

MEN, FAITH AND MASCULINITIES: BURUNDI

*A baseline assessment on the social attitudes, relations,
and practices of men in relation to gender, and sexual and
gender-based violence in Burundi*

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Executive summary

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a global phenomenon that threatens the fabric of our society. In recent years, around the world, there has been an unprecedented focus and collective effort by non-government organisations (NGOs) and governments to address this issue and work to end it. VAWG is not just a threat to the lives of women and girls, but it threatens the social and economic development of our society. We need a coordinated and holistic approach if we are to address the driving forces of SGBV and reverse its impact to envision an era free of violence.

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is one of the most frequent forms of violence experienced by women, girls, men and boys in our society. In a world where it is estimated that one in every three women or girls will experience violence,¹ it is imperative we dig deeper into understanding the broader dynamics of gender. SGBV doesn't happen in isolated spaces, it is important to acknowledge and address the broader triggers of violence, and the attitudes, behaviours and knowledge that contribute and influence these factors. The most common form of violence experienced by women and girls is within the home, by their partners, relatives and people known to them.

In this context, SGBV prevention programmes have been mainly focused on women's empowerment programmes, but the need to engage men and boys is emerging as a crucial and integral component of this work if we are to succeed. The majority of the perpetrators of sexual violence are men and boys, and because the majority of the men and boys are excluded from this work, it is important to explore ways to engage them in this discourse. In order to effectively and meaningfully engage with men and boys, we need to address their own experiences of becoming a man, male identities and roles, their own experiences of trauma and violence within the family, and also their vulnerabilities in an evolving and dynamic social environment.

Burundi is one of the poorest countries in the world, challenged by a history of violent conflicts, which has had a devastating impact on the lives of men and women in general. Many women and girls have experienced sexual and gender-based violence, but there is a lack of reliable data on the prevalence of SGBV in Burundi. However, the available data indicates the critical need for scaling up efforts to address this issue at different levels.

¹ *Global and regional estimates of violence against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence (2013)* WHO

The vast majority of Burundians associate themselves with the Christian faith, and the church is rooted and actively engaged in the lives of the people. The Anglican Church in Burundi has been actively addressing the issue of SGBV, and is committed to being a catalyst in ending all forms of violence against women and girls. The church acknowledges the positive role men and boys can play in achieving this goal, which will benefit society. However, there is a need to better understand the involvement of men and boys in a positive and transformative way to enable the church and its leadership to integrate this in its ongoing efforts.

The *Men, Faith and Masculinities* study of Burundi, within the selected communities of the Anglican province, seeks to make available a baseline study of existing attitudes, knowledge and practices of men and women around male identity, gender roles, manhood, gender relations, and SGBV. This study also seeks to further understand the context where acts of violence occur, and the contributing factors. This study was also commissioned for the purposes of designing effective entry points and strategies when working with men and boys to end SGBV. In the context of SGBV prevention and response this should aid the church as it works with men and boys on a transformative journey to promote equitable, caring, non-violent and positive masculinities.

During August-September 2013 a total of 414 people were interviewed through 12 group surveys and 20 focus-group discussions across five parishes of the Anglican diocese of Matana. This included 219 men and 195 women, who affiliated themselves to the Christian faith.

Key findings

Gendered roles and attitudes: Men and women held strong attitudes on gendered roles, which demarcated the work, roles and responsibilities of women and men according to their own cultural and religious values. In the changing face of life in Burundi, these roles restricted men and women to confined activities, which posed a challenge in their day-to-day lives and burdened them when they were unable to fulfil their roles. Men and boys expressed their frustrations when they were unable to fulfil the expectations of their families, and felt challenged specifically in the role of providing for their families. Ninety-four per cent of men and 64 per cent of women were of the view that a woman's most important role was cooking and taking care of her home, while 51 per cent of men and 63 per cent of women were of the belief that a man should be able to provide for his family, and his extended families. This understanding of role was different in reality. Women were also frequently involved in income-generating activities and felt additionally burdened with household duties, and men felt challenged to make ends meet. Forty-one per cent of the men and 70 per cent of women felt that a man should not share the household work with his wife or partner. Even though 59 per cent of men and 30 per cent of women thought that men should share household work with their wives, less than two per cent of men were currently involved in this type of work.

Men also were limited in their caregiving roles, and had minimal or no involvement in the life of their children. Fifty-nine per cent of men and 94 per cent of women felt it was a mother's responsibility to care for her children. Unfortunately this stereotyped thinking restricts the space available for men to be caring fathers and involved in their children's lives. It continues a negative cycle of strict gendered-roles that is perpetuated in future generations.

The men and women linked these roles to creation and were of the opinion that these roles were designated by God. They believed that it was evident through the scriptures that a woman was inferior or unequal to a man in creation, and also specifically in the context of marital relationships.

Decision-making and domestic duties: 100 per cent of men and 98 per cent of women agreed that a woman should obey her husband, and 60 per cent of men and 43 per cent of women stated that the man should have the final say in all family matters. Most of the women expressed their concern with this even though they were of this opinion. Their concerns were about their husbands not being Christians, and them requiring women to engage in things which aren't always in line with the Christian faith. Other concerns expressed during the discussions were around the issue that they believed the priorities of their husbands were misguided and that affects the overall well-being of the family. They shared examples of husbands abusing alcohol, engaged in extramarital relationships, polygamy and transactional sex. In these situations, family life is negatively impacted and even more so because the husband controls the finances.

Almost all decisions related to the health of women in the house, children's education and activities, spending on food, clothing, and investments, were made by the men in the households. Even though some people mentioned that discussions took place before decision-making, they still said it all depended on the man of the house.

Women said that the decision to have sex or to give birth was also made by men. Thirty per cent of men and 49 per cent of women were of the view that a woman cannot refuse sex to her husband. The majority of those in disagreement with this view said that they could refuse sex under special circumstances. There was hardly any mention of discussions around having children. The decision-making and control seemed to be linked to the scriptures, where the apostle Paul said that the man is the head of the house, like Christ is the head of the church, but the challenge is that the attributes expressed in relation to 'headship' were of dominance, control and power – also occasionally the need to use violence to retain headship. Men also felt that this was changing, because the economic power within the home was shifting due to the unemployment of men and because women were also copying the controlling model of headship that they'd experienced.

The need to review the attributes of Christlike headship is vital. There has to be work on promoting Christlike character within the home and as the head of the household. This will greatly improve the lives of all, and will have a spillover effect in the community at large.

Violence, manhood and SGBV: it is important to acknowledge that violence doesn't exist in a vacuum. In today's society, violence has been justified, accepted and internalized in many ways. This is something important to understand in the context of the men and women who took part in this baseline study. Ninety-seven per cent of men and 95 per cent of women almost unanimously agreed that: "It is manly to defend the honour of the family even by violent means," and through the discussions many examples and situations were shared to support this view. Not only did the men say that using violence was a manly thing to do, but also that there was an expectation from the women for the men to behave this way. This definitely stemmed from the strong sense that men are the protectors of the family.

It is important to note that many of the men expressed the need to discipline or correct their wives when they did something dishonourable or wrong. This was important according to them because if they didn't their wives and children wouldn't respect them and the people in the community will look down on them. This was deemed a job for the head of the household and was their interpretation of biblical manhood.

Eighty-nine per cent of men and 93 per cent of women were also of the view that if a victim doesn't physically fight back, it's not rape. This statement led to discussions on marital rape. Women also feared refusing sex to their husbands and being forced, even though most times they felt tired and exhausted from long working hours. They brought up marital rape during these discussions; even though most men felt that a woman cannot be raped by her husband because her body is his according to the scriptures. Sadly many weren't aware of the remainder of the scripture which also goes on to say that a man's body belongs to his wife – depicting mutual respect in relationships. Women also feared that if they refused sex, their husbands will find another woman or pay for sex. They expressed their desire for their husbands to love them, and prepare them for sex prior to having intercourse. In this context it is easy to see that the most common form of sexual violence happened within the home, between intimate partners (WHO global estimates 2013). The larger notion of women being inferior, and men being entitled to women as they were created as 'helpers', seems to contribute to harmful practices which lead to different forms of violence against women and girls.

The shame associated with SGBV challenged survivors when seeking the help they needed. What is evident is the prevalence of a culture which is focused on the behaviour of the victim rather than the perpetrator. Seventy-seven per cent of men and 95 per cent of women were in agreement with the statement: "some women asked to be raped by the way they dress and

behave.” This kind of thinking is harmful especially since it stigmatizes the survivor, and prevents them from reporting, seeking help or speaking out about their experiences. This also contributes largely to cultural impunity for perpetrators.

Other related findings from the discussions

- Women expressed their concerns in relation to accessing legal or health-care systems in the aftermath of their experience of SGBV, and the slowness of the legal processes which enables the perpetrators to escape to neighbouring countries – only to return later to harass and abuse again.
- Women and girls also expressed their concern to discuss issues related to family planning and reproductive health. They wanted to discuss this from a biblical perspective and wanted men to be involved in this process.
- Leadership and the lack of positive role models. One thing starkly evident was the lack of male role models: fathers, husbands, and positive masculinities. The leadership of the church is crucial in promoting the space for this transformative work.

Recommendations and conclusions: the broader recommendations for the church and also other stakeholders to engage men and boys within the faith context in prevention of SGBV work are discussed below. For a full list of recommendations please see chapter six.

CHURCH/FBOs

- **Awareness:** it is crucial that the church needs to engage with other partners to educate men, women and children on the different types of violence that can occur, and related laws, policies and services available to survivors.
- **Education & training:** theologically-based education for men and women on creation (equality), relationships, headship (based on Christ as the model) and gender roles.
- **Safe spaces:** for men and boys, and survivors, to share and heal from their own traumatic experiences, and share vulnerabilities to facilitate the process and space for transformative masculinities.
- **Leadership:** there needs to be role-model leadership, based on the character, teaching and the life of Christ to promote equitable, none-dominating and non-violent relationships at all levels. The church needs to denounce violence in all forms and change the norm that is attributing ‘manliness’ to violence.
- **Mentorship:** there needs to be programmes for young people on positive masculinities, and pre- and post marriage counselling for couples, which focus on positive aspects of relationship and family well-being.
- **Inaccessible areas:** the church is the only institution accessible to people in remote areas, and it is imperative that the church works in partnership with local and national administrative and judicial bodies to respond to incidents of SGBV.
- **Partnerships:** working together with other key organisations on advocacy at all levels will be extremely effective to bring about the transformation needed by influencing national policy and practices.

