STOP GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE

ON A JOURNEY TO A SAFER SOUTH AFRICA

#Selfless&PatrioticService
Gender-based violence is a scourge many South African women face. It is estimated that one in five women have experienced violence at the hands of a partner, however, there are numerous cases that go unreported. Fortunately there are eight organisations fighting gender-based violence and aiding the women (and their children), who have survived abuse.

People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA)
POWA was originally formed to provide referral services and shelter to women experiencing domestic violence. POWA’s head office is in Berea in Johannesburg, but it also has branches in Soweto, Vosloorus, Katlehong, and Evaton. You can reach POWA at 011 642 4345 or info@powa.co.za. The Saartjie Baartman Centre for Women and Children (SBCWC)
The SBCWC in Manenberg, Cape Town caters for women and children who are survivors of abuse. It acts as a multi-agency service delivery model to manage, treat and prevent violence against women and children, and includes a 24-hour crisis response; a residential shelter and transitional housing for abused women and their children; legal assistance and training in job skills, bringing together a number of government and non-governmental organisations. You can reach the centre on 021 633 5287 or check out the website for more details.

The Frida Hartley Shelter
The Frida Hartley Shelter for destitute women and children is located in Yeoville, Johannesburg and takes in homeless women and their children who have survived neglect, abuse, trauma, and homelessness. It provides a home to women who have lost their jobs and are struggling financially, as well as young, homeless mothers who want to get their lives on track. You can contact the shelter on 011 648 6005 or info@frida-hartley.org.

FAMS A (Families South Africa)
Famsa provides counselling and education to help improve marriages and families. It helps in cases of domestic violence and trauma, divorces and mediation. There are 27 offices across the country.

ORGANISATIONS AND PLACES OF SAFETY FOR ABUSED WOMEN

TEARS FOUNDATION
TEARS Foundation provides access to crisis intervention, advocacy, counselling and prevention education services for those affected by domestic violence, sexual assault and child sexual abuse.

- Website: http://www.tears.co.za/
- Free SMS helpline: *134*735#*
- Tel: 011 590 5920
- Email: info@tears.co.za(link sends e-mail)
- Social media: Facebook and Twitter

THE TRAUMA CENTRE
The Trauma Centre provides trauma counselling and violence prevention services for people affected by violence.

- Website: http://www.trauma.org.za
- Tel: 021 465 7373
- Email: info@trauma.org.za(link sends e-mail)
- Social media: Facebook and Twitter

THUTHUZELA CARE CENTRES
Thuthuzela Care Centres (TCCs) are one-stop facilities that have been introduced as a critical part of South Africa’s anti-rape strategy, aiming to reduce secondary victimisation and building a case ready for successful prosecution. The website also provides access to information on gender-based violence.

- Website: http://www.soulicity.org.za/(link is external)
- Contact details for care centres(link is external)

HELP LINES:
Gender-Based Violence Command Centre
- Website: 0800 428 428
- STOP Gender Violence Helpline
  0800 150 150 / 120/7678
- Hall Elder Abuse Line (Heal) – helpline for elderly people
  0800 003 081
  Email: action@actionnelderabuse.co.za(link sends e-mail)

THE WEALTH OF THE WEAK
We celebrate the month of August by celebrating the great strides that women have made in the fight for the emancipation of all women and gender equality. Women have infiltrated previously male-only or male-dominated sectors of society and proven that they are just as capable as men.

This fortitude in fighting for women’s rights was sparked in 1956 by strong women who united and marched to the Union Buildings on 9 August, now celebrated annually as Women’s Day, in defiance of pass laws. Our modern-day women in the SAPS have picked up the torch and are moving the organisation’s Women’s Agenda forward so that they too can leave a legacy and pave the way for the younger generation following in their footsteps (p 3).

Unity and mentorship among women are vital to the progress of women in the SAPS – or any other sector in the country for that matter. Sgt Media Khoza’s journey in the SAPS (pp 8-9) shows how far one woman can go when mentored appropriately. She changes her career path because of the advice from her cluster commander and has been flourishing ever since.

As we celebrated women this month, Captain Jennifer Laws, who broke into the male-dominated SAPS Air Wing and thrilled. Capt Laws made her mark in the SAPS and showed other police officer and young girls what hard work can help you achieve.

We are still battling with the scourge of gender-based violence, especially against women and children, and femicide in the country. There is a war against women and their bodies – a war that the SAPS is fighting fervently, a war that the police will fight until they win. Women must be protected, women must feel safe wherever they are – we will not stop fighting until this is the case in South Africa.

The SAPS is continuously fighting violence against women through multidisciplinary approaches including finding ways to better assist victims (pp 4-5) urging those who have been victimised to speak up (pp 12-13) and suggest ways of taking back control when in an abusive relationship (pp 14-15).

While the scourge of violence against women is still alarming, we are motivated by the fact that for the first quarter of this year, the crime statistics show that there was a decrease in violence usually perpetrated against women, especially rape which decreased by over 40% (pp 6-7). All members are urged to access the detail crime statistics on the Intertran.

The recent positive crime statistics are due to the hard work of all the men and women in blue. We salute you for your selfless patriotism.

Brigadier V Nkosi

I will tell you my story
03 04 08 10 12
The emancipation of women and gender parity, have always been at the top of the SAPS’s priorities. Through various initiatives, the organisation has strived to empower women and promote capable women to decision-making positions where they can have a say in the strategic direction of the SAPS and, by extension, the country.

To commemorate Women’s Month, August, in memory of our brave foremothers who marched against the pass laws in 1956 on 9 August – now Women’s Day – the organisation held a Women’s Empowerment workshop where issues pertaining to the equitable representation of women in the organisation, were discussed.

The SAPS has remarkably improved on female representation in the past 20 years. The organisation has increased the number of women in senior management positions from 1% in the year 2000, to 37% in 2020. This is quite an achievement, one that we would like to surpass in the next few years.

The focus was not just on Senior management, but on thanking each and every woman in blue working in the office as well as out on the streets investigating and walking the beat, for their valuable contribution to the safety and security of all persons in South Africa.

It pains me that callous criminals waged war against the very crime fighters we were celebrating this August. Sgt Nezizelile Faye (36) from the Ezakheni Police Station in KwaZulu-Natal, was killed in a drive-by shooting while en route to work in her private vehicle on 18 August.

