

2021

ANNUAL REPORT

Irish Consortium
on Gender Based
Violence



FOREWORD

In 2021, I had the honour of being appointed chairperson of the Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence (ICGBV). I have been and continue to be a staunch advocate for gender equality and the important work on eliminating all forms of violence, especially gender based violence, throughout my career.



Over the past 2 years we saw great changes in how we, as a Consortium and as individuals, worked, and ultimately built stronger foundations for the future of the ICGBV. COVID-19 did not go away as many of us had hoped, however, we adapted our way of work to continue to reach as many people as possible, inclusive of Women and Girls who have experienced or are vulnerable to gender based violence.

This year we looked back on the work of the Consortium over the past five years so that our future planning is more inclusive, grows our knowledge and we can understand what we can do better for survivors of gender based violence. This reflection can be seen in the development of our new 2021-2026 Strategic Plan.

Global data shows that more than 30% of women have or continue to experience violence. We, at the Consortium, are building all our organisations to end this violence across the countries we are privileged to work in and with. Our networks over the last year have discussed gender based violence in a range of contexts, implemented important programming as seen through member spotlights in this report and developed important relationships with domestic and international partners.

Members of the ICGBV look forward to continuing our work, sharing our knowledge and working together to end Gender Based Violence in all forms.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Caoimhe de Barra". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Caoimhe de Barra,
Chair, Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence
CEO, Trócaire

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following the adoption of new ways of working in 2020, the Consortium continued its new approach to work in 2021, moving events, meetings and external engagements online, postponing any plans for travel and continuing to adapt to the effects of COVID-19.

The Consortium held several consultations on a range of works inclusive of the Guide to Ethical Storytelling on Gender Based Violence, a planning workshop for CEOs and Leaders within the Member Organisations, and the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan development. These consultations have meant the future of the ICGBV is well thought-out, planned and constructive for our members.

The ICGBV was active this year in developing and sharing information. The ICGBV conducted key research with University College Dublin on GBV Research Priorities. This has highlighted key gaps in GBV Research. Further, several events and meetings were held this year from webinars on GBV and Disability Inclusion to Women Peace and Security Sessions with the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Overall, the Consortium had a successful year despite any challenges it faced, meeting its aims and supporting its members in their work on GBV.

ICGBV MEMBERS



STRATEGIC PLAN

Following consultations and an evaluation paper in 2020, the ICGBV's main focus for 2021 was on the development of the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan. The consultations included discussing the ICGBV aims and topics of interest. This process was informed through several conversations with both the Steering Committee and the Learning and Practice Group via zoom meetings. A workshop to finalise the plan took place in September 2021. The Strategic Plan incorporates three strategic priority areas. These are:

- Strategic Priority 1: Promote GBV Prevention Programming and Gender Equality as a Fundamental Component of Ending GBV
- Strategic Priority 2: Advance GBV Risk Mitigation within Humanitarian and Development Work
- Strategic Priority 3: Strengthen the Response to GBV in Humanitarian and Development Contexts

The Strategic Plan was launched on February 8th, 2022 with the CEOs and leaders of the ICGBV members meeting in St Stephens Green and The Merrion to discuss the future of their involvement with the ICGBV.

The 2021-2026 Strategic Plan is available on our website – www.gbvi.ie



Image Description: CEOs and Leaders of all ICGBV members at the launch of the 2021-2026 ICGBV Strategic Plan. Photo credit: ICGBV

Photo Credit: Mark Stedman

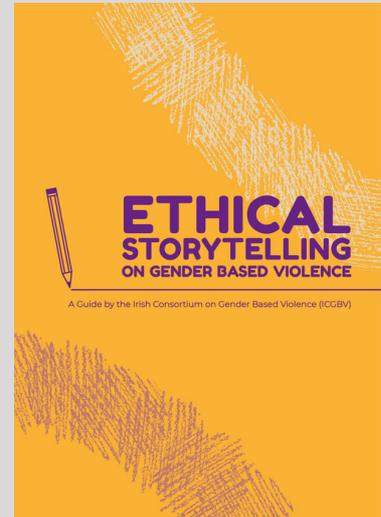
ICGBV THEME FOR 2021-2026

Following the key discussions on the ICGBV 2021 - 2026 Strategic Plan, a workshop was organised to look at key themes, opportunities, and milestones for the next 5 years. Through this discussion a recurring topic came up, Accountability. It was decided the theme for the upcoming 5 years for the Consortium would be a survivor centered approach to Accountability.

