Towards a Gender-Based Violence Index for South Africa

Overview of Activities, Year 2

| 2025

UNFPA

Commission for Gender Equality

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DEVELOPMENT POLICY RESEARCH UNIT

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Commission for Gender Equality

An Index of Gender-Based Violence for South Africa

Overview of Activities: April 2024-March 2025

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Publisher: Commission for Gender Equality.

Design, Layout & Printing: Shereno Printers cc

Title of Publication: An Index of Gender-Based Violence for South Africa Overview of Activities: April 2024-March 2025 Morné Oosthuizen, University of Cape Town Lieketseng Mohlakoana-Motopi, Commission for Gender Equality; Edited and finalised by Naledi Selebano, Commission for Gender Equality

ISBN: 978-1-77997-826-4

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CAS	Case administration system
CGE	Commission for Gender Equality
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
DoH	Department of Health
DoJ & CD	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
DSD	Department of Social Development
DWYPD	Department of Women Youth and Persons with Disabilities
GBV	Gender-based violence
GBVCC	Gender-Based Violence Command Centre
GBVF	Gender-based violence and femicide
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
IJS	Integrated justice system
LGBTIQIA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transexual, intersex, asexual
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
NPA	National Prosecuting Authority
NSP	National Strategic Plan
NSP-GBVF	National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide
PEP	Post-exposure prophylaxis
SAPS	South African Police Service
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
TCCs	Thuthuzela Care Centres
UCT	University of Cape Town
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

1. INTRODUCTION

The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) is an independent statutory body established in terms of Section 187 of the Constitution of South Africa. The CGE is mandated to promote respect for gender equality and the protection, development, and attainment of gender equality in the Republic of South Africa. The powers and functions of the CGE are outlined in the Commission for Gender Equality Act No. 39 of 1996. Specifically, in terms of Section 11(1)(a) of the CGE Act, the CGE has the powers to monitor and evaluate policies and practices of State organs, State agencies, public bodies and the private sector to promote gender equality and to prepare and submit reports to Parliament.

In 2023, the Development Policy Research Unit at the University of Cape Town (UCT) was commissioned by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), on behalf of the CGE, to undertake the process of developing the GBV Index for South Africa. The primary purpose of this GBV Index is to provide a broad measure of GBV that will enable stakeholders to identify GBV trends and patterns to allocate resources appropriately to address GBV and to provide detail on the extent and nature of GBV at different levels of geographic disaggregation (national, provincial, district, and municipal). The intention is that the Index will be updated regularly—preferably quarterly—and will be accessible to a wide range of stakeholders, including government, civil society, and academia.

The initial report detailing the status of the Index's development was published and released in 2024. This document represents the second report in the series, aiming to provide a comprehensive update on the progress made during the second year of the Index's development. The report highlights key activities, achievements, and challenges encountered in the process, offering a clearer picture of the ongoing efforts to enhance and refine the Index.

In line with the conclusions of the first report, two points that inform the second year's activities are worth noting at the outset. First, it was agreed by the three partner institutions—the CGE, UNFPA, and UCT—that the development of a GBV Index would be a longer-term process over several years. Second, for this work to succeed, it requires buy-in and support from various government stakeholders on whose data the Index would be built.

2. BACKGROUND

Based on the work undertaken during 2023 and early 2024, the report to the UNFPA and the CGE highlighted several points relevant to developing a GBV Index that emerged from the workshop held in February 2024, which involved stakeholders from government, academia, and civil society.

2.1 Relevant points regarding the GBV Index

First, developing a GBV Index for South Africa is a significant undertaking as the Index has to be accessible and easy to understand, use, and update regularly, as well as having to provide useful evidence for policy-making at the national, provincial, and local levels. This usefulness and ease of use is particularly true in the context of the current data landscape in South Africa, which is characterised by a lack of systematic and regular data collection on GBV. As a consequence, the development of the Index should be seen as a longer-term process that also allows for ongoing refinement.

Second, the engagements undertaken during the research revealed general enthusiasm and support for the idea of the GBV Index and the systematic and regular measurement of GBV in its various forms in South Africa. Crucially, measurement was recognised as being central to the ability of society to better understand and design interventions to address the problem of GBV. Further, public sector participants in the February 2024 workshop were open to the idea of future engagements aimed at understanding the type of data their institutions collect and potentially at accessing such data, as well as for the possibility of making small adjustments to data collection to make the data more useful for measuring GBV.