To show that this was a hit specifically on the constable, the assailants sprayed the moving car with bullets, then walked to the stationary car, opened the door, executed Const Sikhakhane and took her official firearm, yet left the two passengers in her car alive. However, the suspects did not get far as nine of them were arrested within hours of implementing a 72-hour Activation Plan to trace them.

An attack on police officials is an attack on law and order—an attack on the State. We will leave no stone unturned to ensure that these criminals have their day in court to account for their gruesome deeds. We convey our sincerest condolences to the families of these female officers in blue. To our fallen heroines—we salute you and thank you for your selflessness and patriotism.

The country is plagued with violent crime, especially violence against women and children. The rate of femicide in the country mostly at the hands of intimate partners and family members are five times higher than the global average. The scourge is so rife that President Ramaphosa has dubbed it a second pandemic in addition to the Covid-19 pandemic.


The plan aims at improving the enforcement and implementation of laws and policies in response to GBVF, especially formulating prevention programmes, improving victim support, closing the gaps in legislation, facilitating the attainment of economic freedom for women, as well as cultivating rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators.

We enter Alert Level Two of the National State of Disaster due to the Coronavirus pandemic, with renewed hope that we will soon defeat the virus for good. The increased police visibility as well as the restriction of movement and the sale of alcohol during Lockdown has been beneficial, with notable falls in crime across the country.

The crime statistics for the first quarter of the 2020/2021 fiscal year showed a decline in the majority of crime categories. Notable is the 39.7% decrease in sexual offences, a 40.4% decline in cases of rape, a 35.9% decrease in sexual assaults, and a 40.3% decline in attempted sexual assaults.

These statistics show that GBVF can be reduced, if not totally eradicated, from our society. Let us work together to create a safer South Africa where women and children are and feel safe in their homes, workplaces, and public spaces.

The SAPS continues to break barriers in line with its mandate to ensure gender parity and women’s emancipation within the organisation. This emerged during the recent Workshop on Women Empowerment, conducted virtual due to Covid-19 restrictions.

The workshop was held in August, when the country was commemorating Women’s Month, and gender equality and the emancipation of women, were taking centre stage. The workshop was to give effect to the implementation of the SAPS’s Women Empowerment Agenda launched in Umtata, Eastern Cape, in 2018.

This five-year agenda is envisaged to demonstrate the organisation’s commitment to and progress with the empowerment of the women in blue.

In her address, Lt Gen Francsinah Vuma stressed the importance of women helping each other scale the organisational ladder: “Let us also do our part, as a collective, to fight for the equality of women in our organisation and to move the Women Empowerment Agenda forward. We must leave a legacy for future female leaders of the SAPS, and pave the way for generations that will follow in our footsteps,” she said.

It is common knowledge that our country has been grappling with the scourge of gender-based violence (GBV) and the SAPS, through its National Strategic Plan for GBVF in its five-year agenda, is committed to dealing decisively with this scourge.

“The occurrence of the societal problem of gender-based violence and femicide also continues to be a profound and widespread problem in South Africa impacting on almost every aspect of life,” said the Deputy National Commissioner for Human Resource Management, Lt Gen Bonang Mgwenya.

Lt Gen Mgwenya mentioned that the National Commissioner of the SAPS, General Khehla Sitole, recently “seized the opportunity to encourage all men in the SAPS to rise up to the occasion and be at the forefront of the battle against gender-based violence and femicide, and to end gender discrimination in all its ugly forms”.

Delegates heard that the organisation, through its Strategic Pillar Five of the Women Empowerment Agenda, is committed to fighting the scourge of violence against women and children, which include the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and sexual communities, to eradicate the scourge.

“The SAPS strives all year long to encourage gender equality and celebrate the social, economic, cultural and other achievements of women in the organisation,” said Lt Gen Mgwenya.

Lt Gen Mgwenya said there had been remarkable progress in advancing the cause of women in the organisation, as the SAPS had moved from only having 1% of senior management comprising women in the year 2000, compared to 2020 where “we are proud to say that more than 37% of the SAPS’s workforce consists of women in senior management positions”.

By WO Percy Sepaela

#FightingCrime
IMBIZOS ON

GBV AND FEMICIDE

By Capt Kgabo Mashamalite and Capt Vincent Mukhathi

Photographs by Capt Kgabo Mashamalite and Capt Ndalianule Nyambeni

The Minister of Police, General Bheki Cele, led a panel of representatives from the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) Cluster in a virtual dialogue on gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) at the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) in Tshedimosetso House in Hatfield, Pretoria, on 31 August 2020. The engagement, themed Improving access to justice for the victims and survivors of GBV and Femicide, aimed at addressing concerns and taking suggestions, engaging with stakeholders from various organised formations on how to assist the victims and survivors of GBVF, and urging people to actively participate in uprooting the scourge.

In his opening remarks, Minister Cele said the JCPS had classified GBVF cases as priority crimes and the detectives in the Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Investigations (FCS) Unit were building watertight cases against the perpetrators of such crimes.

"The brutal killing of women and children in this country is a shame I carry each day. From 1 April 2020 to date, over 2 100 domestic violence cases were reported and about 14 777 suspects arrested. In the past six months victims have received closure as 217 life sentences were handed to 251 accused in 200 cases. I think that we are steadily making inroads in effectively dealing with the scourge," said General Cele.

Regarding the perceived slow response to domestic disputes, the National Commissioner of the SAPS, General Khehla Sitole, assured the nation that the organisation had introduced the use of technology to promptly respond to assist the victims of GBVF, particularly those in possession of protection orders who can link with the police station nearest to them for a speedy response.

Addressing members’ training in dealing with the victims of GBVF, the Deputy National Commissioner for Human Resources, Mr Zolani Mkhiva, asked that there be stricter control over alcohol outlet operations, as many traded late into the night and some women were attacked on their way back from these establishments.

Various stakeholders gave input. Ms Jerminah Nkzone of Sonke Gender Justice, emphasised the importance of involving men in GBVF prevention programmes, and said her organisation would continue doing so.

National Police Commissioner Khehla John Sitole noting questions raised by members of the public during the virtual dialogue on the Gender-Based Violence and Femicide.

