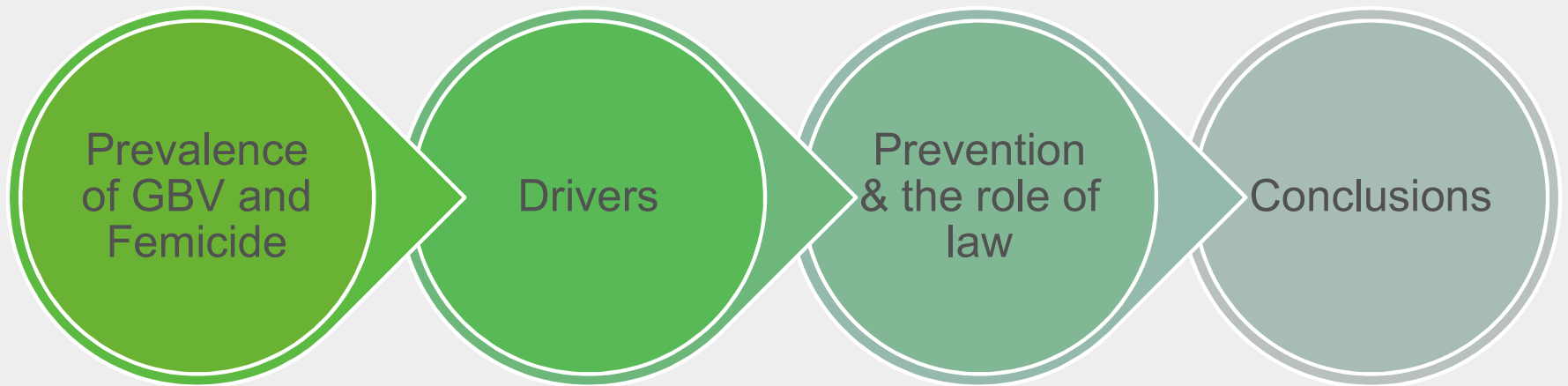


# USING LAW TO ADDRESS THE SCOURGE OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE IN SOUTH AFRICA

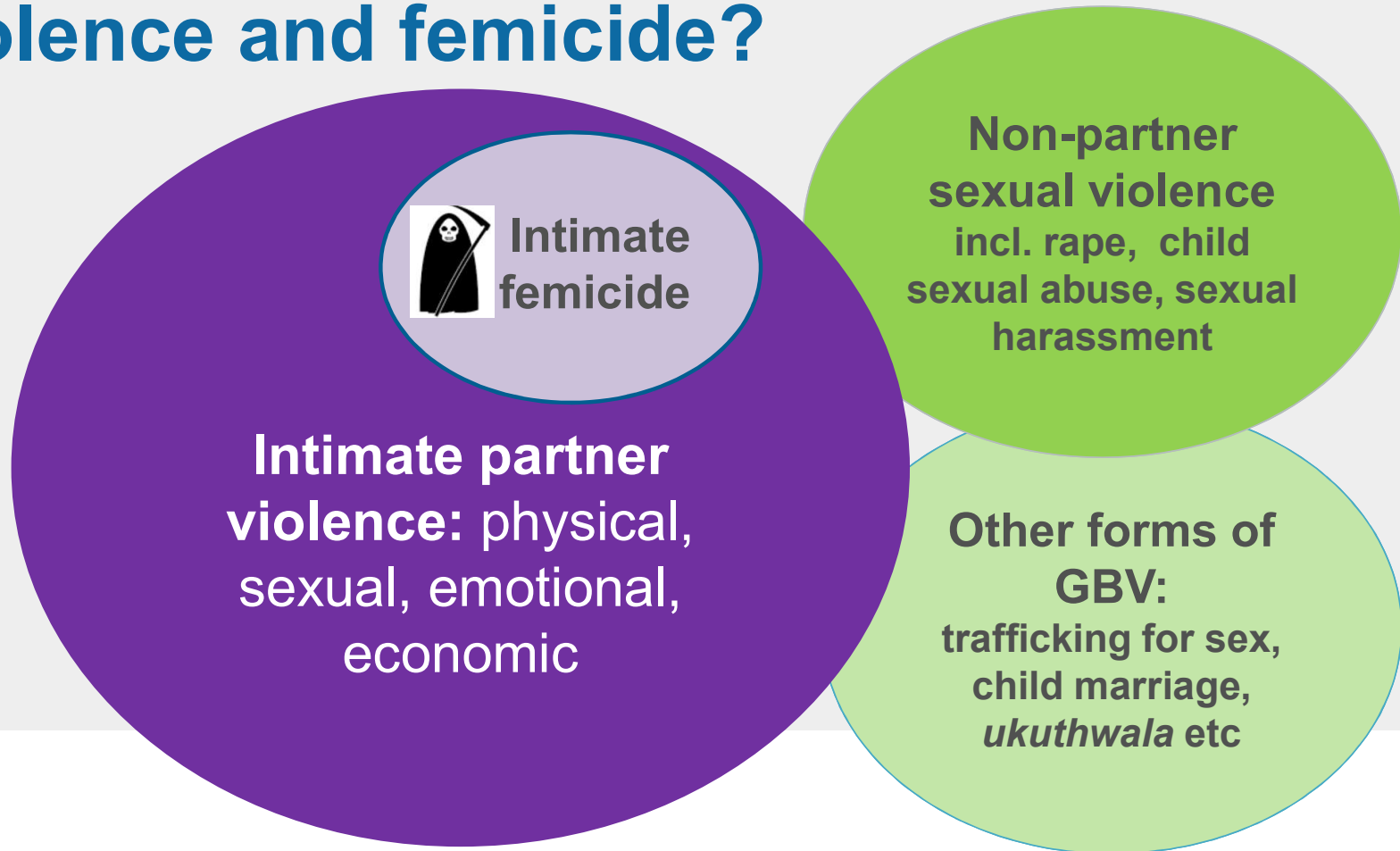
Presentation to:  
The National Council of Provinces:  
Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, 28 July 2020

Prof Rachel Jewkes, Executive Scientist: Research Strategy and Intramural Research, South African Medical Research Council

Prof Naeemah Abrahams, Director: Gender and Health Research Unit, South African Medical Research Council