Third, the type of measure envisaged will, to a large extent, be reliant on regularly-available, high-quality administrative data. Given the degree of fragmentation, siloing, and lack of systematic publication of this data, particularly in formats that speak directly to the issue of GBV, this represents a crucial challenge that will require a concerted effort across a broad range of stakeholders to resolve.

Fourth, a large variety of data sources exist in both the public and the private sectors that have the potential to contribute to our understanding of GBV. While not all of these may be suitable for incorporation into the GBV Index, they may still be useful in broadening and deepening our understanding of the extent and nature of GBV in South Africa.

Partly in response to these points relevant to the development of the GBV Index, but also in reflection on the various discussions that took place during this project, the team made two specific recommendations:

First, the paucity of administrative data collection systems that have GBV as either a primary or ancillary focus has implications for the data that is eventually collected and, as a result, for the type of composite measure that can be constructed. One significant data gap is the ability to discern GBV beyond more narrowly defined violence against women or violence against women and children. The intention is for this Index to be a GBV Index, and the Index should be able to measure violence against women, against children, and against members of the LGBTQIA+ community. However, reliance on administrative data means that, at least initially, the early versions of this Index are likely to be able to only measure violence against women and girls. Over time, as data collection processes are adapted to be more closely aligned to the objective of measuring GBV, the Index may effectively become a measure of violence against women and children and, eventually, GBV. The objective of measuring GBV, broadly defined, must guide and drive future development of the Index.

Second, in response to the fragmentation of data in this space and as a function of the variety of datasets that seem to already exist, the development of the GBV Index would be supported by a parallel process of collating, cataloguing, and bringing as many of these datasets together in a centralised repository where they can ideally be accessed for purposes of policy-making and research. This process should be shaped and informed by considerations around privacy and security, recognising also that the exact considerations might vary across datasets. Modalities of access may vary for different datasets and may range from, for example, unrestricted downloading of data all the way through to secure access. A key aspect of cataloguing the data would relate to documentation around data collection processes, data fields, and other similar metadata.

3. YEAR 2: PLANNED ACTIVITIES

3.1 Alignment

The successful implementation of the proposed GBV Index hinges on its alignment with existing structures and frameworks within the GBV landscape. This alignment is essential for the Index's effectiveness and for ensuring its relevance and applicability in the field. A particularly crucial aspect of this process is aligning with the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (NSP-GBVF). In order to achieve this, it was imperative to engage actively with the Department for Women, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities, the key custodians of the NSP.

3.2 High-level advocacy

It is widely acknowledged that securing support for the development of the GBV Index is essential for ensuring that it achieves its intended goals and effectively captures the prevalence of GBV in South Africa over time. Achieving these necessitated high-level dialogues between the CGE and various stakeholders involved in the GBV sector, emphasising the significance of the proposed Index for informed policymaking, comprehensive monitoring, and in-depth analysis of GBV trends in the country. The aim was for these discussions to encompass crucial considerations regarding data accessibility. An initial objective of these engagements would be to thoroughly map existing data sources, thereby laying a solid foundation for the GBV Index's development and relevance.

3.3 Mapping of GBV data sources

A data mapping exercise was required to ensure the existing data sources could speak to GBV in South Africa. This data mapping would include administrative and survey data and potential administrative-type data sources located outside of the government. This exercise would be a standalone research effort that would, amongst others, document the data collection process (from data collection to data capturing and cleaning), and describe the data fields collected and stored. This data documentation process would require looking at forms and other data collection instruments and speaking to the data holders and expert data users. This data mapping exercise would yield two key outputs: identifying possible indicators for inclusion in the Index and identifying data sources that could be included in a public online data hub.

3.4 Establishment of a GBV data hub

A key challenge around GBV data is the extent of fragmentation and the lack of data in the public domain. Flowing from the data mapping exercise, an online data hub providing access to relevant GBV data for public use would help address this data gap. The intention is that data identified through the data mapping process could be made available through this central hub to policymakers, academics, and civil society for use, either directly or by linking to these datasets. This would require the agreement of the data owners and should be published in such a way as to address any concerns around privacy and anonymity. While the data hub may start with a relatively limited number of datasets, it was hoped that it might develop into a comprehensive source of data for issues related to GBV.

