



South Africa Siyasebenza

OVER A DECADE OF INNOVATION AND PARTNERSHIP



Ushintsho Olugqokazile

Jobs Fund Webinar

From Surviving to Thriving: How Financial Independence Heals and Empowers Women

9 September 2025

The event will start at 10h00



national treasury

Department:
National Treasury
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



National Treasury
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Opening Address

Najwah Allie-Edries

Deputy Director-General: Employment Facilitation
(Head of the Jobs Fund)

Background to the Jobs Fund

Zaid Motala
Facilitator

- The Jobs Fund is a programme of the National Treasury.
- The Jobs Fund was established to inspire innovation and to co-fund programmes that address specific barriers to job creation.
- The Jobs Fund operates on Challenge Fund principles to:



Test innovative approaches to job creation – intervene on both supply and demand side of the labour market



Encourage wider market adoption of challenge fund funding instrument over the medium to long term



Share risk - catalyse social return



Encourage adoption of successful Job Creation Models by organisations

- The Fund is not a mass employment programme but complements other government programmes by encouraging innovation and sustainable job creation.
- The Fund works with intermediaries, leveraging their networks and expertise to access and provide support to targeted beneficiaries.
- The Jobs Fund was established with knowledge sharing as one of its foundational pillars and has a rigorous monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and learning framework.
- To this end the Jobs Fund hosts and participates in knowledge exchange sessions together with its partners and the public.



THE LINK BETWEEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT & GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Kate Brim - Director Sparrow Society



Sparrow Society - Introduction



**Advancing gender equity by
Empowering Women,
creating Economic Opportunity,
& offering strategic support for
Survivors of Gender-Based
Violence**



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WHY WOMEN?

Key Statistics on Gender-Based Violence in South Africa

- **Prevalence of Physical and Sexual Violence in South Africa**

1 in 3 women 18 yrs or older have experienced GBV

- **Overall GBV Exposure**

More broadly, **51% of women** report having experienced some form of GBV in their lives, and alarmingly, **76% of men** admit to having perpetrated such violence [The Mail & Guardian IOL](#)

- **Femicide and Murder Rates**

South Africa faces some of the world's highest femicide rates. On average, a woman is murdered by an intimate partner **every eight hours**, and the female homicide rate is approximately **five times the global average** [SSLGDCIOL](#).

- **Under-Reporting of GBV**

GBV is vastly under-reported—an estimated **60% of women** do not report incidents due to fear of victimisation or retaliatory treatment by authorities [1000 Women](#).

- **GBV as a Public Health and Social Crisis**

GBV contributes to health risks, including trauma, increased likelihood of HIV, mental health challenges, and diminished life opportunities [The Mail & Guardian](#).

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WHY SHE CAN'T “JUST LEAVE”?

Economic insecurity fuels abuse. Financial independence breaks the cycle.

- **Gender-Based Violence (GBV)** is not just physical, sexual or emotional – it's also economic. *This is true particularly in Domestic Abuse, Intimate Partner Violence and Human Trafficking.*
- Economic dependence is one of the most powerful tools used by abusers.
 - Power Dynamics - “Money is Power”
 - Coercive Control
 - **Restricting Access to Money:** Withholding bank cards, cash, or paychecks, giving “allowances”, and demanding receipts.
 - **Sabotaging Employment & Education:** Preventing partners from working or studying, harassing them at the workplace to get them fired.
 - **Creating Financial Dependence:** Forcing debt in the victim’s name, controlling housing, transport, and childcare costs.
 - **Entrapment through Poverty:** The Survivor must choose between safety and survival, keeping the victim trapped and unable to leave.

Safety requires resources. Without financial security, freedom remains out of reach.



BREAKING THE CYCLE OF ABUSE

Research clearly shows that when women are able to financially sustain themselves, they are less prone to abuse and exploitation.

- Empowering survivors financially is a key step toward breaking the cycle of abuse.
 - Intervention
 - It gives her a way out (domestic abuse)
 - Prevention
 - Reduces entrapment,
 - Reduces vulnerability,
 - Gives her more bargaining power
 - After-care
 - Reduces temptation to go back to an abuser,
 - Builds Confidence, Builds Community (in programs like Sparrow Society)

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THE POWER OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Trauma - Informed Interventions and Strategies for Survivors of GBV & HT:

- Studies show that women with steady income are less likely to be abused.
- Financial programs for survivors improve long-term outcomes and reduce return rates.
- Empowered women are better able to access support services and assert their rights.

Pathways to Financial Empowerment:

- Job training and employment programs tailored for survivors.
- Combined with psychosocial support and community support
- An understanding of trauma and recovery

We are not just in the business of creating products. We are in the business of creating pathways for Survivors to protect and empower themselves.

