

Africa SGBV analysis

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Query: What are the main forms and drivers of Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) and gender inequality across the Africa region, and how do these link and/or act as a causal factor in conflict, security and stability?

Contents

1. Overview
2. Forms of SGBV
3. What are the links between SGBV and conflict, security and stability?
4. References

1. OVERVIEW

Women and girls face multiple forms of violence and gender inequality across the Africa CSSF region. There is a growing evidence base on SGBV and gender inequality in the Africa region, but evidence for conflict-affected countries and humanitarian settings is scarce, partly due to the challenges of data collection in such settings. Service-based data is likely to significantly underestimate levels of violence. However, recent studies have shown such research to be possible, suggesting the need to continue investments in improving data collection. See Annex 1 for methodology.

Many forms of SGBV¹ are exacerbated during conflict or periods of crisis and instability, including intimate partner violence (the most prevalent form), early marriage, sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, and trafficking. Women and girls' vulnerability to violence intensifies as protective norms and structures breakdown. Conditions during and post-conflict and emergencies can exacerbate violence for socially excluded groups, for example people with disabilities, migrant women, women and girls living with HIV, girls and young women), widows, sex workers, and sexual minorities. Adolescent girls are also particularly vulnerable.

New forms and pathways of violence have also emerged in fragile or conflict-affected parts of the Africa region, such as conflict-related sexual violence, forced and 'temporary' marriages to fighters, and political violence against women human rights defenders by state actors, and which form part of the political economy of conflict. Men and boys can also experience conflict-related SGBV, particularly within armed groups and in detention. Existing and new forms of violence against sexual and gender minorities can also increase in conflict, including targeted attacks, discrimination, policing of gender norms, blackmail and extortion.

The relationship with conflict, security and stability is complex and multi-directional, and the gendered dynamics may have longer term SGBV consequences. The table below highlights some of the key messages from Section 3 on how SGBV can be both a causal factor in conflict, security and stability, as well as result from conflict. It is structured around the thematic areas proposed in the draft Theory of Change (ToC) for the Africa CSSF region.

¹ See Annex 2 for definitions of different forms of VAWG.

Thematic areas	Examples of the complex links between SGBV, gender equality and conflict, security and stability
Gender-based violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In active conflict and protected crises, there is well-documented evidence that various forms of SGBV intensify and new forms of violence emerge. • SGBV as an effect of conflict can fuel grievances and become a future cause. • There is growing evidence that the drivers of SGBV and gender inequality increase during conflict. • SGBV reinforces violent masculine norms that 'real men' use violence to solve conflict. • Evidence is emerging about the links between witnessing or participating in conflict as a child, and potential perpetration of SGBV as an adult.
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGBV and gender inequality act in multiple ways to limit women's participation in political processes at all levels, including peace-building and state-building • Women's participation in peace processes contributes to the durability of peace and stability. • Women's inclusion in peace-building offers the opportunity to recognise women's different experiences of conflict and to address the particular forms of SGBV they face during conflict. • Peacebuilding and statebuilding processes also provide important opportunities to embed gender equality goals.
Peacekeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender equality is strongly associated with more peaceful and stable outcomes • Women peacekeepers are important for the success of peacekeeping operations, and are often more trusted and effective in information gathering. • Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by peacekeepers is a serious crime and threatens the legitimacy of peacekeeping operations.
Humanitarian response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGBV increases in both frequency and severity during humanitarian crises, as a result of a complex interaction of factors. • There is growing evidence that SGBV undermines humanitarian investments by making it harder for communities to recover from crises. • Failure to exposes women and girls to further harm, and increase risks at a time when access to assistance is most limited • In conflict and humanitarian crises, adolescent girls experience high levels of violence, have unique needs and are often at high risk of falling between the cracks of child protection and SGBV programming.
Security and justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict creates a culture of impunity with few services and little political will to prosecute perpetrators of SGBV. • In conflict-affected settings, traditional values of kinship and patronage which prioritise collective peace over individual concerns become more important, which impacts on women's willingness to speak out about SGBV. • In conflict settings, there are also links between SGBV, trafficking and organised crime. • However, there is also the opportunity for Security and Justice programmes to work with progressive elements within non-state actors using 'gendered' approaches.
Violent extremism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is some evidence that individuals engaged in violent extremism or terrorist attacks are more likely to have a record of perpetrating violence against women. • Personal histories of female violent extremists often identify a pattern of violence and coercion from male relatives, including fathers, brothers or husbands. • Some violent extremists have also forced women and girls to support their organisation, including through abduction. • Boys are also exposed to gendered violence, including sexual abuse and rape, which can increase their susceptibility to perpetrate violence in the future. • Furthermore, there is a growing body of evidence showing that exposure to conflict in childhood is linked to future perpetration of SGBV as an adult. • There is also a larger body of evidence exploring the links between violent and unequal gender norms, conflict and violent extremism, also referred to as 'thwarted masculinities'. • In some parts of Africa, there is a close association between gender inequality and violent extremism through the practice of 'bride price'.
See Section 3 for further details and examples	

Drivers of SGBV increase in conflict settings (see Section 3.1) and include:

- **Conflict and displacement** exacerbate gender inequalities and increase women and girls' risk of violence, both in private and public spaces, as social structures and the rule of law break down, livelihoods are eroded and economic insecurity increases.
- **Weak implementation of laws and policies** help drive SGBV by contributing to public understandings of what is socially unacceptable, as well as shaping practical responses. Impunity is particularly widespread in conflict-affected countries where rule of law is weak.
- **Conflict exacerbates poverty, which in turn can drive SGBV and inequality.** Land-related conflict and intercommunal violence and related displacement and poverty has also increased women's vulnerability to abuse, including sexual and economic exploitation. Poverty and unemployment can also drive harmful practices, such as early marriage.
- **Conservative social norms about gender and power** that justify the use of violence and legitimise harmful practices. Active periods of conflict can further contribute to normalisation of certain forms of violence, including within the family. Gendered norms, including 'thwarted masculinities', can also play a key role in sustaining violence against women, as well as contributing to the normalisation of violence and intrastate conflict and 'fuelling' violent extremism and instability.
- **Children's exposure to violence** dramatically increases in conflict, which impacts intergenerational levels of violence.
- **Alcohol and drug use** are facilitators of interpersonal violence against both women and children in households in humanitarian and displacement settings. There is some evidence that in conflict contexts, exposure to trauma can increase both the occurrence and severity of alcohol use.

2. FORMS OF SGBV

2.1 Intimate Partner Violence

The global prevalence of physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence among all ever-partnered women is 30% (WHO et al, 2013). **The prevalence is highest in the African, Eastern Mediterranean and South-East Asia Regions**, where approximately 37% of ever-partnered women reported having experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence at some point in their lives (WHO et al, 2013). Prevalence of IPV varies greatly between countries and evidence also shows that it varies within countries by other factors such as age, marital status, education, location and ethnicity.

Lifetime physical and/or sexual IPV ²		
Country	Prevalence	Source
Mali	35%	CPS/SSDSPF, INSTAT/MPATP, INFO-STAT et ICF International (2014)
Somalia	36%	Wirtz et al (2018) - Official National Statistics Not Available
South Sudan	73%	What Works to Prevent Violence (2017) - Official National Statistics Not Available
Nigeria	17%	National Population Commission (NPC) [Nigeria] and ICF International (2014)
Sudan	-	Official National Statistics Not Available

² Proportion of ever-partnered women aged 15-49 years experiencing intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. Statistics found on the UN Women website - <http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en>, except Somalia and South Sudan.

Chad	29%	INSEED, MSP and ICF International (2015)
Niger	-	Official National Statistics Not Available
Kenya	39%	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and ICF (2014)
Tanzania	42%	MoHCDGEC, MoH, NBS, OCGS and ICF (2016)
Zimbabwe	35%	Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency and ICF International (2016)
Ethiopia	28%	Central Statistical Agency, Ethiopia and ICF (2016)
Sierra Leone	45%	Statistics Sierra Leone (SSL) and ICF International (2014)

When Demographic Health Surveys (DHS) cover IPV (or SGBV more generally) they can also cover emotional violence and controlling behaviour (as well as sexual and physical violence by different actors). The Nigerian Violence Against People Prohibition Act (VAPP) which was signed into law in 2015, includes a range of forms of violence (see box). As the Act was originally designed to focus on VAWG it includes many forms of violence that have strong gendered elements. Sometimes DHS look at violence against men and boys and children in general. The nature of violence, including perpetrator, severity and frequency can vary significantly by gender of the victim. For example, the Kenya DHS states that the main perpetrators of physical violence against women or girls are husbands; whereas, the main perpetrators against men or boys are parents, teachers, and others (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and ICF, 2014).

