

GBV AoR HELPDESK

Gender Based Violence in Emergencies

Research Query: Guidelines and Examples of Best Practice for GBViE Fundraising

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Introduction

Fundraising for gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response in emergencies is essential for building programming. Currently, humanitarian donor support to GBV programming is relatively poor in relation to the need. According to the International Rescue Committee, GBV funding accounted for just 0.12 per cent of all humanitarian funding from 2016-2018, representing only one-third of funding requested for GBV.¹

Being able to communicate to donors about the urgency of addressing GBV, including the fact that responding to GBV is an essential service in emergencies, is an important skill. However, **it is vital that GBV fundraising efforts follow ethical principles in order to promote empowerment of women and girls, uphold the dignity and safety of GBV survivors and avoid perpetuating or reinforcing negative or harmful stereotypes.**

There are many different ways to fundraise, from responding to donor calls for proposals to building awareness campaigns that generate public interest in an issue and stimulate individual giving. This guidance focuses particularly on public-facing fundraising campaigns. It outlines guiding principles to ensure women and girls are centred in fundraising campaigning for GBV programming, and that fundraising efforts promote the dignity and safety of GBV survivors. It also provides specific recommendations on language and image use. This guidance is meant to be a reference for organisations to guide the development of fundraising standards, and can also be used to train staff responsible for developing campaigns, who may not have extensive experience with GBV. Additional resources are provided at the end of the guidance.

Public-facing Fundraising Campaigns and Basic GBV Standards

Fundraisers can face competing demands in ensuring that the campaigns they produce resonate with the general public and attract funds to finance vital programming, whilst ensuring that the dignity of

¹ International Rescue Committee, Where is the Money? How the Humanitarian System is Failing in its Commitments to end Violence Against Women and Girls, (2019) Available at: <https://www.rescue.org/report/wheres-money-how-humanitarian-system-failing-fund-end-violence-against-women-and-girls>

individuals and communities is preserved. Fundraisers carry a responsibility to raise public awareness of the realities and complexities of inequality, injustice and poverty, and the importance of the work their organisation undertakes, whilst still emphasising the dignity, capacities and resilience of communities.²

Fundraising campaigns are generally expected to adhere to certain standards including being truthful, transparent, and respecting the dignity and privacy of those who might benefit from donations (see for example UK Code of Fundraising Practice³). It is also important for fundraisers in high-income countries whose fundraising focuses on low-income countries to be aware of power dynamics and be sensitive to how language and imagery can reinforce racial or religious stereotypes or centre the experiences of white, Western actors. Those in positions of power should not speak about and for those with lesser power without making every effort to include their perspective and priorities. The resilience and leadership of local communities should be emphasised, with care taken not to portray Western actors as the only providers of solutions.

There are additional considerations when fundraising specifically for GBV prevention and response. As is described further below, it is essential that survivors' rights and wellbeing are considered given the sensitive nature of GBV and the risks that women and girls may face if exposed as survivors. Fundraisers must also ensure that their fundraising efforts do not cause harm or perpetuate negative stereotypes about women and girls, as well as about larger communities. In addition, it is critically important to reflect and reinforce the priorities of women and girls in fundraising campaigns, in their own voices to the extent possible, ensuring that all strategies to address GBV are based on consultation and leadership of women and girls the funding aims to serve.

Guiding Principles

Organisations should develop their own fundraising codes and ensure there are mechanisms in place to report unethical practices and behaviour. All staff, volunteers and agencies engaged in fundraising for GBV programming must abide by the following ethical and safety principles:

Consult with women and girls and local GBV experts who are familiar with the context and dynamics.

Local GBV experts will be able to provide guidance on whether content is appropriate and whether survivors' rights are being upheld. In consultation with experts, highlight the priorities and perspectives of women and girls in the local context. When including expert guidance in campaigns ensure that women are represented and quoted as sources of expert information.

Use language and images that show women and girls in all their strength, capacity and diversity.

Avoid using language that contributes to harmful stereotypes or that objectifies women. Fundraisers should be aware of the context for which they are fundraising and how their own assumptions or unconscious biases could influence a campaign, including bias regarding gender roles of men and women, ideas about people of different races and classes, and ideas about different country contexts.

