

Scorecard on Gender-Based Violence Policies in Conflict & Post-Conflict Settings in Africa



An assessment of whether policies attempt to engage men and boys in the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence

► Overview

This scorecard provides an assessment of whether national policies in conflict and post-conflict settings in the African region attempt to engage men and boys in the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence (GBV).ⁱⁱ This report analyses policies from nine African conflict or post-conflict states: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Kenya, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda.¹ The scorecard establishes whether countries have developed a National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on women, peace and security;² and identifies strengths and gaps within their UNSCR 1325 NAPs and national GBV policies with regards to their inclusion of language relating to the proactive and progressive engagement of men and boys. Furthermore, it offers recommendations for how such policies can increase the commitment and capacity of men and boys to play a proactive role in preventing and eliminating GBV.

► Addressing inequality and engaging men in GBV prevention and response in conflict and post-conflict settings

Over the past decade, several African countries, including the DRC, Liberia and Sierra Leone, have experienced extensive periods of conflict and extreme violence. These conflicts have involved massive human rights violations and horrendous atrocities against civilians, such as rape, murder and torture.³ Although trends and realities vary tremendously by context, conflict and post-conflict settings are often characterised by instability, inequality, violence, trauma, poverty, unemployment, economic stress and ever-changing social values, which impacts gender relations and the perpetration

of GBV. In addition, the militarisation of societies in conflict settings, combined with the wide-spread availability of small weapons, often exacerbate already violent cultures and violence against women and girls, which leave men little agency to challenge traditional notions of masculinity and can prevent them from becoming more equitable, non-violent and care-oriented.⁴ In conflict, these harmful gender norms, together with increased levels of impunity, give social permission for some men to commit extreme forms of violence against women and girls and also against other men and boys.

Globally, and especially in Africa, most programmes addressing GBV prevention and response in conflict, post-conflict and humanitarian crisis settings currently focus on women and girls. This is with very good reason, as violence against women and girls is very prevalent in conflict and post-conflict settings, often more so than in peaceful settings. However, there remains lack of substantial focus on addressing root causes of male violence. While men and boys are usually the perpetrators of this violence, men can also become involved in preventing such violence.⁵ Evidence increasingly shows that in order to end GBV, it is important to work on addressing gender inequality, masculinity and work with men and women to change the social norms that perpetuate GBV, including providing non-violent role models for young men and boys, and supporting men to take a stand against GBV. It is well established that rigid gender norms and gender inequality contribute to GBV, and that conflict and post-conflict settings have a tremendous impact on gender roles and relations, as well as on men's and women's attitudes and behaviours. Recent research also shows that men who were victims or witnesses of domestic violence as children are more likely to normalise violence as part of masculine gender norms, and replicate intimate-partner violence in their

adult lives.⁶ Sonke Gender Justice through its experiences with MenEngage country networks and the UN Trust Fund project in post conflict countries recognises that interventions in conflict and post-conflict settings should ensure that men play a positive role in changing attitudes towards female and male survivors of GBV, in advocating for perpetrators to be held accountable for their crimes, and in transforming the norms of their respective societies, so that GBV - both in and out of war - can finally be eliminated.⁷

► The role of laws and policy in conflict and post-conflict countries

Laws and policies significantly define and sustain gender norms by clearly establishing a country's national priorities and setting aside resources for their implementation. The policy environment in most conflict and post-conflict countries often lacks laws and policies aimed at addressing GBV. At the same time, the post-conflict reconstruction period provides a timely opportunity to incorporate best practices relating to the prevention of GBV and increased implementation of such policies.

Owing to their national impact, laws and policies have the potential to lead to large-scale changes in men's and boys' behaviours and attitudes relating to gender and health, and to challenge social norms and institutional cultures that continue to perpetuate inequalities and violence.⁸ In order to achieve this and be most effective, laws and policies should be *gender transformative*⁹ and when appropriate: *gender synchronised*¹⁰ so as to ensure they do not reinforce negative societal values and norms.¹¹ Nevertheless, it is important to remember that policies and laws alone cannot effect long-term and sustained change. While they are an integral first step, they must be followed up by effective implementation.



