



SES Supplemental Guidance: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Gender-based Violence (GBV) Risk Management

Prepared for UNDP programmes and projects¹

A large graphic illustration at the bottom of the page. It features a series of overlapping, stylized silhouettes of people's heads and shoulders in profile, facing right. The silhouettes are filled with various colors including teal, orange, grey, dark blue, brown, pink, yellow, and light green. Above the silhouettes, there are large, curved, semi-transparent shapes in shades of green, orange, and blue, creating a layered, abstract background.

NOVEMBER 2023

¹UNDP's SES Guidance Notes (see [SES Toolkit](#)) provide guidance for implementing UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards (SES). The SES Guidance Notes help to explain the relevant policy requirements of the SES; they do not set policy. In the case of any inconsistency or conflict between the Guidance Notes and the SES, the provisions of the SES prevail. This is a living document, meaning that there will be periodic updates to this version based on its application. Feedback is always welcome and can be sent to info.ses@undp.org.

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A. BACKGROUND ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) & UNDP’S SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS (SES)

1.1 Why is this guidance needed?

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)¹ is a persistent and systemic issue around the world. For UNDP, identifying, assessing and managing the risks posed by the prevalence of GBV—and its manifestations such as Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH)²—is a priority in programming. UNDP’s imperative to do no harm necessitates that programming does not reinforce or reproduce the existing power imbalances and patriarchal norms that underpin GBV and that risk undermining sustainable development, particularly SDG5: Gender Equality.

These FAQs serve to **clarify existing UNDP requirements** and support UNDP staff in meeting those requirements with tips, tools, and examples. The FAQs **do not establish new requirements**.

The Secretary General's bulletin on sexual exploitation and abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13) applies to all personnel of the United Nations, including UNDP staff and those holding Individual and Service Contracts. Responsibilities regarding prevention of SEAH are also stated in the UNDP Code of Ethics.³ UNDP Implementing Partners must also demonstrate capacity to manage SEAH risks and complaints, as confirmed by the Partner Capacity Assessment Tool (PCAT).

GBV programming risks however extend beyond the responsibilities and actions of UNDP personnel and direct partners as supported activities may, when not addressed, exacerbate conditions that contribute to the risk of GBV. Importantly, GBV risks are reflected in UNDP’s revised Social and Environmental Standards (SES); under the UNDP SES Programming Principle 3: Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment, the UNDP SES requires that “*UNDP seeks to identify and address any risk of potential exposure of affected people to GBV and other abuse that may occur in connection with any of its supported activities*” (SES para. 23).⁴

In addition to SES requirements, UNDP-supported projects must follow the UN Protocol on the provision of assistance to victims of SEAH by using a survivor-centered approach, which prioritizes the survivor’s rights, needs and agency in decisions related to GBV incidents to minimize the potential for re-traumatization and further violence. UNDP must also work to integrate, prevent and respond to GBV across its portfolios and especially in crisis settings in line with the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025, and 10-Point Action Agenda.

¹ GBV is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e., gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private.

² This FAQ includes a glossary (Annex II) for common understanding of different aspects of GBV.

³ See UNDP’s Office of Human Resources Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse website for a range of resources.

⁴ GBV programming risks are also addressed by SES provisions to adopt a Human Rights-Based Approach to programming, supporting States to uphold obligations to core international human rights treaties among other requirements (see Sec. 2.3).

These FAQs therefore serve to clarify existing UNDP requirements and support UNDP staff in meeting those requirements with tips, tools, and examples. The FAQs do not establish new requirements.

1.2 What is the purpose of and who is the audience for this FAQ note?

This guidance has been designed as supplementary to other resources (see FAQ 1.3, next) to support UNDP projects/programmes in strengthening accountability measures and reframing of risk through a prevention lens. The aim is to improve access to and understanding of existing UNDP policy requirements, available procedures, and resources to address and mitigate GBV programming risks.

The primary audience for the note is project/programme developers and design teams, and UNDP personnel in oversight functions, as well as UNDP's partners. The guidance will help raise awareness and understanding of how prevention and mitigation of GBV can be integrated throughout project development and implementation. It also feeds into wider efforts of accelerating the integrative approaches of social and environmental standards, GBV and SEAH in UNDP projects and programmes.

1.3 What other guidance is relevant to GBV risk management?

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the pertinent SES Guidance Notes in the [UNDP SES Toolkit](#), as well as the [recent UNDP report](#) and its [summary](#) on what works to integrate a "GBV lens" into broader development interventions with the aim to prevent and respond to GBV. The report is based on learning and evidence from a [Global Project on Ending GBV and Achieving the SDGs](#).⁵

1.4 Is the guidance relevant for projects/programmes not focused on GBV?

Yes. Even if an initiative does not directly focus on GBV or gender equality, the risks of GBV, SEA and SH exist. Those risks can be exacerbated by project/programme activities that do not take them into account. Further, projects will always work with GBV survivors, as incidence of GBV remains underreported in the developing contexts (see Box 1).

Box 1: Your programme/project will work with survivors of GBV, regardless of whether they have self-identified as survivors: given the prevalence and entrenchment of GBV, you and your team (which can include internal staff and external partners) are interacting with survivors of GBV (in the community or as stakeholders, participants, or beneficiaries of the project and programme) on a regular basis. You may even have survivors on your team. This assumption—whether or not a staff person or participant has disclosed this—should inform the GBV risk management measures put in place.

⁵ As noted above, also see extensive resources at UNDP's OHR [PSEA website](#).

B. BACKGROUND ON GBV RISK MANAGEMENT

2.1 What is GBV?

GBV can be defined as violence that targets individuals or groups on the basis of their gender. GBV is experienced personally and systemically. It can include different forms of violence ranging from sexual, physical, mental and economic harm, and also includes threats of violence, coercion, manipulation, child marriage, female genital mutilation, gendered discrimination, conflict-related violence, and wartime rape.⁶ GBV can take hidden and unseen forms (e.g., psychological abuse, coercive control, and economic abuse) and technology-based forms (e.g., cyberbullying, online harassment).

These continuums of violence exist in times of peace, in times of war, within families, within households, within communities, within local-level and state institutions, and importantly, within national-level institutions and policies. While continuums of violence vary among cultures and societies, GBV is ubiquitous.⁷

GBV reflects and manifests due to power inequalities between women and men, and marginalization of diverse gender groups. It is influenced by intersectionality, impacting individuals differently based on intersecting identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, sexuality, disability). Most victims of systemic and persistent GBV are women, as this phenomenon is rooted in gender inequalities between women and men, power imbalances and a society's patriarchal gender norms.

The terms 'sexual violence', 'violence against women and girls' (VAWG) and 'GBV' are often used interchangeably. However not all acts against a woman are gender-based violence, nor are all victims of gender-based violence female (see Box 2).

SEAH refers to sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment. SEAH is most often perpetrated against women and girls, and it is most often a form of GBV. See Annex II (Key Terms and Definitions) for more information on SEAH.

Box 2: Can men and boys be victims of GBV?^{8,9}

Yes, men and boys can be victims of GBV, but the full scale is unknown and likely underreported.¹⁰ The All Survivors Project finds that rape and other forms of sexual violence occur in most contemporary armed conflicts; while disproportionately affecting women and girls, conflict-related sexual violence involving men and boys has been documented in over 25 different situations of armed conflict in recent decades.

⁶ Yadav, P & Horn, DM. (2021). Continuums of violence: feminist peace research and gender-based violence: <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/oa-edit/10.4324/9780429024160-12/continuums-violence-punam-yadav-denise-horn>

⁷ *Ibid.* Review this data story on the World Bank portal (supplementary information: <https://genderdata.worldbank.org/data-stories/overview-of-gender-based-violence/>)

⁸ <https://odi.org/en/insights/male-gender-based-violence-a-silent-crisis/>

⁹ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>

¹⁰ *Ibid.* (ODI)

2.2 What are GBV risks in the context of UNDP programming?

The prevalence of GBV can pose risks to the success of a project (i.e., risks stemming from the context), and can also be exacerbated by a project (i.e., risks stemming from the project itself). The following table lists examples of GBV risk areas for each of the UNDP signature solutions. Most examples reflected potential unintended impacts that could arise if GBV risks are not mitigated.

