

# **ENDING**

SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED  
VIOLENCE IN HUMANITARIAN CRISES

OSLO, NORWAY, 23-24 MAY 2019

## Oslo commitments on ending sexual and gender-based violence in humanitarian crises

2021 COLLECTIVE PROGRESS REPORT  
ADELICIA FAIRBANKS

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## Acronyms

<b>COFEM</b>	Coalition of Feminists for Social Change
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based violence
<b>GBV AoR</b>	Gender-based Violence Area of Responsibility
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organisation
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>IOM</b>	International Organisation for Migration
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisation
<b>SEA</b>	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
<b>SRHR</b>	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual and gender-based violence
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>UN FTS</b>	United Nations Financial Tracking Service
<b>UN OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>WATED</b>	Women Action Towards Economic Development
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation
<b>WRC</b>	Women's Refugee Commission

## Executive Summary

The May 2019 Oslo conference on Ending Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Crises resulted in 47 participating governments, UN agencies, non-governmental organisations, and other entities making formal commitments for 2020 focused on the prevention, protection and response to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in humanitarian crises. This report is the second in a three-year tracking project supported by the Government of Norway to measure annual progress, as self-reported by participants.

For the year 2020, a total of 12 government participants made financial pledges, and 46 participants (both government and non-government) made non-financial commitments<sup>1</sup> at the Oslo SGBV conference.<sup>2</sup> As of December 2021, 36 out of the 47 participants (or 77%) have submitted progress reports on their commitments, either directly to the Oslo commitment tracking project or through their Call to Action reports.

### Financial pledges

Financial pledges made at the conference amounted to USD \$227.45 million for 2019 and 139.2 million for 2020 and beyond (totalling \$366.64 million for 2019 and beyond).<sup>3</sup> In 2021, the Republic of Korea increased its pledge by USD \$1 million, bringing the new pledge figures to:

2019 (US\$)	2020 and beyond (US\$)	Total (US\$)
227.45 million	140.2 million	367.64 million

This funding is in addition to unearmarked and core funding for humanitarian partners working to prevent and respond to SGBV, as well as funding to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and country-based pooled funds (CBPFs).<sup>4</sup> In 2020, the CERF disbursed a record \$848 million, of which an estimated \$65 million went towards the prevention of and response to SGBV.<sup>5</sup> The CBPFs allocated \$6.6 million to scale up SGBV prevention and response within the COVID response.<sup>6</sup>

The financial commitments for 2020 comprised 51 separate pledges to various recipients, contexts and funding categories, amounting to a total of USD \$98.10 million pledged for 2020 (leaving a further USD \$42 million of pledges to be disbursed in 2021 and beyond).

Pledged for 2020 (US\$)	Disbursed for 2020 (US\$)	Disbursement rate (%)
98.10 million	84.31 million	86%

<sup>1</sup> Henceforth, 'non-financial commitments' or 'policy commitments' refers to the category covering political, operational, institutional policy and good practice commitments.

<sup>2</sup> Of the total 47 participants, 1 made only financial pledges, 34 only non-financial commitments, and 12 actors made both financial and non-financial commitments for 2020.

<sup>3</sup> This total pledge amount is slightly higher than previously published pledge results as some pledges made at the conference were inadvertently omitted from [previously published results](#). All pledges and disbursements in this summary were converted to US\$ using the UN operational rates of exchange on 1 May 2019.

<sup>4</sup> For comparative purposes, the 2021 Global Humanitarian Assistance Report reports that nine UN agencies received a record \$3.3 billion unearmarked funding in 2020, which might have been used for SGBV within a broader remit. The UN agencies were FAO, IOM, UNDP, UN OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNRWA, WFP and WHO.

<sup>5</sup> UN OCHA (2021). *CERF Annual Results Report 2020*. UN OCHA. Available from: [https://cerf.un.org/sites/default/files/resources/CERF%20Annual%20Results%20Report%202020\\_0.pdf](https://cerf.un.org/sites/default/files/resources/CERF%20Annual%20Results%20Report%202020_0.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> UN OCHA (2021). *OCHA-managed Pooled Funds 2020 Overview*. UN OCHA. Available from: [https://cerf.un.org/sites/default/files/resources/OCHA-managed%20Pooled%20Funds\\_2020%20Overview.pdf](https://cerf.un.org/sites/default/files/resources/OCHA-managed%20Pooled%20Funds_2020%20Overview.pdf)

Eighty-six per cent of the pledged amount was confirmed as disbursed in 2020, amounting to USD \$84.31 million (this number only reflects disbursement up to 100% of the pledged amount).

However, due to many disbursements exceeding the pledged amount, the total confirmed as disbursed in 2020 amounted to USD \$123.50 million. In summary, 29% of pledge totals were met, 6% of disbursements were under the pledge amount, and for 14% of pledges, we did not receive confirmation of disbursement. Overall, 51% of disbursements exceeded what was pledged, and the additional funding disbursed amounted to a total of USD \$39.19 million.

Analysis of the funding targets showed that 57% of disbursements went to targeted SGBV-related activities, while the remainder went to activities and entities that included SGBV activities but within a broader remit.

The main recipients of funding were UN agencies (46%) followed by international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) (32%), while pledgers reported less than 1% as having gone *directly* to local entities and systems. Most of the funding was targeted at recipient organisations' country offices, with a significant proportion of the funding disbursed focusing on multiple activities, and efforts to prevent SGBV. A significant focus was also placed on funding health services related to SGBV. Geographically, although most of the funding was directed at multiple countries or for global activities, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Yemen received a significant share of the disbursements in 2020.

In sum, the financial pledges made at the Oslo SGBV conference were fulfilled at a high rate in 2020, but this does not, by itself, signal meaningful change in action or emphasis on preventing or responding to SGBV at the ground level. The broad definitions of SGBV-related funding targets and the lack of specificity in reporting mean that we have limited information on how much local actors have benefited from downstream Oslo funding. Some indication can be drawn from the progress reported by UN agencies through their non-financial commitments, which evidenced significant progress in their efforts to address SGBV across multiple countries, including efforts to engage with and support local actors in this space. A survey of implementing actors sought further information on this score and revealed that funding provision, unfortunately, does not match the rising need to address SGBV. Local actors who participated in the survey in particular cited continued funding obstacles and shortfalls from a system they perceive almost as exclusionary by design due, for example, to funding selection criteria.

## **Policy commitments**

Of the 242 non-financial commitments made at the Oslo SGBV conference for 2020, 181 received progress updates. Within the categories delineated in the pledge form, most policy commitments fell under 'Operational support' (29%), followed by 'Policies, Standards and Legal Frameworks' (22%) and 'Leadership and Coordination' (20%).

According to evidence of progress provided in the self-reports, most commitments were found to be 'on track'. A small number of commitments were 'planned', 'behind schedule', or 'at risk'. Reports on commitments labelled as 'at risk' or 'behind schedule' cited gaps in funding that impeded implementation or delays due to COVID-19. Seven per cent of all the commitments that received progress updates were reported as completed.

Most activities associated with the policy commitments took place at the global level (54%), i.e., in the sphere of international policy and international organisational headquarters or where a particular geographical focus could not be determined. Where target operational locations were defined, a number of these took place in multiple countries (24%). Where activities were concentrated in a particular region,

9% took place in Asia and 6% in sub-Saharan Africa. Where individual activities could be specified, most of them related to advocacy and awareness-raising (8%) and capacity building (8%), followed closely by the provision of funding (7%).

As a result of the institutional and advocacy focus of most commitments, the majority of activities reported were not directly targeted at beneficiaries among crisis-affected populations, although they were frequently identified as the primary end-target group. However, in the cases where beneficiary groups were clearly indicated, women and girls were the primary target group. Most activities involved one or multiple partners.

Several commitment-makers highlighted their efforts in localisation and providing support to local actors, including women-led organisations and groups working on SGBV. A significant amount of progress reported was linked to COVID-related activities.

### **Perceived results to date**

An online survey was shared with individuals working on SGBV, just over half of whom were local actors. The survey found that, on average, most respondents viewed the Oslo SGBV conference, and overall progress in the last year on SGBV, positively. One Oslo commitment-maker linked significant impact made in 2020 on SGBV to the collective results of commitments made at Oslo. The generally positive results reflect the findings of the same survey carried out last year, although the examples of positive impact were fewer and the tone overall less positive. This is likely linked to the respondents' perception that the heightened needs in SGBV work brought about by the pandemic are not being met with sufficient resources to meet this need. Several respondents expressed disillusionment that they have not seen more direct, flexible, and long-term funding reaching local actors, particularly women-led organisations and groups, following the calls made on this at the Oslo conference in 2019.