Nigerian Violence Against People Prohibition Act (VAPP) forms of violence covered - Rape, willfully causing or inflicting physical injury, attempt to commit acts of violence, inciting, aiding or counselling another persons to commit acts of violence, receiving or assisting another in committing an offence of violence, coercing another to engage in acts detrimental to the other person's physical or psychological wellbeing, willfully placing a person in fear of physical injury, compelling another by force or threat to engage in any conduct or act, sexual or otherwise to the detriment of the victim's physical or psychological wellbeing, performance of female circumcision/genital mutilation, frustrating investigation, willfully making false statements in any judicial proceeding under the act, forceful ejection from home, depriving a person of his/her liberty, damage to property with intent to cause distress, forced financial dependence or economic abuse, forced isolation or separation from family and friends, emotional, verbal and psychological abuse, harmful widowhood practices, abandonment of spouse, children or other dependents without sustenance, stalking, intimidation, spousal battery, harmful traditional practices, violence by state actors, political violence and incest.

Evidence suggests that times of conflict exacerbate IPV. For example, in South Sudan women in Protection of Civilian Sites are twice as likely as those in Juba and Rumbek to have experienced multiple acts of IPV (What Works to Prevent Violence, 2017). In Somalia experiences of victimisation and perpetration of IPV (and non-partner violence) among women and men were commonly associated with displacement among other factors³ (Wirtz et al, 2018). The increasing availability of small arms at a household level during and post conflict also increases the risk of IPV escalating into murder (Small Arms Survey, 2013).

³ Other factors included minority clan membership, exposure to parental violence and violence during childhood.

2.2 Child, early and forced marriage

From a global perspective, child marriage in Africa is relatively high compared to all other regions except South Asia. It is higher in Western and Central Africa than Eastern and Southern Africa (see table). Niger has the highest percentage of child marriage in the world and Chad, Mali and South Sudan are all in the top ten. In terms of numbers, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Tanzania are in the top ten (Wylie, 2018). Due to reductions in child marriage in South Asia over the last decade, **the global burden of child marriage is shifting to sub-Saharan Africa** according to UNICEF (Wylie, 2018). One in three recently married child brides are now in sub-Saharan Africa, compared to one in five a decade ago. (Wylie, 2018)

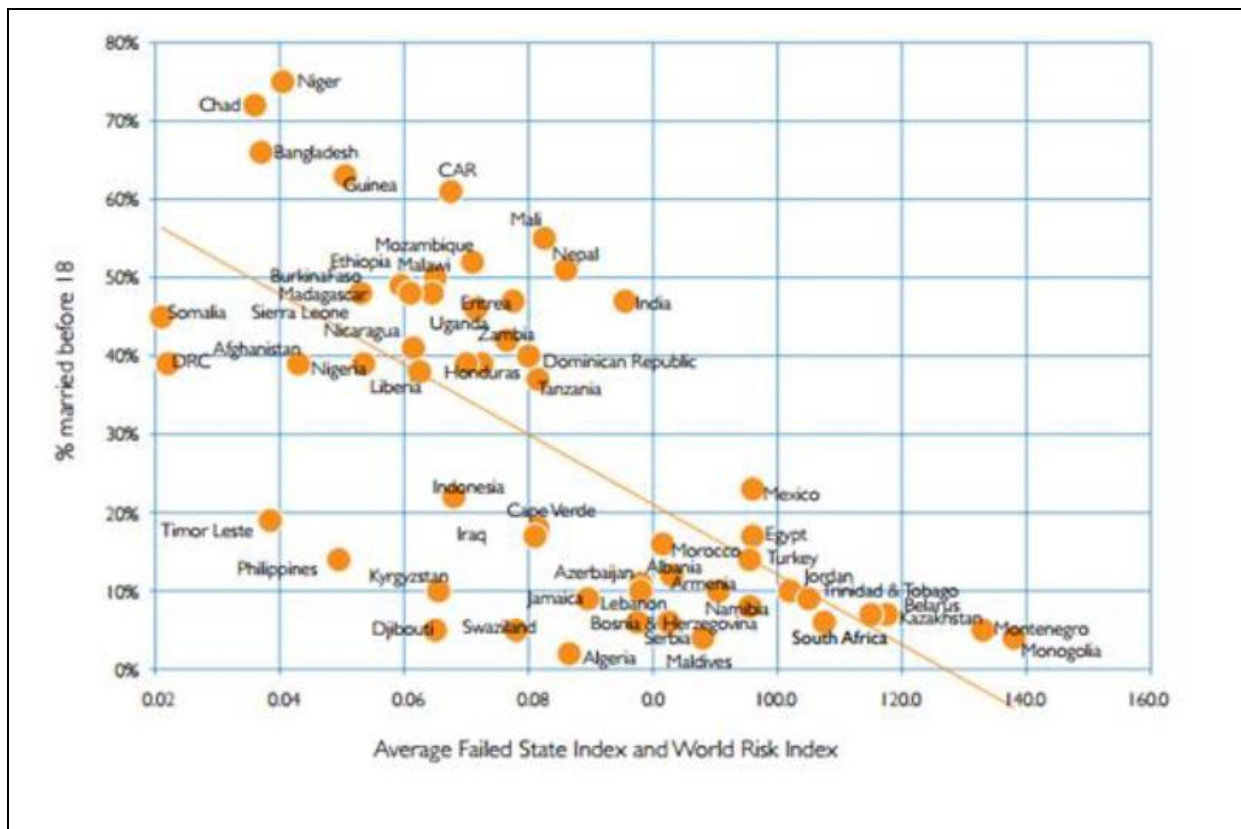
Child marriage by country (UNICEF, 2018⁴)

Country	Married by 15 - %	Married by 18 - %
Mali	17 (2015)	52 (2015)
Somalia	8 (2006)	45 (2006)
South Sudan	9 (2010)	52 (2010)
Nigeria	18 (2016/7)	44 (2016/7)
Sudan	12 (2014)	34 (2014)
Chad	30 (2014/15)	67 (2014/15)
Niger	28 (2012)	76 (2012)
Kenya	4 (2014)	23 (2014)
Tanzania	5 (2015/6)	31 (2015/6)
Zimbabwe	4 (2015)	32 (2015)
Ethiopia	14 (2016)	40 (2016)
Sierra Leone	13 (2013)	39 (2013)

There appears to be a strong connection between C/EFM and fragility. Most of the 25 countries with the highest rates of C/EFM are considered fragile or vulnerable states according to relevant global indexes - Failed States Index (FSI) and World Risk Index (WRI). Analysis by World Vision (2013) has found that states scoring highly on an average of FSI and WRI are significantly more likely to have high proportions of girls married before the age of 18 – this includes Niger, Chad, Mali, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Nigeria.

The percentage of women married before the age of 18 in fragile countries globally (World Vision, 2013)

⁴ https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Child-marriage-database_Mar-2018.xlsx



There is evidence that conflict and emergencies offer contextual conditions that intensify the drivers of C/EFM, including as a protective measure to ensure a secure economic and social advantage for one’s daughters. In contexts of violent extremism, there are also reports of girls being forced to become wives of fighters. Country examples of conflict related C/EFM include:

- **Mali** - Marriage with young girls has been used by foreign extremist fighters in northern Mali to strengthen local ties and influence (Abatan, 2018; Haarmon, 2014). There are also reports that girls are forced to marry members of extremist groups (Ansar Dine, AQIM and MUJAO), gang-raped and abandoned after a swift divorce (Lackenbauer et al, 2015).
- **South Sudan** - Child marriage is increasingly practiced as a means of economic survival and (for people in Protection of Civilian (POC) sites) to ensure the survival of the family following displacement. However, quantitative data also show that poverty resulting from conflict might delay marriage in some cases, since men have insufficient resources to pay a bride price and may result in abductions and sexual violence by individuals/families to secure girls at a lower affordable price. Early marriage is very common, with over 80% of respondents in Rumbek and over 70% in Juba having married before age 20. (What Works to Prevent Violence, 2017)
- **Nigeria** - Women and girls have been kidnapped and forced to marry Boko Haram fighters and used as sex slaves, including more than 1,000 schoolgirls (since 2013). (UNICEF, 2018; Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme, 2017)

2.3 Sexual violence and abuse

Sexual violence is experienced within intimate relationships and by non-intimate partners. In many countries sexual violence, in particular marital rape, experienced in relationships remains outside the criminal law, or is illegal but widely tolerated. This makes gathering accurate data on the issue

particularly challenging. Yet **sexual violence by an intimate partner can be more pervasive than sexual violence by a non-intimate partner**. For example, the DHS from Chad showed that 12% of women (regardless of marital status) have experienced sexual violence at some point since the age of 15. In nearly three-quarters of cases (73%), the current husband or partner is the perpetrator of these acts (INSEED, MSP and ICF International, 2015).

