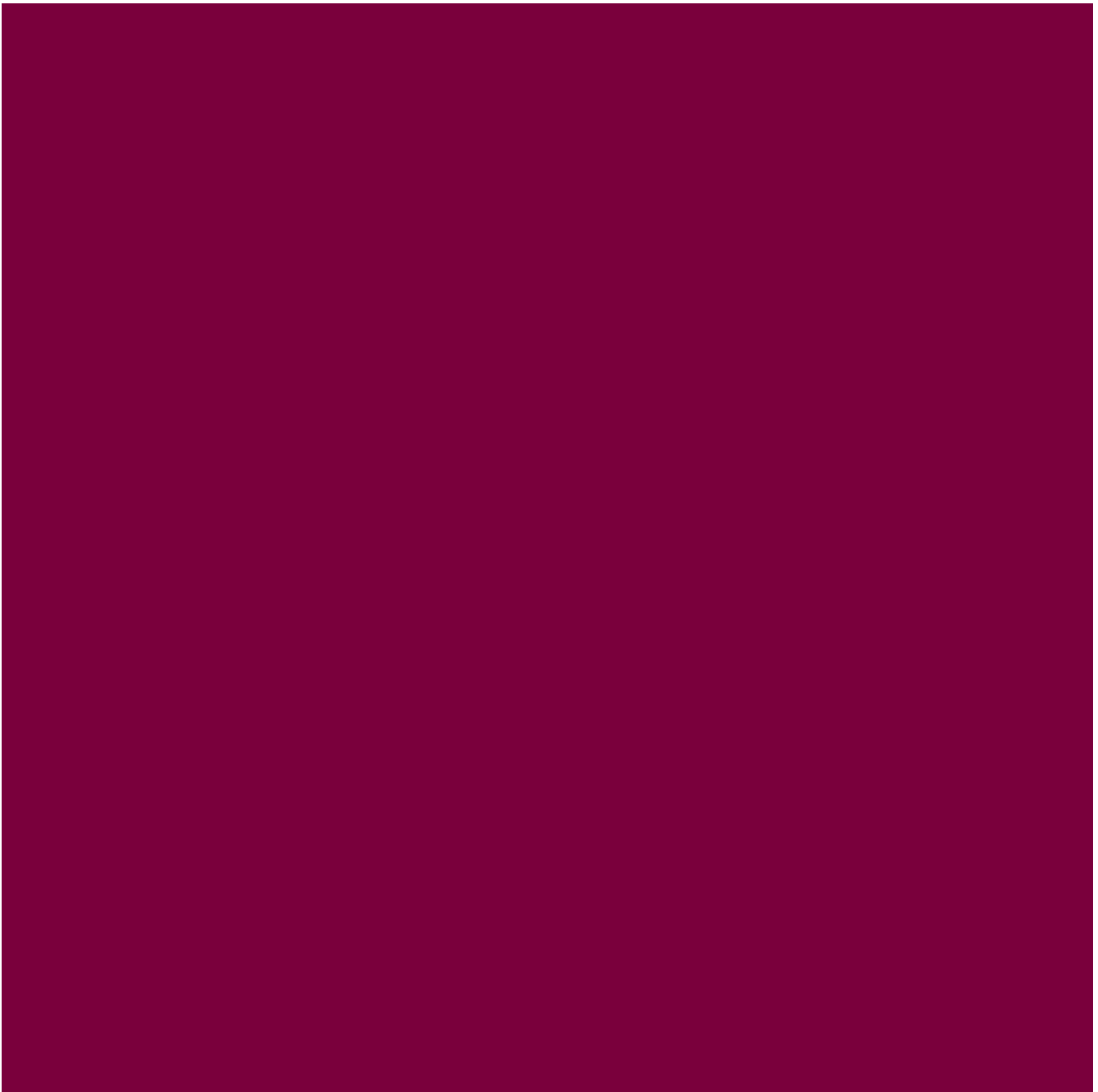


# Action Plan for Sida's Work Against Gender-Based Violence 2008–2010





# Table of Contents

1. Background and Assignment .....	5
2. Gender-Based Violence and Swedish Development Cooperation ....	7
2.1 Existing Legal and Policy Framework on Gender-Based Violence .....	7
2.2 Sida's Work on Gender-Based Violence .....	8
3. Gender-Based Violence: Definitions .....	9
3.1 Gender-Based Violence Due to Harmful Traditional or Customary Practices.....	10
3.1.1 <i>Female Genital Mutilation</i> .....	10
3.1.2 <i>Violence in the Name of Honour</i> .....	10
3.2 Violence Against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People .....	11
3.3 Sexual Abuse in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations .....	11
3.4 Domestic Violence.....	12
3.5 Other Forms of Gender-Based Violence .....	13
4. Entry Points in Development Cooperation to Combat Gender-Based Violence .....	14
4.1 Tackling Gender-Based Violence is Crucial for Poverty Reduction .....	14
4.2 Gender-Based Violence is a Violation of Human Rights.....	14
4.3 Tackling Gender-Based Violence is Key to Reversing the spread of HIV .....	15
4.4 Tackling Gender-Based Violence is Essential in Order to Protect and Promote Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights .....	15
5. Goals and Activities During the Action Plan Period .....	17
5.1 The Overall Objective .....	17
5.2 Intermediate Objective 1: The Preventive Measures, the Legal Measures and the Services and Care for Victims/Survivors of Gender-Based Violence in Sida's Partner Countries Have Increased and Improved. ....	18

