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WIRE Comments and Recommendations for the 2025/2026 Budget Estimates and the Finance Bill 2025.

Women in Real Estate (WIRE) Kenya, the leading professional network championing the inclusion and advancement of women in the built environment, is deeply concerned by the proposed reduction in the national government's budget allocation for preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) in the 2025/26 fiscal estimates. This cut comes at a time when donor funding to GBV cases has reduced and Kenya continues to experience a worrying rise in femicide and other forms of GBV. Survivors continue to face persistent barriers to accessing lifesaving services. Reducing the GBV prevention and response budget not only undermines our collective pledge to protect women and girls, but it also threatens Kenya's commitments under international and regional human rights [instruments](#). In addition, the absence of any allocation for community-based rescue centres which are critical sanctuaries where survivors can find immediate safety, psychosocial support and legal aid further undermines the fight against GBV.

We also note with concern the shrinking growth of the construction sector, with the sector having witnessed a drop of 0.7% growth compared to the previous year. This contraction directly translates to job and income losses, particularly impacting women who constitute a small but growing percentage of the workforce. Economic instability is also a known social stressor that can exacerbate GBV. With a reduced GBV budget, women and girls face an increased risk of violence.

We however welcome the proposed reduction in Export Promotion Levies on critical steel imports, a measure that could help reduce construction costs and accelerate sector growth.

Why the GBV Budget Must Be Restored and Expanded

1. Rising femicide statistics and GBV incidents demand increased, not reduced, investment in prevention, survivor support, and accountability mechanisms.
2. Well-resourced prevention programmes (public campaigns, community dialogues, school-based gender education) have proven cost-effective by reducing the incidence and social costs of violence.
3. Domestic budget provisions build government ownership, ensure continuity of services when external grants lapse, and strengthen institutional capacity.

WIRE's Recommendations

To revive the growth of the construction sector and safeguard the welfare of women and girls, WIRE recommends the following actions;

- **Implement more incentives to accelerate the growth of the construction sector and empower women to transact more business in the construction industry.** This includes:
 1. Reinstatement of the preferential tax rates for developers of affordable housing units
 2. Lowering of loan interest rates to alleviate capital constraints
 3. increased support for local building materials manufacturers by promoting and supporting local production and increasing access to financial tools that allow production to be scaled up to meet demand
- **Increase the FY 2025/26 GBV prevention and response allocation.** This is needed to address rising service needs that include, but are not limited to advocacy for victims, medical care, increase safe houses and legal aid.
- **Mainstream GBV & Safety in Construction.** Mandate gender-sensitivity and anti-harassment training in all public-sector construction projects and the inclusion of GBV and Harassment response protocols in contractor performance contracts.
- **Strengthen monitoring, evaluation, and public reporting** on GBV expenditure, ensuring transparent, results-oriented use of public funds.
- **Engage industry associations and civil society** in defining budget priorities, service standards, and performance metrics for both the construction industry and GBV response.

WIRE is ready to collaborate on policy design, capacity building, and monitoring to ensure a prosperous, inclusive and violence-free future for all.

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Contact for Follow up

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