Despite the overwhelming challenges experienced by responders to SGBV in 2020, some shared examples of what has worked well for them, including access to training, materials, and conferences. Most significantly, respondents felt that across the board, there is more awareness of SGBV among governments, organisations, colleagues, communities, and at-risk groups. Similarly to last year, a significant finding of the survey results was the strongly felt need to work more with local communities, leaders, and responders, particularly women-led groups, and this should be a priority investment for international actors moving forward.

### **Emerging areas for action**

With most financial pledges reported as disbursed and most policy commitments 'on track', the Oslo SGBV commitment process continues to demonstrate a positive trend towards addressing SGBV in humanitarian crises. The disbursements and progress made against the Oslo commitments have allowed important work in addressing SGBV to continue despite the challenges brought about by the pandemic. Many contributors to this report felt that there has been greater attention and awareness of SGBV since the Oslo conference, accelerated by the shadow pandemic brought about by the COVID-19 crisis, with noteworthy advancements in global advocacy efforts and the consideration of SGBV in different planning fora and documents. However, despite a significant number of Oslo pledgers exceeding their financial commitments this year, the funding provided for SGBV still did not match the growing need. Implementing actors surveyed continue to face challenges, particularly related to funding, and more work is needed to ensure that funding and support are provided to address SGBV and that this funding also reaches the local actors – particularly women-led groups – who are those most able to raise awareness within communities and who are often on the frontline providing support to at-risk groups and survivors. The commitment-makers have demonstrated progress in this area and these efforts must be built upon and replicated. Additional efforts should also be made to ensure that

interventions at the global level, such as increased funding, awareness-raising and advocacy, have a positive impact on the work of frontline responders.

The tracking of Oslo commitments is an ongoing piece of work, and the Oslo co-hosts will continue to track the delivery of pledges and commitments through to 2021. Future tracking of the Oslo commitments will continue to align with the Call to Action reporting process.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

In May 2019, the governments of Norway, Iraq, Somalia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), joined by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) held a conference on Ending Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Crises.<sup>7</sup>

At the event, governments and organisations were invited to make financial pledges and political, policy and good practice commitments to support efforts to end sexual and gender-based violence in humanitarian crises. As a follow-up to the conference, the co-hosts commissioned Humanitarian Outcomes to design and implement a project to track the delivery of the Oslo SGBV commitments<sup>8</sup> over three years from 2019 to 2021.

This report provides a summary of the self-reported progress by commitment-makers against commitments made for 2020, which the researchers triangulated with the perceived changes experienced by implementing actors working on SGBV at the field level. For detailed information on commitments and pledges, please consult the 2020 Oslo SGBV Commitments Collective Progress Report.<sup>9</sup>

## 1.2. Summary of commitment-makers

At the conference, 47 actors made financial and non-financial commitments for the year 2020 (see list below). Those actors marked with an asterisk in the following list had not submitted progress reports at the time of writing. Those who submitted reports on some but not all their commitments are noted with two asterisks.

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<sup>7</sup> Learn more about the conference background through the conference concept paper, available here: <https://az659834.vo.msecnd.net/eventsairwesteuprod/production-possibility-public/d7a20c22be0145398e4bbb9ed661f2ef>

<sup>8</sup> In this report 'pledges' refer to financial pledges, while 'commitments' is a general term that is used interchangeably to refer to both financial pledges and non-financial commitments.

<sup>9</sup> Accessible here: [https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/Oslo\\_SGBV\\_Commitments\\_2020\\_Report](https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/Oslo_SGBV_Commitments_2020_Report)

- |                      |                         |                     |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. ACT Alliance      | 18. Japan               | 37. United Nations  |
| 2. Australia         | 19. Republic of Korea   | High Commissioner   |
| 3. Austria*          | 20. Liechtenstein*      | for Refugees        |
| 4. Belgium*          | 21. Luxembourg          | (UNHCR)             |
| 5. Burkina Faso      | 22. Myanmar             | 38. United Nations  |
| 6. Canada*           | 23. Namibia*            | Children's Fund     |
| 7. Coalition of      | 24. The Netherlands*    | (UNICEF)*           |
| Feminists for Social | 25. Norway              | 39. United Arab     |
| Change (COFEM)       | 26. The Philippines*    | Emirates (UAE)      |
| 8. European Union    | 27. Save the Children** | 40. United Kingdom  |
| 9. Food and          | 28. Slovenia            | 41. United Nations  |
| Agriculture          | 29. Somalia*            | Office for the      |
| Organisation (FAO)   | 30. Spain*              | Coordination of     |
| 10. Finland          | 31. Sweden              | Humanitarian        |
| 11. Gender-Based     | 32. Switzerland         | Affairs (UN OCHA)   |
| Violence Area of     | 33. Terram Pacis*       | 42. UN Women        |
| Responsibility       | 34. The New             | 43. VOICE           |
| (GBV AoR)            | Humanitarian            | 44. WFP             |
| 12. Germany          | 35. United Nations      | 45. WHO**           |
| 13. Iceland          | Development             | 46. Women Action    |
| 14. ICRC             | Programme               | Towards Economic    |
| 15. International    | (UNDP)                  | Development         |
| Organisation of      | 36. United Nations      | (WATED)             |
| Migration (IOM)      | Population Fund         | 47. Women's Refugee |
| 16. Ireland          | (UNFPA)                 | Commission          |
| 17. Italy            |                         | (WRC)               |

The commitment-makers included governments, UN agencies, international organisations, national organisations, and entities. As of December 2021, 36 participants (or 77%) submitted self-reporting progress forms or reported on their Oslo commitments through their Call to Action reports.

### 1.3. Methodology

A three-person team from the independent research group Humanitarian Outcomes used a systematic approach to gather and analyse evidence from commitment-makers and external sources to track progress against the Oslo SGBV commitments. The research team was supported by a core reference group (CRG) that provided ad hoc support and advice on the technical aspects of the project. The CRG was composed of representatives from UN OCHA, UNFPA, GBV AoR, ICRC and the governments of Norway, Iraq, UAE and Somalia.

#### 1.3.1. Pledge forms and self-reporting progress forms

Ahead of the Oslo SGBV conference, participants were invited to make financial and non-financial commitments by completing a pledge form.<sup>10</sup> A total of 49 participants submitted completed pledge forms for 2019, and of these, 47 participants' commitments extended into 2020.

These participants were asked to complete a self-reporting progress form to report on progress made in 2020. Those participants who were also Call to Action members were invited to report on their progress through their annual Call to Action reports, and 17 reporters did so.

<sup>10</sup> See the pledge form here: <https://az659834.vo.msecnd.net/eventsainwesteuprod/production-possibility-public/73e6048cb86e46759bdfaf1d63458ad9>

As of December 2021, 36 out of 47 actors shared progress made against their commitments (or 77%).<sup>11</sup> Eleven commitment-makers did not submit completed Oslo self-reporting progress forms or Call to Action reports. The research team sent multiple chaser e-mails to commitment-makers asking them to report on their progress (either directly to the team or via their annual Call to Action reports). However, some either failed to respond or, after confirming that they would report on their Oslo commitments through Call to Action, did not submit Call to Action reports. The research team did not receive any feedback from participants this year that might help explain why some failed to report on progress made.

For those participants who did share progress reports, the team requested further details when the self-reported progress did not contain sufficient information to support an assessment of progress or did not match commitments made in the original pledge form. Additionally, some reporters did not include all their Oslo commitments in their Call to Action reports. The researchers followed up with these and received updates from all but two participants at the time of writing.

### **1.3.2. Oslo SGBV Commitment Tracking Database**

The researchers compiled the written financial pledges and non-financial commitments and progress against each in a database. The database is housed on the AirTable platform. The dashboard visuals are presented in Microsoft Excel using data extracted from AirTable.

During this reporting cycle, UAE shared updates on funding disbursements made in 2019, which were used to update the database.

### **1.3.3. Survey**

To understand what changes, if any, have been perceived among implementing actors following the Oslo SGBV conference, the researchers designed an online survey. The survey repeated many of the questions of the previous survey shared in 2020 to inform the previous progress report, with only a handful of additional questions, including whether they had perceived any changes since the last survey. The survey was targeted at participants of the Oslo SGBV conference and individuals who work to address sexual and gender-based violence through their organisations. Individuals based at the field level and representatives of national and local civil society organisations were particularly encouraged to complete the survey.

The survey was shared with individuals who attended or registered for the Oslo SGBV conference and with SGBV-focused networks, e.g., the GBV AoR network. It was also shared with individuals who had completed the survey in 2020 and shared their contact details for future follow up.

To encourage wider participation among these actors, the survey was made available in English, French, Spanish, and Arabic. A total of 181 survey responses were received with a 69% completion rate. Over half of the respondents represented national NGOs, community-based organisations, local civil society organisations, and women-led groups.

