

ANNUAL REVIEW 2025



Irish
Consortium
on Gender
Based
Violence

MOVING
BEYOND
FEAR

Cover Images:



- 1 Leaders and CEOs from the ICGBV gathered at Iveagh House with Minister Neale Richmond and Irish Aid Director General Michael Gaffey to reaffirm their commitment to ending gender-based violence. Pictured (left to right, top to bottom): Anne Cleary (Aidlink), Michael Gaffey (Director General of Irish Aid), Deirdre Garvey (Irish Red Cross), Brig. Gen. Rossa Mulcahy (Irish Defence Forces), Ifrah Ahmed (Ifrah Foundation), Carol Morgan (Concern), Finola Finnan (ActionAid), Rosamond Bennett (Christian Aid), Róisín Gallagher (ICGBV), Jim Clarken (Oxfam), Paul O'Brien (Plan International), Neale Richmond (Minister of State for International Development and Diaspora), Siobhán Walsh (Chair ICGBV & GOAL), Gillian Barnett (World Vision).
- 2 ICGBV Member and CEO of the Ifrah Foundation, Ifrah Ahmed, at the ICGBV Annual CEO and Leader Roundtable, with Deirdre Garvey (CEO, Irish Red Cross) and Jim Clarken (CEO, Oxfam).
- 3 Frontline workers attending a two-day stress management and healing training in Nepal. *Credit: ActionAid.*
- 4 Director General of Irish Aid, Michael Gaffey, speaking at the ICGBV 20th Anniversary event in Iveagh House.
- 5 Survivor leaders, Iryna Dovgan and Alisa Kovalenko, participating in a panel discussion at ICGBV co-hosted UN CSW69 Side Event, New York.
- 6 Paralegals participate in a workshop in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe, supported by Christian Aid Ireland's partner Women and Law in Southern Africa. *Credit: Gift Simau/Women and Law in Southern Africa; Christian Aid.*

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ACRONYMS USED

CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
CSW69	69th Commission on the Status of Women
CUAN	Statutory agency dedicated to tackling and reducing GBV
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GBViE	Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies
ICGBV	Irish Consortium on Gender Based violence
IGHNxEU	Irish Global Health Network x European Union
IHRL	International Human Rights Law
IWGGBV-SL	Irish Working Group on Gender-Based Violence in Sierra Leone
L&P	Learning and Practice (Group of ICGBV)
MUST	Malawi University of Science and Technology
MICGBV	Malawi Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NUIG	National University of Ireland, Galway
SEMA	We Will Speak Out (Translation from Swahili), Global Network of Victims and Survivors to End Wartime Sexual Violence
ToR	Terms of Reference
UCD	University College Dublin
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIMA	University of Malawi
WPS	Women, Peace and Security



Sudanese Red Crescent volunteer Eman Mohammed Salih Mohammed. Eman is an IDP from Alfasher and is a volunteer with the Sudanese Red Crescent Aldabba Branch. Credit: Irish Red Cross

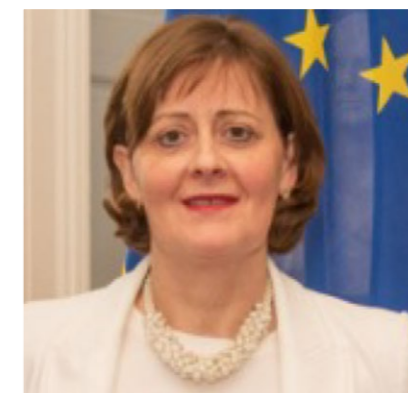


Rights of Child club in a primary school in Kenya. Credit: Aidlink



Students (girls and boys) who are members of the inclusive club set up by the Stéréotype project in a school in the Niamey region, Niger, come together and proudly display a strong symbol of cohesion. Credit: Plan International Niger

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON SIOBHÁN WALSH



In 2025, the Irish Consortium on Gender Based violence (ICGBV) marked twenty years since its establishment. This milestone provided an important moment not only to reflect on how far we have come, but to take stock of the context in which we now work—one that is increasingly complex, constrained, and uncertain, with hard-won gains in gender equality under growing pressure. Twenty years after the founding of the Irish Consortium in response to the Darfur crisis, gender-based violence (GBV) remains one of the most pervasive and persistent human rights crises of our time. Despite sustained global commitments, progress in reducing violence against women and girls has been slow and uneven. At the same time, the systems designed to prevent and respond to GBV are under unprecedented strain.

In 2025, official development assistance was significantly reduced, representing an estimated two-year rollback of up to \$56 billion compared with 2023 levels. Humanitarian funding has also fallen sharply, with projected reductions of up to 45 per cent. These cuts are being felt most acutely by grassroots, women-led and women’s rights organisations, the very actors who are most embedded in communities. A 2025 UN Women survey found that 90 per cent of these organisations are experiencing financial strain, with nearly half at risk of closure should current conditions persist. GBV prevention and response programmes are among the most affected, with over two-thirds of organisations reporting direct impacts on their work. This erosion of resources is unfolding alongside rapidly escalating global need. Nearly 240 million people worldwide now require humanitarian assistance, as crises become more frequent, protracted, and complex.

In this context, the work of ICGBV and its members is not only relevant, it is absolutely essential. Reflecting on the past year, the ICGBV has made meaningful progress across advocacy, convening and learning. This report highlights key moments, including our engagement at the 69th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UN CSW69) in New York, the marking of the Consortium's 20th anniversary, coordinated member activities during the 16 Days of Activism, and ongoing exchanges between our sister consortia in Sierra Leone and Malawi. Progress was made in our Survivor-Centred to Survivor-Led research, by creating of a platform for GBV activists and survivor leaders at CSW69, delivering a workshop of our survivor-led continuum tool with frontline teams from Nepal, Kenya, and Ethiopia, alongside sharing findings with Masters students at National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG) and University College Dublin (UCD).

At the heart of this work are ICGBV's members, whose sustained commitment to the Consortium, including their continued annual membership contributions underpins its collective strength and credibility. I extend my sincere thanks to all member organisations for their tireless frontline work, their active engagement in Consortium activities, and their generosity of time, expertise and resources, often contributed under extraordinarily challenging conditions.

I also wish to acknowledge the stewardship of the ICGBV Steering Committee, whose oversight and guidance continue to play a critical role in shaping the Consortium's direction, as well as the Learning & Practice Group, whose work strengthens shared analysis, learning and collaboration across the membership.

I would particularly like to acknowledge the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) as ICGBV's key donor. DFAT's sustained support through Irish Aid continues to enable the Consortium's work and aligns closely with their priorities, including a strong commitment to gender equality, partnership and locally-led action. DFAT's generosity, not only in funding, but also in strategic engagement and in hosting key convenings and engagement with government leaders was deeply appreciated, most especially in 2025 the support for the ICGBV's 20th Anniversary.

I also warmly acknowledge our sister consortia in Sierra Leone and Malawi for their collaboration and shared learning, and thank all partners and collaborators who contribute to and strengthen this collective effort.