ETHICAL STORYTELLING ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

A guide by the ICGBV

Throughout 2020 and 2021 the ICGBV conducted consultations with members and partner organisation on the topic of Ethical Storytelling on Gender Based Violence (GBV). Through this, the ICGBV developed a guide. The aim of the Ethical Storytelling on GBV Guide is to help organisations talk about GBV in a way that respects and protects those who have experienced GBV. The Guide is primarily focused on the ethical challenges of engaging with a survivor of GBV who chooses to make their story public, via communications campaigns, fundraising campaigns, or programme reporting.



The Guide has three sections highlighting the relevant phases of storytelling in GBV cases, 1. Before engaging with a survivor, 2. While engaging with a survivor, and 3. After engaging with a survivor. The Guide also provides good practice examples and further resources.

You can access the guide on the ICGBV website – www.gbv.ie

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: ACTIONAID IRELAND

ActionAid Ireland continued to work in partnership with some of the most marginalized communities in Nepal, Kenya, and Nepal to end Gender Based Violence (GBV) with support from IrishAid. A situation that was exacerbated by covid 19. We directly worked with 2,304 women and 1,520 men, and indirectly reached 21,005 people with covid prevention related kits and messages.

Additionally, with our human rights-based approaches complimented by the behaviour change approach, we continued to target system actors to ensure safer and more economically secure women in the three countries. This provided us with the tools to deepen our understanding of the underlying problem in each context and have much more targeted interventions to address capability, opportunity, and motivation key system actors to enact the desired behaviors.

As was reported across the globe, there was an

increase in GBV – “the shadow pandemic” following covid 19. We, continued to embed prevention and response mechanisms at all levels. For example, in Nepal we strategically worked with men from the community to the national level to reinforce positive masculinities that culminated in a national men engage forum in a bid to create a protective society that doesn’t tolerate violence against women. In Ethiopia, the capacity of the local women to participate in local, regional, and national GBV spaces was enhanced giving them confidence and enabling their voices to be heard. In addition, seventy-six survivors of GBV were supported to access medical and legal services during the armed conflict that rocked the country. Our work in one of the regions we work in Kenya saw better coordination of different GBV service providers in the referral pathway through use of a standardized data collection tool across all service providers. This also created a learning platform for adjacent regions keen on improving GBV response.

DISABILITY INCLUSION IN GBV PROGRAMMING

During CSW65 the ICGBV, the Christian Blind Mission (CBM) and the Department of Foreign Affairs held a webinar on ‘How GBV impacts the full and equal participation of women and girls with disabilities.’ We brought together three brilliant speakers who are strong women leaders from the disability movement & NGOs. During this session, challenges the disabled community face, access to medical and social structures, policy and legislature, and programming targeting the needs of the disabled community were discussed. Welcome remarks were made by Siobhán McGee, Chair ICGBV & CEO of ActionAid Ireland and open remarks by Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason, Irish Mission to the UN.

Moderation was by Mary Keogh, Advocacy Director with CBM Global. Speakers included Carolyn Dagani, President, Philippine Federation of the Deaf, Barbra Nyangairi, Executive Director, Deaf Zimbabwe Trust, and Tendai Dondofema, Social Worker, Deaf Zimbabwe Trust.

The conference recording is available on the ICGBV YouTube.

CSW65: How GBV affects full and equal participation of women & girls with disabilities

March 25th, 8-9:30 am NYC / 12-1:30 pm Dublin / 2-3:30pm Harare

Opening Remarks:

- Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason, Permanent Mission of Ireland to the UN

Speakers:

- Barbra Nyangairi - Executive Director, Deaf Zimbabwe Trust
- Tendai Dondofema - Social Worker, Deaf Zimbabwe Trust
- Carolyn Dagani - President, Philippine Federation of the Deaf

This event will have captioning & International Sign Interpretation

Registration here:
<https://bit.ly/2Ow35LI>



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: IFRAH FOUNDATION

In 2021, the Ifrah Foundation focused on launching and expanding our Dear Daughter Campaign, in collaboration with UNFPA Somalia. A ambitious pledge-based campaign to address Female Genital Mutilation in Somalia, our Dear Daughter Campaign addresses FGM across three strategic pillars, from advocacy to awareness raising and community empowerment. Following our official launch co-host by the Minister for Women and Human Rights Development in Mogadishu in September, we expanding to Jubaland by year end, delivering community empowerment programming in tandem with regional advocacy and awareness raising in both local and national media.

