

# Press Release

## For immediate release

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**Media contact:** Tawanda Makombo, Research Analyst Tel: 011 482 2053 or 072 283 0626

Email: [tmakombo@irr.org.za](mailto:tmakombo@irr.org.za)

**Media enquiries:** Michael Morris Tel: 066 302 1968 Email: [michael@irr.org.za](mailto:michael@irr.org.za)

Kelebogile Leepile Tel: 011 432 7221 ext: 2018 Email: [kelebogile@irr.org.za](mailto:kelebogile@irr.org.za)

#### **IRR warning on suicide mortality rate**

The Institute of Race Relations (IRR) believes better suicide prevention and intervention measures need to be implemented in schools and communities in the light of research showing the high rate of suicide mortality in South Africa compared to other selected African countries.

South Africa has a suicide mortality rate of 10.7 per 100 000 people, which is higher than the comparable rate for Botswana (9.7), Egypt (2.6), Malawi (5.5) and Nigeria (9.9).

While South Africa's suicide mortality rate is lower than some countries in Africa – these include Angola (20.5), Cameroon (11.9) and Swaziland (14.7) – suicide is a problem the country needs to tackle more effectively, according to IRR analyst Tawanda Makombo.

Typically, he said, a sense of hopelessness or a feeling that there were no solutions to life's difficulties prompted thoughts of suicide.

A few months ago, in one of many cases, a 19-year-old Wits University student committed suicide by jumping from the sixth floor of a building in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, on a Saturday night.

Makombo noted that, in South Africa's case, factors such as unemployment and economic hardship, combined with the insufficiency of suicide prevention and intervention services, could be reasons for the country's high suicide mortality rate.

"Proper suicide prevention and intervention measures must be set up in schools and communities if this problem is to be tackled," he said.

For more information on this topic, contact Tawanda Makombo (Details above)

**Ends.**