

Evaluation of Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence (JCGBV)

Final Report

Mike Williams

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CDAC	Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CG	Consultative Group
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DTALK	Development Training and Learning at Kimmage
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HAP	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
HIV	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IMS	International Media Services
JCGBV	Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence
KODE	Kimmage Open & Distance Education
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SC	Steering Committee
SCF	Save the Children Fund
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WG	Working Group
WV	World Vision

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence has been in existence since 2004. The Evaluation and Audit Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade commissioned an evaluation of the strategy, functioning and structure of the Consortium on behalf of the members in August 2011, in order to inform the future direction of the Consortium from 2013. The evaluation focussed primarily on the period of the current strategic plan from 2009-12, but with reference also to earlier documents and processes.

The process of the evaluation included a review of the documentation developed by the Consortium since 2004, a review of selected documents from member organisations, and a series of interviews with 41 staff from the 15 members, including CEOs and senior managers, staff who were closely involved in the functioning of the Consortium and staff who were less involved. It also included an interview with an external consultant who had worked closely with the Consortium, and a discussion with a similarly diverse network, the Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities network for comparative purposes.

The effectiveness of the consortium was evaluated in relation to each of the three objectives of the strategic plan:

1. To ensure that the actions to prevent and respond to Gender Based Violence are visible and systematically addressed in the policies, procedures and programmes of all member agencies.
2. To develop and strengthen skills and capacities of member organisations for more effective prevention of, and response to, Gender Based Violence at programme level.
3. To inform, effect and monitor policy implementation to improve actions on prevention of and response to Gender Based Violence.

The findings of the evaluation must be set in the context of the membership of the Consortium which is unusually diverse, if not unique, both in terms of the nature of the participating organisations, their scale and size, and how they relate to wider international networks. This diversity is both a great asset for the Consortium and a great challenge at the same time.

The Consortium took a very strategic, systematic and professional approach towards institutionalising Gender Based Violence across the membership since 2004, and has tracked and reported on this process to a significant degree. The picture in relation to the progress of individual members of the Consortium on institutionalising Gender Based Violence is more mixed. There has certainly been some significant progress by members across a range of activities, including on organisational strategies, policy development, codes of conduct, staff capacity and programming on Gender Based Violence, and on developing strategic relationships within networks. However, progress in these areas is generally uneven across the membership and also uneven within individual agencies.

The Consortium has been very effective in initiating a lot of high quality research, running learning events and developing learning documents for the benefit of its members. The investment in these processes was very important for the Consortium in its early years. Some individual members have been very successful in rolling out training on Gender Based Violence (GBV) within their own organisations. Learning resources have been disseminated widely by many members, but the degree to which they have been used is not clear. The focus of learning and skills development now needs to move out from the centre of the Consortium into individual member organisations and to field level in particular.

The Consortium has undertaken a large body of work on advocacy since 2005, and particularly in relation to the Irish National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Advocacy has been based on very good research, and has been implemented very thoroughly. The Consortium's approach to the National Action Plan was ultimately very effective and delivered significant results. However, the differing views on advocacy and the differing roles that members of the Consortium play in relation to policy and advocacy

work are a source of significant internal tension, and could undermine the future of the Consortium if not properly addressed.

In overall terms, the Consortium has made significant progress over the last seven years in supporting its members to work on gender based violence at both institutional and programme levels. The focus of this work now needs to move out from the centre of the Consortium, so that individual members take greater ownership of the work within their own organisations, and at field level in particular.

Key recommendations for the future of the Consortium are as follows:

- The Consortium should continue to function for a further three-year period, following a new strategic planning process. It should maintain its primary focus on GBV, while looking for ways to ensure that broader gender equality issues are being addressed through all of its work
- The Consortium should maintain its internationally-facing GBV agenda, while seeking to develop specific links with Irish-facing GBV organisations
- The Consortium should engage very actively with the White Paper review process to ensure that GBV is given a substantially greater emphasis in the next stage of implementation, as there is a real opportunity for Ireland to take a lead at international level on addressing GBV.
- The Consortium should seek to promote its unique experience more broadly at international level over the course of its next strategic plan
- Each member of the Consortium should develop a specific action plan for institutionalising its response to GBV at policy, process and programming level, with clear targets, timeframes and commitments from senior management.
- The Consortium's work on systematically addressing GBV in policies, procedures and programmes should now place a greater emphasis on supporting members to roll out GBV response at field level, and on supporting partner agencies to do the same.
- The Consortium should now focus more on skills development for staff deployed overseas, and the staff of partner agencies.
- The Consortium should identify two or three countries where it will focus its energy over the next three-year cycle. Interventions in the selected countries could include an emphasis on institutionalising the approaches of member organisations and partner agencies at field level, joint-training of field staff and partner staff, linking of GBV programming initiatives of member agencies on the ground, joint research and learning initiatives, and joint policy and advocacy work, particularly in relation to UN Security Council Resolution 1325.
- The Consortium should further develop its annual reporting process to look right across the activities of each organisation, and not just at examples of good progress.
- The Consortium should continue to work on advocacy at Irish and international levels, including monitoring of the implementation of the Irish National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and support the development and implementation of national action plans at field level.
- The Consortium should organise an internal workshop to review the advocacy processes to-date, with a view to meeting the needs of all of its members.
- Given the pivotal role played by the Patron to-date, this role should continue with the Patron continuing to hold the members to account on an annual basis.
- The Consortium should look at how it might make its activities and processes more relevant to the small number of members who feel disengaged. Possible options include a two tier-membership structure, some members to opt to leave the Consortium, or a re-organised single tier structure.
- The Consortium should develop a new communications strategy and action plan that will address both internal and external communications issues
- The Consortium should consider the recruitment of a co-ordinator to support the membership in the delivery its work.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the process, findings, analysis, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation of the Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence (JCGBV) undertaken by the consultant from August to November 2011, at the request of the Evaluation and Audit Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The purpose of the evaluation, as outlined in the Terms of Reference, is *'to provide the Consortium members with an independent, evidence-based assessment of the structure, functioning and strategy of the Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence, which will help to inform the future direction of the Consortium from 2013'*.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE IRISH JOINT CONSORTIUM ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Origin of the Consortium

The Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence was established in 2004 at the initiative of Amnesty International and Irish Aid who brought together a number of Irish-based development and human rights organisations in response to the atrocities occurring in Darfur, Sudan at the time. The origin of the Consortium centred around two key events in 2004:

- An Amnesty International report on the crisis in Darfur highlighted the failure of the Government of Sudan, and the international community more widely, to respond to gender based violence (GBV).
- The then Irish Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs with responsibility for Development Co-operation and Human Rights, visited the region around the same time, noted similar inadequacies, and committed to supporting an initiative on GBV in Darfur.

Few of the Irish NGOs working on the ground in Darfur had a comparative advantage on working on GBV. The possibility of linking with Irish organisations that had experience of working with survivors elsewhere (e.g. in Kosovo) was considered initially. However, an opportunity was recognised to shift from what might have been a typical project focussing on reproductive health and counselling, to encompass a more strategic approach to addressing GBV in humanitarian, conflict or longer-term development programmes.

A specific study was supported by the Consortium in 2005 with a view to proposing a framework of best practice for use by agencies to engage *'systematically and consistently with the serious human rights violations associated with GBV'*. The report from this study, *'Gender Based Violence, A failure to Protect – A Challenge to Action'*¹ outlined six key recommendations that members of the Consortium have since been working to fulfil:

1. Institutionalise GBV responses at organisational level
2. Support GBV programming
3. Make Prevention and Protection central to programming
4. Improve Service delivery: Respond to GBV
5. Engage with Civil Society
6. Co-ordinate and Collaborate with Partners / other agencies

The report was followed by the publication of a Guidance Note² on institutionalising GBV prevention and response within organisations. Both the report and the guidance note remain as key references for the Consortium right up to the present, and for this evaluation.

¹ Joint Consortium of Irish Human Rights Humanitarian and Development Agencies and Development Co-operation Ireland: *Gender Based Violence: A failure to Protect – A Challenge to Action*, November 2005. Based on research by Mary Jennings and Sherry McLean.

² *Gender Based Violence, Ireland Responding: A Guidance Note on Institutionalising Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response within Organisations*, IJCGV, November 2006

The initial seven members of the consortium were Amnesty International, Christian Aid, Concern, Oxfam, Self Help International³, Trócaire and Irish Aid. GOAL and ChildFund Ireland joined in the course of 2005, followed soon after by ActionAid, the Irish Defence Forces, Kimmage Development Studies Centre (initially represented through DTALK, and more recently by KODE), Plan and World Vision, giving a total membership of 15 agencies. Details on the members are provided in Annex 1. All 15 agencies remain as members of the Consortium to the present time.

The structure of the Consortium consists of a steering committee which meets regularly, and on which all members are represented, and two working groups, the Advocacy Working Group and the Learning and Practice Group (though the Advocacy Working Group is currently lapsed). The Chair rotates annually between Consortium members; for 2011 the Chair is Concern Worldwide.

In its initial years, the Consortium functioned on an annual cycle, centred on a November roundtable with its Patron, Mary Robinson⁴. At the annual meeting, the members reported individually and collectively on their progress on addressing GBV, and commitments were made for the following year. During the early years, the Consortium engaged in a wide range of activities including special studies and reports on GBV, photographic exhibitions, conferences, advocacy initiatives, presentations at international conferences, support for members in institutionalising their work on GBV, the provision of internal learning seminars and documents, and the launch of a website and resource library. These activities are outlined in more detail in Section 5.