In terms of sexual violence by a non-intimate partner, globally, 7.2% of women reported ever having experienced non-partner sexual violence. **The Africa region had among the highest lifetime prevalence of non-partner sexual violence at 11.9%**, while the lowest prevalence was found for the South-East Asia Region (4.9%). These differences between regions may arise for many reasons, and need to be interpreted with caution, especially as most of the regional estimates have wide confidence intervals. As well as real differences in the prevalence of non-partner sexual violence, the figures are likely to be subject to differing degrees of underreporting by region related to the stigma associated with disclosure of sex violence (WHO et al, 2013).

There is evidence of concerning levels of sexual violence by non-intimate partners and IPV against women and girls in a number of the focus countries where data is available. Country specific examples of data on sexual violence include:

- **Mali** - more than 1 in 10 women aged 15-49 (13%) reported experiencing sexual violence at any time of their life, with higher levels among Sonraï (18%) and Peulh (17%). (Cellule de Planification et de Statistique (CPS/SSDSPF), Institut National de la Statistique (INSTAT/MPATP), INFO-STAT et ICF International, 2014).
- **South Sudan** - A study in 5 settings (in urban, rural and PoC sites) in South Sudan found that up to 65% of women and girls had experienced sexual violence and/or physical in their lifetimes (these are among the highest global rates of GBV). Over 50% of women who endured sexual violence had experienced the first incident before age 20 (What Works to Prevent Violence, 2017).
- **Nigeria** – seven percent of women age 15-49 reported that they had experienced sexual violence at some time in their lifetimes (National Population Commission (NPC) [Nigeria] and ICF International, 2014).
- **Somalia** - In a survey in 14 urban areas in Somalia, 17% of women reported experiencing physical or sexual non-partner violence, with common perpetrators being strangers, street gangs and police/soldiers (Wirtz et al, 2018).
- **Kenya** - fourteen percent of women and sex percent of men age 15-49 report having experienced sexual violence at least once in their lifetime (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and ICF, 2014).

Evidence also highlights that **sexual violence is also experienced by men and boys** and can be **particularly prevalent for socially excluded groups** such as people with disabilities, migrant women, girls and young women, sex workers and sexual minorities. For example, a study by the African Child Policy Forum (2011) with nearly 1000 young disabled people aged 18-24 (describing experiences from before they turned 18) across four countries, found that every respondent suffered at least one type of sexual violence during their childhood; on average each child had experienced 2.6 types of sexual violence. Girls and boys with disabilities were equally likely to suffer a given type of sexual violence once or twice (28% of all cases), but girls were far more likely to suffer a given sexual violence more than 10 times (28%) than boys (16%).

2.4 Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH)

The issue of **sexual harassment and how it relates to conflict** has received limited attention in Africa-focused research. While there is an inconsistency in definitions and methods that makes comparisons across time and countries difficult, the conclusions of a metanalysis of child sexual

exploitation and abuse globally suggests that between 15-20% of girls and 7-8% of boys have faced some form of sexual exploitation and abuse (Kelly and Karsna, 2017). Meta-analysis from Barth et al (2013) found that the highest prevalent is in Africa, Australia, the USA and Canada although this may be because of a culturally based willingness to disclose sexual experiences. Sexual exploitation and abuse against boys is dramatically higher in Africa than any other region, with almost parity with the prevalence for girls (20% for girls and 19% for boys).

Research by Save the Children in South Sudan, Cote Ivoire and Haiti suggests that SEAH by aid workers and peacekeepers against boys and girls in humanitarian situations is high, with much of it going unreported (Csaky, 2008).

2.5 Conflict-related sexual violence

The 2017 Annual Report of the UN Secretary-General on Conflict-related Sexual Violence highlights that **sexual violence continues to be “employed as a tactic of war**, with widespread and strategic rapes, including mass rapes, allegedly committed by several parties to armed conflict, mostly in conjunction with other crimes such as killing, looting, pillage, forced displacement and arbitrary detention” (2017: 5).

While exact numbers of women and girls affected by conflict-related sexual violence is unknown, some studies and UN reports indicate **multiple incidences against women and girls** and a range of different perpetrators. Country specific examples⁵ include:

- **South Sudan** - A third of women (33%) in a recent study had experienced sexual violence from a non-partner, with many incidents directly related to raids, displacement or abduction due to the conflict (What Works to Prevent Violence (2017). In 2016, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) documented 577 incidents of conflict related sexual violence, including rape, gang rape and sexual slavery. Ethnic targeting, together with that of pregnant women, children and the elderly, indicates that sexual violence is being used as part of retaliation strategies intended to punish communities. Reports also implicate the South Sudanese National Police Services. Most reported cases occurred at Sudan People’s Liberation Army checkpoints near camps, which are designated as protection of civilians sites. (UN Secretary-General, 2019).
- **Mali** - There are reports of conflict-related sexual and physical violence against women and girls in the northern and central regions of Mali which face a volatile security situation (United Nations Security Council, 2018; UN Secretary General, 2019). The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali investigated 23 cases of conflict-related sexual violence in 2016, including rape, gang rape, forced prostitution, sexual slavery and forced marriage. (UN Secretary-General, 2019).
- **Somalia** – The country’s complex, long-running humanitarian crisis has led to over 2.6 million people being internally displaced (2019) (UN Secretary General, 2018; UNOCHA, 2018). Displaced women and children are at high risk of violence, exploitation and abuse, with 83% of reported cases of GBV incidents involving IDPs (UNOCHA, 2018). Between January and September 2016, the United Nations verified information on conflict related sexual violence against 200 girls and 1 boy. The violations were attributed to unknown armed elements (55), clan militia (60), Al-Shabaab (21), Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama’a (3), and the Somali National Army (59). Three rapes of girls were also attributed to the African Union Mission to Somalia (UN Secretary-General, 2017a).

⁵ The report of the Secretary General on conflict related sexual violence states: ‘The available data does not reflect the actual scale and magnitude of violations, which are underreported owing to stigma, fear of reprisals, community pressure, weak institutions and significant access restrictions’ (p9)

- **Nigeria** - The ongoing crisis in Northeast Nigeria, which in 2019 entered its 10th year, has left 1.8 million people internally displaced. Women and girls have been targeted with abductions, forced marriages, rapes and other forms of sexual violence. (OCHA, 2018; Women's International League for peace and Freedom, 2017). In 2016 43 cases of sexual violence were reported. Perpetrators included security guards, army officers, camp officials, members of the Civilian Joint Task Force and vigilantes (UN Secretary-General, 2019). Sexual violence and sexual exploitation are common in camps for internally displaced people, including transactional sex for food and other necessities (UN General Assembly, 2017). Adolescent female headed households are particularly vulnerable as the role of breadwinner puts them at risk of exploitation in a context of limited livelihood options. (OCHA, 2018)
- **Sudan** - Women and girls have been the target of systematic rape and other forms of SGBV, such as threat of rape, sexual exploitation, sex trafficking, sexual harassment, forced marriages, forced prostitution and sexual slavery perpetrated by the Sudanese military, its allied militias and armed opposition groups in Darfur and in Sudan's periphery regions and disputed border areas with South Sudan (Nobel Women's Initiative, 2013). 221 women and girls were raped by members of the Sudanese military in the Darfur town of Tabit in a 36-hour period in 2014 (Human Rights Watch, 2015). Women and children from mainly non-Arab tribal communities have been abducted during attacks by the armed forces and government-allied militias (Nobel Women's Initiative, 2013).

Conflict-related SGBV has also been documented against men and boys, particularly within armed groups and in detention. For example, in Nigeria there have been reports of young boys being targets for sexual violence by security agents and adult inmates at two high-security detention facilities (Maiduguri Maximum Security Prison and Giwa Barracks), where civilians are being held due to suspected links to the Boko Haram armed group (Amnesty International, 2019).