3.5 Advocacy and engagement

Given the longer-term nature of establishing a GBV Index for South Africa, it is clear that the CGE and its partners would need to engage with stakeholders and the public on an ongoing basis to build awareness and ensure continued enthusiasm for this initiative. The engagements would be between government partners, stakeholders, academia, civil society organisations, the private sector, and the general public.

4. YEAR 2: PROGRESS UPDATE 2023/24

In the second year of developing the GBV Index, the primary objective has been to foster meaningful engagement with key government stakeholders. Over the year, the collaborating organisations—CGE, UNFPA, and UCT—have convened regularly, creating a dynamic forum to sustain the momentum of initiatives. Below, we summarise significant meetings that have shaped progress. In addition to these formal sessions, the team has actively participated in various informal discussions, tackling challenging issues that have surfaced during the preparations.

In consultation with the CGE and UNPF, the UCT team compiled a draft work plan for the third quarter (October to December) of the 2024/25 financial year. The draft work plan was focused on engaging with the South African Police Service (SAPS) and assessing the current and potential suitability of the data on crime statistics for incorporation into the GBV Index. For obvious reasons, crime statistics would be a key data input for the Index, but the crime statistics are currently not geared towards identifying and tracking trends in GBV-related crimes.

At the 7 November 2024 meeting, the CGE reiterated their commitment to taking the work forward and identified key activities to advance the work. Specifically, the partners identified the key departments that should be approached as part of this process. Principal amongst these was the Department of Women, Youth and Persons

with Disability (DWYPD), as custodians of the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (NSP-GBVF). In addition to the DWYPD and SAPS, the CGE identified the Department of Health, Social Development, Justice, and Statistics (DoJ & CD) as key data stakeholders.

The meetings in early 2025 focused on beginning the process of consultations with these key stakeholders, with the CGE managing to secure meetings with a number of these departments.

In 2024, a letter was sent to the DWYPD, which is the key department responsible for addressing GBVF in the country. However, the CGE has not yet received a response from the department regarding its request to engage in the development of the GBVF Index.

4.1 Department of Health (DoH)

The Department of Health was the first department to be consulted, and several issues emerged. The representatives from the department highlighted that gender issues are not centralised in the gender directorate but are distributed across various directorates within the department. The department sensitised the team about the existing memorandum of understanding (MoU) by the director generals from the Justice, Crime Prevention, and Security Cluster Departments on data sharing, which will also contribute to making the process of developing this GBVF Index a success. They, However, indicated they would provide the team with information on how the department collects GBV-related data.

During the engagement, the DoH indicated that it collects fragmented data across all units and directorates within the department. One of the key data sources is the Demographic Health Survey (DHS), which collects the following data:

- Percent of ever-partnered women age 18+ who have ever experienced violence, with violence categorised in four different classifications which include: physical violence, sexual violence, emotional violence and the three categories combined under one category.
- Percentage of ever-partnered women age 18+ who have experienced partner violence in the past 12 months.
- Percentage of ever-partnered women age 18+ who have reported that they hit, slapped, kicked, or did something else to physically harm their current or most recent partner when the partner was not already beating or physically hurting them.
- Experience of partner violence by marital status. Marital status has five categories: never married, married, living together, divorced/separated, and widowed.

- Partner violence by partner's alcohol consumption. Partner alcohol consumption has four categories: does not drink, drinks but never gets drunk, gets drunk sometimes, and gets drunk very often.

- Marital control by partners. Control has seven categories: tries to limit partner contact with family, does not permit partner to meet friends, frequently accuses partner of being unfaithful, insists on knowing where partner is at all times, is jealous or angry if partner talks to other potential partners, displays three or more of these behaviours mentioned, and displays none of the behaviours.

The recent findings from the last Demographic Health Survey report (2016) indicate that almost a quarter (21%) of women aged 18 and older who have ever had a partner have experienced physical violence at some point in their lives. Additionally, a few (6%) of these women have experienced sexual violence. In the past 12 months, some (13%) of ever-partnered women have reported experiencing physical, sexual, or emotional violence. A few (4%) of these women have admitted to initiating violence against their partner.