The Strategic Plan 2009-2012

A formal three-year Strategic Plan for the Consortium was launched in June 2009. The **Vision** of the Consortium as outlined in the Strategic Plan is 'A world free of gender based violence'. The **Mission Statement** is: '*Believing that GBV is a key manifestation of gender inequality, the Consortium works collectively to promote action in order to eliminate GBV in international development and humanitarian contexts.*'

The objectives for the three-year period of the Strategic Plan were as follows:

1. To ensure that the actions to prevent and respond to GBV are visible and systematically addressed in the policies, procedures and programmes of all member agencies.
2. To develop and strengthen skills and capacities of member organisations for more effective prevention of, and response to, GBV at programme level.
3. To inform, effect and monitor policy implementation to improve actions on prevention of and response to GBV.

The three-year action plan⁵ included indicators of achievement and activities in relation to each of the objectives.

3. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of the evaluation, as articulated in the Terms of Reference⁶, is to '*provide the Consortium members with an independent evidence based assessment of the structure, functioning and strategy of the Joint Consortium on GBV which will help to inform the future direction of the Consortium from 2013.*'

³ Now known as Self Help Africa

⁴ Mary Robinson is a former President of Ireland, a former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and is a leading academic and campaigner on human rights, gender and environmental justice issues, and is currently Chair of the Mary Robinson Foundation for Climate Justice.

⁵ See Annex 5: Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence, Strategic Plan: June 2009-2012.

⁶ See Annex 2: Terms of Reference for Evaluation of the Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence

The main focus of the evaluation was on the period of the Consortium's strategic plan from mid-2009 to late 2011, but it also refers to previous activities and plans. As outlined in the Terms of Reference, the emphasis of the evaluation is on assessing the '*structure, functioning and strategy*' of the Consortium, so it is not intended to provide a comprehensive evaluation of all of the activities of the Consortium itself and those of each of the 15 members. This would require a much more extensive exercise, including specific field visits. Some assessment of specific activities was clearly necessary in order to evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of the strategy as a whole.

A number of other exercises also provide vital information on the progress of the Consortium to-date, and provide a key reference for this evaluation. These include the mapping of members' performance on institutionalising GBV undertaken in 2010⁷, the current study of members practice in Sierra Leone,⁸ and the annual reporting process for 2011⁹ which has been conducted against the agreed standard format and sample indicators of achievement for the first time.

4. METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS OF THE EVALUATION

The methodology used in the evaluation of the Consortium was as follows:

- a) A review of all of the documentation developed by the Consortium since 2004, including core consortium documents, research reports, learning and practice documents, annual reports, and advocacy documents.
- b) A review of selected documents provided by member organisations on various issues relating to GBV e.g. organisational strategies, policy documents, process documents, evaluations and reports.
- c) Interviews with three types of participants from all of the 15 member organisations:
 - i. Staff who have had specific involvement in the workings of the Consortium via the Steering Group or one of the working groups
 - ii. CEOs and other senior managers from member organisations
 - iii. Others who did not have direct involvement in the Consortium, including other senior or middle managers, field based staff, and a technical adviser from the international network of a member.
- d) An interview with a consultant, Mary Jennings, who has worked with the Consortium on a regular basis since 2005
- e) Eleven of the 15 member organisations participated in a workshop on November 4th to discuss the interim findings of the evaluation
- f) A lesson learning discussion was held with the Co-ordinator of Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC), a network of similar complexity and diversity as the Consortium
- g) A review of lessons emerging from the annual reporting process in 2011, and the specific research on members' work in Sierra Leone, both of which were being finalised at the same time as the evaluation report.

Documentation provided by the Consortium itself and by individual member organisations was used to assess progress on specific areas in relation to GBV and to the work of the consortium. A total of 41 people were interviewed. A major emphasis was placed on interviews with those who had a specific involvement in the workings of the consortium, either more recently or in the past. A detailed interview guideline¹⁰ covering 11 topics for discussion was forwarded in advance to all

⁷Ref: '*Mapping of Members Performance on Institutionalising GBV within their own organisations*'. Mary Jennings, May 2010.

⁸ Ref: *Learning from Practice*; the experiences of GBV Programming by Irish Joint Consortium Members in Sierra Leone, Aisling Swaine Final Report, Draft 1. October 2011.

⁹ The consolidated report, based on individual member reports is currently being compiled by Mary Jennings.

¹⁰ See Annex 4: Interview Guideline Format

member organisations for this purpose. 17 people who had direct involvement in the Consortium were interviewed, including at least one person from each of the 15 members in this group. Eleven of the 15 CEOs were interviewed in relation to higher level issues. Twelve others staff who had no direct involvement with the Consortium were interviewed, including a mixture of senior managers, middle managers, headquarters and field staff. Some interviewees had experienced the Consortium from different perspectives since 2004 e.g. through field and head office postings within that timeframe.

5. FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

Membership of the Consortium

The evaluation of the Consortium must be set in the context of its membership, which is very diverse, both in terms of the nature of the participating organisations, their scale and size, and how they relate to broader networks, confederations or federations at international level. The consortium includes 10 development or humanitarian NGOs, one academic institution (Kimmage DSC, including DTALK and KODE) government bodies from two Departments (Irish Aid¹¹ and the Defence Forces) one human rights advocacy organisation (Amnesty) and a member of the International Red Cross movement (Irish Red Cross). The organisations range in size from the Defence Forces with an annual budget of approximately €1.2bn and 9,500 staff to ChildFund with a budget of €2.4m and six staff.

Of the ten development NGOs, eight are members of international networks, GOAL and Self Help¹² being the exceptions. Concern and Trócaire are two of the largest of the Irish NGOs, and are also among the larger agencies within their international networks. The remaining six NGOs are smaller in size both in an Irish context, and in comparison with the overall membership of their networks. The remaining five members of the Consortium - Red Cross, Amnesty, Defence Forces, Irish Aid and Kimmage DSC - all have their own very different international networks or federations that they interact with in a variety of ways.

In assessing the effectiveness of the Consortium and its members, this diversity has to be borne in mind as for example, the type of institutional procedures in relation to GBV that might be appropriate for a small NGO backed by a large international network might be totally inappropriate for a very large institution such as the Defence Forces, and *vice versa*. Hence in judging the level of achievement in various areas, each member's actions or progress has to be viewed in the context of its particular organisation-type, agenda, scale, ways of working and network connections.

The findings of the evaluation are presented in relation to each of the three objectives of the strategic plan, and to the functioning of the structures and processes of the Consortium. The findings are analysed in more detail in Section 6.

5.1 Findings in relation to Objective 1: 'to ensure that actions to prevent and respond to GBV are visible and systematically addressed in the policies, procedures and programmes of all member agencies'.

The findings presented in Section 5.1.1 below in relation to the consortium itself are based on a review of the considerable volume of documentation that the Consortium has produced since 2004 and interviews with people who were closely involved with the Consortium at various stages of its development. The findings in Sections 5.1.2 to 5.1.5 in relation to progress made by individual

¹¹ "Irish Aid" is not a separate agency but the Development Cooperation Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade – referred to throughout the report for convenience as "Irish Aid"

¹² Self Help Africa was formed as part of a merger between Self Help International and the UK based Harvest Help. The merged entity has its headquarters in Dublin, but also has an office in the UK.

member organisations are based on a review of consortium documents such as annual reports and the 2010 Mapping Exercise, specific discussions during interviews with the 15 agencies, and a review of documents provided by consortium members at the request of the evaluation consultant. The examples provided are not comprehensive by any means, but are included to give a sense of the types of progress and achievements that have been made, as well as some of the failures and gaps. More detailed information relating to overall institutionalisation progress can be found in the mapping exercise and annual reports.

5.1.1 The Consortium's role in supporting institutional capacity

From the very beginning the Consortium identified the need to focus not just on expanding the work of its members on GBV, but on developing their institutional capacity on GBV in order to address it in a systematic and consistent manner¹³. The Guidance Note that followed the 2005 report drew on best practice of the members and was designed to support members in institutionalising GBV. Both the initial report and the guidance note remain as core documents for the Consortium. Staff of member organisations who have become involved with the Consortium in more recent years have consistently referred to the usefulness and practicality of the initial documents.

Annual reports in the early years of the Consortium referred to the six recommendations in the initial report, thus ensuring that the institutionalisation process was being addressed and reported on annually. The development of the strategic plan in 2009 created a clearer vision and longer term strategy for the Consortium as a whole. Up to that point planning was done very much on an annual basis. Objective 1 in the strategic plan emphasised the need to ensure that actions on GBV are systematically addressed rather than being dealt with on an *ad hoc* basis.

The mapping process in 2010 was designed to assess the progress on institutionalising GBV and provides a very useful framework of reference both for the consortium as a whole, and for individual members. Indicators for assessing the degree of institutionalisation were finally agreed in 2010 and form the basis of reporting that was used by members in 2011.

5.1.2 Institutional policies and procedures of Consortium members

Organisational Strategies

Most Consortium members do not have a specific section on GBV in their organisational strategic plan, but some have referenced it within the context of the wider gender programme or a significant body of work in the plan. Four organisations have identified GBV as a core area of work or as a key theme under a main objective in the plan. Most member organisations now have reference to gender equality, gender issues or gender mainstreaming in the organisational strategic plan. Two organisations do not have a specific reference to gender in their plans, though it is factored into their programme development processes in different ways.