2.6 Modern slavery and trafficking

Whilst not all modern slavery and trafficking is SGBV, it does create heightened risks of SGBV and exacerbates existing power dynamics. Women and girls are more likely to be victims of trafficking in the West Africa region, whereas overall levels of trafficking are higher in East and Southern Africa (UNODC, 2018⁶). Girls are more likely to be victims than boys, women and men in West Africa. However, in East and Southern Africa men and women are more likely to be victims than children. In West Africa, most victims are trafficked into forced labour, followed by sexual exploitation (see diagrams below – UNODC, 2018).

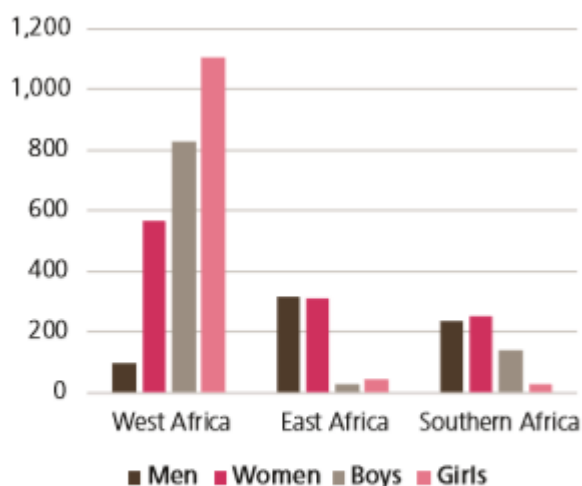
Violent conflict greatly increases the vulnerability of civilian populations to different forms of trafficking and modern slavery and can be gendered. Trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation, sexual slavery and forced marriage is well documented in conflict areas in sub-Saharan Africa. Men and boys are also vulnerable to forced recruitment to militia or armed groups in conflict, for example in DRC and the Central African Republic. There is also evidence from the Africa region of armed groups recruiting children for forced labour in supportive roles (e.g. logistics and catering) and exploitation in extractive industries for the purpose of financing armed groups (UNODC, 2018).

Trafficking is also used as a strategy to strengthen territorial dominance within conflict. UNODC (2018) have observed that armed groups use the fear of being trafficked as a way of keeping the local population under control, and sexual violence or forced marriage as a way of appealing to

⁶ The countries that are the focus of this query are covered in the following regions of the UNDOC report: Sub-Saharan Africa: Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania; North African and the Middle East: Sudan; not covered in report: Somalia, Zimbabwe, South Sudan, Chad (2018).

potential male recruits. In conflict settings, criminal groups and traffickers can also exploit the weak rule of law and displaced persons' desperation to escape in order to intensify their operations.

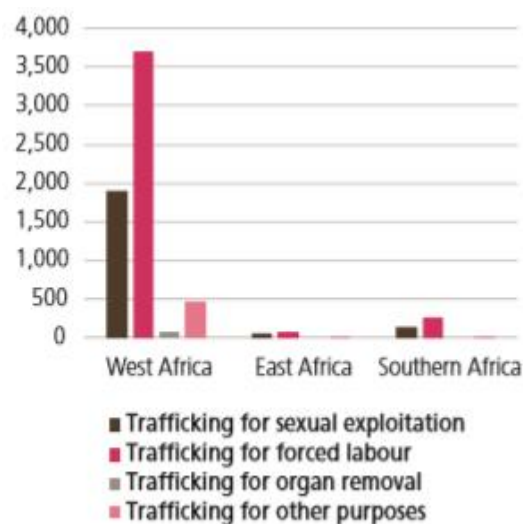
Numbers of detected victims of trafficking in sub-Saharan Africa, by age group, sex and subregion, 2016 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

* Based on data on sex and age on victims detected in 13 countries in West Africa, 6 countries in East Africa, 7 countries in Southern Africa.

Number of detected victims of trafficking in sub-Saharan Africa, by forms of exploitation and subregion, 2016 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Refugees and other migrants displaced by conflict are particularly vulnerable to this form of exploitation. Country specific examples include:

- **Somalia** – the complex, long-running humanitarian crisis has led to over 2.6 million people being internally displaced (2019) (UN Secretary General Report Somalia 2018; UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2018). An estimated 90% of migrants transiting through Somalia are under 25 years, a hazardous journey known as ‘going on Tahrir’, where young migrants face unique protection risks (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2018; Ali, 2016). Somali women, girls and unaccompanied children are at high risk of trafficking for domestic work, forced prostitution and possibly organ removal (US Department of State, 2018b). In south-central Somalia, women and girls have been abducted, trafficked and forced into sexual slavery, support roles and marriages to al-Shabaab militants (US Department of State, 2018b).
- **Mali** - there is a growing trafficking network, (Banco, 2015; US Department of State, 2018a) often associated with rebel and Islamic extremist groups. Sex trafficking is reportedly facilitated by corruption and complicity among local police and *gendarmes* (US Department of State, 2018).
- **Sudan** - Since 2011 there has been a significant increase in the number of people trafficked into slavery or slavery-like situations in Sudan. Trafficked persons include South Sudanese refugees escaping conflict as well as Eritrean, Ethiopian and Somali women and children who are seeking alternatives to living in refugee camps and are trying to reach Europe. Trafficking has led them into situations of forced labour, including involuntary domestic servitude and sexual exploitation. (United Nations General Assembly, 2016)

2.7 Recruitment of women and girls into violent extremist groups

The limited and anecdotal information collected about women and girls' involvement in violent extremist groups does not enable a clear idea of the extent of the participation in these groups of women and girls. However, there are **reports that women and girls have been voluntarily and forcibly recruited into extremist groups.**

The involvement of women in the Islamic State in West Africa⁷ dates back to the early 2000s. Mohammed Yusuf, the group's founder, urged women to join the group in order to broaden the group's membership, and enabled women to become wives for male combatants and mothers for the next generation of fighters. This strategy was also designed to encourage men to join the group. Under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau, who took over after Yusuf's death in 2009, they began abducting women and girls. More than 2 000 women and girls were allegedly abducted between 2014 and 2015. Between April 2011 and June 2017, the group carried out at least 434 suicide attacks in the Lake Chad region (Cameroon, Nigeria, Niger and Chad) of which 244 were undertaken by women. (Abatan, 2018; OCHA, 2018).

Although Nusrat al-Islam, officially known as Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin' (JNIM), **the official branch of Al-Qaeda in Mali, has denied using female suicide bombers,** an Institute for Security Studies report found that women played various active supporting roles such as being informants, laundresses and cooks for violent extremist groups in Mali (Théroux-Bénoni et al, 2016).

In Somalia women play a key role in al-Shabaab, the Somalia-based extremist group, both as voluntary recruits and through kidnapping and violent force (African Union Mission in Somalia, 2018). Women have also been the targets and motivation behind terrorist attacks, such as the June 2017 Mogadishu restaurant attacks (Counter-Extremism Project, 2018). However, evidence about women's involvement in al-Shabaab and the particular experiences of women and girls living under the control of extremist groups is limited (African Union Mission in Somalia, 2018; UK Home Office, 2018).

2.8 Female genital mutilation/cutting

Available data from large-scale representative surveys show that **the practice of FGM is highly concentrated in a swath of countries from the Atlantic coast to the Horn of Africa⁸,** with wide variations in prevalence. The practice is almost universal in Somalia - 98% of girls and women aged 15-49 years have undergone FGM (UNICEF, 2018). In Sudan 87% of women and girls aged 15-49 have undergone FGM/C (2014), Sierra Leone 86% (2017), Mali 83% (2015), Ethiopia 65% (2016), Chad 38% (2014/5), Kenya 21% (2014), Nigeria 18% (2016) and Tanzania 10% (2015/6)⁹ and Niger 2%. There are wide variations within countries (as well as between). For example, in Mali FGM/C is widely practiced among all ethnic groups, apart from Sonrai and Tamachek, with 91% of girls and women (15-49 years) having undergone FGM/C (28TooMany, 2017). Although progress to address FGM/C has been mixed, some countries have experienced significant declines. For example, FGM/C prevalence rates among girls and women aged 15 to 19 have declined by 30% in Kenya over the last 30 years.¹⁰

Globally there has been little research done to systematically track the prevalence of FGM/C before and after conflict and emergencies and in post conflict settings (Bell and Fraser, 2015). Attempts to do so are likely to suffer from the data collection problems that plague representation of

⁷ The Islamic State in West Africa (formerly known as Boko Haram) is a jihadist terrorist organization based in north-eastern Nigeria, also active in Chad, Niger and northern Cameroon.

