

# **Policies for Gender Justice**

Practices in addressing domestic violence and gender stereotypes

NOVEMBER 2022

# POLICIES FOR GENDER JUSTICE

PRACTICES IN ADDRESSING DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE AND GENDER STEREOTYPES

---

NOVEMBER  
2022



Permission is required to reproduce any part of this publication. Permission will be freely granted to educational or non-profit organizations. To request permission or for any other information on this publication, please contact:

International Presentation Association  
1011 First Ave  
#1313  
New York, NY, 10022  
USA

e-mail: [ipa.ngo.rep@gmail.com](mailto:ipa.ngo.rep@gmail.com); [execdirectoripa@pbvm.org](mailto:execdirectoripa@pbvm.org); [ella.j.rayment@gmail.com](mailto:ella.j.rayment@gmail.com)  
website: <https://globalpres.org/>

---

The information in this publication is not designed to replace expert advice on any topic covered. All reasonable precautions have been taken by IPA to verify the information contained in this publication. While every care has been taken to ensure the information is accurate at the time of publication, IPA takes no responsibility for any errors or omissions.

# Preface

The International Presentation Association (IPA) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) in consultative status with the United Nations ECOSOC since 2000. As a network of Presentation Sisters and Presentation People present in over twenty countries on six continents, our unique mission is “to speak and act in partnership with others for global justice” through advocacy and direct service to people in need. Our goal is “to honour and advance the rights of women and children, indigenous and tribal people and the Earth”. At the United Nations in New York, we, and other members of civil society, aim to educate and influence policy makers at the global level to achieve a more just world.

Following our specific UN advocacy focus on the “Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children”, we launched our first publication in April 2022 titled Making Uncomfortable Conversations Comfortable: Gender Stereotypes and Domestic Violence in India, United States and Zimbabwe. This first IPA research placed a particular interest in providing a voice to women experiencing gender stereotypes and

domestic violence - presenting not only their experiences, but also their needs going forward, as reflective of their culture and society. The current, second, IPA publication places a focus on policy responses addressing domestic violence and gender stereotypes by the governments and NGOs in India, United States and Zimbabwe. Our research explores synergies and collaboration between governments and civil society organizations before and during COVID-19 aiming to address the issues at stake. It is most essential to identify existing or potential partnerships between governments and NGOs. Achieving coherence from the two sides constitutes the only viable path to increase the effectiveness of their policies towards addressing gender stereotypes and domestic violence and ensuring that the individuals in need are not left behind.

May we continuously be awakened with a global consciousness to the woundedness and pain of our world, standing with people in their struggles, while speaking and acting for justice, healing and hope for all.

Advocating for gender equality and women’s rights around the world every day,



Ann Marie Quinn PBVM  
Executive Director  
International Presentation Association



Dr. Despoina Afroditi Milaki  
NGO Representative at the UN  
International Presentation Association

# Preface

This research publication, 'Policies for Gender Justice: Practices in Addressing Domestic Violence and Gender Stereotypes', has been developed through testimonies from experts within the field of addressing GBV, under the supervision of Dr. Despoina Afroditi Milaki, the IPA NGO Representative at the UN. Developed to complement the International Presentation Association's previous publication titled 'Making uncomfortable Conversations Comfortable: Gender Stereotypes and Domestic Violence in India, United States and Zimbabwe', this publication looks beyond causes of domestic violence to understand how experts and advocates design and implement policies to provide support to survivors.

As responses to domestic violence vary spatially, this research focuses on policies addressing domestic violence and gender stereotypes in India, the United States and Zimbabwe. This research identifies the strategies that national governments and NGOs design and implement, with an

emphasis on assessing the collaborative networks and mechanisms created to successfully implement effective policies. This publication illustrates and analyses policies within each country to create a broad understanding of how gender stereotypes and domestic violence is being addressed at a global scale. Testimonies from NGO experts will provide insight into best practices (particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic), the opportunities for collaboration with governments and other NGOs, and how challenges in operating effectively could be overcome.

This publication presents key recommendations for how to address domestic violence and gender stereotypes which are rooted in the testimonies of experts. Through highlighting synergies of policy design and implementation, this research takes an international approach in understanding how we can better address domestic violence and gender stereotypes as a global community.



Ella Rayment  
Research Fellow  
International Presentation Association

# Acknowledgements

This research topic was conceptualized and initiated by Dr. Despoina Afroditi Milaki, NGO Representative at the United Nations for the International Presentation Association. As the project's lead consultant, Dr. Milaki provided invaluable support and guidance with her professional and academic experience in setting the frame of and executing the research, dedicating also time to contributing analysis, reviewing multiple drafts and making comments on the document.

The research was conducted and developed by Ella Rayment, Research Fellow of the International Presentation Association, who provided valuable insights and fresh perspectives. With her dedication, commitment and endless efforts, Ms Rayment served a critical role in performing scientific work, collecting sensitive data and moving forward despite the many challenges of the project.

A particular appreciation and gratitude extend to Ann Marie Quinn, PBVM, Executive Director of the International Presentation Association for her continued support and encouragement. Her enthusiasm and vision to put this project into a long-term view constituted significant pillars for the research to go above and beyond.

A special thank you goes to the International Presentation Association Board of Directors.

The International Presentation Association would like to thank all of the individuals and organisations that supported and contributed to this project, with special gratitude for those who participated in the research and shared their experiences:

Amrita Das Gupta, Executive Director, Swayam  
Annatollia Muzata, PBVM, IPA Justice Contact  
Elsa Marie D'Silva, Founder, The Red Dot Foundation  
Flora Mary Arul Doss, PBVM, IPA Justice Contact  
Gargee Guha, Casework Coordinator, Swayam  
Lara Hicks, Executive Assistant, UNANIMA International  
Libania Fernandes, PBVM, IPA Justice Contact  
Marisa Moyo (alias), Justice of the Peace  
Mrs. M. (alias), Magistrate  
Olivia Smith (alias), Women and Children First  
Priya Jain, Programme Coordinator, RSKS India  
Rebecca Cline, Preventions Programme Director, Ohio Domestic Violence Network  
Rufaro Chakanetsa, Spotlight Innovator against GBV, Spotlight Initiative  
Ruhani Amin, Digital Evaluator and Organiser, North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Sally Jones (alias), North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Sara Rudolph-Pollard, Domestic Violence Project Coordinator, Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape, and Domestic Violence  
Sneha Gill, PBVM, Presentation Sister and Advocate  
Sujata Warriar, Chief Strategic Officer, Battered Women's Justice Project  
Dr. SN Sharma, Chief Executive Officer, RSKS India  
Talent Jumo, Founder, The Katswe Sista Hood  
Tinotenda Ratidzo Chihera, Domestic Violence Advocate and Women Rights Lawyer

The layout design was done by Ella Rayment under the guidance and contribution of Dr. Despoina Afroditi Milaki.

# Acronyms

**CEDAW** - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women

**CERD** - Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

**CSR** - Child Sex Ratio

**CSO** - Civil Society Organisation

**DHS** - Demographic Health Survey

**DLSA** - District Legal Service Authority

**GBV** - Gender-Based Violence

**ICERD** - International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

**IGO** - Intergovernmental Organisation

**IPA** - International Presentation Association

**MVP** - Mahila Police Volunteers

**NGO** - Non-Governmental Organisation

**OVW** - Office on Violence Against Women

**PVO** - Private Voluntary Organisations Bill

**UN** - United Nations

**UNDP** - United Nations Development Program

**RSKS** - Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan

**SRHR** - Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

**VAWA** - Violence Against Women Act (1994)

**WAG** - Women's Action Group

**WCF** - Women and Children First

**WEP** - Women Entrepreneurship Platform

**WHO** - World Health Organisation

1

INTRODUCTION

6

METHODOLOGY

9

POLICY RESPONSES

68

RECOMMENDATIONS

70

CONCLUSION

73

BIBLIOGRAPHY





# Introduction

It has been well established that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the severity and widespread nature of domestic violence and entrenched gender stereotypes on a global scale (UN Women, 2022a). The pandemic disrupted pre-existing channels of support and access to essential services for survivors. Whilst the extent of disruption was not experienced evenly across the world, both national governments and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) implemented policies to prevent and respond to gender stereotypes and gender-based violence (GBV). These policies developed partnerships and utilised technologies in response to the context of COVID-19 (UNDP, 2020). As a result of the increased scope and severity of gender stereotypes and domestic violence during the pandemic, it is important that data is collected on how organisations designed and implemented policies to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence. Additionally, it is important to assess what frameworks and policies were in place through state and national governments before the pandemic to provide context to the work that was achieved during the pandemic.

The International Presentation Association's previous publication, 'Making Uncomfortable Conversations Comfortable: Gender Stereotypes and Domestic Violence in India, United States and Zimbabwe' (2022), has determined similarities and differences on how domestic violence and gender stereotypes manifest across India, United States and Zimbabwe before, during and after COVID-19. This first IPA research placed a particular interest in providing a voice to women experiencing gender stereotypes and domestic violence - presenting not only their experiences, but

also their needs going forward, as reflective of their culture and society.

The current research aims to identify policy responses, practices and partnerships by national governments and NGOs before and during the COVID-19 pandemic at the national and local levels. It is important to collect data on the responses of organisations to gender stereotypes and domestic violence to identify cross-cultural experiences of GBV policies. This publication will identify synergies and collectivise responses to gender stereotypes and domestic violence between governments and NGOs across India, United States and Zimbabwe before and during COVID-19. Identifying policy responses to gender stereotypes and domestic violence is particularly important as UN Women have predicted that, globally, we are only "moderately" on track to achieve the adequate legal frameworks and relevant policy responses, rather than being close to or even meeting the target of SDG 5.1 (UN Women, 2022b). Additionally, a recent UNODC and UN Women study found that "more than five women or girls were killed every hour by someone in their own family" in 2021 (UN Women & UNODC, 2022). This

**STOP  
VIOLENCE  
AGAINST  
WOMEN**



publication identifies what developments need to be achieved to increase effective outcomes towards gender stereotypes and domestic violence to address current alarming statistics with stronger actions. The research also explores the impacts of

policies addressing gender stereotypes and domestic violence, as well as the coherence and the effectiveness between the policy responses by governments and civil society aiming to examine in which cases they complete each other or not.

## WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic violence has been described by the UN (2022) as a “pattern of behaviour in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner”. Different ways of how domestic violence can be experienced includes physical, emotional, psychological, financial, emotional and sexual (UN, 2022). Each of these categories of how domestic violence is manifested can be experienced in tandem and to different degrees. Forms of violence that are physical may be more obvious to recognise when compared to psychological or emotional forms of violence, creating a need for policies to recognise the signs of experiencing the spectrum of violence.

## WHAT ARE GENDER STEREOTYPES?

Gender stereotypes are the societal expectations and perceived views of someone based on their gender. These are often rooted in cultural expectations of gendered roles and responsibilities, relying on mutually exclusive attributes prescribing women as gentle and nurturing and men as strong and assertive. Gender stereotypes are often combined and overlap with other stereotypes rooted in one’s identity which creates differences with how people experience gender stereotypes.

The rationale for exploring the significance of gender stereotypes and how they are conducive to domestic violence was explored in the previous IPA research publication (IPA, 2022). It is now important to assess policy responses to domestic violence as we need to make systematic change to the systems that promote discriminatory thinking and behaviour in order to achieve the elimination of gender stereotypes and GBV.





## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENTS?

When ensuring effective responses to gender stereotypes and domestic violence at a national level, governments can pass legislation to change the legal standing of aspects of society. For example, India, United States and Zimbabwe all have different legislation on marital rape which may both reflect and influence how marital rape is perceived within society. Governments design strategies to address GBV and create national government bodies to specialise in addressing those issues through policies across the country. National governments can allocate resources to address GBV through data collection, implementing nationwide programmes and respective national policies. Every government produces their own strategies and frameworks so there is variability in the ways that gender stereotypes and domestic violence is addressed. At a subnational or local level, state or provincial governments are given responsibility to enforce national legislation and policies. This is alongside implementing their own localised responses to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence.

At the global level, governments may choose to ratify and agree to be bound by the provisions outlined in international treaties or conventions produced by intergovernmental organisations in addressing gender-based violence and gender stereotypes. An example of such an international legal text constitutes the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 1979 and it was the culmination of more than thirty years of work by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women to “condemn discrimination against women in all its

forms [and] agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women” (CEDAW, 1979). The Convention is relevant to this research as it addresses strategies to prevent and respond to gender discrimination and therefore, promotes gender equality that can reduce gender stereotypes and domestic violence.

In order to achieve this strategy, the Convention outlined the creation of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, a UN body comprised of 23 experts that “has proved invaluable in opposing the effects of discrimination, which include violence, poverty, and lack of legal protections, along with the denial of inheritance, property rights, and access to credit” (OHCHR, 2022). As outlined in the Convention, 'State Parties' submit a report to the Committee to show their progress towards the elimination of discrimination towards women when they first ratify the Convention and every subsequent four years. The Committee then makes ‘concluding observations’, understood as recommendations in response to the 'State Party' reports to address areas of improvement.



Another international convention that addresses GBV is the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 21 December 1965. This



Convention outlines condemnation for “racial discrimination” and for ‘State Parties’ to “undertake to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating racial discrimination” (ICERD, 1965:2). To implement the strategies outlined in the ICERD, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was created (CERD). This Committee consists of “eighteen experts of high moral standing and acknowledged impartiality elected by States Parties”. (ICERD,1965:4). Every two years, countries that ratify the Convention need to submit a ‘State Party’ report on the “legislative, judicial, administrative” measures that have been implemented in line with the Convention (ICERD, 1965:5).

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination is relevant to the topic of gender stereotypes and domestic violence as it outlines the intersecting forms of gender-based violence and racial discrimination that a person may experience. The Convention outlines the

“right to security of person and protection by the State against violence or bodily harm” (ICERD, 1965:3). As many different forms of violence exist, ICERD acknowledges the need for culturally sensitive approaches to address domestic violence. These culturally sensitive approaches are achieved through collaboration among different government bodies and between governments and NGOs so that knowledge can be shared across sectors.

Both Committees to the above International Conventions assess the state of GBV within a country and provide recommendations for improvements. Through sessions with government officials, NGOs can contribute their evidence towards the reality of GBV within a country to provide further insight and push for recommendations. Through these Conventions, mechanisms exist to provide opportunities for knowledge sharing between NGOs and governments to identify the best practices of addressing gender stereotypes and domestic violence in a country.





Even with the international conventions ratified and national frameworks designed and implemented by governments and NGOs, there are still improvements to be made to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence. In the recent UN Women publication, 'Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals' (2022b), researchers found that it would take up to 286 years to “remove discriminatory laws and close prevailing gaps in legal protections for women and girls”. In other words, at the current rate of progress, it will be extremely difficult to secure legislation on gender equality and equal rights globally.

### **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS?**

Non-Governmental Organisations belong to the wider civil society sphere being a type of organisations that are non-profit and separate from governments (Shift and Mazars, 2015). As organisations, they represent a wide range of interests and occupy an important role of furthering social justice by influencing governments

for policy and legislative change. Additionally, many NGOs implement their own programmes at different levels of society in order to make tangible changes to their communities.

NGOs, whether local, national or international, experience different constraints and have different concerns and interests than governments when implementing policies addressing gender stereotypes and domestic violence. NGOs can make governments accountable for their policies or legislation. NGOs can also work with state agencies for effective policies or advocate for policy changes through lobbying. Additionally, the specialised skills that experts have within NGOs can support and ensure the effective implementation of government policies (Hughs, 2017). In the following research analysis, the relationship between the policies and practices of governments and NGOs will be compared to identify the ways in which meaningful collaboration and synergies can be implemented.

# Methodology

This research uses methods of qualitative data collection to engage with policy makers, experts and service providers from NGOs and government agencies to identify policies and practice in addressing gender stereotypes and domestic violence before COVID-19 and during COVID-19. The current research project provides an opportunity to understand how policy and practice shape experiences of gender stereotypes and domestic violence, with a particular emphasis on the cohesion and collaboration between organisations within civil society, the legal sphere and government bodies.

Our qualitative research takes the form of semi-structured interviews with relevant NGO representatives, lawyers and in certain cases with government officials, whenever available. The sample frame includes any individuals who are involved with the planning or implementation of policies and services addressing gender-based violence (GBV) or gender stereotypes before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The technique of 'snowball sampling' (1) to engage the networks of participants was used to generate a wide range of respondents. This technique allowed us to increase the sample size, establish more localised contacts at a grassroots level, and identify representatives who are within the sample frame but may be difficult to contact or establish a relationship with, due to the remote nature of the research. This qualitative methodology is an effective way to learn about the nuance of an issue,

where open-ended questions prompt long and detailed responses.

Developing from our previous publication whereby testimonials were used to gain insight to experiences of gender stereotypes and domestic violence, this project harnesses narratives from those with experience of planning or implementing policies and projects that actually address domestic violence or gender stereotypes. The participants ranged from working at a community level to provide support to people in rural or village areas, to working at a national level to instigate policy and legislative change. This variation in scale informed the research as to how domestic violence and gender stereotypes are being addressed at a grassroots, state, and national level; illustrating trends at different scales across the three countries.



---

(1) Snowball sampling refers to a mechanism to identify respondents through connections of already existing respondents, recently used for 'hard-to-reach' populations. There are different forms of snowball sampling. This research uses this sampling method as a "convenience sampling mechanism" due to the remote nature of the research. (Handcock and Gile, 2011:370).



To accommodate the different scales and areas of expertise of participants, a few of the questions were modified to be appropriate for the range of participants, although all of the interview questions asked were informed by the main research questions guiding this project. The majority of the questions though were identical for all participants to allow for direct comparisons within and between India, the United States and Zimbabwe.