Ms Emarie Pareira from Mezea/Shout urged the committee to look at innovations that would assist a victim who has a protection order to receive a prompt response once it has been violated, while the National African Farmers Union of South Africa’s representative asked that the protection of widows living on agricultural holdings be prioritised.

Advocate Komane of the Welkom Magistrates’ Court urged the committee to consider generating a GBVF standby list, where investigating officers would have easy access to prosecutors and magistrates on a 24-hour basis to expedite the justice process.

The Congress of the Traditional Leaders of South Africa and Member of the Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature, represented by Mr Zolani Mkhiva, asked that there be stricter control over alcohol outlet operations, as many traded late into the night and some women were attacked on their way back from these establishments.

Ms Sizakhele Langa from Cornwall High School appealed to the panel to deploy members of the SAPS at various schools in order to protect pupils from being kidnapped or violated.

The SAPS also held a virtual imbizo on GBVF in the week prior to the JCPS dialogue on SABC 1’s Expressions programme from the SAPS Academy Tshwane on 27 August 2020. Addressing the nation, the Deputy Minister of Police, Mr Cassel Mathale, alluded to the fact that South Africa’s history with violence, apartheid and colonisation, played a huge role on the levels of violence in the country.

"This environment has created who we are dealing with today. To reverse this, we need society in its totality and communities at the centre of this fight of gender-based violence. This fight must also go hand in hand with economic transformation," he said. Deputy Mathale further emphasised the need for the involvement of the youth in crime prevention, where young people are taking charge of the youth in dealing with the scourge. "We have introduced the Youth Crime Prevention Framework, which is about involving the youth in crime prevention, where young people are taking charge and working with the police to respond to the scourge of crime. This particular strategy is also extended online, because young people relate to online services and programmes," he said.

Responding to the concerns of police officers not helping the victims of GBVF, Deputy Minister Mathale said: “We want to commit here today that we will take a keen interest in all cases that had been reported to the SAPS, and had not been attended to. If there are instances where people are aggrieved, you can lay complaints against the police.”

The imbizo later moved to the GCIS Head Office to communicate with people in the rural areas through community radio stations.

General Mathale addressed perceptions that government protected criminals more than the victims of crime. “We want to assure the public that the government is ensuring that victims get priority and criminals get what they deserve, which is punishment. The parole system is under review to ensure that certain categories of people who have committed gender-based violence and serious crime, should not be released."

General Sitole informed the nation about the police’s response to GBVF, detailing a three-dimensional approach, namely prevention, combating, and investigation.

"As far as investigation is concerned, we need to move those criminals out of circulation in the communities. On combating, we take those criminals head-on and identify the hotspot areas for gender-based violence and stabilise them, and on prevention, we are working with communities to mobilise them. There is also a new concept of spiritual crime prevention to focus on moral fibre investment," said General Sitole.

Police officials who are experiencing acts of domestic violence in their respective homes, should reach out to the Employee Assistance Support Centre, a confidential telephone counselling service line 0840 1030 55 linked to national and provincial levels with Psychological Services, Social Work Services, as well as Spiritual Services.

Members of the public are urged to contact the GBVF call centre on 0800 428 428 to report acts of violence, and to use the SAPS’s complaints line 0800 333 1777 to report poor service by members of the SAPS.
Reduced Crime Stats
Give SA Hope

By Capt Kgabo Mashamaite

The Minister of Police, General Bheki Cele, presented the SAPS’s inaugural quarterly crime statistics, which painted a rosier picture of a relatively peaceful South Africa during the first quarter of the 2020/2021 financial year.

At a virtual media briefing held at the Government Communication and Information System’s auditorium in Pretoria on 14 August 2020, General Cele reported that there had been a major decrease in all crime categories in comparison to the same period the previous year.

Tabling the 2020/2021 financial year’s statistics on the 17 community reported crimes in the first quarter, the Head of the Crime Research and Statistics Component, Maj Gen Thulare Sekhukhune, explained the correct way of interpreting the statistics, especially with regard to contact crimes.

“As the population increases over the years, we consider the broad aspects in relation to crime and the ideal way is to have the population divided by 100 000 as per Statistics SA’s guidelines. We have provided the Stats SA with contact crimes we have recorded, and they used the 2017 mid-year population estimate for the first quarter.”

Maj Gen Sekhukhune further explained that some subcategories of aggravated robbery such as carjackings, robberies at residential and non-residential premises, bank robberies, cash-in-transit heists, as well as truck hijackings decreased dramatically.

Minister Cele conceded that the figure for domestic violence cases may have been distorted due to the fact that some victims may have been unable to report cases as they were unable to escape their abusers.

However, General Cele said that the SAPS would monitor the reporting of such cases to verify whether or not the reduction was as a result of not reporting due to the lockdown. This will be done by comparing the dates of reporting with the dates on which the crimes had been committed.

The decrease in most crime categories is largely due to the restriction of movement and having more boots on the ground to ensure the safety of South Africans since the declaration of the State of National Disaster on 27 March 2020.

Police officers worked around the clock to ensure compliance with Covid-19 regulations and fight crime, in general, by conducting integrated law enforcement operations nationwide. The operations included Tswara Tswa, Buya Mthetho, and Thunderstorm that were conducted in Gauteng, the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and Mmumalanga.

Such operations continued throughout the lockdown period (Alert Levels 5, 4 and 3) and resulted in the seizure of millions of Rands worth of contraband, the removal of illegal firearms from the streets, and the recovery of stolen property and stock.

These interventions also played a pivotal role in clamping down on the illegal transportation and distribution of alcohol and cigarettes, which had been banned during the lockdown prior to the move to Alert Level 2.

Addressing the media on the decline in all crime categories as compared to the first quarter of 2019, Minister Cele said: “In recognizing and acknowledging all the dedicated officers of the South African Police Service, the SA National Defence Force, traffic police officials, all metro police officials and private security industry officers who continue to serve and protect as the country battles the world’s fifth largest Covid-19 outbreak, I want to commend you for executing your responsibility to serve and protect with excellence.

The pandemic certainly did not change the fact that members of the South African Police Service remained out on the streets to enforce the law when the country stayed indoors. Once again, let me take this opportunity to commend the SAPS’s members and our armed forces for holding the fort during the rough winds of the pandemic storm.

