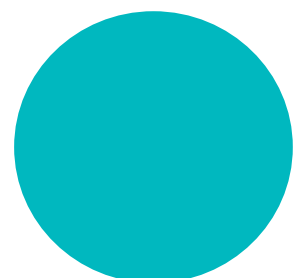
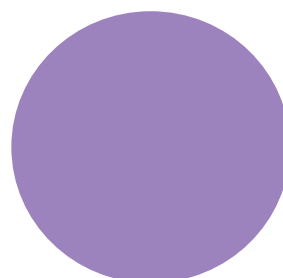
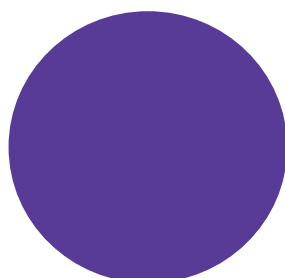
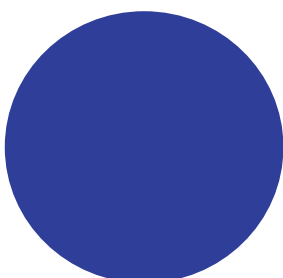




# STRATEGY 2018-20





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# INTRODUCTION



The Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR) is the global level forum for coordination and collaboration under the Cluster Approach on GBV prevention and response in humanitarian settings. The GBV AoR constitutes a focus area within the Global Protection Cluster (GPC).

The GBV AoR brings together non-governmental organisations, UN agencies, academics and others under the shared objective of ensuring life-saving, predictable, accountable and effective GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response in emergencies, both natural disaster and conflict-related humanitarian contexts. The GBV AoR also works to strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies. The GBV

AoR was founded in 2006 and sits within the GPC, one of the eleven humanitarian clusters established by the IASC in 2005. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has been the lead Agency of the GBV AoR since April 2016.

This strategy builds on the substantial achievements of the GBV AoR to date and sets out the priorities for the next three years. It is based on extensive consultations: including 50 key informant interviews with members and partners and a series of focus group discussions conducted with GBV Coordinators at the annual retreat in Portugal,

GBV AoR Core members, and field based sub-clusters in Mindanao, Philippines; Juba, South Sudan; Gaziantep hub, Whole of Syria; Yangon, Myanmar<sup>1</sup>; and Kabul, Afghanistan as well as with 30 sub-cluster coordinators and partners from the West and Central African Region in Dakar, Senegal. In addition, an online survey, aimed at sub-cluster members was distributed in French, English, Arabic and Spanish and received 376 responses<sup>2</sup> from 42 countries.

The GBV AoR applies the IASC definition of gender-based violence: "Gender-based violence is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will, and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females."<sup>3</sup>

The term GBV is used to underscore how systemic gender inequality acts as a foundational characteristic of most forms of violence perpetrated against women and girls. The term is a reflection of unequal power relations and that violence is often used to maintain and reinforce gender inequalities. Gender discrimination is not only a cause of many forms of violence against women and girls but also contributes to the widespread acceptance and invisibility of such violence—so that perpetrators are not held accountable and survivors are discouraged from speaking out and accessing support. Recognising that evidence shows that women and girls are disproportionately affected by GBV, the GBV AoR prioritises women and girls, whilst being inclusive of all survivors.

- 1 FGDs were also conducted at the sub-national level in Sittwe and Myitkyina
- 2 Survey responses received for each language were 239 English, 76 French, 48 Arabic, and 13 Spanish.
- 3 Interagency Standing Committee, 2015. Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing Risk, Promoting Resilience, Aiding Recovery.

# RATIONALE



The need to prevent, respond to and mitigate the risks of GBV in crises has never been greater. The landscape of humanitarian action has changed considerably as interrelated global trends, such as climate vulnerability, demographic change, and migration have led to an increased humanitarian need exacerbated by poverty, fragility and vulnerability. Furthermore, estimates suggest that in 2018 more than 135 million people across the world will need humanitarian assistance and protection.<sup>4</sup> The GBV AoR recognises the need to scale up support for coordination and accelerate a joint approach to enhance the impact of GBV response, prevention and mitigation measures.

The purpose of this strategy is to chart a course for the GBV AoR over the next three years, and to establish and effectively communicate a cohesive narrative and direction for the GBV AoR.