## **1.4. Caveats**

In the original pledge forms, financial pledges were made under two categories: '2019' and '2020 and beyond'. The researchers liaised with reporters to understand the annual breakdown of financial pledges between 2020, 2021 and (if relevant) beyond. Some commitment-makers only made pledges for 2019, and therefore are not included in this report.

All non-financial commitments are the same for every year, and progress was requested on all of them from commitment-makers. Some reporters confirmed the completion of a number of commitments.

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<sup>11</sup> In the previous reporting year, 78% of participants submitted progress reports.

The information shared in this report is as it has been presented by commitment-makers. Reporters were encouraged to self-assess their progress as either 'on track', 'behind schedule', 'at risk', or 'planned'. At the time of writing, the researchers had not received confirmation of progress or disbursements from several reporters. Additionally, not all reporters shared detailed information on progress and, therefore, some of the figures below include 'no progress reported' – where no data was shared at all – or 'insufficient information' – which indicates that not enough information was shared by reporters to allow sufficient assessment by the researchers.

For the survey, a very small number of respondents were attendees of the Oslo conference and therefore, while on average they reported a positive perception of the conference and its outcomes, the small size of the sample puts into question how representative these findings are.

Finally, the USD exchange rates used in this report are UN operational rates on 1 May 2019.<sup>12</sup> These exchange rates were used for the pledge results published in May 2019 and are therefore also used in this report to allow comparison between funding disbursements and the previously published pledge results.

### **1.5. Structure of this report**

Section 2 of this report summarises the progress reported by commitment-makers against their financial and non-financial Oslo SGBV commitments. Section 3 examines the findings of the survey. Section 4 concludes with a summary of key findings.

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<sup>12</sup> Accessible here: <https://treasury.un.org/operationalrates/OperationalRates.php>

## 2. Summary of progress by commitment-makers

### 2.1. Financial Pledges

#### 2.1.1. Overview of progress

A total of 12 actors (all government donors) made financial pledges at the Oslo SGBV conference for 2020 and beyond. The table below gives a breakdown of the financial pledges and the disbursements reported by each actor. Asterisks denote pledgers who had not submitted progress forms – either to the researchers directly or through Call to Action – at the time of writing.

	Donor	2020 pledge	2020 disbursement <sup>13</sup>
1	Australia	\$6.12 million	\$10.73 million
2	Austria*	\$3.34 million	-
3	Canada*	\$2.28 million	-
4	Finland	\$222,965	\$222,965
5	Germany	\$25.42 million	\$55.17 million
6	Ireland	\$1.67 million	\$1.67 million
7	Republic of Korea	\$3.50 million	\$4.90 million
8	Norway	\$37.37 million	\$38.98 million
9	Slovenia	\$144,928	\$156,076
10	Spain*	\$4.45 million	-
11	Switzerland	\$9.79 million	\$10.91 million
12	United Arab Emirates	\$3.75 million	\$750,000
	<b>Total USD millions</b>	<b>\$98.10 million</b>	<b>\$123.50 million</b>

Financial pledges for 2020 consisted of 51 separate disbursements to various recipients, contexts, and funding categories. Of these, the researchers received reports on 47 of them.<sup>14</sup>

The total disbursement rate was 86% (as calculated up to 100% of pledge amounts), amounting to USD \$84.31 million. When considering all disbursements, including those that exceeded the pledge amount, the total disbursement was USD \$123.50 million.

Of the 51 disbursements, 29% of pledge totals were met, and 6% of disbursements were under the pledge amount. No progress was reported on 14% of the pledges at the time of this writing. Overall, 51% of disbursements exceeded the original pledge amount, and the additional funding disbursed amounted to a total of USD \$39.19 million.

Of the total funding disbursed, the main recipients were UN agencies (46%) followed by international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) (32%), while less than 1% was reported by Oslo pledgers as having gone directly to local entities and systems. From available information, it is not possible to discern what proportion of funding given to international actors was then directed to local actors. The reason for such a low percentage of funding going directly to local actors is not clear, although it was discussed in the 2020 Oslo Commitments Collective Progress report.<sup>15</sup> In that report, donors described internal limitations that make it difficult for them to fund these local entities directly, opting instead to fund intermediaries (such as the UN or international NGOs) to manage internal requirements. One of the challenges raised by local actors with accessing international funding is the heavy donor compliance

<sup>13</sup> These figures indicate the full disbursement amount.

<sup>14</sup> Please note that disbursements presented in this report are those reported directly by participants to the researchers. The exception to this was Finland, where disbursements were confirmed through public sources.

<sup>15</sup> Available here: [https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/Oslo\\_SGBV\\_Commitments\\_2020\\_Report](https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/Oslo_SGBV_Commitments_2020_Report)

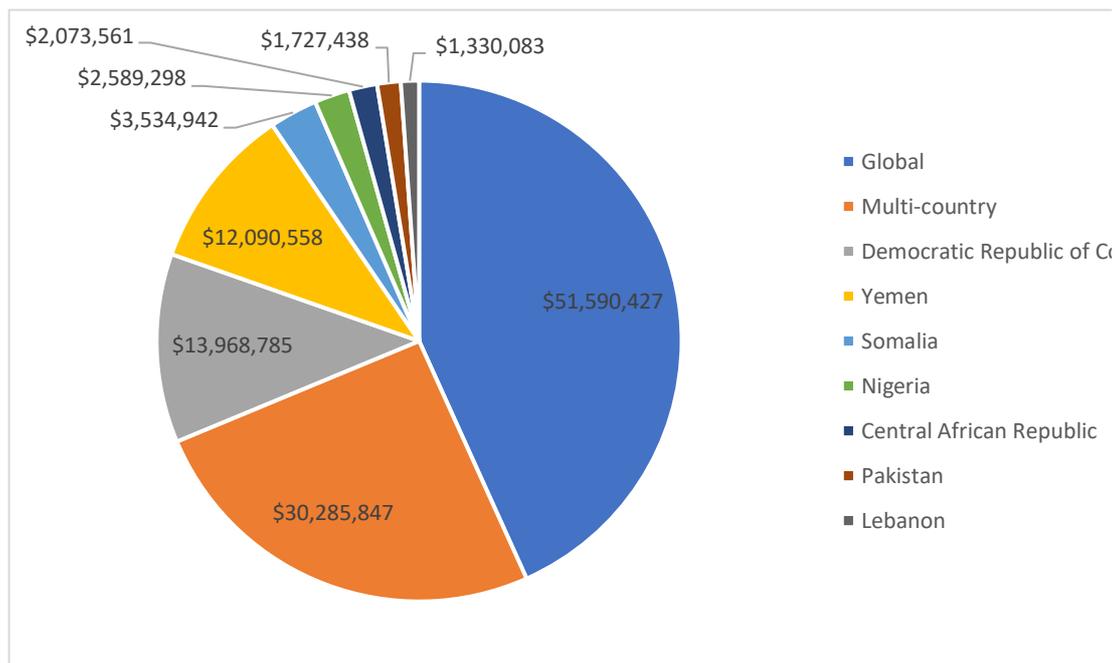
expectations that make it difficult for smaller organisations or groups without the necessary compliance mechanisms or legal status to qualify for funding (see section 3 below).

The majority of funding disbursed was targeted at the country level (74%), followed by 24% targeted at the recipient organisation’s headquarters.

With regards to the specific activities funded by the contributions, not all reporters shared enough details to allow the researchers to assess the primary activities funded – these have been marked as ‘undefined’. However, based on the information received, a significant proportion of funding was directed at multiple activities, and where one prominent activity could be discerned, funding was targeted at activities aimed at preventing SGBV, followed by a focus on strengthening efforts to address SGBV in humanitarian responses, and protection activities. When looking at the total number of individual disbursements themselves, rather than the total monetary allocation per activity, health services featured prominently.

The majority of funding disbursed was for global activities or indicated as such by the researchers when no specific location was shared by reporters (42%), but a significant amount was directed to multiple countries (multi-country) (25%). Where single focus countries were identified, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (11%) and Yemen (8%) both featured prominently.