The National Commissioner of the SAPS, General Khehla Sitole, welcomed the reduction in crime in the first quarter of the financial year, saying that it was due to the cooperative efforts of various role players within the Criminal Justice System who continued with their policing mandate while civilians were confined to their homes.

“The high policing visibility was also augmented by the operationalisation of the Safer City Concept where a high level of technology was used to detect and prevent crime. Through the Safer City Concept, we were able to use close circuit TV cameras to apprehend suspects who have committed crimes, deployed drones to crime hotspots, as well as use online platforms to report criminal activities currently taking place, where a successful intervention has been made,” said General Sitole.

Both Minister Cele and General Sitole expressed their disappointment at the large number of police officers and other security cluster members who were arrested for committing crimes during the State of the National Disaster.

Both principals sternly warned members that criminally had no place in the police and that those found to have violated the law, would be dealt with harshly.

Maintaining high police visibility during the pandemic came at a high cost to members, despite the SAPS management’s efforts to keep the Coronavirus at bay, by adhering to Covid-19 containment and management protocols. The infection rate among members at the frontlines was alarming. At the time of going to print, about 14 192 police members had tested positive for Covid-19 and the majority of these infections occurred while discharging their policing functions.

Regrettably, a total of 163 police officers succumbed to the virus. The SAPS management extended their heartfelt condolences to the families of police officers who had lost their fight against the Coronavirus, while serving the country.

However, 9 563 members recovered from the virus and management urged all SAPS’s employees to continue wearing their masks while executing their frontline duties and wash their hands with soap or apply an alcohol-based sanitizer in public places, decontaminate their work spaces and official vehicles before resuming their daily duties, as well as avoiding unnecessary gatherings.

Management also urges members to continuously monitor themselves for Covid-19 symptoms, especially after having been in contact with a person known to have contracted Covid-19. Members were also urged to consult the Employee Health and Wellness Section when they felt overwhelmed with stress.

Crime Category Decreases:

- Murder
  - 2019/2020: 9.3 per 100 000 (5 398)
  - Currently: 5.8 per 100 000 (1 932)
  - Attempted murder
    - 2019/2020: 7.8 per 100 000 (4 575)
    - Currently: 5.9 per 100 000 (3 487)
- Assault GBH (with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm)
  - 2019/2020: 62.4 per 100 000 (37 425)
  - Currently: 5.9 per 100 000 (22 064)
- Common assault
  - 2019/2020: 62.1 per 100 000 (36 185)
  - Currently: 48.8 per 100 000 (25 995)
- Common robbery
  - 2019/2020: 22.1 per 100 000 (12 885)
  - Currently: 10.9 per 100 000 (6 469)
- Robbery with aggravating circumstances
  - 2019/2020: 37.95%
  - Currently: 21.59%
- Sexual offences
  - 2019/2020: 12 094
  - Currently: 7 296
  - Rape
    - 2019/2020: 16.7 per 100 000 (9 737)
    - Currently: 9.8 per 100 000 (5 805)
  - Sexual assault
    - 2019/2020: 35.9%
    - Currently: 1 070
  - Attempted sexual assault
    - 2019/2020: 40.3%
    - Currently: 454
- Attempted murder
  - 2019/2020: 12 094
  - Currently: 7 296
  - Rape
    - 2019/2020: 16.7 per 100 000 (9 737)
    - Currently: 9.8 per 100 000 (5 805)
  - Sexual assault
    - 2019/2020: 35.9%
    - Currently: 1 070
  - Attempted sexual assault
    - 2019/2020: 40.3%
    - Currently: 454
- Common robbery
  - 2019/2020: 22.1 per 100 000 (12 885)
  - Currently: 10.9 per 100 000 (6 469)
THE SKY IS THE LIMIT
FOR SGT KHOZA

By Capt Keitumetse Mmushi
Photographs by Capt Kgabo Mashamaite and provided by Sgt Media Khoza

Every year, South Africans celebrate Women’s Day on 9 August. The day commemorates the 1956 women’s march petitioning against legislation that required African people to carry pass books.

In remembrance of the 1956 stalwarts, POLICE magazine spent the day with Sgt Media Khoza (36) from the Kwa-Thema Police Station at the East Rand, Gauteng. She is a visionary, hard worker, and proud member of the SAPS, and told us more about herself.

“I have always had a thing for women wearing uniform and have always envisioned myself wearing it with pride and serving the country. In the time that I have been in the SAPS, the organisation has evolved and I am seeing transformation. Not only internally, but also with the service that we provide for our clients. Even services that were not there initially, like the FCS (Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Units) because previously, as a victim you would be exposed to other clients who would be there for completely different issues. The FCS is now a known and helpful unit that affords our female victims the desired assistance as well as their dignity.

I am a ‘Jack of all trades’ when it comes to serving. I have never worked in a communication environment and yet here I am today as a communication official for the police station. I have been involved in different areas of service in the organisation. From crime prevention to sector policing, to analysis and social crime coordination. I am not limited to anything, in fact, I could run a police station if I were given the opportunity.

One day while still working at the Crime Registry, my former cluster commander, Major General Mumsey Mbele, called me to her office and told me that since she had been observing all my projects since her appointment, she would be doing a disservice to the organisation if she did not mentor and steer me in the right direction. Puzzled as I was, she advised that I was selling myself short by staying in the unit I was in. She said that my work ethic, humour, confidence and enthusiasm did not belong behind a computer, but needed to be out in the community. She then suggested that I move to the Communication or Social Crime Prevention Unit. I pondered the suggestion for a while, and chose Communication.

That is when I started being called and recognised in the organisation at a provincial level. I recall being at a course and receiving an email requesting me to host the provincial awards. The email explicitly said that the province was not going to look outside for a host while I was available. I was released from the course and hosted the awards. I nailed them, I did so well! Next, the General asked me to attend a dialogue on her behalf. The dialogue had the likes of Jessie Duarte, Nontsikelelo Siulu and Kholeka Gcaleka, and I was one of the panelists.

