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KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Women and girls among displaced people remain at high risk of GBV in the region.
- Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) is the most prevalent form of GBV in humanitarian settings in eastern Africa.
- Child marriage, rape and physical abuse are the common forms of GBV in stable environments, including southern Africa.
- Regional WHS Commitments on gender call for end to financing gender blind programming.



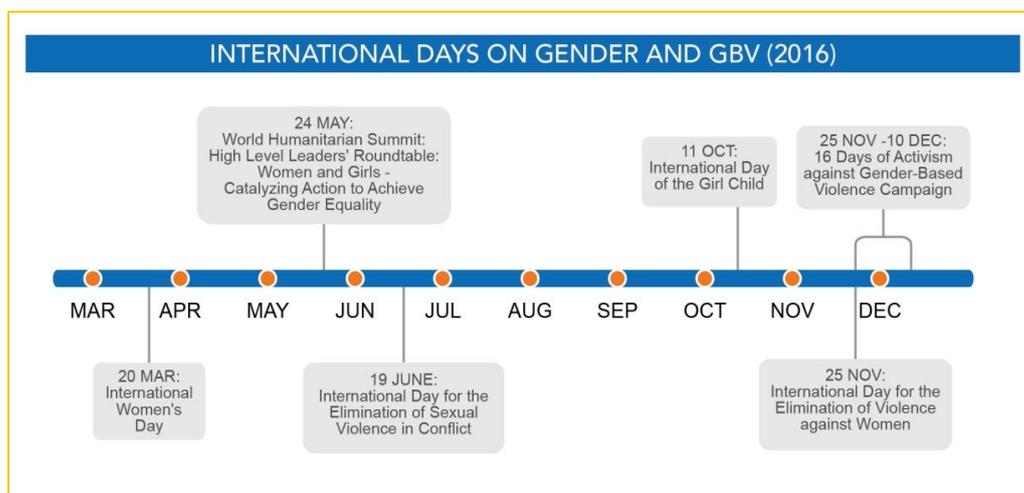
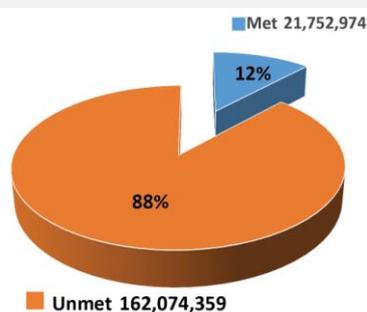
Overview of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) trends in eastern and southern Africa

This month's regional bulletin outlines some key aspects of GBV in humanitarian settings in the region and highlights some promising global, regional and country-level initiatives towards addressing GBV, including through the commitments made at the just-ended World Humanitarian Summit (24-25 May); a summary of which is included in the bulletin.

FUNDING

Source: fts.unocha.org

Protection/GBV funding status HRP for Burundi, Djibouti, Somalia, South Sudan and Zimbabwe , 17 June 2016



GBV and Conflict Related Sexual Violence

Gender-based Violence (GBV), a fundamental violation of human rights, pervades the eastern and southern Africa region and often results in adverse economic and social consequences for men, women, their children, families, communities and States in development as well as in humanitarian settings.

The region remains prone to conflicts and natural disasters, resulting in massive displacements, livelihoods insecurity, food and water shortages, which heighten the vulnerability of girls and women to GBV, particularly rape, sexual assault, physical violence, early marriage and denial of economic resources. Sixty percent of all maternal deaths take place in humanitarian settings and all forms of gender based violence against women and girls spike during disasters and conflict. Countries in eastern Africa continue to record high rates of conflict-related sexual violence, including as a weapon of war; particularly in Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, DRC and most recently, Burundi. In southern Africa - despite being in the development phase - most countries are reporting high GBV incidents, including during natural disasters such as the current El Niño-related drought and flood conditions.

Requirements	211,358,956
Met	25,363,075
Unmet	185,995,881

More information on the humanitarian situation in the region can be found in the Regional Outlook Documents at

<http://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/regiona-l-outlook-horn-africa-and-great-lakes-region-recommendations-humanitarian> and at

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/southern-africa/documents>

19 June:
International
Day for the
Elimination of
Sexual
Violence in
Conflict
(UN resolution
69/293)

On average two to three women report being raped each week in incidents related to collection of firewood up to 15 kilometers outside the Tanzania's Nyarugusu refugee camp, according to IRC

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, held on 19 June globally, the UN Secretary General recognised "sexual violence is a threat to international peace and security, a serious violation of international humanitarian and human rights law, and a major impediment to post-conflict reconciliation and economic development." During the 19th June commemorations, twenty four individuals and civil society organisations in Sudan called on the Sudanese government to end the widespread sexual violence committed by its security forces and to reverse the atmosphere of impunity that fosters it. Read the full [statement](#).