## **HOW THE INTERVIEWS ARE ORGANISED:**

The interview questions were divided into three categories, all containing six to ten open ended questions for the participant to consider. The questions were designed to be unbiased and, oftentimes, broad to accommodate a wide range of responses based on the expertise of the individual or official. As such, the questions provide the topic of conversation that is explored in more depth with subsequent follow-up questions to establish greater depth on the issue.

## **GENERAL QUESTIONS ON POLICY:**

This first section of the interview was designed to establish pre-pandemic mechanisms, frameworks and practices of support for addressing gender stereotypes and domestic violence. This includes allowing the participant to reflect on how domestic violence is received at the decision-making level in their respective state or country, illuminating the social dimensions of domestic violence. Additionally, questions regarding the role of NGOs and governments in providing support for gender stereotypes and domestic violence are emphasised to allow the participant to reflect on the role of their organisation within a broader system of actors. This includes questions about 'best practice' in providing support, alongside challenges that the organisation may experience. Certain questions are intended to recognise the dynamic of working with other organisations to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence.

---

## **QUESTIONS REGARDING POLICIES PROVIDING SUPPORT DURING COVID-19:**

Whilst the first section of questions provide the foundation in understanding dynamics and practices for how NGOs and governments operated prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, this section was created to explore how dynamics shifted in times of crises. Questions in this section include reflection on successful policy design and implementation, unexpected or planned partnerships developed, and new approaches of providing support. It is important to understand what went well and what did not, so we will be able to learn from the shortcomings that may be systemic or institutional in nature in order to improve our future approaches. As such, there are also questions regarding barriers to designing or providing policies, especially where traditional ways of implementing support were unfeasible during the pandemic.



## QUESTIONS ABOUT POLICIES PROVIDING SUPPORT AFTER COVID-19:

In light of recognising how an organisation operated prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic, this final section identifies how organisations may operate in the future to address domestic violence and gender stereotypes to the best of their abilities. This prompts respondents to recognise or further implement the best practices and effective policies in addressing gender stereotypes and domestic violence in their respective country. This includes questions on the nature of collaborations with different organisations, the types of resources needed and the changes in attitudes across society. This final section is for the respondent to reflect on the coherence of their organisation within the broader service provision system to generate the ways in which the elimination of gender stereotypes and domestic violence can be successfully addressed.

## THE NEXT STEPS AFTER CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEWS:

After the interviews were conducted, they were transcribed from the recording and uploaded into a software to code the data. The software used was Taguette, a web-based software that allows the researcher to code text to identify and compare themes. This research uses thematic analysis to identify commonalities and differences between our respondents within and between countries. Many of the themes were a priori established before the interviews based on the RESPECT Women framework established by the WHO (2019) and the Social and Emotional Well-Being framework created by Sullivan (2016). These frameworks complement each other as together they address both the prevention of and response to domestic violence. The RESPECT Women framework

uses 7 core areas on how to prevent violence against women, such as reducing poverty, promoting independence and ensuring that social, legal and health services are available for survivors. Moreover, Sullivan's framework (2016; 2018) implements a survivor-centred approach to identify the aspects of well-being that a survivor needs in order to gain "social support, greater effectiveness accessing resources, higher quality of life, and lower reabuse" (Sullivan, 2018:125). These frameworks address issues of domestic violence and gender stereotypes at different levels, from the individual to the societal. The Emotional Well-Being framework will be used to identify the effectiveness of policies responding to domestic violence, whereas the seven core strategies outlined in the RESPECT Women framework will be used to identify the efficiency of preventative policies.





# Policy Responses

This chapter provides context for current policy responses to gender stereotypes and domestic violence in India, the United States and Zimbabwe. This includes how policy responses may have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and any partnerships that may have produced a successful outcome of addressing GBV, as well as gender stereotypes. To begin, the national framework of a country will be explored to establish how national governments are responding to gender stereotypes and domestic violence. Then, the work of civil society will be analysed to identify examples of best practices and recommendations from NGOs. These two sections are presented to identify the dynamics between governments and NGOs in responding to gender stereotypes and domestic violence, emphasising effective collaboration for impactful change.

## INDIA

### National Framework

This section introduces influential legislation, government bodies and policies relating to gender stereotypes and domestic violence. This is a general overview of the key strategies that the national government has in place to address these issues and not an extensive analysis of everything the Indian government has in place to address GBV.

### NATIONAL LEGISLATION

#### *Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005)*

The most relevant legislation in India to address domestic violence is the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005), which is implemented in all States in India except Jammu and Kashmir. The Act aims to “provide more effective protection of the rights of women guaranteed under the Constitution who are victims of violence of any kind occurring within the family” (The Gazette of India, 2005:1).

Chapter III of the Act outlines the role of protection officers who are given information about acts of domestic

violence. It is the protection officer’s responsibility, along with the police, magistrates and service providers to provide “relief by way of a protection order, an order for monetary relief, a custody order, a residence order, a compensation order” (The Gazette of India, 2005:4), in tandem with providing relevant shelter and medical requests. By ensuring that protection officers are posted in each district within Indian States and shall “be women” (Ibid:4), this Act aims to promote greater accessibility in reporting crimes of domestic violence. Despite this intention, the rate of conviction is low unless there are “extreme forms of physical violence with evidence of injury” (Dandona et al. 2022:12). Stigma exists within Indian society for those experiencing domestic violence which often deters survivors from seeking support, particularly from police or a legal system that favours the impunity of





the perpetrator (Nigam, 2022). Within Dandona et al's study of National Crime Records Bureau from 2001-2018, it is identified that only 6.8 per cent of "cases filed completed trials in 2018" (Dandona et al. 2022:12). Despite forms of domestic violence being classified as criminal offences in the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, the low rate of conviction illustrates the difficulties in completing trials. This shows that the Act may outline how convictions need to be achieved through the court system but that was not the reality for most survivors. A reason why this legislation does not protect survivors in practical terms is due to the perception of the 'perfect victim', whereby the survivor is passive and compliant. Whilst this concept is not contextually located to a specific culture, Nigam (2022) states that:

*"A woman who is challenging the patriarchy is portrayed as one who is wrong or a 'bad woman' who is abusing the process of law because a 'good woman' is passive, compliant, and non-complaining. The laws punish women who transgress the boundaries defined by the patriarchal norms and threaten the privileges dominant men enjoy." (ibid: 15)*

### **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and redressal) Act (2013)**

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act (2013) was passed to promote safe working environments for women and to create mechanisms of accountability for cases of sexual harassment. Moreover, it reinforces the notion that every woman has the right to work with dignity and it promotes financial independence for women (Sinha, 2017). Although this Act does not directly address

domestic violence, it challenges patriarchal attitudes of gender stereotypes through programmes and workshops to encourage safer working environments for women (UN Women, 2013). Through challenging perceptions of sexual harassment within workplaces, this Act promotes the shift in mindset that is needed to tackle gender stereotypes and domestic violence in other parts of society.

### **Dowry Prohibition Act (1961)**



The Dowry Prohibition Act (1961) provides penalties for giving, taking and demanding dowry, whereby the Act defines dowry as "any property or valuable security given or agreed to be given" through marriage (Government of India, 2015). If dowry is exchanged, or agreed to be exchanged, the sentence for parties involved is a minimum of 5 years imprisonment and a fine of fifteen thousand rupees or the value of the dowry if it is greater. Addressing the phenomena of dowries is crucial for addressing gender stereotypes in India as dowry evokes a power imbalance within a relationship if there is a financial transaction for marrying (Kaur and Byard, 2020).

Despite this Act being gazetted over 60 years ago, there were only 10,366 cases of crimes against women under the Dowry Prohibition Act in 2020 (National Crime Records Bureau, 2021:58). Additionally, research shows that legal recourse to prosecute perpetrators is low and the





This Act addresses the culture of sati through punishing its glorification under a Special Court for the trial of offences relating to sati. After repeated offences of sati continued, the Indian National Government released a statement in 2002 considering a proposal to make the Act more strict to further deter sati (Pachauri and Hamilton, 2002). The proposed amendments were drafted by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and included increasing the sentencing of sati and the glorification of sati and holding communities accountable if acts of sati occur (Economic & Political Weekly, 2007). After the amendment was submitted to the Union Council of Ministers, it was sent back to the Ministry of Women and Children for redrafting. This implies that the government recognised the need to further prevent sati through amendments to the legislation, as seen in 2007 to, inter alia, increase the sentencing for imprisonment and the amount that a perpetrator can be fined (Rajagopal, 2008). As the proposed amendment to the Commission of Sati Prevention Act has not been adopted five years later, this shows a lack of urgency or political will by the national legislature to effectively address the issue of sati.

## **NATIONAL BODIES**

### ***Ministry of Women and Child Development (2006)***

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is the Indian Ministry with direct oversight of issues pertaining to GBV. It was created in 2006 as an individual, separate, Ministry as before it was part of the Ministry of Human Resources Development. The main intention of the Ministry is to “address gaps in State action for women and children for promoting inter-Ministerial and inter-sectoral convergence to create gender equitable and child-centred legislation,

policies and programmes.” (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2021). Under the Ministry, policies are designed and implemented on issues such as the care and protection of children, awareness on human rights, access to education, nutrition, and women’s empowerment and gender equality.



### ***High Level Committee on Status of Women (2012)***

The *High Level Committee on Status of Women* was established in 2012 to develop “policy intervention based on a contemporary assessment of women’s needs” (UN Women, 2012). The High Level Committee on Status of Women was created by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and it collaborated with “women’s organisations, activists and gender experts at the national, regional, and local levels” (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2015:xi). The aim of this Committee is to identify social attitudes of women and any discrimination faced, the involvement in decision-making contexts and the forms of violence that women may face. In the 'Report of the High Level Committee on Status of Women in India, Vol 1' (2015), it is stated that there has been “progress on education and political participation of women in local governance”. The report submitted by the High Level Committee on Status of Women span the course of 2 years, over 4 volumes, addresses the state of women in



conjunction with the law, environment, economy, health, education, and power and decision-making for a comprehensive account of the issues facing women in India (Ibid).

## **NATIONAL POLICIES**

To support the implementation of the above legislation, many policies have been enacted by the Indian government. Below is a general overview of the main schemes relating to gender stereotypes and domestic violence. Due to constraints of the research's timeframe, it was inevitable to examine only a part of the national policies provided by the government so below is a curated overview of the most relevant policies to this research.



### **Compensation Scheme for Women Victims/Survivors of Sexual Assault/Other Crimes (2018)**

This compensation scheme was created to pay reparations, including any necessary medical support that may be needed, to survivors of a crime such as a sexual assault and other crimes. The State or District Legal Service Authority (DLSA) determines the amount of compensation deemed necessary for a survivor or her dependents on the occurrence of loss or injury (National Legal Service Authority, 2018).

### **Mahila Police Volunteers (MVP) Scheme (2016)**

This Police Volunteer scheme was implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in 2016 to increase support from law enforcement, improve reporting, and promote a survivor-friendly environment. Despite being approved for 13 states, 9531 Mahila Police Volunteers were deployed across only 5 states. Responding to feedback on how the MVP scheme operated within those 5 states, the Ministry decided to discontinue the scheme in 2021 as “the scheme did not receive encouraging response from the state governments” (Times of India, 2021).



### **Swadhar Greh (2015)**

The Swadhar Greh Scheme was implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development to address the needs of women in difficult circumstances, particularly through providing “temporary accommodation, maintenance and rehabilitative services to women and girls rendered homeless due to a range of difficult circumstances” (Government of India, 2021). It assumes a framework of empowering women and providing basic necessities and support services, including food, clothing, health needs along with economic and social security. Since its implementation in 2015, the scheme has been assessed with proposed recommendations for improvement to



increase the effectiveness and longevity of the scheme.

### ***Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme (2015)***

Translated as “Save the girl child, educate the girl child” (IBEF, 2018), the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme (2015) was designed to protect and educate the girl child and prevent gender-based discrimination. This was implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in response to imbalances in Child Sex Ratio (CSR). This scheme has been rolled out at different levels: national, state and district, and community. To ensure that this scheme is successful at those different levels, the above Ministry worked closely with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Ministry of Women And Child Development, 2015). As one of its key tenets is to “ensure gender equality and women empowerment” (IBEF, 2018), this scheme promotes the value of the girl child and ensures that girls receive equal opportunities through advocacy campaigns, multi-sectoral interventions and a financial incentive scheme to encourage families to save finances for their daughters (ibid).

### ***One-Stop Centres (2015)***

In 2015, One-Stop centres were implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in “660 locations across [India] as a single point access to facilitate effective support of women affected by violence and to provide them medical assistance, police assistance, psycho-social support, legal aid and counselling, temporary shelter and video conferencing to facilitate Police and Court proceedings.” (UN Women, 2015). Because of the holistic nature of the issues that are addressed within the One-Stop centres, the Ministry of Women and Child Development have worked alongside the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Law and Justice to ensure that adequate support is provided (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2015).





## INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND TREATIES

### ***Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979)***

India ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1993. The Convention outlines a commitment to eliminating gender stereotypes and discriminatory practices in the countries that ratify this treaty. Within India, this includes addressing the phenomena of dowry, child marriage, 'honour killings, sex-selective abortion, and sati (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, 2014:7). In accordance with the Convention, the Indian 'State Party' is required to submit reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women to outline how they are upholding the provisions and commitments of the Convention.

In response to the Indian report submitted in 2014, the Committee recommended, inter alia, that the government of India should strengthen the efficiency of the police to protect women and girls against violence, to establish one-stop crisis centres, and provide systematic training on women's rights to law enforcement, medical staff and judicial officers (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women 2014:4). These recommendations indicated the need for improvements towards more effectively addressing gender stereotypes and domestic violence in India. Alongside the recommendations, the Committee commended the efforts of the Indian government to "enact a legal framework to prevent and respond to violence against women" (ibid:3). Through the report, the Committee acknowledges the recent developments in strategy and implementation the Indian government has undertaken to address GBV but still encourages the Indian Government to further develop their commitment to address domestic violence and gender stereotypes.





## NGOs Practices

This section explores the work of NGOs in India, specifically focusing on certain effective practices to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence as identified from our participants' testimonies. NGOs provide crucial services within India aiming to support communities and villages working alongside and in the absence of government interventions. Despite the potential for meaningful collaboration, the Indian national government's relationship with NGOs remains strained. In 2015, the Indian Supreme Court restricted foreign funds to NGOs and some NGOs have had funding limited due to 'anti-national activity' (Asia & The Pacific Policy Society, 2021). Over recent decades, there has been an increase in the politicisation of NGOs in India. This has resulted in the national government proposing regulation in 2021 to further restrict the powers of NGOs within the social work education sector, through greater stipulations on funding and expenses, increased bureaucratic barriers

and greater oversight of government power (ibid). Our testimonies below show how NGOs are able to do effective work and collaborate with governments where possible despite the obstacles they may face by the national government.

NGOs operating in India emphasised the importance of establishing networks and collaborating with other civil society groups to address the issues of gender stereotypes and domestic violence. Whilst this was an apparent key point amongst respondents from India, this is by no means restricted to India, as data from the US and Zimbabwe will later illustrate. Respondents particularly highlighted the need to engage with civil society organisations to deliver support to domestic violence survivors in the absence of government support. Particularly for organisations who represent the minority in India, working with other grassroots organisations appeared as a substantial way for communities to receive support for gender stereotypes and domestic violence.





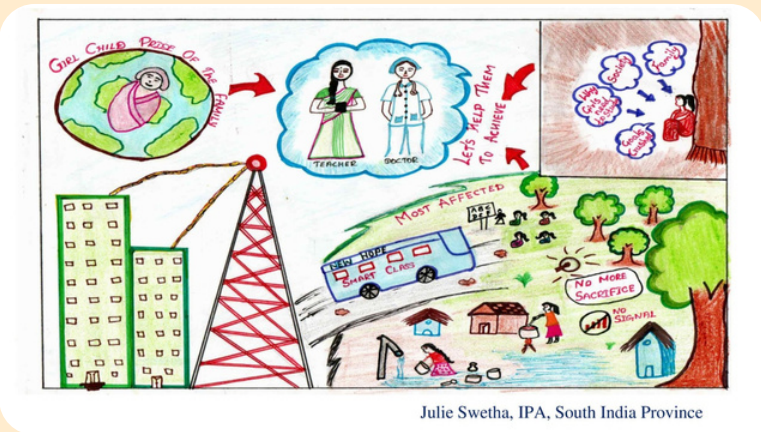


Sneha Gill, PBVM, with her legal clients presenting a class on 'sexual harassment in the work environment' at Sneha's legal office.

**Sneha Gill,  
PBVM and  
Advocate,  
India**

### ***Collaboration among NGOs when providing services, International Presentation Association***

“The government machinery knew that [women accessing courts] suffered a lot. All the single women suffered during the pandemic because they were supposed to get relief from the courts but that [compensation] didn't come through because of the ineffectiveness of the judiciary during the pandemic. Individual organisations, church organisations, women organisations did identify women households [to help] and as Presentation Sisters in collaboration with Christian brothers, the Jesuits, etc. we identified around 20 single women in dire need. I was in the social work community so we helped women during that time to set up a small shop. They were selling fruits or provisions and, as Presentation Sisters, we helped them to begin their small business. We did our part, Jesuits were doing their part, some other religious organisations and women organisations too. [...] The collaborative networks [that] we're working on are focused upon: income generation, internships, legal programmes, counselling, and leadership [development] so all these groups were very well blended. We realised the need for support systems, need for networking, collaboration, and advocacy. [...] I would say a lot of help went out to make the lives of these women meaningful because existence was very difficult. Survival was very difficult.”



