

The role of faith communities in prevention and response to SGBV: a scoping study

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Research question

“What is the evidence of faith groups’ activity and contribution to the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and to the care of survivors?”

- They must contain empirical evidence, and not merely theory or reflection
- All faith-based activities, prevention or response, should be included
- All faiths should be included
- Any form of SGBV should be included

Literature included:

Academic literature
grey literature
organisational reports
internal evaluations
case studies
model programmes
models of collaboration.



Databases

Academic, peer-reviewed literature

- ATLA, Scopus, Directory of Open-Access Journals, EBSCOhost, Google Scholar, JStor, JAMA, LexisNexis, MasterFILE Premier, Academic Premier, MEDLINE, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, ProQuest Medical Library, ProQuest Social Science Journals, PsycARTICLES, Sabinet, Social Sciences , Citation Index, Social Services Abstracts, Social Work Abstracts, Sociology Abstracts, and Africa-Wide: NiPAD

Non-academic lit:

- Sabinet, Google Scholar, Project Muse, UN website and resource lists, Red Cross website and resource lists, The World Bank website and resource lists, and the Deepweb, with the help of search engines such as Webcrawler

Search terms

Original

- Faith, religion, faith community/ies, faith group/s, faith-based organisation/s, Christian, Muslim, Islam, Hindu/ism, Buddhist/m, traditional religion, religious ethics, congregation, faith-inspired, cleric/s, church, mission, Bahá'í, Confucianism, Daosim, Jainism, Judaism, Shinto
- Sexual violence, sexual violence against women, sexual violence against women and girls, sexual violence against men, gender-based violence, sexual and gender-based violence, rape, violence against women, sexual abuse, intimate partner violence, domestic violence

Final

- religion, faith, faith-based organisation/s, faith community/ies
- sexual violence, gender-based violence, intimate partner violence, violence against women

- Intervention texts: texts that study an actual faith-based intervention on any form of SGBV. The text could describe the intervention, evaluate the intervention, or both
- Status quo texts: Texts that empirically study the current status quo in terms of how faith communities are reacting to SGBV. These are empirical studies that look at what is going on (for example, a survey with clergy of a certain church denomination, looking at how they respond to IPV within their congregations)
- Model texts: Texts that develop a structured, systematic model of faith-based SGBV prevention and/or response.

Consultation step

Electronic survey

- The survey was by invitation-only
- Faith and SGBV experts from around the world.
- 127 people were invited to take part.
- 71 people responded
- 51 of these responses were usable.

Key informant interviews

- Faith and SGBV experts from around the world
- Included researchers, policy makers, and the directors of FBOs
- Telephonically or by using Skype
- 20 people interviewed

Limitations

- Only English texts
- Christian network-bias
- Search words

The existing textual evidence

- 30 intervention texts reflect on planned and implemented SGBV interventions,
- 78 status quo texts reflect on research into how faith communities see SGBV and react to it,
- 29 model texts give blueprints for how faith groups can address SGBV.

Key highlights from text review

- Documented evidence is lacking
- Quality and representativeness of the existing evidence is also questionable
- Few texts written prior to 2000; vast majority done in last seven years
- Faith sector tends to focus mostly on faith leaders when it addresses SGBV; little perpetrator focus, little focus on other marginalised groups
- Faith sector prefers using training to address SGBV

Survey & KIIs

- Funding is an influential and often decisive factor when it comes to faith-based involvement in SGBV
- Literature and SGBV&Faith experts tend to agree on the challenges of faith involvement in SGBV; patriarchy
- Literature and SGBV&Faith experts tend to agree on the opportunities of faith involvement in SGBV; the 'presentness' of FCs
- Global policies&strategies insufficiently geared towards faith sector
- Both SGBV and faith experts and the existing evidence argue that inter- and intra-sector networking and collaboration is of vital importance

Six key findings/ recommendations



1. Prioritise the collection of evidence

- More representative
- Documenting vs research
- Rethink 'evidence'
- Standardised indicators
- Dissemination

2. Prioritise context-sensitive programme development

- Particular context
- Input of local communities and faith leaders
- Look at existing programmes and models; also from secular sector
- **Smaller scale, for a longer time period**
- Funders should listen

3. Use multiple modalities in intervention, but prioritise training

- Training
- Use more than one method of approach
- Spirituality for survivor care
- Think creatively

4. Recognise faith leaders as key stakeholders

- FLs as key target group
- Importance of finding 'right' leaders; training, mentoring, support
- Not only the clerical class

5. Actively seek out and develop networking and collaboration opportunities

- Sharing of resources, but also emotional support and encouragement
- Thus networks at all levels of engagement
- The fundamental disconnect between the faith and secular sectors needs to be breached

6. Develop inclusive global policies and strategies

- Faith actors feel they are not recognised enough, or in a token or instrumentalising manner
- Policy makers still misunderstand the faith sector and see it as a tool (?)
- But do not include only certain faith groups and voices
- Working with faith groups that are unable to commit to a certain part of a policy or strategy, due to dogmatic beliefs

What next?

- This is a starting point
- Broadening the scope:
 - languages,
 - regions,
 - faiths,
 - Violence
- Going in-depth into what general recommendations mean to specific actors

A green rectangular sign with rounded corners and a white border, mounted on a wooden post. The sign features the word "Faith" in a large, white, sans-serif font. The background is a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The sign is tilted slightly to the right.

Faith