

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and International Peace and Security



PRODUCED IN COLLABORATION WITH
International Peace Institute (IPI)

COURSE AUTHORS

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SERIES EDITOR

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Gladys Ngwepekeum Nkeh, a United Nations police officer from Cameroon serving with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), conducts a class on gender violence at a school in Bangui. 23 October 2017. UN Photo by Eskinder Debebe.

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Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and International Peace and Security

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	viii
Method of Study.....	ix
Lesson 1 Understanding Terms and Concepts Related to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence.....	10
Section 1.1 What is SGBV?.....	12
Section 1.2 Sexual Violence.....	13
Section 1.3 Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV).....	15
Section 1.4 Violence Against Women and Girls.....	17
Section 1.5 Femicide, Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), and Domestic Violence.....	17
Section 1.6 Sexual Harassment.....	19
Section 1.7 Sexual Discrimination.....	19
Section 1.8 Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA).....	20
Section 1.9 Definitions of SGBV in Relation to Peace Operations.....	21
Lesson 2 Analysing Patterns of SGBV.....	25
Section 2.1 Key Patterns of SGBV.....	27
Section 2.2 The Continuum of Violence.....	31
Lesson 3 Causes of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence.....	39
Section 3.1 What Does Research Say about Perpetrators of CRSV?.....	41
Section 3.2 Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing.....	44
Section 3.3 Conflict Dynamics.....	45

Lesson 4	Historical Case Studies and Applied Learning.....	50
Section 4.1	Understanding SGBV in a Peace and Security Context.....	52
Section 4.2	SGBV in the Bosnian Genocide.....	53
Section 4.3	SGBV in the Rwandan Genocide.....	55
Lesson 5	Reporting and Frequency of SGBV.....	61
Section 5.1	Reporting.....	63
Section 5.2	Limits to Data and Reports on SGBV.....	65
Section 5.3	Victims.....	66
Section 5.4	United Nations Monitoring, Analysis, and Reporting Arrangements (MARA).....	68
Lesson 6	Policy Frameworks on SGBV.....	74
Section 6.1	United Nations Security Council Resolutions on SGBV.....	76
Section 6.2	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).....	79
Section 6.3	United Nations Sanctions Regimes.....	80
Section 6.4	UN-Women.....	82
Section 6.5	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (OSRSG-SVC).....	83
Section 6.6	United Nations Framework for the Prevention of CRSV.....	84
Section 6.7	Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Girls.....	87
Section 6.8	Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate and a Victim-Centred Approach	87
Section 6.9	Regional Organization Approaches.....	88
Section 6.10	Sexual and Gender Minorities.....	89
Lesson 7	SGBV Committed by and against Peace Operations Personnel.....	92
Section 7.1	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA).....	94
Section 7.2	Reporting SEA.....	95

Section 7.3	Establishing the United Nations Zero-Tolerance Policy.....	96
Section 7.4	United Nations Mechanisms to Address SEA.....	99
Section 7.5	A Human Rights-Based Approach.....	104
Section 7.6	Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Assault Against Peace Operations Personnel.....	106
Lesson 8	Approaches to Addressing SGBV.....	112
Section 8.1	Gender Transformative Approach to Addressing SGBV.....	114
Section 8.2	Survivor-Centred Approach.....	115
Section 8.3	Transitional Justice Mechanisms.....	117
Section 8.4	Legal Mechanisms.....	118
Section 8.5	Transformative Justice.....	120
Section 8.6	Preventing and Responding to SGBV in Peace Operations.....	121
Section 8.7	Relevant United Nations Roles in Peace Operations.....	122
Section 8.8	Common Assumptions Around Addressing CRSV as a Form of SGBV in Peace Operations.....	126
Appendices		
Appendix A:	List of Abbreviations and Acronyms.....	130
Appendix B:	Glossary.....	133
About the Authors:	Dr. Phoebe Donnelly and Evyn Papworth.....	136
Instructions for the End-of-Course Examination.....		137

Content Warning »

Certain sections of this course contain discussions of graphic violence and abuse of a sexual nature that may be disturbing to some individuals. Sexual violence, sexual assault, rape, abuse, and genocide are topics discussed in this course. Lesson 7 explains the United Nations zero-tolerance policy for sexual abuse and exploitation and provides instructions on how to report misconduct. Professional help is suggested for those who feel overwhelming sadness, anxiety, numbness, panic, or other concerning psychological or physiological symptoms in relation to these topics.

