Gender Based Violence Programming in Contexts Affected by Violence and Conflict

christian aid

Contents

Executive summary

This paper is intended as a resource for programme staff, in Christian Aid and elsewhere, who are designing and implementing interventions to address Gender Based Violence (GBV) in contexts affected by violence and conflict. It draws on analysis of existing policies, a review of relevant global programming approaches and an examination of case studies from five countries affected by violence and conflict – the Democratic Republic of Congo, Colombia, Myanmar, Nicaragua and Zimbabwe. Based on this analysis, the paper offers recommendations for programming and policy.

In this paper, GBV is understood to be any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships. It includes physical, emotional/psychological, and sexual violence, violence on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression (SOGIE), as well as denial of resources or access to services. This includes threats of violence and coercion. GBV inflicts harm on women, girls, men, boys, transgender, intersex and non-binary individuals and is a severe violation of several human rights. In contexts affected by violence and conflict, GBV can increase and take on different forms owing to an array of factors including, but not limited to: the use of GBV as a tactic of war, increased militarisation, limited mobility and access to services, and the breakdown of law and order. These different forms often emanate from existing and deep-rooted gender inequalities that prevail throughout different levels of society, which are present before, during and after periods of conflict or widespread social violence. GBV disproportionately affects women and marginalised groups such as people with disabilities and diverse sexual and gender identities.[1]

Understanding the root causes and drivers of GBV, as well as the nuanced factors that contribute to GBV in contexts affected by violence and conflict, is a fundamental aspect of designing and implementing effective programmes. Christian Aid's global strategy on violence and peace building, led by Christian Aid Ireland, highlights the dynamic relationship between destructive violent conflict, human security, development and sustaining peace. The strategy aims to reduce the risk of GBV, ensure that survivors receive adequate support, and empower women, men, sexual and gender minorities to change the conditions that lead to GBV.

Our review of existing external policies and programme approaches found that they are ever evolving and becoming more focused on the root causes and drivers of GBV. Long-established global agendas like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and emerging frameworks like the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UN Sustaining Peace resolutions, recognise the links between gender equality, non-discrimination, and inclusive and participatory decision making to reducing violence and building peace. NGO programming approaches are also supporting this focus through guidance like 'the ecological framework.' This paper focuses on the ecological framework as a key guide to understanding the contexts where violence occurs, the risks that exist in these contexts and how they interrelate with each other. The framework identifies factors at different levels of an individual's life – from the personal, to the family, community and society – and analyses how they interact to contribute to the likelihood of becoming a victim or perpetrator of GBV. As the ecological framework supports the analysis of root causes and drivers, it is complemented by global standards and principles to guide the design and implementation of programmes trying to address them. These principles include, but are not limited to: ensuring a survivor-centred approach, 'do no harm', designing a multi-sectoral response, as well as being inclusive and engaging with a range of community actors.

Some of the case studies examined in this paper show key examples of how the ecological framework and the principles are applied in design and

implementation, and how it is supporting progress towards sustainable outcomes. For example, using the ecological framework as an analytical tool for understanding the drivers of GBV at the community and societal level in Colombia helped to design interventions that support women survivors of GBV to pursue justice, as well as push for policy and legal change at the national level to guarantee no amnesty for victims of sexual abuse. The work in Colombia rests on certain principles, such as survivors deciding the best approach at every step of the response. Other main learnings from the case studies included: the potential value in working with faith-based actors to change gender norms and behaviours that perpetuate GBV, and the successful prioritisation of economic assistance as an additional pillar to the multi-sectoral approach principle. For example, in DRC, it was found that through the programme's provision of psychological and medical support (two out of the four pillars of the multi-sectoral approach, the other being legal and security), it was flexible enough to respond to unforeseen needs of the survivors and provide cash vouchers to empower survivors through income generation as well as enhance their personal and family relationships. A few limitations were also found through the examination of the case studies including: the continued marginalisation of people with diverse sexual and gender identities despite programmes aspiring to be inclusive, and the lack of conflict sensitivity which inhibits an understanding of additional risks associated with situations of conflict and violence, and ultimately undermines particular programming principles such as 'do no harm' and inclusion for ensuring sustainable and transformative change.
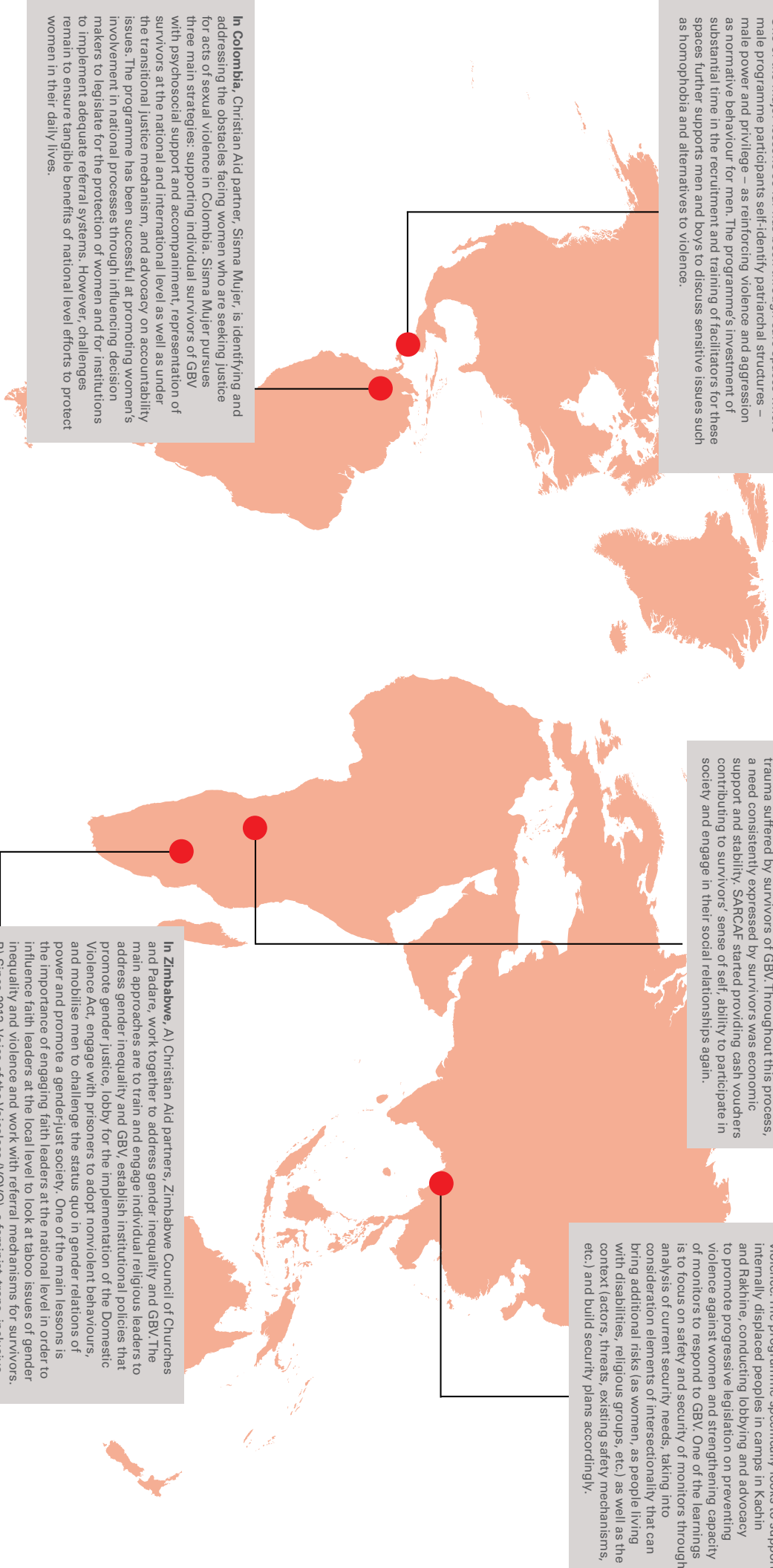
To learn from these findings and support more effective GBV programming in contexts affected by violence and conflict, this paper has recommendations for those designing and managing programmes.

To programme managers:

- Apply the ecological framework as an analytical tool to understand the drivers of GBV at the different levels and design interventions accordingly.

- Apply a conflict sensitive approach, through 1) conflict analysis and 2) understanding how interventions affect the conflict and in turn the drivers of GBV and vice versa.

- Include economic support, in a conflict sensitive manner, as an additional and priority pillar of the multi-sectoral approach.

- Ensure a community-based approach includes sustained engagement with a variety of community actors, with particular attention to the role of faith actors when appropriate.

- Improve data collection on GBV, taking an intersectional approach, which recognises the interaction of gender with other forms of social oppression, such as ethnicity or sexuality.

To advocacy teams to focus on:

- Advocating for states to develop progressive tax systems that are equitable, prioritise public services and enhance the health, legal, security, psychosocial and material needs of survivors.

- Advocating for States to ensure a robust monitoring and reporting system to record progress of implementation under the SDGs.

- Advocating for the new UN OHCHR Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity to 1) ensure a wider interpretation of gender to include people with diverse sexual and gender identities is integrated into key human rights instruments and 2) increase data collection on the levels of GBV against people with diverse sexual and gender identities worldwide.

In Nicaragua, Christian Aid's partner aims to transform understandings of masculinities and create 'alternative' masculinities that promotes gender equality as key to ending GBV. Some of the main strategies used are working with local leaders and organisations to address violent prevention, conduct workshops, reflection spaces, cultural activities and outreach to explore alternative masculinities and develop diplomas in masculinities to build up the level of expertise in this area. One of the major lessons so far has been through safe spaces where male programme participants self-identify patriarchal structures – male power and privilege – as reinforcing violence and aggression as normative behaviour for men. The programme's investment of substantial time in the recruitment and training of facilitators for these spaces further supports men and boys to discuss sensitive issues such as homophobia and alternatives to violence.

In Colombia, Christian Aid partner, Sisma Mujer, is identifying and addressing the obstacles facing women who are seeking justice for acts of sexual violence in Colombia. Sisma Mujer pursues three main strategies: supporting individual survivors of GBV with psychosocial support and accompaniment, representation of survivors at the national and international level as well as under the transitional justice mechanism, and advocacy on accountability issues. The programme has been successful at promoting women's involvement in national processes through influencing decision makers to legislate for the protection of women and for institutions to implement adequate referral systems. However, challenges remain to ensure tangible benefits of national level efforts to protect women in their daily lives.

In Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), since 2002, in the context of armed violence, SARCAF has been building community resilience and protection in Eastern DRC, specifically responding to GBV. The programme implements a number of different strategies from community-based protection systems, legal support for cases of rape, facilitating medical referrals and training police on human rights. One of the successful elements of the programme has been through the provision of psychosocial support as a response to the trauma suffered by survivors of GBV. Throughout this process, a need consistently expressed by survivors was economic support and stability. SARCAF started providing cash vouchers contributing to survivors' sense of self, ability to participate in society and engage in their social relationships again.

In Myanmar, the Christian Aid programme in Myanmar builds on existing programmes to integrate a response to GBV in broader humanitarian work by working with civilian protection monitors, unarmed civilians involved in preventing, reducing and stopping violence. The programme specifically looks to support internally displaced peoples in camps in Kachin and Rakhine, conducting lobbying and advocacy to promote progressive legislation on preventing violence against women and strengthening capacity of monitors to respond to GBV. One of the learnings is to focus on safety and security of monitors through analysis of current security needs, taking into consideration elements of intersectionality that can bring additional risks (as women, as people living with disabilities, religious groups, etc.) as well as the context (actors, threats, existing safety mechanisms, etc.) and build security plans accordingly.