The GBV AoR will continue to facilitate a cooperative and strong relationship with the GPC as well as collaborative partnerships with the other Areas of Responsibility within the GPC. This strategy is designed to complement the GPC strategy, identifying specific strategic entry points for the GBV AoR, that in turn contributes to the overall vision and mission outlined by the GPC strategy. In addition, this strategy aligns with the Call to Action on Protection from GBV in Emergencies Roadmap 2016-2020, contributing directly to the focus on strengthened coordination, full engagement with local actors, improved quality of response and promotion of gender equality.

The GBV AoR will support flexible humanitarian coordination structures that adapt to the unique needs of the population and the often-unpredictable nature of a humanitarian crisis as it evolves. Coordination functions will be fit for purpose for the context in which humanitarian crises occur and wherever possible, will look to support or build upon local capacity and leadership.<sup>5</sup>

As a priority, the GBV AoR will retain its focus on ensuring there are functioning, effective and connected field level sub-cluster and cluster-like coordination mechanisms, supported both technically and through strong policy and advocacy work at the global and regional levels.

.....  
4 Global Humanitarian Overview 2018, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.  
5 The GBV AoR does not operate in refugee contexts where the mandate for coordination of the response is held by UNHCR.



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## VISION



Gender-based violence is eliminated in all humanitarian crises.

## MISSION



The GBV AoR works collectively to improve the effectiveness and accountability of humanitarian response for the prevention of and response to all forms of gender-based violence, to ensure that the agency and capacity of survivors is recognised and reinforced and that primary prevention efforts are effectively employed to address underlying gender inequality.

# OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES



In pursuit of the vision, mission and priorities of this strategy, the GBV AoR commits to the following operational principles as ways of working and will apply these across all areas of its work.



## Gender Equality

Gender equality is at the heart of addressing GBV and must be central to the work of the GBV AoR. The GBV AoR acknowledges that systemic gender inequality is a root cause of violence perpetrated against women and girls. The GBV AoR will strive to promote gender equality in and through all of its actions.

## Partnership

The GBV AoR recognises the need to strengthen existing relationships and foster new ones to improve coordination and collaboration and contribute to a more cohesive management of the needs of survivors and those at risk throughout the entire humanitarian cycle. Where appropriate, we must facilitate the transition to other forms of sector coordination for early recovery; in protracted contexts, we must extend to multi-year planning; and in all contexts, we build upon and facilitate national capacity and leadership including linking more effectively to women's organisations and civil society.

## Localisation

The GBV AoR will apply the principles of partnership and seek to build upon and leverage national capacities for GBV prevention and response through line ministries, NGOs, service providers, community-based organizations, and women's rights organisations, ensuring humanitarian principles are upheld and the needs of survivors are always prioritised. Whilst efforts towards localisation require sustained and dedicated activities, it is also necessary to apply the principle across all areas of work.

## Accountability

In all of its work, the GBV AoR seeks to be accountable to the community it serves, specifically survivors and those at risk of GBV by promoting a survivor-centred approach. The principle of accountability binds the GBV AoR to be field-driven and respond to the needs of those in crisis ensuring that global guidance and leadership is reflective of these needs and can be easily applied. Furthermore, the principle of accountability reflects the commitments made under the IASC-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the primary coordination body of the humanitarian system, as well as one of the three 'strategic shifts' in the Call to Action Roadmap 2016-2020.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Call to Action on Protection from Gender Based Violence in Emergencies Road Map 2016-2020.



# Strategic Objective 1

GBV response is life-saving, timely and responsive to the needs, rights and dignity of survivors and those at risk

- Through continued investment in technical support and the capacity development of sub-cluster coordinators, the GBV AoR will support strong field-level coordination; monitor and advise all GBV sub-clusters to deliver on their core cluster functions as outlined by the IASC;<sup>7</sup> and provide advice so that they are fit for purpose and appropriate to their contexts. The GBV AoR will provide technical support to sub-clusters on key areas such as child/adolescent survivors, early and forced marriage, and mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS).
- The GBV AoR will work closely with partners such as the GPC, Child Protection AoR, Health Cluster and the Inter-Agency Working Group for Reproductive Health in Crisis and other relevant actors to ensure clarity of roles and an accessible and appropriate response for all survivors of GBV and those at risk, with special attention paid to the most excluded and marginalized populations.
- The GBV AoR will strengthen capacity in the area of safe and ethical GBV information management as a core function of coordination, through mentoring and training to ensure that the needs of those affected by GBV, risk factors, vulnerabilities and protective mechanisms are effectively analysed, incorporated into planning and communicated to partners.
- The GBV AoR will strengthen strategic communication and relationships with donors, regularly track and identify GBV coordination and response funding shortfalls and resource needs, and advocate with donors to fill these gaps.
- The GBV AoR will work with both development and humanitarian actors at the field and global levels to ensure the continuity and effectiveness of GBV prevention and response activities, to enhance efforts to challenge social norms that reinforce gender inequality and underpin GBV.