In 2021, we entered into partnership with UN Women Somalia to engage in community dialogue sessions over a 13 week period in Jubaland and South West State. Some 123 participants worked through a programme designed to inform and educate on FGM and build the participant’s capacity to advocate to others in their community to end FGM. All this work was amplified in the media, reaching over 200,000 people.



Photo credit: Ifrah Foundation

In close partnership with the Irish Embassy in Ethiopia and the Global Media Campaign to end FGM, we undertook media training in the Somali region of Ethiopia, building the capacity of local journalists, politician, activities and religious leaders to proactively engage with radio, television, press and social media on FGM .

Finally, during the 16 days of Activism, Ifrah Foundation hosted a series of event targeting Internally Displaced Persons in camps in and around Mogadishu, Somalia. We connected with over 440 residents, providing information on the health services available to survivors of FGM, particularly in the context of pregnancy and child birth.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: TRÓCAIRE

During 2021, Trócaire worked with local partners, including women-centred organisations, to deliver GBV programming across 16 countries (Somalia, South Sudan, Myanmar, DRC, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Kenya, Malawi, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zimbabwe). Key highlights included:

- Providing technical, financial and organisational strengthening support and accompaniment to our local partners, including women-centred organisations, to collaboratively design, implement, and evaluate GBV specialised services and programming in line with the Inter-Agency Minimum Standards for GBV in Emergencies programming (GBViE MS, 2019) in humanitarian, preparedness and recovery contexts.
- Publishing a global resource package entitled Interventions to Support Protection, Resilience and Empowerment (INSPIRE), for frontline staff providing group-based psychosocial support to women and older adolescent girls (aged 15-17) in humanitarian settings. This resource package was developed based on Trócaire's and partners' experience of offering participatory psychosocial support to women and adolescent girls in multiple countries and contexts, including learning from Participatory Action Research with women and girl participants. The INSPIRE resources aim to support local, female, frontline staff of local partner organisations, including women's organisations, who are providing psychosocial support at Level 2 (Strengthening Family and Community Support) of the IASC MHPSS Intervention pyramid within Women's and Girls' Safe Spaces in GBV specialised programmes.
- Continuing to work collaboratively with the Global Women's Institute, local partners TOCH (South Sudan) and KMSS (Myanmar), the GBV Area of Responsibility and ELRHA, to develop a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and accompanying tools as a companion piece to the Inter-Agency Minimum Standards for GBV in Emergencies programming (GBViE MS, 2019).
- Conducting an external evaluation of Trócaire's specialised GBV programming in humanitarian settings, which endorsed the organisation's Protection and SGBV intervention model.

Finally, Trócaire signed off on its new 2021-2025 strategic plan, Local Power, Global Justice, which commits to further strengthening and deepening Trócaire's work on ensuring women's and girls' protection, voice and influence, including work on GBV response, prevention and risk mitigation.

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

From Awareness to Accountability

The ICGBV held a conference during 16 Days of Activism titled 'From Awareness to Accountability'. This conference is in line with the ICGBV Theme for the upcoming 5 years, Accountability. The Conference discussed the political will of leaders to ensure accountability, the need for women's voices at all levels of leadership, marginalised groups such as the disabled community and LGBTQ+ people, and the widespread issue of Gender Based Violence. Caoimhe De Barra, Chair ICGBV & CEO of Trócaire made welcome remarks with a keynote speech made by Julienne Lusenge, Director of SOFEPADI. Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason, Irish Ambassador to the United Nations shared a video message.

The session was moderated by Amany Qaddour, Regional Director of Syria Relief and Development. Speakers included Rhoubha Mhaissen, Founder, Director, SAWA for Development and Aid; Angelina Nyajima Simon, Executive Director, Hope Restoration South Sudan and Caoimhe ní Chonchuir, Permanent Mission of Ireland to the UN.

