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# Gender-based violence and the nexus

Global lessons from the Syria crisis response  
for financing, policy and practice

report

# Contents

Executive summary .....	4
Coherence of policy and strategy focusing on GBV .....	5
Improved financing to end GBV .....	6
Strengthened coordination and partnerships for GBV .....	6
1. Introduction .....	8
2. Global efforts at the nexus to end GBV .....	10
2.1 GBV-related policies across the nexus .....	10
2.2 Financing to end GBV .....	12
2.3 Coordination of GBV programmes across the nexus .....	17
3. GBV in the Syria crisis .....	18
3.1 The Syria context .....	18
3.2 Coordination, planning and delivery of GBV activities .....	19
Box 1: Inter-agency assessment and development of standard operating procedures on GBV and child protection in Jordan .....	21
Box 2: The Lebanon Crisis Response Plan and women’s safe spaces .....	21
3.3 Financing to end GBV in the Syria crisis .....	22
Box 3: Gender and nexus financing mechanisms – the EUTF and GCFF .....	24
4. Conclusions .....	25
5. Recommendations .....	26
5.1 Coherence of policy and strategy focusing on GBV .....	26
5.2 Improved financing to end GBV .....	27
5.3 Strengthened coordination and partnerships for GBV .....	28
Appendix 1: Acknowledgements .....	29
Appendix 2: Terminology .....	30
Gender-based violence (GBV) .....	30
Humanitarian–development–peace nexus .....	30

Appendix 3: Global pooled funds relevant to GBV .....	31
Conflict and emergency settings.....	31
Development settings .....	32
Appendix 4: Individuals consulted.....	33
Notes .....	34

# Executive summary

This report aims to contribute to discussions of how the international response to gender-based violence (GBV) in crisis settings can be strengthened through greater alignment and coordination between humanitarian and development funding, policy and delivery mechanisms. It explores how humanitarian and development actors each approach GBV – looking at GBV policy, financing and coordination from both perspectives – as well as the areas of connectivity. The report looks in depth at the regional response to the Syria refugee crisis as an example in which the international response has sought to strengthen the linkages between humanitarian and development approaches and where addressing GBV has been a priority. Here are the key findings of the report.

**Neither humanitarian nor development approaches to GBV are fully equipped to address the complex challenges of GBV prevention and response in crisis settings.** Although humanitarian policy recognises the need for a holistic approach to GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response, in the context of limited resources, humanitarian agencies prioritise immediate needs such as health and case management services for survivors of rape and sexual violence. Efforts to move toward more holistic, long-term approaches are hindered by humanitarian funding, planning cycles and systems that are poorly suited to this. Development assistance can potentially address a wider range of GBV issues within the context of longer term efforts to empower women, but its focus on GBV is often limited or absent in crisis situations.

**Both the level and quality of funding to address GBV in crisis settings is insufficient to address needs and fill gaps in response.** GBV is underfunded within humanitarian response, and despite increases in multi-year funding, especially to UN agencies, international and national non-governmental organisations (NGOs) still lack access to flexible, multi-year funding required for longer term, adaptive programming to address GBV. Although GBV is a growing area of development assistance, this is not being channelled at a sufficient scale to crisis contexts. Many new nexus financing mechanisms do not adequately integrate gender equality in general, and they don't for GBV in particular. Finally, there continue to be challenges with reliably tracking development and humanitarian finance to GBV in crisis settings, impeding efforts to hold donors accountable to commitments.

**The transition from humanitarian delivery of GBV services, dominated by UN agencies and international NGOs, to a development approach is not as simple as shifting to government-led delivery.** Although working with the public sector to improve the quality of GBV services across sectors including health, education, law enforcement and justice is crucial, the gap in trust in public services to address women's protection concerns is massive in many contexts. The prevention and response to GBV requires a strong and ongoing role for non-state actors, especially women-led organisations, in both the short and long term. Furthermore, women's safe spaces that have offered a model for

GBV prevention and response in humanitarian contexts continue to be relevant and should be adapted to development contexts.

**In the context of the Syria crisis response, the main focus of efforts to work at the nexus has been for humanitarian action to shift towards a longer term, developmental approach to GBV – not for new humanitarian–development partnerships to be formed.** This has been enabled by factors including the increase in multi-year funding, strong partnerships with national women-led organisations, facilitated by progress with localisation, and the capacity of national institutions. Crisis response plans in Jordan and Lebanon have provided entry points to strengthen GBV services for both refugees and host populations; however, if this is to be sustained, more work is needed to strengthen national ownership and shift away from dependence on humanitarian finance. Development finance for GBV is not being mobilised at the scale required to meet this need.

The report makes a number of recommendations for strengthening responses to GBV in crisis by enhancing nexus approaches.

## Coherence of policy and strategy focusing on GBV

- Both humanitarian and development actors should align their support with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 targets to end violence against women and eliminate harmful practices in crisis settings. To achieve this, development actors must recognise the relevance of SDG 5 to crisis contexts and increase their engagement on GBV in crisis; humanitarian actors need to take greater ownership of SDG 5 by including its targets within humanitarian response plans.
- All actors should align their support to GBV prevention and response with the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda. Development and peacebuilding actors must ensure that GBV and women's protection is prioritised within WPS action plans; humanitarian actors should link their support to GBV prevention and response with the wider WPS agenda.
- Development actors should expand funds and programmes that focus specifically on GBV to include crisis-affected contexts. They should also integrate GBV risk mitigation, prevention and response across all relevant sectors of development support in crisis contexts (e.g. health, economic recovery, security and justice sector reform, education, and disaster risk reduction).
- Humanitarian assistance should enable UN agencies and international and national NGOs to continue to move towards long-term and holistic approaches to GBV in protracted crises and other contexts that allow for this, while also incentivising partnerships and collaboration with other actors to address issues that are beyond the mandate or reach of humanitarian agencies.

## Improved financing to end GBV

- Donors should increase flexible, multi-year funding to GBV within humanitarian and refugee response plans – and overcome the bottlenecks to multi-year funding reaching international and national NGOs – to enable humanitarian actors working on GBV to take a longer term, adaptive approach that fills gaps across the humanitarian–development–peace continuum.
- Development donors and funds focused on GBV should scale up and expand their remit to include crisis-affected contexts. In particular, the Spotlight Initiative on GBV, a joint EU and UN initiative that focuses only in development settings, should expand to include crisis-affected contexts and the World Bank should increase its finance for GBV in crisis contexts.
- ‘Nexus’ finance mechanisms, including the Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF) and EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (EUTF), should integrate clear actions and targets related to gender equality and GBV risk mitigation, prevention and response across all sectors of support and increase transparency, tracking and reporting of financial support for gender equality and GBV.
- The UN agencies with the mandate to track funding in crisis settings – the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) – should agree reporting requirements for humanitarian funding on GBV that include, at a minimum, cluster/sector and sub-cluster/sub-sector disaggregation of funding and appeal coverage. This should be coordinated with the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) so that it can be harmonised across the country GBV dashboards to produce comparable data across different contexts.
- The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) should improve the accuracy of data on ODA spending on GBV in crisis settings by increasing reporting under multiple purpose codes (e.g. both the GBV-relevant purpose code and the relevant humanitarian purpose codes).

## Strengthened coordination and partnerships for GBV

- Humanitarian and development donors, and the UN agencies, pooled funds and international NGOs through which they channel funds, should increase flexible support to women’s organisations in crisis situations to enable them to work strategically on issues affecting women, including GBV. Ensure that women-led organisations are included in efforts to promote the localisation of aid and increase support to vehicles such as the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund, which supports women’s organisations in crisis settings.
- Humanitarian and development organisations (as well as teams within organisations) should strengthen context-specific partnerships to carry out joined-up regional, country or area-based assessment, planning and programming on GBV. This should go beyond UN agencies and NGOs that typically coordinate crisis response to extend

to other development and peacebuilding actors, such as the World Bank, women's rights organisations and peacebuilding NGOs, potentially as part of wider planning frameworks that aim to strengthen nexus approaches.

- In contexts that allow for this, humanitarian actors should involve national and local authorities in GBV coordination structures at national and subnational levels and use this as an entry point for developing and reforming GBV policies and strategies and strengthening national systems. Alongside efforts to strengthen public services, humanitarian and development actors should support 'safe spaces' and other community-based prevention and response efforts that bridge the gap between women and public services.

# 1. Introduction

There is growing recognition that humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts are complementary and need to reinforce each other in fragile states and protracted crises. The commitment to joined-up approaches between humanitarian and development donors and aid agencies is reflected in numerous policy commitments, including the 2016 Grand Bargain commitments to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian aid and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation's Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) recommendation on the triple humanitarian–development–peace nexus in 2020.<sup>1</sup>

While there is considerable momentum behind the triple nexus, and several recent studies explore what this means in theory and practice,<sup>2</sup> one area that is particularly relevant yet unexplored is how nexus approaches can help to address gaps in the international system's response to gender-based violence (GBV) in crisis contexts. GBV is pervasive in times of peace, exacerbated by crisis conditions including displacement, and during conflict sexual violence is used as a deliberate method of warfare. GBV is a concern across crisis and development settings and an issue for which bridging between humanitarian and development assistance is especially important. For example, humanitarian agencies recognise that it is essential to build trust in order for survivors to come forward, link with national authorities delivering legal, health and other social services, and provide continuity of care. There is a risk of causing harm if GBV case management is disrupted or if women are forced to return to situations where they are subjected to further abuse.

