

Peace begins @ home
**Gender Based Violence (GBV) National
Baseline Study in Seychelles
Preliminary findings**



Commemorating Orange Day. Photo: Gender Secretariat

<https://genderlinks.sharepoint.com/Gender%20Links%20Photo%20Gallery1/Forms/DispForm.aspx?ID=5351&Source=https%3A%2F%2Fgenderlinks%2Esharepoint%2Ecom%2FGender%2520Links>

More than half of the women (58%) and 43% of men have experienced some form of GBV at least once in their lifetime. Both women and men have perpetrated GBV with 31% and 40% prevalence rates respectively. The study further shows that most of the violence occurs in the home between intimate partners. Fifty four percent of women and over a third (35%) of men have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV). An equal proportion (40%) of women and men confirmed they have perpetrated violence against an intimate partner. While this study shows that both women and men are vulnerable, it is evident that the former are more vulnerable. These are among the key findings of the Gender Based Violence National Baseline Study in Seychelles.

This study comes at an opportune time where there is need for Seychelles to review the various strategies to end gender violence most of which have expired. It also comes at a time where the country is realigning its national policies and plans with the newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the post 2015 SADC Protocol on gender and development. With the new goal of eliminating GBV by 2030. The Ministry of Community Development, Social Affairs and Sports, the National Bureau of Statistics and Gender Links measured gender based violence in 2016 through a cross-sectional prevalence and attitudes household survey focusing on both women and men as both perpetrators and victims. This study targeted 1500 women and men older than 18. In the end, the total sample analysed for this study, comprised 578 women and 531 men: 1109 in total.

Seychelles is the first country in the SADC region to undertake a GBV study that encompasses both violence against women and violence against men. This study came as an acknowledgement to the existence of violence against men by women particularly within the Seychelles community which is matriarchal. Within the SADC region, Botswana is now at advanced stages of conducting a similar study after the VAW study in 2012.

Extent of GBV

Table one: Lifetime extent of GBV in Seychelles

Criteria	Ever in lifetime			
	Women's experience (%)	Men's experience (%) (%)	Women's perpetration (%)	Men's perpetration (%)
Prevalence of GBV	57.7	43.1	30.9	39.6
Prevalence of intimate partner violence	53.8	35.2	39.9	40.1
Prevalence of emotional intimate partner violence	43.4	29.0	33.1	33.7
Prevalence of physical intimate partner violence	38.6	11.7	19	12.2
Prevalence of economic violence	32.6	9.4	7.0	14.3
Prevalence of sexual violence	26.5	3.3	2.5	1.8
Prevalence of non-partner rape	11	10.3	0.8	4.1
Prevalence of abuse in pregnancy	19.3	-	-	-
Prevalence of sexual harassment	18.3	14.2	-	-
Prevalence of sexual harassment at school	4.7	7.2	-	-
Prevalence of sexual harassment at work	16.2	8.5	-	-

Table one shows the extent of Gender Based Violence (GBV) over a lifetime. Forms of violence experienced include physical, sexual, psychological and economical abuse. In all the different forms of violence women were disproportionately affected. The predominant form of violence within intimate relationships is emotional, which involves the perpetrator belittling the victim and using insults and verbal abuse. Forty-three percent of the women and 29% of men experienced emotional IPV in their lifetime. An equal proportion (33%) of women and men confirmed they have perpetrated emotional violence against an intimate partner. Thirty nine percent of women and 12% of men experienced physical IPV. Over a third (33%) of women while only 9% of men experienced economic violence. Meanwhile, 19% of women said they faced abuse during pregnancy.