⁸ As well as in areas of the Middle East such as Iraq and Yemen and in some countries in Asia like Indonesia.

⁹ UNICEF database - https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FGMC-Women-prevalence-database_Oct-2018.xlsx; see - https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FGMC-Daughter-prevalence-database_Oct-2018.xlsx for data on 0-14 year olds. Data for Niger is from the diagram.

¹⁰ UNICEF website - <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/female-genital-mutilation/>

this sensitive topic and the displacement of people during emergency situations makes it even more difficult to track the practice. It is therefore not possible to draw any conclusions about how insecurity and conflict may impact on this practice in Africa, although **some anecdotal research indicates that conflict and displacement may in some instances drive FGM/C** (ibid). For example:

- The aid organisation Plan International discovered in their work in **Mali** that the daughters of displaced families from the North (where FGM/C is not traditionally practiced), but who live amongst host communities in the South (where FGM/C is common), were being ostracized because they were not circumcised. This led to families from the North feeling pressure to perform FGM/C on their daughters (Ryan et al, 2014).
- In **Nigeria**, vulnerable and displaced women and girls reported being forced to have FGM/C to prepare them for prostitution as their sole means of survival. (Ryan et al, 2014).
- There were reports of militia in **Sudan** perpetrating FGM/C on their victims after raping them (IRIN, cited in Bastick et al, 2007).

Ryan et al (2014) also point out that disruption to education during times of conflict can upset the positive affect that education can have on reducing FGM/C, that families may be driven to subject their daughters to FGM/C in order to prepare them for marriage to protect the girls in fragile settings and to ensure the security of girls and their families, and that efforts to tackle the practice can be undermined during conflict.

2.9 Violence against women in political/public life

Political violence targeting women increases where levels of organised violence are high, such as during conflict (Kishi et al, 2019). Forms of violence vary from physical attacks (both sexual and not), abduction, or targeted by mobs. Women can also be dispersed by government officials, other armed agents, or other violent demonstrators for engaging in public demonstrations, peaceful or otherwise. Women are also increasingly facing gendered risks and violence in online spaces (Kishi et al, 2019; Stevens and Fraser, 2018b).

African women lawyers and human rights defenders, gathered together at an International Commission of Jurists colloquium held in Zimbabwe in 2014, reported **a number of reprisals they have routinely experienced as a result of their work in protecting human rights**, which have impacted their ability to carry out their professional roles. Threats upon their security varied in nature from threats upon their lives to threats of a more insidious variety that left them feeling isolated within their communities. They reported being subjected to the following by State actors: arbitrary arrests, travel sanctions, denial of violations of rights, searches of their houses and offices and State intrusion into the personal sphere where police interview and interrogate their family members (International Commission of Jurists, 2015).

Women human rights defenders face particular threats in conflict and post-conflict situations. Situations of armed conflict, and the subsequent break down of the rule of law, create a dangerous environment for women and girls. Further their experiences of violence can hamper their participation in decision-making processes.¹¹ Country specific examples of SGBV and harassment experienced by women human rights defenders:

- **Sudan** - Sexual harassment of female protesters from government security forces in Sudan (Human Rights Watch, 2016)

¹¹ OHCHR (2018) Women human rights defenders must be protected, say UN experts. International Women Human Rights Defenders Day 29 November 2018. OHCHR website - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23943&LangID=E>

- **Nigeria** - Aisha Yesufu and Obiageli 'Oby' Ezekwesili, co-founders of the #BringBackOurGirls movement who were arrested in January during a sit-in in the capital, Abuja (OCHA, 2018)

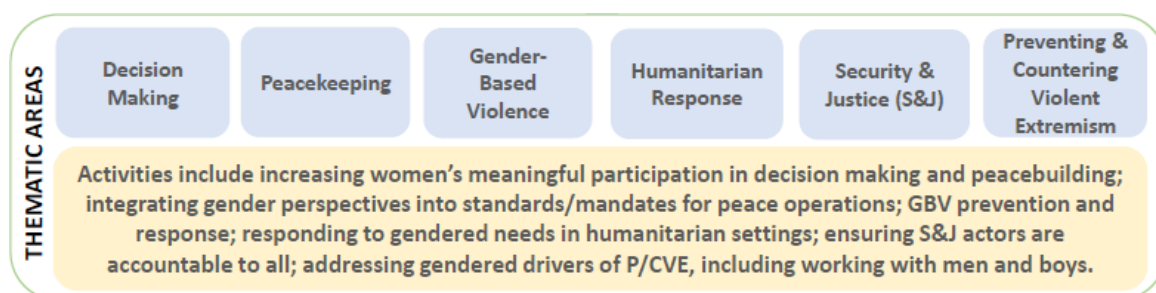
2.10 Violence against socially excluded women and girls

Evidence highlights that violence is experienced in high levels by socially excluded groups including in the Africa region, such as people with disabilities (Bell, 2017), migrant women, women and girls living with HIV, girls and young women, widows, sex workers, and sexual minorities. Forms of violence include those described in previous sections, however, violence against socially excluded groups in institutional, service and employment/economic settings can be particularly prevalent. Gender norms and stereotypes cuts across other factors (such as ability and age) which tends to lead to heightened exclusion and vulnerability to violence for women and girls. Existing and new forms of violence against sexual and gender minorities can also increase in conflict, including targeted attacks, policing of gender norms, blackmail and extortion, and community rejection (Myrntinen and Daigle, 2017).

Conditions during and post-conflict and emergencies can exacerbate violence for socially excluded groups. The estimated 7.6 million persons with disabilities living in forced displacement face high risk of gender-based violence, including specifically against women and girls, because they are less able to protect themselves from violations, more dependent on others for survival, less powerful and less visible (Bell, 2017). Despite this, they are often excluded from programmes and services designed to prevent and respond to GBV in conflict and humanitarian settings (WRC, 2015). Researchers for a DFID-funded study on violence faced by women with disabilities in North Central Nigeria by Inclusive Friends and NSRP (2015) heard anecdotes of men forcing disabled women and girls to have sex with them in exchange for “help” getting food and water. In the Jos North district, 15 out of 35 women with disabilities spoke of violations in camps for internally displaced people (IDP). Understanding the dynamics of SGBV and disability in such settings is hampered by the difficulty of gathering data in such contexts (Bell, 2015).

3. WHAT ARE THE LINKS TO CONFLICT, SECURITY AND STABILITY?

The links between SGBV, gender inequality and conflict, security and stability are complex and multi-directional. This section is structured around the thematic areas proposed in the draft Theory of Change (ToC) for the Africa CSSF region (see diagram below). It explores the evidence around the links between SGBV, gender inequality and these thematic areas, and provides examples of evidence from the region.



3.1 Gender-based violence

Whilst there is some evidence of the links between SGBV and conflict, these are not simplistic and direct relationships. SGBV and other forms of gender inequality are associated with conflict at a macro level (see Section 3.3 below), although further research is needed to explore the causal connections.

In active conflict and protracted crises, there is well-documented evidence that various forms of SGBV intensify and new forms of violence emerge, such as conflict-related sexual violence, as social structures and the rule of law break down, livelihoods are eroded and economic insecurity increases (The Global Women's Institute, 2017; Heidari and Moreno, 2016; Marsh et al., 2006; Fraser and Kangas, 2017). However, intimate partner violence remains the most prevalent form of SGBV, even in conflict settings (Stark and Ager, 2011). Conflict also increases groups that are particularly vulnerable to violence, such as women and girls with disabilities, refugee and IDP women and girls.

Conflict as a driver of SGBV: examples from Africa region

- **South Sudan:** ongoing armed conflict and the humanitarian crisis has reportedly contributed to worsened gender inequalities, and women's greater vulnerability to poverty and SGBV (UNDP, 2019); while the experience of conflict and/or displacement were found to be drivers of IPV in Protection of Civilian sites in Rumbek and Juba, with women being twice as likely to have experienced multiple acts of IPV, reporting increased severity and occurrence of assaults; and non-partner sexual violence often directly linked with conflict-related raids, displacement or abduction (What Works to Prevent Violence, 2017).
- **Mali:** armed groups committed sexual violence against civilians during the occupation of the North (2012-2013), with the conflict reportedly also resulting in abduction, wrongful incarceration, flogging, stoning and forced marriage (Ghorbani, 2015).
- **Nigeria's Borno State:** The conflict has reportedly increased the prevalence (by 8%) and severity of forms of SGBV, including a forcing of women and children to become so-called 'suicide bombers' through person-borne improvised explosive devices (Laouan with CARE Nigeria, 2018).

