

The power of purple

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Sorbet partners with Powa to raise awareness of GBV.



Leading hair and beauty salon, Sorbet, has partnered with **People Opposing Women Abuse (Powa)** to raise awareness of gender-based violence (GBV) during the annual **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence** campaign.

Together they called on South African citizens to paint their nails purple for the duration of the 16 Days campaign and to stand in visible opposition to all forms of GBV, including the most common of all, domestic violence. They also ask guests to share photographs of their purple nails on social media using the hashtags **#PaintPurple**, **#SorbetAgainstGBV** and **#POWA** where they get immense support. The POWA collaboration also coincides with the re-launch of **Sorbet Empowering Wo-Men (Sew) Foundation**.

The Sew Foundation aims to facilitate socio-economic upliftment by providing skills training for both women and men and, in line with Sorbet's brand focus and values, to contribute to both Breast Cancer and GBV initiatives. The latter is particularly significant as South Africa has one of the highest rates of GBV in the world, with rape and domestic violence being so frequent that they are regarded as systemic. This foundation raises funds through the Sorbet Group donating a portion of Sorbet products sold and call out to all Sorbet guests visiting their stores to donate R10 in-store.

To put this into stark perspective, World Population Review reports that [72.1 women per 100,000 of the population](#) were raped in 2021 alone, while during the first three weeks of the Covid-19 lockdown in 2020, government's GBV and Femicide Command Centre alone recorded [120,000 cases of GBV](#). And although more recent statistics are hard to come by, it is profoundly distressing to know that [half of all women murdered in 2009](#) (56%) were killed by a husband, fiancé or boyfriend.

"We have partnered with Powa in the #Paint Purple campaign to bring attention to the magnitude of this scourge and to

amplify the voices of both women and men who have been victims of this form of violence,” says Sorbet marketing executive, Candice Thurston. “Purple nails are a very visible reminder of the issue and of the impact that GBV has throughout society.”

Powa, which was founded in 1979 to address violence against women and girls and to provide practical support for those who have experienced it, resonates with Sorbet. Like Sew, Powa offers survivors of GBV skills training in the beauty treatment field, specifically to help them obtain financial independence and to break the cycle of violence.

“The #PaintPurple campaign was our way of encouraging Sorbet staff (called citizens), guests(consumers) and the general public to lend their voices – and their nails – to raising awareness of GBV and to getting out a strong message about the practical measures that need to be taken in order to significantly reduce its frequency in South Africa,” says Thurston.

The campaign is running in all Sorbet Group outlets, including Sorbet Salons, Sorbet Nailbars, Sorbet Drybar, Sorbet Man and Candi&Co. Sorbet Man has also committed to being an ally, calling on all men to speak out against GBV. Sorbet will also be sponsoring gift packs of their products for women affected by violence, which will be distributed through Powa.

“GBV knows no boundaries; it isn’t defined or limited by class, race, gender or creed,” says Jeanette Sera from Powa. “We need to keep getting the message out about how serious the situation is in South Africa and the #PaintPurple campaign is a novel and eye-catching way to do this.

“So don’t wait, demonstrate the power of purple now.”

If you or someone you know is or has been a victim of GBV, you can contact Powa on 011 642 4345, the government’s GBV Command Centre on 0800 428 428, or the government-run Thuthuzela Care Centres on 080 042 8428 or 080 015 0150 for assistance.

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