² Bond, Putting the people in the pictures first: Ethical guidelines for the collection and use of content (images and stories) (London, 2019). Available at: <https://www.bond.org.uk/sites/default/files/resource-documents/bond-ethical-guidelines-for-collection-and-use-of-content.pdf>

³ Fundraising Regulator, *Code of Fundraising Practice* (London, 2019). Available at: <https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code>

Uphold all survivors' rights to dignity and avoid judgemental language and sensationalist messages. Emphasise the agency of women and girls, and avoid generalising all women in a certain community as victims or all men as violent.

Demonstrate that local communities can provide solutions and leadership. Do not use language that reinforces the idea that GBViE is acceptable, and avoid presenting GBV as an inevitable consequence of a crisis.

Be sensitive and respectful when using survivor stories for fundraising content. Think carefully about the value of using a particular story as part of fundraising. Never share an individual survivor's story unless it is already in the public domain and is clearly "owned" by the survivor, e.g. the survivor has become an advocate, and chooses to use her story; or the survivor specifically requests that her story is used for fundraising purposes. Ensure that survivors cannot be identified from the details provided.

Ensure fundraising campaigns represent reality accurately. Be truthful as altering or embellishing a story about a survivor's experience could have consequences for them.⁴ Provide a contextual framework for a survivor's story, including the gendered dynamics and inequalities that makes violence possible.⁵

Carefully consider whether to include photos in your campaigns. Never take pictures of survivors for the specific purpose of fundraising.⁶ Photos of child survivors should never be used. Consider using illustrations that show a diverse range of women and girls in campaigns instead.

The humanitarian principle of Do No Harm should also be considered in fundraising campaigns. Organisations have a responsibility to ensure that any individuals or communities that are represented in fundraising campaigns, through images or stories, are protected from any harm that could be caused by their participation.⁷

Language Guide

Language used in campaigns should uphold survivors' dignity and seek to empower women and girls. Sexist or exclusionary language that disempowers women should be avoided, including using 'he' or 'his' as default when referring to the larger community, using 'chairman' or 'spokesman' instead of 'chairperson' and 'spokesperson', or referring to women as the wife or girlfriend of a named man. Where possible challenge gender stereotypes by portraying women and men in diverse roles, and avoid portraying women and girls as a homogeneous group.

The table below provides general guidance on what language to avoid and what to use instead. This advice should be adapted to the different country contexts for which it is used.

⁴ Melissa Pack, "Ethical Fundraising: 6 ways to improve your fundraising stories", *Ethical Storytelling*, 3 May 2018. Available at: <http://ethicalstorytelling.com/ethical-fundraising-6-ways-to-improve-your-fundraising-stories/>

⁵ UNICEF Helpdesk, Gender-Based Violence, Media and Communications, (2018). Available at: <https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-07/GBV%20Media%20and%20Communications%20-%20UNICEF%20Helpdesk%202018.pdf>

⁶ GBV AoR, Media Guidelines for Reporting on Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Contexts, (2013). Available at: <https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-07/Media%20guidelines%20for%20reporting%20on%20GBV%20-%20GBV%20AoR%202014.pdf>

⁷ Bond, Putting the people in the pictures first: Ethical guidelines for the collection and use of content (images and stories) (London, 2019). Available at: <https://www.bond.org.uk/sites/default/files/resource-documents/bond-ethical-guidelines-for-collection-and-use-of-content.pdf>

Language to Avoid	Why?	Language to Use	Definition
Victim, battered woman	The word victim can be used when an attack has resulted in a woman's murder, when discussing the criminal justice system, or when a woman describes herself that way (Zero Tolerance, 2019). In other circumstances use the word survivor as this conveys a greater sense of agency. 'Woman who has experienced violence' may be an easier term for the public to understand. ⁸	Survivor, woman who has experienced violence	<p>Victim: A person harmed, injured, or killed as a result of a crime, accident, or other event or action.</p> <p>Survivor: A person who copes well with difficulties in their life.</p>
Sex, sex scandal, crime of passion, lover's quarrel, unrequited attention	These references to a sexual assault can minimise or sensationalise sexual violence, reinforcing common myths or assumptions about what drives violence, who is to blame, etc.	Sexual abuse, assault, rape, harassment	<p>Sexual Abuse: The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. It includes sexual assault (attempted rape, kissing / touching, forcing someone to perform oral sex / touching) as well as rape. Under UN regulations, all sexual activity with someone under the age of 18 is considered to be sexual abuse, regardless of the age of majority or consent locally.⁹</p> <p>Sexual Harassment: A continuum of unacceptable and unwelcome behaviours and practices of a sexual nature that may include, but are not limited to, sexual suggestions or demands, requests for sexual favours and sexual, verbal or</p>