According to UNHCR, in the context of the unrest in **Burundi** since April 2015, 323 incidents of GBV involving 264 women and 59 girls reportedly occurred either in Burundi or during flight. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) reports that on average, two to three women report being raped each week in incidents relating to collecting firewood up to 15 kilometres outside the camps in Tanzania.

In **South Sudan**, spikes in GBV were linked to illegal use of arms, new mass displacements, cattle raids and food insecurity.

In **Sudan**, new cases of sexual violence were recorded in North Darfur's Jebel Marra; while in **Somalia** the majority of the cases were from IDPs. Access remains a major challenge in South Sudan, Somalia and Sudan, limiting survivor's ability to seek timely care and support; and humanitarian actor's ability to reach survivors and those vulnerable to GBV.

Additionally, the fear of reprisals remains a key challenge for survivors of GBV, leading to a prevalent culture of silence. Failures or delays in reporting have meant that survivors present themselves for post GBV violation after the recommended 72 hours when effective health support can be provided, or not at all. The culture of silence is not only predominant in countries in conflict in the region, but also in more stable countries. Access to justice has been constrained by impunity, deeply entrenched attitudes on gender injustices and weak institutional capacities on gender justice.



A child and mother watch Burundian women walk through a swampy area on their return from an hours-long walk outside Nyarugusu to collect firewood (IRC/Griff Tapper/ Al Jazeera)

Key facts:

- 34 per cent of women (aged 18-49) in 8 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa have ever experienced violence in their life time.
- 20 per cent of women (aged 18-49) in 9 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa have experienced sexual violence in their lifetimes.
- Only 5.8 per cent of survivors of GBV, aged 18-49 years, go to report their violation to the police.

Source: United Nations, 2015. *The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics*

GBV and El Niño: girls and women adapting negative coping mechanisms

The El Niño phenomenon in the region has affected the food security and livelihoods of vulnerable households, risking increased incidence of GBV. Government-led inter-agency assessments on the impact of the El Niño drought in Ethiopia, Lesotho, Swaziland and Malawi show that food insecurity often puts communities at increased risk of GBV. This often result from increased cases of inter-communal conflict in competition over scarce

resources, especially in eastern Africa, resort to survival sex and early marriage for girls in an attempt by households and communities to cope with the shocks.

Viewed as a source of assets for vulnerable households in times of crisis, girls in drought affected countries may be forced into early marriage and sexual exploitation. Latest statistics by UNICEF indicate high incidences of child marriages in countries currently experiencing food insecurity and drought conditions. These include Ethiopia (40 per cent), Madagascar (46 per cent), Mozambique (48 per cent), Somalia (45 per cent), South Sudan (52 per cent), Eritrea (41 per cent), Swaziland (7 per cent), Lesotho (19 per cent), and Zimbabwe (34 per cent).

GBV in the drought-affected countries have also been linked to carrying out domestic tasks. Girls and women have reported being sexually assaulted, or raped while collecting water over longer distances than normal. Faced by water and fuel shortages as a result of drought, girls and women, traditionally assigned the role of collecting water and cooking fuel, have reportedly trekked for over 2 kilometres in search of the precious commodities.

In **Lesotho**, women and girls had to wake up, in some cases as early as 3 am to fetch water, and would come back home as late as midnight with only twenty litres of water for the whole family. It is especially during the early morning or late nights that the sexual assault on women could happen, according to reports by [Gender Links for Equality and Justice, Lesotho](#).

GBV and HIV/AIDS in humanitarian crises

Food insecurity and similar challenges associated with disasters, often pressure households into unsustainable coping strategies and can lead to HIV-risk behaviour such as transactional sex, which drives new HIV infections.

With only 5 per cent of the world's population, eastern and southern Africa is home to half the world's population living with HIV, according to [UNAIDS statistics of 2013](#). Today the region continues to be the epicenter of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, with 48 per cent of the world's new HIV infections among adults; 55 per cent among children, and 48 per cent of AIDS-related deaths. The southern Africa sub-region, in particular, experiences the most severe HIV epidemics in the world. Nine countries - Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe - have adult HIV prevalence rates of over 10 per cent.