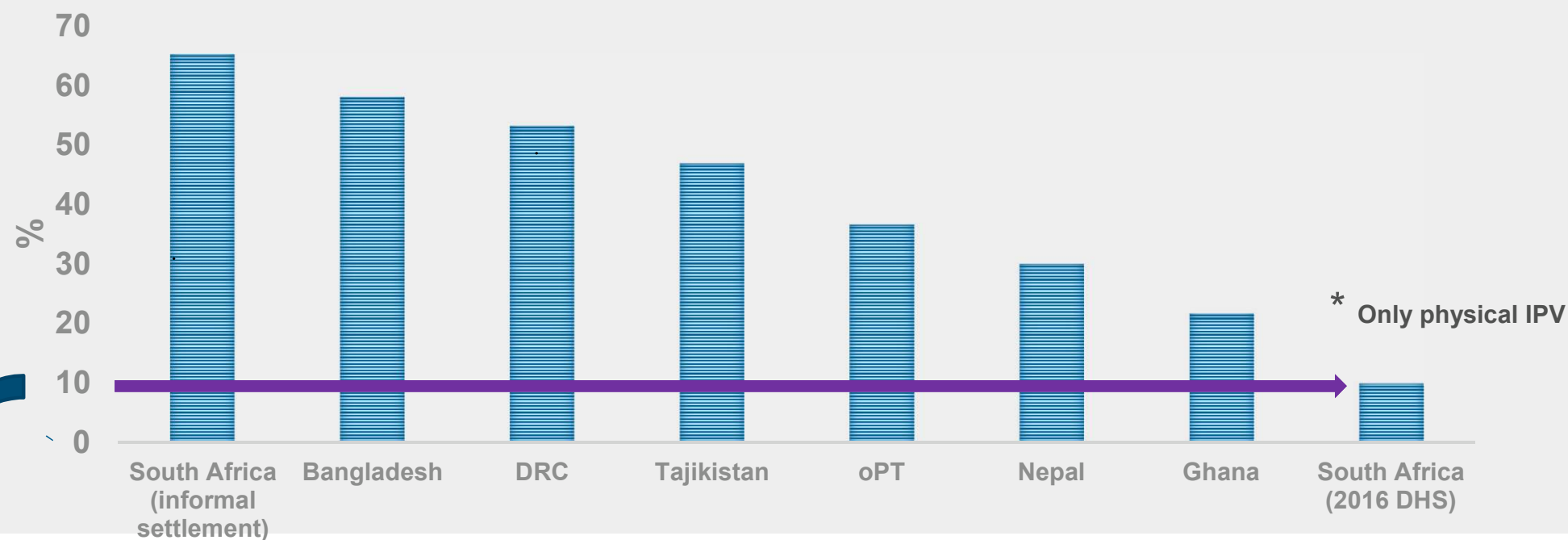


# What do we mean by gender-based violence and femicide?



## SCALE OF THE PROBLEM : Women's experience of physical or sexual violence in the past 12 months

(data from research studies conducted as part of the What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls? Global Programme)



National figure from 2016 South Africa Demographic & Health Survey

# 20 YEARS OF SAMRC'S NATIONAL FEMICIDE STUDIES

1999

2009

2017

2020

Planned

Research conducted in 2 stages:

- 1: Collect data at a nationally selected sample of mortuaries on unnatural deaths
- 2: Collect data from police on each case

