REPORT

SAFERWORLD

PREVENTING VIOLENT CONFLICT. BUILDING SAFER LIVES

Gender and community security

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Abbreviations

CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSO	Civil society organisation
CSWG	Community security working group
CWIN	Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre
FGD	Focus group discussion
FGM	Female genital mutilation
GBV	Gender-based violence
INSEC	Informal Sector Service Centre
KII	Key informant interview
LCPC	Local Crime Prevention Centres
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NODS	National Organisation for Community Development (Yemen)

Introduction

COMMUNITY SECURITY IS A PEOPLE-CENTRED APPROACH to tackling issues causing insecurity, whether they emerge from peace, security or development deficits. It explicitly aims to improve the relationships between and the behaviours of communities, authorities and institutions by providing opportunities for people to identify their security concerns, and to plan and implement collective responses.

The gendered nature of insecurity, and therefore of efforts to promote security and build peace, is now widely recognised, including through international policy frameworks such as the Beijing Platform for Action, eight UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, and General Recommendation 30 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Promoting gender-sensitive approaches to security provision has become part of the peacebuilding canon, although it is still far from being implemented consistently.

This report explores the role of gender in community security programmes and looks at what has and has not worked in a range of contexts – Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, South Sudan and Yemen. It addresses three core questions, which correspond to its three chapters:

How can we make community security programming gender-sensitive? (Chapter 1)

Taking a gender-sensitive approach to community security programming requires a thorough understanding of the context and its conflict and gender dynamics. This chapter details how Saferworld programmes have been adapted in five diverse contexts, based on an understanding of how gender norms and conflict dynamics play out in each location. It is intended to provide illustrations and ideas for people implementing community security programmes, and highlights what has and has not worked rather than putting forward a prescriptive set of instructions.

Does taking a gender-sensitive approach to community security programming improve its outcomes? (Chapter 2)

It has become increasingly common to make arguments for gender-sensitive approaches on the grounds that they increase effectiveness – whether of development, peacebuilding, humanitarian or even military operations – and help organisations to better achieve their objectives, including those not explicitly related to gender. At the same time, the UN Global Study on Women, Peace and Security emphasises that women's rights should be seen as an end in themselves and not an instrumental tool for achieving

other goals.[1] Community security programmes are intended to further a range of objectives, including more inclusive decision making on security issues, and improving security for all sections of a community, including marginalised groups. Therefore, if gender-sensitive approaches can be shown to advance women's right to security and participation then this is in itself a measure of effectiveness. By gathering and disseminating evidence on how gender sensitivity makes community security programming more effective, we aim to reinforce the case for gender-sensitive approaches.

How effective are community security approaches in preventing and reducing gender-based violence? (Chapter 3)

The community security approach has not been specifically designed to address gender-based violence (GBV), yet GBV is a key security concern in all of the communities where Saferworld works. Saferworld has been implementing community security programmes for nearly 15 years and in that time we have noticed significant variations in the extent to which these programmes directly address GBV. It may be that there are some contexts in which community security programming can make an important contribution to preventing and reducing GBV, and in others less so. This research, therefore, seeks to understand what factors affect whether and how community security programmes successfully address GBV.

This report aims to provide information and analysis to help organisations that are designing, implementing or funding community security programming to do so in a gender-sensitive way, and for those involved in GBV programming to incorporate elements of community security into their programming. It builds on Saferworld's *Community Security Handbook* (2014)[2] – which offers a more detailed programming guide for implementing community security programmes – and on Saferworld's experience implementing community security work for nearly 15 years.

Key concepts

Community security

'Community security' is a powerful approach that puts people at its centre, builds human security and contributes to wider peace and development goals. It works by bringing together a wide range of state and civil society actors from the security demand and supply sides to collectively identify root drivers of insecurity and develop coordinated responses to them. The breadth of the approach also means that it can address safety and security issues from both the 'public' sphere (for instance, a national civil war) and the 'private' sphere (for example, alcohol or drug abuse leading to anti-social behaviour). Because responses are community-defined, they may encompass anything from the development of viable livelihoods to better policing, improved infrastructure, or more cooperative relationships. Due to the multi-sectoral nature of the needs expressed, community security programmes also need to engage with a range of authorities and service providers who can address these. The shape and outcomes of a community security process thus depend on the needs and the resources available in each context, and the overall safety and security situation experienced within communities.

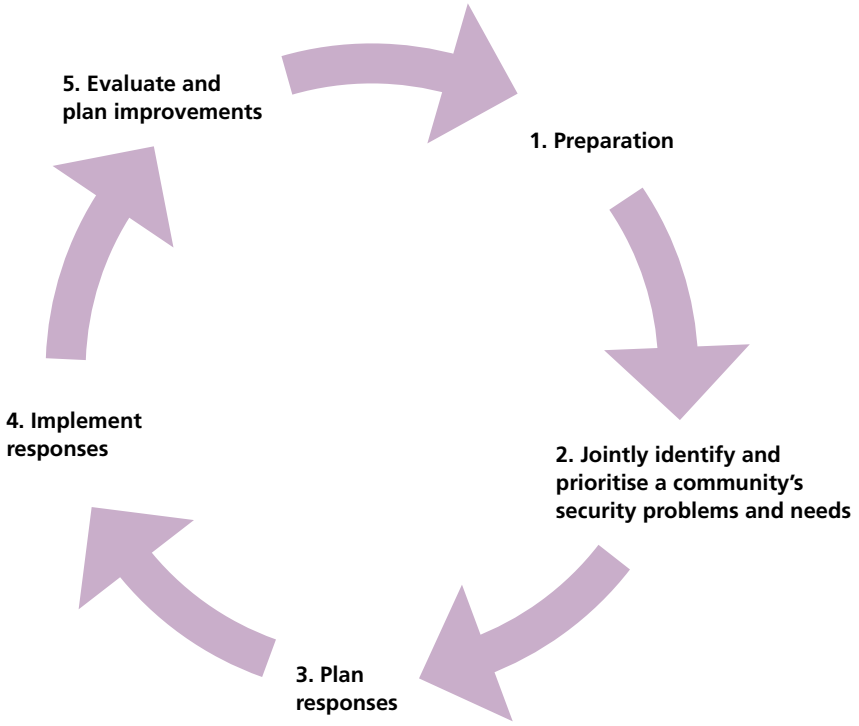
Flexibility is one of the main strengths of a community security approach. It builds the capacity and willingness of communities, local authorities and security providers to address their own sources of insecurity. It creates an enabling environment for wider reforms and more people-focused policies at the sub-national and national levels. While many agencies have a number of years' experience in designing and delivering

1 Coomaraswamy R (2015), *Preventing conflict, transforming justice, securing the peace, security the peace: A global study on the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325* (New York: United Nations), p 222.

2 Saferworld (2014), *Community Security Handbook*, available at: www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/806-community-security-handbook.

community-oriented approaches to security provision, for some it represents a new way of thinking.

Community security programmes use the following five-step approach, which is elaborated further in the *Community Security Handbook*:



Gender sensitivity

Saferworld is committed to ensuring that all of its programming is gender-sensitive but recognises that the term is used in a variety of different ways, alongside others such as 'gender-responsive' and 'gender-transformative'. In order to reach a shared definition of gender sensitivity that could be applied to our community security work, we held a discussion with a diverse group of colleagues from both policy and programming teams and adopted the definition outlined in Box 1.

Box 1: Definition of gender sensitivity

At a minimum, gender-sensitive approaches should avoid entrenching or exacerbating existing gender inequalities. As far as possible, gender-sensitive approaches aim to challenge those existing inequalities between and among women, men, and sexual and gender minorities, taking steps to promote gender justice and equality. Crucially, we note that in practice, **approaches that do not challenge unequal gender norms may tacitly reinforce them**. In order to avoid this, **it will usually be necessary to actively promote gender equality and challenge existing power structures in the course of the project**.

While this definition offers a guide to what to aim for, we also developed principles that set out how this should be applied to community security programming (see Box 2). As gender norms differ greatly across contexts, there is no 'one size fits all' approach; these principles need to be flexible enough to be adapted according to the context, but still offer clear guidance.

While gender sensitivity should be seen as a part of conflict sensitivity, sometimes people see a tension between the two, as challenging existing gender roles and norms can sometimes create conflict within communities. However, addressing the underlying causes of conflict usually means challenging power structures that entrench inequality and injustice, which can itself create conflicts. In this respect, challenging gender norms is no different from other aspects of peacebuilding. Conflict sensitivity should not be a matter of leaving the status quo intact, thereby allowing social inequality

and injustice to persist, which can in turn fuel conflict. Instead, it means challenging the conditions that perpetuate tensions, but in dialogue with those who are most affected by existing and potential conflicts. Gender inequality can also be understood as a type of conflict, and so ignoring (and therefore tacitly reinforcing) gender inequalities is conflict-insensitive. In this sense, integrating gender into community security approaches helps bring another dimension of conflict and insecurity to the fore.

Box 2: Six principles for gender-sensitive community security projects

- Facilitate the equal participation of people of all genders from a range of ages and backgrounds at all stages of the process, including addressing specific gendered barriers to participation, while also mitigating risks of backlash.
- Ensure that women's, men's and gender minorities' security issues are identified and given equal consideration (that is, aiming to correct existing biases in how people think about what is an important security issue).
- Aim to create a safe environment in which people of all genders feel able to raise sensitive issues that may relate to cultural taboos around gender.
- Help communities to develop an analysis of how beliefs, attitudes and behaviours relating to gender may interact with security concerns, and to address that (including, but not limited to, GBV).
- Facilitate the development of respectful and productive relationships between local authorities, security providers and community members of all genders.
- Facilitate and promote an understanding that people of all genders have an important role to play in security provision and decision making on security issues.

Background and methodology

For this report we selected five different contexts – Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, South Sudan and Yemen – to compare how Saferworld teams and partners gender-sensitised community security programmes.[3] In addition to the diversity of conflict and gender dynamics in these countries, their community security projects are at different stages of maturity, with our programme in Yemen still in its pilot phase, while our work in Bangladesh and Kyrgyzstan has developed and adapted over five years.

Bangladesh has been plagued by political unrest and violence following the January 2014 elections, which heightened insecurity throughout the country. The situation has become increasingly precarious, with renewed violence erupting on the first anniversary of the elections and hundreds of reported deaths resulting from political violence. Countrywide strikes (hartals) are frequent and have badly affected the country, causing additional violence, disrupting people's livelihoods since travel is difficult and dangerous, and often forcing businesses to remain closed.

Bangladesh ranks 64th in the 2015 Global Gender Gap Index, the highest ranking of all the countries featured in this research.[4] Women occupy prominent positions in politics, including leading the most powerful political parties. However, nearly two out of every three women in Bangladesh are victims of some form of violence. Women have long been subjected to systemic violence at home and in public through dowry-related violence, rape, acid throwing, and sexual abuse. Moreover, many women in Bangladesh choose not to report violence committed against them because of persistent stigma surrounding rape, abuse, and domestic violence in the country.

Following an earlier pilot, in 2012 Saferworld and partner BRAC began a larger community security project in sixteen locations in five districts of south-western Bangladesh. Key security concerns identified by communities include domestic

3 This research forms part of a four-year project on community security in Bangladesh, South Sudan and Yemen, which is funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and began in 2012. In addition to these three countries, we chose to include case studies on our work in Kyrgyzstan and Nepal.

4 The *Global Gender Gap Index* was first introduced in 2006. It benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education and health criteria and ranks 145 countries, with those at the bottom facing the greatest gender gaps. http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/rankings/.

violence, gambling, early marriage, sexual harassment of women, and drug abuse. For this study, research was conducted in Faridpur, Gopalganj, Jessore and Satkhira.

In **Kyrgyzstan** the security situation is heavily shaped by its post-Soviet legacy of weak democratic institutions, a poorly adapting economy, over-centralised government, disputed borders, inter-ethnic tension, and a reliance on sometimes repressive law enforcement agencies. Political and inter-ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan in 2010 resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people,[5] and while time has passed since these events, the underlying causes of the violence – including poor governance, economic growth, and security and justice provision – have not been resolved.

Various forms of GBV remain prevalent across the country. Research suggests that bride kidnapping, though common before, has increased since the collapse of the Soviet Union,[6] with one United Nations Population Fund survey finding that 15 per cent of marriages were based on bride kidnapping.[7] Domestic violence is also prevalent in Kyrgyzstan, affecting nearly one in three women.[8] Although Kyrgyzstani law provides for women's right to shelter, social services and justice, a recent Human Rights Watch report found that the state was failing to take the problem seriously.[9] The country ranks 76th in the 2015 Global Gender Gap Index.