The degree of emphasis in plans on gender issues and GBV in particular has increased over the last six years. Four NGO members are in the process of developing new strategic plans from 2012, either in their own right or as members of broader confederations, and three of them have indicated that the emphasis on gender will be more pronounced than before, though not necessarily resulting in a specific GBV section in the plan. Some examples that illustrate progress and trends on organisational strategic plans are as follows:

- ChildFund identified GBV, along with HIV & AIDS, as one of two priority issues in its previous strategic plan 2004-2008, and in its new plan from 2009-13 speaks of '*giving priority to*

¹³ This intention was set out in advance of the 2005 study and is reflected in Recommendation 1 of the 2005 report - Ref. 'Terms of Reference for Gender Based Violence Study Consortium of Irish Human Rights, Humanitarian and Development Agencies & Development Co-operation Ireland, 2005

development programmes which address Child Protection and Gender, focussing in particular on combating GBV and / or HIV’.

- Trócaire has ‘Promoting Gender Equality’ as one of its six organisational programmes in its strategic plan 2006-16, under which one of the three outcomes states that: ‘*women’s vulnerability to disadvantage, exploitation and violence in Trócaire’s priority countries is reduced’*
- ActionAid Ireland draws on the strategic plan of the ActionAid Alliance and develops its own action plan in that context. One of the five Mission Objectives in the new ActionAid Alliance Strategic Plan¹⁴ is to ensure that ‘*women and girls can break the cycle of poverty and violence, build economic alternatives and claim control over their bodies’.*
- The White Paper on Irish Aid¹⁵ drives the strategy of Irish Aid and has a major influence on the sector as a whole. The references to GBV in the White Paper are outlined in Box 1, below.
- The existing Christian Aid strategic plan has reference to gender, but it is not one of the six core themes. Gender issues are viewed by Christian Aid from a ‘power’ perspective. Gender, including GBV, is being proposed as one of the core themes in the new plan from 2010 (currently in draft form).¹⁶
- The Irish Red Cross strategic plan developed in 2007 has a reference to gender as a ‘priority’.

Box 1: GBV in the White Paper on Irish Aid (2006)

The White Paper on Irish Aid sets out the strategic direction for Irish Aid and for the Government’s approach to aid as a whole in the following years. The White Paper is also of great significance to all Consortium members, and to the international development sector as a whole, for a number of reasons:

- a) Consortium members, and other actors in the sector, were directly involved in the extensive consultation process that led to the White Paper
- b) Because of the relatively small size of the development / human rights sector in Ireland, all of the Consortium members have a close relationship with Irish Aid
- c) Almost all Consortium agencies (with the exception of the Defence Forces) receive significant funding from Irish Aid.

The White Paper has therefore a significant influence on the strategies of Consortium members and those of other actors in the sector. The Paper made a specific reference to the work of the Consortium - without actually naming it - and recognised that ‘*raising the profile of GBV as a distinct and important issue’* had been an essential first step. This reference is significant as it confirms that the work done by Irish Aid staff and the Consortium more generally in profiling GBV as an important issue had an influence on the strategy.

Under one of its 48 ‘Key Decisions’ the White Paper spoke of increasing support for ‘*gender equality measures, with a specific focus on preventing and responding to gender-based violence’*. A second key decision included reference to gender as one of four themes to be mainstreamed in all of Irish Aid’s work. It went on to affirm that the Government / Irish Aid ‘*will continue to advocate internationally for greater attention and resources to be devoted to the prevention of gender-based violence’*. In the Gender and Development section of the White Paper there was a specific reference to the Irish Government’s commitment to the implementation of UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

¹⁴ ActionAid’s Strategy 2012-2017: People’s Action to End Poverty

¹⁵ The White Paper on Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs, 2006.

¹⁶ Confirmed in conversation with the Christian Aid Gender, Power and Exclusion Adviser, London

Gender Policies and GBV in other Policies

The larger member organisations have developed their own gender policies while smaller organisations generally utilise those of the international networks of which they are members. For example:

- GOAL and Trócaire have their own gender policies including reference to GBV, and Concern has an Equality Policy that emphasises gender and protection
- Plan Ireland utilises the gender policy developed by Plan International in 2010, and a specific GBV position paper is being developed by the network at present.
- An internal review of the Irish Aid Gender Policy in 2011 found that there has been an increase in attention to and resources for GBV across the organisation.

The degree to which GBV and gender equality more broadly is incorporated into other thematic and organisational policies and strategies has increased since 2004, as Consortium members and their broader international networks are more conscious of the need to address the issue. For example:

- Concern's HIV and Education policies make specific reference to GBV. School-related GBV has been identified as a particular issue to address, and nine of Concern's country programmes have now developed action plans on this.
- In line with the Gender policy developed in 2009, the GOAL Haiti Strategic Plan makes specific reference to several GBV and gender-related areas of work
- Christian Aid's policies on Livelihoods, Emergencies, Economic Justice and HIV all have specific reference to gender issues.
- Trócaire's Governance and Human Rights Policy was finalised in 2011 and makes specific reference to impunity issues relating to GBV. Trócaire's new Security Manual also has a specific section on sexual assault
- The ChildFund HIV policy makes specific reference addressing GBV
- Irish Aid's Guidelines on the Development of Country Strategy Papers make specific reference to gender and GBV
- Oxfam International's Programme Standards document makes specific reference to GBV and gender equality

However, there are some obvious examples where opportunities have been missed e.g. the Irish Aid Education Policy was updated in 2008, and briefly refers to GBV in a case study, but has no specific objective, output, strategy or approach in relation to GBV. While many members can give examples of progress on integrating GBV into specific policies and strategies, very few, if any, could be said to have a strategy or action plan to ensure that all organisational policies, thematic policies and country strategies will be systematically assessed to ensure that they address GBV within a specific timeframe.

Roll-out of organisational processes is significantly influenced by the scale of the organisations. For smaller agencies with few staff, the roll-out of new procedures or internal systems can be done very quickly, with little fuss. For larger organisations with a substantial field presence and hundreds or even thousands of staff in some cases, these processes are more challenging and take more time to achieve. That said, some good examples were given (e.g. by Defence Forces, Trócaire) of how discussions on GBV had been successfully integrated into regional meetings, global thematic programming meetings and training workshops, and gender or GBV is being increasingly included in regional and country strategies of those organisations that have them.

Gender Audits

Somewhat disappointingly, only two organisations (Concern and Trócaire) have completed specific gender audits. Two others have conducted internal surveys on gender attitudes. Several of the

remaining agencies commented on their intentions to do audits, but had not got around to them. The agencies that had undertaken internal audits or surveys generally reported that the exercises were useful in terms of identifying specific issues that the organisations needed to address.

Staff Codes of Conduct

Significant progress has been made over the last seven years in the application of specific staff codes of conduct or protection policies. All Consortium members have codes of conduct for staff that relate to GBV or protection issues in some shape or form at this stage. The type and content of codes used is significantly influenced by the nature of the organisations and the circumstances in which their staff work. The codes include child protection policies, dignity at work policies, anti-sexual harassment policies, programme participant protection policies, staff handbooks and standards of behaviour¹⁷. Some organisations already have, or are in the process of developing, more than one of these policies. As for other policy documents, the smaller agencies tend to adopt the codes developed within their broader networks, while larger agencies tend to develop their own codes. In some cases, the development and roll-out of these policies is still a work in progress, particularly in relation to the more complex issue of the application of protection policies to partner agencies.

Consortium members and other development agencies are now very conscious of the fact that their organisations, their staff and the work that they do overseas will come under increasing scrutiny in relation to protection issues. Membership of the Consortium has generally made agencies more conscious of the need to address these issues, but the drive towards codes of conduct and protection policies has been driven primarily by the international response to UN and NGO abuse scandals in developing countries, and also by the response to child abuse scandals in Ireland.

Some examples of codes of conduct and related implementation mechanisms are as follows:

- The Defence Forces have a specific Dignity Charter in their Information Handbook¹⁸ for personnel, and the Soldier's Card also refers specifically to GBV issues.
- Concern was the first Irish agency to develop a Programme Participant Protection Policy (4P) and as a certified member of the international Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP)¹⁹ each country programme is required to develop a formal complaints response mechanism. Christian Aid also has full HAP certification.
- Plan Ireland adheres to the Plan International Whistle-blowing Policy on Sexual Harassment
- The IFRC has an independent confidential service to support staff in reporting on breaches of the Red Cross Code of Conduct.

5.1.3 Leadership and Capacity of Members on GBV

Leadership

Virtually all of the interviewees who have a direct connection with the Consortium, including most of the 11 CEOs interviewed, felt that the high profile annual conference involving the Patron is a significant influencing factor on their organisation. Because of the high profile and status of the event, CEOs feel that it is important to attend and the approach of the annual event provides them with a reference point at which to check their own organisation's progress in responding to GBV. Apart from designated gender / GBV staff, senior managers in all organisations engage with GBV to some extent, but very much depending on the structure and overall size of the organisation.

¹⁷ More detailed information on the codes developed by agencies is documented in the 2010 Mapping of Members Performance and the 2011 Annual Report.

¹⁸ Defence Forces Information Handbook, Human Resource Management Section, Defence Headquarters, January 2011.

¹⁹ Concern and Christian Aid are two of the 12 HAP members with full certification. Other HAP members include ActionAid International, Plan International, Trócaire and World Vision International.

However, some CEOs themselves and some of their staff would agree that the level of engagement by CEOs and senior managers on GBV between the annual meetings is very low in some cases.

Two of the CEOs who were relatively new to the sector admitted that when they first joined the organisation they did not see the full relevance of GBV to the organisation's mandate and were surprised that it was being treated as an issue of such high importance. It was only when they explored the issue in more detail and the sheer scale and horror of the GBV problem became apparent (heavily informed by a field visit in one case) that they realised the importance of addressing it. The lack of full awareness of the scale and depth of the GBV problem was not confined to new entrants to the sector. Other senior managers and experienced aid workers (including emergency managers) were aware of the issue, but were taken aback at the sheer scale and horrendous nature of the GBV problem when this was highlighted by the work of the Consortium and by research emerging from other sources.

