

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS TO PARTICIPATE

Leadership for systems change in addressing gender-based violence

EXECUTIVE SHORT COURSE 2026

Since the launch of South Africa's National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence in 2020, there has been a strong emphasis on responding to and preventing gender-based violence (GBV). Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), government officials and policymakers face many interrelated challenges, including weak systems, uncertainties and resource constraints. The sector needs decisive, strategic, critically informed and connected leadership to reduce rape and domestic violence and ensure survivors receive the support and services they need.

Many leaders we spoke to while designing this course feel disconnected from one another and want to develop their capacity to provide quality, compassionate care and support for survivors to break cycles of violence. To help address these challenges, Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust and MOSAIC Training, Service and Healing Centre for Women collaborated to shape a learning offering tailored to the needs of those working in the GBV sector.

The Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance at the University of Cape Town and the Institute for Security Studies are offering this custom-designed leadership course to enable collaborative relationships across government and civil society stakeholders working to address domestic violence and rape. This course builds leadership capacity to facilitate systemic change and ensure equitable, appropriate, quality services for survivors and their families.

The learning journey is practical and experiential, fostering critical and strategic thinking, problem-solving, and relationship building to strengthen collaboration. The ultimate intention is to ensure survivors receive compassionate, linked-up services.

Target audience

This course is designed for middle and top management officials in government (South African Police Services, Department of Justice, National Prosecuting Authority, Department of Health, Department of Social Development), NGOs, and funding institutions in the GBV sector.

We strongly encourage institutions to support applications from at least two team members, allowing participants to apply their learning together in their work environments.

Course structure

The course takes a systems view and includes peer learning, case studies and immersive exercises that expose participants to different approaches. Participants will leave with practical tools to enable positive change within their sphere of influence and become part of a well-connected network for ongoing learning and support. The course will motivate, invigorate and energise participants to drive change in the sector.

The course runs over ten weeks through online face-to-face sessions and self-paced learning, commencing in the week of **4 May 2026** and concluding on **16 July 2026**. Each week includes two compulsory online face-to-face sessions (Wednesday and Thursday from 09:00 – 12:00). In the week of 25–29 May there are no online face-to-face sessions.

Participants will be expected to dedicate a minimum of six hours per week (including the face-to-face session) to self-driven learning.

Criteria to pass

Participants who submit all learning tasks, participate in learning activities and attend at least 80% of online sessions will receive a certificate of completion.

Cost: ZAR 25000

Application criteria

Applicants must:

- Hold a management position within their department or organisation
- Have at least 5 years' experience in the GBV sector
- Have some tertiary education
- Be working in South Africa
- Be supported by a line manager or director
- Preferably nominated by a senior manager or funder

Two applicants per department or organisation are encouraged but not required

Application process

Submit your application and supporting documents here: <https://forms.gle/ovZGP3moSMfdQ9tJ6>

Required documents:

- Short, up-to-date CV
- Letter of recommendation from a senior manager or funder
- Motivation letter explaining why you want to do this course, how you intend to apply your learning and what you hope to gain (please write this yourself – do not use AI)

Closing date: 13 Feb 2026 at 16:00 (SAST).

Successful candidates will be notified by email by 13 March 2026. For queries, please contact: veleska.maphike@uct.ac.za