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This course builds on and directly cites and quotes material and images from scholars and practitioners who have worked on SGBV for decades. We wish to recognize their tireless efforts and their advancements in this field.

Most importantly, the authors want to recognize the countless individuals who consider themselves survivors of SGBV. We hope that providing information about SGBV will support prevention and response efforts.



Staff members serving with MINUSCA organize a student awareness campaign on sexual exploitation and abuse in Bangui. 24 January 2018. UN Photo by Herve Serefio.

Method of Study

This self-paced course aims to give students flexibility in their approach to learning. The following steps are meant to provide motivation and guidance about some possible strategies and minimum expectations for completing this course successfully:

- Before you begin studying, first browse through the entire course. Notice the lesson and section titles to get an overall idea of what will be involved as you proceed.
- The material is meant to be relevant and practical. Instead of memorizing individual details, strive to understand concepts and overall perspectives in regard to the United Nations system.
- Set personal guidelines and benchmarks regarding how you want to schedule your time.
- Study the lesson content and the learning objectives. At the beginning of each lesson, orient yourself to the main points. If possible, read the material twice to ensure maximum understanding and retention, and let time elapse between readings.
- At the end of each lesson, take the End-of-Lesson Quiz. Clarify any missed questions by rereading the appropriate sections, and focus on retaining the correct information.
- After you complete all of the lessons, prepare for the End-of-Course Examination by taking time to review the main points of each lesson. Then, when ready, log into your online student classroom and take the End-of-Course Examination in one sitting.

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from virtually anywhere in the world.***

- Your exam will be scored electronically. If you achieve a passing grade of 75 per cent or higher on the exam, you will be awarded a Certificate of Completion. If you score below 75 per cent, you will be given one opportunity to take a second version of the End-of-Course Examination.
- A note about language: This course uses English spelling according to the standards of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (United Kingdom) and the *United Nations Editorial Manual*.

Key Features of Your Online Classroom »

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- A secure testing environment in which to complete your training;
- Access to additional training resources, including multimedia course supplements; and
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LESSON 1

Understanding Terms and Concepts Related to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence



UN Photo by Isaac Billy.

This lesson seeks to demystify the different terms used to describe SGBV and explain why they matter.

In This Lesson »

- Section 1.1 What is SGBV?
- Section 1.2 Sexual Violence
- Section 1.3 Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV)
- Section 1.4 Violence Against Women and Girls
- Section 1.5 Femicide, Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), and Domestic Violence
- Section 1.6 Sexual Harassment
- Section 1.7 Sexual Discrimination
- Section 1.8 Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)
- Section 1.9 Definitions of SGBV in Relation to Peace Operations

Lesson Objectives »

- Have a better understanding of the terminology around sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).
- Define terms and differentiate concepts that fall under the umbrella term SGBV.
- Recognize other forms of SGBV.
- Understand the definition of CRSV in the context of peace operations.



© ICRC, Axel Moeschler. Nana-Grébizi prefecture, Kaga-Bandoro Hospital. This woman was a victim of sexual violence. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) provides her with psychosocial support and assists her in obtaining a sustainable livelihood. 28 October 2022.

Introduction

The terminology around sexual and gender-based violence, and associated abbreviations such as SGBV, may seem insignificant, but understanding the terms used to describe SGBV is key to understanding the concept.

This lesson seeks to demystify the different terms used to describe SGBV and explain why they matter. It will also provide guidance on when to use which terms and how different terms are used in different policy frameworks.

In many cases, there is not a single agreed-upon definition, but the lesson will use the most relevant and comprehensive definition.



View a video introduction of this course at <https://youtu.be/h7h-sPtTSbE>.

Content Warning »

Certain sections of this course contain discussions of graphic violence of a sexual nature that may be disturbing to some individuals.

Section 1.1 What is SGBV?

Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term encompassing many forms of violence. While these forms of violence may be distinct, they overlap and are all considered to be types of GBV. GBV (which can also be referred to as **SGBV**) refers to acts that are perpetrated against a person's will and based on their gender. **GBV and SGBV are often used interchangeably.** This course uses the acronym SGBV as the broadest and most explicit description of this pattern of violence.

Since SGBV is a broad term that can describe many different forms of harm, this term can be used if there is uncertainty regarding the specific situation. However, knowing more about different types of SGBV is important as it will help identify which services are needed when responding to different situations. The following definitions do not include every form of SGBV but will help demystify some of the terminology.