GBV does not generally appear as an automatic item on the agenda of senior management meetings of members, but some organisations confirmed that it does appear on occasion, particularly because of the high profile of the Consortium. However, in many cases GBV still does not get the attention or profile that other thematic issues get e.g. hunger or climate change.

Specialist Staff

The number of dedicated GBV staff varies widely across members and is related to both the overall scale and capacity of the organisation and the level of emphasis that the organisation places on gender or GBV issues. Some organisations have specific gender posts, while others have broader equality or gender & HIV roles (or both in one case). The larger advocacy-driven members (e.g. Amnesty, Trócaire) have staff with a specific remit that allows them to spend a substantial portion of their time on GBV advocacy. In several cases, smaller agencies in large international networks (e.g. Christian Aid) link with gender or GBV specialists in the wider networks. GBV work is supported by technical advisers at field level in some cases, and where organisations do not have the capacity to have full time gender / GBV officers they often have a gender focal person. A few members have taken the initiative to partially or fully fund specific gender posts within their wider networks as a direct consequence of their participation in the Consortium.

- The Defence Forces deploy a gender adviser as one of four advisers to each commander on an overseas mission.
- Irish Aid has a part-time or full-time gender adviser in each embassy where there is a development programme
- Trócaire has a HIV and Gender team headed by a Programme Leader and including a gender Project officer and a HIV & Gender Advocacy Officer.
- World Vision Ireland operates from a strong gender focus. It does not have a specific gender focal person, but links with gender experts in the wider confederation, and expects all staff to address gender issues.
- Irish Red Cross has funded a gender specialist for the Red Cross Federation in Haiti. Irish Aid has done likewise for the Ugandan Government.
- GOAL has a technical specialist with a broad remit, and gender focal person who doubles as a desk officer
- Oxfam Ireland manages the Tanzania country programme on behalf of the Oxfam International confederation, and has two gender specialists on the programme.

5.1.4 Programming of Members on GBV

The term 'programming' has differing meanings to different members. For NGOs and the Irish Red Cross, programming relates to their work in developing countries, either implemented directly or in partnership with local organisations or sister agencies in networks / confederations. The smaller NGO members generally tend to channel their funding of programmes via sister agencies or the

networks as a whole, with some exceptions e.g. Oxfam Ireland as the ‘managing affiliate’ for Oxfam International in Tanzania.

Amnesty’s programme of work is based on advocacy implemented in Ireland and abroad via Amnesty International. For the Defence Forces, programming relates to the deployment of field personnel e.g. under a UN mission. KODE’s programme of work is based on training courses provided for other agencies. Irish Aid does not implement programmes directly, but programmes its work through multilateral agencies, bilateral relationships with governments in developing countries and support for Irish and local civil society organisations (CSOs). In addition to their work abroad, several members of the consortium also have an Irish facing programme of work e.g. on advocacy, campaigning, training or development education.

When the Consortium was established in 2004, much of the work being done on GBV at the time was based on isolated project responses to GBV e.g. the provision of shelters or counselling services for victims of GBV. There has been a significant increase in the level of programming on GBV since that time, either through the delivery of specific GBV interventions (some), the incorporation of GBV into other thematic programmes (mostly) or via gender mainstreaming (increasing). Some examples are as follows:

- Networks / confederations such as ChildFund Alliance, Plan International, ActionAid Alliance and World Vision, that have a particular focus on children or education, have all increased their focus on GBV in recent years and tend to have well developed GBV / protection components or approaches to their programming that the Irish members feed into, support and learn from in various ways, and to varying degrees.
- Trócaire has GBV specific programmes in seven countries around the world, each supported by a technical programme officer.
- Oxfam Ireland actively sought and continues to support the inclusion of a GBV prevention component in a joint Oxfam programme in Uganda
- Concern does not have specific GBV programmes, but has incorporated significant GBV components into programmes in countries such as Ethiopia, Bangladesh and Uganda.
- In the MAPS II Programme Funding Scheme in 2007 (under which 5 consortium members were funded) Irish Aid made specific reference to the recommendations from the GBV Consortium ‘being a focus for policy dialogue and learning’²⁰, and included a special incentive for mainstreaming.
- GOAL has integrated GBV into programmes in seven countries to varying degrees e.g. Children at Risk and Behaviour Change components in Ethiopia, GBV in Haiti.
- Amnesty’s ‘programming’ is reflected in the high level advocacy work that contributed significantly to the establishment of the Consortium in the first place, and is further reflected in its work on UNSCR 1325 and other human rights frameworks, both within the Consortium (under Objective 3) and in its own right.
- As a ‘personnel sending’ institution, the Defence Forces has developed clear systems and structures both in Ireland and at field level, to ensure the appropriate conduct of military personnel in relation to gender issues, and to liaise with local communities on the ground in relation to protection of civilians and GBV issues.
- An example of a joint programme by Trócaire and Irish Aid to counter domestic violence in Uganda is highlighted in Box 2, below.

The recently-completed research in Sierra Leone²¹ provides a useful case study of the programming activities of eight Consortium members on the ground in one country. One of the reasons for

²⁰ Guidelines for Irish Aid Multi-Annual Programme Scheme (MAPS) Phase II, 2007-11.

²¹ Aisling Swaine on behalf of the Consortium on GBV: *Learning from Practice: the Experiences of GBV programming by Irish Joint Consortium Members in Sierra Leone*, Draft 1, 30th October 2011.

selecting Sierra Leone for this research was because a large number of Consortium members have programmes there. The report outlines a significant body of work in relation to GBV being undertaken by the agencies on the ground, but it also identifies some considerable gaps, as well as opportunities for greater collaboration in the future. Significantly, the agency representatives on the ground had little knowledge of the Consortium or the resources it has produced, and collaboration among the agencies only took place in the context of other local structures and processes.

Despite the substantial increase in programming work on GBV by Consortium members overall, agencies generally acknowledge that this expansion of work has not been developed on a uniform basis across their international portfolios, and is often related to the level of interest, competency or understanding of gender / GBV issues of specific managers or programme staff, so that some countries or regions may have very strong programmes while others have clear gaps. Similarly, some programme officers are very good at incorporating GBV into non-gender specific programmes while other struggle or omit to do so. This variation in commitment or capacity is almost certainly related to the success or otherwise in rolling out organisational policies and procedures relating to GBV and the degree of leadership taken at senior level in doing so.

Box 2: Programming on GBV: Ending the Silence on Domestic Violence in Uganda

In 2008, Irish Aid and Trócaire undertook a joint scoping study on GBV in Uganda. The study identified the lack of a clear response on GBV by faith based organisations and communities as a key gap. Following extensive engagement with the leadership of the Catholic Church, a high-profile National Campaign on Domestic Violence was launched in 2009 in conjunction with the Ugandan Bishops Conference and utilised the Church structures in every diocese and parish. A local pilot programme was also launched in Soroti Diocese to test prevention and response mechanisms on domestic violence at community level. An early learning review of the programme in mid-2011 found a number of significant achievements to date, including a shift within the Church from a piecemeal response to domestic violence to the creation of formal structures and a co-ordinated approach; the breaking of the silence within the Church community itself on domestic violence; and the stimulation of a demand for more action and practical responses to GBV.

A few organisations have developed specific procedures or criteria to ensure that GBV or gender is taken account of in programme analysis and design, but others still take a more informal approach. For example:

- Concern's programme planning system includes a particular section on gender inequality in the planning framework, with specific reference to gender roles, relations and GBV.
- Oxfam has adapted its programme appraisal format to include consideration of gender issues as one of 10 'non-negotiables' for programmes
- Self Help Africa has a focus on rural development programmes where it is aware of GBV issues and tries to take them into account, but does not have a formal mechanism for assessment.

In general, member organisations are unable to put precise figures on the overall organisational or programme expenditure on GBV. The exception to this is where projects or programmes are entirely GBV focussed and the project budget can be allocated 100% to GBV. However, these cases are the exception rather than the rule. Irish Aid has calculated that it spent €3.66m on GBV in 2010²²

²² Irish Aid report to the Joint Consortium on GBV, 2011.

As the level of programming on GBV increases, the amount of programme evaluation work is also increasing. Several members were able to provide examples of external evaluations of specific GVB projects or programmes, or evaluations of broader programmes that make specific reference to how they address GBV. Some examples are as follows:

- The final evaluation of Irish Aid’s MAPS II programme funding scheme for five Consortium members highlighted the fact that MAPS allowed the agencies to take ‘a more strategic approach to their programming – both on paper and on the ground’ on GBV (among other issues)²³.
- An evaluation of Trócaire’s GBV programme with six partners in Kenya from 2006-09 concluded that the programme had made a significant impact in contributing to a reduction in the level of GBV in the country over that period.²⁴
- An evaluation of an Oxfam Germany programme in Eastern DRC, included a specific component on GBV at the request of Oxfam Ireland

5.1.5 Membership of International Networks

The sixth recommendation from the 2005 study called on members to collaborate and co-ordinate with other agencies and partners. The participation of 13 Consortium members in international federations, confederations or networks, and their varying roles in them, has already been highlighted at the beginning of Section 5. Many of these networks are significant players in the international development arena, and have a considerable degree of influence on the wider development / human rights sector as a whole. In ten cases it could be said that the Irish member of these networks is a relatively small member (in terms of scale, but not necessarily in level of influence) in relation to the size of other members, and to the network as a whole. Only two of the agencies, Concern and Trócaire²⁵, are significantly large players in their respective networks.