SGBV as an effect of conflict can fuel grievances and become a future cause. Systematic use of sexual violence in conflict can traumatise and divide communities, generating grievances which become part of future conflict dynamics, feeding perceptions and narratives which often serve to facilitate and justify further violence (DFID, 2010; Segal and Bishop, 2018). Addressing conflict-related sexual violence as part of processes of peacebuilding and statebuilding are therefore crucial. For example, the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission included sexual and broader gender-based violence as part of the scope and remit, with special considerations for female survivors and establishment of hybrid courts with jurisdiction to prosecute for SGBV (What Works to Prevent Violence, 2018).

Shame, stigma and communal silence regarding SGBV are closely associated with the use of sexual violence in conflict as both a cause and consequence; this has been recognised by the UK's 2017 Principles for Global Action¹², which aims to prevent and address stigma associated with conflict-related sexual violence. The principles note that such stigma "has its roots in, and is sustained by, gender inequality and discrimination, the normalisation and tolerance of sexual violence itself and the failure to consistently adhere to and implement human rights" (2017: 25).

There is also a growing evidence base that some of the common drivers of SGBV increase in conflict settings. The box below sets out some of the evidence on drivers of SGBV and gender inequality across the Africa region, and how these increase in conflict.

¹² The UK has set out five Principles for Global Action: (1) Recognise and address stigma's root causes; (2) Avoid reproducing stigma; (3) Reduce stigma-related risk; (4) Put victims/survivors at the centre; and (5) Pursue effective stigma prevention and response.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/645636/PSVI_Principles_for_Global_Action.pdf

Drivers of SGBV and gender inequality increase in conflicts

Impunity for SGBV increases as the rule of law weakens in conflict (Fraser and Kangas, 2017). For example, in South Sudan, sexual violence has been exacerbated by an increasing impunity and lack of accountability as a result of a weak criminal justice system, and little political will to prosecute perpetrators, which discourages women from reporting violence (Amnesty International, 2017).

Conflict exacerbates **poverty and unemployment**, which in turn can drive SGBV, gender inequality and harmful practices such as early and forced marriage. A systematic review of predictors of interpersonal household violence in humanitarian settings highlighted income and economic status as shared predictors for violence against children and violence against women (Rubenstein et al., 2017). Land-related conflict, intercommunal violence and related displacement and economic disempowerment has also increased women's vulnerability to abuse, including sexual and economic exploitation in Nigeria's Plateau State particularly among widowed and displaced women who have had to become the main breadwinner for their family (Taft et al., 2016). There is also some evidence of the links between poverty, violent extremism, sexual violence and CEFM through the practice of 'bride price' (see Section 3.6).

Normalisation of gendered violence, including violent masculine norms that 'real men' use violence to solve conflict: Active periods of conflict can contribute to normalisation of certain forms of gendered violence, including within the family (Fulu et al., 2017). It has been argued that gender norms – including how masculinity is constructed in society – “are at the root” of the majority of physical violence perpetrated by men against women and other men. In Nigeria, a study has illustrated that widely held perceptions of masculinity and femininity are dominant 'root causes' of gender inequality and forms of SGBV – such standards can require men to “prove they are 'not women' in a society” by asserting their dominance through violence (Voices for Change, 2015). In Somalia, a research study found perceived changes in traditions, behaviours and social norms as a result of prolonged civil war, particularly among IDP communities. These include, for example, a normalisation of physical and sexual violence in public and private spheres, and early and child marriage (CISP and International Alert, 2015). Social norms can also aid in legitimising harmful traditional practices, which are often linked to other forms of violence.

'**Thwarted masculinities**' can also lead to violent extremism, instability, and increased perpetration of SGBV (Sommers, 2019). In Somalia, Al Shabaab provides an “alternative pathway to manhood” in an environment which makes it difficult to do so otherwise (Rift Valley Institute, 2013). Further research is needed to explore the role that 'thwarted' masculinities specifically play in conflict (Wright, 2014), particularly given the emphasis placed on female vulnerabilities, which could potentially deepen male humiliation (Gardner and El-Bushra, 2016). However, it is also important not to ignore the majority of men who find other ways to 'be a man' during conflict and under-theorise other, 'non-hegemonic' forms of masculinity (Myrtilinen et al, 2017).

Complex links between conflict, **childhood violence, and intergenerational perpetration of violence**: There is emerging evidence about the complexity of the links between witnessing conflict as a child, and potential perpetration of violence as an adult. An examination of the effect of exposure to armed conflict during childhood and youth life phases in 20 countries of sub-Saharan Africa has indicated that men and women who had been exposed to conflict between the ages of 6-10 express a greater acceptance of domestic violence; and that women are more likely to report having experienced domestic violence (La Mattina and Shemyakina, 2017). Research also shows that the single strongest factor, across countries, affecting men's use of violence is having witnessed violence during childhood against their mother (Fulu et al., 2017).

Alcohol and drug use are known to be facilitators of SGBV and often increase in conflict: While evidence on substance abuse in armed conflict appears to be generally sparse, alcohol and drug use have been identified as predictors of interpersonal violence against both women and children in households in humanitarian and displacement settings (Rubenstein et al., 2017). Men have a greater likelihood than women to respond to trauma or stressors (including through gender socialisation) through suppression or resorting to substance abuse or anti-social behaviour (Fleming et al., 2015a). It has been pointed out that the circumstances of armed conflict, such as exposure to trauma, could increase both the occurrence and severity of the use of alcohol among forcibly displaced persons (Weaver and Roberts, 2010); with some evidence that binge drinking and use of opiates or minor tranquilisers is widespread among these populations, particularly among men (Ezard, 2012).

3.2 Decision-making

UK policy has emphasised the importance of women's participation in peacebuilding efforts under the women, peace and security agenda since the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2001. DFID's *Building Stability Framework* (2016) highlights the importance of women's leadership and meaningful participation in conflict resolution processes.

SGBV and gender inequality act in multiple ways to limit women's participation in political processes at all levels, including peace-building and state-building. Domestic violence or social norms around women's mobility in the public sphere may limit women's opportunities to vote; women in public life are often targets for violence which can discourage women from entering political office, or lead to low retention of women in politics, including in peace building. Threats to women's safety and security are often gendered or sexualised, which can in turn lead to a silencing of women's voices and undermine women's ability to participate in peace processes.

Women's participation in peace processes contributes to the durability of peace and stability (Domingo et al, 2013; O'Reilly et al 2015). A multi-country study of women's involvement in peacebuilding found that a key characteristic across the study sites¹³ was that women organised collectively to achieve change, with potential for greater impact in building longer-lasting peace (Justino et al, 2012). For example, in South Sudan, women's groups from the government and opposition groups came together and formed a women's bloc, which has gone on to facilitate communication and dialogue with women in warring parties and during peace negotiations. Women were seen as having informal networks and personal connections that would allow them to move between the negotiating groups and bridge religious, ethnic and tribal lines to promote peace (Mai, 2015; What Works To Prevent Violence, 2018)

Women's inclusion in peace-building offers the opportunity to recognise women's different experiences of conflict and to address the particular forms of SGBV they face during conflict (Fraser and Jacobsen, 2013). Research in Mali has revealed that women have different priorities relating to conflict, security and stability than men; a recent study found women peacebuilding practitioners expressed significantly more concern about levels of SGBV, as well as concerns about abuse by the security forces or government (Reeve, 2018).

Peacebuilding and statebuilding processes also provide important opportunities to embed gender equality goals (Domingo et al, 2013; Fraser and Jacobsen, 2013). For example, the women's bloc participated in the negotiations of the 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS). This explicitly prohibited GBV, sexual exploitation and harassment, and created a hybrid court with the jurisdiction to prosecute GBV (What Works To Prevent Violence, 2018)

3.3 Peacekeeping

Gender equality is strongly associated with peace. Gender inequality increases the likelihood that a state will experience both internal and international conflicts (Caprioli, 2005). Women's physical security is the number one predictor of state peacefulness, more than other factors such as level of democracy, wealth or religious identity (Hudson et al. 2012). Increased gender disparity and reduced physical security for women are among the earliest signs of crisis and violence (Anderlini, 2011) – see box below.

