

**Mapping of Services to Address Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)
in Sri Lanka**

Centre for Equality and Justice and VILUTHU

2024

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guidelines for Women

I. General Information			
Facilitator's Name		Date of FGD	
Start/End Time		Province & District	
Area (GN division, rural/urban)		Centre/ Venue	

INFORMATION NOTE

Instructions for the facilitator:

- Start by introducing yourself and the interpreter (if present).
- Give the FGD participants a copy of the consent form. Ask them “Do we have your voluntary consent to participate in this FGD?” before proceeding with the discussion.
- Only collect information if the participants are willing to share. (Remember to collect the signed copy of the consent form before the end of the discussion).

Background information:

- Thank you for taking the time to come and participate in this FGD, about which I would like to give you some information before we commence the survey.
- I am an enumerator for CEJ/ Viluthu.
- Our two organisations are currently conducting a study whose purpose is to learn about the types of services which are available to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, and more importantly, how accessible, reliable, and useful they are to community members. We will be collecting data from people living across different provinces of the country. In order to ensure maximum comfort, we will not ask for or record your name. All demographic information as well as any responses you give me will be combined along with the responses of others, so there will be no way to identify which individual said what.

- Your responses are extremely valuable for our research, and the information you share will contribute towards efforts aiming to strengthen and improve the SGBV response in our country. This is why we encourage you to provide open and honest responses. Also, since our goal is to understand people's perceptions, there are no right or wrong answers. If there is any question you do not wish to answer or that you do not know the answer to, please feel free to say so and we can skip it. You can also stop the interview at any point without providing a reason.
- We cannot provide any incentives for this research, and participating in this FGD is completely voluntary. However, we will be providing a transportation stipend because you came to [the centre/location] today.
- This FGD is expected to take approximately 90 minutes. Before we begin, do you have any questions? [answer any questions]
- Do you confirm that you voluntarily participate in this interview?

Oral permission to proceed given: 1. Yes 2. No → Thank whoever does not consent and have them leave the room before launching the session.

II. Details of participants' information							
	Gender	Age	Disability	Ethnicity/Religion	Marital Status	Occupation (even if they are not engaged in salaried employment, a homemaker counts as an occupation)	Where do you live? (Rural/Urban)
Person 1							
Person 2							
Person 3							
Person 4							
Person 5							
Person 6							

Perso n 7							
Perso n 8							
Perso n 9							

Before we begin, I would like to note something very important. The topics we are talking about today may be very sensitive. Therefore, for privacy reasons, please do not share details that may reveal the identity/identities of the person/persons you are talking about.

1. Could you explain what SGBV means to you? (First, listen to and document all the explanations given by the participants, regardless of whether they are right or wrong. After collecting all responses, tell them: Thank you for all this important feedback.

Just so that we are all discussing the same concept, the definition of SGBV is violence and abuse against someone based on their gender. It can be physical, sexual, emotional or online. Main types include rape, sexual assault, physical assault, forced marriage/abortions, femicide, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), trafficking for forced labour or sexual exploitation, denial of resources /opportunities or services such as access to education or remunerated employment, and psychological and emotional abuse.)

Then, tell them this: In general, it is important to note that The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that GLOBALLY, about 1 in 3 women have been subjected to physical and/or sexual violence, mostly by intimate partners, but also by other perpetrators. In Sri Lanka, while there is no systematic data collection on SGBV, before COVID-19, UNFPA estimated that around 1 in 5 women have experienced SGBV by an intimate partner, and 1 in 4 reported facing violence since the age of 15. Global studies have shown that the pandemic resulted in a significant rise in violence against women and girls.

2. Going from this definition, what types of SGBV are most commonly occurring in your community?
3. In the past 5 years (since 2019), have you observed/ heard of any new types of SGBV that were not common before? If yes, what are those?
4. What do you think are the causes of SGBV [**Examples (do not prompt):** Inequality, Economic dependence, Poverty, patriarchal and sexist views, General acceptance of

violence, under-representation of women in power and politics to affect progressive policy changes]?