Table 1: GBV Risk Areas for UNDP Signature Solutions

Signature Solutions	Examples of GBV Risk Areas & Considerations
Poverty & inequality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When women are assigned new and non-traditional economic roles, it can also expose them to GBV • <u>Uneven intra-household asset ownership</u> and other power and material inequalities can negatively affect women’s bargaining power within the household, making them more vulnerable to become victims of GBV • <u>Informal employment</u>, which characterizes most employment in developing countries, creates vulnerabilities for women due to a lack of social protection, lack of protection by labour laws and due to high rates of unemployment, underemployment and/or seasonal labour
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Governance programming</u> focusing on participation could inadvertently maintain or exacerbate gender inequalities that contribute to GBV • Rule of law (e.g., on access to justice) around GBV may not always be sufficient (due to lack of enforcement, and existence of embedded sociocultural structures) • Strengthening capacity of law enforcement officers (training, equipping) can result in incidents of GBV if they misuse their newly acquired resources to perpetrate violence • In conflict-affected areas, governance programs that do not address security concerns or power imbalances may inadvertently contribute to an increase in GBV during and after conflicts. Inadequate security and law enforcement can lead to impunity for perpetrators.
Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual violence is often <u>exacerbated by</u> shocks and crisis including conflict, climate change, disasters, and epidemics. Minority women without documentation may be excluded and face discrimination and stigmatization, which can result in psychological and emotional abuse, undermining their well-being • Interventions like "Cash for Work" may inadvertently lack gender sensitivity and expose women to heightened risks of GBV as they step into non-traditional roles, especially in conservative or unsupportive environments • Inadequate shelter can expose individuals, especially women and girls, to heightened GBV risks due to overcrowding, unsafe locations, limited privacy, and increased vulnerability in times of displacement
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The localized effects of climate change and <u>environmental degradation</u> may worsen GBV incidence, for instance by exacerbating resource scarcity leading to increased incidence of child marriage and transactional sex as negative coping techniques by households. • <u>Environmental crimes</u> (e.g., illegal mining, fishing and logging) associated with contexts where there is weak rule of law can lead to the flourishing of sex trafficking • <u>Environmental work</u>, such as biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management, can lead to disputes and conflict as well as increases in GBV prevalence indirectly if they do not take livelihoods or local social norms into account, such as women’s lack of legal protection, especially when considering access to, and control of resources. • Women and girls are responsible for water collection in 8 out of 10 households with water off premises, an often dangerous and time-consuming task exposing

Signature Solutions	Examples of GBV Risk Areas & Considerations
	<p>them to <u>higher risks of gender-based violence</u> and further stressed by extreme weather events linked to climate change such as drought and flooding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental programmes may inadvertently reinforce gender inequalities by excluding women from decision-making processes and resource management, contributing to power imbalances that can result in violence.
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to energy can increase women’s intra-household bargaining power, leading to reduced GBV incidence—or to increased GBV incidence if these changes are not accepted by men (particularly in the short term) • Infrastructure development, including that of renewables, can increase GBV risks or reinforce existing issues of access (e.g., from an influx of construction workers) • <u>Lack of public lighting and energy poverty</u> may reduce women’s perception of safety and may make them more vulnerable to sexual violence, particularly in rural areas when they are responsible for fuel and water collection
Gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political participation of women at different levels of government may be thwarted by gendered repression and violence preceding election periods with the explicit goal of curtailing women’s effective participation in the political sphere or empowerment through increased representation/election into decision-making bodies. • GBV and social/cultural norms may limit women’s ability to participate in politics and elections. • GBV can act as a barrier to women’s economic empowerment, disrupting work functions and productivity, for example through workplace harassment or wage discrimination, and can be highly prevalent especially in informal economy/sectors. • Programming in women’s economic empowerment may also increase GBV, due to backlash from men and the endurance of patriarchal structures. Women may experience economic challenges due to their partners’ control over their income, limiting their financial autonomy and decision-making power. • Participants in digital literacy initiatives, especially women and girls, may experience cyberbullying and online harassment including online stalking and abusive messages leading to emotional distress and feelings of insecurity. • Initiatives with gender equality as a principal objective (i.e. GEN3) that exclusively target women and do not include an intersectional gender approach may risk alienating men and boys, leading to gender equality backlash and violence against women and girls.

2.3 Why is GBV a “safeguards” area of risk?

GBV is a human rights issue. A UNDP project/programme can exacerbate existing GBV risks or introduce new GBV risk factors; to ensure that UNDP follows its mandate to “do no harm”, safeguards that avoid or reduce those risks are needed. GBV risk factors are linked to many of the UNDP SES Programming Principles and Project-level Standards including, but not limited to:

- **Principle 1. Human Rights** in particular in terms of enjoyment of human rights, the ability of different government institutions to enforce rights and the level of inclusive development (e.g., level of marginalization of certain groups according to criteria such as race, gender, caste, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion which may compound GBV risks due to intersectionality).
- **Principle 2. Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment:** the SESP explicitly flags “risks of gender-based violence (GBV)” here but other factors such as social norms around gender, level of gender inequality (for example: women’s status, roles, access

to public spaces, control of resources, and division of labour in relation to the project) could impact GBV risks.

- **Principle 4. Accountability** with regard to the ability of different project beneficiaries to access, use and be protected from retaliation when using grievance redress mechanisms.
- **Standard 3. Community Health, Safety and Security:** requires projects to anticipate and avoid adverse impacts on the health and safety of affected communities during the project life cycle, including but not limited to the influx of project workers and security-related issues.
- **Standard 7. Labour and Working Conditions:** stipulates the need to consider vulnerabilities and potential GBV as well: (i) appropriate measures of protection and assistance are provided to address the vulnerabilities of project workers, including specific groups of workers, such as women, persons with disabilities, migrant workers and young workers; and, (ii) appropriate measures will be taken to prevent and address any form of violence and harassment, bullying, intimidation and/or exploitation, including any form of GBV.

2.4 What is GBV Risk Management?

GBV risk management refers to establishing processes and designing interventions to identify, assess and manage the risk of GBV exposure of all gender groups. This approach is part of a larger process of social and environmental risk management that seeks to identify, predict, evaluate, avoid, and—where avoidance is not possible—mitigate adverse social and environmental impacts of UNDP projects/programmes under the UNDP SES.¹¹

The GBV risk management process can be broadly divided into three steps (details on these are available in Section C):

- i) **risk identification** (with UNDP’s Social and Environmental Screening Procedure; SESP) includes the analytical tools, methods (including consultation with project-affected peoples) and resources used to describe and rate the significance of potential GBV risks linked to the project;
- ii) **risk assessment** to better understand the type, scale and time sensitive nature of the different risks; and
- iii) **risk management** (treatment) to develop and implement measures to manage the different GBV risks, which includes risk monitoring.

¹¹ In addition to the Programming Principles, the eight Project-level Standards relate to biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management, climate change and disaster risks, community health, safety and security, cultural heritage, displacement and resettlement, indigenous peoples, labour and working conditions and pollution prevention and resource efficiency.

2.5 How is GBV risk management different from GBV programming?

GBV-specific programming aims to address the barriers of preventing GBV in a certain context, break the causal chains that spike or lead to continued occurrences of GBV, as well as to better prevent and respond to GBV through institutional and policy reform. GBV programming can take several forms, for example: interventions related to economic empowerment (which removes financial and economic barriers) combined with gender-transformative approaches, community mobilization programmes (which include male sensitization sessions to change social norms), and relationship-level interactions that build healthy relationship skills and parenting programmes.¹²

Box 3: Example of GBV Programming

A UNDP programme in Albania (on Gender Equality and Gender-based Violence), for example, is working to respond to GBV by supporting the Ministry of Social Welfare to adopt standards of hotline services for victims based on the best international practices and is establishing a hotline for survivors. Further, the State Police Academy, supported by UNDP, assessed and upgraded the training curricula on GBV in view of the latest legal improvements of domestic legislation and newly ratified international treaties.