One day, I received an email from Head Office saying Const Khoza was to be programme director at a Community Policing Strategy launch. After directing that programme, the National Commissioner called me and asked me about myself. He then asked if I knew about the Junior Core Management. I didn’t, so he proceeded to tell me that it was management encouraging junior members to participate in decision-making within the organisation. He said that I fit one of the missing puzzle pieces needed in the organisation. I gave my contact details to one of his staff members and from then on I never looked back. I have since been appointed as a Vision Ambassador and I am also now identified as a highflyer within the JMC. I am also one of two non-commissioned officers on the National Police Safety Committee.

I have entered through doors that even senior officials are afraid to enter through. You know there are people who are just comfortable where they are. They are not interested in doing anything that is outside of their scope of work. That can never be me. I am fearless, a go-getter, a visionary, a mover-and-shaker. I am always willing to take risks. When I put my mind onto something, I have to get it done. It is a pity that most of the time people mistake these traits of mine for arrogance. I am very disciplined and respectful.

I am a single mother of two beautiful girls. I don’t spend enough time with them, but they are proud of the work that I do. They call me a hard worker. They do complain about the travelling, but I always tell them that it is for a good cause. One day it will pay off and as long as the community benefits from my service, I am happy. At the end of the day, it is all about service delivery.”
TAKE A STAND AND BE COUNTED
BREAK THE SILENCE AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

By Capt Vincent Mukhathi
Photograph by Capt Nolantuleni Nyambeni

As the country commemorated Women’s Month - August - the SAPS’s Women’s Network’s Head Office branch, called on all men and women to be united and speak up against gender-based violence (GBV) in order to end the scourge.

The Public Relations Officer, Capt Busi Thanjekwayo, explained that the Women’s Network aimed at empowering and encouraging women to speak about their experiences, as violence against women and girls is a silent epidemic. She emphasised that the scourge of GBV as well as sexual harassment in the workplace, would only end if both men and women helped each other fight against it and break the culture of silence.

“We are urging women to speak out about all forms of abuse, as well as sexual harassment in the workplace. They should not be afraid of being victimised after reporting their cases. As we commemorate this (Women’s) month, we should intensify the fight against gender-based violence and sexual harassment. Women should not be silent,” said Capt Thanjekwayo.

The Women’s Network has adopted the theme: ‘Be Your Sister’s Keeper’. She highlighted that this theme symbolised their aim of ensuring that women unite to fight abuse and sexual harassment.

“Working together would help us stand up and speak up for those women and girls who cannot speak for themselves. We are not going to keep silent as women, because being silent is completely destroying women and girls. We cannot afford to have another woman die at the hands of a man,” said Capt Thanjekwayo.

She also urged men to participate in ‘Men for Change’ initiatives and play a role in their communities and workplaces to address issues of GBV and sexual harassment.

“Men must stop protecting their friends who are the perpetrators of gender-based violence and sexual harassment. It is time for men to speak up, expose, and report their friends who are the perpetrators of violence, to the police. They must not be silent because it is their friends, brothers and uncles – they must speak up and protect women,” said Capt Thanjekwayo.

Addressing women in the SAPS who have been affected by abuse and sexual harassment, Capt Thanjekwayo vowed that the Women’s Network would speak on behalf of those who could not speak for themselves.

“We encourage members who have fallen victim to abuse, to contact the Women’s Network if they feel that they cannot report an incident of abuse or sexual harassment to their commanders. We will be your voice and take the matter to the next level so that it can be resolved,” she said.

Capt Thanjekwayo further emphasised that the SAPS should prioritise GBV and continue to strengthen its efforts in fighting the scourge.

“I would like the SAPS to assist victims, even if the victims are reluctant to open a case. They can also assist neighbours who would like to open a case on behalf of victims. The SAPS should prioritise these cases because some women are reluctant to open a case against perpetrators who are providers. The police should take these cases seriously when someone reports on behalf of a victim, and investigate the matter as it is always serious. It is time for the police to protect women and girls. It is time to act,” she said.

The Women’s Network also appealed to members of the SAPS who were victims of GBV and sexual harassment to get psychological help from the Employee Health and Wellness Section.

“The SAPS has sections where you can go for professional help and report any incident of abuse and sexual harassment. I am sure that you will be treated with dignity when consulting with the Employee Health and Wellness employees,” said Capt Thanjekwayo.

The Chairperson of the Women’s Network’s Head Office branch, Col Rose Mampane, pointed out that both the Women’s Network and the ‘Men for Change’ had watched, with the dismay, as the number of femicide cases in South Africa increased alarmingly.

“The Women’s Network and ‘Men for Change’ have created platforms to support the victims of gender-based crime and they will continue to stand firm against these acts of patriarchy and toxic masculinity, which we see as the root cause of all these despicable acts of abuse against women and girls,” she said.

Col Mampane further said that both SAPS’s structures had recently been to Orange Farm, where a little girl was murdered and her body disposed of in a veld six kilometres away from her home. They also visited the family of 42-year-old Evelyn de Kock, who was brutally murdered by her boyfriend in Eersterust, just outside Pretoria. They consolled the grieving family and helped them with groceries.

“The SAPS will do its best to fight this scourge of gender-based violence that has engulfed our communities. Members must handle all these cases with sensitivity and care. They should remember that the National Commissioner has instructed that all cases be registered and all victims be treated with respect in a private, victim-friendly facility available at all police stations. No victim of gender-based violence should ever be turned away from the police station,” said Col Mampane.

By Capt Vincent Mukhathi
Photograph by Capt Nolantuleni Nyambeni
"I WILL TELL MY STORY"

By SAPS’s KwaZulu-Natal Police Express

“I will tell you my story.”

These words have a deep meaning for CAC Silindile Majola, the Chief Administration Clerk at the Durban 10111 Call Centre, because they define a very troubled chapter in her life.

The SAPS’s KwaZulu-Natal Police Express team had the privilege to have a heartfelt conversation with CAC Majola about her experience with domestic violence.

CAC Majola married her childhood boyfriend in 2008. She was ecstatic, having dreamt of marrying and starting a family since childhood. Little did she know that her life’s hardest challenge was at her doorstep.

Her husband started abusing her in 2010. This went on for seven years. “It became the norm that he would hit me on the 25th of each month, to a point that hospital visits because of him, had become part of my life,” said CAC Majola.

She said that she had given her husband so much power over her; that even when she opened a case of abuse against him, she would later return to the police station and withdraw it again – every, single time.

