Questions and Answers – CPUT - Series 2

1. How can we ensure government action and accountability on GBV?

The government can invest more in prevention and protection. This includes better lighting on campuses and streets, more trained police officers, and quicker legal processes. Strong awareness campaigns in universities, and communities can help young girls understand consent and report abuse early. We must also strengthen partnerships between government, civil society, and youth-led structures such as Peer Educators.

2. What resources are available to support GBV prevention and response?

Resources include **Higher Health's GBV support services**, Campus Care Coordinators (Social Workers), Campus Health Unit, Student Counselling support, Police units like the and local NGOs. Peer Educators are also trained to guide students on where and how to access help.

3. Do we think male victims will ever be comfortable to report GBV?

Yes, but we need to remove the stigma and shame around male vulnerability. Society must accept that men too can be victims. Safe spaces, peer support, and strong male role models who speak out will encourage more men to report abuse.

4. How are institutions involving students and staff to combat GBV?

Many institutions now have GBV Task Teams, trained Peer Educators, workshops, and student dialogues. Higher Health trains both students and staff on GBV prevention, trauma support, and referral pathways. These actions create shared responsibility.

5. How do we help women put themselves first?

We teach self-love, self-worth, and confidence-building through peer-led

campaigns, mentorship, and support groups. Empowering women means reminding them they are not to blame, and they deserve safety, love, and respect.

6. How does one spot GBV in someone else's relationship?

Look out for signs like isolation, fear, mood changes, bruises, or controlling behaviour from the partner. The victim may seem anxious or withdrawn. Trust your instinct, check in gently and offer support.

7. How do you think we can reach the root of GBV?

We must change mindsets early starting from homes and campus space. Address toxic masculinity, inequality, poverty, and childhood trauma. Let’s talk more about healthy masculinity, empathy, and emotional healing, especially among boys/men.

8. Is the punishment for GBV fair or adequate in SA?

While laws exist, the justice system is often slow or fails victims. We need harsher and faster sentencing, better protection for survivors, and courts that are survivor centered. We also need education about the law, so people know their rights.

9. How and where to report GBV?

You can report GBV at:

- Local police station
- Campus Care Coordinators/ Social Workers
- Higher Health Toll Free Number: **0800 36 363 36**
- Department of Student Counseling- In-house support.
  Always try to report as soon as possible and reach out for counselling support too.
- Thuthuzela Centre

10. Can homophobia be decreased without offending others?

Yes. Through education, dialogue, and promoting human rights. Respect and understanding are key. We must challenge discrimination while promoting peaceful, respectful discussions.

11. As a GBV survivor, how does one regain confidence?

Healing takes time. Support groups, therapy, and self-love are key. It's also important to take back control of your life through affirmation, safe friendships, and doing things you enjoy. You are not defined by what happened to you.

12. Is society doing enough to prevent GBV?

Not really, more can be done. We need consistent action from leaders, institutions, churches, families, and media. GBV must be seen as everyone's problem, not just a women's issue.

13. How to take care of yourself while supporting a GBV victim?

Self-care is vital. Set boundaries, seek your own support, debrief with professionals, and take breaks. Supporting someone does not mean losing yourself. You're stronger when you also care for your own wellness.

14. What is GBV but portrayed as not?

Sometimes GBV is hidden as "discipline", "love", or "culture". Control, jealousy, or abuse should not be mistaken for care or tradition. Abuse is abuse.

15. Will GBV ever stop?

It can reduce if we all act, educating ourselves, supporting victims, challenging harmful norms, and demanding accountability. It's a long journey, but change starts with us.

16. How do we navigate a broken society that reflects pain through GBV?

We must promote healing. Trauma-informed approaches, mental health support, youth/student engagement, and breaking cycles of violence are key. Hurt people can hurt others, but healed people can also help heal society.

17. What are practical ways students can prevent GBV?

- Speak out when you see abuse
- Join Peer Education groups
- Support campaigns and marches
- Report GBV
- Educate your peers on consent and respect
- Promote positive masculinity

18. How can we engage men and boys in GBV prevention?

Start by involving them in dialogues, mentorship programmes, and leadership roles in prevention efforts. Let them speak about their struggles and unlearn harmful beliefs. Men and Boys need to see that strength includes respect and care.

19. How can victims come forward without fear?

By creating non-judgmental, safe spaces, where victims are listened to and believed. Protect their identity, offer support, and walk with them through the process. Fear decreases when trust and care increases.

20. How do you help someone who doesn’t want to report abuse?

Be patient. Offer emotional support and remind them of available options. Never pressure them. Help them feel in control, when they are ready, they’ll decide. Just stay close and supportive.

21. How effective are legal frameworks, and what role do religion and culture play?

Legal frameworks are often in place but not always enforced. We need better training for police and courts. Religion and culture can help if used to promote love and dignity but can also harm when used to excuse abuse. We must challenge harmful traditions while respecting faith and identity.

End

Compiled: Ozie Mdletshe