

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT:

**Analyzing Challenges and Opportunities for
Providing Holistic Support to Survivors of
Conflict-Related Sexual Violence**

FRAMING DOCUMENT

1. Overview

This document accompanies the Global Initiative for Justice, Truth and Reconciliation's (GIJTR's) conflict-related sexual violence [self-assessment toolkit](#).

The self-assessment toolkit provides civil society organizations and survivor networks with the tools to analyze how effectively survivors' holistic needs in relation to truth, justice, and healing are being met in their context, and to use this analysis to inform their strategies, activities, and future programming. Recognizing that survivors have differing and interconnected needs and priorities in relation to truth, justice, and healing, the assessment toolkit offers organizations a framework to consider survivors' immediate and long-term needs, and how these needs may shift over time.

Based on the GIJTR's experience supporting communities emerging from conflict over the last decade, the toolkit addresses the topic of holistic support for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) through a transitional justice lens, considering survivors' needs for truth, justice, reparation, non-recurrence, and memory. Recognizing that civil society organizations and survivor networks using the self-assessment toolkit may have varying degrees of familiarity with transitional justice processes and vocabulary, the purpose of this document is to explore transitional justice concepts—from the GIJTR's perspective and experience—and offer definitions for key words and ideas that appear throughout the self-assessment toolkit. As it often takes many decades to establish formal transitional justice mechanisms, due to their dependence on political will, examples from both formal and informal transitional justice initiatives across a broad range of contexts are included.

2. Introduction to the GIJTR’s approach to supporting survivors of conflict-related sexual violence

CRSV is a form of gender-based violence directly or indirectly arising from conflict that is perpetrated against an individual or group on the basis of their sex or gender. Defined by the United Nations (UN) as “rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage, and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls, or boys,”¹ CRSV is endemic in areas affected by conflict and humanitarian crises.

The drivers and forms of CRSV differ across affected areas: in some contexts, it is used by parties in conflict to pursue strategic, military, or organizational objectives; in others, the breakdown of rule of law and protective systems create an environment wherein perpetrators (not necessarily parties to conflict) can more easily commit opportunistic acts of abuse.

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by CRSV as a form of violence grounded in gender inequality; in the UN Secretary General’s 2022 annual report on the issue, women and girls accounted for more than 94% of the reported cases. Research documenting the prevalence of CRSV against men is extremely limited, but studies do indicate that the phenomenon is widespread. For example, a cross-sectional, population-based, random cluster survey taken in Liberia in 2008 found that 32.6% of male former combatants had experienced sexual violence. Approximately one-third of adult male former combatants were found to have experienced sexual violence compared with only about 7% of men who were not involved in combat; soldiers or rebels were reported to be responsible for the majority of sexual violence that was committed against Liberian males (combatants and noncombatants).² Research estimates that 9–21% of men experienced some form of CRSV during the ethnic civil war in Sri Lanka.³

For individuals of all gender backgrounds, barriers to reporting—including stigma, unsafe reporting mechanisms, harmful social norms that lead to sexual violence being condoned or tolerated within institutions, issues of physical access to services, and fear of reprisals from perpetrators, family, or community—lead to underreporting or a lack of reporting through formal channels.

The Global Initiative for Justice, Truth and Reconciliation

In 2014, the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience (ICSC) launched the Global Initiative for Justice, Truth and Reconciliation (GIJTR), a consortium of nine international organizations focused on offering holistic, integrative and multidisciplinary approaches to issues of truth, justice and reconciliation. GIJTR works primarily with local populations, civil society organizations, survivors and governments to develop transitional justice approaches that are victim-centered, collaborative, and support dignity, respect, inclusion, and transparency in societies emerging from conflict or periods of authoritarian rule. Since its founding, GIJTR has engaged 801 local civil society organizations; 78 countries; 43 publications; collection of over 8,000 narratives of human rights violations; and supported 588 civil society organizations dealing with human rights violations.

For more information, please visit [gijtr.org](https://www.gijtr.org).