7 IASC Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country Level.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



1

GBV response is life-saving, timely and responsive to the needs, rights and dignity of survivors and those at risk.

2

GBV risk mitigation is integrated into all humanitarian response efforts and is central to humanitarian action.

3

The GBV AoR works in partnership to address strategic, technical and policy gaps while communicating and promoting best practice.

## Strategic Objective 2

GBV risk mitigation is integrated in to all humanitarian response efforts and is central to humanitarian action

- The GBV AoR will strengthen efforts to influence policy and practice at all levels, through evidence-based, targeted and sustained advocacy interventions.
- The GBV AoR will support humanitarian leadership's efforts to provide strategic direction to all humanitarian actors to ensure GBV is accorded sufficient attention in the response, in light of the revised HCT Terms of Reference (April 2017) and model HCT Compact, which are to reflect GBV as one of the four standard mandatory responsibilities.
- The GBV AoR will work with the GBV Guidelines Reference Group, GPC and the Global Cluster Coordinators to advocate for the integration of GBV risk mitigation and response throughout the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC); including through ensuring it is appropriately addressed in Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) protection strategies.
- The GBV AoR, in consultation with field level GBV sub-clusters, will support the integration of GBV into high-level planning, preparedness and evaluation documents particularly the IASC Early Warning - Early Action report, Emergency Directors' annual review of operational response and other relevant global reports.
- The GBV AoR will monitor Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs), Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs) and their associated funding requests and will support country-level coordination mechanisms to ensure that GBV is highlighted as a priority area for action.

## Strategic Objective 3

The GBV AoR works in partnership to address strategic, technical and policy gaps while communicating and promoting best practice

- The GBV AoR will establish itself as the first point of contact for coordination guidance on GBV in emergencies through effective information management, including an accessible and up-to-date website and functional community of practice.
- The GBV AoR will seek to engage and partner with local organisations, in particular women's organizations, and national governments and facilitate their active participation in coordination.
- The GBV AoR will partner with academic institutes, think-tanks, innovation labs and other research bodies to identify gaps, further strengthen the evidence base and disseminate research outcomes in order to promote innovative approaches for GBV prevention and response efforts. The focus will be on practical advice that can be applied in the field on areas of emerging importance and identified gaps.
- The GBV AoR will work closely with relevant bodies and joint initiatives focused on GBV in emergencies, including but not limited to, the Call to Action on GBV in Emergencies, the Real Time Accountability Partnership (RTAP) and the GBVIMS Steering Committee to leverage partnerships, link to and inform joint advocacy, avoid duplication and create linkages in field implementation.





## IMPLEMENTATION



The GBV AoR will prioritise support to GBV sub-clusters in Level 3 and also critical, large-scale and under-resourced emergencies, whilst continuing to be responsive to the needs of all sub-clusters.

The GBV AoR will be supported by a Coordination Team, comprised of both management roles and key technical staff as appropriate to fulfil the function of the AoR and for the implementation of this strategy. Those in the Coordination Team may sit either at the global or regional level as required.

The GBV AoR will periodically review Task Teams, which operate on a time-bound basis as well as Reference Groups, which operate on an ongoing basis. The Task Teams and Reference Groups of the GBV AoR are informed by field-level needs and their work supports the implementation of this strategy and accompanying work-plan.

In order to promote alignment between the work of the Task Teams, Reference Groups and the Coordination Team, and the REGA function, and for the coherence of the GBV AoR's work as whole, regular meetings will be scheduled to review progress and the ongoing relevance of the activities under the GBV AoR's work-plan.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION



The GBV AoR commits to creating and aligning measurable activities against the strategic objectives outlined in this strategy. The activities will form the basis of a three-year work-plan, which will include relevant indicators, assigned responsibility, time frame and costing.

On an annual basis, the GBV AoR will conduct an internal interim review process of the work-plan, looking at progress against indicators. At this time, the AoR will also assess the continued suitability and feasibility of planned activities and, if necessary, amend the proceeding year's work-plan to reflect both achievements and changes in circumstance or context. An updated work-plan will be confirmed by the core membership.