GBV risk management aims to do no harm throughout the project cycle by applying certain measures to manage the GBV risks, and might not target the barriers to GBV prevention and response.

However, the UNDP SES emphasizes the need to “do more good” in its programming by maximizing social and environmental opportunities and benefits. For example, after identifying GBV risks, a project design team (developing a non-GBV project) could go beyond the management of GBV risks by including GBV-specific outcomes/activities into the project’s logical framework. The UNDP publication *A New Approach to Ending Gender-Based Violence: Lessons on Integrating Prevention and Responses in Four UNDP Sectoral Development Projects* provides more information on this approach.

2.6 Do projects/programmes designed to contribute to gender equality and women’s empowerment need to consider GBV risks?

In short: yes. Gender and GBV are complex issues; even projects/programmes designed with gender equality as the primary objective can lead to increased incidences of VAWG, SEAH and GBV. In fact, evidence suggests that women’s empowerment may increase the risks of gender-based violence, at least in the short term. Therefore, it is crucial that all UNDP initiatives, including those with primary gender equality and women’s empowerment aims, screen for GBV risks, and integrate appropriate GBV-risk mitigation and response measures.

¹² UNICEF: [https://www.unicef.org/media/127671/file/Assessment%20Report%20\(English\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/media/127671/file/Assessment%20Report%20(English).pdf)

Box 4: Case Study from the World Bank: would a focus on women's empowerment increase GBV risks?

The World Bank undertook a rigorous GBV risk assessment in the context of the Nigeria for Women Project (NFWP) to answer the following questions: would a focus on women's social and economic empowerment increase risks of GBV in Nigeria? What would be the causal factors? What measures could form part of the project design to address these risks from and to the project?

The Nigeria For Women project aims to support livelihoods improvement for individual women and their collectives through financial grants, business advisory services, better access to markets, livelihoods and personal initiative skills, and innovations. The GBV risk assessment, which aimed to identify the GBV risks and possible mitigation options with the NFWP, confirmed that women who realize improved livelihoods opportunities, a greater voice and better decision-making power, could experience "backlash" from their intimate partners as well as family and community members. This essentially stems from the community- and household-level power dynamics where the gender roles are defined and enforced through social norms that regard men as the providers and women as the caretakers.

A woman from Edo State summed it up by saying, "a man is proud and conscious of his position as the head of the home...an empowered woman who does not respect her husband or is authoritative in her demeanor will attract battering from her husband, and dislike from his relatives."

Building on this analysis that not only identified risks but also opportunities for integrating risk prevention and mitigation measures in the project design, the NFWP team embedded key measures into the project design, such as:

- a) creating an enabling environment for women's participation through strategic and behavior change communication, targeting religious and traditional leaders, community members both men and women;
- b) ensuring safety and security of particular women groups in the target communities;
- c) age-, gender-, and culturally appropriate ways to facilitate participation of women in Women Affinity Groups (community-based institutions), and in the planning, design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of individual and collective livelihoods;
- d) enhancing community awareness, capacities, and strengths of project beneficiary communities, implementing partners and government staff in preventing and reducing risks of GBV; and,
- e) mapping of the existence of and gaps in services for survivors.

C. SCREENING, ASSESSING AND MANAGING GBV RISKS

3.1 How is the screening of projects/programmes for GBV risks done in UNDP?

All UNDP projects/programmes must be screened for GBV risks using UNDP's Online *Social and Environmental Screening Procedure* (SESP) (with limited exemptions listed in the SESP guidance). While GBV risks may be identified across multiple thematic areas, the SESP Risk Screening Checklist (part of the SESP Online Tool) specifically asks the following:

- P.12 Would the project potentially involve or lead to exacerbation of risks of gender-based violence? *(For example, through the influx of workers to a community, changes in community and household power dynamics, increased exposure to unsafe public places and/or transport, etc.)*

To answer the above question (Yes/No), several matters can be considered¹³ – for example:

- Root causes of GBV and contributing factors, and how they might be impacted by the project
- National rates of GBV, and trends
- Prevalent socio-cultural norms on GBV, including harmful attitudes, biases, stereotypes
- Existing gender dynamics, different roles, access to resources, and levels of power
- Levels of poverty, representation, etc. by gender
- Aspects of the project/programme that could target gender inequalities

Importantly, this risk screening should be done in consultation with national stakeholders and project-affected peoples, who can be well-positioned to identify risks. In addition, the project's gender and stakeholder analyses should be used to identify potential GBV risks, and the relevant documents (SESP, Gender Action Plan, and Stakeholder Engagement Plan) should be aligned.

The SESP is a mandatory annex to every UNDP ProDoc (as noted, with limited exemptions). However, screening for all environmental and social risks, including GBV, should be done as early as possible during project/programme development, so that the risks can be identified and—ideally—avoided or addressed through project/programme design.

In addition, projects can update their SESP during implementation for the GBV risks identified particularly in cases of new information, changes to the project, and/or changes to the context. Thus, screening of GBV risks is not a one-off process but rather an iterative process.

¹³ The table in Annex V contains a detailed list of questions as further guidance.

3.2 How does a project's Gender Analysis and Action Plan relate to GBV risk identification?

The project's gender analysis and Gender Action Plan (GAP) should include a GBV contextual analysis that considers the principal barriers to change, and how power, voice, roles, access to resources, representation and decision-making are distributed. This contextual analysis can be key to identifying GBV risks. The gender analysis can also reveal the formal and informal institutions (e.g., local laws, norms and customs) that shape gender power relations and are likely to influence the principal drivers of GBV in a given context; identify the risk factors and forms of GBV incidences that are common; acceptability and norms around GBV prevalence; etc.

Box 5: Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression may influence to what extent a person is at risk of GBV. LGBTQI+ people face higher rates of poverty, stigma, and marginalization, which in turn increases risk for sexual assault. Within the LGBTQI+ community, transgender people and bisexual women face the most alarming rates of sexual violence. For LGBTQI+ survivors of sexual assault, their identities – and the discrimination they face surrounding those identities – often make them hesitant to seek help from police, hospitals, shelters or rape crisis centers, the very resources that are supposed to help them. While sexual violence against LGBTQI+ people is prohibited under international humanitarian law, domestic law is less consistent, for example, 68 countries criminalize homosexuality as of 2022.

3.3 Should stakeholder consultations be used to identify GBV risks?

Yes, stakeholder consultations can complement GBV analysis through focus group discussions, key informant interviews and surveys with community members, local women's organisations and local government institutions. They can shed light on context-specific GBV risks, notably related to community participation and leadership, cultural and community norms and practices as well as physical safety and risks of GBV.

However, the consultants/colleagues carrying out such consultations should be trained in GBV research methods and ethics to respect the following principles:

- Safety and security of participants: all research decisions should be guided by the safety and security of participants to avoid any potential risks of reprisal.
- Do no harm: the benefits and process of undertaking participatory data collection must outweigh potential negative consequences.
- Data usefulness: avoiding collecting data that already exists or collecting data in similar geographies.
- Confidentiality and identity concerns: the confidentiality of interviewees, their identity and any information they divulge need to be protected.
- Informed consent: gaining the informed consent of participants must be ensured.
- Locally-led: it can be preferable to include local GBV expertise or build on it as a first step.

Participatory design processes can also be followed up during project/programme preparation by conducting community-level check-ins that can allow users to gauge a community's reaction to the project. An expert can help increase stakeholder buy-in, and identify how the project/programme can impact the status quo around decision-making and power distribution.

The project/programme Stakeholder Engagement Plan should include information on survivor-centered approach to GBV, to ensure that this issue is addressed across the board.