This scorecard is intended to be used by civil society, governments, law and policy-makers as well as decision-makers working in the development of policies and legislation. It aims to provide better understanding on the importance of engaging men and boys in the elimination of GBV and offers an opportunity to address the gaps and priorities identified in existing laws and policies. It can also be used to identify key areas and priorities for policy advocacy.

Scorecard: Engagement of Men and Boys in GBV Policies in Conflict and Post-Conflict Settingsⁱⁱⁱ

The table below represents the rankings of eleven African countries based on whether their laws and policies include language on the proactive and progressive engagement of men and boys in the area of GBV. The following pages provide more detail on the key strengths and gaps of GBV legislation in these countries.

Methodology: In evaluating each country's policy framework, relevant criteria were weighted based on the extent to which the UNSCR 1325 NAPs and GBV policies include language on men and boys.

Ranking	Country	UNSCR 1325			GBV policies					
		NAP exists for the implementation of UNSCR 1325	NAP includes language on engaging men and boys	NAP includes psycho-social support interventions	Sufficient focus on preventative measures	Level of engagement with men	Men engaged as advocates for change	Men treated as capable of change through the provision of rehabilitation programmes	Commitment to the transformation of gender norms	Acknowledgement of the violence men experience and how it can be a risk factor that increases the likelihood of men perpetrating violence
1	UGANDA ^{iv}	✓								
2	RWANDA ^v	✓								
3	DRC ^{vi}	✓								
4	LIBERIA ^{vii}	✓								
5	KENYA ^{viii}	x ^{ix}								
6	SOUTH SUDAN ^x	x ^{xi}								
7	SIERRA LEONE ^{xii}	✓								
8	SUDAN ^{xiii}	x								

KEY	Engagement with men and boys ranged from adequate to impressive	Room for improvement/ a mixture between strong and weak policies	Policies were found to be inadequate in terms of the above criteria	No applicable policies
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ⁱWhen this document refers to policies, it should be understood that this refers broadly to laws, policies, frameworks, guidelines and plans.

ⁱⁱGBV is defined as any act that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, emotional, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering based on a person's actual or perceived gender, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. While GBV primarily affects women and girls, men and boys can also experience GBV if they are deviating from expectations around masculinity.

ⁱⁱⁱWhile other policies have been taken into account, the focus of the scorecard was based on GBV- specific policies.

^{iv}The following documents were analysed: The Uganda Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 & 1820 and the Goma Declaration, 2008; National Action Plan on Gender Based Violence, Oct 2010 Draft; National Policy on Gender Based Violence 2011-2015, 2010; Domestic Violence Act, No. 3 of 2010; Ugandan Penal Code, 1950; Sexual Offences Bill, Bill No.1 of 2011; National Development Plan 2010/11-2014/15; National Action Plan on Women, 2007.

^vThe following documents were analysed: The Rwanda Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325, 2010; Law on Prevention and Punishment of Gender Based Violence, N°59/2008 of 10/09/2008; National Policy Against Gender-based Violence, 2011; National Social Protection Policy in Rwanda, 2005; National Strategic Plan Against Gender-based Violence, 2011-2016; National Gender Policy, 2010; National Accelerated Plan for Women, Girls, Gender Equality & HIV, 2010-2014; Organic Law Instituting The Penal Code, N° 01/2012/OL of 02/05/2012.

^{vi}The following documents were analysed: Plan D'Action du Gouvernement De La Republique Du Congo Pour L'Application De La Resolution 1325, 2010; Congolese Penal Code Law No 06/018 of 20 July 2006; National Strategy against Gender Based Violence, 2009; Action Plan of the National Strategy against Gender Based Violence, 2009; Gender National Policy, 2009.

^{vii}The following documents were analysed: The Liberia National Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Resolution 1325, 2009; Liberia Gender Policy (2010-2015), 2009; National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Management of Gender Based Violence in Liberia, 2006, and Act to Amend the New Penal Code Chapter 14 Sections 14.70 and 14.71 and to Provide for Gangrape (Revised Rape Law) 205, 2006.

^{viii}The following documents were analysed: National Gender and Development Policy, 2000; Sexual Offences Act (No. 3 of 2006); National Guidelines on Management of Sexual Violence in Kenya, 2nd Edition, 2009, Plan of Action (2008 – 2012) to Implement the National Policy on Gender and Development.