Julie Swetha, IPA, South India Province



Poster submissions from IPA girls for the International Day of the Girl campaign at the UN.

## **Rights-based Education, International Presentation Association**

"A good education is a foundation for life. Through our many educational institutions, programmes are held in assemblies, school curricula and co-curricula activities to create greater awareness among students on girls rights and women empowerment. Students are well informed of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals including Goal No.5: 'Gender Equality'. Students are also educated on their rights and responsibilities through club activities and exposure trips. Each year, a number of our girl students participate in the Working Group on Girls (WGG) campaign at the UN celebrating the International Day of the Girl Child with speeches, drawings and competitions. Through hundreds of Self-Help-Groups of women, programmes are facilitated to enhance socio, economic, cultural and political empowerment of women that enable them to achieve gender equality, prevent domestic violence and overcome various issues that affect their lives. We work in collaboration with other organizations like the Lions Club toward empowerment of women and girl child."

**Flora Mary  
Arul Doss,  
PBVM and IPA  
Justice  
Contact, South  
India**



Testimonies from representatives who work in schools have identified the importance of teaching children their rights at a young age as part of the school curriculum. Multiple types of activities and events have been carried out by NGOs to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence in different parts of society including schools and families, and across members of communities. The need to share knowledge on women's rights has previously been identified by the Rapporteur on 'Follow-up Concluding Observations' of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in their 2016 recommendations regarding first responders (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 2016c). By addressing this at a young age, children will grow up with the knowledge of healthy and violent-free relationships. Additionally, engaging in relevant activities and campaigns was an essential way that the research respondents emphasised in order to be able to address gender stereotypes and value genders equally.

Within a system where the girl child is traditionally seen as a 'burden', research participants acknowledge the need to change these patriarchal attitudes to address gender stereotypes and justifications for domestic violence. The Indian government has implemented policies to attempt to address the social stigma of gender inequality within India. This includes the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (2015) scheme, and the national 2016 National Policy for Women formulated by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. As India is a patrilineal society where once she is married, the wife leaves her paternal home and lives with her husband, initiatives to honour the girl child creates stronger emotional ties to her familial home.





RSKS India campaign to educate school children on gender equality

**Dr. SN  
Sharma,  
Chief  
Executive  
Officer, India**

### **Valuing the girl child in rural areas, Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan (RSKS) India**

“Our ‘Her Voice’ Project was started to address [gender inequality] that we face in the rural areas. We have village action groups in different villages in which the people involved in the action groups are the children and adolescents, whether they're girls or boys. They go out in the villages and they celebrate and honour the parents of the girl child when a new girl baby is born. The village action groups go to their home and they honour the parents. We also talk to the village officials so that we can plant a tree in the name of the girl child. As we have seen in the rural area, the girl child is thought of as a burden and when they are married, they go to their in-laws and there is nothing remaining of the girl-child at the home in which she was born. What we do is we give them a plant to plant in the courtyard of the house. Then the plant grows and it's a fruiting plant so it gives the fruits and shade to the home. That resembles the birth of the girl child and makes people understand about the importance of the girl child to her family. Also, the house of the person who has a new born girl child is named after the girl child so that the people know their house by the name of the girl child.”



### **Advocacy for essential services, Red Dot Foundation**

“[During the pandemic] Shelter homes were shut down; they weren't accepting new [survivors] and even if a woman wanted to leave and go to a relative's house, she was unable to. Even if she had her own house, a second apartment, she couldn't go there because travel wasn't permitted. You couldn't access helplines because the perpetrator was right there so it was a situation where emergency services were literally unavailable to you. So we, as an organisation, filed in the Supreme Court of public interest litigation to list these services - domestic violence services - as essential, so no matter what kind of emergency, disaster, pandemic, it's always available to women. The court directed us to approach the Ministry of Home Affairs which looks at this and we submitted all the documents but we've not heard from them.”

**Elsa Marie  
D'Silva,  
Founder, India**



During COVID-19, vast restrictions on movement and how direct service providers could operate resulted in the need to rethink the ways in which support could be delivered. On March 24th, 2020, the Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, enforced the world's largest lockdown whereby the population had to stay home for 21 days (Chandrashekar, 2020). This lockdown made it more difficult for essential services to deliver support and survivors to receive that support. Through networks, NGOs appealed to the Indian government to categorise direct service providers as essential workers. By July 2021, the Indian national government classified domestic violence support services as 'essential' (UN Women, 2021). By advocating for direct services to be considered 'essential', it would allow greater movement and capacity for direct service providers to support survivors during the pandemic, particularly in remote or underserved areas which might have faced barriers to accessing support either in person or digitally.



Another practice that has been identified throughout the testimonies has been the need to strengthen the skills of individuals from local communities through capacity-building on domestic violence programme response and issues of gender stereotypes. Developing the capacity-building of individuals enables them as future leaders within their communities who could address issues of gender stereotypes and domestic violence. The local individuals are already part of their communities which means that they have a greater awareness of the challenges and issues affecting that community. This model constitutes a sustainable method of addressing issues of violence. The NGOs organising the capacity-building and training can repeat this model elsewhere as they have already acquired the knowledge in training and developing individuals into leaders able to advocate for the elimination of GBV. Additionally, this allows greater rapport with communities when an NGO is providing services due to the embedded nature of the person within the community.





<https://swayam.info/>

### **Community capacity building, Swayam**

**Amrita das  
Gupta,  
Executive  
Director, India**

"Swayam has been working since 1995 to address gender inequality and violence against women. Around 2005/2006, we started working in two communities, an urban community in Kolkata and a rural community in the village outside Kolkata. The work in the communities is holistic where we support survivors of violence as well as deliver prevention work which is rolled into one geographical location. We form groups of women, or we work with existing groups of women and we provide them with several trainings and capacity building [exercises] over a certain period. They take part in our programmes, they support us with our case interventions. With time, some of them emerge as leaders, we then provide these leaders extensive training on how to intervene in cases, how to go to the police station, how to support women in communities, how to go for home visits and basically, work as barefoot case workers in the communities so that they can intervene. They know the problems and they know their communities. Ultimately the aim is that Swayam exists these spaces/areas and our leadership groups will continue providing support and intervene in cases of violence and inequality in the spaces."



## Analysis

From researching the legislation and work that has been carried out by the national Indian government to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence and hearing first-hand accounts from NGO representatives working on these issues, synergies of partnership emerged. This subsection analyses the partnerships between government and NGOs, the gaps in implementation for legal proceedings, the awareness-raising on gender equality and the economic empowerment of women.

### BARRIERS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

Our testimonies from India indicated the types of challenges a survivor faces when seeking legal justice through the court system. The process starts when they report their case to law enforcement officers and continues as their case goes to court. This section outlines the barriers that survivors may experience when reporting an incident of domestic violence or putting their case through the domestic violence courts. This section also identifies the partnerships between NGOs and state agencies that have been developed to reduce these barriers.



When a survivor is experiencing GBV and approaches a police officer for protection or recourse to what they have experienced, the conduct of that officer is vital in determining whether the survivor sees justice. It is believed that “improper investigations at the initial stage of a case slow down the process of judicial proceedings” (India Today, 2017). National training has been provided by the Indian government to address gender violence in

the national and state level police academies. As previously stated, the Mahila Police Volunteers were established in 2016 to ensure that survivors are not re-traumatised by the response of law enforcement agencies. Additionally, NGOs like Swayam have worked with law enforcement agencies to train officers on issues of GBV so that survivors have more positive experiences and higher possibility for a proper investigation when reporting their case.

“Despite the collective efforts to promote gender sensitisation by the government and NGOs, our testimonies highlight how women have felt to be “not supported, judged, a statement isn’t taken, and a court case takes a lot longer”. There might be a law in place but in terms of the person on the ground who is implementing it, his patriarchal mindset takes over and the woman isn’t getting the right services that she’s meant to get.”

-Amrita Das Gupta, Executive Director, Swayam

The above testimony illustrates the importance of ensuring rights against discrimination are upheld by individuals who are in positions of authority. As the Mahila Police Scheme ended in 2021 due to a lack of support at a state level, this further illustrates that more can be done to reinforce the culture of gender equality within law enforcement and first responders.





Survivors may be subjected to issues of delayed court hearings and costly decisions to attend the courts. Chapter IV of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005) outlines the relief in the form of compensation that a survivor may be entitled to if their case goes through the courts (Gazette of India, 2005).

Whilst the promise of relief is enshrined in the legislation, in practice there are often greater barriers to accessing that relief. The testimony on the following page highlights how experts from civil society can collaborate with government or state agencies to provide legal support for survivors at the national level.





Sr. Sneha Gill (in the middle) at the National Tribunal.

“The National Tribunal was organized by All India Dalit Mahila Adhikar Manch (3). The National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights is a national organization working for Dalit women. They invited 5 women as Jury Members [and] I was the only one from the legal fraternity. We had 17 cases to listen to, either from survivor’s family or rape victims. We were asked to study the role of prosecution [and how] the justice system was ineffective for Dalit women. We studied these cases and formed a National Lobby on behalf of victims to address these issues through women organisations. We developed legislation and built strong advocacy to support the victims and their families [and] to get justice by police. [We did] judicial activism on behalf of rape victims and their families. I will be following these cases in the judiciary with their local Council. We, as Presentation Sisters, consider rape as the most severe [form of] violence against Dalit women in India. I was called as a Jury Member to study these cases [so] I help [The National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights] legally in Delhi Session Court, High Court and Supreme Court of India.”

- Sneha Gill, PBVM and Advocate, International Presentation Association, India

(3) The All India Dalit Mahila Adhikar Manch (AIDMAM) is a “platform for women from Dalit communities in India to escalate our voices for justice”. (NCDHR, 2018).



NGOs can be a source of support to survivors going through legal proceedings by providing legal advice, providing basic services such as shelter and financial support but also providing emotional support to uplift the survivor. Whilst there are government schemes to provide similar types of support to survivors, such as Swadhar Greh (2015) and the Compensation Scheme for Women Victims/Survivors of Sexual Assault/Other Crimes (2018), these schemes can be difficult to access in rural communities. NGOs working with local communities are better placed to provide support or guidance on how to access services and legal aid at the grassroots level. The following testimony illustrates an example of how the International Presentation Association collaborates with legal organisations, local governments and other NGOs to share knowledge on how to

navigate the legal system. It also provides insight into the types of capacity-building that NGOs provide to survivors to reduce the challenges that they may face when going through court proceedings.

“We collaborate with the National Women's Commission, State Women Commissions, and the local bodies which are called the local Panchayat (4). They have small segments which are attached with NGOs. We are collaborating with the NGOs who are working on domestic violence cases. [They] are giving counselling and they are service providers. They [do] not provide litigation but women can go there. I have worked on the legal aid panel too [and] I collaborate with the State Legal Service Authority, with NGOs, with women activists, and with women who are also involved in counselling. We are also collaborating with women organisations

---

(4) Panchayats are institutions of self-government in rural areas of India. It is composed of elected representatives who form the local government at a village level. (IGI Global, 2022).



who are working to empower them through vocational skills. We realised that when women go through litigation, [there is a need and] we are trying to help them to learn a skill.”

*-Sneha Gill, PBVM and Advocate, International Presentation Association, India*

## **CAPACITY-BUILDING AND AWARENESS-RAISING**

To raise awareness and implement policies of ending gender discrimination as outlined in the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005), NGOs have worked with local governments to implement supporting initiatives. This can be seen, for example, through the work of Swayam which provides training and capacity building “to individuals working in CSOs and NGOs, to state agencies like the police, lawyers, protection officers, to corporates about sexual harassment at the workplace, to school and college students”. Through the expertise of local NGOs, knowledge of gender equality and GBV issues can be shared amongst different actors to mainstream the information across society.

NGOs, like the International Presentation Association, raise awareness and promote gender equality within schools through the curriculum and activities such as posters and drawing competitions or participation in local, national and global campaigns. By engaging children through these initiatives, the importance of addressing gender inequality and GBV is heightened. As children often convey drawings in an innocent way, drawing how they experience gender stereotypes or domestic violence becomes more emotive. When Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan (RSKS) India carried out drawing workshops for children to raise awareness on gender stereotypes

and domestic violence, their programmes were supported by the village officials, school administration and the local government people at the ground level.

Our testimonies illustrated a trend existing for communities in villages and remote areas in India to hold more traditional attitudes and gender-biased views regarding gender issues when compared to communities in urban locations. To address this, NGOs facilitate campaigns and activities to raise awareness and prevent domestic violence. This type of consciousness-raising is often carried out within villages through engaging communities and schools to spread knowledge. The need to raise awareness through education was highlighted in the IPA testimony above but was also present in other testimonies when working across community spaces. By working at a grassroots level, NGOs can ensure that their work is tailored to the issues of a village or community.



“Awareness is a tool that can make people understand about [gender stereotypes and domestic violence] in a better way. We make people aware through different types of activities. This can include workshops where the RSKS team goes over there and leads the community members through flip charts, cards, different stories, video sessions, audio sessions, from the survivors and their stories. Then we have programmes that we do in the schools where we organise a poster making competition or a drawing competition as all the children are being taught about social ‘evils’ like domestic violence, dowry, child marriage. Whenever we are implementing any programmes, we just let the village officials or the school administration [know] at the local level. [We] call the local level and the people who are needed for the programme and the people who must be aware of this programme in the rural area. Whenever we do all this [gender awareness] work, it would not be possible without the support of the village officials or the local village administration. We have a very good relationship with these officials. When we talk about women empowerment programmes [and] sustainable livelihood programmes, we have received government buildings rent free for us because we are providing skill education to the girls and women of the rural areas. After all this work is done, we [receive] feedback from the community and from the different people [involved] so the programmes that we’re implementing [in] the rural area can be done in a better way.”

- Dr. SN Sharma, Chief Executive Officer, RSKS India



Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan (RSKS) India hosting a drawing workshop for children on gender equality.



## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

In a society where an expectation for a woman exists to be financially dependent on her husband, women need to be empowered to increase their opportunity for gainful employment and decrease dependencies within a relationship. Testimonies from India emphasised the importance of providing skills training and workshops in order to achieve greater financial stability. This has been addressed nationally by the Indian government through the 2017 Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) which “build a nurturing ecosystem that enables them to realise their entrepreneurial aspirations” (WEP, 2022). WEP allows women to make

connections across the country to reinforce and develop skills they have learnt and businesses that they have established so they can further flourish.

Whilst WEP creates networks across India to promote a culture of female entrepreneurs, many local NGOs are providing the skills training to empower women into becoming entrepreneurs. Some examples of entrepreneurship fields, where vocational training was focused on, include tailoring, cosmetology, handicrafts and leadership training. The skills training and workshops are complementary to the national policies to promote financial independence for women and challenge respective gender stereotypes.



The Bihar state government awarded Presentation Sister Dorothy Fernandes for her 25 years of work on economic empowerment of women.



“We train them to be very confident, although they may feel that they’re not able to do it but we train them and empower them so that they know that they are able to do it.”

- Libania Fernandes, PBVM and Justice Contact, International Presentation Association, India



Presentation Sister with Indigenous Women (Jiajor) participating in a cutting skills training



Learning how to make pouches.



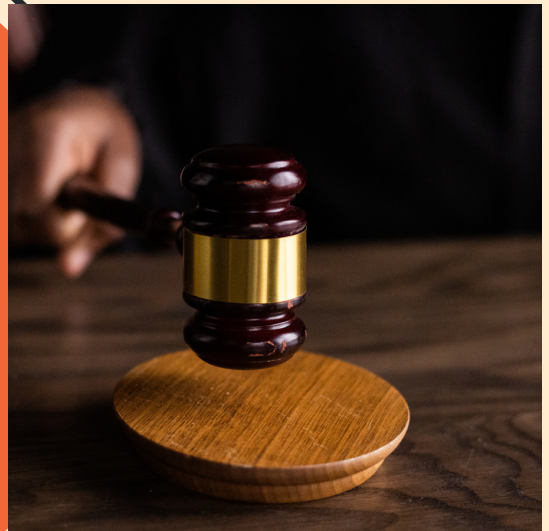
Tailoring and cutting workshop.



## BARRIERS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

The Indian national government promotes strategies for educating officers in law enforcement agencies on domestic violence. To complement and implement these government policies, local NGOs consistently provide essential training to law enforcement officers.

NGOs also provide legal advice and basic provisions for survivors navigating the court system at the grassroots level. Government schemes such as Swadhar Greh and the Compensation Scheme for Women Victims/Survivors of Sexual Assault/Other Crimes (2018) are complementary to this work of NGOs.



## AWARENESS-RAISING IN REMOTE AREAS

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005) outlines strategies to end gender discrimination and promote gender equality. To implement this strategy within rural areas of India, NGOs design and implement policies to raise awareness of gender stereotypes and domestic violence. These initiatives occur in schools, communities, and villages whereby NGOs are supported by local governments and school administration by providing resources or access to people to undertake campaigns or workshops.

## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Both NGOs and Indian government initiatives exist to promote employment opportunities for women in India. This is to increase economic independence so that women have greater opportunities in society and a healthier relationship.

One such initiative by the Indian national government is the Women Entrepreneurship Network. This Network promotes knowledge sharing and skills training to foster a spirit of entrepreneurship. At local levels, the entrepreneurial spirit is further maintained through NGOs providing vocational skills training to communities.







# THE UNITED STATES

## National Framework

This section of the chapter will assess the national legislation, committees and organisations, as well as policies that have been created to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence in the United States. Only the most prominent mechanisms to address these issues are discussed below.