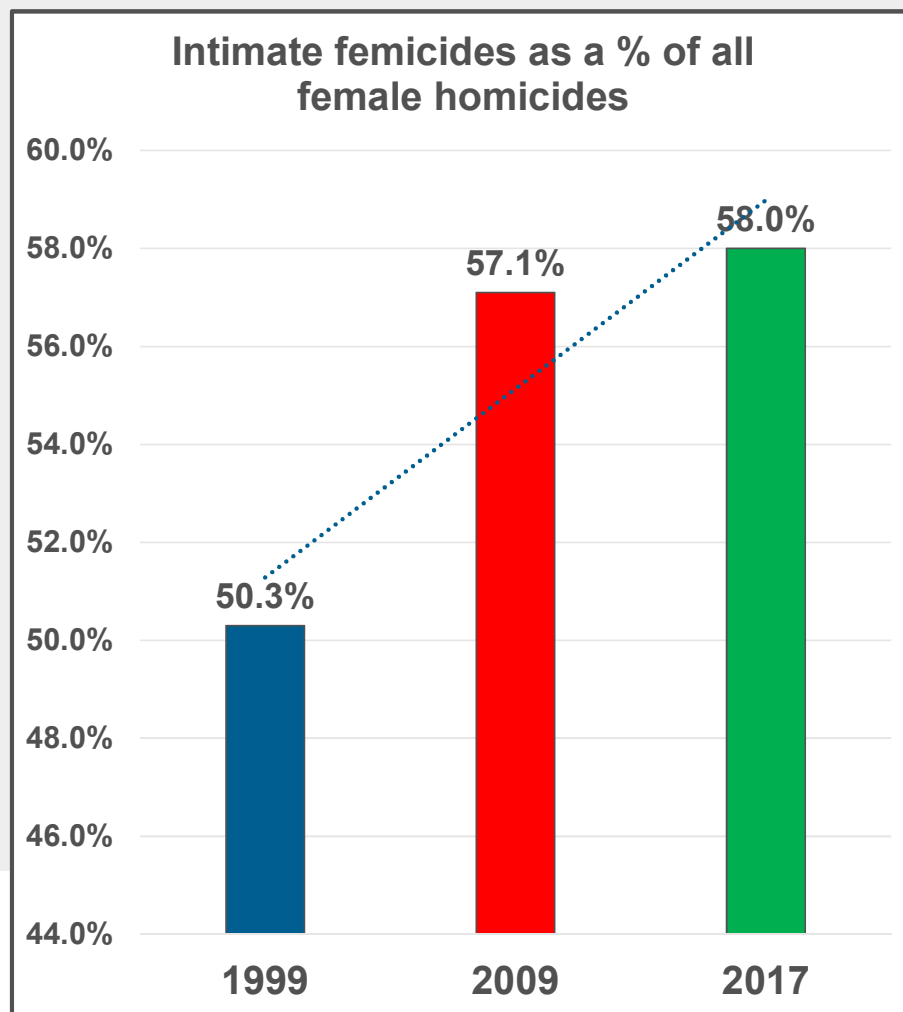
# Intimate Femicide in South Africa



Key message: preliminary research findings are confirming that the problem of intimate femicide is getting worse in the country

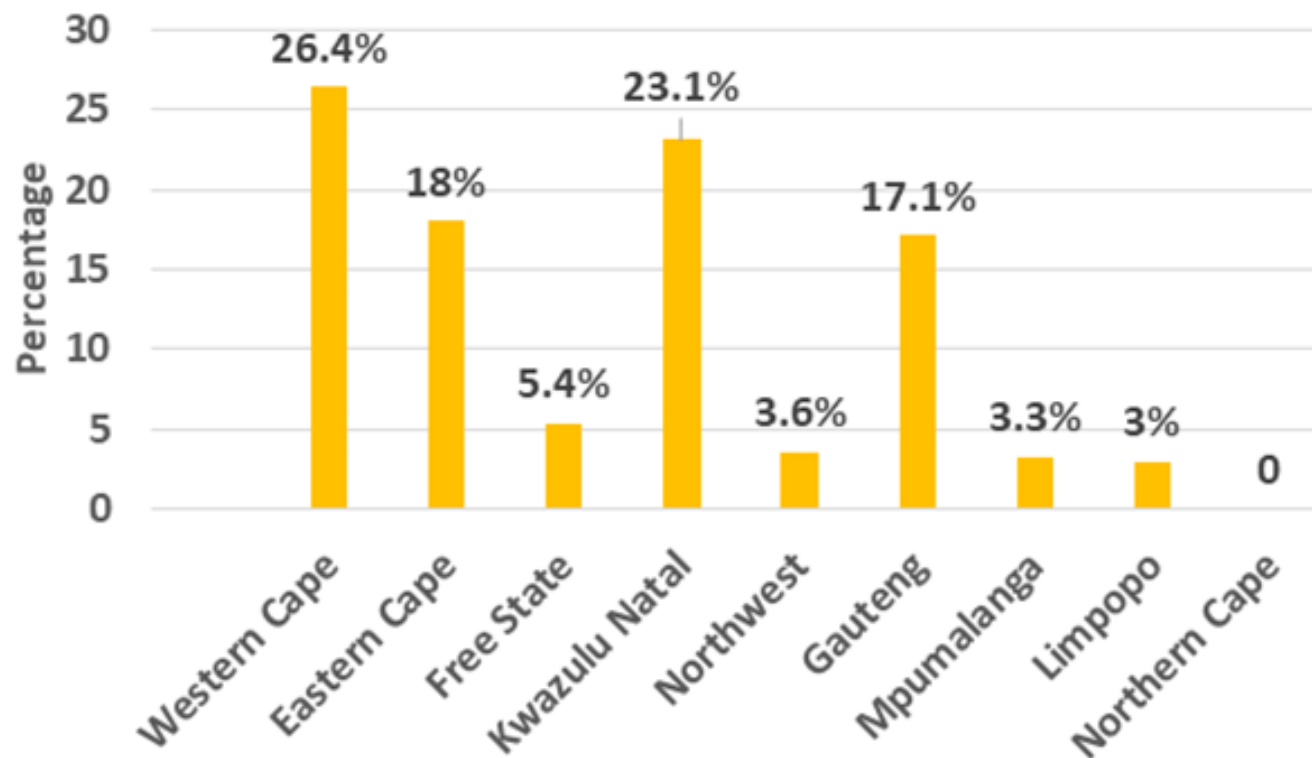
- **1999:** Four women a day killed by a current or ex husband and boyfriend
- **2009:** Three women per day are murdered by their current/ex boyfriend or husband
- **2017 :** Preliminary data suggests it is between 3-4 women killed every day (higher than 2009)