In Zimbabwe, A) Christian Aid partners, Zimbabwe Council of Churches and Padare, work together to address gender inequality and GBV. The main approaches are to train and engage individual religious leaders to address gender inequality and GBV, establish institutional policies that promote gender justice, lobby for the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act, engage with prisoners to adopt nonviolent behaviours, and mobilise men to challenge the status quo in gender relations of power and promote a gender-just society. One of the main lessons is the importance of engaging faith leaders at the national level in order to influence faith leaders at the local level to look at taboo issues of gender inequality and violence and work with referral mechanisms for survivors. B) Since 2013, Voice of the Voiceless (VOVO), a feminist, trans, inclusive, democratic collective, has been working to document human rights abuses against marginalised communities and establish safe spaces to share stories and mutually support each other. VOVO focuses on the survivors of GBV and holds continuous consultation with survivors to ensure that their fears, hopes and needs inform every stage of their interventions. VOVO integrates the needs of people with diverse sexual and gender identities into the debate on women's rights and the need to eradicate all forms of discrimination and exclusion for the promotion of safety, dignity and equality for all. One of the main lessons is the integral role of regular debriefing among staff and reflective practice on their work in creating an honest and cohesive working environment, which in turn helps to prevent against staff burnout and vicarious trauma.

Glossary

Gender based violence (GBV)

Any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships. It includes physical, emotional/psychological, and sexual violence, violence on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression (SOGIE), as well as denial of resources or access to services. This includes threats of violence and coercion. GBV inflicts harm on women, girls, men, boys, transgender, intersex and non-binary individuals and is a severe violation of several human rights.

Gender refers to the set of roles and characteristics that different cultures and social groups prescribe for women and men, girls and boys. This includes their relationships with each other. All persons are gendered and have a gender identity, which can fall within a male-female binary, but can also fall outside it.

Patriarchy describes societies characterised by current and historic unequal hierarchal power relations between women and men, where women and certain groups of males are systematically disadvantaged, oppressed and exploited. This takes place across almost every sphere of life but is particularly noticeable in the under-representation of women and marginalised male groups in social spaces, state institutions, decision-making positions and industry. It encourages a dominant form of 'masculinity' and 'femininity' which directly affects how men and women are expected to behave.

SOGIE – Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression aims to ensure inclusivity in understanding the marginalisation of people according to their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression. The term 'people with diverse sexual and gender identities' or LGBTQI is used to describe individuals (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex). SOGIE refers to characteristics and expressions of all human beings.

Conflict is a natural part of life and can be an important driver of social change. Key to moving from violence to building peace is learning to resolve our conflicts in a non-violent manner. However, conflict is often used as shorthand for armed conflict.

Armed conflict is a legal term describing an international or non-international armed conflict where international humanitarian law applies.[2] Post-conflict settings, are states where a peace settlement has been made, even if high levels of violence remain.

Conflict sensitivity minimises the negative and maximises the positive impacts of interventions on peace and conflict dynamics. For Christian Aid, conflict sensitivity is bound up with gender sensitivity, power analysis and inclusive programming.[3] For gender sensitivity, consider the differential impacts of programming on gender identities. Power analysis looks at social structures, including the power dynamics within development work, in order to understand the ways in which different dimensions of power reinforce poverty and marginalisation.

Violence is endemic in many countries and not only where there is armed conflict. The majority of violent deaths occur outside of armed conflict either alongside it or through social violence. **Direct violence** (physical, perceived or experienced) is often underpinned by **structural violence** (the unequal societal structures which harm people) and **cultural violence** (the attitudes which normalise or permit direct or structural violence). All three forms interrelate where cultural and structural violence cause direct violence and reinforces structural and cultural violence.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) 'refers to any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to those in the relationship.'[4] IPV occurs in all contexts and among all groups, disproportionately affecting women. Although women can be violent in intimate relationships and violence can occur in same sex marriages, most perpetrators are male. The UN estimates that of all women who were victims of homicide in 2012, almost half were killed by intimate partners or family members. Less than 6% of male homicide victims in the same year (global averages) were killed by partners or family members.[5]

States affected by violence and conflict are where there is some large-scale mix of political armed conflict, widespread social violence (inter-communal, criminal etc.), and structural violence directed against particular groups.

GBV always co-exists with this general context of violence, in both public and private spheres, and often in a complex interplay with other violence. Such states are often referred to as 'fragile', though this term is contested. The context of violence and conflict also means that governance, access to justice, and resources for public services are limited, and these constraints affect the possibilities for programming on preventing and reducing GBV.

Peace building is a broad and overarching concept that includes a wide range of efforts by government and civil society to support human security and transform destructive conflict. It can include direct processes focused on managing, mitigating or resolving the root causes and driving factors of conflict before, during, and after violence erupts. On the other hand, peace building also occurs through interrelated efforts that support and strengthen durable peace, including humanitarian assistance, sustainability practices, economic development, and strengthening resilience through building local capacities, solidarity and social cohesion. The United Nations' definition is inclusive of a wide range of measures intended to reduce the risks of lapsing or relapsing into conflict, strengthening top, middle, and local level capacities to manage conflict effectively, and laying the foundation for sustained peace through development efforts. **Sustaining peace** supports countries to address root causes of conflict and nurture the foundations of social cohesion, assisting parties to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation and healing in moving towards recovery and development.[6]

Protection is understood differently in a humanitarian or human rights programming context. In humanitarian interventions, it is often understood in terms of physical security and meeting basic humanitarian needs. For human rights accountability, it refers more broadly to protecting the work of human rights defenders and the communities they support from violence and intimidation. Christian Aid adopts a human rights-based approach to protection, which is underpinned by the universality of human dignity (upon which all human rights are founded) and emphasises people as rights holders and states and responsible organisations as duty bearers.

Security here refers to two different types. **National security** as the state's defence of its citizens, territory and rule of law through protecting borders, critical infrastructure, national culture and identity. Citizens are seen as a 'whole' and the state's aims are to protect this 'whole' from threats. However, individuals and groups have suffered insecurities through this process. One common example is that during attempts to secure national infrastructure against attacks, governments have harmed and killed innocent civilians as collateral damage. **Human security** means protection of the security and dignity of the individual including their freedom from violence, and their fundamental rights and freedoms.[7] The concept is not accepted by all states affected by violence and conflict.[8]

GBV prevention and mitigation positively overlap in programme design and implementation but the distinction is important. **Prevention** refers to actions or interventions that stops GBV from happening (e.g. promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, working with men and boys to change attitudes and behaviours). **Mitigation** refers to reducing the risks that expose people to GBV (e.g. risk reduction strategies, sufficient lighting, security, locks on latrines).[9] **GBV response** refers to interventions that are reacting to occurrences of GBV through survivor care and assistance.

The ecological framework helps to identify factors at four different and intersecting spheres/levels (individual, relationship, community and society) that can either put an individual at risk of becoming a victim or perpetrator of GBV or protect them. This identification can be used to design interventions at different levels of the framework to address the risks of GBV, reduce them and enhance protective factors.[10]

Intersectionality promotes an understanding of human beings as shaped by the interaction of different social locations ('race'/ ethnicity, indigeneity, gender, class, sexuality, geography, age, disability/ability, migration status, religion). These interactions occur within a context of connected structures of power (e.g. laws, policies, state governments, other political and economics unions, religious institutions, media). Through these processes, interdependent forms of privilege and oppression are created and shaped by colonialism, imperialism, racism, homophobia, ableism and patriarchy.[11]

Introduction

Gender Based Violence (GBV) is an abuse of gendered power in society through multiple forms of violence including: physical, sexual, verbal, psychological and economic and can occur in a multitude of spaces including: domestic, public or within institutions/organisations. This violence targets a person based on their sex, gender, sexual orientation or their behaviours as seen in relation to their gender. It is rooted in patriarchal norms and gender inequities which are embedded in and perpetuated by government institutions, faith and traditional institutions, civil society, communities and citizens themselves. It is a severe violation and abuse of several human rights, including life, security of person, highest standard of physical and mental health and freedom of opinion and expression; a public health issue, and a barrier to peace, development and social justice.[12]

Within the definition of GBV is the concept and endemic reality of **violence against women,** where 35% of women globally have experienced some sort of physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime and which, according to the World Health Organisation, may exacerbate and take on new forms in situations of conflict, post-conflict and displacement.[13] A 2012 study in Sierra Leone, which experienced armed conflict from 1991 to 2002, found that up to 250,000 women and girls suffered targeted gendered violence including rape, sexual slavery, torture, abduction, sterilisation, forced pregnancy and sexual exploitation while men were disproportionately affected by enforced recruitment and associated violence.[14] Intimate partner violence for all its prevalence (see Glossary), is also known to increase during times of conflict. For example, in South Sudan women living in Protection of Civilian Camps in Juba, who were displaced a number of times, were 'twice as likely as women in Juba City to have experienced multiple acts of intimate partner violence'.[15]

Other global statistics, although sporadic, indicate high levels of **sexual violence against men, violence against people with intersecting identities and violence against people with diverse sexual and gender identities**. For example, sexual violence against men was evidenced in reports from 25 conflict affected countries between 1998 and 2008, and since has been exposed in major conflicts including Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Libya and Syria.[16] In considering intersecting identities, the risk to GBV increases. For example, according to ADD International, women living with disabilities suffer high risks of GBV where they experience high vulnerability to violence in daily life, often due to difficulties in recognising or avoiding danger such as not hearing gunshots, not staying in groups during firewood collection or being left unprotected at home. Furthermore, a review of international studies by the Working Group on Violence Against Women concluded that women with disabilities can suffer an equal, or up to three times greater risk of rape. And in times of conflict, such violence can take on new forms such as abandonment during displacement or being blamed for 'attracting' the conflict.[17] In addition, violence against people with diverse sexual and gender identities is disproportionate with a worldwide figure of 2,609 trans and gender-diverse people reported killed in hate crimes between January 2008 and September 2017 in 71 countries. A high proportion of these killings are in Central and South America,[18] where social and gang violence is high. Among these statistics, the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (IACHR) identified high rates of killings among trans women, and discrimination and violence perpetrated against them by law enforcement agents.[19]

Given the prevalence of GBV, reducing it is a key priority for Christian Aid, set out in the organisation's global strategy on violence and peace building. This global strategy is led by Christian Aid Ireland and highlights the dynamic relationship between destructive violent conflict, gender inequality, development and sustaining peace.

Christian Aid recognises that GBV exists along a continuum between violence and peace. GBV is present in 'peaceful' societies and can be exacerbated by the emergence of violent conflict. One such root cause is patriarchy – a systematic rule of many societies based on gender normative ideologies. It often assigns the role of breadwinner, protector and head of households to men and boys and care-giver and dependent positions to women and girls. These roles essentially manifest in practice through power over, control and subordination of women and girls and reinforce male dominance and men as users of violence. Such practices not only play out at the individual level but are also embedded in the structural level of society whereby privileges are given to men and those who conform to dominant notions of gender, especially notions of masculinity. When people deviate from these expectations of masculinity and femininity, they are at increased risk of marginalisation. While such power systems prevail throughout society in peacetime they can heighten or take on different forms during times of violence and conflict especially when gender performances are constantly shifting and being negotiated in relation to one another.[20] For example, when men are expected to take up arms, women often play a greater role in the 'informal trade sector' and therefore become breadwinners, which shifts norms of masculinity and femininity and shifts power from men, often manifesting in an intensified expression of GBV such as an increase in intimate partner violence.[21]

Understanding conflict as a root cause of GBV is more challenging. Although many studies have identified a clear **correlation between gender inequality and high levels of violence**, they are not as clear on whether violence is contributing to gender inequality or vice versa, or both are driving each other.[22]

Though more men are likely to die as a result of direct violence, other forms of GBV that intensify for women and girls during violent conflict include trafficking, sexual slavery, forced marriage and structural forms of violence, such as women's and girls' limited mobility and access to school or employment. These manifestations perpetuate gender inequality and increase the risk of becoming a victim of GBV especially when there is increased militarisation, breakdown of law and order and heightened sense of aggression in society. This environment also affects the post conflict stage where people are at higher risk of psychological trauma and cognitive and social challenges due to long term exposure to violence.

There have been a number of different **reasons cited for the increase in GBV during violence and conflict** such as: the breakdown in law and order which enables high levels of impunity; displacement and separation from families and communities leaving victims more vulnerable; military and political tactics employed to humiliate, dominate and disrupt social cohesion; high levels of fear, anxiety and distrust after armed conflict has ended, lack of confidentiality and poor services.[23]

Gender norms and discriminatory attitudes can also drive GBV in a context of conflict as they foster notions of militarised masculinities, gender discrimination and women as 'property' or inferior to men (for example dowry custom, polygamy, or early marriage as a protection mechanism). Although such patriarchal norms exist in societies not affected by violence and conflict, they are nevertheless common factors in GBV and lay the basis for increased cruelty and regularity during the insecurity of conflict and violence.

