

**MAPPING AND ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED WOMEN
AND CHILD PROTECTION GROUPS AND DEVELOPMENT OF
TOOLS TO STRENGTHEN THEIR CAPACITY TO ADDRESS
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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ACRONYMS

Bt20+	: Birth to Twenty Plus
CBA	: Community Based Agency
CBOs	: Community Based Organizations
CBWCPGs	: Community-based women and child protection groups
CEDAW	: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPS	: Child protection services
CRC	: Convention on the Rights of the Child
DCES	: Developmental, Capable and Ethical State
DSD	: Department of Social Development
FGDs	: Focus group discussions
GBVF-NSP	: Gender-based Violence and Femicide National Strategic Plan
HSRC	: Human Sciences Research Council
IPV	: Intimate partner violence
KIIs	: key informant interviews
KPMG	: Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler
M&E	: Monitoring and evaluation
NDP	: National Development Plan
NPOs	: Non-profit organizations
OECD	: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PRALAR	: Participatory rapid assessment learning and action research
RAR	: Rapid assessment response
SAPS	: South African Police Service
SDGs	: Sustainable Development Goals
SHS	: Sustainable Human Security
UN	: United Nations
UNICEF	: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VAWC	: Violence against women and children
VDCs	: Village development committees
WHO	: World Health Organization

FOREWORD

This report provides an overview of community-based women and child protection groups (CBWCPGs) herein called community-based organizations (CBOs) or non-profit organizations (NPOs), in selected urban communities in Cape Town and Durban, South Africa. It highlights the role of CBOs from the perspective of key informant CBO staff and victims/ survivors of violence regarding services that respond or address extensive needs in affected communities and shed light on how CBOs support fortitude, discuss the challenges facing CBOs, and suggest strategies for strengthening the role of CBOs in addressing the needs in affected communities that build on a range of initiatives derived from, and supportive of, the positive social local values addressing violence against women and children (VAWC).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

VAWC is a prevalent and serious violation of human rights and human dignity. Although rates at which women and children are exposed to violence vary from one community to another, statistics indicate that the problem is a widespread phenomenon and women and children are subjected to different forms of violence both within and outside their homes. The impact is devastating with effects that include short and long-term physical, mental and reproductive health problems of physical injury, sexually transmitted infections, anxiety, depression, suicide ideation, accidental pregnancy, pervasive fear, and death (UNICEF, 2014; Jewkes, Rachel et al., 2013; Wilkins, Natalie et al., 2014; Akmatov, 2011; Feliti et al., 1998). Evidence suggests that toxic stress associated with exposure to violence may impair the brain and damage the nervous system with lifelong consequences (Feliti et al., 1998; UNESCO, 2017). Besides, it has serious socioeconomic consequences for individuals and society such as reduced earnings and school time for women and children respectively, reduced school performance, loss of property, homelessness, mistrust in institutions, destruction of social relationships, increased inequalities and long-term socioeconomic costs (KPMG, 2016; Rachel, 2016; UNICEF, 2014; Jewkes, Rachel et al., 2013; Jewkes, Rachel et al., 2011). Addressing these effects is essential in affected communities to move the needle towards peaceful and prosperous communities.

The ‘community’ has often proven to be resilient in such situations of desolation and provide survival and coping mechanisms for despair. Experience has shown that even in contexts of violence and hopelessness, social life and organizational systems can readily re-emerge within community networks (Pouliny, 2005). Growing attention has thus been paid in recent years to the roles of community organization and practice to address the extensive needs of affected communities. VAWC is a violation of human rights and human dignity and describes any acts of abuse on women (females 18 years and older) and children (girls and boys 18 years and under) that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering for women and children, and threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether happening in public or in private life, with lasting consequences on women, children, and their communities (National Council Against Gender-Based Violence, 2022). VAWC is driven by a complex interaction of social, economic, normative and institutional environments in which women and children live; and it is committed by family, peers, parents, caregivers, siblings, current/ former intimate partners, strangers, and in systems like housing, school, and workplace. Preventing VAWC is a peacebuilding activity that aims to resolve injustice in nonviolent ways and to transform the cultural and structural conditions that generate VAWC (Lederach, 1995;1997; Boutros-Ghali, 1992; UNWomen, 2023). It revolves around developing constructive personal, group, and political relationships across demographic (gender, ethnic, income, education, employment, religious, age, marital status, racial, national) boundaries; in addition to transformation, reconciliation, healing, self-reliance, and, victim empowerment, The process essentially is multidisciplinary and cross-sector effort that becomes strategic when it works over long-term and at all levels of society that cause VAWC to establish and sustain norms that engender cultural peace (Lederach, 1997).



Community organization as a notion of social transformation and ecology of community life is an important focus in SHS programme of the DCES research division in the HSRC Strategic Plan 2020/21-2024/25, and, supports policy-makers, practitioners and other stakeholders with knowledge to inform practice and empower the marginalized and voiceless, bringing people together to work toward a common goal of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 vision for “All people in South Africa are and feel safe”. This report explores those aspects preventing violence, networks, and social capital in what why and how community organization address poverty, inequality, and employment that exacerbate VAWC and obstruct progress toward the NDP Vision 2030.

Limited attention has been paid to the role played by CBOs contributing on violence prevention programmes in communities affected by VAWC; and inadequate research exists for policy-makers and practitioners with information on how and under what circumstances community organization fulfil role of extensive needs of affected communities. Besides, minimal literature exists that focus especially in patriarchal (Maphosa, Keasley, Sliep, Haavelsrud, Hemson, Mjimba, Bialostocka & Mutanga, 2016) culturally marginalized (Maciak, Guzman, Santiago, Villalobos & Israel, 1999) settings, and, how CBOs improve lives of those in need, and direct interventions (Yakubovich, Sherr, Cluver, Skeen, Hensels, Macedo & Tomlinson, 2016). Increasing knowledge in this focus will help policy-makers and practitioners alike to produce programmes that would intertwine objectives of community-level institutions with government projects they are a part of. This would also assist government officials in knowing the needs of the communities under their jurisdiction.

To fill this gap the HSRC made resources available for this pilot project and report through DCES research division and SHS programme on *‘Mapping and assessment of community-based women and child protection groups and development of tools to strengthen their capacity to address violence against women and children in South Africa’* and approved by HSRC Research Ethics Committee (REC) Protocol No. REC 6/28/09/22.

To understand the role of local community mediating structures in preventing VAWC it was important this research enlighten on community organization from the perspective of structural ecology of community life. While there are many perspectives on ecological organization, for example, Speer & Perkins, 2002; Berger & Neuhaus, 1977; Park Burgess & McKenzie, 1967; Long, 1958; Reitzes & Reitzes, 1987; Barker, 1968; Barker & Gump, 1964; Rappaport, 1987, this study utilized Urie Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) microsystems and mesosystems ecologies, among others Bronfenbrenner articulated, because these two represent the concentration of this study and appropriate for community organization and prevention of VAWC. In applying the ecological orientation, the current study sought to understand the diverse settings that embed in communities as mediating structures, constraints and opportunities to ending VAWC. At the local level, microsystems are the settings (organizations) in which individuals participate; and, mesosystems are the interactions (relations) between microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In microsystems enquiry, the mesosystems analysis pivots around exploring relationships across networks of people who identify with common values and ideals, and participating in sustained social action on the basis of those values (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Speer & Perkins, 2002). It

explores and embodies entire processes of organizing relationships, identifying issues, moving to action on identified issues, evaluating the efficacy of those actions to maintain sustained organization capable of continuing to act on issues and concerns of the community (Speers & Perkins, 2002; Speers & Hughey, 1995). With this procedure the current research intended to learn what works of CBOs practice and spurs violent behaviour to peaceful relationships (Speers & Perkins, 2002; Alford, 2010; Carlson, 2011).

Utilizing exploratory qualitative research (Stebbins, 2001; Maphosa, 2013; Hunter, McCallum & Howes, 2019; Swaraj, 2019; Ndwadwe & Adigun, 2023), the study identified CBOs and investigated their form, including areas of intervention, representation, capacity to influence, and support needs that derive from, and are supportive of the positive social of local values addressing VAWC. The procedure adopted a participatory rapid assessment learning action research (PRALAR) methodology (Holdsworth et al., 2020; Dupont et al., 2015; Kearney & Zuber-Skerrit, 2012; Wood & Zuber-Skerrit, 2013, Zuber-Skerrit, 2015). Data collection occurred in iterative loops moving back and forth between data collection and data analysis to allow new avenues of inquiry to develop as additional secondary data were collected between October 2022 throughout April 2023. The measures included (1) scoping of study, research questions, objectives, and plan for secondary and primary data collection and analysis; (2) identify CBOs (n = 15); (3) review secondary information and outline VAWC and CBOs in South Africa; (4) anecdotal evidence with government and civil society stakeholders (n = 14) to illuminate who, what, where, how of CBOs and VAWC in selected urban locations; (5) semi-structured KIIs with staff of CBOs (n = 18) to inform structure of CBOs, areas of intervention, representation, capacity to influence, and support needs; and, (6) FGDs with victims/ survivors and staff of CBOs (n = 47) to clarify experience of violence, deterrence, and supportive resources.

The study brought together 15 CBOs; and 65 participants enrolled through purposive sampling for semi-structured KIIs and FGDs, in Western Cape with support of the South African Faith & Family Institute (SAFFI) in Cape Town, and in KwaZulu-Natal with support of the DSD provincial office in Pietermaritzburg. The process administered KIIs and FGDs over three weeks in February/March 2023. The cohort of participants in Cape Town were recruited from Cape Flats region including Hanover Park, Lavender Hill, Delft, Bonteheuwel, Heideveld, Phillippi, Bishop Lavis, Manenberg, and Mandela Park in Khayelitsha; and, for the Durban cohort participants were recruited from Durban region including EThekweni North, EThekweni South, and surrounding districts of UMgungundlovu, Ugu and Ilembe.

Once all data were collected, and transcribed; the research team conducted a manual analysis including content and narrative data reading through transcripts to identify and catalogue apparent concepts to themes which were pre-assigned while preserving the context in which concepts occurred. The procedure extracted nominal demographic information (>18 years, female, 86.1%), then focused on learning about community organizing including interventions, representation, capacity to influence and support needs through KIIs with staff of CBOs, and, explored the experience of VAWC and support services through FGDs with victims/ survivors

and staff of CBOs to illuminate types and sources of violence, place of occurrence, mediating structures, services, and, resources needed to improve and enable services.

Key findings

Community-based women and child protection groups (CBWCPGs)

- The CBWCPGs reported here are non-profit groups also called CBOs/ NPOs such as township associations, women's rights groups, faith groups, among others, that organize programmes and services for themselves and use local resources and values to support women, children, and men. They are located in, and provide services to, the community, and characterize the needs of community against VAWC, and leveraging on local assets of *Ubuntu-value* and ethics of care and stewardship linked to belonging, mutually obligated life, justice as equality, and, action because '*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*' [a person is a person by others] (Masolo, 2010; Zuberi, 2012, interview with Maphosa; Benhabib, 2003).

VAWC in South Africa and selected communities

- VAWC refers wide-ranging forms of maltreatment against women (females 18 years and older) and children (girls and boys 18 years and under) committed by peers, family, parents, caregivers, siblings, current/ former intimate partners, strangers, and disasters. VAWC affects all people irrespective of ethnicity, education, income, profession, and religion, with overwhelming physical, emotional, financial, and social impact on victims, families, communities.
- It embraces direct, cultural, and structural violence such as physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and economic violence; and, occurs everywhere in the home, toilet and water points of informal settlements; school, workplace, creche, shopping area, shebeen, tavern, road, taxi, train and bus station, bar, nightclub, stadium, prison, clinic, hospital, church, park, bush. Men are perpetrators despite women and children are involved; and, most incidences take place at the hands of someone victims know, and many cases remain invisible as part of family or private life and culture of silence, and corruption of institutions and people who are supposed to champion the cause of VAWC.
- VAWC in Cape Town and Durban stems from interaction of social norms of gender inequality and acceptability of violence and discrimination, culture of silence about violence, situations of frustration at the community and society level like crime, economic hardships, poverty, poor service delivery, unemployment, unequal and segregated distribution of land and wealth, drug and alcohol abuse, workplace and school-based violence, gang violence, informal settlement structures, ineffective legal justice system, impunity of perpetrators, forced initiation (male circumcision), child marriage, ritual killing, migration, human trafficking, dearth in understanding the problem VAWC and practice of what works to reduce drivers of violence, exposure to violence hearing gunshots, witnessing parents or peers fighting or attacked.



- VAWC is not homogenous, and it manifests in combination with other forms of discrimination that account for different types and rates of violence on women and children. KIIs and FGDs shed light on how Black African and Coloured women and children, and women and children with disabilities, women-led and child-headed households, orphaned children, lesbian gay bisexual transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) women and children, and migrant women and children than native South African women and children, were more likely to experience violence than women and children without disability, straight women and children, and, households with both parents.

Type of organization

- The organizations define themselves as voluntary, non-state, non-profit groups. 80% specified were registered with the DSD as NPOs, 13.4% were not registered, and 6.6% did not know if their organization was registered or not. 60% of CBOs had knowledge of their organization's hierarchy of business teams, leaders, managers, individual contributors, mode of governance and decision-making. They elaborated their internal structure and organograms directed roles, internal reporting, and, cascading decisions; and identified boards of directors, chief executive officers, organizational guidelines, procedures, programmes, and conducting activities in line with clients to whom they were accountable. 40% either didn't understand the question or didn't know what internal structure decision making entailed in their organizations.

Type of interventions

- Findings show diverse strategies that utilize primary and secondary (i.e., tertiary) approaches. Primary approaches focus interventions to addressing relationships before violence occurs like parenting workshops, community mobilization to raise awareness of VAWC, and training on how women and children can avoid violence. While secondary or tertiary approaches are aimed at reducing the impact, effects and harm from violence in the short and medium to long-term after it has occurred such as treatment of injuries, counselling, protection of victims and safe accommodation in shelters, recovery and self-help skills, assessment/investigation, help line support information for victims. The intervention services address issues of divorce, child or adult domestic violence, parents' alcoholism, drug abuse and mental illness, teen pregnancy and parenthood, school performance, negative peer influences, minority status, community violence. The interventions are planned locally, and are culture context-specific including (a) support via counselling, human rights and gender equality education; (b) identity strengthening via education, arts, cultural activities, therapy, and sport; (c) *Ubuntu* education and gender equality awareness; (f) neighbourhood policing as first line of crime investigation, police visibility; (g) shelter/protection rehabilitation, security, personal safety, dignity for victims, offering opportunities to lead normal life, reduce vulnerability, and job opportunity information; (h) dialogue, truth telling, reconciliation, faith healing; (i) self-reliance, media and cyber awareness education; and, (j) composite comprising elements from all or part of services and programmes above.



- 92% reported focus services in the immediate neighbourhoods. They perform “people-sized” (Speer & Perkins, 2002) mediating functions with small enough groups to reflect values and realities of individual life, and, large enough to empower individuals to begin to influence wider social structures of behaviour change efforts (Speer & Perkins, 2002; Berger & Neuhaus, 1977). Besides, their services represent unfolding contexts of empowerment processes for both individuals, organizations and communities, e.g., SAFFI, Ihata Shelter, Mphoyabasadi Foundation, Lifeline Durban, Kerr House, Women Hope for the Nation, Abathunywa Ministers Fraternal work on legal and rights information, psychosocial support and counselling, women-centred support and children services for children accompanying their mothers, youth services for teens, community information, education and community outreach, assistance toward economic independence, recovery and self-sufficiency, human rights education, identification of victims of intimate partner violence in their neighbourhoods, as first line support, prevention, initial contact, assessment/investigation, safety and protection, assistance and support – even though short-term, they begin empowering processes for individuals and organizations to address collective self-interests, particularly regarding issues, problems and factors that feed VAWC in families and their communities.

Representation

- All organizations revealed their cause represent interests of their communities and victims; they aim to create safe neighbourhoods, and, support other stakeholders such as SAPS. 92.2% enlightened functions to educate, heal, reconcile, empower, protect victims, encouraging family cohesion, self-reliance, and to influence cultural norms of male domination, and, community members to hold municipal government to account on service delivery which contributed to VAWC in their communities; and, highlighted being at the grassroots, vetted and registered with DSD as NPOs gave them legitimacy to campaign on behalf of their communities and champion the cause of members who are harmed.

Capacity to influence

- On capacity to influence, 47 % respondent and rated themselves ranging from 5 to 10, and 53% did not respond to the question. Despite respondents described how they promoted victim/survivor security by informing the public about the risks associated with VAWC that most directly affect them, they are not participating meaningfully to influence VAWC and in ways that would catalyse significant change both at the individual, family, community and societal level and with more and key people, nor are they influential enough to articulate a common prevention agenda good enough – with government, business, and parallel civil society – for significant behaviour and social change to leverage cultural peace.

Support needs

- According to the analysis, all of the organizations that were reported had problems with insufficient funding, staff who lacked training and expertise, a lack of accountability,



and disagreements with other civil society actors. Nonetheless, the results highlight the significance of asking for help and provide a positive perspective of contacting an organization for support following abuse.

Way forward

Based on how the FGDs unfolded, a way forward was discussed and agreed by the participants. The facilitators, provided a summary of the proceedings which highlighted the way forward as proposed during the discussions as follows:

- Reflecting on field discussions, there was an emphasis on key themes that emerged which include the role of South African Police Services and the issue of public trust. They highlight the importance of evidence-based discussions on socio-economic indicators and religion, suggesting these aspects need thorough exploration and attention.
- Besides, there an acknowledgement of the impact of foreign influence on local communities and the necessity for extensive exploration of these dynamics. They express concern over labelling people as “foreigners” within the country and emphasize the need for interactions and understanding among communities. Additionally, there was an acknowledgment of the exploitation of young girls by foreign nationals who mostly reside in Parkland and it was proposed that an urgent intervention by the community is needed.
- An emphasis on the need for leaders to undergo personal introspection while serving the community also emerged. The findings caution against letting historical divides hinder progress and call for a unified approach towards societal issues, urging leaders to challenge systems that perpetuate inequality and exclusion, particularly in decision-making spaces.
- The discussions emphasized the importance of cultural sensitivity in policymaking. They stress the need to avoid supporting initiatives that perpetuate division among black communities and call for unity, understanding, and collective healing.
- Lastly, the participants advocate for respectful engagement, collective healing, and the rejection of actions that perpetuate divisions among black communities. They emphasize the importance of inclusivity, cultural understanding, and the need for leaders to challenge systems that reinforce inequality especially in the fight against VAWC.

Conclusion

The study involved 15 CBOs in Cape Town and Durban, with 65 participants. 12 organizations were from Cape Town and 3 from Durban. The CBOs focused on supporting victims of gender-based violence, providing victim empowerment services, shelter, counselling, advocacy, community policing, education, youth empowerment, mobilizing for access to justice. Most CBOs were registered NPOs though some were not registered or didn't know their registration status. Many were recently formed in the last 5-15 years. They defined themselves in various ways, such as providing shelters, counselling, skills training, youth development, advocacy, reconciliation, and community upliftment. VAWC includes direct, cultural, and structural violence such as physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and economic violence; and,



occurs everywhere in the home, toilet and water points of informal settlements; school, workplace, creche, shopping area, shebeen, tavern, road, taxi, train and bus station, bar, nightclub, stadium, prison, clinic, hospital, church, park, bush. Men are perpetrators despite women and children are involved; and, most incidences take place at the hands of someone victims know, and many cases remain invisible as part of family or private life and culture of silence, and corruption of institutions and people who are supposed to champion the cause of VAWC. The strategies for intervention utilize both primary and secondary (i.e., tertiary) approaches. Primary strategies focus interventions on addressing relationships before violence occurs like parenting workshops, community mobilization to raise awareness of VAWC, and, training women and children to avoid violence. While secondary or tertiary approaches are aimed at reducing the impact, effects and harm from violence in the short and medium to long-term after it has occurred such as treatment of injuries, counselling, protection of victims and safe accommodation in shelters, recovery and self-help skills, assessment/investigation, help line support information for victims. The intervention services address issues of divorce, child or adult domestic violence, parents' alcoholism, drug abuse and mental illness, teen pregnancy and parenthood, school performance, negative peer influences, minority status, community violence. The organizations worked at the individual, family, community and group levels. They had limited capacity to influence change, though many rated themselves moderately high they indicated support need in areas like gender focused capacity, leadership, management, and innovation. Besides, their services represent unfolding contexts of empowerment processes for both individuals, organizations and communities, e.g., SAFFI, Ihata Shelter, Mphoyabasadi Foundation, Lifeline Durban, Kerr House, Women Hope for the Nation, Abathunywa Ministers Fraternal work on legal and rights information, psychosocial support and counselling, women-centred support and children services for children accompanying their mothers, youth services for teens, community information, education and community outreach, assistance toward economic independence, recovery and self-sufficiency, human rights education, identification of victims of intimate partner violence in their neighbourhoods, as first line support, prevention, initial contact, assessment/investigation, safety and protection, assistance and support – even though short-term, they begin empowering individuals and organizations to address collective self-interests, particularly regarding issues, problems and factors that feed VAWC in families and community. Data revealed challenges in the delivery of violence prevention programming, including lack of consistency and coordination with communities and horizontal CBOs, and lack of programming for diverse women and children. The protection of women and children against violence cannot be a short-term effort, but rather an endeavour that requires ongoing commitment from governments, CBOs, business, and other stakeholders, increased research to inform and monitor progress, and persistent action that addresses violence against women at its source. CBOs alone cant do much because structures and norms that feed VAWC are bigger than what CBOs and services can catapult to leverage change. The way forward requires CBOs to work with local community partners including municipals and provincial government and local business to understand local needs and to jointly review programs with strong scientific evidence what address those needs; and, government needs robust policy change to address the structural dimensions of violence prevention. Besides, collaborating as Africans, interrogating violence, policy changes, and caution about anti-foreigner sentiments.