All of the major international development networks have been increasing their engagement with gender issues, and with GBV in particular, over the last six years. During interviews, most of the Consortium members indicated that, even if they had not been members of the Irish Consortium, they would probably have increased their work on GBV to some degree over this period in any case, as their networks were placing a greater emphasis on it. However, most felt that their increasing emphasis on GBV in programme work was also influenced by their involvement in the Consortium to a substantial degree. Membership of the Consortium enabled them to be better prepared and to engage more actively in GBV programming within their wider networks. Two agencies felt that the Consortium had not significantly influenced their programming work at all, and that the Consortium had little to add beyond what was already available in their networks.

Some members have been very proactive in seeking to influence their wider networks via specific funding for GBV work, support for GBV-related resources or influencing policy debates, even where the Irish arm of the network is quite small in relation to the overall network size. Members such as Amnesty, Irish Aid, Defence Forces and Trócaire have been very proactive in this regard, but success in this area is not exclusive to the larger members. Some smaller members have also been very successful in influencing their wider networks, and could provide an example for others to follow in future. The key to successful influencing appears to have been the willingness and enthusiasm of individuals to promote the issue, and having a clear niche or thematic area to focus on.

- World Vision Ireland co-hosted with World Vision Somalia a conference for all WV offices in Africa on ‘Anti-FGM Advocacy – Experience sharing’ in 2010.

²³ Irish Aid Multi Annual Programme Scheme (MAPS) Phase II, Final Evaluation Par 152. IOD-PARC September 2011.

²⁴ Kenya Gender Based Violence (GVB) Programme Evaluation, Final Report Submitted to Trócaire Horn & East Africa Regional Office, Nairobi, Kenya. RUCBIC, Nairobi, March 2010.

²⁵ Concern is a member of the Alliance 2015 network. Trócaire is a member of both the CIDSE and *Caritas Internationalis* networks

- Christian Aid Ireland was asked to spearhead work on GBV within the Christian Aid Network in 2007²⁶
- Because of its specific focus on GBV and HIV, ChildFund Ireland has been able to achieve significant influence within the ChildFund Alliance
- The action of the Irish Red Cross in pushing for the development of a gender strategy for the entire Red Cross federation is highlighted in Box 3, below.

While some cases of positive influencing have been highlighted above, some other cases came to light where the international networks had a strong emphasis on GBV or gender in their work, but the Irish members did not appear to engage very strategically with the broader networks e.g. in some cases they were funding programmes that happened to have GBV elements to them, but this was more through coincidence than strategy. In other cases, they were aware of gaps in relation to GBV but had not attempted to address them. One larger agency, even though very active on GBV in its own right, did not link at all with its network on GBV.

Box 3: Influencing a Global Federation

As a relatively small affiliate of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the Irish Red Cross acted very strategically in 2010 in pushing for the development of a gender policy (including consideration of GBV) for the entire Federation. The Irish affiliate was instrumental in organising a global process of consultation including two consultative workshops in Panama and Munich²⁷ with funding of €0.3m from Irish Aid – a relatively small investment in the context of the entire Red Cross global budget. The process has led to the development of a Draft Gender Strategy for the Federation with a significant emphasis on GBV, which was presented for discussion at a side event for IFRC members at the November 2011 General Assembly. A final draft strategy is expected to be presented to the IFRC Governing Board in May 2012.

Smaller members of networks often find that it is quite difficult to influence their much larger sister agencies on programming, policy or institutional issues. The most success in this area in relation to GBV (and indeed on other issues) appears to have been achieved where the Irish members have focussed their activities either geographically or thematically (e.g. Oxfam, ChildFund) to gain greater influence through better concentration of resources and the development of more in-depth personal relationships with sister-agency staff in the field. Agencies that spread their involvement very wide have found it difficult to influence their sister agencies to any significant degree.

5.2 Findings in relation to Objective 2: *‘To develop and strengthen the skills and capacities of member agencies for more effective prevention of, and response to, GBV at programme level’.*

5.2.1 The role of the Consortium in developing skills and capacities:

The Consortium has undertaken a number of initiatives designed to learn from experience to date and to improve the capacity of members to respond to GBV at programme level. Some of these initiatives relate to specific programming situations on the ground, while others are of a more general programming nature. The Consortium initiated a specific piece of research in early 2005 in Sierra Leone and Liberia that focussed on developing a framework for Irish agencies to respond to GBV in conflict and post-conflict settings. Consortium members who were around at the time commented on this as a very useful piece of work, as it provided a practical basis for action in what was a very complex environment. The research completed in Sierra Leone in late 2011 has

²⁶ Ref Consortium Annual Report 2007

²⁷ A third workshop in Lebanon was funded by Norwegian Red Cross.

documented the experience of GBV programming by Consortium members there to date, and makes specific reference to the original research conducted in 2005.

Activities of the Learning & Practice Working Group

The Learning and Practice Working Group has focussed on supporting members through a series of learning days involving highly respected international speakers on various topics relating to GBV. The discussions from these learning days were recorded and a series of learning briefs were published. Most of the discussions during learning days were focussed on programming practice, but some have also focussed on policy issues.

Based on a learning day in June 2009, three learning briefs on effective responses for GBV were published as follows:

- Developing a Community based Approach
- Gender Based Violence in Schools
- Engaging Men to end Gender Based Violence

A further learning day on MDG 1 (Poverty and Hunger) with a policy focus was organised in June 2010, in advance of the MDG Summit in September of that year. A fourth Learning Brief on MDG 1 was published subsequently. Two further learning briefs on *'Engaging Men and Boys to Address GBV'* and *'Addressing GBV in Post-Conflict and Fragile States'* have just been launched in November 2011. The effectiveness of these learning events and publications is discussed in Section 5.2.2 and Section 6.2.1, below.

The focus of the Consortium's learning and research work over time has fluctuated between humanitarian emergencies / conflict situations and longer-term development situations. The initial focus in 2004-5 was very much in relation to Darfur, and the emphasis was therefore on humanitarian crises. In more recent years, the emphasis has tended to be on development situations as can be seen from the content of the learning days and learning briefs outlined above. More recently again, there has been a renewed focus on humanitarian settings, with the organisation of a training workshop on *'Addressing GBV in Humanitarian Settings'* given by globally renowned expert Jeanne Ward in May 2011, the commissioning of the Sierra Leone research project, and the launch of the Learning Brief on fragile states in November 2011.

The Learning & Practice Group also worked on the development of the indicators and standard template for future reporting by members. The Consortium website has a resource library that provides links to a variety of learning documents from a range of leading agencies in the sector.

Presentations by individual members to the group on particular topics relating to their work have also been a successful feature of the Learning and Practice group:

- Several Consortium members commented that they had received great insight from the presentations by the Defence Forces and the Gardai on their approaches to protection and codes of conduct.
- Smaller agencies that have less capacity to engage in detailed ongoing research or publications (e.g. Self Help Africa, ChildFund) have been able to formally present aspects of their work to the group. This aspect of sharing learning on each other's work is greatly valued by Consortium members generally.

Functioning of the Learning and Practice Group

In general, the work of the Learning and Practice Group has been highly valued by the members of the Consortium. Approximately 9-10 organisations, both large and small have remained involved in the workings of the group to varying degrees at any one time, which is quite a high number given the

capacity constraints of many members. This probably reflects the fact that a significant number of agencies have more interest in field programming than in advocacy, as the focus of the group's work has been mostly (but not exclusively) on programming. All interviewees who have worked on the group were positive about its work and motivated to develop it further, but there are significant concerns about the overall workload on the group. Members who do not have the time, or in some cases the interest, to work on other aspects of the Consortium's work, appreciate the opportunity to come to the events organised by the Learning and Practice Group.

Interviewees, including those who were not directly involved in the workings of the consortium, spoke very highly of the quality of the learning days organised by the Consortium. In general, speakers were found to be very knowledgeable and engaging on their topics, and the events were well organised. A lot of effort was put in to promoting the learning days among the membership. Some members of the group expressed frustration at the difficulty in getting a broader range of staff from member organisations to attend the learning events. Consortium members also spoke highly of the quality of learning papers produced and in particular about the practical nature of the content.

5.2.2 The role of members in developing their own skills and capacities on programming:

Apart from the learning and skills development work advanced by the Consortium as a whole, individual members have also been active in developing the skills of their own staff, and those of other Consortium members in a variety of ways.

The roles of DTALK and KODE

The participation of Kimmage Development Studies Centre in the Consortium, initially via the Development Training and Learning Centre (DTALK) and latterly via Kimmage Open and Distance Education Programme (KODE), provides a particular in-house resource for training of staff from member agencies. DTALK initially developed a specific training course on GBV that was delivered in Dublin and open to all agencies. Staff who participated in the course were generally positive about the content, but DTALK was somewhat disappointed at the poor take up of places on the course over time. Part of the reason for this was that the course had a focus on humanitarian emergencies rather than long-term development situations, and was therefore of less interest to some member agencies.

Recognising that in many cases the people who would need to participate in such a course (particularly from larger agencies) are field-based, KODE has now developed a distance learning course on GBV. The course was launched in mid-2011 and candidates do not need to be based in any particular country in order to participate. Early indications are that at least two Consortium members have made particular efforts to encourage staff or partner agencies to sign up to the course. Some other training initiatives by member organisations include the following:

- The Defence Forces run a 10-day International Human Rights Course in the UN School in The Curragh on a twice-yearly basis, dealing with issues such as child abuse and hostages. Apart from building the knowledge of Defence Forces officers being deployed overseas, the course also includes participants from NGOs.
- The Oxfam network has a specific 'Why Gender – let's talk' internal training format and process.
- As part of its annual Gender and HIV Programme Meeting, Trócaire has provided specific training on GBV for managers and staff from around the world, and utilised materials from the Consortium in the process.
- The collaboration of Consortium members for training on the sensitive area of civil-military relationships is outlined in Box 4, below.