Beyond measuring the achievements of the work-plan against output level indicators, at the end of the strategy and work-plan period, the AoR will commission an outcome level evaluation of the strategic plan assessing progress towards the strategic objectives and their contribution to the overall mission and vision.



## ANNEX 1



# CONSULTATION

A substantial consultation process was undertaken and forms the basis of this three-year strategy. The consultation was a global process, informed by contributions from GBV AoR members, global cluster actors, field level sub-cluster members, sub-cluster coordinators, the GBV AoR coordination team and donors.

The consultation included 50 key informant interviews, a series of focus group discussions in 10 locations and a global survey which received 376 responses. This consultation was complemented by a detailed literature review, which examined both GBV AoR products and external publications to understand current practice, emerging and priority areas, coordination challenges and external initiatives on GBV in emergencies.

The online survey was made available in four languages; Arabic, English, French and Spanish and was distributed through GBV sub-cluster coordinators and core members to GBV sub-cluster members and partners at the field level. The purpose of the survey was to identify the priority needs for support, varying needs dependent on context, areas of increasing priority as well as current or previous areas of work that were particularly impactful. The survey utilised a variety of methodologies including summative scales, multiple choice and preferential ranking. Respondents to the survey were primarily drawn from multi-lateral organisations, international and national non-government organisations and national governments, with some representation from women's organisations and the private sector. The results of the survey fed into the broader themes of consultation as outlined below. An overview of the survey findings is included in a detailed summary of the consultations made available online at [gbvaor.net](http://gbvaor.net).

The detailed findings from this consultation and literature review will also inform the development of targeted and measurable actions outlined in a three-year work-plan that will accompany this strategy.

# THEMES OF CONSULTATION



## Global guidance must speak to and be based on the realities of the field.

The exceptional work done at the global-level on standard setting and producing guidance materials was acknowledged throughout the consultation, with many useful and significant products produced in the last five years. Those consulted called for a renewed focus on ensuring additional materials and updated content are easily adaptable in the field with mechanisms to share lessons learned amongst field locations.



## Data and information management are a crucial part of coordination and quality response requiring greater investment.

Both GBV specialists and partners highlighted the significant gaps in capacity for specialised GBV information management.<sup>8</sup> The impact of this on the narrative of GBV and the integration of GBV into humanitarian-wide or response-wide documents was also highlighted. GBV specialists noted the specific requirements of information management within the sector, including the capacity to identify, seek out and analyse alternative data sources; to negate unnecessary or unrealistic demands for prevalence or incident data by capitalising upon alternative, safe and ethical quantitative and qualitative information sources which illustrate risks and locations of concern; and, in particular, to maintain respect for GBV guiding principles including confidentiality and consent, as keystones of safe and ethical data management. The need to work in a sustained way on building the capacity of specialist GBV information managers was highlighted, with mentoring, twinning and the development of specialised training all raised as mechanisms that should be employed, as well as strengthened collaboration with the GBVIMS Steering Committee.

## The GBV AoR should provide greater technical leadership and support to the field on a number of key issues.

The GBV AoR was asked to provide guidance on some specific issues, in particular:

- Child survivors
- Early and forced marriage and other harmful practices
- Adolescent girl survivors
- Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)

The request also included the need for specialised capacity building of existing cohort of GBV Coordinators. It was acknowledged that there have been some significant efforts by the GBV AoR and the Learning Task Team to build up a global cadre of GBV personnel through general GBViE training, as well as the significant investment of UNFPA as lead agency in establishing a surge capacity and efforts toward addressing coordination gaps at the country level. However, there is now the need to focus on further strengthening the technical GBV and coordination skills of existing staff members. It was highlighted that this could be done through a combination of methods such as supervision, mentoring and training.

## Advocacy is central to the effectiveness of the GBV AoR at both the country and global level and must be done in a systematic and targeted way, drawing directly from the reality of the field.

Throughout the consultation, there was significant discussion on advocacy, both public and strategic advocacy and the challenges in conducting advocacy at both the field and global level. Participants noted there is no common understanding of advocacy amongst the

8 The GBVIMS, which is a linked but separate body, has been a global leading body on safe and ethical GBV data management for ten years, with a focus on incident data. The role of the GBVIMS was acknowledged throughout the consultation, however the role and purpose of GBV information management is broader than the scope of the GBVIMS.