3.4 After a GBV risk is identified in the SESP, what comes next?

The SESP Online Tool requires screeners to describe risks that are identified with the Screening Checklist, rate their significance and specify appropriate risk treatment measures where necessary (see the [SESP Guidance Note](#) for details). The SESP Online Tool aligns with UNDP's [Enterprise Risk Management](#) system, which provides for tracking project-related GBV risks. Risks rated as Moderate or above are monitored in the Project Risk Register. Such risks may be recorded under various ERM Risk Categories (e.g., 1.2 Gender equality and women's empowerment, 1.6 Community health, safety and security, 1.10 Labour and working conditions, 1.13 Sexual exploitation and abuse).

Per SES guidance, Substantial or High risks require further assessment and management, in a proportionate manner (i.e., risk treatment measures). Moderate risks can in some instances be fully addressed through a project's design (including its SESP), and in other instances require targeted assessment and management. Low risks do not require further assessment or management, though should be monitored. These SES requirements apply to all environmental and social risks, including GBV risks; might be met through application of national law (with gap-filling as needed to fully comply with the UNDP SES); and could be funded through co-financing, if available, rather than the project grant. The main forms of assessment and management are described next, in the context of GBV.

- *Targeted assessment of GBV risks & standalone GBV Action Plan*: For Moderate risks projects, a targeted assessment and management of the GBV risks can be appropriate (rather than more expansive and comprehensive forms of assessment and management). This can be presented in a GBV Action Plan, the elements of which are described in Annex I.
- *ESIA (Environmental and Social Impact Assessment)*: typically required for Substantial Risk (scoped ESIA) and High Risk (full ESIA) projects, as categorized by the SESP. A GBV risk analysis can be incorporated into the project's ESIA process (see Annex V for relevant considerations). A GBV expert may need to be included in or undertake the ESIA.
- *ESMP (Environment and Social Management Plan)*: details the mitigation, monitoring and institutional measures, including policies, procedures and practices—as well as the actions needed to implement these measures—to achieve the desired social and environmental sustainability outcomes. The ESMP can include a standalone GBV action plan. It can also consist of actions that seek to build capacities of different authorities on GBV and its avoidance/mitigation as well as articulate a specific strategy related to stakeholder engagement on these topics.
- *SESA (Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment)*: is a range of analytical and participatory approaches to integrate social and environmental considerations into policies, plans and programmes and evaluate interlinkages with economic and social considerations. GBV risk management can be linked in a similar way in SESAs to what is outlined above for ESIA.

Note that a GBV Action Plan (whether standalone or embedded in a larger Plan) is separate and different from a project's Gender Action Plan, which aims to deliver gender equality-related

development results. In some cases, it may be helpful to ensure alignment between a Gender Action Plan and GBV Action Plan, for example, by including targets in the Gender Action Plan on delivering elements of the GBV Action Plan.

3.5 What if the GBV Action Plan cannot be prepared during project design?

If the required assessments and management plans cannot be prepared during project/programme design, an ESMF (Environment and Social Management Framework) should be prepared. It is typically used when a project consists of a series of forthcoming activities or the subsequent downstream implementation of policies, plans, programmes that cannot be fully assessed until the details of the activities have been identified. An ESMF should identify procedures for further screening, assessment, and management of project-supported activities once they are defined, including of course GBV risks. Where appropriate, a GBV Action Planning Framework could be prepared prior to the GBV Action Plan.

3.6 What are typical measures for managing or mitigating GBV risks?

Several types of measures can mitigate the risk of exacerbating existing GBV risks or the introduction of new GBV risk factors in projects/. The following general measures for managing or mitigating GBV risks should be made project-specific:

- Training on GBV (prevention and response) –delivered to project (implementing) partners, project workers, and relevant stakeholders including community members and project-affected peoples, based on findings of capacity assessments (e.g., HACT)
- Code of conduct prohibiting GBV – signed by project workers (as defined in the SES), displayed at project sites, with clear reporting mechanisms and monitored through the relevant project stages
- GBV/social expert included in project team (part-time or full-time) – to deliver specific measures, monitor risks, liaise with stakeholders, etc.
- Specific measures, as appropriate, may include ensuring safety and security of project sites/areas (e.g. housing, transportation, training sites; increased oversight in remote locations); adjusting composition of project workers engaging with beneficiaries (e.g., same sex, two-person mixed sex teams); controlling of unauthorized visitors to project sites/areas; conducting exchanges of money, goods, services in open spaces, etc.
- Entry points, focal personnel and remedial action pathways – identified through mapping existing resources and engaging relevant local partners (e.g., the police and/or local government might not be an appropriate pathway; context matters)
- Long-term positive interventions (e.g., psycho-social support groups) – to modify behaviors, attitudes and change norms around GBV, such as male sensitization
- Grievance redress mechanism – see FAQ 4.3 below.

D. Handling GBV Incidences and Grievances

4.1 How should GBV incidences and complaints be handled?

UNDP applies a survivor-centered approach to responding to and preventing GBV incidents or complaints. This response to GBV primarily focuses on empowering survivors by prioritizing their needs, agency, autonomy, dignity, wishes and self-determination over considerations such as social norms, organizational reputation, and hierarchal considerations for the organization.^{14,15} A survivor-centered approach helps to promote a survivor's recovery and to reinforce their capacity to make decisions about possible interventions.¹⁶ A survivor-centered

approach ensures that survivors have access to appropriate, accessible, and good quality services including health care, psychological and social support, security, and legal services.

To properly respond to a GBV incident, a project should engage competent service delivery actors with the appropriate attitudes, knowledge, and skills to prioritize the survivor's own experiences and input.

The UN Protocol on the provision of assistance to victims of SEAH, which applies to UNDP, aims to ensure a coordinated, system-wide approach to the provision of assistance and support the employment of a survivor-centered approach. The Protocol includes principles that must be respected and monitored when providing support, describes different forms of assistance and support including medical care, legal services and psychosocial support and lays out the roles and responsibilities of the UN system in the provision of assistance:

The following guiding principles and rights must be respected and carefully monitored at all stages in the provision of assistance and support:

- *Assistance and support will be made available to all victims of sexual exploitation and abuse irrespective of whether the victim initiates or cooperates with an investigation or any other accountability procedure.*
- *Assistance and support shall be provided in a manner that is victim-centered, rights-based, age, disability-and gender sensitive, non-discriminatory and culturally appropriate. The rights and best interests of victims shall guide how assistance and support are designed and provided.*

Box 6: What if I receive a complaint of GBV and I am unclear about next steps?

- Check if the relevant project has a GRM that can handle GBV complaints
- Check agreements with Implementing Partners for GBV/SEA reporting procedures
- Contact the CO PSEA Focal Point for advice on how to address the issue
- Ensure that the survivor is provided a referral to a safe service provider
- Protect confidentiality of survivor

¹⁴ CARE- GBV Guidance: https://www.care.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/GBV-Guidance_final-external_Jul2022.pdf

¹⁵ https://makingcents.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CARE-GBV-03-Survivor-centered-v9-508c.pdf?utm_source=IGWG&utm_campaign=57891f59a-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2021_12_09_03_29_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a24996ea0a-57891f59a-54846365&mc_cid=57891f59a&mc_eid=c075385406

¹⁶ UNFPA Pakistan: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/Building%20Survivor%20Centered%20Response%20Services%20-%20%20Participants%27%20Module.pdf>

- *Assistance and support to child victims (under age 18) shall be provided in a manner consistent with the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular the “best interests of the child.”*
- *Assistance provided to victims shall adhere to the principle of “do no harm” and be provided in a manner which seeks to uphold their rights, dignity and well-being. This may entail provision of safety measures to protect against retaliation, re-victimization and re-traumatization.*
- *The rights of victims to privacy, confidentiality and informed consent in respect of assistance shall be respected. Victims (or their parents/caregivers where appropriate) have the right to decide on the assistance they need, and information should be provided on the full range of options available. Victims should be informed of the progress and outcomes of actions or processes that concern them.*
- *Victims are entitled to pursue applicable accountability measures, including legal redress where desired. The United Nations shall cooperate with States on all available measures to hold perpetrators of sexual exploitation and abuse accountable, while respecting due process, confidentiality and the principle of informed consent.*

4.2 How can a project/programme ensure a survivor-centered approach to GBV grievances or incidents, given a limited budget?