Despite some of the challenging attitudes upheld by both men and women, they demonstrated their willingness to change throughout the discussions; they were not defensive even when justifying their reasons. This creates a unique opportunity to engage in a journey of transformation. The church is uniquely positioned to make this happen, and can be the catalyst for engaging men and boys in this discourse. The need to have men with Christlike behaviour and character, or the aspiration to be so, is vital in leading men on this process. The church can be the lead in breaking the stigma for survivors of violence and can promote positive masculinities that can have a spillover effect and break the norm. The church in partnership with other key stakeholders can lead the work with men and boys to promote Christlike men as the new “man” of Burundi.

Definitions of key terms and acronyms

BASELINE: A minimum survey that can be used for comparisons

CDC: Center for Disease Control

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

FBO: Faith-based organisation

FGD: Focus-group discussion

GBV: Gender-based violence

ICPD: International Conference on Population Development

IMAGES: International Men and Gender Equality Survey

IPV: Intimate partner violence

SGBV: Sexual and gender-based violence

SRH : Sexual and reproductive health

SV: Sexual violence

TEASING: Eve-teasing (making sexual remarks and advances towards someone)

VAW: Violence against women

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: why masculinities and men?

Violence against women and sexual violence is a gross violation of human rights and an act against the will of God. Globally, this is an issue that is threatening the economic and social development of communities, and is a challenge to many governments, faith-based organisations and civil society groups. It is a threat to the quality of life and security of women and girls at large. SGBV happens in many settings, and in diverse ways, it is estimated that one in every three women and girls will experience some form of violence in their lifetime. This is an issue that directly affects over 1 billion of the population in our world today, and will have adverse effects on the respective societies and not only on the lives of women and girls.

Burundi has gone through severe challenges due to a 12-year conflict, and this had led to increase in incidents of SGBV according to International Medical Corps.² However, it is challenging to gauge the prevalence of SGBV in Burundi, as there isn't any published data.

The SV pilot project in Burundi

Tearfund has been working in Africa for decades around different programming themes, from responding to emergencies to proactively engaging churches to respond to the HIV and AIDS epidemic. It has a very successful track record of HIV and AIDS programming and is a respected and valued stakeholder.

Even though Tearfund has been addressing sexual violence as a sub-theme in its HIV and AIDS programming globally, in recent years this has evolved into a standalone programmatic theme and is being scaled up in the Great Lakes region and sub-Saharan Africa.

Tearfund has been working with the Anglican Communion on a two-year pilot project to end SV in this region, specifically in South Africa, Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Liberia and Tanzania. Engaging men and boys is an intrinsic component of Tearfund's *Ending sexual violence together* framework and programming. This area of work is being piloted for six months as a collaborative intervention with Restored and Sonke (Gender Justice) in Burundi and Rwanda initially, and then rolled out across another three countries. In order to be effective in addressing the behaviour, practices, and attitudes of men and women with regards to gender and SGBV in these countries, a baseline study was carried out in Rwanda and Burundi in August-September 2013, a further study was conducted in DRC in March 2014.

² International Medical Corps communication on SGBV in April 2011

Men, faith and masculinities

In the recent years, programming around the issue of VAW has been influenced by discussions, debates and studies around masculinities and men, and masculinity as a social and political construct to uphold patriarchal values, norms and systems. This contributes to behaviour that leads to the perpetration of violence against women and girls, and also creates the space within society to do so with high levels of impunity. These discussions have demanded that organisations must work with men and boys, not only to address their behaviour, social attitudes and practices, but also their own experiences, trauma, and victimization.

A baseline study to better understand the attitudes, behaviours, and practices around men, manhood, masculinities and faith was commissioned in Burundi, within the above context. This was in order to better inform our responses and strategies when integrating working with men and boys as part of SV programming.

This report will comprise three main sections: 1) the baseline, 2) the analysis of some of the key findings and narratives, and 3) recommendations and programming suggestions, with guidelines on working with men and boys.

The issue of men and masculinities, or even work themed ‘engaging men’ has grown to become an integral component in programming and policy around VAW. This also means that the church has to adapt, integrate and transform its response and include a focus on men and boys, and understand the different masculinities within the church, its theology and leadership. These baseline-study findings will help the church to better engage men and boys in preventing sexual violence, and in promoting equitable, healthy and positive gender-equitable relationships, which will be a catalyst in ending SGBV in Burundi.

CHAPTER TWO

Methodology

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods to ascertain the social attitudes, practices and behaviours of men and women in relation to gender and SGBV in the Anglican diocese of Matana, Burundi. A total of 414 people (219 males and 195 females) were interviewed either through a survey or focus-group discussions. The survey was structured with statements related to gender and SGBV, and the focus-group discussions were around related programming areas.

Objective

Assess and understand the given contexts and existing knowledge around gender, SGBV and masculinities within countries, in order to integrate engaging men with intervention projects.

Design

The statements of the survey were adapted from the *International Men and Gender Equality Survey*³ study tool, specifically the *Gender Equitable Men Scale*⁴ and gender-relations scale. The questions were adapted to the context and appropriateness. In consultation with local partners, the statements guided discussions and other themes as identified by the researcher.

Sampling

Survey participants and the discussion themes were selected and approved by the Anglican Church of Burundi, Tearfund's partner implementing the work on gender in this region. The respondents were selected based on their engagement with the respective parish, and based on the prior training they have received from the church on gender.

The respondents were from the following five parishes of the Anglican diocese of Matana, Burundi: Rutana, Matana, Ntaho, Bukemba and Timbura. The total number of respondents for the survey was 100 males and 81 females. The discussions consisted of 119 males and 114 females.

³ International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) model, developed by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) and Instituto Promundo (www.icrw.org/node/765); the WHO multi-country study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women; and the South Africa study of Men, Masculinities, Violence and HIV, carried out by the Medical Research Council

⁴ The Gender Equitable Men (GEM) scale was developed by Population Council and Promundo and by surveys on sexual violence and physical violence against women carried out by the Medical Research Council of South Africa

Distribution of respondents according to location – group surveys and discussions

Location	Males	Females
Rutana	45	40
Ntaho	37	44
Timbura	61	38
Bukemba	34	39
Matana	42	34

Survey

The survey was conducted for males and females separately, and due to the limitation of time and resources was administered in a group. Responses were captured through a show of hands after each survey statement. A total of 12 groups surveys were conducted in the five communities. The survey consisted of 27 statements, around gender relations, attitudes and practices, domestic violence, sexual violence, household duties and masculinities. The list of statements is annexed in this report.

Structure of the tool

Survey

The survey was split into three sections, and there were multiple statements within the first two sections where participants could either agree or disagree. The third section on current practices consisted of statements where participants could choose the responses of either men or women. The following are the broad section themes.

Sections	Statement themes
Gender attitudes	Gender roles, domestic chores and domestic violence
Gender relations	Decision-making, partner relations, consent, attitudes around rape and victims and household duties
Current practices	Decision-making around health, assets and finances. Practices around domestic duties.

The discussions

As a separate exercise, four discussions were held after the group survey in each of the parishes, and were segmented as: youth (both young men and women) men, women, and leaders (parish and local administration). The discussions were guided by the survey statements, and also around participants' understanding of gender, GBV, and the role of the church in addressing this. This was to gauge the commitment, will and interest of the members in addressing the issues.

Themes for the discussions were:

Theme of discussion	Discussed sub-themes
Gender	Gender roles, culture, faith, equality, GBV, root causes of GBV
Violence	Why violence, power, structures, the role of faith
Engaging men	Why/how men can contribute, challenges
Church	The role of the church, the challenges, what does the word of God say

Analysis

Data analysis of the survey results is done in two parts. The findings are analyzed on face value, in terms of what it represents of participants' attitudes, behaviours and practices. The responses also will provide a baseline for our work, which will be used to evaluate the impact of the work on engaging men in the respective areas. The findings also will be used for programme design, and for engaging the leadership of the Anglican Church in Burundi, in order to integrate and mainstream the work with men and boys to end SGBV. Data from the survey and discussions will be used as a narrative to describe the current status of the attitudes and practices of men in relation to gender and SGBV.

Limitations

This exercise was carried out with great support from all parties involved; however given the subject matter and the timelines involved, it did have its limitations. The respondents were all from the parishes and therefore it is not representative of the wider community. The findings can only be used in relation to the respective parishes. Due to unavoidable circumstances, we weren't able to survey or interview non-Christians, this would have been great in order to compare the findings and assess the impact of the ongoing work. But it was logistically challenging to get participation.

The survey was administered in groups and some responses could have been influenced by the popular response of the group.

The timings were challenging. Each day there were four focus groups and four surveys, but some participants arrived earlier or later than their allotted time slot, so their responses could have been affected if they were tired. However, despite the limitations, the outcome was still positive to the intention of the assignment.

CHAPTER THREE

Defining key concepts

Gender

Gender is understood as socially and culturally constructed, encompassing behaviours, roles, responsibilities, rights and expectations that distinguish men from women. Classification forms around femininity (female roles) and masculinity (male roles) (Bhasin, 2000, pp.1-2).

Gender equality

Gender equality refers to equality in rights, opportunities and responsibilities for women, men, girls and boys. Equal rights refer to equality of rights under the law. Equality of opportunities refers to equality in access to work, land, education, health and other resources that enable opportunities. Equal responsibilities refer to equality in tasks and contributions to the development of society.

Gender equity

Gender equity is the process of being fair to men and women. To ensure fairness, measures must often be put in place to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field. Equity is the means to achieving equality.⁵

Gender-based violence (GBV)

The United Nations (UN) defines violence against women as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women. This includes threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

Intimate partner violence (IPV)

IPV is a serious, preventable public health problem that affects millions of people. This term describes physical, sexual, or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse. This type of violence can occur among heterosexual or same-sex couples and does not require sexual intimacy.⁶

IPV can vary in frequency and severity. It occurs on a continuum, ranging from one hit that may or may not impact the victim to chronic, severe battering and even murder.