5.3 Intermediary Objective 2: The Awareness and Commitment to Reduce Gender-Based Violence in the Partner Countries Have Increased. ....	19
5.4 Intermediary Objective 3: The Knowledge About Gender-Based Violence, Its Causes and Expressions Have Increased Among Key Sida Staff and Implementing Partners.....	19
6. Responsibilities, Financing and Follow up.....	20
Appendix Recommendations .....	21



Published by Sida 2007

Department for Democracy and Social Development

Author: Gender Secretariat

Printed by Edita Communication AB, 2007

Art. no.: SIDA38656en

This publication can be downloaded/ordered from [www.Sida.se/publications](http://www.Sida.se/publications)

# 1. Background and Assignment

The goal of Swedish development cooperation is to help create conditions that will enable poor people to improve their quality of life. Gender-based violence undermines both social and economic development and the individual's capacity for realising her or his rights and potentials under already strained conditions.

The UN Secretary General's report *In-depth study on all forms of violence against women* states that gender-based violence is a universal problem, existing in all countries, religions and social classes. It is a pervasive violation of human rights and a major obstacle to achieving gender equality. It also poses a serious threat to democratic development and public health – especially sexual and reproductive health – and is a critical barrier to fighting HIV/AIDS and to achieving sustainable development. The UN report on violence against women explicitly recognises that “male violence against women is generated by socio-cultural attitudes and cultures of violence in all parts of the world, and *especially by norms about the control of female reproduction and sexuality*”.<sup>1</sup>

In the *Letter of Appropriation for 2007*, the Government stated: “By the 30th of September 2007, Sida shall submit an action plan for the concrete work to follow up the conclusions and recommendations both from the mapping report about Sida contributions that aims to combat gender-based violence<sup>2</sup>, and the UN Secretary General's report on violence against women from October 2006. The action plan shall include different forms of gender-based violence, with special attention to combating female genital mutilation, violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, sexual abuse in conflict and post conflict situations, domestic violence and violence in the name of honour.”

---

<sup>1</sup> United Nations (2006), “In-depth study on all forms of violence against women, Report of the Secretary General”, p 23 (in the text: the “UN report on violence against women”), <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/SGstudyvaw.htm>, 2007-08-06.

<sup>2</sup> Peck, L.(2006), “Review of Sida's work against gender-based violence” (in the text: “the Review”).

*The overall objective of Sida's action plan* is to contribute to a reduction of gender-based violence and to promote the rights and the economic and political empowerment of those subject to gender-based violence - mainly women and girls - in Sida's partner countries and in humanitarian assistance.

*The intermediary objectives* are to increase and improve (i) the preventive measures, (ii) the legal measures and (iii) the services and care for victims/survivors of gender-based violence in the partner countries. In order to reach this the awareness and commitment in the partner countries to reduce gender-based violence must increase. For this purpose key Sida staff and implementing partners must improve the knowledge about gender-based violence, its causes and expressions.



# 2. Gender-Based Violence and Swedish Development Cooperation

## 2.1 Existing Legal and Policy Framework on Gender-Based Violence

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)<sup>3</sup> states that all parties shall eliminate all discrimination against women. This was further developed in the Beijing Platform for Action where one of the identified strategic areas of action is the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls.<sup>4</sup> The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)<sup>5</sup> states that all children shall be protected from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court defines certain forms of sexual violence as crimes against humanity and war crimes.<sup>6</sup>

Several regional bodies have adopted binding instruments prohibiting violence against women. The Protocol to the African Charter on human and people's rights on the rights of women in Africa<sup>7</sup>, the Inter-American Convention on the prevention, punishment and eradication of violence against women "Convention of Belem do Pará"<sup>8</sup>, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Convention on preventing and combating trafficking in women and children for prostitution<sup>9</sup>, and policy documents such as the Council of Europe Recommendation 5 (2002) of the Committee of Ministers<sup>10</sup> all include affirmations about the obligations to protect women and girls and end violence.

Sweden's policy for global development emphasises the need to take action against gender-based violence: "The notion that women and children are subordinate to men and have no rights, and can therefore be

---

<sup>3</sup> CEDAW was adopted in 1979 by the UN GA, entered into force in 1981, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>, 2007-08-06.

<sup>4</sup> The Beijing Declaration, Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/declar.htm>, 2007-08-13.

<sup>5</sup> CRC was adopted in 1989 by the UN GA, entered into force in 1990, <http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/pdf/crc.pdf>, 2007-08-13.

