



# SEXUAL HOMICIDES OF ADULT WOMEN AND CHILDREN: A SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL STUDY

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# BACK GROUND

- Sexual homicides are distinct and extreme forms of violence against women and children
- Rare event in develop settings - <1% of homicides in US
- Rape and homicide is common in SA
  - Homicides among young male population is high
  - Sexual violence commonly reported in population research
- 1999 South Africa 16.3% of female homicides were sexual homicides
- Much less known for children (<17 yrs)

# STUDY AIM AND OBJECTIVES

- Describe prevalence, incidence and epidemiology
- Describe victim, perpetrator and crime characteristics

# METHODOLOGY

Adult women	Children
18 + years	0-17 years
	Boys and girls
2nd study (1999, 2009)	1st study (2009)

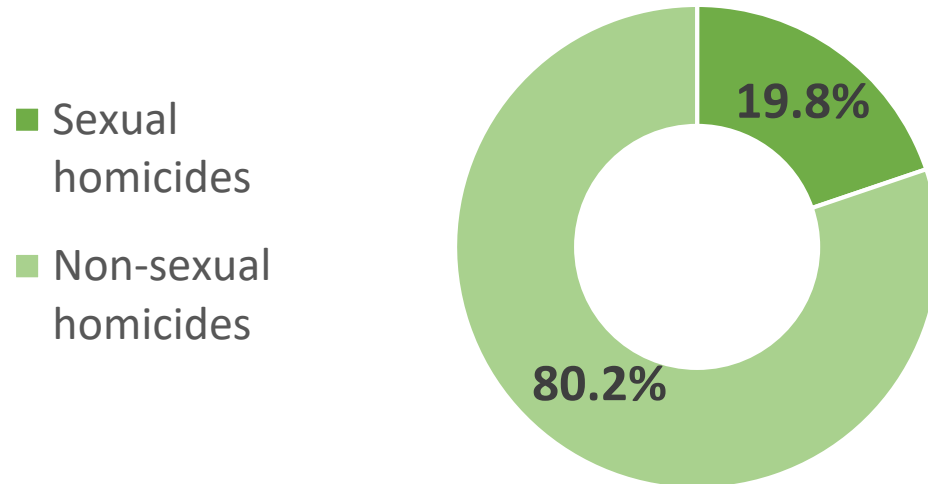
- Cross sectional retrospective national study
- Mortuary sample
- Homicides identified ➡ extract forensic data ➡ police interview
- Sexual homicide identified:
  - ❖ Evidence from forensic examination
  - ❖ Police evidence from investigation
- Victim, forensic, perpetrator, crime information
- Compare sexual homicides with non sexual homicides

# Findings: Sexual homicides 2009

## Adult women (18+ years)

Total Homicides: 2 670

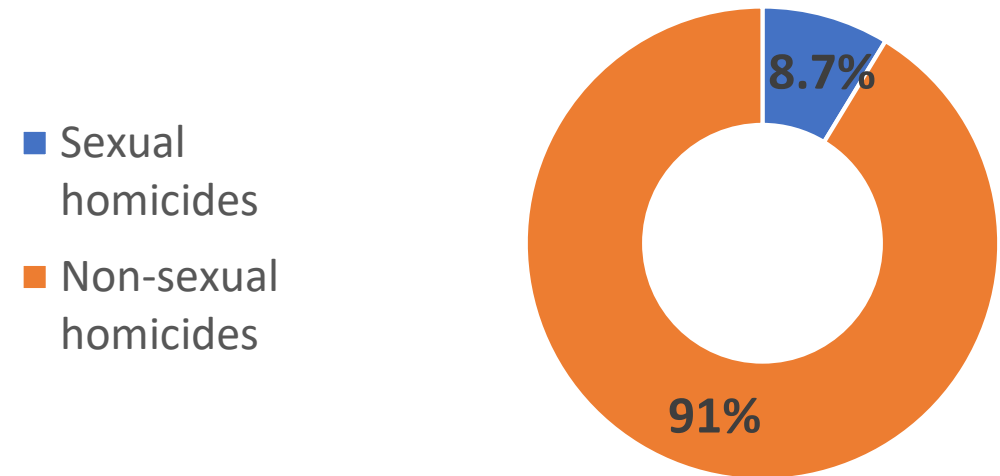
**Total Sexual Homicides: 495**



## Children (0-17 years)

Total Homicides: 1 277:

**Total Sexual Homicides: 104**



### Comparing 1999 with 2009

1999	2009
3.65/100 000 pop	3.05/100 000 pop
n = 561	n = 495
16.3% of all homicides	19.8% of all homicides

### Child sexual homicide rate

All children: 0.56/ 100 000 population

Female children: 1.03/ 100 000 population

Boy children 0.08/ 100 000 population

**Overall 9 sexual homicides per 1000 sexual offences reported to police in 2009**

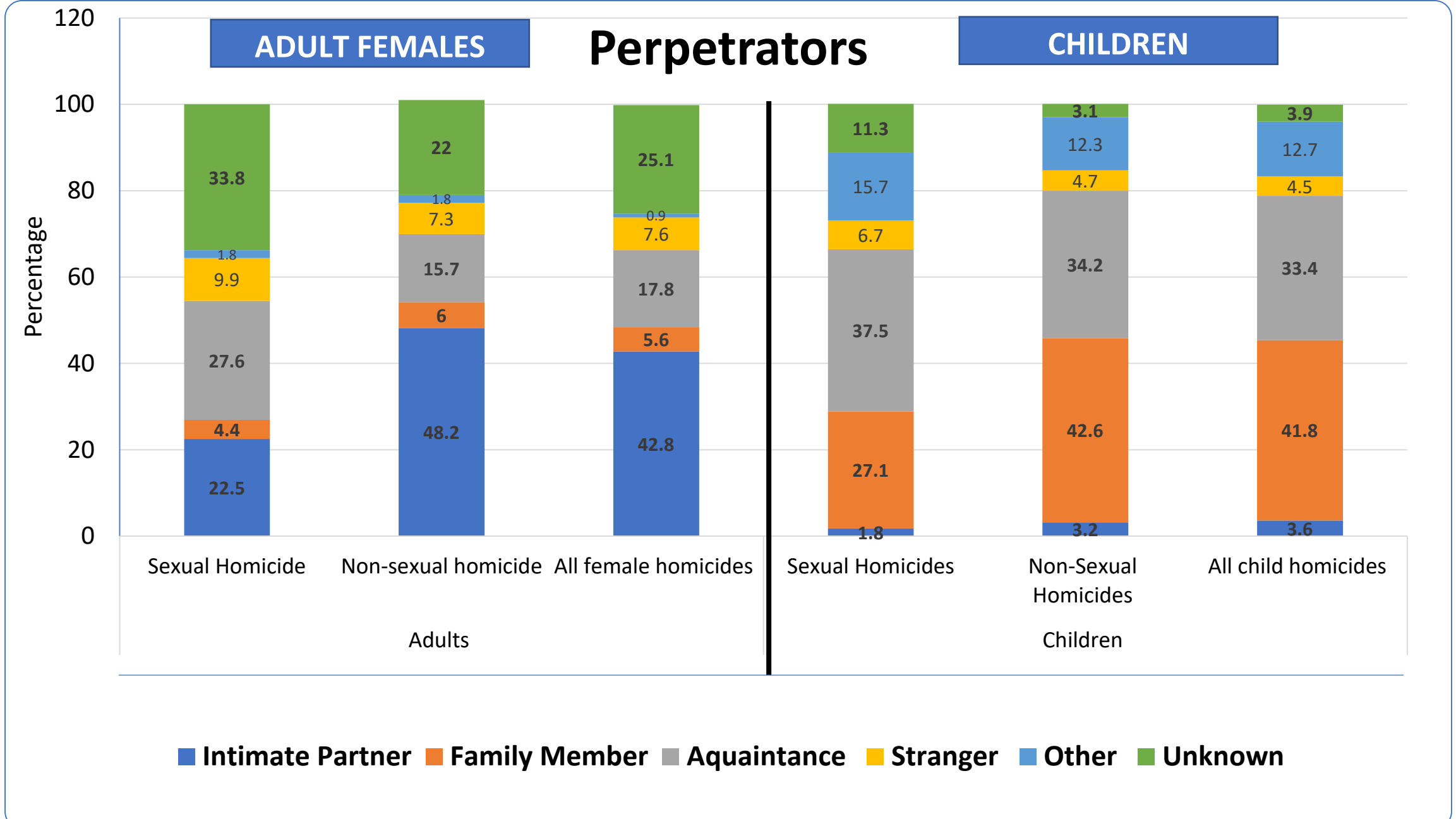
# Sexual homicides children victims:

	Sexual homicides	Non-sexual homicides	All child homicides
<b>Boys</b>	<b>8%</b>	29.3%	64.2%
<b>Girls</b>	<b>92%</b>	70.7%	35.7%
<b>Mean Age (SD)</b>	<b>11.0 (5.2)</b>	9.3 (7.6)	9.1 (7.4)
<b>&lt; 5 years</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	42.5%	41.1%
<b>5-&lt;13</b>	<b>32.3%</b>	7.4%	10.1%
<b>13-&lt; 18</b>	<b>52.3%</b>	50.1%	48.8%
<b>Urban</b>	<b>40.9%</b>	50.9%	51.0%
<b>Crime scene home</b>	<b>47.9%</b>	44.5%	44.1%
<b>Multiple victims</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	19.0%	18.9%
<b>Cause of death strangulation</b>	<b>35.5%</b>	4.0%	6.5%

# Sexual homicides: Adult female victims

	Sexual homicides	Non-sexual homicides	All adult female homicides
Mean Age (SD)	<b>38.6 (16.4)</b>	37.9 (15.4)	38.2 (15.7)
18-<30 years	<b>35.7%</b>	35.7%	35.5%
30-<45	<b>35.4%</b>	37.5%	36.8%
45-<60	<b>17.6%</b>	15.3%	15.9%
60+	<b>11.3%</b>	11.3%	11.7%
Employed	<b>23.1%</b>	26.0%	24.5%
Urban	<b>52.0%</b>	50.8%	50.4%
Crime scene public space*	<b>47.7%</b>	26.7%	31.0%
Multiple victims	<b>11.6%</b>	13.6%	13.1%
Victim was pregnant*	<b>6.9%</b>	4.4%	5.2%
Cause of death strangulation*	<b>24.5%</b>	3.6%	7.9%