The Syria crisis has been an important driver of the nexus agenda internationally. Nine years into the conflict, over 5.6 million refugees are registered in neighbouring countries and an estimated 6 million people are displaced within the Syria.<sup>3</sup> The sheer scale of the refugee crisis, its protracted nature, and its potential to destabilise the region with repercussions for Europe, demands an approach that goes beyond short-term humanitarian assistance. The regional refugee response has been at the forefront of efforts to link humanitarian and development approaches in order to deal with immediate needs while also strengthening national systems critical to coping with the refugee influx. Furthermore, sexual violence has been a systematic war tactic within Syria – and a key issue motivating families to flee – and GBV in its wider manifestations, including child marriage and family violence, is a pervasive concern among Syrian refugees, intensified by conditions during displacement.

This study analyses how humanitarian and development actors each approach GBV prevention and response – and the areas of connectivity – considering policy, financing and coordination. While recognising the triple nexus, it focuses primarily on the dual humanitarian–development nexus with peace integrated into this, rather than treated as a third and separate set of actors (see Appendix 2 on terminology).<sup>4</sup> It includes a case

study of the regional response to the Syria refugee crisis in which humanitarian–development partnerships have been piloted and GBV is a priority. Drawing on this case study, it makes recommendations for how humanitarian and development actors can together provide a coherent response to GBV in crisis situations. This report is based on a review of publicly available data, policy guidance and reports and interviews with UN agencies, donors international NGOs and women’s organisations working on GBV as part of the regional Syria response. It is intended to inform humanitarian and development donors and agencies working on GBV as well as those interested in the nexus more broadly.

## 2. Global efforts at the nexus to end GBV

In addition to representing separate funding streams, humanitarian and development actors have different mandates, objectives and ways of working. Humanitarian assistance focuses on life-saving and immediate support to the most vulnerable people impacted by crisis, typically working outside government channels and with short project cycles. Development assistance, on the other hand, is longer term and tends to involve partnerships with national government and non-governmental actors to bring about policy, institutional and systemic change that will improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of populations in developing countries.

At the same time, the line between humanitarian and development contexts is increasingly blurred. Donors and multilateral institutions increasingly deploy development assistance in fragile and conflict-affected contexts<sup>5</sup> and have taken steps to adapt their approaches, for example by developing peace, security, resilience and risk-reduction programmes. Humanitarian actors increasingly operate in protracted crises and have made commitments that enable longer term, adaptive programming and greater national ownership, including the move towards multi-year, flexible funding and the localisation of aid.

This section examines how humanitarian and development assistance addresses GBV – looking at issues of policy, financing and coordination from the perspective of each as well as the areas of inter-connection.

### 2.1 GBV-related policies across the nexus

The women, peace and security (WPS) agenda is a comprehensive normative framework for efforts to deal with the multifaceted challenges women face in conflict contexts. Guided by UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on WPS, with its four pillars of prevention, participation, protection, and peacebuilding and recovery, the agenda has been expanded and reinforced with nine resolutions including UN Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) on conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).<sup>6</sup> All of these resolutions recognise the importance of protecting women from violence, particularly GBV, during and after conflict. At the same time, the WPS agenda emphasises women's full and equal participation and representation in conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict recovery and women's agency in conflict transformation. Thus, it is a wide-ranging agenda that encompasses peace and security, development, and humanitarian actors.

From the perspective of humanitarian policy, protection is a central objective of all humanitarian action<sup>7</sup> and GBV is one of the protection risks that must be addressed in emergencies. Although humanitarians do not physically protect people from harm, they do have an obligation to reduce risk and help people stay safe, as well as to help them restore dignity and recover from violence or abuse. The Inter-Agency Steering Committee (IASC) – the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance – approved guidelines on integrating GBV in humanitarian action in 2015.<sup>8</sup> This makes clear that it is the collective responsibility of all humanitarian actors to prevent and mitigate GBV risks within their areas of operation.

Humanitarian programming to address GBV typically has three main strands: (1) **provision of specialised services to survivors** – establishing GBV case management systems that link survivors to a package of services that includes, but is not limited to, health (including the clinical management of rape, mental health and psychosocial support), legal services, and safety and security; (2) **risk mitigation** – incorporating actions into all humanitarian sectors to mitigate GBV risk (e.g. within the water, sanitation and hygiene sector, building sex-segregated latrines with locks and lighting) and (3) **prevention** – this may include community-based outreach to change attitudes, beliefs and social norms that are the basis for GBV and actions to promote gender equality across all sectors of the humanitarian response. Humanitarian programming is based on a multi-sector model that includes creating and monitoring referral pathways to ensure continuity in the management of GBV cases as well as the presence and quality of services in each element of the response.<sup>9</sup>

Although humanitarian policy calls for a comprehensive approach, the delivery of GBV services in humanitarian crises remains piecemeal.<sup>10</sup> In the context of limited resources, humanitarian actors prioritise the most pressing needs – often related to providing health and case management services to survivors of rape and sexual violence. Although they recognise that other forms of GBV, such as early marriage and domestic violence, are often worsened due to crisis, and the importance of prevention, they often struggle to raise funds for this. Furthermore, integration of actions to address GBV across other humanitarian sectors is often uneven. The key reason for this, from the perspective of the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and echoed by other humanitarian agencies in the field, is that GBV prevention and response is underfunded and “treated as a ‘second tier’ priority” in crises.<sup>11</sup> This is despite over a decade of advocacy and efforts to build inter-agency cooperation on GBV in crises through initiatives such as the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies.<sup>12</sup>

Development policy and programming often treats GBV as a manifestation of gender inequality and the systemic cultural, political, institutional and economic subordination of women. For example, SDG 5 on gender equality and women’s empowerment includes targets to end all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres (including trafficking, sexual and other forms of exploitation) and to eliminate harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation. Development initiatives have more scope to address GBV in its wider sense, including forced and early marriage, domestic violence, harmful practices, and other forms of exploitation and abuse. They also typically take a more holistic approach to prevention and response that is linked with wider efforts to empower women. Development

programmes focusing on GBV may include interventions to raise awareness and change social norms and behaviour, including by engaging men and traditional or religious leaders; develop and reform policies and laws relating to GBV; provide psychosocial support to survivors and address stigma they face within their communities; support women's economic empowerment, including income-generation opportunities for survivors; and increase women's access to reproductive health services and sensitive and appropriate legal and justice services. In conflict-affected contexts, development and peace and security actors also address GBV in the context of security and justice sector programmes, including efforts to improve the conduct of security forces and end impunity for CRSV.

Among development institutions the World Bank is at the forefront of efforts to step up commitments to GBV prevention and response and integrate it across all sectors of support in crisis contexts. It supports over US\$300 million in development projects aimed at addressing GBV, both through standalone projects and by integrating GBV components into sector support in areas such as transport, education, social protection and forced displacement. This has included support to a number of GBV-focused projects in crisis settings, including a US\$100 million GBV prevention project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and a US\$107 million project focusing on multi-sectoral services to GBV survivors the Great Lakes region. The World Bank has also strengthened efforts to address risks of sexual exploitation and abuse in the projects they support.

## 2.2 Financing to end GBV

Financing is crucial to realising all of these commitments – not only to fund programmes but also to incentivise a nexus approach. Several recent studies make clear that the current funding architecture is failing to mobilise sufficient funding for the humanitarian response to GBV in crisis settings.<sup>13</sup> Twenty-one donors have recently stepped up their financial commitment, pledging US\$363 million to GBV in humanitarian crises at the 2019 Oslo Conference.<sup>14</sup> In order to bridge humanitarian and development approaches to GBV, development funding also needs to prioritise GBV in crisis settings, however this is under-explored. The following section examines humanitarian and development financing of GBV, including an analysis of official development assistance (ODA) targeting GBV.