ICGBV's unique strength lies in its alliance of civil society organisations, Government, and the Irish Defence Forces, bringing together policy leadership, operational experience, and frontline expertise in a shared commitment to ending gender-based violence. The engagement of the Defence Forces reflects Ireland's commitments under the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, reinforcing the importance of addressing GBV as integral to peace, protection, and humanitarian response.

This work is sustained by the Irish Government's long-standing commitment to advancing gender equality and tackling GBV through coherent policy, partnership, and resourcing—support that has been central to the Consortium's endurance over twenty years. Thank you for your support and leadership.

2026 calls for greater resolve. While the environment we operate in is more challenging than ever, this is not a year for retreat, but one in which we are committed to greater collaboration. Proven approaches to preventing, mitigating, and responding to gender-based violence must be protected and scaled up. Funding must be safeguarded in line with growing needs, and the leadership of grassroots, women-led and survivor-led organisations must be recognised and resourced, as they remain central to effective, accountable responses.

In this context, ICGBV is committed to harnessing the full potential of its network, strengthening its role as a platform that convenes global actors, researchers, policymakers, and frontline practitioners to learn from one another, share evidence and experience. It is through this collective effort that the Consortium will strengthen its impact and contribute meaningfully to advancing gender equality and ending gender-based violence globally.

Thank you.

Siobhán Walsh

Chairperson

ABOUT THE ICGBV

The ICGBV is a unique alliance of Irish humanitarian and development organisations, Irish Aid, and the Irish Defence Forces, formed in 2005 in response to the horrific levels of sexual violence against women and girls in Darfur, Sudan. The Consortium is a platform that works to increase knowledge and understanding of GBV, and to amplify the role, participation, and contributions of grassroots and women’s rights organisations. Our approach is grounded in three pillars: Prevention, Mitigation of, and Response to gender-based violence.

At the heart of our mission is partnership. We bring diverse actors together to share knowledge, exchange ideas, and strengthen collective action towards a world free from GBV.

Hosted by GOAL since September 2023, the Irish Consortium is led by Chair, Siobhán Walsh and managed by Coordinator Róisín Gallagher and Programmes & Communications Officer Niamh O’Connor McCabe. A member Steering Committee guides governance and strategic direction, with technical support provided by a member Learning and Practice Group.

MEMBERS

In 2025, the 13 ICGBV member organisations: ActionAid Ireland, Aidlink, Christian Aid Ireland, Concern Worldwide, the Irish Defence Forces, GOAL, Ifrah Foundation, the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Irish Red Cross, Oxfam Ireland, Plan International Ireland, Trócaire, and World Vision Ireland, continued to demonstrate strong commitment and leadership in advancing the Consortium’s shared objective to prevent, mitigate against and respond to gender-based violence.

Through coordinated engagement, members amplified evidence-based policy positions and collectively called for sustained and predictable funding to enable longer-term programming, institutional learning and systems level change. Members also supported and participated in learning exchanges, fostering deeper knowledge sharing and critical reflection across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding contexts. These exchanges laid important groundwork for greater coherence in future approaches, enhancing the Consortium’s overall value to affected communities.

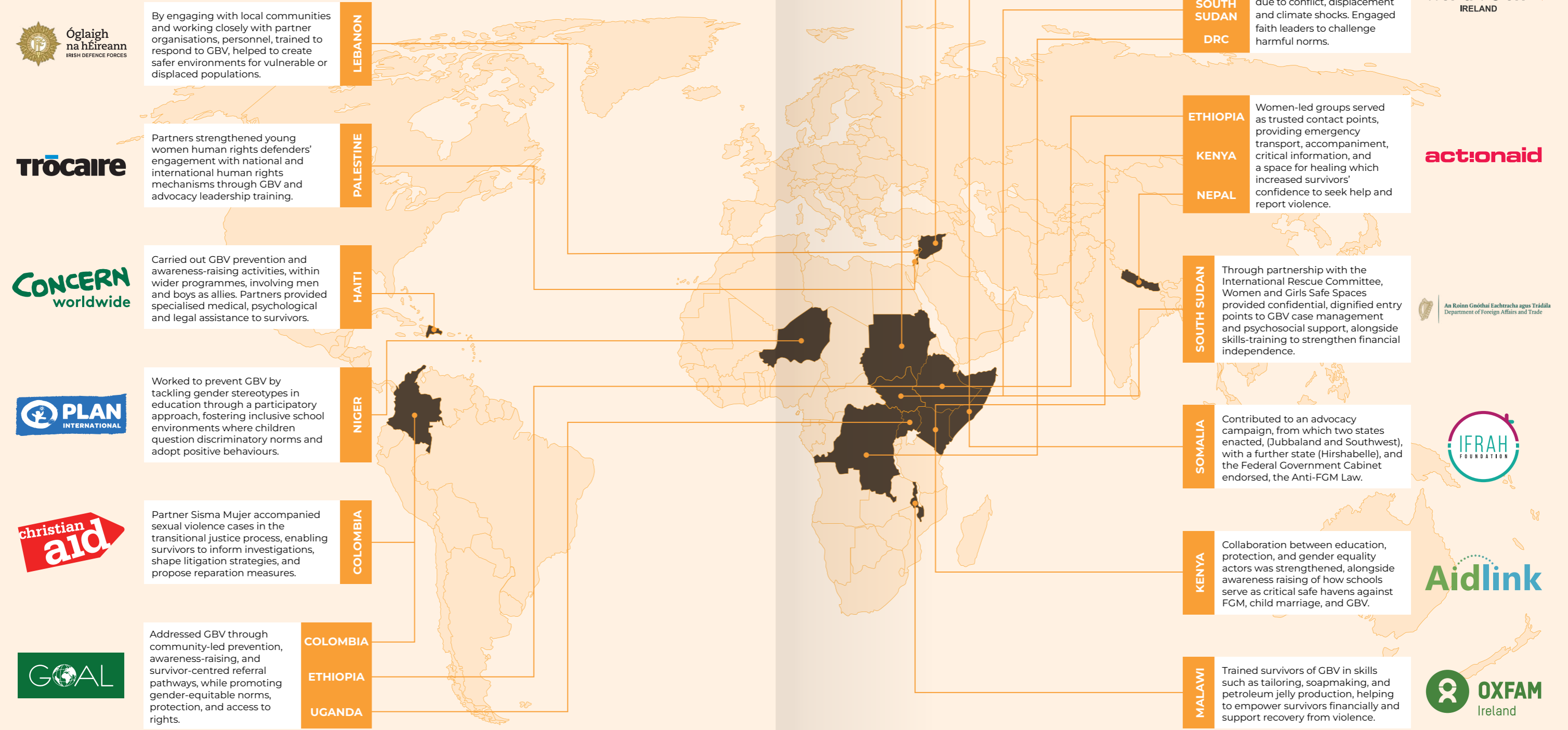


Pictured (left to right, top to bottom): Anne Cleary (Aidlink), Michael Gaffey (Director General of Irish Aid), Deirdre Garvey (Irish Red Cross), Brig. Gen. Rossa Mulcahy (Irish Defence Forces), Ifrah Ahmed (Ifrah Foundation), Carol Morgan (Concern), Finola Finnan (ActionAid), Rosamond Bennett (Christian Aid), Róisín Gallagher (ICGBV), Jim Clarken (Oxfam), Paul O’Brien (Plan International), Neale Richmond (Minister of State for International Development and Diaspora), Siobhán Walsh (GOAL; Chair ICGBV), Gillian Barnett (World Vision)



Snapshot of Members' Work

In 2025, ICGBV members operated in an increasingly constrained funding and political environment, with direct implications for GBV prevention, mitigation and protection programming. Despite these challenges, members continued to deliver vital services, adapting programmes and partnerships to maintain support for women, children, and others at-risk from gender-based violence. The map below provides a high-level snapshot of the scale and reach of this work, illustrating one example from each membership organisation.