⁸ CARE International Secretariat, Communications involving survivors of gender-based violence policy and guidelines (London, 2014). Available at: <https://www.careinternational.org.uk/sites/default/files/GBV-Comms-Policy-and-Guidelines.pdf>

⁹ United Nations, Glossary on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (2017). Available at: https://hr.un.org/sites/hr.un.org/files/SEA%20Glossary%20%20%5BSecond%20Edition%20-%202017%5D%20-%20English_0.pdf

			physical conduct or gestures, that are or might reasonably be perceived as offensive or humiliating. ¹⁰
Fiend, monster, great dad, respected professional, community leader	Language used to speak about perpetrators can promote the idea that perpetrators are not a part of normal society. Other terms for perpetrator can create sympathy for them. ¹¹	Perpetrator, offender, abusive partner, rapist	Perpetrator: A person who carries out a harmful, illegal, or immoral act.
Increase in violence <u>as a result</u> of a crisis	This phrasing can transmit the message that violence is inevitable in the context of crises, or shift responsibility away from perpetrators	Increase in violence <u>during</u> the crisis.	
GBV	Using acronyms makes communications less accessible to the general public	Gender based violence, violence against women and girls	The term 'GBV' is most commonly used to underscore how systemic inequality between males and females—which exists in every society in the world—acts as a unifying and foundational characteristic of most forms of violence perpetrated against women and girls. The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW, 1993) defines violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women.” DEVAW emphasizes that the violence is “a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to the domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women.” ¹²

¹⁰ United Nations, Intensification of efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls: sexual harassment (A/RES/73/148) (2018). Available at: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1660617?ln=en>

¹¹ Zero Tolerance, Media Guidelines on Violence Against Women (Edinburgh, 2019). Available at: <https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/resources/Media-Guidelines-on-Violence-Against-Women.pdf>

¹² IASC, Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action (2015). Available at: www.gbvguidelines.org

Use of Images

Images are a vital part of fundraising campaigns, used to engage an audience, bring a situation to life, and illustrate the importance of the work being undertaken. Fundraisers must consider how the images used in campaigns, influence the way that people, communities and countries are perceived. As such, it is important uphold survivors' dignity, use truthful representations, and avoid perpetuating stereotypes. Fundraisers should consider the following guidance.

Present people in positions of dignity and show that the local community can provide solutions.

Consider using images of people working to prevent violence, or other representations of how communities do not support GBV.

Avoid images that portray women as helpless victims as this reinforces negative stereotypes and may further traumatise GBV survivors who are exposed to the campaign. This may include images of women cowering or being physically assaulted. Bear in mind that only using images of women who have been beaten and bruised can reinforce the perception that GBV is only physical.¹³ Sexualised images of violence should never be used.

Consider using illustrations instead of photos to avoid the risks associated with using photos of survivors.

In case where it is necessary to use an image of a survivor, ensure that informed consent has been given, and that the survivor understands what their image will be used for. Consider risks associated with the survivor being identified and take steps to ensure confidentiality, such as not including the survivor's name or geographic location.¹⁴ Consider using a silhouette, recording women and girls' hands, or blurring images of women and girls during editing to conceal their identity. Software is available to distort voices in video footage.

Always remember that you are using images of real women in campaigns about a sensitive issue.

Consider possible risks, do not use the photo if there are risks associated, and ensure any images are used in an honest and dignified way. Ensure the image accurately depicts the reality of the situation.¹⁵ Do not manipulate the image to fit a certain narrative or create a more emotive image. If taking photos of women and girls in the wider community, it is vital to obtain informed consent and ensure that the women and girls know how their images will be used. Use of stock images with survivor faces should be avoided, and stock photos should never be used to portray a survivor who is not actually a survivor. Any use of actors or models must be clearly indicated.