Saferworld has been working in Central Asia since 2009, conducting community security work in the Ferghana Valley that targets 15 communities in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. For reasons of time and resources, this research focuses only on locations inside Kyrgyzstan. These are all in the south of the country, and include a mixture of urban and rural locations: Amir Timur and Mady districts in Osh, Masaliev municipality in Batken, and Yrys municipality in Jalal-Abad. Key security concerns include corruption among law enforcement officials, ethnic tensions, radicalisation of youth, bride kidnapping, and domestic violence.

In **Nepal**, progress made since the signing of the peace agreement in 2006 has been overshadowed by the prolonged political deadlock, as well as a devastating series of earthquakes which hit the country in April and May 2015. Contention over the new constitution has polarised the political groups, sparking identity-based tensions around the country (linked to ethnicity, caste and other issues) including numerous bandhas (strikes) by different groups either opposing or demanding a state based on identity.

Nepal ranks 110th in the 2015 Global Gender Gap Index. The draft constitution put into effect in September 2015 brought improvements in language on social equality, while also entrenching certain gender-based inequalities. For example, while it includes a long list of fundamental rights, including for women, sexual and gender minorities, and various other marginalised groups, it also prevents women from passing citizenship onto their children if the father is a foreign national. Data is inconsistent, but studies indicate that almost half of women have experienced some form of GBV in their lives.[10] This ranges from verbal harassment to physical harassment, domestic violence and rape.

Saferworld's community security work in Nepal began in 2009. In partnership with the Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC) and Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre (CWIN), and other district-level partners, we are working in five districts. Data

5 Actual figures are disputed: see International Crisis Group (2010), 'Pogroms in Kyrgyzstan', August, p 18, www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/central-asia/kyrgyzstan/193%20The%20Pogroms%20in%20Kyrgyzstan.pdf.

6 World Bank (2011), 'World Development Report 2012 background paper: Kyrgyz country case study', p 30.

7 UNFPA (2013), 'Gender norms and practices in the questions of maternal health, reproductive health, family planning, fatherhood and domestic violence', p 10, available at www.unfpa.kg/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Gender-Norms-ENG.pdf.

8 National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, Ministry of Health and Measure DHS (2012), Kyrgyzstan Demographic and Health Survey, https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR283/FR283.pdf.

9 Human Rights Watch (2015), '"Call me when he tries to kill you": State response to domestic violence in Kyrgyzstan', https://www.hrw.org/node/282404.

10 Government of Nepal (2012), 'A Study on Gender-Based Violence Conducted in Selected Rural Districts of Nepal', p 50, available at http://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/OPMCMGECUGBVResearchFinal.pdf.

for this report was collected in Sunsari and Siraha districts, where we had previously implemented a two-year project.

South Sudan seceded from Sudan in 2011 with little national infrastructure, weak institutions, and a legacy of profound mistrust between communities still reeling from decades of civil war. After ten years of unstable peace following the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), South Sudan relapsed from sporadic state-level violence into outright civil war in late-2013 when the President accused his deputy of launching a coup. Since then, 2.8 million people are thought to have been displaced, and more than 100,000 killed, while tens of thousands face starvation. The national conflict has ignited violence at all levels, with well-armed local militias being drawn in and large-scale human rights abuses committed, including high levels of GBV.

South Sudan does not feature on the 2015 Global Gender Gap Index. However, though gender norms and expectations vary between South Sudan's numerous ethnic and religious groups, violence against women is widespread. Domestic violence in particular is very common. This partially results from a strongly patriarchal system in which decision making at all levels is the responsibility of men, and is further compounded by the practice of dowry, which assigns women an economic value that often results in their being treated as 'assets' or 'belongings' rather than as autonomous individuals with their own rights.

Saferworld is implementing community security work in eight of South Sudan's ten states, addressing local security concerns including cattle raiding, lack of basic resources, ethnic tensions, and domestic violence. For the purposes of this research, data was gathered in Wau (Western Bahr al Ghazal state), Kuajok and Tonj North (Warrap state).

Yemen faces a range of insecurities and conflicts. The current crisis unfolding in Yemen has roots in a political culture that promotes corruption and patronage among the country's political elites at the expense of the wider population, which experiences shortages in basic services, including water, healthcare, education, security and justice. In September and October 2014, the Houthi rebel group began a takeover of many governorates in Yemen, including the capital Sana'a. Also that month, a coalition led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia responded with a campaign of air strikes in key sites across the country, which are ongoing at the time of publication. The fighting has significantly worsened the humanitarian crisis, killing more than 6,400 people.[11]

Yemen occupies the bottom ranking in the 2015 Global Gender Gap Index. Women and girls are known to face severe social and political discrimination and though Yemen has signed almost all of the main international human rights treaties they are not put into practice, earning frequent criticism from international human rights groups.

With local partner the National Organisation for Community Development (NODS), Saferworld has piloted the community security approach in two communities in Ta'iz governorate. Ta'iz has been badly affected by the current crisis, with aerial bombardment and heavy ground fighting ongoing. While the focus of the project has changed since the violence escalated in March 2015, one of the two community security working groups (CSWGs) has continued to work at the very local level to mitigate the impacts of the increasing levels of violence.

For the purposes of this research, data was gathered through:

- reviewing project documents, including independent mid-term reviews conducted in Bangladesh, South Sudan and Yemen

11 United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2016), 'Statement to the Security Council on the humanitarian situation in Yemen, 15 April 2016', available at http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ASG%20Kang%20Statement%20on%20Yemen%20SecCo%2015Apr2016%20CAD.pdf.

- focus group discussions (FGDs) with CSWGs, Saferworld staff members, partner organisations, and community members who were not direct participants in the project. Separate FGDs were held with women and men, and in some cases different age and ethnic or religious groups, so as to facilitate honest discussion
- key informant interviews (KIIs) with important stakeholders in the community such as local authority figures, security providers and civil society organisations (CSOs)

In Spring 2013, consultations were held with communities in five districts of Bangladesh to identify people's security concerns. Here, women in Gopalganj provide feedback on the steps we took to make the process gender-sensitive. In Gopalganj, communities identified issues such as drug abuse, early marriage and violence against women among their top security concerns.

Quotations from participants have been included throughout this report, and have been anonymised in order that respondents cannot be identified.

Research locations were selected according to expected diversity of the findings based on the knowledge of our regional teams. Data was gathered by a combination of staff from Saferworld's London headquarters and independent consultants, sometimes with the help of a translator. Because the research questions were addressing the effectiveness of Saferworld's community security programmes, every effort was made to ensure that the researchers asking the questions were not people who were directly involved in the day-to-day running of the project. In the case of Yemen, staff travel from Saferworld's London office was restricted at times due to the security situation and particularly heightened threats against foreigners. From March 2015, travel by national staff from Sana'a to the project locations in Ta'iz also became impossible due to the security situation. We were therefore only able to speak to Saferworld staff and partners remotely, and did not speak directly to CSWGs or other community members for this research.

The chosen research methods do pose certain limitations. The findings are based on the subjective perceptions of people who are involved in the project or who live in the communities where project activities have taken place. Speaking to a range of different actors has enabled us to validate the findings to some extent by checking people's responses against each other. Nonetheless, as with all perceptions-based data, allowances must be made for the influence of bias, selective or incomplete memory, and group dynamics.

1

Making community security programmes gender-sensitive

THIS CHAPTER SETS OUT HOW COMMUNITY SECURITY PROGRAMMES can be made gender-sensitive at each stage of the community security cycle, and is intended to be used alongside the *Community Security Handbook* to assist with designing gender-sensitive community security projects. As noted in the introduction, what a gender-sensitive approach looks like in practice may vary considerably in different locations, depending on gender norms and dynamics of the context. Therefore, rather than provide a definitive guide as to how to make community security projects gender-sensitive, this chapter sets out how Saferworld put the principles for gender sensitivity into practice at each stage of the community security cycle in a diverse range of contexts.

A brief description of the purpose of each stage of the project cycle is included below, using the same headings as in chapters 3–7 of the *Community Security Handbook*, which provides more detail on the purpose of each stage of the cycle and rationale for this design. This chapter also includes some reflections on successes and challenges in making community security gender-sensitive, which are intended to be used by organisations interested in implementing community security programmes.

What becomes clear from the research is that the most effective way to be gender-sensitive is to build it into the project right from the start: not only from the day that project activities begin, but throughout the planning process, including when budgets are being put together. Dedicated time and resources are needed to allow for necessary training, capacity building and monitoring to ensure that commitments to gender sensitivity are being met. Additionally, activities may need to be structured differently, for example to allow for separate discussions with men and women.

1. Conflict and context analyses

A thorough analysis of conflict drivers, actors and dynamics is an important starting point for all programmes in conflict-affected contexts. A conflict analysis can help to determine whether community security is the right kind of intervention for the context, as well as providing crucial information to ensure that the project does no harm, both to conflict and gender dynamics. Having this initial analysis will also help later on, when CSWGs are identifying the security problems and needs of their communities.

In all five countries, Saferworld undertook conflict and security assessments. These involved consultations with local stakeholders, including a diverse range of women and men in the communities, of different age, ethnic and religious groups, as well as the police, local authorities, informal or traditional security and justice providers, religious leaders, women's organisations and other civil society groups. Where it

proved challenging to engage with equal numbers of women and men we sought to understand and address gender-specific barriers to participation. For example, in Bangladesh the project team identified that it may be more difficult for women to participate in focus groups because they have the double burden of paid employment and unpaid work in the home. In response, the team asked the participants to suggest the time and place to hold the FGD to ensure it was more convenient for them. In some cases, women had asked their husbands to do their housework for the day so that they could attend – a model that could perhaps be replicated elsewhere.

Box 3: Sexual and gender minorities

Ensuring that sexual and gender minorities, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex[12] individuals, are included in community security projects and their needs are addressed has proved extremely challenging. In all five countries considered here, as elsewhere, there exists social stigma against people who are not heterosexual and cisgender.[13] This creates a strong disincentive for people to openly identify themselves as sexual and gender minorities, making it difficult to ensure that they are invited to participate in community security projects. In some contexts, discriminatory and repressive laws make this even more challenging.

One context where Saferworld has made some positive steps in this regard is Nepal, where there is a legally recognised third gender, thanks to strong advocacy from organisations promoting the rights of sexual and gender minorities, such as the Blue Diamond Society. People have the option to identify themselves on official documents as 'sexual and gender minority' or tesro lingi ('third gender'). There is some ambiguity over the meaning of the term, with the government using it to refer to sexual and gender minorities in general, although many lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people do not identify with the term. Many people in the communities where Saferworld works understand it to refer only to people who cross-dress. Sexual and gender minorities experience widespread discrimination, harassment and violence, including rejection by their families and prejudice from service providers including security personnel and health workers.

While there are outspoken groups of activists in some locations in Nepal, at the village level there are far fewer people who openly identify themselves as belonging to sexual and gender minorities. Saferworld ensures that its trainings on gender for staff, partners and CSWGs include discussions on sexual and gender minorities and the challenges they face. Saferworld in Nepal also encourages members of the sexual and gender minorities to participate in CSWGs and has been successful in getting them on board, particularly in Sunsari and Banke. However, these participants continued to face challenges in gaining acceptance from other CSWG members, who often did not understand their identities and were not easily willing to include and/or prioritise the concerns of sexual and gender minorities.

In all five countries, Saferworld and partners identified that it would be better to hold separate FGDs with women and men as it was felt that local gender norms would make it difficult for women, and in some cases men, to speak openly about their security concerns in a mixed-sex environment. This was especially useful in identifying forms of GBV as a security concern in all contexts (see pages 20 and 34 for more on this).

In most cases, teams also held some mixed-sex groups either because the demographic being targeted – such as teachers or local service providers – included both women and men or as a strategic way to build the understanding of each group around each other's security concerns:

"When I was in the women's group I always felt that men need to be part of those discussions so they can hear about women's concerns."

Young Madhesi woman, CSWG member, Baharaul/Sunsari, Nepal, November 2014

The team in Nepal found this to be a useful way of reinforcing to members that people of all genders have serious and legitimate concerns, and that GBV is a community security issue, rather than something confined to the private sphere of the home. However, before holding mixed-sex consultations they held separate consultations with men, women and sexual and gender minorities in order to build people's confidence to

12 The word 'intersex' refers to people who are born with anatomical characteristics that do not fit within the binary categories of 'male' and 'female'.

13 The word 'cisgender' or 'cis' refers to people whose self-identity conforms to the sex they were assigned at birth. It is an antonym to the word 'transgender'.

talk about security issues. In some cases some gender sensitisation work was done in order to prepare participants to discuss security issues in a mixed setting.

However, gender dynamics in mixed-sex groups need to be carefully monitored. In Bangladesh, some male participants reported that they preferred the mixed-sex groups because they got to hear a wide range of views, while many female participants felt that men dominated the mixed sessions. To counteract this, facilitators sometimes asked the men to give the women space to speak, saying: "What you have said is okay. Now let us listen to the sister." Despite this, both men and women appreciated the opportunity to learn about each other's security concerns.

