone is drunk you cannot control their behaviour either in public or their homes"
- "Poverty is a big challenge in preventing gender base violence in the Northern Cape. Many men are unemployed; therefore lack of food in homes fuels domestic violence in most households"
- "There is no respect or acceptance of marriage counselors by perpetrators of violence if they are of low economic status, especially by our young generation. Respect for elders especially in urban areas is slowly fading away. They respect someone because of one's economic status and therefore they do not accept advice from persons of low status like most traditional counselors. Moreover, most young people nowadays are just cohabiting and so they have not gone through traditional marriage counseling".
- "When there is violence, even if people want to help, victim or perpetrator think that people want to finish the marriage".
- "We lack finances to compile cases and offer assistance where victims of domestic violence need financial help".
- "We lack knowledge, pamphlets and other aids to educate people on good marriage values aimed at minimising domestic violence. We are encouraging interested stakeholders with the knowledge and useful resources to work with us in minimising domestic violence in our community".

a) LEADERS IN THE COMMUNITY
A female marriage counselor said:
"…My role as counselor is to reach out to as many couples as possible experiencing gender baseviolence even if I do not know them personally because I know my advice can make a positive difference. I also make sure I counsel couples intending to get married on how to avoid gender base violence because it is always good to stop the violence before it starts. For example, I counsel the women to be resourceful and not just wait for the man to provide everything for the home. The only problem that I encounter is counseling couples that never passed through premarital counseling as they tend to be stubborn and immature [sic]".

Ms Lootering say: (marriage councilor)
"…As a marriage counselor, I reach out to couples experiencing gender baseviolence within my locality. The community members are also at will to approach me as it was my noble contribution to my community. The only problem is that many couples have now just started cohabiting at tender ages and were not passing through our premarital counseling as it is evident that it is the young ones who are mostly embroiled in domestic violence. In my opinion, if couples could approach us before marriage, then levels of domestic violence would be lower than they are now in our community [sic]".

b) CHURCH LEADERS
Mr Ikaneng a Pastor in Zion Christian church stated:
"…As the Zion Church Pastor, we have church programmes for our members where we learn about good values of marriage and we have annual marriage retreats that are aimed at building good marriages. We have observed that those who make an effort to attend our retreats are enjoying violence-free marriage [sic]".

Ms Mary a church leader in the community alluded that:
"…We pray for women experiencing domestic violence within the church and we also encourage women facing economic violence to embark on income-generating activities through saving clubs within the church. At my church, we have income-generating activities but I am not sure if other churches are doing so. Therefore, if all churches had such initiatives in the community, we would see a reduction in domestic violence because most women are suffering from violence due to their low economic status [sic]".

Mr Makhamba a church home sell leader in the church said:
"The Christian Revival Church (CRC) has departments such as the Men's Christian Fellowship (MCF) that visits families experiencing domestic violence in the communities even though they do not belong to CRC. Our role is to rebuke especially men perpetrating violence and encourage them to be better husbands. As CRC we go a step further by reaching out every so often to men in the community with teachings about being good husbands and providers for the family".

D. *THEME4 COMMUNITY-OWNED INITIATIVES AIMED AT PREVENTING GENDERBASE VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE COUNCILORS COMMITTEE/COMMUNITY LEADERS*
The Ward councilor chairperson acknowledged:
"…Most churches teach their members on good marriage values which discourage violence. The marriage counselors also play an important role in guiding married couples and intervening whenever disputes arise in homes but we lack organisations whose main objective is carrying out violence prevention programmes such as

community sensitisation and economic empowerment [sic]".

Mr Diraditsile alluded:
"…We need a community-led organisation to spearhead issues of domestic violence and we will be glad to be part of it. We should not wait until a lot of people are killed to have such an organisation. In fact, in general, there are many programmes on television and radio on cholera, HIV and AIDS and other forms of GBVF but very little on domestic violence in particular [sic]".

The last respondent stated:
"…I am only aware of the church and traditional marriage counselors as groups who are making an effort in preventing domestic violence but those who do not go to church miss out [sic]".

XIV. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Engage in peer education and community mobilization to break the silence around GBVF and promote a zero tolerance of GBVF;
- Develop community-based GBVF prevention strategies to strengthen grassroots initiatives against any forms of GBVF;
- Educate community members on where and how to access services and inform them about the referral pathways among service providers;
- Develop and disseminate information in relevant languages on laws and rights and on service availability through information boards, information sessions, radio shows etc.
- Form survivor support groups/networks that provide basic emotional support and information about availability of services. Explore the possibility of linking GBVF in existing HIV related support groups;
- A multi-sectoral approach to optimally harness the roles, responsibilities, resources and commitment across government departments, different tiers of government, civil society, movements, youth structures, development agencies, the private sector, academic institutions and all stakeholders;
- Complementing and augmenting existing strategies, instruments and national initiatives on GBVF and safety in the Northern cape Province;
- Active and meaningful participation of communities, civil society, movements, and those most affected by GBVF in the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the strategy;
- A visionary, gender-responsive, and transformative approach that takes account of inequality and gender-driven differences driving GBVF;
- A human rights-based, victim-centred, survivor-focused approach to the provision of services that reaches all, without the risk of financial hardship;
- An inter- generational, youth-friendly approach;
- Progressive realization of outcomes through the prioritization of reforms and strategic partnerships to address wider systemic challenges;

- Develop and implement programmes that seek to transform harmful gender norms and relations from a human rights perspective.
- Establish support groups for perpetrators to learn different patterns of behaviour and cope with responsibility of harm perpetrated.
- Link GBVF and HIV in awareness raising programmes and mass media campaigns to highlight the mutually reinforcing relationship between the two epidemics.
- Forward looking towards co-creation of a different social milieu underpinned by respect, compassion and human dignity for all;
- Mutual accountability for changes recognising that meeting these outcomes requires government, civil society, communities, social movements, the private sector, development partners and all stakeholders to work together to drive the agenda forward. 10. Inclusiveness, embracing diversity and intersectionality, recognising the importance of foregrounding women's experiences most marginalised by poverty, race, age, ableness, sexual orientation, gender identity and nationality.

XV. CONCLUSION

Globally, gender-based violence and (GBVF) is seen as a gross violation of human rights, an attack on women's dignity and a significant public health problem. GBVF includes physical, economic, sexual, and psychological abuse from intimate and non-intimate partners, rape, sexual abuse of girls, sexual harassment and acts such as trafficking women for sex as well as femicide; the most extreme form of GBVF. Intimate femicide refers to the killing of a female person by an intimate partner (that is, her current or ex husband or boyfriend, same sex partner or a rejected would-be- lover and non-intimate femicide refers to the killing of a female person by someone other than an intimate partner. Violence against women is defined as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. It refers to a specific form of gender-based violence that is directed at a woman because she is a woman and that affects her disproportionately. It affects women throughout their life cycle, is often exacerbated by cultural, economic, ideological, technological, political, religious, social and environmental factors. As society has evolved, there have been calls for expanded understandings of gender-based violence have expanded to include economic violence, violence as a result of sexual orientation, sexual and gender identity, cyber violence and state violence in which women and girls are denied access to critical sexual and reproductive health rights.

GBVF is highly prevalent and endemic in South Africa, with particularly high rates of sexual gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) has serious negative health outcomes, economic and psycho-social impact and is often associated with injuries, acute morbidity and even mortality. Individuals who experience GBV tend to experience long-term effects on their health and wellbeing, thus making gendered violence prevention an urgent priority for policy makers and other key stakeholders to address.

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