The conference recording is available on the ICGBV YouTube.

The advertisement features a dark purple background with white and yellow text. At the top, the title 'From Awareness to Accountability' is written in a large, bold, white font. Below the title, three categories are listed: 'Keynote Speaker', 'Conference Host', and 'Video Message'. Each category is accompanied by a small portrait of the respective individual. To the right of these portraits is a Twitter logo followed by the text '@ICGBV_Ireland #16Days'. Below this section, the word 'Panel:' is written in white. Underneath, five more portraits are shown, each with a caption identifying the person: Moderator: Amany Qaddour, Dr. Rouba Mhaissen, Marcela Sanchez, Angelina Nyajima Simon, and Caoimhe ní Chonchúir. The overall design is clean and professional, with a focus on the key participants of the event.

From Awareness to Accountability

Keynote Speaker
Conference Host
Video Message

Julienne Lusenge
Caoimhe de Barra
Amb Geraldine Byrne Nason

@ICGBV_Ireland
#16Days

Panel:

Moderator: Amany Qaddour
Dr. Rouba Mhaissen
Marcela Sanchez
Angelina Nyajima Simon
Caoimhe ní Chonchúir

Image description: Advertisement of the ICGBV 16 Days of Activism Event with images of the Guests who spoke at the event.

Image credit: ICGBV

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: DEFENCE FORCES

The Defence Forces continued its participation on the Oversight Group for Ireland's third National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions into 2021. In line with commitments associated with this plan, the DF is guided by the Defence Forces Third Action Plan (2020-2024) for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions.

In 2021, the Defence Forces Working Group on increasing the strength of female personnel within the organisation reported its findings. The recommendations of this Working Group fall under three headings, namely Recruitment and Selection, Training and Retention. Following consideration of this report the senior management have directed the establishment of a Standing Working Group to monitor and advise on the implementation of these recommendations.

In 2021 an independent Confidential Contact Service, Raise-A-Concern, was established. This provides a mechanism outside of the Chain of Command for serving and former personnel to report incidents of unacceptable behaviour. The Chief of Staff also convened an Organisational Culture Standing Committee at the end of 2021, to provide an enduring structure to drive and coordinate the process of positive cultural change into the future.



Photo Credit: Irish Defence Forces

From an equality perspective and within the framework of the Defence Forces Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Statement and Action Plan, as well as the Third Action Plan the Defence Forces has continued to explore initiatives to encourage equality of participation particularly at decision-making levels within the organisation. White Paper Project 56 - 'Survey to identify impediments to the advancement of women in the PDF' is one example of these initiatives. The responses to this survey are currently being analysed.

Notably 2021 saw the promotion of the first ever female Major General in the Defence Forces. Major General O'Brien is the first woman to be appointed to the second highest rank in the Defence Forces. She has taken up the role of Deputy Military Advisor to the UN under Secretary General for Peace Operations at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: SELF HELP AFRICA

Self Help Africa remains committed to working to prevent, mitigate and respond to sexual and gender-based violence. A priority area of focus for SHA's work on gender is on bringing about transformative change at the individual and community level to end GBV.

One of the most exciting initiatives in 2021 was the roll out of a new tool kit, developed by United Purpose who merged with SHA in August 2021. The tool kit and training manual was shared with all gender advisers and relevant staff and partner staff. It builds upon SHAs gender documents addressing the most serious form of gender inequality which is gender-based violence. Some of the areas covered in the manual include defining GBV, scope of the problem, domestic violence, sexual harassment, community dialogue tools, story poster dialogue, community painting, participatory theatre tool and service providers for the prevention and response to GBV. This manual provided very helpful technical support and suggestions/ideas for the advisers while they delivered training on GBV in a safe space ensuring "we do no harm" in terms of our prevention, mitigation and response initiatives.

An innovative approach was also adapted in our Burkina Faso programme whereby gender image boxes were produced and used by project facilitators and cooperative leaders to address gender equity and gender-based violence and promote women's leadership through community dialogue sessions. In Ethiopia our Gender Adviser attended further training on the GBV Pocket Guide to learn how to safely and ethically support GBV survivors and was able to use the Tigrinya and Somali translated version which was extremely helpful.