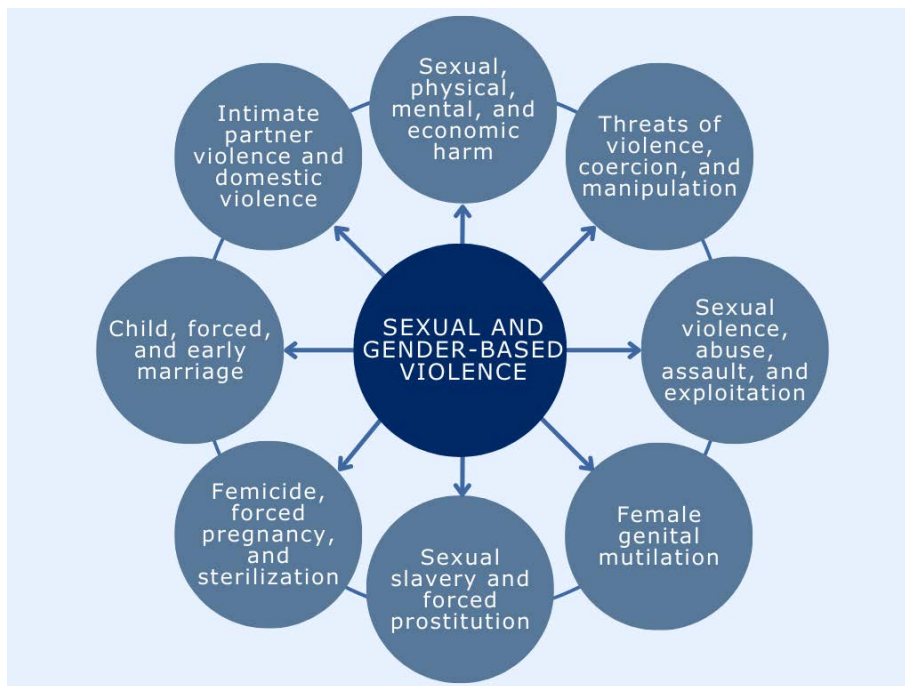


Figure 1-1: Forms of SGBV

As shown in Figure 1-1, SGBV is an umbrella term that refers to:

- Harmful acts perpetrated against an individual based on their gender and against their will;
- A type of violence rooted in the abuse of power, unequal power relationships, harmful gender norms, and gender inequality;
- Violence that can include sexual, physical, mental and psychological, and economic harm, including denial of resources or access to services;
- Acts occurring in public or in private;
- Violence that can also include threats of violence, manipulation, or coercion;
- Violence that may take many forms, including child marriage, female genital mutilation, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and so-called “honour crimes”; and
- A serious violation of human rights that can affect everyone.

According to this definition, SGBV may not always be sexual or even physical in nature, although it can include sexual violence. It is important to note that men can also be victims of SGBV and that members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ+) population and members of sexual and gender minorities are often targeted at higher levels.

Sexual and Gender Minorities »

Members of sexual and gender minorities include “lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgender people (LGBT); intersex people (people whose bodies do not have typically male or female sex characteristics due to variations in chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones and/or genitals); gender non-conforming people who may not see themselves as transgender; and people involved in same-sex relations who may not see themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual, possibly preferring another word to self[-]identify (such as polyamorous, queer or two-spirited) or possibly preferring no label at all.”ⁱ⁾

i) Jeffrey O'Malley et al., *The Sustainable Development Goals: Sexual and Gender Minorities*, United Nations Development Programme, 2018, 1–132. 10. Available from: <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/publications/SDGs_SexualAndGenderMinorities.pdf>

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is an important lens through which to understand SGBV. The term was initially coined by Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 and refers to how different identities intersect to form unique experiences of oppression and discrimination within existing power structures.¹

These identity factors can include race, economic status, gender, sexuality, age, and disability. Intersectionality is essential for understanding SGBV because certain people may be at a heightened risk of violence based on the intersection of these factors.²

Section 1.2 Sexual Violence

Sexual violence, as defined by UN-Women, refers to: “any sexual act committed against the will of another person, either when this person does not give consent or when consent cannot be given because the person is a child, has a mental disability, or is severely intoxicated or unconscious as a result of alcohol or drugs.”³ This can occur in any setting and includes attempted as well as actual violence. Sexual violence includes direct physical violence such as assault and rape, which refer to bodily penetration without consent, and other forms of harm, such as sexual harassment.