Collaborating for Impact

In a year marked by significant funding constraints and uncertainty across the sector, ICGBV members forged new collaborations on joint initiatives, demonstrating that partnership remains a critical pathway for sustaining impact, securing resources, and delivering programmes at scale.

Christian Aid and national partners (Centro de Desarrollo Humano, Comisión de Acción Social Menonita, and Organismo Cristiano de Desarrollo Integral de Honduras) adapted to the withdrawal of USAID funding in Honduras by pooling resources and expertise to continue protection work with Indigenous women defenders. Together, they convened 40 Lenca and Maya Chortí women defenders to document patterns of GBV, territorial conflict, and threats linked to environmental defence, while co-producing advocacy recommendations rooted in lived experience.

The partnership submitted evidence to the Universal Periodic Review of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, enabling indigenous women defenders to present their priorities directly to international decision-makers in Geneva. The submission was cited 36 times in the UN Stakeholder Summary Report and informed recommendations relating to protection mechanisms, human rights defenders, indigenous groups, and climate change.

Through ongoing CIMIC (Civil Military Cooperation) engagement across South Lebanon, **the Irish Defence Forces** worked closely with local communities through school visits, medical support, coordination with community leaders and assistance to local initiatives and essential services. These activities strengthened mutual understanding and reinforced positive relationships between peacekeepers and the civilian population supporting UNIFIL's mandate and the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701.

Following the clashes in Goma and the takeover of the city by M23, **Concern** partnered with MSF France to deliver an emergency protection intervention responding to heightened risks of violence, in particular. Following a rapid assessment, Concern provided Individual Protection Assistance (IPA) to 677 individuals, including 664 women, across three health centres in Goma. Survivors identified by MSF were referred to Concern's case managers for psychosocial support, dignity kits and financial assistance to cover accommodation, transport and essential items lost during forced displacement.

The collaboration continued beyond the emergency phase through a clear division of roles, with MSF providing medical and mental health care while Concern delivered psychosocial and financial support. Despite Concern's gradual disengagement due to funding constraints, coordination exchanges with MSF teams continued, demonstrating the effectiveness of complementary referral pathways and partnership-based approaches in sustaining survivor support during crisis contexts.

Ifrah Foundation implemented its 2025 GBV and FGM prevention programming through partnerships with UNFPA Somalia, International Rescue Committee, Amplify Change, and other actors, with a combined implementation budget of approximately \$500,000. These collaborations supported integrated programming across community mobilisation, legal advocacy, media engagement, and sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR) service strengthening.

Partnerships enabled implementation of the SASA! Together¹ model in Somalia, mobilisation of youth, women, and religious leaders through the [Dear Daughter Campaign](#), and strengthened national advocacy on ending FGM. These combined efforts contributed to significant legal progress, including Anti-FGM legislation being enacted or advanced at both state and federal levels in Somalia.

Finally, and particularly resonant given the Consortium's origins in response to widespread sexual violence in Darfur, Sudan, **two ICGBV members came together to deliver a major joint initiative in Sudan. GOAL, Christian Aid** and three Sudanese partners were awarded €3 million through the EU Foreign Policy Instrument for a project focused on preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence, while strengthening women's participation and influence in peacebuilding processes.

Across North Darfur, South Kordofan, and White Nile, the 18-month project began in June and works with women, women-led organisations, religious leaders, community volunteers, and local authorities to strengthen protection systems and support survivor recovery. Alongside comprehensive services for survivors, delivered in active partnership with Sudanese women-led organisations and community groups, the project also focuses on prevention and social norm change through structured dialogue with faith and community leaders, and traditional authorities to address harmful gender norms and unequal power dynamics.

1. The SASA! Together model is a community-based approach to preventing gender-based violence that focuses on changing social norms around power and relationships. (Raising Voices)

SIERRA LEONE & MALAWI SISTER CONSORTIA

To strengthen nationally led coordination and collaboration on gender-based violence, the ICGBV supported the establishment of sister consortia in Malawi (2014) and Sierra Leone (2016). These consortia were designed to build on ICGBV's collaborative approach while ensuring that leadership, decision making, priorities and approaches are grounded in local realities. Today, both consortia continue to operate as independent nationally led coordination platforms, bringing together national and global actors to address GBV through coordinated advocacy, shared learning and programme approaches. Their ongoing work demonstrates the value of sustained support in nationally driven coordination structures that strengthen leadership and collective effectiveness over time as well as the importance of linking national leadership with global experience, partnerships and solidarity in efforts to end GBV.

Malawi Irish Consortium on Gender Based violence

In June 2025, the Malawi Irish Consortium on GBV (MICGBV), in collaboration with the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA), launched its module on GBV in Emergencies in the University of Malawi (UNIMA) and the Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST) together with the Sierra Leone Ministry of Gender and the Irish Embassy in Malawi.

This journey began in 2017, when the Irish Consortium on Gender Based violence and University College Dublin (UCD) collaborated on a summer school, bringing academic learning together with key practical strategies to prevent, mitigate against and respond to GBV in emergencies. What began as a summer school for UCD students and ICGBV member practitioners, developed into a module as part of the Masters in Humanitarian Action in UCD. From the outset, there was an ambition that this learning would move beyond the classroom and be adapted in countries affected by GBV in emergencies (GBViE). In 2022, ICGBV Chair, Caoimhe de Barra, introduced UCD to the Malawi Consortium, which doors towards the development of a course in Malawi, enabling students to participate and benefit from such a course, without the cost and barriers associated with international travel to a foreign university.

In his Keynote Address at the official launch of the module, the Director of Administration in the Malawi Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare, Ben Mbwana, described the module as a testament to the government's commitment to combating various forms of abuse, especially during times of crisis. *"Many people in the country, particularly women and girls, face increased vulnerability and abuse when disasters strike. This calls for collective and informed efforts to address the issue,"* Mbwana said.