The DoH has collected the following data, as presented in Table 1:

Table 1: List of data elements

Data Element Name	Use and Context
New sexual offence case seen at healh facility	The data element helps to monitor the incidence of sexual offence and access to care, identify friends over time, inform resource allocation for care and support services, and evaluate the effectiveness of prevention and response programs. This data can indirectly support HIV programming with regard to Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) provision.
New sexual offence case HIV negative issued with Post Exposure Prophylaxis	This data element can help inform policies and interventions related to sexual assault offence prevention, response, and treatment. It can also help track the effectiveness of PEP administration and identify potential areas for improvement.
Delivery 10-14 years in facility	Monitors the proportion of deliveries in facility by teenagers.
Delivery 15-19 years in facility	Monitors the proportion of deliveries in facility by adolescents
Termination of pregnancy 15-19 years	Monitors the implementation of the termination of pregnancy policy
Assault case - new	It includes all cases where there is an act of inflicting physical harm upon a person which might lead to injury and emotional trauma.
Falls - new	It includes all cases where clients present to the facility with injuries relating to falls which can make it hard for a person to get around, do everyday activities or live on their own.
Bites - new	It includes all cases where clients present to the facility with

4.2 Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ & CD)

The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development expressed sincere appreciation for the initiative commissioned by the CGE. Representatives from the department underscored that this initiative is both timely and crucial for our nation as we seek to address the significant challenge of GBVF.

The engagement highlighted concerns about the lack of data on persons with disabilities. It was noted that there is a general scarcity of comprehensive information regarding this demographic. The SAPS is the primary department responsible for publishing statistics related to GBVF. However, the compartmentalisation of SAPS data serves the department's administrative purposes and does not adequately support other departments or entities that rely on that data. It was also highlighted that the SAPS data is problematic as it uses the case administration system (CAS). The case administration system duplicates statistics and thus sometimes presents false data, doubling the number of cases.

The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development made the following input:

- An integrated justice system (IJS) will lead to credible data collectively published by the key departments of the integrated justice system.
- The team was advised that the identified forms of GBVF for the Index should be aligned with the existing legislation so that an appropriate measure can take place. The team creating the GBV Index was requested to consider the alignments of the top ten offences in the country. These GBVF forms should be aligned with existing legislation:
- Sexual slavery trafficking should be aligned with the categories in the relevant Act and legislation in South Africa
- Trafficking servitude should be aligned with relevant legislation
- Economic forms of GBV should be aligned with the provisions under the Domestic Violence Act
- New additional Acts (amendments should be included)
- Maintenance data cases collected by the DoJ & CD Courts.

The DoJ & CD representatives suggested which crucial forms of offences should be included, namely statutory rape, sex with a child, intergenerational rape, date rape, and incest. The DoJ & CD is responsible for court processes, which include prosecution, convictions, and acquitting in cases where the prosecution failed to get a conviction. The department registers the cases aligned with the SAPS recording as the feeder to the court processes. The highlighted data is 3% of statutory rape cases that were calculated during the 2023/24 financial year. Therefore, 1,255 of the 8,621 sexual offence cases were statutory rape cases registered at the regional courts. Marital rape and date rape should be highlighted as they are prevalent issues based on registered court cases.

The DoJ & CD further recommended that CGE have a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) as the department

is currently developing similar work to the current efforts of creating the GBV Index. The the DPME has mapped GBVF data sources across five categories. The UNFPA is engadging with the DPME, under the NSP data pillar, to set up a GBV data hub.

Legislations to be consulted for the different GBVF forms are:

- Sexual offences – Sexual Offences Act and its amendments
- Psychological – Domestic Violence Act and its amendments; Hate Crimes Act
- Criminal Procedure Act
- Legal Aid Act.

It was emphasised that the wording of the forms of GBVF and its subcategories should be the same as in the relevant pieces of legislation, but currently, the GBVF forms are not.

4.3 National Prosecuting Authority (NPA)

The National Prosecuting Authority indicated that constructing the Index will be a mammoth task. It was acknowledged that different departments collect statistics differently to suit their administrative purposes. They also flagged the same concerns raised by the DoJ & CD about including different forms of violations in collecting data and reporting. They requested that different forms of assault and murder should be captured. They also suggested that the murders should be accessed from mortuaries as their data is also credible.

The NPA also indicated that they are exploring different ways of keeping statistics. In relation to the Thuthuzela Care Centres, the NPA collects data on the number of incidents reported at the sites. The NPA indicated that half (48%) of the GBV cases are reported at the Thuthuzela Care Centres and include formal and informal inquiries. The NPA also indicated that the Department of Social Development includes the relevant data from the Kgomotso and Khuseleka centres. The NPA echoed the relevance of administrative data but raised concerns about how the information will be verified.