To better understand some of the aspects of GBV that grow out of deep rooted gender inequalities and manifest themselves during times of violence and conflict, it is useful for Christian Aid to view patriarchy as a sort of ecosystem from which many aspects of GBV grow. However, contextual factors in each case need to be specifically analysed. For example, sometimes GBV can be in the form of a fully developed strategy of war where rape, forced marriage or forced sterilisation are used to fracture communities and tightly control populations. In other cases, rape can be encouraged as a reward for soldiers not being paid, because they are away from their partners, or because of a superstition that having sex with a virgin can protect against bullets. It also happens out of raw opportunism. There is no one driver of GBV that can explain all situations.

It is important to note that characteristics of gender inequality, whether at the individual, community or societal level have serious implications on the vulnerability of populations at risk of GBV during times of conflict. Without understanding these characteristics, whether strict rigid norms or weak protection laws and inequitable resources, programmes and policies will not have the desired effect for those affected by GBV.

Christian Aid wishes to improve on identifying and addressing the root causes and contributing factors to GBV in contexts affected by violence and conflict. This paper was commissioned by Christian Aid Ireland, led by two independent researchers and supported by Trinity College Dublin. It was jointly funded by the Irish Research Council New Foundations scheme 2017. The paper aims to respond to the following learning questions:

➡ What are the current international policy and programming arguments on GBV in contexts affected by violence and conflict?

➡ What specific lessons are learned from GBV programming by local civil society actors in contexts affected by violence and conflict?

➡ What recommendations should Christian Aid make from the learning to inform GBV policy and programming design?

This paper is divided into four sections. Section one (this introduction) outlines the focus and scope of the paper and frames GBV in relation to the specific contexts of violence and conflict where there are added dimensions to understanding its causes and contributing factors. Section two explores current policies, and programme approaches, such as the ecological framework, that aim to prevent and respond to GBV. Section three reviews six case studies from Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar, Nicaragua and two from Zimbabwe, and identifies useful lessons. Section four pulls together the findings from the case studies and reads them in the context of the existent literature. Section five makes a number of recommendations to improve policy and programming design on GBV in contexts affected by violence and conflict.

Methodology

Different methods were employed throughout this paper including a literature review, interviews with Christian Aid staff and external experts, interviews and focus group discussion with Christian Aid country programmes staff and programme participants.

A literature review of the current thinking within policy and programme in addressing GBV was conducted in early 2017, complemented by interviews with Christian Aid staff and eight external experts. This was followed by an examination of six case studies (five Christian Aid programmes, one external) between June - August 2017, which began with a qualitative study of programmatic documents including proposals, consultation meetings during design, materials used during implementation, available reports and evaluations. This was followed by visits to Myanmar, Nicaragua and Zimbabwe to undertake interviews and focus group discussions about GBV programming in these contexts. As it was not possible to visit Colombia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, assessments of the programmes were made through existing reports and programme material and substantiated with online interviews and focus group discussions with Christian Aid Colombia staff, Christian Aid Colombia partners and programme participants as well as online interviews with Christian Aid partners in the Democratic Republic of Congo. During interviews and focus group discussions, the research team utilised the 'Most Significant Change Approach' which drew out personal accounts of change and encouraged participants to explore which changes were the most significant. The literature review and visits were complemented by a peer learning in December 2017 where partners from each country involved in this paper, with the exception of DRC, spent three days in Dublin sharing experiences and validating the ecological framework as well as the programming principles.

Two limitations in the methodology are to be highlighted. The first relates to the different stages of programme design and development. Although Christian Aid conducts ongoing monitoring and evaluation, the case studies represent a snapshot of each programme, and does not comprehensively capture how the programmes adapted to new learnings and needs over time. A second limitation relates to the limited number of interviews with stakeholders in some locations, which detracts from the ability to offer comprehensive comparative analysis. This was due to a few reasons: some programmes had only just been established, researchers had limited time in country, and it was challenging at times to organise Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with community members. The data was considerably more robust and rich in Nicaragua, Zimbabwe and Myanmar where all interviews and FGDs were possible.

1. International instruments on addressing GBV

Since the International Bill of Rights (the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the subsequent Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), there has been a gradual evolution in the legal and policy making arena in relation to GBV.

Main international instruments addressing GBV:

- The Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (1967)

- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) (CEDAW)

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)

- The Vienna Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993)

- The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)

- The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (1994)

- The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on Rights of Women (2003)

- The Southern African Development Community's Protocol on Gender and Development (2008)

- The Istanbul Convention (2011)

These instruments consider the prevalence of gender inequalities, defining GBV, including marital rape, as a form of violence against women, as well as explicitly recognising women's rights as human rights for the first time. They also set standards globally and domestically for establishing key rights of women and requiring governments to 'modify or abolish' laws, regulations, customs and practices that discriminate against women.[24]

Further advancements were made in the 1990s on **GBV** through Security Council resolutions, and legal judgements at International Tribunals (Yugoslavia and Rwanda) that address sexual violence during armed conflict. In 2002, the Chamber of the Rwandan Tribunal was the first to convict rape as a crime against humanity.[25] The UN Security Council's Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security in 2000 accelerated the debate through its additional lens of viewing women as agents in peace building and highlighting the gendered dimensions to conflict and peace building. It calls for greater prevention of violence against women in conflict, protection of women, participation of women in peace processes, and relief and recovery services tailored to their needs.

There have been a number of **challenges in relation to the effectiveness of these instruments** in addressing violence against women and more broadly addressing GBV. On a practical level, declarations are not legally binding and states consistently fail to make progress on their legal obligations under CEDAW, despite the publication of general recommendations to support interpretations of the convention. Implementation depends on the political will and capacity of states. Also, some state signatories to CEDAW have made over 100 reservations,[26] which can undermine the normative impact of the convention. This was not helped by the original decision, not reversed until 2008, to locate the Committee, which monitors the implementation of the convention, in New York, cut off from other human rights bodies located in Geneva.[27]

The Women, Peace and Security UNSC 1325 resolution and its subsequent resolutions have also been criticised for failing to spur real action within states. A high-level Global Study Review, 15 years after the 2000 Women Peace and Security (WPS) resolution, found that while member states had made over 180 financial, political and institutional commitments, implementation of these commitments was rare. For example, as of 2011, only 9% of peace negotiators and only 3% of peacekeepers were women. There have been some notable achievements in the recent Colombian peace process (2016) where, because of sustained advocacy from civil society, women made up one-third of peace table participants and over 60% of victims and experts represented. This resulted in gender featuring throughout the peace agreement as well as securing a guarantee of no amnesty for crimes of sexual violence. However, this example remains outside the norm.[28]

On a more theoretical level, these instruments can contribute to misconceptions in the **understanding of GBV**, such as defining gender as synonymous with women and using the term sexual gender based violence interchangeably with GBV. There is insufficient consideration of the situation of GBV against men and boys, while recognition of GBV against people with diverse sexual and gender identities is completely absent. Such limitations neglect the importance of intersectional and inclusive approaches to achieving transformative change for men, women and people with diverse sexual and gender identities. For example, the latter group can be separated under the guise that they experience violence because of their sexuality rather than their gender. Whereas in fact, it is the very deviation from notions of how people of a specific gender should act and whom they should love that puts them at risk of GBV.[29]

A **further obstacle** is the **global policy and legal focus on sexual violence against women as a tactic of war**. This narrow concentration neglects decades of feminist work on violence against women as based on social and gendered elements.[30] Sexual violence against women should be challenged and addressed. However just because rape or sexual violence isn't happening does not mean the harm of other forms of GBV is not happening. A gendered understanding of social norms and inequalities will help to better dissect the causes of GBV, whether inside or outside conflict, such as physical violence and intimate partner violence, emotional and psychological violence, harmful traditional practices and socio-economic violence.

In recent years there has been some **expansions of GBV** beyond sexual violence as a weapon of war and gender as referring to men and women. For example, CEDAW's **updated General Recommendation 35, 2017** emphasises the importance of addressing the underlying causes of GBV and not just focusing on specific actors, e.g. armed groups, defence forces etc. The recommendation recognises that violence against women 'manifests in a continuum of multiple, interrelated and recurring forms, in a range of settings, from private to public, including technology-mediated settings and in the contemporary globalised world it transcends national boundaries'.[31] This highlights the responsibility of a range of actors including state, non-state and the private sector to address GBV and gender inequalities in different spaces.[32]

Similarly, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015 includes a specific goal tackling the root causes of conflict to achieve peaceful and inclusive societies. **SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions** has specific targets, namely 16.7 and 16.b, that point to the necessity of inclusive, participatory and representative decision making as well as the promotion of non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development. These targets are accompanied by indicators that require 1) the collection of disaggregated data by sex, age, disability and population groups on the number of positions in public institutions 2) perceptions among the population that decision making is inclusive and responsive 3) proportion of people reporting discrimination or harassment.[33] In 2017, Maria Viotti, speaking on behalf of the UN Secretary-General during a Security Council

debate, underlined the importance of **gender equality and security of women as strong indicators of peace**.[34]

Finally, the UN Sustaining Peace focus as outlined in the **Security Council Resolution 2282** in 2016 and simultaneous General Assembly Resolution shows a further global movement towards articulating more clearly the **interdependence of gender equality and peace**. This global focus is also building on the increasing evidence that gender equality and women's empowerment are closely related to stability and peace, 'more so than a state's level of democracy, religion or gross domestic product', according to the largest dataset on the status of women.[35]

In relation to people with diverse sexual and gender identities, the SDGs do not explicitly call for SOGIE rights. However, they provide opportunities to advance in this area. For example, SDG 5 calls for an **end to all discrimination** of women and girls, which includes people with diverse sexual and gender identities; Goal 10 prohibits exclusion on the basis of 'other status' implying that the SDGs apply to everyone (SOGIE, migrant, disabled etc.); and SDG 16 highlights the importance of access to justice and non-discriminatory laws, which can support the cessation of attacks, harassment and discrimination of state security forces and the justice system towards people with diverse sexual and gender identities. This interpretation is also reinforced by the newly appointed UN Independent Expert in 2016 on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, which can draw attention to levels of violence and discrimination faced by people with diverse sexual and gender identities.[36]

While there are deficiencies in the policy environment, given recent revisions and improvements the existing international policy instruments in the main are adequate to hold perpetrators of GBV to account and reduce the risks of GBV.

2. Programming on GBV in contexts affected by violence and conflict

The distinction between humanitarian and development programming is commonly and historically understood as humanitarian being short-term, responsive and focused on saving lives while development is longer term, addressing systematic problems on a social, economic and political level. This distinction influences many programmatic domains from funding to timeframes, to deliverables and stakeholders etc. However, because crisis situations are often protracted, especially in contexts affected by violence and conflict (i.e. Syria, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo etc.), the distinction between humanitarian and development does not allow for an adequate response and programmes require a stronger link between the two.