In her remarks, the MICGBV Chairperson and Concern Country Director, Lucy Mwangi, underscored the importance of launching this module, stating that *"In the aftermath of every storm, it is the cry of survivors that echoes the loudest: women, men, children, and all those whose suffering is too often unseen. Today, we respond to that cry with courage and conviction."*

The Embassy of Ireland in Malawi was represented by the Deputy Head of Mission, Ronan Sweeney, underscoring the strong governmental and diplomatic support for the initiative. The ICGBV was well represented online by Chair Siobhán Walsh, who also spoke at the event, as well as Coordinator Róisín Gallagher and Programme Support Officer Niamh O'Connor McCabe.

The introduction of the GBViE module marks a significant step in strengthening Malawi's capacity to prevent and respond to gender-based violence during disasters, through education and collaboration.



The ribbon-cutting ceremony by Guest of Honour, Director of Administration, Malawi Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare, Ben Mbwana, launched the module

Irish Working Group on GBV in Sierra Leone

In September 2025, members of the Irish Working Group on GBV in Sierra Leone (IWGGBV-SL) engaged in a process of reflection on the Group's Terms of Reference (ToR), its role in the GBV landscape and future direction.

In the evolving context, including managing organisations' competing priorities and the existence of multiple GBV coordination platforms (both local and national), the workshop created an opportunity to reassess priorities and approaches to collaboration. This period of reflection provided an opportunity to consider how best to support collaboration and coordination moving forward.

To support the continued functioning of the group during this transition period, the Irish Embassy in Sierra Leone volunteered to Chair the group until December 2026, with Rainbo Initiative serving as Deputy Chair and the Forum Against Harmful Practices (FAHP) acting as Secretary.



Masidama supports women's voice and leadership in Sierra Leone. Credit: Trócaire (Chair of the IWGGBV-SL).

ACTIVITIES & RESULTS

Strategic Priority 1: Promote Gender-based Violence Prevention Programming and Gender Equality as a Fundamental Component of Ending Gender-based Violence

CEO and Leader Roundtable

In April 2025, ICGBV convened its annual CEO and Leader Roundtable at Iveagh House, kindly hosted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. This event brought together senior decision makers from across Ireland's international development, humanitarian, and peace support sectors, with the Minister of State for International Development & Diaspora and Director General of Irish Aid. The Roundtable took place amid escalating humanitarian crises and a tightening global funding landscape, placing increasing pressure on GBV prevention, mitigation and response programmes across the globe. Against this backdrop, the roundtable reinforced the critical importance of coordinated leadership, shared responsibility, and collective action to safeguard and advance GBV commitments even in challenging times.

The event was opened by the newly appointed Minister of State for International Development and Diaspora, Neale Richmond TD, marking his first engagement with the Consortium. In his remarks, the Minister reaffirmed the Irish Government's commitment to addressing GBV as a core component of Ireland's international development programme, emphasising the importance of maintaining a strong focus on gender equality in the current global context.

A central feature of the Roundtable was the promotion of the membership's GBV work and most importantly, the renewal of member commitments for the year ahead. Each organisation outlined actions to strengthen their prevention, mitigation and response to GBV in 2025. This commitment setting process serves as an important mechanism for collective accountability, enabling the Consortium to maintain momentum across its membership.

The event featured a presentation of Consortium achievements through a [video](#) presentation of 2024 highlights, reinforcing the role of ICGBV as a platform for coordination, learning, and advocacy.

Feminist Peacebuilding in Colombia

In November 2025, the ICGBV, in partnership with Christian Aid, co-hosted a learning exchange with Colombian women-led organisations Sisma Mujer and Mujeres Sembrando Vida. The exchange brought together ICGBV members and partners from Ireland and Colombia to explore the links between GBV and gender-responsive peacebuilding in conflict and post-conflict contexts, drawing on lived experiences and practices from the front lines.

The discussion focused on the implementation of Colombia’s National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and the critical role of women’s organisations in advancing peace, justice and accountability. Contributions from the Colombian partners highlighted both progress and ongoing challenges, including persistent insecurity, high levels of impunity for GBV, and the risks faced by women human rights defenders.

The exchange underscored the critical importance of grassroots leadership in driving the WPS agenda. Participants emphasised how women-led organisations are sustaining community-based support for survivors, advancing legal advocacy, and enabling women’s participation in peace and accountability processes—often under extremely challenging conditions.

The session also reinforced the continued need for sustained international support, including predictable funding and advocacy, to ensure that women’s organisations can operate safely and effectively.

Pictured from left to right: Róisín Gallagher (ICGBV), Camila Comas Capó (Translator), Katerin Jurado Díaz (Corporación Sisma Mujer), Yirley Judith Velasco Garrido (Asociación Mujeres Sembrando), Niamh O’Connor McCabe (ICGBV), Catarina Neves (GOAL), Patrick Geoffroy (DFAT), Dee Da Silva (GOAL), Grace Duffy (Christian Aid)












69th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

In March 2025, the ICGBV co-hosted a Side Event at the 69th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the UN, the Government of Sierra Leone, and the National Women’s Council of Ireland, Chair of the National Observatory on Violence against Women. Titled “*GBV Survivors Leading the Way to Change*,” the event brought together survivor leaders, policymakers, practitioners and advocates to examine how survivor leadership can strengthen accountability, inform policy reform and drive systemic change.

The event provided a global platform to advance [ICGBV’s work on survivor-led accountability](#), positioning survivors not only as participants in GBV responses, but as leaders shaping solutions. Contributions from survivor advocates and international experts underscored the importance of moving beyond consultation towards meaningful, structured engagement of survivors in decision-making processes.

A central message emerging across the discussions was the urgent need for sustained, flexible funding for GBV prevention and response, particularly for survivor-led and grassroots initiatives. Speakers highlighted that while progress has been made globally, gender-based violence remains critically underfunded, limiting the ability to support long-term recovery and systemic change.

Panellists explored the importance of avoiding survivor stigmatisation, ensuring survivors are recognised as experts, and the critical role of reparations in healing and shifting social norms. The conversation reinforced that survivors must not only be included in decision-making but lead efforts for accountability and change.

Opening Remarks	 Fergal Mythen – Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ireland to the UN
Keynote Speaker	 Katrien Coppens – Executive Director, Mukwege Foundation
Research Presentations	 Róisín Gallagher – Coordinator, Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence
	 Ivanna Youtchak – Violence Against Women Coordinator, National Women’s Council of Ireland
Panel Discussion, Followed by Q&A	 Tinebeb Berhane – Country Director, ActionAid Ethiopia
	 Iryna Dovgan – Leader, SEMA Ukraine
	 Alisa Kovalenko – Board Member, SEMA Ukraine. Documentary Film Director
Closing Remarks	 Ruth Quinn – Senior Advocacy & Policy Officer on Reparation Financing, Global Survivors Fund
	 Dr Isata Mahoi – Gender Minister of Sierra Leone

With strong participation from governments, UN agencies, civil society organisations and funders, the event demonstrated growing international recognition of survivor-led approaches as a core focus of effective GBV programming. It further strengthened ICGBV's role as a convener of global dialogue and a driver of practical, evidence-based approaches to ending gender-based violence. The event also contributed to strengthening relationships between Ireland and international partners, including governments and organisations represented by speakers and participants, reinforcing collaboration with actors such as the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs in Sierra Leone, the Dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation, and a wide range of civil society organisations working across a diverse range of contexts.