⁵ Definition from UNESCO's Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework, April 2003

⁶ Definition by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

There are four main types of IPV (Saltzman et al. 2002):

- Physical violence is the intentional use of physical force with the potential for causing death, disability, injury or harm. Physical violence includes, but is not limited to, scratching, pushing, shoving, throwing, grabbing, biting, choking, shaking, slapping, punching, burning, use of a weapon, and use of restraints of one's body, size, or strength against another person.
- Sexual violence is divided into three categories: 1) use of physical force to compel a person to engage in a sexual act against his or her will, whether or not the act is completed; 2) attempted or completed sex act involving a person who is unable to understand the nature or condition of the act, to decline participation, or to communicate unwillingness to engage in the sexual act, eg, because of illness, disability, or the influence of alcohol or other drugs, or because of intimidation or pressure; and 3) abusive sexual contact.
- Threats of physical or sexual violence using words, gestures or weapons to communicate the intent to cause death, disability, injury or physical harm.
- Psychological/emotional violence involves trauma to the victim caused by acts, threats of acts or coercive tactics. Psychological/emotional abuse can include, but is not limited to: humiliating the victim, controlling what the victim can and cannot do, withholding information from the victim, deliberately doing something to make the victim feel diminished or embarrassed, isolating the victim from friends and family, and denying the victim access to money or other basic resources.
- It is considered psychological/emotional violence when there has been prior physical or sexual violence or prior threat of physical or sexual violence. Stalking is often included among the types of IPV. Stalking generally refers to, "harassing or threatening behaviour that an individual engages in repeatedly, such as following a person, appearing at a person's home or place of business, making harassing phone calls, leaving written messages or objects, or vandalizing a person's property." (Tjaden & Thoennes 1998).

Sexual violence (SV)

Sexual violence (SV) is any sexual act that is perpetrated against someone's will. SV encompasses a range of offences, including: a completed non-consensual sex act (eg, rape), an attempted non-consensual sex act, abusive sexual contact (eg, unwanted touching), and non-contact sexual abuse (eg, threatened sexual violence, exhibitionism, verbal sexual harassment).

These four types are defined in more detail below. All types involve victims who do not consent, or who are unable to consent or refuse to allow the act.⁷

Violence against women (VAW)

The UN defines VAW in the Vienna Declaration⁸ as:

Article one:

For the purposes of this declaration, the term violence against women means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women. This includes threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

Article two:

Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, the following:

- (a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation
- (b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution
- (c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.

⁷ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

⁸ The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women was adopted without vote by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993

Masculinities

This term conveys that there are many socially-constructed definitions for being a man and that these can change over time and from place to place. The term relates to perceived notions and ideals about how men should or are expected to behave in a given setting. Masculinity and femininity are relational concepts, which only have meaning in relation to each other. The word masculinities (plural) is used as opposed to masculinity (singular) as different forms of masculinities exist – shaped by class, ethnicity, race, tribes and sexual orientation. And also because, within masculinities, there are hierarchies – some are dominant or hegemonic while others are subordinated, marginalized or complicit. Masculinities are normative practices, structured and shaped by gender relations. It's inherently historical and its making and remaking is a political process affecting the balance of interests in society and the direction of social change (Connell, 1995, p.44).

Sexual and reproductive health (SRH)

Sexual health and reproductive health overlaps. In addition to supporting normal physiological functions such as pregnancy and childbirth, work needs to be done to reduce the adverse outcomes of sexual activity and reproduction (ICPD, 1994). SRH programming within development work aims to enable people of all ages to have safe and satisfying sexual relationships by tackling obstacles such as: gender discrimination, inequalities in access to health services, restrictive laws, sexual coercion, exploitation and gender-based violence.⁹

⁹ As defined by the UN International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 1994.

CHAPTER FOUR

Burundi, SGBV and masculinities

Burundi is a small, densely populated country located in sub-Saharan Africa. The population of Burundi is estimated to be around 8.7 million people.¹⁰ Since its independence in 1962 from Belgium, the long years of civil war have had a significant impact on sanitation, infrastructure and human development. Classified as a low-income country, it is listed as one of the five poorest countries in the world, with almost half of its population live under the \$1 a day (60p).¹¹ The Global Hunger Index lists Burundi as one of the three countries with extremely alarming levels of hunger.¹²

In the recent years, with all the challenging history behind it, the government along with other key stakeholders such as the United Nations is working together for sustainable national unity, which is pivotal to long-term stability and development.

The majority of the Burundians affiliate themselves to the Christian faith, some 80 per cent, and 2.5 per cent are Muslims. The rest of the population practice indigenous religions or have no affiliations to any religion.¹³

Burundi and SGBV

One of the biggest challenges of work on this theme in Burundi is the lack of reliable prevalence data. According to the UN 1325 civil society report in 2011, many women and girls experienced rape and other forms of sexual violence since during the civil war since 1993.¹⁴ The report also highlights the increase of widows and female headed households during this time, which represent 22 per cent of all households.

The 1325 report also records 3,715 cases of sexual violence during 2011, out of which 22 per cent of the cases were investigated, eight per cent of the cases were referred, 1.6 per cent was prosecuted and only 1.4 per cent was penalized. According to the SERUKA centre, a non-governmental, health-care facility providing services to victims of SGBV, an average of 20 victims are received each day, among these 95 per cent are women and disturbingly 60 per cent are younger than 15-years-old.

¹⁰ UN Data 2012

¹¹ Data refer mostly to the year 2012. "GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$)", World Development Indicators database

¹² Welthungerhilfe, IFPRI, and Concern Worldwide: 2013 Global Hunger Index, The challenge of hunger: Building Resilience to Achieve Food and Nutrition Security. Bonn, Washington D. C., Dublin. October 2013

¹³ International Religious Freedom Report 2010, US Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor

¹⁴ Security Council Resolution 1325 Civil Society Monitoring Report for Burundi, 2011 by Women and Allies Peacebuilders Network WAP/RAP and Fontaine-ISOKO for Good Governance and Integrated Development

A shocking 15 per cent are less than five-years-old.¹⁵ This report also states that 70 per cent of victims knew the perpetrator.

This data is from the government's Ministry of National Solidarity, Human Rights and Gender. The 3,715 reported cases do not convey the overall situation in terms of SGBV prevalence. It is important to note there could be significant under reporting and the 1325 report of 2011 discusses some of the key reasons: the stigma felt by SGBV victims, the lack of evidence due to lack of access to health-care services for survivors, and the corrupt and slow judicial system.¹⁶

The issue of SGBV remains a challenge to men, women and children in Burundi. It is crucial that ongoing work needs to be scaled up with a multi-disciplinary response.

Burundi's response to SGBV

Burundi is signed on and ratified many of the international conventions and has ratified addressing violence against women. Laws, policies, and international declarations that are relevant to Burundi are listed in the appendix.

Masculinities

The study of masculinity was an outcome of feminist studies and activism, and is now becoming an integral section within the field of gender studies. In order to discuss this in relation to gender-based violence and the role of men and boys, the following concepts are helpful and discussed in the publication *Redemptive Masculinities* by the World Council of Churches. The following are excerpts from the introduction by the authors, Chitando and Chirongoma.

Firstly, there has been general acceptance of the plural word masculinities as opposed to simply masculinity based on numerous research that shows that there is no typical way to be man, and that there are different versions of manhood.

A further study by Barker and Ricardo emphasizes the need to take the plurality of masculinities in sub-Saharan Africa. They define the versions of manhood in Africa as:

(i) Socially constructed, (ii) fluid over time and in different settings and (iii) plural. There is no typical young man in sub-Saharan Africa and no single version of manhood. There are numerous African masculinities, urban and rural and changing historically, including versions of manhood associated with war, or being warriors and others associated with farming or cattle herding. There are indigenous definitions and versions of manhood, defined by tribal and ethnic group practices, and newer versions of manhood shaped by Islam and Christianity, and by Western influences, including the global media.

¹⁵ *ibid*, p. 68

¹⁶ *ibid*, p. 69

Secondly, masculinity is not seen as monolithic, but shaped by many processes and intersecting identities or conditions that produce multiple variables amongst different groups, individuals, institutions and societies (Gardiner, 2002, p.11).

This means that men are susceptible to change. This also gives the possibility that we can transform negative masculinities into positive ones in relation to gender-equality and freedom from violence. The following is an excerpt on African masculinities, which resonates the same sentiments as above.

That definitions of African masculinities are not uniform and monolithic, not generalizable to all men in Africa, and that masculine behaviours in Africa are not natural or unchanging— suggesting the possible emergence of new (and less violent and less oppressive) ways of being masculine. (Morrell and Ouzgane, 2005a: 8-9)

Thirdly, hegemonic masculinities have projected men as having power over women and children. Given the fact that not all men are powerful, and that some men are more powerful than others, the truth remains that men tend to be both perceived and socially constructed as more powerful than women. This can be termed as patriarchy, which is an ideology that privileges men in every aspect of society and is a global phenomenon (Messer, 2004:78). What this also means is that men can also be victims of violence on the basis of class, ethnicity, religion or sexuality. In the context of Rwanda even men were victims of sexual violence and also victims of disempowerment.

Fourthly, sexual potency and association with manhood is depicted in many cultures. Men have been socialized to be associated with competence in sexual matters. The becoming of a 'man' according to many cultures has to do with a sexual encounter with a woman. Sadly, many violent forms of sexual relations define the many relationships in Africa (*Redemptive masculinities*, pp. 22).

Fifthly, scholarly reflections on masculinities in sub-Saharan Africa gloss over the role of religion in shaping masculinities. There are two main reasons for this unfortunate development. Scholars who have been pioneers in this field were not trained in theology and religious studies. As a result, theological and religious perspectives on masculinities have been missing. Secondly, African women theologians, who have brought the discourse on gender to the fore, have not focused specifically on masculinities. It is therefore crucial to highlight the place of religion in forming and challenging masculinities in the context of gender-based violence.

Sexual violence, masculinities and the Bible

There has been extensive literature focused on sexual violence, masculinities and the Bible, and the most relevant and comprehensive narrative can be found in the World Council of Churches (WCC) publication *Redemptive Masculinities*. It is highly recommended for anyone interested in an extensive and systematic reading in relation to this theme.

For the purposes of this report, and to give an overview of the existing thoughts on masculinities in relation to Christianity, the following narratives are quoted from *Redemptive Masculinities*. But it is advisable to read the publication provided in the references section of this report, from page 173 onwards, entitled *Thus Says the Lord? Sacred Texts and Masculinities*.

Tamar

In 2 Samuel 13:1-22, the story of Tamar is found. The WCC publication goes on to discuss the “Tamar Campaign”, which is used as a bible study to discuss the issue of rape, and also discusses the concept of alternative masculinities. This section also gives an outline and discussion guide on how to use this story from the Bible to discuss this issue. It is an extremely effective campaign in terms of “breaking the silence” surrounding rape from within the church.