^{ix}Have initiated process of developing a NAP.

^xThe following documents were analysed: Draft National Gender Policy, 2012; and National Gender Policy Strategic Plan (2013-2018), 2012

^{xi}Have initiated process of developing a NAP.

^{xii}The following documents were analysed: The Sierra Leone National Action Plan for the Full Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000) & 1820 (2008) (SiL NAP), 2009; The Domestic Violence Act of Sierra Leone, No. 20 of 2007; National Gender Strategic Plan, 2009; Gender Equality Act, 2012; and the Sexual Offences Bill, 26 July 2012 (a copy of the Sexual Offences Act could not be located before going to print).

^{xiii}The following documents were analysed: Five-Year National Strategic Plan to combat violence against women and children 2012-2016; Sudanese Penal Code 1991.

Findings of policy analysis

The strengths and gaps outlined below indicate that many national policies dealing with GBV in African countries affected by conflict need to be strengthened in terms of engaging with men and boys. While a few policies articulate the importance of engaging men and boys for the elimination and prevention of GBV, with some notably mentioning the need to shift negative masculine norms and behaviours, there are hardly any which emphasise the need for Information, Education and Communication (IEC) or Behaviour and Communication Change (BCC) strategies in order to effectively operationalise this aim. In many of the policies, men are viewed primarily as perpetrators of GBV and are not engaged as potential advocates for change.

Strengths

UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan (NAP)

Within three of the NAPs, some language exists on the engagement of men in promoting women's role and safety in the peace and security agenda. For example, the Rwandan NAP aims to implement 'effective men-women collaboration in promoting women's role in the peace and security process';¹² the Ugandan NAP includes an objective to 'support the implementation of gender equality programmes aiming to transform the relationship between women and men in a sustainable and equitable manner'¹³ with the result indicator 'measures undertaken to change the attitudes of both men and women to accept and support men's involvement and participation in the fight against GBV'¹⁴; and the Liberian NAP contains a priority area with regards to community individuals known as '1325 Champions', including women and girls, men, and boys, to 'lobby national, county and community structures and Security Sector Institutions to strengthen prevention of violence policies.'¹⁵

The Ugandan and Liberian NAPs, include psycho-social support interventions for both survivors and perpetrators of GBV.

GBV policies

Most policies analysed offer a comprehensive definition of GBV which is not limited to physical and sexual assault but includes cultural and psychological harm or suffering that occurs by way of threats, intimidation, economic deprivation, rape, trafficking and forced prostitution. Rwandan policy on GBV is the most comprehensive and nuanced as it clearly defines GBV as not being motivated purely by someone's sex but by someone's gender role.¹⁶ Rwanda's GBV policy also recognises that GBV both 'reflects and reinforces inequities between men and women.'¹⁷

Several policies acknowledge that GBV is facilitated by social norms of male superiority, male sexual entitlement and

men holding attitudes and beliefs supportive of sexual and other forms of violence. For example, The Sierra Leonean National Gender Strategic Plan acknowledges that '[s]ocio-cultural beliefs teach that women are subordinate to their male counterpart and are socialised to see themselves as inferior',¹⁸ and that such beliefs are an impediment to achieving gender equality.¹⁹

A number of countries recognise the need to do gender transformation work in order to reduce rates of GBV. For example, in Uganda, most GBV policies focus on sensitising males and females on harmful values and beliefs on male dominance and female subordination and are committed to promoting gender equality in society.²⁰ South Sudan's Draft National Gender Policy aims to 'recognize and engage male anti-Violence Against Women champions in programs designed to end SGBV'.²¹

Many policies and plans note the importance of developing prevention strategies as opposed to only focusing on punishment.

Within the DRC's National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Violence against Women (2008-2012) it is discussed that men who are exposed to violence (for instance, in conflict and post conflict settings) are more likely to use physical and sexual violence against their partners and children.²²

Gaps

UNSCR 1325 NAP

With the exception of Uganda, the NAPs do not include any discussion around the root causes of male violence in conflict settings, and therefore how it can be addressed and prevented. In addition, there is minimal acknowledgement of the violence that men and boys experience during conflicts, nor how men's identities are shaped by conflict, which may have negative consequences for women and girls.