Things became so bad that she had to send her children to her mother so they would not witness what was happening in the house. “I spent most of my time with him, he isolated me from everyone. I could not even speak to my colleagues outside of work,” said CAC Majola.

“I believed he could change, but sadly that was not the case. We even went for counselling, trying to identify the root cause of the problem, but we did not succeed. The last time he laid hands on me, I was in the intensive care unit for two weeks – that was when I realised that I had to leave him. The people who knew about my situation, were begging me to do something because they could see that my life was in danger,” said CAC Majola.

Focused on a new chapter of her life, CAC Majola filed for divorce in 2017. “I was very brave, I wanted nothing to do with him, nor his assets or the things we had collected together,” she said. As soon as the divorce was final, CAC Majola began to build a new life for herself and her four children.

In 2019 CAC Majola started a non-governmental organisation called ‘I’ll Tell My Story’. The organisation helps women who may be facing challenges similar to those she experienced. Since the establishment of this organisation, she has successfully hosted five events commemorating Women’s Day, Heritage Day, Humans Rights Day and Youth Day in 2019.

CAC Majola envisions a prosperous 2020 as she had many plans for her organisation. “We were planning to visit more schools and engage with all the youth out there to help produce better men and women,” she said.

Through this organisation, CAC Majola has cooperated with various selfless organisations such as Gift of the Givers, and is hoping to involve more. “We still have more ground to cover, especially in uMthwalume as those are mostly people living with disabilities, and we would like to help them,” she said.

In the hope that her life journey will help someone going through a similar situation, CAC Majola intends on publishing a book later in 2020.

“I have been beaten, but not broken.”
In his 2020/2021 Budget Vote, the Minister of Police, General Bheki Cele, said “The tide must change on how we respond to gender-based violence matters”. In honouring Women’s Month, August, the time has come for women to respond differently to domestic violence. The time has come for women to take back control of their lives. The unfortunate fact is that most of us have hurtful, aggressive or manipulative people in our lives, either at home or in the workplace. We cannot avoid them, but we can decide how we interact with them and how we allow them to interact with us. Learning to set clear, firm boundaries and taking back control, is the best way to protect ourselves from the negative effects of this kind of behaviour.

Some pointers on how to take back control in your life:

1. **Self-awareness**
   
   Before you can establish boundaries with others, you first need to understand what your needs are. You need to be clear about what healthy behaviour and healthy relationships look. You first have to become aware of your feelings and be honest with yourself about your expectations.

2. **Set goals**
   
   Setting goals will allow you to clarify what you want in life, provide a target for you to aim at, and allow you to create a life governed (as far as possible) by your own choices.

3. **Practice prevention**
   
   You can reduce some of the uncertainty in your life by practising prevention. You can take control of your life by thinking of the things that you do not want to happen and then act in a way that makes it less likely for those things to happen. For example, if you do not want to be trapped by violence in the house, you must put a safety plan in place. Though this may not guarantee that you will be out of danger, it will lessen the probability of the danger. You can take control of your life by preparing for the unexpected.

4. **Choose your story carefully**
   
   One cannot change what happens in the world or in your life. What is important, is what you choose to tell yourself about what happened. The story you tell yourself can either empower or disempower you. Make sure that your story is in line with the facts, but that it keeps you in control by:
   - not telling yourself a victim story
   - allowing yourself to acknowledge any mistakes you made so that you can learn from them
   - giving yourself options to move forward.
   
   Choose the attitude that is most likely to help you create the kind of life that you want.

5. **Stop waiting for other people**
   
   Most of the time things feel out of control because of other people who act in ways you disagree with, or they fail to do the things you feel they should. The bottom line is that there is nothing you can do to control other people, but you can always control yourself. Take back the decision-making power when the actions of others are making you feel helpless, angry, or frustrated. The more you take decisions out of the hands of others and have them back in your own hands, the more control you will have over what happens next.

6. **Make a list of the things you can control**
   
   Even if there is nothing you can do about a specific situation, there are always things in your life that are still within your control. Focusing on that will help to restore a sense of order in your life and will allow you to restore a sense of your own self-worth, which is often damaged when you feel as if you have little say in what happens to you.

7. **Reduce your anxiety with positive self-talk**
   
   One of the feelings that often accompany an event that makes you feel as if things are out of your control, is anxiety. How you view and talk to yourself, are very important. Change the negative thoughts into positive thoughts about yourself, your attitude and your emotions.

In these times of uncertainty, especially now with the Covid-19 pandemic and the number of domestic violence cases peaking, it is time for women to take back control. For women to be the change, to live by example, and to be the foundation for tomorrow.

---

Gender-based and domestic violence are about power and control. It is about destroying the self-worth and self-confidence of the victim to increase total dependence on the abuser, thereby increasing the power and control he or she has over the victim.

References

- [https://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/how-to-take-back-control-of-your-life.html](https://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/how-to-take-back-control-of-your-life.html)
- [https://daringtolivefully.com/take-control-of-your-life](https://daringtolivefully.com/take-control-of-your-life)

EHW Social Work Services renders a variety of interventions to address gender-based and domestic violence in the SAPS. Contact the Domestic Violence Desk for further guidance and/or awareness in your workplace. You may call Lt Col Chrisna Gerber at 079 880 5966 (Duty Officer), or 082 301 2138 (Standby), or email: GerberChrisna@saps.gov.za.
FEMALE LAW ENFORCERS TACKLE
CRIME HOTSPOTS IN TSHWANE

By Capt Kgabo Mashamaite

As the country continues to wage war against the Covid-19 pandemic and the scourge of gender-based violence, especially violence committed against women, female members of law enforcement agencies in the Tshwane policing area conducted Operation ‘Okae Molao’ to ensure law and order on 13 August 2020.

The objective of the multi-pronged, crime-fighting operation was to, among other things, ensure compliance with the Disaster Management Act’s regulations, enforce traffic and municipal by-laws, as well as conduct search-and-seizure activities to ensure a safe and secure environment for Tshwane residents.

The operation focused on problematic crime hotspots such as the Brooklyn policing area, the Tshwane inner city, the Sunnyside area, as well as the R21 corridor. The R21 was particularly important as it connects the cities of Tshwane and Ekurhuleni, houses OR Tambo – the busiest international airport – as well as the surrounding industrial hub.