Figure 1. Top funding target locations in monetary totals – 2020



Source: Oslo SGBV Commitment Tracking Database

Financial pledgers were encouraged to make financial contributions to specific funding categories in the pledge form.<sup>16</sup> When analysing disbursement against these categories, the largest portion is tagged as ‘Other’ (41%) followed by NGO/Civil Society (32%), then UN-coordinated appeals received (18%).<sup>17</sup> When disbursements marked as ‘Other’ were additionally analysed, it emerged that the majority of these

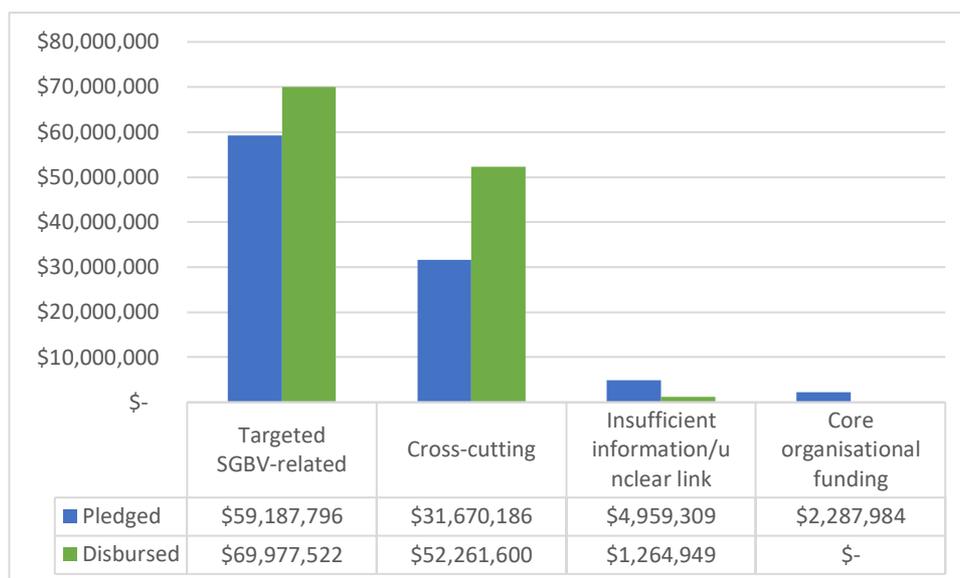
<sup>16</sup> Please consult the 2020 Oslo SGBV Collective Progress Report for details on the funding categories, available here: [https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/Oslo\\_SGBV\\_Commitments\\_2020\\_Report](https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/Oslo_SGBV_Commitments_2020_Report)

<sup>17</sup> Pledges and disbursements were not always clearly linked to particular funding categories by reporters, however, and, in practice, there is overlap across these categories, which means that these percentages likely do not provide a complete picture of funding that may have gone to particular categories.

went towards project-based activities implemented by UN agencies. This would explain why the UN was reported as a primary recipient, as previously indicated, whereas the UN-coordinated appeals were not.

Finally, an analysis of the funding disbursements indicates that most were targeted SGBV-related activities (where SGBV is the primary focus area), followed by cross-cutting funding where SGBV is one component of a larger programme (Figure 2).

Figure 2. SGBV assessment (pledges vs disbursements) – 2020



Source: Oslo SGBV Commitment Tracking Database

### 2.1.2. Summary findings

As in 2019, the majority of pledges for 2020 were met, up to 86% of pledge totals, with many disbursements exceeding the original amount pledged. Of these disbursements, 57% went to targeted SGBV-related activities.

In terms of recipients, UN agencies and large international organisations and platforms have received most of the direct funding, with just a small fraction going directly to local entities. The broad definitions of SGBV-related funding targets and the lack of specificity in reporting mean that we have limited information on how much local actors have benefited from downstream Oslo funding. Some indication can be drawn from the progress reported by UN agencies through their non-financial commitments, which evidenced significant progress in their efforts to address SGBV across multiple countries, including efforts to engage with and support local actors in this space. UNFPA, for example, channelled 39% of its total humanitarian funding in 2020 to national and local organisations, including women-led organisations. This tracking of funding to local actors started after the Oslo Conference, and since then UNFPA has committed to increase the portion of funding going to local actors in its new Strategic Plan.

Contributions were also made to important initiatives, including those led by Nadia Murad, Dr Denis Mukwege and the Panzi hospital in DRC. Funding was also additionally made to the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund, which provides funding directly to local civil society actors.

Although commitment-makers were not asked to make further pledges, the Republic of Korea voluntarily committed an additional \$1 million USD for 2020 and beyond. A welcome development in the past year

has also been the introduction of a new GBV page on UN OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS) website dedicated to tracking funding for GBV prevention and response activities in the inter-agency coordinated plans in the Global Humanitarian Overview.<sup>18</sup> However, OCHA staff who contributed to this report note that while reporting on GBV funding from agencies has improved, still more work is needed to enhance accuracy.

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<sup>18</sup> See: <https://fts.unocha.org/global-clusters/13/summary/2021>

## 2.2. Political, Policy and Good Practice Commitments

### 2.2.1. Overview of progress

A total of 46 actors made 242 political, policy and good practice commitments at the Oslo SGBV conference. The researchers received progress updates for 181 of these commitments. See below a breakdown of the non-financial commitment-makers. An asterisk has been added for those commitment-makers who have not submitted at the time of writing an Oslo self-reporting progress form or Call to Action report with Oslo commitments included. Two asterisks denote a participant who reported on some but not all their Oslo commitments at the time of writing.

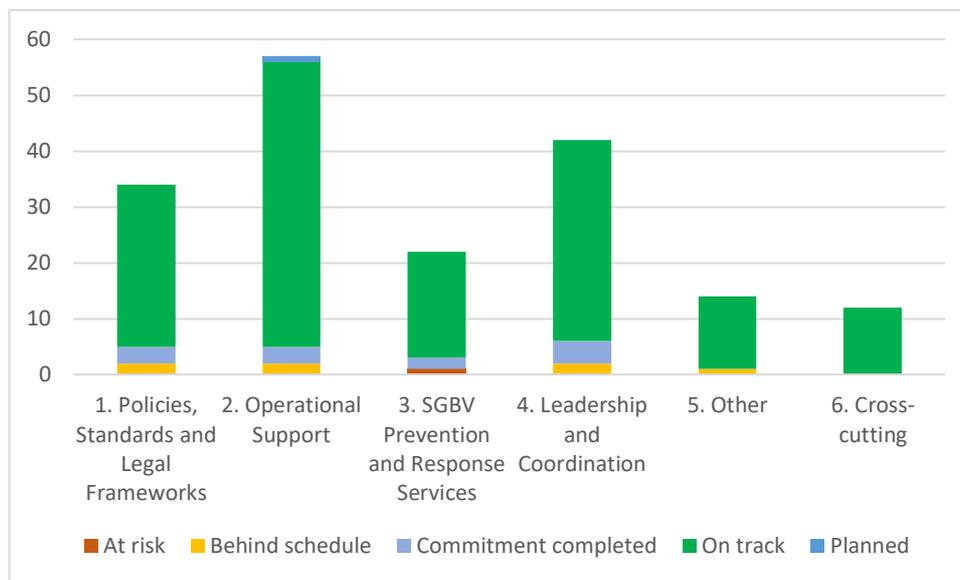
1. ACT Alliance	17. Italy	33. Terram Pacis*
2. Australia	18. Japan	34. The New Humanitarian
3. Austria*	19. Republic of Korea	35. UNDP
4. Belgium*	20. Liechtenstein*	36. UNFPA
5. Burkina Faso	21. Luxembourg	37. UNHCR
6. Canada*	22. Myanmar	38. UNICEF*
7. COFEM	23. Namibia*	39. United Kingdom
8. European Union	24. The Netherlands*	40. UN OCHA
9. FAO	25. Norway	41. UN Women
10. Finland	26. The Philippines*	42. VOICE
11. GBV AoR	27. Save the Children**	43. WFP
12. Germany	28. Slovenia	44. WHO**
13. Iceland	29. Somalia*	45. WATED
14. ICRC	30. Spain*	46. WRC
15. IOM	31. Sweden	
16. Ireland	32. Switzerland	

Government actors made the majority of policy commitments, followed by UN agencies. Most of these policy commitments fell under the categories of 'Operational Support' (29%), followed by 'Policies, Standards and Legal Frameworks' (22%), and 'Leadership and Coordination' (20%).

At the time of writing, 75% of commitments (181 of 242) received progress updates, of which 7% were confirmed as completed.

Commitment-makers were encouraged to self-assess whether their commitments were 'on track', 'planned', 'behind schedule', or 'at risk'. According to reports, most commitments were on track (160 out of 181). Those identified as at risk or behind schedule were impacted by funding challenges or by the COVID-19 pandemic. An analysis of progress against the different categories of commitments indicated that the bulk of commitments were on track (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Progress overview by category - 2020



Source: Oslo SGBV Commitment Tracking Database

Most activities (54%) took place at the global level. Where locations were defined, a number of these were multi-country (24%). Where activities were concentrated in a particular region, 9% of reported activities took place in Asia and a further 6% in sub-Saharan Africa. Less than 1% of reported activities were concentrated in the Middle East and North Africa, although contexts such as Syria, Libya, Yemen, Lebanon, and Iraq featured several times in the commitments.

The progress reports for each commitment most often included multiple activities (16%) where it was difficult to identify one overarching activity. However, when individual activities were specified, the most prominent were in the areas of advocacy and awareness-raising (8%) and capacity-building (8%), followed closely by funding (7%), and data collection and analysis (6%).