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Micealah Ford - Program Head

Candice Cloete - Social Auxiliary Worker

Mihlali Manikivana - Youth Engagement Coordinator



OUR APPROACH - HOLISTIC EMPOWERMENT

Our model: **Aid to Trade** – moving from short-term relief to long-term empowerment.

Four pillars:

- Skills development
- Job creation & enterprise support
- Psychosocial care (healing & resilience)
- Gender advocacy & awareness (shifting community mindsets)



THE SEWBOSS NETWORK

Enterprise development model: **independent, home-based sewing businesses.**

Focus: **ownership, upward mobility, sustainability** (not low-wage factory lines).

Support: training, equipment, logistics + contracts with brands (Woolworths, Revlon, Dermalogica, etc.)

Results:

- **150+ women trained**
- **100+ earning income** (R5,000–R20,000/month)

Beyond jobs: **dignity of running your own business.**

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WHY POWER PADS?

Challenge: **period poverty** → **missed school, stigma, exploitation.**

Need: Survivors of GBV/trafficking require **safe, low-pressure work** to rebuild lives.

Solution: **Power Pads connects the two:**

- Survivors earn income making reusable pads.
- Girls stay in school with dignity and safety.





SPARROWS RISING (JOBS FUND INTERVENTION)

With Jobs Fund support, program delivers:

1. **Safe jobs for survivors** (pad-making + psychosocial support).
2. **Paid internships for unemployed youth** (prep, logistics, quality checks + training).
3. **Direct school distribution** with menstrual health & GBV awareness education.

Provides **dignity, income & empowerment** across generations.





IMPACT THUS FAR

100,000+ pads produced → reaching 25,000+ girls.

160 survivors empowered through pad-making.

40 paid internships created (job readiness, entrepreneurship, first aid).

Women gaining **confidence, stability & ability to plan a future free from abuse.**

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THEORY OF CHANGE

If women & youth are given:

- + Safe spaces
- + Skills
- + Psychosocial support
- + Income opportunities

Then they can:

- Become financially independent
- Rebuild their lives
- Break cycles of abuse



Ripple effect: **stronger families, healthier communities, reduced GBV.**

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WHAT SETS US APART

We only train when **income opportunities exist**.

Strong **corporate partnerships** ensure sustainability.

Integration of **economic empowerment + trauma-informed psychosocial care**.

Outcome: Women **heal, grow, and thrive**, not just survive.

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SURVIVOR STORY: LIZIWE BOTHA



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YOUTH: WHY EARLY INTERVENTION?

- **64% youth unemployment** – finding first jobs is difficult.
 - Harmful behaviours driving **GBV often start in adolescence.**
 - Our solution: combine **economic empowerment, menstrual health & GBV awareness** in schools.
- ➡ Immediate support + long-term culture shift.



AMBASSADORS OF EXCELLENCE



- Paid work experience for young women (18–24).
 - Hands-on roles in **Power Pads**: quality checks, logistics, prep.
 - Training in: job readiness, computer skills, entrepreneurship, labour law.
- ➡ Interns leave with **skills, confidence & references** for the job market.

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SCHOOL-BASED EARLY INTERVENTION



Pad distributions linked with education:

- Menstrual health workshops (breaking stigma).
- GBV awareness & referral resources.
- Gender equality sessions (respect, consent, stereotypes).

➡ Girls stay in school; boys & girls learn **equality & respect.**



POWER PADS

The Value of Psychosocial Support

- Trauma impacts every part of life: confidence, focus, trust.
- Survivors can't transition into full-time work without first healing.
- Role: Provide safe spaces for **counselling, group workshops & check-ins.**

➡ Healing is not rushed — it's **integrated into empowerment.**



SUPPORTING SURVIVORS IN THE PROGRAM

- In **Power Pads**, survivors earn income *and* rebuild confidence.
 - Personal development plans track progress & celebrate small victories.
 - Ongoing support through challenges & setbacks.
- ➡ Combination of **income + psychosocial care** = long-term empowerment.



COMMUNITY CONNECTION - PAD DISTRIBUTION

- Survivor's pads that they've made are distributed to schoolgirls.
- Transforms self-view: **from survivor → changemaker & role model.**
- Girls see powerful women leading, supporting, and inspiring them.

➡ Message: *Women can rise, lead & support each other.*



CLOSING

Empowerment creates **lasting change**.

Survivors: defined by **resilience**, not trauma.

Girls: able to **stay in school** and reach potential.

Women: moving from **aid to trade**, leading thriving businesses.

Questions & Discussion

Closing Address

Najwah Allie-Edries

Deputy Director-General: Employment Facilitation
(Head of the Jobs Fund)



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Thank you



The Jobs Fund



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