### NATIONAL LEGISLATION

#### *Violence Against Women Act (1994)*

The most relevant legislation regarding GBV in the US is the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), passed by the US Congress in 1994. The primary aim of this legislation is the “response to and prevention of violence against women, offender accountability, and victim safety” (Gover and Moore, 2021). To implement the strategies outlined in this legislation, the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) was established to oversee relevant policies addressing issues of gender and GBV. To ensure that this legislation responds to the key issues of GBV faced in society, there have been 4 re-authorisations in: 2000, 2005, 2013, and

2022. Through the legislation’s 2022 re-authorisation, the Act will inter alia: re-approve all current VAWA grant programmes; increase GBV services to underserved communities; and improve prevention policies and programmes addressing sexual violence (White House, 2022b).

Reauthorizing the legislation ensures that the strategies it outlines remains current and relevant but the formation of the legislation is only as effective as its implementation. Whilst it is positive that the Violence Against Women Act recognises the need to address support to survivors, how this Act is translated in practice depends on how much financial support is provided. Over recent years, the policies that address domestic violence have





received inadequate funding to address the extent of the issues within the legislation. Sapphire et al (2022) found that the proportion of funds allocated to addressing GBV at a national level was “disproportionately low relative to GBV’s health and economic burden”, only receiving 0.09 per cent in total funding in 2013. Protections against domestic violence are enshrined in the Violence Against Women Act through implementing “increasing services and support for survivors from underserved and marginalized communities, [...] improving the healthcare system’s response to domestic violence and strengthening evidence-based practices by law enforcement” (White House; 2022b).

## **NATIONAL BODIES**

### ***Office on Violence Against Women’s (OVW) (1994)***

Following the passing of the 1994 Violence Against Women Act, the Department of Justice created the Office on Violence Against Women to implement the legislation. The Office on Violence Against Women provides “federal leadership in developing the national capacity to reduce violence against women” (OVW, 2022), specifically through financial and technical assistance to communities, developing programmes, policies and practices to implement VAWA.

Since its creation in 1994, the Office has awarded over \$9 billion in grants and cooperative agreements, primarily through its formula and discretionary grant programmes. (ibid). Formula grant programmes are where “enacting legislation specifies how the funds are to be distributed” whereas discretionary programmes are decided by the OVW (Department of Justice, 2021). Currently, there are four formula programmes and fifteen discretionary programmes in the US

(ibid), including the Stop Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program, State and Territorial Sexual Assault And Domestic Violence Coalitions Program and the Sexual Assault Services Formula Grant Programme.

### ***Gender Policy Council (2021)***

To further commit to reducing GBV and ensuring gender equality, the Biden-Harris administration formed the White House Gender Policy Council in 2021. The aims of this Council are to “reduce poverty and promote economic growth, increase access to education, improve health outcomes, advance political stability, and foster democracy” (White House, 2021a). The National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality produced by this Gender Policy Council is the first U.S national gender strategy to address issues of gender mainstreaming, formed in response to heightened experiences of gender stereotypes and domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic (White House, 2021b).





## NATIONAL POLICIES

### *It's on Us Campaign (2014)*

In September 2014, the US President and Vice President launched a national campaign titled 'It's on Us', encouraging "Americans to make a personal commitment to work to change the social norms that allow violence to occur" (UN Women, 2014). One way in which this campaign addresses the social norms of gender violence is through a "movement to combat campus sexual assault by engaging all students, including young men, and activating the largest student organizing program of its kind" (It's on Us, 2022). This campaign uses the model of bystander accountability to change perceptions and attitudes of gender stereotypes and GBV. It addresses gender stereotypes and forms of GBV by raising awareness at all educational levels.



<https://www.itsonus.org/>

To **RECOGNIZE** that non-consensual sex is sexual assault.

To **IDENTIFY** situations in which sexual assault may occur.

To **INTERVENE** in situations where consent has not or cannot be given.

To **CREATE** an environment in which sexual assault is unacceptable and survivors are supported.

As of 2022, the campaign has held over 6,000 educational programmes across the 50 states of the US, collaborating with media outlets, creative agencies and influencers (ibid).

### ***STOP (Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecutors) Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program***

Administered by the Office on Violence Against Women, this formula grant programme is given to US states and territories to "develop and strengthen effective law enforcement and persecution strategies to combat violent crimes" (OVW, 2020). Through the STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Programme, states and territories are allocated an average of \$263,232,979 to 2,392 subgrantees across the United States (OVW, 2018:5). Subgrantees range from direct service organisations, state or tribal coalitions, law enforcement departments, prosecutors' offices and courts. This programme addresses domestic violence, sexual violence, dating violence and stalking through a "coordinated community response" (ibid:4). Whilst the VAWA Act states that the Attorney General submits a report to Congress every two years to reflect and provide a summary of the effectiveness of the grant programme, the most recent report accessible to the public was submitted in 2016 (OVW, 2022). As no reports are available to the public since this last submission, it is publicly uncertain how effective the grant programmes have been during the pandemic.

### ***Engaging Men Programme (2011)***

This is a national discretionary grant programme that aims to "engage men in preventing crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking with the goal of developing mutually respectful, nonviolent relationships" (UN



Women, 2011b:1). This is achieved through establishing projects with direct service providers, coalitions and community-based organisations (ibid). An example of this is Futures without Violence’s ‘Engaging Men to End Gender-Based Violence’ national strategy centre (2022) that was created in collaboration with the National Office on Violence Against Women and the NGOs Caminar Latino, and Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse (Futures without Violence, 2022). This project is a good example of how NGOs can collaborate with government agencies and other NGOs in order to

develop networks of research development and policy design and implementation. This resource is focused on four key areas to address GBV: planning, training, programming and evaluation. The Engaging Men Programme also engages with culturally specific service providers within an intersectional approach to preventing GBV. Similarly to the nationwide ‘Engaging Men Programme’, the ‘Ohio Men’s Action Network’ is an example of an initiative to share resources and knowledge in preventing violence at a state-wide level.

### **Ohio Men’s Action Network**

This is a multi-sectoral network founded by the Ohio Domestic Violence Network, Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence and the Ohio Department of Health. It is a network of:

“men and women, as individuals and as representatives of local and state organizations, working to engage men and boys in efforts to prevent sexual violence; sexual exploitation; domestic, intimate partner, family and relationship violence and to promote equitable, nonviolent relationships and a culture free of oppression.” (Ohman, 2022).



The logo and slogan for the Ohio Men’s Action Network



## **Domestic Violence Homicide Prevention Demonstration Initiative (2013)**

The Demonstration Initiative is a multiyear, two-phase project intended to assist local sites nationwide in reducing domestic violence homicides through promising prevention models. This initiative, managed by the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women, gives grants and awards to cities that identify 'at-risk' victims or offenders and collaborate with law enforcement, service providers and legal officials to address this threat. The first grant of \$2.3 million USD in 2013 was awarded to 12 cities to fund these services (UN Women, 2013b). This grant initiative implements the VAWA through increasing the resources to the relevant service providers, legal officials and law enforcement in order to foster a culture of responding to and supporting victims of GBV.

## **INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND TREATIES**

### ***International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), (1965)***

Although the United States has not ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) yet, in 1994, they did ratify the UN International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). ICERD outlines many comprehensive ways to address racial discrimination within societies, including how to address domestic violence and gender stereotypes through a cultural lens. To implement the Convention, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) receive reports from countries that ratify the Convention and present recommendations for improvements. The US's 2021 'State Party' Report that was submitted to the Committee acknowledges that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has "a Family Violence Prevention Specialist to provide program oversight, develop gap analyses and best practice models, and organise training and technical assistance efforts involving the OJS Victim Assistance Program, the DOJ/OVW, and the HHS Domestic Violence Program." (CERD, 2021:23). This shows that efforts are being made from federal agencies to strategise and implement culturally sensitive ways of addressing domestic violence through collaboration with different federal agencies.

Additionally, the 2021 'State Party' Report submitted by the US, outlines that "the United States is concerned about violence against women and takes aggressive action to prosecute perpetrators and provide services to victims". (CERD, 2021:23). This is supported by the 19 awards that were given out by the Office on Violence Against





Women to tribal domestic violence and sexual assault coalition programmes in 2020, which totaled over \$6.7 million USD (OVW, 2020). Whilst domestic violence is only addressed in relation to race and ethnicity within the Convention, the Committee's 'Concluding Observations' state that they are concerned with the "challenges faced by indigent persons belonging to racial and ethnic minorities [...] seeking remedies" to domestic violence (CERD, 2022:14). Within its 'Concluding Remarks' report, the Committee stresses

the need to "take all measures to ensure effective access to legal representation for indigenous persons belonging to racial and ethnic minorities" and address issues such as, inter alia, domestic violence and the loss of child custody (ibid). The 2021 US report and the subsequent report by the Committee outline the strategies that the US are implementing to address issues of domestic violence for ethnic and racial populations and the measures that are needed to improve the response.





## NGOs PRACTICES

NGOs play an important role in protecting human rights and democracy within the United States (US Department of State, 2021). The Department of State estimates that there are around 1.5 million NGOs in the United States, all contributing working at different levels on a wide range of issues. Unlike in India, the US federal government does not impose any restrictions on foreign funding that NGOs can receive. There are also very few restrictions on the freedoms of expression for NGOs (ibid). National strategies within the United States allow NGOs that freedom. This section explores through testimonies the effective practices that NGOs have implemented to address domestic violence and gender stereotypes.

When NGOs aspire to enact change at a larger political level, it is important to put pressure on specific decision-makers to achieve those goals. There are a great variety of ways and activities in which you may get your message(s) across, based on your local context, political situation, culture or the risks that you may face when speaking out about the identified issue related to violence against women and children. The lobbying process involves the targeted efforts to influence the decision-makers and those that have the power to change a policy towards advancing your advocacy goals and objectives.

“Building good long-term relationships and alliances in the political arena is essential to effectively advocate for a policy change towards the elimination of violence against women and children. You can approach and lobby the policy-makers either informally or formally. However, a policy change is possible to require more than one (formal and/or informal) meeting to educate and convince an official or a politician to support your ending gender-based violence agenda.” (IPA Booklet, 2021:30).

In this context, the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence, for example, is working to address unfair gender stereotypes resulting in pregnancy discrimination in the workplace through lobbying state officials. Additionally, they work towards fair paid leave for employees who have to respond to situations of domestic violence. This is with the aim to foster healthy work environments that are free from gender discrimination and enable employees to seek GBV support when needed.





# NCCADV

North Carolina Coalition  
Against Domestic Violence

[www.nccadv.org](http://www.nccadv.org)

[www.preventviolencenc.org](http://www.preventviolencenc.org)



## *Paid family leave policies, North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence*

**Sally  
Jones  
(alias),  
United  
States**

"When we look at policy in North Carolina, one of the policy initiatives that we've been trying to focus more discreetly on recently is paid family leave. We work in coalition with the other advocacy organisations across the State to try and advocate for these policies. When we talk about paid family leave, we're talking about non-vacation, [and] non-sick leave that folks are able to access in order to receive medical care and respond to domestic violence or care for a family member who is experiencing anything health or violence related. We advocated two or three years ago [on this issue] for the state to provide [safe] days and kin-care which is specifically allowing state workers to use their earned leave, so their sick days or their vacation leave, to respond to domestic violence. That also is tied [with] efforts to provide protection against pregnancy discrimination of individuals who are pregnant in the workplace. It's advocacy that we're trying to do at the federal, state and at a local level as well. Our coalition has involved folks who go to municipal government: city councils, commissions, and ask [them] as an employer to provide paid leave. Within our state legislator, the bills and the policies do not see the light of day. They are buried immediately after they're filed. It's pretty easy to see a connection between wanting to maintain gender stereotypes in our state and the lack of conversation around policy initiatives that would help women and folks who are not heterosexual males to have greater financial security."





Our research respondents from the United States have also identified the need for a central place where survivors can receive different forms of support. This is because of the barriers that survivors may face when accessing different types of specialised support. This is conceptualised as a building where survivors can access support in an inclusive and simple way. The types of support provided by these centres include inter alia legal, health and social forms of support. The support given to a survivor always needs to be tailored to that survivor. Testimonies also emphasise the stress and overwhelming emotions that survivors may feel in an abusive situation so, when seeking support to leave that situation, these places need to provide all the support a survivor may need in a way that is manageable and easy to navigate.



The 'Family Peace Centre' testimony below, from a representative from Women and Children First (WCF), outlines the 'Family Peace Center' that this NGO aspires to build in Arkansas over the next three years. They have begun the planning process for a Family Peace Center in Little Rock with the help of the Family Justice Center Alliance, a project of Alliance for HOPE International. The Center will help survivors of violence and their families to find the resources and support they need at one location. WCF has toured Family Peace Centers across the country to learn best practices and challenges in order to build their own. Specifically, this Peace Centre will include an attorney's office, representative from Little Rock Police Department, representatives from state agencies such as the disability agency, and many more resources that a survivor might need. Financial support has been provided by the city of Little Rock who have leased almost 4 acres for \$1.00 per year for 99 years. This model is stated to be a success due to the "colocation of multi-disciplinary professionals focused on advocating for victims' safety and quality of life" (WCF, 2022).



# Family Peace Center

A SUCCESSFUL NATIONAL MODEL FOR ARKANSAS

## Family Peace Center Guiding Principles

*Survivor Driven – Kindness and Respect – Hope Centered – Safety Focused –  
Intentionally Diverse and Inclusive – Empowering Survivors, Families and Communities*

<https://www.wcfarkansas.org/family-peace-center/>

## **Family Peace Centre, Women and Children First**

“We’ll be the first in the State to have a family peace centre. The land has been purchased so hopefully we’ll be able to break ground sometime this year and then it’ll take 2 to 3 years for it to be built. We’ll build the shelter part first but the Family Peace Centre is something that is already in place in surrounding States. It’s an evidence-based concept but more importantly, it’s community-based. For example, we have a court advocate and she’s downtown in the court building, so anyone can go in and file an order of protection. When they file that order of protection, they have to go to 7 or 8 different places within the court building just to complete an order of protection. Well, you can imagine as a victim that it’s already overwhelming that you’re experiencing domestic or sexual violence, then you have to go into this scary looking building where people are not the friendliest because they’re on alert and not everybody believes in what we do. Over 90% of people needing our services [don’t need shelters]. This will be another way to provide our services for those who don’t need a shelter but they might need to talk to someone for legal aid [or] for how to apply for government assistance. We’ll have a clothing place where they can come in and we’ll have a food pantry where they can come and get food too.”

**Olivia  
Smith  
(alias),  
United  
States**



On a similar note, the Ohio Domestic Violence Network identified how to more comprehensively support survivors with housing other than shelters during times of crisis where the extent of the support given may be different. The 'Hotel Programme' testimony outlines a programme that was implemented as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic reducing the capacity of shelters.



<https://www.odvn.org/>

**Rebecca Cline,  
Preventions  
Programme  
Director,  
United States**

### ***Hotel Programme, Ohio Domestic Violence Network***

“We have a hotel programme. What COVID-19 really caused was us to think about supporting survivors in Ohio and what they needed most. What we needed most was to separate shelters and communal living spaces. [Ohio Domestic Violence Network] launched a hotel programme and has worked with funders at the state level to help us sustain that programme. It came into existence in 2020 - shortly after the pandemic, probably by June it was up and running and has been running continuously ever since. We have a survivor relocation programme so those two programmes work in tandem to help survivors move from shelter services into independent living situations and that has been really helpful during the pandemic. [...] If it wasn't for the COVID-19 pandemic, we wouldn't have a hotel programme. So I think that's really interesting. I don't know if that's going to be sustained beyond post-pandemic, if we'll ever be post-pandemic? But I think what that helped us learn was besides shelter, we need a way to house survivors of domestic violence safely, whether it's in shelters or in hotels or whatever it is.”



The research testimonies have also identified the need to include survivors and those who have experienced harmful gender stereotypes in policy formation and decision-making spaces. This is to convey the stories and needs of the people affected from the grassroots to national and international platforms. Sharing survivors' views and experiences can be an empowering act and allows for policy-makers to understand the impact of their decisions with greater nuance.



<https://unanima-international.org/>

### ***Survivor-Centred Advocacy, UNANIMA International***

“We always say ‘don’t talk about us without us’. Really, our advocacy that we do as an NGO is rooted in the empowerment of the people that we’re trying to help. Of course, that’s women and children that we are primarily focusing on. It’s really about empowering people to share their experiences with each other and in places of power. Our research that we do at UNANIMA International is just one advocacy tool, one way in which to feature people’s stories and their lived experiences. It’s also great because a lot of this stuff that we talk about in terms of domestic violence and gender stereotypes, you can understand it in an academic sense or there [could be] a really good gender lens or theory that is applicable to a certain case. It’s really hard to humanise [these issues] for policymakers without hearing from people directly who have gone through the experience.”

**Lara Hicks,  
Executive  
Assistant,  
United  
States**



To dispel ideas that domestic violence is a private issue, NGOs create campaigns in communities to raise awareness of the harm that domestic violence can cause. By engaging with communities through public campaigns, the gravitas of the issue is conveyed. An example that was highlighted during our research is the campaigns that are focused on domestic violence homicide. In this context, the power of sharing the names and stories of victims is an emotive way for communities to recognise and address the extent of harm caused by GBV.