The majority of activities reported lacked defined beneficiary targets or were categorised as 'other', e.g., activities focused on advocacy or general capacity building for a variety of actors. However, where a particular target group could be defined, women and girls were identified, followed by survivors of SGBV. Other beneficiary groups included men and boys, children, and persons with disabilities.

### 2.2.2. Summary findings

In summary, the majority of non-financial commitments made at the Oslo SGBV conference are on track. Activities undertaken were numerous and wide-ranging

Donor governments focused many of their activities on international legal mechanisms and rights-based advocacy initiatives. These included the promotion of international resolutions and actions within the Human Rights Council, Security Council, the European Union and other major international policy forums, centred on gender equity rights and protections and ending impunity for sexual violence. Some examples cited were the Security Council debates on Sexual Violence in Conflicts and Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict adding SGBV language to humanitarian resolutions of the UN General Assembly and of the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment.

Additionally, many donor governments reported on actions related to their commitments to strengthen or expand SGBV provisions in their existing humanitarian funding strategies and plans, ensuring that their

funding partners incorporate actions and programming principles aimed at preventing SGBV in humanitarian response. A few donors cited the gender marker as a key tool in this regard. An example was the Swedish government's report that it will only fund humanitarian projects that consider the different needs of women and men and girls and boys according to the UN's gender marker system.

National governments, particularly those based in the Global South, focused their activities on adopting or implementing domestic legislation and information systems to help them better combat and monitor gender-based violence.

UN agencies focused particularly on efforts to advance the integration of SGBV considerations – including risk mitigation measures – into existing processes, workstreams and humanitarian responses. This was mainly done through policy development and strengthening, and providing technical support. The provision of training, technical support and resources was often undertaken in collaboration with other UN agencies and partners, including academic institutions, to strengthen the capacities of staff and others on SGBV.

Several commitments focused on data collection and analysis. The CERF and CBPF project templates now, for example, include a mandatory section on Sex and Age Disaggregated Data (SADD), a qualitative gender analysis section, and the Gender with Age Marker (GAM).

GBV AoR strengthened the information management support it provided by recruiting two new Regional GBV IM specialists in 2020. The scale up of GBV AoR information management capacity was a direct result of GBV AoR's Oslo commitment and led to increased quality of GBV integration into the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC). This is significant because the new HPC template was a result of OCHA's commitments at Oslo, and coupled with GBV AoR's commitment to increase capacities in data, both agencies were able to achieve a leap forward in terms of quality analysis and planning.<sup>19</sup> This is an example of collective results started at the Oslo conference.

OCHA reported on efforts to increase GBV funding, highlighting that 9% of CERF-funded projects in 2020 had GBV as their main objective, while 62% of CERF-funded projects included a GBV component. Through the CERF's Underfunded Emergencies Window, USD \$5.5 million was earmarked for GBV priorities in 10 countries. Following country-level prioritisation exercises, the total amount allocated by country operations to GBV-related programming increased from the USD \$5.5 million earmarked to USD \$22.5 million, including indirect GBV outcomes under the health sector.

National and international NGOs, as well as other actors like the ICRC and COFEM, have made progress in their efforts to address SGBV in line with their Oslo commitments. Several, including ICRC and Save the Children, have continued efforts to integrate or strengthen gender and SGBV considerations within their existing work. The ICRC focused particularly on continuing to implement its Strategy on Sexual Violence 2018-2022.<sup>20</sup>

These actors have also pushed forward innovative initiatives. The Women's Refugee Commission, for example, has worked to ensure that gender and GBV actors have the tools and resources to translate the IASC Disability Guidelines into changes in policy and practice.

Several of these commitment-makers, including The New Humanitarian, VOICE, ICRC and COFEM, have made efforts to raise awareness of SGBV and related issues within the sector more broadly

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<sup>19</sup> To learn more, please see GBV AoR (2021). *Annual Report: GBV AoR Regional Support Teams (2020)*. GBV AoR. Available from: [https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2021-10/J18092%20-%20REGA%20and%20the%20GBV%20AoR%20Documents%20Amends%20Annual%20Report%202020\\_LR2%20%281%29.pdf](https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2021-10/J18092%20-%20REGA%20and%20the%20GBV%20AoR%20Documents%20Amends%20Annual%20Report%202020_LR2%20%281%29.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> More details about the work ICRC has done on sexual violence in 2020 can be found in their annual report: [https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/Activities/Sexual-violence/icrc\\_sexual\\_violence\\_special\\_report\\_2020.pdf](https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/Activities/Sexual-violence/icrc_sexual_violence_special_report_2020.pdf)

through research, advocacy, and reporting. The New Humanitarian notably co-produced an investigation with the Thomson Reuters Foundation that uncovered claims of sexual abuse and exploitation by aid workers during the 10<sup>th</sup> Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

#### **COVID-19**

Only six commitments were reported as affected by COVID-19, resulting in delays or workarounds to continue undertaking activities. Not only did most commitment-makers note progress in their commitments in spite of COVID-19, but many engaged in additional efforts to address the rise in SGBV cases during the pandemic.

Several donor governments reported funding additional SGBV projects given the disproportionate effect the pandemic had on women and girls.

Many commitment-makers integrated SGBV into their COVID-19 responses; for donor governments, this involved ensuring that proposals funded during the pandemic included SGBV activities. Others, such as GBV AoR, expanded their support to new contexts to account for the heightened need. In one country example, IOM supported the establishment of the COVID-19 Camp Coordination Task Force in Sudan, which supported the setup of GBV and Child Protection referral pathways in all sites.

Many commitment-makers reported the development and/or greater dissemination of SGBV-relevant guidance, tools, and training resources during the pandemic. For example, COFEM shared resources on COVID-19 related to SGBV, including articles, webinars, and new and adapted guidance. Similarly, ICRC developed practical guides and interactive webinars for staff. The GBV AoR's regional teams organised a global webinar series open to all GBV actors on how to adapt their services and activities during the pandemic. They additionally supported the establishment of new GBV coordination groups to tackle GBV during the pandemic. UNFPA reported organising workshops to identify GBV risks as well as promising practices, lessons learned and common challenges relating to GBV work. WHO produced an information brief entitled, 'Violence Against Women and Covid-19: What the Health Sector Can Do'.

Several of the commitment-makers joined forces calling for GBV to be a standalone objective within the Global Humanitarian Response Plan.

COVID-19 was recognised by SGBV stakeholders as a 'shadow pandemic' due to the lockdowns and restrictions imposed during the pandemic, including potential impacts to women and girls in humanitarian settings. The IASC Gender Reference Group developed the IASC Gender Alert for COVID-19 to provide guidance on addressing the needs of women and girls and promoting gender equality in COVID-19 responses. The New Humanitarian and VOICE reported on the lived experiences of women and girls during this time to further draw attention to the real-life impacts of the pandemic.

UN Women also conducted rapid gender analysis and assessments with partners to assess the impact of the pandemic on crisis-affected women and girls in humanitarian settings, including its impact on the provision of services to SGBV survivors. UN Women also reported scaling up its partnerships with local women's organisations and networks as part of its efforts in preventing and responding to SGBV within the context of the pandemic.

Some commitment-makers reported on their efforts to ensure that the integration and attention placed on SGBV during the pandemic outlast COVID-19 and become a longer-term focus and investment area.

## Support to local actors

Several governments noted providing support or working with local actors on SGBV issues. Australia, for example, advocated for OCHA's pooled funds to maximise support for local women's organisations working on SGBV. Norway has made efforts to map how many of their partners' responses involved women's organisations or local women. Similarly, the UK now requires the organisations it funds to list their downstream partners, which allows better tracking of the amount of funding that reaches women's organisations. A new UK funding procedure also ensures that local partners have equitable access to indirect costs, thereby ensuring the organisational sustainability of funded partners.

Several UN agencies shared the progress they had made in 2020 to engage more with local actors. In 2020, during the 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence, the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) announced \$25 million USD from the CERF would go to UNFPA and UN Women for SGBV programming. Of this allocation, at least 30% of funding is encouraged to be given to women-led organisations, a condition that will also be applied to all CERF GBV-related allocations. Early indications show that both agencies will likely exceed this 30% target.<sup>21</sup>

More generally, the OCHA-managed CBPFs channelled a record-breaking \$330 million to local actors in 2020. A reported \$73 million in CERF funding was sub-granted to 588 local actors in 2020. The CERF also promoted partnerships with women-led and women's rights organisations to address SGBV.<sup>22</sup>

UNFPA and GBV AoR supported the work of women-led organisations and other local actors by using local structures and providing capacity strengthening and resources to these actors. GBV AoR has highlighted the role and membership of local and national NGOs in the GBV Sub-Clusters. UNHCR is working on undertaking institutional changes to enable more meaningful participation and partnership between the agency and women-led organisations. WHO has reported providing technical support and guidance on how to support survivors to international and local organisations, health managers and health providers.

