

Partnerships – Action – Evidence: Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls in Southern Africa

Confronting the Challenge

In Southern Africa, gender-based violence against women and girls (VAWG) is among the **most severe and widespread human rights violations**. The prevalence and acceptance of VAWG is very high in international comparison. Between half and two-thirds of all women state that they have experienced violence at some point in their lives; violence by a male intimate partner is the most common form.

The **VAWG epidemic** poses a serious obstacle for efforts to achieve global, regional and national development goals. The elimination of VAWG is therefore firmly anchored in the **Sustainable Development Goals**.

The revised SADC Protocol on Gender and Equality (2016) stresses the importance of VAWG, which has led to a **renewed dynamism at the level of SADC member states** for addressing VAWG.

But while policies, legal frameworks and action plans are largely in place, challenges remain in regard to **ineffective coordination and implementation**, especially of prevention interventions.

Building Partnerships

Considering the magnitude of VAWG in the countries of Southern Africa, a broad-based effort is required. The programme will support the formation of **multi-stakeholder initiatives** that

will leverage financial and technical contributions from governments, civil society organisations, private sector companies, the media and academia.

These initiatives will serve to jointly implement flagship projects in South Africa, Lesotho and Zambia. The collaborative mode of implementation will **enhance coordination** and mutual understanding among stakeholders.



Project title	Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls in Southern Africa
Financing Agency	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Implementing partners	Multi-stakeholder partnerships with government, civil society and private sector
Project area	South Africa, Lesotho, Zambia
Duration	01/2018 – 12/2020
Budget	€ 10m

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Taking Action

The flagship projects will promote **concrete, locally-adapted and innovative approaches** aimed at preventing all forms of violence against women and girls.

For example, in Lesotho a **mobile phone app** for women with information on their rights and services and an emergency function has been developed with contributions from civil society and the telecommunications sector. Other projects are: **working with private sector companies**, like the mining sector in Zambia, to establish VAWG workplace programmes; **engaging churches and traditional leaders** in awareness raising campaigns; working with the media and creative industry in South Africa to improve **gender-sensitive reporting**.

The programme's primary target group is women and girls. Since patriarchal gender norms promote VAWG, the programme will also work with men and boys around masculinities.

Sharing Evidence

Despite progress over the past years, knowledge on the effectiveness of prevention interventions is still much needed to inform policy-making and programme development.

It is essential that the flagship projects supported under the programme are closely monitored to **create robust evidence** on what works in prevention and, importantly, under which conditions approaches could be replicated in other locations. Every flagship project will therefore be accompanied by practice-oriented **operational research**.

The findings and lessons learnt from the flagship projects will be **documented and publicised** so that they are shared among national stakeholders in South Africa, Lesotho and Zambia, across the Southern African region and fed into the global agenda.

The programme supports specific **formats for regional exchange** – such as conferences, communities of practice and exchange visits – to **promote scaling-up**.



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