¹³ Based on research in Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sierra Leone (Justino et al, 2012)

Gender equality is strongly associated with more peaceful and stable outcomes: Key findings from analysis of global data

- **Violence against women¹⁴ is a predictor of whether a society is generally prone to violent conflict.** Countries characterised by high levels of violence against women are also more likely to be involved in international conflicts with high levels of violence. Analysis of global data shows that violence against women explains almost 15% of the likelihood that a state will become involved in violent militarised interstate disputes (Caprioli et al, 2007).
- **More equal societies are associated with lower levels of armed conflict.** The larger the gender gap,¹⁵ the more likely a country is to be involved in inter- and intrastate conflict and to use violence as a first response in a conflict setting (Melander, 2005). Countries with 10% of women in the labour force are nearly 30 times more likely to experience internal conflict than countries with 40% of women in the labour force (Caprioli, 2005).
- **The higher the level of violence against women, the more likely a country may be to not comply with international commitments,** and the less peacefully it will operate in the international system. Analysis of global data¹⁶ shows a significant relationship between states that do not care about enforcing national laws that protect women from violence and states that do not comply with international norms and treaty agreements (Hudson et al, 2012).
- **The severity of violence used in crises decreases with higher gender equality,** as based on data¹⁷ comparing female decision-making during international crises and a state's use of violence internationally (Caprioli and Boyer, 2001).

See also: Crespo-Sancho (2018 and 2017)

Women peacekeepers are important for the success of peacekeeping operations, and are often more trusted and effective in information gathering, according to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). In Somalia, AMISOM (2019) have noted how women peacekeepers have been critical in stabilising the country. The UN have noted that women peacekeepers can also improve access and support for local women, act as role models, provide a greater sense of security, mentor female cadets at police and military academies, and help address the specific needs of female ex-combatants. The increased recruitment of women is particularly critical in societies where women are prohibited from speaking to men (UN, 2019).

Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by peacekeepers is a serious crime and threatens the legitimacy of peacekeeping operations. As peacekeeping operations have increased in size and complexity of mandates, the number of victims has increased (Freedman, 2018). Between 2004 and 2016, the UN received almost 2,000 allegations of SEA against its peacekeepers (Essa, 2017). Examples of SEA by peacekeepers in the Africa region include:

- **South Sudan:** In February 2018, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) recalled a unit of Ghanaian police officers accused of sexual exploitation of women living at the UN Protection of Civilians site in Wau.¹⁸
- **Central African Republic:** Human Rights Watch (2015) documented the gang-rape of two girls by MINUSCA peacekeepers near the base. The UN also reported allegations of regular oral and anal rape of homeless boys aged 8-15 by peacekeepers from France, Chad and Equatorial Guinea. It

¹⁴ As measured by laws on domestic violence, rape and murder, based on data from the WomanStats physical security cluster (Caprioli et al, 2007)

¹⁵ Gender gap is defined as the differences in experiences and opportunities between men and women, in terms of female participation in parliament and higher education attainment (Melander, 2005).

¹⁶ Association of discrepancy between national law and practice concerning women is compared with SOCIC (States of Concern to the International Community) (Hudson et al, 2012).

¹⁷ The International Crisis Behaviour (ICB) dataset and the multinomial logical regression are used to test the level of violence exhibited during international crises by states with varying levels of domestic gender equality (Caprioli and Boyer, 2001)

¹⁸ UN Peacekeeping (2018) UNMISS acts on allegations of sexual exploitation against formed police unit: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/unmiss-acts-allegations-of-sexual-exploitation-against-formed-police-unit>

also alleges sadistic sexual abuse by a French military commander who tied up and forced four girls to have sex with a dog (Westendorf and Searle, 2017).

Recent research has highlighted the multiple forms of SEA perpetrated in peace operations, including: opportunistic sexual abuse; planned sadistic attacks; transactional sex; and networked sexual exploitation (Westendorf and Searle, 2017).

3.4 Humanitarian response

The UK has led international efforts to address SGBV in humanitarian responses and made significant international commitments. In 2013, the UK and Sweden launched the *Call to Action on Protection from Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Emergencies*, leading to an internationally agreed Roadmap in 2016 committing signatories to time-bound actions, including specialised prevention and response services and the integration of SGBV prevention and gender equality into all humanitarian response efforts. These commitments were re-stated in the Agenda for Humanity and Grand Bargain at the *World Humanitarian Summit* and in DFID's 2018 Strategic Vision for Gender Equality and the UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace & Security: 2018 – 2020.

SGBV increases in both frequency and severity during humanitarian crises, as a result of a complex interaction of factors including: existing gender inequalities; discriminatory social norms; breakdown of rule of law and normal protective systems; changing power dynamics and new vulnerabilities, for example arising from loss of homes and/or incomes (DFID, 2018). In northern Nigeria, sexual violence, exploitation and abuse have been reported against displaced women and girls and are common in camps, including by authorities and other groups controlling access to the camps (OCHA, 2018).

SGBV is also perpetrated by those delivering humanitarian aid in conflict settings. For example, in Nigeria's Borno state, an estimated 10% of SGBV incidents are committed in humanitarian spaces (Laouan with Care Nigeria, 2018). In Eastern Chad, Amnesty International (2009) has documented cases of humanitarian NGO personnel working in refugee camps committing acts of sexual and other violence against women and girls in the camps, though the extent of this is not known due to extensive underreporting (Amnesty International, 2008).

There is growing evidence that SGBV undermines humanitarian investments by making it harder for communities to recover from crises. Gendered violence not only increases costs to public health and social welfare systems, it decreases women and children's abilities to participate in social and economic recovery (DFID, 2018). A recent DFID-funded study¹⁹ from South Sudan shows the heavy costs of SGBV in fragile contexts, with 8.5 million lost days of work per year - equivalent to 6% of total employed women working. It is estimated that each survivor spent US\$21.3 of out-of-pocket expenditure per year on services due to SGBV (in a country where 80% of the population lives on less than US\$1 a day) (Elmusharaf et al, 2019).

Failure to address SGBV and gendered needs within humanitarian response exposes women and girls to further harm, and increases risks at a time when access to support for survivors is most limited with the breakdown of statutory support and social structures. In humanitarian crises, groups that have unique gendered needs and are particularly at risk of SGBV include women with disabilities, older women, and sexual minorities (DFID, 2018).

In conflict and humanitarian crises, adolescent girls experience high levels of violence, have unique needs and are often at high risk of falling between the cracks of child protection and SGBV programming. In the Lake Chad crisis, research found that sector-specific programmes and funding

¹⁹ Based on surveys with individual women, households, and businesses

often failed to address “complex, interrelated challenges adolescent girls face” (Plan International, 2018a: 1). In South Sudan, new DFID-funded research finds that over 1 in 4 adolescent girls (27%) reported that they had experienced some form of non-partner sexual violence and almost half (43%) had experienced intimate partner violence at least once during their lifetime. Exposure to armed conflict increased adolescent girls’ odds of experiencing non-partner sexual violence by up to seven times. Girls reported ongoing threats of sexual violence even after the acute conflict passed (Murphy et al, 2019).

3.5 Security and Justice

Conflict creates a culture of impunity with few services and little political will to prosecute perpetrators of SGBV. The breakdown of statutory services and the rule of law, as well as deepening of poverty and lack of choice for women, can discourage women from reporting violence. For example, in northern Nigeria, the UN Secretary General (2017) has raised concern that almost half of all survivors do not report sexual violence because of a lack of trust in formal and informal justice systems, a prevailing culture of impunity, stigmatisation and personal risk.

In conflict-affected settings, traditional values of kinship and patronage which prioritise collective peace over individual concerns become more important, which impacts on women’s willingness to speak out about SGBV. Rights of women and girls are often seen as secondary to the need to resolve conflict, so they may be viewed as an asset to be ‘traded’ In Somalia, there has been a reported ‘revival’ of clan customary law particularly in IDP communities as a result of prolonged civil war, which is often discriminatory towards women and children from minority clans (who are most often affected by sexual and gender-based violence) and sees sexual violence as a communal, rather than an individual crime (CISP and International Alert, 2015). Although rape cases fall under the remit of statutory law, there is a lack of trust in authorities which impacts reporting, while the formal legal system also lacks provisions on domestic violence, early marriage and FGM/C,²⁰ often resulting in inadequate response unless the involved physical injuries are severe (CISP and International Alert, 2015).