UN Women has supported local actors by advocating for increased direct funding to local women's organisations on other platforms and through its leadership role in the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund. The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund launched its COVID-19 Emergency Response Funding Window in April 2020 to channel funding to local women's organisations to prevent and respond to the gendered aspects of the pandemic. Currently, 42 projects are funded under this window, with 46% focused on activities to prevent and address SGBV during COVID-19 in 18 countries globally. Activities funded include setting up hotlines to provide counselling and psychological support, providing free legal support, ensuring safe GBV case management, and organising safe spaces for survivors of SGBV.

The ICRC has worked in coordination with local organisations and relevant Red Cross/Red Crescent National Societies to ensure a coordinated response to sexual violence in its intervention countries. For example, in western Africa, the ICRC worked with National Societies to raise public awareness on SGBV issues through radio messages. VOICE has taken initial steps to develop and pilot a partnership assessment tool and guidance to support donors to fairly identify and assess women- and girl-led organisations for investment.

<sup>21</sup> UN OCHA (2021). *CERF Annual Results 2020*. UN OCHA. Available from: [https://cerf.un.org/sites/default/files/resources/CERF%20Annual%20Results%20Report%202020\\_0.pdf](https://cerf.un.org/sites/default/files/resources/CERF%20Annual%20Results%20Report%202020_0.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> UN OCHA (2021). *OCHA-managed Pooled Funds 2020 Overview*. UN OCHA. Available from: [https://cerf.un.org/sites/default/files/resources/OCHA-managed%20Pooled%20Funds\\_2020%20Overview.pdf](https://cerf.un.org/sites/default/files/resources/OCHA-managed%20Pooled%20Funds_2020%20Overview.pdf)

In summary, more emphasis in 2020 was placed on capacity building and the provision of technical support than in 2019, although advocacy and awareness-raising featured just as prominently both years. In 2020, many commitment-makers stepped up and adapted their work in the wake of the pandemic, with a large number of commitment-makers also sharing examples of their efforts to support and work more closely with local actors, particularly women-led organisations.

### 3. Beyond the Oslo SGBV Conference

To further support the analysis of changes that the Oslo conference and its outcomes have had on SGBV more broadly, a survey was shared with individuals whose work is focused on SGBV, particularly those based at the field level.

The survey received 181 responses<sup>23</sup>, with just over half of responses received from local actors, such as those working for national non-governmental organisations (35%), community-based organisations/local civil society organisations (13%), and local women-led groups (3%). Other respondents included representatives of international non-governmental organisations (22%), UN agencies (14%) and governments (7%). Most respondents' organisations focused on protection, prevention and risk mitigation activities, followed closely by awareness-raising efforts related to SGBV.

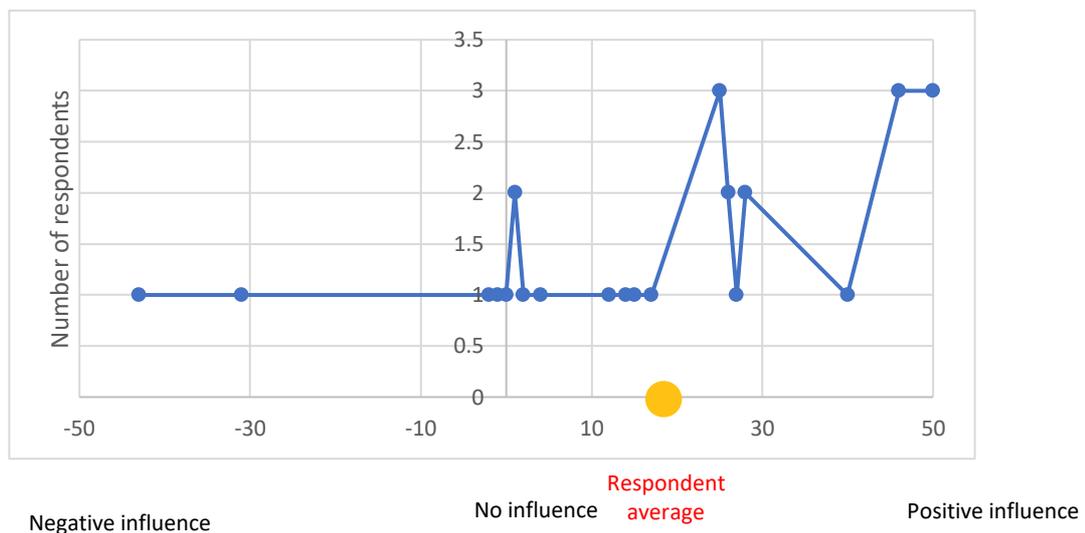
Respondents were asked questions ranging from the perceived impact of the Oslo conference and its outcomes to the challenges they have experienced in carrying out SGBV work.

#### 3.1. Perceived influence of the Oslo conference

Just under half of the respondents (49%) were aware of the Oslo conference commitments. Only nine respondents confirmed that their organisations had received funding as a result of the conference, and these were mainly UN agencies and the ICRC.

A total of 29 respondents (16%) confirmed that they had attended the Oslo SGBV conference in May 2019. Those who attended the conference were asked to share their opinion on the influence the Oslo SGBV conference had on the broader SGBV space (Figure 4).

*Figure 4. In your opinion, how much change (positive or negative) have the Oslo conference and its outcomes had on the broader SGBV space? (On a scale of -50 to 50, where -50 was negative, 0 was neutral/no influence and 50 was positive)*



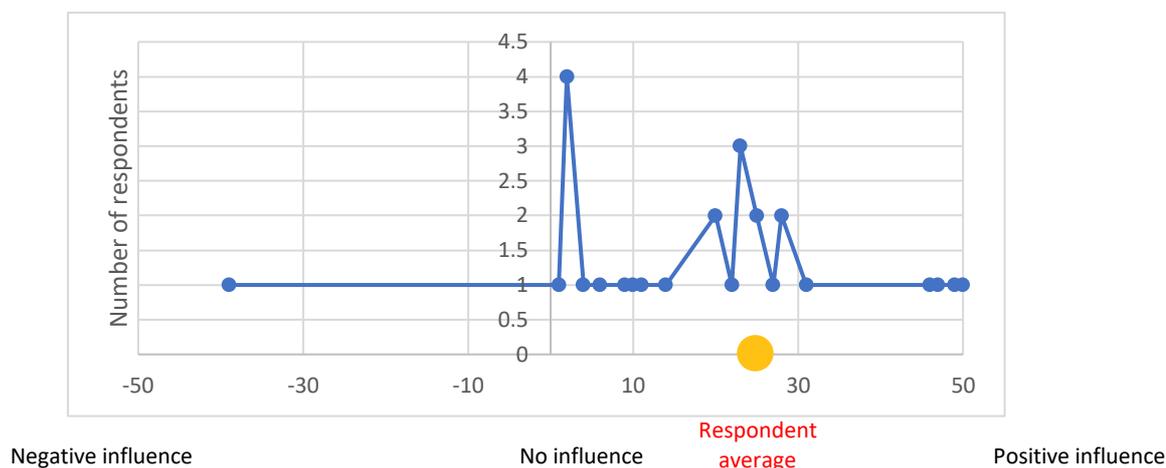
Source: Oslo SGBV Commitments Tracking Survey

Most respondents felt that the conference and its outcomes had a positive effect. The average rating was +12, which is lower than last year's average of +18, but this is due to two respondents rating the influence as particularly negative.

<sup>23</sup> 58 fewer responses than last year.

Most respondents who attended the conference also felt that the Oslo conference and its outcomes had a positive influence on their organisation's SGBV work (the average rating was +19, the same as last year) (Figure 5).

*Figure 5. What kind of influence do you believe the Oslo conference and its outcomes had on your organisation's SGBV work? (On a scale of -50 to 50, where -50 was negative, 0 was neutral/no influence and 50 was positive)*



Source: Oslo SGBV Commitments Tracking Survey

GBV AoR shared the example of improved quality of GBV integration into the HPC, which it links to the commitments made by GBV AoR and OCHA at the Oslo conference:

*'This shift resulted in clarity on persons in need, persons targeted, the financial ask per country that can be compared with incoming funds in FTS. Overall, since Oslo, the field level GBV response planning has become more evidence based, and it could only happen because of the combination of new templates issued by OCHA, coupled with GBV AoR investment in guidance and technical support as committed.'*

Respondents who attended the Oslo SGBV conference were asked whether they had seen any influence in the SGBV work carried out by others outside of their organisation that they believe to be the result of the Oslo conference. Ten respondents reported that they had, with one individual stating that:

*'The global campaign on SGBV during COVID 19 was made easy due to earlier actions and activities on SGBV, of which the Oslo international conference was one.'*

However, most respondents found it challenging to link any changes to the Oslo conference, with one respondent noting that advancements also had to be linked to work undertaken through the Call to Action. Nonetheless, several noted an increased commitment and attention to SGBV following the conference, new areas of work (such as support and materials), increased exchanges and coordination between organisations working in the same sphere at national and international levels, and funding. One respondent stated that:

*'[T]he multi-year funding obtained as a result of the conference enabled the office to implement longer term life saving interventions for the communities mainly girls and girls in humanitarian settings.'*

Initiatives by UNFPA, governments, and the Panzi Foundation of Dr Denis Mukwege in different areas of SGBV work were also mentioned as linked to the Oslo conference by respondents.

