



Primary Health Care Gender-Based Violence

Additional Terms and Definitions

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (continued)

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) defines gender-based violence as violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty (United Nations Women). Other types of GBV includes: Intimate partner violence (IPV) (physical, sexual, psychological, economic)².

Domestic violence, sexual coercion, childhood sexual abuse, rape, female genital cutting, dowry (gift) deaths, unwanted sexual advances or harassment, forced marriage, denial of the right to use contraception or other measures, denial to protect yourself against sexually transmitted infections (STI), forced abortion, forced prostitution, trafficking of people for the purpose of sexual exploitation and (www.who.int, 2016).

GENDER ROLES

This term refers to the roles or behaviours expected of men and women, boys and girls, according to their sex in a given society or community²². These roles dictate what is acceptable or desirable for women and men to do, based on the idea that a person is a man or a woman²³. For example, the ideas that “house cleaning is women’s work” or “Men are tough and never cry” are gender roles decided on by society. In reality, both men and women can clean house, plenty of men cry when they are upset, and women can be strong and tough. These ideas about behaviours and tasks are based on what society thinks is acceptable,

not what individual people want for themselves.

IPV DURING PREGNANCY

Intimate partner violence (IPV) during pregnancy is a serious public health issue with significant negative health consequences for women and children. Women of reproductive age are more vulnerable to abuse by intimate partners than by any other perpetrator. Review of 18 studies conducted in Africa reported prevalence of physical violence against pregnant women ranging between 0.9% and 30% (Shamu et al, 2017).

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is any form of abuse which includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or economic. It includes damage to property, stalking and entry into a person’s property without their consent any other abusive or controlling behaviour where such a conduct causes harm or may cause harm to your health, safety, or wellbeing (Domestic Violence Act No. 116 of 1998).

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

This is the most common form of GBV and may involve rape, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and trafficking for sexual purposes.

CHILD ABUSE & CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE (continued)

Physical Abuse can be external or internal and includes injuries such as a bruise, welt, burn, or cut inflicted on a child by other than accidental means by another person. Smacking children is illegal in South Africa. The following terms can be



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helpful to identify child abuse:

- Neglect: the failure to provide adequate care or supervision for a child.
- Willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment: any situation where any person willfully causes, inflicts or permits unjustifiable physical pain or mental suffering, or permits the child to be placed in a situation of danger.
- Mental suffering, emotional abuse: willful harm that has been inflicted upon a child and endangers his or her emotional well-being.

Childhood sexual abuse is involvement of a child in sexual activity, to which he/she does not consent; he/she does not understand on the basis of his/her developmental age and that violates the norms of society (Mc Kerrow., N 2015). It is an involvement of a child in sexual activity where there is an imbalance of power on the basis of age, strength, assertiveness wealth or social status.

Child sexual abuse may include but is not limited to: — the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity; — the exploitative use of a child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices; — the exploitative use of children in pornographic performance and materials”

Most perpetrators of child sexual abuse are known to the children concerned, suggesting that child sexual abuse often takes place at home, school or in the surrounding neighborhood (Fox, 2003).

Sexual offences against children in South Africa are governed by three pieces of legislation: (i) the Criminal Law [Sexual Offences and Related Matters] Amendment Act No. 32 of 2007, the

Children’s Act No. 38 of 2005 and the Children’s Amendment Act No 41 of 2007. These acts explicitly define what sexual offences are and detail support and protection of abused children.

Children with disability are four times more likely to suffer from abuse or neglect (WHO, 2017) The commodification of sex as a risk factor for sexual abuse, with children or adolescents exchanging sex or associated acts for goods such as money, food, or other items.

GBV AND HIV

In South Africa, HIV/AIDS has worsened the situation of women. It has exacerbated their economic and social insecurity. Caring for sick and dying family and community members has increased the workload of women and girls, sometimes taking them out of education and economic spheres of activity. Negotiating safer sex, disclosing one’s HIV status to one’s partner, and seeking counselling and treatment are limited by fear. For women, this fear relates not only to stigmatisation, but to violence and destitution.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Female genital mutilation (FGM) includes procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons (WHO, 2017). FGM is performed on young girls, from infancy to 15 years and sometimes on young women. It is violation of their rights. The procedure can cause many health-related complications including severe pain, urinary complications and death. FGM is often performed to reduce the woman’s libido to ensure premarital virginity and extra marital sexual acts.



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TRAFFICKING IN PERSON

Trafficking in persons in South Africa remains to be the result of a complex set of interrelated push and pull factors. On the “push” side factors such as poverty, a lack of opportunities, dislocations from family and community, gender, racial and ethnic inequalities, and the break-up of families are all relevant. “Pull” factors include the promise of a better life, consumer aspirations, and lack of information on the risks involved, established patterns of migration, porous borders and fewer constraints on travel (TIP draft policy, 2016).

FEMICIDE

Femicide is generally understood to involve intentional murder of women because they are women, but broader definitions include any killings of women or girls. Intimate femicide is perpetrated by a current or ex-boyfriend or

husband. Dowry-related femicide involves newly married women being killed by in-laws over conflicts related to dowry, such as bringing insufficient dowry to the family. Dowry related femicide is common in India.

MIGRANT WOMEN AND GBV

Women in some African countries migrate to South Africa for many reasons. Some migrate to escape the political and economic crisis including civil wars and genocide (Kihato, 2009). Refugee women are greatly disempowered, with illegal immigrants’ access to police and justice system severely constrained (Fox, 2003). , POWA in its shadow compiled for the Beijing +15 states that migrant women who are in abusive relationships are reluctant to report the abuse to the Police due to discrimination from service providers In addition, abusive men used the woman’s migrant status to justify their abuse.

Many types of violence can occur at any point in the lifespan. However, some developmental phases are associated with increased risks of certain types of violence, as illustrated in the table below.

Phase	Type of Violence
Pre birth	Sex-selective abortion Battering during pregnancy
Infancy	Female infanticide
Girlhood	Child marriage; genital mutilation; sexual abuse by family members and strangers; differential access to food and medical care; child prostitution
Adolescence	Dating and courtship violence economically coerced sex
Reproductive Age	Abuse of women by intimate male partners; marital rape; dowry abuse and murders
Elderly	Abuse of widows; elder abuse



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Lesbian- a woman who forms same-sex romantic and sexual relationships, a woman who is homosexual

Gay- term to describe men and women who form same-sex romantic and sexual relationships, term to describe men and women who are homosexual

Bisexual- a person who may form sexual and romantic relationships with both men and women

Transgender- Transgender (sometimes shortened to “trans”) is an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of identities—including transsexual people, cross-dressers (sometimes referred to as “transvestites”), people who identify as third gender, and others whose appearance and characteristics are perceived as gender atypical.

Transwomen- identify as women but were classified as males when they were born. Transmen identify as men but were classified female when they were born. Some transgender people seek surgery or take hormones to bring their body into alignment with their gender identity; others do not.

Intersex- An intersex person is born with sexual anatomy, reproductive organs, and/or chromosome patterns that do not fit the typical definition of male or female. This may be apparent at birth or become so later in life. An intersex person may identify as male or female or as neither.

Source: UN High Commission for Human Rights, Free and Equal, LGBT Rights FAQ, 2017. <https://www.unfe.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/LGBT-Rights-FAQs.pdf>