With proper resource allotment and expertise, any project or programme can ensure that a survivor-centered approach is mainstreamed. A gender-responsive budgeting process constitutes one way of ensuring a survivor-centered approach. Such a process includes specific provisions related to GBV and a survivor-centered approach, while reflecting, to the maximum extent, a gender-responsive distribution of resources from analysis of budget programmes ‘to a process of change based on identified gender equality gaps.’

This can entail financial investments or increased transaction costs for certain activities (particularly if these are high risk). Usually, a survivor-centered approach can be built into the mandatory (and necessary) gender, SES and stakeholder engagement work being undertaken in different project/programme stages. UNDP’s SES screening procedure (SESP) should be applied as early as possible to identify GBV risks and measures to manage them, which then in turn enables and informs early budgeting for the resources needed to address potential GBV risks—which is crucial.

4.3 What can a grievance redress mechanism for GBV risks look like, and how should it be designed?

All projects categorized as complex Moderate Risk, Substantial Risk, or High Risk (as determined by the SESP) need to make available an effective project-level grievance redress mechanism (see the sample TOR for Project-level GRMs in the SES Toolkit). Because of the risk of stigmatization or backlash against persons reporting GBV incidences, it is important that GRMs include multiple safe entry points and have clear protocols for handling GBV complaints.

In the case of GBV risk management, a GRM should serve primarily to inform potential GBV victims about safe referral pathways following the principles of a survivor-centered approach. The GRM process should be promptly accessible without cost or risk of retribution, rights-compatible, culturally appropriate and use an easily understandable and transparent process.

The handling of GBV complaints may take different forms. Provided they have appropriate capacity and procedures, projects may use a broader established program, agency or national grievance mechanism to handle complaints. If existing GRMs do not have the capacity or procedures in place to effectively manage GBV complaints and cannot be adapted to do so, GBV complaints management may be outsourced to a third party with dedicated GBV expertise (such as an NGO) or a standalone GRM may be established, reporting back to the project GRM.

A number of specific characteristics need to be considered when designating an appropriate GBV complaints process for projects, including the following¹⁷:

- The GRM should adopt a survivor centered approach in which the safety and well-being of the GBV survivor is the first priority and, in relation to adult GBV survivors, any action is only taken with the survivor's consent. Survivors' stories and reports should be believed rather than viewed with suspicion as this may likely lead to the "burying" of reports leading to poor outcomes in terms of victim support and assistance downstream;
- There should be multiple channels through which complaints can be registered in a safe and confidential manner, including through anonymous complaint reporting mechanisms. Information on how to report complaints should be disseminated among beneficiaries and communities.
- Gender and GBV expertise needs to exist among the relevant UNDP personnel¹⁸, implementing partners or government institutions to effectively respond to GBV-related complaints. If this is absent, expertise and capacity need to be built to ensure effective implementation of the GRM throughout the project lifecycle;
- GRMs need to consider the legal context affecting the project, social attitudes around GBV and the potential risk for impunity when referring victims to certain referral pathways (e.g., using institutions such as local law enforcement could exacerbate GBV risks in certain contexts). The GRM needs to operate without prejudice to any other complaint mechanisms or legal recourse to which an individual or community may otherwise have access under national, regional, or international law or under the rules and regulations of other institutions, agencies or commissions.
- In order to act in the best interests of children, GRMs will need to have specific protocols for children who are survivors of GBV. GRM operators should be trained on how to respond to cases involving children, regardless of whether the child or a third party lodges the complaint.
- For GBV complaints, the GRM must take steps as necessary to protect the confidentiality of the complainant and minimize reprisal and retaliation risks. The personal information of a survivor must be protected. The GRM should not require disclosure of, or record, information on aspects of the GBV incident other than (a) the nature of the complaint (what the complainant says in her/his own words without direct questioning); (b) if, to the best of the complainant's knowledge, the alleged perpetrator was associated with the project; and (c) if possible, the age and sex of the survivor. Where mandatory reporting requirements apply, information disclosure should be made in accordance with legal requirements, and information should only be released to the appropriate authority or agency. The GRM should advise a survivor of any mandatory

¹⁷ Some following points rely on information contained in IASC, [IASC Best Practice Guide Inter-Agency Community-Based Complaints Mechanisms](#) (2016) and World Bank, [ESF Good Practice Note on Addressing SEA/SH in Human Development Operations](#) (2022).

¹⁸ Vetted GBV expert consultants are in the UNDP GPN ExpRes Roster.

reporting requirement and limits of confidentiality. If a country's legislation requires mandatory reporting, the GRM and the GBV service provider should inform the potential survivor of this obligation, as well as of any other limits of confidentiality.

- Ongoing reporting to affected communities and individuals in terms of how the GRM is being implemented and any material changes or additional mitigation measures to this should be clearly communicated and reported on an annual basis at the minimum.

E. Monitoring, Evaluation & Disclosure

5.1 What documents should be publicly disclosed related to GBV risk management?

Relevant information about UNDP programmes and projects is disclosed to help affected communities and other stakeholders understand the opportunities, risks and impacts of the proposed activities. Relevant information should be made available in a timely manner, in an accessible place, and in a form and language understandable to affected persons and other stakeholders, including the general public, taking into account any special needs of groups that may be disproportionately affected, disadvantaged or groups with specific information needs (e.g. due to intersectional discrimination for instance). Disclosure of key documents should occur early in programme/project development in a timeframe that allows for meaningful effective consultation and on an ongoing basis. This includes:

- A public record of stakeholder engagement and stakeholder engagement plans throughout the project cycle is maintained and disclosed including those related to GBV risks;
- Social and environmental screening reports and assessment and management plans such as ESIA's and SESAs as well as plans such as ESMFs and ESMPs (including GBV action plans) are disclosed with programme and project documentation and upon completion of the project when and if they are updated.

Stakeholder consultations related to GBV risk management interventions may at times involve sensitive information (depending on circumstances, this could include names, location of interviewees, persons responsible for case management and grievance redress mechanism). Such information should be anonymized and not disclosed publicly. Country teams should handle sensitive information judiciously.

5.2 What can be done to ensure continued assessment of GBV risks throughout the life cycle of the project/programme, including M&E?

Projects/programmes should incorporate GBV-specific indicators in their M&E plan (and their Results Framework, where appropriate given the project's objective); seek to explicitly link community feedback and grievance mechanisms with the project monitoring process; and have periodic re-assessments of the drivers of GBV risk. Projects/programmes can also monitor GBV incidents using a simple, anonymous and confidential tracking system.

Further, it is recommended that collected data is disaggregated by sex, age as well as other identity and vulnerability factors (e.g., ethnicity, geography, caste and religion) to better understand risks and how intersectionality can contribute to GBV risks.

Project mid-term and final evaluations can be tasked with reviewing and providing recommendations or lessons on a project's GBV risk management. To strengthen GBV risk management approaches, findings and lessons learned should be disseminated for future relevant programming.

The following indicators – to be adapted to circumstances – can be utilized to strengthen GBV risk monitoring and evaluation:

- Inclusion of GBV-related questions in assessment conducted by UNDP/partners
- Inclusion of GBV referral information in the design of project activities/workshops
- % of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to gender-based violence in the last 12 months by form of violence and age
- # and % women and girls who access GBV response services
- # and description of positive shifts in informal structures (social norms, culture, beliefs, etc.) as defined and influenced by movements and/or CSOs
- % of women and girls, men and boys (a) aware of GBV reporting channels, (b) comfortable of using these channels, (c) reported through these channels (d) received a response, and (e) satisfied with the response

5.3 What are the other action points/options to ensure GBV risks are monitored during implementation and closure?

GBV trainings and capacity building opportunities should be available to project staff and GBV expertise should be available to the team/coordination unit for projects/programmes with high GBV risks. It is of course important to ensure that the work environment contributes to eradicating GBV, including PSEA and SH, as per UNDP's zero tolerance policies. Further, it will be important to establish partnerships and scope opportunities to coordinate with GBV, gender, protection, and other teams, working groups, etc. Partner screening, due diligence, capacity assessment, onboarding and compliance as well as provide ongoing training, support and learning opportunities to internal staff and external partners will be key. Lessons learned on GBV risk management and related good practice can be incorporated into project monitoring reports and evaluations.