### Humanitarian financing

GBV remains an underfunded area of humanitarian response compared with other sectors.<sup>15</sup> According to a recent study by VOICE and the IRC, humanitarian funding allocated to GBV between 2016 and 2018 amounted to US\$ 51.7 million – only 0.12% of the US\$ 41.5 billion spent on humanitarian assistance. This represents only one-third of the US\$155.9 million requested.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, these funding requests do not match the real scale of the problem and needs – agencies report that they frequently adjust appeals to reflect expectations of what donors will realistically support.<sup>17</sup>

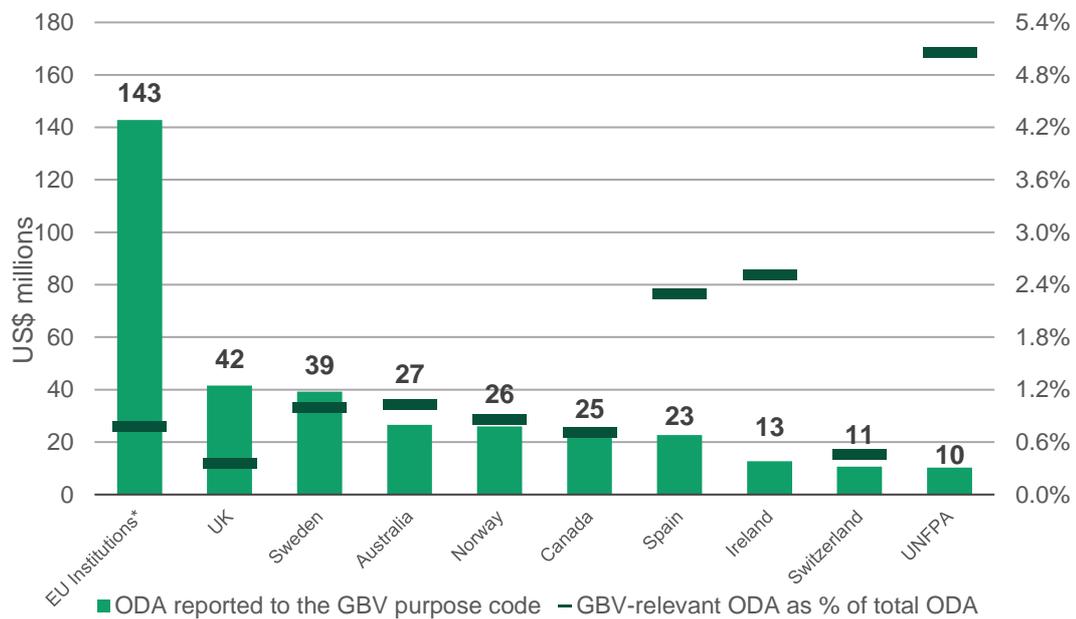
While we know that there are major gaps in GBV funding in crises, the financial tracking of humanitarian assistance to GBV is challenging for several reasons, making it difficult to monitor progress towards commitments. Firstly, although GBV is a separate 'Area of

Responsibility' or sub-sector within the protection sector, funding for GBV is rarely reported separately – usually only aggregate funding for protection is reported. Furthermore, GBV prevention and risk mitigation actions that are integrated into other sectors, such as health or water, sanitation and hygiene, are hidden within those sectors. In part because GBV is a less established and distinct sector, organisations do not report GBV projects in a consistent and standardised way to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)'s Financial Tracking Service (FTS) – the platform that provides the most detailed data about the funding of humanitarian appeals and response plans – making it challenging to aggregate and compare data. Finally, reporting to the FTS on humanitarian aid flows channelled outside of appeals or to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)-led Refugee Response Plans (RRPs) often does not provide the same level of detail as for OCHA-led Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs), making it more difficult to track GBV funding outside of humanitarian appeals.<sup>18</sup>

### Development financing

GBV is a very small but growing focus of development finance. The OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS) – the most comprehensive and reliable data source on ODA – introduced a new code for aid to end violence against women and girls in order to improve accountability and tracking. The 'violence against women and girls' purpose code may however under-represent GBV funding, especially in crisis situations, as donors can report under one purpose code based on the primary purpose of the aid. For example, aid cannot be reported under both the 'violence against women and girls' purpose code and one of the humanitarian purpose codes.<sup>19</sup> ODA from the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors reported under the 'ending violence against women and girls' purpose code more than tripled from US\$122 million in 2016 to US\$389 million in 2018. This spike is largely due to an eight-fold increase in EU funding for GBV connected with the Spotlight Initiative (see Appendix 3 for more details). Canada, the UK and Spain also more than doubled their contributions from 2016 to 2018. Despite this, the US\$389 million targeting GBV in 2018 still represents only 0.26% per cent of the US\$147 billion in total ODA from DAC donors that year.<sup>20</sup>

**Figure 1: Top ten donors of GBV-relevant ODA in 2018**



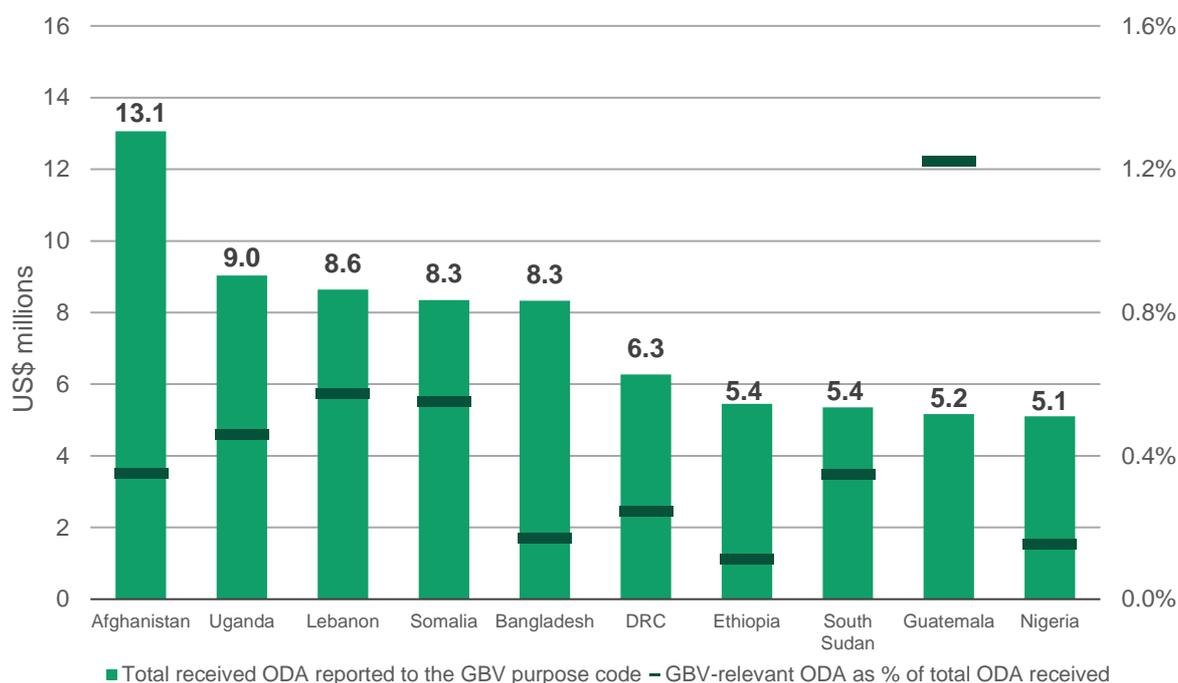
Source: Development Initiatives based on OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Creditor Reporting System (CRS).

Notes: Data is in constant 2017 prices. Figures only include projects reported to the CRS by donors and coded with the purpose code 15180 – ending violence against women and girls. Total ODA refers to total gross bilateral ODA as recorded in the CRS. \*The EU is a member of the OECD DAC. UNFPA: United Nations Populations Fund.

There is a substantial disparity between donors. Figure 1 shows the top ten donors of ODA targeting GBV in 2018. Three of these – the EU, Sweden and the UK – are also among the top ten donors of ODA in 2018. However, a number of smaller donors also feature among the top ten, contributing a larger proportion of their total ODA. It is also notable that a number of the largest donors of ODA – the US, Germany, Japan, France, Italy and the Netherlands – reported less than 0.2% of their total ODA going to GBV in 2018.

The OECD DAC also tracks ODA focusing on gender equality more broadly using the gender equality policy marker (GEM). Although the GEM includes all gender equality programming, not only that specifically targeting GBV, it gives some context for how funding for GBV fits within the wider funding climate for gender equality programming. It is also relevant because development programmes often treat GBV as one element of broader gender equality programming, whilst the ‘violence against women and girls’ purpose code only captures aid reported as having a primary focus on GBV. At the same time, the GEM has limitations due to inconsistent and incomplete donor reporting.<sup>21</sup> In 2018, DAC donors reported that only 8% of ODA had a primary focus on gender equality. An additional 25% of ODA made a partial contribution towards gender equality.<sup>22</sup>

**Figure 2: Top ten recipients of GBV-relevant ODA in 2018**



Source: Development Initiatives based on OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Creditor Reporting System (CRS).