According to UNAIDS, young women in South Africa are at great risk of being infected with HIV. Violence against women, and especially rape, are significant problems in the region, where it is estimated that more than one woman is raped each second. In 2005, HIV infection prevalence in the age group 15-24 years was 16.9 per cent in women and 4.4 per cent in men. At an estimated 26.0 per cent, Swaziland has the highest HIV prevalence rate in the world, followed by Botswana (23.4 per cent) and Lesotho (23.3 per cent). With 5.6 million people living with HIV (17.3 per cent), South Africa is home to the world's largest epidemic. Young people are particularly susceptible to HIV infections and they also carry the burden of caring for family members living with HIV/AIDS..

WHS commitments on gender and GBV

The first-ever World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) drew to a close on 24 May in Istanbul, Turkey, with over 1000 commitments made by world leaders, humanitarian and development organizations, donors, the private sector and members of civil society, among others. The consultations around gender issues culminated in a successful high level roundtable on women and girls. The high level round table was organised against the backdrop of persistent gender inequalities in emergencies; some of which are to be addressed in the commitments below.

Countries in crises, including those experiencing the El Niño - related drought report high incidences of early marriage and school dropouts.

World leaders commit to increased humanitarian funding for GBV interventions.

As at 17th June 2016, only 12 per cent of the \$185,906,306 required for protection/GBV interventions in Somalia, South Sudan, Djibouti, Burundi and Zimbabwe had been funded.

1. Stop financing programmes and projects which fail to take gender dimensions into account

This commitment seeks to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment become pillars of humanitarian action. Closely linked to this is another commitment, by donors and humanitarian actors to apply the IASC, ECHO or other gender and age markers to 100 per cent of their humanitarian funding allocations by 2018.

2. Increased humanitarian financing for GBV

Funding gaps persist despite GBV and CRSV being recognized as a serious concern globally and in the region. As at 17 June 2016, three out of the five Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) launched in the region had received an average of 12 per cent funding for Protection/GBV interventions against a request of a total of around USD \$186 million for Burundi, Djibouti, Somalia, South Sudan, and Zimbabwe response. The HRPs for Djibouti and Zimbabwe have received no funding for GBV.

3. The establishment of an effective monitoring and analysis system to institutionalize the collection of sex and age desegregated data of key humanitarian indicators at sub national and national levels, and to continuously analyse the data to inform response decisions. The near-absence of gender disaggregated data across board in key humanitarian data remains a major challenge to clearly understanding the problem in order to effectively find solutions.

4. Put affected communities at the heart of operations, prioritizing their needs and consulting with and being led by them. This includes empowering women and girls as change agents and leaders, and ensuring that they have equal access to decision making processes.

5. Strengthening partnerships with all stakeholders on gender interventions at all levels of humanitarian action as an essential approach in not only ensuring access to affected individuals and groups, but also in institutionalizing gender in partnership arrangements with humanitarian and development actors in the region.

The Regional Steering Groups for eastern and southern Africa, in collaboration with regional partners will develop specific action plans to follow-up on the implementation of the WHS Gender commitments applicable to this region. For more information on the post-WHS process, please contact: Luluwa Ali, OCHA WHS Focal Point, on ali19@un.org.

GBV initiatives in the Region

Legislative and Policy Measures to address GBV

The adoption of commitments, action plans and disciplinary measures by parties to armed conflict, such as the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), as well the implementation of zero-tolerance policies and codes of conduct for armed forces, is an encouraging development towards ending impunity.

Governments in the region have also made some progress towards ending sexual violence by adopting national laws as indicated in the adjacent table. The respective national legislations criminalise sexual offences and offer strict penalties for offenders, thus providing some form of deterrence. The effective implementation of the commitments and other legal provisions however continues to call for increased advocacy, political commitment and capacity building to ensure attendant skills and resources are available for action. Somalia has in the recent months reviewed the Sexual Offences Bill expanding the scope of sexual offences and attendant penalties.

Countries with Specific Laws on Sexual Offences and GBV	Countries with Draft Bills on Sexual Offences and GBV
Kenya	Somalia
Lesotho	Uganda
Malawi	
Rwanda	
South Africa	
Tanzania	
Zambia	
Zimbabwe	

The enactment of the specific national sexual offences Acts will however only be effective if matched with the requisite political commitments, skills and resources to enforce them.