In Malawi SHA continued to support the work of the Malawi Gender Based Violence consortium and participated in the planning and roll out of events to mark the 16 days of activism. The roll out of the comic book addressing issues around GBV in the farmer schools was hugely successful in 2020 and this continued to be a major focus of our work in 2021.

Every year context mapping and support services are updated by field staff to ensure expediency of response by staff and partner staff to cases of SGBV.



Image description: Village of Toumousseni focus group – mixed group of men and women
Image credit: Self Help Africa

GBV RESEARCH PRIORITIES

In conjunction with Dr. Brynne Gilmore, School of Nursing, Midwifery, and Health Systems, University College Dublin, the ICGBV began a project in 2020 to determine the GBV research priorities of the ICGBV members. This research aimed to understand member's research priorities in order to provide contextual research support aligned to members' needs.

It was completed through a mixed methods study consisting of surveys completed by ICGBV members and their partners who work within gender or GBV programming, and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with gender experts or focal persons from ICGBV to triangulate and contextualise the findings from the survey. 145 people took part in the survey, the majority of respondents worked with International organisations followed by Government and then National NGOs. When asked what regions of work the respondents personally worked in, East Africa, followed by the Middle East and West Africa were the most prominent. This study highlights regional variations in research priorities, and also uncovers a potential gap between international, local and governmental GBV actors' perceptions and priorities on research.

Recommendations from this research include development of the ICGBV's research strategy in line with the ICGBV Strategic Plan and, support for ICGBV Member organisations future learning and research areas.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: OXFAM

In Tanzania and Rwanda, Oxfam and partners reached over 28,200 and 15,500 people, respectively, through campaigns and awareness-raising activities to challenge the social norms that perpetuate GBV. Subsequently, in Rwanda, 89% of respondents in programme areas reported a reduction in GBV in their communities.

In Malawi, 65 police officers received specialist training in 'Victim Support', resulting in survivors of GBV expressing increased satisfaction with improved services. In Zimbabwe, we worked with partners to strengthen the capacity of community-based structures to respond to survivors through training in the "Listen, Inquire, Validate, Enhance Safety and Support" (LIVES) methodology. Through survivor-centred GBV case management and psycho-social support services, the counsellors offered individual counselling and ongoing assistance to help survivors recover from traumatic incidents.

In Zimbabwe we also provided bicycles to community-based GBV facilitators. This has reduced response times, resulting in strengthened community referral and response structures. Survivors have become more confident that community-based structures, shelters and mobile one-stop centres are equipped to offer adequate support, leading to an uptake of services by 6.4% in comparison to 2020.

In protracted crises contexts, Oxfam and partners supported over 18,000 people in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and 34,500 people in South Sudan to prevent and respond to protection threats and risks in their environments, with a specific focus on GBV sensitisation. Furthermore, through providing training and advocacy support, Oxfam helped to strengthen Community Protection Structures (CPS) in DRC (6) and South Sudan (4) to reduce protection risks through planning and collaboration with local authorities. In South Sudan, the CPS in Verthet, Pibor North and Pibor South actively facilitated direct support and referrals related to GBV to crisis affected communities. Furthermore, in Rafah city, Tal Al-Sultan, and Al-Shabora in the Gaza Strip, Oxfam and partners supported 2,450 people to access information on referral services.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: GOAL GLOBAL

Throughout its work GOAL remains committed to gender equality, social inclusion, safeguarding and protection, including prevention of and response to gender-based violence (GBV). Examples from GOAL's programming work include the use of the Gender Action Learning System in Zimbabwe as an approach to integrate and address gender issues and promote discussion and change in areas such as the gendered division of labour, joint decision-making and GBV.

Responding to the impacts of COVID-19, the UPLIFT project in Zimbabwe seeks to increase food security and tackle gender-based violence and child protection issues, while also supporting income-generating activities and livelihoods for households and businesses. Likewise, the mentorship approach of the Spotlight Initiative in Malawi used safe spaces to explore themes to eliminate violence against women, including attitudes and behavioural change at community and individual levels, and the promotion of women's and girls' sexual reproductive health rights.

GOAL Ethiopia implemented integrated community based GBV and child protection projects across many woredas, one example, includes partnering with the Development for Peace Organization and Mothers and Children Multisectoral Development Organization which resulted in over 2,800 adults and children engaged with GBV awareness-raising and risk mitigation activities. Local government and the community displayed a commitment to fight GBV and protection issues by engaging in sensitisation events and putting GBV at the forefront of their agenda.

