Mpophomeni Gender and Paralegal Office (MGPO)

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 report analyses the socio-economic conditions and the prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) in the community served by Mpophomeni Gender and Paralegal Office (MGPO). Data from 293 household surveys conducted by GBV monitors offers insights into the various forms of GBV and the associated challenges. The findings indicate a higher prevalence of physical and economic violence compared to national averages, while the incidence of sexual GBV is slightly lower. Despite a higher-than-average rate of educational attainment, financial insecurity remains widespread, impacting nearly all households.

We spoke to

293

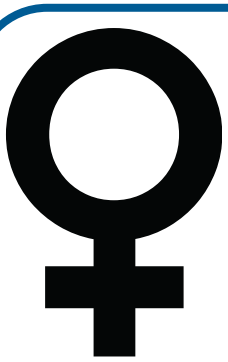
people in the community

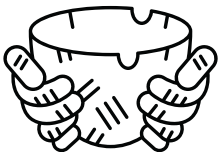
158 youth

107 adults

28 elderly people

Mpophomeni Gender and Paralegal Office (MGPO)





139

in 293 experienced **economic GBV**

100

in 293 experienced **psychological GBV**

51

in 293 experienced **physical GBV**

10

in 293 experienced **sexual GBV**

What are Socio-Economic Rights?

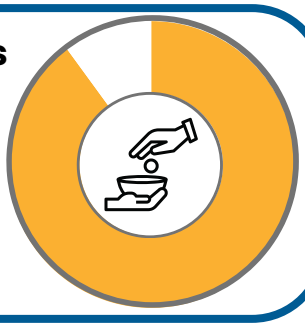
Socio-economic rights are guaranteed by the Constitution and include access to food, healthcare, water, sanitation, education and social security (grants) - the government must provide these rights to EVERYONE in South Africa.

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

Financial insecurity was the highest risk factor.

269

of the 293 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.

129

in 293 respondents said that they faced food insecurity

173

in 293 respondents **completed matric**, higher than the national average

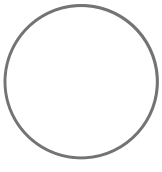
It was found that respondents relied heavily on social grants.

39

in 293 respondents received grants, with the **Child Support Grant** being the most common

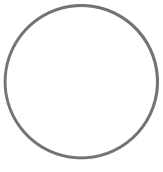
The findings from the Mpophomeni Gender and Paralegal Office community highlight significant challenges related to gender-based violence (GBV) and socio-economic conditions. Economic violence was the most prevalent form of GBV, with nearly half of respondents reporting incidents, while physical violence affected 2 out of 10 people surveyed. Despite slightly lower rates of sexual GBV compared to national figures, the lack of convictions for all forms of GBV reflects major gaps in the justice system, which can perpetuate cycles of abuse and erode trust in legal support.

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.



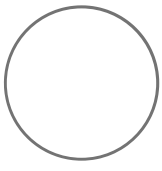
0 in 100

perpetrators of **psychological GBV** were convicted.



0 in 51

perpetrators of **physical GBV** were convicted.



0 in 10

perpetrators of **sexual GBV** were convicted.

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Introduction

This report analyses the socio-economic conditions and the prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) in the community served by Mpophomeni Gender and Paralegal Office (MGPO). Data from 293 household surveys conducted by GBV monitors offers insights into the various forms of GBV and the associated challenges. The findings indicate a higher prevalence of physical and economic violence compared to national averages, while the incidence of sexual GBV is slightly lower. Despite a higher-than-average rate of educational attainment, financial insecurity remains widespread, impacting nearly all households. Alarmingly, there were no convictions for sexual, psychological, or physical GBV, underscoring significant gaps in legal accountability. These results highlight the pressing need for targeted support systems, economic empowerment initiatives, and strengthened legal measures to protect survivors and promote justice.

Demographics

Of the 293 people we spoke to, 158 were youth (aged 18 to 34 years), 107 were adults, and 28 were elderly people. The larger proportion of youth in this community, compared to national averages, has significant implications for GBV prevention and intervention strategies. Younger individuals may be more vulnerable to dating violence, intimate partner violence, and sexual exploitation, while adults face challenges such as financial dependency in abusive relationships. Tailoring GBV programs to address the specific risks faced by both youth and adults is essential for effectively reducing GBV and providing appropriate support to survivors.