“Nothing about us, without us (quoting Sema member, DRC). Survivors tend not to be consulted but no one knows their pain, their needs, better than they do.”

– Katrine Coppens, Executive Director, Mukwege Foundation, Keynote Speech

A [recording of the event](#) is available to watch on the ICGBV YouTube channel (@ICGBV).

Pictured left to right: Róisín Gallagher (ICGBV), Tinebeb Berhane (ActionAid Ethiopia), Ruth Quinn (Global Survivors Fund), Iryna Dovgan (Leader, SEMA Ukraine), Alisa Kovalenko (Board Member, SEMA Ukraine)



Above: Nora Owen, Fionnuala Gilsennan, Róisín Gallagher, Siobhán Walsh at the Launch of Ireland's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security



Below: Captain Oliver Byrne, Niamh O'Connor McCabe, Siobhán Walsh, Nora Owen and Lieutenant General Rossa Mulcahy at the Launch of the Irish Defence Force's National Implementation Plan

Strategic Priority 2: Advance Gender-based violence Risk Mitigation within Humanitarian and Development Work

Women Peace and Security

In 2025, ICGBV continued to play an active role in shaping and supporting Ireland's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, with a particular focus on the development of Ireland's Fourth National Action Plan on WPS (2025–2030).

The Consortium contributed to the development of the National Action Plan in their role on a dedicated subcommittee of the Oversight Group, providing inputs across stages of the process. This included collating written contributions from members, feeding into draft reports, and participating in a validation workshop. ICGBV also hosted an international consultation, creating space for global perspectives and frontline insights to inform the development of the Plan, thereby

ensuring that Ireland's WPS commitments are grounded in the operational experience of the ICGBV members.

Following the launch of the National Action Plan in September, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade appointed [an independent Oversight Group on Women, Peace and Security](#), to monitor, implement and review progress across the lifetime of the Plan (2025–2030). ICGBV was appointed to this Oversight Group, comprising civil society and statutory representatives. In preparation, the Consortium established a dedicated member consultation mechanism to ensure that real-time frontline knowledge, and operational experience informs its engagement on an ongoing basis.

In addition, ICGBV engaged with broader WPS implementation efforts, including attending the launch of the Defence Forces National Implementation Plan, supporting greater alignment across Ireland's WPS architecture.

Through these engagements, ICGBV continues to act as a bridge between policy and practice, providing a platform for members to contribute to national policy processes. This ensures that GBV considerations and frontline perspectives are reflected in Ireland's WPS commitments and their implementation.

Academic Engagement and Practitioner Development

Strengthening links with academic institutions remains an important part of ICGBV's work, supporting both the development and dissemination of research, while sharing practice-based learning and guidance with the next generation of GBV and international development practitioners.

In 2025, ICGBV delivered two lectures at leading Irish universities. The first was hosted by the University of Galway as part of the Gender and Human Rights Lecture Series, co-convened by the Centre for Law, Religion and Society (CLRS) and the Irish Centre for Human Rights (ICHR). The second lecture was delivered to Masters' students in Development at Trinity College Dublin, engaging emerging practitioners at a critical stage of their professional development.

Across both sessions, ICGBV introduced students to the purpose, governance and added value of the Consortium, highlighting its unique alliance: both in terms of the opportunities it creates for collaboration and influence, as well as the practical complexities of working across diverse mandates.

The lectures disseminated findings and recommendations from ICGBV's survivor-led accountability research and solicited feedback. Discussions with students also explored pathways into the sector, practical reflections on working in GBV and international development, and emerging trends shaping policy and practice.

ICGBV Coordinator, Róisín Gallagher, and Programme Support Officer, Niamh O'Connor McCabe, giving a lecture to Masters in Development students, at Trinity College Dublin



Strategic Priority 3: Strengthen the Response to Gender-based Violence in Humanitarian and Development Contexts

20th Anniversary of the ICGBV

In December 2025, the ICGBV marked its 20-year contribution to addressing GBV globally, with a special gathering in Iveagh House, hosted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Convened as part of the 16 Days of Activism Against GBV, the event brought together government representatives, civil society, academia, national and international grassroots activists to discuss progress, setbacks and emerging threats.

A short [reflection video](#), premiered at the event, traced the Consortium's work over the past 20 years and reinforced the critical role that collaborative platforms such as the ICGBV play in advancing progress in the prevention, mitigation and response of gender-based violence.

Speakers focused on the increasing pressure on GBV programming, including shrinking civil society space, declining global commitments

Minister of State for International Development and Diaspora Neale Richmond speaking at the ICGBV 20th Anniversary event in Iveagh House. Also pictured is Áine Lawlor, moderating the event, and panelists Director General Michael Gaffey (Irish Aid), Alice Kachere (GBV Community Advocate, Malawi), Susan Mani (Rainbo Initiative, Sierra Leone), Professor Fionnuala Ní Aoláin.



to gender equality, and the erosion of International Human Rights Law (IHRL). It was emphasised that these trends are not occurring in isolation but are part of a broader pattern of global regression on women's rights and international humanitarian norms. Professor Fionnuala Ní Aoláin argued for the preservation of existing legal frameworks and made the case for a global treaty on GBV to standardise accountability. She emphasised that economic framing is a powerful advocacy tool, noting the estimated global cost of GBV at 2% of GDP.

Speakers, Alice Kachere and Susan Mani illustrated how survivor-centred and community-led models are producing tangible results in Malawi and Sierra Leone respectively, including increased reporting of GBV, reductions in child marriage, and stronger community engagement. Speakers stressed that holistic services, economic empowerment, and land rights are central to sustainable change.

A central theme throughout the event was the power of partnership. The Consortium was praised for enabling collaboration between government, civil society, and grassroots actors, and amplifying local voices to influence policy and practice at national and international levels.

“Since its establishment in 2005, the ICGBV has delivered a unique alliance of Irish Aid, the Defence Forces and Ireland’s leading humanitarian and development actors and so has strengthened programme quality, built shared learning, and advocated for global action to prevent and respond to GBV.”

– Neale Richmond, Minister of State for International Development and Diaspora

The event also highlighted Ireland's continued leadership in this space. At a time when many donors are reducing commitments, Ireland's sustained focus on gender equality and GBV was recognised as both significant and necessary to maintaining progress globally.

Marking 20 years of ICGBV provided an opportunity not only to reflect, but to look ahead. The discussions reinforced that while the global context is increasingly challenging, progress remains possible where partnerships are strong, survivors are central in shaping decisions, and long-term political and financial commitments are sustained.