Hosea and his wife Gomer

In Hosea 1-3, God uses Hosea’s marriage to Gomer to highlight Israel’s unfaithfulness to God and worship of other gods. However it is also an excellent study on how Hosea, as the husband, is commanded to forgive his wife and bring her back to him after she was unfaithful. This section is found from page 193 in *Redemptive Masculinities*.

Joseph

Matthew 1:18-25 narrates the events leading up to the birth of Jesus. We see the unusual situation of Mary – miraculously pregnant with Jesus. As she is soon to be Joseph’s wife we see a conflicted Joseph, unsure of how to respond to this challenging situation. Given the context, standing by Mary is not an easy decision for Joseph to make as a Jew and as a man. However the Bible also describes him as righteous and he chooses to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and make the difficult decision to continue to marry Mary, irrespective of the consequences and potential shame it may bring them. Joseph also assumes the role of a father. Luke 2: 41-52 gives an account of the incident when Joseph and Mary couldn’t find Jesus and highlights Joseph’s actions, “Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.” This can be discussed in promoting positive fatherhood in relation to today’s context, when many men abuse and discriminate against their children based on gender or due to the circumstances of their birth. This is from page 211 of *Redemptive Masculinities*.

Paul

There is extensive review of the Epistles of Paul, a book which was written within the context of the Roman Empire and how this should be read with this context in mind in relation to what it says on marriage, sex, gender equity, hegemony and hierarchy. Also a section on Paul as an example, who breaks down the concept of hegemony and dominating behaviours by describing himself as: “slave to all” (1 Corinthians 9: 19-23).

Paul calls men and women equal in Christ, and calls for gender equality in sex and marriage. Galatians 3:28 and 1 Corinthians: 7 provide a great reflection for man – setting a standard for equitable relationships. This section of the publication can be found from page 229 in *Redemptive Masculinities*.

Redemptive Masculinities is a great resource for faith-based interventions to end SGBV. By re-reading some of the scriptures we can understand better what the word of God says in relation to gender equality, masculinities and sexual violence. It also provides case studies, discussion guides and real-life examples to assist related work.

CHAPTER FIVE

The baseline

This section is mainly to report on the findings from the survey, and includes some direct quotes and narratives from discussions with the respondents. As evident in the responses discussed below, the work around engaging men and boys is in no way diverting the attention from the ongoing work with women and girls. It is still vital to address the victimization of SGBV survivors and prioritise women's empowerment programmes. It is also interesting to see how women uphold inequitable attitudes as well – that masculine notions aren't just upheld or promoted by men. It is important to acknowledge the crucial role women and girls also play in constructing and perpetuating damaging male identities and roles.

Gendered roles and attitudes

Attitudes on women, and their roles (male response)	Agree	Disagree
A woman's most important role is to take care of her home and cook for her family	68%	32%
Changing nappies, giving kids a bath and feeding the kids are the mother's responsibility	59%	41%

Attitudes on women, and their roles (female responses)	Agree	Disagree
A woman's most important role is to take care of her home and cook for her family	94%	6%
Changing nappies, giving kids a bath and feeding the kids are the mother's responsibility	94%	6%

Attitudes on men, and their roles (male response)	Agree	Disagree
To be a man, you need to be tough	2%	98%
To be a man means providing for your family and your extended family	51%	49%
It is manly to defend the honour of your family even by violent means	97%	3%

Attitudes on men, and their roles (female responses)	Agree	Disagree
To be a man, you need to be tough	14%	86%
To be a man means providing for your family and your extended family	63%	37%
It is manly to defend the honour of your family even by violent means	95%	5%

Attitudes on sexual and reproductive health (SRH)

Attitudes on SRH (male response)	Agree	Disagree
It is a woman's responsibility to avoid getting pregnant	1%	99%
A real man produces a male child	-	100%
Attitudes on SRH (female response)	Agree	Disagree
It is a woman's responsibility to avoid getting pregnant	-	100%
A real man produces a male child	-	100%

Attitudes on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)

Attitudes on SGBV (male response)	Agree	Disagree
There are times when a woman deserves to be beaten	2%	98%
A woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together	63%	37%
Women should accept teasing even of a sexual nature because it is harmless	-	100%
Teasing becomes harmful to women only when there is physical contact	-	100%
It is manly to defend the honour of your family even by violent means	97%	3%

Attitudes on SGBV (female response)	Agree	Disagree
There are times when a woman deserves to be beaten	12%	88%
A woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together	99%	1%
Women should accept teasing even of a sexual nature because it is harmless	-	100%
Teasing becomes harmful to women only when there is physical contact	-	100%
It is manly to defend the honour of your family even by violent means	95%	5%

Gender relations and decision-making

Gender relations – decision-making/domestic (male response)	Agree	Disagree
I think that a woman should obey her husband	100%	-
I think that a man should have the final say in all family matters	60%	40%
I think that men should share the work around the house with women such as doing dishes, cleaning and cooking	59%	41%
I think that a woman cannot refuse to have sex with her husband	31%	69%

Gender relations – decision-making/domestic (female response)	Agree	Disagree
I think that a woman should obey her husband	98%	2%
I think that a man should have the final say in all family matters	43%	57%
I think that men should share the work around the house with women such as doing dishes, cleaning and cooking	30%	70%
I think that a woman cannot refuse to have sex with her husband	49%	51%

Sexual violence, inclusive of rape

Gender relations – SV, inclusive of rape (male response)	Agree	Disagree
I think that when a woman is raped, she is usually to blame for putting herself in that situation	30%	70%
I think that if a woman doesn't physically fight back, it's not rape	89%	11%
I think that in any rape case, one would have to question whether the victim is promiscuous or has a bad reputation	67%	33%

I think that some women ask to be raped by the way they dress and behave	77%	23%
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Gender relations – SV, Inclusive of rape (female response)	Agree	Disagree
I think that when a woman is raped, she is usually to blame for putting herself in that situation	1%	99%
I think that if a woman doesn't physically fight back, it's not rape	93%	7%
I think that in any rape case, one would have to question whether the victim is promiscuous or has a bad reputation	89%	11%
I think that some women ask to be raped by the way they dress and behave	95%	5%

Current practices around decision-making and household work

Decision-making

Practices – decision-making (male response)	Men	Women
Who in your household usually has the final say regarding the health of women in the family?	75%	25%
Who in your household usually has the final say about decisions involving your children (their schooling, their activities)?	99%	1%
Who has the final say about decisions involving how your family spends money on food and clothing?	95%	5%
Who has the final say about decisions involving how your family spends money on large investments such as buying a vehicle, a house or a household appliance?	100%	-

Practices – decision-making (female response)	Men	Women
Who in your household usually has the final say regarding the health of women in the family?	69%	31%
Who in your household usually has the final say about decisions involving your children (their schooling, their activities)?	64%	36%
Who has the final say about decisions involving how your family spends money on food and clothing?	72%	28%
Who has the final say about decisions involving how your family spends money on large investments such as buying a vehicle, a house or a household appliance?	98%	2%

Household work

Practices – who does the following at home (male response)	Men	Women
Preparing food	-	100%
Cleaning the house	1%	99%
Washing clothes	1%	99%
Taking care of the children	2%	98%

Practices – who does the following at home (female response)	Men	Women
Preparing food	-	100%
Cleaning the house	-	100%
Washing clothes	-	100%
Taking care of the children	-	100%

CHAPTER SIX

Discussion on key themes

The following chapter discusses the key themes which have emerged from the findings of the survey and the focus-group discussions, and links this to a broader understanding of masculinities relating to gender (roles and identities) and SGBV. These themes are categorized, and discussed to identify the key challenges, which leads to creating space and opportunities for discourse on this subject.

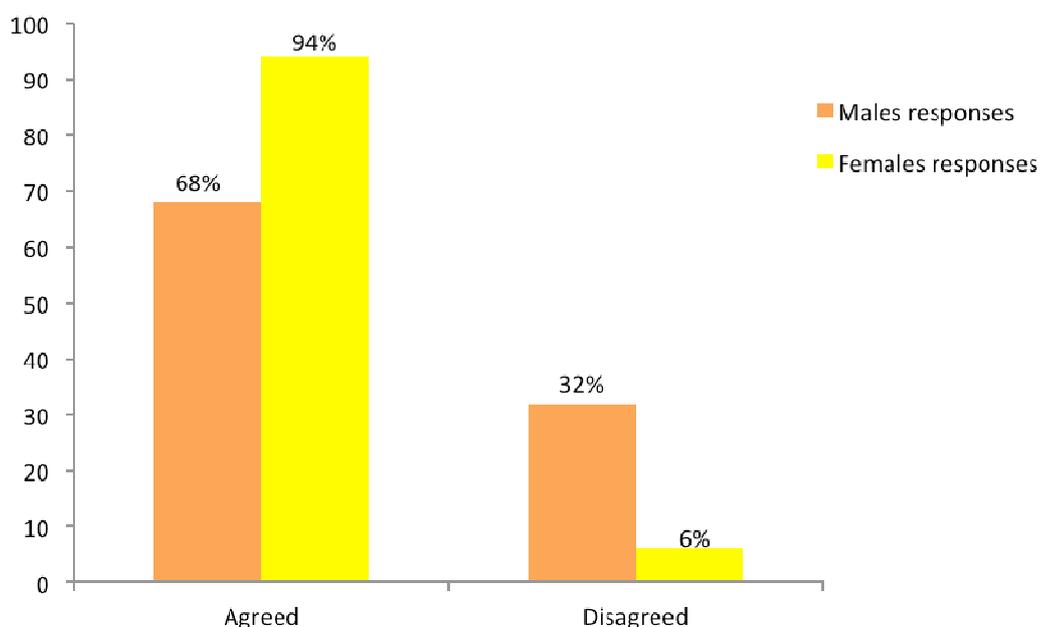
Gendered roles and attitudes

94 per cent of women and 68 per cent of men agreed with the statement:

“A woman’s most important role is to take care of her home and cook for her family”

Men and women agreed very strongly on their own gendered roles, and argued this wasn’t negotiable. They believe this is how it’s always been in African and Burundian culture. It is interesting to note that women responded more positively than men – that their importance and identity is focused around the household.

A woman’s most important role is to take care of her home and cook for her family.



