

# Gender-based violence & the gender dimension of human trafficking



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# The concept GBV

- Gender-based violence (GBV) refers to harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender.
- GBV is one of the most pervasive forms of gender-based inequality and is rooted in the abuse of power and harmful norms.
- Gender-based violence (GBV) against women and children is a human rights violation.

# GBV Prevalence

**It is estimated that one in three women will experience sexual and/or physical violence in their lifetime, mostly in the hands of an intimate partner.**



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# Norms & power relations

Gender inequality is rooted in norms and traditions inherited and internalized among individuals and societies. One can talk about a system of relationships, beliefs, and values embedded in political, social, and economic life that structure inequality between men and women. Gender inequality is individual *and* structural: it concerns family and the society as a whole.



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# Gender Equality

**Achieving gender equality requires eliminating harmful practices against women and girls. Gender equality means that women and men, and girls and boys, enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities, and protections.**



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# Istanbul Convention

**Each country that ratifies the Istanbul Convention legally undertakes to provide support and assistance to all girls and women who are victims of violence and to prevent, prosecute and eliminate all forms of violence within the Convention.**

**See** <https://rm.coe.int/coe-istanbulconvention-infografic-en-r04-v01/1680a06d0d>



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# Forms of GBV

- Domestic Violence
- Rape and sexual violence
- Violence in the name of honour
- Femicide
- Human Trafficking Sexual Purposes
- Female genital mutilation
- Forced marriages including child marriage

# Individual & structural

- Individual level
- Family level
- Community level
- Society level



# Domestic Violence

***Domestic violence*** is a pattern of behaviour that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. The abuse can be a series of actions or threats of actions that gets the victim to do something against their will, or to stop doing something the victim wants to do.



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# Recovery process

Victim's responses to domestic violence, sexual exploitation or torture, war, include complicating factors:

- Relationship with perpetrator
- Several traumas
- Coping strategies to survive
- Change of perception of time, body etc

>>Risks; re-victimization, CPTSD, return to abuser etc

# Impact of GBV

- Gender-based violence can result in serious physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health conditions. In most severe cases, it can result in permanent disabilities and even death.
- In the long term, GBV can have a lifetime impact on victims which decreases their wellbeing significantly. It is important to be supportive to victims and survivors, to help them and protect their human rights, even in times of crisis.

# GBV during Crisis

- Crisis, such as the pandemics, migration crisis and post-conflict crisis, increase the risks of GBV and its severity.
- The capacity of the welfare system of any state is set under a lot of pressure in time of crisis.
- In crisis, focus is on lifesaving measures and hitherto this has meant that identification of victims of GBV has been set aside.
- In crisis society and family, political and economic structures become vulnerable and GBV becomes normalized
- In conflict and warfare rape is a severe risk: and female refugees risk being exploited in human trafficking for sexual purposes.

# Human trafficking for sexual purposes

Human trafficking is the acquisition and exploitation of people, through means such as force, fraud, coercion, or deception.

The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, entering in force in 2008, aims to prevent human trafficking, protect victims, prosecute offenders, and promote international cooperation on actions .



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# Prevalence of human trafficking for sexual purposes

**Globally, women and girls comprise 71% of the total number of detected trafficking victims.**

**Regarding trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, 96% of detected victims in the world are women or girls.**



# GBV and human trafficking

- Gender stereotypes and gender inequality is linked to the risk for women to be exposed to GBV and also to end up in human trafficking for sexual purposes.
- There are gender-specific reasons for higher risk for re-victimization and re-trafficking of female victims of human trafficking for sexual purposes.
- The risk for human trafficking for sexual purposes increases in times of crisis.

# The impact of human trafficking

- Trafficking can result in serious physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health conditions. In severe cases, it can result in permanent disabilities and even death.
- Harms arising from trafficking for sexual exploitation are gender-specific, including vaginal injuries, increased risk of sexually transmitted diseases, HIV and unwanted pregnancies.
- In the long term, trafficking can have a lifetime impact on victims which decreases their wellbeing significantly.





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# The importance of support

**It is important to be supportive to victims and survivors, to help them and protect their human rights.**

**The rates of re-trafficking of those who managed to escape from a situation of exploitation are high, particularly for young people during the 2 years that follow their trafficking experience, while the recovery from lasting damage is long and resource-intensive.**



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# Trafficking is a violation of human rights

Victims of human trafficking has suffered a loss of dignity and freedom.

To restore (or build up) the victim's capacity to live independently and safe demands that one take into account the gender dimension, apply a holistic perspective and include the victim's family, and acknowledge the need of long-term existential and emotional support for the harm and damaged the victim has experienced.



# October 18 is International Anti- Trafficking Day

Human trafficking constitutes a severe form of violence against women, being one of the most evident manifestation of gender inequalities.

Trafficking for sexual exploitation is not seldom part of the continuum on experienced violence.



# Conclusion country reports

- GBV exist in all countries but the recognition of what causes GBV, the priority of the issue by government and authorities, and the awareness in the society vary among the countries.
- The tools to combat it, such as the human rights, national legislation, action plans and policy documents but also the work to raise awareness, promotion of attitude change, training and education may be differently widespread and acknowledged in the different countries.
- In all countries, however, there are challenges to end the violence; to make sure that women are helped and protected, and that perpetrators are hold accountable.

“Be the change that you wish to see in the world.”  
— Mahatma Gandhi



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