<sup>6</sup> The Rome Statute was adopted in 1998, entered into force in 2002, <http://www.un.org/law/icc/index.html>, 2007-09-05.

<sup>7</sup> Adopted 2003, entered into force 2005, [http://www.achpr.org/english/\\_info/women\\_en.html](http://www.achpr.org/english/_info/women_en.html), 2007-09-05.

<sup>8</sup> Adopted 1994, entered into force 1995, <http://www.oas.org/cim/English/Convention%20Violence%20Against%20Women.htm>, 2007-09-05.

<sup>9</sup> Adopted in 2002, but not yet in force, <http://www.saarc-sec.org/old/freepubs/conv-trafficking.pdf>, 2007-09-05.

<sup>10</sup> Adopted 2002, [http://www.coe.int/t/e/human\\_rights/equality/05\\_violence\\_against\\_women/003\\_Rec\(2002\)05.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/equality/05_violence_against_women/003_Rec(2002)05.asp), 2007-09-12.

abused and exploited with impunity must be combated /.../ Analyses must be made and appropriate measures devised in each specific area that takes into account issues such as gender discrimination, violence against women and girls and sexual and reproductive rights /.../”<sup>11</sup> Guidelines in Sweden’s strategy Poverty and Trafficking in Human Beings (2003) outline priorities and measures to combat the particular form of gender-based violence and crime that trafficking comprises, and Sweden’s action plan (2006) to implement UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security contains actions to be taken to strengthen judicial systems and protect women and girls from gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict countries.

In May 2006 the Swedish Parliament adopted a new Gender Equality Policy with the main objective that “women and men shall have equal power to shape society and their own lives”. One of the four interim objectives is “Men’s violence against women shall come to an end. Women and men, girls and boys, shall have equal rights and opportunities to physical integrity”.<sup>12</sup>

Sida’s *Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality* highlights gender-based violence, stating that “Sida will give support to securing women’s and children’s right to physical integrity” and “/.../ Sida will address the specific needs of women and men, girls and boys [in conflict situations] – for example by strengthening women’s participation in peace processes and by promoting changes to societal norms around gender-based violence”.<sup>13</sup>

## 2.2 Sida’s Work on Gender-Based Violence

In 2006 Sida commissioned a study of its ongoing contributions combating gender-based violence. The Review of Sida’s work against gender-based violence identified 66 ongoing targeted Sida financed interventions, defined as interventions where combating gender-based violence is an explicit objective. There are also a number of interventions where the combat of gender-based violence is included as an “aspect” or a “theme”. Gender-based violence was also found to be part of a dialogue in a few cases.

The Review concludes that Sida should clarify its use of the concept gender-based violence, since it was found that it has different meanings to different people. As the Review points out there is an absence of a Sida policy, a position paper or a strategy regarding gender-based violence.

The Review asserts that a multiple approach will be required to work against gender-based violence. The need for contextualisation is also stressed and the Review challenges Sida to reflect on how and when combating gender-based violence can best be integrated in broader programmes and when there is a need for more focused action. It is suggested that Sida’s roles as financier, analyst and dialogue partner should be strengthened regarding gender-based violence. Finally the Review recommends that the present difficulties for systematic follow-up should be addressed.

---

<sup>11</sup> Government Offices of Sweden (2003) “Shared responsibility: Policy for global Development”, p 25.

<sup>12</sup> Prop. 2005/06:155 “Makt att forma samhället och sitt eget liv – nya mål i jämställdhetspolitiken”. <http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/3208,2007-08-06>.

<sup>13</sup> Sida (2005), “Policy Promoting Gender Equality in Development Cooperation”, p 9.

# 3. Gender-Based Violence: Definitions

There is no single internationally accepted definition for gender-based violence as such. CEDAW defines gender-based violence as “violence that is directed towards a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately”.<sup>14</sup> The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993) uses “gender-based violence” as part of the definition of “Violence against Women”.<sup>15</sup> UNIFEM states that “Gender-based violence can be defined as: violence involving men and women, in which the female is usually the victim and which arises from unequal power relationships between men and women”.<sup>16</sup>

Women and girls comprise by far the majority of the targets of gender-based violence. An estimated one-third of all women and girls in the world have been exposed to rape or physical violence of some kind at least once during their lifetime<sup>17</sup>, and much of this violence is done with impunity. Children with disabilities, especially girls, are often subjected to corporal or sexual violence, even in schools or other institutional settings, from peers as well as from male teachers and others in authority. Boys and men can become vulnerable to gender-based violence, for example in conflicts, by rape or through trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation. In peacetime those men and boys who do not conform to prescribed norms around gender or sexuality are highly at risk. According to a WHO-study in 2002, men perpetrate 90–95% of all violent acts.<sup>18</sup> It is clear that when talking about gender-based violence it is above all men’s violence against women and girls that is dealt with. It should also be noted that various kinds of gender-based violence are often closely interlinked with one another.