- 1) Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics”, *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, Vol. 1989: No. 1, Article 8. Available from: <<https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8/>>.
- 2) For more information, see: UN-Women, *Intersectionality Resource Guide and Toolkit*. Available from: <<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/Intersectionality-resource-guide-and-toolkit-en.pdf>>.
- 3) UN-Women, “Violence Against Women and Girls”. Available from: <<https://interactive.unwomen.org/multimedia/infographic/violenceagainstwomen/en/index.html#sexual-3>>.

Sexual assault is a form of sexual violence.⁴ It typically refers to involving someone in a sexual activity without their consent and can include:

- Threats of physical aggression or emotional abuse;
- Unwanted physical or sexual touch; and
- Rape.⁵

As described above, **consent cannot be given** in settings with unequal power dynamics or when someone does not have full decision-making capacity.⁶ Consent must be given freely, affirmatively (silence or the absence of “no” is not enough. There needs to be an active “yes”, and the person should not appear to be worried or unsure), and must be informed (the person consenting must have all the facts).⁷ Consent to one act does not mean consent to other acts, and consent can be revoked at any time.⁸

As the lesson moves to discussing environments where United Nations peace operations are based, it is important to consider how power dynamics can complicate consent. For example, giving consent to people who are armed is particularly complex because of the extreme and immediate power imbalance.

International legal definitions

There are also many definitions in the legal field related to SGBV.

In the Rome Statute, the treaty that established the International Criminal Court (ICC), crimes against humanity listed under Article 7 include the following acts of sexual violence:

- Rape;
- Sexual slavery;
- Enforced prostitution;
- Forced pregnancy;
- Enforced sterilization; and
- Or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity.⁹

Further lessons will explore some international frameworks for addressing SGBV more deeply.



A view of the ICC, in The Hague, Netherlands. At the opening of the permanent premises, former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called the inauguration a milestone in global efforts to promote and uphold human rights and the rule of law. 19 April 2016. UN Photo by Rick Bajornas.

4) Kemi DaSilva-Ibru and Gbemi Ogunrinde, “Let’s talk about the difference between sexual violence, sexual assault, rape and sexual harassment”, *The Guardian*, 28 February 2020. Available from: <<https://guardian.ng/features/lets-talk-about-the-difference-between-sexual-violence-sexual-assault-rape-and-sexual-harassment/>>.

5) Phoebe Donnelly, Dyan Mazurana, and Evyn Papworth, “Blue on Blue: Investigating Sexual Abuse of Peacekeepers”, International Peace Institute, April 2022, 3. Available from: <<https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Blue-on-Blue.pdf>>.

6) For more information on consent, see: UN-Women, “When it Comes to Consent, there are no Blurred Lines”, 18 November 2019. <<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/11/feature-consent-no-blurred-lines>>.

7) UN-Women, “When it Comes to Consent, there are no Blurred Lines”.

8) UN-Women, “Frequently Asked Questions: Types of Violence Against Women and Girls”. Available from: <<https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/faqs/types-of-violence>>.

9) ICC, “Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court”, 17 July 1998. Available from: <<https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/NR/rdonlyres/ADD16852-AEE9-4757-ABE7-9CDC7CF02886/283503/RomeStatutEng1.pdf>>.



Zainab Bangura (on right), the Secretary-General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, meets with members of the Police Advisory Committee in Mogadishu, Somalia. Ms. Bangura visited Somalia on a mission to engage with United Nations officials, civil society partners, and various stakeholders on ways to address and prevent conflict-related sexual violence. 2 April 2013. UN Photo by Tobin Jones.

Section 1.3 Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV)

CRSV often receives a lot of international policy attention due to its ties to conflict. CRSV is one form that falls under the broader umbrella of SGBV. In the peace operations environment, peace operations personnel's understanding of CRSV is complicated by ambiguity in their mandates. Peace operations personnel typically use "CRSV" to describe what they have been mandated to respond to. However, many other forms of SGBV, such as early marriage, fall outside the mandate of peace operations personnel.

In a January 2021 interview, an Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) peace operations trainer pointed out that "one possible reason for this is that CRSV has been conceptualized within the peace and security sectors while SGBV has been conceptualized within the humanitarian sphere".¹⁰ Moreover, the United Nations has many well-established guidance documents and structures focusing on CRSV, while guidance on how peace operations personnel should address SGBV is less developed.

This course will switch between using SGBV and CRSV. Although the broader term relating to this form of violence, SGBV, should be preferred, it is essential to accurately reflect the terminology used in policies and data, which often focus on CRSV.

