ANNOTATIONS FOR RESOURCE PACK FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION FORUM 21

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Building the Investment Case for Ending Violence against Children

Date of Publication: 2023
Type: Policy Report
Affiliations: UNICEF and Cornerstone Economic Research
Geographic Focus: Global

What's it about

This report lays out the rationale for treating child protection as an investment rather than a cost. It presents evidence on the significant economic and human costs of violence and highlights how targeted investment can yield long-term gains. The document offers practical advice on building cross-sectoral, budget-informed arguments to secure political and fiscal support.

Key Argument

Preventing violence against children is not only a human rights obligation — it makes strong economic sense, and the cost of inaction is significantly higher than the cost of intervention.

Evidence Base

Strong empirical evidence and economic modelling; draws on global data and case studies; developed by UNICEF and partners with credible research.

Top Recommendations

- Prioritise violence prevention in national budgets.
- Develop investment cases to support advocacy and resource mobilisation.
- Ensure multi-sectoral engagement across planning, finance, child protection, and social development ministries.

How you might use this

- Ministries of finance and planning can use this resource to justify increased allocations to child protection.
- Civil society can leverage it to build stronger advocacy campaigns, and development partners can align their support behind national investment cases.
- Practitioners can use it as a tool to ensure their interventions are better prioritised and sustainably funded.

Free to Grow: Benefiting Businesses Where It Matters Most

Date of Publication: 2024
Type: Policy Brief
Affiliations: Institute for Security Studies
Geographic Focus: South Africa

What's it about

This brief presents the "Free to Grow" workplace programme as a practical intervention to reduce violence against women and children while improving workplace cohesion and productivity. Grounded in human-centred design and local evidence, the programme equips employees with communication, stress management, and parenting skills.Its iterative development model shows how employer–NGO collaboration can drive both social and business outcomes.

Key Argument

Delivering violence prevention programmes during work hours is both feasible and beneficial for businesses — improving relationships at home and performance at work.

Evidence Base

Based on qualitative interviews, programme feedback loops; grounded in practitioner experience with some references to international evidence. Though small in scale, the programme's iterative development and stakeholder collaboration contribute to its contextual credibility.

Top Recommendations

- Businesses should integrate such preventative programmes into existing wellness offerings.
- NGOs should explore workplace delivery models and diversify income streams through private sector partnerships.
- Facilitators need strong psychosocial support, supervision, and training in trauma-informed practices.

How you might use this

- Employers can initiate workplace-based violence prevention as part of employee wellness and productivity strategies.
- NGOs can adapt their programmes for the workplace and build capacity to support delivery.
- Policymakers and funders may support scalable models of violence prevention through public–private collaboration.

Fact and Fiction – A Comment on the 2025–26 Budget

Date of Publication: 2025
Type: Public Commentary
Affiliations: Southern Centre for Inequality Studies, Wits
Geographic Focus: South Africa

What's it about

This article critiques South Africa's 2025–26 budget for its reliance on austerity and insufficient investment in pro-poor growth and public services. It challenges assumptions around VAT increases and argues for a more evidence-based approach to tax justice and expenditure planning. The piece advocates using fiscal policy to stimulate inclusive growth and cautions against regressive cost-cutting that harms the vulnerable.

Key Argument

The current austerity-based fiscal strategy is undermining social infrastructure and worsening inequality, and South Africa needs a growth-oriented budget strategy supported by more equitable revenue generation.

Evidence Base

Draws on national budget data, SCIS research, and academic tax policy analysis. Cites historical spending trends, public wage dynamics, and inequality impacts; strong academic grounding and analytical rigour.

Top Recommendations

- Reframe fiscal strategy to stimulate inclusive growth through increased investment in health, education, and social protection.
- Exercise caution in implementing VAT increases without addressing regressive effects.
- Introduce more progressive tax instruments (e.g. wealth tax) and address inefficiencies in state-owned entities.

How you might use this

- Civil society, government partners and research institutions can use this commentary to advocate against harmful austerity and support equitable fiscal reform.
- Policymakers can draw from the analysis to consider alternatives to blanket cuts and explore more progressive revenue strategies.
- Budget coalitions and social justice movements can leverage the piece to strengthen public discourse on fiscal justice.