Figure one: Forms of IPV experiences in lifetime

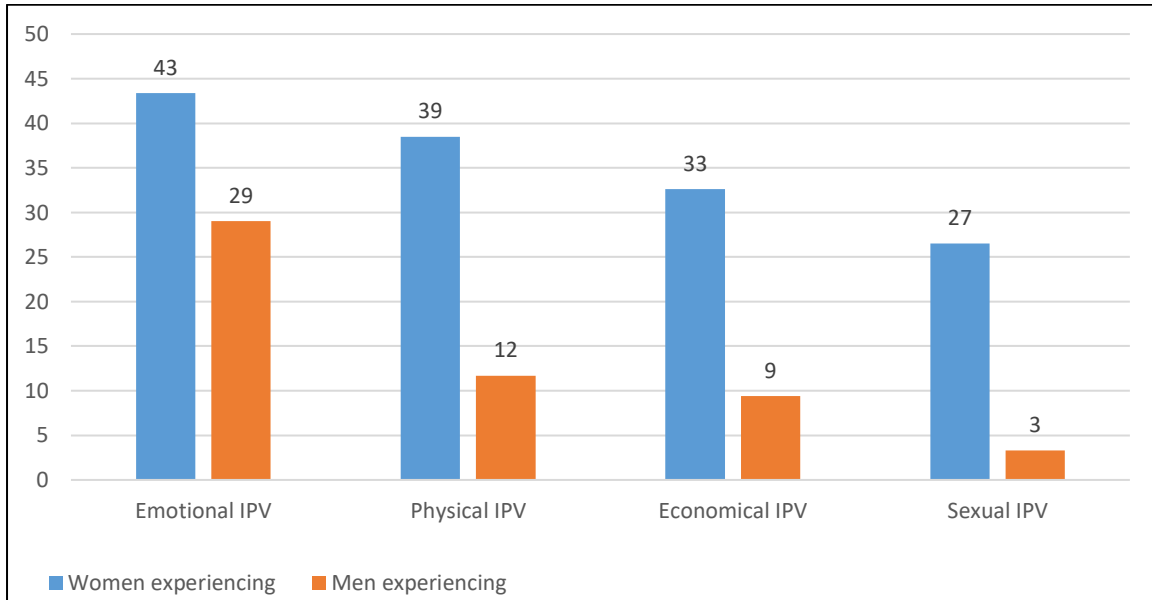


Figure one shows that most commonly experienced form of IPV is emotional IPV followed by physical then economic and sexual IPV. Forty three percent of women and 29% of men experienced emotional IPV in their lifetime. More than third of women (39%) and about a tenth (12%) of men experienced physical IPV. About a third (33%) of women and 9% of men experienced economic IPV. Twenty-seven percent of women experienced and 3% of men experienced sexual IPV.