In conclusion, the report suggests that investing in sustainable capacity strengthening and support to CBOs to develop and maintain quality of care to victims/ survivors; empowering local structures and families to participate in and own violence prevention mechanisms; tailoring strategies and actions with regards to the specific issues faced by different groups of women and children, aiming for equality of outcomes for all women and children; investing in active non-violence training, and, use of cultural traditions as a tool for change; given CBOs' nature of tasks and their own traumatic experiences, provide mental health support to these frontline responders in order to improve and sustain programmes and services for victims/ survivors; fostering opportunities across actors and sectors, as well as communities to bring men, women and children together around areas of common concern; working with place of occurrence of VAWC to develop "safe spaces" across neighbourhoods to find reprieve from violence while inculcating families and victims/ survivors with victim empowerment skills; and integrating CBOs to address underlying drivers of VAWC and build into programmes and services strong monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to understand contributions that make meaningful prevention of violence – is critical to move the needle towards reducing VAWC in South Africa.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a synopsis of the context of this research including brief overview of the research purpose, study objectives, research questions and key concepts of analysis, and brief methodology that organise this report. The purpose of this research and report draws on the principle that VAWC is preventable. Despite the challenges that abound, the potential to prevent VAWC has gained and is further gaining increasing attention in South Africa, e.g., 16 Days of Activism, the GBVF-NSP 2020, proactive policy directions in many sectors and contexts including workplace, new curricula in education from kindergarten to tertiary, and involvement of traditional leaders, as well as in the taxi industry and involving new ways of relating and appreciating the “other” which is critical to shift and change our understanding, attitudes and ultimately behaviours. Indeed, there is still much to be learned and gaps in knowledge and practice remain. Hence, the importance and purpose of the current research mapping CBWCPGs/CBOs/NPOs in South Africa. It is the belief of the researchers and through HSRC-DCES and SHS programme that increasing understanding of the root causes, risks and protective factors contributing to VAWC from this research, together with a growing body of effective and promising prevention practice, there are sound prospects of prevention and to foster a peaceful South Africa where all will live in dignity and respect of women and children and institutions. Of course, on its own its not enough; and so, the current research contributes to other sectoral investments into building a peaceful and prosperous South Africa and the region.

In this corollary, the report presents findings from the project *‘Mapping and assessment of community-based women and child protection groups and development of tools to strengthen their capacity to address violence against women and children in South Africa’*. This study’s aim was to identify and assess community-based agency that serve people in the community in which they are based, and demonstrate multiple social benefits they bring in protecting victims/survivors and prevention of violence to improve wellbeing of women and children and social cohesion. Furthermore, this study anticipated to increase knowledge and strengthen a shared understanding regarding the factors contributing to and protecting against VAWC and the role that CBOs/NPOs can play to prevent this violence; and, develop a common language to discuss the prevention of VAWC. This is critical if we are to move the needle towards holistic and multi-sectoral dividends in eliminating VAWC in South Africa.

The project sought to inform the development of community-driven initiatives to build the capacity of CBOs/NPOs to address VAWC, strengthen services of protecting the safety and wellbeing of current and potential victims/ survivors, and strengthen collaboration with local, provincial and national government stakeholders. In this corollary, the goal was not only to integrate community-based knowledge into government strategies but to identify how these strategies support and magnify community-based agency. By exploring the role of community-based assets in their communities, government and business stakeholders will appreciate the

challenges of community-based interventions, how to support and strengthen community-based prevention, and how such actions contribute to building and sustaining neighbourhood safety and social cohesion. CBWCPGs in this research are also called CBOs or NPOs.

1.2. Background

Civil society has an important role to play in a whole-of-society approach to addressing VAWC but we know very little about civil society especially CBOs in South Africa how they contribute to preventing VAWC; and, to address this gap we ran a study in selected urban communities in Cape Town and Durban to identify and assess community-based formations and draw practice-based lessons from their collective experience work in preventing VAWC.

VAWC denotes all forms of gender-based violence and maltreatment of women (all females 18 years and older) and children (all girls and boys 18 years and under). It is a complex and widespread defilement of human rights and human dignity (Norman, Schneider, Bradshaw, Jewkes, Abrahams, Matzopoulos & Vos, 2010) with massive individual and community impact with social costs (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund – UNICEF), 2022; (Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler – KPMG), 2016) that impede progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), NDP Vision 2030, and realization of human rights. The President Cyril Ramaphosa described it as the country's second pandemic (Ramaphosa, 2023). VAWC in South Africa is the result of concoction of harmful attitudes and sociocultural norms of gender discrimination, inequalities and poverty generated by apartheid, extant economic hardships, unemployment, natural and human-induced disasters, crime, drugs and alcohol abuse, ineffective legal and justice system, impunity of perpetrators, and dearth in understanding of the problem itself and practice that can be transferred and scaled-up to eradicate drivers of violence and vulnerability.

With a ranking of 130 out of 163 and one of the worst rates of violence, violence-related injury, and murder outside of a war zone, South Africa is among the most violent countries in the world, according to the 2023 Global Peace Index (IEP, 2023; Norman et al., 2010). In fact, South Africa continues to be one of the most unequal societies in the world, as evidenced by the forecasted Gini coefficient of 0.7 in 2023, well above the BRICS average of 0.5 and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average of 0.3 (Statista, 2023; OECD, 2015). This inequality is also reinforced by patterns of social injustice, VAWC, marginalized groups, patriarchal social norms, male control over decision-making, constrained women's independence, and stereotypes of masculinity and femininity, as well as disrespectful toward women and children, male peer relations that emphasize aggression and weak sanctions against it.

According to recent crime statistics from the South African Police Service (SAPS), which cover a 90-day period from January to March 2023, more than 969 women and 245 children were murdered; every day, 28 children are violently attacked, and three of them die as a result of the physical and psychological toll on 2, 291 children, and 1, 485 attempts to murder women. In addition, according to the South African Demographic Health Survey, 26% of women who



are 18 years of age or older report having been the victim of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse at some point in their lives from an intimate partner (National Department of Health et al., 2016). According to Machisa, Christofides & Jewkes (2011), 46% of women in Gauteng reported higher levels of emotional and financial abuse, and 36-40% of pregnant women in KwaZulu-Natal reported experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV), with 15-19% reporting sexual violence in intimate relationships. Additionally, the Birth to Twenty Plus (Bt20+) study discovered that 40% of the cohort had several experiences of violence at home, school, and in the community, and that over 90% of the cohort had suffered multiple forms of physical and sexual abuse (Naicker, Norris, Mabaso & Richter, 2017; Richter, Mathews, Kagura & Nonterah, 2018).

The overwhelming physical and emotional impact disrupt the human security of women and children, families, and overall society. It also exerts massive economic impacts on government fiscal costs of response and indirect fiscal costs on social services with lifelong effects on poverty eradication, unemployment, education, health, and inequality of a country like South Africa (UNICEF, 2022). A 2016 brief, *Report on the Diagnostic Review of the State Response to Violence Against Women and Children*, using conservative estimate reveal the cost of VAWC in South Africa could be as high as between R28.4 billion and R42.4 billion per year that is between 0.9% and 13 % of the annual gross domestic product (GDP) (KPMG, 2016). Although several government strategies are present myriad women, children and communities are disproportionately affected and suffer multiple and increasing forms of violence (Mathews, Delany, Makola, October, Titi, Hendricks & Rehse, 2022; Richter et al., 2018; Naicker et al., 2017). As the problem excessively affect those already suffering multiple forms of discrimination such as Black African and Coloured women and children, orphaned children, women- and child-headed households, women and children with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and all other identities (LGBTQ+) women and children, and, migrant women and children; when basic services are available they are inadequate, underfunded, understaffed, and fragmented all of which contributes towards overall inadequate protection of victims/ survivors and prevention of violence resulting to ‘poly-victimization’ (Turner, Shattuck, Finkelhor & Hamby, 2017) experience that further expose victims/ survivors to multiple secondary shocks. At the same time, there are many formal and informal actors that complement government strategies and champion community outreach of victim/ survivor empowerment and collective organic capacities in local assets of affected neighbourhoods.

VAWC is not acceptable nor justified. It might be lessened and eventually eliminated with the right resources and political resolve. The government by itself cannot bring about the necessary changes to solve a problem as significant, pervasive, and deeply ingrained as VAWC. While there is no one actor or method that will completely eradicate VAWC, a variety of actors operating in diverse ways together constantly contribute to the dividend of violence prevention (UNICEF, 2022; Maphosa et al., 2016). The government, civil society, media, businesses, communities, families, women and men, girls and boys, and all other segments of society must all play a part in achieving the long-term goal of ensuring that all women and children in South Africa live free from violence. Everybody is accountable to act. This is a corollary of the fact that international human rights treaties and national strategies, like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on

the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Republic of South Africa's Constitution, the Gender-based Violence and Femicide National Strategic Plan (GBVF-NSP) of 2020, and the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998, for instance, ensure that women and children have the freedom to live without experiencing violence and establish laws that support the development of civil society.

(UN, 1993; UNICEF, 2015; Republic of South Africa, 1996). The CEDAW maintains that:

State Parties shall establish tribunals and other public institutions [and civil society] to ensure the effective protection of women against discrimination ... and elimination of all acts of discrimination against women...;

and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) Article 19 that:

States Parties shall take appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures [and civil society] to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse...;

and standards of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa have special place for civil society (United Nations (UN), 1993; UNICEF, 2015; RSA, 1996), to advocating for people's rights, monitoring human rights abuses, advocating social justice and protecting people from violence, providing services to communities and victims/ survivors of violence, and advocating for end to VAWC including transforming social structures, values and behaviours that feed VAWC. Since advent of democracy in 1994 there is growing interest and role of diverse actors to move the needle towards "All people in South Africa are and feel safe".

1.3. Understanding Violence Against Women and Children

The goal of prevention is to deal with the underlying causes of VAWC in order to enhance population-level variables that serve as barriers to violence and to mitigate those that raise its likelihood. This entails determining the contributing elements within an ecological conceptualization of VAWC as a continuum across a number of dimensions and levels, and understanding the relationships among them, at the same time allowing for insights of variations in contexts and cultural meanings to be explored.

1.3.1. An Ecological approach

To understand the role of local community mediating structures in preventing VAWC it was important this research process enlighten on community organization from the perspective of structural ecology of community life. There are many perspectives on ecological organization, for example, Speer & Perkins (2002), Berger & Neuhaus (1977), Park Burgess & McKenzie (1967), Long (1958), Reitzes & Reitzes (1987), Barker (1968), Barker & Gump (1964), and, Rappaport (1987).

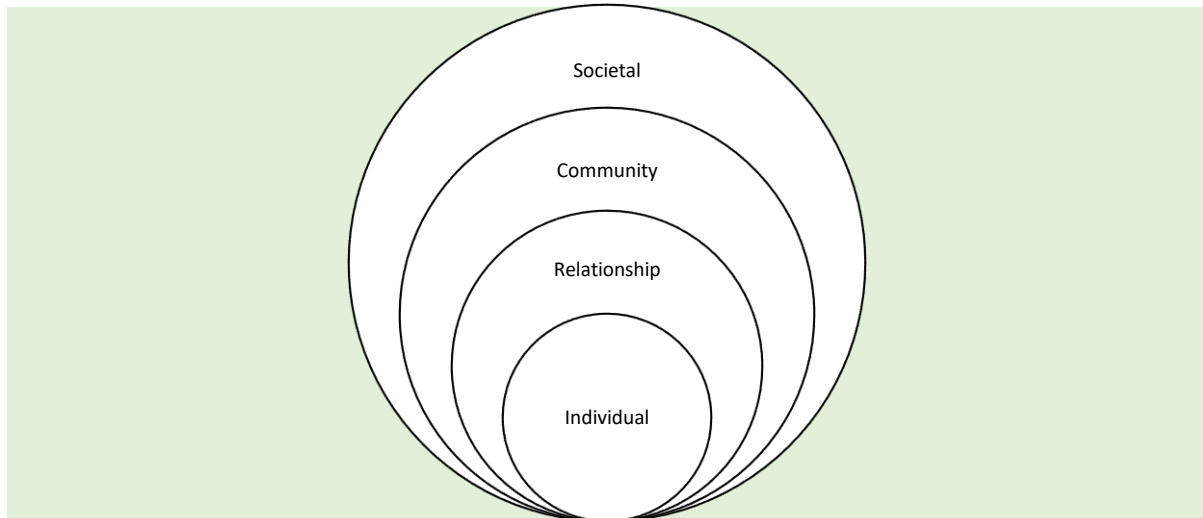
The current study employs Urie Bronfenbrenner's (1979) microsystems and mesosystems ecologies, among other ecologies Bronfenbrenner articulated. It is because these two represent the concentration of this study and is appropriate with community organization and prevention

of VAWC. In application of this ecological orientation, the current study sought to comprehend the diverse settings that embed in community structures to mediate issues, constraints and opportunities these settings provide, for instance, in protecting women, children, families, communities and societies from violence. At the local level, microsystems are the settings (organizations) in which individuals participate whereas microsystems are the interactions and relations (organizing) between microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In community organization (microsystems enquiry), organizing (mesosystems analysis) entails examining connections between groups of individuals who have similar beliefs and aspirations and engaging in ongoing social action based on those beliefs (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Speer & Perkins, 2002). It explores and embodies entire processes of establishing connections, recognizing problems, acting on those problems, and assessing the success of those actions in order to sustain an organization that can continue to address problems and concerns in the community (Speers & Perkins, 2002; Speers & Hughey, 1995). Hence, current research procedure intended to identify what works of CBOs practice and spurs violent behaviour to peaceful relationships (Speer & Perkins, 2002; Alford, 2010; Carlson, 2011).

Bronfenbrenner's microsystems and mesosystems ecologies helps to usher understanding that VAWC is inhibited or encouraged by factors that reinforce one another at each level. Figure 1 shows how personal and biological factors, such as age, gender, education, income, substance use, and abuse history, are considered at the individual level to increase the likelihood of becoming a victim or perpetrator of VAWC. The relationship dimension considers the influence of factors related to relationships with peers, intimate partners, and family members that increase risk. The community dimension focuses on settings like churches, workplaces, schools, homes, and neighborhoods where social relationships occur and are linked to one becoming a victim or perpetrator of VAWC and, societal characteristics that consider the many social elements, such as social cultural norms and the divisions of economic and social inequality among different groups in society, that contribute to environments where violence is either promoted or discouraged.

The root causes of VAWC are factors increasing the probability of VAWC including social norms, social practices, social structures, and societal relationships. In certain situations, historical factors like apartheid, war, and deeply ingrained cultural practices influence gender inequality and discrimination. Structural differences based on age, income, location, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other characteristics also influence gender inequality and discrimination.

Figure 1: Understanding VAWC through An Ecological Approach



Source: Adapted from WHO (2002)

According to the 2002 WHO World Report on Violence and Health, violence is a multifaceted phenomenon that results from the interactions of numerous people as well as context-specific elements that have an impact on women and children. The model considers the intricate interactions of individual, relational, neighbourhood, and societal elements; it enables us to comprehend the variety of circumstances that either shield women and children from suffering violence or put them in danger of it (Figure 1). The model's overlaps show how elements at one level affect elements at another level. Every level generates aspects of influence over an individual that reinforce each other. For example, individuals who have an aggressive disposition (risk factor on an individual level) or who have witnessed violence in the past as a seemingly acceptable way to resolve conflicts at home (relational level) are more prone to adopt a violent approach. In addition, people who live in urban areas with high rates of unemployment, crime, and a dearth of recreational opportunities, risk factors at the community level, have stronger incentives to turn to violence than people who grow up in calm environments with greater variety and better opportunities.

As a result, the model illustrates the interactions between women, children, and their complex environment while also aiding in the differentiation of the numerous and various influencing variables underlying VAWC. In addition to providing clarification on these elements, the model implies that simultaneous action at several levels of the model is required to avert violence. This strategy has a higher chance of achieving population-level impact and long-term sustainability of preventative initiatives. As a result, the model provides insight into how people socialize, how they first form bonds with other members of their family and then gradually engage in interactions at the levels of the community and society as they age. Therefore, the ecological model offers a useful framework for comprehending violence-prevention strategies that take the environment into account in which women and children grow up.

1.3.2. The Ecological approach: Policy and programme implications

The following are the implications for policy and programs:

- Individual behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs are shaped by people's immediate organizational and community environments as well as by influences at the broader societal level.
- When preventing VAWC, multiple factors need to be considered. It is important to consider factors at each of the ecological levels and the relationships between and among them. Individuals' attitudes and behaviours also have an impact on these larger institutions and cultures.
- To ensure that activities at one ecological level, such as promoting human rights and respectful relationships among individuals, are supported and reinforced by activities at other layers, such as adopting and implementing laws and policies that address discrimination and VAWC and promote women's human rights, a coordinated and consistent approach is required. It has been determined that this mutually reinforcing strategy is particularly crucial for the prevention of VAWC.
- In order to address the challenge of avoiding VAWC, various sectors will need to be involved. A teacher, who works primarily with individuals, might not be able to lead the reform of laws that discriminate against women and children, but they are in a good position to promote change through their teaching methods. Many actors will play a part in preventing VAWC to promote non-violent, respectful relationships

1.3.3. Key issues emerging from evidence and policy implications

The Ecological Approach is without challenges and limitations. The challenges of this approach that are worth noting are as follows:

- To stop VAWC, a number of gender inequality-related issues must be addressed. Even though they don't directly affect unequal gender relations, other factors nonetheless have an impact and should be taken into consideration.
- Every environment must examine and consider the context-specific risk factors for VAWC.
- It is imperative to tackle the social, political, and economic frameworks that impact violence, in addition to customs and behaviours.
- It is imperative that boys and men who use violence are held responsible for their actions through both formal and informal social consequences, as well as formal legal sanctions like laws that are effectively implemented and enforced.

1.4. Problem Statement

While a lot has been done to strengthen institutional prevention and response framework at the provincial and national levels, the capacity of the country to protect children will remain limited unless and until a parallel effort is conducted at the community level. This is because the current



social workforce approximately 17 500 social workers who provide services for a population of more than 60 million inhabitants is too small to efficiently respond to incidents of violence and other women and child protection challenges at the household or community levels. Van Niekerk & Matthias (2019: 250) point out to “...many gaps in the coordination and integration of services ..., lack clear overarching structure of implementation and integration between the Department of Social Development (DSD), levels of government, and sectors involved in provision of protection services for women and children.” There is increasing recognition of the need for action at the community level, and this has found expression in community-based women and child protection groups. CBWCPGs refer to a collection of people, and volunteers that aim to ensure the protection and well-being of women and children in a community. If these groups are systematically linked to formal mechanisms and service providers at the local, provincial, and national government levels, they have the potential to become a critical and indispensable component of the national women and child protection system. Their presence in the communities places them in strategic advantage to perform comprehensive functions of identifying, reporting, responding to cases, and making referrals to appropriate mechanisms and agencies.