Box 4: Civil Military Collaboration on Training on GBV

The Irish Defence Forces worked in partnership with the Irish Red Cross and Amnesty International to develop GBV-related scenarios for the Swedish-led International Viking Civil-Military and Police Training Exercise. The exercise is designed to promote learning and mutual understanding at the interface between civil, military and police actors on a range of operational issues in complex humanitarian emergencies. An Irish Aid gender specialist also supported the implementation of the exercise.

Research Initiatives

There is a growing body of research work emerging from member agencies that can potentially be used to inform future programming. The mapping exercise of 2010 listed twenty three pieces of research undertaken at that stage, together with an additional eleven lesson-learning documents or case studies on good practice. Some examples are as follows:

- Concern research²⁸ on identifying possible intervention measures to address GBV in Northern Uganda
- A study by Irish Aid on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Niassa, Mozambique (2008)
- Research on Domestic Violence in Afghanistan by Christian Aid
- Programmatic research on FGM in Sierra Leone funded by World Vision Ireland

The increasing number of specific evaluations on GBV work or evaluations that refer to the GBV dimension of broader programming work, as referred to in Section 5.1.4 also provide a solid basis for learning from programming practice to date.

Most members have disseminated the learning papers and CDs produced by the Consortium widely throughout their own organisations and to their networks. However, they are generally unsure as to the degree to which the materials have actually been used by staff. Conversations with a small number of staff who are not directly involved with the Consortium would suggest that there is not a high degree of familiarity with the learning documents. Consortium members who are members of larger international networks have also drawn on the toolkits and materials from their own networks in support the development of their GBV programming.

A few members provided interesting examples of specific programming tools and resources that they have developed for use in their own organisations e.g. the development of a Training of Trainers Manual on Engaging Men and Boys²⁹ by Concern in Sierra Leone in conjunction with Oxfam GB, Christian Aid and COOPI. Some members have also availed of opportunities of asking speakers coming to Ireland for Consortium events to speak to staff in their organisations.

Consortium members are also taking opportunities to learn from each other. For example:

- Concern utilised a Self Help questionnaire to field staff on GBV in the design of its own questionnaire for programme planning.
- Consortium members as a whole contributed to the design of the KODE Distance Learning Programme
- Trócaire utilised the experience of Concern's Equality Audit in the development of its own gender audit

²⁸ Identification and Prioritisation of Possible Intervention Measures to Address GBV in Pader District, Northern Uganda. Concern Worldwide, 2008.

²⁹ Promoting Gender Equality: Engaging Men and Boys on Masculinities and Gender Based Violence, A Training of trainers (ToT) Manual.

5.3 Findings in Relation to Objective 3: ‘To inform, effect, and monitor policy implementation to improve actions on prevention of and response to, gender based violence.’

The Consortium has engaged in a very substantial amount of policy work over the last seven years. Given the nature and diversity of the membership of the Consortium, this work has proven to be very challenging on occasions, but also very productive, and provides a lot of learning for potential future approaches to policy work.

The emphasis and level of investment on advocacy / policy work varies hugely across the membership of the Consortium. As Government institutions, Irish Aid and the Defence Forces play a direct part in the formulation and delivery of Irish Government policy within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Justice, Equality and Defence respectively. Amnesty International is an entirely advocacy driven organisation, while several of the NGO members (e.g. Christian Aid, ActionAid, Oxfam, Trócaire) have strong advocacy agendas, though not all of those with advocacy backgrounds have always participated in the advocacy of the Consortium. The Irish Red Cross is part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement which has a policy of political neutrality³⁰ on all issues. Some of the other members of the Consortium have little or no involvement in formal advocacy or policy work, though they do engage to varying degrees in informal policy influencing work.

Advocacy on Darfur

A report on engaging with GBV in Darfur was produced on behalf of the Consortium in 2006³¹. This report was designed to support members on their advocacy work on the situation in Darfur, and made specific recommendations on four areas of action:

- Political lobbying, advocacy and space creation
- Civil Military relationships and the peacekeeping role in addressing GBV
- The role of Donor Governments
- Utilising and Supporting Consortium members on the ground.

The report was well received by members at the time, though progress on Darfur proved challenging over time.

Advocacy on the MDGs

Drawing on research from various sources, and with a view to the MDG Summit that was due to take place in 2010, the Consortium published an issues paper: *Keeping Gender on the agenda: Gender Based Violence, Poverty and Development* in November 2009. The specific Learning Paper on MDG 1 and GBV developed in mid-2010, as referred to previously above, was also geared towards the MDG Summit that took place in September 2010. Agencies that were directly involved in drafting policy positions in relation to the Summit (e.g. Irish Aid, advocacy NGOs) found these resources and the discussions around them particularly useful for their preparations.

UN Security Council Resolution 1325: Women, Peace and Development

The main body of work on policy was in relation to UNSC Resolution 1325 (adopted in 2000) and in particular on the development of the Irish National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSC Resolution 1325. Two members of the Consortium (Amnesty and Trócaire) were already working on UNSCR 1325. The Patron of the Consortium encouraged the members to take up the issue of the Irish Government’s obligations and commitments to develop a NAP. The Consortium commissioned research on this

³⁰ The Red Cross undertakes ‘Humanitarian Diplomacy’ through a variety of means, including confidential dialogue and public engagement, but always in strict adherence to humanitarian principles, a factor which does not always lend itself readily to overt public criticism.

³¹ *Engaging with Gender Based Violence in Darfur. A Report for the Gender Based Violence Consortium, Ireland, Mary Jennings, November 2006.*

issue and the report '*Stepping up Ireland's Response to Women, Peace and Security: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*' was launched by the Consortium in November 2008.

The Conflict Resolution Unit within DFAT was appointed to lead the development of the NAP. The consultation process began in February 2010, with a very short timeframe for completion. Five Consortium members were represented on the Consultative Group (CG) two as government representatives and three others as civil society representatives³². Three consortium agencies also participated on the Technical Working Group (TWG) that provided research and technical assistance to the project.

Given that there were often tensions between the government and civil society sides of the CG, some members found it very difficult to reconcile their roles as members of the CG on the one hand, as members of the Consortium on the other hand, and also as representatives of their own individual organisations. The triple roles that members had to play in the process also led to considerable tensions within the Consortium itself. There were further tensions between consortium members on the civil society side of the CG and other Irish-focussed civil society representatives who had different and sometimes very forceful views.

The civil society representatives to the CG made a series of strong submissions to the Group with particular reference to the speed of the development of the NAP (too fast); the conduct of CG meetings; the content and quality of the proposed NAP; and plans to monitor and evaluate the NAP. As recognised in a letter from the Tánaiste's office in May 2011, the bulk of the recommendations made by the civil society representatives, including Consortium members, were taken on board in the final draft of the NAP that was launched in November 2011, so in overall terms the Consortium members can be said to have had a substantial input into the NAP from both a Government and civil society perspective. The NAP itself is recognised by some experts³³ as being a high quality document that could serve as a model for NAPs being developed elsewhere round the world.

Advocacy Processes and Roles

While five members of the Consortium were deeply involved in the NAP process, others were much less involved, and some did not engage at all. Most agencies that were not directly involved were somewhat bemused by the intensity of the process and the level of technical detail in the discussions, but were quite happy to let those involved get on with the process and acknowledged that the Consortium ultimately had a significant influence on the process through the actions of its members. One or two Consortium members were less convinced about the value of the process and the heavy emphasis on advocacy / policy work in this period in relation to other activities of the Consortium.

Advocacy Working Group

The original Advocacy Working Group has not functioned for some time. The group was formally disbanded in 2010 when some key participants moved on to new positions in their own organisations. The work of the group was taken up directly by the Steering Committee (SC), where the Vice-Chairperson acted as the focal point for advocacy. This arrangement worked reasonably well in the short term as the Chair of the SC at the time was the CEO of one of the leading advocacy members (Amnesty) and had a particular interest in the intensive work around Resolution 1325. The heavy emphasis on advocacy at the Steering Committee led to frustration for members who had little interest in advocacy.

³² Irish Aid and Defence Forces were two of the Government representatives on the Consultative Group. Amnesty and Trócaire were civil society representatives in their own right, and the Irish Red Cross represented the Consortium on the CG. Amnesty, Trócaire and Irish Red Cross also participated on the Technical Working Group.

³³ Ref. Jeanne Ward at the Consortium Annual Conference, prior to the launch of the NAP, on November 25th 2011.

5.4 Findings in relation to the working of the Consortium as a whole

Interviewees were asked to give their views on various issues relating to the functioning of the Consortium as a whole, and these issues were also discussed during the evaluation workshop on emerging findings.

5.4.1 Relationships among members of the Consortium

The diversity of the membership in terms of organisation-type, size and international linkages has been highlighted frequently above. It is probably true to say that there are few, if any, consortia or working groups in the sector with such a diverse membership. This diversity is highly valued by the members themselves who have welcomed the differing perceptions and insights of their colleagues on the Consortium in influencing their own organisational responses and positions. In particular, the members, who may have very different perspectives, approaches and obligations, really value the private 'safe space' within which they can explore ideas and issues together.

