

Take This Thread and break the pattern of gender-based violence in South Africa

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In South Africa, one in five partnered women has experienced physical violence by a partner. According to the Social Policy Network, the government GBV (gender-based violence) and Femicide Command Centre reported more than 120,000 cases of GBV in the first three weeks of lockdown. Ending GBV could not be more urgent at this moment, when the world is dealing with a pandemic. Joining South Africa, and the rest of the world to help raise awareness is Take This Thread, a movement aimed at helping break the pattern of abuse by focusing on helping survivors of GBV achieve financial independence.





In partnership with People Opposing Women Abuse (Powa), Take This Thread uses creativity, skills development, psychosocial support and entrepreneurship to raise awareness of the pattern of abuse. The movement provides GBV survivors at Powa safehouses with sewing skills training, fabric and other raw materials to make merchandise. The items are sold on [TakeThisThread.com](https://www.takethisthread.com) and the proceeds go to the individual women who had a hand in making the products.

“Research continuously shows that financial dependence is one of the main reasons why women stay in abusive relationships, and to break the pattern of abuse, survivors need to be financially independent. Through Take This Thread, we open that door where survivors witness the possibility of making their own money so that leaving abusive relationships has less of a financial impact. It is also more than that. It is also about finding a sense of purpose, fostering sisterhood and enabling psychosocial support to survivors,” said Lynn Madeley, CEO of Havas Southern Africa and patron of Take This Thread.

The available merchandise includes scatter cushions, pillows and head scarves, each with a story from the survivors involved in the production. The items are made using a specially designed shweshwe-inspired material that illustrates the pattern of abuse. The unique fabric reflects the cycle of events as motifs and comes in three colour swatches.



WE'RE
BREAKING
THE PATTERN
OF ABUSE

PQWA *take this thread*





“The lockdown glared at many inequalities in our society, one of which is that women in South Africa are not safe in their own homes. We also know that because of the way our society is set up, leaving an abusive relationship is not always an easy choice. One of the factors that makes leaving difficult is intentionally imposed financial dependence by abusive partners. It becomes a tool of manipulation that binds women to remain within a cycle of abuse and it is this pattern of abuse that Take This Thread aims to break,” added Madeley.

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence in 2020 comes at a time when the matter of the safety of women is urgent. In South Africa, 40% of men have admitted to hitting their partners and 80% of abused women will return to their abuser. The South African police recorded at least 42,289 rapes between 2019/2020, which increased from 41,583 in 2018/ 2019. This is an increase of an average of 113 rapes per day to 116 rapes each day.

For more information on how you and your organisation can get involved, please see the contact details below:

Email: info@takethisthread.com

Phone number: 011 549 3600

Website: www.takethisthread.com

Instagram: [@takethisthread](https://www.instagram.com/takethisthread)

Twitter: [@TakeThisThread](https://twitter.com/TakeThisThread)

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