



Media Reaction: Oxfam South Africa responds President Ramaphosa's address on GBV

Attention: Editors
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oxfam South Africa: Deadlines must be matched by delivery in GBVF response.

On Tuesday, 29 September, President Cyril Ramaphosa addressed the nation following the recent killings of women in eastern Gauteng, where more than nine of the 12 women reported dead were found in Ekurhuleni.

Oxfam South Africa is deeply concerned by these killings, which reflect South Africa's persistent crisis of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF). Women and girls continue to face serious and often lethal risks, compounded by inequality, inadequate protection, and failures across the criminal justice and public safety systems.

In his address, the President acknowledged that government's response to GBVF has not been sufficient to prevent women from being killed or to make women safe. He announced a multidisciplinary task team comprising detectives, crime intelligence officers, forensic specialists, and investigative psychologists.

The President also announced four measures: recovering unresolved GBVF cases, clearing forensic backlogs, conducting municipal women's safety audits, and addressing harmful alcohol use while strengthening enforcement around liquor outlets.

Oxfam South Africa welcomes these directives and the publication of clear deadlines. Their credibility will depend on urgent implementation, adequate resourcing, transparent reporting, and consequences when commitments are not met.

“Every woman killed is a reminder that commitments alone do not save lives. South Africa needs urgent implementation, meaningful accountability, sustained investment in prevention and survivor support, and women’s economic empowerment,” said Busiswa Nyume, Provincial Programmes Lead at Oxfam South Africa.

At Oxfam South Africa, we believe GBVF is not only a policing or criminal justice issue. It is rooted in gender inequality, unequal power, and economic exclusion. Limited access to income, land, safe housing, social protection, and essential services can make it harder for women to leave abuse and rebuild their lives.

A comprehensive response must combine effective policing and justice with prevention, survivor-centred services, women’s economic empowerment, and action to dismantle the unequal power relations that enable violence against women and girls.

We welcome the President’s recognition that GBV often begins in homes and intimate relationships. A societal shift is essential: men must take responsibility for challenging harmful attitudes and behaviours, speaking openly about violence, and helping to create safety and equality. Responsibility for violence lies with those who perpetrate it, never with survivors.

Ahead of the local elections, Oxfam South Africa calls on every municipality to implement the President’s directives transparently and inclusively. Accountability is required across the justice system; from reporting and investigation to prosecution, bail, sentencing, incarceration, and parole.

Government commitments must translate into measurable action, transparent monitoring and meaningful participation by women’s rights organisations and civil society.

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Note to Editors:

On the 1st of October, Oxfam South Africa will launch its Inequality Report 'Hoarded Wealth, Dignity Denied' in Cape Town. The report will make linkages between gender inequality and violence against women. Media that would like to attend (in-person or virtually) can reach out to Bongani Maseko listed above.