GBV AoR members and the utilisation of it as a tool to achieve certain stated aims. Whilst several respondents highlighted the work of the Policy and Advocacy Task team as a positive example, they also noted that it would be beneficial to resource this group to further support the field-level on joint advocacy and to improve the visibility of global level advocacy efforts.

**Efforts on localisation must be implemented in a way that is sensitive to the power dynamics and capacity gaps within each specific country and at the global level, ensuring that the needs of survivors and those at risk are always prioritised.** Localisation was a key topic of discussion throughout the consultations with many raising questions around how to move beyond rhetoric and apply this in a meaningful way in the field. Some coordinators and specialists who are working in contexts where the national government shows strong leadership of the GBV response and GBV sub-cluster brought up further questions on how to avoid disrupting the local leadership in times of significant or large-scale disasters that involved a substantial influx of international responders. Adversely, others who were working in contexts where there was limited national capacity requested further guidance on how to engage with the government and suggested that contextualisation of guidance, tools and standards were crucial for encouraging the buy-in from line ministries.

**Consultations revealed that the role of the GBV AoR in relation to coordination and advocacy for male survivors needed to be clarified and affirmed to the broader humanitarian community.** The appropriateness of inclusion of male survivors in both prevention and response activities was raised several times during the consultations. In many instances, there were questions as to whether the mandate of the GBV AoR extended to male survivors. Furthermore, a common observation among consultation participants was a lack of



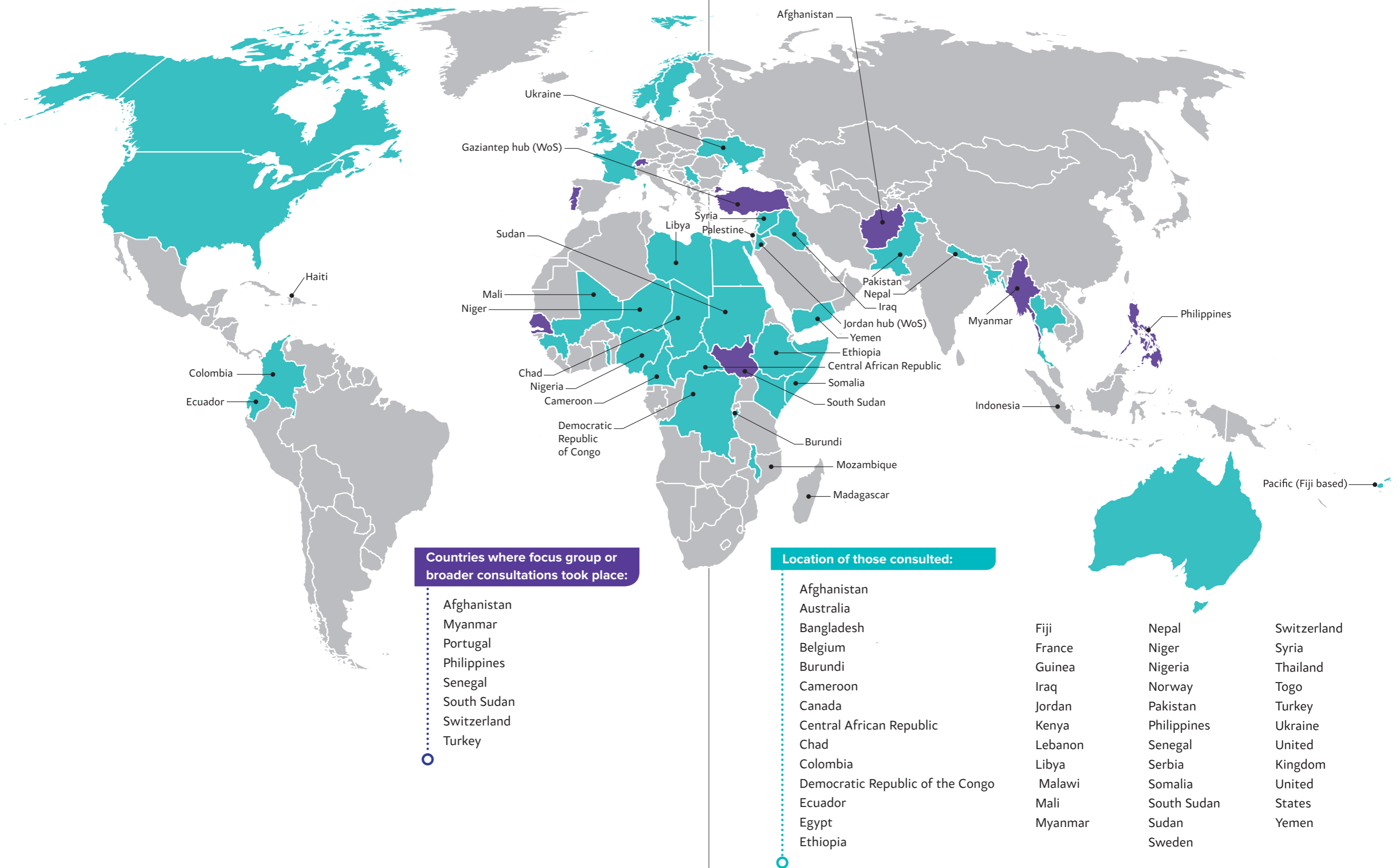
understanding as to what types of violence affecting men and boys constitute GBV, and a lack of knowledge as to the extent that current GBV service provision and prevention work is inclusive of men and boys at the field level.