GOAL's LINK project in Turkey, which targets vulnerable nomadic and semi-nomadic refugees and seasonal agricultural workers, provided individual protection assistance to 748 refugee women and girls at risk or survivors of GBV.



GOAL Malawi team commemorating the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence 2021

GOAL's Protection from Sexual Exploitation Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy was reviewed and updated to include GOAL's stance on sexual harassment. Furthermore, a new online Safeguarding training was developed which includes a module on GBV.



GOAL Zimbabwe GBV awareness campaign in the community - Bulawayo

During 2021, GOAL progressed its work around Safe, Accountable and Inclusive Programming which provides the foundation for a quality, safe, relevant, and impactful program. In 2021, a global Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Focal Point Network was established to promote awareness, information sharing and learning related to gender equality and social inclusion.

GOAL's Protection from Sexual Exploitation Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy was reviewed and updated to include GOAL's stance on sexual harassment. Furthermore, a new online Safeguarding training was developed which includes a module on GBV.

INFORMAL EXPERT GROUP ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY LISTENING SESSIONS

Since Ireland took on the role of co-chair of the IEG on WPS in early 2021, the ICGBV has been engaging with DFA to provide civil society briefings on WPS across a number of countries. Providing a space for members of local civil society and activists to discuss their experience and assessment of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda with a view to enrich and inform Ireland's participation on the IEG on. Three sessions were held in 2021, namely Lebanon, Somalia and Haiti. Topics that came up for discussion included Women's Participation, Armed Groups, Food insecurity, GBV services, and Peace Processes.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND IRISH AID

Addressing gender-based violence is a key objective for Irish foreign policy and our international development cooperation program. To this end, Ireland funds initiatives through Irish and international NGOs, the UN and through our country programmes, mostly in Africa. In 2021, the Irish Aid programme committed approximately €15 million annually to address Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and continued to advocate for its elimination in relevant multilateral fora, including through our current membership of the UN Security Council.

Ireland agreed a number of new multi-annual programmes that include GBV, including increasing the Gender and Protection in Emergencies Budget at HQ from €1.5m to €1.8m for a Strategic Partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) for the period 2022-2024. This is for GBV prevention and response in six African countries and 20% of this €5.4m programme will be channelled to local women's organizations by 2024. Under the Policy and Advocacy pillar of this partnership Irish Aid and the IRC had first-hand information on how the Covid-19 pandemic was impacting women and girls. These concerning trends triggered an unprecedented media and political focus. Working in close coalition with allies in the sector, Irish Aid and partners were able to push for stronger prioritization of GBV in the humanitarian agenda. We also doubled our funding to the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women in 2021, strengthening our commitment to work closely with multilateral partners on coordinated efforts to end GBV.

Ireland also became a Board member of the Women, Peace and Security Humanitarian Action compact, signed at the Generation Equality Forum, convened by UN Women. We committed to strengthen legislative and policy frameworks to end GBV in Ireland and internationally. Ireland worked to ensure that the outcomes of the Action Coalition on GBV were meaningful, and as a Board Member, contributed to the accountability framework for the Compact.



Ireland's membership of the UN Security Council in 2021/2022 highlighted and focused on gender equality, and on advocating for women to contribute to achieving peace and security. Amidst difficult Council dynamics Ireland, Kenya and Mexico led an initiative during our consecutive presidencies (September, October and November 2021) to mainstream Council engagement on the agenda. During this "trio of presidencies" the importance of implementing the existing normative framework rather than push for new WPS outcomes and civil society participation was emphasised. During our Security Council Presidency in September 2021, 16 of the 17 briefers we brought before the Council were women.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: IRISH RED CROSS

For many, the pandemic added another layer of complexity to existing or crisis situations as lockdowns and isolation rules severely impacted on the operation of support services and emergency responses. The pandemic conditions also brought increased instances of sexual and gender based violence, creating further need for these services and another lasting legacy of the pandemic.

To address this the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent provided technical support to national societies across the world to ensure that COVID-19 responses included gender and protection considerations (e.g. through guidance notes).