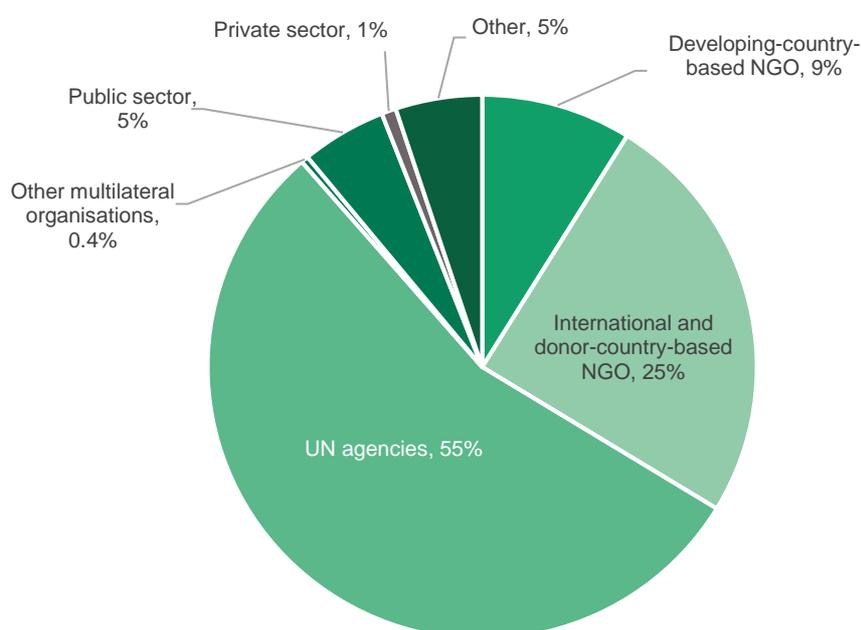
Notes: Data is in constant 2017 prices. Figures only include projects reported to the CRS by donors and coded with the purpose code 15180 – ending violence against women and girls. Figures include country-allocable aid only. Total ODA refers to total gross bilateral ODA as recorded in the CRS. DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Figure 2 shows the top ten recipients of ODA targeting GBV. This includes a number of conflict-affected countries where violence against women is well documented: Afghanistan, Somalia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Nigeria. It also includes several countries with large refugee populations within which GBV has been a prominent concern – including Lebanon, Bangladesh and Ethiopia – although the extent to which assistance is connected to crisis response is unclear.

As illustrated in Figure 3, ODA focused on GBV is channelled primarily through UN agencies and international NGOs in contrast to the general trend of channelling development assistance through national governments. More than half of aid focused on GBV is channelled through UN agencies (55% compared with 11% for total ODA) and 25% channelled to international NGOs and donors (compared with 11% for total ODA). Only 5.0% of ODA focused on GBV is channelled through the public sector. In addition, developing-country-based NGOs receive a larger share of aid targeting GBV (8.9%) when compared with the general trend for ODA (1%).

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**Figure 3: Channels of delivery of GBV-relevant ODA in 2018**



Source: Development Initiatives based on OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Creditor Reporting System (CRS).

Notes: Data is in constant 2017 prices. Figures only include projects reported to the CRS by donors and coded with the purpose code 15180 – ending violence against women and girls. Channel of delivery refers to the first implementing partner of the ODA activity. OECD DAC coding was used to classify NGOs. International NGOs are organised on an international level. Some international NGOs may act as umbrella organisations with affiliations in several donor and/or recipient countries. Donor-country-based NGOs are organised at the national level, based and operated either in the donor country or another developed (non-ODA eligible) country. Developing-country-based NGOs are organised at the national level, based and operated in a developing (ODA eligible) country.

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### Global funds focusing on GBV

In addition to regional and country-based finance for GBV programmes, there are a number of global pooled funds that are relevant to GBV (see Appendix 3). Two new vehicles focusing on crisis contexts have the explicit aim of filling gaps across the triple nexus: the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), which supports women’s organisations to work on a range of issues across the WPS agenda and humanitarian action (not only GBV); and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)’s Humanitarian Action Thematic Fund, which is a mechanism to provide more flexible funding to UNFPA to lead the GBV ‘Area of Responsibility’ in crisis settings.

To date, the crisis-focused funds have attracted relatively small investment. For example, the UN’s Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict, which has a major focus on strengthening the rule of law response to sexual violence in conflict, has received an average of only US\$4 million per year since 2007<sup>23</sup> and the recently

launched WPHF has received an average of US\$6 million per year over 4 years.<sup>24</sup> The Spotlight Initiative, a joint EU and UN initiative launched in 2017 with €500 million in seed funding from the EU, is a significant, recent, larger scale effort to address all forms of GBV. However, it does not target conflict or emergency settings.

## 2.3 Coordination of GBV programmes across the nexus

Development and humanitarian actors have different approaches to coordination. This impacts the way in which they relate to one another in crisis situations and how the various agencies and actors involved in delivery of GBV programmes coordinate with one another. In humanitarian crises, UN OCHA takes on much of the burden of coordination, and there are strong financial incentives for agencies to participate in HRP in order to receive funding. Within the humanitarian cluster system, GBV is an 'Area of Responsibility' that falls under the protection sector. At the global level, UNFPA leads the GBV 'Area of Responsibility' and at the country level it leads GBV coordination. In refugee contexts, the UNHCR has the mandate to protect refugees and to coordinate the refugee response, including overseeing the GBV response.

In contrast to the strong role of international agencies in humanitarian coordination, national governments usually lead the coordination of development assistance. Development actors participate in sector or thematic coordination mechanisms linked with national strategies; however they also face disincentives to coordinate. Their interests, in terms of securing funding and access, are often better served by building close bilateral relationships with national authorities. This poses particular challenges in fragile settings. If governance is weak, so is the government's leadership of sector coordination mechanisms and its ability to ensure policy coherence – thus, coordination of development work is also weak.<sup>25</sup> Because development support is aligned with government institutions, policies and strategies, the government institutions tasked with leading GBV vary from context to context and coordination structures are diverse.

In contexts in which humanitarian, development and/or refugee operations are simultaneous, there may be parallel or overlapping coordination structures. For example, in mixed situations with both refugees and internally displaced people, there may be both humanitarian and refugee coordination systems in place, focusing on different target populations or geographic areas.<sup>26</sup> In addition, the role of various agencies may vary depending upon their capacity and resources. For example, in contexts in which UNFPA lacks resources to coordinate the GBV sub-cluster, it may delegate this to an international NGO.

# 3. GBV in the Syria crisis

## 3.1 The Syria context

The Syrian crisis is the largest displacement and refugee crisis in the world today, and the response has also attracted unprecedented resources. Syria was the largest recipient of humanitarian assistance for six consecutive years from 2011 to 2017, a trend that looks set to continue. In addition to the US\$2.2 billion in humanitarian assistance to Syria itself in 2018, the Syria Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) – the regional strategy for the refugee response in five neighbouring countries – received US\$2.9 billion in 2018.<sup>27</sup> Alongside this, there have also been substantial development aid flows, particularly to Lebanon and Jordan, to strengthen national systems critical to managing the crisis.

Sexual violence, affecting both women and men, has been a persistent feature of the conflict within Syria, as documented by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, fear of rape has been a key motivation for families fleeing the violence. The displaced, especially refugee women and girls, then face heightened risk of violence due to gender inequalities that are worsened by conditions during displacement. A UN Women study of Syrian refugee women in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq found that violence against women was a common concern.<sup>29</sup> Nearly half of Syrian refugee women surveyed in Lebanon (45%) and in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (47%) reported that violence against women was a problem in the Syrian refugee community. Furthermore, women face heightened risk in camp settings, for example 78% of women in camp settings in Iraq reported that violence against women was an issue. Early marriage has been another prevalent and growing concern within Syria and among Syrian refugees – a trend that has worsened due to economic and physical insecurity associated with the war and displacement.

The regional Syria response has been at the forefront of efforts to bring humanitarian and development approaches closer together. However, the opportunities for a nexus approach differ depending on the context. Within Syria itself there is little scope for work at the nexus due to the active conflict and the opposition of EU member states, the US and other donors to any action that could increase the legitimacy of the regime. However, situations in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq (middle-income countries with the institutional capacity to absorb development resources but in need of external support to cope with the crisis) are conducive to work at the nexus.

### 3.2 Coordination, planning and delivery of GBV activities

The 3RP is a first in bringing together both humanitarian and development perspectives in a unified plan to address a regional crisis. The 3RP has two components: (1) the refugee component, which focuses on the protection and provision of life-saving support to Syrian refugees and the most vulnerable within host communities; and (2) the resilience component, which focuses on strengthening national and sub-national delivery systems, building the self-reliance of refugees and vulnerable populations, and strengthening host communities' capacity to recover and cope with the crisis. The overall approach aims to mitigate potential tensions between refugees and host communities – both refugees and vulnerable populations within host communities receive the same support. Furthermore, it aims to stabilise the region by strengthening the capacity of national systems to cope with the crisis.

The national authorities in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey have developed national response plans that together form a coherent regional strategy. UNHCR and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) formed a unique partnership to jointly support national authorities in coordination and planning at the regional and country levels, with the idea that UNHCR guides the refugee response while UNDP leads the resilience component.

Although the focus of each country's response plan depends upon the context, their structure is broadly similar, with GBV falling under the protection sector. All of the response plans treat gender equality as a cross-cutting issue, and in many cases specific GBV-related actions are integrated into other response sectors, particularly health. In addition, there are common threads in GBV programming across the region, for example both mobile and static women and girls' safe spaces have been a central part of the response strategy both within Syria and in the countries hosting refugees. These aim to create an environment in which women and girls are safe to express themselves without judgement or harm and where they can access information, referrals, counselling, support for income-generating activities and other services.