Ensure diversity in the photos or illustrations that you use. This includes women with disabilities, young and old women, women of different races, women from different ethnic, religious and class backgrounds, LBTQI+ women, and migrant and refugee women. It is important to recognise that GBV

¹³ Zero Tolerance, Media Guidelines on Violence Against Women (Edinburgh, 2019). Available at:

<https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/resources/Media-Guidelines-on-Violence-Against-Women.pdf>

¹⁴ WITNESS, Conducting Safe, Effective and Ethical Interviews with Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (2013). Available at: <https://library.witness.org/product/guide-to-interviewing-survivors-of-sexual-and-gender-based-violence/>

¹⁵ Bond, Putting the people in the pictures first: Ethical guidelines for the collection and use of content (images and stories) (London, 2019). Available at: <https://www.bond.org.uk/sites/default/files/resource-documents/bond-ethical-guidelines-for-collection-and-use-of-content.pdf>

affects women from all different backgrounds, and that women with multiple, intersecting discriminations are often at increased risk.

Sensitive use of Survivor Testimony

Survivors' stories or first-person narratives are often used in fundraising campaigns to communicate the importance and impact of programmes and to encourage empathy from potential donors. **It is not recommended that survivors are interviewed for the purpose of fundraising**, as there are risks that recalling negative experiences will cause additional distress for survivors and there are risks of exposing the survivor to further harm if they are identified by perpetrators or communities.

Interviewing service providers, activists or advocates may provide equally compelling content and avoid some of these risks. Fundraisers can also draw on qualitative data from interviews conducted with survivors for other purposes to add to fundraising campaigns. Even when using secondary data, survivors' welfare and confidentiality should be considered at all stages.

When survivors wish to be identified, ensure there is a clear understanding of the level of identification that will be used. There may be an occasion where a survivor would like to be identified, for example an advocate or support work who has also experienced GBV and wishes to raise awareness. Key details to agree on in the testimony are whether the survivor wishes to share their name, photograph and geographical location.

Do not use details in testimony that could lead to identification of the survivor unless express informed consent has been given for this. As with visual images, to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of the survivor ensure that written or recorded stories do not contain personal details that could allow for the identification of the interviewee, including through a combination of any details provided. This includes biographical information, geographic information such as the names of local landmarks, schools or hospitals, and the names of related organisations that could be used to identify the survivor.

Ensure informed consent was given and documented for information to be included in fundraising campaigns. Survivors should be informed and understand how their story will be used. Take additional care to explain how electronic media campaigns work, and particularly that materials produced may be available to access in their own communities as well as overseas. Showing examples of previous campaigns can help survivors to make an informed choice.

Ensure interview materials are stored safely, online and offline, to maintain confidentiality.¹⁶ This includes footage, photographs, interview transcripts and any email communications.

Examples of Good Practice in Funding Campaigns

There is a shortage of examples of best practice in ethical fundraising for GBViE prevention and response. Examples of good practice in several campaigns have been identified below.

¹⁶ WITNESS, Conducting Safe, Effective and Ethical Interviews with Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (2013). Available at: <https://library.witness.org/product/guide-to-interviewing-survivors-of-sexual-and-gender-based-violence/>

Help End Violence Against Women, UN Women

<https://untfevaw.rallyup.com/4d1896>



What is done well?

A positive image of women protesting violence is used. A quote from a survivor is used on the webpage, but is anonymised as “a participant in a UN Trust Fund-funded project.”

How Ama escaped child marriage, ActionAid UK

<https://www.actionaid.org.uk/blog/voices/2017/07/05/it-happened-to-me-watch-amas-story-of-child-marriage>

What is done well?

The use of an animation avoids the need to use images or videos of the child survivor or a model/actor. A content warning is given, explaining that the video includes mentions of violence. The agency of local ActionAid staff and community members (Ama’s father) is emphasised. At the end of the video it is made clear that the girl’s name has been changed to protect her identity.