The Operations Advisor for the Tshwane District, Maj Gen Yvonne Botsheleng, said the operation that intended to commemorate Women’s Month and eradicate crime at all levels, recorded many successes.

“Early this morning, our teams of detectives arrested over 200 suspects for various crimes. We have successfully linked about 26 (of those) suspects to cases of gender-based violence,” she said.

Commending members for setting the vulnerable free from the shackles of their tormentors, Maj Gen Botsheleng said: “We want the victims of gender-based violence to [believe] that they can count on us to get them justice and end their suffering.”

Maj Gen Botsheleng also highlighted the importance of empowering the victims of gender-based violence with knowledge, especially how to go about reporting abuse.

The integrated law enforcement operation was conducted by female law enforcement officers from the SAPS, the South African National Defence Force, the Gauteng Traffic Police, the Tshwane Metro Police, the Tshwane Emergency Response Unit, the Department of Home Affairs’ Immigration section, the Department of Correctional Services, and Tracker.

On behalf of the top management of the SAPS, Maj Gen Botsheleng encouraged members to continue serving the country amid the spreading of Covid-19, and to seek help when exposed to those infected with the virus. She also relayed her deepest condolences to the families of all law enforcement members who had lost their lives to the pandemic while serving the nation and wished those infected with the Coronavirus, a speedy recovery.

The Bekkersdal Police Station held a roadblock where only women were on duty, on the N12 road near the Caltex filling station recently.

The operation, conducted from 11:00 to 13:00, focused on hijacking, robberies, and enforcing the Disaster Management Act in terms of the transportation of liquor and cigarettes. Motorists were also discouraged from offering hitchhikers lifts and not to stop along the road as it was risky because criminals could target them.

A total of 154 vehicles and 403 persons were searched. A total of 12 traffic fines to the value of R9 000 were issued, and four suspects were arrested for crimes ranging from the possession of dagga, illegal trading, and being in the country without the legal documentation. All the arrested suspects are expected to appear before the Westonaria Magistrates’ Court soon.

The Bekkersdal Police Station’s Commander, Col Phumelele Matamela, lauded her members for their dedication to fighting crime. She also thanked the members of the West Rand Traffic Department for the participation in the operation.

Members of the Primrose Police Station, their Crime Prevention Youth Desk, and Victim Empowerment volunteers paid a visit to the Makause informal settlement to address gender-based violence (GBV), as a large number of incidents of assault and domestic violence had been reported in the area.

The police used loud-hailing systems to sensitise the community, while other stakeholders distributed safety tips on GBV. The Acting Station Commander, Lt Col Solomon Maswanganyi, thanked all who took part in this awareness campaign.

It is envisaged that the community will take what they were told, into consideration to stop these incidents, as well as seek help from the police when in need.
TRIBUTE: Courageous Capt Laws succumbs to cancer

By Col Priscilla Naidu

Cancer can affect anyone – the young and old, rich and poor, men, women and children, irrespective of age and status. It is a deadly disease that spreads in a person’s body very quickly.

So often, precious lives are interrupted or cut short by this disease. There are no words to describe the pain experienced when cancer steals the life of someone you love or know as fondly.

Capt Jennifer Laws (53) joined the SAPS’s family in August 2012 as a pilot at the SAPS’s Air Wing in Port Elizabeth. She was a woman who lived and enjoyed life to the fullest. Never in their wildest dreams did she or her family think that the killer disease had taken residence in her body.

In 2018, after returning from her basic training in Cape Town, Capt Laws complained about a pain in her shoulder. She downplayed it to be injuries sustained from the many shooting practices while in training, however, at some point she was coerced into visiting a doctor and that is when her life started to take a turn for the worse.

She was initially diagnosed with breast cancer and after treatment, she thought that she had beaten the disease, but then in her last few months (March to June 2020) it came back with a vengeance. Like an angry dragon that spits fire, it showed no mercy and spread to her body, lungs and vertebrae.

When asked to describe Capt Laws in one word, her husband, children and colleagues all said “Motherly”.

Choking back the tears, her commander, Capt Jacques Camons, praised Capt Laws for bringing out their emotions and closeness at the unit. “She was a truly devoted wife and mother to her two boys and to us – her second family. We all felt that we could approach her whenever we felt the need to talk, and she always knew exactly what to say to make us feel better. She could calm a storm so subtilly and bring peace to the unit in a way that no one else could,” he said.

“The irony of this is that she was such a healthy person and she taught us all about leading a healthy lifestyle. Who would have thought that cancer would choose such a healthy person as its victim. Nothing can explain why cancer swoops in, grabs a hold of a good and loving person, and then gradually start chewing them up. She had the heart of an elephant – so kind and caring,” reminisced Capt Camons.

Capt Laws demonstrated her passion for flying in everything that she did. She often gave career guidance to schoolchildren, and was always proud to explain the dynamics of being a pilot.

In 2014, she made a dream come true when she took a five-year-old cancer victim up in the sky when requested to do so by the ‘Reach for a Dream’ Foundation. Children loved her, and she never once minded or complained about her work.

Her husband, Nick Laws, described his wife as an adventurer who never let anything hold her back. She always saw the stumbling blocks as challenges, which, in her words, “can be overcome”. “Her infectious personality emitted positive energy wherever she went. She loved a challenge, and she would often venture into the unknown. Her life was filled with amazing travels. She still had a sense of humour, right up her last breath,” he said.

Mr Laws lauded the SAPS for taking care of his wife while he was working abroad. “I have never seen such support that was given to my wife, starting with senior management at Head Office, right down to her commander and colleagues in Port Elizabeth. They made sure that her last days were as comfortable as could be. She was even flown from Cape Town back to Port Elizabeth by the SAPS so that she could spend her last days with the people whom she loved, and who loved her dearly. I am eternally grateful for their support to my family during this time,” he said.

Capt Jennifer Laws, like other cancer patients, fought the courageous fight to the end. She eventually lost the battle and died at home on 1 July 2020—on this day, God promoted this warrior from a protector on earth to an angel in Heaven.

The SAPS’s family honours her life and her eight-year dedication to the SAPS. She contributed tremendously to the fight against crime. Her professionalism and expert piloting have saved many lives and put many criminals behind bars.