Annex I: Elements of GBV Action Plan

A GBV Action Plan details the procedures and actions that will be undertaken in order to ensure that the GBV risks are managed. Targeted GBV-related management measures may be integrated into more general Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) or related plans. However, a GBV Action Plan provides focused attention to GBV risks. It may be included as a component of a broader ESMP. While the GBV Action Plan should be incorporated in / aligned with the ESMP from the outset, it can also be adapted and changed based on changes in project circumstances, risks and implemented activities along the project lifecycle.

The following elements can form the GBV Action Plan:

(1) Description of relevant context: Describe the project and associated facilities (if any), the GBV context (national/regional/etc.) and risks (aligned with the SESP), and the project components that pose GBV risks.

(2) GBV/social baseline: Provide and analyse the results of relevant assessments/studies (if any) conducted to establish the social/GBV baseline.

(3) Legal framework: Describe all relevant international, national, local, and community laws and customs that apply to GBV risks, with particular attention to laws and customs relating to gender rights, and highlight any potential conflicts e.g., between UNDP's SES and national or regional law.

(4) GBV risk management measures: Identify measures to manage GBV risks in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, minimize, mitigate potentially significant adverse social and environmental impacts to acceptable levels). Describe – with technical details – each GBV-related action/management measure, including the type of issue/impact to which it relates and the conditions under which it is required (e.g., continuously or in the event of contingencies), together with designs, implementation descriptions and operating procedures (as appropriate). Take into account, and be consistent with, other relevant SES management plans (e.g., indigenous peoples, economic displacement). See the example below.

(5) Implementation action plan (schedule, cost estimates and source of financing): Outline an implementation schedule for measures that must be carried out as part of the project, showing phasing and coordination with overall project implementation plans; and the capital and recurrent cost estimates and sources of funds for implementing the Action Plan (i.e., budget). Describe institutional arrangements, identifying which party is responsible for carrying out the actions/mitigation and monitoring measures.

(6) Stakeholder engagement & GBV-specific GRM: Outline context-specific actions to engage in meaningful, effective, and informed consultations with relevant stakeholders, including locally affected groups. Include information on (a) means used to inform and involve affected people and (b) description of effective processes for receiving and addressing stakeholder concerns and grievances regarding the project's social and environmental performance. Align with the project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan (if any).

(7) Monitoring and evaluation: Identify monitoring objectives and specify the type of monitoring, with linkages to the GBV management measures. Describe parameters to be measured, methods to be used, sampling locations, frequency of measurements, and definition of thresholds that will signal the need for corrective actions. Establish reporting schedule and format.

Example of GBV Risk Management Measures (table format)

Relevant Project Component	Type of GBV Issue/Impact	Measures to address GBV risk	Timeline & Frequency	Responsible Body
Output 1.2 [...]	<p><i>Influx of project workers to targeted sites might cause increase GBV incident rates among workers and in the local population</i></p> <p><i>[An influx of workers can increase demand for sex work, including from higher wages. This can increase the risk of sexual assault between workers and community members.]</i></p>	<i>Ensure adequate daily subsistence allowance and/or provide accommodation for the project workers, with private and secure rooms separated by gender and following international good practice.</i>	<i>Establish before workers are sent to the project sites.</i>	IA
		<i>Ensure separate, safe, and easily accessible facilities for women and men working on the site. Locker rooms and/or latrines should be located in separate areas, well-lit and include the ability to be locked from the inside.</i>	<i>Facilities, signage and lightening maintenance ensured weekly or more frequently as needed.</i>	Contractors
		<i>Visibly display signs around the project site that signal to workers and the community that the project site is an area where GBV is prohibited.</i>		
		<i>As appropriate, ensure public spaces around the project grounds are well-lit.</i>		
		<i>Intensive and ongoing GBV awareness raising training of project workers will be carried out.</i>	<i>Train on first day; repeat monthly.</i>	Contractors
		<i>Development and signing of codes of conduct for workers and project personnel, which include prohibited behavior; minimum standards to follow.</i>	<i>Codes of conduct administered before work begins.</i>	Contractors
Output 2.4 [...]	<p><i>Project activities to improve women's livelihoods might increase GBV incident rates</i></p>	<i>Implement gap-filling measures (identified in section XX of the GBV Action Plan) to enhance the capabilities of the service providers to provide quality survivor-centered services, including GBV case management and acting as a victim advocate.</i>	<i>Before start of livelihoods activities</i>	IA
		<i>Disseminate information, in collaboration with GBV partners, on GBV referral pathway (including project GRM) and the importance of timely seeking services.</i>	<i>Before start of livelihoods activities and throughout</i>	IA

	<p><i>Provide GBV-related trainings and incorporate awareness raising methodologies (e.g., the <u>Indashyikirwa intimate partner violence prevention programme</u> or the <u>SASA! Approach</u>) for groups targeted for livelihoods activities (e.g., producer groups, mothers' groups, Village Savings and Loans groups) with organizations that have GBV expertise</i></p>	<p><i>Before start of livelihoods activities; repeated as needed.</i></p>	<p><i>IA</i></p>
	<p><i>Facilitate single-sex safe spaces for critical reflection on men's/women's own experiences of gender norms and expectations, followed by opportunities for mixed sex dialogue and reflection, with local organizations that have relevant expertise</i></p>	<p><i>During implementation</i></p>	<p><i>IA</i></p>

Annex II: Key Terms and Definitions

<p>Violence against women and girls (VAWG)</p>	<p>The 1993 UN <i>Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women</i> defined violence against women and girls as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life (Article 1).</p> <p>Violence against women and girls shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation; • Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced sex work; • Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs (Article 2). <p>Violence against women and girls is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women.</p>
<p>Gender-based violence (GBV)</p>	<p>Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e., gender) differences, including but not limited to differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private (IASC 2015). Women and girls are disproportionately affected by GBV across the globe.</p>
<p>Sexual harassment (SH)</p>	<p>Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. SH differs from SEA in that it occurs between personnel/staff working on the project, and not between staff and project beneficiaries or communities. The distinction between SEA and SH is important so that agency policies and staff training can include specific instructions on the procedures to report each. Both women and men can experience SH.</p>
<p>Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)</p>	<p>Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Sexual abuse is further defined as "the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions." Women, girls, boys and men can experience SEA. In the context of UNDP supported projects, project beneficiaries or members of project-affected communities may experience SEA.</p> <p>Sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment is most often perpetrated against women and girls, and it is most often a form of GBV. Although sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment can happen anywhere in society, when used as an umbrella term within the development and humanitarian sector, the term refers to SEAH perpetrated by those working in, or with, development and humanitarian organisations and within Peacekeeping Missions.</p>