In addition, there are specific challenges that prevent men, boys, and people of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) from reporting, including legal frameworks that do not recognize them as victims and/or can criminalize them for reporting sexual violence crimes. Prevalence figures should therefore be assumed to be estimates, and the true number of victims of CRSV is likely to be much higher.

The enduring impact of CRSV upon individual survivors and their communities requires a multisectoral and multidisciplinary response, encompassing psychological, medical, socioeconomic, and legal support. Human rights law recognizes that those who suffer gross human rights violations have a right to psychosocial treatment and other alleviating measures,⁴ and states bear responsibility for meeting survivors' urgent and long-term needs. Yet, in reality, many survivors around the world today struggle to access even basic care, let alone the sustained assistance required to reintegrate into their communities and rebuild their lives.

Survivors should be able to seek justice as part of a comprehensive response to CRSV. How survivors choose to define justice will vary from country to country, province to province, and survivor to survivor. For some, it may entail requesting official and public acknowledgement of their suffering or focusing on returning home and reintegrating into their community. For others, it may be found in the provision of financial compensation, or in holding their perpetrators accountable in a court of law.

Over recent decades, significant progress has been made in convicting perpetrators of CRSV in international, hybrid, and national courts and tribunals around the world. However, accountability for CRSV remains largely elusive, with many survivors forced to suppress their experiences due to undeserved shame, stigma, and fear of impunity while their perpetrators remain in positions of power. Not only are conviction rates vanishingly low, but survivors are frequently harmed and re-traumatized in the process of seeking accountability due to the absence of survivor-centered protocols and criminal justice systems that under-prioritize their needs.⁵

The GIJTR's work is based on the belief that, in countries coming to terms with violent pasts, sustainable peace cannot be achieved unless all members of a society—particularly marginalized groups such as women, minorities, and survivors of conflict—are able to play a central role in rebuilding their countries. While some transitional justice processes have failed to actively involve those key voices, preferring instead top-down procedures that prioritize the experiences and opinions of those in power, the GIJTR's work centers the knowledge and experiences of survivors and civil society organizations in communities directly affected by conflict, while giving them training and tools to pursue truth, justice, and reparation through a wide range of formal and informal mechanisms.

Against this backdrop, the GIJTR has prioritized support to survivors of CRSV across its programming. From working with survivors of Da'esh atrocities in the Middle East to developing Training of Trainer toolkits for human rights practitioners on topics such as the unique reintegration needs of children born of CRSV, the GIJTR has responded to the urgent and long-term needs of survivors through a range of transitional justice initiatives.

In **Bangladesh**, where nearly one million members of the Rohingya community now live in exile after fleeing persecution from Myanmar's military, GIJTR partners have identified and trained female leaders to document human rights violations in preparation for community-led documentation missions. While data on sexual violence following the military coup is limited, in its 2018 report to the UN Human Rights Council, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar documented hundreds of cases of Rohingya women and girls being raped, gang raped, and/or subjected to other forms of sexual violence in Rakhine State during the military's "clearance operations" in 2016 and 2017. The majority of Rohingya refugees now living in Bangladesh are women and children, with more than 40% below the age of 12. Where other international agencies have conducted documentation initiatives with the Rohingya community, they have generally done so with local activists working only as interpreters or "fixers." GIJTR's experience, however, has shown that training documenters from within the community to lead these efforts is a far more effective approach. Unlike international efforts, locally led and coordinated civil society documentation schemes can build trust among survivors, reach communities outside the scope of efforts led by external international organizations, and lay the groundwork for future transitional justice processes. As women and girls are frequently more likely to share their experiences of violations with female facilitators, due to cultural taboos around discussing sexual violence, training female leaders in documentation has been essential to the collection and preservation of their stories.

In **Ukraine**—where organizations with little previous experience of gathering and processing evidence of CRSV are now under huge pressure to undertake this work in line with international standards—following Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022, GIJTR partners have utilized a similar approach, providing training and psychosocial support to civil society documenters. In a context where many survivors are afraid to speak out due to stigma, the work of Ukrainian organizations, which are able to repeat missions to the same settlements to gradually build the trust of witnesses and survivors over time, is critical in uncovering these crimes, referring survivors to support services, and contributing to accountability efforts.