The governments of Lebanon and Jordan have both developed comprehensive, multi-year crisis response plans that include GBV as a protection priority. Within Lebanon, the Ministry of Social Affairs leads the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) and oversees the protection sector and GBV working group. In Jordan, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation coordinates the Jordan Response Plan (JRP), and the government's National Council for Family Affairs oversees the GBV response and child protection. In Iraq, the vast majority of refugees are located in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and so the Directorate for Combatting Violence Against Women within the Kurdistan Region of Iraq Ministry of Interior oversees GBV work, primarily in the context of domestic violence. In both Lebanon and Jordan, UNFPA and UNHCR co-lead the GBV working groups. In Iraq, UN coordination mechanisms are complex because there are separate, but overlapping, coordination and planning processes for the humanitarian response (focusing on internally displaced people and returnees) and the refugee response. However, in practice UNFPA leads the GBV sub-cluster and sub-sector, and mostly the same actors participate in both at the national level, despite the fact that there are separate humanitarian and refugee planning processes.

Significant progress has been made with the localisation agenda within the context of the Syria crisis response, including for women-led organisations and national NGOs working on GBV. This has been accelerated by restrictions in the operating environment for international NGOs in some contexts, for example around 85% of the organisations involved in the GBV working group for the Turkey cross-border operation are national NGOs. Other factors contributing to progress are the strength of national organisations and deliberate efforts through mechanisms such as the OCHA-led, country-based pooled funds to channel funds to national NGOs. In Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, national NGOs and women's organisations are the key interlocutors and actively participate in planning, including through the GBV working groups. For example, in Iraq, 31 of the 52 organisations participating in the GBV sub-cluster/sector are national NGOs. In many cases, national NGOs also lead the sub-national GBV coordination mechanisms. There are some notable examples of efforts to bring actors into the GBV working groups that are not directly involved in humanitarian delivery, for example in Jordan the GBV working group has brought in several organisations that are part of the women's movement.

Over time, the engagement of national authorities in the humanitarian response to GBV appears to have strengthened the government's approach in Jordan and Lebanon. For example, the Lebanese government has developed a national strategy to address GBV with support of the GBV working group members. In addition, in both Lebanon and Jordan the GBV working groups have supported the government to develop common standards and procedures for all actors involved in GBV prevention and response (Box 1). While it is clear that the approach has strengthened national systems in many respects, there is still some concern that GBV programming through the LCRP and JRP is not sustainable without continued humanitarian funding and that the delivery of services still largely operates in parallel to national systems. Furthermore, there are still significant barriers to refugee women accessing public services in general and deep mistrust when it comes to GBV. Thus, efforts to strengthen national capacity and ownership, and to move towards a more sustainable model for financing and delivering GBV services, need to be sustained.

Iraq is in the midst of transition from humanitarian to development modes of delivery across all areas of cooperation, including GBV. This is driven by both declining humanitarian funding and reductions in displaced populations living in camp settings as internally displaced people return to their home areas and refugees integrate into host communities. In addition, the UN and the government have moved towards a co-financing arrangement. These shifts have significant implications for the delivery of GBV services. For example, UNFPA has scaled back its support to women and girls' safe spaces from 140 to 47 centres in camp settings. It is currently exploring alternative models and ways of delivering the same services linked with health centres and government-run shelters, community centres and the private sector. It has also increased its focus on supporting and improving the quality of government-led delivery of services in other ways – such as supporting government-run GBV hotlines – as it moves from humanitarian to development funding streams.

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### **Box 1: Inter-agency assessment and development of standard operating procedures on GBV and child protection in Jordan**

In 2013, the GBV and Child Protection working groups in Jordan carried out an inter-agency assessment in refugee camps and urban settings in Jordan.<sup>30</sup> The assessment improved understanding of the protection challenges facing women and children refugees, with a particular focus on early and forced marriage. Building on this and extensive consultations with national and international stakeholders, Jordan's National Council for Family Affairs, with support from UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF and Save the Children, developed standard operating procedures that harmonise standards and procedures for responding to GBV and child protection. The standard operating procedures cover four main response sectors: health, psychosocial support, law/justice and security. They apply to all organisations providing services to refugees and host communities from both humanitarian and development perspectives, within the National Family Protection Framework.

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### **Box 2: The Lebanon Crisis Response Plan and women's safe spaces**

The Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) is the primary framework for GBV programming within Lebanon, and its roll-out has significantly expanded the quality and availability of GBV services not only for refugees but also for host communities. Although some women's organisations offered counselling and services to women prior to the Syria crisis, the availability of services to GBV survivors in most areas of Lebanon was relatively limited. The investment in GBV prevention and response from the outset of the crisis, through the LCRP, has strengthened outreach services, referral pathways and access to safe spaces for women and girls throughout the country.<sup>31</sup> For example, according to an evaluation of UNHCR's support to GBV services, 95% of refugees are within five kilometres of a safe space, and these spaces meet the minimum standards adopted by the sector in Lebanon.<sup>32</sup>

A variety of approaches have been used to increase coverage and link with national response systems and strengthen service delivery by national NGOs. This includes the use of different local centres, such as social development centres, primary health clinics, community centres and other women and girls' safe spaces, to offer safe spaces, outreach, GBV services and referrals.

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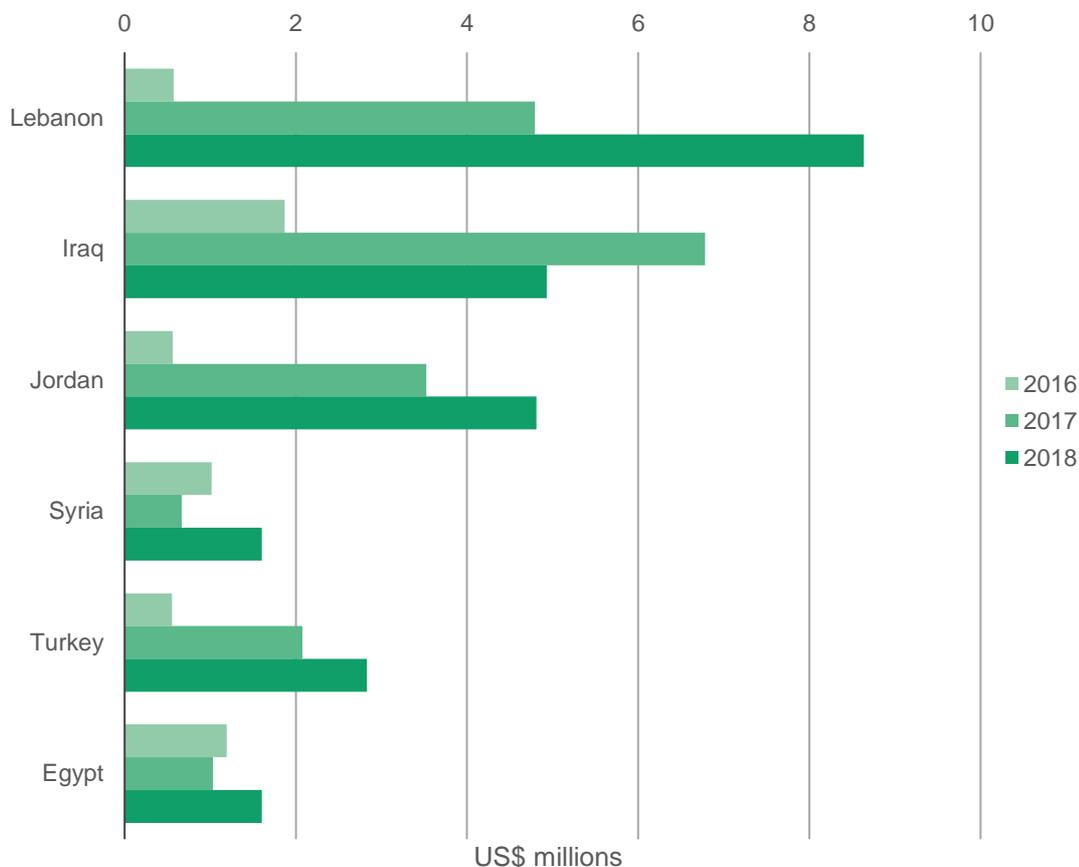
### 3.3 Financing to end GBV in the Syria crisis

According to UN agencies, the Syria crisis response has been a favourable context within which to raise funds for GBV. This is because the crisis response is generally well funded (compared with other, more neglected crises) and there has been strong leadership to integrate GBV into crisis response plans. As an illustration of this, the protection sector of the 3RP received 70% of the US\$623 million requested in 2018,<sup>33</sup> compared with only 36% of requirements met for Protection in appeals globally in the same year.<sup>34</sup> Reporting on appeals is not disaggregated to show GBV funding within the protection sector. However, the Lebanon protection sector reported that it received US\$29 million for GBV, or 18% of the US\$161 million received for the protection sector in 2018 through inter-agency appeals.<sup>35</sup> Jordan's GBV working group reported receiving US\$13 million through inter-agency appeals in 2019.<sup>36</sup>

Humanitarian funding continues to be the main source of finance for GBV programming. In practice, the refugee component of the 3RP requests and receives more than twice as much funding as the resilience component. In 2018, the resilience component was about half the size of the refugee component and was only 37% funded compared with 76% for the refugee component.<sup>37</sup> This dynamic impacts funding for GBV as well – for example only US\$2.1 million of the US\$13 million received for GBV in Jordan was for resilience-related activities. One reason for this may be that development donors provide less funding to middle-income countries such as Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. Another may be that development donors primarily channel funds outside of appeals, seeing them as the responsibility of humanitarian funders, while humanitarian donors see the resilience component as having a development focus. This leaves a gap in funding for resilience, despite efforts to bridge humanitarian and development approaches in a single strategy.