To Capt Jennifer Laws and other victims of cancer—the SAPS salutes you for your bravery, courage, and fight for survival. Sometimes circumstances are beyond our control and human understanding; so let us all live as though today is our last.

HONYDEW POLICE STATION

HONEYDEW POLICE STATION

PRAISED FOR SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Capt Vincent Mukhathi
Photograph by Capt Ntanduleli Nyambe

The excellent service and good client etiquette displayed by members of the Honeydew Police Station sent Power 98.7 FM phone lines abuzz as listeners called in to commend their efforts.

Callers spoke at length, about how the police station was a shining beacon of hope because its members were providing a high standard of service to the community in Gauteng, as they were always professional when attending to complaints and continuously updated them on investigations.

Acknowledging the appreciation, the Honeydew Police Station Commander, Brig Anesh Maharaj, stressed that the members always strived to serve the community to the best of their ability.

“I try to inculcate an attitude of servitude in my members. I encourage them to put themselves in the shoes of the communities they serve. They must feel what the community members feel. As management, we try to tell members that they must have empathy for the community, as police officials cannot become cold and treat everybody as criminals. We try to strike a balance with the members in terms of how we deal with the community, especially with complainers,” he said.

Brig Maharaj also stressed that management continuously emphasised the importance of members giving regular feedback regarding investigations, to clients.

“We ensure that we follow up on complaints to ensure that members give feedback to victims on the status of investigations. You must always show personal interest, even if investigations take a lot of time, because we are here to serve,” he said.

Brig Maharaj also indicated they have floor managers at his Community Service Centre. “They directly clients to where they should go for help. This helps maintain professionalism and helps clients to receive a service as fast as possible. I am proud of my members, who always serve the public with a smile and ensure that frontline services are of a high standard at the police station,” he said.

Emphasising the importance of good community-police relations, Brig Maharaj said that they were building strong relationships with the communities they served and the Community Police Forum. He also highlighted that they ensured that their Victim Support Centre reached out to the victims of crime, especially trio crimes, to give them the necessary support as soon as possible.

Brig Maharaj also pointed out that his members were always striving to push for excellent service at the police station.

“We aim at indoctrinating a culture of excellence and good ethics in our new constables. We are blessed that we have 45 new constables, fresh from the training college, so it is easy for us to inculcate professional work ethics in them and ensure that they provide excellent service to the public. This also has a positive impact on the older members who are motivated when they see how the new members are doing things,” he said.

Brig Maharaj said his members’ dedication to the SAPS ensured that service delivery was not hampered because of Covid-19.

“Covid-19 has affected us a lot. We went through a stage where we had over 50 infections and about 30 isolation cases at the station. It affected shifts and deployments, but we were able to pull through. We have not closed the station throughout the infections, we only closed the Community Service Centre for decontamination and moved our members to the boardroom in order to continue serving the public. Our members were even willing to work on their rest days, because they want to make a difference,” he said.
SAPS DONATES PPE TO SCHOOLS IN BOSCHKOP

By Capt Keitumetse Mnushi
Photographs by Capt Kgabo Mashamaite

Representatives from the SAPS, Habesha Community Pretoria East, the Kutumela Molifi Primary school learners and teachers with donated Personal Protective Equipment, heaters and school learning materials during the SAPS Adopt-a-Cop community initiative.

The SAPs ensured that learners in Boschkop, east of Pretoria, were protected against Covid-19 by donating personal protective equipment (PPE) to the Kutumela Molifi Primary and Lesedi Secondary Schools.

This was made possible through the SAPS’s ‘Adopt-a-Cop’ programme, which aims at encouraging pupils to report crime. A school is assigned two police officers—a detective and a member doing visible policing—who liaise with the school. The school will report any problems to these police officers, who then help find solutions.

Expressing his gratitude, the Kutumela Molifi Primary School Principal, Mr Alfred Moemise, said: “The school is honoured to have police and community members here to donate masks, heaters, sanitisers, and personal hygiene packages. Our learners look up to you as the police. This is your school as well, please continue keeping us safe”.

Encouraging learners to practise personal safety, the Acting Head of the SAPS’s Tshwane North District, Brig Terrence Naidoo, said: “We are fighting this dangerous virus at the moment, so we encourage you to stay safe. Wash your hands with soap regularly, sanitise, wear a mask, and report any form of abuse to the police. The police are here to help you’.

The Habesha community in Pretoria, who represent Eritreans and Ethiopians, contributed to the donations through their non-profit organisation.

Learners of the Lesedi Secondary School in Boschkop observing Covid-19 regulations while waiting for the address by the SAPS and the Habesha Community Pretoria East during the SAPS Adopt-a-Cop and the Habesha Business donation programme.
The South African Police Service requests urgent assistance from members of the public in tracing the following alleged perpetrators wanted in connection with various criminal offences committed countrywide.

**ARMED ROBBERY**
NAMATAI BHOBHO

Investigating Officer:
Sgt MD Marais
021 685 7345
061 867 5088

**FRAUD**
RYNO MULLIGAN

Investigating Officer:
Const C Alkaster
022 931 8700
083 346 9939

**VEHICLE THEFT**
SINOXOLO NKOTHA

Investigating Officer:
Sgt BE Kleynhans
021 974 2416
081 443 6268

**POSSESSION OF SUSPECTED STOLEN PROPERTY**
JAMES SHOKWE LUBISI

Investigating Officer:
Sgt J Appolis
021 685 7345
061 867 5088

**RAPE**
NKOSINATHI MNISI

Investigating Officer:
Const HR Masango
017 811 1892
072 638 1652

**RAPE**
MUHAMMED SHAKEEL

Investigating Officer:
Sgt MM Mafate
017 819 2321
072 610 5768

**ROBBERY**
MFUNDO SHAZI

Investigating Officer:
Const CT Dladla
013 762 4462
082 708 8950

**PUBLIC VIOLENCE**
MUKA MUJIRI

Investigating Officer:
Const NL Loggenberg
021 467 8246
078 966 9773

**RAPE**
UNKNOWN

Investigating Officer:
Sgt BS Nkadimeng
072 888 1309
082 5565601

**RAPE**
UNKNOWN

Investigating Officer:
Sgt LZ Mathenjwa
013 655 5082
072 792 0691

**SAPS CRIME STOP**
08600 10111