Sida has developed a definition of gender-based violence, relevant for Swedish development cooperation that encompasses what is being done to whom, with what effect and which includes why the violence is being perpetrated:

---

<sup>14</sup> CEDAW, General Recommendation No 19, 1992.

<sup>15</sup> The UN Declaration defines Violence against Women as: “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life”. <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>, 2007-08-06.

<sup>16</sup> UNIFEM Gender Fact Sheet No. 5, <http://www.unifem-eseasia.org/resources/factsheets/UNIFEMSheet5.pdf>, 2007-08-06.

<sup>17</sup> WHO (2002), “World report on violence and health”, cited in Government Offices of Sweden (2005), “Patriarchal violence – an attack on human security”, p 34.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, p 35.

*Any harm or suffering that is perpetrated against a woman or girl, man or boy and that has a negative impact on the physical, sexual or psychological health, development or identity of the person. The cause of the violence is founded in gender-based power inequalities and gender-based discrimination.*

### **3.1 Gender-Based Violence Due to Harmful Traditional or Customary Practices**

The tackling of harmful traditional or customary practices must challenge the conservative patriarchal norms and control that concerns notions of the subordination of women, the superiority of men and men's right of power over and access to women and children. Such notions exist in all societies and reflect the beliefs and convictions of the populations concerned. Their manifestations may vary however, and in terms of gender-based violence such practices are detrimental to the health and very lives of women and children.

#### **3.1.1 Female Genital Mutilation**

According to the UN report on violence against women, it is estimated that more than 130 million girls and women alive today have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM)<sup>19</sup>, mainly in Africa and some countries in the Middle East.<sup>20</sup> The practice also occurs in Europe, Asia and the Americas. Some progress has been made towards eliminating the practice. The UN report on violence against women notes that, as of April 2006, fifteen of the 28 African states where FGM is prevalent had made it an offence under criminal law. Of the nine states in Asia and the Arabian Peninsula where FGM is prevalent among certain groups, two have enacted legal measures prohibiting it.

Conservative conceptions around women's sexuality and reproduction which lie at the heart of FGM must be challenged. For example around women's chastity, and the underlying belief that women's bodies, sexualities and offspring must be controlled by men, their families or society. Gender discrimination is literally embodied through practices of FGM, although the practice is usually performed by elder women on girls or young women.

Eliminating FGM is fundamentally about the right of all persons to the highest attainable standard of health, and to make choices regarding their own bodies and sexualities. Realising these rights in practice requires a positive approach to sexuality which empowers women and girls to assert their bodily integrity, as well as awareness and knowledge about the linkages between FGM and sexual and reproductive ill-health, fistula and morbidity in females.

#### **3.1.2 Violence in the Name of Honour**

Violence in the name of honour occurs in societies in which patriarchal control of women's and girls' autonomy, especially their sexuality is perceived as fundamental for a man's, a family's or community's honour or respectability. In some countries or regions, a legal distinction is made between murder and killings for reasons relating to honour, with much lesser punishment for the latter.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Many organisations working with communities refer to the act as "cutting", maintaining this term to be more value-neutral.

<sup>20</sup> United Nations (2006), p 39.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations (2002), "Working towards the elimination of crimes committed in the name of honour" Report of the Secretary General" <http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/AllSymbols/985168F508EE799FC1256C52002AE5A9/%24File/N0246790.pdf?OpenElement>, 2007-08-07.

In the Sida Review, honour-related violence is defined as “violence with the justification that the victim has brought ‘dishonour’ to the family”, usually because the person has “not lived up to the established norm for a woman/girl or a man/boy”.<sup>22</sup> As the Review notes men will not be punished for the same things as women. Honour crimes have a collective dimension with the family or community as a whole considering itself to be humiliated by the woman’s or man’s actual or perceived behaviour. Violence against LGBT people can be related to concepts of honour, and domestic violence is often related to honour although it is rarely discussed in such terms. The most severe form of honour-related violence is murder (honour killings) but such violence also includes honour suicide.

### **3.2 Violence Against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People**

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people face high levels of gender-based violence and discrimination worldwide.<sup>23</sup> In more than 80 countries, many of which are Sida’s cooperation partners, relations between people of the same sex are criminalised, and six countries may issue death sentences.<sup>24</sup> However, even where the legal framework is supportive, violence continues and a large part of the violence is perpetrated by the family or the community, such as hate crimes. Violence is also often perpetrated by or in state institutions such as by the police or in prisons irrespective of the legal framework.

One of the key factors triggering this discrimination is that LGBT people diverge from gender identity and sexuality norms. Lesbian, gay or bisexual women, men and transgender may be seen as “not proper women” or “not proper men”. Girls and boys with real or perceived same sex sexualities may be subject to corporal punishment or sexual violence for so called correctional purposes. Intersex children may be discriminated against and subject to violence.