The government has invested in various community structures and other community-based women, youth and traditional institutions. These groups are sensitized on women and child protection issues, especially as it relates to girls, and have the potential to provide substantive results in supporting women, children and families who experience incidents of violence and other protection challenges. Many other groups have also been set up by other donor agencies and institutions to support community focused interventions in other sectors like health and social protection. The typologies of these groups differ, depending on the level of community ownership and involvement in its establishment, administration and accountability.

Despite the huge potentials of these groups, it is important to adopt an evidence-based approach in determining their effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the opportunities for sustainability and scalability. This entails inquiry into the models and approaches of existing CBWCPGs, the process of assignment of roles and responsibilities to its members, their legitimacy, governance structures and modus operandi in a systematic way. It is also important to evaluate the knowledge and capacity gaps of these groups with a view to determining how they can be strengthened to better deliver defined packages of services to victims/ survivors of VAWC. Informal engagement and interactions with some of these existing groups appear to indicate that the groups would benefit from being further structured and strengthened in their capacity to prevent and respond to child protection challenges.

For these reasons, we set out to explore community-based women and child protection groups in selected communities across the nine (9) provinces in South Africa to shed light on practice-based evidence of such local assets about who is doing what where and how with the aim to build on a range of initiatives derived from, and supportive of, the positive social of local values addressing VAWC; and, produce knowledge with a view to increase understanding of CBOs, reinforce protection services, safety, and wellbeing of current and potential victims/ survivors, as well as strengthen collaboration and coherence of services with local, provincial and national government stakeholders. The project was funded by the HSRC through the DCES research

division and undertaken by DCES's SHS programme. However, once the study commenced the initially allocated budget was abruptly cut after piloting in two coastal provinces of Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, and, hence current report only on selected urban communities in Cape Town and Durban. The original plan was to return to Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, then roll-out the study across all provinces of the country.

1.5. Project Aims, Objectives, and Study Partnerships

This study seeks to explore CBOs and 1) identify experiences and knowledge of key informant CBO staff and victims/ survivors of violence regarding programmes and services that respond or address VAWC in selected urban communities in Cape Town and Durban; and, 2) shed light on practice-based evidence of such local assets about who is doing what where and how in order to build on a range of initiatives derived from, and supportive of, the positive social of local values addressing VAWC.

Specific objectives are:

- To describe the organizations in terms of how they define themselves and their internal structures.
- To determine who the organizations represent, their constituencies and how they define their legitimacy.
- To assess the relevancy of the organizations in the current community specific context.
- To assess the organizations' capacity to influence and have voice.
- To identify ways in which the organizations could be supported besides financial support.

Study Partnerships

Since the goal of study is to assess the nature and quality of extant practice-based evidence on delivery of services to victims/ survivors and prevention of VAWC, to inform the development of tools to strengthen the capacity of CBOs to address VAWC, the research was conducted in collaboration with community-based partners and government stakeholders including SAFFI in Cape Town, FAMSA in Durban and the DSD as well as provincial governments of Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

1.6. Key Terms

The key terms used in this study include:

- **CBWCPGs:** The CBWCPGs surveyed in this report also called CBOs/ NPOs denotes local assets of people, places, and organizations that offer protection programmes and essential services of support and care targeting victims/ survivors of VAWC (Mulugeta, 2016). They are diverse in purpose and structure including neighbourhood and village associations, fraternities, orphanages, faith-based and community clubs. They serve vital functions in their communities like encouraging individuals take control of issues impacting their life, be it economic, social, cultural, environmental or political. The terms CBWCPGs, CBOs, NPOs are used interchangeably throughout this report. CBOs



supplement but do not replace local, provincial, and national government spheres and functions. The organizations mapped in this report include formal (vetted) and informal (not vetted or registered) organizations in terms of the NPO Act No. 71, 1997 and operate in specific communities.

- **Coherence:** refers to the relationships formed when multiple players work together to achieve common goals. It also suggests that these actors have a common understanding of the circumstances and a plan of action for achieving these goals in order to protect victims and survivors and prevent VAWC (Liwag-Lomibao, 2024). It is important for strategic programme design which involves bringing together different CBOs and across dimensions of prevention and services to share experiences and capacities that will strengthen capacity of CBOs.
- **Community-based organizations:** characterizes civic society organizations that are non-profit and strive to improve the lives of those in their local communities (Hasenfeld & Gidron, 2005). Their services revolve around participating relevant stakeholders in developing, implementing and monitoring, advocacy, mediation, counselling, non-violence training, accompaniment, public safety, victim empowerment, employment, self-reliance, capacity training, psychosocial and mental health healing.
- **Domestic violence:** refers to violent crimes committed by individuals who are in or have been in close relationships. It encompasses actions intended to impose dominance and control over women and their offspring, such as abuse that is physical, sexual, or psychological (Burelomova, Gulina & Tikhomandritskaya, 2018).
- **Gender equality:** refers to the equal opportunities, rights, and duties that apply to men, women, and girls and boys. The phrase suggests that both men's and women's interests, desires, and objectives are fairly considered, acknowledging the diversity of these various groups (Abu-Ghaida & Klasen, 2002).
- **Family violence:** This includes violence within the family as well as violence between intimate partners such as parents and children, siblings, and other family members (Burelomova ET AL., 2018).
- **Local assets:** This phrase denotes individuals, locations, and groups that provide services, care, or support to the greater community (O'Connor, Alfrey, Hall & Burke, 2019) in this case, support of protection and elimination of VAWC.
- **Poly-victimization:** According to Turner et al., (2017) poly-victimization refers to “the experience of multiple victimizations of different kinds, such as sexual victimization, physical abuse, bullying, witnessing family violence, and exposure to community violence, not just multiple episodes of the same kind of victimization”.



- **Sexualised violence:** is any unwanted, actual, attempted, threatened, or non-consensual act or behaviour that is carried out through sexual means, communication, or by targeting someone's sex, sexual identity, or gender expression; this includes voyeurism, sexual exploitation, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, stalking, and the distribution of sexually explicit images or videos without the subject's consent (University of Victoria, 2022).
- **Violence:** The term describes situations whereby someone hurts, or scares and/or controls another. It can also be called abuse. There are different types of violence, and, every person's experience of violence is different. According to World Health Organisation (WHO):

“Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in, injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation” (WHO, 1996).

The four ways that violence can be inflicted are physical, sexual, psychological, and deprivation. The WHO's World Report on Violence and Health identifies a typology of violence that can help to understand the contexts in which violence occurs and the interactions between different types of violence. Based on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, it further breaks down the broad definition of violence into three subtypes.

- *Self-directed violence* which includes self-abuse and suicide and describes acts of violence in which the perpetrator and victim are the same person.
- *Interpersonal violence* communal violence as well as violence between families and IPV. In contrast to the latter, which includes acquaintance and/or stranger violence such as juvenile violence, attack by strangers, violence connected to property crimes, and violence in workplaces and other institutions, the former involves abuse of children, elder abuse, and intimate partner violence.
- *Collective violence* the violence perpetrated by bigger collectives of people, which is further classified as economic, political, and social violence.

1.7. Conclusion

Chapter one of this report discussed the context of the research focussing on the purpose, background, aims and objectives, the conceptual framework, and key concepts. This discussion was preceded by a foreword and executive summary which provided an overview of the main points of the report. Chapter Two will discuss the literature review, Chapter Three focus on methods, followed by Chapter Four on findings, then Chapter Five discussion of findings, conclusion, and way forward.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of the literature on VAWC, civil society in particular CBOs to gain an understanding of the existing research and debates relevant to VAWC and the role of CBOs regarding programmes and services that respond and address VAWC in South Africa. The discussion covers existing research and evidence and critical evaluation and discussion of this evidence in relation to current study. CBOs are important for prevention of VAWC and translating research to inform interventions. Engagement is an integral part of partnerships between CBOs and social science research and impacts the quality and quantity of any desired outcome. Despite acknowledged benefits of CBO and community engagement there is a paucity in understanding of its use in community partnerships. To gain better understanding of CBO engagement in protecting victims/ survivors and preventing VAWC the aim of this literature review will synthesise published literature relevant on VAWC, dynamics of VAWC in South Africa, approaches to programmes and response; and, definitions and applications of CBO engagement and identify stakeholder relationships that aid their functioning.

2.2. Background of VAWC

Notwithstanding the generally progressive tendency of erasing sexual, ethnic, and cultural borders in practically every aspect of life today, gender disparity still exists in the twenty-first century. Women still face a lifetime battle against assault, abuse, and discrimination regardless of their location or cultural background, with the poorest facing the most hardships (Oxfam International, 2021; Balahadia, Astoveza & Jamolin, 2022; Gonzalez III, Calaca, Saguran & Mallillin, 2022). Violence against women and their children (VAWC) is so common that it has prompted the international community to proclaim it a global public health and human rights issue (Guedes, Bott, Garcia-Moreno & Colombini, 2016). The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) and the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) are two significant examples of the global and regional conventions and agreements that have been held as a result of decades of lobbying by organizations dedicated to protecting women's health and rights to end such cruel acts (World Health Organization (WHO), 2021a, 2021b). VAWC has a detrimental effect on women and children's general health and keeps them from engaging fully in society. Violence affects women and children negatively, but it also has an adverse effect on their families, the society, and the entire nation. It has high costs, impacting national budgets and overall development, including increased health care and legal costs as well as productivity losses (Guedes et al., 2016; Guanzon, 2012). According to Guedes et al. (2016), violence against women and children is arguably the most serious and widespread violation of human rights. It transcends all barriers related to wealth, culture, or location. Gender bias has existed from the beginning of time since it is a social and cultural construct. Violence can be influenced by and even drawn to this unquestioning gender disparity,

particularly when it comes to the differences in gender roles between men and women (Guanzon, 2012).

VAWC is defined by the UN as "any" act of gender-based violence against women, whether it occurs in public or in private, that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm to women. This includes coercion, threats, or wilful denial of liberty. Any kind of violence against women that is motivated by their sex is considered gender-based violence (WHO, 2021a). Multiple effects on women's mental, physical, and reproductive health make VAWC a serious public health concern (Boeckel, Blasco, Grassi & Martinez, 2014; WHO, 2021a, 2021b). As per the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 48/104 of December 1993, violence against women is defined as any act of physical, sexual, psychological, or financial harm inflicted on an intimate partner or child. Numerous factors contribute to violence against women, such as: femicide, which includes killings committed in the name of "honour", intimate partner violence (physical, sexual, and/or psychological); sexual violence committed against a partner by someone other than the spouse or partner; and trafficking in women. However, the most common type of violence against women worldwide is that committed by husbands, other male intimate partners, or male family members (WHO, 2021a).

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 raised awareness of the significance of addressing violence against women as a public health issue. There has been a rise in the number of reports of domestic abuse, particularly intimate partner violence against women, to helplines, police, and other service providers as a result of pandemic response measures including lockdowns and distancing guidelines (Barbara, Facchin, Micci, Rendiniello, Giulini & Cattaneo, 2020; Evans, Lindauer & Farrell, 2020; Roesch, Amin, Gupta & García-Moreno, 2020; WHO, 2021b; Gonzalez III et al., 2022). Nevertheless, these data which indicate a recent rise in violence against women depend on the use of services and do not accurately reflect the prevalence of violence against women overall, which can only be determined by population-based surveys (Jansen, 2016; Kendall, 2020). It will be impossible to determine with precision how COVID-19 (and other humanitarian crises) has affected the prevalence of intimate relationship violence and non-partner sexual violence until surveys and research on the subject pick back up (WHO, 2001; Jewkes, Dartnall, Sikweyiya, 2012; WHO, 2016). VAWC is without a doubt the most egregious human rights violation and the most pervasive phenomenon that happens anywhere in the globe, regardless of geography, culture, or economic status (WHO, 2021a, 2021b).

2.2.1. Trends of VAWC

In terms of violence against women and children, the most prevalent categories of violence include physical abuse which can be in the form of kicking, slapping, beating, choking; honour killing in domestic violence; hurling acid; and stalking, among others (WHO, 2021a, 2021b). Sexual abuse is another category which includes human trafficking, rape, and sexual harassment. Verbal, social, and socioeconomic abuse are examples of psychologically emotional abuse category (WHO, 2021a, 2021b). Sexual abuse is a wide topic that needs to be discussed without bias, because different people have different ideas about what constitutes

sexual abuse. Moreover, sexual assault affects women and children from a variety of ethnicities and origins including girls, teens, and adults (Gonzalez III et al., 2022). Worldwide, one of the most frequent crimes against women and children in this category is rape. Regardless of age, it is a form of sexual assault directed mostly at women and children (WHO, 2021b). Although the number of reported rapes has increased, many go unreported or have the complaint files withdrawn because the victim feels that their family's honour is being violated (WHO, 2021a, 2021b). According to Spohn & Tellis (2012), Johnson (2012) and Moolman, Tolla, Essop, Isaacs & Makoae (2023), women and children typically do not receive justice for the rapes they endure because police rarely provide a fair trial and/or medical proof is frequently not documented, which makes it simple for criminals to escape punishment under the current legal system. Other types of sexual abuse of women and children exist as well, which do not include forced sexual relations. Among them is the dissemination of videos and pictures that are offensive to women and children (Gonzalez III et al., 2022). According to Ranada (2020), there have been several documented incidences of sexual abuse in most countries which include online sharing of naked images and videos even claimed the lives of well-known celebrities. Other forms of sexual assault against women include offering money or other luxuries in exchange for sex, abusing women and children through sexual gestures, and purposefully making derogatory remarks or actions (Ranada, 2020; Gonzalez III et al., 2022).

Physical violence can take many different forms, including shaking, pinching, kicking, pulling hair, hitting, and giving someone too much or too little medication when they are in pain, among others (Gonzalez III et al., 2022). Physical violence happens when someone intentionally plans to strike or kick someone in order to do them harm (Ranada, 2020). Children and women are particularly vulnerable to this type of abuse. Furthermore, Calvano, Engelke, Di Bella, Kindermann, Renneberg & Winter (2022) stressed that it is illegal to use physical violence in an intimate relationship or within the family. The police have the authority and jurisdiction to defend against physical violence. If someone who is powerful or in a position of authority physically violates someone, there are always ways to report it. Physical violence is wrong, even if it just happens once and nobody has the right to hurt someone. Your physical and emotional health may suffer permanent effects from physical assault. Numerous chronic (long-lasting) health issues can be brought on by physical violence, such as heart attacks, high blood pressure, and digestive troubles (Calvano et al., 2022; Calvano et al., 2022). Abused women and children are frequently more prone to struggle with eating disorders, anxiety, or depression (Calvano et al., 2022; Calvano et al., 2022). Here's where emotional and psychological abuse comes into the picture. Cases of physical assault against women and children have been documented, especially during the national lockdown during the pandemic. There were many confirmed cases during the lockdown than there had been in prior months. In the previous months before lockdown, the number of cases were lesser than during the lockdown period (Calvano et al., 2022).

Every year, more cases of emotional abuse go unreported since the majority of those who are abused do not realize they are being abused (Brewer-Smyth, 2022). Undefined as it may be, emotional violence claims the lives of more people every day since the victims are unaware that they are being taken advantage of (Brewer-Smyth, 2022; Gonzalez III et al., 2022). Any behaviour that uses physical or verbal abuse, intimidation, or humiliation to control another



person is considered abuse (Gonzalez III et al., 2022). Whereas, psychological emotional abuse is defined as persistent, pattern-based, and systematic maltreatment intended to undermine the victim's self-esteem. The violence is usually experienced often enough for the victim to absorb it. The victim experiences emotional deprivation, fear, unimportance, distrust, and unlovability as a result. It's hard for survivors of this kind of assault to comprehend why they feel the way they do (Munro, 2000; Gonzalez III et al., 2022). Many countries have seen a rise in VAWC, and research indicates that traditional, economic, social, and cultural factors contribute to gender inequality and vulnerability (Ranada, 2020; WHO, 2021a, 2021b; Brewer-Smyth, 2022; Gonzalez III et al., 2022). The primary attributes of women are their structural inferiority in all spheres of society, including education, employment, and the economy. This virtually ensures economic reliance on men with the fact that being a woman by birth guarantees a double battle to obtain basic needs (Gonzalez III et al., 2022).

Another emerging category of violence is economic abuse which women and children can experience across various institutions including their households and at work (Postmus, Hoge, Breckenridge, Sharp-Jeffs & Chung, 2020; Christy, Welter, Dundon, Valandra & Bruce, 2022). According to Christy et al., (2022), there are many different behaviours that fall under the category of economic violence. At the extreme end is a partner who handles all financial matters for the household. The other partner must give up his paycheques, lose access to bank accounts, and struggle to make ends meet even when it comes to necessities like food (Christy et al., 2022). Using a partner's credit card for purchases without authorization and making all financial decisions without consulting them are further examples of economic abuse (Gonzalez III et al., 2022). Furthermore, Postmus et al., (2020) asserted that one of the several manifestations of economic abuse is the refusal to provide for a family's fundamental requirements. Abuse of power occurs when partners track how resources are spent, limit partner access to household resources, and control resource allocation. When a spouse is employed, abusers frequently coerce them into giving up their paycheque, denying them access to their own money (Postmus et al., 2020). Occasionally, they even spend their victims' money without their consent and take advantage of their financial situation (Gonzalez III et al., 2022).

Abusers may use sabotage tactics to impede victims' efforts to further their education, improve their employability, or perform better at work (Showalter, 2016; Voth Schrag, Edmond & Nordberg, 2020; Gonzalez III et al., 2022). Additionally, women were underpaid and overworked at work, paid less than males for tasks done equally well, and used for unpaid labour beyond what was specified in their contracts (Gonzalez III et al., 2022). Sadly, economic violence exacerbates poverty and limits women's access to higher education and career possibilities (Showalter, 2016; Voth Schrag et al., 2020). Some victims of economic abuse are unable to acquire the employment skills and earning capacity necessary to sustain themselves and their children. After fleeing their abuser, victims can see a dramatic drop in their standard of living or find themselves dependent on government aid (Gonzalez III et al., 2022). In certain instances, victims are legally responsible for the debt and asset losses incurred as a result of the defendant's economically abusive behaviour. This limits their future opportunities and financial stability (Voth Schrag et al., 2020). Coerced economic crimes, or crimes carried out under duress in order to obtain a financial or professional advantage, frequently result in the incarceration of the survivors themselves, obstructing critical avenues for economic security

and failing to hold the actual offenders accountable for their actions (Showalter, 2016; Gonzalez III et al., 2022).

On the other hand, there are various ways that children be harmed. Some of these, such organized sexual exploitation or trafficking, are widely covered by the media. Some are trickier to notice and harder to identify (Gonzalez III et al., 2022). The so-called "circle of trust" is the setting where violence against children takes place places like the family, school, and residential institutions that are supposed to be safe havens for kids. Violence is frequently veiled in mystery. Some frequent types of violence against children, such corporal punishment as a kind of intra-family violence, are accepted by society in many countries (Gonzalez III et al., 2022). The shocking scope and intensity of violence against children and adolescents worldwide is described in the UNICEF report (2020) on Global status report on preventing violence against children. Every age group of children is exposed to violence in some capacity at home, at school, and in their communities. Approximately 176 million children under the age of five, or one in every four, live with a mother whose husband is abusive. In the 30 countries that were the subject of the study, nearly half of all 1- and 2-year-olds received physical punishment in the form of a slap, shake, or other similar measure (UNICEF, 2020). The creation of trustworthy data that increases violence's visibility, exposes its covert nature, and starts the process of destroying societal acceptability of its different manifestations is a crucial component of combating violence (Figge, Somba, Aloyce, Minja, Fawzi, Temu & Kaaya, 2022). The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda places a high premium on shielding children from violence. It is true that there are five aims and nine specific targets pertaining to violence and abuse, including child marriage, trafficking, various forms of sexual and other forms of exploitation, and the worst kinds of child labour. Additionally, they provide secure public areas and peaceful, safe learning settings.