Some of the questions raised by the NPA included whether the CGE would focus on the hotspots that SAPS earmarked. They also wanted to find out if the Index will enable comparison between the urban areas and rural areas, , and would include harmful traditional practices such as *ukuthwala,* virginity testing, among others. The NPA committed to providing the statistics and expressed their support for the development of the GBV Index.

4.4 Department of Social Development (DSD)

The Department of Social Development was also consulted, and like other departments, the representatives welcomed the initiative of developing the GBVF Index. It was highlighted that the crucial need is building capacity for conducting GBVF costing studies. They also indicated a challenge across different departments on the unreliability of data collected, hence the importance of information management skills. The representatives indicated that the National Treasury is crucial in developing the GBV Index and that the department must be consulted.

The department indicated that they have a set of indicators that can benefit the process of developing the GBVF Index. They indicated that psycho-social support is difficult to quantify and attach a cost to. Thus, the department proposed a further engagement with the CGE and the broader leadership of the department to discuss the issue further.

The department highlighted that they mostly execute their work through civil society organisations. They added that they are reviewing their approach to conducting satisfaction surveys and working with Statistics South Africa. An integrated justice system was highlighted as a significant contribution to the Indexing process.

The DSD indicated that it collects reports on abuse through an online form that allows individuals to submit their information electronically. The form requires the reporting person's name and includes a drop-down list for the reporter to select the category: victim, perpetrator, community member, and other (for cases that do not fit the prescribed categories). Additionally, the form asks for the preferred method of communication for the department representative to reach out to the reporter. It also enables the reporter to specify the type of incident they are reporting, providing a drop-down list that includes options such as physical abuse, rape, emotional abuse, and other (for incidents not listed).

The department provides various services for victims of GBV and domestic violence, including White Doors and Khuseleka Centres, and thus collects data from them. Additionally, the department operates the Gender-Based Violence Command Centre (GBVCC), which functions at the national level as a 24/7 call centre. The facility employs social workers who handle calls and facilitate referrals. There is also a please-call-me service available. For the deaf community, the Helpme GBV Skype line is available (please add Helpme GBV to your Skype contacts). For persons with disabilities, an SMS-based line is available (send "help" to 31531).

All these services also collect data on GBV, which will aid in developing the GBV Index. However, specific statistics regarding the data collected by the department are not readily available.

The recommendations by the DSD were to engage the HSRC regarding the relevant indicators, as the institution was commissioned to produce the first-ever prevalence study in South Africa. The GBV Command Centre was also highlighted as another credible data source for this process. There is also a National Intersectoral Committee on Trafficking in Persons that can provide relevant information.

The department requested a follow-up meeting and requested that the experts commissioned to develop the Index be available.

4.5 Statistics South Africa (Stats SA)

Statistics South Africa raised the following questions in line with the first report produced on the GBV Index:

- What are the data gaps?
- Draw the main focus areas (national, provincial, and metros)
- Define regular
- Define key data sources
- What are the elements that go into the Index?
- Scope can be a challenge, including crimes against children.

Stats SA recommended conducting a baseline study to define potential data sources and inform the process. They also recommended that CGE meet with them to discuss the Index further, strongly emphasising the need to conduct a baseline study given the mapping required for the development of an effective and efficient Index.