Child marriage/ Forced early Marriage	Forced marriage is the marriage of an individual against her or his will. Child marriage is a formal marriage or informal union before age 18. Even though some countries permit marriage before age 18, international human rights standards classify these as child marriages, reasoning that those under age 18 are unable to give informed consent. Therefore, child marriage is a form of forced marriage as children are not legally competent to agree to such unions (IASC 2015).
Domestic abuse	Domestic abuse, also called "domestic violence" or "intimate partner violence", can be defined as a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone. Domestic abuse can happen to anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender. It can occur within a range of relationships including couples who are married, living together or dating. Domestic violence affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels.
Intimate partner violence	Intimate partner violence is one of the most common forms of violence against women and includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and controlling behaviors by an intimate partner. Intimate partner violence ¹ (IPV) occurs in all settings and among all socioeconomic, religious and cultural groups. The overwhelming global burden of IPV is borne by women. Although women can be violent in relationships with men, often in self-defense, and violence sometimes occurs in same-sex partnerships, the most common perpetrators of violence against women are male intimate partners or ex-partners. By contrast, men are far more likely to experience violent acts by strangers or acquaintances than by someone close to them (non-partner violence).
Cyber violence	Violence against women including in an online environment can take many forms: cyber-harassment, revenge porn, threats of rape, and can go as far as sexual assault or murder. Perpetrators can be partners or ex-partners, colleagues, schoolmates or, as is often the case, anonymous individuals. Some women are particularly exposed, such as women's rights defenders, journalists, bloggers, video gamers, public figures and politicians.
Human Trafficking	The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of force, the threat of force, other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, of the abuse of power, or of a position of vulnerability, or giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person, having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation includes, at a minimum, the exploitation of the sex work of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs (United Nations 2000. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children).
Survivor and victims	Many women's rights organizations use the term "survivor," a term that implies strength, power, and empowerment, to refer to someone who has experienced GBV. "Victim" suggests helplessness. Some use "victim" to refer to someone immediately after an experience of GBV, and "survivor" when the person has regained some sense of control over their body. In practice, those who experience GBV may not associate with either term, or they may shift between feeling like a victim and a survivor.
Intersectional lens	An intersectional lens acknowledges that individuals face different structural power imbalances and may be at disproportionate risk of violence if they occupy marginalized social identities. It also takes into consideration how a person's varied social identities are interconnected. Addressing GBV with an intersectional lens includes considering where overlapping and compounding forms of oppression

	produce unique risk factors and experiences of violence. Intersecting forms of oppression can create distinctive barriers to and risks in accessing support services and care.
Inclusion	Inclusion is a process of ensuring that diverse individuals and groups are included in an approach, activity, or program. An inclusive development approach recognizes that every person, regardless of identity, is instrumental in the transformation of their own societies, and that their ability to participate fully throughout the development process leads to better outcomes.
Trauma-informed	Recognizes trauma, including primary and vicarious trauma, and responds with policies, procedures, and practices that seek to actively prevent re-traumatization. A trauma-informed approach means it includes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for all providers and survivors. It also assumes that everyone, regardless of their personal experiences, can benefit from this approach.

Annex III: Additional Resources

Entity/Institution	Type (with date)	Title/Name (with link)	Summary
UNDP	PSEA requirements	Prevention and Response to Sexual Misconduct Office of Human Resources PSEA website	UNDP policies and resources regarding prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and harassment, including reporting information.
UNDP	Guidance on conducting gender analysis (part of SES guidance – 2016) and Do No Harm	Principal 3: Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment How to Conduct a Gender Analysis UNDP Do No Harm UNDP Do No Harm workshop example - Timor Leste UN Protocol on SEAH	Gender analyses are a useful point of departure to conduct secondary research on available GBV rates in an area of intervention, which can then inform in-country work. For conducting primary research on GBV, abiding by a survivor centered approach and relying on experts (to ensure Do No Harm) is key.
UNDP	Report on GBV Integration (2023) as well as related GBV resources	A New Approach to Ending GBV GBV and COVID-19 Sexual and Gender-based violence Gender and Recovery toolkit Adapting the Indashyikirwa Intimate Partner Violence	The report contains an overview and concrete recommendations to take up the main findings of four UNDP pilots funded by the Republic of Korea to gather evidence about what works to integrate a "GBV lens" into broader development interventions with the aim to prevent and respond to GBV. The recommendations are practical and will help development professionals -- particularly UNDP staff with policy or programmatic responsibilities -- to assess whether a particular intervention has the conditions to integrate a "GBV lens" as part of its core development objectives.

		<p>Prevention Programme: Lessons Learned in Iraq and Lebanon</p> <p>Gender Backlash and Violence Social Media Monitoring Tool</p>	<p>UNDP also conducted assessments on GBV and COVID-19 that has useful learning for programme/project developers, and has a landing page on sexual and gender-based violence which is updated regularly.</p> <p>The Gender and Recovery toolkit on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Crisis and Recovery Settings provides guidance on how to enable the leadership of women and girls while making sure that their specific needs are met. It consists of seven thematic Guidance Notes covering UNDP’s main areas of work in crisis and recovery contexts. Each Note offers concrete entry points and proven approaches for gender-equitable, transformative recovery and resilience programming. Additional Tip Sheets complement the Notes with fast facts and overviews of policy frameworks, concepts, indicators and innovative practices.</p> <p>The "Indashyikirwa" program achieved a 55% reduction in physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence through the innovative integration of SASA and the couple curriculum module in Rwanda. This pioneering approach has been replicated by UNDP in Iraq and Lebanon.</p> <p>Gender Backlash and Violence Social Media Monitoring Tool: using digital technology and mobile apps to mitigate, bring awareness and report GBV.</p>
UN Women	Database	<p>Global Database on Violence against Women</p> <p>Male Champions - Uganda</p> <p>Addressing VAW through Social Protection</p> <p>Technology-facilitated VAW</p>	<p>This database is an important point of departure for GBV analysis as it provides easy access to comprehensive and up-to-date information on measures undertaken by Governments to address all forms of violence against women</p> <p>Each country page provides the user with a snapshot of available prevalence data on different forms of violence against women*, reports submitted by the UN Human Rights bodies, and a comprehensive and easily printable list of available information on measures undertaken by the selected country.</p> <p><i>*Prevalence Data on Different Forms of Violence against Women</i></p> <p>Each country page provides the following prevalence data:</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical and/or Sexual Intimate Partner Violence in the last 12 months • Lifetime Physical and/or Sexual Intimate Partner Violence • Lifetime Non-Partner Sexual Violence <p>These three are foundational documents to build a wider understanding of VAW (which is a subset of GBV), particularly how men can be source/agents of change within a society to shift norms, how social protection systems (which provide a wide range of policy tools and mechanisms) have the potential to address VAW, and how the digital revolution has exacerbated existing, and even created new, forms of gendered inequalities and oppression.</p>
Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)	Resources	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse	Inter-Agency resources on PSEA, including Best Practices and Standard Operating Procedures for inter-agency SEA/GBV complaints mechanisms
World Bank	Database Report (2023)	World Bank Gender Data Portal Violence against women and girls – data visualization World Bank Open Knowledge Repository Integrating Gender and Social Inclusion in Nature-based Solutions	<p>This database includes latest gender statistics accessible through compelling narratives and data visualizations to improve the understanding of gender data and facilitate analyses that inform policy choices. It contains microdata, select country profiles and in some cases, elaborative reports, which can be also accessed on the World Bank Open Knowledge Repository.</p> <p>This guidance note provides insights into how to include GESI in NBS – and points out how GBV considerations can be mainstreamed as well. For example: In the World Bank financed São Tomé e Príncipe Transport Sector Development and Coastal Protection Project, which was designed to integrate NBS into road projects in vulnerable coastal communities, several features were implemented to reduce women’s risks of GBV, including lighting, safe pedestrian crossings, round table discussions on GBV, training for project staff and information for communities to mitigate risks of GBV, and procedures for confidential reporting and safe documentation of cases.</p>
UNHCR	Trainings/Toolkit	Online learning opportunities for practitioners	These are useful learning sources, relevant for both internal and external capacity building. Particularly, the SGBV Prevention and Response is a key tool.