As GBV is known to increase during times of crisis, it is no surprise that the predominant amount of substantial programming guidance on addressing GBV has emerged from the humanitarian side. In development, there is a noticeable shortage.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines on integrating GBV interventions in humanitarian action (2015),[37] aim to mainstream prevention of GBV across all humanitarian work. They are designed for non-specialist GBV staff, and look at the most relevant functions (coordination, assessment and monitoring, protection) and sectors (human resources, water and sanitation, food security and nutrition, shelter and site planning and non-food items, health and community services, and information, education and communication) to ensure they mitigate against the risk of GBV and prevent GBV from occurring in their programme areas. The IASC guidelines are complemented by the protection mainstreaming agenda from Global Protection Cluster which aims to assists humanitarian workers to mainstream protection according to the programme cycle – needs assessment and risk analysis, project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

> ## Other key guidance documents, which also have a range of accompanying checklists, M&E guides and ethical guidance include:
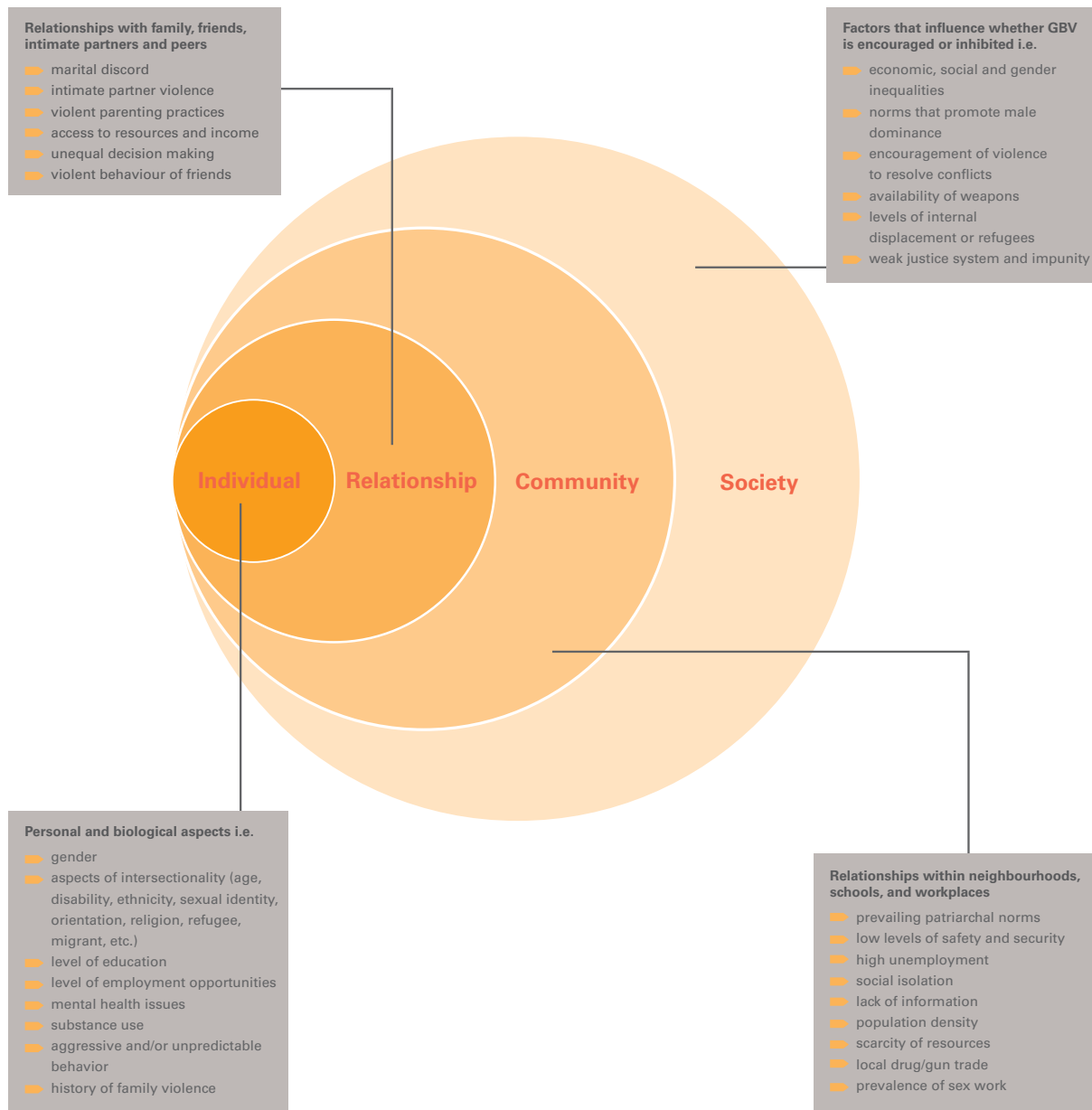>
> - The Call to Action Roadmap (2016)
> - The UNFPA Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to GBV in Emergencies (2015)
> - Core Competencies for GBV Program Managers and Coordinators in Humanitarian Settings (2014)
> - IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings (2007)
> - The WHO Ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies (2007)

Other longer-term development plans and programmes that can help to guide programmes in addressing GBV, include the UN Secretary General's 'Agenda for Humanity', where 'leave no one behind' is in the five-point plan for alleviating suffering, reducing risk and vulnerability. The Agenda promotes the need to reach everyone and transform the lives of those most at risk of being marginalised and forgotten and clearly stipulates the eradication of sexual and gender based violence.[38] 'What Works', a DFID funded programme on preventing violence, is also a valuable guide for drawing on learnings and lessons in addressing GBV in a variety of contexts and can help to inform programme design.[39] Yet, it remains the case that there are not enough global standards and guidance for development practitioners on reducing GBV, especially in contexts affected by protracted violence and conflict.

Analysing the drivers of GBV

One area advancing understanding of violence against women is the public health sector. The Violence Prevention Alliance, under the network of the World Health Organisation, applies a public health lens to interpersonal violence and works to address the root causes of violence and improve services for survivors. Two frameworks that are important are: 1) The power and control wheel that focuses specifically on the patterns of behaviour to dominate or exercise control in intimate relationships such as intimidation; emotional abuse; isolation; minimising, denying and blaming; economic abuse; and coercion and threats[40] and 2) the ecological framework that focuses on understanding the contexts where violence occurs, the risks that exist in these contexts and how they interact.[41] Although both are mutually complementary, the ecological framework, adapted from L. L. Heise,[42] is useful for guiding analysis and informing the design of complex programming.

The ecological framework

Relationships with family, friends, intimate partners and peers
- marital discord
- intimate partner violence
- violent parenting practices
- access to resources and income
- unequal decision making
- violent behaviour of friends

Factors that influence whether GBV is encouraged or inhibited i.e.
- economic, social and gender inequalities
- norms that promote male dominance
- encouragement of violence to resolve conflicts
- availability of weapons
- levels of internal displacement or refugees
- weak justice system and impunity

Individual   Relationship   Community   Society

Personal and biological aspects i.e.
- gender
- aspects of intersectionality (age, disability, ethnicity, sexual identity, orientation, religion, refugee, migrant, etc.)
- level of education
- level of employment opportunities
- mental health issues
- substance use
- aggressive and/or unpredictable behavior
- history of family violence

Relationships within neighbourhoods, schools, and workplaces
- prevailing patriarchal norms
- low levels of safety and security
- high unemployment
- social isolation
- lack of information
- population density
- scarcity of resources
- local drug/gun trade
- prevalence of sex work

This framework identifies the different and intersecting levels for addressing GBV as individual, relationship, community and societal.[43] These levels can help to explain the factors that lead to becoming a victim or perpetrator of GBV and how their interrelation may influence and reinforce each other.

This framework – and its usefulness for analysing GBV in conflict contexts – can be explained by first looking at the societal level and the risks identified such as inequalities and discriminatory gender norms that give rise to GBV and can contribute to a normalisation of discriminatory, violent or harmful practices. For example, patriarchy and amplified expectations of men (aggression, sexuality, physical strength) during conflict can contribute to GBV against women and girls. At the *societal level,* legal systems can also reinforce such discriminatory norms and enable the continuation of different forms of GBV through limited access to justice and high levels of impunity.

Factors at the *community level* such as unequal access to resources or employment opportunities and prevailing illegal trade can drive and exacerbate GBV owing to conflict over resources and the competing needs and interests of different actors. For example, during inter-communal conflict, women and girls can be targeted as a way to fracture community cohesion and continuity owing to their perceived roles in preserving the social fabric of their communities. At the *relationship level*, drivers include violence and stress within the household, economic pressures and unequal decision making. For example, on return from war, men can abuse and exploit female headed households in order to re-establish themselves and their status in the community. At the *individual level* factors can range from low level of education to alcohol or drug abuse and being exposed to family violence. For example, someone developing a drug problem as a negative coping mechanism during widespread violence or conflict can alter behaviour and contribute to GBV. As these factors interrelate, they can again drive or exacerbate levels of GBV in each sphere and across each sphere. For example, if women are targeted at the community level to disrupt cohesion, this can lead to shame and expulsion of women from their close relationships and then to substance abuse or abuse or mental health issues at the individual level.

A mapping of these factors helps to analyse and identify areas at the *micro* (immediate benefits for targeted groups), *meso* (collaboration with local authorities and relevant structures to support systemic change) and *macro* (strengthening institutions, laws, policies regionally and nationally) levels to challenge behaviours, attitudes, practices, policies and laws that reinforce the perpetration of GBV. Working at all levels is not necessary. Depending on capacity, it is important to choose intentions that work at one (or more levels) to reduce the risk of becoming a victim or perpetrator of GBV. The factors are not exhaustive. In contexts affected by violence and conflict, there are additional factors that come up from conflict analysis that need to be considered as drivers of GBV.

These can include the political and economic intentions of armed or violent groups, the politicisation of ethnicity or the media acting as a driver of conflict. These factors need increased focus when analysing drivers at the *societal level* in order to influence institutions, laws and policies and contribute to lasting change.[44]

Addressing GBV: From principles and analysis to practice

Once the drivers of GBV are understood there are key principles that can also inform the design and implementation of programmes in contexts affected by violence and conflict. Building on the drivers identified at each level under the ecological framework and how they inter-relate can inform the implementation of these following principles to ensure survivors are treated with dignity and respect and programmes contribute to genuine sustainable change.

The UNFPA Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to GBV Interventions in Emergencies[45] outline the following key guiding principles for preventing and responding to GBV:

A survivor-centred approach recognises and maintains the centrality of the agency of all those who have experienced violence, which includes women, girls, men, boys, children and people with diverse sexual and gender identities. For many of those who have direct experience of GBV the term 'survivor' highlights their power and agency, in contrast to the term victim. In affirmation and celebration of this agency the term survivor should be used, although it is important to acknowledge that many do not survive.

The four main areas to ensure a survivor-centred approach are: **safety, respect, confidentiality and non-discrimination,** which aim to create a supportive environment in which the survivor is treated with dignity and their rights, needs and wishes are respected. It recognises the insecurity and discrimination faced by individual survivors, including males, children and people with diverse sexual and gender identities, and therefore ensures an adaptable and flexible approach.

A humanitarian/human rights based approach (HRBA) to GBV. HRBA is enshrined in CEDAW and other instruments and recognises that gender inequality is at the root of GBV. It aims to unearth the gender discrimination that hinders comprehensive change throughout different levels of society – laws, policies, attitudes and behaviours – and redress unjust power distributions. HRBA is built on the premise that citizens can claim their rights and not rely on charity – and states have corresponding duties to protect, respect and fulfill these rights. Humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality are outlined in the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response

Community-based approach involves survivors, communities and at-risk populations as active partners in preventing, mitigating and responding to GBV and supporting survivors to access services. Influential actors can range from community to traditional leaders to faith leaders and religious elders who can promote justice, peace and dignity to prevent and reduce GBV.[46]

There should be regular consultation to ensure all perspectives are considered and the programme is not reinforcing power dynamics but building on existing community-based protection and coping mechanisms. This process will encourage ownership and a sense of survivor agency.

Do No Harm is foundational in ensuring no further harm comes to survivors or the community as a result of programme interventions. Based on Mary B. Anderson's tool, it is the touchstone for skilled decision making, particularly in contexts affected by violence and conflict. The main elements are: 1) understand the context, 2) analyse drivers of violence and sources of tensions, 3) analyse connectors across individuals and groups, 4) analyse the programme (its mission and mandate and ways of operating etc.), 5) analyse the programme's impact on the dividers and connectors identified and, 6) generate programming options, 7) test options and re-examine impact for possible programme re-design.[47]

A number of other guiding principles and standards highlighted by Christian Aid partners during a peer learning in Dublin, December 2017 on preventing and responding to GBV included:

Inclusive participation and empowerment requires 1) good planning and preparation by ensuring participation of women (assessing safe spaces, time and location, travel requirements, compensation, trusted facilitators, outreach strategies etc.); 2) engaging men and boys (in understanding their needs, gauging the level of victimisation among men and boys of GBV as well as associated stigma and discrimination, and supporting them to transform harmful social norms that minimise gender inequality; 3) considering the needs and rights of people with diverse sexual and gender identities who sometimes fall under the categories of men and women e.g. transgender women, but sometimes do not, e.g. intersex or gender non-conformists. Inclusive participation and empowerment requires an understanding of **intersecting identities** and multiple forms of discrimination and stigma must be taken into account for understanding contributory factors to GBV, especially in violent and conflict contexts. In some cases, discrimination and marginalisation is not only

related to gender but also to other social identities such as gender, class, race, age, political affiliation and disability. An intersectional lens helps to bring such aspects to the forefront which will ensure wide ranging and nuanced solutions.

