

FACT SHEET

GBV AND FEMICIDE

#4

DEFINITIONS

WHAT IS FEMICIDE?

Femicide is generally understood to involve the intentional murder of women because they are women, but broader definitions include any killings of women or girls.

Source: [WHO](#)

WHAT IS 'INTIMATE FEMICIDE'?

Intimate femicide refers to the killing of a woman by the woman's husband, boyfriend (dating or cohabiting), ex-husband (divorced or separated), ex-boyfriend, same-sex partner or a rejected would-be lover. This is also known as intimate partner homicide.

WHAT IS 'INTIMATE PARTNER FEMICIDE'?

The broad category of intimate partners includes all sexual partners — such as current and former spouses or partners — as well as other close family members if they were involved in an intimate relationship with the victim. Non-intimate partners include friends and acquaintances, as well as known strangers and family members.

PREVENTION RATHER THAN CURE

Did you know 32% of women killed in South Africa in 1999 died from gunshot injuries. This reduced to 17% in 2009. Researchers determined that this could only be due to the introduction of the Firearms Control Act in 2000 because deaths by other means, including stab and blunt injuries, remained stable.

International research shows that it is more effective to restrict gun access to people with a history of abuse, than

to remove a gun from a home after domestic violence has been reported. South Africa's Firearms Control Act has two mechanisms to help make sure that gun owners are and remain "fit and proper" to own a gun:

[Mechanism 1: Two-tier licensing](#)
[Mechanism 2: Regular licence renewal](#)

[Click here to learn more](#)

DIFFERENT WAYS TO TALK ABOUT INTIMATE FEMICIDE

- Intimate femicide, gender and power.
- The power that the Firearms Control Act has to regulate legal gun ownership to prevent IPV crimes made by police, officers and military (all of whom have access to guns).
- How a culture that tolerates violence against women creates the foundation for IPV.
- IPV and mental health

IPV "DRIVERS"

- **Poverty is strongly associated with IPV and under resourced areas such as informal settlements which have some of the highest prevalence.**
- **Exposure of children to childhood trauma – both witnessing abuse and their own abuse and neglect – as these drives the next generation of IPV**
- **Patriarchal gender relations and the stagnation of the economy.**
- **Alcohol abuse and mental health issues. Anger and trust issues take time to heal.**

GUNS IN FEMICIDE/INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE (IPV)

A summary of research into IPV in South Africa shows that:

- Women are most vulnerable to being shot by an intimate partner in the home: 60% of gunshot homicides in 1999 occurred at home and 31% of women were shot and killed by an intimate partner.
- Legal gun ownership significantly increases the risk of intimate femicide–suicide with two-thirds (66%) of intimate femicide–suicide perpetrators in 1999 owning a legal gun.
- The high percentage of guns used in intimate femicide–suicide is attributed to the lethality of guns and the ease with which they can be used, with international research showing that guns are up to 12 times more likely to result in death than non-firearm assaults in IPV.
- In South Africa, 83% of victims that were shot were killed and of the women victims of gun homicide, 68% were killed with a single shot, most often to the head and face.
- A significant proportion of intimate partner suicide perpetrators are employed in the police, army or private security industry, showing that easy access to guns increases the risk for intimate partner-suicide.
- Guns are often used in rape – 41% of rapes reported by adult women to the police in Gauteng Province in 2003 involved a firearm.

DID YOU KNOW?

GLOBALLY, APPROXIMATELY 66,000 WOMEN ARE KILLED ANNUALLY.



REPORTED CRIMES BETWEEN OCTOBER AND DECEMBER 2021.

OF THE ALMOST 6,900 PEOPLE KILLED, MORE THAN 900 WERE WOMEN AND AROUND 350 WERE CHILDREN.

WOMEN 900
CHILDREN 350

"MANY VICTIMS OF FEMICIDE HAD PREVIOUSLY REPORTED BEING THREATENED WITH A FIREARM (CAMPBELL, WEBSTER, AND GLASS, 2009)."

Source: [Article extract: GFSA Firearms Control Briefing](#)