Image description: A simulation exercise run by Nepal Red Cross to test protection, gender and inclusion processes in early action activities. Photo Credit: Irish Red Cross

Beyond COVID-19 responses, many national societies continued their efforts to integrate these considerations into wider operational procedures within their own remit and more broadly in their countries. Irish Red Cross partner, Nepal Red Cross, made significant progress in this area through their leadership of a forecast based action project (that was supported by Danish Red Cross). A key of the project was to ensure government and humanitarian responders had information about individual and household vulnerabilities so that they could include protection, gender and their inclusion considerations into their planning. This was achieved by mapping out vulnerabilities in a household-level database and integrating this database and by testing these tools through a simulation exercise which helped unpick coordination challenges and opportunities for municipal gender equality and social inclusion focal points.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) also continued their work with local Red Cross/Crescent societies on ensuring the domestic implementation International Humanitarian Law provisions that prohibit sexual violence. A checklist provided a useful tools for these societies as they worked through the process of ensuring domestic laws and practices supported these provisions. ICRC also released two reports covering issues related to men as part of moves to increase their engagement in efforts to reduce gender based violence and to raise awareness of the issue of sexual violence perpetuated against men and boys.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: WORLDVISION IRELAND

The protection of women and girls, and understanding the threats to their safety, remains a key commitment for World Vision. One such threat is teenage pregnancies, due to the major health consequences and associated social and economic hardships. With teenage pregnancies accounting for 11% of all births worldwide, 95% of which are born in developing countries, the ever-pressing issue was one World Vision Ireland wanted to explore further in its humanitarian and development programmes. In 2021, World Vision carried out a piece of research to examine the rise in teenage pregnancies observed in our project communities. The Policy Brief, “Ending Violence Against Children: Addressing Teenage Pregnancy” sets out the problem, explores the drivers to teenage pregnancies, World Vision’s response and key recommendations.

Along with informing our activities, the brief was used in our 2021 advocacy efforts, launched during World Vision’s annual global campaign “Ending Violence Against Children” in November 2021. This included a series of podcasts, one which focused on “Girls at Risk” and can be accessed [here](#).

The research revealed a number of drivers of teenage pregnancy, including: child, early and forced marriage due to cultural beliefs; poverty; gender based violence including rape, coercive and transactional sex; educational attainment of employment; lack of adolescent sexual and reproductive knowledge and services; and increased vulnerability in humanitarian context, both emergencies and protracted crises. Teenage pregnancy is a result of multiple interconnected root causes. In order to respond to, and prevent, teenage pregnancies, agencies/projects should: explicitly and deliberately address the issue with a dedicated theory of change; include localized assessment for context specific data; have a multisectoral approach; knowledge is power- aim to sexual and reproductive health must be strengthened; staff need to be invested in solving the problem to avoid bias and judgement. Understanding the drivers and roots causes, agencies can review its current policies and approaches and have a more deliberate approach to reducing teenage pregnancies.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: CHRISTIAN AID IRELAND

In Colombia, Christian Aid and local partners Colombia Diversa and Red Nacional de Mujeres supported the emotional recovery of conflict-related survivors by establishing self-managed networks, equipping them with skills and capacities to support each other and empowering women and LGBT survivors to reclaim their dignity and build their confidence. As part of the Colombian peace process, Christian Aid also supported the re-construction of victims’ memories through workshops, theatre and sport events. These initiatives amplified the voices of Afro-Colombian and Indigenous women, and LGBT people to challenge stereotypes and dominant narratives of the conflict that undermine the transition to peace.

In El Salvador, Christian Aid partner ORMUSA’s (Organisation of Salvadorean Women for Peace) Legal Attention Centre provided legal advice to 662 women at national level. In San Pedro Masahuat, 60 women received psychological services and from June 2021, girls and adolescents at local public schools were supported with psycho-emotional health care in response to the effects of Covid-19 and subsequent abuse and mental health challenges experienced. Teachers were supported with strategies and methodological tools to provide Psychological First Aid.

For the first time, the Zimbabwe Gender Commission launched an investigation into complaints of sexual exploitation and abuse of girls and child marriages in the Apostolic sect, following lobbying by Christian Aid, Padare and other NGOs. Seven men’s groups supported by Christian Aid and local partner Padare remained active in 2021, referring 225 GBV survivors through the national referral pathway and conducting monthly dialogues (when permitted by Covid 19).