Asking participants about their gender-specific security concerns helped to ensure the analysis included the concerns of all groups. Asking them whether there were security concerns that were specific to people of other genders in some cases also revealed gaps in perceptions between people of different genders. Additionally, phrasing questions to encourage participants to identify a wide range of security threats both inside and outside the home helped to reveal issues, such as domestic violence, which people may not usually think of as 'security' issues. For example, during community security consultations in Tonj North, South Sudan, when a women-only focus group was asked if there were any security problems that particularly affected women, the researcher was surprised to find that intimate partner violence[14] was not mentioned. Only when the researcher asked directly whether men beat their wives did the women explain that violence against women by their husbands was very common. Where certain types of violence are either accepted and normalised or made invisible by social taboos, careful questioning is needed to find information about it.

It is vital that the group facilitator is able to manage discussion of sensitive and potentially upsetting issues, impress the importance of privacy and confidentiality, and make clear that participants are not expected to disclose personal experiences of violence committed against them if they do not want to, particularly where doing so may be re-traumatising or put them at risk. The risk of psychological distress when discussing violence and insecurity has proved a particular challenge, and is covered in greater detail on page 36. In addition, some issues are too sensitive to come out in the initial assessment process and will only emerge as an ongoing relationship develops between project partners and communities.

2. Developing programme-level theories of change

Developing a theory of change challenges programme designers to be clear about the purpose of their work and the rationale behind it. It stimulates important thinking about what is achievable and how. Once formulated a theory can be monitored and evaluated over time to see whether it stands up in practice. For community security programmes to effectively pursue changes in gender relations it is helpful to have these ambitions explicitly reflected in theories of change.

For example, in Nepal, women are severely under-represented in the security sector at the local level, particularly in remote locations. GBV remains a key cause of insecurity, especially for many women and girls, and the lack of female police officers is one of several barriers to women and girls reporting cases of violence against them. A theory of change to address this through a community security programme might look something like the following:

14 The term 'intimate partner violence' refers to violence (including physical, sexual and psychological harm) committed by a person against a current or former partner or spouse.

If…	Then…	This is because…
Saferworld works with CSWGs to increase their capacity on gender-sensitive approaches and supports them to effectively advocate for the deployment of female police officers to their villages…	Local security providers will deploy female police officers at the Village and District Development Committee level…	They are under pressure from the community. In turn, women will be more likely to report GBV cases to the police, because they will feel more comfortable reporting to a female officer.

As with any theory of change, it is necessary to revisit it regularly throughout the programme to assess whether the assumptions contained within it still hold, or whether it should be revised in light of new evidence.

3. Deciding where to work: identifying appropriate communities and environments

When designing a programme and deciding where to work, it is important to show that clear values, objectives and criteria have been used when selecting communities, that the selection process has not been unduly influenced by any particular actor's interest, and that the fairness of the process is underpinned by transparency.

Shortlisting and detailed profiling of communities, including their make-up, key actors, resources, causes of conflict and insecurity, and likely attitude towards external engagement (albeit through local partners), is essential before starting a programme. In particular, the conflict analysis should help highlight the implications of working with one community or another. At this stage, it is important to take into account factors relating to gender that were identified in the initial context analysis. For example, if GBV is one of the most important security concerns in a community, implementing organisations must consider whether they are equipped to support CSWGs to address it. Furthermore, understanding what services are currently available in the community for survivors of GBV, such as shelter and psychosocial support, will help determine whether it is possible to develop activities to address GBV in a way that does not put survivors at risk. This issue is explored further in chapter 3, page 36. While none of these factors need to put a definite halt to planning a community security project – as capacity can be built where it does not exist already – it is important to assess whether this is feasible in the context of the project.

4. Identifying partners and building local capacity to use community security approaches

CSOs and other local associations or structures are critical to the success of community security programmes. The right partners can provide the legitimacy and consistency of engagement and contextual understanding that external actors might lack, and their presence can help ensure the sustainability of any changes resulting from an intervention.

Along with factors such as transparency, impartiality, and accountability, experience in and attitude towards working in a gender-sensitive way is one of the key criteria that Saferworld has included when selecting partner organisations. In Bangladesh, for example, we have partnered with BRAC, which has a strong history of working on gender issues. They work closely with local women's groups known as the *Polli Shomaj*, making them a strong choice of partner for implementing gender-sensitive community security work in Bangladesh.

Where selected partners do not have strong capacity to work on gender but have been selected on the basis of other strengths, a clear plan for capacity building should be included. Even where partners have worked on gender in the past, it is still important to spend time ensuring that there is a shared understanding among the project team of what it means to take a gender-sensitive approach to community security. In particular, because 'gender' is often understood to be synonymous with 'women', or to simply

mean that all projects should include 50 per cent female participants, it is important to reach a mutual understanding of how concepts and principles are being applied.

Staff from Saferworld's Yemen team and partner NODS participate in a capacity building workshop on gender sensitivity in August 2013.
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Box 4: Gender capacity building in Yemen

As part of the setup phase of the pilot community security project in Yemen, Saferworld and its partner, NODS, held a joint capacity building workshop to agree how to integrate gender sensitivity throughout the project. In the workshop, both organisations shared their experiences working on gender in the past, and worked together to:

- Agree on how 'gender' is defined, and why it is relevant to community security
- Analyse how gender norms in Ta'iz relate to the security problems that had been identified in the project locations
- Agree on a set of key principles for gender sensitivity to be implemented throughout the project
- Discuss how these principles would be applied at each stage of the community security cycle
- Raise any concerns the teams had over specific issues, such as how they would identify women who were willing to join the CSWGs
- Discuss how they would monitor the gender sensitivity of their approach throughout the project

The teams agreed that they had a collective responsibility to uphold the principles of gender sensitivity, and also decided to appoint a gender champion in the NODS team who would have a specific responsibility for reminding the teams of this commitment. She then also participated in another Saferworld project on gender, ensuring learning from each project was carried into the other.

"She was the person who was always pushing the gender agenda as part of the project. She would always be bringing the gender sensitivity angle in. I personally saw a huge evolution within her way of addressing issues and talking about them from a gender-sensitive perspective."

Female Saferworld team member, Yemen, October 2015

5. Establishing community security working groups

CSWGs convene and facilitate the community security process at local level, and form the heart of the community security approach. In each of our focus countries these entities took on slightly different names, but for the purpose of this research – as in the *Community Security Handbook* – we refer to them as CSWGs throughout, with the exception of Kyrgyzstan (see Box 5 below). CSWGs are made up of a cross section of the community they come from and include representatives from existing local organisations and entities. These groups work to collectively identify and address the communities' security needs.

Saferworld aims to make the gender balance of the CSWGs as representative of the wider communities as possible, including men and women from a range of different backgrounds. As with community consultations, it may be necessary to examine gender-specific barriers to participation and find ways to overcome them. Ensuring women's equal participation in the CSWGs was challenging in all five contexts.

At one location in Yemen, it was initially difficult to find women who were willing to participate. However, the project's gender champion was able to get a woman who was influential in the community to convene a meeting in her house, where she gathered local women and was able to persuade some of them to join the CSWG.

A major barrier to women's participation in most contexts was the cultural expectation that women needed the permission of family members – particularly husbands and fathers – before joining CSWG meetings. In Kyrgyzstan husbands and fathers of female participants were unwilling to let them attend training sessions, especially when these took place outside of their locale. Where women needed permission to attend the CSWGs, or were allowed to attend only if accompanied by a male relative, Saferworld was faced with a dilemma: paying for family members to attend and risk reinforcing gender inequalities; or choosing not to pay and risk women not attending. A phased approach has helped, whereby the male relative accompanied a female participant to the first training in order to be more comfortable letting her go on her own the next time.

In 2015 Saferworld supported the Local Crime Prevention Centre (LCPC) in Suzak to reestablish itself. By relocating their building and making the membership of the group more diverse the LCPC has seen improved relationships between local communities and authorities, and a reduction in crime in the neighbourhood.

Box 5: Local Crime Prevention Centres in Kyrgyzstan

Unlike in other contexts, where Saferworld has set up community security groups from scratch, in Kyrgyzstan there were already appropriate existing structures for Saferworld to work with, namely Local Crime Prevention Centres (LCPCs). These are intended to provide a forum where local authorities, law enforcement agencies and community members can work together to address their security concerns. It was felt that using existing structures with a basis in Kyrgyz law would make the project outcomes more sustainable as the groups were more likely to continue their work after the project had ended.

The structure of LCPCs is mandated in Kyrgyz law. Each one consists of the local elder court, a youth committee, a women's committee, and the heads of local villages. In some cases, local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and activists may also be granted membership of the LCPC. Apart from the women's committees, all of these component groups are overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, male, particularly in more socially conservative areas. Therefore, while women's membership of the LCPCs is enshrined in law through the women's committees, in practice this structure ensures that they will be a small minority in each centre. Nonetheless, in some areas, the number of women becoming heads of villages or members of elder courts is gradually increasing.

To encourage participation in South Sudan, membership of CSWGs was decided by nomination within the community. While this was intended to ensure that all participants had the acceptance of the community, thereby removing that particular

barrier to women playing an active role, it meant that those selected were likely to be those more readily approved by the community rather than people who were already marginalised, meaning the latter were unable to be part of the CSWG. Nonetheless, in a number of project locations in South Sudan, where cultural norms do not allow women to speak when their elders are in the group, the team chose to form additional women-only CSWGs at the request of women in the community who felt this was a more effective way to discuss security issues perceived as too sensitive for a mixed-gender group.

Gender is not always the sole or biggest barrier to participation, and ensuring diversity among women and men in the CSWG can also be a challenge. In Sunsari and Siraha in Nepal, Saferworld and partners identified ethnic Madhesi women as being particularly hard to reach, and so developed specific outreach strategies. For example, non-Madhesi women on the CSWGs spent time with Madhesi families who were worried that their daughters or wives might have indecent contact with men in the CSWGs; they explained what the CSWGs were doing, and what the role of the women would be. Having separate discussions with Madhesi women before and during group formation was seen as useful to make them feel comfortable with sharing their concerns. Securing the participation of sexual and gender minorities also proved challenging, but Saferworld's local partners approached NGOs that work with sexual and gender minorities to identify people to join the CSWG and support them to comfortably voice their safety and security concerns. Continued trust-building among the CSWG group members was needed in order to make it a safe space, which included facilitating discussions to demystify the language relating to gender identity and sexual orientation.

In addition to the composition of CSWGs, there is a need to monitor whether diverse women, men and sexual and gender minorities feel they have equal opportunities to speak and be heard in CSWG meetings. For example, Saferworld and BRAC in Bangladesh acknowledged that many women were not comfortable speaking in a public forum as they lacked confidence and were not used to speaking in front of men who were not their immediate family. To help address this, members of the *Polli Shomaj* women's groups were included in the CSWGs as they had more experience of speaking in public meetings, and the hope was that this would encourage more women to actively participate in CSWG meetings. Saferworld teams in all five countries stressed the importance of the role of the facilitator in such meetings in encouraging equal participation.

6. Developing relationships with key stakeholders

The *Community Security Handbook* notes the importance of engaging with key stakeholders in the community in order to secure their buy-in for the process, whether they are influential actors such as local authorities or security providers, potential spoilers, or both. In relation to gender sensitivity, it is also worth considering who might need to be involved to ensure the process is inclusive or to respond to gender-specific security needs.

For example, if GBV is raised as a security concern – as it has been in most contexts – it is likely to be advantageous to develop relationships with organisations or initiatives working on GBV, if they exist locally. Even if CSWGs do not choose to work on GBV as a priority issue, it is not uncommon for individuals in the community to report cases of GBV to CSWGs and ask them to deal with them. In such cases, having relationships with organisations who offer services to survivors of GBV will be important. In Nepal, for example, Saferworld set up platforms of NGOs focusing on women, gender, human rights, and related fields, who could work with the CSWGs. The platform members included organisations that provide individualised support to survivors of GBV, and through the project they began referring cases to one another in order to access different services, resulting in better outcomes for survivors. Local NGOs who work with sexual and gender minorities were also crucial to ensuring and sustaining the participation of those groups.

7. Identifying and prioritising communities' security problems and needs

Although an assessment of community security needs will have been conducted by this stage, supporting a lighter-touch, community-led analysis builds on the earlier conflict analysis and helps communities identify and prioritise their own security concerns and determine what actions they can take. This is crucial if the procedure is to be democratic and reflective of actual community needs.

CSWGs used similar methods to the initial context analysis to identify their communities' security needs: a combination of FGDs and KIIs. The same gender sensitivity considerations therefore also apply to this process (see pages 8–10).