In **The Gambia**, women were largely excluded from providing input during the state's consultations, which preceded the launch of the country's Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission in 2018. Once launched, the Commission failed to make safe spaces available for women to give testimony, despite a breadth of evidence on the need to offer anonymity and privacy to women who had been abused or traumatized to enable them to participate safely in accountability processes. GIJTR's experience showcases the need to involve marginalized groups, including women, in transitional justice processes, because if they are not part of developing those processes, they are neither well-positioned to, nor deeply invested in, moving them forward. Responding to this pressing need in The Gambia, GIJTR worked with local partner Women in Liberation and Leadership to conduct women-only "listening circles" over a three-year period, compiling the findings and recommendations into a report. The report, which was received positively by The Gambia's Ministry of Justice, concluded that in order for the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission to offer justice to Gambian women and girls, it must acknowledge and address the root causes of sexual and gender-based violence in Gambian society, which existed long before the dictatorship and still continue today.

In 2016, GIJTR partners established the **Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Transitional Justice Academy** to provide survivors, activists, and academics with the skills and funds to design and implement transitional justice programs in their local communities to raise awareness of transitional justice concepts and ensure these processes are responsive to survivors' needs. Through the Academy, GIJTR offers technical and financial support to a range of practitioners working with survivors of human rights violations in the MENA region, including one local partner who conducted workshops with Syrian

women who were former detainees to increase their understanding of different types of documentation, how evidence they provided could be used for justice and healing purposes, and their rights when engaging with these processes. Interventions from participants spoke to the need for the workshops, which helped to foster a greater sense of agency among the women who attended.

In the aftermath of the 2009 Stadium Massacre in **Guinea**, during which at least 150 civilians were killed and dozens of women and girls sexually assaulted, GIJTR worked with Guinean partner the Association of Victims, Parents and Friends of the September 28 Massacre (AVIPA) over a period of six years to build their capacities across a range of transitional justice-related topics, including participatory truth telling, mental health and psychosocial support, memorialization, gender justice, and atrocity prevention. AVIPA, with GIJTR's support, has in turn established psychosocial support groups for CRSV survivors, engaged them in arts-based "body mapping" workshops and awareness-raising activities, advocated alongside them for the start of the recently launched Stadium Massacre Trial, and established a hotline that allows women and girls to report ongoing incidents of sexual and gender-based violence and receive referrals for psychosocial, medical, and legal support services.

Finally, in order to share lessons learned from these and other contexts, GIJTR has produced numerous **toolkits and resources** outlining holistic, survivor-centered approaches to supporting CRSV survivors through formal and informal transitional justice mechanisms. These include "Truth, Bread and Tea: A Toolkit for the Reintegration of Women Survivors of conflict-related sexual violence and Children Born of War," a body-mapping toolkit focused on raising awareness of survivors' stories and sharing rights-based advocacy strategies, and a toolkit on women and transitional justice that shares recommendations from women-led grassroots organizations for meaningful inclusion of women in transitional justice processes.

3. Key terms

Victim, survivor: This toolkit uses both "victim" and "survivor" to refer to individuals who have experienced CRSV, recognizing that the context in which these terms are used may vary, and that whether an individual is identified as a "victim" or "survivor" depends primarily on their preference and self-identification. "Victim" is often used in reference to the incident of victimization and the legal context and to reflect the deeply unfortunate reality that not all victims of CRSV survive the crimes. "Survivor" stresses the resilience and empowerment of individuals who have suffered sexual violence, is more common in the psychological and social support sectors, and is therefore used more frequently throughout this toolkit.

Survivor-centered approach: A survivor-centered approach means recognizing and prioritizing the rights, needs, priorities, and capacities of the person who has experienced CRSV. This approach creates a supportive environment, ensures safety and dignity to promote a survivor's recovery, and reinforces the survivor's capacity to make decisions about possible interventions.