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: CONCERN WORLDWIDE

In line with 'How Concern understands extreme poverty' and our global equality strategy, Concern is committed to preventing and responding to GBV, addressing gender inequality, risks and vulnerabilities, which we see as barriers to eradicating extreme poverty and GBV. We are committed to delivering gender transformative programming in our work to achieve gender equality and prevent GBV.

Concern continues in its global partnership with Sonke Gender Justice in order to

1. Address harmful attitudes and practices internally within the organisation and
2. To improve our staff capacity to deliver gender transformative programmes.

In 2021 Sonke supported 14 countries which typically included:

- Gender transformative workshops for staff – These seek to reflect upon and challenge their own attitudes, beliefs and biases towards gender equality in their work and personal lives
- Training of Trainers (ToT) - Staff that have undergone the gender transformative workshop are trained to deliver sessions at community level or for other staff.
- Sessions on gender transformative programming – is an opportunity to reflect on the country portfolio of programmes as well developing more gender transformative strategies.

Concern is currently implementing gender transformative dialogues (couples dialogue, fathers groups, écoles de maris, youth dialogue, community leader dialogues) in 19 country programmes.

Concern continued with two randomised control trials (RCTs). One focused on the 'Safe Learning Model' in Sierra Leone in partnership with University College Dublin. Research continues on the Graduation model in Malawi in partnership with Trinity College. Early results are showing positive shifts within households with reduced levels of gender based violence.

For the 16 days of activism against Gender Based Violence Concern launched a video highlighting our work on engaging men and women on Gender Equality <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvhDPffs46c&t=2s>

Concern also published 'Knowledge Matters' with a focus on Gender Equality, profiling our gender transformative and GBV prevention work in 9 countries

<https://www.concern.net/knowledge-hub/knowledge-matters-gender-equality-2021>



Image description: A community dialogue session is held monthly in Masokoray Community, Sierra Leone and facilitated by Concern officer Salamatu Magdalene. Community dialogues discuss ways to improve gender equality and tackle issues of GBV. Photo credit : Michael Duff/Concern Worldwide 2021.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: PLAN INTERNATIONAL

Through a partnership agreement with UNFPA, Plan International Liberia implements the Spotlight Initiative Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) response and prevention project which include a component to promote the realization of SRHR at national and sub-national levels. As part of the intervention, Plan International Liberia manages and supplies SGBV One Stop centres (OSCs), safe homes and 4 social coping centres and peace huts across the country and ensures their operations are up to standard in meeting the needs of SGBV survivors.

Through this Initiative, about 40 Members, mainly women, representing nine Community Peace Huts received capacity building training to enhance understanding of their key roles in combating the prevalence of SGBV and other forms of violence and harmful practices against women and girls in Liberia.

The women drawn from five Spotlight Counties of Nimba, Lofa, Grand Gedeh, Cape Mount and Montserrado, learned about community mobilization through informed consents by community members and how to carry out distribution of non-injectable family planning for injectable. They also learned about collaborate with other accountability structures including Community Health Assistants (CHAs) in the efforts to promote Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) and prevention of SGBV in their individual communities.



Photo credit: Plan International



Photo credit: Plan International

Based on the intervention, the trainees are demonstrated effective information dissemination and persuasion skills while maintaining good rapport and coordination with other community structures in the execution of their duties to promote SRHR and fight SGBV at community levels.

At least nine Peace Huts were set up to function as mediators, carrying out community awareness on SGBV issues affecting women and children, engaging and enlightening males on how to work with their wives to maintain productive homes as part of an integrated multi sectorial approach

to combating SGBV and other harmful practices against women and girls. Peace Hut members also serve as links for referring SGBV cases to nearby police stations and clinics for further interventions ensuring that treatment is provided for survivors and justice is served.

Supporting the efforts of the Government of Liberia through the Ministries of Gender Children and Social Protection, Justice and Health in reducing the prevalence of SGBV and enhance access to SRHR services, the project was initiated to ensure that survivors of SGBV are provided with adequate and essential services including medical, psychosocial and protection services in a timely and efficient manner.

2021

ANNUAL REPORT

Thank you to all
Contributors to the
ICGBV work of 2021

Irish Consortium
on Gender Based
Violence