5. Based on your knowledge and observations, could you give a general profile of who is usually most at risk of SGBV in your community? (**Prompt:** age, gender, conflict-affected, disability, ethnicity, level of education, socio-economic background, displaced, sexual orientation as relevant, if revealed by respondents)
6. We will now talk a little about specific types of violence experienced by people in your direct surrounding as well as associated response services. When I ask my questions, just for simplicity, I will ask for your perceptions, but please feel free to tell us about incidents either based on first-hand knowledge (i.e. that you have personally experienced) or that people you know have directly told you about.
7. Have you or **someone you personally know** experienced any SGBV from a current or previous partner, carer, other family member, employer, or within other social, institutional, or legal settings? If yes, can you please share some information about the perpetrators and types of violence experienced? For privacy reasons, please do not share details that may reveal the identity of the person you are talking about.
8. Have you/they reported or approached any support services to get support to help deal with the experienced violence?
 - a. If yes, could you tell me what the main services one would seek are? [**Examples (Do not Prompt):** Police/security, Healthcare- post-rape care/managing chronic physical health outcomes/reproductive healthcare etc., legal advice and/or legal representation- pro bono or fee levying, shelter services, psychosocial support, economic empowerment, reintegration support etc.]?
 - b. How does a survivor know which services to approach? [**Examples (Do not Prompt):** through relatives, friends, health care workers, CSOs, government officials, media]
 - c. What support would a survivor expect from such services? Do you believe that they meet expectations?
 - d. If a survivor decides not to approach any service, what are the main reasons for this? (**Prompt:** fear, shame, lack of awareness of services, no one to accompany, financial cost etc.)
9. Based on your knowledge of the service quality, can you tell me if a survivor:
 - a. Has to retell their story multiple times to access different parts of the service?

- b. Is forced to share any information they do not want to share or accept services they do not want/ decide not to have?
 - c. Has to incur any costs to access these services? If yes, please explain what.
 - d. Are services usually offered in safe spaces that make survivors feel comfortable to share their experiences? Please explain your answer.
 - e. Do service providers usually seek a survivor's permission to share their personal information and experiences with other parties such as other service providers (e.g. when reporting or making referrals)?
 - f. Do you know of cases where service providers have to report violence without a survivor's permission? If yes, can you please give me some information about this? (prompt: in what cases is this done, to whom, how, does it create any issues)
 - g. Do service providers take the time to clearly explain what services they offer and the limitations of what they could do?
 - h. If any service provider does not offer a particular service, do they usually refer the survivor to another service provider?
 - i. If yes, do they actively help a survivor to approach other services **(Prompt: accompanying you to another service provider/ connecting you to an employee of the other service provider etc.)**
 - ii. After referral, do the original service providers follow-up to check if the service was provided?
 - i. Do you think that relevant service providers usually have a thorough understanding of SGBV, as well as survivors' culture and community?
 - j. How long does it usually take for providers to respond? Would you consider the response time reasonable or delayed?
10. Do you believe there are any barriers to accessing these services **(Prompt: financial/resource constraints, safety, language barriers etc.)**?
- a. Are services usually disability- friendly (i.e. physically accessible and tailored to the needs of persons with disabilities)?
 - b. Are they able to communicate in a language that survivors are comfortable with?
 - c. If an interpreter is needed, do service providers offer this type of support for free, or do survivors have to secure their own interpretation?
 - d. If an interpreter is not provided, how do they communicate with the service provider?
 - e. Do you know of any instances where service providers have discriminated against or judged a survivor? If yes, can you please explain on what basis they discriminated/why?

- f. Did you know of any other potential negative experiences when seeking services?
- 11. When it comes to service delivery personnel, how would you assess their overall qualifications? Please explain your response. What do you believe they need to improve? (Prompt: knowledge, awareness, communication skills, empathy, confidentiality, survivor respect, inclusion, participation, etc.)
 - a. In your opinion, are there any gaps in knowledge among employees of service providers? If yes, what are those?
- 12. What should be done to make women feel more secure in your community?
 - a. What SGBV services are essential for your community but are not currently available?
 - b. Are there any actions taken by your community to address SGBV? If yes, please explain what these measures are.
 - c. How important do you believe it is for actors working on SGBV to engage and work with men and boys on prevention? Please explain.
- 13. Do you have anything more to share about SGBV service provision in your community?

Thank you for providing information. We appreciate your support.