Left to right: Director General Michael Gaffey, Professor Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, Alice Kachere, Siobhán Walsh, Minister of State for International Development and Diaspora Neale Richmond, Susan Mani, Róisín Gallagher and Niamh O'Connor McCabe at the ICGBV 20th Anniversary



Invited speakers, ICGBV Members, and activists at the ICGBV 20th Anniversary



Event Speakers



Minister Neale Richmond TD
Minister of State, DFAT, for International Development and Diaspora



Alice Kachere
GBV Community Advocate, Malawi



Susan Mani
GBV Project Coordinator Rainbo Initiative, Sierra Leone



Michael Gaffey
Director General, Irish Aid



Prof. Fionnuala Ní Aoláin
Professor of Law; Former UN Special Rapporteur

Video Contributors



Dr. Isata Mahoi
Minister of Gender and Children's Affairs, Sierra Leone



Prof. Nata Duvvury
University of Galway



Col. Jayne Lawlor
Defence Forces Senior Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer



Panel discussion at Trinity College Dublin during the 16 Days of Activism, bringing frontline practitioners from Malawi and Sierra Leone into dialogue with students on GBV prevention and response

16 Days of Activism Against GBV

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is an annual global campaign, observed each year from the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November) through to Human Rights Day (10 December). It explicitly links gender-based violence to human rights and accountability, creating a concentrated annual moment for civil society, governments, and international partners to mobilise public attention, reinforce political responsibility, and drive sustained action to prevent and respond to GBV.

For ICGBV and its membership, the 16 Days is a core annual advocacy moment used to intensify collective action, amplify evidence-informed messaging, and elevate frontline leadership. It provides a structured period to coordinate advocacy and increase visibility across Irish media, academic, and policy spaces - connecting global realities of GBV with Irish public discourse and decision-making.

As part of the 2025 mobilisation, ICGBV's 20th anniversary event was strategically convened during the 16 Days, reinforcing the campaign's emphasis on accountability, partnership, and long-term commitment. However, ICGBV's engagement throughout the 16 Days extended well beyond the anniversary event, with members using the period to sustain public attention, elevate frontline priorities, and drive wider engagement across multiple platforms.

National broadcast media played a key role in expanding public awareness and reinforcing accountability framing. Through a [radio interview with TODAY FM](#), Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, Professor of Law at the Queen's University School of Law Belfast, and concurrently Professor of Law at the University of Minnesota Law School, former United Nations

Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, and a member of Ireland's Council of State, brought significant international authority and credibility to the public conversation on GBV as a human rights and accountability issue. She positioned GBV as a systemic human rights concern requiring political responsibility and long-term action. This interview potentially reached a weekly audience of approximately 928,000 listeners.

Print and digital media further extended the reach of frontline perspectives and member-aligned advocacy messages. The Irish Examiner, with an estimated daily readership of over 200,000 across print and digital platforms, published [a contribution by Alice Kachere](#), a Malawian rural women's leader, farmer, and long-standing community advocate. Alice's activism focuses on ending child marriage, supporting survivors of GBV, and strengthening women's leadership at community level. She is Chairperson of the Rural Women's Assembly Malawi Chapter and a recognised advocate in regional and global policy spaces.

Members of Chisomo Tailoring Club in Malawi showcase some of their work. Credit: Veronica Mwale; Oxfam



By elevating Alice's lived experience and policy analysis through a widely read national outlet, ICGBV helped ensure that voices from GBV-affected communities in Malawi reached Irish public and policy audiences. This strengthened the case for long-term investment, locally led solutions, and international solidarity, particularly at a moment when shrinking civic space and funding pressures risk undermining prevention and response efforts.

The 16 Days period also served as a platform for learning, exchange, and movement-building. ICGBV convened a panel discussion at Trinity College Dublin, bringing together representatives from sister consortia in Malawi and Sierra Leone with Masters in Development students and academic audiences. The discussion focused on how GBV prevention and response are implemented in practice and facilitated direct dialogue with practitioners leading this work on the ground—grounding academic and public debate in frontline realities, practical challenges, and proven approaches.

Speakers included Alice Kachere (community advocate, Malawi), Lindiwe Jere (Oxfam Malawi, member of the Malawi Irish Consortium on GBV), Susan Mani (Rainbo Initiative, Sierra Leone, member of the Irish Working Group on GBV in Sierra Leone), Maurice Pewa (Trócaire, Coordinator of the Irish Working Group on GBV in Sierra Leone), and Tiwonge Mtisunge Chirwa (former Coordinator of the Malawi Irish Consortium on GBV). This engagement ensured that frontline experience informed wider discourse and helped inspire and equip the next generation of development practitioners.

From Research to Practice

In June, at the Action Aid Women's Right Annual Programme Meeting held in Dublin, the ICGBV delivered a workshop which focused on translating ICGBV's research on survivor-led accountability into practical application within programming contexts.

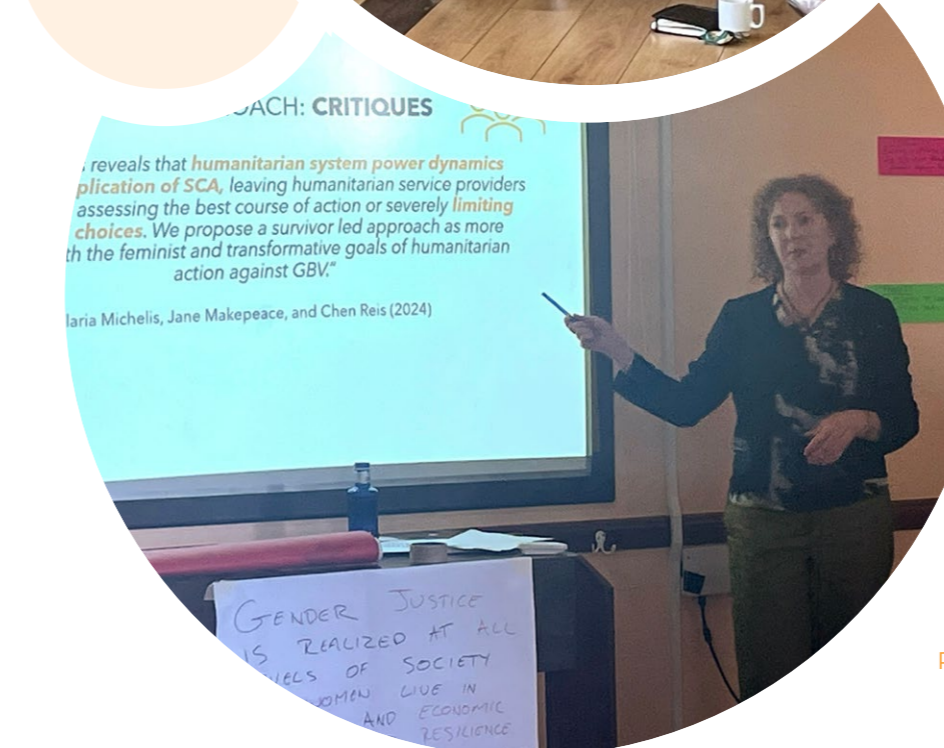
The workshop explored key questions on the evolution from survivor-centred to survivor-led approaches, including where organisations currently sit along this continuum and what is required to progress towards more transformative models. Participants from Kenya, Ethiopia and Nepal engaged in practical exercises to map their own programmes along the continuum tool and to identify concrete steps needed to advance survivor leadership within their work.

