Letlhabile Network Community Advice Office

Masibambisane Community-Based Survey Results: Incidences and Drivers of Gender-Based Violence & Femicide

2024

What is GBVF?

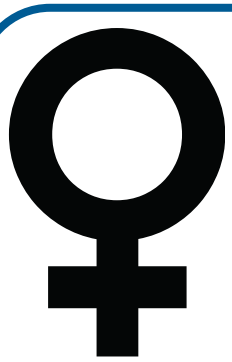
Gender-based violence includes physical, sexual, psychological, and economic abuse based on someone's real or perceived gender identity. Femicide is murder based on real or assumed gender identity.

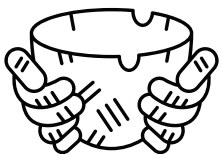
This summary focuses on gender-based violence (GBV) and socio-economic conditions among individuals from the local community, with data collected through household interviews conducted by GBV monitors from the Letlhabile Network Community Advice Office. Nearly half of the respondents experienced various forms of GBV, with economic violence being the most prevalent. These findings align with broader trends observed in the Masibambisane survey, which highlight the ongoing challenges of GBV in communities across South Africa.

We spoke to

308

people in the community





201

in 308 experienced **economic GBV**

108

in 308 experienced **psychological GBV**

49

in 308 experienced **physical GBV**

36

in 308 experienced **sexual GBV**

What are Socio-Economic Rights?

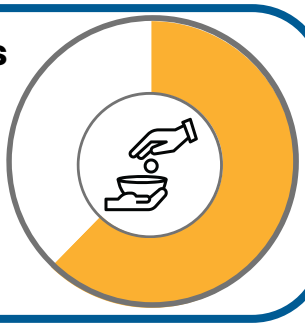
Socio-economic rights are guaranteed by the Constitution and include access to food, healthcare, water, sanitation, education and social security (grants) - the government must provide these rights to EVERYONE in South Africa.

The most common form of GBV was **economic**, followed by **psychological**, then **physical**, and lastly, **sexual**.

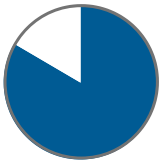
Financial insecurity was the highest risk factor.

192

of the 308 people we spoke to reported financial challenges to meet their basic needs.



Financial insecurity has serious implications for survivors of GBV. Survivors may remain dependent on their abusers for financial support, making it harder for them to leave abusive relationships. Additionally, the lack of income can prevent survivors from accessing essential services.



257

in 308 respondents said that they faced food insecurity

108

in 308 respondents **completed some high school**, lower than the national average

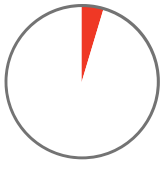
It was found that respondents relied heavily on social grants.

34

in 308 respondents received grants, with the **Older Person's Grant** being the most common

The findings from the 308 surveys conducted among the local community by Letlhabile Network Community Advice Office reveal that financial strain, food insecurity, and various forms of GBV remain key issues. Economic violence, experienced by 201 respondents, was the most common form of abuse, highlighting the financial dependency that traps survivors in abusive situations. Additionally, the rates of physical and psychological GBV in this community are slightly higher than the national averages, which underscores the urgency of addressing these forms of violence. Addressing these socio-economic and GBV challenges requires a comprehensive approach, including financial resilience, legal advocacy, and community education.

The conviction rates for sexual, psychological, and physical GBV are notably low, mirroring national trends and highlighting the need for stronger legal protections and support systems. Addressing these issues through targeted economic empowerment, improved legal accountability, and tailored GBV prevention programs for both youth and adults is essential for fostering safety, independence, and long-term recovery for survivors.



5 in 108

perpetrators of **psychological GBV** were convicted.

4 in 49

perpetrators of **physical GBV** were convicted.

3 in 36

perpetrators of **sexual GBV** were convicted.

Letlhabile Network Community Advice Office Report

Masibambisane Community-Based Survey Results: Incidences and Drivers of Gender-Based Violence & Femicide

Introduction

This report explores the socio-economic conditions and prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) within the community served by Letlhabile Network Community Advice Office, based on data from 308 household surveys conducted by GBV monitors. The findings reveal that economic GBV is the most reported form of violence, followed by psychological, physical, and sexual violence. Financial instability remains a significant challenge, with most respondents citing it as a primary concern. While educational attainment shows some progress, high rates of financial dependency and food insecurity continue to affect many households, particularly impacting GBV survivors. Low conviction rates across all GBV types further highlight barriers to justice and the need for stronger legal and socio-economic interventions.

Demographics

Out of the 308 people we spoke to, 141 were youth, aged 18-34, while 140 were adults, and 27 were elderly. This matches the national age distribution. This distribution underscores the need for targeted GBV prevention and intervention strategies that address the unique risks faced by youth and adults, while also recognising the specific vulnerabilities of the elderly population.

Socio-Economic Conditions and Link to GBV

Education Level

Out of the 308 people we spoke to, 116 (3 out of 10) people had at least completed some high school, reflecting a relatively lower level of educational attainment compared to national averages. Lower educational levels can limit access to job opportunities and financial independence, which are crucial for survivors of GBV seeking to leave abusive relationships. Providing access to education and job training programs is essential for empowering survivors and improving socio-economic outcomes within the community.