Figure two: Forms of IPV perpetration in lifetime

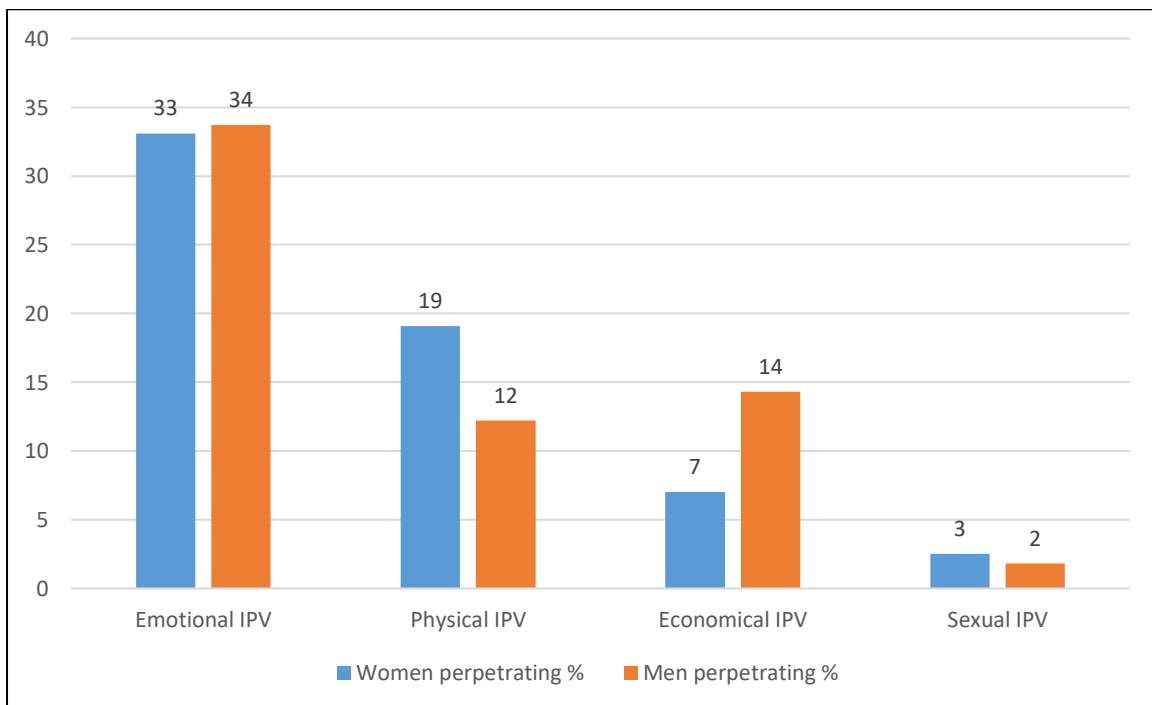


Figure two shows that the predominant form of IPV perpetrated by both women and men is emotional IPV, with 33% of women and 34% of men perpetrating it in their lifetime. More women (19%) than men (12%) perpetrated physical IPV. More men (14%) compared to women (7%) perpetrated economic IPV. Almost equal proportions of women (3%) and 2% of men perpetrated sexual IPV.

Figure three: Comparison of lifetime IPV experience and perpetration in seven countries

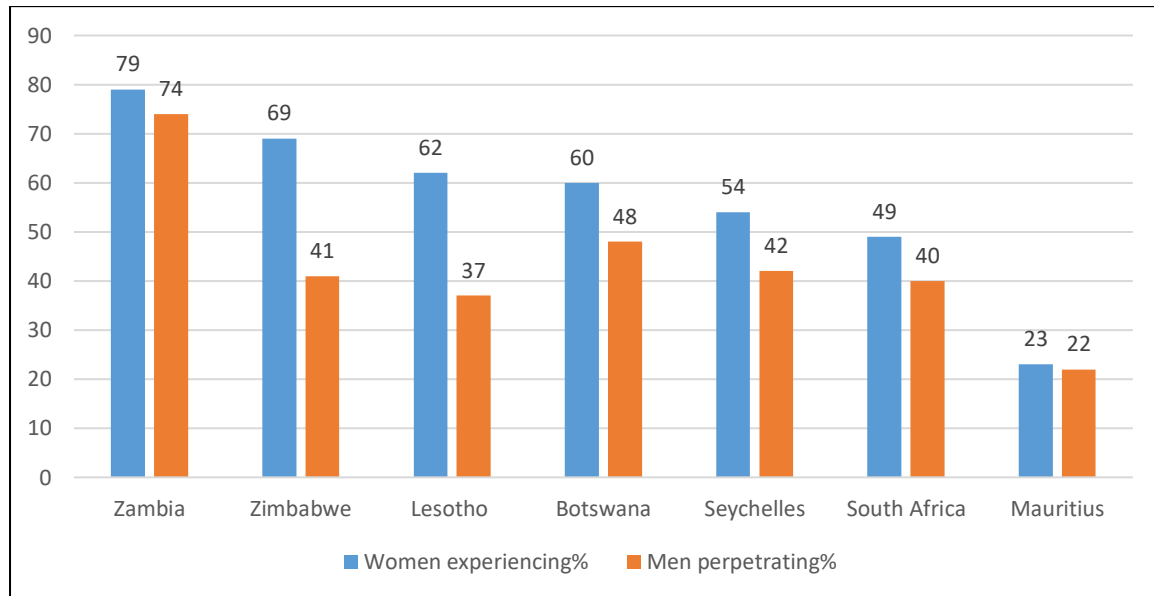


Figure three compares the IPV prevalence experienced and perpetrated in seven countries where GL conducted GBV Baseline research. Zambia has the highest experience prevalence rates at 79%, followed by Zimbabwe (69%), Lesotho (62%), Botswana (60%), Seychelles at 54%, four provinces in South Africa (49%) and Mauritius (23%). Similarly, in terms of perpetration, at 74% Zambia records the highest followed by Botswana (48%), Seychelles (42%), Zimbabwe (41%), South Africa (40%), Lesotho (37%) and Mauritius at 22%.¹ Of the seven countries that have undertaken this study, Seychelles recorded the fifth highest experience rate and third highest perpetration rate of IPV.