Socio-Economic Conditions and Link to GBV

Education Level

Of the 293 people we spoke to, 173 (6 out of 10) had completed at least matric, which is higher than the national average of 5 out of 10. While higher educational attainment is a positive sign for the community, it must be complemented by economic empowerment and access to resources to ensure that survivors of GBV can achieve independence. Without adequate financial support, even those with education may struggle to escape abusive situations and rebuild their lives.

Income Levels

Of the 293 people we spoke to, 269 (9 out of 10) were financially insecure, with their income being either just enough or not enough to meet basic needs. This aligns with the national average and highlights the widespread financial vulnerability in the community. Financial insecurity severely limits the ability of survivors to leave abusive relationships, as they may lack the resources to support themselves independently. Reducing this vulnerability is crucial for helping survivors achieve long-term safety and independence.

Grant Dependency

Of the 293 people we spoke to, 39 (1 in 10) reported that their primary household income came from grants, significantly lower than the national average of 3 out of 10. The most common type of grant received was the Child Support Grant, received by 22 people. While reliance on grants provides essential financial support, it often leaves survivors financially dependent, making it difficult to leave abusive relationships. Expanding economic opportunities and support services is crucial for reducing this dependency and enabling survivors to regain financial control over their lives.

Food Security

Of the 293 people we spoke to, 129 (4 out of 10) reported some form of food insecurity, which is slightly lower than the national average of 5 out of 10. Food insecurity exacerbates the challenges survivors face, as dependence on abusers for basic necessities like food can trap them in abusive situations. Addressing food insecurity is essential to empowering survivors and ensuring they have the stability needed to leave abusive environments and regain independence.

GBV Analysis

Sexual GBV

Of the 293 people we spoke to, 10 reported experiencing sexual GBV, with most incidents involving current partners. This rate is slightly lower than the national average. No convictions were recorded for sexual GBV, reflecting a gap in legal accountability and being lower than the national rate. The absence of convictions may discourage survivors from reporting incidents and seeking justice, further perpetuating cycles of violence and leaving survivors vulnerable.

Psychological GBV

Of the 293 people we spoke to, 100 people reported experiencing psychological GBV, primarily by previous partners. This rate aligns with national figures. However, no convictions were noted for psychological GBV, this is lower than the national conviction rate. The lack of accountability can leave survivors feeling isolated and powerless, making it difficult to seek help. Stronger legal frameworks and support systems are needed to ensure survivors of psychological GBV receive the justice and protection they deserve.

Physical GBV

Of the 293 people we spoke to, 51 reported experiencing physical GBV, with most incidents involving previous partners. This community experiences significantly higher levels of physical violence compared to the national average. Despite this, no convictions were recorded for physical GBV, which is less than the national conviction rate. This lack of justice undermines efforts to support survivors and holds perpetrators accountable.

Economic GBV

Of the 293 people we spoke to, 139 reported experiencing economic violence, which is higher than the national average. Economic violence, often involving control over financial resources, restricts survivors' ability to achieve independence, trapping them in abusive relationships. Addressing economic violence through targeted empowerment programs is crucial for helping survivors regain financial control and break free from these dynamics.

Implications of Low Conviction Rates

The low conviction rates for sexual, psychological, and physical GBV in this community 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 Mpophomeni Gender and Paralegal Office (MGPO)

- Expand Financial Resilience 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 Measures: Engaging with national organizations to strengthen social safety nets could ensure survivors have the financial and material resources they need to leave abusive relationships.

Conclusion

The findings from the Mpophomeni Gender and Paralegal Office community highlight significant challenges related to gender-based violence (GBV) and socio-economic conditions. Economic violence was the most prevalent form of GBV, with nearly half of respondents reporting incidents, while physical violence affected 2 out of 10 people surveyed. Despite slightly lower rates of sexual GBV compared to national figures, the lack of convictions for all forms of GBV reflects major gaps in the justice system, which can perpetuate cycles of abuse and erode trust in legal support. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive strategies, including stronger legal accountability, economic empowerment programs, and increased access to mental health and social support services to foster a safer and more independent future for survivors.

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FOUNDATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

creating GBVF free zones
Masibambisane

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