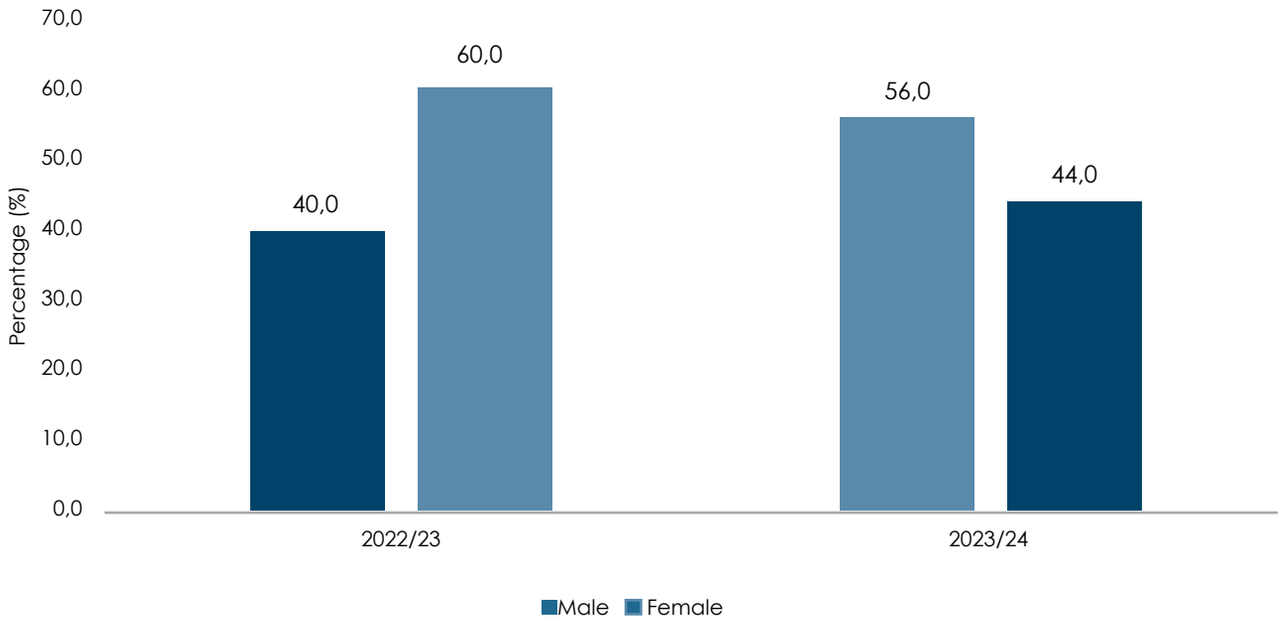
Stats SA collects data through their Victims of Crime Surveys, which focus on contact crimes, including assault, murder, and sexual offences. Table 2 presents some of the data that Stats SA has gathered from the 2019/20 to 2023/24 financial years.

Table 2: Victimisation rates, household crime, 2019/20 to 2023/24

Type of crime	2019/20	2020-21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Housebreaking/ burglary	5,3	4,6	5,4	5,7	5,9
Home robbery	0,8	0,6	0,9	1,0	1,1
Assault	0,3	0,3	0,5	0,4	0,7
Deliberate damaging of property	0,3	**	**	0,3	0,6
Theft of motor vehicle	0,5	0,5	0,2	0,4	0,5
Sexual offences	0,1	*	0,1	0,1	0,1
Murder	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1

Source: Stats SA Victims of Crime Survey 2023/24

Figure 1: Victims of assault by sex, 2022/23 and 2023/24



Source: Stats SA Victims of Crime Survey 2023/24

Figure 1 demonstrates the victims of assault by sex, indicating the majority of female victims (60%) during the 2022/23 financial year and a slight (16%) decline during the 2023/24 financial year to 44%.

Table 3: Summary of statistics for murder, 2019/20 to 2023/24

Indicator	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Number of incidences ('000)	16*	11	20	16	22
Number of households that experienced murder ('000)	14	11	20	16	22
Number of households that reported all or some incidences of murder to the police ('000)	14	11	20	16	22
Percentage of households that reported all or some incidences of murder to the police ('000)	100,0	100,0	95,0	93,8	100,0

Source: Stats SA Victims of Crime Survey 2023/24

Table 2 presents the data on murder incidences, categorising the data by the number of households that experienced murder, the number of households that reported all or some incidences of murder to the police, and the percentage of households that reported all or some incidences of murder to the police. The statistics demonstrate a significant increase in murder between the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years across all the indicators.

Table 4: Summary of statistics for sexual offences, 2019/20 to 2023/24

Indicator	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Number of incidences ('000)	13*	8*	12*	12*	25
Number of households that experienced sexual offences ('000)	13*	6*	12*	11*	22
Number of households that reported all or some incidences of sexual offences to the police ('000)	8*	5*	11*	10*	17
Percentage of households that reported all or some incidences of sexual offences to the police ('000)	59,9	88,7	90,0	92,3	78,4

Source: Stats SA Victims of Crime Survey 2023/24

Table 3 indicates the statistics on sexual offences collected by Stats SA. Measured indicators include the number of incidents, the number of households that experienced sexual offences, and the number of households that reported all or some incidences of sexual offences to the police. The trends indicate a significant increase (28,8%), especially between the 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial years. The statistics also show a decline (13,9%) in numbers between the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years.