It is important to flag that the small sample size of respondents who attended the conference makes it difficult to ascertain how representative their sentiments of the conference and its outcomes are. To make up for this, additional questions were asked in the survey about the changes all respondents perceived in the last year with regards to SGBV and work to address it.

### **3.2. Changes in the last year**

A question was included in the survey asking whether respondents had perceived any positive changes in their SGBV work or collaboration with others in the last year. Over half reported that they had perceived a positive change and shared the following examples:

- More synergies and collaboration among actors working on SGBV.
- More attention to SGBV in the humanitarian system where previously the work was side-lined or underfunded.
- Capacity building efforts (including improved access and availability of resources and training).
- Good participation of different actors in international events.
- More awareness of SGBV among communities (including at-risk groups).
- More awareness of and attention to SGBV among governments and donors.
- Advances in efforts to address SEA.
- Greater consultation and a more sensitive approach to SGBV work.
- Better information sharing on SGBV.
- Referral pathways.
- Experiences of increased funding for SGBV.
- More attention to local NGOs in the context of localisation.

Despite these improvements, respondents noted some persistent challenges impacting their work, especially the short-term nature of funding received and the lack of access to funding. These challenges were mostly experienced by local actors and acutely felt, given the growing needs in SGBV work. Cultural sensitivity and challenging social norms were also noted as significant challenges in the survey, with political challenges highlighted as well. General insecurity and lack of access due to local contextual dynamics were also mentioned by respondents.

For those respondents who completed the survey last year, an additional question was asked on their general perception about progress toward the goal of ending SGBV in humanitarian crises. The majority responded 'neutral' (27%), followed by 22% stating their perception was positive. This contrasted with only 6% who felt negatively about progress.

Although the majority of respondents were generally neutral about progress in the last year with some altogether pessimistic of progress made, many respondents highlighted that they had seen an increased awareness and attention on SGBV, which is a significant positive trend. And while COVID-19 brought significant challenges to actors working on SGBV (including a rise in cases that has been accompanied by a worrying reduction in resources according to some respondents), the pandemic has also provided an opportunity to create innovative ways of working on SGBV in humanitarian crises, including making training and events more accessible online. One respondent emphasised, however, that while progress has been positive, funding still needs to reach the relevant grassroots women organisations as was called for during the Oslo conference.

### 3.3. Funding for SGBV work

A number of respondents confirmed that they received targeted funding for SGBV-specific activities (27%), as well as targeted funding for activities focused on the prevention of SGBV, including gender equality activities (26%). However, many respondents indicated that they receive short-term funding in comparison with long-term/multi-year funding. Very few of those surveyed stated that they had access to flexible and core funding.

Respondents were also asked if they provide funding to local partner organisations, with 43% indicating that they did and 40% stating that they do not. Most government respondents and all except one UN agency representative indicated that they provide funding to local actors. Most local actors made up the bulk of those who indicated that they did not.

The majority of respondents indicated that they have access to international funding sources (67%). Some donors cited include UNFPA, IPPF, the European Union, UN Women, the Mukwege Foundation, and UNICEF. Slightly less than 60% of local actors specifically – national NGOs, community-based organisations, and women-led groups – stated they received international funding, with some sharing caveats. For example, that this funding had been received in the past and that obtaining sustainable international funding, particularly for SGBV work, was a significant challenge. One local women's group representative stated that although they receive international funding, it is 'inadequate and we are always looking for ways to mobilise funding.' The fact that funding does not match the requirements was echoed by other respondents as well.

Another respondent noted that local NGOs are often overlooked by UN agencies when it comes to funding. One government donor who stated that they had provided funding to local organisations stated that this was an exception, as funding to local organisations is still usually channelled through international organisations, international NGOs, and pooled funds. UNFPA was mentioned by several respondents as an intermediary for channelling funding to local actors. This intermediary approach, which appears to be the main way through which Oslo pledgers have funded local actors, presents challenges according to local respondents.

Respondents raised concerns about biases in the allocation of funds. One survey respondent stated:

*'Funds are continuously being put in the wrong hands not doing genuine work on the ground, meanwhile most local/national organizations on the ground lack the minimum resources to effectively respond to the numerous cases of SGBV being reported.'*

Similar sentiments were flagged by other respondents, including one who had seen funding go to local organisations, but only those directed by male leaders. One respondent shared an example of their experience of adequate funding having been obtained by an international NGO to be implemented by a local organisation, but these funds failed to adequately reach the field level. Another respondent stated that funding selection criteria by donors and UN agencies appear almost developed to exclude local organisations and faith-based organisations, despite these arguably having the greatest influence over communities to bring about lasting change in this space.

Some respondents noted a failure from donors to be flexible in whom they fund (direct funding to local actors) and how (to allow adaptations given changing contexts). Interestingly, one respondent stated that most funding they have seen had been directed towards proactive activities rather than support to survivors (e.g., safe houses for survivors of FGM, child marriages, etc.). However, this was not a challenge flagged by other respondents.

With regards to overall funding for SGBV, respondents continued reporting funding gaps even though several Oslo pledgers' disbursements exceeded their commitments in spite of the economic challenges brought about by the pandemic. This may be because Oslo commitment-makers only represent a handful of the world's aid donors but could also reflect the growing need in this area as well as improvements in tracking SGBV funding requirements in recent years. According to data from UN FTS, funding for GBV in 2020 only met 32% of global requirements (totalling \$135.6 million funding reported). And although funding for GBV markedly increased from 2020 to 2021 (to \$260.2 million), this amount still only met 27.8% of GBV requirements for 2021.<sup>24</sup>

#### **Diversity of SGBV programming funded**

One of the benefits of the Oslo commitments was the wide variety of funding pots through which funding could be channelled, thereby ensuring that funding reaches a variety of SGBV initiatives, from those that are focused on prevention, to those that aim to strengthen SGBV response within humanitarian crises more generally, to those focused on addressing sexual violence in conflict settings or from the perspective of international humanitarian law.

One contributor flagged the need to ensure that the international community considers and funds a variety of entry points to engage with the issue of SGBV. This can increase the collective impact on preventing, mitigating risks and responding to SGBV.

### **3.4. Access to support, events, and coordination forums**

Many respondents (44%) felt that they had sufficient access to technical information, guidance, and standards on SGBV to carry out their work, though 34% stated that this access was only somewhat sufficient. Several respondents stated that they would like additional training and guidance, especially in other languages, as well as greater consolidation of all the new research and guidance being developed on SGBV.

With regards to having access to SGBV events/coordination forums, most respondents stated that they had access at some level, though most indicated access at the national level. At the international level, international actors such as international NGOs and UN agencies had the greatest access, although 27 local actor respondents indicated that they had access to international forums. This is most likely thanks to more of these moving online in the wake of COVID-19 restrictions.

### **3.5. Priority areas for the future**

Respondents overwhelmingly felt that to have the most impact, efforts to work with communities and at-risk groups – through community structures, leaders, and organisations – to raise awareness of SGBV had to be prioritised. This engagement must be long-term to effect change. This coincides with the findings of last year's survey.

While a significant proportion of activities focused on advocacy and awareness-raising under the Oslo SGBV commitments, the majority of Oslo related advocacy and awareness-raising activities continue to be concentrated at the global level. The global-level progress made by commitment-makers can play an important role in strengthening the global normative framework against SGBV, advancing progress in the long run. They also arguably have trickle-down effects on policy and practice at the local level, though any immediate and direct impacts would be difficult to attribute. It is incumbent on the global commitment-makers to follow up on their commitments by setting targets for

<sup>24</sup> For more details, including a breakdown between global and country levels, please see: <https://fts.unocha.org/global-clusters/13/summary/2021>

operationalisation/implementation and accountability, so they do not remain mere rhetoric. For example, additional efforts could be focused on removing the obstacles that prevent local actors, particularly women-led groups, from accessing and obtaining sufficient funding to address SGBV, e.g., re-evaluating funding selection criteria and ensuring that – when funding is provided through intermediaries – the greatest proportion of funding is distributed at the implementation level.