Gun-related Femicide in South Africa over 25 Years: A Call to Action

Date of Publication: 2025
Type: Policy Brief
Affiliations: Gun Free South Africa, with SA-MRC Data & SAPS
Geographic Focus: South Africa

What's it about

This briefing tracks 25 years of femicide data, highlighting a disturbing increase in gun-related murders of women, particularly by intimate partners. It shows a direct link between stricter gun laws and reduced femicide — and warns that recent policy regression threatens to undo hard-won gains. The authors call for urgent reforms to limit gun access and strengthen enforcement of firearm legislation to protect women's lives.

Key Argument

Femicide in South Africa has risen sharply in recent years, largely due to increasing access to firearms — especially legally owned guns — and urgent action is needed to reverse this trend.

Evidence Base

Strong and longitudinal; draws on MRC's 20-year femicide research, SAPS crime statistics, and peer-reviewed studies on gun control efficacy. The brief is underpinned by rigorous mortuary data and cross-sectional studies.

Top Recommendations

- Reinforce implementation of the Firearms Control Act (2000) and limit access to firearms, especially in domestic contexts.
- Prioritise gun control as a violence prevention strategy in national safety planning.
- Use policy tools like amnesties, targeted disarmament, and regulation of firearm licensing to reverse the rising trend.

How you might use this

- Policymakers can reinstate and reinforce evidence-based firearm regulations to reduce femicide.
- Civil society actors can use this data to advocate for legislative reforms and accountability in firearm licensing.
- Researchers and media can frame the gun–femicide connection as a public health and human rights crisis needing urgent attention.

Understanding Gender-Based Violence in Critical Mineral Mining

Date of Publication: 2025
Type: Briefing Paper
Affiliations: Institute for Environment and Development IIED
Geographic Focus: Global, with reference to sub-Saharan Africa

What's it about

This briefing highlights how GBV is embedded in the structures and norms of the global mining industry, especially in remote and gender-unequal contexts. It outlines how harmful workplace cultures, weak protections, and marginalisation of women in supply chains fuel exploitation and risk. A multistakeholder approach — grounded in legal duty and structural understanding — is essential to prevent and respond to GBV in mining.

Key Argument

The mining sector urgently needs coordinated, structural responses to gender-based violence, as GBV both reflects and reinforces systemic inequalities that threaten human rights and business viability.

Evidence Base

Draws on IIED-led field research, Rio Tinto internal reports, ILO and UN instruments, and empirical studies across 12 African countries. Balances legal, economic, and rights-based perspectives with practical examples.

Top Recommendations

- Integrate GBV risk analysis into corporate due diligence and ESG frameworks.
- Adopt zero-tolerance GBV workplace policies, inclusive grievance mechanisms, and gender-sensitive infrastructure.
- Strengthen investor and policy pressure to mainstream GBV prevention across value chains.

How you might use this

- Mining and other companies can use this guidance to build stronger human rights compliance and social licence to operate.
- Investors, regulators and civil society can demand disclosures and safeguards to reduce GBV-related risk and improve prevention efforts.
- Development partners and civil society can align efforts to shift sector-wide norms and practices, especially in artisanal and high-risk mining zones.

Shared Value: How Business Can Support Children and Prevent Violence

Date of Publication: 2018
Type: Policy Brief
Affiliations: Institute for Security Studies
Geographic Focus: Global, with relevance for other high-violence contexts

What's it about

This brief frames ECD as a shared value strategy for business, linking early intervention to long-term economic growth, reduced violence, and healthier societies. It highlights the impact of toxic stress on children's development and the ripple effects on education, employability, and community wellbeing. Specific actions are proposed for business to support ECD internally (e.g. parental leave) and externally (e.g. community programmes).

Key Argument

South African businesses have both an incentive and responsibility to invest in early childhood development (ECD) as a means to reduce violence, enhance workforce skills, and contribute to national stability and productivity.

Evidence Base

Grounded in South African demographic and crime data, and academic research on stress and child development. Supported by ISS's policy credibility and local case examples, though more illustrative than quantitatively rigorous.