With the exception of Uganda and Liberia, none of the other countries' NAPs include psycho-social support for perpetrators.

None of the NAPs aim to engage men as agents of change and allies in achieving lasting peace and to promote the full equality of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings.

GBV policies

Many policies recognise that GBV is fuelled by negative masculine behaviours but do not provide detailed and explicit plans to address them, including the pervasive belief that men are superior to women and that they have the right to use physical and/or sexual violence to maintain their dominance. There are minimal IEC and BCC strategies that seek to challenge these attitudes, which are often the root cause of GBV.

There are very few policies and plans in place that encourage men and boys, particularly those in leadership positions, to speak out publicly against GBV and act as advocates for change.

In most countries, GBV is synonymous with violence against women (VAW). As a result, there is minimal acknowledgement of the violence that men and boys experience,²³ particularly at a young age, and how this often leads to violence against women and children as well as other men, especially marginalised men such as men who have sex with men (MSM) and men in detention settings. Male rape in particular is barely discussed in policies dealing with GBV.

Most policies do not commit their governments to developing adequate rehabilitation programmes (such as batterer interventions) for men seeking to address their aggressive behaviour, whether in prison settings or in their communities.

Recommendations

Policies, in particular UNSCR 1325 NAPs, should address root causes of conflict, gender inequality and GBV, particularly male violence and issues of violent militarized masculinities, to prevent conflict as per the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Policies should look at how to effectively engage men as agents of change and allies in achieving lasting peace and to promote the full equality of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings. Men of all walks of life, including community, traditional and religious leaders, at both local and national levels, should be encouraged to support and advocate for women's and girls' equal participation in peace processes, to reach out to other men to not use violence and to support survivors of GBV. For example, men, whether former offenders, civilian men or men in high positions, such as men with high military ranks, political and traditional leaders, should be called upon to speak out publicly against gender inequality and GBV thereby challenging the culture of impunity that surrounds GBV.

Policies should pay adequate attention to prevention strategies, including a focus on gender norms transformation work. Legislation and policies tends to understandably be punitive in their approach to GBV. While this is extremely important, and much work should focus on ensuring that GBV offenders are brought to justice, detailed strategies that aim to address root causes of GBV should also be prioritised. Prevention measures should include gender norms transformation work which focuses on transforming notions of masculinity that encourage violent behaviour, gender inequality and discrimination, and the objectification and domination of women and excessive alcohol consumption. Strategies should also include the development of positive role models who encourage men and boys to be engaged in GBV prevention, both in and outside of armed conflicts.

Policies should recognise the violence that

men experience, particularly at a young age, in conflict and in prison settings.

Legislation and policies should seek to provide psychological and psychosocial support for boys and men who witness and/or experience violence, including in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programmes for ex-combatants, as this can be a risk-factor that increases the likelihood of men perpetrating violence against women, children or other men. When acknowledging the violence that men experience, this should never detract focus from preventing violence against women; and it should always be acknowledged that men usually experience violence at the hands of other men.

Policies and GBV prevention programmes should address how men's identities are shaped by conflict. A substantial body of literature demonstrates that men and women experience conflicts differently. Conflicts may cause some men to lose their social identity as providers and breadwinners, which may in turn cause men to turn to alcohol, avoid mental health support (as seeking help may be equated with weakness), seek power through the possession and use of weapons, and give social permission for some men to commit extreme forms of violence against women and girls. Policies and programmes in conflict and post-conflict countries must therefore acknowledge men's realities and vulnerabilities in order to strengthen efforts to prevent GBV and promote non-violent and peaceful versions of manhood.

Governments should provide opportunities for rehabilitation for GBV perpetrators.

The potential for rehabilitation, such as through batterer intervention and DDR programmes, should be addressed in legislation and policies in order for offenders and ex-combatants to address their violent behaviour and reduce the potential for re-offending. DDR programmes

should specifically include social reintegration activities for ex-combatants to un-learn violent behaviour and learn how to face difficulties and social conflict in a non-violent manner.