They also discussed how these strict, differentiated roles were natural, and how “God created” them to be. However in subsequent discussions they had also understood this has changed due to various external and internal challenges and influences. For instance, men said: “it is not OK for us to cook or clean at home, but men and boys are involved in employment, which involves cooking or cleaning.”

One young man stated, “My father is a chef, but I have never tasted the food he cooks, because he never cooks at home.” They also understood that culture is not a monolithic or static concept, but that it has evolved over the years. And when discussing cultural norms, it was interesting to note the components of culture that have remained, even though most practices and norms had changed.

It was evident that most of the cultural norms around gender identity and attitudes were still strongly held, such as women having the caregiving and domestic role because this is not something men could ever do and it is not OK for Burundian men to do so.

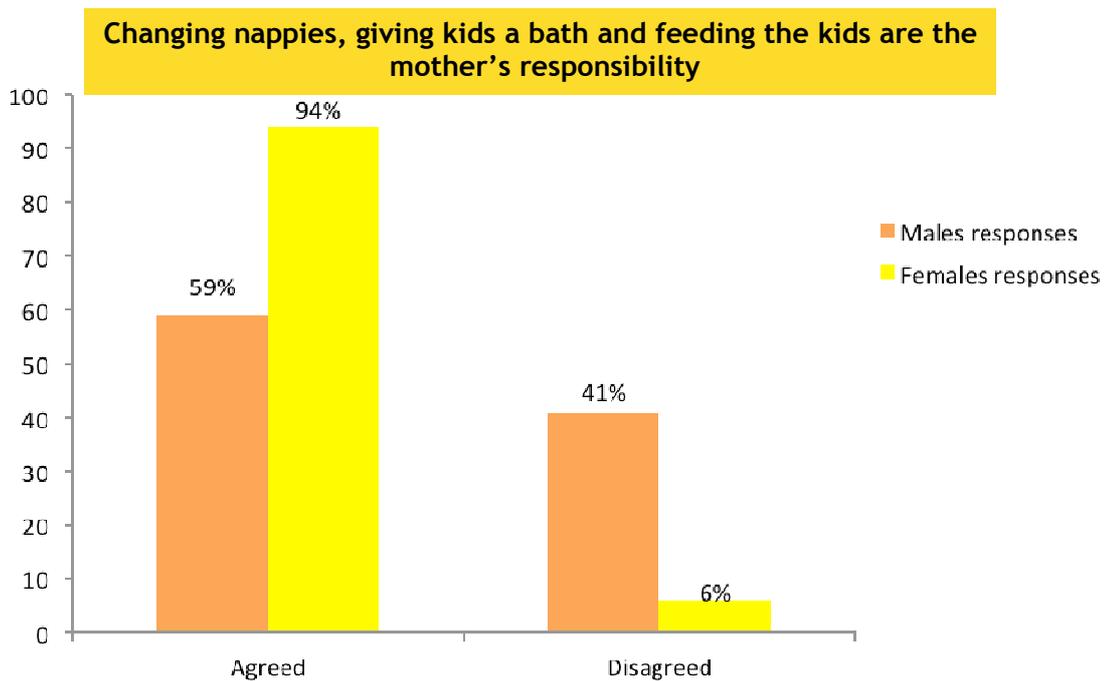
Challenges

51 per cent of men and 63 per cent of women agreed with the statement:

“To be a man means providing for your family and your extended family”

94 per cent of women and 59 per cent of men agreed with the statement that caregiving is a woman’s role. Also 41 per cent of men and 70 per cent of women thought a man shouldn’t be sharing the household work with women.

The challenge here was that most men are struggling to make a living, and are involved in traditional and unconventional income-generating activities. Providing for family was coming at a personal cost and seemed to be a challenging and frustrating issue for them. Women and girls were also involved in income-generating activities, but never really had access to the fruits of their labour: money. It was still something that the man of the house controlled and used.



Male priorities were often misplaced. Many men were experiencing addictions or caught up in negative behaviours such as: alcohol abuse, gambling, polygamy and transactional sex. This obviously damages life for the entire family and harms relationship all family members. Within this context, children's education, food, clothing and health is not a priority, as household income is abused.

Another challenge for the women and girls was the fact that, additional to their traditional role at home, they also had to spend many hours working to bring income into the household. This was a burden, both physically and emotionally.

“We not only have to go to the field and work, but we need to finish the domestic chores before we leave, and after we come back we have to cook, clean, take care of the children, help with their education and attend to other duties at home. This is exhausting.”

Young men also shared experiences and concerns about how boys are expected to do what was considered to be 'manly' work, such as bringing water from afar, building, or doing physically-tough chores. When they are unable to perform these tasks they said they are either ridiculed by their peers, family or even face rebuke or anger from their father – as they weren't strong enough. This was also a burden for them, as this sometimes was physically and emotionally challenging.

Women also held attitudes which are harmful to self, the relationship and the well-being of the family. These attitudes are easily passed on to their children, and play a significant role in influencing children as they grow – informing their knowledge, attitudes and behaviours with one another.

The prevailing attitudes also restrict men from being involved in caregiving roles, which according to many studies will have a long-term impact on the life of the child.¹⁷ These attitudes also affect men who want to be involved with the household, either because of pressure from within the home and family or stigma from the community. Comments were shared such as, “why are you doing a woman’s work?” Women also fear stigma or shame if they are seen as not being a good woman or not taking care of their man.

Opportunities

41 per cent of men disagreed with the statement:

“Changing nappies, giving kids a bath and feeding the kids are the mother’s responsibility”

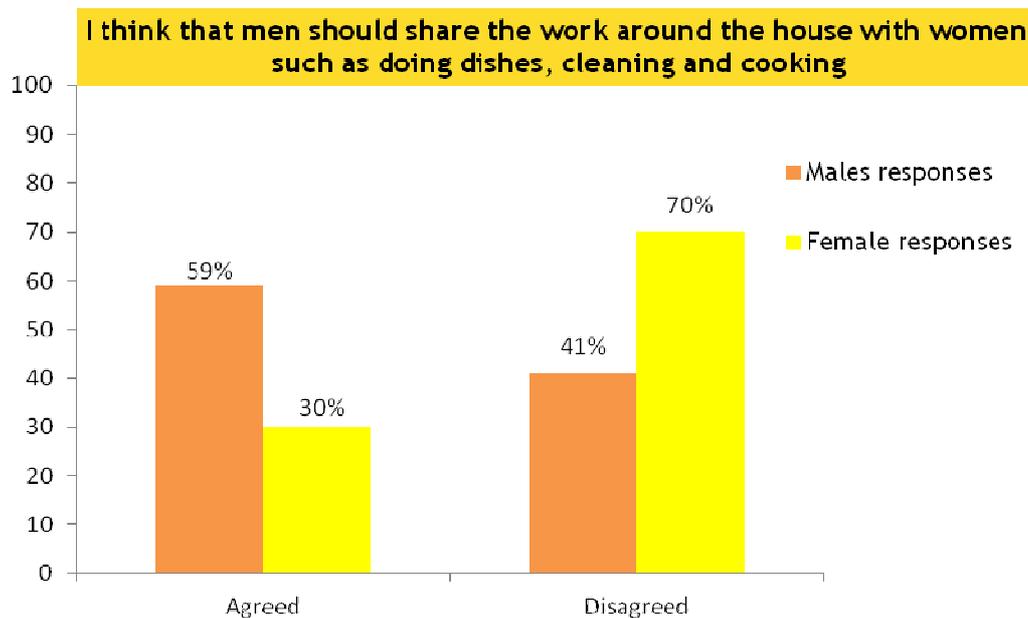
32 per cent of men disagreed with the statement:

“A woman’s most important role is to take care of her home and cook for her family”

59 per cent of men agreed that men should be more involved in sharing work such as domestic chores with the women.

There is opportunity for a meaningful and long-term discourse on the theme of gendered roles. This is not because we have externally identified it as a need, but because it is evident in the discussions and survey results. People are feeling frustrated by either the burden of their pre-existing roles or the challenges faced when unable to change them.

¹⁷ The global *Men Care* campaign has several listings of studies around fatherhood, which can be found at www.men-care.org



In reality when access to conventional or ‘accepted’ income-generating activities are challenging, or it is difficult to sustain the family, men feel overly burdened and discouraged in their inability to be ‘the head’ or the ‘provider’ of the household. This is a great opportunity to promote positive relationships and encourage the space for discussion between partners sharing not only the physical or emotional burden, but also the economic one. Women are also overly burdened by their existing household chores and the physical labour in generating income for the household, and other related activities such as fetching firewood etc. Even though men were the head of the household, what was evident was the women were also working to provide for the home and have done so for a long time. The need for a safer space for women and men to dialogue on both of their vulnerabilities, challenges and feelings will be a crucial to promoting healthier relationships in the household. This will have an effect on the attitudes of the community towards gender roles, responsibilities and relations.

Creating the space for men to be involved in caregiving roles and encouraged to enjoy fatherhood will not only improve the relationship with the child, but also the quality of life for the children and well-being of the family. Engaging men in this capacity creates a unique opportunity for them to be role models in their homes, churches and communities.

Decision-making, control and domestic duties

100 per cent of men and 98 per cent of women agreed that a woman should obey her husband. 60 per cent of men and 43 per cent of women felt that the man should have the final decision in all family matters. And according to the male respondents almost 100 per cent of the decisions related to a women's health, family finance, food, clothing, children's activities and education and investments were made by men, or men had the final say.

In general it is evident that both men and women think a woman should obey her husband and that this is not only a cultural norm, but they also believed that the Bible reaffirms this view. It was evident that men, irrespective of their religion, social status or ability to provide were the ones making decisions related to the family. Through their explanation of culture, men and women strongly supported the male-centric, decision-making process and the 'headship' of man as they believed the Bible teaches. They strongly felt that men and women weren't created equal, and men were the head of the household and superior to women, and women were inferior or seen as the helper of man. Regarding marriage, they also quoted bible verses, which depicted, "men are the head of the house, as Christ is the head of the Church."

This cut across a spectrum of day-to-day decisions, ranging from children's activities, to buying land or vehicles. Contradictory, most women disputed this and almost two thirds of women agreed the reality was different. It seemed like some women wanted to assert that they were the ones making decisions about how their bodies were used, but sadly the reality was different.