Figure four: Comparison of the lifetime experience of non-partner rape in seven countries

¹ The same study was undertaken at national level in Zimbabwe, Botswana, Mauritius, Lesotho and Seychelles. In Zambia and South Africa only selected areas and provinces were included in the study.

- Equal proportions (89%) of men and women affirm that people should be treated the same whether they are male or female. However, 79% of men compared and 54% women believe that a woman should obey her husband.
- There was a significant association between attitudes towards gender equity and IPV perpetration in women only and not in men.

Societal norms

Previous research has shown that social norms that legitimise male or female dominance are key drivers of GBV. This study explored the personal attitudes of women and men and their perceptions of their communities' attitudes towards gender relations.

Figure five: Personal attitudes towards gender relations by women and men

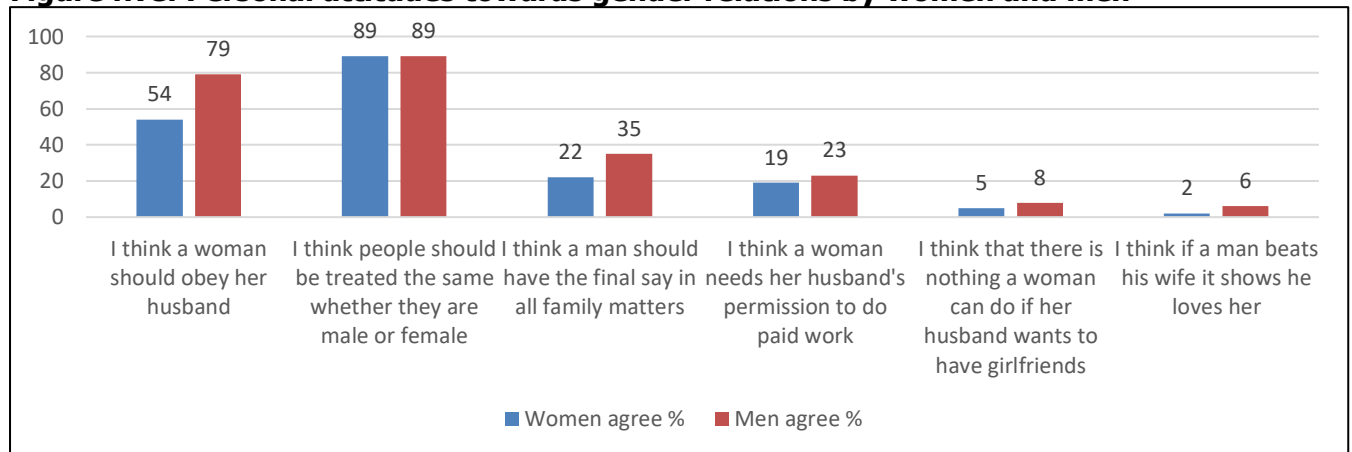


Figure five shows that equal proportions (89%) of men and women affirm that people should be treated the same whether they are male or female. 79% of men compared and 54% women believe that a woman should obey her husband. Overall a higher proportion of men subscribe to the conservative notions compared to women showing that there is a disparity in terms of acceptance of social norms between women and men. The disparity in perceptions in itself may fuel conflict and further research is necessary to support this.