Furthermore, it also appears that GBV is not a significant priority for development funding. Although countries such as Jordan and Lebanon have received substantial ODA flows to strengthen the capacity of national systems to address the crisis, development assistance targeting GBV was only US\$8.6 million in Lebanon and US\$4.8 million in Jordan in 2018 (Figure 4).

**Figure 4: GBV-relevant ODA in countries affected by the Syria crisis, 2016–2018**



Source: Development Initiatives based on OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Creditor Reporting System (CRS).

Notes: Data is in constant 2017 prices. Figures only include projects reported to the CRS by donors and coded with the purpose code 15180 – ending violence against women and girls. The figure includes country-allocable aid only.

At the global, regional and country levels, donors and multilateral institutions have set up a number of financing vehicles for non-humanitarian aid to the regional Syria response that work at the interface between crisis response, stabilisation and development. Among the most significant are the World Bank’s Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF) and the EUTF (Box 3). In addition, several country-focused pooled funds have a stabilisation and development focus, including the World Bank’s Lebanon Syrian Crisis Trust Fund.<sup>38</sup>

Of these mechanisms, only the EUTF explicitly supports gender-equality-focused projects (2% of its budget) and also integrates GBV-related targets as part of its small protection sector. Based on publicly available information, we know that GBV and gender equality are not a specific focus of the World Bank-managed funds, and it is not clear how they integrate gender equality or GBV across other sectors of support.<sup>39</sup>

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### Box 3: Gender and nexus financing mechanisms – the EUTF and GCFF

The EU established the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (EUTF) because its existing development and humanitarian instruments were not suitable to assist regional countries in coping with the additional social and economic burdens associated with hosting Syrian refugees. The fund has reached over €1.7 billion to date in contributions from 22 EU member states and Turkey, as well as various EU instruments. Of this, over €1.3 billion has been contracted to large education, livelihoods, health, socio-economic support, water and sanitation projects that benefit both refugees and host communities. It has an explicit focus on bridging the humanitarian–development nexus and assisting regional countries to cope with the social and economic burdens associated with hosting refugees.

Within the EUTF Syria, GBV is a part of the protection sector. This is the smallest sector, with 4% of total allocations.<sup>40</sup> This reflects the fact that the EUTF did not initially focus on protection because it saw protection as a principally humanitarian domain; however over time this has shifted. The EUTF has allocated approximately €28.5 million (2%) to projects that have gender equality as the main focus – some, but not all, of these initiatives directly address GBV.<sup>41</sup> In addition, gender equality is integrated across sectors. Many of the projects outside the protection sector have the potential to positively impact GBV prevention and response, for example by expanding reproductive health services to vulnerable populations or increasing girls' access to education; however, it is unclear the extent to which actions to address GBV are integrated.

The UN, World Bank and Islamic Development Bank launched the Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF) in 2016 in response to the effects of the Syrian refugee crises in Jordan and Lebanon. The GCFF provides concessional finance to middle-income countries for development projects that benefit refugees and host communities. Its initial focus was on Jordan and Lebanon and it subsequently extended support to Colombia. Since its launch, the GCFF has approved US\$514 million in funding, which has leveraged additional finance to projects worth US\$3 billion. GCFF has supported large-scale (from US\$25 million to US\$500 million) health, education, infrastructure and job creation projects. These do not have a specific focus on GBV or gender equality and, based upon publicly available information, it is not clear how gender equality is integrated within other sectors. Some projects appear neutral or gender blind, while others might have a positive impact on GBV but do not make this explicit, such as the Lebanon Health Resilience Project, which scales up subsidised primary healthcare services to poor Lebanese and Syrian refugees and aims to reduce income and gender disparities in access to healthcare.<sup>42</sup>

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## 4. Conclusions

From the perspective of humanitarian agencies, a key reason for suboptimal responses to GBV in crisis is the failure to prioritise and mobilise sufficient funding for GBV. This funding gap overshadows other concerns over the nexus. The Syria case illustrates the importance of also addressing insufficient development funding for GBV in crisis contexts. In Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, the advances made in GBV prevention and services as part of the crisis response plans will be rolled back when humanitarian funding declines if governments and development donors do not step in to finance and sustain this work.

The 3RP framework has enabled humanitarian agencies delivering GBV services to take a longer term approach, including linking with and strengthening national systems. The main focus of the nexus revolves around how humanitarian agencies (or those agencies that operate in both humanitarian and development contexts) can transition from immediate relief to longer term, sustainable developmental approaches. There are fewer examples of efforts to strengthen partnerships and develop joint approaches between humanitarian and development actors or of development actors shifting their approach to pick up issues that are beyond the reach of humanitarian assistance.

The shift towards longer term, developmental approaches to GBV over the course of the crisis is clear in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, and it has been enabled by a number of other factors. These include: the relatively strong capacity of the government and civil society organisations; the availability of finance to the crisis response in general and for GBV in particular; significant progress in the localisation agenda, which has enabled stronger partnerships with women's organisations and national NGOs; and the increase in multi-year funding, especially to UN agencies, enabling a longer term approach.<sup>43</sup>

The Lebanon and Jordan cases illustrate that crisis response plans can accelerate and strengthen national service provision for GBV prevention and response. In both contexts, humanitarian agencies working on GBV have worked in parallel to engage and strengthen the capacity of national organisations and national systems. However, GBV services in Lebanon and Jordan remain dependent upon humanitarian funding, development assistance targeting GBV remains very small, and government ownership and capacity to co-finance GBV services appears limited. Sustained effort is needed to continue to build national capacity and ownership, and to secure sustainable finance, if the same quality and coverage of services is to continue when humanitarian funding declines. In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, the government is taking strong leadership of GBV, and the UN system has moved towards a model of co-financing for all aspects of its support, including GBV. However, declining humanitarian funding is also likely to impact the quality of services.

# 5. Recommendations

This report makes the following recommendations for how humanitarian and development actors can strengthen responses to GBV in crisis situations at a global level.

## 5.1 Coherence of policy and strategy focusing on GBV

Neither humanitarian nor development approaches to GBV are fully equipped to address the complex challenges of GBV prevention and response in crisis settings. Although humanitarian policy recognises the need for a holistic approach to GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response, in the context of limited resources, humanitarian agencies prioritise immediate needs such as health and case management services for survivors of rape and sexual violence. Efforts to move towards holistic, long-term approaches are hindered by humanitarian funding, planning cycles and systems that are poorly suited to this. Development assistance can potentially address a wider range of GBV issues within the context of longer-term efforts to empower women, but its focus on GBV is often limited or absent in crisis situations.

- Both humanitarian and development actors should align their support with SDG 5 targets to end violence against women and eliminate harmful practices in crisis settings. To achieve this, development actors must recognise the relevance of SDG 5 to crisis contexts and increase their engagement on GBV in crisis; humanitarian actors need to take greater ownership of SDG 5 by including its targets within humanitarian response plans.
- All actors should also align their support to GBV prevention and response with the WPS agenda. Development and peacebuilding actors must ensure that GBV and women's protection is prioritised within WPS action plans; humanitarian actors should link their support to GBV prevention and response with the wider WPS agenda.
- Development actors should expand funds and programmes that focus specifically on GBV to include crisis-affected contexts. They should also integrate GBV risk mitigation, prevention and response across all relevant sectors of development support in crisis contexts (e.g. health, economic recovery, security and justice sector reform, education, and disaster risk reduction).
- Humanitarian assistance should enable UN agencies and international and national NGOs to continue to move towards long-term and holistic approaches to GBV in protracted crises and other contexts that allow for this, while also incentivising partnerships and collaboration with other actors to address issues that are beyond the mandate or reach of humanitarian agencies.

## 5.2 Improved financing to end GBV

Both the level and quality of funding to address GBV in crisis settings is insufficient to address needs and fill gaps in responses. GBV is underfunded within humanitarian responses and, despite increases in multi-year funding to UN agencies and pooled funds, the volumes are still insufficient to transform humanitarian responses and there continue to be bottlenecks to flexible funding reaching international and national NGOs. Although GBV is a growing area of development assistance, this is not being channelled at sufficient scale to crisis contexts. Furthermore, many of the larger nexus financing mechanisms do not adequately integrate gender equality in general, and they don't for GBV in particular. Finally, there continue to be challenges with reliably tracking development and humanitarian finance to GBV in crisis settings, impeding efforts to hold donors accountable to commitments.