As with all activities of the CSWGs, it is necessary to ensure that women and men have an equal say in the problem prioritisation process. This should ensure that, for example, security concerns that are of particular relevance to women are not deprioritised on the basis that men are less affected. Teams noted that while women were involved in the discussion on prioritisation, how actively they participated and the reception from other members varied in each context. In most contexts, there was a tendency for men to dominate conversations, but this often changed over time, as women's confidence grew and facilitators helped to encourage everyone to give each other space to speak:

"In the beginning we were a bit scared to speak but then we were encouraged and now we can speak. Meetings are quite frequent so we got to know each other and built networks, which helped."

Young female CSWG member, Bahraul, Sunsari, Nepal, November 2014

Again, gender is not the only or primary barrier in all cases: in Nepal, it was perceived that women of so-called higher caste backgrounds such as Brahmin and Chhetri were more outspoken and heard above others – even, in some cases, men belonging to marginalised groups. There were similar experiences in South Sudan, where discussions were initiated and dominated by elder men. While women and youth members later felt their confidence grow when speaking in group sessions, the focus should not only be on building the confidence of the more marginalised members but also on challenging the notion that some individuals have a greater right to speak on the basis of their gender, age or ethnicity.

In Yemen, CSWG members were trained in facilitation techniques and guided through the problem prioritisation process. Men and women had different ideas about which issues should be prioritised:

"When we broke it down into details, the contrast in views came out. For example, the idea of children harassment, violence against children and domestic violence was raised to an extent from the females, but not the males. The men were more focused on the relationships with security providers. Women focused on child labour and harassment."

Male Saferworld team member, Yemen, November 2015

The CSWG members then agreed on a set of criteria for prioritising the security concerns they had identified, and with careful facilitation to ensure that everyone was able to put their case across, reached an agreement to prioritise two issues in each location, which included both preventing child labour and improving community relationships with security providers.

8. Analysing problems and planning responses: developing an action plan

Action planning is the process by which CSWGs, local authorities and security/justice providers articulate their objectives, activities, roles and responsibilities for addressing the security concerns they have prioritised. Together, they develop a plan that clearly outlines a roadmap for activities that is realistic and achievable and will yield visible results. The core component of action plans should be a clear statement of workable, time-bound actions that stakeholders will implement – with a clear allocation of responsibility for progress.

A young man guards the herd at Lakatoc cattle camp, Tonj North. Boys look after the cattle at the camps while young men, often armed to protect themselves and their cattle, move the cattle to graze during the day. Conflict increases during the dry season as cattle keepers are forced to move in search of grassland and water sources, creating risks of confrontation with other communities.

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When communities analyse the causes of and solutions to their security concerns, it is important to look at whether and how gender norms might cause or exacerbate these problems, in order to identify effective solutions. In South Sudan, where cattle raiding has been one of the biggest security problems for rural communities, CSWGs have readily highlighted that constructions of masculinity, reinforced by the bride price system, provided strong incentives for young men to engage in cattle raiding.[15] In other cases, it can be harder to draw out the links between gender norms and security problems, and some support may be needed for CSWGs to do this analysis. For example, in Nepal CSWGs were quick to identify the gendered impacts of specific types of insecurity, but it was more challenging to get the groups to analyse how gender norms contribute to conflict, insecurity and violence.[16] This is particularly difficult where 'gender' is understood to refer specifically to women, and is not used as a lens for analysing men's attitudes and behaviours. This can mean that deeper causes of security problems are not addressed: for example, as detailed in chapter 3, action plans address factors that trigger incidents of violence by men against their female partners, such as alcohol abuse and gambling, but do not always challenge the discriminatory attitudes towards women that often underpin such violence.

In Bangladesh, Saferworld conducted a training session on problem analysis and solution identification with BRAC field staff, which they subsequently delivered to CSWG members. This session included a specific focus on ensuring that gender considerations were included at each stage of the process. When analysing the causes of a security problem, participants were asked to think about how ideas about masculinity and femininity influence men's and women's behaviour in relation to the problem and potential solutions. While training offers one strategy for helping people to think how gender norms should be included in problem analysis, ongoing monitoring and support is needed to ensure that CSWGs include this when they do their own analysis.

9. Implementing the action plan

Ensuring the physical security of families and communities is often perceived to be the role of men – and, frequently, older men from privileged ethnic and socioeconomic groups. The implementation of community security action plans can provide an important opportunity to begin to challenge that norm by taking a more inclusive approach.

15 Saferworld (2014), 'Masculinities, conflict and peacebuilding: Perspectives on men through a gender lens', p 7.

16 As a result of this, a report was developed targeting Nepali NGO practitioners and community-based organisations to help with integrating gender and gender sensitivity within community security training and outreach. Saferworld, IHRICON, et al (2014), 'A gender sensitivity resource pack: Community safety training, outreach, and advocacy in Nepal', www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/793-a-gender-sensitivity-resource-pack.

In most cases, CSWGs actively involved both women and men in implementing their action plans, although in some cases there were difficulties that need continual monitoring. For example, in Yemen, the team perceived that some male CSWG members were not always open to women playing an equal role in the CSWG's planned activities, but Saferworld and NODS kept discussing the need to take a more inclusive approach:

"There is this challenge with [*the more rural location*] *Ta'izia that men* [*in the CSWG*] *will have phone calls, decide what to do, start doing stuff and then inform the women later. The men started talking about the* [*CSWG*] *activities they were doing, but we made sure they included everyone… Even Muthafar, the idea of empowering women was needed. Generally, in planning activities and implementing them, when we started working with the community they adopted the idea of empowering women, especially at the end."*

Saferworld team member, Yemen, November 2015

In other cases, women and men were actively involved in implementing the action plans, but tended to stick to traditionally prescribed gender roles. For example, when cases of domestic violence came up in Bangladesh, some of the CSWGs sent their female members to speak to the survivors and perpetrators, whereas the male members would go to the police station, as it is considered 'improper' for women to visit the station by themselves. The BRAC team identified that this was a missed opportunity to challenge that gendered norm, and began to encourage women in the CSWGs to accompany the men to interact with local security providers. They hoped that this would not only build the women's confidence to do so but would also begin to change the perceptions within the community and the police about women being in police stations.

However, the BRAC team also noted that it is not enough to simply encourage women to get involved, particularly where that means interacting with security providers who may be discriminatory and even abusive:

"Even though I live in the capital city where women enjoy a lot of freedom, I would not allow my wife go to the police station. Knowing that she is there would make me feel very uncomfortable. If we want to remove barriers to women empowerment, police need to be provided training on gender sensitiveness that will help change their attitude and mindset about women."

BRAC field officer, Bangladesh, November 2015

In cases such as this, it may be necessary to develop specific strategies to build relationships between security providers and women or other marginalised groups. Where there are both male and female security providers, it will be advantageous to ensure that both are invited to participate in dialogue with the community, as this may help to build confidence. If there are no female security providers, this could become an advocacy objective for the project. In Nepal and South Sudan, for example, CSWGs successfully advocated for the appointment of female police officers in locations where previously there were none (see page 28 for more details from Nepal). When advocacy is undertaken it is important to target security providers so that they understand the need to deploy female police officers, create appropriate and safe infrastructure for them to be able to carry out their duties, and ensure that protection policies are in place to prevent GBV within the security organisation itself.

10. Influencing national level policy and practice/advocacy

Alongside local-level engagement it is necessary to increase the capacity and political will of sub-national and national authorities to provide the services that people need. Aside from capacity gaps, further barriers to this may include discriminatory norms and laws, non-compliance with human rights standards, hybrid formal and non-formal security and justice providers and procedures, and a lack of accountability across security and justice institutions. Community security approaches attempt to address insecurity holistically through a combination of actions at different levels.

When advocating for decision makers at the local, national and international levels to adopt a community security approach, it is important that experience and learning on gender-sensitive approaches is incorporated into advocacy messages. Gender considerations in the context analysis are also important at this stage. For example, where the community security programme aims to connect with national security sector reform processes, knowing whether authorities have made any commitments to gender sensitivity in this process can help with tailoring advocacy messages. It may also help to identify key stakeholders who may be advocacy targets, such as a Ministry of Women's Affairs, international NGOs working on gender issues, or key government policies such as gender equality legislation or national action plans on UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

11. Monitoring, evaluation and learning

A participatory approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) involves bringing communities together to discuss the impacts, challenges, and future direction of their community security programmes. It also gives the broader community greater ownership of the projects and ensures they determine success according to their own criteria and understanding of the context.

Saferworld records outcomes on an ongoing basis through semi-structured CSWG meetings and reviews in addition to annual evaluation meetings to measure progress. During the action planning, it is important to encourage communities to think clearly about what changes they want to measure (indicators), what information they can collect, where they will find it, and who will be responsible for it. In deciding what to measure, it is important to refer back to theories of change, including those related specifically to gender dynamics. For example, if the project is seeking to promote young women's participation in the community security cycle, then it is important to include relevant indicators – for instance, tracking the extent to which young women not only attend meetings, but how confidently they speak about the issues affecting them and successfully argue for them to be addressed. Saferworld teams have used perception indicators disaggregated by gender to collect opinions from men and women on the changes achieved by the project activities and the changes to gender dynamics especially, such as how issues related to women's and men's security are prioritised and addressed in CSWG meetings.

2

Does taking a gender-sensitive approach to community security improve its outcomes?

THIS CHAPTER SETS OUT THE DIFFERENT WAYS in which Saferworld has found the gender-sensitive approaches described in chapter 1 to have increased the effectiveness of community security programmes across the five country contexts.

Gender-sensitive approaches are often justified on the basis that they help organisations better achieve their objectives including those not explicitly related to gender.[17] However, the UN Global Study on Women, Peace and Security emphasises that women's rights should be seen as an end in themselves and not an instrumental tool for achieving other goals.[18] For Saferworld, taking a gender-sensitive approach is part of its core commitment to human rights, equality and 'do no harm'.

Community security programmes are intended to further a range of objectives, including more inclusive decision making on security issues, and improving security for all sections of a community, including marginalised groups. If gender-sensitive approaches can be said to advance the rights of women, sexual and gender minorities, or other marginalised groups to access security and enable them to participate in the decision making that affects their lives, then this is in itself a measure of effectiveness. By gathering and disseminating evidence on how gender sensitivity makes community security more effective, we aim to reinforce the case for gender-sensitive approaches.

It is notable that, while Saferworld's approach to gender sensitivity emphasises that 'gender' is not synonymous with 'women', several of the positive outcomes outlined below relate specifically to women. This is despite the fact that the research team asked questions about the outcomes for both women and men. There are a number of possible reasons for this. It may be that the changes that were most obvious or visible related to women's behaviour, even though there were almost always corresponding changes in men's behaviour as well. It could be that, despite many of them having attended capacity building workshops stressing that men's lives are also shaped by gendered expectations, participants in the research found it more difficult to think about men's roles and behaviours in terms of gender. Certainly, given that gender-sensitive approaches seek to challenge gendered expectations which primarily disadvantage women, it is women who stand to benefit more from these efforts. However, the research also highlighted that 'women' and 'men' are far from being homogeneous categories, and paying

17 *Op cit* Coomaraswamy R (2015), p 135.
18 *Ibid*. p 222.

attention to the differences among women and men showed that gender is not the only, or sometimes even the main, form of oppression which defines how people experience insecurity or interact with community security projects.

Evidence from across the five countries' community security programmes highlighted how outcomes in the following areas were improved as a result of taking a gender-sensitive approach:

- a broader range of security concerns were included
- including men and women on the CSWGs changed the security issues that were prioritised and addressed
- diverse membership of the CSWGs increased legitimacy and enabled them to engage better with different sections of the communities
- participation in the CSWGs has helped especially women to gain confidence to overcome gendered expectations
- the families of female CSWG members started to accept their participation in community affairs
- the participation of a mixture of activist women and women with no history of activism helped make the CSWG effective and empowering
- focusing on gender sensitivity can also help to change gender norms within the project team
- women's participation in CSWGs has changed male CSWG members' attitudes towards women
- community security helped overcome gendered barriers to women engaging with security providers

A broader range of security concerns were identified:

Ensuring a gender-sensitive approach to conducting periodic assessments of communities' security needs, as outlined in chapter 1, helped to ensure more inclusive and nuanced understandings of the community's security problems than would have been possible had these steps not been taken.

In Yemen, violence against women was raised only in women-only focus groups with female facilitators. This is likely because of social taboos and lack of a strong public discourse around the issue, meaning that this was the only space women felt safe discussing such issues. In contrast, in other contexts, such as Bangladesh and Nepal, various forms of violence against women were raised as security concerns in both mixed-sex and men-only focus groups.

"The issues they raised in the mixed-sex groups were different. The issues of rape, domestic violence, harassment, they never come up in mixed groups. When we talked with the local authority there were some people who would talk about these things, but they weren't being specific. Even in women-only groups it's still not a comfortable topic for them to talk about, but we got more from the women's group than the mixed group."

