

GENDER JUSTICE INFORMATION SHEET

The theme for the 2022 Helping-Hand Appeal is Gender Justice. This information sheet is intended to provide a basic understanding of gender justice and to clarify the language that The Salvation Army uses when discussing this issue. It will hopefully provide a basis of knowledge for leaders who intend to use the 2022 Helping-Hand resources but is not intended to be used as part of a group session.

GENDER JUSTICE

Gender Justice is about overcoming gender inequality, ensuring women and girls have equal power, rights and opportunities, and eliminating violence against women and girls.

A key part of The Salvation Army's gender justice projects is addressing gender-based violence.

"Gender-based violence refers to harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender."
UNHRC

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

Regardless of gender, all people can be subjected to gender-based violence, it is important to note that it disproportionately affects women and girls.

The international projects and programmes that The Salvation Army in the United Kingdom and Ireland Territory supports primarily work alongside women and girls who have experienced gender-based violence. Therefore, this is the area of GBV that Helping-Hand 2022 and this information sheet will focus on.

WHAT IS GENDER?

Gender refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed.

Gender interacts with but is different from sex, which refers to the different biological and physiological characteristics of females, males and intersex persons, such as chromosomes, hormones and reproductive organs.

Gender and sex are related to but different from gender identity. Gender identity refers to a person's deeply felt, internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the person's physiology or designated sex at birth.

Definition from World Health Organization



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: KEY POINTS

- GBV refers to violence, or the threat of violence, against women and girls, by individuals, communities and institutions.
- GBV violates women's and girls' human rights, constrains their choices and negatively impacts on their ability to participate in, contribute to and benefit from development.
- It is a **human rights issue** that affects a woman's physical, emotional, psychological and social wellbeing.
- A woman of **any age, class, economic status or culture group may experience gender-based violence** during her lifetime.
- Research shows that while gender-based violence crosses all socio-economic groups, **women living in poverty are disproportionately affected**.
- There are many forms of gender-based violence including domestic violence, sexual abuse, forced early marriage, trafficking, female genital mutilation and sexual exploitation, amongst others (see below for further information).

GBV AROUND THE WORLD

Women are not passive victims; rather, they actively try to find ways to maximise the safety of themselves and their children. A woman's response to abuse is often limited by the options available to her. Women in low- and middle-income countries note that the stigma linked to being unmarried can be a barrier to leaving a relationship. Other barriers include lack of economic independence, lack of family/community support, hope that the man will change, fear of worse violence.

Though violence has always been present, the world does not have to accept it as an inevitable part of human life. Factors that contribute to violence can be addressed. Attitude and behaviour can be changed. Social, economic, political and cultural conditions can be changed. **Violence can be prevented.**

WHAT LANGUAGE TO USE

- **Domestic violence:** This term has become synonymous with violence between couples. However, it also refers to violence amongst members of the family more broadly. This can include towards intimate partners, children, grandparents, and extended family etc.
- **Survivor (not 'victim'):** It is important to avoid the victimisation of people we know or meet who have experienced violence, and to recognise their strengths, agency and path of recovery.



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- **Prostitution Trade (not just ‘prostitution’):** Prostitution is a trade. It should be recognised in terms of supply and demand of sexual acts, not as a profession. In general, the trade disproportionately benefits the buyer or the profiteers, and not the woman who is being prostituted.

FORMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

IPV refers to any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to those in the relationship, such as acts of physical violence, sexual violence, emotional abuse or controlling behaviour.

IPV is viewed as a man’s right to inflict punishment on his wife in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Tanzania and Zimbabwe and Pakistan, among others. Men might discipline their wives with violence when she fails in her role or oversteps her limits, to show her who is boss and/or to discourage further transgressions. In many developing countries, due to cultural and religious reinforcement many women also believe that men have the right to discipline them in certain situations.

Early and/or Forced Marriage (EFM)

EFM refers to any marriage performed without the valid consent of one or both parties, in which physical or emotional trauma is a factor. Early marriage includes children under the age of 18.