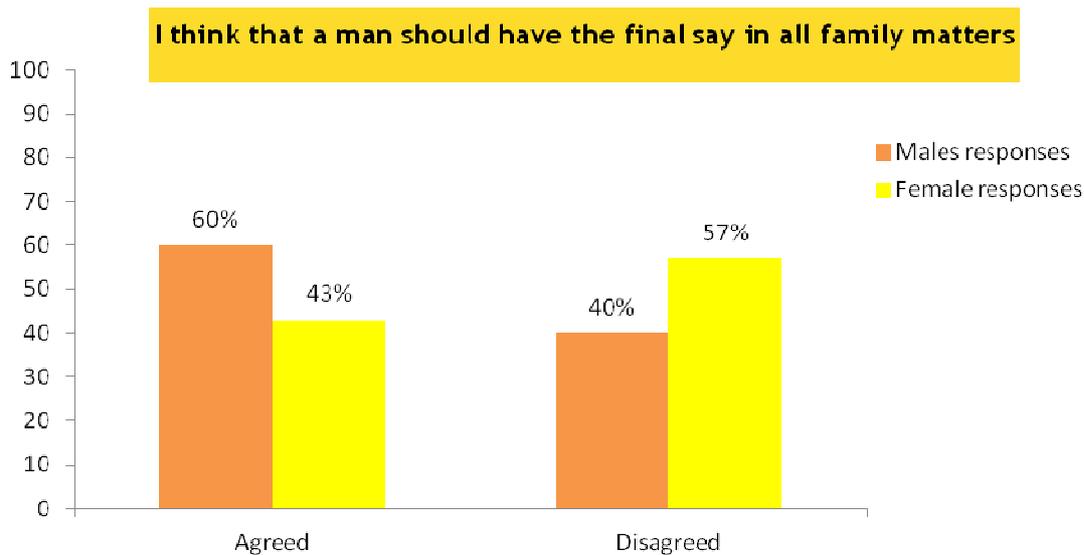
Men were the ones who decided when to have children or have sex, which they could have as and when they want it with the exception of during a woman's illness or menstruation. This was the reality despite the fact that 57 per cent of the women disagreed that men should have the final say in all family-related matters.

Even though 59 per cent of the men agreed that men should share household work with women, less than 2 per cent of men are currently involved in household or caregiving duties.

Challenges

There is a misinterpretation around the creation story, and cultural practices teach inequality and inferiority or discrimination towards women and girls from an early age. For example, the type of food that a girl or boy eats, or the preference of the boy child being sent to school over the girl, or the boys being allowed to play, while the girls have to help the mother with domestic duties. The boys were also taught that they were superior to their sisters, and the sisters accepted this as the norm. This was reinforced by their interpretation of creation, that

God made man in his own image, and made woman from the rib of the man, because God wanted a ‘helper’ for Adam. And also other scriptures such as: “wives submit to your husbands”, “husbands you are the head of the house, as Christ is the head of the church” and “for a woman’s body doesn’t belong to her, but to her husband.” This has all been used to justify why a woman cannot refuse to have sex with her husband.



What is challenging is not the concept of headship, but the attributes of headship which participants were communicating. There is a lack of correct biblical interpretation of scripture and context. The knowledge of partial scriptures either influenced their behaviour or reinforced it. The attributes of headship communicated were often of control and dominance, and also the need to correct their wives through disciplining her when she makes mistakes or does not conform to the expected roles within the home, or didn’t reflect the lifestyle or model of Christ which they had mistakenly misinterpreted. The use of violence to discipline or correct the wife was explained as if it was the norm, and this is corroborated in the responses to the statement: “a woman should tolerate violence to keep her family together.” A staggering 63 per cent of men and an appalling 99 per cent of women agreed with this.

There were times when friction was visible when headship is challenged, due to men’s inability to be the primary breadwinner of the house for various reasons and where the women have become the main breadwinner. The challenge felt by men was that when the woman was the one making decisions, this not only affected the way their children interacted with them, but also increased stigma from the community. Sometimes men seemed to be using violence in order to reassert their headship so that it was evident to others – wives, children, and the community.

31 per cent of men and 49 per cent of women agreed: “a woman can’t refuse sex with her husband.”

When discussing the issue of marital rape – when women refuse or aren’t feeling well enough to have sex with their husbands, many women agreed that it is a reality for them, but it is not something they will speak about because it is dishonourable for their husbands or families.

Women also said, *“they never prepare us for sex or thank us afterwards. Sometimes we are exhausted after a day’s work in the field or in the household. It is late when we get back and then our husband demands sex.”*

Most of the women didn’t know the full text of the scriptures or they didn’t know how to read and didn’t own a bible. Some women expressed that it was a challenge to obey their husbands because they weren’t Christians, and occasionally asked/expected them to do things which weren’t right.

The misplaced priorities of men were also discussed. Men control most aspects of family life and this affects the overall well-being of the family, including children’s education.

Sadly the only experience of a relationship that women and girls expressed was one which was controlled or where they were told what to do all their lives either by their fathers, brothers or now their husbands. They were told they were not equals or important.

Men and women expressed that men are better decision-makers, not only because they were the head, but also because they were created with the ability to do this. Women were seen as created with the ability to take care of domestic affairs.

Opportunities

40 per cent of men and 57 per cent of women disagreed with the statement that men should have the final say in all family matters. They thought that decisions should be made together, after discussion.

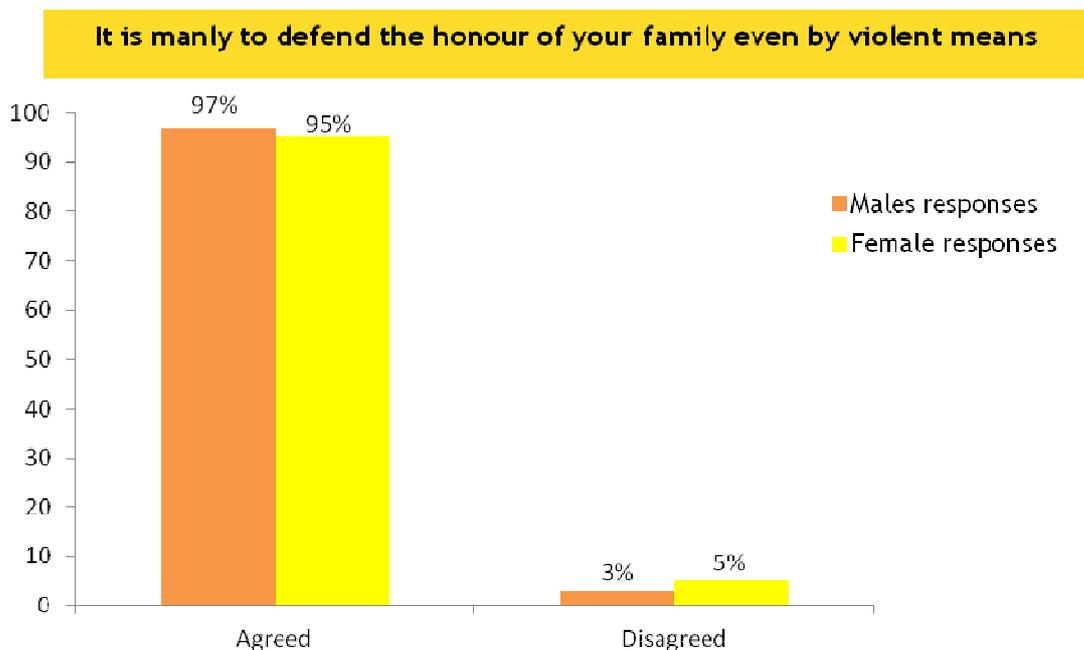
Even though the male-dominated, decision-making culture is a challenge and the attributes of headship are influenced by culture, there are opportunities to engage men in order to improve equality between the sexes. Men seemed challenged by their inability to provide, and in the changing environment around livelihoods and the aftermath of conflict, which left many men physically disabled. Women have evolved as the primary breadwinner. This has challenged the identity of men and their headship in the house. Conflicts within the home have also challenged their own attitudes and tested faith. The disharmony within homes is compelling both women and men to relook at their relationships, and also the current concept of headship.

The main contributing factor to defining who the head of the house is was around financial issues. The one who earns the most seems to be in control and in the instance where men are not earning, the women are the decision-makers. Men felt that they were neglected or dominated in this instance. This could be due to the insecurity men feel when they are not in control, and of course the use of the same dominant and controlling type of headship behaviour by the woman. This often leads to violence within the home. This is a great opportunity for the church to create a safe space for discussion on this issue, and also to help understand the characteristics of Christ as the head of the church. The teaching of creation and the image of God will be a great catalyst to help people understand one another's value and importance. This is a great opportunity for change because most of the responses around inequality between men and women were held because people believed the inaccurate teachings that it was how God created them. Accurate biblical interpretations and teachings on creation and the image of God (trinity) can be a life-transforming experience and a catalyst in promoting gender equality.

Violence and manhood

97 per cent of men and 95 per cent of women agreed with the statement: "It is manly to defend the honour of your family even by violent means"

It is important to understand that any form of violence, sexual or physical, doesn't happen in a vacuum. While many external factors can aggravate potential environments and create a culture of impunity, these are not the root causes of the violence.



The unanimous agreement with this statement is worth exploring further. While the statement itself refers to the use of violence in general, and is attributed to manhood, it is interesting to note the women's almost unanimous agreement. While men strongly felt it was their duty to protect the family, there was also a strong expectation from women that men would fulfil this role. Given the history of Burundi, and the violent nature of conflict, it is intriguing to see how sometimes violence can be justified.

The survey results show that violence is sometimes justified because it is seen as a manly characteristic, and there is an expectation from women and the community. It would be worthwhile exploring the concept of honour and family honour in the Burundian context.

Challenges

The use of violence in general and within the concept of manhood is very problematic. Not only does it strengthen and reinforce the role of men as violent, but it also creates this as the norm, irrespective of the justification. Not all men are violent, or resort to violence to solve conflict, be it within the home or in communities. But most of the perpetrators of violence against women, specifically SGBV, are men and boys. There is a lot of silence around this issue and there is a lack of visibility of men and boys who aren't violent in nature or use violence against women. This also exacerbates the dominant social narrative that men are inherently violent. This cannot be tolerated and is not true.

This is why it's crucial to address not only the normalization of violence within society, but also the attribution of it to man. In a community where violence is normalized, justified and internalized, it will be challenging to address the issues of SGBV.