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There were organizations and individuals who collected our stories and surveyed us without telling us, even once, why they were collecting that information.

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Trauma-informed approach: Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as harmful or life threatening. While unique to the individual, generally, the experience of trauma can cause lasting adverse effects, limiting the ability to function and achieve mental, physical, social, emotional, and/or spiritual well-being. A trauma-informed approach aims to increase practitioners' awareness of how trauma can negatively impact individuals and communities and their ability to feel safe or develop trusting relationships with support services and their staff.

Gender-sensitive approach: A gender-sensitive approach entails respecting each survivor's dignity and sense of personal identity, attending to the impact of gender on survivor experiences, making space for historically excluded survivors and crimes, and recognizing the wide range of ways in which different individuals are affected by conflict and violence as a result of their gender identity.

Survivor networks: These are networks that are built to create solidarity between survivors by offering a space for exchange and mutual assistance. Survivor networks can help survivors gain access to care they need, share collective memories about their experiences, and advance their collective priorities by carrying out advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns.

Civil society organizations: Driven by people with a common interest, these non-profit, voluntary citizens' groups are organized on a local, national, or international level and perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens' concerns to governments, monitor policies, and encourage political participation within their communities.

Justice and accountability: This refers to modes of accountability, restoration, and the full enjoyment of human rights by individuals who have been the victim of a crime. Justice may take different forms and be realized through different tools, including transitional justice mechanisms, as well as truth-telling, memorialization, reparation, effective remedies, acknowledgment or awareness of crimes and violations, formal civil or criminal court processes, as well as informal and traditional forms of justice.

LGBTQI+: An abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer, the plus sign represents people with diverse SOGIESC who identify using other terms.

4. Introduction to transitional justice concepts

“Transitional justice” is a term used to encompass mechanisms and processes aimed at addressing abuses and violations that occur on a large scale within a specific period of time. These approaches offer societies emerging from periods of conflict or authoritarian rule a constructive means of addressing the legacy of human rights violations. Crucially, transitional justice should be a survivor-centered process that prioritizes redress and recognition for both individuals and society as a whole. Its ultimate goal is the establishment of a just, dignified, and reconciled society. While rooted in principles of justice and human rights, transitional justice, as a practice, uniquely focuses on repairing the broader social fabric that has frayed over time due to violence and repression.

Transitional justice processes supportive of addressing human rights violations and mass atrocity crimes require a unique and specific combination of mechanisms to promote long-term, just, and sustainable peace. These mechanisms are frequently broken down into the five pillars of transitional justice: truth, justice, reparations, guarantee of non-recurrence, and memorialization. These five pillars are mutually supportive, as they each help the others to provide a holistic process that supports reconciliation, prevents recurrence of violence, and ensures accountability for survivors and victims.

Below are the most common supporting mechanisms that correspond with the five pillars of transitional justice:

Truth. Acknowledgement and documentation of violations that took place are important on both an individual level for victims and survivors and a broader social level to avoid the denial or recurrence of violations.

Truth-telling initiatives frequently involve the creation of specialized truth commissions or nation-wide truth-telling programs designed to operate of the judicial system to uncover information about the nature of the human rights violations committed, address the root causes of conflict, provide a space for survivors to share their experiences, and make recommendations for overcoming widespread human rights violations.

Justice. This involves the identification and prosecution of perpetrators of gross human rights violations and international crimes. While a form of retribution, “justice” in this sense is also a further acknowledgement of the violations experienced by victims and survivors and can serve as a deterrent for similar violations.

A key mechanism here is **criminal prosecutions**, which involve the investigation and trial of those accused of gross human rights violations in a court of law. These can take place in domestic, international, hybrid, or mixed courts involving the participation of both local and foreign actors.

Reparations. A key reparative process, reparations can take different forms of redress including restitution, compensation, and rehabilitation provided for individuals and groups. This can occur through material and symbolic reparations, which act as a tangible acknowledgement that both harm was suffered and an attempt to make amends has taken place. On a broader social level, reparations can build empathy for victims and survivors.