This course also tries to avoid narrow framings of CRSV that see the pattern as only relevant for armed actors during periods of active conflict. However, studying CRSV more broadly shows important patterns, such as that domestic violence heightens after conflict and may increase beforehand.¹¹ While domestic violence is rarely linked with CRSV in policymaking, pre-existing gender inequalities in society (such as those that contribute to domestic violence) become exacerbated during conflict and contribute to CRSV.¹²

10) Gretchen Baldwin, "Expanding Conceptions of Conflict-Related Sexual violence among Military Peacekeepers", International Peace Institute, June 2022, 8. Available from: <<https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Expanding-Conceptions-of-CRSV-Web.pdf>>.

11) Samantha Bradley, "Domestic and Family Violence in Post-Conflict Communities: International Human Rights Law and the State's Obligation to Protect Women and Children", *Health and Human Rights*, December 2018, Vol. 20, No. 2, 123–136. Available from: <<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6293353/>>; See also: Radhika Coomaraswamy, "Preventing Conflict: Peaceful Solutions to Operational and Structural Challenges", *Transforming Justice, Securing Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, (New York: United Nations, 2015), 198.

12) Baaz, Maria Eriksson and Maria Stern, *Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War? Perceptions, Prescriptions, Problems in the Congo and Beyond*, (London: Zed Books, 2013). Available from: <<https://giwps.georgetown.edu/resource/sexual-violence-as-a-weapon-of-war-perceptions-prescriptions-problems-in-the-congo-and-beyond/>>.

According to the United Nations, CRSV “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.”¹³

This lesson will define three of the most widespread forms of CRSV.¹⁴

- Using the definition of crimes involving rape from the *Elements of Crime* or the International Criminal Court, **rape** is: “The perpetrator [invading] the body of a person by conduct resulting in penetration, however slight, of any part of the body of the victim or of the perpetrator with a sexual organ, or of the anal or genital opening of the victim with any object or any other part of the body.”¹⁵
- As defined by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), **sexual slavery** encompasses “the sexual exploitation of individuals through the use or threat of force, often occurring in times of armed conflict or belligerent occupation. There may be no financial gain in sexual slavery, unlike in the case of exploitation of prostitution.”¹⁶

Forced marriage is distinct from sexual slavery and other forms of CRSV. Conflict-related forced marriage can be defined as intimate relationships that

1. “[A]re facilitated or enforced by armed actors;
2. [A]re referred to as ‘marriages’, involve a marital ceremony, or result in the parties being called spouses; and
3. [A]re conducted without the complete and free consent of both parties.”¹⁷

What does it mean for something to be “directly or indirectly linked to conflict”? According to United Nations Peacekeeping, a link to conflict is evident in the following environments:

“[T]he **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 ceasefire agreement**.”¹⁸

13) United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence*, 2019, 3. Available from: <<https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/report/conflict-related-sexual-violence-report-of-the-united-nations-secretary-general/2019-SG-Report.pdf>>; See also: United Nations Peacekeeping, “Conflict-related Sexual Violence”. Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/conflict-related-sexual-violence>>.

14) For information on rates of different forms of CRSV see: Dumaine, Logan, Ragnhild Nordås, Maria Gargiulo, and Elisabeth Jean Wood, “Repertoires of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: Introducing the RSVAC Data Package”, *Journal of Peace Research*, 17 November 2021.

15) International Criminal Court, *Elements of Crimes* 2013, Article 7 (1) (g)-1.1. Available from: <<https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/Publications/Elements-of-Crimes.pdf>>.

16) UNHCR, “The Human Faces of Modern Slavery”, 7. Available from: <<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Slavery/UNVTCFS/UNSlaveryFund.pdf>>.

17) Phoebe Donnelly and Emily Myers, “Forced Marriage by Non-state Armed Groups: Frequency, Forms, and Impact”, International Peace Institute, 17 April 2023, Executive Summary. Available from: <<https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Forced-Marriageweb.pdf>>.

18) United Nations Peacekeeping, “Conflict-related Sexual Violence”. Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/conflict-related-sexual-violence>>.

CRSV also “encompasses trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual violence and/or exploitation, when committed in situations of conflict.”¹⁹

Understanding how CRSV may manifest differently for different types of victims is crucial. For example, men and boys may be more likely to experience sexual violence in the form of torture or being forced to watch a family member being violated. CRSV may also be used against lesbian, gay, bi, trans, and intersex (LGBTI) people and members of sexual and gender minorities as a form of social control or extortion.²⁰

While all the above-mentioned terms are forms of SGBV, the following section further breaks down different types of violence. It is important to remember that **violence occurs on a spectrum or continuum**. Forms of SGBV that may seem minor, such as sexual harassment in the form of inappropriate jokes, are ultimately related to a culture of harmful gender norms that contribute to higher rates of violence against women and girls.