Effects

- *Physical effects:* A total of 172 women reported to having been physically abused by their intimate partners, from these 46 individuals (27%) sustained injuries resulting in total of 21 individuals (46%) being bedridden. The average number of days they spent bedridden was three. Approximately 18 (39%) took days off from employment as a result of injuries sustained after physical abuse. The average number of days that they had to forgo was five. Such a scenario presents an economic burden on the individual as well as the nation as productive days are altered which could have

Annette is a small, lively woman in her early sixties. Married to an abusive husband — who once threw boiling water on her, landing her in hospital — she was not repeating the story with her alcoholic and drug-addicted son. Just as her husband was growing older and calmer, her son was getting increasingly violent. So Annette reported the son's abuse to the Family Tribunal. He ignored its repeated warnings and was eventually charged with assault and sent to jail for two years. Some neighbours criticised her, but the mother did not budge. "It is not right for a son to abuse his mother, and I had had enough with the father" she told IPS.*

Written by Mercedes Sayagues, Victoria for IPS News 3 July 2008

<http://www.africafiles.org/article.asp?ID=18420>

been utilised productively for income generation. On the other hand 155 (35%) of men who participated in the study experienced physical abuse at the hands of intimate partners. However, unlike women only three men (2%) sustained injuries after the abuse. None of the men disclosed if they were bedridden or if they sustained injuries. These findings show how violence affect women and men differently.

- *Sexual and reproductive health effects:* The study can show that 110 women constituting almost 20% of the women interviewed had a smelly and itchy vaginal discharge at some point in their life. The figure also shows that medical staff diagnosed 30 (5%) of the women interviewed with an STI at some point in their lifetime while 27 (4%) had a vaginal ulcer at some point in their lifetime.
- *HIV and AIDS:* Seventy four percent of women interviewed had tested for HIV and 37% had done so in the 12 months before the survey. Of the women who collected their results, 0.5% reported an HIV-positive status. A lower proportion (66%) of men had tested for HIV, while 2% who had tested and collected their results tested HIV positive. It is worth noting that a higher proportion of men had tested positive while at the same time more than a third had never tested for HIV.
- *Psychological effects:* Almost a third (28%) of women and 16% of men participating in the study reported feeling depressed in the week before the survey, while 5% of women and 2% of men attempted suicide in their lifetime and 3% of women and 2% of men experienced suicidal thoughts in the month before the survey.
- *Social Effects:* The study shows that both men and women have negative attitudes towards rape survivors: 34% of women and 36% of men agreed that in any rape case one should question whether the victim was promiscuous. A third (29%) of women and 37% of men believe that if a woman does not fight back then it is not rape. A quarter of men (25%) and 18% of women think that in some rape cases, women "want it to happen." One fifth (20%) of men and 11% of women agreed that if a woman is raped, she should be blamed for putting herself in that situation.
- *Economic costs:* Approximately 18 (39%) survivors took days off from employment as a result of injuries sustained after physical abuse.

BACK COVER



A group of school-children dressed in Orange Day t-shirts gathered at the Peace Park in the capital city of Victoria to mark the launch of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. Photo: Seychelles News Agency

<https://genderlinks.sharepoint.com/Gender%20Links%20Photo%20Gallery1/Forms/DispForm.aspx?ID=5255&Source=https://24/25/25genderlinks/25sharepoint/25com/25Gender/2520links/>

The participants in the study were asked if they know of events or campaigns to end GBV. Of the participants who completed the survey, 235 (41%) of women and 193 (41%) confirmed that they knew of events or campaigns to end GBV. Majority of them (80%) of them knew through the TV, 10% from the radio and 3% from the newspaper. Further questions were asked to those who knew about campaigns. One of the questions was which symbol they most associated GBV with.