Multi sectoral approach is imperative for a holistic, sustainable response to GBV as it acknowledges that no single type of response or sector can adequately address GBV. The four main sectors recognised by this approach are: health, psychosocial, legal and security, that all have individual responsibilities and resources to respond to the specific needs of survivors. Economic support can also improve recovery. Collaboration and coordination between the sectors is part of this approach to ensure that no undue burden is placed on the survivor. This can often be the case where rules and regulations in each sector are hindering the progress of another sector i.e. a survivor is unable to get medical attention because the police are not available to sign a referral form.

Accountability to affected populations, namely survivors of GBV and those most at risk such as women, girls, and people with diverse sexual and gender identities. An accountability partnership framework has recently been developed by different international actors to improve accountability in GBV prevention and response. Although it is looking specifically at emergencies, its consideration can be relevant to wider contexts affected by violence and conflict.[48] For example, ensuring funding is allocated to risk reduction strategies both at the local and national level.

3. GBV in programming practice: Lessons from six case studies

This section looks at six case studies from five countries: Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo. Myanmar, Nicaragua and Zimbabwe. The case studies draw on experiences from five Christian Aid programmes and one external programme in designing and implementing GBV programmes with the aim of identifying lessons in areas of promising practice. Through the analysis this learning paper also identifies areas of improvement for each programme. Although the case studies differ in capacity, longevity and contexts, they nonetheless show the parallels with policy and programming approaches as well as the gaps.

Case study 1 - Supporting the women's movement in Colombia

Context

On 24 November 2016, the Colombian government signed a revised peace agreement, previously rejected in a referendum in October by a small majority, with the main guerrilla army, FARC. The agreement legally ended the 52-year civil war that killed 220,000 people and displaced up to seven million. Conflict related gender and sexual violence against women was used systematically during this time by all armed actors in Colombia as a weapon and intimidation strategy to silence and punish communities. In 2008, the constitutional court found that 'sexual violence against women is a common practice, widespread, systematic and invisible in the Colombian armed conflict'.[49]

The peace agreement, as a result of sustained advocacy and lobbying by civil society organisations and participation of women's organisations in the peace talks, ensured amnesty is not granted for crimes of sexual violence. However, the political situation remains unstable with a ceasefire and peace talks with the other main guerrilla group, ELN, wavering and levels of violence by paramilitaries remaining high. According to Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in 2017, they treated 645 survivors of sexual violence in two cities and stated that 'sexual violence against women and girls is one of the most frequently committed forms of assault in Colombia.'[50] Yet it remains a largely unreported crime mainly due to fear of retribution and further victimisation by perpetrators. Where it is reported, women encounter major obstacles to accessing justice and face extremely high levels of impunity.

Yet despite these obstacles and at considerable personal cost, Colombian women are speaking out and demanding their right to truth, justice and reparation and guarantees of non-repetition, which are enshrined in the peace agreement.

There is critical work being done at a local level by civil society organisations to ensure the leadership and participation of women. Although more conservative political forces opposed gender equality in recent elections (influenced by traditional church teachings that see it as a threat to the family and society at large) women remain optimistic that they can keep gender equality on the agenda.

In this context, Christian Aid Colombia supports Sisma Mujer to identify and address the obstacles faced by women seeking justice for acts of sexual violence.

Programme objectives

- To **support civil society, communities, victims and partners in claiming rights** for women survivors of GBV.

- To **demand accountability from state institutions** to respect and fulfil the rights of women survivors of GBV.

- To **support transitional justice mechanisms** in upholding the rights of women to a life without violence and in guaranteeing the rights of women survivors of GBV, through enhanced visibility, jurisprudence, and the implementation of the peace accords.

Programme activities

- **Provide counselling, psychosocial support, and accompaniment** of women victims of violence.

- **Conduct comprehensive litigation and provide representation of women victims** of violence at the national and international level (the Inter-American Human Rights System) as well as under transitional justice mechanisms.

- **Conduct advocacy** towards the Colombian authorities, and third party countries' governments on accountability measures.

Emerging results

- **The creation of a Gender Subcommittee**, influencing the mainstreaming of gender into the peace talks and the explicit recognition that sexual violence is a grave crime in the context of armed conflict.

- **The Constitutional Court ordering the state** to provide comprehensive physical and mental care for victims of sexual violence.

- **The sentencing of a paramilitary perpetrator** to 28 years for the kidnapping, rape and torture of journalist Jineth Bedoya in 2001.

What is working well

Responsive programming: Faith-based partner CIJP (Inter-Church Justice and Peace Commission) collaborated and feminist partner, Sisma Mujer, to implement an intervention for addressing GBV. CIJP recognised that GBV was an area they needed to strengthen and Sisma Mujer, one of the leading feminist organisations in Colombia working with GBV survivors, had lots to offer. Although both sides were cautious about engaging the other (due to concerns from each about the Catholic church and feminism having different positions and approaches) they came together. CIJP gained technical support and a feminist perspective on GBV and gender equality. Sisma Mujer gained an understanding of faith values and norms which helped in their work on prevention of GBV owing to the influence of Catholicism in Colombian society.

Survivor-centred: Sisma Mujer only works with women survivors who they can fully support with health, psychosocial and legal elements. Sisma Mujer ensures each survivor decides the best approach at every step and are in charge of the response.

Inclusive participation and empowerment: interviewees and FGDs spoke of how the conflict strengthened the women's movement. Women have organised themselves through their shared experiences of displacement and violence and have gained more confidence in voicing their needs and opinions. They have already done important work to ensure the recognition of the rights of women and women's experience of violence during the conflict by participating in the peace talks and ensuring amnesty is not granted for crimes of sexual violence. As Sisma Mujer explained, 'taking time (to document women's stories) is critical to women's

wellbeing and is an opportunity for them to celebrate their achievements and strengths rather than just focus on their experience of violence'.

Duty of care: Sisma Mujer recognises the emotional and psychological effects on staff, lawyers and therapists from directly hearing the stories and by putting their own lives at risk by advocating for this cause. Therefore, staff can avail of counselling sessions to look after and protect themselves emotionally. Sisma Mujer as an organisation is constantly under threat and has been provided with special security measures from the Inter-American Human Rights Commission which the staff on this programme can also access.

Areas for future consideration

A) The ecological framework: the work in Colombia offers a key opportunity to examine the interventions at different spheres i.e. the individual, community and societal for addressing GBV. Documenting change that is driven by women in reducing and preventing GBV at the individual and community level will be an important test in determining the effectiveness of the national processes and legislation on preventing and protecting against GBV and how these three levels intersect and impact women's lives.

B) Inclusive definition of GBV: as women's organisations explained, it is important to broaden the understanding of GBV and not just focus on experiences related to conflict, but consider domestic violence, structural violence and inequality.

C) Community-based approach: women's organisations have extensive experience and knowledge of working on women's rights, but also on mobilisation,

collective action and community-led programming. It would be beneficial for humanitarian, development and faith-based organisations, as well as human rights organisations, to receive support from women's organisations to develop women-led and women-centred programming.

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Case study 2 - Building community resilience and sustainable protection for survivors in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

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Context

The Rwandan genocide in 1994 had a devastating effect on the DRC, especially in the East, plunging the country into decades of conflict and violence. At that time, more than two million Hutus sought refuge in eastern DRC, 7% of whom were estimated to be perpetrators of the genocide by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. These are often referred to as the Federation for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). Rwanda and Uganda's invasion of eastern DRC to root out the FDLR led to the overthrow of the President and the installation of a Rwandan backed president, Kabila, to support the pursuit of the FDLR. When Kabila was subsequently threatened with overthrow due to the lack of progress in capturing the FDLR, he galvanised support from neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe and Angola and a war played out among many regional powers in eastern DRC from 1997 until 2003. After this, a proxy war continued with further attempts by Rwanda and DRC to root out the FDLR in North and South Kivu. Many report that this war is a veil for looting the country's resources. Bitter conflict has continued with the emergence and interplay of different armed groups and widespread violence including mass rapes and killings. A report in 2010 by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms Margot Wallstrom, stated that in the DRC "sexual violence remains a dominant, even escalating, feature of the conflict".[51]

One of the armed groups active in South Kivu Province eastern DRC is the Raia Mutomboki, motivated by the financial gains possible from exploiting the presence of minerals and wood. In July 2015 there was a major humanitarian intervention in Shabunda, Lulingu – Nyambembe – Nduma axis, centre of South Kivu province, following a Raia Mutomboki attack. In April 2016 another Raia Mutomboki attack resulted in the kidnapping of 55 people, of which 18 women and girls (three under 15 years old) were subjected to rape and sexual assault. The Raia Mutomboki are one of many armed groups that use sexual violence as a tactic of fear and intimidation. It is used as a conscious strategy to torture and humiliate opponents, terrify individuals, destroy societies through inciting flight from a territory, reaffirm aggression and brutality, specifically through an expression of domination, and enlist civilians in forced labour for their own economic gains. As of 2016, Humanitarian Needs Overview estimates that 15% of reported GBV cases were perpetrated by armed actors[52] but according to focus groups discussions, those living in rural areas where government and armed group clashes exist the risk and levels of GBV cases remain steady.[53]

There are also high levels of GBV within communities in general, with grave physical and psychological health implications. The Demographic Health Survey (2013/14) representative data for South Kivu reveals the spread of non-conflict-related GBV in South Kivu (47.5% of women had experienced physical violence since the age of 15, 31% in the previous 12 months; and that 34.5% of women had experienced sexual violence; 18.3% in the previous 12 months). According to Christian Aid's internal baseline study, attitudes towards GBV survivors were reported to be tolerant with the exception of spouses, who found it difficult to accept if their wife had been sexually abused, but rape remains a strong taboo and reporting it brings a lot of stigma. Such cultural influences as well as disinterest among survivors in engaging with the police means there are high levels of impunity.

Designing the programme

The Service *d'Accompagnement et de Renforcement des Capacités d'Auto Promotion de la Femme en Sigle* (SARCAF) is Christian Aid's partner in DRC implementing a programme on *Building Community Resilience and Sustainable Protection in Eastern DRC*. SARCAF was established in 2002 in the context of the war, to respond to GBV.

Programme objectives

- **Understand and tackle the root causes** of gender based violence.

- Directly **assist survivors of sexual and other Gender Based Violence** to access basic humanitarian assistance.

- **Assist survivors and communities to develop mechanisms** to protect themselves and prevent new cases of violence.

Programme activities

- **Build the capacity of local authorities,** leaders and community representatives to develop community protection systems in the event of violence, rape or attempted rape.

- **Support legal processes** to prosecute cases of rape and raise awareness on the content of laws against sexual violence.

- **Facilitate medical care referrals,** advocate for access to medicines, equipment and support to treat survivors of sexual violence and provide psychosocial assistance to survivors through focal points in the community.

- **Train soldiers and police on human rights** and organise common activities between the civilian population and military/police.

Emerging results

- **12 Listening Centres** (staffed by four Psychosocial Assistants) are coordinating GBV prevention and response activities.

- **1250 survivors receive direct support** including psychosocial, economic and legal support and medical referral.

- **In 97% of cases to date survivors are reintegrated into their families** through accompaniment, counselling and mediation.

- **600 survivors receive financial support** for income generation activities and were joined with other survivors in Mutual Solidarity Groups (MUSOs) to establish a joint savings and loan systems.

What is working well

Responsive programming:
the context has changed since the inception of the programme in 2006 and as a result the programme has needed to adapt and respond. Although the levels of violence perpetrated, including sexual violence, by armed actors reduced, other forms of GBV remained. This allowed SARCAF to consider the root causes of GBV rather than just focus on violence related to conflict and look at new ways that survivors and communities can protect themselves for emerging forms of GBV.

