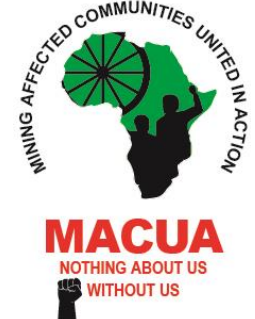


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WAMUA Will be Launching a Groundbreaking Report on the State of GBV in Mining-Affected Communities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | 13 September 2024

On 20 September, Women Affected by Mining United in Action (WAMUA) will be launching a groundbreaking report that reveals a gory and alarming statistics regarding the scale of gender-based violence (GBV) in 14 mining affected communities in Gauteng, North West, Limpopo and Northern Cape provinces.

Two surveys were conducted to gather information on different aspects of violence and abuse. The first survey aimed to document cases of domestic violence, sexual harassment, and sexual assault. It also assessed the effectiveness of institutions that support and serve women who have experienced abuse. In total, 860 surveys were completed and collected for analysis.

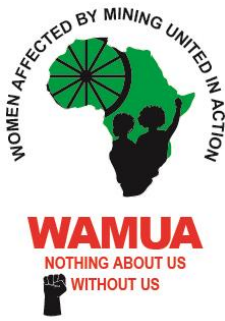
The second survey focused specifically on obstetric violence. It investigated healthcare facilities and evaluated both the services provided and the conduct of healthcare personnel in upholding the rights of women and birthing individuals. A total of 959 surveys were completed and collected for further review.

This report exposes the systemic injustices women in mining communities endure, while we celebrate their courage in challenging oppressive structures and fighting for their right to safety, dignity and justice. The report uncovered high levels of GBV in the communities surveyed, that GBV in these communities is not accidental and some of the factors that contribute to GBV include cultural norms, social structures and power dynamics.

The report is made up of four briefing papers developed in collaboration with 30 WAMUA activists. The briefing papers explore how women navigate access to health and dignity, employment and education, as well as how they navigate violence in mining-affected communities and the avenues of protection and safety available to them.

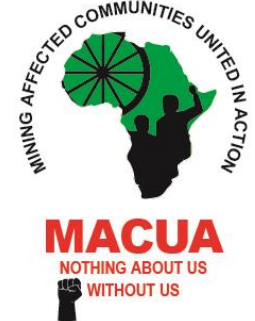
From the hundreds of women we interviewed, at least 959 women responded to questions relating to obstetric violence, 52% of respondents on protection and safety shared that either they themselves or people they know had not reported their experiences of GBV to the police.

The comprehensive figures are detailed in the report, but some of the alarming figures on obstetric violence alone reveal that:



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- 49% said that their genitals were touched without their consent by a medical practitioner or a health practitioner during labour.
- 43% said that they faced physical force at the hands of medical staff, with the highest number of these incidents taking place in Kuruman in the Northern Cape.
- 33% said that they faced verbal abuse, with the highest number of these incidents taking place in Kuruman, Northern Cape.
- 24% said that medical students watched them give birth with their consent violating their consent and privacy.

The struggle against gender-based and obstetric violence in South Africa's mining communities is a fight against deeply entrenched historical and systemic issues. WAMUA's activism and research has laid the groundwork for this fight. This report is a call to action for all stakeholders to come together and work towards a future where communities affected by mining are free from the scourge of gender-based violence and obstetric violence and can thrive in a just and equitable society.

Tackling GBV in mining communities in South Africa as a whole necessitates not only addressing the direct violence experienced by women in and around mines, but also confronting the broader systemic issues of economic exclusion, environmental degradation and power imbalances.

WAMUA makes an urgent call for actors in civil society to truly collaborate in addressing the intertwined challenges of gender-based violence, health, and dignity in these communities. We stand in solidarity with survivors of obstructive violence and demand that their voices be heard, their rights be respected, and their lives be valued.

Details of the launch are as follows:

- Date: 20 September 2024
- Venue: Holiday Inn Johannesburg Sunnyside Park Hotel
- Time: 10h00- 13h00
- RSVP: adminoffice@macua.org.za and if you are the member of the media with an intention to cover the event, RSVP at magnificent.mndebele@macua.org.za

For media enquiries and more information contact: MACUA media and communications manager, Magnificent Mndebele at 064 785 9746 or the email above.