

# "From Relief to Development: Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Conflict and Post-Conflict Contexts."

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# Conflicts Around the World

- Afghanistan
- DR Congo
- Ethiopia / Eritrea
- Myanmar/Burma
- Nepal
- North Caucasus
- Somalia
- Sudan











## GBV in Emergencies

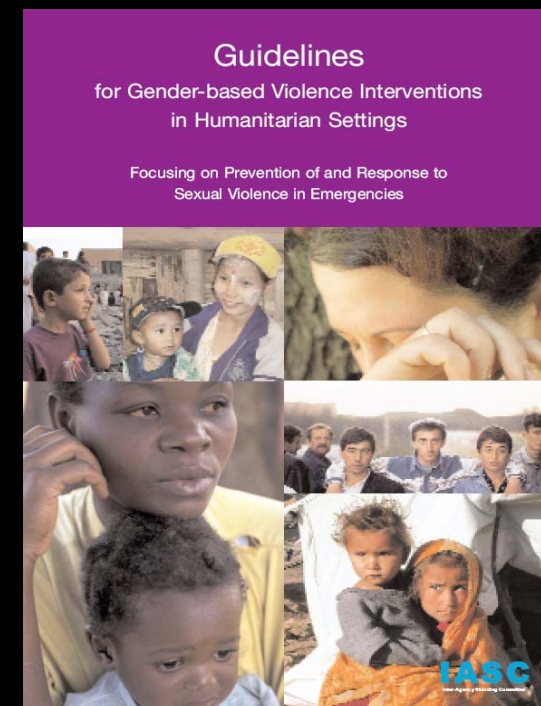
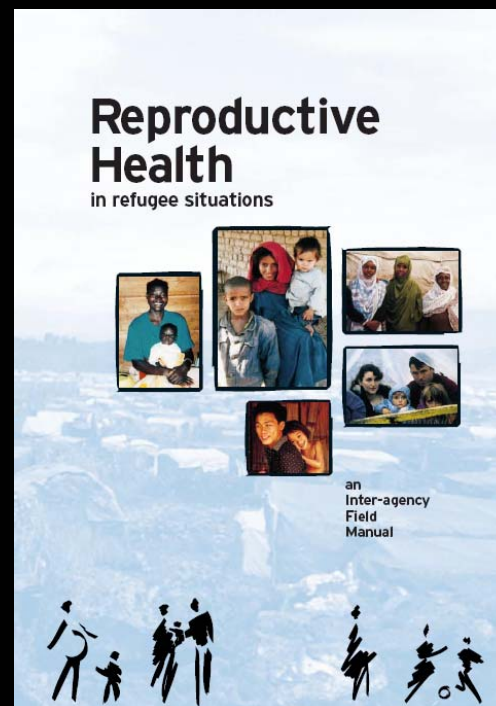
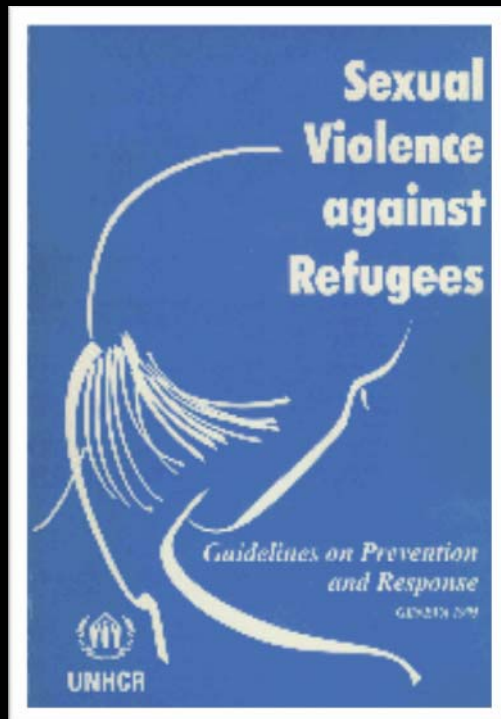
- GBV is an umbrella term encompassing *a range of abuses* based on gender roles.
- In emergency settings the focus is typically on *Sexual Violence* – even more specifically on **conflict related rape**.



## Historically

From Kosovo to Liberia to Nepal to Sudan – sexual violence has historically been a part of conflict that overwhelmingly impacts women and girls.

# Responding to GBV in Emergencies is relatively new



## *Response Through Service Delivery*

- Focus of humanitarian communities addressing the problem to date has been on **response**.
- Health and psychosocial support

## Prevention on the back burner for number of reasons including:

- People have seen sexual violence as an inevitable part of conflict.
- How do you do prevention in the middle of a war zone?
- Limited funding for the issue means resources focus on service delivery.
- Changing attitudes, a central part of prevention and outside the scope of an emergency intervention.

# International Rescue Committee's Approach

**“From Service Delivery to  
Social Change”**

# Addressing the Problem

## GBV is a Huge and Complex Issue

Must be addressed by understanding how it is related to women's social and economic disadvantage and discrimination

This means:

- challenging gender inequality
- promoting women's rights
- creating social, political and economic environments in which women/girls are empowered to enjoy those rights

## Levels of Intervention

**Structural level** - preventative measures to ensure rights are recognized and protected (through international, statutory and traditional laws and policies)

**Systemic level** - systems and strategies to monitor and respond when those rights are breached (statutory and traditional legal/ justice systems, health care systems, social welfare systems and community mechanisms)

**Community Level** - direct services to meet the needs of women and girls who have been abused

# What Does Response & Prevention Looks Like in an Emergency ?



## IRC's GBV Program in Liberia – 2003

Samuel K Doe Stadium → 40,000+ IDPS

1. Conflict Related Rape
2. Opportunistic Sexual Assault
3. Sexual Exploitation
4. Domestic Violence

# Liberia - 2003

Response

Prevention

# IRC Liberia 2008

# Opportunities

- Start the process of breaking the silence surrounding sexual violence and talking about things that have been previously taboo.
- Provides opening to influence systems that can protect women from a variety of abuses.

# Challenges

- Programs can be overwhelmed by the scope & scale of violence against women outside of conflict related rape.
- Funding cycles typically 12 months - not conducive to the long term work needed to address GBV.
- Political will to address what is seen as a sensitive & “soft” topic is lacking.
- Humanitarian Communities become stuck in emergency programming particularly with focus on service delivery as opposed to work at the systemic or structural level.
- Resources and guidelines focused emergency settings.

## Lessons Learned

- GBV does not start when a conflict does and it will not end when the conflict ends.
- Communities are more open to discussing sexual violence perpetrated by “others” i.e. rebel forces. Becomes much more difficult when talking about violence done by members of community.
- Other types of GBV quickly emerge, even in emergencies – domestic violence, early marriage.
- A relief to development approach including work at the community, systemic, and structural level is imperative to long terms solutions to this problem.
- Systems of some sort were in place before the conflict and will be in place after the conflict.

