

Fact Sheet

What is Gender-Based Violence ?

Gender-based violence (GBV) refers to violence directed at an individual or a group of individuals based on their gender. This violence can result in physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to the victim. All genders and gender identities can be victims of GBV, although women and girls are mostly affected.

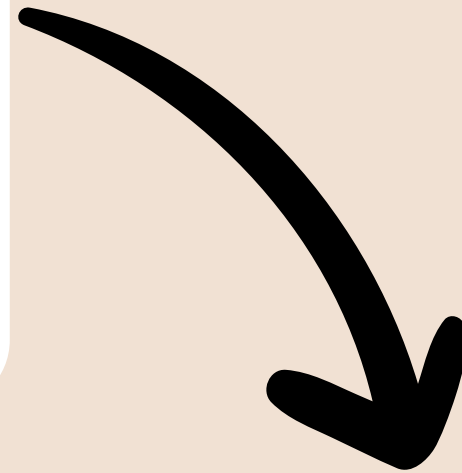


Although GBV mostly affects women, people of all genders and sex can be victims. Witnessing GBV can also make one a victim.

Forms	Explainer	Example
Physical	It results in injuries and health problems and may even lead to femicide (refers to the killing of women and girls).	Beatings, strangling, pushing and use of weapons.
Sexual	It includes sexual acts without consent. attempts to obtain sex and other acts directed against a person's sexuality without their consent. Acts of trafficking a person for sexual purposes.	Rape, attempted rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, sexual assault and incest.
Psychological/emotional	It includes emotionally abusive behaviours such as control, isolation, coercion and blackmail.	Verbal abuse, shaming, ridiculing, ghosting, manipulation, emotionally breaking down confidence.
Economic	Creating economic dependency and withholding financial support.	Refusal to let the victim go to work, forcing the victim to surrender their income, a breadwinner refusing to pay bills and support the family.

Types of Gender Based Violence

Domestic Violence (DV): Refers to all acts of physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence that occur within the family, domestic unit or intimate partners.



Types of Domestic Violence

- **Intimate partner violence (IPV):** IPV is domestic violence by a former or current partner/spouse against another partner/spouse in an intimate relationship. The partner/spouse does not need to share the same residence with the victim (for example, an ex-boyfriend or ex-husband can commit domestic violence).
- **Elderly abuse:** This is domestic violence directed at the elderly members of the family by their own family members or someone targeting the family (examples include neglecting to care for the elderly, keeping social grant bank cards, accusing the elderly of witchcraft and isolating them from the family, sexual abuse of the elderly).
- **Child abuse:** This is domestic violence directed at children. This includes violence by family members both immediate and extended. Violence targeting children within a family by people outside that family, sometimes consent from the child's family (for trafficking of children for marriage or child labour, incest). This includes **infanticide and/or neglect:** Killing, withholding food from, and/or neglecting girl children.
- **Honour based violence & abuse:** Violence meted when the actions of a victim are perceived by their family to have damaged its reputation. Maiming or murdering a person as a punishment for acts considered inappropriate with regards to their gender.

Forced/child Marriage: Refers to marriage concluded under forced or coercion through physical or emotional pressure. Child marriage is when a person under the age of 18 is forced into marriage by their family (this is usually due to cultural or religious beliefs).

Technology Facilitated Violence: Refers to various harmful behaviours against victims in the online space, (social media and online platforms) this includes threats, stalking, incitement to violence, unwanted offensive messages, sexually explicit emails or messages, sharing of private images or videos without consent, inappropriate advances on social networking platforms and hacking.

Drivers or Fuelers of GBV

Harmful cultural practices and religious beliefs:

Harmful religious beliefs that are perceived as a violation of women's rights. The following are examples of harmful cultural practices.

Substance Abuse: Substance abuse emerged as a key driver of violence and instability in communities, with alcohol and drug abuse frequently linked to the rise of GBV, family breakdowns, and crime.

Socioeconomic challenges:

Communities characterised by poverty, unemployment, gender inequality, and educational disparities often have higher reporting of GBV, creating conditions that perpetuate vulnerability and cycles of abuse.

Failure to bring perpetrators of GBV to justice:

When perpetrators of GBV get away without facing punishment, they become repeat offenders. Others in the community also become encouraged to commit the same crimes, expecting to get away with it.

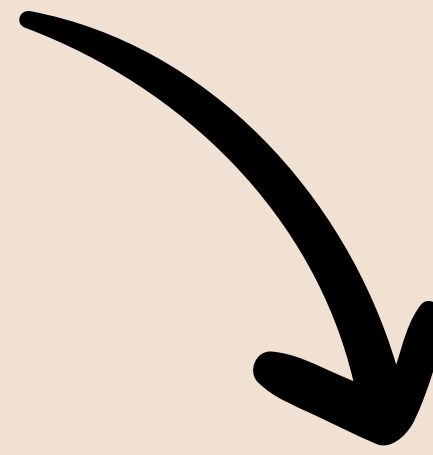
Normalisation of violence in society: Exposure to violence makes people numb to acts of violence around them, and when GBV is seen or heard, it is simply ignored as another regular occurrence. Domestic violence is also seen as a way of relating or resolving issues within families.

Unresolved trauma of the past: Unresolved trauma of the past often creates cycles of violence between generations.



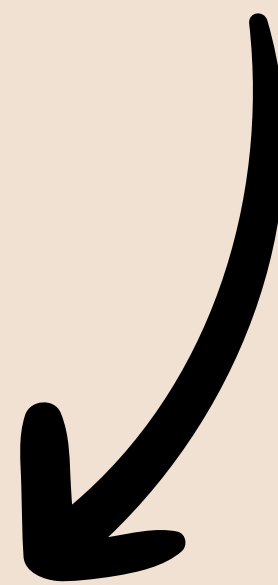
Factors that increase the likelihood of GBV

Individual/family level: Witnessing violence between parents during childhood and being abused as a child can result in the child becoming a perpetrator of domestic abuse as an adult.



Community level: Increased number of taverns in communities contributes to the abuse of alcohol, which, in turn, results in IPV, which in some cases results in femicide, sexual assault, rape and child abuse.

Societal/ Structural level: GBV in communities reflects broader societal issues where men hold the power and women and children are viewed as subordinates. The challenges of urbanisation resulted in the establishment of informal settlements and a lack of basic services in the areas, such that even the police or emergency services do not provide services to some of the informal areas due to a lack of proper infrastructure.



GBV is a crime, punishable by law. Victims and people who witness GBV must report it to ensure that victims access justice.

