

15 June 2020

MEDIA STATEMENT

The system must serve victims not perpetrators of GBV

Since the beginning of level 3, we have seen a number of gruesome deaths of women in South Africa. This is yet another grim reminder that gender-based violence and femicide needs vigilance and decisive action from both government and society at large. Tshegofatso Pule, Sibongiseni Gabada and Naledi Pangindawo are only just 3 out of many women who have passed on violently since 1 June 2020.

“The Community Constituency Covid-19 Front strongly condemns the senseless killings of women and children. We call on the President to ramp up the efforts outlined in the Emergency Response Plan on Gender and Femicide in South Africa. The system failures are hampering efforts in response to GBV. The current lockdown regulations are such that the women and especially young women and the girl child remains vulnerable and feel unprotected. We urge the normalisation of the removal of perpetrators outside of the home, instead of the victims. It is not fair for women and children are housed in unfamiliar spaces while perpetrators are roaming free”, said Chippa Sithole, Head of Advocacy, Community Constituency Covid-19 Front

It is against this background that we call on government to assist women by removing perpetrators of violence against women to a place of detention until they are prosecuted and send to jail. Women and the girl child must always feel safe amid COVID-19 pandemic and its lockdown regulations. Their basic rights to safety and protection cannot under any circumstances be ignored.

The South African government has developed a plan to manage the Covid-19 as part of its response to this pandemic. The plan has 23 intervention areas, 7 of these provide a specific role for Civil Society. These are a) the community-based urban spatial strategy for epidemic prevention; b) geospatial mapping of the Covid-19; c) Small Area Layers (SAL) as the basic function-spatial unit for prevention and treatment to meet the needs of different stages of epidemic; d) increasing shelter and improving care for homeless people; e) mitigating infection of Health Workers with Covid-19; f) public awareness of the epidemic and; g) and monitoring gender-based violence (GBV) and femicide.

Through our [Thusa Sechaba](#) web application, we are providing a platform for South Africans to advise us of their challenges when it comes to gender-based violence and human rights violations in order for us to provide much-needed support.



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Our networks in faith-based institutions have been providing pastoral care and we are engaging with them to provide temporary shelter to church-owned facilities. While community-based health care workers are on hand to assist as well. Through our vast network of neighbourhood agents, we are able to reach households to provide care and assistance with reporting cases or linking them to the relevant government departments.

Ends

About the Community Constituency Covid-19 Front

The Community Constituency Covid-19 Front was established as a formal advisory body to facilitate the participation of civil society sectors and networks, including those represented in the national response and implementations of Community-Based Measures in response to the novel Coronavirus (Covid-19).

The Community Constituency Covid-19 Front promotes an inclusive, competent and responsive civil society that effectively serves the needs of communities by linking and diversifying civil society actors, expanding the sector's response and ensuring better coordination, thus improving operations, and enhancing connections between civil society organisations with government, business labour, their stakeholders and beneficiaries.

The Covid-19 Front aims to provide a hub of information and contacts for distribution and engagement through our members across the country.

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