5.4.2 Role of the Patron

Virtually all interviewees were convinced that the role played by the Patron has had a significant influence on the success of the consortium, for a number of reasons:

- Following the initial meeting with the Consortium members in 2005, the Patron herself suggested a further meeting in 12 months, thus initiating what became the annual reporting and planning cycle that has given much focus to the Consortium
- The Patron has adopted a challenging role towards the members in asking them to account for their actions and progress on an annual basis. This creates a sense of urgency which is not always present in other consortia or networks in the sector. It results in an intense level of activity in the months leading up to the November meeting, but all members feel that it is an important role
- The Patron's specific knowledge of gender and GBV issues, particularly from a human rights perspective, means that she is well placed to propose issues that the Consortium should tackle e.g. her proposal to the Consortium to address the Irish NAP on UNSCR 1325.
- The international reputation and standing of the Patron has brought recognition to the Consortium, and the Patron frequently refers to the workings of this unique Consortium in her contributions to international fora
- The Patron's high profile has meant that her meeting with the Consortium usually attracts significant media attention and therefore considerable publicity for the Consortium around the time of the annual meeting.
- The presence of the Patron and the media around the annual meeting has encouraged CEOs of member agencies to attend, and has resulted in a greater level of senior management buy-in to GBV response than might otherwise have been expected.

5.4.3 Working structures

Most members feel that the functioning of the steering group has worked reasonably well and has improved in recent years. However, the workload on the committee and on the Chair in particular has increased significantly, particularly since the Advocacy Working Group was disbanded. Because of the considerable workload involved, finding a Chair on an annual basis is a major problem. The current Chair (from Concern) is now performing the function for the second time. It is worth noting that the smallest member of the Consortium (ChildFund) has provided both the Chair and the administrative support function (prior to the arrival of the part-time administrator) to the Consortium in the past. This indicates that organisational capacity or size should not be a limiting factor for members in volunteering to chair the Consortium.

The Consortium benefitted significantly from having a CEO from a member agency (Amnesty) in the Chair in the past, an option that is worth re-visiting in future. The addition of a part-time administrator paid for out of consortium funds, is recognised as having made a significant difference

in terms of general administrative efficiency and the working of the intranet site (known as Basecamp) in particular. While the Learning and Practice Working Group has a high output and a good degree of participation from the membership, it also carries a heavy workload. The disbandment of the Advocacy Working Group placed an even heavier burden on the Steering Committee. It also created frustration at the Steering Committee for those agencies who have little interest in advocacy, and who felt that there was an excessive emphasis on advocacy relative to other aspects of the Consortium's work.

5.4.4 Communications Strategy

A communications strategy for the Consortium was drafted in 2009. The need for such a strategy was due to a number of factors:

- The need to improve the external communications of the Consortium, with particular reference to the development of a more user-friendly and informative website for public use
- The need to improve the intranet (Basecamp) to make it more user friendly for internal use.
- The need to develop an advocacy strategy and to clarify internal protocols regarding the development and sign-off of policy positions that are particularly complex for such a diverse consortium.

The Communications Strategy was developed with support from external consultants. Interviewees for the evaluation confirmed that the strategy is not a live document and has largely if not entirely been forgotten. Some interviewees were completely unaware of the existence of the communications strategy. The lack of success with the strategy is generally attributed by the members to a poor choice of consultancy firm, resulting in a document that does not meet the needs of the members. A review of the strategy document suggests that there was also a lack of clarity from the Consortium itself on what it wanted to achieve from the exercise. For example, Objective 1 for the communications review³⁴ is almost a direct copy of Objective 1 of the Consortium's own strategy, whereas it should in fact be focussing on what the Consortium wanted to achieve in relation to communications surrounding this work of the Consortium.

The Learning and Practice group has been appointed to look at improving the website, and is currently doing so. Interviewees noted that the intranet (Basecamp) has improved considerably following the recruitment of the part-time administrative assistant by the Consortium. However, some additional improvements are still needed. In general, people who use Basecamp very frequently find it satisfactory, but members who are less familiar with it find it difficult to navigate.

5.4.5 Commitment of members

It is generally recognised that some larger agencies provide most of the human resourcing for the work of the consortium across the steering committee and the two working groups. This is hardly surprising given that the job descriptions of some staff in larger organisations are very closely aligned with the GBV work of the Consortium, whereas staff from smaller agencies are likely to have a broader range of roles to cover. The larger agencies concerned are, in general, happy to provide this level of resourcing, but staff from some of the smaller members (e.g. Red Cross, ChildFund) also invest substantial time in the activities of the Consortium

The Consortium appears to be primarily driven by 4-5 very active members with a further group of 7-8 less active members and 2-3 members who are fairly inactive at present. This is probably not an unusual breakdown for a typical consortium or working group of 15 members. The members who are least active are in some cases those who feel that the Consortium does not provide much, if any

³⁴ Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence, Communications Strategy, DHR Communications, 2009. p4: *Objective 1: To ensure that actions to prevent and respond to gender based violence are visible and systematically addressed in the policies and work of all member agencies'*

added value to their work, but some of the inactivity is also related to a lack of capacity in the organisations at this particular time.

5.4.6 Relationships with other Networks

International Development Networks

The Consortium does not have a specific relationship with the Irish international NGO network, Dóchas, though the possibility of Dóchas becoming a member of the consortium was floated in the past. In the end it was felt that it would not be appropriate for Dóchas to be a member. Rather, it was agreed that members of Dóchas should join the consortium on an individual basis as they see fit. The work of the GBV Consortium is closely related to the work of the HIV & AIDS and Humanitarian working groups in Dóchas. The crossover in membership of the Consortium with the two Dóchas working groups has provided opportunities for linkages. Consortium representatives have been nominated to both groups, and linkages are beginning to develop at this stage.

The Consortium currently has no links with *Misean Cara* or with the Irish Missionary Union, whose members have a considerable interest in GBV and protection issues in the context of international development.

Irish-facing GBV Networks

One of the criteria for being a member of the Consortium is that an applicant must work in an international development context³⁵. The possibility of including organisations that work on GBV issues only in Ireland was discussed in the past, but there are no plans to broaden the group to include exclusively Irish-facing agencies at present. In this context, it should be noted that quite a few of the existing members of the Consortium (e.g. Irish Red Cross, Defence Forces also have an Irish facing agenda. Akidwa, which works on GBV issues in relation to migrants in Ireland, applied for membership of the Consortium, but was rejected on the basis that it did not have an international programme at the time. It is now developing an international programme and could therefore become a member in the future if it satisfies all of the other criteria.

The Consortium has engaged constructively with Irish-facing GBV organisations in other ways, for example, by sitting with organisations such as Banulacht, Akidwa and the National Women's Council as civil society members of the Consultative Group on UNSCR 1325. Irish-facing GBV organisations have also participated in the learning and practice events organised by the Consortium.

5.4.7 Budget and Fees

Irish Aid currently contributes 50% of the budget of the Consortium. Because of this, Kimmage DSC does not pay a fee as KODE (and previously DTALK) is fully funded by Irish Aid. For similar reasons, the Defence Forces as another government agency does not pay a fee. Most of the other members pay an annual fee of €3,500, with the exception of three of the smallest ones who pay €2,500 each. Because of under-expenditure of the budget for the last two years, the fees of some members were reduced in 2011. Management of finances is reported to have improved since it was agreed that overall responsibility for this function would rotate with the chairing agency (with support from the administrator) on an annual basis. The Consortium has also moved its financial year in line with the calendar year.

6. ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS - EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CONSORTIUM

The analysis of the evaluation findings, as outlined in this section, identifies the key achievements, lessons and challenges facing the Consortium. The Terms of Reference for the evaluation required

³⁵ Ref: JCGBV Strategic Plan Section 1: Member Commitments No 2.

that it would be conducted against the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of effectiveness, relevance and sustainability. In the following analysis, the effectiveness of the Consortium is assessed on the basis of the extent to which each of the three objectives of the strategic plan has been achieved to date. The relevance of the Consortium is discussed in relation to how the Consortium, its structure and ways of working provide an effective mechanism to support members in implementing the recommendations from the 2005 report and the 2009 Strategic Plan, and its continuing relevance to the members. Sustainability of the Consortium is considered in Section 7 in relation to its future potential and some of the risks that need to be addressed.

6.1 Effectiveness in Relation to Objective 1: Systematically Addressing GBV

6.1.1 Effectiveness of the Consortium on Supporting Members to Institutionalise GBV

The strategy and performance of the Consortium in supporting its members to institutionalise prevention and response to GBV is impressive on many fronts:

- a) **The Consortium took a very strategic approach from the beginning in recognising the importance of institutionalising the approaches of members to GBV, as reflected in the Terms of Reference for the 2005 Study, and in putting in place structures and systems to support this:**

Following the initial report and Ministerial visit to Darfur in 2004, it would have been easy to design a localised project-focussed intervention on GBV. However, the early drivers of the initiative recognised that GBV needed to be addressed much more systematically, that the agencies on the ground were not fully equipped for this broader approach, and while there was a severe GBV problem in Darfur, GBV was also an issue of major concern in many other countries, in both humanitarian and development contexts.

- b) **Interventions to support members in systematically addressing GBV were based on solid research and independent external support from consultants with particular expertise in gender equality and gender based violence:**

The initial report '*Gender Based Violence, a Failure to Protect – A Challenge to Action*', outlined the gravity of the issue and the lack of an adequate response by Irish agencies and by the international community as a whole. It clarified the concepts of gender equality and GBV, and crucially set GBV clearly in a human rights context (as also reflected later in the strategic plan). The report clearly outlined in its recommendations the six basic areas of action required to address GBV in a comprehensive manner.

- c) **Practical tools and support mechanisms were put in place to support the institutionalisation process from an early stage:**

The '*Guidance Note on Institutionalising Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response within Organisations*' was crucial in outlining how the recommendations from the earlier study could be put into practice in a practical manner, and remains a core document for the Consortium itself and a key aid for new staff as well as for any other organisations trying to develop their approaches to GBV.