The *Yogyakarta Principles* on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity, states that “many states and societies impose gender and sexual orientation norms on individuals through custom, law and violence and seek to control how they experience personal relationships and how they identify themselves. The policing of sexuality remains a major force behind continuing gender-based violence and gender inequality.”<sup>25</sup>

### **3.3 Sexual Abuse in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations**

It has been estimated that 12 000 women were raped during the first half of 2006 in DR Congo<sup>26</sup>. Between 250 000 and 500 000 women were raped during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.<sup>27</sup>

Gender-based violence increases in situations of conflict and post-conflict. This is due to factors in existence prior to the disaster and others which arise as a result of the emergency, such as heightened tensions within communities and households and large scale population movements. Displacement exacerbates the risk of gender-based violence due to

---

<sup>22</sup> Peck (2006), p 14.

<sup>23</sup> Samelius, L., Wågberg, E. (2005), “Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Issues in Development Cooperation”, p 19-21.

<sup>24</sup> RFSL & ILGA (2007), “State Homophobia”, [http://app.rfsl.se/apa/19/public\\_files/State\\_homophobia\\_ILGA\\_2007.pdf](http://app.rfsl.se/apa/19/public_files/State_homophobia_ILGA_2007.pdf), 2007-08-06.

<sup>25</sup> The Yogyakarta Principles (2007) is a non-binding political tool and an interpretation of legally binding human rights conventions, <http://www.yogyakartaprinciples.org/>, 2007-08-06.

<sup>26</sup> OCHA/IRIN (2007), <http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthId=53&ReportId=71974>, 2007-09-12.

<sup>27</sup> Cited in Peck (2006), p 14.

poor welfare services and the breakdown of social networks and justice systems.

Sexual violence is being used as a deliberate strategy of war, which more often than not is committed with impunity. Women and girls are targets, much more often than men and boys. Girls as well as boys are kidnapped and forcibly recruited into fighting forces and followers. Soldiers use rape and forced pregnancy as instruments of warfare to degrade and humiliate women or girls and their families, and to destroy the social fabric of a community.<sup>28</sup> Rape of men and boys may be aimed at humiliating the man or boy and undermining his masculinity. Various reports give testimony of girl-soldiers being forced to marry and have sexual relations with their military commanders.

There is also an increased risk of rape of women and girls in refugee camps (including by male emergency personnel). Internally displaced or refugee women and girls are particularly vulnerable since they bear primary responsibility for collecting food, water and firewood – often outside the camps where violence may be committed with impunity.

Prostitution may increase in war and conflict affected areas both due to an increase in demand for sex, including from male international presence, and as women deal with the loss of income, home and supportive family members.

### 3.4 Domestic Violence

The lifetime prevalence of physical violence that women suffer by an intimate partner range between 13 and 61% in countries included in the WHO *Multi-country study on domestic violence against women*.<sup>29</sup> The most common form of violence is intimate partner violence defined in the UN report on violence against women as including “a range of sexually, psychologically and physically coercive acts used against adult and adolescent women by a current or former intimate partner, without her consent”.<sup>30</sup> Yet intimate partner and domestic violence continues to be seen as a private matter in most societies. Women are often held responsible for the domestic violence perpetrated against them, creating stigma which may deter women and girls from seeking medical services or legal redress. Physical abuse is often accompanied with verbal, psychological and economic abuse and restrictions put on the woman’s movements and contacts with family and community. Widows, elderly and disabled women are also subject to this type of abuse. Domestic violence also takes place in LGBT households. Within the domestic realm, girls and boys are also subject to gender-based violence. Children witnessing domestic violence are also victims who are deeply affected or even traumatised by such violence. There are reports of domestic violence increasing in post-conflict contexts.

The UN report on violence against women argues that intimate partner violence “is significantly correlated with rigid gender roles that associate masculinity with dominance, toughness, male authority in the home and threats to male authority”.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Ilkkaracan, P. and Jolly, S (2007), “Gender and Sexuality Overview Report”, <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/CEP-Sexuality-OR.pdf>, 2007-08-06.

<sup>29</sup> WHO (2005), “Multi Country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence against Women, Initial results on prevalence, health outcomes and women’s response”, [http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who\\_multicountry\\_study/en/](http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who_multicountry_study/en/), 2007-08-06.

<sup>30</sup> United Nations (2006), p 37.

<sup>31</sup> United Nations (2006), p 29.

### **3.5 Other Forms of Gender-Based Violence**

There are many other forms of gender-based violence than those mentioned above. Without being comprehensive, these also include: the specific murder of women and girls – femicide and female infanticide, all forms of non-consenting sexual acts and sexual violence, rape, sexual assault and harassment, prostitution and trafficking for sexual and other purposes, forced sterilisation and forced abortion. It also includes harmful traditional practices such as forced and child marriage, selective abortion due to son preference, non-consenting male circumcision, dowry crimes, bride-price abuse and widow inheritance.



# 4. Entry Points in Development Cooperation to Combat Gender-Based Violence

*Taking the perspective of people living in poverty* into account means that the needs, interests and conditions of those living with violence must be given priority in deciding how gender-based violence shall be combated. *The rights perspective* is based on an internationally accepted framework putting the individual at the centre, as a rights holder, and putting binding obligations on States to prevent, eradicate and punish such violence.