Survivor-centred: SARCAF's focus on psychosocial support ensured survivors were at the centre of the programme and their needs were deeply understood. As GBV has mental health impacts, including fear, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, shame, sadness and anger it was important for SARCAF to work though these issues with survivors before moving to other programme supports (economic, legal). The importance of such support proved vital for not re-traumatising survivors and rebuilding their resilience.

A multi-sectoral approach:
providing psychosocial support at the individual level not only supported survivors to begin recovery emotionally but also provided insights into the needs of survivors that went beyond that of medical, legal and psychosocial support, to financial support, restoration of relationships and re-integration. SARCAF began to provide a 100 USD grant to each woman in their target group to improve their economic situation. In turn, women formed co-ops to sell produce, bought land and planted cash crops. Survivors testified that thanks to their socio-economic activities, they have been re-integrated with their families and their communities.

Inclusive definition of GBV:
SARCAF ensured the inclusion of men in trainings and the broader programme in recognition of the fact that men can also be victims and often do not report because of stigma and shame.

Areas for future consideration

A) A conflict sensitivity approach
can enhance future interventions by: 1) being sensitive to gender dynamics in how violence is used, even if it is separate from armed conflict. This can help to anticipate backlash against survivors who are empowered e.g. women survivors receiving economic assistance can be targeted by family members as their greater economic resources undermine male norms; 2) being sensitive to gender violence as an instrument of conflict and understanding how interventions on GBV can change conflict dynamics e.g. protecting women in IDP camps when they are being 'raided' as part of the conflict can affect the tactics of armed groups and change the risks of GBV.

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Case study 3 - Building local protection mechanisms in Myanmar

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Context

The handover of power to a civilian government in 2011, after 49 years of authoritarian rule by the military, has brought about a number of economic, political and social changes in Myanmar. There has been a dramatic increase in foreign direct investment, especially in energy and information technology. The election of 2016, brought the National League of Democracy to power, as the first credibly elected government since 1962.

The population of Myanmar is complex with seven main ethic groups and the recognition of 135 indigenous sub-ethnic groups, many of which mobilise armed groups to resist military control over territory and resources. A number of ethnic groups have a long history of marginalisation and violence at the hands of the military, including mass displacement, destruction of villages and killings of suspects supporting ethnic armed groups. There are also reports of the military regularly torturing and raping civilians, targeting women through sexual violence and gang rape.[54]

Ceasefires between the government and a number of the major ethnic armed groups, Karen, Mon and Chin, have been agreed. Such state level agreements are an important step towards the national level peace where the government supports confidence building, political dialogue and regional development plans in the hope of signing a nationwide peace agreement. However, there are a few ethnic minority groups that remain outside the negotiations with government and have not agreed upon a ceasefire. The Kachin Independence Army

have in fact seen an escalation of violence since 2011 causing hundreds of casualties, damaged infrastructure, and displacement of over 120,000 civilians, with 110,000 staying in 167 camps. Most internally displaced persons (IDPs) are below the poverty line, with low levels of literacy, limited knowledge, skills and capacity to survive in displacement. Women feel especially insecure in camps due to a lack of privacy and barrack type shelters. For example, the IDP camp in Bhamo have 638 households, a total IDP population of 3,979, the majority of whom are women.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, found that sexual violence has been exacerbated by violence and conflict, especially in Kachin and northern Shan. The Rapporteur links this directly to the presence of armed actors, increased militarisation as well as the breakdown of community protection mechanisms. On average, just 2% of survivors choose to pursue legal redress, and just 4% opt to access health services, in line with the perceived requirement that victims must first report to the police.'[55]

Designing the programme

The Christian Aid programme in Myanmar builds on existing programmes to integrate a response to GBV in broader humanitarian work by working with civilian protection monitors (CPMs). CPMs are unarmed civilians that involve themselves in peacekeeping – preventing, reducing and stopping violence. The programme is informed by national data about high levels of GBV and the dearth of appropriate provision or legal and service

support for survivors. Christian Aid works in partnership with international, national and local NGOs and Community-based Organisations (CBOs) across the country and specifically in Kachin and Rakhine to respond to the serious gaps in service provision.

Programme objectives

- To **meet the acute humanitarian needs** of the most vulnerable women, men, girls and boys affected by protracted conflict in Kachin and Rakhine states in a way that builds resilience.

- To **reduce the risk of GBV and human trafficking** for women, girls, men and boys in target communities and to ensure survivors have access to appropriate care and support.

- To **strengthen the capacity of vulnerable men and women** living in violent/conflict-affected contexts in Kachin and Rakhine states to be safer, more secure and protected and more resilient to crises.

Programme activities

- **Supporting** internally displaced peoples residing in camps in Kachin and Rakhine.

- **Lobbying and advocacy** with key NGOs and multi-laterals at state and national level to build a support system and work towards national policy change and a legislative framework on preventing violence against women.

- **Strengthening the capacity** of civilian protection monitors to respond to GBV.

Emerging results

- **Increased confidence or women CPMs** to reduce violence through participation in their communities and opening up communication with various actors.

- **Women and men CPMs strategically cooperate to handle GBV,** especially sexual violence as men increasingly recognise that it affects men as well as women.

What is working well

Inclusive participation and empowerment: involvement in programme implementation can be an empowering process. One of the partners, noted a change for women monitors were 'initially very hesitant' …but became 'very confident in participating in their community and in some cases leading in communicating with government officials and NGOs.' Understanding how women's attitudes and behaviour positively changes is essential to measure. It is not only an indication of their sense of agency but also a means of enhancing self and community protection measures against violence and GBV.

A multi-sectoral approach: there was a broad and inclusive understanding of GBV at a community level, which included non-recent experiences of sexual violence, psychological violence and violence and abuse experienced in workplaces (this was particularly an experience for women in the IDP community). As a result, a number of CSOs had emerged to respond to the wide-ranging experiences of GBV. These CSOs are building on existing structures and community resources to respond to GBV through supporting women to report, gathering evidence (particularly on trafficking cases) to provide to the authorities, ensuring women access necessary healthcare services and documenting cases of GBV.

The principles of Do No Harm – **safety and security:** CPMs conduct individual safety mapping of the current security needs based on their own experiences (as women, as people living with disabilities, religious groups etc.) and develop an individual plan that builds on their strengths and identifies areas for support.

Areas for future consideration

A) A human rights based approach: an effective approach to GBV programming challenges social norms and training and materials should reflect consistent understandings of the root causes of GBV, frame GBV as a human rights violation, link the impact of GBV to the realisation of other human rights and have a broad and inclusive definition of GBV. The training of civilian protection monitors is an ideal opportunity to enhance the analysis of the root causes of GBV and the gendered impact of conflict in supporting the protection of civilians.

B) The ecological framework: whilst it is important to recognise, as one NGO noted, that most of the 'customary practices (e.g. child marriage) are not healthy for solving GBV', the emergence of locally based organisations provides a critical opportunity to engage more effectively with the community, and link their needs and existing capacities to better improve services and support at the structural level.

C) The principles of Do No Harm – **safety and security:** there is a gap in ongoing technical support and training for civilian protection monitors on integrating minimum standards for responding to GBV cases. Ethical practice in documenting human rights violations is critical, and confidentiality and safety for survivors are of the utmost importance. Further training is also important for monitors to be able to respond adequately to survivors when there are no relevant services to which to refer cases.

D) Responsive programming: the peace process offers an important opportunity for the country to progress forward with the minimisation of violence and building a more cohesive society. Owing to the current absence of women from the national peace processes, INGOs need to enable local groups to lead on advocacy and lobbying for community-level engagement in this critical process.

Case study 4 - Engaging men and challenging masculinities in Nicaragua

Context

The Nicaraguan Demographic and Health Survey of 2007 found that 29% of women between 15 and 49 had experienced some form of physical or sexual violence during their lifetime, with 9% enduring this in the previous year. More broadly the Gender Inequality Index for 2015, ranked Nicaragua as 103/159 countries on a measure composed of criteria relating to women's health, empowerment and economic status. This GII ranking is an indicator of the very real social, political and economic inequalities which impact on women's lives and vulnerability to violence in this context. These material inequalities are exacerbated by gender norms around masculinity and femininity which often legitimate violence. When describing 'ideal men' in Nicaragua, the participants of the FGDs were blunt, remarking that men are the head of the families and 'are allowed to beat their partners'. 'Ideal women', on the other hand, are quiet, respectable, keepers of the home. Real manhood was also intrinsically heterosexual, probably not monogamous, and homophobic.[56] The provenance of some of these norms lie in conservative Catholicism (and the growing influence of conservative Evangelicalism), as well as the culture of 'machismo' - an ideology that men are 'physically, intellectually and sexually superior to women'.[57]

The violent conflict of the 1980s and its aftermath exacerbated gender inequalities and GBV in Nicaragua. While the Sandinista's left-wing politics might have been expected to produce a more gender equal and liberal environment, Sandinista soldiering and later control of the state became associated with 'male, macho power'.[58] The neoliberal Chamorro government of the 1990s introduced privatisation measures which heightened unemployment, causing stress for both men, who found themselves failing as breadwinners, and for women, who were forced into informal economies and sweatshops.[59] While strong feminist movements were part of the legacy of the revolution, they – like all autonomous civil society groups have experienced repression and a closing of civil society space under the increasingly authoritarian politics of the Sandinistas since their return to power in 2007. The government will not engage with discussions of gender, masculinities or, feminism[60] and has allied with the Church to restrict women's reproductive rights, especially denying access to 'therapeutic abortion'. Moreover, while there is a law against domestic violence, women are unwilling to pursue recourse because it mandates mediation before a case can progress.

In this 'post-conflict' context, inequalities have become more and as such gendered violence is widespread. One interviewee described the GBV situation as worse today than during the conflict, citing high levels of femicide, the rise of male dominated narco-trafficking gang culture and the restrictions on women's access to reproductive health rights.[61]

Designing the programme

The current Christian Aid programme entitled *Promotion of a culture of peace in the family and the community from a masculinity gender in Nicaragua* aims to transform understandings of masculinities and create

'alternative' masculinities that promotes gender equality as key to ending GBV. The programme aims to decrease GBV by promoting alternative masculinities in 11 regions of Nicaragua

Programme objectives

➡ **Influence public opinion and political decision makers** to promote new conceptions and practices of masculinity with a gender equality perspective.

➡ **Support local leaders and social organisations** to implement and promote places of articulation and reflection on models of masculinity with gender equity in their localities.

➡ **Encourage men, women, young people, adolescents and children, to identify and question unequal power** in men and women's relationships and express themselves in favour of the exercise of the human rights of women.

Programme activities

➡ **Training local leaders and CSOs:** development of community agendas in violence prevention and implementation of an integrated model of violence prevention.

➡ **Development of diplomas in masculinity** at universities and educational products and a virtual library.

➡ **Promote alternative masculinities through workshops and local cultural activities** including reflection spaces, popular theatre/circus, radio and television, such as soap operas and radio shows.

Emerging results

➡ **The attitudes of men participating in local reflection spaces** and community initiatives who are recognising the inequality between men and women and promote the reduction of violence against women increased from 32.7% in 2015 to 35.24% in 2018.

➡ **Incorporating positive masculinities into the national education agenda** through two diplomas and within the curriculum of 16 schools.

➡ **Putting the importance of working with men as allies** for the prevention of violence in traditional, mass, written and digital media.

What is working well

The ecological framework: the programme starts at an individual level creating 'safe male only spaces' with experienced facilitators delivering workshops that offer men the opportunity to reflect and engage on issues of gender equality, masculinities, relationships and GBV. Participants in this programme noted that 'gender equality, preventing violence against women and masculinities are not on the state agenda so this work is filling an important gap, both politically and socially.' The individual process centred on 'talking about masculinity as a possibility rather than a problem, viewing men as 'partners in transformation.' The programme also works with the community, building relationships with local churches, religious leaders, community leaders and local organisations as champions of gender equality. The programme also has an important national dimension of work with media - television, radio, print press and social media. The programme has successfully managed to utilise all these forms of expression to 'start conversations' about masculinities and ensure 'that men are part of the debate.'

A human rights based approach: The Nicaragua programme frames GBV as linked to gender inequality and a violation of women's human rights. The partners in

the programme have advocated collective action for women's rights as part of the broader work beyond just this programme to highlight the links between challenging gender norms and the wider struggle for the affirmation of women's rights. According to partners involved in this work, one of the most important aspects is the relationship with the women's movement, from which the work emerged, and the fact that the work is rooted in feminist principles.