A patriarchal system is reportedly one of the main factors reinforcing the prevalence of gender-based violence in the region, as it gives men power over women.

UNICEF and partners are supporting the Somalia Government and civil society partners to expand their approach to GBV from emergency-driven service provision, to long-term sustainable capacity building interventions that will help tackle root causes of violence and inequalities.

Targeting root causes of GBV: UNICEF Community Care Programme promoting dignity, equality and non-violence

The root causes of GBV - gender inequality, abuse of power and lack of respect for human rights - continues to pose significant impediments to women and girls' health and well-being across the region. The Communities Care: Transforming Lives and Preventing Violence Programme (CC Programme), implemented by UNICEF in South Sudan, focuses on promoting gender equality to reduce tolerance of sexual violence against women and girls and to build quality, survivor-centers services at community level. UNICEF reports that in 2010, 57 percent of the population living in female-headed households was poor, compared to 48 percent in male-headed households. The same survey indicates that 79 percent of both male and female respondents find it justifiable for men to beat their wives or partners under some circumstances.



Woman displays reading materials issued at CC Programme South Sudan (UNICEF)

The CC initiative seeks to transform norms that contribute to GBV and sexual violence into norms that promote dignity, equality and non-violence. This is done through structured dialogue among key influencers in the community, including both men and women and male and female youth, thereby stimulating reflection on human rights principles, identification of shared community values; debate about beliefs and norms that are harmful for women and girls; and deliberation about potential alternative norms. The program takes global guidance and standards and adapts them in a way that is culturally and contextually appropriate to the local reality, while simultaneously emphasizing community ownership and sustainability.

UNICEF, Chief of Child Protection in South Sudan, Vedasto Nsanzugwanko concludes thus, " if we want to have any long-term impact on preventing and addressing gender-based violence, promoting positive social norms and gender equality must be integral parts of our overall approach.

"In order to have any long-term impact on preventing and addressing gender-based violence, promoting positive social norms and gender equality must be integral parts of our overall approach," UNICEF Chief of Child Protection, South Sudan.

Engaging men and boys in humanitarian action in Botswana

A patriarchal system is reportedly one of the main factors reinforcing the prevalence of gender-based violence in the region, as it gives men power over women.

The **MenCare (for Women) UNFPA-supported Programme** in Botswana, is encouraging men and boys to abandon harmful stereotypes, embrace respectful and healthy relationships, and support the human rights of all. Overall, the programme helps men realise their role as change agents, the value of women and children and teaches them that



After growing up with an absent father, Olepolotse Othuseng, who has a two-month-old baby, wants to be the change he had hoped for as a boy growing up. (UNFPA)

real change must start at home. Statistics by UNFPA indicate that about 67 per cent of women in Botswana have experienced physical violence, and the most common perpetrator of this violence is an intimate partner. Approximately 15 per cent of women experience sexual abuse within intimate relationships.

Preventing child marriage in Malawi

Through the [Kameme Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment \(GEWE\) network](#) in Malawi, UNFPA and partners are helping girls realize their future by identifying girls who have dropped out of school due to early marriage or pregnancy and encouraging them to continue with their education.



At 16, Kisa Kaisi is facing a much brighter future, thanks to a UNFPA-supported intervention
© malawi -child marriage UNFPA / Henry Chimballi

According to UNFPA less than 25 per cent of girls finish primary school. By age 18, about half of all girls in Malawi are married. Most of the girls who marry early suffer abuse in their partnerships. Through the Kameme initiative, men and women volunteers at the network work with local leaders to identify such girls and encourage them to continue with their education, thus contributing to their empowerment.

Availing tools for Gender and GBV in Disaster Risk Reduction

Whereas the concept of mainstreaming gender across the humanitarian and development sphere is gaining momentum and acceptance at various levels, the challenge is always the “how to do it”. It is in this regards that the UN Women in Kenya launched the Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Reduction Mainstreaming Manual entitled “[Enhancing the Capacities related to Gender and Gender Based Violence in Humanitarian Actions](#)”.

The Manual provides an easy to use guide to humanitarian actors on how to address gender and GBV dimensions in disaster risk reduction. UN Women in partnership with OCHA and other key stakeholders is rolling out trainings and capacity building programmes in support of the use of this manual and other tools such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) gender marker tip sheets. The capacity building programme is expected to strengthen gender mainstreaming across humanitarian and development continuum.

For more information on the Manual, please contact **Beatrice Teya**, UNWOMEN on beatrice.teya@unwomen.org.

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