In the SGBV section in this report, the expectation to tolerate violence to keep the family together is discussed, and also the dominant, forceful and controlling attributes of men, and their need to correct or discipline women. This poses a threat to healthy, equitable and positive relationships at homes, churches and communities.

Opportunities

Even though the views, opinions and responses from the survey and discussions were challenging, it also created discomfort within the groups. There was a conflict regarding what the Bible and Jesus taught compared to what is normal in their communities. The scriptures lay great foundations to address the issue of violence within communities and family life, and can be used to engage men and boys with positive masculinities, which do not condone violent behaviour. The life of Christ can be used as an example to help transform existing attitudes. The opportunity to model the behaviour of men and boys on Christ's example will not only be

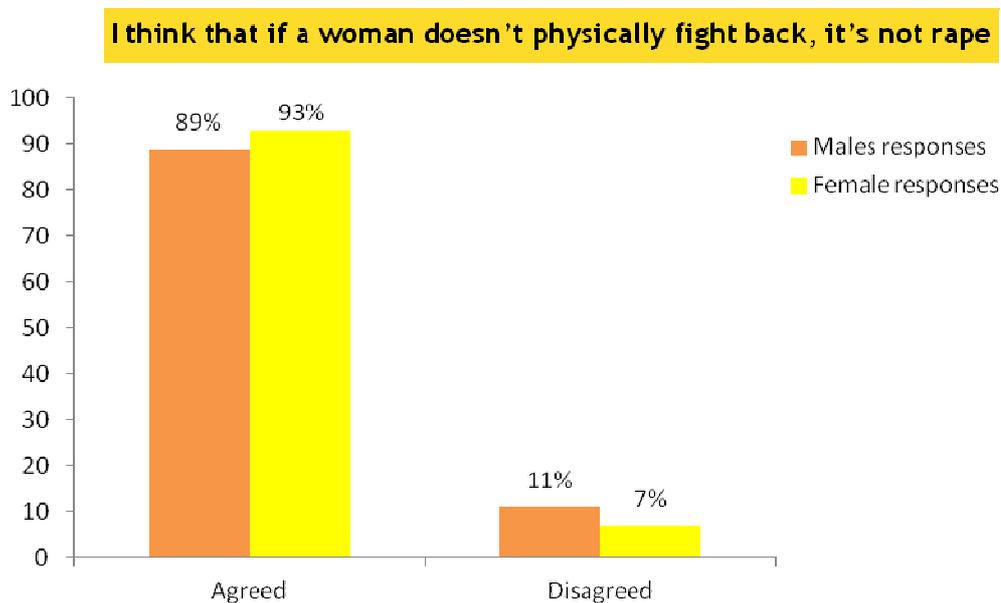
liberating to the men and women, but also to the community as a whole. It promotes alternative ways and examples to resolve disputes, disagreements and differences.

The message to the church to denounce violence is crucial, and will be a catalyst in challenging an environment where violence has been allowed to flourish and is normalized or internalized. This will then create the space for conversations on SGBV, which happens largely in private spaces or in situations seemingly inaccessible by the church.

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)

63 per cent of men and 99 per cent of women agreed that women should tolerate violence to keep the family together. 89 per cent of men and 93 per cent of women were of the opinion that if a woman doesn't physically fight back, it's not rape.

As discussed in the section on violence, it is important to re-emphasize that SGBV doesn't happen in a vacuum. We have noted in the last section that there is a culture of tolerating and justifying some acts of violence, there is also a culture of blaming SGBV survivors. If the focus continues to be on looking at the behaviour and dress code of a survivor of SGBV, and not on the one committing the act, then this creates a culture of impunity and allows SGBV to be committed with little or no consequence.

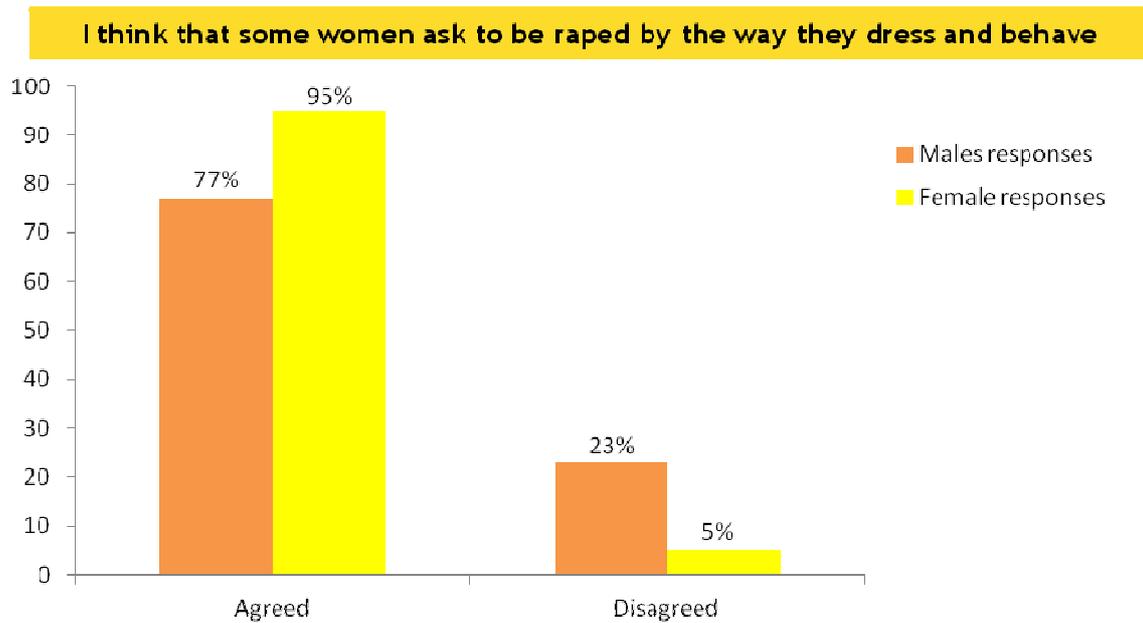


The most common form of violence experienced by women is at the hands of their partners, and spouses.¹⁸ Marital rape (also known as spousal rape) is one of the most common types of sexual violence. It is important to make the link between gender-based violence and sexual

¹⁸ WHO global and regional estimates of violence against women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence, 2013.

violence, which happens within the home and outside. These acts are committed by those who feel entitled to sex or demonstrate power and control. There is high impunity due to the lack of legal and administrative structures and systems available to aid and support survivors.

In a society where victims of SGBV are unable to talk about their experiences because of the shame or stigma associated with it, perpetrators continue to exploit this environment and commit these horrendous acts against women and girls.



Society seems to be fixated on the behaviour and the dress of women and girls, 67 percent of men and 89 per cent of women felt that a woman's character should be questioned if she has been raped, and 77 per cent of men and very disturbingly 95 per cent of women felt that "Some women ask to be raped by the way they dress and behave." This was the view held by all participants, including those in leadership roles.

Challenges

Women expressed their concern about the lack of infrastructure to safeguard and protect those affected by SGBV, such as accessing medical and psychological help or even taking legal action against the perpetrators. They said most of the men who perpetrate violence flee their community to bordering countries, and avoid the consequences of their actions.

Much discussion was also had about women not being able to refuse marital sex or the use of force when doing so. Both women and men were of the opinion that women must tolerate violence for the sake of the family, which is challenging because this normalizes such relationships, and stigmatizes anyone who disagrees and wants a better life. The responsibility

for keeping the family together lay with women. Men who don't work on their marriages and act or engage in activities that are harmful to marriage, such as polygamy, domestic violence, transactional sex and alcohol abuse are allowed to continue.

The discussion around victimization of women and girls is focused on their behavior and poses a threat to ever addressing the behaviours and attitudes of male perpetrators. The continued focus, blame, and stigma on women and girls restricts them from seeking help or legal action and creates the space for the perpetrator to continue with little or no consequence.

The emphasis and attention needs to be focused on the perpetrator in order for us to respond effectively to this global issue and to work towards prevention.

Women who didn't fight back during a rape, for various and valid reasons, are prevented from accessing services that are crucial to their recovery because of legal processes which hinge on physical or material evidence for prosecutions. This also contributes to the larger perception that if she didn't fight back, it was consent or it is not rape.

It is impossible to address the issue of sexual violence without addressing the larger contributing factors, which hinge on people's attitudes and behaviours around gender identities, gendered roles, attitudes and relations.

Opportunities

98 per cent of men and 88 per cent of women disagreed that there were times when a woman deserved to be beaten. 33 per cent of men and 11 per cent of women had the view that a woman's character or reputation was irrelevant if they had experienced SGBV.

There are no short-term solutions out there for solving gender inequality or sexual violence or for preventing gender-based violence. It requires the commitment and the perseverance of key stakeholders, such as the church. The church creates a unique opportunity to engage its membership on these important issues. In Burundi more than 80 per cent of the population affiliates itself to different denominations of Christianity and this means the church is in a greatly influential position. What this also means is that those who commit these acts of violence against women and girls are calling themselves Christians, as well as the survivors themselves, and most probably part of a congregation. The church then has the unique moral and spiritual authority to teach, help, heal and transform the lives of its people. The church has the potential to become a safe space for both men and women to address this issue, and also seek help.

The local and national church has great partnerships with government and is influential. This can be used to advocate for survivors of SGBV, and work with the State on addressing this issue effectively. The church is present in almost every village, and functions well even in remote

areas. By working with the church, NGOs and service providers can have a more powerful impact on preventing and responding to SGBV.

Other themes emerging from focus-group discussions (FDGs)

Here are some of the key themes which emerged from the discussions and which needs further exploration.

Family planning & SRH: women in two of the five parishes brought this up after the official closure of the FDGs, and wanted to learn/know more about it, and what God and the Bible says. This is an area of interest and challenge for the women.

Law enforcements: most of the women and men raised the issue that few perpetrators are brought to justice and most men flee to neighboring countries. These men may return to the village after a few months, and little or no action is taken. A woman talked about the continuous harassment by her husband, who not only physically abused her, but also kept returning to burn her house.

Land/property rights: inheritance and property rights were a recurring theme from the discussions, and an issue raised by most of the women. Most women did not have titles for their land, which makes it challenging when their abusive husbands either chase them out of their own homes or misuse the property because of their gambling or alcohol abuse.

Leadership models: there was distinct call for good role models, for positive masculinities and leadership within the home and community. This is discussed in the section on decision-making in this report. There is an urgent need for non-dominant, facilitative, humble, gracious, forgiving and Christlike leadership models, for both men and women.