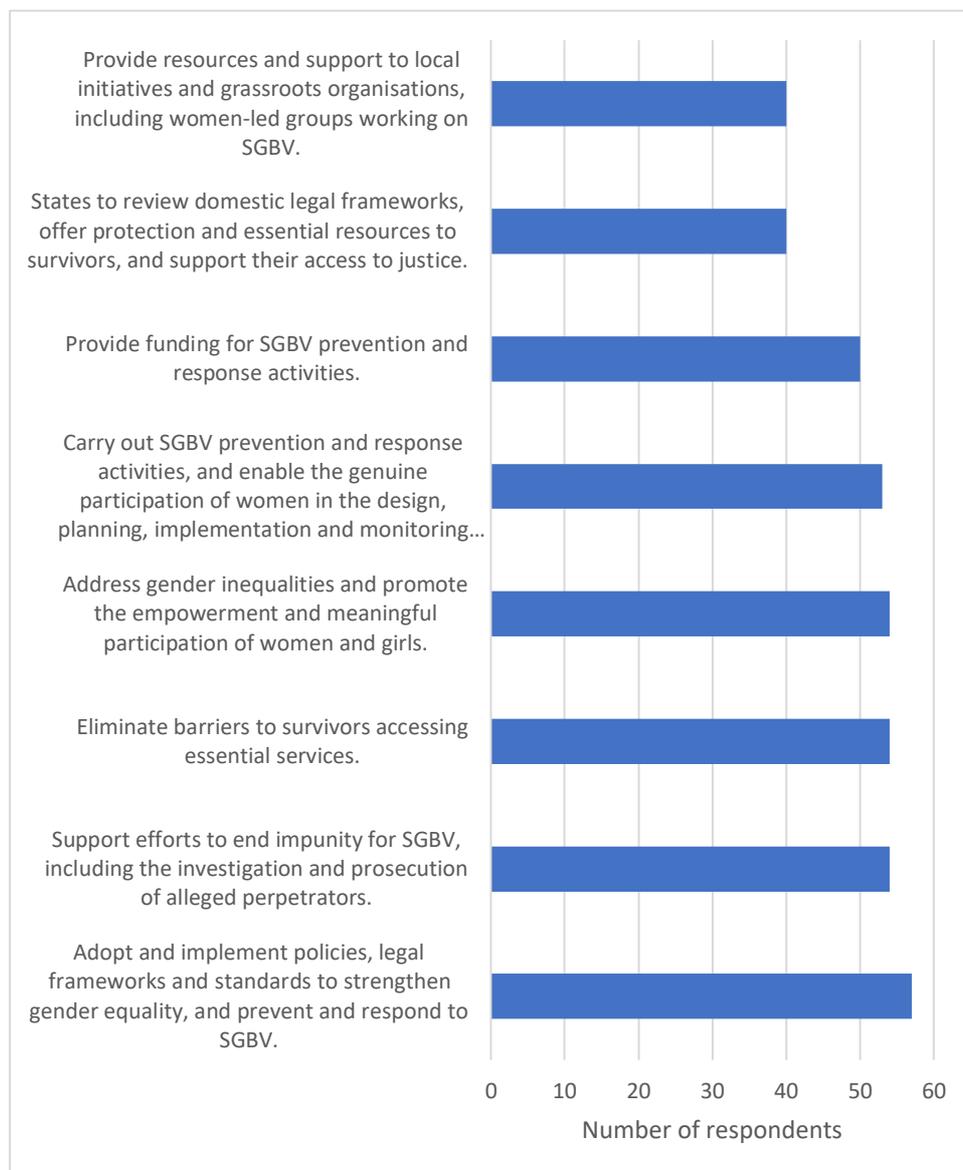
Life-saving services, including medical care, psychological and legal support, were also mentioned by respondents as impactful areas of intervention. Support to survivors more generally, including socioeconomic reintegration and economic empowerment, was also highlighted. Additional activities that were deemed to have the most impact by respondents were general prevention activities, capacity building in this area of work, improving research and data collection and information to address SGBV, including increasing the evidence base on responses for male and LGBTI+ survivors. One respondent stated:

*‘Political attention and funding on addressing and responding to CRSV against men, boys and LGBTI populations remains very weak. Heteronormative patriarchy has to be addressed to ensure sexual violence against ‘all’ survivors is prevented and responded to. Funding for ‘all’ survivors needs to be increased to ensure that hierarchies of harm are not created.’*

Respondents also mentioned the positive impacts of sensitisation efforts with police and military actors, as well as calls for international actors to train judges and police on SGBV.

Finally, respondents were asked to select the top 5 priority areas that international actors, particularly government donors, international NGOs, and UN agencies, should prioritise in the coming year. The results did not present a clear top 5, however, with respondents’ selections spreading across the board. Figure 6 presents the eight areas that were most often selected by respondents.

**Figure 6. What areas of work should international actors, particularly government donors, international NGOs, and United Nations agencies, prioritise in the coming year to have the most positive impact on SGBV work at the field level? (Top 8)**



Source: Oslo SGBV Commitments Tracking Survey

While the priority areas selected by respondents place funding and support to local initiatives at the lower end of the top 8 priority areas, the comments shared by respondents indicate that this priority need should not be ignored over other priority areas. This is reflected in recent research published by others, who have called for the greater support to and involvement of women-led organisations and women’s rights organisations, particularly in response to the COVID-19 crisis.<sup>25</sup>

Respondents expressed their desire to continue to collaborate with and learn from others working on SGBV, with many asking to be invited to future conferences of this kind.

<sup>25</sup> For example, ActionAid et al. (2020). *Humanitarian Funding, Partnerships and Coordination in the COVID-19 crisis: Perspectives from local women-led organisations and women’s rights organisations*. ActionAid. Available from: <https://actionaid.org/sites/default/files/publications/WLO-Covid19-Joint%20Policy%20Brief.pdf>

## 4. Conclusion

In 2020, commitment-makers continued to fulfil the pledges and non-financial commitments they made at the Oslo conference in 2019. The progress reported by commitment-makers was broad and varied, but many shared examples of how they stepped up during the pandemic to address the heightened risk of SGBV and the disproportionate impact experienced by women and girls globally. Very few commitment-makers were so affected by COVID-19 that they could not proceed with their commitments, and this is a testament to the resolve and hard work of all those involved in addressing SGBV in humanitarian crises.

Implementers surveyed have felt this impact on attention and resolve, indicating a greater awareness and engagement from multiple actors on SGBV. Therefore, while the pandemic has brought significant challenges to actors working in this area, it has also raised awareness of this issue and caused many actors to find creative ways to continue carrying out this work. Most notably, a larger number of individuals have been able to access resources, events, and training sessions to increase their capacity to deal with heightened needs.

Despite this notable progress, challenges remain. While a significant proportion of activities focused on advocacy and awareness-raising under the Oslo SGBV commitments, as was noted for 2019 as well, the majority of Oslo related advocacy and awareness-raising activities continue to be concentrated at the global level. This has led to notable shifts within the international aid sector, particularly greater attention to and funding for SGBV, as exemplified by several Oslo commitment-makers exceeding their pledges in 2020, advancements in allocating OCHA-managed pooled funds for SGBV, and commitments by UN agencies to work in greater partnership with women-led organisations.

It is important to ensure, however, that these global-level efforts support efforts on the ground. Survey respondents indicated that one of the intervention areas that has the most impact on addressing SGBV is awareness-raising at the community level through community structures, leaders, and organisations. This has been accompanied by a call from respondents for greater engagement with and direct funding for local actors working on SGBV, particularly women-led organisations and groups.

Overall, the Oslo conference and its outcomes were perceived positively by surveyed individuals, with repeated examples of greater attention to, resources for and collaboration on SGBV. This positive progress, however, has been accompanied by continuing challenges. Respondents reported the continued scarcity of funding, especially for local actors, to meet the growing need for SGBV work brought about by the pandemic, as well as disillusionment that they have not seen more direct, flexible, and long-term funding reaching local actors, particularly women-led organisations and groups, following the calls made on this at the Oslo conference in 2019.

It is important to note, however, that several of the commitment-makers have reported on their efforts to engage with and support local actors in 2020, and these efforts should remain a priority area in the future and be replicated by others.

The Oslo SGBV commitments will continue to be tracked up to 2021, with the final collective progress report shared in 2022. Given the time-bound nature of these commitments and their tracking and the growing needs in the area due to the pandemic, there is an evident need to identify a way to continue this work beyond 2022. Therefore, the momentum of the Oslo conference and its outcomes must be built upon and carried on through a longer-term platform. The Call to Action appears the most adequate platform through which to do so, but to have broader impact, Call to Action members should continue discussing how the platform can be more inclusive of a variety of actors, particularly from the Global South, and whether it can, in collaboration with others, report on SGBV-related funding in a more systematic way.

## 5. References

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