- Donors should increase flexible, multi-year funding to GBV within humanitarian and refugee response plans – and overcome the bottlenecks to multi-year funding reaching international and national NGOs – to enable humanitarian actors working on GBV to take a longer term, adaptive approach that fills gaps across the humanitarian–development–peace continuum.
- Development donors and funds focused on GBV should scale up and expand their remit to include crisis-affected contexts. In particular, the Spotlight Initiative on GBV, a joint EU and UN initiative that focuses only in development settings, should expand to include crisis-affected contexts and the World Bank should increase its finance for GBV in crisis contexts.
- 'Nexus' finance mechanisms, including the Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF) and EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (EUTF), should integrate clear actions and targets related to gender equality and GBV risk mitigation, prevention and response across all sectors of support and increase transparency, tracking and reporting of financial support for gender equality and GBV.
- The UN agencies with the mandate to track funding in crisis settings – UN OCHA and UNHCR – should agree reporting requirements for humanitarian funding on GBV that include, at a minimum, cluster/sector and sub-cluster/sub-sector disaggregation of funding and appeal coverage. This should be coordinated with UNFPA so that it can be harmonised across the country GBV dashboards to produce comparable data across different contexts.
- The OECD DAC should improve the accuracy of data on ODA spending on GBV in crisis settings by increasing reporting under multiple purpose codes (e.g. both the GBV-relevant purpose code and the relevant humanitarian purpose codes).

### 5.3 Strengthened coordination and partnerships for GBV

Currently, UN agencies and international NGOs dominate the delivery of GBV prevention and response in crisis settings, and coordination primarily takes place within the humanitarian cluster system or the refugee coordination model. Unlike many other areas of development support where the primary channel of delivery is the public sector, the prevention and response to GBV requires a strong and ongoing role for non-state actors, especially women-led organisations, in both the short and long term. While it is critical to work with the public sector to improve the quality of GBV services across sectors including health, education, and law enforcement and justice, the gap in trust in public services to address women's protection concerns is massive in many contexts. The transition from humanitarian to development ways of working is not as simple as shifting from UN and NGO-led delivery to government-led delivery. 'Safe spaces' and other models of community-based prevention and response implemented in humanitarian settings should be sustained and adapted to development contexts.

- Humanitarian and development donors, and the UN agencies, pooled funds and international NGOs through which they channel funds, should increase flexible support to women's organisations in crisis situations to enable them to work strategically on issues affecting women, including GBV. Ensure that women-led organisations are included in efforts to promote the localisation of aid and increase support to vehicles such as the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, which supports women's organisations in crisis settings.
- Humanitarian and development organisations (as well as teams within organisations) should strengthen context-specific partnerships to carry out joined-up regional, country or area-based assessment, planning and programming on GBV. This should go beyond UN agencies and NGOs that typically coordinate crisis response to extend to other development and peacebuilding actors, such as the World Bank, women's rights organisations and peacebuilding NGOs, potentially as part of wider planning frameworks that aim to strengthen nexus approaches.
- In contexts that allow for this, humanitarian actors should involve national and local authorities in GBV coordination structures at national and subnational levels and use this as an entry point for developing and reforming GBV policies and strategies and strengthening national systems. Alongside efforts to strengthen public services, humanitarian and development actors should support 'safe spaces' and other community-based prevention and response efforts that bridge the gap between women and public services.

# Appendix 1: Acknowledgements

This report was authored by Sarah Hanssen (Consultant), with contributions from Carina Chicet (Development Initiatives, DI) on the analysis of financing for GBV programming. Data analysis was also provided by Duncan Knox (DI). The report was reviewed by Sarah Dalrymple, Angus Urquhart, Niklas Rieger, Amanda Thomas and Carina Chicet (DI) and Helen Stawaski (International Rescue Committee). The project was managed by Tom Urry (DI), with publications support provided by Simon Murphy (DI) and communications support provided by James Harle (DI). The author would like to thank all of the individuals who provided insights, expertise and documentation in support of this study. A full list is included in Appendix 4. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, Canada for funding this research.

# Appendix 2: Terminology

## Gender-based violence (GBV)

“**Gender-based violence (GBV)** is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e. gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private.”<sup>44</sup>

**Sexual violence** is a form of GBV and refers to any act, attempt or threat of a sexual nature that is intended to inflict physical, psychological or emotional harm. During conflict, sexual violence is often a method of war, deliberately perpetrated to achieve military, political or psychological objectives, and may escalate to crime against humanity, war crime or act of genocide. The term **conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV)** refers to “rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilisation, forced marriage, and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict.”<sup>45</sup>

**Violence against women** refers specifically to acts of GBV that target women and girls. Although GBV and violence against women are often used interchangeably, this report uses the inclusive term GBV in recognition that women and girls as well as men and boys may be targeted.

## Humanitarian–development–peace nexus

This report uses ‘nexus’ or ‘triple nexus’ as short-hand terms to refer to the connections between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding approaches. It aligns with the definition in the OECD DAC recommendation.<sup>46</sup> The ‘nexus approach’ refers to the aim of strengthening collaboration, coherence and complementarity between each of the three pillars according to their relevance to the specific context.<sup>47</sup>

# Appendix 3: Global pooled funds relevant to GBV

## Conflict and emergency settings

**Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)** – Launched in 2016 as an outcome of the UN system’s 2015 review of the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325, the WPHF provides flexible and rapid finance to women’s civil society organisations that are working to advance women’s participation in crisis, peace and security contexts globally.<sup>48</sup> It has the explicit goals of breaking siloes between humanitarian, peace, security and development finance and addressing gaps in funding for women’s participation across the crisis, peace and security, and development continuum. With US\$24.5 million in contributions from 10 donors to date,<sup>49</sup> WPHF is supporting women’s organisations to work on a range of issues across the WPS agenda, including GBV.

**UNFPA Humanitarian Action Thematic Fund** – UNFPA launched the Humanitarian Action Thematic Fund in June 2018 to address gaps in funding for sexual and reproductive health services and GBV prevention and response. The fund, which is in a pilot phase, will provide flexible and multi-year financing and aims to increase resources available to fill gaps in the response to GBV. The fund has been designed to enable UNFPA to respond quickly at the beginning of a crisis and address the humanitarian–development nexus.

**UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UN Action)** – Formed in 2007, UN Action brings together 12 UN entities to strengthen UN system’s response to CRSV. The fund supports the UN Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict (TOE), which was set up in 2011 as an outcome of UN Security Council resolution 1888 (2009). The TOE is made up of experts from several UN agencies that deploy to the field to support national authorities to strengthen the rule of law and criminal accountability for CRSV in order to deter future violations. The fund supports UN Action’s Secretariat<sup>50</sup> and strategy, which until 2018 focused upon advocacy, knowledge generation and strategic support to UN missions and country teams to address CRSV. To date, the fund has received approximately US\$ 48.4 million in contributions, of which US\$45.8 has been committed with approximately half allocated to the TOE.<sup>51</sup>

## Development settings

**Spotlight Initiative** – Launched with a €500 million commitment from the EU, the Spotlight Initiative is a global, multi-year partnership between the EU and UN agencies to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls, currently covering 25 countries. It focuses on all forms of GBV and harmful practices, including domestic and family violence, female genital mutilation, forced and child marriage, femicide, human trafficking and sexual and labour exploitation. The initiative is not implemented in conflict situations or emergency settings, although it does aim to contribute to longer term resilience and risk reduction<sup>52</sup> and includes some countries that are in a recovery phase or are affected by conflict or instability in certain regions.

**UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women** – A multilateral grant-making mechanism managed by UN Women, the UN Trust Fund supports local, national and regional efforts to end violence against women, with a particular focus on support to civil society organisations. Since 1996, the UN Trust Fund has awarded US\$140 million in grants to 493 initiatives in 139 countries.<sup>53</sup>

# Appendix 4: Individuals consulted

Name	Organisation	Geographical responsibility
Ghida Anani	ABAAD	Lebanon
Joanna Atlin Villa	EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis	Regional
Livia Das Neves	UNHCR	Iraq
Heather Patterson	Canadian government	Regional
Ruben Nijs	UNHCR	Iraq
Rita-Flora Kevorkian	UNHCR	Lebanon
Victoria Sukhanova	UNHCR	Lebanon
Helen Stawski	International Rescue Committee	Global
Tayba Sharif	UNHCR	Jordan
Amani Saleh	OCHA	Jordan
Nada Nader	EuroMed Feminist Initiative	Regional
Sunita Joergensen	UNICEF	Regional
Pamela De Camillo	UNFPA	Jordan
Lionel Laforgue	UNFPA	Iraq
Ai Li Lim	Danish Refugee Council	Regional
Fulvia Boniardi	UNFPA	Syria
Gisela Duetting	UN Women	Global
Rola al-Masri	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom	Regional

# Notes

<sup>1</sup> OECD Legal Instruments. DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus. Available at: <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/public/doc/643/643.en.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Development Initiatives' research on approaches to the nexus from Sweden and the UK, synthesised by Sarah Dalrymple and Sophia Swithern. Development Initiatives, 2019. Key questions and considerations for donors at the triple nexus: lessons from the UK and Sweden, Development Initiatives. <https://devinit.org/publications/questions-considerations-donors-triple-nexus-uk-sweden/>

<sup>3</sup> UNHCR and UN OCHA data cited in the Syria HRP 2019 (available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/syrian-arab-republic-2019-humanitarian-response-plan-january-december-0>) and Syria 3RP, Regional Strategic Overview, 2020-21 (available at: [www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Regional-Strategic-Overview-2020-2021-1.pdf](http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Regional-Strategic-Overview-2020-2021-1.pdf)).