Discussions highlighted the challenges of survivor leadership in practice, particularly in contexts where significant progress has already

been made to establish survivor-centred approaches. Participants reflected on the complexity of moving further along this continuum, noting that this transition requires not only additional resources but also shifts in power, decision-making structures and organisational culture. The workshop sparked ongoing reflection on what survivor leadership looks like in practice and how organisations can meaningfully support survivors as decision-makers, particularly within initiatives that were not originally designed or led by survivors.

This workshop marked an important step in ICGBV's efforts to ensure that its research is not only disseminated but actively applied.

By engaging directly with practitioners across multiple country contexts, the Consortium supported members to reflect on their own approaches and consider practical steps towards strengthening survivor engagement, while also highlighting to the Consortium, aspects that warrant further exploration and development, to better ground future research, in the realities and needs of implementation.



Facilitated workshop and participant discussions exploring how to translate survivor-led accountability from research into practice at the ActionAid Women's Rights Annual Programme Meeting, Dublin

GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONS

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee provides the core governance and oversight function of the Consortium, meeting quarterly to set strategic direction, ensure accountability, and guide delivery against agreed priorities. This includes reviewing and approving financial reports, proposals, and annual priorities, strengthening transparency and collective responsibility across the membership.

The Steering Committee also supports member engagement in Consortium activities by establishing time-bound working groups for key events and initiatives. These working groups enable members to contribute in ways aligned with their organisational capacity and expertise, such as providing communications support, sponsoring speakers, suggesting moderators, bringing valuable learnings from countries of operation to the membership, thereby strengthening collaboration across the consortium.

Steering Committee Member and Chairperson Attendance*

Organisation	Attended	Organisation	Attended
ActionAid Ireland	3/4	Ifrah Foundation	1/4
Aidlink	3/4	Oxfam Ireland	3/4
Christian Aid Ireland	1/4	Plan International Ireland	4/4
Concern Worldwide	3/4	Trócaire	3/4
Defence Forces	4/4	World Vision Ireland	3/4
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade	4/4	Chairperson	4/4
GOAL Global**	2/4		

* The Irish Red Cross is currently not represented on the Steering Committee

** GOAL, as Chair, attended all Steering Committee meetings during the period

Steering Committee Members (alphabetical):

Dept. of Foreign Affairs & Trade: Róisín Carlos
ActionAid: Finola Finnan/ Gráinne Kilcullen
Aidlink: Anne Cleary
Christian Aid: Paul Quinn
Concern Worldwide: Russell Gates
Defence Forces: Captain Oliver Byrne
GOAL: Mary Van Lieshout/Naomi Wyles
Ifrah Foundation: Ifrah Ahmed/Leonie Kerins
Plan International: Juliane Schmucker
Trócaire: Helen nic an Rí/Sara Cornish-Spencer
World Vision: Maurice Sadlier

Financial Management

Through prudent financial management by the hosting agency, GOAL, and clear oversight by the Steering Committee, ICGBV maintained efficient operations throughout 2025. Activities were prudently budgeted and managed to support the delivery of core consortium activities and priorities, ensuring value for money and operational continuity.

ICGBV Representation: Bridging Practice and Policy

Throughout 2025, ICGBV team played an active role in national and international fora, supporting member engagement and ensuring that GBV considerations remained visible within broader policy and practice discussions. This included facilitating member input into the Inter-Agency GBV Guidelines Reference Group and contributing to consultations and policy processes at national, EU and global levels.

Within the Department of Foreign Affairs Human Rights Committee, ICGBV contributed to the public consultation on Ireland's priorities and programme ahead of its Presidency of the Council of the European Union, including advocating for the establishment of a dedicated funding line for GBV within the EU Multiannual Financial Framework.

ICGBV Representation in 2025

- National Observatory on Violence Against Women
- Inter-Agency GBV Guidelines Reference Group (Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action)
- Irish Department of Foreign Affairs Human Rights Committee
- IGHNxEU Conference Steering Group

As an active member of the National Observatory on Violence Against Women and Girls, the ICGBV participated in project workshops to develop [‘Structures of Engagement for Survivors of Violence Against Women’](#) research report, as prepared by the Observatory funded by CUAN². The ICGBV Continuum Tool on Survivor Leadership, was a core feature of the Observatory's literature review in 2024 and a precursor to the 'Structures of Engagement' research. This was an extension of the

2. Ireland's Statutory agency dedicated to tackling and reducing GBV

earlier collaboration this year with National Women’s Council of Ireland, as Chair of the Observatory, when we invited them to present their literature review at our CSW Event, “GBV Survivors Leading the Way to Change”.

The Consortium also actively participated on the steering committee for the Irish Global Health Network’s Empowering Women for a Healthier Europe (IGHNxEU) two-day conference, supported Christian Aid and their Colombian feminist partner Sisma Mujer’s participation, and contributed to related policy consultations, with GBV priorities reflected in the [resulting policy brief](#).

Through these strategic roles, ICGBV serves a vital conduit between its members and key policy and advocacy spaces, ensuring that frontline knowledge and evidence from practice inform broader decision making, funding priorities, advocacy efforts and accountability processes.

Community members participate in an awareness session addressing FGM and supporting safer futures for girls through positive social norm change in Baidoa, Southwest State, Somalia. Credit: Ifrah Foundation



Gender-based violence awareness training in Colombia. Credit: GOAL Global



A woman stitching a traditional, colourful pattern on a fabric by hand at a local women and girls safe space facility in Juba, South Sudan. Credit: Anna Benassi, IRC, July 2024; Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade

Learning & Practice (L&P) Group: Advancing Collective Learning

The Learning and Practice Group (L&P) continues to serve as a core platform for collective learning, enabling the sharing of technical expertise, resources, and emerging practice across member organisations.

In 2025, the group played a key role in shaping the second phase of the Consortium’s research on survivor leadership, scheduled to continue in 2026. Members contributed inputs to inform the scope and direction of the research, which include prioritising practical guidance for members, including tool development, along with exploring how the funding cuts has practically impacted survivor leadership engagement. L&P members further called for clear, evidence-based messaging on GBV financing, to build on ICGBV research, [Tracking the Money Towards Ending Gender-based violence](#). A learning session on this topic is planned for 2026.

Throughout 2025, the L&P supported knowledge exchange across the Consortium by coordinating, and disseminating 12 member bulletins containing relevant events, announcements, and resources to support members’ GBV programming and wider networks. These bulletins strengthened information flows across the membership and supported ongoing GBV programming and wider professional networks.

In addition, the group played an active role in ICGBV’s engagement under the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and supported the development of learning opportunities and events for the wider membership, reinforcing the link between evidence, practice and policy engagement.