Examples of Illustrations Related to GBV

Stop Child Marriage, Plan International

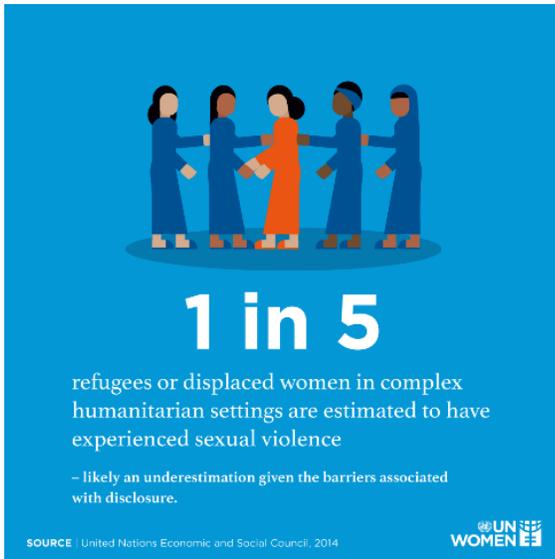
<https://plan-international.org/sexual-health/child-marriage-early-forced>



This illustration clearly conveys the campaign’s message against child marriage, without using photos of survivors, particularly child survivors.

World Humanitarian Day 2019, UN Women

<https://eca.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/world-humanitarian-day-2019>



This campaign emphasises that crises often exacerbate gender inequality, including increased levels of GBV. It clearly conveys key messages on GBViE. Statistics are used to show the scale of the issue, noting that the 1 in 5 statistic is likely to be an underestimation. Illustrations are used instead of photos, avoiding concerns around survivor confidentiality. A range of skin tones reinforce the fact that GBV can affect all women.

Key Resources

GBV in Media Toolkit: <https://feminisminindia.com/2020/02/20/new-stock-images-rape/>

This toolkit is the result of a campaign run by Feminism in India that aimed to identify problematic areas in the coverage of gender-based violence in the media in India, and aimed to offer sensitive and ethical suggestions to rectify them. It includes analysis of headlines and image use in the media. The campaign also included a crowdsourced art project to collect alternative stock images that can be used in GBV coverage.

Images for Reporting Violence Against Women: <https://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/images-for-reporting-vaw/>

This is a bank of free, ethical and diverse stock images created by Zero Tolerance and Scottish Women's Aid.

Media Guidelines for Reporting on Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Contexts:

<https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-07/Media%20guidelines%20for%20reporting%20on%20GBV%20-%20GBV%20AoR%202014.pdf>

These guidelines support actors working in humanitarian contexts to address the needs of GBV survivors and propose best practices for journalists and other media professionals who are reporting on GBV in emergency contexts.

Putting the people in the pictures first: Ethical guidelines for the collection and use of content (images and stories): <https://www.bond.org.uk/sites/default/files/resource-documents/bond-ethical-guidelines-for-collection-and-use-of-content.pdf>

These guidelines and accompanying Statement of Ethical Practice on NGO content gathering and use, aim to support sector-wide best practice. They cover the process of filming, photography and interviewing, as well as the selection and use of images and stories. They urge NGOs to put contributors at the centre of NGO image making; to recognise contributors' rights, and to consider our responsibilities towards them while gathering and using their images and words for communications purposes.

Racial representation in communications and fundraising [webinar]:

<https://www.bond.org.uk/resources/racial-representation-in-communications-and-fundraising>

In this online discussion a panel of people of colour who are working in international communications give their perspective on representation and dignity in INGO communications and how this contributes to narratives around race. They explore steps that can be taken to encourage more positive perceptions around race and development.

The People in the Pictures: Vital perspectives on Save the Children's image making:

https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/12425/pdf/the_people_in_the_pictures_summary_0.pdf

This report presents findings from research undertaken in Bangladesh, Jordan, Niger and the UK to listen and learn from those who contribute their images and stories to campaigns. Areas of good practice are highlighted, as well as concerns and challenges.

The GBV AoR Help Desk

The GBV AoR Helpdesk is a unique research and technical advice service which aims to inspire and support humanitarian actors to help prevent, mitigate and respond to violence against women and girls in emergencies. Managed by Social Development Direct, the GBV AoR Helpdesk is staffed by a global roster of senior Gender and GBV Experts who are on standby to help guide frontline humanitarian actors on GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response measures in line with international standards, guidelines and best practice. Views or opinions expressed in GBV AoR Helpdesk Products do not necessarily reflect those of all members of the GBV AoR, nor of all the experts of SDDirect's Helpdesk roster.

The GBV AoR Helpdesk

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The Helpdesk is available 09.00 to
17.30 GMT Monday to Friday.

Our services are free and confidential.