Photo of the 'Clothesline Project' in Arkansas. Credit: Arkansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence, <https://www.domesticpeace.com/awareness-projects>

**Brandy Dailey,  
Community  
Response  
Facilitator,  
United States**

### ***Clothesline Project, Arkansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence***

“We have general awareness projects for the public like the Clothesline project and the Silent Witnesses. Those are about telling the community the story of domestic violence and trying to demonstrate the impact. I really admire the Clothesline project because each shirt is personalised to a victim of domestic violence homicide and you see the range of ages. I think last year, the youngest age was 2 months old and the oldest person was in her 70s. When the shirts are hung up, you see it. Communities have no choice but to recognise that [domestic violence homicide] is occurring in their communities.”



## Analysis

The data collected from representatives of NGOs in the United States illustrated many examples of synergies between NGOs and governments to implement effective policies to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence. Alongside the cohesive efforts to address these issues, this section will also explore the challenges that NGOs had to overcome as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. Whilst these recommendations may be transferable to other contexts, they were recurring throughout the testimonies of participants within the US context.

### CAPACITY-BUILDING OF AGENCIES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

Many of the NGOs from the US explained the responsibility they feel they have in building capacity and providing training for government officials and state agencies on issues of domestic violence and gender stereotypes. This is often considered as the responsibility of NGOs as they have expertise in areas that may differ from the one of the government or state agency. The capacity-building or skills learning initiatives facilitated by NGOs are in line with the VAWA's aim for "developing and strengthening policies, protocols, best practices and training for law enforcement agencies and prosecutors" relating to GBV (113th Congress, 2013:31). For example, the NGO Arkansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence provides training on domestic violence to "thousands of law enforcement [officers] a year" through a trauma informed approach. This is to reduce the rates of re-victimisation of survivors by law enforcement agencies so that they know how to appropriately navigate domestic violence cases.

Our coalition is involved in training shelter programs and all of their employees. We have 30 member shelter programs that serve all 75 counties in Arkansas. We have minimum training requirements for employees. We also have an on-staff law enforcement trainer who does a trauma informed approach to domestic violence training. She trains many thousands of law enforcements a year. That's a highly regarded training. When we first started it, we were begging people to come and do it and now her training calendar is full. We have done some human trafficking [and] intimate partner violence collaborations [too]. We train department of children and family service workers, medical professionals. We also give input and consultation about legislation and policy. We are working towards working with legislators, having them really run their domestic violence bills by us for input so that we can give feedback about how that would be helpful or potentially harmful."

-Beth Goodrich, Executive Director, Arkansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence, United States





In 2022 the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) released an updated policy for 'Improving Law Enforcement Response to Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence by Identifying and Preventing Gender Bias' (OVW, 2022).

“The intersection of stereotypes and biases about gender, race, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, involvement in the sex trade, and other aspects of people’s lives and identities can also pose challenges when people seek law enforcement services after a sexual assault or domestic violence incident.” (OVW, 2022:6).

This 'Improving Law Enforcement Response to Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence by Identifying and Preventing Gender Bias' document was created to address the biases that officers may have when responding to domestic violence and how that influences their response. It is a guidance that “provides law enforcement agencies with principles with which they can align their policies, practices, and training so that gender bias and other types of bias do not undermine justice in cases involving domestic violence and sexual assault, including those perpetrated by law enforcement officers” (ibid:1). As further highlighted in the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination’s ‘Concluding Observations’ (2022:4), there is a need to “continue to provide mandatory training on preventing and combatting racist hate speech and hate crimes to law enforcement officials at all levels”. This shows that discrimination is recognised to exist in law enforcement spaces and is being addressed by governments, NGOs and IGOs.

It is apparent that the concept of gender stereotypes influencing the response of a service provider was widely articulated by the research participants as affecting domestic violence responses at a state level. The emotive imagery of the “meek women and child” was described by a representative from the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence to explain how language is used by state legislators to reinforce gender stereotypes. By referring to women as “meek”, it perpetuates the stereotype of women being ‘gentle’, ‘passive and in need of help. This language was described by a participant as “helping domestic violence victims is still seen as providing charity care to women and children in a way that it could be a way for legislators to show that they're kind and get good will in the public sphere”.





Training on issues of GBV has been provided by NGOs to other state agencies, across various sectors, as well. Women and Children First has shared that they “train healthcare professionals and the ER providers about the language they use” through their sexual assault programme. Additionally, they educate veterans through ‘lunch and learn’ training programmes on issues of domestic violence and sexual assault. At the same time, it is further important that training is also provided to NGOs working on domestic violence to ensure that their staff are enabled by receiving the proper information. This was particularly important during COVID-19 when guidelines shifted on how shelters and other services providers could operate. Service providers in communities are not the only ones who should receive training on the stereotypes of GBV but it should permeate different levels of society.

## **FUNDING DISTRIBUTION**

Under the Violence Against Women Act

(1994) and the Office on Violence Against Women, funding is allocated to state agencies and NGOs who provide direct services concerning GBV, through a series of grant programmes. According to Gover and Moore (2021) around \$8 billion USD was awarded through these programmes between 1995-2018. From speaking with representatives from NGOs in the US, there was great variability for the funds awarded to the NGOs that participated in this research. Our testimonies illustrated that some NGOs received adequate funds for certain projects but at the same time there were NGOs that didn’t receive enough funds to continue similar projects. For example, the Ohio Domestic Violence Network received enough funds to launch a Hotel project during COVID-19 whereas Women and Children First’s transitional housing programme had to close due to a lack of funding. From our testimonies, it was inferred that the variability of funding posed difficulties in maintaining the quality and extent of programmes that NGOs needed.





“It's clear that the funding is, once again, just used as a currency to get political points, to be seen as helping women and children but when it comes time to actually make the funding work, there's no interest, there's no energy because there's no accountability at that level.”

-Sally Jones (alias), North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence, United States

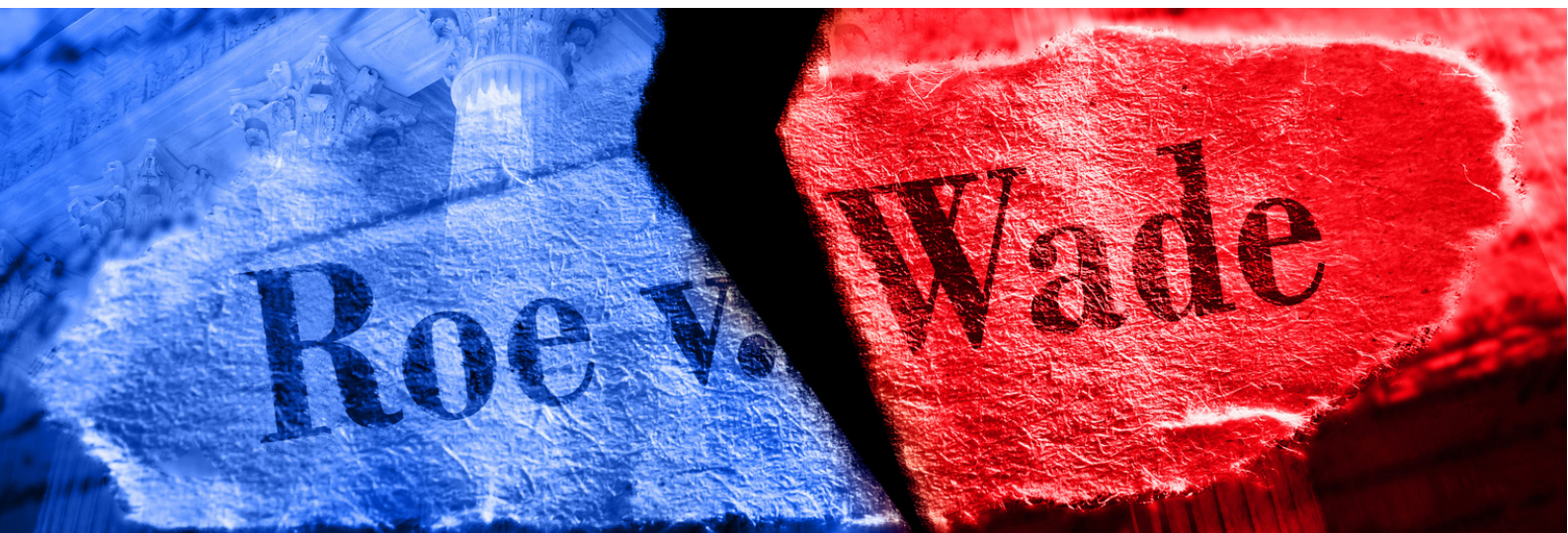
Another important issue is where those funds could be spent, which are the categories that are covered under those funds. NGOs need flexibility in how government or state funds can be spent in order to react to the needs of the populations they serve. Particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic where NGOs had to work reactively to constantly shifting operating guidelines and reduced capacity, it was important that the civil society organisations could use their allocated funding to the best of their ability. The North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence specifically outlined the situation where they were given “facilities improvement money” but could not

purchase a new Wi-Fi system as it did not fall under the remit of that funding. Despite the knowledge that digital divide is a barrier to accessing services, they did not have the funding sources to alleviate that barrier. As it is these civil society organisations that know how funding can best be used for their organisation, there should be greater flexibility allowed for the grantees to spend the money in the way they see fit.

### **ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE AND PROTECTION OF REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS**

As established by the 2021 Gender Policy Council, the US first 'National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality' addresses the need to “protect, improve, and expand access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health care” (White House, 2021b:18). As part of this policy document, it is stated that:

“We will ensure equitable access to high-quality, affordable healthcare, protect the constitutional right to safe and legal abortion established in Roe v. Wade in the United States, while promoting access to sexual and reproductive health and rights” (White House, 2021b:18).





As this was the first national policy document established at a federal level to comprehensively address issues of gender stereotypes and GBV, it provided an opportunity to guide states to adequately address these issues in accordance with this strategy. In order to address the role of healthcare in providing support to a GBV survivor, this should be a multi-stakeholder effort. Government agencies, state coalitions, or NGOs, all need to play an essential role in providing and exchanging knowledge on how to respond to issues of domestic violence to improve the experience of the survivor. A testimony from the Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape and Domestic Violence explained how they worked with other agencies to “develop a plan for what happens when someone goes to the hospital and reports sexual assault”.



“Sometimes other agencies will call and say ‘can you guys come out and give a presentation and help my team?’, especially working with emergency rooms, we work really hard to establish ongoing relationships with the ER nurses and the nurses so it helps them understand what language to use but also we can be at the hospital and be a source of strength and encouragement during that difficult time.”

- Olivia Smith (alias), Women and Children First, United States

Another aspect of healthcare that was emphasised by our research participants has to do with the sexual and reproduction health and rights (SRHR). As outlined in the 'National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality' (2021) formulated by the

Gender Policy Council, the right to safe abortion was enshrined by the Roe v. Wade court ruling that made “access to an abortion a federal right in the United States” for over 50 years (American University, 2022:1). However, in 2022, the US Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade Legislation that enshrined abortion as a federal right, and instead it allowed individual states to determine the extent of autonomy that people have over their bodies. As of June 2022, 9 states had already banned abortion with around 12 more in the process of banning it (American University, 2022).

The need to provide safe and accessible sexual healthcare emerged as a recurring theme throughout the testimonies from NGOs in the US context, however there was uncertainty as to the support that NGOs would be able to give to survivors. This was apparent through the uncertainty that NGOs had in how they were able to provide or promote abortion and post-abortion care. This is relevant to the issue of domestic violence as sexual violence and reproductive coercion is one element of domestic violence so it is important that a



survivor can access adequate healthcare support. Additionally, an abortion could help a survivor to leave an abusive situation. Our data emphasises the role of

sexual coercion and being unable to receive abortion care can make it more difficult for a survivor to leave an abusive situation.

“There are so many women trapped in domestic violence relationships because of children. Not being able to access women’s health is insane. I’m going to tell you a story and you can apply anyway you want. I befriended somebody who was in need and we switched phones, she asked me if she could take my phone, I took her [mobile] phone. I went and parked with her phone at a blood donation service centre while she went to planned parenthood to have her blood drawn because she was pregnant and planning to an abortion. She did not want her husband to know because she was trying to leave him. So the reason why she told him that she was going to a blood donation centre is because she was going to have a bruise on her arm [from the abortion procedure]. He tracked her every move. That’s why I took her phone. I took her phone, she took my phone if she needed it and that’s how it worked. This woman is no longer in her marriage. She has two children. She saved her two children. Had that pregnancy stuck, she would have been in that marriage and in that relationship still.”

- Meredith, Domestic Violence Survivor

If healthcare providers were able to provide safe, affordable and easily accessible abortion and reproductive healthcare, then survivors experiencing sexual violence would not face greater barriers to leaving a relationship. The

fraught uncertainty of losing the autonomy of your reproductive health as a result of changes in national legislation can undermine both national strategies to protect health rights and difficulties for service providers to provide support.





## TRAINING AGENCIES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

Due to the expertise of NGOs working on issues of GBV in the US, there is an expectation that they provide training to state agencies such as law enforcement officers and healthcare providers. This strategy to promote training is outlined within the Violence Against Women Act and was recommended by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

NGOs are well placed to collaborate with government or state agencies and provide training to address issues of gender stereotypes and domestic violence.



## FUNDING DISTRIBUTION

The US Office on Violence Against Women distributes funding through various grant programmes to state agencies, NGOs, law enforcement and direct service providers. Funding from state and the federal government is fundamental for some NGOs to develop and implement policies to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence.

To ensure that funding is used in the most effective way, there should be greater freedom for NGOs to determine how to use the funds to best support their beneficiaries



## ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE AND PROTECTION OF REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Whilst the 2021 US 'National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality' outlines the need to improve access to healthcare, health and reproductive support is strained across the United States. NGOs have been shown to work with healthcare professionals to increase the quality of care given.

As abortion rights are determined by individual states, this undermines the coherence of the US National Strategy and NGOs implementing health and reproductive policies.





# ZIMBABWE

## National Framework

This section outlines the national strategies that the Zimbabwean government has created to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence. The strategies presented in this section are national legislation, government bodies and policies that have been formulated to address these issues. These three categories are explored in order to give an overview of the government's response to gender stereotypes and domestic violence to identify good practices, gaps in implementation and partnerships formed.

### NATIONAL LEGISLATION

#### *Domestic Violence Act (2007)*

The Domestic Violence Act was the first of its kind to address harmful practices in Zimbabwe, (Sithole and Dziva, 2019). The primary aim of this Act is “to make provision for the protection and relief of victims of domestic violence” through staffing police stations with at least one officer who is trained in responding to cases of domestic violence, to support the needs of the individuals needing help (Government Gazette, 2007:2). This legislation is considered as unprecedented for how it directly acknowledges and outlines support to those experiencing domestic violence. Despite this achievement, there are still shortcomings for how forms of domestic violence are criminalised. The Act does not include “emotional, verbal and psychological abuse [and] economic abuse” to constitute criminal offence, despite acknowledging these as forms of domestic violence (ibid:5). By limiting the types of abuse that are deemed offences, it limits the forms of justice a survivor is able to seek under this legislation.

Testimonies from legal officials from Zimbabwe emphasise the difficulties in

providing adequate justice to survivors through the sentencing proceedings within the Domestic Violence Courts. The issue of balancing the need for harsh and fair sentencing was apparent as there exists a pressure on magistrates to preserve families through fair sentencing but also deter domestic violence through harsh sentencing. The practices that emerged from the data included providing fair sentencing to perpetrators and providing follow-up support to both the survivor and the perpetrator to prevent re-committing domestic violence crimes.

“More can be done to the [Domestic Violence] Act. Right now, we have been told from the magistrates side to not be stringent in our sentences. We're supposed to be sensitive. One of the background values of this Act is to foster relationships rather than further stringing them through harsh sentences. I feel that it takes us back because you give them a fine and then next time, he has killed that person. I don't know how we can achieve that balance of being strict on the offenders and also trying to make sure families don't disintegrate.”

- Marisa Moyo (alias), Justice of the Peace (5), Zimbabwe

---

(5) A Justice of the Peace is defined as “a local magistrate empowered chiefly to administer summary justice in minor cases, to commit for trial, and to administer oaths and perform marriages” (Merriam-Webster, 2022).



### ***Gender Commission Act (2016)***

The function of this Act is to address gender stereotypes within Zimbabwe that result in discrimination and withhold opportunities to create a more equitable society. This Act was gazetted in 2016 to investigate and provide recommendations to remove barriers to “the attainment of full gender equality” (Veritas, 2016:147). Additionally, this Act outlines the need for establishing a commission to investigate violations to gender equality, receive and address complaints, conduct research and propose relevant changes, advise public and private institutions and recommend affirmative action programmes. The Zimbabwe Gender Commission was established in 2015 in response to the Gender Commission Act.

### ***Marriage Laws Amendment Bill (2021)***

In 2021, a Marriage Laws Amendment Bill was drafted to prohibit the marriage of persons under the age of eighteen and to abolish the need for adult women to have the consent of their guardian to marry (Veritas, 2021). This Bill passed in 2022 and included the amendment that the “payment of lobola before marriage under customary union is now mandatory” (AllAfrica, 2022). Lobola is a form of bride price whereby the

family of the husband exchanges money and goods in order to marry a woman. The inclusion in the amendment of making lobola mandatory under customary law further entrenches gender stereotypes and emphasises the transactional nature of marriage under customary law.





## NATIONAL POLICIES

### *One Stop Centres (2011)*

Similarly to India, Zimbabwe has implemented the One Stop Centres policy across the country to provide holistic services to survivors of GBV. As part of these One Stop Centres, there are 11 temporary shelters for survivors, with many shelters being in rural areas that were previously inaccessible to many GBV services. The Centres are inspected by the Anti-Domestic Violence Council (UN Women, 2016). In 2021, One Stop Centres supported 1511 women and were classified as 'essential' during the pandemic to allow continuous support to be provided (UN Women, 2022c). To provide more flexible support for survivors during the pandemic, the national government further provided mobile One Stop Centres to assist individuals closer to their homes (Ibid).