Reparations can include both material and symbolic benefit programs, administered under judicial and administrative authorities, for victims of human rights violations designed to address the long-term consequences of the violence or abuse they suffered. These benefits may include, but are not limited to, financial compensation, the return of lost or stolen property, the provision of health care or psychosocial services, the creation of educational and/or livelihood support programs, formal apologies, and the construction of memorials or museums.

Guarantee of non-recurrence. This refers to reforming laws and institutions that were either party to previous atrocities or inadequate in addressing and preventing atrocities.

Institutional reforms are designed to address patterns of systemic abuse or corruption within a nation's fundamental institutions, such as the police force, court system, governing branches, and military. These reforms may involve the removal of individuals accused of human rights violations, aim to rebuild a sense of trust among the general public in a nation's central institutions, and promote a culture of accountability among the people working in the institutions themselves. These reforms demonstrate a commitment to non-recurrence.

Memorialization. This is the processes through which memory is perpetuated. Memorials and memory initiatives can take on a wide variety of forms and often seek to recognize victims and contribute to a broader process of promoting reconciliation and social cohesion.

Memorialization efforts can include a symbolic form of recognizing victims, educating the general public and future generations about past human rights violations, and preserving memory to raise moral consciousness and prevent atrocities from recurring in the future. Memorials and museums frequently provide opportunities for members of diverse communities to express the different truths surrounding their experiences of conflict.

Formal and informal approaches to transitional justice

Within the transitional justice framework, there are both formal and informal approaches to each of the five pillars.

Formal approaches are led by the state, or a regional or international body, and tend to focus on bigger-picture transitional justice strategies, such as holding those most responsible for past atrocities accountable or setting the historical record straight regarding the commission of past human rights violations, sometimes at the cost of the participation or inclusion of marginalized citizens.

In many instances, informal, local-level approaches are able to complement or fill gaps left by more formal approaches; and in some instances, participation in a local-level approach can be a stepping stone to participation in a more formal approach. Informal or local-level approaches can vary by context, are generally more responsive to community needs, and are frequently led by non-state actors, such as civil society organizations.

Effective transitional justice mechanisms require participation across a range of actors; however, in cases where formal mechanisms are not supported or initiated by governments, civil society organizations and survivor networks can pioneer initiatives with significant impact.

Below are some examples of formal and informal approaches within the five pillars of transitional justice:

<p>Truth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal mechanisms can include state-sanctioned truth commissions, judicial cases, fact-finding bodies, and national education curricula. • Informal, local-level approaches can include community-based town halls and dialogues, documentation of oral histories, creation of community archives, and awareness-raising campaigns on human rights violations that occurred.
<p>Justice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal mechanisms can include cases before the International Criminal Court (ICC), international tribunals, hybrid tribunals, domestic prosecutions, and cases brought under the concept of universal jurisdiction. • Informal, local-level approaches can include traditional justice processes, which are customary practices that have typically been developed and accepted by communities over an extended period of time as a means of offering redress to victims of specific violations.
<p>Reparations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal mechanisms can be symbolic through national commemoration, monuments, or official apologies issued by the state. They can also be material through monetary compensation, medical assistance, providing infrastructure to communities, and land restitution. • Informal, local-level approaches can include scholarship and educational support, vocational training programs, and rebuilding homes of victims.
<p>Guarantees of Non-recurrence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal mechanisms can include vetting and lustration by the state, security sector reform, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs, and judicial reform. • Informal, local-level interventions include initiatives to strengthen the role of civil society, end harassment of civil society actors, empower women, girls, and minorities that have been traditionally excluded from the protection of the law, and provide a narrative or memorialization of events through cultural and artistic mediums.
<p>Memorialization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal mechanisms can include official commemoration days, preserving sites of atrocity, and renaming public spaces. • Informal, local-level mechanisms can include spontaneous memorials, community oral history programs, murals and quilting projects that recognize victims, photo exhibits and documentaries, and community memorial gardens.