Table 5: Number and percentage of individuals who experienced psychological violence by demographic characteristics, province, and settlement type, 2023/24

Demographic Characteristic	Number of Incidences('000)	Number of Individuals	Percentage
Sex			
Male	526	11	0,5
Female	616	204	0,9
Age Group			
16-34	508	159	0,8
35-49	437	100	0,8
50-64	138	42	0,5
65+	55	14	0,3
Highest Level of Education			
No schooling	20	4*	0,3
Some primary	55	18	0,6
Completed primary	45	10	0,7
Some secondary	473	126	0,8
Completed secondary	340	93	0,6
Post-school	156	58	0,9
Province			
Western Cape	199	34	0,6
Eastern Cape	139	52	1,2
Northern Cape	66	25	2,7
Free State	317	33	1,6
KwaZulu-Natal	44	26	0,3
North-West	170	33	1,1
Gauteng	144	74	0,6
Mpumalanga	35	27	0,8
Limpopo	29	11	0,3
Metro status			
Metro	298	120	0,6
Non-metro	845	195	0,8

Source: Stats SA Victims of Crime Survey 2023/24

Table 4 presents data on psychological violence, categorising it by demographic characteristics such as sex, age groups, highest level of education, province, and metro status. The statistics demonstrate that a majority of victims of psychological violence are women (0,9%), followed by men (0,5%). During the 2023/24 financial year, the province with the highest recorded incidence of psychological violence was the Northern Cape (2,7%), followed by the Free State (1,6%), and KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo were the lowest with subsequent (0,3%).

4.6 Broad overview and way forward

The meetings held with the key entities were highly productive. From our perspective, these meetings allowed us to introduce the work surrounding the GBV Index to the various departments, to emphasise that the success of this initiative will rely on support from across the government, and to outline the vision for future engagements with these departments. Each entity expressed support for the importance of accurately measuring GBV in South Africa and provided valuable initial insights that could be included in our discussions regarding the types of data they collect and other relevant areas within their departments.

In the final quarter of the financial year (January to March), UCT submitted a revised work plan for its engagements with SAPS to the UNFPA and the CGE for the first and second quarters of the 2025/26 financial year. This effort is expected to inform future interactions with other departments by aiding in facilitating and streamlining engagements.

4.7 Meetings

- 27 May 2024 – CGE, UNFPA, UCT
- 7 November 2024 – CGE, UNFPA, UCT
- 28 January 2025 – UNFPA, UCT
- 24 February 2025 - CGE, UNFPA, UCT
- 26 February 2025 – CGE, DoH, UCT
- 27 February 2025 – CGE, DoJ & CD
- 28 February 2025 – CGE, NPA, UCT
- 5 March 2025 – CGE, DSD
- 6 March 2025 – CGE, Stats SA

5. CONCLUSION

This report marks the second instalment in an ongoing series dedicated to documenting the advancements achieved in the development of the GBV Index. It provides an analysis of the key activities undertaken over the second year, including the strategies employed, partnerships established, and data collection efforts by various stakeholders. This report also addresses challenges faced throughout the process, including a lack of cooperation from some of the key departments, limitations in data accessibility, and the complexity of integrating diverse perspectives on GBV data. Overall, this report offers a comprehensive overview of both progress and obstacles encountered, paving the way for future enhancements to the development of the GBV Index.

A central feature of the report was the series of high-level stakeholder meetings conducted with key representatives from the justice, crime prevention, and security cluster government departments, along with relevant entities involved in collecting and analysing data related to GBV. These meetings, which took place over several days, were specifically aimed at promoting the Index, seeking buy-in from all stakeholders, and establishing a structured collaborative framework. This framework is intended to facilitate the sharing of critical insights and best practices among the entities, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of GBV data collection. The discussions included topics such as data accuracy, accessibility, and the integration of findings into policy-making processes, highlighting the importance of comprehensive collaboration in collecting, storing, and sharing GBV data.

The report identified several critical challenges that hinder effective data collection and analysis. These include fragmented approaches to data gathering, disparate use of indicators across entities, varying definitions and understandings of GBVF, and inadequate coordination among various departmental units. Such discrepancies complicate the development of the GBV Index and impact the overall effectiveness of interventions aimed at combating GBVF.

Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that all entities engaged in this process have acknowledged the importance of the proposed GBV Index and have expressed their commitment to support and collaborate in its development and utilisation, recognising it as a vital tool for informed decision-making and policy formulation. This consensus marks a significant step towards fostering a unified approach to addressing GBV and improving data-driven strategies for prevention and response.

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