Youth focused GBV prevention initiatives should be rolled-out in schools. In order to influence socialisation processes and attitudes towards violence, programmes which address transformation of gender norms and raise awareness on gender equality and human rights should be integrated into school curricula and other learning institutions to enable young boys and girls to grow into a more conscious and sensitive environment. Special efforts should be made to prevent violence in schools and involve parents and communities.

Policies should indicate how the use of IEC/BCC strategies, Community Mobilisation and Social Norms Campaigns can be used to prevent GBV. In Sonke's experience, community mobilization and social norms campaigns using mass media, community dialogues, door to door campaigns and performing arts, are an interactive way of informing communities about existing GBV prevention laws and policies, the dangers of harmful and oppressive cultural practices and available referral services in case of GBV emergencies. Communities are highly responsive to such interventions and there is reported increase in GBV cases reported by targeted communities.

All policies should include clear implementation strategies. In order to turn a policy into practice, the policy must allocate responsibility for a specific agency that will be tasked to translate the goals into operational rules and develop guidelines for implementation, as well as coordinate resources and personnel for the achievement of the goals.

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References

¹ This scorecard is a summary of several policy reports that Sonke has been producing since 2010 on behalf of the MenEngage Africa Network. The detailed country reports can be accessed at www.genderjustice.org.za
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⁸ "What men have to do with it: Public Policies to Promote Gender Equality", Men and Gender Equality Policy Project, coordinated by the International Center for Research on Women and Instituto Promundo, pp. 8-9; "Policy Approaches to Involving Men and Boys in Achieving Gender Equality and Health Equity", prepared by Sonke Gender Justice Network for the Department of Gender, Women and Health, World Health Organization, (June 2010), p. 10.
⁹ "Gender transformative" refers to action that seeks to promote equitable relationships; challenge male gender norms; transform traditionally accepted norms associated with being a man or a woman; and change gender relations. Adapted from Gupta GR, Whelan D, Allendorff K. *Integrating gender into HIV/AIDS programmes: review paper for expert consultation*. Geneva: WHO, 2003. http://www.who.int/gender/hiv_aids/en/Integrating%5B258KB%5D.pdf (accessed January 2012).

¹⁰ "Gender-synchronized approaches are the intentional intersection of gender transformative efforts reaching both men and boys and women and girls of all sexual orientations and gender identities. They engage people in challenging harmful and restrictive constructions of masculinity and femininity that drive gender-related vulnerabilities and inequalities and hinder health and well-being"; Margaret E. Greene and Andrew Levack, *Synchronizing Gender Strategies, A Cooperative Model for Improving Reproductive Health and Transforming Gender Relations*, 2010. For the Interagency Gender Working Group (IGWG), http://www.engagehealth.org/files/pubs/gender/synchronizing_gender_strategies.pdf
¹¹ "Policy Approaches to Involving Men and Boys in Achieving Gender Equality and Health Equity", op cit, p.12.
¹² Rwanda 1325 NAP, p. 19-20.
¹³ Uganda NAP, p. 37 and 65.
¹⁴ Ibid, p. 65.
¹⁵ Liberian NAP, p. 27.
¹⁶ Rwanda's National Strategic Plan Against Gender-based Violence 2011-2016, p. 3.
¹⁷ Rwanda's National Policy Against Gender-based Violence, p. 8.
¹⁸ Sierra Leone National Gender Strategic Plan 2009, p. 11 (of our copy).

¹⁹ Ibid, pp. 3 & 31 (of our copy).
²⁰ Uganda's National Action Plan on Gender Based Violence, p. 8-9.
²¹ South Sudan's Draft National Gender Policy, p. 37.
²² DRC's National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Violence against Women, 2008-2012, p. 3.
²³ Two exceptions are DRC's National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Violence against Women (2008-2012), p. 3 and the South Sudanese Draft National Gender Policy, p. 18, which demonstrates a survey from 2009 where 36% males reported to have experienced GBV.
²⁴ The views expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official views and positions of UNDP, UNFPA, SIDA, UN Trust Fund, UN Women, the United Nations or any of its affiliated organizations.
²⁵ The United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) is a multi-lateral grant-making mechanism supporting country-level efforts of governments and non-governmental organizations to end violence against women and girls. Established in 1996 by General Assembly resolution 50/166, the UN Trust Fund is administered by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) on behalf of the United Nations system.