To deal with the aftermath of a decades-long internal armed conflict, **Colombia** has undertaken a large-scale path toward peace, reconciliation, and justice through the implementation of the comprehensive 2016 peace agreement⁶ between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia: the People's Army (FARC-EP).⁷ The peace process and subsequent agreement centered victims' rights to accountability, truth, and reparation. While some measure of relief has been provided to victims, implementation has also faced significant barriers. CRSV was widespread through the duration of the conflict, and local civil society organizations and victim advocates have noted that it demonstrates systemic failures as well as an extension of the continuous patriarchal oppression in women's lives.⁸ While there have been some advances in addressing CRSV through heightened visibility, investigations, and activism, which have resulted in actions in the legislative process and a handful of verdicts, a high level of impunity remains, preventive measures are lacking, and there is a need for strengthened investigative measures and more stringent penalties.⁹

In 2015, **Sri Lanka** pledged to pursue truth, justice, and accountability in order to provide redress to victims. This included plans for four transitional justice processes: a mechanism to search for the disappeared, an office for reparations, a truth commission, and a judicial mechanism. To date, only two of the four transitional justice processes have been established—the Office of Missing Persons and the Office for Reparations—and have received insufficient support.¹⁰ This has significantly eroded citizens' and victims' confidence in the government's commitment to transitional justice objectives.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Serbia—collectively the **Western Balkans**—have engaged in various transitional justice and reconciliation initiatives to address the legacy of the wars of the 1990s and the deep divisions that persist. Beyond the high-profile trials carried out at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, a great deal of success in promoting reconciliation, in particular at the community level, has occurred through truth telling, art and culture, memorialization, dialogue, and education.¹¹ These efforts speak to the role civil society can play in complementing, deepening, and/or broadening the reach of a formal transitional justice process through informal approaches.

In 2017, the dictator Yahya Jammeh left **The Gambia** and the country embarked on a transitional justice process. The newly elected government established a security sector reform mechanism, a commission of inquiry on the financial dealings of the former dictator, the Constitution Review Commission, and the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission. While progress has been made, a number of significant issues, such as the safety of female participants, have challenged the processes.

Kenya experienced significant post-election violence in 2007–2008 that included sexual violence, among other crimes. Several transitional justice efforts promised some measure of accountability for the violence. These efforts included a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2008–2013), ICC proceedings (2010–2015), an official apology by President Kenyatta, and the promise of a Restorative Justice Fund (2015) to provide reparations. However, the results of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its many recommendations stalled in Parliament, charges by the ICC for six perpetrators were all withdrawn or unconfirmed amid accusations of intimidation of witnesses, the promise for reparations was never realized, and national courts have mostly failed to address post-election crimes. Realizing the ongoing trauma and economic hardship faced by women survivors of the post-election violence, a group of civil society organizations came together to find a way to support them. Rather than seeking individual accountability for the sexual crimes, the group instead brought the state of Kenya itself to court for its failure to fulfill its obligations to uphold human rights. In 2013, six women and two men sued the Kenyan government for neglect. In 2020, Kenya’s High Court found the state guilty. According to a press release by Physicians for Human Rights, the finding of the court was that the government was responsible for a “failure to conduct independent and effective investigations and prosecutions of SGBV [sexual- and gender-based violence]-related crimes during the post-election violence.”¹² This important decision provides a promising example for other survivors who may now be encouraged to continue their pursuit of justice for these past crimes through a judicial process. It also sends a message to police about the need for reforms to ensure proper investigation of sexual crimes.

5. Suggested reforms

The GIJTR has seen that the majority of the positive change in relation to truth, justice, and healing for CRSV has been driven by the sustained efforts of survivors and the communities that surround them. In recognition of the importance of local ownership for both effectively addressing CRSV crimes and achieving meaningful change through transitional justice processes, the following is a series of suggested reforms that have been drawn from past transitional justice processes. They aim to ensure that transitional justice processes are truly accessible to survivors of CRSV, address CRSV survivors’ specific needs, and target the root causes of CRSV. These reform suggestions can be considered a collection of lessons learned from past transitional justice processes in relation to CRSV and used to evaluate existing government frameworks and advocate for specific changes within transitional justice processes or national legislatures to better support survivors of CRSV.¹³

- Ensure that the legislative framework provides adequate gender protections, without any discriminatory provisions, and in particular that homosexuality and same-sex activity are not criminalized.
- Ensure access to justice for survivors of SGBV and strengthen efforts to end impunity.
- Ensure all reparation programs are victim centered and gender sensitive.