Research on the effects of domestic violence and abuse on children and young people has significantly increased in the last few years (Jansen, 2016; Kendall, 2020; Figge et al., 2022; Gonzalez III et al., 2022; WHO, 2021a, 2021b). Research indicates that children who experience violence, fear, or abuse may have a variety of long-lasting consequences. These include relationship problems, emotional and psychological distress, as well as physical reactions like bedwetting and weakened immune systems (Gonzalez III et al., 2022). According to UNICEF (2020) estimates, 300 million children globally are abused, exploited, and victims of violence every day. Since there is little protection, millions more youngsters are still at danger. Levels of violence are strongly correlated with modifiable factors, including concentrated poverty, income and gender inequality, alcohol abuse, and the lack of stable, caring relationships between parents and children (UNICEF 2020, WHO, 2021a, 2021b). Although many forms of violence are avoidable, there are techniques that deal with the root causes of violence that have the potential to stop it from happening.

2.2.2. VAWC in South Africa

According to Norman et al. (2010), VAWC is quite common and severe in South Africa. Despite the paucity of thorough national research, a study of the literature shows startling

conclusions. In a 2010 study done in Gauteng, more than half of the women sampled had experienced GBV at least once in their lives (Machisa et al., 2010); in 2009, Abrahams et al. discovered that intimate partner violence accounted for 50.3% of female homicides (Abrahams et al., 2009); and in 2006, 42.3% of a sample of men employed by Cape Town municipalities reported having physically abused a partner within the previous ten years (Abrahams et al., 2006). Over a ninety-day period from October to December 2022, over three children and twelve women were murdered in South Africa; also, 21,434 children and women suffered from attempted murder or grievous bodily damage; and 5,935 incidences of rape and sexual assault were documented (SAPS, 2023). According to the South African Demographic Health Survey (DHS) published in 2016, 26% of women who were 18 years of age or older reported having ever been the victim of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse at the hands of an intimate partner. Furthermore, the Birth to Twenty Plus (BtTP) study found that more than 90% of the cohort had experienced physical and/or sexual abuse at some time in their life (Naicker et al., 2017; Richter, Mathews, Kagura & Nonterah, 2018).

In South Africa, VAWC is not a uniform occurrence. Because of their status, women and children experience violence differently. Certain groups of women and children—such as older women, women and children with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) women, orphaned and trafficked children, and women and children refugees—are more vulnerable and experience violence more frequently (Rule, 2017; Ryan, Esau & Roman, 2018). Even though different people experience violence in different ways, it is evident that violence is a serious and pervasive issue in South Africa. VAWC is primarily committed by men, while women are also affected. Furthermore, because the conviction rates for sexual assault and murder are not as high as they appear, many survivors suffer in silence, frequently have limited access to justice, or are too weak, intimidated, or afraid of further trauma or stigmatization in the criminal justice system to come forward (Rule, 2017). As a result, the true number of rape and sexual assault cases is much higher (Businesstech, 2023; Smythe, 2022). For instance, the murder conviction rate for recorded rape and sexual assault cases is just 4–8% (Smythe, 2022), while the rate for the 2,446 mass murder instances documented in 2021–2022 was 6.8% (Businesstech, 2023). It will take years for women, children, and families in South Africa to fully recover from the physical and psychological wounds caused by this kind of violence. A comprehensive strategy involving all pertinent parties is required to confront this reality of daily life.

Since only a small percentage of all actions are reported and looked into, it is hard to determine the actual cost of VAWC. Direct (or physical), indirect (or intangible), and opportunity costs are common terms used to characterize the consequences of violence against women and its effects on their children (KPMG, 2016). The goal is to identify all the costs related to violence in order to fully quantify its impact, even if the literature differs in how these types of costs are categorized and some studies treat direct and tangible as distinct entities (KPMG, 2016). Therefore, actual paid expenses, or real money spent, on the provision of services, facilities, or expenses suffered by the victim or the household are considered direct costs, also known as tangible costs. Indirect, or intangible, costs are those that are not quantifiable in money, like the social and psychological toll that violence takes as well as feelings of anguish, fear, and suffering. These expenses can be estimated using a quality or worth of life metric or by using

an acceptable proxy metric, like the ones that are reliably applied in the legal system to determine compensation. Opportunity costs, also known as indirect costs, are the expenses incurred when a victim's alternatives are restricted due to violent conditions, such as being in or out of a violent relationship. They stand for the potential that has been lost and can be valued financially (KPMG, 2016). All concrete and direct costs need to be quantifiable, yet many aren't because of a lack of information. For instance, the absence of record keeping is problematic since it makes it impossible to accurately determine the expenses that the government is bearing to solve VAWC, considering that many services are provided to victims free of charge by the government and civil society. In addition, estimating indirect and opportunity costs can be even more difficult, despite the fact that numerous researches have looked into this and have produced estimates (KPMG, 2016).

VAWC presents itself as a spectrum of many, connected, and occasionally recurrent manifestations (UN Secretary-General, 2006; Rule, 2017; Ryan et al., 2018). It encompasses a variety of situations in both public and private domains, including but not limited to domestic violence, sexual violence by non-partners, date and marital rape, stalking, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, domestic homicides, and harmful customs like forced child marriages and female genital mutilation. It can involve physical, sexual, psychological or emotional, and economic abuse and exploitation (Rule, 2017). In addition, women encounter violence in a variety of settings and methods throughout their lives, and numerous types of violence against women of all ages are still practiced. VAWC can also cross-national borders, and information that is currently available indicates that South Africa is a place of origin, transit, and destination for women who are victims of sex trafficking and forced labour (Ryan et al., 2018). Traffickers employ a variety of tactics to keep their victims under control, including assault, threats, passport withholding, debt bondage, and coerced drug and alcohol use (UN Secretary-General, 2006; Rule, 2017; Ryan et al., 2018).

A significant number of VAWC cases are made invisible as a part of family, private life, or culture, and the majority are committed by someone the women and children know. The majority of abusers are neighbours, family members, friends, or acquaintances, indicating that most abuse occurs in or close to the home. For example, in South Africa, between 40 and 70 percent of female murder victims are slain by their spouses or lovers (UN Secretary-General, 2006); almost one-third of parents' report abusing their children with severe types of corporal punishment (Dawes, De Sas Kropiwnicki, Kafaar & Richter, 2005). Even though physical punishment is prohibited in schools, physical violence nonetheless happens frequently there. According to a 2008 nationwide research on school violence, 1.8 million youngsters, or 15% of students, reported having witnessed violence in a school setting. This involves peer bullying and violence based on gender, as well as harsh and dehumanizing psychological punishment administered by educators in addition to corporal punishment (Burton, 2008). Gang activity also adds to children's exposure to and participation in violent crimes in metropolitan locations.

Children are not just less safe at home, but also at schools, the care and judicial systems, and on the streets where they live since a large number of them are raised in violent circumstances from an early age. Violence in one context might have an impact in another. For instance, family and school violence seems to be more prevalent in environments of excessive

community violence. The most prevalent types of violence against children include bullying, physical and mental abuse, and sexual assault. 10,134 minors in South Africa were recorded as victims of contact crimes in the 2022–2023 fiscal year; 7,587 of these cases were classified as assaults with intent to cause grievous bodily damage (Statista, 2023). Physical punishment is a frequent type of violence that children encounter (Jamieson et al., 2018; Meinck et al., 2016). Any kind of physical punishment, including spanking, has been shown to have a detrimental effect on children's behaviour and cognitive development (Bacchus et al., 2017). IPV has also been connected to the risk of more men abusing women and children as well as to the experiences of abuse that women had as children and communal violence. Studies reveal that men who were subjected to harsh punishment or other forms of maltreatment as children are more likely to commit violence against their spouse and offspring as adults (Mathews et al., 2011).

2.3. The Goals of Community Participation

Community participation is an active process where intended recipients influence programme outcomes and gain personal growth. It is the “key to building an empowered community” (Adebayo, Salerno, Francillon & Williams, 2018; Drennan & Morrissey, 2020; Mailloux & Lacharité, 2020). It is an occurrence whereby people take responsibility for their own welfare and health along with others in the community for the improvement of their community. They are cognizant of their issues and are motivated to solve them through active participation and capacity building. This gives them autonomy rather being victims of a failed government system (Drennan & Morrissey, 2020). The primary goals of community participation, according to development specialists, are empowerment, beneficiary capacity building, boosting effectiveness, and improving project efficiency (Mailloux & Lacharité, 2020). CBOs give the impoverished, downtrodden, and disenfranchised a sense of agency. Their capacity to engage with, bargain with, exert influence on, and hold responsible the institutions that impact their life is what makes this possible. This subsequently cascades into self-assurance, inventiveness, accountability, and proficiency in self-sufficiency. CBOs are better suited to handle issues facing the community and are the ones who can effectively represent the interests of the locals they serve because they are comprised of members of the same community. They are also in a better position to design projects that efficiently meet people's perceived demands and can be completed with the least amount of resources, which contributes to efficiently (Adebayo et al., 2018; Drennan & Morrissey, 2020; Mailloux & Lacharité, 2020).

Opponents of community participation, on the other hand, contend that CBOs convey the idea that small communities are a cohesive unit battling for justice against strong outside forces. Nonetheless, it is impossible to overlook the disparities within the community due to factors such as gender, class, or colour. It is impossible to overlook the difficulties that these demographic components have with one another. Conflict and interpersonal interactions have been mentioned in this. When left unattended, they give rise to bias, discrimination, and varying points of view, all of which could compromise the intended results of the CBO in operation (Adebayo et al., 2018; Mailloux & Lacharité, 2020). Additionally, Mgawanyemba (2008) contends that although the idea of community engagement promotes a bottom-up

strategy, the strategy itself is rife with paternalism. The simple process of assigning community workers to a community is a top-down, external imposition. This goes against what the method suggests. Furthermore, it is assumed that people have free time to participate in and dedicate to community improvement. Since the majority of their labour is volunteer work, some people are unwilling to work unpaid or give up their time for meetings and other events, particularly if they have other responsibilities like taking care of their families or working.

2.4. Community-Based Organisations

Organizations that are rooted in and dedicated to their communities are known as community-based organizations. Local non-profit organizations that strive to bring about improvements and offer social services at the local level are known as community-based organizations, or CBOs (Fasil & Rubiyat, 2015; Kaviani Johnson & Sloth-Nielsen, 2020; Castillo et al., 2022). As such, they support the fundamental social infrastructure and fabric at the individual, family, and community levels. Local organizations, or CBOs, go by different names depending on where they are located. These comprise, among others, "neighbourhood councils," "community development associations," and united communities (Abegunde, 2009). Chechetto-Salles & Geyer (2006) state that a CBO should have the following qualities: It is a non-profit organization that is primarily funded by voluntary contributions and has few paid positions because the majority of its funding is allocated to achieving the organization's goals. It operates at the local level because it is typically formed, staffed, and acts locally to benefit the community in which it operates. It is also service-oriented, with the goal of assisting with issues that the community faces, though the resources available to it may be restricted depending on the community's status and geographic location (Fasil & Rubiyat, 2015; Kaviani Johnson & Sloth-Nielsen, 2020; Castillo et al., 2022).

They consist of a group of individuals that share a living and/or working space. Their unity fosters a feeling of self-governance and the distribution of power among a larger segment of the populace. Many of these organizations provide a variety of social and informal educational assistance services and are an integral part of the support system in many communities (Abegunde, 2009). They operate solely on the basis of volunteerism or a combination of paid and unpaid labour. They provide a connection between the public and private domains of existence (Abegunde, 2009). When it comes to social policy, including Internet-related activities, governments view them as a way to engage locally (Meredyth, Ewing & Tmomas, 2004). Macroeconomically, community-based organizations can be viewed as a component of the non-governmental and non-commercial organizations that comprise the increasingly recognized "civil society." "Shared democratic values and resources," which overlap with but are separate from corporate and governmental interests, are considered to be the defining characteristics of civil society (Libal & Harding, 2015).

2.4.1. History of CBOs in South Africa

The concept of community-based organizations originated in South Africa in the 1980s when the oppressed and impoverished had to organize for social development and other necessities during the Apartheid era. The civic associations, which first appeared in the 1980s and purported to speak for all local citizens in a specific region, were the most significant CBOs. Some of these CBOs started to take the lead in implementing development projects in their communities as a result of shifting political circumstances in the early 1990s, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) started to assist CBOs in engaging in "community-based development" (Castillo et al., 2022). In the past, CBOs have been crucial in addressing community needs and changing power dynamics during the apartheid era, according to Yachkaschi (2008). In the 1980s, radical civic organizations were born out of protests against township management and rent rises, as well as the township uprising that resulted in a state of emergency in 1984–1985. "Civic organizations have occupied a position of unprecedented importance, being involved in protests and negotiations over rents, development and service provision, and local government restructuring" following 1989 and during the apartheid era.

Following the first democratic national and provincial elections in 1994, CBOs started to play a bigger role in development initiatives. The introduction of democratic local government in 1995–1996 led to a change in the function of Community Benefit Organizations (CBOs), as councillors were now the democratic representatives of their communities. New mutual aid organizations with an emphasis on development also started to form, and existing CBOs were either integrated into corporatist participation systems set up by local government or attempted to become autonomous, sustainable development organizations (Broberg & Sano, 2018; Castillo et al., 2022). Black townships had a lengthy history of cooperating and supporting one another. Stokvels (savings clubs), burial clubs, church associations, and sports clubs were among the first "organizations of survival" in townships. In a wider sense, CBOs are any organizations with grassroots membership. Their main goal was to enable individuals to support one another in getting by on a daily basis (Broberg & Sano, 2018). However, when the term is used more narrowly, it usually refers to organizations that assert that they speak for every person in a certain region, and such was the case in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Although these organizations went under several names, such as residents' associations, they were often referred to as civic associations (Broberg & Sano, 2018; Castillo et al., 2022).

2.4.2. Types of CBOs

Arcand & Fafchamps (2012), West, Kraeger & Dahlstrom (2014), Keisler, Turcotte, Drew & Johnson (2014) and Putnam, Morgan, Hollingsworth, Desai, Chen & Stark (2024) identified three types of organizations: local organisations, cooperatives, and interest associations which are discussed as follows:

- **Local organizations:** One can further categorize local organizations into conventional and participative groups. Organizations classified as standard are frequently established and managed by external entities. They are ruled by the elite, and the group members



reap the majority of the benefits. Participatory organizations tend to be more informal and have more flexible goals because they are founded and run by the people involved. Their founding was motivated and connected to the people's daily needs (Keisler et al., 2014; Putman et al., 2024).

- **Cooperatives:** are characterized by the economic roles they play, which involve the pooling of members' labour, capital, land, purchasing power, and goods. Unlike local associations, cooperatives allow members to receive benefits in private. Cooperatives typically only concentrate on financial matters (Arcand & Fafchamps, 2012; West et al., 2014).
- **Interest associations:** are defined by the shared characteristics or interests of their members. Because they are concerned with both private and public benefits, as well as social as well as economic concerns, they are more expansive than cooperatives but less comprehensive than local development groups (Putman et al., 2024).

CBOs play a variety of roles in preventing violence, such as offering advice, assisting the elderly, supplying knowledge and life skills, engaging in youth activities, empowering families, and developing skills. There is a chance that services will overlap. CBOs are occasionally associated with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have same goals or in which the government provides minimal assistance (Yachkachi, 2008).

CBOs can be public or private, formal or informal, and occasionally they can take on any shape to help the community achieve their objectives. There are microfinance institutions that concentrate on financial aspects of the community, such as lending and savings; village development committees (VDCs), which are typically CBOs that function as a collective governance in villages; and common interest groups, which are typically organizations that involve community members who have shared goal(s) and interest(s). They have rules that not only control what the VDC does but also the community as a whole; they are user-associations, which function similarly to clubs but offer resources to the community that are primarily useful to their members; and they are faith-based organizations, where congregations own a few aspects of organizational structure and the commitment to enhancing the lives of those who are vulnerable in their communities (Libal & Harding, 2015; Broberg & Sano, 2018).

These CBO's have a number of strengths which as follows:

- CBOs operate at a local level, hence a hypervigilant awareness towards understanding the intrinsic needs and plights of the people within their communities (Libal & Harding, 2015; Broberg & Sano, 2018);
- This serves a great advantage to state departments at provincial and national levels, who could use this knowledge for programme formulation, execution and allocation of resources that are specifically suited and relevant to the community's needs and development (Libal & Harding, 2015; Broberg & Sano, 2018);
- CBOs serve as catalysts for prevention of illnesses and promotion of health (Mayberry, Daniels, Akintobi, Yancey, Berry & Clark, 2008);
- Due to the nature of their work, CBOs can be regarded as public benefit organizations (PBOs) and are thus exempt from paying tax on "certain trading and business activities"



(Libal & Harding, 2015; Broberg & Sano, 2018). This meaning that there will be money for the CBOs to fund their activities;

- CBOs are able to help those in dire need depending on their goals and objectives, such as those living in poverty (McDonnell Ben-Arieh & Melton, 2015); women suffering from abuse (Maciak et al., 1999); safety and protection of children (Yakubovich et al., 2016); people with health issues and education of those around them to minimize stigmas and prejudices (Mayberry et al., 2008).

There also a number of factors that affect the success of the CBOs which are as follows:

- One of the determining factors in the successes of CBOs to fulfil their mandates lies in whether the objectives of the CBO and government programmes align (Fasil & Rubiyat, 2015; Kaviani Johnson & Sloth-Nielsen, 2020; Castillo et al., 2022);
- CBOs should have sufficient funding to be able to fulfil their tasks (Kaviani Johnson & Sloth-Nielsen, 2020; Castillo et al., 2022);
- Maciak et al. (1999) noted the racial disparity statistics regarding IPV victims and the lack CBOs with a focus on cultural inclusivity which would be better equipped to deal with women from marginalized backgrounds;
- Staff working for CBOs need to have the relevant knowledge and skills development for the successful implementation of programmes (Fasil & Rubiyat, 2015; Kaviani Johnson & Sloth-Nielsen, 2020; Castillo et al., 2022);
- CBOs often offer services and resources that are in line with their objectives, they may lack the capacity to assist community members with issues different from what they prioritize and what their staff have the skills, knowledge and training for (Yakubovich et al., 2016; Castillo et al., 2022);
- CBOs usually do not have monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems embedded in their programmes and services and tend to not assess how efficient are the services and resources they offer to their community members, something they ought to do to improve practice (Mayberry et al., 2008), this will also assist them in comprehending their limitations and identifying areas for improvement.

2.4.3. The Role of CBOs in the prevention of VAWC in South Africa

CBOs, play a crucial role in preventing violence against women and children as well as in interpreting research to guide intervention decisions. Engagement affects both the quality and quantity of any intended output and is a crucial component of partnerships between CBOs and social scientific research (Abegunde, 2009; Arcand & Fafchamps, 2012; West, Kraeger & Dahlstrom, 2014). Even while community-based organization engagement is known to have advantages, there are differences in how it is operationalized and little knowledge about how it might be used in community partnerships. In a community that has come to an agreement on its problems and needs, community-based planning is necessary to promote justice and fairness (Abegunde, 2009; Putman et al., 2024). CBOs are ingrained in the neighbourhoods they serve since they were started by community members. Additionally, they operate under the constraints of their immediate surroundings (Putman et al., 2024). They are aware of the

dynamics within their community and frequently experience first-hand the injustices they work to end. Therefore, if change leading to sustainable development is to be accomplished, strengthening CBOs is a crucial responsibility.

A CBO's role is to address challenges in the community they serve. This does not imply that CBOs exclusively pay attention to small matters; on the other hand, CBOs frequently have a keen interest in large-scale problems like poverty and crime. These organizations are free to examine external concerns that have an impact on their community, but they will only examine how those issues affect things in that specific space (Broberg & Sano, 2018). They are also intended to organize, carry out, and oversee social and economic development initiatives as well as give communities financial and technical support. This is accomplished by contributing to rising incomes as well as bettering nutrition, health, and literacy. Sometimes a CBO will work with another CBO on a problem that isn't inside its community. This typically occurs when there is some overlap between their areas of interest, like when the two communities share geographic boundaries. In an effort to locate direction or different approaches, they might also examine how a more significant problem is being addressed in other communities and by other CBOs. If not, it will stay in one particular town and not travel to another (Libal & Harding, 2015)

Because CBOs function at the local level, they have a hypervigilant awareness towards understanding the intrinsic needs and plights of the people within their communities (Libal & Harding, 2015; Broberg & Sano, 2018). This is a great advantage to state departments at the provincial and national levels, as they could use this knowledge for programs that are specifically suited and relevant to the community's needs and development (Broberg & Sano, 2018). "CBOs serve as catalysts for prevention of illnesses and promotion of health (Mayberry et al., 2008)." Owing to the nature of their work, CBOs can be considered Public Benefit Organizations (PBOs) and are therefore exempt from paying tax on "certain trading and business activities" (Broberg & Sano, 2018). This implies that funding for CBOs will be available for them to assist individuals in extreme need based on their goals and objectives, such as those experiencing poverty (McDonnell et al., 2015); women abused (Maciak et al., 1999); children's safety and protection (Yakubovich et al., 2016); and individuals with health concerns & educating others around them to reduce stigmas and prejudices (Mayberry et al., 2008).