The AoR adheres to humanitarian principles, and its mandate does not exclude male survivors of sexual assault. Consultations made clear that further clarification on what types of violence affecting men and boys constitutes GBV and guidance on how to best support male survivors of sexual assault without compromising access for female GBV survivors are needed. That said, the AoR recognises and respects that its members have differing target demographics and varying approaches in their respective prevention and response work in line with individual agency mandates and technical specialisations.

Still, inclusion does not negate emphasis, and in-line with global evidence and IASC policy, the GBV AoR's primary focus is on women and girls as those most disproportionately affected by violence stemming from gender inequality and the resulting differences in power, privilege, and opportunity that are often exacerbated in emergencies.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Inter-Agency Standing Committee Policy on Gender Equality and The Empowerment of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Action





Strategy Development Process

October 2017 October 2017-May 2018	October 2017	Geneva, Australia	Inception plan developed and agreed
	Outline of process		
	October- November 2017	Australia	Consultation tools prepared
	Literature review		
	November 2017	Portugal	Series of focus group discussions conducted, summary report prepared
	Consultation with sub-cluster coordinators		
	November 2017	Geneva	Series of key informant interviews, summary report prepared
	Consultations with cluster partners		
	November-January 2017	Global	50 key informant interviews conducted
	Online consultations: Key Informant Interviews		
	December 2017-January 2018	Global	Survey design developed and agreed, survey launched and 376 responses received from 42 countries
	Online survey		
	December 2017-January 2018	Myanmar, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Philippines, Turkey (Whole of Syria response)	Structured focus group discussions conducted in 7 locations across 5 countries. With a total of 94 participants
	Field based consultations: focus group discussions		
	January 2018	Senegal	Series of focus group discussions conducted, summary report prepared
	Consultation with sub-cluster coordinators and partners for West and Central Africa region		
	January 2018	Australia	Consultation findings analysed and synthesised
	Synthesis of findings from initial consultations		
	January 2018	Geneva	Presentation of findings and series of structured focus group discussions
	Consultation with Core Members		
	February 2018	Australia	Additional findings from remaining field consultations and consultations with core members synthesised and incorporated into analysis
	Synthesis of additional consultations		
	February 2018	Global	Strategy drafted based on all consultations and circulated to coordination team, all core members, members of the strategy reference group and donors
	Draft strategy and work plan circulated for feedback		
	February 2018	Australia	Comments collated and weighed against findings from consultations, strategy and work plan redrafted
	Redrafting of strategy and workplan based on feedback received		
	March 2018	Global	Second iteration of strategy and work plan circulated to coordination team, core members, REGAS, strategy reference group, GPC, CP AoR and donors
	Second iteration of draft strategy and workplan circulated for feedback		
	May 2018	Australia, Thailand	Final version of strategy drafted and agreed, Strategy launched in Bangkok
	Strategy and work plan finalised		

Strategy Development Process

The development of the GBV AoR Strategy for 2018-2020 included a wide-ranging consultation with partners, core members and sub-cluster coordinators and members.

The process was led by an independent consultant and guided by a representative advisory group, consisting of core member representatives, sub-cluster coordinators and members of the GBV AoR Coordination Team.

Through this collaborative process, the GBV AoR strategy reflects the needs and ambitions of the whole GBV AoR including the lead agency, core members and those engaged in GBV prevention, mitigation and response work in the field.



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