- Ensure that reconciliation programs are derived from broad community-led consultations from the planning through implementation stages.
- Intensify programs aimed at raising awareness of sexual and gender-based violence at the grassroots level.
- Adopt measures to empower women and support gender equity and equal representation in both the public and private sectors.
- Introduce comprehensive gender, sexual, and reproductive health education in schools to foster awareness of sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- Intensify efforts to ensure the availability of adequate sexual and reproductive health care services that also cater to the needs of vulnerable groups.
- Intensify efforts to support and protect vulnerable social groups and communities such as LGBTQIA+.

Endnotes

- 1 “The term ‘conflict-related sexual violence’ refers to rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, 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. That link may be evident in the profile of the perpetrator, who is often affiliated with a State or non-State armed group, which includes terrorist entities; the profile of the victim, who is frequently an actual or perceived member of a political, ethnic or religious minority group or targeted on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity; the climate of impunity, which is generally associated with State collapse, cross-border consequences such as displacement or trafficking, and/or violations of a cease-fire agreement. The term also encompasses trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual violence or exploitation, when committed in situations of conflict.” Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Report of the United Nations Secretary-General (S/2019/280).
- 2 Johnson K, Asher J, Rosborough S, et al., “Association of Combatant Status and Sexual Violence With Health and Mental Health Outcomes in Postconflict Liberia,” *JAMA* 2008;300(6):676-690 (2008), <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/182379>.
- 3 Kiss, L., Quinlan-Davidson, M., Pasquero, L., et al., “Male and LGBT survivors of sexual violence in conflict situations: a realist review of health interventions in low-and middle-income countries,” *Conflict and Health* 14, 11 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13031-020-0254-5>.
- 4 UN General Assembly, “Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law,” resolution adopted by the General Assembly, 21 March 2006, A/RES/60/147, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4721cb942.html>.
- 5 Remarks of the UN’s Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict: <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/statement/remarks-of-srsg-patten-at-unga76-side-event-pre-venting-addressing-conflict-related-sexual-violence-as-a-tool-of-war-co-hosted-by-the-office-for-global-womens-issues-us-department-of-state-search-f/>
- 6 Peace Agreements Database, “Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace,” <https://www.peaceagreements.org/wview/1845/Final%20Agreement%20to%20End%20the%20Armed%20Conflict%20and%20Build%20a%20Stable%20and%20Lasting%20Peace>.
- 7 The Council on Foreign Relations, “Colombia’s Civil Conflict,” <https://www.cfr.org/background-er/colombias-civil-conflict>.
- 8 Esther Marina Gallego Zapata, Ruta Pacifica de las Mujeres “Colombia Case Study,” [NEED DATE, OFFICIAL TITLE AND URL].
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 OHCHR, “Sri Lanka: Experts dismayed by regressive steps, call for renewed UN scrutiny and efforts to ensure accountability,” <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2021/02/sri-lanka-experts-dismayed-regressive-steps-call-renewed-un-scrutiny-and>.
- 11 Huma Haider, “Transitional justice and reconciliation in the Western Balkans: Approaches, impacts and challenges,” January 25, 2021, <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/16471>.
- 12 Physicians for Human Rights, “Kenya Submission to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences Ms. Dubravka Šimonović,” 31 December 2020, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/SR/RapeReport/CSOs/166-kenya.pdf>.
- 13 These reform suggestions are drawn from the Women in Liberation and Leadership’s “WILL TRRC Shadow Report on SGBV,” <https://www.womeninliberation.org/reports>.