## Femicide in South Africa: 1999, 2009 & 2017 (preliminary data)



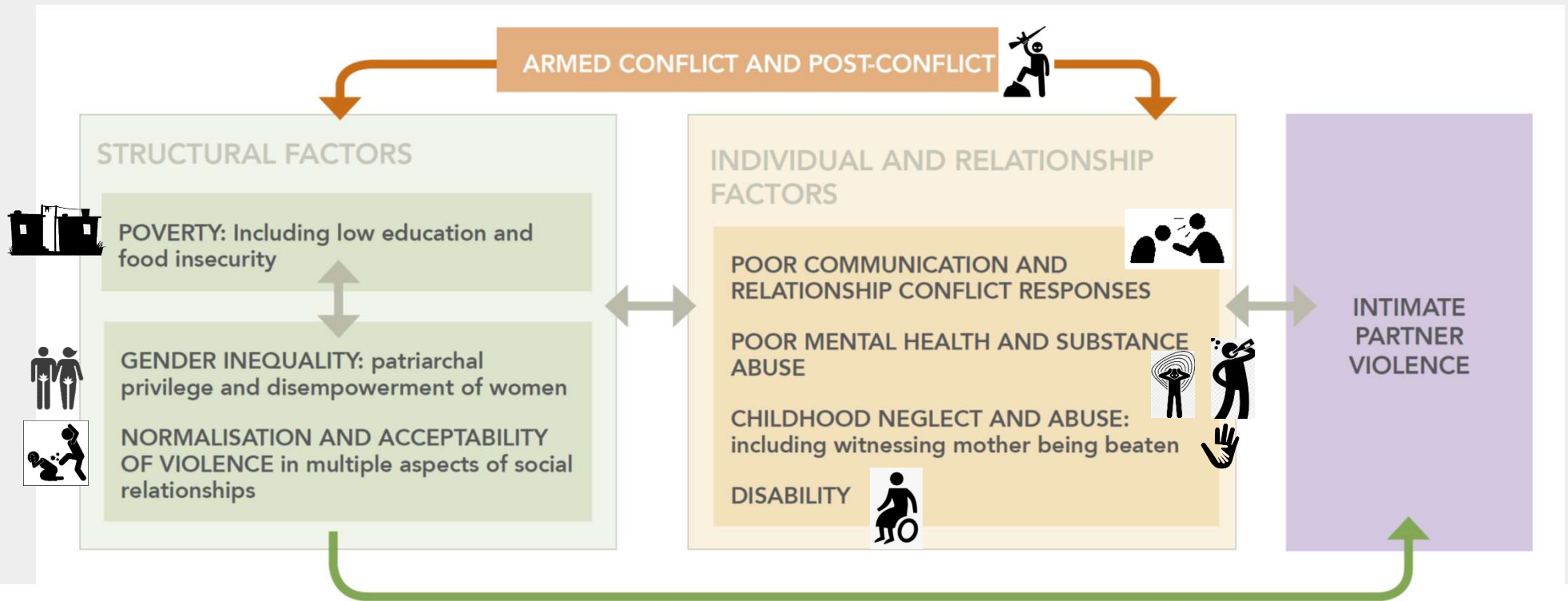
**Global IF as a  
proportion of  
all femicides =  
36%**

Firearm homicides among females 14 years and older  
across Provinces 2017 Injury Mortality Study (unweighted  
data)



The 2017 Injury Mortality Study (IMS) included all injury deaths: Data collection complete

# Drivers of violence against women



# Key interventions on drivers

- Poverty reduction and enhancing school completion for girls and boys
- Measures to promote gender equality and action against violence of all forms including children
- Vigorous gun control
- Reduction in harmful alcohol use
- Extension of funding for mental health services and support for programmes with lay counselling
- Much more vigorous enforcement of protection of children
- Parenting programmes and support for vulnerable parents
- Programmes to build gender equity and counter the use of violence throughout the community