A strategic entry point in the practical development cooperation is the sector programmes, mostly in the justice, health and education sectors.

## 4.1 Tackling Gender-Based Violence is Crucial for Poverty Reduction

As stated in the UN report on violence against women: “violence prevents women from contributing to, and benefiting from, development by restricting their choices and limiting their ability to act. The resulting consequences for economic growth and poverty reduction should be of central concern to governments”.<sup>32</sup> Achieving the first Millennium Development Goal on reducing poverty thus requires a sustained focus on tackling gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence is not only a cause of poverty but also a consequence of it. Conflict over scarce economic resources and limited mobility restricts women and girls’ access to education, health, livelihood opportunities and resources, both due to fears and threats of sexual violence and ideas about chastity and reputation.

Gender-based violence has also an underestimated economic cost in terms of health services and care, police and judicial sector, and related absenteeism which results in decreased workforce and productivity and reduced family income.<sup>33</sup>

## 4.2 Gender-Based Violence is a Violation of Human Rights

Gender-based violence violates human rights. The Committee overseeing the implementation of CEDAW has made clear that all forms of violence against women fall within the definition of discrimination against women as set out in the Convention. The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 underlined that

---

<sup>32</sup> United Nations (2006), p 22.

<sup>33</sup> UNFPA, UNIFEM & OSAGI (2005), “Combating Gender-Based Violence: A Key to Achieving the MDGs”, <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/detail.cfm?ID=266>, 2007-08-06.



violence against women is both a violation of women's human rights and an impediment to the full enjoyment by women of all human rights.

International human rights law imposes an absolute prohibition of discrimination in regard to the full enjoyment of all human rights. Respect for sexual rights, sexual orientation and gender identity is integral to the realisation of equality between women and men, girls and boys. Individuals have a right to decide freely on matters related to their sexuality. The Yogyakarta Principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity puts focus on the primary obligation of States to implement human rights for LGBT people.

Recognizing violence against women and other forms of gender-based violence as a violation of human rights clarifies the binding obligations on States to prevent, eradicate and punish such violence and States' accountability if they fail to comply with these obligations. To meet their human rights obligations States should seek to transform the social and cultural norms regulating the relations of power between men and women and other linked systems of subordination. Addressing gender-based violence as a human rights issue empowers survivors and victims of gender-based violence as active rights-holders and it implies a holistic response that adds a human rights dimension to work in all sectors.

### **4.3 Tackling Gender-Based Violence is Key to Reversing the spread of HIV**

A study in South Africa showed that women who were beaten by their male partners were 48% more likely to become infected by HIV than women in non-violent relationships.<sup>34</sup> Forced sex increases women's vulnerability to HIV by making it difficult or impossible to negotiate safer sex. Violent sexual encounters also increase the risk of tears or abrasions to the vaginal wall, greatly exacerbating women's biological vulnerability to infection. Young girls are especially susceptible due to the under development of their reproductive tracts. In high HIV prevalence countries, special health care protocols are needed for rape survivors with prophylactic treatment with anti-retroviral medicines.

Fear of gender-based violence, or the stigma associated with having been victimised, is also an obstacle to accessing information, care and treatment for HIV/AIDS, or to getting tested in the first place. An effective response to the HIV pandemic thus requires addressing the issue of gender-based violence and recognising the intersection of gender-based violence with HIV and AIDS. Making progress towards the Millennium Development Goal on combating HIV and AIDS critically depends on tackling gender-based violence.

### **4.4 Tackling Gender-Based Violence is Essential in Order to Protect and Promote Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights**

Gender-based discrimination and violence, including forced sex, is the cause of many sexual and reproductive health problems including sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancy. Unwanted pregnancy can have serious repercussions, including unsafe abortions, as well as ostracism by family members leading to social isolation, suicide and sometimes murder. In addition, violence before, during and after preg-

---

<sup>34</sup> UNAIDS, UNFPA & UNIFEM (2004), "Women and HIV/AIDS: Confronting the crisis", <http://www.unfpa.org/hiv/women/>, 2007-08-06.

nancy is linked to a range of pregnancy-related problems, such as miscarriage, preterm labour or maternal mortality.

The stigma associated with sex and sexuality may deter women, girls and LGBT people from seeking or receiving medical services. This is especially true in the case of girls who are assumed not to need sexual health services because they are not expected to be having sex. The staff at health services are often not adequately trained and equipped to deal with health problems relating to e.g. FGM, rape and other sexual violence which leaves the underlying problem undealt with. Achieving success on the Millennium Development Goal on reducing maternal mortality is thus dependent on a reduction of gender-based violence.

# 5. Goals and Activities During the Action Plan Period

The background and the analysis made of what Sida is already doing, the understanding of the concept of gender-based violence and the entry points in development cooperation leads up to the following objectives and activities to be carried out during 2008–2010.