Top Recommendations

- Provide parenting support, ECD centres, and paid leave within company operations.
- Convene business coalitions to invest in scalable ECD interventions.
- Partner with civil society and government to ensure universal access to nurturing early environments.

How you might use this

- Companies can operationalise ECD investment as a core business strategy, improving long-term workforce resilience and brand alignment with the SDGs.
- Policymakers and ECD advocates can use this brief to engage business as a critical stakeholder in violence prevention and early learning.
- Cross-sector platforms (e.g. NEDLAC) can facilitate alignment between private sector priorities and national development goals.

The Violence-Prevention Dividend: Preventing Violence Against Children Makes Economic Sense

Date of Publication: 2022
Type: Policy Paper
Affiliations: UNICEF, World Vision, Safe the Children, Cornerstone et al.
Geographic Focus: Global, with national data from South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria et al

What's it about

This publication sets out the economic argument for preventing VAC by highlighting its costs to individuals, societies, and governments. It presents global and country-specific data showing that violence against children can cost up to 5% of GDP, and outlines the return on investment of proven interventions. The paper serves as both a call to action and a strategic policy brief aimed at aligning prevention with national development and economic planning.

Key Argument

Preventing violence against children is not only a moral imperative — it is an economically smart investment that protects human capital, reduces inefficiencies in social spending, and contributes to poverty reduction and economic growth.

Evidence Base

Draws on extensive empirical data, global and national cost estimates, and return-on-investment studies from more than 10 countries. Includes peer-reviewed studies, World Bank data, WHO research, and standardised programme evaluations. Clear use of BCR (benefit-cost ratio) and ROI (return on investment) calculations.

Top Recommendations

- Recognise the high economic return of violence prevention and prioritise it in national recovery and growth plans
- Increase and better track public investment in evidence-based prevention programmes
- Integrate prevention into all child-facing sectors and social protection strategies
- Improve coordination across government departments and between national and sub-national levels
- Strengthen indicators and data

How you might use this

- Civil Society and Government can use this to argue for increased budget allocations and cross-sectoral prevention strategies.
- Donors and technical partners can support governments in cost modelling, programme design, and ROI tracking.
- Researchers and think tanks can use it as a source of credible data on violence-related economic burden and intervention value.

Investing in Zambia's Children: The Economic Case for a Well-Planned, Supported, and Resourced Social Service Workforce

Date of Publication: 2024
Type: Policy Brief (and full Report)
Affiliations: UNICEF, Government of Zambia
Geographic Focus: Zambia, with regional benchmarking

What's it about

This policy brief builds a compelling economic case for strengthening Zambia's social service workforce (SSW) to address high rates of VAC. It presents the financial cost of underinvestment, models the benefits of scaling the workforce, and provides a costed roadmap for gradual SSW expansion.

Key Argument

VAC costs Zambia an estimated 9.12% of its GDP each year. By investing less than 1% of the government's annual budget in expanding and strengthening the SSW, the country can halve these costs while protecting children's rights and enabling long-term economic growth.

Evidence Base

Grounded in national VAC data (Zambia VACS 2014), budget and staffing audits, and economic modelling using UNICEF's SSW Costing Tool. Comparative benchmarks with regional and global staffing levels.

Top Recommendations

- Gradually increase SSW to ~7,400 over 8 years (90 per 100,000 children)
- Fully implement the Children's Code Act through adequate training, staffing, and infrastructure
- Apply the Multivariable Index for Demand for Social Services (MIDSS) to guide equitable staffing
- Provide tools of trade, supportive supervision, and professional development
- Create a national Task Team

How you might use this

- Ministries and budget offices can use it to justify increased public funding for child protection staffing.
- Development partners and CSOs can apply the framework in advocacy and programme design.
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Safe Women, Safer Cities: A Systems Approach to Urban Safety for Women

Date of Publication: 2023
Type: Toolkit
Affiliations: SA Cities Network, Fixed Africa, Safetipin, Ethekwini
Geographic Focus: South Africa (national relevance, with local case study)

What's it about

This guide introduces an integrated urban safety strategy focused on the lived experiences of women. It uses Safetipin technologies and a multi-sectoral package of tools, partnerships, communication, and data systems to make cities safer through prevention, participation, and design. Centred on local government mandates, the project shows how inclusive safety planning can drive systemic change and shared accountability.