Section 1.4 Violence Against Women and Girls

While men and boys can also be victims of SGBV, **violence against women and girls** is one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world and refers to:

- “Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women and girls, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.”
- “Violence against women and girls encompasses, but is not limited to, physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family or within the general community, and perpetrated or condoned by the State.”²¹

Section 1.5 Femicide, Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), and Domestic Violence

The **gender-related motivation for killings of women and girls (femicide/feminicide)** refers to the killing of women and girls due to their gender. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC):

- “‘Gender-related motivation,’ refers to the root causes — such as stereotyped gender roles, discrimination towards women and girls, inequality and unequal power relations between women and men in society — that characterize the specific context in which such killings take place.”²²



© ICRC. South Kivu Province, Sange. A psychosocial worker (front view) and a victim of sexual violence during a counselling session in the women's shelter of the city. The ICRC supports a dozen women's shelters in the two Kivus, where victims of violence are taken care of. 9 February 2021.

19) United Nations, *Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence*, 2019, 3; See also: United Nations Peacekeeping, “Conflict-related Sexual Violence”.

20) Gretchen Baldwin, “Expanding Conceptions of Conflict-Related Sexual violence among Military Peacekeepers”, International Peace Institute, June 2022, 6.

21) UN-Women, “Frequently Asked Questions: Types of Violence Against Women and Girls”.

22) UNODC, *Statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killing of women and girls (also referred to as “femicide/feminicide”)*, 2022, 3. Available from: <https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/Statistical_framework_femicide_2022.pdf>.

- Perpetrators may commit violence based on these factors when a woman's behaviour is perceived to be outside stereotyped gender roles or traditional social norms.
- In this sense, "gender-related motivation" refers to the underlying root causes rather than the subjective motivation of the perpetrator.
- However, the subjective motivation may be present alongside this, such as specific hatred or bias against women.²³

While estimating the number of gender-related killings of women and girls is very difficult, it is estimated that 81,100 women and girls were intentionally killed in 2021.²⁴ In 2017, nearly three out of five women who were killed worldwide were murdered by their family or partner.²⁵ In 2021, intimate partners or family members killed an estimated 45,000 women and girls. In other words, five were killed every hour by someone in their family.²⁶ This means that **many cases of intimate partner violence are seen as gender-motivated**.

IPV and domestic violence are often used interchangeably, but both refer to violence committed by someone the victim knows and is often seen as taking place in the "private" sphere. IPV is one of the most common forms of violence women experience globally. According to UN-Women, one out of three women have experienced physical or sexual violence — mainly committed by an intimate partner.²⁷ If sexual harassment is included, this number is even higher.

According to the UN-Women definition, "Domestic violence, also called domestic abuse or intimate partner violence, is any pattern of behavior that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. It encompasses all physical, sexual, emotional, economic and psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This is one of the most common forms of violence experienced by women globally."²⁸

UN-Women explains what these different forms of violence may look like:

- **Economic violence:** This could include denying access to financial resources or forbidding education and employment to attempt to make someone financially dependent.
- **Psychological violence:** This could include threats and intimidation, isolation from social networks, "mind games", and destroying property.
- **Emotional violence:** This could include belittling someone, undermining their self-esteem, verbal abuse, and not letting a partner see friends and family.
- **Physical violence:** This could include hurting or trying to hurt a partner, denying medical care, forcing substance use, property damage, or using other physical force.
- **Sexual violence:** This could involve forcing someone to participate in a sex act without their consent.²⁹

23) UNODC, *Statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killing of women and girls (also referred to as "femicide/feminicide")*, 2022, 3.

24) UN-Women, *Gender-related killings of women and girls (femicide/feminicide), Global estimates of gender-related killings of women and girls in the private sphere in 2021: Improving data to improve responses*, 2021, 5. Available from: <<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/Gender-related-killings-of-women-and-girls-improving-data-to-improve-responses-to-femicide-feminicide-en.pdf>>.

25) UN-Women, "Violence Against Women and Girls".

26) UN-Women, *Gender-related killings of women and girls (femicide/feminicide), Global estimates of gender-related killings of women and girls in the private sphere in 2021, Improving data to improve responses*, 2022, 5.