Male Saferworld team member, Yemen, November 2015

It was not only violence against women that was of more concern to women than men. In Satkhira in Bangladesh, for example, women were more likely than men to raise the issue of political violence, which threatened the safety of their sons and husbands, and in Jessore they were worried about child labour as it was preventing their children from getting an education.

Even where men and women raise the same problems, analysing data with a gender lens can reveal that women and men are affected by the issue in different ways:

"The community are speaking about the problem of young men who are sitting on the side of the streets, bad young men; from men's perspective they are being problem-makers

for the community in general. The women have said they are getting harassed by these young men."

Male Saferworld team member, Yemen, December 2015

Having women and men represented on the CSWGs changed the kind of security issues that were prioritised and addressed:

It is difficult to know exactly how the list of security problems prioritised by the CSWGs would have been different with a less gender-balanced membership, however there are some indications that taking a gender-sensitive approach opened up the discussions. For example, in Yemen, the team reported that it was the female CSWG members who argued strongly for child labour to be addressed, and this was then prioritised in both locations. In Nepal, male CSWG members in Sunsari believed that had there been no women on the CSWG, they would have prioritised different issues:

"If it had been a men-only group, we would have discussed only male problems."

Male CSWG member, Bahraul, Sunsari, Nepal, November 2014

In Kyrgyzstan, because the LCPCs had previously been exclusively male, partner organisations who had been working with them before the women's and youth committees became members were able to identify how the LCPCs' priorities had changed as a result:

"As soon as women became members of the LCPC, domestic violence and school racketeering became priority issues, and crime among youth, which was raised by women. Men were talking more about cattle theft, traffic accidents, corruption – their agenda was different. When women raised these questions relating to the family it was a good shift."

Female team member from partner organisation, Kyrgyzstan, July 2015

The Saferworld team in Kyrgyzstan also identified that the introduction of youth committees into the LCPCs increased the extent to which reducing early marriage was prioritised.

Diverse membership of the CSWGs increased their legitimacy and enabled them to engage better with different sections of the communities:

"Female [*CSWG*] *members have a better relationship with the women in the community, so they can interact with them much better and much easier. Women had the strongest influence on women, so they got to a point where they couldn't continue conducting the project activities properly unless women* [*CSWG*] *members play a major role."*

Male Saferworld team member, Yemen, December 2015

In all five contexts, male and female CSWG members felt that having mixed-sex CSWGs made them better able to interact with other women and men in the community. An example raised in all five case studies related to how CSWGs respond to cases of domestic violence.

"In family conflicts, women would never talk to the men in the LCPC so we ask the women's committees to talk to them."

Male LCPC member, Masaliev, Kyrgyzstan, August 2015

Typically, in all five contexts, where a case of domestic violence is brought to the attention of the CSWG, a mixed-sex team of CSWG members goes to speak to the family, with women speaking to the women and men speaking to the men. One exception was found in South Sudan, where many respondents in Tonj North felt that older women were best placed to talk to couples who were having problems, including to husbands who were using violence against their wives. There was a perception that if a male CSWG member intervened, the husband might see this as an act of aggression, and might then blame the male CSWG member for interfering or even fuelling his marital problems:

"Women complain that they are always beaten by the men, even killed. As man you can't go and solve the problem. The man might even say that you are the reason why she doesn't respect me. But a woman can separate them. That's why we like women in our group."

Young male CSWG member, Tonj North, South Sudan, September 2015

Having a diverse age range among both women and men on CSWGs was also perceived to make them more effective, more accessible and more legitimate in the eyes of the community. For example, in South Sudan, older women on the CSWGs were seen as better able to influence young women in the community, while young men in Jebel Kheer had better access to their peers, including youth seen as causing security problems, such as gang members or cattle keepers. Some respondents also pointed to the potential role of male CSWG members in influencing men in their community to become activists against GBV:

"Young men [CSWG members] can talk to their age mates and convince them to go to school rather than harassing girls."

Older female CSWG member, Jebel Kheer, South Sudan, September 2015

"A good thing about being mixed is that we are tackling problems of all kinds of groups, we are not blamed for being biased, for example against women or the elderly."

Male CSWG member, Siraha, Nepal, November 2014

However, the gendered division of labour within CSWGs may not always be evidence of gender sensitivity done well, particularly where it reinforces restrictive gender norms and inequalities:

A male community member discusses local safety and security issues during a meeting with government officials and CSOs about Saferworld's community security project in Sunsari, Nepal.

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Box 6: Reinforcing gender norms and inequalities

"Some roles are better played by men while women are better at others"

Male CSWG member in Satkhira, Bangladesh, November 2015

As noted in chapter 1, in some communities in Bangladesh, CSWG members related that in cases of domestic violence, female CSWG members would speak to the victim or perpetrator, while men would (in some cases) go to the police station, which women did not feel comfortable doing as it was considered 'improper' in the community's eyes. While any risks to women who go to the police station should certainly be taken into account, continuing to divide these tasks along gendered lines misses an opportunity to challenge this stigma and build trust between women and the police.

Similarly, assumptions that women have qualities that make them natural peacemakers can not only reinforce the association between femininity and passivity that confines them to specific roles, but can also have the effect of exempting men from having to do particular kinds of work:

"Women have a softening effect on anything, that's why they are needed, such as a difficult situation. They also think about gender equality more than men do – men usually ignore it."

Male LCPC member, Amir Timur, Kyrgyzstan, July 2015

Participation in the CSWGs has helped women to gain confidence to overcome gendered expectations

In many cases, female CSWG members reported that joining a CSWG had had knock-on effects in their lives. In some contexts, particularly in parts of Bangladesh, South Sudan and Yemen, women who were not already activists prior to joining the CSWGs had been largely confined to their homes before, and were not confident speaking in public, particularly in front of men or older women. This changed as a result of regular CSWG meetings and trainings:

"In the beginning women used to hesitate to open up, now they walk by our sides."
Male CSWG member in Trimohoni, Jessore, Bangladesh, November 2015

"People, especially women and youth, were reluctant to talk to stakeholders and had limited access to them. Now this has changed. We as [CSWG] members have received regular training which helped us to build our influence, but even other community members are more confident."
Male CSWG member, Siraha, Nepal, November 2014

In South Sudan, young women shared that they had overcome a reluctance to speak to the more senior women in the CSWG and how they now "understand each other" because of their longer-term interaction in the CSWG. Young men also reported that they now feel more confident to interact with women and girls in the community.

In several contexts, female CSWG members highlighted that having the confidence to solve problems has been an empowering experience. This was even more the case as community members were open to them, or even approached them to assist in addressing family or community disputes or tensions:

"I am happy now because if I see someone who is fighting I can solve this. They allow me to talk to them because they know we are the ones to solve the problem."
Female CSWG member, Agok, South Sudan, September 2015

"Earlier, we found it difficult to come out and voice our opinion. But since we've joined the [CSWG] we can speak more freely. This is not only good for us, but also for people around us who feel comfortable to approach us when they have problems."
Senior female CSWG member, Dhanghadi, Siraha, Nepal, November 2014

This is a considerable outcome in contexts where women are routinely excluded from decision making, and where it is not seen as their role to become involved in community affairs. This is especially so in highly insecure contexts like South Sudan, where community members as a whole, and women in particular, may feel helpless in the face of the conflict and violence they experience on a daily basis. Many female CSWG members shared how their understanding of the role they had in the community had changed, that they now felt that they did have an active role to play in public issues, including in security and peacebuilding. In Bangladesh, some female CSWG members were spurred on by their participation in the project to take on other roles within their communities. There were female members in several of the CSWGs who had run or who wanted to run in the local elections, who felt they were unlikely to have had this aspiration were it not for their work with the CSWG.

The families of female CSWG members started to accept their participation in community affairs

In South Sudan, female CSWG members in Jebel Kheer shared that their husbands have become proud of their activities and accepted them having a life outside of the house:

"Before they said women can't even talk in front of others, now husbands are even proud because their wives talk in front of others."
Senior female CSWG member, Jebel Kheer, South Sudan, September 2015

Community security working group meeting in Kuajok, Warrap State, South Sudan.
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In Tonj North young men said that a wife who participated in the CSWG was now seen as a "good wife" – a significant change in a context where women are usually expected not to talk in public, especially not in front of men. Similarly, many women in Ta'iz, Yemen, had not participated in a community project before, often because of conservative social norms, but joining the CSWG helped them to gain acceptance from others for their participation in such initiatives.

"Two of the CSWG members went to Ibb to have a training there, and one of them told me this is the first time ever she travelled alone. It's not that far, but before, her family, they would tell her not to go and she would be afraid to do it… For someone who spent all her life between walls, to travel even one hour is scary. But the family started to understand and accept this kind of work."

Male Saferworld team member, Yemen, November 2015

In Bangladesh, some women said that their husbands had started helping with the housework so that they could participate in CSWG activities, although in other cases women were still expected to fulfil their traditional roles on top of their new responsibilities:

"And why should [our husbands] stop us? We come [to the CSWG] after doing all the chores at home: cooking, feeding, and cleaning."

Female CSWG member in Labsha, Satkhira, Bangladesh, November 2015

Alongside the positive changes there has also been some evidence of backlash from people who do not approve of women's activities in CSWGs. In Nepal, for example, some female CSWG members shared that they faced mistrust from their families for staying out late or being in touch with male community members, and they worried about other community members making judgements about their families because of their activities:

"We had a [CSWG] meeting near a well, and a lady was taking a bath only wearing a petticoat. A man came and starting gossiping that she was bathing in front of us, almost naked. But there was another man taking a bath wearing only short trousers, so I asked, why do you only accuse the woman? Then people accused me of coming to the community and trying to corrupt the social values."

Young female CSWG member, Dhangadhi, Siraha, Nepal, November 2014

The context analysis process conducted at the start of a community security project can be used to identify potential risks to participants and the project, so that mitigation strategies can be put in place. For example, holding community meetings to share information about the project and gain buy-in for the work of the CSWGs can help to

prevent backlash later. Practising how to respond to people resisting CSWGs' efforts to challenge gender norms may also help prepare members to de-escalate any potential tensions.

***Polli Shomaj* members at a meeting. Women who are part of the *Polli Shomaj* are often more experienced activists, who can encourage other women to be more vocal in community security processes.**
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The participation of a mixture of activist women and women with no history of activism helped make the CSWG effective and empowering

As noted in chapter 1, in some cases Saferworld and partners ensured the continued and active participation of women in the CSWGs by deliberately selecting women who were already active in their communities, such as the *Polli Shomaj* in Bangladesh. At the same time, they noted that this may be a missed opportunity to enable women who did not have this history of activism – including many from marginalised groups – to gain more skills and confidence. In fact, where CSWGs included a mixture of the two, the experience of more activist women helped others to take on new roles. For example, in Bangladesh, women from the *Polli Shomaj* were initially much more vocal, but having them present encouraged other women to begin to voice their concerns more over time. Similar perceptions were also noted in Yemen:

"One of the things that really helped was that we had a mix of women who had never been out and women who were activists who had been travelling all over. They used to travel to trainings in Istanbul and Sana'a and everywhere. It helped in influencing the other women – she can look at someone who can travel and do activities. This kind of encouragement – it's not only us, but also the variety in the group really helped."

Male Saferworld team member, Yemen, November 2015

Compared to the other countries, this research found relatively little evidence that women who had participated in the LCPCs in Kyrgyzstan experience other benefits, in terms of increased standing and influence in the community, or more accepting attitudes among family members to their participation in public life. One likely explanation for this is that most female LCPC members were already prominent activists before joining the LCPC, which again highlights the increased potential of a more diverse membership.

Focusing on gender sensitivity can also help to change gender norms within the project team

In Yemen, the team found that not only did gender norms begin to change within the CSWG, but also within the project team. At the beginning of the project, the local partner organisation's two female staff members played more limited roles; however,

as well as working to improve gender sensitivity in the way the project was run, over time the female coordinators took on greater responsibilities, challenging hierarchies within their own organisation. Ultimately, they played leading roles in the implementation of the project.

In turn, the team believed that having female staff playing prominent roles in the project team also had a positive influence on perceptions of women within the CSWG:

"Having women as coordinators helped – previously we had male coordinators and [*the two women*] *were the assistants.* [*Promoting them*] *helped to empower women in the organisation, and that kind of thing makes a difference to how the* [*CSWGs*] *are perceiving these women."*

Male Saferworld team member, Yemen, November 2015

Women's participation in CSWGs has changed male CSWG members' attitudes towards women

The research team looked for any evidence that seeing women working on the CSWGs had changed community perceptions about women's roles, and found that the strongest evidence of change was in the CSWGs themselves. In addition to female members feeling more confident and empowered, many male CSWG members also reported that their attitudes and behaviours towards women had changed.