Income Levels

Out of the 308 people we spoke to, 289 (9 out of 10) people reported that their income was less than what they needed to meet basic needs. This level of financial insecurity mirrors national struggles and has serious implications for GBV survivors, as economic dependency can trap them in abusive relationships. Financial empowerment programs and access to better job opportunities are critical steps to reducing this financial strain and helping survivors gain independence.

Grant Dependency

Out of the 308 people we spoke to, 113 received grants. The most common grant was the Child Support Grant – 64 people received it. While grants provide necessary support, they often offer limited financial flexibility, making it challenging for GBV survivors to break free from abusive relationships. Expanding economic empowerment opportunities is essential to addressing the financial dependencies that contribute to the persistence of GBV.

Food Security

Out of the 308 people we spoke to, 254 (8 out of 10) people reported some level of food insecurity, which is higher than the national average. Food insecurity exacerbates the vulnerability of GBV survivors, as dependency on abusers for basic needs like food can trap them in abusive situations. Ensuring access to consistent food supplies is a crucial part of helping survivors gain the independence they need to escape abuse and rebuild their lives.

GBV Analysis

Economic GBV

Out of the 308 people we spoke to, 201 people reported experiencing economic violence. Current partners were the primary perpetrators. Economic violence often involves controlling access to financial resources, preventing survivors from working, or restricting their financial independence, trapping them in abusive relationships. Addressing this form of GBV requires targeted economic empowerment programs, which provide survivors with the financial literacy, skills, and job opportunities they need to break free from abusive situations.

Physical GBV

Out of the 308 people we spoke to, 49 people reported experiencing physical GBV, with current partners being the most common perpetrators. This rate is slightly higher than national averages, underscoring the persistent issue of intimate partner violence. Only 1 perpetrator was convicted, lower than the national conviction rate. The low conviction rate reflects the challenges survivors face in securing justice, often due to underreporting or fear of retaliation. Strengthening legal protections and support services is essential for ensuring accountability and providing survivors with the help they need.

Psychological GBV

Out of the 308 people we spoke to, 108 people reported experiencing psychological GBV, with current partners being the most common perpetrators. This rate is higher than national trends and highlights the damaging prevalence of emotional and mental abuse within relationships. Psychological GBV can deeply affect survivors' mental health, leaving them feeling trapped and powerless. There were only 5 convictions. Strengthening legal responses and improving mental health support for survivors is crucial for breaking cycles of abuse.

Sexual GBV

Out of the 308 people we spoke to, 36 people reported experiencing sexual GBV, with most incidents involving current partners. This is higher than the national average and highlights the challenges survivors face in seeking justice when the perpetrator is someone close to them. Only 3 convictions were reported, mirroring national trends where sexual violence is often underreported and under-convicted. Improving legal support and encouraging survivors to come forward are key steps in addressing this issue and holding perpetrators accountable.

Implications of Low Conviction Rates

The low conviction rates for physical, psychological, and sexual GBV are consistent with national trends and have significant consequences. Perpetrators may feel emboldened by the lack of legal repercussions, allowing cycles of violence to persist. Survivors may lose faith in the justice system, leading to a reduced likelihood of reporting abuse or seeking help. The inability to secure convictions can compound the emotional and psychological damage suffered by survivors, reinforcing feelings of helplessness. Moreover, survivors may hesitate to pursue legal protection or assistance, prolonging their exposure to violence. The absence of accountability can normalize harmful behaviours, hindering efforts to shift societal norms around GBV.

Suggestions for Letlhabile Network Community Advice Office

- Expand Financial Empowerment Programs: Offering financial literacy and skills development programs could help survivors gain economic independence, reducing reliance on abusive partners.
- Strengthen Legal and Psychological Support: Increasing access to legal aid and mental health support could improve outcomes for survivors, helping them rebuild their lives.
- Community Education: Raising awareness about psychological and economic abuse could encourage earlier reporting of abuse, helping survivors seek help before violence escalates.
- Collaborate on Social Protection Initiatives: Engaging with national bodies to discuss enhancing social protection measures could ensure survivors of GBV have access to adequate financial resources.

Conclusion

The findings from the 308 surveys conducted by Letlhabile Network Community Advice Office highlight persistent challenges related to financial strain, food insecurity, and various forms of GBV. Economic violence was identified as the most prevalent type of abuse, emphasizing the financial dependency that often traps survivors in abusive relationships. Additionally, the community experiences slightly higher-than-average rates of physical and psychological GBV, pointing to the urgent need for targeted interventions. Addressing these challenges effectively requires a comprehensive approach that includes financial empowerment, legal advocacy, and community education to support survivors and foster long-term stability and independence.

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+27 (0) 11-593 4000
FHRRights
www.fhr.org.za
Foundation for Human Rights
info@fhr.org.za
foundation_for_human_rights
Floor 7, Metalbox Building - 25 Owl Street cnr Stanley Avenue
Braamfontein Werf, Johannesburg

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