## NATIONAL BODIES

### *Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises (2011)*

The Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises is the Zimbabwean Ministry to “develop, coordinate and monitor policy on violence against women” (UN Women, 2016). Previously called the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender, and Community Development, this Ministry now encompasses more economic objectives alongside addressing GBV. The Ministry hosts workshops to review Zimbabwe’s National Gender-Based Violence Strategy, capacity-building programmes and engages with the High Level Political Compact on ending GBV.

### *Anti-domestic Violence Council (2009)*

The Anti-domestic Violence Council was formed in 2009 by representatives of various government departments such as Justice and Legal Affairs, Health and Child Welfare, Department of Social Services, Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development. In response to the 2007 Domestic Violence Act, this Council aims to review and promote research of domestic violence, provide safe-houses and increase public awareness on domestic violence. The extent to which this has been successful is debatable due to having “very little resources and [being] at very low capacity” (UN Women, 2009).

### *4ps Campaign on Zero Tolerance to Domestic Violence (2011)*

This campaign focuses on the 4ps of prevention, protection, programmes and participation to address domestic violence. Launched by the government of Zimbabwe in 2011, this campaign focuses on community mobilisation in its approach to strengthen the “capacity of communities to establish mechanisms for preventing and responding to domestic violence” (OHCHR, 2016). This includes specific attention to campaigns in hard to reach areas, religious groups, people living with disabilities and within schools.





### **Women’s Fund (2011)**

The Women’s Fund is allocated by the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises to economically support survivors of domestic violence through providing loans to beneficiaries. This initiative was created to provide women and women’s groups loans without having to pay the high interest rates that banks charge (Women Connect, 2018). These loans are given to promote economic independence of women and reduce the pressure to stay in an abusive relationship (UN Women, 2011a). Despite the intention of this Fund, it was found that many of its beneficiaries “did not qualify for the assistance received” and that there were “failings to disburse the monies on time” (Financial Gazette, 2013).

marriage through a multi-sectoral approach (Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development, 2018:4).



This is particularly important when Zimbabwe has considerable high rates of child marriages: in 2015, child marriages in Mashonaland Central was at 50 percent and Mashonaland West was at 42 percent (Sithole and Dziva, 2019:572). As a factor contributing to domestic violence is the unequal dependence and power in a relationship, child marriages are particularly harmful also due to the ingrained power imbalance. Child marriages additionally prevent the girl child from experiencing their childhood, putting her in a situation that she is not emotionally or psychologically prepared for (Ibid). Additionally, it is a factor contributing to school drop-out rates for girls, reducing opportunities for more fulfilling employment and financial independence in the future.

### **INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND TREATIES**

***Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (The Maputo Protocol) (2003)***

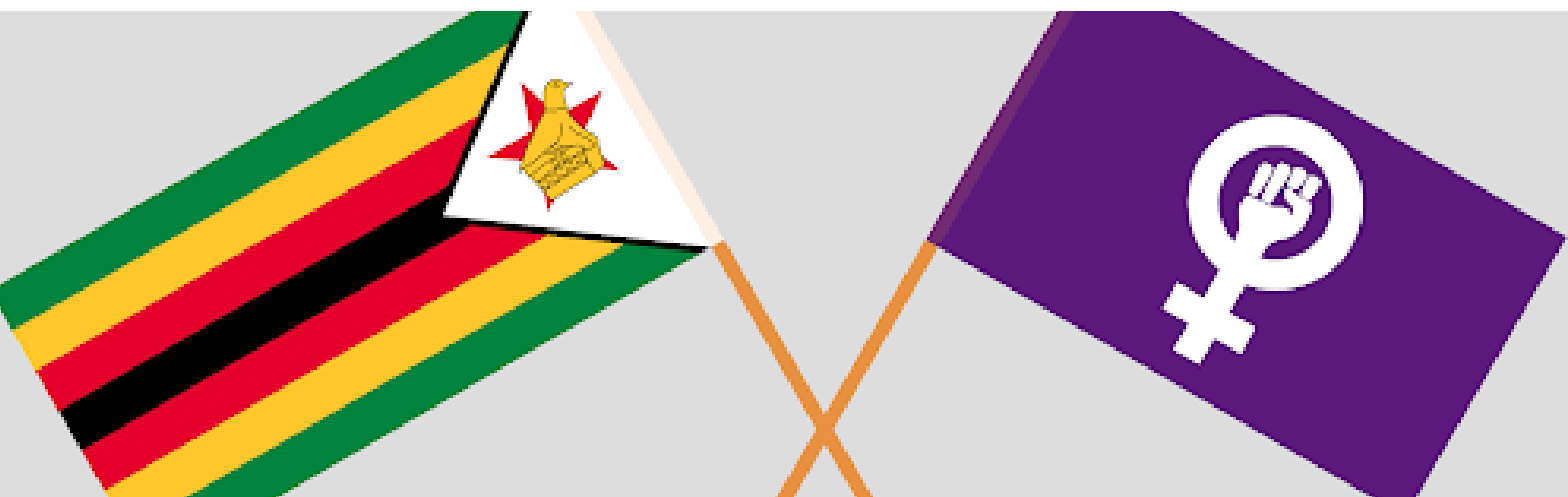
In 2008, Zimbabwe ratified the Maputo Protocol which is an international treaty developed by member states of the African Union to address “behaviour, attitudes,



### **National Action Plan on ending Child Marriages (2019-2021)**

This Action Plan is an initiative by the Government of Zimbabwe and coordinated by the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises in 2018 to address the issue of child





and/or practices which negatively affect the fundamental rights of women and girls” (Sithole and Dziva, 2019). The ratification of this treaty by Zimbabwe shows solidarity across African nations in their commitment to address GBV and gender stereotypes. This Protocol is reflected in policy frameworks implemented by the Zimbabwean government, including the National Action Plan on ending Child Marriages (2019-2021) mentioned above and the National Health Strategy for Zimbabwe which has a distinct focus on reproductive health (Ibid).

“The Maputo Protocol is a groundbreaking women’s rights legal instrument that expands and reinforces the rights provided in other human rights instruments. It details wide-ranging and substantive human rights provisions for women, covering the entire spectrum of civil and political, economic, social and cultural as well as environmental rights.” (Kubatana, 2019).

### ***Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979)***

Zimbabwe signed the Convention in 1991 and ratified it in 1997. According to a 2019

‘State Party’ Report submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, Zimbabwe have implemented initiatives that have “brought positive changes in transforming traditional beliefs, attitudes and norms that contribute to the perpetuation of violence against women and girls” (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, 2019a:8). This is referring to public awareness, media, and institutional awareness campaigns, engagement of leaders and developing policies in preventing and responding to GBV. In response to the ‘State Party’ report, the Committee recommended changes to further address GBV issues including, inter alia, addressing polygamy which is legal under customary law, measures taken to implement the National Strategy policies on ending child marriages and to clarify what forms of GBV are classified as offences and crimes (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, 2019b). This correspondence between Zimbabwe and the Committee to uphold the CEDAW commitments is a mechanism on how Zimbabwe is being held accountable for the efforts and lack thereof when addressing GBV.



## NGOs PRACTICES

This section indicates how pivotal the NGOs role is in providing support to communities and villages on issues such as gender stereotypes and domestic violence. As of 2000 at a national level, 18 percent of NGOs were addressing the issue of education and training, followed by 17 percent addressing issues of women and gender (Zimfact, 2018). These are the two most popular issues for NGOs to address in Zimbabwe, which reflects the strong commitment of NGOs in pursuing gender equality. This section outlines the ways in which NGOs operate in Zimbabwe, recognising practical restrictions, effective strategies and implementation of policies.

Similarly with India, there have been incidents of NGOs in Zimbabwe experiencing censorship and interference by the national government. One of the most notable issues was the suspension of the Executive Committee of the Association of Women's Clubs in 1995 as the result of passing the Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Bill by the national Zimbabwe Government. The PVO bill granted the national government powers to register and de-register NGOs and suspend committees if the government

believed that the NGO did not adhere to the Zimbabwe constitution, being poorly administered, engaging with illegal activities or it was within the public interest for the government to interfere (Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, 1998). Consequently, the Supreme Court ruled that the PVO Act contravened the Constitution of Zimbabwe and the Executive Committee of the Association of Women's Clubs was reinstated in 1997. In 2021, an amendment was drafted for the PVO Bill which allows the Zimbabwean government to extend powers to "interfere in civil society organisations' governance and activities" (FIDH, 2022). This amendment would provide challenges to NGOs operating in Zimbabwe as it provides the national government the "legal tools to control and ultimately silence civil society" (ibid).

As also identified in testimonies regarding India, the role of religious leaders in making direct and prevention services more effective emerged also as a strong theme in the Zimbabwean context. As religious leaders are respected in their communities, greater clout is given to a domestic violence programme if it has the support of those leaders.



**Annatollia  
Muzata, PBVM  
and Justice  
Contact,  
Zimbabwe**

***Collaboration with Local Leadership,  
International Presentation Association***

“As IPA, we have workshops in different places trying to address and bring awareness to GBV. Even if you’re inviting people from the church, you need to go through their leader, even through the priest. If the priest says it to the people, then it has an impact. For example, if we have a workshop on GBV, women will come because it has been said by a priest [compared to] if I just stand up or give a notice [on my own] that we have a workshop on GBV. Whatever platform in whatever way, the leader of the people has to be part of the planning and everything that you need to do for the people. The leaders are very important and they have influence. If they say they’re not going, for sure [the people] won’t go.”



Source: <https://katswesistahood.net/>.

### ***Pachoto, Katswe Sistahood***

“The advocacy actually starts at the community level - when we create safe spaces, we call them ‘pachoto’, by the fireside. The work we do in communities is to gather women in their diversity into a safe space where they can begin to share their stories and experiences, for example, of violence or trying to access services. When they share [their] stories, some issues will emerge and we classify them to see at which level we want to engage. If it’s an issue of service provision at the health centre or the local police where they feel that the service provider is not being responsive, we then simply craft a small advocacy campaign at a local level to target the specific service provider. Then, of course, some of the issues are not necessarily local level issues, they might actually be policy level issues. We then design relevant advocacy campaigns. [...] After today, we have pushed quite a number of campaigns on the prevention of pornography. You have scenarios where you have people dating or in marriage and people can be taking some pictures or videos and when they separate or divorce, the aggrieved partner may want to use some of that material to frustrate the other party. We develop policy briefs and sometimes we provide draft texts that can be used to push that kind of work. And then [we have] campaigns around date rape. Right now we are pushing one on the Criminal [Codification] Act. We’ve been running quite a number of campaigns: campaigns around access to safe abortion, all these things centre around violence against women.”

**Talent  
Jumo,  
Founder,  
Zimbabwe**



For direct service provision to address GBV, our testimonies illustrate the need for survivor centred programming, whereby the type of NGOs policy response is tailored to the needs of the survivor; particularly in the context of COVID-19 as many direct service providers were responsible for fulfilling the basic needs of survivors in lieu of government support. Whilst the concept of survivor centred support is not contextually unique to Zimbabwe, it has been conceptualised by some NGOs as ‘pachoto’, a safe space where women can share their stories and experiences and service providers, on their end, can identify the types of support that are needed. The below testimony describes how Pachoto embodies the individualised way of providing support.

---

Where testimonies from the US illustrated the impact of changing legislation regarding Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), testimonies from Zimbabwe, on the other hand, displayed confusion as to what SRHR services are legal due to the lack of government policies that could formally address this issue. The below testimony describes the uncertainty of receiving SRHR services and the need to address this through lobbying for policy changes





# Zimbabwe

The Spotlight Initiative in Zimbabwe advances the elimination of gender-based violence and harmful practices through a broad partnership with civil society, government, the private sector and the media. The programme builds a social movement of women, men, girls and boys as agents of change.

<https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/zimbabwe>

**Rufaro  
Chakanetsa,  
Spotlight  
Innovator  
Against Gender  
Based Violence,  
Zimbabwe**

## *Lobbying for SRHR Policy Changes, Spotlight Initiative (6)*

“One of the things that we managed to do as part of [the NGO called] Taking a Stand Against Gender-based Violence [which was created under the Spotlight Initiative], together with other partners, was to move the age of consent from 16 to 18. That has gone through but it has not yet been conclusive. The other issue that we are currently pushing for, is the access to SRHR services, especially for adolescents. It remains a grey area because our government has not made it clear that adolescents can access sexual reproductive health rights services. I’ll give you an example: If an adolescent person wants to access contraceptive pills at a local clinic, the law still says it’s illegal. But health workers have realised the need to actually give adolescents things like contraceptive pills, emergency contraception, condoms, whatever they need but the law has not stated its stance, it’s still silent. [...] So we are lobbying for that, for a policy or for them to make it clear to everyone that this is our stance instead of just leaving people guessing. The issue of SRHR services for adolescents and then pushing the consent age from 16 to 18.”

---

(6) The Spotlight Initiative is a “global initiative of the United Nations funded by the European Union. Its aim is to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls” (Spotlight Initiative, 2022).



## Analysis

From the above case studies and the wider testimonies from Zimbabwean participants, three key thematic areas emerged when considering collaboration between governments and NGOs. These areas were also identified as ways in which improvements could be made to address gaps to further address gender stereotypes and domestic violence. The three thematic areas are: financial resources, collaboration with local leadership and increasing policies to address child marriage.

### FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The current economic conditions in Zimbabwe, where inflation was at 557.20 per cent in 2020 and 98.5 percent in 2021 (World Data, 2022), have created problems for how NGOs can operate in Zimbabwe, financial-wise. According to testimonies, there have been trends of donor dependency in Zimbabwe where the national government is reliant on private donors to fund the work of civil society organisations in addressing social issues, including GBV. By not supporting the NGOs financially, a reliance on private donor sources is created which at the same time reduces the pressure for the government to address issues of gender stereotypes and domestic violence. The lack of support to NGOs was acknowledged in the 2012-2015 Zimbabwe government's 'National Gender-Based Violence Strategy' (2011:iii) whereby "the needs of many survivors remain unmet and prevention efforts are diminished due to limited resources and coordination among the various actors". Through the financial support of private donors, NGOs can receive the resources necessary

however this does not provide a sustainable solution, neither for the government nor the NGOs.

The lack of government support for addressing GBV was pointed out, particularly, from representatives from Katswe Sistahood and the Spotlight Initiative, who recognised that the national government could not provide them with the necessary resources for their direct service work. Some NGOs even felt they had the additional responsibility to provide material resources to state agency services responding to a domestic violence situation. Examples include NGOs providing 'rape kits' to law enforcement agencies for survivors of sexual violence when the capacity of the government to provide the necessary resources was absent. The issue of the lack of resources appears to be systematic across various government departments. Women's rights activists that participated in our research called for civil servants to be better paid in their wages so that work addressing GBV can be more effectively delivered.





## COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL LEADERSHIP

“We also need [the police] to be better paid because in Zimbabwe the civil service is very lowly paid so I think we need to have better salaries for the police, magistrates, the nurses, doctors, those who offer psychosocial support. It’s the whole team who respond to violence and if these people are lowly paid, they really are not motivated. Even if they went to use the services, it’s not to the best of their ability.[...] Especially doctors and nurses right now, junior doctors in Zimbabwe are earning about \$80 USD [per day] which would definitely impact on the service.”

*-Tinotenda Ratidzo Chihera,  
Domestic Violence Advocate and  
Women Rights Lawyer, Zimbabwe*

Increasing the financial support from governments to ensure that domestic violence is effectively addressed goes beyond paying experts and service providers higher wages. Even though the above testimony illustrates the need for greater government investment in the salaries of civil servants and professionals, there are also additional barriers when a survivor is seeking support, such as the infrastructural issues. The issues of poor public transport and conditions of infrastructure can make it more difficult for a survivor to physically or digitally access direct service support. To counter this, greater collaboration between the government and the civil society through the sharing of resources, knowledge and skills is needed to increase the impact of NGO work and hold governments accountable in addressing GBV.

Engaging local leadership figures in communities and villages for awareness raising campaigns was a consistent theme throughout the testimonies within the context of India, as earlier mentioned. The approach of working with local, traditional and religious leaders to improve the effectiveness of an NGO campaign emerged within the Zimbabwean context as well. Often, this was the context of working with local religious and community leaders in order to mobilise a greater number of people within the community. This was vocalised when referring, for example, to the work of the International Presentation Association where the importance of working with local leaders was emphasised as being necessary in order to be able to work in certain locations. This concept of community mobilisation complements the Zimbabwe government’s 4ps Campaign on Zero Tolerance to Domestic Violence, which is implemented in communities at a grassroots level. Particularly as the 4ps Campaign has a focus on implementation in difficult to reach areas - such as the rural ones - it is important that the work is channelled through respected people in communities so that people trust the intervention. Local leaders should be consulted when designing policies and programmes to ensure that the community is at the heart of the work.







Working with traditional and religious leaders is interestingly apparent within the government's strategy to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence. This point emerged from the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women's 2019 'Concluding Observations' Report, stating the need to "engage with communities, including religious and community leaders, parents and relatives of girls, on the criminal nature and negative impact of child marriage on the enjoyment by girls of their rights" (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, 2020:6).

Additionally, the 'National Gender Based-Violence Strategy for 2012-2015' outlined the need to "increase capacity of leader at all levels to address GBV including negative cultural and religious practices that fuel violence against women and girls" (Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development, 2011:11). Further, working with local leaders is particularly important when the beliefs or attitudes of those leaders contribute to the problem at hand or hinder the work from being carried out. Testimonies also stated that corruption can be a barrier to accessing populations if the leaders want money.