Key Argument

Safety for women is not simply about crime prevention or policing — it is about enabling women to fully participate in urban life. A city safe for women is a city safe for all.

Evidence Base

Grounded in participatory data from Safetipin apps and audits, qualitative research with women in Durban, programme evaluations, and decades of experience from the Safer Cities movement. Includes measurable safety parameters and rigorous local implementation.

Top Recommendations

- Integrate Safetipin data into city dashboards for real-time planning
- Train senior officials and local partners in using data tools and interpreting women's lived experiences
- Engage transport stakeholders to increase safety at taxi ranks and on public routes
- Support city-to-city learning and the development of urban safety curricula
- Build strategic partnerships across city departments and with civil society

How you might use this

- Cities can adopt the Safe Women Safer Cities package to align municipal planning and budgeting with lived safety outcomes.
- CSOs can use Safetipin tools to generate local data and advocate for structural interventions.
- Donors and urban networks can support scaling across South African cities and beyond.

Mapping Gender Norms in Public Social Media: A South African Study

Date of Publication: 2023
Type: Research Report (Book Chapter)
Affiliations: Tales of Turning
Geographic Focus: South Africa

What's it about

This study explores gendered discourse in South Africa by analysing public social media conversations using advanced analytics tools. It identifies how cultural practices like lobola, transactional relationships, and fatherhood are discussed and contested online, revealing how gender norms are reinforced or challenged in real time. The authors advocate for online dialogue as a strategy to shift harmful norms and support male allyship in ending gender-based violence (GBV).

Key Argument

Social media platforms are powerful spaces for understanding and shifting gender norms. Engaging men in online dialogue and addressing problematic discourses can help interrupt the intergenerational cycle of GBV in South Africa.

Evidence Base

The study uses thematic analysis of social media data collected between December 2021 and February 2022. Data is ethically curated and thematically structured, triangulated with academic literature and social norms theory.

Top Recommendations

- Use social media as a tool to understand and reshape gendered social norms
- Support digital campaigns and online male facilitation initiatives to counter misogyny
- Recognise the role of economic pressures in shaping gender expectations
- Engage in cross-sector responses that challenge provider-based masculinities
- Promote fatherhood models beyond financial provision

How you might use this

- Practitioners can adapt the findings to design online dialogue interventions with men and boys.
- Digital campaigners can build norm-shifting content rooted in real language and discourse.
- Researchers and prevention initiatives can use this framework to analyse local gendered narratives and track norm change over time.

Addressing GBV and Harassment: Emerging Good Practice for the Private Sector

Date of Publication: 2020
Type: Good Practice Guide
Affiliations: IFC and CDC
Geographic Focus: Global (with focus on emerging markets incl. sub-Sah Africa

What's it about

This publication provides detailed guidance for private sector companies and investors on how to assess, prevent, respond to, and monitor gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) in workplaces, communities, and supply chains. It presents a clear business case for GBVH prevention, highlights international standards, and offers tools to integrate action into operations. The guidance is practical, survivor-centred, and tailored to emerging markets

Key Argument

GBVH is not only a human rights violation — it also threatens workforce wellbeing, legal compliance, investor confidence, and business performance. Companies that take action can reduce risk, retain talent, and improve relationships.

Evidence Base

Draws from international human rights frameworks (ILO C190, CEDAW, UNGPs), sector-specific case studies, IFC/EBRD/CDC standards, and participatory research.

Top Recommendations

- Conduct robust GBVH risk assessments across the workforce, supply chains, and communities
- Embed survivor-centred, inclusive GBVH response systems in all company policies and grievance mechanisms
- Integrate GBVH indicators and action plans into ESG and environmental and social due diligence (ESDD)
- Use procurement, training, and physical design to reduce risk
- Engage with local partners to support survivor services and safe reporting

How you might use this

- Private sector leaders can adapt this framework to build or strengthen their GBVH response systems.
- Investors and ESG managers can embed GBVH into due diligence, risk screening, and monitoring tools.
- Development partners and consultants can use the tools to support companies with implementation in emerging markets.