## **5.1 The Overall Objective**

*The overall objective* of this action plan is to contribute to a reduction of gender-based violence and to promote the rights and the economic and political empowerment of those subject to gender-based violence – mainly women and girls – in Sida’s partner countries and in humanitarian assistance.

*The intermediary objectives are* to increase and improve (i) the preventive measures, (ii) the legal measures and (iii) the services and care for victims/survivors of gender-based violence in the partner countries. In order to reach this the awareness and commitment in the partner countries to reduce gender-based violence must increase. For this purpose key Sida staff and implementing partners must improve the knowledge about gender-based violence, its causes and expressions.

## 5.2 Intermediate Objective 1: The Preventive Measures, the Legal Measures and the Services and Care for Victims/Survivors of Gender-Based Violence in Sida's Partner Countries Have Increased and Improved.

Activity	Output	When	Immediate target	Responsibility
Support contributions that include GBV, while having a clear focus on human rights, HIV/AIDS or SRHR.	The contributions and components (for example in sector programmes) that are ongoing or under preparation on GBV dealing with human rights, HIV/AIDS or SRHR have been improved.	2008–2010	Implementing partners, key Sida staff.	DCS, Regional Departments, DESO, SEKA.
Support contributions to combat FGM, violence against LGBT, sexual abuse in conflict and post conflict situations, the domestic violence, and honour related violence.	The contributions and components that are ongoing or under preparation on one or more of the forms of GBV have been improved.	2008–2010	Implementing partners, key Sida staff.	DCS, Regional Departments, DESO, SEKA.
Support humanitarian interventions with explicit care for preventing and reducing GBV.	At least three humanitarian interventions per year have clear GBV related goals and indicators.	2008–2010	Implementing partners.	SEKA/HUM.
Provide support to research and development of statistics about GBV.	The level of available data for implementers has increased.	2008–2010	Academics, implementing partners.	SAREC, DCS, DESO, SEKA.
Support a multiyear regional network initiative of Nordic Embassies and regional bodies in Africa, to scale up action against GBV and make best practices visible.	Production of an inventory of best practices and recommendations on how peer review mechanisms may include GBV, as well as advocacy and launching of campaigns against GBV in conjunction with high profile events.	2008–2010	AU/NEPAD/APRM, IGAD and member states in Africa.	Embassy in Addis Abeba, DESO.
Provide advice and technical assistance for inclusion of GBV in cooperation strategies, programme support and projects.	Attention to and goals related to GBV is clearly reflected in at least 3 cooperation strategies per year, and followed up in the yearly reporting.	2008–2010	Key Sida staff at Regional Departments and DCS.	DESO, SEKA, Regional Departments.

### 5.3 Intermediary Objective 2: The Awareness and Commitment to Reduce Gender-Based Violence in the Partner Countries Have Increased.

Activity	Output	When	Immediate target	Responsibility
Provide advice and technical assistance on how to conduct a dialogue on GBV.	At least one dialogue strategy around GBV is developed per year.	2008–2010	Key Sida management and staff at DCS.	DESO, SEKA, Regional Departments.
Target media around the International day for the elimination of Violence against Women (the 25th of November) and the Campaign “16 days against Gender-based Violence” (25/11–10/12).	Media, both in Sweden and in the partner countries where Sida works against GBV, has given attention to the International day and the Campaign against GBV.	2008–2010	Media	INFO, DESO, DCS.
Issues around GBV are raised in all relevant contacts with multilaterals.	The targeted multilaterals include GBV in their contacts and dialogue with Sida’s partner countries.	2008–2010	Multilaterals	DESO

### 5.4 Intermediary Objective 3: The Knowledge About Gender-Based Violence, Its Causes and Expressions Have Increased Among Key Sida Staff and Implementing Partners.

Activity	Output	When	Immediate target	Responsibility
A one-day high-level conference on gender-based violence at Sida Stockholm.	GBV has been highlighted as a prioritised issue in Swedish development cooperation and the Action Plan has been officially launched.	First half-year 2008	Sida Gender Focal Points, key Sida staff, civil society, consultants and researchers.	DESO
Three seminars per year, highlighting different forms of GBV and the identified entry points to combat GBV.	Continued and improved knowledge about GBV among key Sida staff and implementers.	2008–2010	Sida Gender Focal Points, key Sida management and staff, civil society, consultants and researchers.	DESO
Develop training modules on GBV with focus on project preparation, implementation and dialogue.	At least two modules – one one-day course to be held at least twice a year 2009–2010, and one for a one-hour mini-workshop for use in division-meetings, training and courses held at Sida and in the field around gender equality, human rights, SRHR and HIV/AIDS.	2008–2010	Sida Gender Focal Points, key Sida management and staff.	DESO
Develop a user-friendly statistical tool for GBV interventions.	A tool which will make it easy to keep track of Sida’s GBV contributions, and facilitate systematic follow up.	2008–2010	Sida Gender Focal Points, key Sida management and staff working with GBV.	DESO
Participation in international conferences and fora on GBV.	Participation in at least one international meeting per year.	2008–2010	Key Sida staff.	DESO, DCS, Regional Dep.