"When I went to the local government trying to access a [village], the MP wanted money, the counsellor wanted money, the traditional leaders wanted a portion before you even reach the people who you intend to help. Sometimes the leaders, if you assure them that you are not interested in that, they can be a hindrance to you to access the people."

-Annatollia Muzata, PBVM and Justice Contact, International Presentation Association, Zimbabwe

## INCREASE POLICIES ADDRESSING CHILD MARRIAGE

Under the remit of the Domestic Violence Act (2007), child marriage is stated as a "cultural or customary rites or practices that discriminate against or degrade women" (Government Gazette, 2007:4). Although the legislation does not elaborate on the phenomenon of child marriage itself, it recognises the abuses that may occur from a child marriage situation. From reviewing national policies relating to GBV, it appears that more could be done nationally to mainstream the issue of child marriage in prominent policy and legislation in Zimbabwe; particularly as Zimbabwe's national statistics agency found that 1 in 3 girls are married before the age of 18 (Zim Fact, 2021).



The Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development in their 'National Action Plan and Communication Strategy on Ending Child Marriage' acknowledges that "legislative and policy frameworks still provide for and protect the right to enter into marriage for persons under the age of 18" (2018:9). The 2021 Marriage Laws Amendment Bill prohibited the marriage of people under the age of 18 so it is consistent with the Zimbabwean constitution but widespread efforts are needed by the government to reduce the rates of child marriage (Zim Fact, 2021). To adequately address the prevalence of child marriages, there needs to be a concerted



multi-sectoral effort by both governmental and non-governmental actors. The quote below identifies the extent of the effort that is needed.

“To end child marriage in Zimbabwe there is a need for structural, institutional, community and individual strategies to tackle factors fueling child marriage. There should be a combination of strategies that target socio-cultural and economic lives of people and should include poverty reduction, improved access to education and life skills, enforcement of legal frameworks, registration of marriages, awareness creation through sex education, accessible adolescent friendly health services, investigative journalism, safe space - role models concept, effective

monitoring and evaluation of programs” (World Bank Blogs, 2020).

The 'National Gender Policy Report' (2013-2017) recognises that “early marriage” is a cause of school dropout but fails to outline a strategy to reduce rates of child marriage (Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development, 2013:4). As stated by UN Women (2022b:4), every year of schooling can increase a girl’s earning when she’s an adult up to 20 percent, making it imperative that girls don’t drop out of education at a young age. This shows how preventing child marriages and pursuing education increases the opportunities of a young woman for greater income and financial independence.

“There is a very big crisis now with teen mothers. Kids are giving birth at 14, 15, 16. These are all COVID-19 babies. Is our education still effective as before COVID-19? How has it changed for the girl child? How has it made the girl child vulnerable? Now, these teen pregnancies were already there but [during] COVID-19 when we had the national lockdown, some of these girls engaged in child marriages, which is essentially rape. What is the government saying about that? How can we make things better? Do they continue with school or do they just [drop] out? I know that in principle you can continue after you give birth but what about practically? Do they have a support system? Do they have the resources? Are they emotionally stable enough to go back to school? This is something that really needs to be looked into.”

-*Tinotenda Ratidzo Chihera, Domestic Violence Advocate and Women Rights Lawyer, Zimbabwe*

Individuals and civil society organisations work and advocate for increasing the age of consent in relevant legislation regarding child marriage. However our data identified a slow response when it comes to meaningful legislative change. Whilst continuing advocacy efforts, it is further essential to provide direct service support to survivors of child marriages in their health, education, and livelihood. The intertwined relationship of child marriages and education is a key point, since child marriage is a reason for girls not

completing education. Our testimonies further emphasised the issue of increased child marriages as a result of the pandemic and increased economic insecurity.





## FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The National Gender-based Violence Strategy outlines that economic conditions in Zimbabwe make it difficult for the government to invest in addressing gender stereotypes and domestic violence. Therefore, some NGOs are reliant on private funding for their work rather than direct financial support from the national government.

To cohesively address GBV, there needs to be mutual collaboration and support from both governments and NGOs.



## COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL LEADERSHIP

The Zimbabwean government's 4ps Campaign on Zero Tolerance to Domestic Violence is implemented at a local level, particularly in rural villages, to raise awareness in communities. At the same time, NGOs promote gender-focused workshops and events in villages aiming to address issues of gender norms and GBV at a community level.

To address gender stereotypes and domestic violence at a grassroots level, both government agencies and NGOs emphasise the need to work with traditional and religious leaders in their campaigns.

## INCREASING POLICIES ADDRESSING CHILD MARRIAGE

Child marriages remain an issue in Zimbabwe, as recognised in the 'National Action Plan and Communication Strategy on Ending Child Marriage'. In line with this government strategy, NGOs advocate for legislative changes to prohibit child marriages and to support those who have been subjected to underage marriage.

In order to reduce rates of child marriages, there needs to be concerted efforts by both the government and the NGOs to address the driving factors causing child marriages and achieve structural changes at different levels in society.



# Recommendations

Our research analysis across the three countries illustrated overlapping issues, highlighting the need to draw and establish these similarities and address them in a holistic approach. As such, this final section identifies broad recommendations to emphasise the best practices for addressing gender stereotypes and domestic violence.

- **Raising awareness through education**

We believe that formal and informal education can alleviate domestic violence, address gender stereotypes and enable women and children to better know their rights in this respect. We use education as a vehicle for transformation at a local and global level. Education, including educating young girls and boys, can help break the intergenerational attitude towards women and children that leads to violence.

As values and attitudes are developed from childhood, it is important that schools implement values of gender equality both inside the classroom and within communities. NGOs and governments can work together to enable teachers and students to implement and engage into awareness-raising initiatives towards the elimination of gender stereotypes and respective violence.

- **Building civil society networks**

We emphasise on the need to build local, national and international networks among civil society organisations to share resources, guidance and advocate to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence. Whether this will be engaging local or community leaders like religious or traditional figures, sharing technical skills, areas of expertise, or data, there is greater opportunity to work more effectively through meaningful partnerships and collaboration among NGOs. Addressing domestic violence and gender stereotypes cannot be achieved alone.

- **Implementing survivor-centred policies**

We believe that a survivor-centred approach is fundamental when planning and implementing policies to address issues of gender stereotypes and domestic violence. It is only through those who have experienced the issues in question that can identify what they truly need. When issues of gender stereotypes and domestic violence intersect with other forms of violence or poverty, service providers should be consulting the survivors in order to provide support that would be substantially tailored to those in need.



- **Establishing partnerships with other stakeholders**

We recognise the importance of collaborating with governments, agencies and other public or private organisations at the global and national levels to develop and implement effective policies in addressing gender stereotypes and domestic violence. We identify the important role of NGOs in providing expert knowledge to government actors since civil society engages and works closely with the grassroots communities. NGOs are better placed in identifying challenges and opportunities for survivors' support. Additionally, there is a need for government actors to address the impediments that restrict NGOs from delivering their work, such as prioritising work through essential services and reducing stipulations on funding for NGOs.

- **Working with men and boys**

We believe it is imperative to engage boys and men in preventative work to transform attitudes to gender stereotypes and domestic violence. Preventative measures are the most difficult to implement yet are the most effective at combating GBV. In order to enact changes to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence, all members of communities need to be involved. When working with boys, gender stereotypes can be addressed at a young age so that values of gender equality are promoted in their youth. We should work with men to develop healthy role models to display respectful gender values within family and community settings.



# Conclusion

The design and implementation of policies to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence vary greatly across the globe. This research has identified the national strategies that governments of India, United States and Zimbabwe have designed and implemented and the local ways in which NGOs are furthering those strategies in these countries. At the same time, NGOs are planning and implementing their own strategies and launching campaigns to support survivors and address issues of domestic violence and gender stereotypes. From our interviews with experts within the field of domestic violence policy, our research presented the different ways that gender stereotypes and domestic violence is being addressed in India, the United states and Zimbabwe.

A particular interest lies on how policies are formulated and implemented within different societies and under the context of COVID-19.

Our testimonies illustrated how each country faced specific challenges relevant to their local context. This ranged from challenges of dowry being prominent in Indian society and the need to value the girl child, barriers to funding in the United States and insecure health and reproductive rights, to issues of child marriage in Zimbabwe.

Despite the various and different contexts of the countries, a plethora of effective ways to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence emerged for both government and NGOs across those countries. These include inter alia:

- Collaboration between government /state agencies and NGOs on gender-focused training programmes and sharing knowledge and expertise.
- Developing policies and programmes tailored to the needs of the beneficiaries.
- Providing legal support and relevant information to survivors going through the legal system.
- Ensuring safe, clear and affordable access to health and reproductive services.
- Empowering individuals at the grassroots level to provide direct services to GBV survivors.
- Working with local community leaders to ensure impactful initiatives and campaigns addressing gender stereotypes and domestic violence.
- Providing greater flexibility in how the NGOs can use and allocate the government funding granted for domestic violence services.
- Increasing means of digital services to support people in remote or difficult to reach areas.
- Responding to intersectional forms of violence and achieving a holistic approach for an impactful and sustainable change.





The recommendations outlined in this publication will only be achieved through dedicated multi-sectoral efforts. Our research indicated that there is general cohesion between the strategies national governments develop - whenever and to the extent and format that these policies are designed and implemented in each national framework - and the policies developed by NGOs. Often, the implementation of these government strategies rely on NGOs involvement in training and enabling those undertaking the policies or the programmes. The degree of coherence varies across countries and for the specific topic or issue at stake.

For example, NGOs in India raise awareness on how the survivors can navigate the court system by getting the proper legal aid in advance with the ultimate goal to receive justice. The NGOs found it was their responsibility to share their knowledge in this way. This was considered a responsibility of civil society, particularly when the survivor was facing issues of slow bureaucratic progress or corruption. NGOs fill the space to support a survivor through this process, emotionally, legally and financially.

The United States has shown commitment to addressing gender stereotypes and

domestic violence through a series of grants from the Office of Violence Against Women to fund programmes and campaigns of civil society. When it comes to funding, there is little cohesion in how NGOs are able to spend the funding. Stipulations and barriers on how funds could be spent, often prevent the most effective use of these funds.

In Zimbabwe, some NGOs felt they had a responsibility to provide material resources to state agency services who may be first responders in a domestic violence situation. The pressure for NGOs to provide material resources, such as rape kits for law enforcement, was the result of a lack of funding in state agencies in Zimbabwe. Sharing material resources was stated as a result of the fragile economic conditions. This makes it less feasible for the national government to invest resources, whether financial or material, into state agencies to design or implement policies to address gender stereotypes or domestic violence. The lack of government investment in state agencies reduces their efficiency to address gender stereotypes and domestic violence. This lack of investment creates a responsibility for NGOs to provide the necessary support to state agencies so that survivors are supported.



Across the testimonies for this research, NGOs presented both the innovations and the challenges that they faced in implementing policies under the context of COVID-19 pandemic. The short-term innovations that emerged across the country case studies ranged from providing direct service provision of basic goods for survivors, to implementing digital campaigns to raise awareness of gender stereotypes and domestic violence during the pandemic. Our testimonies illustrated how partnerships were formed with other NGOs, private organisations, and governments in order to design and implement policies at state and community levels. Simultaneously, the challenges that NGOs faced during the pandemic included

restrictions to capacity in shelters, lacking digital infrastructure to effectively reach their beneficiaries, and address the effects of COVID-19 on the staff of the NGOs.

To develop this research further, it would be beneficial to learn what the long-term impacts of the pandemic would be on the delivery of direct services. As testimonies identify a backlog in the domestic violence courts and reduced capacity in shelters during the height of the pandemic, the long-term impacts have yet to be experienced. It is pertinent that there is collaboration between different actors in civil society and governments to ensure that the individuals who need support are not left behind.





# Bibliography

- **113th Congress.** 2013. S.47. *An Act to Reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.govinfo.gov/link/plaw/113/public/4> [Accessed on: 21/10/2022]).
- **All Africa.** 2022. *Zimbabwe: No Lobola, No Customary Marriage.* (Retrieved from: <https://allafrica.com/stories/202203100120.html> [Accessed on: 06/07/2022]).
- **American University, Washington, DC.** 2022. *Roe V. Wade Overturned: What it Means, What's Next.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.american.edu/cas/news/roe-v-wade-overturned-what-it-means-whats-next.cfm> [Accessed on: 20/10/2022]).
- **Asia & The Pacific Policy Society.** 2021. *India's War on NGOs: Disparaging a Crucial Sector.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.policyforum.net/indias-war-on-ngos/> [Accessed on: 09/11/2022]).
- **Chandrashekar, V.** 2020. *1.2 billion people. A 21-day lockdown. Can India curb the coronavirus?* Science. (Retrieved from: <https://www.science.org/content/article/13-billion-people-21-day-lockdown-can-india-curb-coronavirus?cookieSet=1> [Accessed on: 11/10/2022]).
- **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.** 2014. *Concluding Observations on the Combined Fourth and Fifth Periodic Reports of India.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.undocs.org/en/CEDAW/C/IND/CO/4-5> [Accessed on: 09/11/2022]).
- **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.** 2016a. *Zimbabwe State party's report* (CEDAW/C/ZWE/6) (Retrieved from: [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/ZWE/CEDAW\\_C\\_ZWE\\_RQ\\_6\\_41072\\_E.docx](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/ZWE/CEDAW_C_ZWE_RQ_6_41072_E.docx) [Accessed on: 21/10/2022]).
- **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.** 2016b. *List of issues and questions in relation to the sixth periodic report of the Republic of Zimbabwe* (Retrieved from: <https://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d%2fPPRiCAqhKb7yhsjRQNw4j9iQmKc34zuC413vLFnEFbNEox2HRF61bu5wdmfNCz%2f3r7zQiJvXThYOJyuxU9h4OAdE%2f%2bDaWKRHRvwnCG0JfudW9ANq3XHt2sbr> [Accessed on: 21/10/2022]).
- **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.** 2016c. *DB/Follow-up/India/65.* (Retrieved from: [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/Ind/INT\\_CEDAW\\_FUL\\_Ind\\_25972\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/Ind/INT_CEDAW_FUL_Ind_25972_E.pdf) [Accessed on: 12/05/2022]).
- **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.** 2020. *Concluding Observations on the Sixth Periodic Report of Zimbabwe.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.undocs.org/en/CEDAW/C/ZWE/CO/6> [Accessed on: 16/11/2022]).
- **Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.** 2021. *Combined tenth to twelfth periodic reports submitted by the United States of America under article 9 of the Convention, due in 2017\*\*.* [CERD/C/USA/10-12] (Retrieved from: <https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2053891/G2138109.pdf> [Accessed on: 04/07/2022]).
- **Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.** 2022. *Concluding observations on the combined tenth to twelfth reports of the United States of America. Advance Unedited Version.* (Retrieved from: [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/USA/CERD\\_C\\_USA\\_CO\\_10-12\\_49769\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/USA/CERD_C_USA_CO_10-12_49769_E.pdf) [Accessed on: 21/10/2022]).



- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.** 1979. *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/cedaw.pdf> [Accessed on: 28/10/2022]).
- **Dandona, R., Gupta, A., George, S., Kishan, S., and Kumar, G. A.** 2022. Domestic Violence in Indian Women: Lessons from Nearly 20 Years of Surveillance. *BMC Women's Health*, 22(128) :1-14.
- **Department of Justice.** 2021. *Office on Violence Against Women: OVW Grants and Programs.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/grant-programs#> [Accessed on: 04/07/2022]).
- **FIDH: International Federation For Human Rights.** 2022. *Zimbabwe: Private Voluntary Organisations Amendment Bill poses serious threats to freedom of association.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.fidh.org/en/region/Africa/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-private-voluntary-organisations-amendment-bill-poses-serious> [Accessed on: 16/11/2022]).
- **Financial Gazette.** 2013. *Women's Fund Abused.* (Retrieved from: <https://fingaz.co.zw/?s=Women%27s+Fund+Abused> [accessed on: 20/10/2022]).
- **Futures without Violence.** 2022. *Engaging Men to End Gender-Based Violence: A National Strategy Centre.* (Retrieved from: <https://engagingmen.futureswithoutviolence.org/about-us-2/> [Accessed on: 16/11/2022]).
- **The Gazette of India.** 2005. *The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005.* (Retrieved from: <https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/wdvact.pdf> [Accessed on: 18/10/2022]).
- **Gover, A. R., & Moore, A. M.** 2021. The 1994 Violence Against Women Act: A Historic Response to Gender Violence. *Violence Against Women*, 27(1): 8-29.
- **Government Gazette.** 2007. *Domestic Violence Act [Chapter 5:16].* (Retrieved from: <https://old.zimlil.org/zw/legislation/num-act/2006/14/Domestic%20Violence%20Act%20%5BChapter%205-16%5D.pdf> [Accessed on: 19/10/2022]).
- **Government of India, Ministry of Women & Child Development.** 1961. *Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 (Act No. 28 of 1961).* (Retrieved from: <https://wcd.nic.in/act/dowry-prohibition-act-1961> [Accessed on: 18/10/2022]).
- **Government of India, Ministry of Women & Child Development.** 2015. *One Stop Centre - Scheme Document.* (Retrieved from: <https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/ProposalforOneStopCentre17.3.2015.pdf> [Accessed on: 19/10/2022]).
- **Handcock, M. S., and Gile, K. J.** 2011. Comment: On the Concept of Snowball Sampling. *Social Methodology*, 41(1): 367-371.
- **IGI Global.** 2022. *What is Panchayat?* (Retrieved from: <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/accessing-community-rights-and-livelihood-through-tourism/49892> [Accessed on: 26/10/2022]).
- **India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF).** 2018. *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao.* (Retrieved from: [https://www.ibef.org/government-schemes/beti-bachao-beti-padhao#:~:text=The%20name%20Beti%20Bachao%2C%20Beti,\(US%24%2013.5%20million\).](https://www.ibef.org/government-schemes/beti-bachao-beti-padhao#:~:text=The%20name%20Beti%20Bachao%2C%20Beti,(US%24%2013.5%20million).) [Accessed on: 19/10/2022]).