27) UN Women, "Violence Against Women and Girls".

28) UN-Women, "Frequently Asked Questions: Types of Violence Against Women and Girls".

29) UN Women, "Frequently Asked Questions: Types of Violence Against Women and Girls".



Delegates request the floor during the Human Rights Council's panel discussion on discriminatory laws and practices or acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity. 7 March 2012. UN Photo by Violaine Martin.

Section 1.6 Sexual Harassment

According to the UNHCR, sexual harassment includes: “any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation. While typically involving a pattern of conduct, sexual harassment may take the form of a single incident.”³⁰

Sexual harassment can refer to:

- Unwanted general sexualized comments, discussions, gossip, or rumours;
- Unwanted receipt of sexual content, including, but not limited to, verbal, image, or video content;
- Unwanted romantic or sexual advances;
- Displays of jealousy, revenge, or retaliation for unreturned advances, including extortion; and
- Actions intended to create pressure to submit to romantic or sexual advances.³¹

Section 1.7 Sexual Discrimination

Sexual discrimination can occur at any level and contribute to a broader culture of unequal power relationships and harmful gender norms that enable SGBV.

Sexual discrimination refers to “any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.”³²

30) UNHCR, “What is Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment?” Available from: <<https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/what-is-sexual-exploitation-abuse-and-harassment.html>>.

31) Donnelly, Mazurana, and Papworth, “Blue on Blue: Investigating Sexual Abuse of Peacekeepers”, April 2022, 3.

32) United Nations, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*, 18 December 1979, Article I. Available from: <<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>>.

Section 1.8 Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)

SEA has been documented in peace operations and is a major violation of the United Nations *Code of Conduct*.

The United Nations Secretary-General's office defines SEA by breaking down the two components.

Sexual exploitation refers to "actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another."³³

Sexual abuse refers to "actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions."³⁴

In a mission context, this may look like:

1. "Any act of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, or any other form of sexually humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour.
2. Any type of sexual activities with children (persons under 18 years of age). Mistaken belief as to the age of a person is no excuse.
3. Use of children or adults to procure sexual services for others.
4. Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex with prostitutes or others.
5. Any sexual favour in exchange for assistance provided to the beneficiaries of such assistance.
6. Visit to brothels or places, which are declared off-limits."³⁵



United Nations police officer Deborah Porter (Canada) during an interactive information session on how to prevent SEA with the Formed Police Unit from Nepal serving with the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH). 25 April 2018. UN Photo by Leonora Baumann.

33) United Nations Secretariat, *Secretary-General's Bulletin, Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse*, ST/SGB/2003/13, 9 October 2003, Section 1. Available from: <<https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=ST%2FSGB%2F2003%2F13&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>>.

34) United Nations Secretariat, *Secretary-General's Bulletin, Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse*, ST/SGB/2003/13, 9 October 2003, Section 1.

35) UN-Women, "Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse", 3 July 2013. Available from: <<https://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/1497-protection-from-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse.html>>.

The United Nations Standards of Conduct³⁶ note the zero-tolerance policy for SEA. The Code of Conduct states “this includes any sexual activity with minors or any actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions; any actual or attempted abuse of position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This includes acts of transactional sex, solicitation of transactional sex, and exploitative relationships. In addition, military and police personnel have non-fraternization policies making relations with beneficiaries of assistance a breach of the standards of conduct.”³⁷

Preventing SEA »

For more details on the Secretary-General’s initiatives, victims’ rights, data on allegations, how to report SEA, resources, and news, visit the United Nations website, “Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse”, available at: <<https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/>>.

Section 1.9 Definitions of SGBV in Relation to Peace Operations

Many people have biases about who can be a victim of SGBV and who can support victims of SGBV:

- Peace operations personnel are often first responders to SGBV in mission contexts. Understanding the different types of violence can help refer victims to the right services.
- **ALL** peace operations personnel should be trained to respond to SGBV, not just women.
- Women and girls are **not** the only victims of SGBV. Men and boys and members of sexual and gender minorities can also be victims.
- Not all SGBV that occurs in a conflict setting is sexual violence.³⁸

Conclusion

SGBV is an umbrella term encompassing all the forms of violence described above. While forms of violence such as CRSV and IPV may be seen as separate in policy documents, all SGBV is rooted in gender inequality and refers to violence perpetrated against someone against their will because of their gender. Since some ambiguity remains regarding which term to use, it is advisable to use SGBV, which is the broader term.