<sup>4</sup> There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, the implications of adding 'peace' as a third pillar in the well-established humanitarian–development nexus are still somewhat unclear, both conceptually and in practice. Secondly, the humanitarian–development dimension has been the most central to the regional Syria response. Although peace is not a third and separate set of actors and interventions in the way implied by the OECD DAC recommendation, efforts to strengthen social cohesion and stabilise the region (by mitigating potential tensions between refugees and host communities and supporting national systems to cope with the crisis) are integral to the way in which the humanitarian–development nexus has been put into practice in the Syria context.

<sup>5</sup> ODA and humanitarian assistance are increasingly channelled to the same protracted crises. Development Initiatives, 2019. Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2019. <https://devinit.org/publications/global-humanitarian-assistance-report-2019/>

<sup>6</sup> The WPS agenda is guided by 10 UN Security Council resolutions: 1325, [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1325\(2000\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1325(2000)); 1820, [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1820\(2008\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1820(2008)); 1888, [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1888\(2009\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1888(2009)); 1889, [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1889\(2009\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1889(2009)); 1960, [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1960\(2010\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1960(2010)); 2106, [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1960\(2010\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1960(2010)); 2122, [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2122\(2013\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2122(2013)); 2242, [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2242\(2015\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2242(2015)); 2467, [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2467\(2019\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2467(2019)); and 2493, [https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2493\(2019\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2493(2019)).

<sup>7</sup> Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), 2013. Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action. Available at: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/principals/content/iasc-principals-statement-centrality-protection-humanitarian-action-2013>

<sup>8</sup> IASC, 2015. Guidelines for Integrating Gender Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action. Available at: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/working-group/documents-public/iasc-guidelines-integrating-gender-based-violence-interventions>

<sup>9</sup> Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (UNFPA), 2019. Handbook for Coordinating GBV in Emergencies. Available at: [https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-07/Handbook%20for%20Coordinating%20GBV%20in%20Emergencies\\_fin.pdf](https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-07/Handbook%20for%20Coordinating%20GBV%20in%20Emergencies_fin.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Women's Refugee Commission, 2016. The Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies: Field Level Implementation Urgently Required. Available at: <https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/gbv/resources/1479-call-to-action-gbv-protection-in-emergencies>

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<sup>12</sup> The Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies is an initiative of 85 governments, NGOs and multilateral partners launched in 2013 to transform the humanitarian system's response to GBV. Find out more at: [www.calltoactiongbv.com/](http://www.calltoactiongbv.com/)

<sup>13</sup> VOICE and IRC, 2019. Where is the money?: How the humanitarian system is failing in its commitments to end violence against women and girls. Available at: <https://www.rescue.org/report/wheres-money-how-humanitarian-system-failing-fund-end-violence-against-women-and-girls>

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- <sup>15</sup> UN OCHA, 2019. Gender-based violence: A closer look at the numbers. Available at: <https://www.unocha.org/story/gender-based-violence-closer-look-numbers>
- <sup>16</sup> Based on FTS data. VOICE and IRC, 2019. Where is the money?: How the humanitarian system is failing in its commitments to end violence against women and girls. Available at: [www.rescue.org/report/wheres-money-how-humanitarian-system-failing-fund-end-violence-against-women-and-girls](http://www.rescue.org/report/wheres-money-how-humanitarian-system-failing-fund-end-violence-against-women-and-girls)
- <sup>17</sup> This was reinforced by interviews with UN agencies carried out during this study. VOICE and IRC, 2019. Where is the money?: How the humanitarian system is failing in its commitments to end violence against women and girls. Available at: [www.rescue.org/report/wheres-money-how-humanitarian-system-failing-fund-end-violence-against-women-and-girls](http://www.rescue.org/report/wheres-money-how-humanitarian-system-failing-fund-end-violence-against-women-and-girls)
- <sup>18</sup> The Syria Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) is a special case in that it is included in the FTS. The 3RP data in the FTS is not disaggregated by sector. The 3RP annual reports break down spending by sector and country but they do not report funding for GBV.
- <sup>19</sup> ODA flows for 2016 are the first to be reported against the 'violence against women and girls' purpose code.
- <sup>20</sup> Development Initiatives, 2020. Final ODA data for 2018: What does the data tell us? <https://devinit.org/publications/final-oda-data-2018/>
- <sup>21</sup> Development Initiatives, 2014. Trends in donor spending on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). <http://devinit.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/SGBV-Briefing-June-2014-FINAL11.pdf>. This report showed that 40% of SGBV-related projects were categorised as 'gender blind' because the GEM was left blank.
- <sup>22</sup> Development Initiatives, 2020. Final ODA data for 2018: what does the data tell us? Available at [www.devinit.org/publications/final-oda-data-2018/](http://www.devinit.org/publications/final-oda-data-2018/)
- <sup>23</sup> Based on UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund data. Available at: <http://mpmf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/UNA00> (accessed 8 March 2020).
- <sup>24</sup> Based on UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund data. Available at: <http://mpmf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/GAI00> (accessed 8 March 2020).
- <sup>25</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Norwegian Refugee Council and the United Nations Development Programme, 2019. Financing the nexus gaps and opportunities from a field perspective. Available at: [www.nrc.no/resources/reports/financing-the-nexus-gaps-and-opportunities-from-a-field-perspective/](http://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/financing-the-nexus-gaps-and-opportunities-from-a-field-perspective/)
- <sup>26</sup> OCHA and UNHCR, 2014. Joint UNHCR - OCHA Note on Mixed Situations: Coordination in Practice. Available at: [www.unhcr.org/53679e679.pdf](http://www.unhcr.org/53679e679.pdf)
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- <sup>31</sup> Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence (ICGBV), 2019. Responding and Empowering: GBV services in Lebanon in Response to the Syrian crisis. Available at: <https://www.gbv.ie/tag/response/>
- <sup>32</sup> UNHCR, 2018. Evaluation of UNHCR prevention and response to SGBV in the Refugee Population in Lebanon. Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/5c4afb4d4.pdf>
- <sup>33</sup> 3RP, 2019. 3RP Annual Report 2018. Available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/68557>
- <sup>34</sup> UN OCHA FTS. Appeals and response plans, 2018. Available at: <https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/overview/2018>
- <sup>35</sup> Inter-Agency Coordination, 2019. Lebanon: Inter-Agency - Protection - End of Year 2018 dashboard. Available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/68485>
- <sup>36</sup> Inter-Sector Working Group, 2020. SGBV SWG Q4 dashboard. Available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/74252>

- <sup>37</sup> 3RP, 2019. 3RP Annual Report 2018. Available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/68557>
- <sup>38</sup> The Lebanon Syrian Crisis Trust Fund is a multi-donor trust fund managed by the Government of Lebanon and the World Bank. It aims to mitigate the impact of the Syrian conflict on the Lebanese people and host communities through financing activities identified in the Lebanon Roadmap of Priority Interventions for Stabilization from the Syrian Conflict (available at: [www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/PCPD/pdf/Lebanon\\_roadmap.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/PCPD/pdf/Lebanon_roadmap.pdf)).
- <sup>39</sup> There is almost no mention of gender in the Lebanon Roadmap of Priority Interventions for Stabilization from the Syrian Conflict, funded through the Lebanon Syrian Crisis Trust Fund.
- <sup>40</sup> Actions adopted by the Board for a total of more than €1.9 billion – breakdown by sector, 4 December 2019. European Commission, EUTF Syria, 2019. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/content/state-play\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/content/state-play_en) (accessed 2 February 2020).
- <sup>41</sup> EUTF Syria, 2019. EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis. Projects contracted, status 15/11/19. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/sites/tfsr/files/15.11.2019\\_madad\\_signed\\_contracts.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/sites/tfsr/files/15.11.2019_madad_signed_contracts.pdf) (accessed 2 February 2020). Two projects address sexual and gender-based violence as part of a wider strategy to empower women including strengthening women's resilience through, for example, livelihoods, legal rights and access to justice, access to services, and strengthening women's organisations. Only one project (Medair) focuses specifically on providing care for sexual and gender-based violence and psychosocial support services as part of health care.
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- <sup>44</sup> UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR, IRC, International Medical Corps (IMC), USAID, Primero, Gender-based violence information management system (GBVIMS), 2017. Inter-agency Gender Based Violence Case Management Guidelines. Available at: [http://www.gbvim.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/Interagency-GBV-Case-Management-Guidelines\\_Final\\_2017.pdf](http://www.gbvim.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/Interagency-GBV-Case-Management-Guidelines_Final_2017.pdf)
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- <sup>48</sup> WPHF currently supports projects in 12 crisis contexts, including Lebanon and Iraq.
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- <sup>51</sup> Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office. United Nations Fund for Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict. Available at: [http://mpf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/UNA00?fund\\_status\\_month\\_to=&fund\\_status\\_year\\_to=2019](http://mpf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/UNA00?fund_status_month_to=&fund_status_year_to=2019) (accessed 12 February 2012).
- <sup>52</sup> Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office. Spotlight Initiative Fund. Available at: <http://mpf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/SIF00>
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