- **India Today.** 2018. *Cows safer than women in India: Uddhav Thackeray, Sahil Joshi.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/cows-safer-than-women-in-india-uddhav-thackeray-1294119-2018-07-23> [Accessed on: 06/07/2022]).
- **International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD).** 1965. *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/cerd.pdf> [Accessed on: 28/10/2022]).
- **It's on Us.** 2022. *Mission and Impact.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.itsonus.org/about-us/mission-and-impact/> [Accessed on: 19/10/2022]).
- **Kaur, N., and Byard, R. W.** 2020. Bride Burning: A Unique and Ongoing Form of Gender-based Violence. *Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine.* 75: 2020. 1:4.
- **Kubatana.** 2019. *Protocol to the African Charter on Women's Rights - Women's Watch 1/2019.* (Retrieved from: <https://kubatana.net/2019/04/11/protocol-to-the-african-charter-on-womens-rights-womens-watch-1-2019/> [Accessed on: 16/11/2022]).
- **Merriam-Webster.** 2022. *Justice of the Peace.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/justice%20of%20the%20peace> [Accessed on: 23/11/2022]).
- **Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development.** 2011. *National Gender-Based Violence Strategy 2012-2015.* (Retrieved from: [https://www.veritaszim.net/sites/veritas\\_d/files/Zimbabwe%20National%20Gender%20Based%20Violence%20Strategy%202012%20-%202015.pdf](https://www.veritaszim.net/sites/veritas_d/files/Zimbabwe%20National%20Gender%20Based%20Violence%20Strategy%202012%20-%202015.pdf) [Accessed on: 20/10/2022]).
- **Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development.** 2013. *National Gender Policy (2013-2017)* (Retrieved from: <http://catalogue.safaid.net/sites/default/files/publications/2013%20national%20gender%20policy%20-%20final%20april%2020th.pdf> [Accessed on: 21/10/2022]).
- **Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development.** 2018. *National Action Plan and Communication Strategy on Ending Child Marriage* (Retrieved from: <https://www.zimgbvportal.org.zw/download/zimbabwe-national-action-plan-and-communication-strategy-on-ending-child-marriage/> [Accessed on: 21/10/2022]).
- **Ministry of Women and Child Development.** 2015. *Report of the High Level Committee on Status of Women in India, Vol 1* (Retrieved from: <https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Vol%20I.compressed.pdf> [Accessed on: 21/10/2022]).
- **Ministry of Women and Child Development.** 2021. *Draft proposed Guidelines of Swadhar Greh Scheme.* (Retrieved from: <https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/DRAFT%20GUIDELINES%20OF%20SWADHAR%20GREH%20SCHEME.pdf> [Accessed on: 19/10/2022]).
- **National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights.** 2018. *All India Dalit Mahila Adhikar Manch. Overview.* (Retrieved from: <http://www.ncdhr.org.in/all-india-dalit-mahila-adhikar-manch/> [Accessed on: 01/11/2022]).
- **National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs.** 2021. *Crime in India, 2020. Statistics Volume-1.* (Retrieved from: <https://ncrb.gov.in/sites/default/files/CII%202020%20Volume%201.pdf> [Accessed on: 18/10/2022]).



- **National Legal Services Authority (NLSA).** 2018. *Compensation Scheme for Women Victims/Survivors of Sexual Assault/other Crimes - 2018.* (Retrieved from: [https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Final%20VC%20Scheme\\_0.pdf](https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Final%20VC%20Scheme_0.pdf) [Accessed on: 18/10/2022]).
- **Nigam, S.** 2022. *Domestic Violence Law in India.* London: Routledge India.
- **Nigam, C.** 2017. *21 lives lost to dowry every day across India: conviction rate less than 35 per cent.* India Today. (Retrieved from: <https://www.indiatoday.in/mail-today/story/dowry-deaths-national-crime-records-bureau-conviction-rate-972874-2017-04-22> [Accessed on: 01/07/2022]).
- **Office on Violence Against Women.** 2018. *STOP Program. Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutors, 2016 Report.* (Retrieved from: [https://www.vawamei.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/final\\_2016\\_stop\\_report\\_to\\_congress\\_august\\_2018.pdf](https://www.vawamei.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/final_2016_stop_report_to_congress_august_2018.pdf) [Accessed on: 19/10/2022]).
- **Office on Violence Against Women.** 2020. *Formula Grant Programmes.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/page/file/1117621/download> [Accessed on: 19/10/2022]).
- **Office on Violence Against Women.** 2022. *Reports to Congress.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/reports-congress> [Accessed on: 19/10/2022]).
- **Ohio Men's Action Network (OHMAN).** 2022. *About: Our Mission | Our Vision.* (Retrieved from: <https://ohman-ohio.org/about/> [Accessed on: 26/10/2022]).
- **OHCHR.** 2016. *Concluding Observations on the Combined Second to Fifth Periodic Reports of Zimbabwe.* (Retrieved from: <http://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d%2FPPrICAqhKb7yhsjRQNw4j9iQmKc34zuC413t20jEdnVyLhCso0090Yy2PLEPd9yuQTM94cJPUVdMPctqn8vs1wyx4lEoXilSknsn2Te2tNU61v%2FoXMIJJJoMtZGwlfsMQzEgwAPftDAiizA%3D%3D> [Accessed on: 19/10/2022]).
- **OHCHR.** 2022. *Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against women: Overview.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/cedaw> [Accessed on: 01/07/2022]).
- **Pachauri, S. K. and Hamilton, R. N. C.** 2002. *Sati Problem - Past and Present. Proceedings of the Indian History Congress,* 63(2002): 898-908.
- **Rajagopal, L.** 2008. *The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Amendment Bill, 2008.* (Retrieved from: <http://164.100.47.4/billstexts/lsbilltexts/asintroduced/3951ls-04.pdf> [Accessed on: 18/10/2022]).
- **Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Canada.** 1998. *Zimbabwe: Whether critics of the government or human rights agencies are the subject of direct or covert harassment by the authorities with specific reference to persons advocating for women's rights in divorce proceedings.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6ac6bc.html> [Accessed on: 16/11/2022]).
- **Samarth.** 2022. *Dowry Death: A Neglected Public Health Issue in India. Int'l JL Mgmt. & Human.,* 5(2):384.
- **Sapphire, R., Ostrowski, J., Maier, M., Samurai, G., Bencomo, C., and McGovern, T.** 2022. *COVID-19 and gender-based violence service provision in the United States. PLOS ONE,* 17(2): 1-18.



- **Shift and Mazars.** 2015. *UN Guiding Principles: Reporting Framework. Civil Society Organizations (CSOS).* (Retrieved from: [https://www.ungpreporting.org/glossary/civil-society-organizations-csos/#:~:text=Non%2DState%2C%20not%2Dfor,%2Dgovernmental%20organizations%20\(NGOs\).](https://www.ungpreporting.org/glossary/civil-society-organizations-csos/#:~:text=Non%2DState%2C%20not%2Dfor,%2Dgovernmental%20organizations%20(NGOs).) [Accessed on: 30/06/2022]).
- **Sinha, V.** 2017. *Implementation of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act (2013) -an Exploratory Study.* (Retrieved from: <http://14.139.53.35/jspui/bitstream/1/2614/6/Varsha-BOOK-final-1-11.pdf> [Accessed on: 18/10/2022]).
- **Sithole, L., and Dziva, C.** 2019. Eliminating Harmful Practices Against Women in Zimbabwe: Implementing Article 5 of the African Women's Protocol. *African Human Rights Law Journal*, 19(2): 568-590.
- **Spotlight Initiative.** 2022. *What we do* (Retrieved from: <https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/what-we-do> [Accessed on: 16/11/2022]).
- **Sullivan, C.** 2016. *Examining the Work of Domestic Violence Programs Within a "Social and Emotional Well-Being Promotion" Conceptual Framework,* National Resource Center on Domestic Violence.
- **Sullivan, C.** 2018. Understanding How Domestic Violence Support Services Promote Survivor Well-being: A Conceptual Model. *Journal of Family Violence*, 33: 123-131.
- **Sultan, T.** 2021. Burning of Brides in South Asia. *Pak J Med Sci.* March-April 2021. 37(2): 608.
- **Times of India.** 2021. *Centre to Discontinue 'Mahila Police Volunteers Scheme' as State Response not Encouraging.* (Retrieved from: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/centre-to-discontinue-mahila-police-volunteers-scheme-as-state-response-not-encouraging/articleshow/88016140.cms> [Accessed on: 19/10/2022]).
- **UN.** 2022. *What is Domestic Abuse?* (Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus/what-is-domestic-abuse> [Accessed on: 11/07/22]).
- **UNDP.** 2020. *UNDP Brief: Gender-Based Violence and COVID-19.* (Retrieved from: [https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/publications/undp-gender-GBV\\_and\\_COVID-19\\_0.pdf](https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/publications/undp-gender-GBV_and_COVID-19_0.pdf) [Accessed on: 24/05/2022]).
- **UN Women.** 2009. *Anti-Domestic Violence Council.* Global Database on Violence against Women. (Retrieved from: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/fr/countries/africa/zimbabwe/2009/anti-domestic-violence-council> [Accessed on: 10/11/2022]).
- **UN Women.** 2011a. *Women's Fund.* Global Database on Violence Against Women. (Retrieved from: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/fr/countries/africa/zimbabwe/2011/women-s-fund> [Accessed on: 20/10/2022]).
- **UN Women.** 2011b. *Engaging Men Program.* (Retrieved from: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/fr/countries/americas/united-states-of-america/2011/engaging-men-program> [Accessed on: 21/10/2022]).
- **UN Women.** 2012. *High Level Committee on Status of Women.* (Retrieved from: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/fr/countries/asia/india/2012/high-level-committee-on-status-of-women> [Accessed on: 21/10/2022]).



- **UN Women.** 2013a. *Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.* Global Database on Violence against Women. (Retrieved from: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/fr/countries/asia/india/2013/sexual-harassment-of-women-at-workplace-prevention-prohibition-and-redressal-act-2013> [Accessed on: 18/10/2022]).
- **UN Women.** 2013b. *Domestic Violence Homicide Prevention Demonstration Initiative.* (Retrieved from: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/americas/united-states-of-america/2013/domestic-violence-homicide-prevention-demonstration-initiative> [Accessed on: 21/10/2022]).
- **UN Women.** 2014. *“It’s on Us” Sexual Assault Awareness Campaign.* Global Database on Violence against Women. (Retrieved from: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/americas/united-states-of-america/2014/its-on-us-sexual-assault-awareness-campaign> [Accessed on: 11/10/2022]).
- **UN Women.** 2015. *One Stop Centres.* Global Database on Violence against Women. (Retrieved from: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/asia/india/2015/one-stop-centers> [Accessed on: 11/10/2022]).
- **UN Women.** 2016. *One Stop Centres.* Global Database on Violence Against Women. (Retrieved from: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/fr/countries/africa/zimbabwe/2017/one-stop-centres> [Accessed on: 19/10/2022]).
- **UN Women.** 2021. *Your Questions Answered: Women and COVID-19 in India.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2021/7/faq-women-and-covid-19-in-india> [Accessed on: 16/11/2022]).
- **UN Women.** 2022a. *UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women: Annual Report, 2021.* (Retrieved from: [https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/07/un-trust-fund-annual-report-2021#:~:text=Publication%20\(PDF%2C%203.79MB\)](https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/07/un-trust-fund-annual-report-2021#:~:text=Publication%20(PDF%2C%203.79MB)) [Accessed on: 11/07/22]).
- **UN Women.** 2022b. *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The gender snapshot 2022.* (Retrieved from: [https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/Progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2022-en\\_0.pdf](https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/Progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2022-en_0.pdf) [Accessed on: 11/10/2022]).
- **UN Women.** 2022c. *Various One Stop Centres.* Global Database on Violence Against Women. (Retrieved from: <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/fr/countries/africa/zimbabwe/2021/various-one-stop-centres> [Accessed on: 19/10/2022]).
- **UN Women, and UNDP.** 2022. *Government responses to COVID-19: Lessons on gender equality for a world in turmoil.* P.42. (Retrieved from: [https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/Government-responses-to-COVID-19-Lessons-on-gender-equality-for-a-world-in-turmoil-en\\_0.pdf](https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/Government-responses-to-COVID-19-Lessons-on-gender-equality-for-a-world-in-turmoil-en_0.pdf) [Accessed on: 24/06/22]).
- **UN Women and UNODC.** 2022. *Gender-related Killings of Women and Girls (Femicide/Feminicide): Global Estimates of Gender-related Killings of Women and Girls in the Private Sphere in 2021. Improving Data Responses.* (Retrieved from: [https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/ap-Femicide\\_brief\\_22Nov2022\\_final2.pdf](https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/ap-Femicide_brief_22Nov2022_final2.pdf) [Accessed on: 24/11/2022]).



- **US Department of State.** 2021 *Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the United States: Fact Sheet.* Bureau of Democracy, Human rights, and Labor. (Retrieved from: <https://www.state.gov/non-governmental-organizations-ngos-in-the-united-states/> [Accessed on: 09/11/2022]).
- **Veritas.** 2016. *Zimbabwe Gender Commission Act [Chapter 10:31].* (Retrieved from: [http://www.veritaszim.net/sites/veritas\\_d/files/Zimbabwe%20Gender%20Commission%20Act%20%5BChapter%2010-31%5D.pdf](http://www.veritaszim.net/sites/veritas_d/files/Zimbabwe%20Gender%20Commission%20Act%20%5BChapter%2010-31%5D.pdf) [Accessed on: 19/10/2022]).
- **Veritas.** 2021. *Marriage Laws Amendment Bill, 2021.* (Retrieved from: [https://www.veritaszim.net/sites/veritas\\_d/files/Marriage%20Laws%20Amd%20Bill.pdf](https://www.veritaszim.net/sites/veritas_d/files/Marriage%20Laws%20Amd%20Bill.pdf) [Accessed on: 21/10/2022]).
- **White House.** 2021a. *Executive Order on Establishment of the White House Gender Policy Council. March 08, 2021.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/03/08/executive-order-on-establishment-of-the-white-house-gender-policy-council/> [Accessed on: 04/07/2022]).
- **White House.** 2021b. *National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/National-Strategy-on-Gender-Equity-and-Equality.pdf> [Accessed on: 04/07/2022]).
- **White House.** 2022. *Fact Sheet: Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).* (Retrieved from: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/03/16/fact-sheet-reauthorization-of-the-violence-against-women-act-vawa/> [Accessed on: 04/07/2022]).
- **Women Connect.** 2018. *Access to Capital for Zimbabwean Entrepreneurs. Women Development Fund* (Retrieved from: [https://www.womenconnect.org/web/zimbabwe/access-to-capital/-/asset\\_publisher/79i9QKD7Zr94/content/women-development-fund](https://www.womenconnect.org/web/zimbabwe/access-to-capital/-/asset_publisher/79i9QKD7Zr94/content/women-development-fund) [Accessed on: 16/11/2022]).
- **World Data Info.** 2022. *Inflation rates in Zimbabwe.* (Retrieved from: <https://www.worlddata.info/africa/zimbabwe/inflation-rates.php#:~:text=For%202021%2C%20an%20inflation%20rate,at%20the%20beginning%20of%202022.> [Accessed on: 20/10/2022]).
- **World Economic Forum.** 2021. *Global Gender Gap Report 2021: Insight report, March 2021.* (Retrieved from: [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GGGR\\_2021.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf) [Accessed on: 01/07/2022]).
- **World Economic Forum.** 2015. *Global Gender Gap Report 2015: Rankings.* (Retrieved from: <https://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/rankings/> [Accessed on: 01/07/2022]).
- **World Health Organisation (WHO).** 2019. *RESPECT Women: Preventing Violence Against Women.* Geneva: World Health Organisation. (Retrieved from: <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2019/RESPECT-Women-Preventing-violence-against-women-en.pdf> [Accessed on: 06/07/2022]).
- **Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP).** 2022. *About WEP.* (Retrieved from: <https://wep.gov.in/about-wep> [Accessed on: 20/10/2022]).



- **Zim Fact.** 2018. *Non-Governmental Organisations in Zimbabwe.* (Retrieved from: [https://zimfact.org/ngo\\_governmental\\_organisations\\_in\\_zimbabwe/#:~:text=These%20varied%20organisations%20have%20formed,Alliance%20of%20Zimbabwe%20among%20others](https://zimfact.org/ngo_governmental_organisations_in_zimbabwe/#:~:text=These%20varied%20organisations%20have%20formed,Alliance%20of%20Zimbabwe%20among%20others). [Accessed on: 09/11/2022]).
- **Zim Fact.** 2021. *Child marriage: One in three Zimbabwean girls married by 18* (Retrieved from: <https://zimfact.org/child-marriage-one-in-three-zimbabwean-girls-married-by-18/> [Accessed on: 21/10/2022]).





---

This publication was designed on and features images from Canva and Adobe Stock. For the images not from these platforms, credit has been given to the source of the image throughout the publication.