UNICEF Women's Refugee Commission	Presentation	Survivor-centered approach	A PowerPoint deck useful for internal usage for UNDP teams/project developers, and external usage, if deemed appropriate (and if necessary, translated).
International Union for the Conservation of Nature	Report (2020)	Gender-based violence and environmental linkages IUCN – Risk Matrix GBV-ENV Center	This publication establishes patterns of gender-based abuse observed across environmental contexts, affecting the security and well-being of nations, communities and individuals, and jeopardizing meeting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Gender-Based Violence and Environment Linkages Center (GBV-ENV Center) is the world's premiere platform for understanding how gender-based violence is linked to environmental sectors, themes, and activities. The GBV-ENV Center is a strategic action hub hosted by Advancing Gender in the Environment (AGENT), a partnership between the IUCN and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).
Journalism Initiative on GBV	Book (2021)	Silence and Omissions – a media guide for covering GBV	Chapter 1 is on survivor-centered approach, and presented to keep audiences engaged. A useful link to have for internal training.
International Gender Champions	Trainings/Courses	GBV	This is a compilation of free, online training courses that the IGC Secretariat has prepared on different types of SGBV, sectors and levels, and discover levers of action. This may be useful for internal and external (particularly partner) capacity building.
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-based Violence European Institute of Gender Equality Gender Equality Observatory for	Data, Guidance	API-GBV EIGE GEO GBV Prevention Network	Regional entities with resource hubs, data and cultural sensitivity guidance

Latin America and the Caribbean			
GBV Prevention Network (Horn of Africa)			
USAID	Guidance	Working with GBV survivors USAID Guidance on Energy and Infrastructure Projects	<p>A useful guidance on working with survivors, with an important list of questions (and other information):</p> <p>When a survivor is referred or comes to you, use these questions to guide your assessment of the person's immediate needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Would you prefer talk to a male or a female?</i> • <i>What are your immediate needs?</i> • <i>Have you eaten something today or in the last 24 hours?</i> • <i>When was the last time you slept or got a full night's sleep?</i> • <i>Do you need any health services or a doctor's appointment?</i> • <i>Have you felt in danger or unsafe in the last week or the last 30 days?</i> • <i>Do you feel like anyone you live with is in danger or unsafe?</i> • <i>Can you tell me who or what is making you feel unsafe?</i> • <i>Can you tell me what makes you feel safe?</i> • <i>How do you think I might be able to assist you?</i> • <i>Would you be open to answering more questions or would you like to take a break?</i> <p>A useful guidance on energy and infrastructure projects for GBV risk mitigation.</p>
CARE	Guidance on GBV programming	GBV Guidance Online Training	<p>This guidance supports CARE program staff across all impact areas to reduce GBV risks and follow ethical best practice. It provides step-by-step information and tools for how to weave GBV throughout the project cycle. This is a useful supplementary document.</p> <p>CARE also has an interagency training programme with UNFPA and other entities, which covers the key skills required to prepare, design, implement, and monitor projects designed to achieve GBV outcomes using CVA (cash voucher assistance). This can be complemented with training available from the European Institute of Gender Inequality.</p>
Action Aid	Guidance on GBV Programming Report (2019)	Violence Against Women Women-led Approach for GBV Protection	<p>Action Aid is a leading NGO (federation) engaging on women's issues in fragile contexts and emergencies, and has several guidance available on its website. The review report provides important analysis on existing funding data on protection, and specifically GBV response, to determine the extent to which commitments and initiatives on GBV prevention and response, as well as</p>

			localization are being realized. The findings are useful to inform future programming.
GBV Guidelines GBV Area of Responsibility	Professional networks	GBV Guidelines GBV AoR	The inter-agency GBV risk mitigation professional community is a community of practice to connect with others working on GBV risk mitigation, share learnings and resources.
GBV Information Management System	Information system	GBVIMS	<p>The GBV risk mitigation professional community is distinct from the GBV AoR Community of Practice (CoP) which targets GBV specialists working on GBV specialized programming.</p> <p>These could be a source of experts, with regional focus/national or sub-national language capacities.</p> <p>GBVIMS resulted out of an inter-agency partnership UNFPA, IRC and UNHCR. The GBVIMS was created to harmonize data collection on GBV in humanitarian settings, to provide a simple system for GBV project managers to collect, store and analyze their data, and to enable the safe and ethical sharing of reported GBV incident data. The intention of the GBVIMS is both to assist service providers to better understand the GBV cases being reported as well as to enable actors to share data internally across project sites and externally with agencies for broader trends analysis and improved GBV coordination.</p>
Select vertical/climate funds (Green Climate Fund; Global Environment Facility and Adaptation Fund)	Guidance on conducting gender analysis as well as gender policies	GCF – Gender Policy and Action Plan Gender in GCF projects Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) Risk Assessment Guideline: A Toolkit for Green Climate Fund Financed Activities GEF – Policy on Gender Equality GEF Guidance on Gender Equality	<p>Increasingly (and rightly) – vertical funds are focused on understanding levels of GBV, and what proposed project/programme designs imply for different contexts. This is reflected in their gender policies, as well as accompanying environment and social safeguarding policies.</p> <p>The guidance documents provided by the funds also discuss different factors to look at for GBV (such as tenure rights) in the design phase.</p>

		<u>AF – Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan</u> <u>Gender Guidance Document for Implementing Entities</u>	
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Annex IV: Questions to Consider When Screening for GBV Risks

Social/Cultural Context

- Do women face backlash from men or local male leaders because of their economic/political empowerment?
- Are women represented politically (from the local to national level) and if this is not the case; what prevents them from doing so?
- Will women attending trainings/capacity-building activities increase their exposure to GBV, both partner and non-partner?
- Are rates of child marriage high?
- To what extent is wife beating considered acceptable?
- What are the prevalent socio-cultural norms on GBV?
- To what extent do women participate and take decisions in the household?
- Will there be an influx of workers?

Economic Context

- To what extent are women employed in the informal sector as opposed to men?
- Is asset ownership particularly unequal?
- Do women participate in income-generating activities? If not, are women often working on tasks that are not remunerated?
- Have households recently fallen into poverty (e.g., due to natural disasters)?
- Will the project involve exchange of money, employment, goods, or services between project staff and community members?

Legal/Institutional Context

- How strong are local government and customary mechanisms for accountability and transparency regarding GBV?
- Is GBV explicitly not addressed through legal channels/policy frameworks?

Environmental/Geographical Context

- Will the project work in remote locations that may increase vulnerability to GBV risks?
- To what extent have the slow and rapid onset effects of climate change led to resource scarcity, indirectly straining gendered relations in households situated in the project area?
- To what extent are women affected by time poverty in the project area? Is this being exacerbated by the effects of climate change?
- What is the prevalence of environmental crimes in the project area?
- How dependent are men and women on ecosystems goods and services, particularly for livelihoods? Will the project impact this status quo?
- Have previous infrastructure construction/development taken place in the project area? What were the spillover effects?
- Will the project result in changes to the local environment or infrastructure that could impact the safety of women and girls (for example, will introduction of low-emission transport options increase accessibility but also create new sites where GBV can happen)?

Annex V: Considerations for integrating GBV risk assessment in an ESIA

This annex describes some considerations for integrating the GBV risk analysis into the various sections of the ESIA:

- Review policy, legal/regulatory and institutional frameworks around GBV as well as the incidence of GBV: looking at the existence of these frameworks and their level of enforcement at national, regional, and local as well as project level may be a useful first step to gain an understanding of the context at country and project level. This also includes looking at whether frameworks around GBV response meet international obligations, agreements as well as the minimum standards set out by UNDP in its SES.
- Document baseline information: it will be useful to incorporate an understanding of the country context and the incidence and nature of violence in relation or project activities and potential locations. This is a particularly useful step to understand the availability and reliability of data on GBV and violence against women. Evaluating whether any changes are anticipated in the project context or risks caused by the project is also key to establish baseline information. In certain contexts, particularly conflict-affected settings or those with lack of reliable data, it may be necessary and useful to collect household survey data disaggregated by gender, religion, age, disability, caste and other factors on the issue of GBV and violence against women (at the same time collecting this data may be particularly complex in certain contexts due to the risk of backlash from men and others that enforce patriarchal structures).
- Examine project alternatives and revise project design: in alignment with 'do no harm' principles, it may be useful to review and compare feasible alternatives to specific activities that may exacerbate GBV risks. At the very minimum, steps to monitor and mitigate GBV risks must be incorporated into a GBV action plan (this falls in a separate section under the ESMP – see below).
- Analyze and evaluate risks and impacts: specific GBV risks should be listed and their impacts over the project life cycle should be identified in terms of the time aspect of the impact (short-, medium- and long-term); spatial scope and how different groups may be affected.
- Prepare an ESIA report: the ESIA report should contain specific sections related to GBV risks all the while ensuring safety and confidentiality of interviewees to protect them as all reports are publicly disclosed upon completion.