# 6. Responsibilities, Financing and Follow up

The overall responsibility for implementation of the action plan rests with Sida's General Director. Each Head of Department or Development Cooperation Section is responsible for carrying out their respective activities and contributions. The coordination and the yearly follow up of the action plan is the responsibility of the Gender Secretariat. A working group with representatives from various departments is established within Sida to monitor the implementation of the action plan activities.

The resources needed shall be made available for the implementation of this action plan. Financing for the activities will primarily be allocated from the respective country appropriations and from regional programmes. In cases of global importance and interest global programme funds shall be allocated.

An evaluation of how the action plan has reached its objectives and how it has been implemented shall be carried out by the end of the three-year period.

# Appendix

## Recommendations

With the following tips and ideas Sida intends to provide some help for analysis and thinking in the processes that Sida staff and implementing partners will be involved in regarding gender-based violence (GBV) in the development cooperation work. These recommendations are not specific guidelines, nor a methods handbook, but they are intended to provide some ideas when it comes to dialogue and direct contributions.

When it comes to combating gender-based violence, the context will be very different from setting to setting, making it almost impossible to give an all encompassing map on how to analyse, how to engage in a good dialogue and even less on how to choose the best contribution.

Central to all efforts to combat gender-based violence is to listen to the victims/survivors and ensure that the perspectives and voices of victims/survivors of violence are central to the design and implementation of all policies and programmes. It shall always be remembered that it is critical to address the survivors' fears for their safety in the process.

### **Legal and Policy Framework, Including Legal Reform**

- Support and coordinate with existing government and civil society initiatives working to enact laws prohibiting GBV and improve existing laws.
- Support the implementation and follow-up of international and regional conventions and national laws and agreements prohibiting all forms of GBV including harmful traditions and customs.
- Support initiatives to combat impunity for crimes of GBV.
- Support women's and girls' right to property, land, inheritance, employment and income to increase options available to women who might want to leave abusive relationships and establish their own households. It is also key to transforming women's subordinate status in society.
- Support the implementation of the Yogyakarta Principles on the application of human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Empower women, girls and LGBT people by raising their awareness about their rights and enhancing their ability to demand and exercise such rights – including awareness of how to claim these rights through the justice system.
- Support human rights and women's rights defenders working against GBV.

## Services

- Support existing government and civil society initiatives working to improve access to appropriate services and support options for survivors of GBV. This may involve setting up services where none currently exist, including psycho-social counselling services and economic services, improving access to and awareness of existing services, and tackling the stigma that exists around the use of these services, especially for women, girls and LGBT people facing multiple discrimination.
- Support the establishment of safe houses and women's shelters.
- Ensure that service providers receive clear guidelines and protocols for working with victims/survivors of GBV, as well as on-going gender-sensitivity training.
- Support coordination of services where possible, including health-care, counselling, housing, and law enforcement.
- Ensure the security of refugee settings by involving women and girls in the design, layout and implementation of different development and humanitarian programmes, so that the risk of sexual attack is reduced and so that their perceptions and opinions are taken into account. This should be done in accordance with the UNHCR Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women.
- Work with government to ensure that adequate budget allocations are made.

## Prevention: Challenging Attitudes and Behaviour

- Support the development of prevention strategies that identify and challenge the oppressive gender ideologies at the root of GBV – such as the value placed on women's chastity, the belief that men should be "macho", and that transgender and same sex desire are abnormal.
- Recognise and protect women's, girls' and LGBT people's right to control their bodies and sexuality. This requires adopting a positive approach to sexuality which demands not only an end to GBV, but also seeks to empower women and girls to assert their bodily integrity.
- Make committed efforts to identify and support innovative strategies at the grassroots and local level to engage men and boys as well as women and girls, and scale-up initiatives that are working.
- Promote men's and boys' adjustment to changing gender roles and their understanding of oppressive effects of gender inequality. Work with men as perpetrators, but also with those that promote rejection of violence.
- Address men's and boys' particular vulnerabilities to GBV as well as specific cases and characteristics of abuse – especially in the context of armed conflict.
- Support research about who experiences GBV, where, and with which associated causal factors (alcohol abuse, cultural practices, armed conflict, etc), to enable Sida and others to better target interventions to reduce GBV, as well as interventions to assist survivors.
- Support education about gender equality, sexuality education and information in schools and other places where young people meet.
- Support to the elaboration of statistics and other data on GBV.
- Promote greater understanding of the need to tackle GBV in the context of reconciliation processes.





*Halving poverty by 2015 is one of the greatest challenges of our time, requiring cooperation and sustainability. The partner countries are responsible for their own development. Sida provides resources and develops knowledge and expertise, making the world a richer place.*



SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

SE-105 25 Stockholm Sweden  
Phone: +46 (0)8 698 50 00  
Fax: +46 (0)8 20 88 64  
sida@sida.se, www.sida.se