Academic literature on the work of CBOs with victims of domestic violence, particularly in racially marginalized settings, is scarce (Maciak et al., 1999). There is also disagreement over whether CBOs actually improve the lives of those who receive their services, those who participate in their activities, and the way in which these services are delivered (Yakubovich et al., 2016). A greater body of scholarly work would support policymakers and the state in developing transformational interventions programs that align with the goals of the CBOs and state initiatives in which they participate. Additionally, this would help state representatives understand the needs of the populations that fall under their purview. "*Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu*" is a well-known Zulu proverb that highlights the value of community. Without the ongoing assistance and involvement of its community members, CBOs would cease to exist. Collaborating with other establishments, groups, and executives can assist in issue solving;

project design, implementation, evaluation, and delivery (Broberg & Sano, 2018); and providing services that they are unable to provide on their own (Yakubovich et al., 2016). The state must gather and report to relevant stakeholders on a continuous basis evidence of CBOs' work yielding positive results within their respective communities in order to resume funding them. This will help identify what works and what doesn't (Mayberry et al., 2008).

2.4.3. CBOs approaches towards VAWC

CBOs play a crucial role in comprehensive intersectoral approaches, which call on the government and every citizen to actively participate in addressing the intricate social norms that encourage violence and helping victims, especially women and children to recover and move past it. In order to achieve the goal of ending violence against women, an organization can essentially concentrate on four areas of intervention at any given time; these include: (a) prevention, which involves addressing the attitudes and systems that contribute to violence in order to stop it before it begins (WHO, 2021c); (b) early intervention, which involves identifying and supporting those who are at high risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence in order to prevent it from reoccurring (WHO, 2021c); and (c) response, which involves offering services and supports to address existing violence and support victims/survivors experiencing violence, such as crisis support and police intervention, as well as a trauma-informed justice system that will hold those who use violence accountable (WHO, 2021c); and, (d) recuperation and healing, which include assisting in the decrease of the likelihood of re-traumatization and ensuring the safety and well-being of victims and survivors so they can recuperate from trauma and the psychological, emotional, physical, and financial effects of violence (WHO, 2021c).

Addressing VAWC requires a continuum of interconnected and mutually reinforcing therapies in a holistic manner. This research is supported by the following continua, despite the fact that different organizations have different theories about them: 1. Preventing acts of violence before they happen, often known as 'new cases' of VAWC; 2. Preventing the continuation of violent acts (i.e., stopping men from committing new acts of violence against women and children); 3. Providing short- and long-term treatment and support to mitigate or prevent the effects of VAWC. For a complete systems strategy to avoid VAWC and its repercussions, all intervention levels are crucial. The aforementioned illustrates the significant overlap and connection between the various levels of preventive as well as between actions taken both before and after violent incidents.

This discussion is underpinned by a human rights-based approach. Such an approach:

- Argues that VAWC is an example of discrimination and negligence towards women and children, harming their ability to exercise their human rights and enjoy basic freedoms (Fasil & Rubiyat, 2015; Castillo, Chan-Tayo, Celestino, Berse, & Quebral, 2022).
- Organizes preventative initiatives to prioritize the human rights of women and children, particularly their rights to bodily integrity, agency, and autonomy (Kaviani Johnson & Sloth-Nielsen, 2020).



- Ensures that violence prevention measures align with women's and children's other rights, such as their freedom of movement and full involvement in politics, business, education, and the workforce (Broberg & Sano, 2018).
- Acknowledges and upholds the need to guarantee adherence to established human rights norms and to guarantee responsibility for any transgressions (Schmitz, 2012; Castillo et al., 2022).
- Aims to increase the capacity of women and children to assert their rights and to be empowered (Libal & Harding, 2015).
- Ensures that women and children, in particular, as well as affected communities and stakeholders, are involved in the development and execution of preventive initiatives. The objective is not to treat them as passive recipients but rather to foster self-advocacy and increase the ability of organizations to prevent VAWC (Fasil & Rubiyat, 2015; Castillo et al., 2022).
- Prioritizes preventing violence against women and children who experience many forms of discrimination, as they are more susceptible to violence or its repercussions and face higher risks of violence. This entails focusing efforts on the risk and protective variables that have an impact on these women's and children's groups (Schmitz, 2012; Broberg & Sano, 2018).

Identifying specific elements and the possible interactions between them must be considered when implementing a specific solution in a community or organization. This would serve as the foundation for the particular program or policy rationale that would be built for each project or policy. Thorough evaluation at the municipal, regional, or federal levels is necessary to pinpoint certain elements preventing or raising the likelihood of violence in a given setting.

2.4.4. Partnership, focus, and resources of CBOs

An effective CBO has a clearly defined purpose and objective. The purpose of a CBO would have to be defined as part of a mission statement. In its planning and establishment, it should be clear who is being targeted in the community, what their needs are and how meeting their identified needs will be accomplished (Matsumunyane & Hlalele, 2022). Social investors can partner with CBO's in different ways. One way is to directly invest in the COB giving them liberty to use the funding resources how they see fit. This approach cuts out the intermediaries and ensures that the entirety of the available budget reaches the CBO (de Abreu & Hoeffler, 2021). However, assistance in this way comes at a higher risk because CBOs usually lack the systems necessary to report back to the sponsor in line with standard practices. A CBO can also be linked to an NGO, partnering in this way means the NGO is the umbrella organization from which support and funding can be channelled (de Abreu & Hoeffler, 2021). Alternatively, a social investor can act on behalf of the CBO through direct or indirect support. Partnership in this way will ensure the sustainability of initiatives helping it to develop and operate effectively (Matsumunyane & Hlalele, 2022).

The resource requirement of a CBO depends on its structure, capacity and access to funding. An organization based within the community will need funding, a workspace, staff and volunteers, depending on its structure and partnership links, and other material for day-to-day operations (Fasil & Rubiyat, 2015; Kaviani Johnson & Sloth-Nielsen, 2020; Castillo et al., 2022). Often there is a lack of sustainable funding and CBOs that are not linked to established NGOs and tend to be noncompliant with standards needed to attract investment to get going in the first place (Matsumunyane & Hlalele, 2022). Informal CBOs also struggle to keep records of expenditures and are unaware or lack the skilling to manage the administration to run the organization (Kane, Katenda, Habarugira, Arineitwe, Immaculate & Tshimba, 2023; Tuominen, 2023). Many CBOs end up being too under-resourced to access resources either because they lack the expertise or because they do not know the right channels to access resources (de Abreu & Hoeffler, 2021). Successful CBOs have a sustainable source of funding and/or access to platforms where they can apply for funding and are supported (Matsumunyane & Hlalele, 2022). A well-functioning CBO also has good leadership and/or management that act as co-ordinator between the organization and its partners (Fasil & Rubiyat, 2015; Kaviani Johnson & Sloth-Nielsen, 2020; Castillo et al., 2022).

CBOs are an important way for implementing successful interventions (Adebayo et al., 2018). Being close to the community allows interventions to be better implemented because they represent their communities, are able to better identify their needs at the grassroots level unlike an external organisation (de Abreu & Hoeffler, 2021). A ‘Safer South Africa for Women and Children’ is a programme that uses prevention mechanisms in communities to protect women and children against violence (de Abreu & Hoeffler, 2021; Matsumunyane & Hlalele, 2022). The programme operates at the national, provincial and community level. The organization has community-based interventions in two provinces in South Africa, the Eastern Cape and Free State (de Abreu & Hoeffler, 2021; Matsumunyane & Hlalele, 2022). In the Eastern Cape partnership and co-ordination is led by DSD and the Provincial Population Unit; in the Free State the programme’s main funder is the United Kingdom’s Department of International Development. Their programmes focus on raising awareness and community empowerment (de Abreu & Hoeffler, 2021; Matsumunyane & Hlalele, 2022). Accordingly, CBOs can be helpful in reducing VAWC as their focus is localized and partnerships with government can reach more marginalized groups.

2.5. Challenges for prevention of VAWC in South Africa

The alignment between the objectives of CBOs and state department activity is a determining factor in whether they are successful in fulfilling their mandates on state-led projects (Libal & Harding, 2015; Broberg & Sano, 2018). Additionally, CBOs should have adequate funding to accomplish their tasks (Broberg & Sano, 2018). Maciak et al. (1999) noted the racial disparity statistics regarding IPV victims and the lack of CBOs with a focus on cultural inclusivity, which would be better able to assist women from marginalized backgrounds. Lastly, staff members of CBOs must possess the necessary knowledge and skill development for the successful implementation of programs (Libal & Harding, 2015; Broberg & Sano, 2018).

A CBO's need for resources is determined by its capacity, financing sources, and organizational structure. Depending on its structure and partnerships, a community-based organization will require funds, a workspace, employees, volunteers, and other supplies for daily operations (Libal & Harding, 2015; Broberg & Sano, 2018). A lack of consistent funding is a common issue, and COBs that are not affiliated with well-known NGOs frequently violate the requirements necessary to draw in initial funding (de Abreu & Hoeffler, 2021; Matsumunyane & Hlalele, 2022). In addition, informal CBOs have difficulty maintaining expense records and are either ignorant of or unqualified to handle the administrative tasks necessary to govern an organization (Kane et al., 2023; Tuominen, 2023). Due to a lack of experience or a lack of knowledge about the appropriate routes for resource access, many CBOs wind up having insufficient resources to obtain resources (de Abreu & Hoeffler, 2021; Matsumunyane & Hlalele, 2022). Effective CBOs are supported by their partner organizations and have a reliable source of funding in addition to having access to grant applications platforms (2021; Matsumunyane & Hlalele, 2022). Effective management and/or leadership that serves as a coordinator between the organization and its partners is another essential component of a well-running CBO (Libal & Harding, 2015; Broberg & Sano, 2018). Short-term contracts, lasting up to a year, between CBOs and the state have not shown to have significant financial difficulties; instead, difficulties surface when the contract lengthens because the state need the services that CBOs provide (Broberg & Sano, 2018). The services that CBOs provide to community members are then impacted by the question of long-term contract funding (Libal & Harding, 2015).

CBOs could be forced to fold in the event of a change in the global, national, or local economy, including recessions, mismanagement of public funds, or a lack of donors. This is especially true for CBOs that depend on outside funding. As a result, CBOs won't have enough money to pay for their administrative and logistical costs. Thus, a lack of funding may prevent CBOs from completing their objectives and completing projects (Mayberry et al., 2008). CBOs provide resources and services that align with their goals, but they might not be able to help community members with problems that are not in line with their priorities or what their staff is qualified to handle (Yakubovich et al., 2016); CBOs also don't evaluate the effectiveness of the services and resources they provide to their members, which is something they should do to determine how successful they are in serving their community (Mayberry et al., 2008). This will also help them understand their shortcomings and pinpoint areas for improvement.

Many countries have taken significant national steps to eradicate VAWC due to the variety of actors and programs that include government, business, and civil society to address the issue. However, there is a lack of evidence regarding "what works," as evidenced by the persistent, chronic VAWC that affects many communities. Studies reveal that VAWC is still pervasive and underreported, and that public agencies do not adequately assist victims of violence (Gouws, 2022; Rikhotso, Namumba, Morwe & Dibetso, 2013). While there are laws pertaining to VAWC, very little is done to enforce them or address the structural and cultural root causes of the issue, such as the power disparity between men and women, the way gender roles are seen, and the needs of children. Research indicates that, despite the government of South Africa's stance against VAWC—which includes a 16-day activism dedicated to the issue—it is not enough, and that victims and survivors of VAWC have limited access to formal

psychosocial support and protection, which can lead to psychological trauma, behavioural repercussions, and difficulties reintegrating into society (Govender, 2023; Gouws, 2022).

The mainstream media plays a crucial role in highlighting the prevalence of violence and providing strategies for preventing it. According to Rikhotso et al. (2013), only 9% of news stories feature children; when child abuse is reported, the focus is typically on the graphic details rather than the causes; and while the media frequently offers advice, more needs to be done to promote reporting and prevention. To avoid any potential secondary trauma resulting from unethical coverage of children, the media must be continuously assisted in ensuring that coverage of children complies with the highest ethical standards. Even though there are initiatives centred around digital media, such as those from major corporations and the Film and Publication Board (FPB), it is evident that children must be proficient in online literacy and critical media analysis in order to be empowered and to safeguard themselves from harm caused by digital media.

Furthermore, violence against women and children is not a high political priority, despite mounting evidence of its prevalence, causes, and social and economic implications (Hsiao, Fry, Ward, Ganz, Casey, Zheng & Fang, 2018; KPMG, 2016). Because of this, there is little money spent on preventing violence, and the government is under pressure to meet other current goals because economic growth has not been as strong as anticipated (Abdollah & Mayet, 2017). When it comes to programs that address VAWC, the evidence basis for successful programs is thin (Mathews & Gould, 2017). There is a dearth of qualified workers, and those who do so frequently exhibit unfavourable attitudes that injure others and deter people from coming forward and asking for assistance (Jamieson, Sambu, & Mathews, 2017). Ministerial bodies and other actors notwithstanding, there is generally inadequate supervision, poor coordination, and services for women and children are usually provided in isolation by various government agencies, each with its own funding sources and approaches (Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation & Department of Social Development, 2016). Furthermore, there is growing acknowledgment that it is imperative to combine efforts to address VAWC in light of the mounting evidence that violence against women and children co-occurs, share common risk factors, have similar health outcomes, and have effects that span generations.

There are gaps between what is experienced on the ground on a daily basis and the elites' adherence to international protocols, the NSP and its massive budget, and coordinated province and local government initiatives. Many women and children, especially those who already experience numerous forms of discrimination, do not have access to high-quality vital services for their safety, protection, and healing. Even in cases where basic services are provided, they are frequently dispersed, insufficient, underfunded, and/or understaffed. These factors all work together to create an environment in which victims and survivors are more vulnerable to secondary trauma and to a general lack of attention paid to their safety and the cessation of VAWC. The extent and brutality of the rape and murder of women, children, and LGBTQIA+ individuals; (ii) the lack of safety and respect for their human dignity and autonomy in their private and public lives; and (iii) the degree of impunity and a lack of individual, state, and societal accountability for the scourge are all clear indicators of this (Republic of South Africa, 2020).

Therefore, local resources that provide "bottom-up" community-based care, support, and peace education have a role to play even while they are unable to fully supplement "elite" national, provincial, and municipal government agencies. In fact, under (1) the six pillars of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2020), namely, (i) responsibility, leadership, and coordination; (ii) social cohesion prevention and reconstruction; (iii) justice, safety, and protection; (iv) response, care, support, and healing; (v) economic power; and (vi) research and information management (Department of International Relations & Cooperation, 2020); as well as (2) provincial government whole-of-society integrated strategies and (3) Chapter 7 of the Constitution on local government objects 152 First of all (d) to support safe, healthy environments; and (e) to promote community organizations' and communities' involvement (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). Community-based agencies are highlighted as essential venues for addressing violence because of their closeness to and trust from their communities, which allows them to reject, stop, and/or respond to violence and change attitudes.

2.7. Conclusion

This chapter presented a discussion and synthesized literature focussing on existing research and evidence on VAWC, extent and dynamics of VAWC in South Africa, definitions and applications of CBO engagement and stakeholder relationships to gain better understanding of CBO engagement in responding and addressing VAWC, and, approaches to protecting victims/survivors and reducing VAWC. The next chapter will discuss the strategy and framework of research methods and techniques chosen to conduct this research.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter describes how this study was conducted including objectives, research questions, research design, data collection processes including participants and materials, methods, and procedure in administering materials with participants, and data analysis procedures. Ethical considerations as well as limitations of the study are also discussed.

3.2. Methods

The strategy for addressing overall purpose of study encompassed an exploratory qualitative framework using a participatory rapid assessment learning and action research (PRALAR) methodology (Holdsworth et al., 2020; Dupont et al., 2015; Kearney & Zuber-Skerrit, 2012; Wood & Zuber-Skerrit, 2013, Zuber-Skerrit, 2015) in order to investigate the experiences and knowledge of key informant CBO staff and victims/ survivors of violence regarding programmes and services that respond or address VAWC in selected urban communities in Cape Town and Durban, and, to shed light on practice-based evidence of such local assets about who is doing what where and how in order to build on a range of initiatives derived from, and supportive of, the positive social of local values addressing VAWC. This study was approved by the HSRC Research Ethics Committee (REC) Protocol No. **REC 6/28/09/22**.

Based on PRALAR approach and with purposeful sampling, 65 women and men who were staff of CBOs and victims/ survivors of VAWC were participated in the current study. PRALAR is a practice and need-driven approach which helps to directly link identification and planning of appropriate responses to the outcomes of the assessment (dos Santos et al., 2014; Trautmann, 2004). The adopted methodology included interviews, focus groups, anecdotal evidence, and observation, including secondary library and desktop review to provide a more comprehensive picture of programmes and services of CBOs, illustrated on Table 3 below. The research was deliberate to ensure (1) participation and guidance of representatives of CBOs and victims/ survivors, (2) participatory engagement of researchers with target group, and, (3) mutual learning and actions towards inclusion of victims/ survivors and CBOs in extant interventions.

Table 1: The Qualitative-exploratory Procedure

Method	Target	Data collected
Scoping review	Research team, experts in other divisions, and academics	Identify research question(s), secondary data search strategy and relevant studies, charting data and primary data collection procedures.
Secondary research	HSRC library and desktop resources	Dynamics of VAWC in South Africa, civil society, peacebuilding, and prevention of violence; CBOs, history, role, strengths, partnerships for success; protecting victims/ survivors and preventing VAWC.
Anecdotal experience/expert opinion	Government stakeholders including provincial government staff, DSD, and civil society (n = 14)	Personal and shared CBOs experience, initiatives and VAWC.
Interviews (semi-structured questionnaire survey)	Staff of CBOs (vetted/registered or unregistered) Cape Town and Durban (n = 18)	Sources and nature of neighbourhood VAWC, CBOs and areas of intervention, representation, capacity to influence, support needs, experience with government and political context.
Focus group discussions (FGDs)	Victims/ survivors of violence and staff of CBOs Cape Town and Durban (n = 47)	Validation and experiences of violence, sources, occurrence, deterrence, resources, challenges, and way forward.

Source: Authors (2023)

Meetings and discussions were conducted in person by a three-member research team comprising legal, urban development and violence prevention specialists. The recruiting of participants with purposive sampling was done for Western Cape with the support of the South African Faith and Family Institute (SAFFI) in Cape Town, and KwaZulu-Natal with the support of the DSD provincial office in Pietermaritzburg. The inclusion criteria for the study included partaking or membership of any community-based formations (CBOs) working on issues of domestic and GBV, a history of involvement with CBOs as victim/ survivor of violence, and consent to participate in the study, and unwillingness to participate in the study was the exclusion criteria.

Box 1 and 2 below describe the specific objectives of study, key research questions; and, focus group guide, respectively.

Box 1: Objectives and Materials for KII

Objectives and research questions

Specific objectives

- 1) To describe the organization in terms of how they define themselves and their internal structures.
- 2) To determine who the organization represents, their constituencies and how they define their legitimacy.
- 3) To assess the relevancy of the organization in the current country specific context.
- 4) To assess the organizations' capacity to influence and have voice.
- 5) To identify ways in which the organization could be supported besides financial support.