One in three girls in the developing world are married before they reach adulthood. This often means that they are no longer able to get or continue an education. Other consequences of EFM include social isolation, violence and early pregnancy. *“More than an estimated 22,000 girls a year are dying from pregnancy and childbirth resulting from child marriage.”¹*

Honour-Based Violence (HBV)

HBV is violence committed within the context of the extended family which is motivated by a perceived need to restore standing within the community presumed to have been lost through the behaviour of the victim. Most victims of HBV are women or girls, although men may also be at risk.

Women and girls may lose honour through expressions of autonomy, particularly if this autonomy occurs within the area of sexuality.



Some common triggers for HBV include:

- Refusing an arranged marriage
- Having a relationship outside the approved group
- Reporting domestic violence
- Attempting to divorce
- Pushing for custody of children after divorce

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM) is the partial or full cutting of a girl's clitoris and labia, for non-medical reasons, nearly always on minors between 4 and 12 years old.

The procedure can cause severe bleeding, infection, infertility and even death. FGM can have devastating physical, psychological and social consequences for the rest of girls' lives.

Prostitution Trade

The prostitution trade is a form of violence against women. It is not natural or inevitable but an exploitation of women and girls as a result of inequality.

Several factors can force a woman into the prostitution trade, such as violence in the family, economic pressures, or because they are tricked. However, these are not the cause of prostitution. The cause is the demand from men to buy sex which stems from a patriarchal belief that devalues and objectifies women.

Women who are exploited through the prostitution trade, particularly in developing countries, are at increased risk of HIV/Aids, sexually transmitted diseases, physical violence, unwanted pregnancy and forced unsafe abortions. Many women develop drug addictions and the associated side effects as they are forced to take drugs either for compliance or, for example in Bangladesh, to make them put on weight and increase their desirability to men.

HOW IS THE SALVATION ARMY RESPONDING?

We believe that a world where women are not only able to exist safely but are also given the freedom to flourish is good for everyone.

The Salvation Army in the United Kingdom and Ireland Territory provides financial and technical support for projects in Argentina and Bangladesh and is working alongside The Salvation Army in South Africa as it develops its gender justice work.



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Argentina

In Tres Arroyos, Argentina, The Salvation Army supports women who have experienced or are currently experiencing domestic abuse. In this safe space women are welcomed, listened to and supported through their journey. The Salvation Army facilitates group therapy sessions with the support of a psychologist. Women are invited to share their experiences in a supportive and non-judgemental setting and have the opportunity to collectively find personal solutions and ways of breaking the cycle of abuse they are in. Here, women have found solidarity and sanctuary.

Another element to the project is engaging children who have experienced violence at home. Through play-based learning, children learn non-violent responses to various situations – aiming to break the cycle of violence in their families.

Bangladesh

The Salvation Army is working to support women who have been sold into or entered the brothels of Jessore, Bangladesh. Journeying alongside women to improve human rights knowledge and literacy, providing education options for children and opportunities for alternative income. Alongside this, The Salvation Army also works with communities to prevent women and girls from entering brothels, raising awareness of women's rights and addressing issues such as early marriage.

South Africa

The Salvation Army in South Africa have employed a gender violence specialist who is advising and guiding the territory on their gender violence response. In the next few years she will also lead a gender justice project in the territory.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

The Salvation Army is working to address a number of the SDGs across all of its international development projects. The Gender Justice projects relate particularly to SDG 5 - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

There are several targets under this SDG, and we are intentionally contributing towards the following targets in the work that we do:

- Ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
- Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.



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- Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.
- Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Visit www.justgiving.com/helpinghand2022 to donate

- £10 could provide functional education classes for women in Bangladesh so they understand their rights and can protect themselves from exploitation.
- £25 could buy materials for Tres Arroyos Salvation Army's 'learning through play' sessions for children who are exposed to violence at home.
- £60 could set up eight child marriage prevention committees in Bangladesh, helping to challenge this practice which violates girls' human rights.

For more information about Helping-Hand 2022 and to download resources, visit www.salvationarmy.org.uk/helpinghand2022

[1] <https://www.savethechildren.net/news/child-marriage-kills-more-60-girls-day>