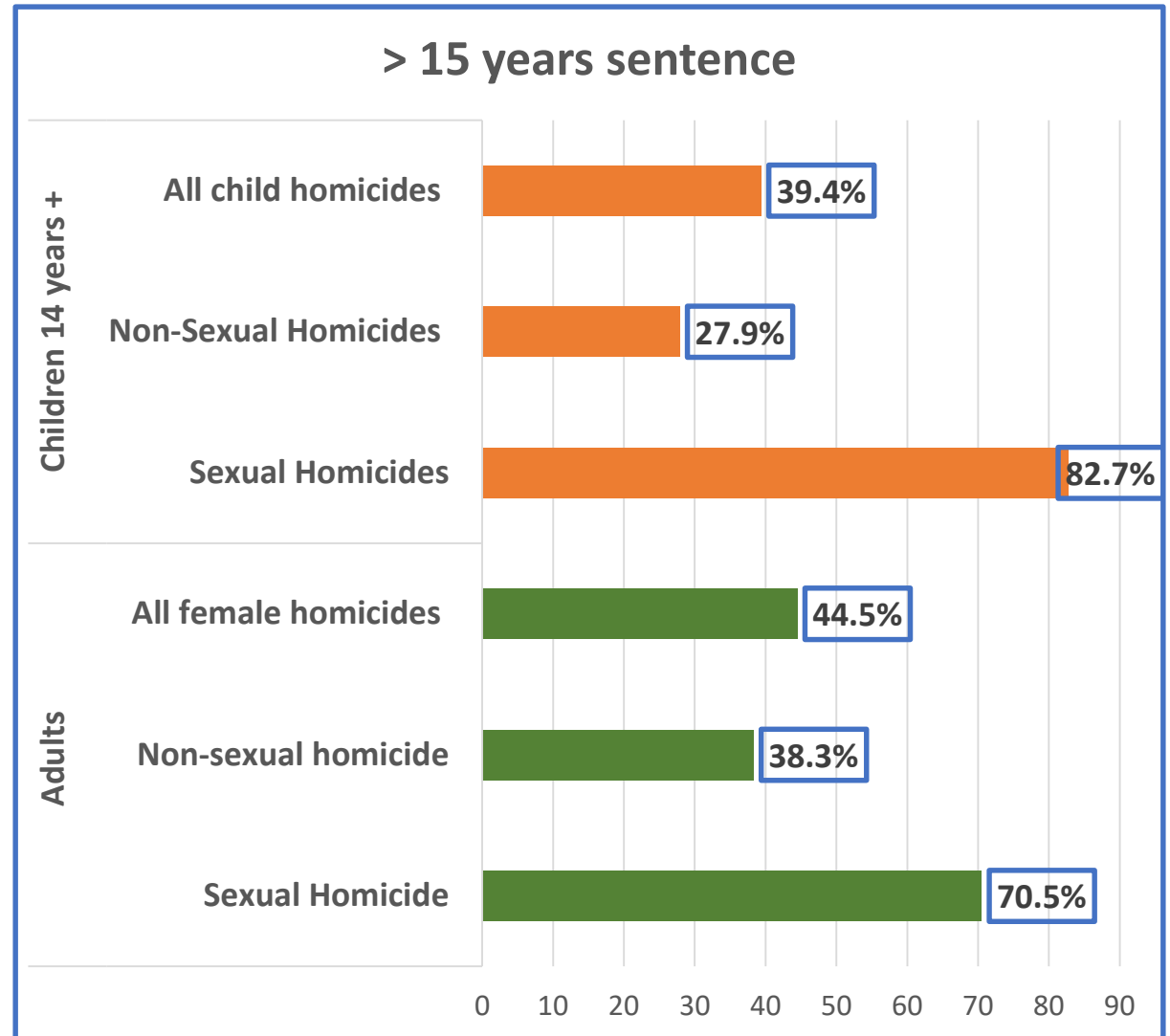
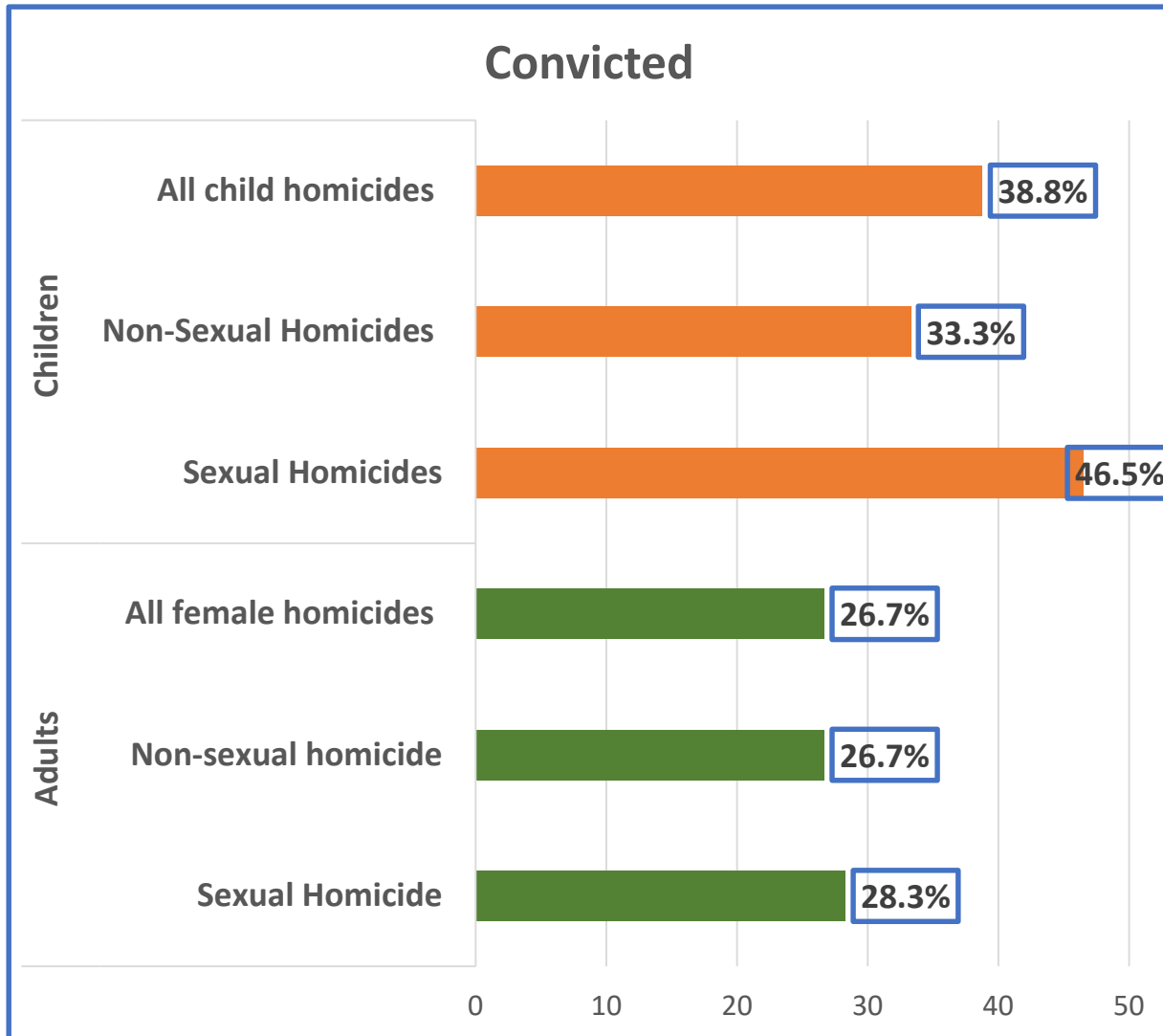
\* = significant at 0.05 or less



■ Intimate Partner ■ Family Member ■ Acquaintance ■ Stranger ■ Other ■ Unknown



# Convictions and Sentencing



# CONCLUSION

- Sexual homicides is not a rare event in South Africa and contribute to the health burden in South Africa.
- The female sexual homicide rate of 3.05/100 000 is similar to the overall global female homicide rate (3-4/100 000 pop).
- Despite overall decrease, the proportion among all adult female homicides increasing (16 to 19%)
- Nearly 1 in 10 children killed are also sexually abuse with older children girl children most vulnerable
- Sexual homicide fatality rate per sexual offence reported to police is 9/1000 cases reported.
- Strangulation most common manner of death
- Majority of crimes remain unsolved despite most perpetrators not strangers
- Reducing mortality caused by violence is a important policy goal globally and for South Africa and our focus should be on prevention of this crime

# RECOMMENDATIONS

- All homicides of children and females should be investigated for sexual crimes.
- Dedicated studies to collect homicide data for women and children can be done in poor resource settings.
- We should consider death review systems to improve investigation and improve response and prevention in developing settings.