"In the case of the LCPC, the role of women has increased a lot – sometimes even they manage us. When there are more women it improves the impact of the LCPC. It has changed my views on women's role."

Male LCPC member, Mady, Kyrgyzstan, July 2015

"We were determined to participate in the [*CSWG*] *meetings and contribute towards building peace in the communities. When male members started to understand the positive contribution we women can make in preventing violence and building peace in our community, they gradually began to give us more space."*

Female CSWG member, Jessore, Bangladesh, November 2015

"Earlier, men made us feel that only they are assertive but now we have shown that girls can equally do things, and we are confident."

Young female CSWG member, Baharaul, Sunsari, Nepal, November 2014

Most respondents felt that these changes resulted simply from seeing how effective women were in their work with the CSWGs. However, these changes in attitude were not universal. For example, one male LCPC member in Kyrgyzstan strongly opposed women's participation in resolving conflict, which he perceived to be men's job:

"I am against the idea that women have the capacity to resolve conflict. It's only the imam and the elderly court who can deal with these issues. Women can talk to men freely about their issues."

Male LCPC member, Masaliev, Kyrgyzstan, August 2015

This highlights that simply working alongside women on the CSWGs is not enough: there is a need for focused efforts to increase gender sensitivity among LCPC members, which requires dedicated budget and time set aside in project schedules.

Changes in male CSWG members' attitudes to women also extend beyond their work in the CSWGs, with many men reporting changes in the way they behaved towards women in their families as well:

"My wife works in a school. [*Since I joined the CSWG*] *I help her in the morning with the cooking and cleaning and I afterwards drop her at her workplace."*

Male CSWG member in Trimohoni, Jessore, Bangladesh, November 2015

Several male CSWG members in South Sudan shared how as a result of the work in the CSWG they had changed their behaviour towards their wives and had stopped beating

them.[19] Likewise, female CSWG members mentioned that they were now better able to peacefully resolve disputes with their husbands. There were also accounts of women using less violence in the upbringing of children:

"Before, I did not know how to talk. Now I get information and use it at home, for example not beating the children, and sending sons and daughters to school. I learned it through this group."

Senior female CSWG member, Kuajok, South Sudan, September 2015

Though the fact that some male CSWG members had previously been beating their wives was cause for reflection for the project team, it is not particularly surprising in a context where intimate partner violence is so prevalent and socially accepted. That these men changed their behaviour as a result of their participation in the CSWGs is positive, but only came to light incidentally during this research. Saferworld often deliberately includes people in CSWGs who have a degree of complicity in security problems they are trying to address, such as cattle keepers or police officers, as a strategy for changing their behaviour. However, this must be balanced with the need to avoid according (increased) social status to people responsible for abuses.

Village community police officer, Anwar Hossain Khan, talking with members of his community in Kachua, Bangladesh. Community security projects have helped women to engage more with security providers, although in parts of Bangladesh they still preferred to be accompanied by male CSWG members.

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Community security helped overcome gendered barriers to women engaging with security providers

"Before the [*CSWG*] *came* [*into action*]*, women did not know the responsibilities of the Chairman*[20] *and now they ask for their dues from him."*

Local authority official, Jessore, Bangladesh, November 2015

There were examples across all five countries of women engaging with security providers in ways that they had not done before the community security project due to local gender norms.

In Yemen there is a strong taboo about women interacting with police or going to police stations, particularly if they are not accompanied by a male relative. However, female CSWG members did eventually go to the police station without their male counterparts to discuss how to improve security provision for women:

"Previously, for a female to get into a police station, it was not a proper thing for the community at all, especially in Ta'izia. Now, being within a community group, that encouraged the [*CSWG*] *women to get into these meetings, visit the police station and*

19 The research team did not have the opportunity to confirm this information with the men's wives.
20 The Chairman is an elected official overseeing a local, district or municipal authority.

speak about the community concerns in general, and the women in particular. I think other people's perceptions of what those women are doing have also changed. They would not usually go to the police station to speak about a personal case for them."

Male Saferworld team member, Yemen, December 2015

In Nepal, as well as engaging with more government institutions, female CSWG members successfully advocated for the ten per cent of the Village Development Committee budget that is allocated for women's issues not be diverted to cover other costs such as road construction, as it had been in the past. In several locations, the CSWGs used the funds for activities to improve women's security, such as in Siraha district where a women-only group was formed that provides advice to women facing safety and security problems. CSWGs have also frequently identified the absence of female police officers as a barrier to women's access: as a result of their advocacy, female officers have been appointed in Ayodhyanagar in Siraha, Kachanapur in Banke, Singiya in Sunsari district, and most recently in Uttarganga in Surkhet district. Community members in Surkhet also provided female police officers with a safe place, as often the female officers themselves are at risk of GBV, particularly in remote locations.

As noted above, some gendered barriers still remain. For example, in Jessore and Satkhira, Bangladesh, female CSWG members still preferred to only go to the police if they were accompanied by male colleagues, and in South Sudan, negotiations between the CSWG and cattle keepers (who have an informal role in security provision) were happening without women's participation. In such cases, project teams must decide how best to help CSWGs to overcome these obstacles. In Yemen, the project team and CSWG held several public forums to increase trust and understanding between community members and police officers. Women were more comfortable meeting police officers in the community rather than at the station, and it allowed them to get to know the local chief of police better. After these interactions, female CSWG members felt more confident about engaging with police officers, and have subsequently attended meetings inside the police station.

These examples clearly demonstrate how taking a gender-sensitive approach can improve the outcomes of community security programmes. While many of the examples highlight benefits in terms of women's empowerment, they also show how a gender-sensitive approach can help to meet the needs of men, youth and other social groups. These were only possible with continued and careful attention to the needs of different groups, not only in terms of gender but also age, ethnicity, caste, and other aspects of identity and power.

In addition to the benefits outlined in this chapter, taking a gender-sensitive approach provided clear benefits in terms of the ability of community security programmes to identify and address various forms of GBV, which in some cases resulted in demonstrable reductions in its prevalence. The next chapter outlines our findings in relation to the question of how effective community security is as an approach to preventing and reducing GBV.

3

How effective is community security in preventing and reducing gender-based violence?

GENDER IS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR in determining who perpetrates and who experiences different types of violence. In this regard, it is plausible to argue that all acts of violence are shaped by gender dynamics.[21] However, for the purposes of this report, we employ a widely used (if contested) definition of GBV as physical, emotional and economic abuse that is directed against a person on the basis of their gender. It constitutes a breach of a person's fundamental human rights, physical and mental integrity, and exacerbates inequality between women and men, as well as sexual and gender minorities. GBV includes, but is not limited to: intimate partner violence, rape, sexual assault and harassment, incest, dowry-related violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), trafficking in persons, forced abortion, abduction and confinement, verbal abuse and mental harassment. While GBV is sometimes understood as being synonymous with violence against women and girls, Saferworld adheres to a wider definition that also includes violence committed against men, boys and sexual and gender minorities on the basis of their gender.

Community security has not been designed specifically as an intervention for addressing GBV, although others have used similar approaches to run projects that do have a more explicit focus on GBV.[22] However, given the prevalence of GBV across the globe, it is not surprising that it is raised as a security problem in most contexts where Saferworld has carried out community security projects. That said, it is not inevitable that community security projects address GBV. Social taboos and stigma associated with openly discussing GBV sometimes result in it going unmentioned, and even if it is, CSWGs may choose not to work on it. Nonetheless, some CSWGs in this study did prioritise certain forms of GBV in their action plans and chose to address it in various ways. This chapter provides an overview of how community security programmes in these five countries have addressed GBV, while also highlighting some of the limitations and challenges faced. Of course, community security approaches cannot offer a comprehensive approach to addressing and responding to GBV; rather, this chapter

21 For more on limitations of commonly used definitions of 'gender violence', see Laura Shepherd (2008), *Gender, violence and security: Discourse as practice*, (London: Zed Books).

22 See, for example, UN Women's work with local security committees in Haiti: Social Development Direct (2011), *UN Women Programme: From Communities to Global Security Institutions: Engaging Women in Building Peace and Security: Haiti Report*; also Womankind-supported Community-Based Action Teams: Womankind (2014), *Prevention is possible: The role of women's organisations in ending violence against women and girls in Ethiopia, Ghana and Zambia*.

considers how they can form part of a larger, multi-sectoral approach that works with security, justice, health and education sectors, among others.[23]

How have community security projects addressed GBV?

Different forms of GBV came up as security issues during the context analyses in each of the five contexts. Domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment and early marriage were common themes across most contexts, with other types being more specific to particular contexts, such as girl elopement/bride kidnapping[24] in South Sudan and Kyrgyzstan, or *chhaupadi*[25] and accusations of witchcraft in Nepal. Unsurprisingly, CSWGs have come up with different approaches for addressing these issues in different contexts. In many cases, activities to prevent and improve responses to GBV were included in CSWGs' action plans. However, where individual cases of GBV have been brought to the attention of CSWGs, they have also worked on it in a more reactive way.

Addressing GBV in community security action plans

Where CSWGs decided to include preventing GBV in their action plans, their interventions included efforts at primary prevention – that is, preventing the use of violence before it first occurs – and efforts to improve responses to violence after it has already occurred. Chosen approaches include:

- raising awareness of the negative impacts of GBV and changing attitudes towards it in the community
- addressing factors that exacerbate intimate partner violence, such as alcohol abuse and gambling
- creating dialogue between community members, police and local authorities to demand better responses to GBV
- advocating for changes in policy or legislation; engaging directly with perpetrators (in less serious cases, for example cat-calling in the street) to change their behaviour

The following case studies offer just a few examples of how CSWGs have chosen to take this forward.

Community members watch a street drama about substance abuse and its effects on domestic violence, orgainsed by a community security working group in Banke District, Nepal.
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Box 7: Changing attitudes towards GBV in Nepal

The CSWGs in Nepal used awareness-raising methods with a broader reach. The project team provided small grants to support the organisation of mass rallies against GBV, art competitions, street dramas, sports tournaments and radio jingles. Crucially, these activities aimed to go

23 For more information on multi-sectoral approaches to addressing GBV, please see Department for International Development (2011), *How to note: A theory of change for tackling violence against women and girls*.

24 'Girl elopement' in South Sudan and 'bride kidnapping' in Kyrgyzstan are terms use to refer to the phenomenon of a man or boy abducting a woman or girl in order that the girl's family will consent to their marrying. The terms are also used to refer to cases in which the girl or woman willingly runs away with her partner.

25 The practice of confining women to outhouses while they are menstruating, due to a belief that they are 'impure'.

beyond simply raising people's awareness of the problem of GBV, but also aimed to change attitudes and promote more positive behaviours:

"We have awareness-raising activities, we advocate with district authorities to sensitise them, we do awareness raising with the communities… we focus on good relationships between husband and wife, equality between husband and wife, that we should not oppress women."

Saferworld team member, Nepal, November 2014

Respondents perceived that these public events and campaigns had led to a greater willingness to talk about GBV, including encouraging survivors to report their experiences to the CSWGs and even the police:

"Earlier when people didn't have anyone to approach it looked like people had very peaceful lives, but now issues are coming out; some people might think there are more cases [of GBV], but they are just coming out now."

Senior female CSWG member, Dhanghadi, Siraha, Nepal, November 2014

Sexual harassment or 'eve teasing' of girls on their way to school is a regular occurrence on streets such as this one in Satkhira, Bangladesh. The abuse, which includes cat-calling and taking images on mobile phones, impacts on the day-to-day lives of women and girls and has resulted in some girls no longer attending school.

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Box 8: Preventing street harassment in Bangladesh

Verbal or physical sexual harassment of women and girls in public places – sometimes referred to as 'eve-teasing' – was identified and prioritised by CSWGs in several communities in Bangladesh. In Labsha Ward 8 in Satkhira district, a community security assessment found that the harassment of girls in the street had restricted their movement to and from school, the market and other public places. The CSWG prioritised tackling this issue in coordination with schools, parents, the local administration and religious leaders.

After consultations to identify the specific areas where incidents happened most frequently, three hotspots were identified and the main perpetrators were found. CSWG members worked with teachers in the local school and talked to students in order to change attitudes by helping them to understand the negative impacts of harassment. The CSWG also created posters with slogans opposing street harassment and put them up in the market places and key areas, and asked shopkeepers in the affected locations not to allow the perpetrators into their shops.

Having successfully persuaded some of the perpetrators to stop harassing girls and women in the street, the CSWG then enlisted their help in persuading other young men to change their behaviour.

"Eve-teasing went down recently, mainly because of the initiatives taken by the CSWG. Some of the male youth committee members were themselves teasers who stopped teasing after joining the committee. The Labsha women felt the male youth had become more responsible after engaging with the CSWG. They discouraged their male friends outside the youth committee from eve-teasing and tried to show more respect to young girls and women, and even accompanied them home if needed."