Community-based approach:
For women's organisations, the programme had a critical capacity building component at the local level. Organisations also had local ownership in implementing the programme (e.g. decision by women's network in San Pedro that they would offer masculinities workshops delivered by men). Local partners could choose how to implement the project based on their local context. The workshops delivered to men reflected feminist principles of intersectionality, particularly in terms of class, access to services and levels of education. The work centred on 'unlearning' masculinities rather than 'alternative' or 'better' masculinities.

Areas for future consideration

A) Maintaining a human rights based approach: some feminists felt resources were being diverted away from women's organisations to work with men on masculinities. Similarly, a number of older feminists are not fully convinced that younger men are seriously engaged in feminist approaches. Building on the partners' strong relationship with the women's movement in Nicaragua, stronger efforts and links need to be made to engage those who are sceptical of men's engagement in the feminist agenda and look to mitigate fears of competing for resources and instead consider building broader coalitions pursuing the same gender transformative goals.

B) Responsive programming:
the programme needs to build a component of measuring and managing backlash, particularly against women human rights defenders, although men involved in the project also sometimes felt targeted. As spaces for NGOs are closing and human rights defenders are forced to take greater risks, it is critical that these shifts are documented as part of the broader commitment to defending human rights in advancing gender equality.

C) The ecological framework:
Increased attention on the societal level of the ecological framework could enhance the sustainability of interventions in relation to changing norms and attitudes of masculinities. It is especially important to influence policies, laws and institutions that can challenge machismo and the promotion of gender equality. For example, laws and practice that reduces the impunity for perpetrators of GBV or policies that enhance women's participation in decision making and political representation.

Case study 5 - Engaging with religious leaders in Zimbabwe

Context

The most recent Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey of 2015 found that 35% of women between 15 and 49 had experienced some form of physical violence during their lifetime, with 15% suffering this in the previous year. This figure rose to 45% over women's lifetime when other forms of violence – emotional and sexual – were included.

The conflicts Zimbabwe has experienced during and since independence, have created what interviewees called 'a generalised context of violence in Zimbabwe', which exacerbates the prevalence of GBV. The war of independence resulted in a reinforcement of a conservative gender regime. Later the historical conflict over land between black men and white male landowners further added to this context of gender violence. The government's determination to reward male war veterans with land left women out of the picture altogether and remains to this day the major source of material gender inequality and GBV. As Everjoice Win writes, the struggle for land reform did not benefit women in Zimbabwe. Instead during the conflict, they experienced state sanctioned violence of 'many faces' - physical, sexual, economic and social.[62]

Post-independence Zimbabwe's legal system is dual track, with customary law running parallel to constitutional, and the former is generally discriminatory against women.[63] So, for example, although there is a law against domestic violence (successfully lobbied for by women's movements in 2007), the persistence of customary law undermines this and is one reason for its lack of implementation.

In addition, women are reluctant to report cases of domestic violence due to social stigma and being perceived as 'undermining their husbands'.[64] Social norms around masculinity and femininity are generally rooted in 'patriarchal Shona culture' which expects women to mind the home while men lead in family and social life and so women therefore experience marginalisation from public life. Women, who do become politicians, are subject to discriminatory and violent language.[65]

Equally, patriarchal Christian ideas and institutions, which hold the allegiance of more than 85% of the population, powerfully influence norms around gender and heteronormativity.[66] Aspects of this are state sanctioned with the criminalising of LGBTQI relationships. The culture of silence on GBV leads to under-reporting and perpetuation of abuse. Often women and men who belong to faith groups have no support in addressing issues of GBV and inequality and faith groups themselves have limited capacity to provide this support.

Designing the programme

The Christian Aid country team in Zimbabwe has been actively engaging with two partners, Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) and Padare in order to address GBV. ZCC was formed in 1964 with the aims of bringing together Christian churches and organisations for joint action, witness and coordination, particularly to adopt a united and common response to the political and socio-economic challenges. It comprises of 25 members and reaches at least 900,000 men, women (60% of congregants) and children. Padare/Men's Forum on

Gender aims to reach out and mobilise men across Zimbabwe to challenge the status quo in gender relations of power and to promote a gender just society.

Christian Aid country team have engaged with the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) for a number of years, as part of the Gender Faith Network. This experience in the network inspired all Christian churches, under ZCC, to develop a Commitment Charter to address gender inequality and GBV. This led to the development of the current programme, Addressing Gender Based Violence in Zimbabwe, that trains and engages individual religious leaders in conjunction with institutional policy changes within ZCC. The programme reflects the important role the church plays in shaping public opinion in Zimbabwe as Christianity, religion and the church are deeply embedded in daily life.

Programme objectives

- To **strengthen and enable faith institutions'** responses to gender inequality and GBV in six districts of Manicaland.

- To contribute towards **increased effective implementation of the Domestic Violence Act** by policy makers, community leaders, Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) anti domestic violence council, religious leaders and chiefs' courts, with the support of faith organisations and communities.

- To **strengthen the role of the church in the GBV referral system** in six districts of Manicaland.

Programme activities

- **Providing technical capacity** to the different church groupings including ministers' fraternities, youth leaders, men's fellowship groups, women's groups and any other such structures on addressing gender inequality and GBV.

- **Establish individual policies** on gender justice and GBV through the implementation of the Commitment Charter that can support the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act.

- **Developing and rolling out resources** and specific training tools on how to address gender inequality and GBV and how to liaise with other stakeholders to advance gender justice throughout the church structures at the local level.

- **Prisoner rehabilitation** is supported by Padare at Harare Central Prison and providing counselling to walk-in clients, dialogue with perpetrators and continuous engagement to influence the adoption of nonviolent masculinities and challenge perceptions on gender norms

Emerging results

- **ZCC member churches have amplified their messaging and voices** against GBV through participating in social media campaigns against GBV and making commitments to ending GBV.

- **One leader from a Ministers Fraternity joined hands with government** stakeholders and other CSOs in organising a march to speak out against GBV. For the first time, the church's voice was heard clearly saying NO to violence against women particularly perpetrated by men.

- **Dialogue with 60 inmates created space** to learn more about GBV, its effects, the law, women's rights, equality and positive masculinities to prevent reoffending.

What is working well

Responsive programming: respondents mentioned that one of the critical successes of the programme was the flexibility and adaptability of the programme design. In Zimbabwe, gender and women's rights issues are very sensitive subjects and sometimes perceived as undermining traditional family values, especially within the church. Therefore, in order to generate support and engagement from church leaders there was a recognition that the programme 'could not be an event, it had to be a process'. This led to the creation of a space for reflection, Bible study, consultation with the religious leaders, with the Women's Fellowship and broader planning resulting in a willingness from religious leaders to engage with the programme. In addition, discussions about gender justice are included in meetings/retreats attended by clergy and the Charter on Gender Justice, developed by the bishops, is being used by clergy in their ministry or Theological Colleges.

Community-based approach: The Church was described as an integral part of the community and because it is 'with the people' it is able to support 'local initiatives' without requesting 'permission' from the state, police or local authorities. In reflecting upon the leadership and engagement with the Church on gender and GBV, respondents highlighted that 'gender justice programmes don't have to be seen as an imposition by foreigners – it is a local initiative, local change'.

A human rights based approach: the articulation of gender equality by the leadership of ZCC recognises that inequality impacts women's participation in public and private life. As a result, the programme, through the leadership's access to different spaces, is linking in with other sectors to address inequality including mining, education, peace building and policy-making in order to tackle social norms and behaviours that perpetuate gender inequality and ultimately disempower women.

Areas for future consideration

A) The ecological framework: this programme has the strong commitment of the leadership of ZCC which is crucial for making change at the structural level within the Church and potentially in time within the Government. However, local religious leaders at the community level are essential to the success of this programme as they are the bridge between the communities and the structures of ZCC. It is a challenge for practitioners and NGOs to secure the support of local religious leaders, but specifically measuring change at that level could offer some important insights for sharing across Christian Aid programmes.

B) A conflict sensitive approach: this is vital for the context in Zimbabwe owing to the political instability and the potential for violence both among ethnicities and political factions. For example, political transition can bring a sense of hope that situations for women will change, giving rise and momentum to women organisations and activists demanding rights and representation. This can cause backlash because it challenges patriarchal attitudes towards women and questions the dominant system of male power.

C) Inclusive participation and empowerment: the programme needs to partner formally with a women's rights organisation to ensure the involvement of GBV survivors and women's voices, especially in the establishment and strengthening of a referral system. For example, the Women's Fellowship valued the spaces provided by the programme and this could be strengthened

by implementing a formal mechanism/structure for women to inform the development of the programme. It is also important for the programme to consider how to engage more effectively with the LGBTQI community.

D) Gender transformation at a local level: power analysis needs to include an understanding of the dynamics among leaders, individuals and communities at a local level and how they impact the implementation of the programme. Without such nuanced understanding it will be difficult to ensure interventions are relevant, sustainable and locally owned.

E) Advocacy with the government: especially in the areas of recruitment of more social workers, provision of funding for rehabilitation and support for collaboration between organisations to provide services such as a half-way house before release.

Case study 6 - Bringing back activism in Zimbabwe

The final case study is not a Christian Aid programme but has been included to highlight some aspects of programming, such as work on intersectionality, survivor-led and wellness, that are often undocumented and under-recorded

Context

The historic struggles faced by movements for the protection of SOGIE have come in many different forms and severity. Same sex marriages are criminalised in 72 countries worldwide and in eight countries homosexuality can receive the death penalty. In many southern African states, the sentence is between zero to seven years imprisonment, with Zambia raising the punishment to between eight to 14 years. Within this regional context, Zimbabwe has its own history in violent mistreatment of people with diverse sexual and gender identities. According to Oxfam, 'hate speech, beatings, arbitrary arrests and even 'corrective' rape are rife.' During the drafting of the constitution in 2012, such hate speech, derogatory attacks and discrimination were even more pronounced when the government proposed outright prohibition of homosexuality and same sex marriage.

Such violence targeted at people with diverse sexual and gender identities is often attributed to some of the same reasons for violence against women i.e. the prominent cultural notion of an 'ideal' woman. As a result, women who diversify from this ideal, or are perceived to diversify, face exclusion, discrimination and fear for their personal safety. Additionally, those who actively speak out for the rights of people with diverse sexual and gender identities risk arbitrary arrest and harassment by the police.[67] According to the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission report in 2015,

many LGBTQI people are driven underground and don't report crimes due to continued hostility and systematic discrimination by police and politicians. A survey on perceptions, attitudes and understanding of SOGIE also found that sex workers in nine provinces claim not to enjoy their rights and often need to form associations to protect themselves.[68]

The impact of such treatment and perceptions on SOGIE manifest in a number of ways. As outlined in the shadow report to the 51st session of CEDAW, they create poverty and denial of access to services, such as health and safety.

Designing the programme

Voice of the Voiceless (VOVO) is a feminist collective in Zimbabwe's second largest city, Bulawayo. The collective was formed in 2013 by a group of feminists who decided 'we were tired of not being listened to, tired of the conversation being dominated by men...we wanted to be visible.' As a feminist, trans-inclusive, democratic collective, the group were unique to Bulawayo. The flat structure of the organisation often created challenges as donors wanted to address a 'director', but the organisation was changing the conversations and asking challenging questions. Why do we need hierarchal structures to be effective? Why can't we all have access to opportunities and experiences?

Programme objectives

➡ **Providing safe spaces** for lesbian and bisexual women and trans identifying individuals.

➡ **Strengthening the capacity of marginalised communities** to lobby and advocate for an end to GBV.

➡ **Building networks and partnerships** to ensure marginalised communities can access services and support.

Programme activities

➡ **Documentation of human rights violations** and abuses.

➡ **Establishing and maintaining safe spaces** for marginalised communities.

➡ **Training organisations** (women's rights organisations, legal organisations and medical professionals) on providing human rights-based services to marginalised communities.

Emerging results

➡ **Building alliances and networks** with other marginalised communities as well as more 'mainstream' women's rights organisations is improving the practice of applying an intersectional lens. Organisations are enhancing their understanding of multiple discrimination and adapting their planning accordingly.

