



## EVIDENCE BRIEF

### Stop Violence Against Women in South Africa: Know Your Epidemic, Know Your Response (2014)



#### Why is it important?

This report is a situational analysis on the scale, determinants, consequences and responses to violence against women (VAW) in South Africa.

It is useful for those wishing to understand trends in violence against women and intimate partner violence in South Africa in order to inform their study designs, programmes, interventions and policy implementation.

#### Methodology

The data presented in the paper was sourced using a number of approaches, including the review and analysis of the available epidemiological data from administrative and survey data, literature and document reviews. The report also included government responses and data collected by government departments, literature on the civil society response to VAW, key informant interviews, and a survey to capture the responses of civil society.

#### Key findings

VAW is highly prevalent in South Africa. More than half of the women murdered in 2009 (56 per cent) were killed by an intimate partner. Overall, between 19 per cent and 33 per cent of women have ever experienced physical partner violence, but in some population subgroups it may be as high as one in two women. Sexual violence against intimate partners is less common than physical violence, but very commonly accompanies it. Non-partner sexual violence is particularly common, and the high prevalence of reporting of gang rape is also notable.

The ecological model shows that a comprehensive response to VAW requires intervention at multiple levels (individual, peer, family or relationship, community, and societal levels) as the risk factors operate at multiple levels and are interrelated. The model further shows that there is no single causal pathway to being a perpetrator or victim.

#### Conclusion

Not enough is known about the economic and social development impacts of VAW in South Africa, and it is recommended that a more detailed costing exercise be conducted. Additionally, a public surveillance system is needed to centrally analyze and disseminate service delivery data collected by various government departments and to respond to the indicators mentioned in the report. A number of policy interventions, if implemented, could have a significant, positive impact on VAW. Furthermore, the scaling up of best practices, improved monitoring and evaluation, better funding and coordination of existing government and civil society programmes, and improvements to the legal framework are crucial.

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