Classification	Intervention Type
Effective, when well designed and executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic transfer programmes.</li> <li>Combined economic and social empowerment programmes targeting women.</li> <li>Parenting programmes to prevent IPV and child maltreatment.</li> <li>Community activism to shift harmful gender attitudes, role and social norms.</li> <li>School-based interventions to prevent dating or sexual violence.</li> <li>School-based interventions for peer violence.</li> <li>Interventions that work with individuals and/or couples to reduce their alcohol and/or substance abuse (with or without other prevention elements).</li> <li>Couples' interventions (focused on transforming gender relations within the couple, or addressing alcohol and violence in relationships).</li> <li>Interventions with female sex workers to reduce violence by clients, police or street harassment (with or without intimate partners) through empowerment/collectivisation or alcohol and substance abuse interventions.</li> </ul>
Promising, but requires further research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) based interventions with pregnant women.</li> <li>Self-defence interventions to prevent sexual violence for women.</li> <li>Economic and social empowerment programmes targeting women.</li> <li>Interventions with female sex workers to reduce violence by clients, police or street harassment (with or without intimate partners).</li> </ul>
Conflicting evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-defence interventions to prevent sexual violence for women in primary and secondary schools.</li> <li>Working with men and boys alone to reduce violence against women.</li> <li>Home visitation programmes to reduce violence during the prenatal period to prevent IPV.</li> </ul>
No effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good evidence that these interventions do not reduce levels of VAWG: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microfinance programmes.</li> <li>Peer education programmes.</li> <li>Community planning for pregnant women.</li> <li>Violence<sup>8</sup> but unlikely to work as standalone interventions to reduce levels of VAWG:</li> <li>Marketing campaigns and edutainment.</li> <li>Digital technologies for VAWG prevention.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**We have a repertoire of interventions that are effective that can be adapted and taken to scale**

**Table of What Works? based on an in-depth review of the physical/sexual IPV prevention field 2019**

# Legislative contribution

- This can be made in respect of reducing all of the drivers of violence through laws, promoting policies and ensuring oversight
- Part of the portfolio for action lies in the domain of the CJS. We welcome new sexual offences courts and the Person Identification and Verification Application system at police stations to apprehend 'persons of interest' as well as proposed reforms allowing for online applications for child maintenance and protection orders, as well as legislative amendments
- **Very important contribution for Parliament with respect to interventions to address drivers of violence**

## Ten measures to support ending GBV and femicide

1. Basic income grant to reduce most severe poverty
2. Enhancing school completion : resourcing pre-school education, teenage pregnancy prevention, homework support, oversight of DBE measures to prevent drop out before matric, action to ensure school year is not lost from Covid
3. Gun, alcohol and drug control : enforcement of existing measures, oversight of and prevention of corruption, action on illegal guns, measures to reduce harmful alcohol use and drugs
4. Resources for evidence-based prevention programmes to change harmful masculinities e.g. Stepping Stones and Creating Futures
5. Resources for mental health programmes, in the health sector and through community-level interventions including psychotherapy from lay counsellors
6. Funding for shelters, parenting programmes for vulnerable parents, more efficient maintenance, protection orders etc
7. Stronger enforcement of existing legislation, and judicial review of sentencing
8. Effective Parliamentary oversight of the National Council on GBV and Femicide and its work in implementing the National Strategic Plan
9. Ensure that resources are allocated from National Treasury for measures required for GBV and femicide prevention
10. Ensure solid research foundation to guide the prevention strategy and monitor and evaluate its impact

# Conclusions

- Prevention of intimate femicide requires measures to prevent gender-based violence overall
- Research shows that prevention of gender-based violence before the acts occur is possible in the short to medium term
- There is a very important legislative role in this that encompasses measures in the criminal justice system but has a far wider reach with measures across a number of areas of the social cluster
- We are confident after 3 decades of research on GBV and femicide about measures needed for prevention
- It is essential that we have political support and funding