Accordingly, the questionnaire and key sub-questions considered the following:

A: Type of organization

- *How does the organization define itself?*
- *What type of registration does the organization have?*
- *What is the internal structure of the organization?*
- *What are their decision-making mechanisms?*

B: CBO area of intervention

- *What is the focus area/s of the organization?*
- *What is the geographical scope of activities and programme implementation of the organization?*

C: Representation

- *Who does the organization represent, who are their constituencies?*
- *How does the organization perceive its role in the current provincial and national context?*

D: Capacity to influence

- *What is the organization's potential for liaising with local, provincial and national stakeholders?*

E: Support needs

- *What are the specific needs of the CBOs in terms of:*
 - *Receiving support to strengthen the organization internally*
 - *Access to capacity development*
 - *Access to conduct advocacy*
 - *Funding needs*
 - *Other relevant aspects specific to each organization*

Source: Authors (2024)

Box 2: FGD Guide Materials

Focus Group Discussion Guide

1. Tell us about the types and sources of violence in your neighbourhood.
2. Where does violence against women and children take place/occur?
3. How do community structures and networks respond or intervene to stop violence in your neighbourhood?
4. What are the resources that are needed that would improve and enable protection of victims/survivors and reduce VAWC in your neighbourhood?

Source: Authors (2024)

After introducing themselves and outlining the goal of the study, the research team got the participants' informed written consent. It was promised that the data gathered would remain private and anonymous. The participants were confident in their ability to withdraw from the study at any moment after being made aware that it was completely voluntary. With consent from the participants, the audio recordings of the focus group discussions and interviews were made. Moreover, the study team employed reflexivity throughout the whole qualitative research process by using observational notes.

Any intergroup contact is an opportunity for learning through reflection on issues dialogued. In fact, PRALAR approach integrates concepts of action learning with action research. It also integrates participatory elements and aims at positive social change for a just and better community for all human beings. In this corollary, administering survey questionnaires and focus groups encouraged learning and reflection for both the research team and participants making positive social change through dialoguing and reflection making them more aware to examine and analyse the social and structural reasons of their situation of VAWC so they could take more involved action to improve it. For the research team, the process in this way, allowed the current study to collect information that would tell the study and research team whether the CBOs, programmes, services, and experiences offered were having the desired impact of protecting victims/ survivors and/or reducing VAWC in their neighbourhoods.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

The implementation of data collection occurred in an iterative way involving moving back and forth between data collection and data analysis processes to allow new avenues of inquiry to develop as additional secondary and primary data were collected in October 2021 throughout April 2023. In particular, primary data collection spanned three weeks mid-February/early-March 2023. Data were generated and collected from library and desktop reviews, anecdotal evidence, interviews, and focus groups (refer to Table 3 above). The prompted information related to extent and dynamics of VAWC in South Africa, role of civil society particularly CBOs in protecting victims/ survivors of violence and reducing VAWC, organizational profile of CBOs, organizations' activities, programmes and services, representation and level of

inclusion of community and victims/ survivors, perceptions of gaps, opportunities and potential strategic actions to increase programmes and services impact.

The data from KIIs and FGDs were transcribed, translated and analysed using guided content and narrative analysis. The research team conducted manual content and narrative analysis reading through transcripts to identify and catalogue apparent concepts to themes which were pre-assigned while preserving the context in which the concepts occurred.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from HSRC Research Ethics Committee (REC) in January 2023 (Annexure A), and supported by approvals from Western Cape government Minister of Police Oversight and Community Safety in December 2022, and KwaZulu-Natal Community Safety and Liaison in December 2022 (Annexure B) and from Western Cape Department Police Oversight and Community Safety (Annexure C). The project investigators (PIs) ensured data collection process followed POPI Act regulations in terms of access, protection of personal information, and processing information and/or personal data in respect of the study being undertaken in accordance with the POPI Act, and only for the purposes of this study objectives set out in the project proposal. The PIs allowed confidentiality to be maintained to the extent allowed by law; and that consent forms will not be attached or associated with any recorded information participants provided, and/or their names recorded anywhere to connect to the answers they gave. Thus, participants were asked to give permission to audio-record the interview so that what was said was accurately recorded; and the PIs assured these will be stored electronically in a secure and access-controlled location at the HSRC's IT infrastructure and that it will be used for research and academic purposes.

3.5. Limitations of the study

Key limitations included:

- *Resources*: The project was first developed as a national mapping study including all nine provinces; however, due to abrupt budget decrease in the initial fund allocation once the project commenced, the budget did not allow for the study and data collection to extend all nine provinces, hence selected communities in Cape Town, Western Cape and Durban, KwaZulu-Natal provinces, respectively. Much of the information used thus relied on secondary data available to the researchers, and supplemented with what of primary data that could be collected under the circumstances.
- *Lack of documentation on some projects*: Many communities are running 'good' prevention programmes but lots of operational information is not documented including implementation and impact evaluation, which was verbally available.
- *Time available for research*: Obtaining information was time consuming and mired by bureaucracy. Due to ethics clearance requirements and delays in obtaining gatekeeper permission, fieldwork was delayed until late February through March 2023, hence the



conditions of the surplus fund spending did not allow for cost extension of the project beyond 31st March 2023.

- *Follow-up discussions:* with selected interviewees from community groups were not conducted to allow analysis of the interviews to be shared and obtain clarifications on gaps that became apparent with initial interview process and analysis.

3.6. Conclusion

This section highlighted the process and framework of research methods and techniques chosen to conduct this study including strategy for answering the aims, objectives and research questions. It discussed the process of coordinating the process of gathering inputs into the project, secondary and primary data collection, recruiting and interviewing relevant stakeholders, transcribing and translating collected data, analysing collected data, and ethical considerations. The following chapter discuss results/ findings of research.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

The objective of this study was to identify CBOs in selected urban communities in Cape Town and Durban and investigate the experiences and perceptions of key informant CBO staff and victims/ survivors of violence regarding programmes and services that respond or address VAWC, and, shed light on practice-based evidence of such local assets about who is doing what where and how in order to build on a range of initiatives derived from, and supportive of, the positive social of local values addressing VAWC. Therefore, this section describes the results of the research, and present analysis of findings, and draw conclusions.

The study was implemented in selected urban communities in Cape Town and Durban, viz. the Cape Flats region including Hanover Park, Lavender Hill, Delft, Bonteheuwel, Heideveld, Phillippi, Bishop Lavis, and Manenberg, and Mandela Park in Khayelitsha; and, Ethekewini region in Durban including Ethekewini North, Ethekewini South, and surrounding districts of Umgungundlovu, Ugu and Ilembe.

The procedure extracted demographic information of participants, and type of organizations, interventions, representation, capacity to influence and support needs of CBOs. There were 79 adult participants including Black African, Coloured, Indian and White (>18 years, Female, 86.1%) who were staff and victims/ survivors from 15 CBOs, DSD, and offices of MEC Community Safety Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provincial governments.

4.2. Findings

Millions of people's lives and welfare are impacted by VAWC worldwide. South Africa has a high rate of violence against women and children. The violence's numerous negative effects may have a lifetime influence on people's relationships, communities, and society as a whole.

4.2.1. Community-based women and child protection groups (CBWCPGs)

The CBWCPGs reported here refers to community-based formations also called CBOs/ NPOs such as township associations, women's rights groups, faith-based organizations, among others, that represent the needs of the community against forms of violence and maltreatment, and organize programmes and services for themselves and leverage on local assets and values in protection of women, children and men from VAWC. The study involved 15 CBOs participants recruited from selected urban communities in Cape Town and Durban, viz. Ihata Shelter, Gugulethu Community Policing Forum (CFP), Mphoyabasadi Foundation, Healthy Shack Foundation, South African Faith & Family Institute (SAFFI), Women Hope for the Nation, Abathunywa Ministers Fraternal, City Gate Foundation, Community Project

Association (COMPASS), Paradigm Leadership Academy for Youth (PLAY), Sons of Destiny, Lavender Hill Sport and Recreation Project, Lifeline Durban, Kerr House, and Kenilworth Respite Center. There are no precise data on exact number of CBOs currently working on prevention of VAWC in selected study areas, and as it was not the aim of this study to identify the total number of community-based formations but to gain insight into perceptions of representatives of any CBOs and victims/ survivors about the nature of VAWC experienced in their neighbourhoods and how it is being addressed by local organic structures. As stated by Chechetto-Salles & Geyer (2006), these CBOs are non-profit organizations that are primarily funded by voluntary contributions and has few paid positions if not none because the majority of its funding is allocated to achieving the organization's goals.

4.2.2. VAWC in South Africa and selected communities

In South Africa, VAWC refers wide-ranging forms of gender-based violence and maltreatment against women (females 18 years and older) and children (girls and boys 18 years and under) committed by peers, family, parents, caregivers, siblings, current/ former intimate partners, strangers, and natural and/or man-made disasters. VAWC occurs on a continuum of suffering, with multiple risk factors, that can be prevented (WHO, 2002). South Africa is a wounded, deeply violent society in the midst of a crisis of VAWC exacerbated by convergence of socio-economic and political turmoil wrestling decades of apartheid legacy and institutionalization of violence whereby disparity, poverty, absent services and opportunities, marginalization and militarization of men bred culture of violence with intersections with current economic and socio-political challenges, feed extant chronic VAWC and normalized it to resolve conflict. VAWC is not only physical and/or sexual; it can be social, financial, emotional, psychological, spiritual and technological abuse and manipulation. Non-physical VAWC is very common in South Africa, but harder to know, and often not well understood. VAWC is not homogenous; and the scale of VAWC cannot be explained by a single factor or experience because it impacts women and children of all ages, identities, abilities in disproportionate ways (Burton et al., 2016). VAWC frequently occurs in conjunction with other types of discrimination and inequality, which explain the various kinds and frequencies of violence that women and children encounter. Research showed that native South African women and children, women and children without disabilities, straight women and children, and households with both parents were less likely to experience violence than Black African and Coloured women and children, women and children with disabilities, women-led and child-headed households, orphaned children, LGBTQ+ women and children, and migrant women and children.

Further, there are no direct causes of VAWC but complex interaction of factors (Dialogue Forum, 2018; Matthews et al., 2016; Jewkes et al., 2015; Machisa et al., 2011; WHO, 2002) related to environment, biology, personality that increase a person's risk of committing or experiencing violence (Jamieson, Mathews & Rohrs, 2018). According to a 2015 nationwide study, there were an estimated 355,000 cases of sexual abuse among 15–17-year-olds; girls were twice as likely as boys to experience forced penetrative sex, and more boys than girls were impacted by non-contact sexual abuse or pornographic exposure. VAWC can be prevented.



From the FGDs on type of violence and occurrence, the following were revealed:

“Okay, I will say its physical, physical abuse and every hour, not even every day, every hour. Sexual abuse. And sexual abuse within the community which is sometimes misunderstood ...”

“I don’t keep my money with me due to situation of the financial abuse.... This conversation we had last year, and men think that they are also being financially abused by women using their children if they have not paid that allowance to the family that says it is your child. But further and exhausting is an environment where women are not working, an environment where women feel high rates of divorce because of the equity and policy, an environment where government is also saying jobs are available but people are not getting those opportunities, so this leads them to go to crime... source money from ... You know, and also, it's sad because also you look at home from the social grants, one must also share that R350 and yes, so the issue of financial abuse is underrated ...”

“And also, to add, you’ll find men complaining about financial abuse from their wives. Some wives are not working, they stay at home but at the end of the month they have piles of bills to pay, because they took something from So-and-So and took R200 from So-and-So and those R200’s and R700’s they spent were not discussed, it’s something that the woman decides to take because she saw some other woman from the area taking or taking from the people ... This is a woman who is supposed to be leading other women, but she is not satisfied with the husband’s treatment as he is not giving her money and he is not intimate with her and now she wants to find out from the husband what are the causes of the problem. There's a lot that he must take from this woman and he is not happy. So, how do you expect someone who is not happy to be intimate in the evening because sex does not start in the evening in a marriage, it’s something that you should be doing like text during the day, something like: “I need you” or “What are we doing tonight” or “What tonight”, just when he gets home the wife is expecting you as a man to be active and now the man mentally is not ... So, I think we need to find a balance”.

“Violence take place, at home or in a workplace, a tavern. Violence happens everywhere, in your own community... robbery, the crime. It’s challenging. As for, trafficking, to use girls and women for prostitution, girls from Khayelitsha are involved because it’s an organised sort of crime where they have to recruit others because it’s no longer now just trafficking to taken out to hotels, but for them to have in their Tiktok, in their WhatsApp, in their social media ... to show others their views and whatever. These girls are actually recruited by those girls who are seen but it’s covered as going



to work to be waitresses somewhere in the hotels, however, they will be hosting these big guys who have money, so it's prostitution in some way..."

"And it's difficult for us as an organisation that work with violence against women and children to assist these girls because it is well known that the police are also involved. This girl was saying it is a very organised crime that is currently happening but it has levels because some girls are imported, like outside of the country into South Africa ... trafficking and the of trafficking human and girls, this is a problem".

"It's organised crime popular in the community, wherein these girls get picked up somewhere in these areas, and then are taken to the perpetrators who pay the transport fare on arrival. At pick-up, the girls don't know who they are going to meet and only get to meet their perpetrators on arrival. Last year, one of my husband's friends who is an uber driver notified us that he saw one of the ladies at church. He confirmed that the lady didn't go shopping or anything, or visiting people she knew but a ride was requested for her. The driver picked her up and took her to Parkland and then again picked her up to bring her back home. So, it is happening, and as a woman in the church, I was left with so many questions about what has led that child to participate in such? What is it that we did not do? What were the signs that we missed? All of those questions, so it's really a sad thing".

The categories of VAWC experienced in selected neighbourhoods in Cape Town and Durban (by types, occurrence, and drivers) revealed: *categories of VAWC* include domestic and family violence, physical violence beating with belt, stick or knobkerry, shooting, sexualised violence, emotional or psychological violence including controlling behaviours like control of finances, isolation from family and friends, continual humiliation, threats against children and/or being threatened with injury or death, maltreatment, violent punishment, neglect, bullying, online violence, trafficking, ridicule, rejection, intimidation, discrimination, youth violence, gang violence, sexual exploitation, elder abuse, cultural violence, early marriages, vigilantism, forced sex, stalking, workplace violence, absent service delivery, displacement by climate change disasters, infection with HIV/AIDS, exposure to violence hearing gunshots, witnessing parents or peers fighting or attacked. These types of violence *occurred everywhere* including the home, toilets and water points in informal settlements, school, creche, workplace, shopping area, shebeen, tavern, along roads and at taxi, train or bus station, bar and nightclub, stadium, prison, clinics, and church. The occurrences of these violence is *driven by* patriarchy beliefs and gendered drivers condoning VAWC, tradition and family upbringing, race, colour, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, marital status, young and large age difference in marriage, disability, HIV/AIDS status, high levels of alcohol and drug abuse, sexist peer and organizational cultures, disintegration of families, absent parents mainly fathers, poverty, unemployment, patriarchal social norms, control decision-making by men, limits to women's independence, stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity, disrespect towards women and children, male peer relations that emphasize aggression and weak sanctions against it, including intersections with other forms of social, political, economic discrimination, and leadership, inequality, poverty, apartheid legacy, migrant or refugee status,

perceived influence of foreigners on community values, absent service delivery, natural and man-made disasters, anti-social community practices that fuel violence against vulnerable individuals and groups, and exclusion from school.

4.2.3. Types of organizations

On the theme of *type of organization, how they define themselves, and, whether they were vetted*, 15 CBOs (listed earlier) were recruited and participated in the study. All CBOs were voluntary, non-state, and non-profit formations and invested on programmes and services including prevention of VAWC and support to victims/ survivors of violence. Their formation signified principles in faith-based, human rights, *Ubuntu*, and traditional women group values. 80% of organizations specified were vetted and registered with DSD as NPOs, 13.4% were not registered, and 6.6% did not know if their organization was vetted or not. Most organizations 80% were formed in the last 5 to 15 years and with one very old Lifeline Durban registered in 1970. They defined themselves in varied ways as support (counselling, advocacy); identity strengthening (sport, education, arts, cultural activities, group therapy); behavioural reform (men's and women's group); neighbourhood policing (community policing forums); shelter/ protection (protection and rehabilitation); justice (community justice groups); mediation (dispute resolution); education (self-reliance, media, cyber awareness); and, composite (comprising elements from all or part of programmes above).

Ihata Shelter

“shelters women with young children who are victims of GBV and substance use. We also empower the women with job opportunities and reintegration with families and society; CPF we prevent crime and work with SAPS on offenders and encourages good relationships”.

Mphoyabasadi

“is a non-profit organization established in 2018 and works to protect and [encourage] stability in families, we want to see our community living free from gender [violence] society”.

The Healthy Shack Foundation

“is an organization who focuses on strengthening the youth in the community to provide psychosocial skills and educational support and awareness. A safe space for young children to learn and grow”.

South African Faith & Family Institute (SAFFI)

“works with leaders from different religions, that has been a victim or perpetrator of gender-based violence. We provide a secret [shelter] space for discussions and also support services for religious leaders teaching them how to use the bible in the right context”.



Women Hope for the Nation

“women abuse child abuse substance abuse youth development services feed scheme sport in informal settlements ... Women Hope for the nation is defined as an organization that helps and voice the people of the community. It’s a place where people can seek help for all ages. It’s an organisation that helps build people’s strength to voice themselves”.

Abathunywa Ministers Fraternal

“we are moving teaching community about GBV that is taking place in our communities. We also teach people how to engage to one another”.

City Gate Foundation

“we are a faith-based organisation focused on peace building efforts and capacity building for sustainable community development. We are focused on collective impact building healthy ecosystems around schools”.

Community Project Association (COMPASS)

“the focus of COMPASS is to ensure people feel valued and special to enhance self-worth and self-esteem creating confident individuals who are able to manage any challenge in life. Focus is ... through ... outreach activities and capacity building initiatives”.

Paradigm Leadership Academy for Youth (PLAY)

“our purpose is to cultivate and groom a generation of young people through sports and recreation to become positive citizens through their choices”.

Sons of Destiny

“we focus on the overall of wellbeing of the male child. By doing this we are grooming them to be better representatives of men, we aim to deal with their trauma so they don’t take out their anger on innocent victims”.

Lavender Hill Sport and Recreation Project

“community upliftment transformation organization focusing on sport and recreation as an alternative to gangsterism and substance abuse”.

Lifeline Durban

“defines itself as an organization that promotes emotional wellbeing to vulnerable client for domestic violence. Lifeline is promoting the minimization and fighting against gender-based violence within communities and entire world. Lifeline also promote both mental and emotional health for all people ... Our organisation is community based as it is more focus on the emotional wellbeing of the clients using person centered approach ... Lifeline Durban defines itself as a mental and emotional health for all”.



Kerr House

“defines itself as a shelter for abused women and young mothers and provide victims with protection, and empower victims through capacity building activities”.

Kennilworth Respite Center

“defines itself as a shelter for abused women in domestic violence and intimate partner relationships, and we also help victims with application for job opportunities to help them become self-reliant and not on the abuser”.

As alluded by Arcand & Fafchamps (2012), West, Kraeger & Dahlstrom (2014), Keisler, Turcotte, Drew & Johnson (2014) and Putnam, Morgan, Hollingsworth, Desai, Chen & Stark (2024) these CBOs can be categorised as either local organisations, cooperatives, and interest associations.

In terms of the *internal structure of the organization, the organization’s mode of governance, and decision-making mechanisms guiding development of the organization, monitoring and evaluation*, 60% of representatives of CBOs had knowledge of their organization’s hierarchy of business teams, leaders, managers, individual contributors, mode of governance and decision-making. They elaborated how internal structures of their organizations determined what volunteers/employees did, whom they reported to, and how decisions were made. Mostly, they identified board of directors, chief executive officers, organizational guidelines, procedures, programmes, and conducting activities in line with groups of community clients to whom they were accountable. 40% either didn’t understand the questions or didn’t know what internal structure and decision making entailed in their organizations.

“We have Board of Directors...director...and social worker then staff...We report to the DSD every year and also registered with SAPS ...Board of Directors are the decision makers and oversee operational of the organisation. Monitoring, feedback and follow up processes, data base verification, data capturing” (Mphoyabasadi).

“Founder...chairperson...secretary...volunteers...our mode of governance [include] assessment (referrals), intervention, implementation, maintenance... We are guided by our constitution and our internal policies when we receive external information that influences our decision-making processes we have staff meetings. For monitoring we do monthly reports by the director” (The Healthy Shack Foundation).

“CEO who does research ... social worker/project development manager work with victims and perpetrators... community and fieldworkers in the schools and community and all religious and faith-based community... [organisation] governed by sponsors and CEO which is the visionary. [We] guided by legislation of SA and children’s Act... the strategic and generative mode non-coercion, voluntarism, targeting and teamwork... decision making mechanisms [include] strategies plans, collectively as a team governed by law (SA)... research, evaluation and monitoring forms after all sessions” (SAFFI).