Dowry: the issue of dowry was highlighted by the leaders during FDGs. They discussed the fact that most men who pay the bride price (dowry) through extreme hardships feel that they've bought their woman, and that she is his property to be treated as he wishes. This is a major contributing factor to intimate partner violence.

Underage marriages: underage marriages were reported to be frequent, and lead to early pregnancies. There is also a lack of documentation for the children, which leads to difficulties in accessing health care and administrative services. Men also use this as an opportunity to leave or have multiple partners, as the marriage is not legalized and there is no proof. Early marriages also cause complications in reproductive health-related issues, which need to be further explored and has an impact on girls' education and rights.

The church's current response to SGBV: to date, the church's work on SGBV has been primarily focused on women and girls and survivors of SGBV. Working with men and boys is completely new to the church. Local leaders met during this assignment and were very keen on bringing men and boys on board with this work. However, not everyone was enthusiastic about this work or think men and boys have a great role to play in preventing SGBV. Some leaders felt that this work was discrimination against men or has disempowered them in the community. It is a great opportunity for the church to promote the positive role men and boys can play in preventing and ending SGBV while also highlighting the need with them to understand their own vulnerabilities and experiences of abuse.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion and recommendations

Key recommendations

The baseline study had many objectives as discussed in chapter two. One of the key purposes was to understand the context, prevailing attitudes and practices in order to design well-focused interventions. This will not only be useful for faith-based organisations working in the same region, but also other secular/mainstream organisations engaged in this work. Together we can collaborate for a comprehensive and holistic response to SGBV in Burundi.

The following are some of the key recommendations based on the findings and the discussions with the respondents, partners, and other stakeholders.

CHURCH/FAITH BASED ORGANISATIONS (FBOs)

Awareness

- Awareness-raising of the issue of SGBV and its impact on the role of men, women and children is needed in the community. Awareness must also be raised regarding the law, policies and legal provisions.
- Awareness of the nature and impact of SGBV, most women and men do not understand what may lead to it occurring or the types of violence that can occur to them.

Education and teaching

- Solid theologically-based teaching on creation and equality is crucial to this work to set right the skewed understanding that participants articulated. We must promote the biblical view of men and women as equals.
- Pre- and post marriage counselling is needed to discuss biblical principles of relationships and problem-solving. Promoting shared responsibilities and decision-making is vital in promoting equitable relationships.
- We must break the gender stereotypes which limit and frustrate both men and women. Training needs to provide space and time to discuss, reflect and possibly even renegotiate these gendered roles and identities in order to promote the well-being of the whole family.

Role models

- We need to promote positive role models for leadership; break down the concept of 'headship' to discuss it from the point of Christ as the ultimate role model – reflecting

on his interaction with different members of the community.

- Promote good practices and examples of fatherhood. Men should be encouraged to be involved in family life, as caregivers and role models.
- Mentoring programmes for young males are needed, on positive and transformative masculinities. Promoting positive values, which seek to restore, respect and promote equitable and healthy relationships with their counterparts.

Safe spaces

- We need to create safe spaces for men and boys to dialogue on their identities, expectations, and vulnerabilities in relation to gender and SGBV.
- And safe spaces for men and women to dialogue on challenges in their relationships, couples ministries to strengthen and restore relationships.

Leadership

- The church should lead work on engaging men and boys, and create inclusive spaces for men and boys to be involved. The church leadership should be sensitive and committed to ensuring the way the word of God is preached is accurate in relation to gender equality (creation), marital relationships (Paul's epistles) and headship.
- Create spaces to promote female leadership of both older and younger women and engage men and boys to also promote/support and create space for female leadership at different levels.
- Promote caring, non-violent, equitable masculinities and gender relations as mentors, role models and church leadership through the life of the church.
- Through awareness raising and teaching the church needs to deconstruct the cultural norm which has normalized violence and attributed it to manhood.
- The church and its leadership should denounce violence. This will have a domino effect within the community and strengthen violence prevention interventions and advocacy efforts.

NON FAITH BASED ORGANISATIONS (FBOs)

- It is important for non-FBOs to acknowledge that while many misinterpreted religious teachings are challenging in addressing gender equality and SGBV, there is great scope to change from within the church and great willpower in the church to end SGBV.
- Some of the FBOs are a catalyst in bringing about transformation in this work, and it is important to find common ground to work together in sharing the vision for a future free of SGBV in Burundi.
- Religion and faith plays a significant role in the lives of people in Burundi, it is important to be respectful of this fact, and address specific harmful behavioural issues and

practices which were influenced by faith and religion, as opposed to blaming and demonizing faith and religion as the perpetrator.

- Working in coalitions with FBOs, and non-FBOs, to optimize resources and tools in making a significant and sustainable impact.

POLICY AND PRACTICE

- Create spaces for men and boys to be involved in this work. Including men and boys' roles in communications with regards to this programme, and in Burundi's government national plan of action.
- Breaking the stereotype of SGBV as being a female-only problem, and encourage and create space for public engagement on this, with male involvement.
- Law enforcement agencies should be trained to respond promptly and effectively on responding and case handling.
- Working with other stakeholders on strengthening legal mechanisms and processes in responding to SGBV.
- Inclusion of men and boys in national campaigns on ending SGBV.
- Working with men within the system who are in influential positions, such as police officers, local administrative leaders and politicians, in order to sensitize and engage them as advocates for transformation.

Conclusions

The Burundi survey highlighted some challenging and unexpected results. The people were open and honest, yet compared to other countries, some attitudes were more challenging. There were strong arguments voiced for justifying actions and behaviours that are harmful to relationships. When discussed further, there was no protest or defence, but a willingness to learn. This is a unique great opportunity for the work which will follow this baseline study.

Generally, men held a strong belief that being a man is to be in control, and to dominate and discipline the members of their family. This was evident not only in the group surveys, but in the many discussions and was a view held by men from many different backgrounds. The use of violence as a manly characteristic was almost unanimously agreed upon, not only by the men, but also women. This demonstrates that women and girls also contribute to the creation of the definition of what it means to be a man. A woman's attitude on manhood also needs to be challenged if we are to progress towards a society, which values equality and promotes equitable relationships. We must acknowledge that there are many different types of masculinities that exist in the Burundian context. We must have open dialogue between genders to deconstruct each one of these different masculinities.

Teaching and discussion is crucial to the success of this work, and promoting transformative

masculinities.

What emerged from the conversations with the men and women is the great opportunity the church has in moving this work forward. The people are interested to see change come, they are dissatisfied with the status quos, and they are frustrated by the limitations which have been created by society's expectations of men and women.

The need for closer partnership with local and national administrative and governing bodies is crucial for enforcing the existing laws, and breaking the silence on these issues. The taboos around talking about the families can be overcome if the church can facilitate these dialogues in a safe space, and safeguard the interest of the discussants. The church is uniquely positioned to break the stigma surrounding SGBV, and it must be the voice that doesn't blame survivors, but create safe spaces for survivors in order to promote healing and facilitate restoration. This includes standing by and supporting survivors when they want to prosecute. The church must adhere to the laws of the land in a visible way. Its partnership with law enforcement on this issue will also create awareness among the communities that the church is serious about ending SGBV, unwilling to turn a blind eye and that SGBV is in no way acceptable or pleasing to God. The church can lead the work on transformative and positive masculinities, and promote a Christlike model as the norm for men and boys in Burundi, for a better life for all.

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Appendix

LAWS

- Burundi's new penal code defines rape as: "vaginal, anal and oral penetration by the male sexual organ as well as penetration of the female sexual organs by an object." Sentences range from five years to life imprisonment.
- The penal code also recognizes domestic violence: "anyone who has intentionally injured another person is subject to two to eight months' imprisonment, a fine, or both, with harsher penalties if the violence is premeditated."
- The new penal code includes the comprehensive definitions of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity as discussed in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the Geneva Conventions Act and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.
- Discussions about inheritance laws have been ongoing for several years. Today, Burundian women have no legal rights to inherit land, which makes them economically dependent on their male relatives and husbands.

Declarations

Internationally:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) (1948) provides the respect of fundamental human rights of every human being. It provides for rights in social, economic, civic, political and cultural areas.
- United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (UNSCR) (2000) calls on parties to armed conflicts to take special measures to protect women and girls from SGBV. It also emphasizes the responsibility of the State to end impunity and prosecute those responsible for war crimes, genocide crimes and crimes against humanity.
- UNSCR 1820 (2008) demands that all parties to armed conflict adopt concrete protection and prevention measures to end sexual violence. It also asserts the importance of women's participation in all processes related to ending sexual violence in conflict.
- UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) commits its parties to abide by the civil and political rights of individuals.

- UN International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) commits its parties to work toward the granting of economic, social, and cultural rights to individuals, including labor rights and rights to health, education and an adequate standard of living.
- UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW) aims to eliminate 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. (*Incorporated into the Burundi constitution in 2005*).
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) protects the rights of people under 18 years old by setting standards in health care, education, and legal, civil and social services.
- Beijing’s Platform for Action and Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW) (1995) recognizes that violence against women – including rape, sexual slavery and forced pregnancy – is an obstacle to equality, development and peace.
- The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998) recognizes rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced sterilization, and other forms of sexual violence as war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Regionally:

- The African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (1986) provides a number of articles on the equality of women in politics, before the law, in education, health, marriage, food, shelter. It provides equal rights for women at all times, and states specifically the right to peace, including participation in all conflict resolution and reconstruction efforts.
- A protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights is the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003) (also known as the Maputo Protocol). This guarantees comprehensive rights to women, including the right to take part in the political process, to social and political equality with men, to control of their reproductive health, and to an end to female genital mutilation.

- The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Protocol (2006) aims to provide protection for women and children against the impunity of sexual violence in the Great Lakes region.
- The Goma Declaration on Eradicating Sexual Violence and Ending Impunity in the Great Lakes Region (2008) asks member states to
 - provide the necessary protection measures for women and girls against GBV
 - provide assistance and care and support to GBV survivors
 - put in place measures to fight impunity, and
 - Increase women's participation in decision-making and conflict-resolution bodies.

For a detailed report on the status of CEDAW implementation in Burundi, please check the combined second, third and fourth report published in 2008.¹⁹

¹⁹ CEDAW - Burundi second, third and fourth report- CEDAW/C/BDI/CO/4. Available at www.un.org/womenwatch