

TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY



VOLUME 2

Imithombo Sessions Empower Young Women in Umzingwane's Ward 19 to reduce SGBV

Young women in Umzingwane's Ward 19 recently attended Imithombo sessions aimed at addressing issues of Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). The sessions, facilitated by Emthonjeni Women's Forum, provided a platform for open discussions on SGBV, with a focus on raising awareness and empowering young women to inculcate voice, choice, and agency towards taking action against SGBV.

The community Imithombo sessions resulted in:

- Participants gained a deeper understanding of SGBV and its impact on their lives and communities. They were equipped with knowledge on recognizing signs of abuse, asserting their rights, and accessing support services.
- An increased sense of self-confidence and empowerment among young women. They expressed their determination to stand up against SGBV and break the cycle of silence and fear. Lindiwe Moyo, "These sessions have given us the strength to speak up and take action. We now know that we have the right to live free from violence."
- Fostering a sense of solidarity and support among the young women. They formed a strong network of peer support, where they share experiences, seek advice, and uplift one another.
- Developing action plans to address SGBV in their community includes raising awareness and advocating for policies and programs promoting gender equality.
- Empowered young women to become agents of change in their community against all forms of violence. They are determined to challenge the norms that perpetuate violence and discrimination and to create a future where every individual can live with dignity and respect.



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"We need accessible family planning services and a supportive community that encourages women to pursue their dreams. We deserve to be heard and respected." - Nomusa

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CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR YOUNG WOMEN AND OLDER GIRLS

Women's safe spaces can either be formal or informal places where women and girls feel physically and emotionally safe. This is a place free from trauma, excessive stress, violence (or fear of violence), or abuse. It is a space where women and girls, feel comfortable and enjoy the freedom to express themselves without the fear of judgment or harm.

The key objectives of a safe space are to provide space where women and girls can:

- Receive social support;
- Acquire relevant skills;
- Access safe and non-stigmatizing multi-sectorial GBV response services
- Receive information on issues relating to women's rights, health, and services

Empowering Women in Insiza's Ward 9: Imithombo Sessions Address SGBV and Economic Empowerment

In response to challenges faced by women in Insiza's Ward 9, Emthonjeni Women's Forum led Imithombo sessions, providing safe spaces for dialogue on SGBV and economic empowerment. These sessions aim to tackle issues such as early marriages, economic abuse, absent fathers, communication breakdown, menstrual hygiene, and toxic friendships. The sessions yielded positive outcomes of empowering women with knowledge, support, and tools to combat gender-based violence (SGBV), promote economic independence, and foster healthier relationships. The Imithombo sessions represent a transformative step towards creating a community that values and uplifts its women, ensuring a brighter future for all.



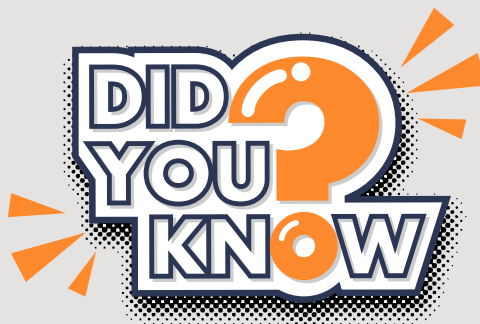
The sessions led to:

- Increased awareness and understanding of the harmful consequences of early marriages.
- Buy in on the economic empowerment idea of creating income-generating projects.
- The establishment of support systems for single mothers, and providing them with emotional and financial assistance.

By cultivating supportive networks, women have found a source of strength and encouragement.

Through the Imithombo sessions, I realized the significance of surrounding myself with positive influences. Being part of a community of like-minded women has given me the support and encouragement I needed to pursue my goals. Together, we are rewriting the narrative and creating a brighter future for ourselves and future generations."

-Sizakele



- Early marriages can have long-lasting negative effects on the lives of young girls, hindering their educational opportunities, physical and mental health, and overall well-being.
- Economic empowerment plays a crucial role in breaking the cycle of abuse and providing women with the means to support themselves and their families independently.
- Building supportive networks and making wise choices in friendships can contribute to healthier relationships and a more stable and fulfilling married life.