“Work in the community...project coordinators. [We do] reports, follow up, keeping records, success cases” (Women Hope for the Nation).

“3 directors 1 female, 2 males... board of directors ... collective participation in all matters...” (City Gate Foundation).

“Chairperson, secretary, administrator, volunteers... we are guided by the vision and mission in the constitution. Furthermore, the internal structure has varied role they each count to as chairperson, administrator ... the organisation is guided by the constitution. We also have our criteria for community we identify as in need and decide together... record keeping. Matrix framework document, logic model is used to monitor evaluation and work programmes” (COMPASS).

“Director, programme manager, facilitators, volunteers. As a fairly new organisation we are still in the process of establishing solid governance and SOPs... governance based on integrity, sound financial principles, and calibre of potential staff to drive this approach. We are 3 directors that makes decisions regarding the organisation. These decisions are normally discussed in our online meetings. We have continuous training engagements with all role players to guide development. In the moment monitoring is done by myself (director), programme manager and 2 of our volunteers” (PLAY).

“We are team of 3 permanent staff and rely on volunteers for handling certain projects... we report to the director...” (Sons of Destiny).

“4 pillars [of structure] sports and recreation, youth and education, body and soul, and arts and culture. [We use] grassroots approach, baseline work and unpacking, needs other stakeholders to come to table... [decision making] early stage, project spearheaded by myself... visionary” (Lavender Hill Sport & Recreation Project).

“Board members, directors, project manager, supervisors, coordinators. The board of directors are the decision makers. It is led by a director and each programme has programme manager, team leaders, social workers and social auxiliary workers...board of directors makes decisions... Lifeline also work in collaboration with community governance to eradicate GBV... monitoring is done by supervisor and coordinators then presented to directors” (Lifeline Durban).

Despite assertions on conducting programmes and services in line with groups of community clients to whom organizations were accountable, the analysis however, revealed process gaps embedding community problems, strengths and concerns, that didn't acknowledge families and victims/ survivors the ability to solve their own problems and realize own goals. There were no evidence organizations involved participation of affected groups to identify their own needs, set priorities, plan for the future and responsibility for own future, and/or built M&E system in programmes and services they conducted. Indeed, while decision-making processes of

organizations are organization-specific and refer to direct participation in, ownership of, and sharing collective benefits from social and political projects, by and for local community, and tactical decisions made by upper hierarchy of organizations (like CEOs, directors) and operational decisions, including the day-to-day decisions made by employees/ volunteers; anecdotal information and FGDs with victims/ survivors revealed how affected community members were not involved or consulted on matters that affected them and specified how CBOs prescribed to them on how to deal with hurt and trauma of their experience. Many of these organizations provide a variety of social and informal educational assistance services and are an integral part of the support system in many communities (Abegunde, 2009). They operate solely on the basis of volunteerism or a combination of paid and unpaid labour.

4.2.4. Area of intervention

On the theme of *area of intervention of the organization, geographical scope of activities and implementation of the organization*, the analysis revealed programmes and services of reported organizations focussed on livelihoods, protection, women's rights, democratization, civil rights, and peacebuilding through support (counselling, advocacy); identity strengthening (sport, education, arts, cultural activities, group therapy); behavioural reform (men's and women's group); neighbourhood policing (community policing forums [CPFs]); shelter/ protection (protection and rehabilitation); justice (community justice groups); mediation (dispute resolution); education (self-reliance, media, cyber awareness); and, mix comprising elements from all or part of programmes. About 72% of the organisations reported work on initiatives that primarily focus on the individual, relationship/ family, and group or community level; 6.5% focused at structural or institutional level; and 11.5% focussed either the individual, or relationship/ family level, despite some organizations acted more in accordance with personal beliefs and dominant social norms than with a human rights approach. As well, despite SAPS established CPFs long time ago across the country they are not yet established in all neighbourhoods. Furthermore, 88% of organizations specified that their programmes embraced mediation and reconciliation, encouraging victims/ survivors to seek help and other psychosocial support services of counselling, therapy, and accessing shelter and legal assistance, and education on gender equality.

“In our interventions we try to do careful assessments of the challenges and opportunities facing the individuals or neighbourhood ... and connect through an underlying viewpoint of empowerment through collaboration, and use cultural awareness, to support victims such as in preparing for courts and hospital needs... our hotline is available in all hospitals and police stations in the country” (Lifeline Durban).

Because CBOs function at the local level, they have a hypervigilant awareness towards understanding the intrinsic needs and plights of the people within their communities (Libal & Harding, 2015; Broberg & Sano, 2018).

4.2.5. Representation

On the theme of *representation, constituencies, and how the organization perceived its role in local and national context*, all organizations revealed the cause on representing interests of victims/ survivors in their neighbourhoods, mobilizing resources and community capacities to protection of women, children, and men, in addition to supporting other stakeholders such as SAPS, courts, churches, and schools; although 7.8% did not understand the last question on how they perceived their functions and opportunities in current local and national context. A total of 92.2% revealed how they encouraged security of victims/ survivors by public communication on harms of VAWC that most affect them. They emphasized that being at the grassroots gave them a legitimacy as agitators on behalf of the neighbourhood and affected members who are harmed and marginalized. Accordingly, these CBOs serve as catalysts for prevention of illnesses and promotion of health (Mayberry et al., 2008). This implies that funding for CBOs will be available for them to assist individuals in extreme need based on their goals and objectives, such as those experiencing poverty (McDonnell et al., 2015); women abused (Maciak et al., 1999); children's safety and protection (Yakubovich et al., 2016); and individuals with health concerns & educating others around them to reduce stigmas and prejudices (Mayberry et al., 2008).

4.2.6. Capacity to influence

On the theme of *capacity to influence and rate themselves on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being least capacity, and 10 high capacity)* 47 % respondent and rated themselves ranging from 5 to 10, and 53% did not respond to the question. While the response to VAWC in resource-limited townships settings has included a call for support to CBOs and their potential to influence and provide prevention services to victims and community safety (UNICEF, 2022), evidence from reported organizations was absent as to whether CBOs in Cape Town and Durban were reaching those who are most vulnerable and increasing neighbourhood safety and well-being because of incessant VAWC and some participants revealed how they had been victims of multiple violence and CBOs had repeat interventions with some individuals and households. In terms of liaising with local and national stakeholders most reported CBOs were established in the last 5-15 years except for Lifeline Durban established in 1970. Most entities were formed from existing networks of local neighbourhoods, people sharing the same interests, or even friends with shared social goals. Accordingly, they were still embryonic in the process of negotiating their structures and developing reputation in procedures and programmes, hence, capacity to influence was limited despite 47% scoring themselves moderately high to influence. All entities except Lifeline Durban, Gugulethu CFP, and SAFFI had links with local, provincial, and national government stakeholders. Thus, despite potential role civil society have to leverage peaceful relationships, reported CBOs have not participated meaningfully to prevent VAWC and protect victims/ survivors in ways that catalyse significant changes both at the individual and socio-political level with more and key people; nor are they influential enough to articulate a common prevention agenda significant enough – with government,



business, and parallel civil society – for social change and leverage cultural peace. Even with that reported CBOs were set up 15 years ago still their programmes were haphazard, transient, unconnected to government strategies hence achieved limited results that do not reach key people and more people of critical mass to begin to move the needle towards social change. CBOs often offer services and resources that are in line with their objectives, they may lack the capacity to assist community members with issues different from what they prioritize and what their staff have the skills, knowledge and training for (Yakubovich et al., 2016; Castillo et al., 2022)

4.2.7. Support needs

On the theme of *specific needs of the CBOs in terms of receiving support to strengthen the organization internally, access to capacity development, access to conduct advocacy, funding needs, and relevant organization aspects*, the analysis revealed all reported organizations faced issues of inadequate finances, untrained and unskilled staff, lack of accountability, and discord with similar civil society actors and stakeholders like local municipality, SAPS, health, courts, corrections, business and political parties, ultimately leads to peripheral achievements in their programmes. Often, CBOs do not collaborate even if they are working on similar issues of VAWC in the same communities with similar primary stakeholders. Consequently, windows of opportunity to share information, capacity, and to improve coordination are missed. Hence reported organizations fail to participate meaningfully in prevention of VAWC and catalyse important changes at individual and socio-political levels of more and key people to leverage social change towards cultural peace. There is a need for reported CBOs to work together to collaborate on violence prevention issues, foster coalitions to address underlying causes of VAWC, share information and resources, improve coordination and coherence.

The answers from the participants were as follows:

“We need capacity building....workshops to help us do better... assistance... no funding...strengthen leadership vision...build networks for collaborations and linking with provincial and national governments...education for our staff... infrastructure support like office space, telephone, vehicles etc...”

“I would say skills so that we may empower the victims because most of the time we become victims because of we don't have any say because you are depending on others for support... I would speak from my case, we do not ask money from the perpetrators or anything, you can't. So, if you have maybe your own source of income or maybe a skill that you can make your own business you can be able to put the foot down to whatever you want, you just cannot listen to anyone for things that are not of value from anyone because they are supporting you”.

“I think I'll talk on your behalf, I think you need resources like early expenses where we can run these workshops and train people. Another thing, for people to come to the workshop, it is only when you say I'm going to give you something, and the they will



listen. Funds are important resources because nowadays people are tired of attending workshops if you workshop, they want skills, they want to be employed”.

“Also, I think the skills that, also for yourself to also start a business because truly speaking the majority of our people hardly have Matric. So, we need skills that make people employable by different companies, but not just the skills but ... the technical in terms of financial literacy. But how do you then do that, how do you do that, so that when you have a business it's a sustainable business, you understand how to run a business.....perhaps get learnerships. I went to developed places and you will see that people have life coaches, people have business coaches but we don't have someone who is assisting us.... Also, family orientation development programme, because if you talk abuse it starts at home, if you talk poverty ... there's no relationship at home with the community, about the community and the society. So, if you can't development abuse awareness, especially for children because they see everything, it becomes a problem. If children know the structures and community development centres that can be able to assist them on how to deal with the issue and where to take the child to, it becomes less of an issue to have a close relationship with the victims in the community”.

“Because I'm running an organisation that supports survivors of domestic violence. Unfortunately, I think we have a lot of people who wants to start organisations to assist because they see a need in their community but the organisations are not resourced. I think funding has also just shifted from the organisations that do not have anything on the ground and the people who are doing the real work to a point that the majority of good organisations have lost their leaders who get a 9 to 5 job and only focus on this work on weekends. Like myself, I have a 9 to 5 job and I focus on my organisation on the weekends because of an ad hoc intervention funding. I think we think we need to monitor the resources in the community. We need to also monitor the community because we are a huge organisation ... We are in a phase where we're seeking guidance from professionals because we believe their expertise is valuable. For instance, a life coach possesses skills that extend beyond their job and can contribute significantly to the community, such as ensuring safety and mentoring young boys. We're emphasizing the need for professionals in various fields to extend their expertise beyond their work settings, taking responsibility for the safety and well-being of individuals within their communities. Instead of solely relying on government intervention, we're encouraging people to act and monitor their surroundings, ensuring the safety of their own families and neighbours. These actions address simple yet crucial issues that impact the community at large”.

“Just to add, I believe that as community leaders, we are engaged in meaningful work, such as aiding young people, yet there are times when we must seek employment to sustain ourselves and our families. Currently, I'm actively searching for opportunities to provide for my children, even though deep down, I know I can't abandon the work I was dedicated to. Perhaps those with resources could support community leaders by providing training and means of sustenance, acknowledging that not all leaders have



access to such resources. This support could be offered in forums or similar platforms. Despite some leaders having wealth and resources, we are determined not to halt our efforts. Although they may not recognize it now, I am clear about my purpose and committed to my cause”.

“I was doing my practical at different schools around here, I was there, so I know what they say, so they are doing a good job but there's no place to place the child victims. We also have a challenge of placing children and also other people, there is no family that is available to assist ...”

“I think what I would love also to face the reality happening in Western Cape at large, the problem of extortion. And then we cannot allow that because since we've got the Somalian shops things just get out. As we are coming from this last week someone was shot dead because of the extortion and we need to face the reality that they don't see themselves going back to school but they need skills. But the difficulty is that no one is willing to train our young ones because these things are getting rough in our communities and we are seeing now if after it goes from the Somalian shops and it went into the flats. In some of our areas we've got the cameras but in Gugulethu they shot three guys and there was a camera but when they were checking the footage they didn't see the faces of the guys because they know in that area there's a camera, so when you come there made sure they come behind the camera”.

“So, those are the things that we need as HSRC when you're doing your research, that means we need to train more boys than girls because they are changing as it was said. But the problem is that in our community we have got two different people or three, we've got those who have got money, they don't give time to their family because I'm the master and my mind is busy and there are those who have got nothing, they are trying their best but they are trying to here I cannot manage anything and the problem is that they cannot afford what you are looking for”.

In light of this, CBOs and NGOs can also be associated; in this scenario, the NGOs serve as the main conduits for finance and support (de Abreu & Hoeffler, 2021). As an alternative, a social investor may provide direct or indirect assistance on behalf of the CBO. By partnering in this way, efforts supporting its development and smooth operation will be sustained (Matsumunyane & Hlalele, 2022).

4.2.8. Response mechanisms

In this section, response mechanisms of VAWC are discussed. To establish the mechanisms, two questions were asked during the FGDs which the participants submitted. The questions are as follows: *What other organisations or institutions were involved in assisting the victims, survivors and perpetrators? To what extent do the organizations influence other stakeholders in intervening in reported cases?*



To respond to these questions, the following were answers from the participants from the FGDs:

“You know, I think within the church, it's the pressure that we as leaders I think we need to set a tone of within the church as ladies because we like to be nice but it is within us again to not pressure these people, not to use words that will make people to go the extra mile to find. You know, just last week I met one of the leaders, it's a lady, she wrote on her status that: "Ladies, how do you wear a shoe when you see that the is not there anymore?" you know, and I wanted to comment on that, then I said no, because I'm not, I don't know her on a personal level. I just know her at church, so she might take my comment in an offensive way, but I felt like saying to her you know what, this is the level they are expecting from me to come to a church.....It took me to a point whereby I was speaking to a lady the other day and this lady said to me: "I cannot go to church because I don't have the kind of clothes that people at church wear". I said to her you know, and I will show you the pictures that I took around you will notice that most of those pictures, it's not about what you wear at church, it's about taking your heart to church. These days as church leaders we are setting an example for our church and putting pressure on people that are sitting there. For example, if you're not working you feel inferior in the church because at the end of the month you don't have money, so it's something that at the end of day people are like hey, going to church is a burden. But if you can go to the shebeen you can wear whatever you want and go and sit there”.

“As I'm listening I think we allowed the peer pressure in our community to take over and we lost as a community, including the church also, because we believe that there's a structure within our communities. When you go to church there's a structure for the young women, there's a structure for the women, there's structures of men, so it seems to me we allow the peer pressure”.

“Most often when we see our children going to Parkland while we're working hard for them to get a plate of food, and then you find that your child is wearing expensive clothes, those brand names and is having the latest phone and we don't even ask because we allow that. And guess what, we are, and I say we as the black people, we'll always blame the government as if the government is there when we are treating and allowing these things to happen, instead of us training our children because it is the time for us to go back to our roots and our basics and check where we went wrong before we go and involve the government. So, for me it's only to say we need to teach our people, but before that we need to teach us that we need to go back to our roots because nobody wants to see a woman from church, who is supposed to call people to church, inciting those people”.

“And ...I think as families we can also play a part in our children because you'll find that some of the children that goes to Parkland it's children who have homes but the parents are not there. For most children who are raised by single parents, there are those that are looking for validation from a man because the father is not there. When



these children start dating in addition to them wanting a new iPhone, sneakers, or a holiday somewhere, they seek someone older, someone mature, matured man. It is because the father is not there at home.....so the fathers need to be there, mothers need to be there... we're always looking at the man side but as women we are always there at home, but we don't have a relationship with our children. There is a difference when you are always available physically but there's no relationship, we need to know what the relationship is between you and your children at home because it's what drives them out”.

“When a child is trying to bring a conversation don't crush them, let's be more listeners to them because what I found out while working with people, gave me more insight about is that they just want to be listened to, listen to them, give them time to talk when you have spoken ... I'm raising teens at home, what I have noticed when you have said something, say it, give them a chance and they will speak, they need that. Just sit back and listen and if you don't have all the answers at the end of the questions, I say: "Okay, I heard you", because they want to be heard. You will see they feel happy after that conversation because you have given them time to be heard. So, I think we need to go back, set a standard in our homes before we go outside and say that I'm an activist of this and that but you are not an activist in your home, you are not a master in your home. We need to set that standard in our home and by doing so, when doing so, when my child goes outside to play with other children she can be an influence there to those children...”

Generally, the findings revealed the following as resources that are crucial in the fight against VAWC:

- *Receiving support to strengthen the organization internally*

The participants stress the importance of empowerment and independence for victims and CBOs. They highlight the need for skills, resources, and financial independence to support victims effectively. The participants emphasize empowerment and self-sufficiency as key factors in helping victims and strengthening CBOs. Although there is lack of specifics on the types of support needed to strengthen internal organizational structures and processes.

- *Access to capacity development*

These findings underscore the necessity of workshops, skills development programs, and financial literacy to enhance the employability and sustainability of businesses. That is, the representatives of various organisations recognize the significance of skill development and financial literacy for both victims and CBOs although the findings do not delve into the concrete mechanisms or institutions necessary to provide these developmental opportunities.

- *Access to conduct advocacy*

Participants stressed the need for family orientation programs, abuse awareness, and community-based centres to assist victims, especially children. They also identified the importance of advocating for family orientation and abuse awareness programs at the

community level. However, the discussions lacked specifics on how to effectively conduct and sustain advocacy efforts within communities.

- *Funding needs*

The discussions highlight the necessity of funding for workshops, resources, and skills training, emphasizing the current fatigue of attendees towards workshops that lack practical skills. The discussions recognize the importance of funding for practical skills development and sustainability however, they do not explore potential funding sources or strategies to access funding effectively.

- *Monitoring of allocated resources*

Mostly, the challenges faced by organizations supporting survivors of domestic violence, is around issue of insufficient resources and funding allocation. A prevalent problem was acknowledged where numerous individuals are eager to initiate organizations to aid their communities, yet these initiatives lack the necessary resources. Apparently, the focus of funding has shifted away from these under-resourced organizations, leading to a situation where dedicated leaders have to seek additional employment (9 to 5 jobs) to sustain themselves, rather than dedicating their full time and efforts to these crucial causes. One of the participants exemplifies this issue by sharing their own experience of managing the organization during weekends due to a lack of consistent funding. This situation reflects the sporadic or temporary nature of the financial support these organizations receive, termed as “ad hoc intervention funding”. Furthermore, the importance of community monitoring and resource allocation was emphasised. It underlines the need for professionals to extend their skills and expertise beyond their regular work roles, advocating for their involvement in community-based initiatives to address safety concerns, mentorship, and well-being. A shift from relying solely on government support to encouraging community members to take proactive roles in ensuring the safety and welfare of their own families and neighbours was proposed.

- *Other relevant aspects specific to each organization*

The findings revealed the broader social issues impacting communities, such as extortion, violence in certain areas, and the need for skills training for youth. That is, the discussions acknowledged broader societal challenges and their impact on VAWC. Generally, the participants’ responses emphasize the multifaceted needs of CBOs involved in combating VAWC. They recognize the importance of empowerment, skills development, advocacy, funding, and addressing broader societal challenges. However, there’s a lack of specificity in outlining actionable steps, partnerships or strategies to address these needs effectively. To enhance the effectiveness of these efforts, there is a need for a more detailed action plan that involves collaboration with government agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders. Furthermore, there is need to develop specific strategies for sustainable funding, targeted advocacy, and implementation of skill-building programs for these CBOs to effectively combat VAWC in the two coastal cities.