Youth committee member, Labsha, Satkhira, Bangladesh, November 2015

Women wait for their cases to be heard outside a traditional court in Wau, South Sudan. Inside a man is ordered to pay a small fine to his wife for repeatedly beating her, with the threat of criminal conviction if he continues. The judge at this court estimates that over 85% of the cases that he sees relate to domestic violence, which is often not seen as a criminal justice issue unless it results in serious bodily injury or death.

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Box 9: Improving police response to intimate partner violence in Agok, South Sudan

In Wau, South Sudan, the vast majority of respondents in Saferworld's community security assessments in 2013 and 2014 identified intimate partner violence committed by men against women as being an important threat to women's security. This violence was seen as being driven by alcohol abuse, as well as social norms that discriminate against women, make them economically dependent on their husbands, and make it difficult to report intimate partner violence to the police. Authorities were requiring survivors of sexual violence to file a police report and pay for 'Form 8' before they were able to access health services – despite this not being required by law – meaning that survivors who did not want to go to the police were not getting the medical care they needed.

As a result, the local CSWG in Agok, on the outskirts of Wau, decided to conduct advocacy activities to change attitudes towards intimate partner violence and persuade the local authorities to improve their response to the problem. They organised a public event at a local school in July 2015, which attracted 164 people, bringing together community members, local authorities and police representatives to discuss how to address the problem. The event aimed to spread messages among the community that intimate partner violence is not acceptable, demonstrate to the police that there was strong demand for a better response to the problem, and advocate for the deployment of a senior police officer at Agok police station to handle cases of GBV.

The Director of Police, who was present at the meeting, agreed to the suggestion of assigning a senior police officer to Agok police station, which he subsequently did. However, as the captain who was deployed had no specialist training in dealing with GBV cases, the CSWG continues to advocate for formal training on this for police officers. Local authorities also made Form 8 freely available, and committed to ensure that healthcare providers do not require survivors to present the form as a condition of accessing their services.

From reactive approaches to prevention

In addition to including efforts to address GBV in community security action plans, CSWGs are often asked by community members to intervene in individual cases. This has happened in all five countries, and frequently in some. In some contexts, the fact that community members – most often women – bring these cases to light has spurred the CSWGs on to include preventive measures in their action plans. Boxes 10 and 11 give examples of how CSWGs' interventions in individual cases have led them to take steps to prevent future cases.

Box 10: Intervention prevents a woman from being victimised on witchcraft charges

In Ayodhyanagar, Siraha district, Nepal, a woman was accused of being a witch by her neighbours. She experienced verbal and physical abuse from them for a year before her husband called a meeting of the village elders, elites and political party members (*panchayat*).[26] The *panchayat* decided to send her to a witch doctor in a nearby village in India to be tested and subsequently 'cured' and collected 300 rupees from each household in the village to cover the cost of sending the woman to India. Though not happy with the decision, the couple had no redress against the decision of the *panchayat*.

During these initial deliberations, the couple became aware of the CSWG's work to address violence against women. After the couple shared their ordeal with the CSWG, members discussed the case with the Women and Children's Office, who suggested that the issue be referred to the Chief District Officer. He invited the couple to meet with him the next day. Police were also informed, and they informed the community that the *panchayat* had no jurisdiction over such cases and asked for the names of those threatening the woman. The *panchayat* apologised to the couple and assured the police that they would discontinue any such activities that were in conflict with the law. The police then reassured the couple that they could approach them anytime they faced similar problems again.

The panchyat later approached the CSWG and expressed interest in receiving capacity building to avoid such situations in the future. The project team organised a training on GBV for *panchayat* members along with the local police and government authorities and other CSWG members, helping them to clarify the concept of GBV, explain relevant laws and policies and the roles and responsibilities of security and justice providers in GBV cases.

BRAC uses popular theatre performances to raise awareness of social issues in the local community in Kotalipara, Bangladesh. Actors begin a play which touches on the issues of early marriage, the dowry, violence against women, drug abuse and gambling.

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Box 11: From case-by-case to wider prevention: early marriage in Satkhira, Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, the legal age for marriage is 21 for boys and 18 for girls – marriage below these ages is termed early (or child) marriage. In spite of this, local government authorities rarely intervene to stop early marriages, particularly if parents want to marry their daughters off. In response to the situation, the CSWG in Jhawdanga Ward 8, Satkhira District, prioritised tackling early marriage in its Action Plan.

Initially, the CSWG began intervening in individual cases, working with families and the Union Parishad Chairman. They discovered that the authorities had been altering birth certificates in order to allow parents to marry off their children – particularly girls – at a younger age. Under pressure from the CSWG, a key local official admitted that he had been amending the birth certificates and agreed to stop doing so.

26 A traditional dispute resolution mechanism practised in some parts of Nepal, predominantly in Hill and Terai areas whereby village elders, mostly consisting of powerful male elites in a village, arbitrate the dispute. According to Nepali law, statutory cases such as rape, murder, polygamy, caste-based discrimination, sexual and physical abuse cannot be mediated and are required to be presented in court, if reported. However, in many cases they get mediation within the community.

Subsequently, the CSWG has adopted a more systematic approach to the issue by regularly observing village court sessions in order to prevent early marriages. The CSWG also works alongside local partner BRAC to raise awareness of the harmful effects of early marriage through popular theatre, group discussions and meetings with community leaders and teachers. BRAC stages quarterly shows that both raise awareness and aim to change attitudes.

"Early marriage has dramatically decreased in our community."

Youth group participant, Jhawdanga, Satkhira, Bangladesh, November 2015

"The other issue they are dealing with is early marriage. They also help whenever I need them. They are a really good help to me – although it is part of my job to deal with these issues, I am really overloaded. The community action committee members are really good people and support me to do my job properly."

Union Parishad Chairman, Satkhira, Bangladesh, November 2015

Challenges

Taboos and silences

"People don't like to speak about domestic violence, they prefer to keep it secret. They don't feel comfortable speaking to the LCPC about it. All of the cases which ended up close to divorce, when the wife can't tolerate it anymore or thinks there is a threat to her life, then they will bring it to the LCPC. But other than that, they keep it quiet."

Female LCPC member, Amir Timur, Kyrgyzstan, July 2015

"There is a conception that what happens in the family stays in the family, because this is shameful. Only a few people would say it clearly. They are either not talking about it or they were saying there is no violence."

Male Saferworld team member, Yemen, November 2015

Despite evidence that various forms of GBV are prevalent in each of the five contexts, the perception that it is a private matter and the stigma attached to survivors make it difficult to talk about, even for people who are not directly affected. Therefore, issues of GBV do not always come up as prominently in community security assessments as might otherwise be expected. Often, people are more willing to speak about some types of GBV than others: for example, in Bangladesh, street harassment was seen as a less sensitive topic, while intimate partner violence was more of a taboo subject and rape was barely spoken about. GBV against sexual and gender minorities was raised rarely, if it all, in all five contexts.

In other cases, it was not the taboo about GBV that prevented people from raising it as a problem, but the fact that it was not seen as a security issue, sometimes because it was so normalised. This may explain why LCPCs in Osh, Kyrgyzstan, had not received many reports of girls and women being harassed in the street, even though local women's organisations described it as a common problem.

It is not always easy to determine what factors influence whether community members feel confident to speak about GBV, but during the course of this research, Saferworld staff, partners and community members suggested the following as potential factors:

- Previous awareness-raising activities: for example, in Bangladesh BRAC and the *Polli Shomaj* have done a lot of work to break down the stigma of talking about domestic violence, including regular popular theatre shows addressing the issue, such that there is now a public discourse around it in the communities where BRAC and Saferworld work.
- Creation of safe spaces: holding separate FGDs with women, men and sexual and gender minorities, with a skilled facilitator of the same sex who is familiar with the local dialect.
- Confidence that the project can address the problem: some people may feel moved to raise the issue if they have seen the CSWGs do effective work on other issues because this increases their confidence in the CSWG – and Saferworld and its local partners – to address it, even though they would perhaps not discuss it in other contexts.

Of course, this taboo is something that can be addressed through the CSWGs' action plans, such as those described in boxes 7 and 11. This is a long-term endeavour, on which it can take years to make progress. However, community security projects can contribute to this change:

"I felt relieved when we were able to discuss GBV in the [*CSWG*]. *I felt that at last there is a bit of progress in the country if we can discuss this issue."*

Young Madhesi woman CSWG member, Bahraul/Sunsari, Nepal, November 2014

In Yemen, the CSWGs chose not to work on GBV directly, as they feared there may be a backlash against them. Instead, they chose to work on drug abuse, which they saw as contributing towards domestic violence.

Such an approach allows CSWGs to work on GBV without incurring the same risks, although it misses an opportunity to begin changing attitudes towards GBV in a way that may make it easier to work on and speak about in future. CSWGs may not always be best placed to do this kind of work, however: they may also prefer to advocate quietly for other actors to take up this cause, such as NGOs or local authorities.

In many countries, CSWGs have opted to work on less sensitive issues to begin with while they and key stakeholders in the community are familiarising themselves with the community security process. Once the CSWGs have built trust with each other and the wider community, they then begin to broach more difficult topics.

Violence against men and boys

In all five countries, it was very difficult to gather information on GBV against men and boys. This is partly due to fact that people often do not understand certain forms of violence that are primarily or exclusively experienced by men and boys to be gender-based. People often think of GBV as synonymous with violence against women and girls, and so asking respondents about GBV against men and boys can be confusing. It is also often less obvious from descriptions of violence committed against men whether it is gender-based. For example, in Yemen there were some types of violence that are usually, if not always, committed against men and boys rather than women and girls:

"From the perspective of armed groups, they would say most of the people suffering from armed groups were men, because they wouldn't hurt females. Especially when there was a land dispute."

Male Saferworld team member, Yemen, November 2015

This is a form of GBV, since the fact that it was men and not women who were targeted is not a coincidence, but a decision based on understandings of gender roles in that society. Yet community members did not identify this as GBV, nor is it looked upon by security providers as having anything to do with gender. It therefore also lacks the taboos surrounding other forms of GBV.

Furthermore, some forms of GBV against men and boys, particularly sexual violence and intimate partner violence, carry serious social stigma. In Sunsari, Nepal, a senior police officer explained that men in the community had privately disclosed instances of domestic violence committed against them, but did not want to formally report it. Many fear that they will not be seen as 'real men', and will be bullied and looked down upon by their peers. Similar judgements exist in Bangladesh in instances of domestic violence:

"If you complain or share it with your friends, they laugh it off and ask what kind of a man are you that you cannot deal with your wife [*physically*]*."*

Male CSWG member, Jessore, Bangladesh, November 2015

On rare occasions where sexual violence against men and boys has been raised as an issue in community security projects, social taboos have also made it difficult to

address. For example, in January 2014 in Muthafar, Yemen, a boy was raped and murdered and the case was widely talked about in the community. Initially, the police had declined to investigate due to the sensitive nature of the case. However, after community members complained to the CSWG about this, the CSWG worked with the local imam and other CSOs to pressure the authorities, who eventually investigated and arrested the suspected perpetrators. However, rumours and misunderstandings surrounding the case made it difficult for the CSWG to work on it. Similarly, in Banke, Nepal, a young boy was raped by a man in his twenties and the case was reported to the police. However, the survivor's family decided to drop the case as they did not want to bring shame to their family by bringing this out in the open.

As with violence against women and girls, long-term efforts to change attitudes towards gender, power and violence are needed, both in order to prevent GBV against men and boys and to create the conditions for more effective responses. CSWGs could contribute towards these efforts, but are unlikely to choose to do so without significant support, including to address any misconceptions about GBV held by CSWG members themselves.

Lack of local support services for survivors

When conducting community security assessments, it is vital to be sensitive to the fact that some participants in the study are likely to be survivors of GBV or other traumatic events, and to be aware of the fact that talking about those experiences may cause them further trauma, or even expose them to risks of further violence.

When asking community members about their security concerns, it is vital to make clear to them that they may choose to discuss personal experiences of violence, but they are not obliged to, and that all answers will be kept confidential. In a group setting, it is important to suggest that survivors consider any possible social consequences of disclosing personal experiences before doing so. Often, Saferworld researchers phrase questions in terms of security concerns for the community or for the social group that respondents belong to, rather than for the individuals present. Nonetheless, such scenarios often provoke survivors to disclose traumatic experiences, and so researchers must be prepared.

Before the consultation process begins, a mapping of local organisations that provide services to survivors – including shelter and psychosocial support – should be conducted, in order that people can be referred to these services if necessary. Yet in all of the contexts considered here, such services are very limited or do not exist at all. In Yemen, for example, the scarcity of services in Ta'iz meant the team were all the more cautious when asking community members about GBV. Most of the communities visited for this research in Kyrgyzstan did not have a shelter for survivors of domestic violence, and those that did exist only allowed for short stays.