Throughout this course, the preference is to use SGBV; however, when citing specific policy documents or research, the lesson will use the terms that the source uses to ensure accuracy. Most frequently, United Nations policies and organizations use CRSV. Researchers cited in this course are often studying CRSV or wartime rape.



Children at a school in Bangui take part in a class on gender violence led by United Nations police (UNPOL) officers serving with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). 23 October 2017. UN Photo by Eskinder Debebe.

36) United Nations Peacekeeping, “Standards of Conduct.” Available from: <<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/standards-of-conduct>>.

37) United Nations Peacekeeping, “Standards of Conduct.”

38) See: Gretchen Baldwin, “Expanding Conceptions of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Among Military Peacekeepers”, citing United Nations, “Handbook for United Nations Field Missions on Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence”, 2020.

Again, the lesson will note the terminology the source uses, but its preference is to use SGBV.

The definitions of key terms will be repeated throughout the course, but please refer to the definitions and summaries of two of the key concepts below for easy reference.

SGBV refers to:

- Any type of violence directed against individuals or groups based on sex or gender. As will be discussed throughout the course, violence does not have to be physical and can also include threats of violence.
- Women, men, girls, boys, and LGBTI people can all be victims of SGBV; however, SGBV disproportionately affects women and girls due to deeply entrenched gender norms and unequal power relationships.
- CRSV is one form of SGBV.
- Other forms of SGBV include female genital mutilation, IPV, domestic violence, and SEA.³⁹

CRSV is a form of SGBV directly or indirectly linked to conflict.

- Forms of CRSV include 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.⁴⁰



The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) provides training in combating sexual and gender-based violence to residents of a protection of civilians site (PoC 3) in Juba. The training is conducted by the UNPOL Gender, Child, and Vulnerable Persons Protection team in coordination with the UNMISS Human Rights Division and Child Protection Unit. 12 May 2016. UN Photo by JC McIlwaine.

39) Gretchen Baldwin, "Expanding Conceptions of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Among Military Peacekeepers", citing United Nations, "Handbook for United Nations Field Missions on Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence", 2020, 6.

40) United Nations Security Council, *Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2022/272*, 29 March 2022), I.4. Available from: <<https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=S%2F2022%2F272&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>>.

End-of-Lesson Quiz »

1. **If there is uncertainty regarding a specific violent situation related to sex or gender, the term _____ should be used.**
 - A. sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)
 - B. sexual harassment
 - C. conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV)
 - D. sexual discrimination (SD)
2. **Which term describes the overlap of different identities to form unique experiences of oppression?**
 - A. Sustainability
 - B. Discrimination
 - C. Intersectionality
 - D. Multiple minorities
3. **In a sexual situation, silence or the absence of “no”:**
 - A. Indicates consent in all situations
 - B. Indicates consent as long as there is no power imbalance
 - C. Is only problematic if someone appears worried or unsure
 - D. Is not enough to indicate consent
4. **TRUE or FALSE: Rape is a war crime, but it is not considered a crime against humanity.**
5. **What is the relationship between domestic violence and conflict?**
 - A. Domestic violence increases after conflict.
 - B. Domestic violence decreases after conflict.
 - C. Domestic violence is unaffected by conflict.
 - D. Domestic violence increases before conflict but not after it.
6. **Violence against women and girls:**
 - A. Does not include psychological violence
 - B. Does not include violence perpetrated by a State
 - C. Always takes place in private life
 - D. Is a prevalent human rights violation
7. **Perpetrators may commit violence against women when their behaviour is perceived to be _____ stereotyped gender roles.**
 - A. in line with
 - B. outside
 - C. causing
 - D. underlying
8. **TRUE or FALSE: Gossiping about someone can be a form of sexual harassment.**
9. **Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) committed by United Nations peace operations personnel is:**
 - A. Against national law but not against United Nations rules and regulations
 - B. The responsibility of the troop- or police-contributing country, not the United Nations
 - C. A major violation of the United Nations *Code of Conduct*
 - D. Unknown in the history of United Nations peace operations
10. **Who should be trained to respond to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)?**
 - A. Police officers, but not military peace operations personnel
 - B. Female peace operations personnel only
 - C. Specialized peace operations personnel only
 - D. All peace operations personnel

Answer Key provided on the next page.

End-of-Lesson Quiz »

Answer key

1. A
2. C
3. D
4. False
5. A
6. D
7. B
8. True
9. C
10. D