In conflict settings, there are also links between SGBV, trafficking and organised crime. Organised criminal gangs operating with impunity often take advantage of migrants’ desperation to get to safety (Segal and Bishop, 2018). The trafficking and sale of women and girls is also a key source of revenue for violent extremist groups (Arriaga, 2017). In the Sahel region, conflict and political turmoil have led to a complex migration situation, with a growing trafficking network associated with rebel and Islamic extremist groups that is reportedly facilitated by corruption and complicity among local police and security officials (US Department of State, 2018a; UNODC, 2014). Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual trafficking and exploitation with more than a thousand cases reported to just one protection agency in the Lake Chad region; many more likely remain unreported due to stigmatisation and fear of reprisal (Plan International, 2018b).

However, there is also the opportunity for Security and Justice programmes to work with progressive elements within non-state actors using ‘gendered’ approaches. Positive entry points that deliver for women and girls can include women’s rights organisations, and customary/traditional leaders. This can enable identification of reforms that favour women and girls, and go with the grain of legitimacy and incentives (SDDirect, 2018). For example, in Nigeria, DFID’s Voices for Change (V4C) programme facilitated connections between religious leaders so that they could see a bigger change was happening around challenging gender norms around violence. Some religious leaders went on to build working relationships with other religious institutions to raise girls’ and women’s empowerment issues (V4C, 2016), thereby contributing to a ‘rising tide’ of change.

²⁰ While constitutionally prohibited, this is not enforced by local or federal authorities)

3.6 Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism

There is some evidence that individuals engaged in violent extremism or terrorist attacks are more likely to have a record of perpetrating violence against women. For example, the Sydney hostage siege, London Bridge attacks, Manchester arena bombing, Barcelona and Nice truck attacks were all perpetrated by men with a known history of domestic and sexual violence (Fraser and Kangas, 2017; Smith, 2019). While there is no simple direct causal link, and only a small proportion of abusive men will go on to become terrorists, commentators have noted that previous perpetration of intimate partner violence is typically a 'red flag', and the first victim of an extremist is often the woman in his own home (Smith, 2019). To date, however, research has focused on violent extremist acts in Europe and the US.

Personal histories of female violent extremists often identify a pattern of violence and coercion from male relatives, including fathers, brothers or husbands (Darden, 2019). For example, research in Kenya found that women often became involved in violent extremist groups through al Shabaab's recruitment of husbands and sons "whether they choose to or not, wives and mothers are almost inevitably caught up in playing roles that support violent extremists" (Ndung'u et al, 2017: 34).

Some violent extremists have also forced women and girls to support their organisation, including through abduction. Over 2,000 women and girls were kidnapped in Nigeria over an 18-month period from the beginning of 2014, with many used as "sexual slaves, human shields and suicide bombers" (Coomaraswamy, 2015: 223). Young girls have also been abducted in Somalia by al-Shabaab (Ndung'o et al, 2017). Once in the group, either through choice or forced recruitment, women are also subjected to violence.

Boys are also exposed to gendered violence, including sexual abuse and rape, which can increase their susceptibility to perpetrate violence in the future. Indeed, there is some evidence from Northern Nigeria that Boko Haram are intentionally committing sexual violence against boys as young as 7 years old as a tactic to traumatize and sever children from their communities and coerce them into violence (Arriaga, 2017). The use of sexual violence as a weapon to force children's loyalty to armed groups more broadly is also well-documented in other conflicts, including Sierra Leone and Liberia (Human Rights Watch, 2003; Stephens and Fraser, 2018).

Furthermore, there is a growing body of evidence showing that exposure to conflict in childhood is linked to future perpetration of violence as an adult. Analysis of data from 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa which had experienced armed conflict found that men and women who were exposed to armed conflict between ages 6 to 10 are more accepting of domestic violence as an adult. Women who were exposed to conflict during this age are more likely to report being a victim of domestic violence (La Mattina and Shemyakina, 2017). The results highlight that violent conflict can lead to the intergenerational transmission of intimate partner violence, and the importance of interventions working with this age such as the DFID-funded peace education project in Afghanistan which has significantly reduced violence both in schools and at home (Corboz et al, 2019).

There is also a larger body of evidence exploring the links between violent and unequal gender norms, conflict and violent extremism, also referred to as 'thwarted masculinities'. As noted in Section 3.1, these violent masculinities can be a driver of recruitment to violent extremist groups, as well as part of the wider enabling environment for violent narratives to flourish (Stevens and Fraser, 2018a). Research in Nigeria has shown how conflict and violent extremism can be a significant 'pull' factor to fulfill otherwise 'thwarted' cultural expectations of what it means to be a man, highlighting the importance of putting greater emphasis on positive masculinities in conflict: "Sexism, homophobia and transphobia can lead to violence because men feel under pressure to prove they are 'not women' or

'gay' – and entering a world of violence is seen as a means of demonstrating their masculinity” (Ekeoba et al, 2015: 34)

In some parts of Africa, there is a close association between gender inequality and violent extremism through the practice of 'bride price'. Rapid increases in bride price can delay or diminish young men's marriage prospects, leading them to join violent extremist groups who offer to pay bride price or even provide brides. Research²¹ in northern Nigeria has confirmed the role of marriage market imbalances as an important driver of violent extremism, which is exacerbated in areas where polygamy is widely practiced. Sudden increases in bride prices have led to women marrying richer, older, already-married men. In turn, young men have joined violent insurgent groups who offer the promise of marriage and income. Abductions and violence against women also increased in these areas, suggesting that Boko Haram is responding 'strategically' to marriage market imbalances (Rexer, 2019). Research with men in Somalia has indicated that sexual violence at times is driven by the costly and unaffordable demands of formal marriage for young men – planned rape of girls and women serves to reduce their dowry value (CISP and International Alert, 2015). There is also a reported 'alarming trend' towards group rapes in Somalia, as these require less individual compensation payments to a survivor's family (collective rape is treated as one incident, incurring the same compensation payment which can be split among all perpetrators), potentially making any punishment for perpetrators seem less daunting (CISP and International Alert, 2015: 43).

²¹ Study of marriage markets in northern Nigeria based on data from Demographic and Health Survey data on village-level polygamy status and pre-marital rainfall shocks as an instrument for marriage inequality, average wedding expenditures, as well as data on Boko Haram incidents comes from the Armed Conflict Location Event Dataset (Rexer, 2019)

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Annex 1: Methodology

This methodology is described below.

Search strategy: Studies were identified through searches using Google and relevant electronic databases (PubMed, Science Direct, and Google Scholar) for priority sources. Key search terms included: conflict, security, stability, organised crime, peacekeeping, violent extremism, humanitarian AND GBV, violence, rape, sexual abuse, threats, early marriage, FGM, women, women human rights defenders, women activists, anti- gender, trafficking

Criteria for inclusion: To be eligible for inclusion in this rapid mapping, evidence had to fulfil the following criteria:

- **Focus:** Research, studies and grey literature on forms and drivers of VAWG and gender inequality across the Africa region, and how these link and/or act as a causal factor in conflict, security and stability.
- **Time period:** 2000 – June 2019.
- **Language:** English.
- **Publication status:** publicly available – in almost all cases published online.
- **Geographical focus:** Africa region, with a focus on CSSF countries including: Somalia, Nigeria, South Sudan, Mali, Chad, Niger, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and Ethiopia.

Annex 2: Terminology

Gender-based violence (GBV): refers to any physical, sexual and emotional violence perpetrated against a person due to their gender. This primarily affects women and girls, but also other groups such as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals and to a smaller extent men and boys.

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) refers to any act that is perpetrated against a person's will and is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships. It encompasses threats of violence and coercion. It can be physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual in nature, and can take the form of a denial of resources or access to services. It inflicts harm on women, girls, men and boys.

Violence against women and girls (VAWG): includes all forms of physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, in the community or perpetrated by or condoned by the state.

Child marriage: refers to the marriage of an individual before the age of 18. Child marriage is a violation of human rights and primarily affects girls. It frequently results in early pregnancy, interruption of schooling, limitations on future opportunities and places her at increased risk of domestic violence.

Conflict-related sexual violence: includes rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage, and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict.

Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C): comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

Intimate partner violence (IPV): is one of the most common forms of violence against women and includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and controlling behaviours by an intimate partner.

Modern slavery and trafficking: includes crimes such as slavery, servitude forced or compulsory labour, organ harvesting, sexual exploitation, child related crimes such as child sexual exploitation, forced begging, illegal drug cultivation, forced marriage and illegal adoption.

Sexual harassment: is typically targeted at women and occurs in a workplace, or other professional or social situation, and involves the making of unwanted sexual advances or obscene remarks

Sources: UNICEF, 2017, WHO, 2012, WHO, 2017, UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, Modern Slavery Act 2015, Palermo Protocol, SRSG-SVC (2017)