Learning & Practice Members (alphabetical):

ActionAid: Nisha Lama Karki

Aidlink: Abirami Muthurathinam/Anne Cleary

Christian Aid: Grace Duffy

Concern Worldwide: Adèle Fox

Defence Forces: Denise English

Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade:

Patrick Geoffroy/Saidhbh Houlihan

GOAL: Thandolwenkosi Sibindi

Ifrah Foundation:

Ifrah Ahmed/Zena Ní Dhuinn-Bhig

Irish Red Cross: Rebecca O’Byrne/Sarah West

Plan International: Clara Devine

Trócaire: Jihan Hisso/Roberta Cappieri

World Vision: Esperanza Escorza

Communications and **Visibility**

ICGBV's online communications in 2025 focused on amplifying Consortium priorities, increasing visibility of members work, and extending the reach of key moments of engagement, including events, research outputs, and advocacy activity. Engaging its network of over 11,000 subscribers, these efforts combined communications through ICGBV's own channels, with selective wider amplification through national media in Ireland, and ensuring consistency in messaging.

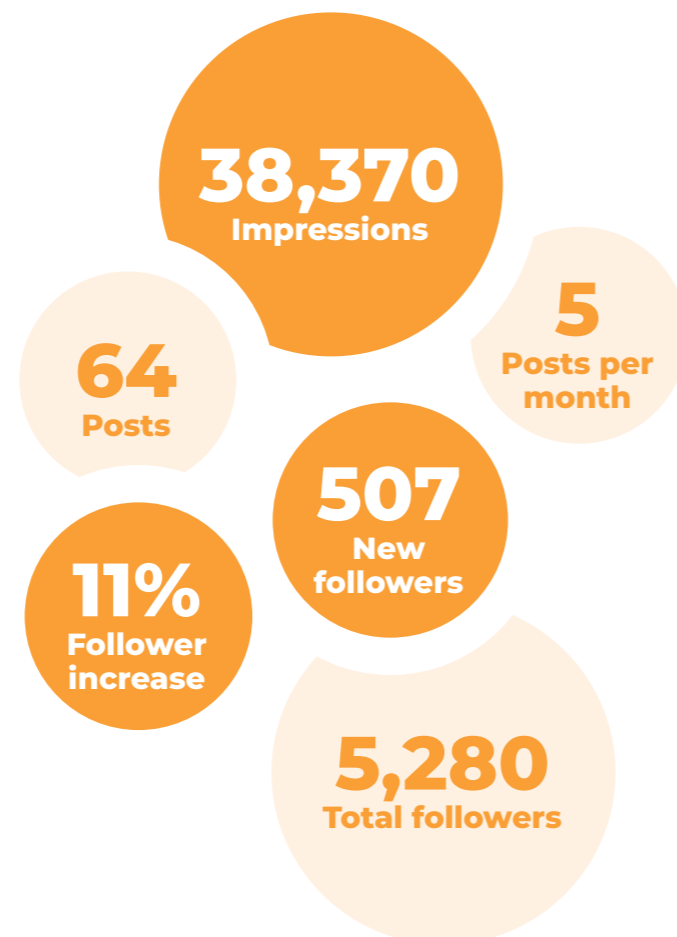
LinkedIn remained the Consortium's primary digital communications platform. Over the year, the number of followers increased by 10.6%. A total of 64 posts were published, generating 38,370 impressions and supporting regular visibility of Consortium activity among policy, academic, and practitioner audiences.

A total of 64 posts were published over the year, generating 38,370 impressions and supporting sustained engagement with policy, academic and practitioner audiences.

Beyond owned digital channels, ICGBV's messages were further amplified through national media engagement through Ireland's Today FM radio (928,000 listeners) and Irish Examiner (print and online, national readership exceeding 200,000).

These opportunities extended the reach and frontline perspectives and supported wider awareness of GBV issues.

LinkedIn Reach



LOOKING AHEAD

Building on the momentum and learning of 2025, the Consortium enters 2026 acutely aware of rising levels of need, sustained uncertainty, and growing pressure on gender-based violence (GBV) programming and gender equality efforts. These pressures will continue to test the resilience of organisations and systems, reinforcing the importance of strong, coordinated, and collective responses.

In this context, ICGBV **remains committed to strengthening its role as a convening, learning, and connecting platform**, bringing together members, partners, academics, policymakers, and frontline voices to share learning openly, build collective understanding, and support more effective approaches to addressing GBV. This commitment reflects a core belief that progress is possible when learning is shared, challenges are acknowledged openly, and solutions are developed collectively and translated into practical action.

A key priority for the year ahead will be **deepening engagement across the membership** and their partners, while remaining realistic

ICGBV Members Participating in the Annual CEO and Leader Roundtable in Iveagh House



about the operating constraints members face. The Consortium will actively facilitate collaboration by identifying areas of overlap, shared priorities, and opportunities for partnership. This will support members to work more collectively and creatively in an increasingly constrained funding and operational environment.

ICGBV will also continue its work on survivor-led approaches with a second phase of research designed to generate practical outputs that inform programming, advocacy, and policy engagement. Alongside this, the Consortium **will convene targeted learning opportunities** to translate research, evidence, and global trends into practical insights, ensuring that learning is shared, applied, and continuously refined to support effective approaches to addressing GBV.

At the **global level**, ICGBV will maintain—and as additional funding is secured—and **expand its engagement in key policy and advocacy spaces**, including through the Oversight Group for Ireland’s National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and preparation for participation in CSW71. These spaces remain critical for ensuring that frontline realities and survivor perspectives inform national and international policy discussions, even as participation requires careful prioritisation of limited resources.

The Consortium will also **strengthen collaboration with its sister consortia in Malawi and Sierra Leone**, creating more structured opportunities for joint learning, shared engagement, and the elevation of locally driven approaches. This work will further reinforce ICGBV’s role as a bridge between global policy spaces and lived frontline realities.

Taken together, these priorities reflect a deliberate choice: to continue operating collectively in difficult times, to learn from both progress and setbacks, and to remain engaged even when constraints are real.

The challenge of ending gender-based violence is complex, and the current global context has intensified that reality. By working as a global community grounded in evidence, lived experience, and mutual support, ICGBV and its members remain committed to pushing forward, adapting where needed, and **remaining resolute in pursuing a world free from gender-based violence.**

Matulizo* (37), a survivor of conflict-related sexual violence, received medical and psychosocial support. She is now participating in an economic empowerment programme for GBV survivors, under the FCDO-funded EAST programme. Credit: Concern Worldwide

*Not real name for confidentiality purposes

Female programme participant at a meeting organised in New Paloch Women and Girls’ Safe Space supported by EMPOWER! New Paloch, Melut County, Upper Nile State, South Sudan. Credit: World Vision



Members of the Defence Forces engaging in civil-military cooperation initiatives with girls in South Lebanon. Credit: Irish Defence Forces

act:onaid

Aidlink

**christian
aid**

**CONCERN
worldwide**



**Óglaigh
na hÉireann**
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

GOAL

IFRAH
FOUNDATION

+ **Crois Dhearg na hÉireann**
Irish Red Cross

OXFAM
Ireland

PLAN
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