One of the most important resources to prevent and respond to VAWC, is assistance from communities. The following are the perceptions of the participants about how the community assisted them when they needed support to get back again:

“Okay, the community did help me, I would say even a problem like this, you must speak to someone. That is the first step, because speaking to someone will get you assisted. I spoke to someone and someone referred me to the organisation and then they were so generous to me there, they offered me a health and social worker. I had the sessions with her, six sessions, we spoke about things and I voiced all my pains out to her and then as I was attending I got the relief and then also they came to schools because of the skill programme. We were six ladies in my group, so they gave us the skills. We acquired the skills and when we received the baking equipment and now the organisation is working on finding us something to do so we can start our businesses. So, now my situation is not the same, I am trying to be my own person, to have my own voice and to do what I want instead of being abused and controlled by others, being called names, belittled everyday So, yes, I would say communities will lead you to health because that's what happened to me....”

“To add, getting help is very important because it also helps you to have open eyes now for other victims that are going through the same problem and now I feel like you can give the same help that you got for the girls. So, you also learn to help, you can help the community as well, even the skills that I got just now feel like either we can receive the same so that they can also better themselves and communities...”

“I know there are some areas in Pretoria where I'm sure you hear about Boko Haram that they go around spaza shops, they exploit and demand money. Boko Haram is also responsible for crimes, and so on but at the same time when women, when families face problems like your own child starts to beat you, Boko Haram comes to you to discipline those. There was an organisation like that but I don't hear about it anymore, I'm sure you know about this in Durban where they teach you that every woman must be protected...”

“Like you said some have, like there's a guy who is the boss of the gangster. You know the time he was out of jail there was no crime. When you were robbed or whatever happened to you if you can go and tell him that this thing happened and he will ask you how is that person and he just wants you to describe the person, if the person you know. He only said to the robbers, you can't rob people in the community, if you want to rob just go to town or whatever, the white people, they said you must go to the white people, you can't rob here. Like I'm just trying to say it's not all the guys who are gangsters who are bad to their communities....”

“In our community, there was a guy who was also in this because he was collecting money from the spaza shop. At the time the gangs arrived we were free in our community, there was no robbery. But since the guy is arrested, criminals come to our



*place and sometimes when they're robbing you they will be saying to you go to Bara....
Bara is in jail, we're going to do whatever we want to do....”*

“And sometimes we look at those who are involved in car high jackings. One nice boy passed on last week after he told his boss that he wanted to quit the high jackings. In December he was going to be initiated to go to the bush and when he comes back he wants to change, he wants to go back to church... But they did something, whatever it is that they did, he ended up being killed before he could quit...when going out here, there are robbers after the garage, before or somewhere where he was killed. At home when his mom decided to look for him and gather his pictures, they found that he had taken his picture and written at the back of it saying all the things that he wanted to say he knew that he was going to be killed because apparently the boss told him straight that you can go to the bush but when you come back you must come back here or.... And the sad part is that the boss is a church leader. The sad part, all the church leaders' children are straight-narrow children, they go out and do everything for them. But there's that child whose mom is not working, whose mom is in an unstable home because they are always fighting. You know, people look for loopholes to get into those families so that they can act as if they are assisting parents to groom their children”.

The findings reveal a positive account of seeking help from an organization after experiencing abuse, emphasizing the importance of reaching out to someone for assistance. One participant shared their transformative journey, having received counselling sessions and skill-building programs from one organization, leading to an improved situation where they are aiming to take control of their life and start their own business. The findings continue by highlighting the significance of assisting others after receiving help. One participant explained how a community leader who, upon release from jail, managed to reduce crime in the area by intervening and discouraging local robbery, suggesting that not all figures within gangs are detrimental to their communities. However, another participant described how the arrest of an individual involved in criminal activities led to increased crime in their community. They further explained tragic incidents involving gang-related actions, initiation rituals, and the death of a young person attempting to leave criminal involvement, shedding light on the influence of criminal leaders, even those associated with churches, in perpetuating violence. The findings reveal the vulnerability of certain families to exploitation by those seeking to manipulate and influence children for criminal purposes. Overall, the findings encompass personal empowerment through community support, the complexities of criminal influences, and the tragic consequences of attempting to leave criminal involvement within certain communities.

Furthermore, VAWC impacts women, children and men of all ages, abilities, backgrounds and identities, but in disproportionate ways; in order to prevent VAWC in South Africa, it is important to understand that victims/ survivors and neighbourhoods are not a homogenous cluster, and therefore, diverse social identities based on their age, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, education, socioeconomic class, nationality, migration status and geographic location are key factors in designing interventions, and require contribution from

affected individuals, families and neighbourhoods. There being no one-size-fit-all and in this corollary, championing discourse and dialogue encouraging vertical and horizontal coherence with primary stakeholders, skills development, capacity building local assets and capital, based on social and performance audit of CBOs holds the key to leverage social change and to reducing VAWC in South Africa.

In addition, organizing women, children, and men, educating them on their rights to pleasure and safety, and encouraging help-seeking behaviours while addressing policies that increase vulnerability to VAWC will foster whole-of-society empowerment. This includes promoting education to change sociocultural norms and sexist gender bias norms that condone VAWC. Ultimately, CBOs must work hand-in-hand with local primary government stakeholders to tackle institutional cultures perpetuating VAWC in South Africa.

Specifically, the following six capability areas need to be refined over time including:

- Ability to comprehend gender concepts, deal with the underlying issues, and actively promote gender equality and women's empowerment, including men and boys, with a focus on gender.
- Leadership ability to motivate, set priorities, and offer guidance for accomplishing the organization's goals and objectives.
- The ability to manage projects well, including in terms of planning, scheduling, and allocating physical, financial, and human resources to achieve goals.
- Actionability to facilitate the creation of advocacy and knowledge-sharing programs and services.
- Originality in ability to foster entrepreneurial thinking and produce ground-breaking concepts for organizing people and interacting with communities, as well as alternate resources for plan implementation.
- Adaptive ability to track, evaluate, and encourage changes both inside and outside the organization. It involves taking lessons from experience and constantly reviewing and revising the theory of change that an organization has created. People's theories and opinions regarding why and how neighbourhoods and individuals change are included in the field of theory of change.
- In fact, as FGDs and interviews made clear, reported groups were failing to reach the most vulnerable members of their communities because they lacked the capacity and resources to include people who were more likely to be exposed to VAWC and lived in overcrowded or mostly unemployed families.

4.3. Conclusion

This chapter outlined the research results and discussion of findings including nature of VAWC in South Africa, type of organization, CBO area of intervention, representation, capacity to influence, and support needs. The following section present conclusion and way forward.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

5.1. Summary

The findings reveal a positive account of seeking help from an organization after experiencing abuse, emphasizing the importance of reaching out to someone for assistance. One participant shared their transformative journey, having received counselling sessions and skill-building programs from one organization, leading to an improved situation where they are aiming to take control of their life and start their own business. The findings continue by highlighting the significance of assisting others after receiving help. One participant explained how a community leader who, upon release from jail, managed to reduce crime in the area by intervening and discouraging local robbery, suggesting that not all figures within gangs are detrimental to their communities. However, another participant described how the arrest of an individual involved in criminal activities led to increased crime in their community. They further explained tragic incidents involving gang-related actions, initiation rituals, and the death of a young person attempting to leave criminal involvement, shedding light on the influence of criminal leaders, even those associated with churches, in perpetuating violence. The findings reveal the vulnerability of certain families to exploitation by those seeking to manipulate and influence children for criminal purposes. Overall, the findings encompass personal empowerment through community support, the complexities of criminal influences, and the tragic consequences of attempting to leave criminal involvement within certain communities.

5.2. Key Findings of the Study

Community-based women and child protection groups (CBWCPGs)

- The CBWCPGs reported here are non-profit groups also called CBOs/ NPOs such as township associations, women's rights groups, faith groups, among others, that organize programmes and services for themselves and use local resources and values to support women, children, and men. They are located in, and provide services to, the community, and characterize the needs of community against VAWC, and leveraging on local assets of *Ubuntu-value* and ethics of care and stewardship linked to belonging, mutually obligated life, justice as equality, and, action because '*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*' [a person is a person by others] (Masolo, 2010; Zuberi, 2012, interview with Maphosa; Benhabib, 2003).

VAWC in South Africa and selected communities

- VAWC refers wide-ranging forms of maltreatment against women (females 18 years and older) and children (girls and boys 18 years and under) committed by peers, family, parents, caregivers, siblings, current/ former intimate partners, strangers, and disasters.



VAWC affects all people irrespective of ethnicity, education, income, profession, and religion, with overwhelming physical, emotional, financial, and social impact on victims, families, communities.

- It includes direct, cultural, and structural violence such as physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and economic violence; and, occurs everywhere in the home, toilet and water points of informal settlements; school, workplace, creche, shopping area, shebeen, tavern, road, taxi, train and bus station, bar, nightclub, stadium, prison, clinic, hospital, church, park, bush. Men are perpetrators despite women and children are involved; and, most incidences take place at the hands of someone victims know, and many cases remain invisible as part of family or private life and culture of silence, and corruption of institutions and people who are supposed to champion the cause of VAWC.
- VAWC in Cape Town and Durban stems from interaction of social norms of gender inequality and acceptability of violence and discrimination, culture of silence about violence, situations of frustration at the community and society level like crime, economic hardships, poverty, poor service delivery, unemployment, unequal and segregated distribution of land and wealth, drug and alcohol abuse, workplace and school-based violence, gang violence, informal settlement structures, ineffective legal justice system, impunity of perpetrators, forced initiation (male circumcision), child marriage, ritual killing, migration, human trafficking, dearth in understanding the problem VAWC and practice of what works to reduce drivers of violence, exposure to violence hearing gunshots, witnessing parents or peers fighting or attacked.
- VAWC is not homogenous, and it manifests in combination with other forms of discrimination that account for different types and rates of violence on women and children. KIIs and FGDs shed light on how Black African and Coloured women and children, and women and children with disabilities, women-led and child-headed households, orphaned children, lesbian gay bisexual transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) women and children, and migrant women and children than native South African women and children, were more likely to experience violence than women and children without disability, straight women and children, and, households with both parents.

Type of organization

- The organizations define themselves as voluntary, non-state, non-profit groups. 80% specified were registered with the DSD as NPOs, 13.4% were not registered, and 6.6% did not know if their organization was registered or not. 60% of CBOs had knowledge of their organization's hierarchy of business teams, leaders, managers, individual contributors, mode of governance and decision-making. They elaborated their internal structure and organograms directed roles, internal reporting, and, cascading decisions; and identified boards of directors, chief executive officers, organizational guidelines, procedures, programmes, and conducting activities in line with clients to whom they were accountable. 40% either didn't understand the question or didn't know what internal structure decision making entailed in their organizations.



- Findings show diverse strategies that utilize primary and secondary (i.e., tertiary) approaches. Primary approaches focus interventions to addressing relationships before violence occurs like parenting workshops, community mobilization to raise awareness of VAWC, and training on how women and children can avoid violence. While secondary or tertiary approaches are aimed at reducing the impact, effects and harm from violence in the short and medium to long-term after it has occurred such as treatment of injuries, counselling, protection of victims and safe accommodation in shelters, recovery and self-help skills, assessment/investigation, help line support information for victims. The intervention services address issues of divorce, child or adult domestic violence, parents' alcoholism, drug abuse and mental illness, teen pregnancy and parenthood, school performance, negative peer influences, minority status, community violence. The interventions are planned locally, and are culture context-specific including (a) support via counselling, human rights and gender equality education; (b) identity strengthening via education, arts, cultural activities, therapy, and sport; (c) *Ubuntu* education and gender equality awareness; (f) neighbourhood policing as first line of crime investigation, police visibility; (g) shelter/protection rehabilitation, security, personal safety, dignity for victims, offering opportunities to lead normal life, reduce vulnerability, and job opportunity information; (h) dialogue, truth telling, reconciliation, faith healing; (i) self-reliance, media and cyber awareness education; and, (j) composite comprising elements from all or part of services and programmes above.
- 92% reported focus services in the immediate neighbourhoods. They perform “people-sized” (Speer & Perkins, 2002) mediating functions with small enough groups to reflect values and realities of individual life, and, large enough to empower individuals to begin to influence wider social structures of behaviour change efforts (Speer & Perkins, 2002; Berger & Neuhaus, 1977). Besides, their services represent unfolding contexts of empowerment processes for both individuals, organizations and communities, e.g., SAFFI, Ihata Shelter, Mphoyabasadi Foundation, Lifeline Durban, Kerr House, Women Hope for the Nation, Abathunywa Ministers Fraternal work on legal and rights information, psychosocial support and counselling, women-centred support and children services for children accompanying their mothers, youth services for teens, community information, education and community outreach, assistance toward economic independence, recovery and self-sufficiency, human rights education, identification of victims of intimate partner violence in their neighbourhoods, as first line support, prevention, initial contact, assessment/investigation, safety and protection, assistance and support – even though short-term, they begin empowering processes for individuals and organizations to address collective self-interests, particularly regarding issues, problems and factors that feed VAWC in families and their communities.

Representation

- All organizations revealed their cause represent interests of their communities and victims; they aim to create safe neighbourhoods, and, support other stakeholders such



as SAPS. 92.2% enlightened functions to educate, heal, reconcile, empower, protect victims, encouraging family cohesion, self-reliance, and to influence cultural norms of male domination, and, community members to hold municipal government to account on service delivery which contributed to VAWC in their communities; and, highlighted being at the grassroots, vetted and registered with DSD as NPOs gave them legitimacy to campaign on behalf of their communities and champion the cause of members who are harmed.

Capacity to influence

- On capacity to influence, 47 % respondent and rated themselves ranging from 5 to 10, and 53% did not respond to the question. Despite respondents described how they promoted victim/survivor security by informing the public about the risks associated with VAWC that most directly affect them, they are not participating meaningfully to influence VAWC and in ways that would catalyse significant change both at the individual, family, community and societal level and with more and key people, nor are they influential enough to articulate a common prevention agenda good enough – with government, business, and parallel civil society – for significant behaviour and social change to leverage cultural peace.

Support needs

- According to the analysis, all of the organizations that were reported had problems with insufficient funding, staff who lacked training and expertise, a lack of accountability, and disagreements with other civil society actors. Nonetheless, the results highlight the significance of asking for help and provide a positive perspective of contacting an organization for support following abuse.

5.3 Way forward

Based on how the FGDs unfolded, a way forward was discussed and agreed by the participants. The facilitators, provided a summary of the proceedings which highlighted the way forward as proposed during the discussions as follows:

- Reflecting on field discussions, there was an emphasis on key themes that emerged which include the role of South African Police Services and the issue of public trust. They highlight the importance of evidence-based discussions on socio-economic indicators and religion, suggesting these aspects need thorough exploration and attention.
- Besides, there was an acknowledgement of the impact of foreign influence on local communities and the necessity for extensive exploration of these dynamics. They express concern over labelling people as “foreigners” within the country and emphasize the need for interactions and understanding among communities. Additionally, there was an acknowledgment of the exploitation of young girls by foreign nationals who mostly reside in Parkland and it was proposed that an urgent intervention by the community is needed.



- An emphasis on the need for leaders to undergo personal introspection while serving the community also emerged. The findings caution against letting historical divides hinder progress and call for a unified approach towards societal issues, urging leaders to challenge systems that perpetuate inequality and exclusion, particularly in decision-making spaces.
- The discussions emphasized the importance of cultural sensitivity in policymaking. They stress the need to avoid supporting initiatives that perpetuate division among black communities and call for unity, understanding, and collective healing.
- Lastly, the participants advocate for respectful engagement, collective healing, and the rejection of actions that perpetuate divisions among black communities. They emphasize the importance of inclusivity, cultural understanding, and the need for leaders to challenge systems that reinforce inequality especially in the fight against VAWC.

5.4 Conclusion

The study involved 15 CBOs in Cape Town and Durban, with 65 participants. 12 organizations were from Cape Town and 3 from Durban. The CBOs focused on supporting victims of gender-based violence, providing victim empowerment services, shelter, counselling, advocacy, community policing, education, youth empowerment, mobilizing for access to justice. Most CBOs were registered NPOs though some were not registered or didn't know their registration status. Many were recently formed in the last 5-15 years. They defined themselves in various ways, such as providing shelters, counselling, skills training, youth development, advocacy, reconciliation, and community upliftment. VAWC includes direct, cultural, and structural violence such as physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and economic violence; and, occurs everywhere in the home, toilet and water points of informal settlements; school, workplace, creche, shopping area, shebeen, tavern, road, taxi, train and bus station, bar, nightclub, stadium, prison, clinic, hospital, church, park, bush. Men are perpetrators despite women and children are involved; and, most incidences take place at the hands of someone victims know, and many cases remain invisible as part of family or private life and culture of silence, and corruption of institutions and people who are supposed to champion the cause of VAWC. The strategies for intervention utilize both primary and secondary (i.e., tertiary) approaches. Primary strategies focus interventions to addressing relationships before violence occurs like parenting workshops, community mobilization to raise awareness of VAWC, and, training women and children to avoid violence. While secondary or tertiary approaches are aimed at reducing the impact, effects and harm from violence in the short and medium to long-term after it has occurred such as treatment of injuries, counselling, protection of victims and safe accommodation in shelters, recovery and self-help skills, assessment/investigation, help line support information for victims. The intervention services address issues of divorce, child or adult domestic violence, parents' alcoholism, drug abuse and mental illness, teen pregnancy and parenthood, school performance, negative peer influences, minority status, community violence. The organizations worked at the individual, family, community and group levels. They had limited capacity to influence change, though many rated themselves moderately high they indicated support need in areas like gender focused capacity, leadership, management, and



innovation. Besides, their services represent unfolding contexts of empowerment processes for both individuals, organizations and communities, e.g., SAFFI, Ihata Shelter, Mphoyabasadi Foundation, Lifeline Durban, Kerr House, Women Hope for the Nation, Abathunywa Ministers Fraternal work on legal and rights information, psychosocial support and counselling, women-centred support and children services for children accompanying their mothers, youth services for teens, community information, education and community outreach, assistance toward economic independence, recovery and self-sufficiency, human rights education, identification of victims of intimate partner violence in their neighbourhoods, as first line support, prevention, initial contact, assessment/investigation, safety and protection, assistance and support – even though short-term, they begin empowering processes for individuals and organizations to address collective self-interests, particularly regarding issues, problems and factors that feed VAWC in families and their communities. Data revealed challenges in the delivery of violence prevention programming, including lack of consistency and coordination with communities and horizontal CBOs, and lack of programming for diverse women and children. The protection of women and children against violence cannot be a short-term effort, but rather an endeavour that requires ongoing commitment from governments, CBOs, business, and other stakeholders, increased research to inform and monitor progress, and persistent action that addresses violence against women at its source. The way forward includes working closely with local community partners including municipals and provincial government and local business to understand local needs and to jointly review programs with strong scientific evidence that may address those needs. As well, collaborating as Africans, interrogating violence, policy changes, and caution about anti-foreigner sentiments.

In conclusion, the report suggests that investing in sustainable capacity strengthening and support to CBOs to develop and maintain quality of care to victims/ survivors; empowering local structures and families to participate in and own violence prevention mechanisms; tailoring strategies and actions with regards to the specific issues faced by different groups of women and children, aiming for equality of outcomes for all women and children; investing in active non-violence training, and, use of cultural traditions as a tool for change; given CBOs' nature of tasks and their own traumatic experiences, provide mental health support to these frontline responders in order to improve and sustain programmes and services for victims/ survivors; fostering opportunities across actors and sectors, as well as communities to bring men, women and children together around areas of common concern; working with place of occurrence of VAWC to develop “safe spaces” across neighbourhoods to find reprieve from violence while inculcating families and victims/ survivors with victim empowerment skills; and integrating CBOs to address underlying drivers of VAWC and build into programmes and services strong monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to understand contributions that make meaningful prevention of violence – is critical to move the needle towards reducing VAWC in South Africa.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure A: Ethical Clearance Letter



Ethics Clearance
Letter.pdf

Annexure B: Gatekeeper Letters

Kwa- Zulu Natal



KZN Approval
Letter.pdf

Western Cape Province



Gatekeeper
Letter-WC.pdf

Annexure C: Data Collection Instruments

Focus Group Discussion



DCES_Mapping &
Assessment_FGD Guide

Key Informant Interview



DCES_Mapping &
Assessment_Interview

Questionnaire



DCES_Mapping &
Assessment_Questionnaire

Annexure D: Consent Forms:

Focus Group Discussion Consent Form



DCES_Mapping &
Assessment_Consent

Key Informant Interview Consent Form



DCES_Mapping &
Assessment_Consent

Questionnaire Consent Form



DCES_Mapping &
Assessment_Consent