

UJ GRT-I Gender-Based Violence Workshop

December 2025



Participants at the UJ GRT-I Gender-Based Violence

The University of Johannesburg's (UJ) Community Engagement Unit hosted a Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Workshop aimed at raising awareness, building capacity, and empowering the UJ community and external partners to recognise, prevent, and respond effectively to GBV. The workshop took place on 14 November at the UJ Bunting Road Campus.

As part of UJ GRT-INSPIRED'S commitment to sustainable community engagement, GRT-I extended the invitation to its partner schools in Hillbrow, resulting in two teachers attending as representatives.

The objectives were to strengthen partnerships with schools and community stakeholders, deepen their understanding of GBV dynamics affecting the communities they serve, equip educators and partners with knowledge and support resources and explore collaborative opportunities that promote safer environments for youth

The workshop included presentations by GBV specialists, university stakeholders, and a representative from the South African Police Service (SAPS). The programme covered the root causes, drivers, and manifestations of GBV, psychological, social, and structural impacts of GBV and preventative approaches at institutional and community levels. It also dealt with support services and referral pathways as well as SAPS procedures for reporting GBV cases, the role of specialised units, and common challenges in case management.

The SAPS provided practical insight into the legal processes surrounding GBV reporting, as well as the importance of early reporting, accurate documentation, and community collaboration in ensuring survivor protection.

The workshop reinforced the urgent need to address GBV as a structural and social issue. Discussions highlighted the prevalence of GBV in high-density, underserved communities such as Hillbrow, where the GRT-I partner school is located.

The SAPS provided invaluable information, offering clarity on how the police respond to GBV cases, the roles of the Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences (FCS) Units, and what survivors can expect during the reporting process. This helped demystify the justice system for attendees and underscored the importance of strong partnerships between schools, communities, and law enforcement. The teachers noted that they often struggle to navigate police processes when supporting learners, and they found this session especially informative.

The workshop highlighted the critical role teachers play in identifying early signs of abuse. The school representatives expressed that the session equipped them with better awareness and strengthened their confidence in supporting learners.

The presence of SAPS alongside academic and community practitioners underlined the power of multi-stakeholder collaboration. This aligns with UJ GRT-I's Community Engagement office's vision of bridging institutional and community efforts to foster safer environments.

The workshop demonstrated the need for ongoing support, training, and partnerships, particularly for educators who frequently deal with vulnerable youth.

The two teachers expressed appreciation for being included in the highly beneficial workshop. They indicated their interest in future training sessions and advised that they would be sharing key learnings from the workshop with their colleagues.

The GBV Workshop provided critical insights into both prevention and response mechanisms, enriched by the contribution from SAPS. The participation of the two teachers from the GRT-I partner school added real value, strengthening the connection between UJ GRT-I and the communities they serve. The event reaffirmed the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration in addressing GBV and highlighted opportunities for further engagement and capacity-building within their outreach work.