In such cases, implementing organisations and CSWGs can – and sometimes do – provide help themselves, by offering survivors a safe space to talk about their experiences if they want to, or helping them to find some help from service providers in other locations. These options require specialist staff skills and additional resources, which should be considered in the planning phase of any community security project.

A lack of services for survivors also makes it difficult for CSWGs responding to individual cases of GBV to take a survivor-centred approach. This is further addressed on page 38 below.

Measuring the prevalence of GBV

While the research methods commonly used in community security assessments – a combination of FGDs and KIIs – are in certain respects not conducive to the identification of GBV as a security issue by participants, the use of qualitative methods also

does not enable precise measures of the prevalence of the problem. These methods are usually selected because the focus is on measuring the quality of relationships and services. However, the lack of quantitative measures is limiting in at least two respects: first, an accurate measure of the prevalence of GBV would make CSWGs and other key actors more aware of the seriousness of the problem, and therefore perhaps more likely to give it priority; second, it makes it more difficult to understand with certainty whether community security interventions reduce the prevalence of GBV and other forms of crime and violence.

In some cases, CSWGs collect quantitative data on more public, less sensitive issues – for example, some LCPCs in Kyrgyzstan record numbers of early marriages, as they are a matter of public knowledge in those communities. However, with issues such as domestic or sexual violence this cannot be done. It is possible to include household surveys in community security assessments, asking individuals about types of insecurity they have personally experienced or witnessed, and their perceptions of security provision, which Saferworld has done when appropriate. However, conducting research on such sensitive issues requires a high degree of skill to ensure that it is done in a way that is ethical, rigorous, and conflict- and gender-sensitive.

Analysing root causes

When devising their action plans, CSWGs are always asked to analyse the causes of the problems they want to address. However, without access to reliable evidence, it is often difficult to determine what these are and gain a comprehensive picture.

In many cases, CSWGs identify factors such as men's use of drugs and alcohol, gambling and unemployment as causes of GBV – factors that have been found to be correlated with GBV in some contexts.[27] However, it is less common for CSWGs to identify gender norms among the causes of GBV unless they have received specific guidance and training. This is despite strong evidence that, for example, men's discriminatory attitudes towards women are one of the factors most strongly correlated with their use of violence towards intimate partners.[28] This is not to say that interventions that address other causes are not valuable; however, if CSWGs consider the role of gender norms in fuelling violence, they may either design activities to address these, or perhaps advocate for others to do so. Furthermore, a focus on factors such as unemployment may detract from the need for the perpetrator to take responsibility for their actions and be held accountable.

CSWGs can inadvertently entrench harmful attitudes

As CSWGs are intended to be representative of the communities they inhabit, it is not surprising that their attitudes towards GBV also often reflect prevailing social norms. In some cases, this includes victim-blaming attitudes, and CSWGs may encourage survivors of violence to change their behaviour in order to prevent further violence, rather than, or as well as, holding perpetrators accountable:

"We tell the woman whose husband had been out all night gambling, do not start questioning him as soon as he enters the house. This will anger him further and he will start beating you. Wait till he has eaten and rested."

Female CSWG member, Jessore, Bangladesh, November 2015

"The LCPC women meet with the women of their villages and raise awareness about what women should do if she experiences domestic violence, or what strategies to adopt when he is drunk. We advise women to be more economic with their family household budget, because men drink because they are stressed about not having enough money.

27 See, for example, Heise L (2011), 'What works to prevent partner violence? Evidence overview' (Strive), chapter 4, available at http://strive.lshtm.ac.uk/system/files/attachments/What%20works%20to%20prevent%20partner%20violence.pdf.

28 *Ibid*. Chapter 2.

Women stress them out because they want money for social events. As a woman, you should do your duties to keep your house clean and get the dinner ready."

Female LCPC member, Masaliev, Kyrgyzstan, August 2015

Assisting men and women to resolve conflicts in the household productively and non-violently can be a positive outcome in its own right. However, this must not come at the cost of entrenching gender inequalities or condoning harmful practices. Given that GBV is such a common security problem across contexts, it is vital that CSWGs receive training to understand the causes of GBV and how to respond to it, and that project teams monitor carefully how this knowledge is being implemented. This should form part of a basic commitment to 'do no harm'.

Promoting a survivor-centred approach

Taking a 'survivor-centred approach' when responding to a case of GBV means respecting and upholding the rights, needs and decisions of the survivor(s). Their confidentiality and right to anonymity must be protected, they should be treated with dignity and respect, and support services (health, shelter, legal, economic, psycho-social) should be offered when and where possible. Importantly, survivors should not be forced to take a certain course of action, such as reporting to the police, if they do not want to.

In many societies, there is a stigma around divorce, particularly for women, who are expected to stay with their partners even if they are being abused. Saferworld's research from Kyrgyzstan, Bangladesh and South Sudan has shown that, in response to this, when cases of intimate partner violence are reported to CSWGs, they often advise the survivor to reconcile with the perpetrator. Of course, in some cases the survivor decides independently that reconciliation is the best (or least undesirable) option. Ideally, CSWGs should provide information to survivors about what options are available to them – or refer them to someone who can – so that they can make their own informed choice. However, sometimes CSWG members bring their own judgements about which option is best:

"If the woman [*experiencing intimate partner violence*] *comes in, the local committee heads all get together, go to visit the family, the husband, try to reconcile, and if it doesn't work then we'll invite the police. We always try to reconcile the family rather than support a divorce."*

Chair of women's committee, Amir Timur, Kyrgyzstan, July 2015

In many of the contexts where Saferworld works, options for survivors of intimate partner violence are limited. In South Sudan, a woman who has experienced intimate partner violence may find that her birth family do not welcome her back, there is no local safe house, she cannot secure an income, and is at further risk of violence from her husband or others within the community if she leaves the relationship. Reporting to the police is also risky: women reporting GBV to police in South Sudan have been questioned about the clothes they were wearing when the violence happened, or asked whether they would really like to live on the street (rather than reconciling with their husbands). Even if the police are responsive, they do not necessarily have the power to detain the perpetrator immediately, potentially putting survivors at further risk. With this in mind, it is understandable that many CSWGs – and survivors themselves – see reconciliation as the most viable option. In such situations, it is imperative the groups are trained to give the survivor all of the available options and continue to support their decision, regardless of whether the CSWG agrees with it.

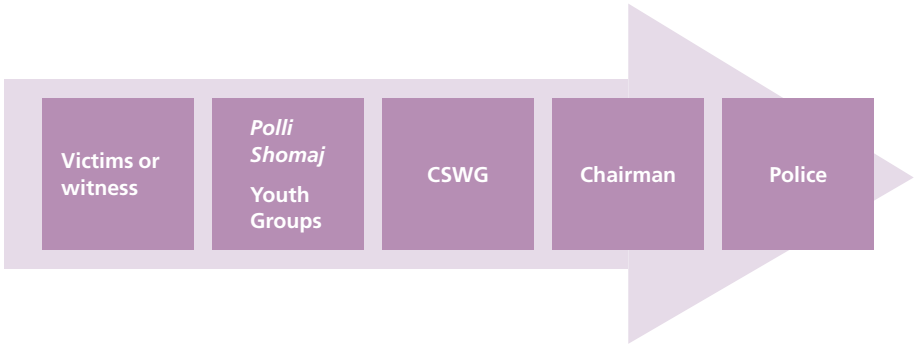
Maintaining the rule of law

In some communities in Bangladesh, survivors often chose to report cases of GBV to the CSWGs instead of the police. This was partly to protect their anonymity – they want to avoid the report being common knowledge, and in this context it is not possible

to go to the police station and report a crime confidentially without the community becoming aware of it. They also felt that a fairer conclusion would be reached through the CSWG.

In one community, the local police and the Union Parishad Chairman[29] indicated that they appreciate the CSWG reducing their work burden by responding to GBV cases, thereby saving the police from having to deal with them. In many ways, the fact that survivors trusted the CSWG enough to report their case to them is encouraging, particularly if they would otherwise not have reported it at all. Survivors have a right to choose who they want to report to, and it is not uncommon even in countries with more gender-sensitive police services for survivors to choose to report to non-state service providers instead. However, if the police and local authorities take this as a sign that they no longer have to worry about responding to crimes of GBV, this undermines the rule of law. There is a need to take steps to improve police handling of GBV cases, including making it possible to report crimes confidentially, such that survivors will have the confidence to report GBV cases to the police if they choose to.

A more positive outcome has been a significant increase in third-party reporting across several communities in Bangladesh: that is, survivors or witnesses reporting cases to the CSWG, which they in turn report to local authorities, with the permission of the survivor. The most common form of third party reporting is as follows:



This enables the survivor to report their case to the Chairman or police without physically going to their offices, thereby keeping the case confidential. Examples include victims of sexual harassment reporting to youth group members and women experiencing violence, including rape and poisoning, reporting to the *Polli Shomaj*. The youth groups and *Polli Shomaj* do not feel comfortable going to the Chairman or police themselves, so the CSWGs have been able to fill an important gap in the reporting chain. While a wide range of community members relayed that this has resulted in a decrease in crime, it is important that CSWGs do not become a substitute for improved community-police relations. In the long-term, the police require specialist training, oversight and facilities to allow them to respond more appropriately to GBV.

Conclusions:

Community security as part of a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach to addressing GBV

"Unless there are job opportunities for young men and women, change in mind sets, poverty alleviation programmes, and education, it will be difficult for community security alone to reduce gender-based violence."

Union Parishad Chairman, Satkhira, Bangladesh, November 2015

Community security approaches alone are not a solution to GBV. However, linked with other approaches, they can be seen as a contribution towards a multi-sectoral approach to addressing GBV, which includes, among other things, changing social norms relating to gender and violence; providing health and psychosocial care, shelter

29 Union Parishads are the smallest rural administrative and local government units in Bangladesh, usually made up of nine villages. The Chairman is directly elected by the voters of the Union.

and legal aid to survivors; improving the capacity, accountability and responsiveness of security and justice providers; and providing economic opportunities for people of all genders. The flexible nature of community security approaches means that they can address any of these factors, or a combination of them. In this way, CSWGs can fill gaps in what is already being done in each community, as well as advocating for other actors such as state service providers, NGOs and intergovernmental organisations to play a greater role. While many community security programmes have tended to focus on improving relationships between communities and the formal and informal security and justice sectors, there is greater scope for CSWGs to work with other sectors, including health, education and employment, acting as a focal point to co-ordinate different elements of a multi-sectoral approach.

For those designing programming to prevent and reduce GBV, community security approaches offer a model that is community-led and has had demonstrable successes, a few of which are outlined in this chapter. While targeted programmes that focus solely on GBV may allow for more in-depth engagement on this issue, including work on GBV in broader community security programming also has its advantages. For example, it can help to build understanding among communities and security providers that GBV is a security problem, and not something that can be siloed as a 'women's issue'. Addressing it alongside a range of other issues can help to highlight how GBV is related to other community security problems, making for more effective responses. However, it is important to note that community security programmes will be most effective in preventing and reducing GBV if this is part of their design from the start.

Even though community security has not been designed as an intervention for preventing and reducing GBV, it is highly likely that cases will be brought to the attention of CSWGs in most, if not all contexts. It is therefore essential that, at the very least, CSWGs and implementing organisations are prepared to respond appropriately, for example by referring people on to specialist services where they exist, or finding interim solutions where they do not. However, given that GBV is a pressing security concern around the world, implementing organisations should aim to do much more, equipping the project team and CSWGs to analyse the underlying causes of different forms of GBV and design responses based on evidence of what has worked in other contexts. This means budgeting and planning for specialist training, and seeking out local partnerships with organisations who can form part of the bigger picture, making up a comprehensive approach to preventing and responding effectively to GBV.

Chapter 1 set out some ideas about how to make community security programmes gender-sensitive, based on Saferworld's experience in Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, South Sudan and Yemen. As Chapter 2 demonstrated, there are many benefits of doing this. Gender-sensitive approaches make it more likely that GBV will be raised as part of community security assessments and addressed in action plans. But beyond the issue of GBV, gender sensitivity also helped to challenge discriminatory attitudes, promote women's participation, and empower them at home and in their communities. Investing time and resources into gender sensitising every stage of the project is an essential aspect of ensuring that community security programmes meet their goal of developing more inclusive, participatory processes for security provision in communities affected by conflict.

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We are a not-for-profit organisation with programmes in nearly 20 countries and territories across Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Europe.

COVER PHOTO: A youth action committee meets in Moghia, Bagerhat District, in southwestern Bangladesh as part of Saferworld and BRAC's community security project.

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