➡ **Solidarity and collaboration** are strengthening between women's rights organisations and other groups that are marginalised on the basis of a myriad of identities.

➡ **The visibility of feminist voices and spaces** has been raised through public and private spaces to highlight 1) publicly where women of diverse sexual and gender identities do not feel safe and 2) privately to share their stories, feel free to be who they are and mutually support each other.

What is working well

Survivor-centred approach: many of the group members are survivors of GBV in the public or private sphere. As a result, the programming of the collective has always integrated work around GBV, 'we talk about violence in all our work because it is the experience of our community, whether it is public abuse, violence from our partners or harassment and discrimination from service providers, it is part of our daily lives.'

Inclusive participation and empowerment: one of the key principles of the collective is intersectionality. The collective advocate for the intersection of all human rights and how the realisation of human rights is hindered by stigma and exclusion. One of the key campaigns was a 'Taking Back the Streets' march in Bulawayo during the 16 days of activism against Gender Based Violence. The group marched to sixteen sites to highlight 16 struggles faced by women and people with diverse sexual and gender identities. The march highlighted the myriad of stories about how discrimination on the basis of SOGIE violates the lives of many members of the community. As they stood in a market place they talked about the fact that women and people with diverse sexual and gender identities feel constantly harassed and under threat. As they stood under a street light that doesn't work they talked about how it feels to be 'unsafe' on the streets.

Duty of care: In recognition of the fact that all the members of VOVO have experienced some form of GBV, wellness and wellbeing is integrated into all aspects of work for programme participants. VOVO have provided training to counsellors to ensure that programme participants receive non-judgemental and rights-based support. VOVO also ensures there are opportunities for debriefing and reflexive practice as part of their work as a collective to develop and document their learning.

Areas for future consideration

A) Documenting the impact:
it is critical to record evidence of the impact of informal, feminist collectives in reaching the most marginalised and excluded. INGOs have a role to play in funding the sector and providing spaces and opportunities for collectives and networks to participate and inform the programming of other larger NGOs and institutions.

B) Applying a multi-sectoral approach to strengthen the intersectional approach VOVO are working with a number of organisations but this area of work could be strengthened to support organisations to integrate an intersectional approach to programming, especially on GBV.

4. Key learnings

Learning from the case studies, show the following factors should be taken into account when designing programmes for addressing GBV in contexts affected by violence and conflict.

(1) The ecological framework

This approach was not applied consistently across all programmes. Where it is applied, (see Colombia) it remains to be seen if achieving impact at the individual level contributes to transformational change at the societal level. Nevertheless, the potential benefits of taking an ecological approach that connects the individual, to the community, to the social and national levels are evident across all the programmes. For example, in Nicaragua, creating safe spaces for conversations on masculinities (individual and community level) as well as promoting positive masculinity in media and education (societal level) can be enhanced by interventions to support adherence to legislation in order to achieve lasting change

In Colombia, the programme has a combination of interventions at the community level in supporting and documenting change that is driven by women's involvement in national processes, as well as at the societal level, through influencing decision makers and institutions to legislate for the protection of women and implement adequate referral systems. However, more learning is required to see the tangible benefit of national level efforts on women's daily lives.

(2) Survivor-centred approach

Programmes that *put an understanding of the experiences and fears of survivors at the forefront of operations* can collectively identify the different types of violence and design activities accordingly. Cases that did not explicitly have a survivor-centred approach in their design but documented women's stories of GBV in a post-conflict environment or provided psychosocial support during open conflict were able to become survivor-centred based on the information and expression of needs through these activities.

In Zimbabwe, the VOVO's collective holds continuous consultation, dialogue and opportunities for sharing with survivors to ensure that their fears, hopes, and needs informs every stage of programme planning and operations.

(3) A human rights based approach

Programmes that make explicit an analysis of gender inequality as a root cause of GBV have benefits to both programme participants, who begin to articulate the contributing factors of GBV in their own context, and, to the success of advocacy strategies that outline the wider implications of GBV on the enjoyment of human rights and thus create a more cohesive society.

In Nicaragua, programme participants self-identified patriarchal structures (male power and privilege) and the social acceptance of male violence as a way to reinforce rigid gender and social norms and violence and aggression as normative behaviour for men. This helped the programme to strengthen men to manage conflict in non-destructive ways.

(4) Do No Harm – ensuring safety and security

This is generally a gap across the programmes but a few examples exist where programmes are incorporating safety and security into design through, for example, a support system of lawyers for women human rights defenders in a post conflict context or security mapping based on strength and needs during armed conflict.

In Myanmar, civilian protection monitors conduct individual analysis of their current security needs based on experiences (as women, as people living with disabilities, religious groups etc.) as well as the context (including actors, threats, existing safety mechanisms etc.) and builds security plans accordingly.

(5) Inclusive participation and empowerment

It is evident from the cases that locating programmes in a feminist agenda, even when working with other groups such as men and boys, is proving beneficial as it creates more opportunities for solidarity and collective action (although women activists are still at greater risk than their male counterparts on the basis of their gender) and promotes a more inclusive agenda that challenges gender inequality and gendered norms in all contexts.

In Zimbabwe, the VOVO collective integrates the needs of people with diverse sexual and gender identities into the debate on women's rights and the need to eradicate all forms of discrimination and exclusion for the promotion of safety, dignity and equality for all.

(5a) Inclusive participation and empowerment

Ensuring that survivors of GBV or others directly affected participate in the processes challenging social norms, policies and practices that perpetuate gender inequalities and increase the prevalence of GBV can be both empowering and effective.

In Colombia, women survivors were directly involved in national peace agreement negotiations, influencing decision-makers and institutions to legislate for the protection of women and implement adequate referral systems.

(6) Adopting a multi-sectoral approach

In all contexts studied, legislation and service provision on GBV is limited or inadequate, especially for rural communities. Where services are provided by civil society they are building alliances and networks and responding to emerging needs such as legal, medical, security or psychosocial support. An additional support that requires more prominence is economic owing to the benefits it gives to survivors in re-building their lives.

In DRC, the programme initially provided psychosocial support as a response to the trauma suffered by survivors. During this support to survivors it emerged that there was a growing need for economic support. The programme then adapted its design and provided cash vouchers that contributed to a sense of self and ability to contribute to society and engage in their social relationships again.

(7) Engaging with multiple actors

Partnering with faith leaders is proving to be a promising entry point to effect behaviour and attitudes towards gender inequality and gender norms. Faith actors can be a resource or a roadblock when addressing matters of gender injustice, including GBV. However, faith leaders and organisations have tremendous convening power and involvement in key services making them a critical ally in denouncing harmful practices and positively shaping national discourses on GBV.

In Zimbabwe, where gender inequality and violence are often taboo and considered a domestic issue, getting the commitment from faith leaders at the national level to discuss GBV and the implications on society has proved a vital entry point for engaging and influencing faith leaders at the local level.

(8) Accountability – duty of care

Integration of regular debriefing and reflective practice is important for the commitment, learning and cohesion of staff but also for the wellbeing of individuals who are affected by prevailing violence or conflict. Programmes that have done this also highlights the importance of how work is delivered, which requires time, highly skilled facilitators and a shared ideology from all implementers. Clinical supervision is also essential for the protection of clients and counselling staff.

In Zimbabwe, VOVO's regular debriefing among staff and reflective practice on their work and how it can be improved provides an honest and cohesive working environment. It also prevents against staff burnout, helps to respond to individual staff needs, as well as avoiding any risks of staff suffering vicarious trauma. It also helps to secure a sustainable working relationship with other organisations.

(9) Enhancing organisational capacity

This was evident in some programmes where organisations invested time, energy, organisational capacity and commitment to changing power dynamics and social norms. Examples also show that skills in facilitating sensitive, qualified approaches to difficult conversations during times of conflict and violence where tensions are required. An internal organisational journey is therefore essential to ensure all partners share a common goal and can deliver adequate and sensitive support.

In Nicaragua, the programme invests substantial time in the recruitment and training of facilitators for safe spaces for men and boys to discuss sensitive issues such as homophobia and alternatives to violence. However, if these safe spaces are not managed sensitively from the outset they can do more harm to solidify negative attitudes and justify behaviours.

(10) Responsive and conflict sensitive programming

Many of the programmes had some level of flexibility, but this was often at a micro project management level, rather than at a strategic level. Although the programmes are being implemented in contexts affected by violence and conflict, there were very few with a thorough and consistent conflict analysis. Programmes across all examples could benefit from a more systematic approach to conflict sensitivity by including a conflict lens in the context analysis and building in a reflection tool that supports a continuous assessment of how addressing GBV has an impact on the context and vice versa.

5. Recommendations for improving programming and policy

The case study findings, as well as the review of existing policies and programming practice highlight a number of areas for consideration by programme managers, states and international institutions and organisations to adequately address GBV in contexts affected by violence and conflict.

To programme managers

- Apply the ecological framework as an analytical tool to understand the drivers of GBV at the different levels and to design interventions accordingly. The ecological framework provides a sound basis for the design of interventions at specific levels whether it is to challenge social norms at the micro level or advocate for progressive legislation change at the macro level.

- For transformative change in contexts affected by violence and conflict, influencing policies, laws and institutions at the societal level should be a medium to long-term programmatic goal.

- It is important to note that one programme cannot respond to or prevent GBV at each level adequately. However, the framework can offer ideas for collaboration with other initiatives and organisations that are working at different levels.

- A conflict sensitive approach should be integrated into the ecological framework, through 1) conflict analysis that draws on a deep historical and contextual understanding of the programme site and 2) designing interventions that are sensitive to conflict by understanding how the interventions affect the drivers that cause GBV and how those drivers in turn impact the interventions.

- Include economic support, in a conflict sensitive manner, as an additional pillar to the multi-sectoral approach (along with health, security, legal and psychological assistance) as essential assistance to survivors to re-build their livelihoods, relationships and acceptance into society.

- Ensure a community-based approach includes sustained engagement with a variety of community actors. Working with faith actors particularly must not be ignored in challenging gender discrimination as they can be central to addressing the root causes of gender inequality.

- Improve data collection and evidence on the intersectional identities of those who experience and perpetrate GBV such as gender, class, race, age, political affiliation to ensure that vulnerable and at-risk groups and individuals are not further marginalised.

- Safety, security and duty of care must be accounted for by building support structures to uphold and affirm the rights of staff to not be subjected to GBV in the workplace and ensuring clinical supervision of staff to prevent burn-out and vicarious trauma, to enhance coping mechanisms and to ensure the most appropriate guidance is being given to clients.

To advocacy teams to focus on:

- Advocating for States that are party to CEDAW to review their reservations to CEDAW and ensure they are not undermining, either symbolically or practically, the rights of women.

- Advocating, in line with international commitments, for States to maximise available resources, advocate for States to increase resources for gender-responsive public services that enhance the health, legal, security, psychosocial and economic needs of survivors. One way to ensure this is to develop and implement progressive taxation regimes and practice gender-responsive budgeting to ensure that tax revenues are also spent on promoting the rights of survivors of GBV.

- Advocating for States to ensure a robust implementation, monitoring and reporting system to record progress against the SDGs, especially SDG 5 and SDG 16. For example, under SDG 5, target 5.2, data is needed on the levels of violence of GBV, particularly women and girls and those with other identities that can increase vulnerability such as disabilities, age, ethnicity etc. This data could in turn help to measure progress on how national institutions are preventing violence and the perceptions of people feeling discriminated against under SGD 16.

- Advocating for Increased support to local level initiatives led by women and SOGIE activists through resourcing, capacity building and active and meaningful inclusion in decision making processes in relation to GBV prevention and response. Look at local collectives to raise the visibility of marginalised and excluded voices as well as provide longer term support, with adaptive approaches, to change deep rooted norms and behaviours.

- Advocating for the new UN OHCHR Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity to:

    assess existing human rights instruments that protect against GBV, such as CEDAW, SDGs 5 and 16 and Sustaining Peace Agenda to ensure a wider interpretation of gender that includes people with diverse sexual and gender identities.

    increase data collection on the levels of GBV against people with diverse sexual and gender identities worldwide to show the specific and nuanced needs of prevention and response.

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