Figure six: Symbols most associated with campaigns to end GBV

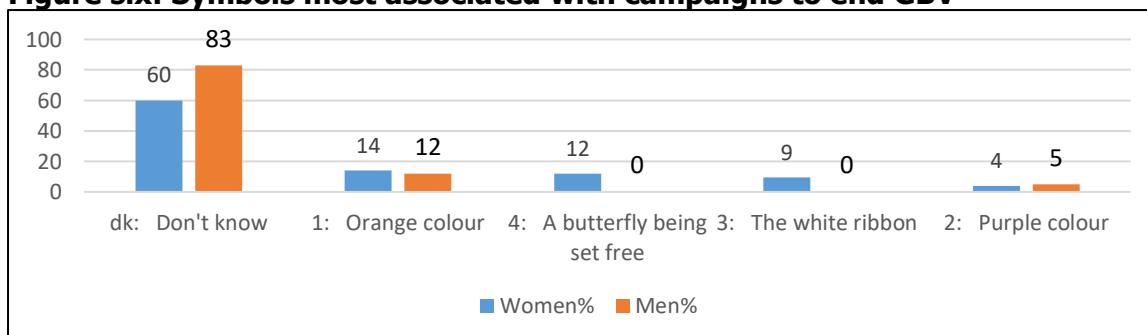
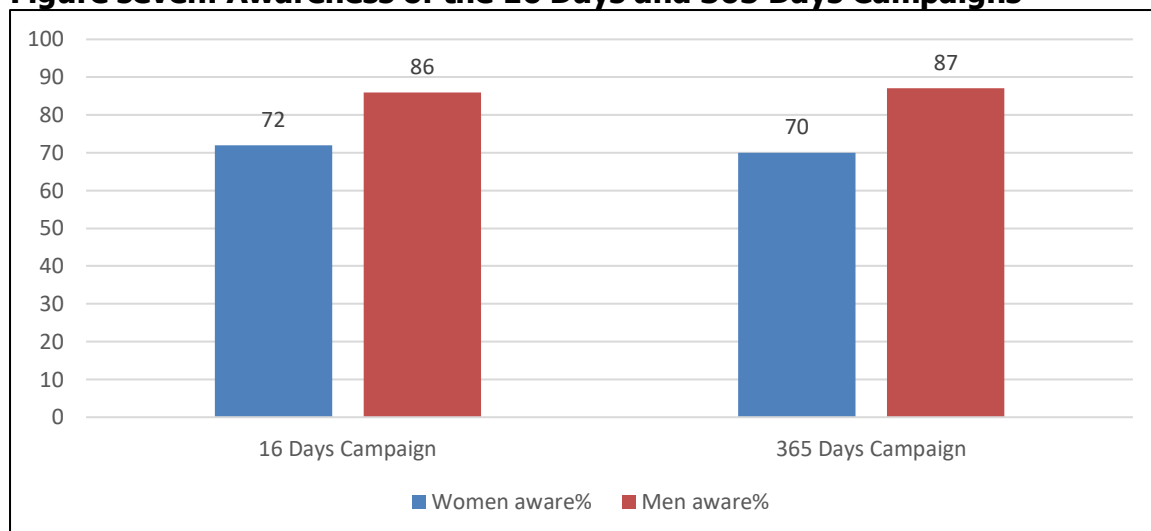


Figure six shows that of the 235 women who knew about GBV campaigns 60% of women could not identify any symbol associated with the campaigns. Similarly of 195 men who knew about the campaigns 83% could not identify any symbol. Fourteen percent of women and 12% of men associated the orange colour with campaigns to end GBV, while 12% of women and no men identified a butterfly being set free, 9% of women and no men identified a white ribbon and 4% of women and 5% a purple colour.

Figure seven: Awareness of the 16 Days and 365 Days Campaigns



Of the participants that knew about the campaigns almost 72% of women and 86% men knew about the 16 days campaign. Seventy percent of women and 87% of men knew about the 365 Days Campaign and the 16 Days respectively. These figures are relatively high compared to other countries where the same study was undertaken.

Next steps

Seychelles has a gender secretariat which is the coordinating structure of all issues pertaining to gender in Seychelles. The role of the unit is to act as the permanent Lead Agency within the Gender Management System (GMS) with the goal of facilitating gender mainstreaming in all policies, programmes, and activities of the government, the private sector and civil society. The networks facilitate information and resource sharing as well as the coordination of programmes. The results of this study will thus give an impetus for Seychelles to adopt national and local plans of action for ending GBV - followed by allocating funds and resources for prevention and awareness raising programmes and activities. It is also critical to review existing legislation (Family Violence Act, Penal Code) and identify gaps and areas to be strengthened, working with civil society organisations.