The work of the Learning and Practice Group facilitated members in sharing experiences on a whole variety of topics, including institutionalisation. The exchange of experiences was highly valued by all members. It is of particular note that not all of the experience sharing came from large agencies and that larger agencies sometimes built on the experience of smaller ones e.g. Concern using a Self Help questionnaire in the design of its own questionnaire (5.2.2 above)

d) The development of a formal annual reporting process from members to the Consortium, and from the Consortium to the Patron, provided a significant incentive to members to progress their activities:

When she met the Consortium initially in 2005, the Patron proposed returning the following year to review progress, thus initiating the annual cycle. The annual reporting process and annual plans have ensured that institutionalisation was kept on the agenda throughout and documented on a regular basis. This avoided the type of drift that can occur in networks when there is no clear reporting cycle. The reporting process also provided another opportunity for members to learn from each others' experience.

The challenging role played by the Patron ensured that the Consortium and its members could not fudge the issues, but had to account for their actions in a very public forum on an annual basis. This approach is very unusual for networks or thematic working groups of this nature. While it created a lot of pressure for the Consortium, particularly in the months leading up to the annual meeting, it clearly helped to focus minds and to produce results, and was much appreciated by the members themselves.

e) The development of a three-year strategic plan provided greater clarity on the medium-term objectives of the Consortium and its members:

The plan itself did not signify a major change in direction of the Consortium, as the objectives essentially reflect what was initially set out in 2005 and the ongoing work at the time. However, it did help the Consortium to look beyond a one-year planning cycle for the first time, and to provide a more structured framework for its work. The development of the accompanying three-year action plan and indicators was particularly important in setting a framework for measuring progress, as this is often a feature that is neglected when strategic plans are developed. The plan also provided clarity on the criteria for membership of the Consortium at a crucial stage of its development.

The Consortium only developed a strategic plan in 2009, after almost five years of activity. It could be argued that a strategic plan should have been developed at an earlier stage of its existence. However, the establishment of the previous annual planning cycle and supporting frameworks, as outlined above, made this delay less critical. Also, in the first few years it was not unreasonable for the Consortium to operate on an annual basis, as members could not necessarily assume at that stage that the Consortium would continue to exist in the longer term. In that sense, the development of the strategic plan was a natural part of the evolution process, when it became clearer to the members that the Consortium needed to have a medium-term vision of what it wanted to achieve.

The Consortium was rather slow in finalising the indicators and reporting format for annual plans. Indicators were developed for the three-year plan, but the reporting format was not finalised and put into practice until 2011. Had this work been completed in 2009, immediately after the development of the strategic plan, there would now be three years of data in standard format to track progress of the Consortium on institutionalisation. That said, the mapping exercise completed in 2010 provided a good picture of some of the achievements, and this is complemented by the 2011 Annual Report³⁶ which provides some very good examples of what individual agencies have achieved more recently.

³⁶ The 'Annual Report 2011 Institutionalising Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response' was being finalised by Mary Jennings at the same time as this evaluation was taking place, in advance of the November roundtable with the Patron. Hence, references to the annual report here are based on a review of the 2nd draft of the annual report.

f) Apart from the annual reporting process, the Consortium has taken some important initiatives to assess overall progress:

- The mapping exercise in 2010 helped to clarify progress on institutionalising GBV.
- The current Sierra Leone Review, though not exclusively designed for this purpose, enables the Consortium to see a full picture of what all members are doing in one country, and how work has progressed since the previous study in 2006.
- Undertaking this evaluation will allow the Consortium to take overall stock of its strategy, structure and processes in advance of a possible new strategic planning cycle in 2012.

6.1.2 Effectiveness in relation to institutional policies and procedures of Consortium members

Given the diversity in strategies, structures, staffing and ways of working across the membership of the Consortium, it would not be possible to do a comprehensive review of all of the members in a limited evaluation of this nature. Nevertheless, there are some significant achievements, gaps and trends that can be identified from the findings outlines in Section 5.1.2, and documentation elsewhere:

a) There has been some significant progress in the development of policies relating to GBV and gender, but this progress is not evenly spread across or within organisations.

Some organisations (e.g. Trócaire, ChildFund, ActionAid Alliance) have given a high priority to GBV and gender in their organisational strategic plans, and almost all members have at least a significant reference to gender in their organisational strategy. Several examples have been documented in Section 5.1.2 above and elsewhere³⁷ where member organisations have incorporated GBV / gender into other programmatic or institutional policies and strategies over the last six years. However, there are also some obvious examples where GBV has not been addressed³⁸, and while many members can give specific examples of progress on integrating GBV into policies and strategies, very few, if any, could be said to have an action plan to ensure that all of their organisational policies, thematic policies and country strategies will be systematically assessed within a specific timeframe to ensure that they address GBV. A thorough institutionalisation process should include such a plan. In the absence of a systematic process at organisational level to institutionalise GBV, progress is likely to be achieved only on an *ad hoc* basis, and to be heavily dependent on the skills and interest of individual managers in relation to GBV.

One agency is aware that GBV could be an issue in its programmes, but has only a vague reference to gender in its strategic plan, has no gender policy and has no formal mechanisms to ensure that GBV is taken into account in programming. In theory, it is possible for an organisation to address GBV without having any of these formal systems and checks in place, but in practice it is unlikely to happen, and will be done on an *ad hoc* basis at best. Where there is no specific gender policy or meaningful gender section in the strategic plan, the inclusion of GBV and gender assessment tools or checklists is even more essential to ensure that specific action on GBV is taken.

A majority of agencies admitted that while they are making progress in relation to policy development, they still have some way to go. Given the commitment by all Consortium members to institutionalise GBV, all agencies should at a minimum articulate a clear gender statement and approach in their organisational strategic plan. Having such a statement does not in itself guarantee implementation, but it does at least set out the intent of the organisation,

³⁷ Other examples are given in annual reports and in the 2010 mapping exercise.

³⁸ The example of an education policy that was reviewed in 2009 without reference to GBV was a particular case in point. This would not have happened if the organisation had a specific strategy or action plan to systematically address GBV in all of its policies.

and makes it easier for those directly interested in progressing the issue to get internal commitment.

b) Progress on undertaking gender audits is slow

As indicated in Section 5.1.2, only four agencies have completed a gender / equality audit or survey of some description at this stage, and only two of these are specific gender audits³⁹. Many others have indicated their intention to do so. A gender audit is a very good starting point from which to identify gaps in institutional knowledge, leadership and processes in relation to gender / GBV, so it is disappointing that only two agencies have addressed this after six years of involvement with the Consortium.

c) Significant progress has been made on the development of staff codes of conduct and protection policies in recent years, but the development and roll out of these codes is still a work in progress for some organisations.

It is important to note that each agency has at least some form of code of conduct at this stage. Given the diversity of the Consortium membership, it is not surprising that the type of codes that are being applied will vary somewhat as the governing authority and management of each agency has to determine what types of codes are the most appropriate for the particular agency and the particular contexts it is working in e.g. the codes required for a personnel driven agency such as the Defence Forces operating in a peacekeeping role in a UN environment are quite different from those required for an NGO that is working primarily through partner agencies.

As indicated in Section 5.1.2, the development of codes has been primarily driven by action in the broader sector to address GBV and protection arising from abuse scandals that emerged within the UN and NGOs in Africa in the last decade, and also from the child abuse scandals in Ireland. While the Consortium may not have been the primary driver for these codes, it did create a further impetus for the development of them, and helped to inform the members on what these codes should contain and how they should be enacted. The particular diversity of the Consortium was of considerable benefit in this regard as agencies were able to draw upon the experiences of other members operating in quite different environments, as illustrated by the examples given previously of NGO members drawing on the experience of the Defence Forces and the Gardai in implementing protection policies, and conversely, the Defence Forces drawing on the experience of the Red Cross, Amnesty and NGOs in relation to the development of their staff training programmes.

The mapping exercise in 2010 highlighted the need for further development of enforcement mechanisms among some members, as some codes have only been developed quite recently. A particular challenge for many agencies now also is the application of these codes to their relationships with partner agencies on the ground, as enforcement of codes of behaviour is more complex in a partnership model than for internal application. This is an area that Consortium members might usefully explore collectively in the near future.

d) GBV has gained recognition as an important issue at senior management level, but more leadership is required in developing and overseeing processes to address it systematically throughout organisations.

The work of the Consortium has raised the profile of GBV and the knowledge of senior managers in relation to it. The annual roundtable has been particularly successful in getting engagement from CEOs on an annual basis, but this is not always followed through with strategic leadership by senior managers throughout the year. While middle managers and technical specialists on

³⁹ Concern and Trócaire are the only two agencies to have done full gender audits.

GBV are often doing their best to promote the issue within their own organisations, a comprehensive approach to GBV requires ongoing leadership at senior level.

As outlined in Sections 5.1.1 and 6.1.1, the individuals who participate in the activities of the Consortium on an ongoing basis have done very well to establish an overall framework within which member agencies can institutionalise their response to GBV. The majority of these individuals are technical specialists, middle managers or programme officers. While they can provide technical support within their own organisations and can seek to influence their own organisational agendas, they are generally (with some exceptions) not in a position to drive out the required changes. This is why the involvement of CEOs and senior managers is so important to ensure that GBV is fully addressed in all aspects of each organisation's work.

The issue of leadership is directly related to the need for organisational action plans to institutionalise GBV as referred to previously in Section 5.1.2 and under point (a) above. The development of an action plan to institutionalise GBV on a systematic basis requires buy in from senior management in the first place and the implementation of that plan is also dependent on leadership at senior level.

e) Staffing capacity in relation to GBV and gender varies widely across organisations, but investment in capacity is being rewarded

Given the huge differences in scale and capacity of the organisations, the variation in technical staffing on gender is not entirely surprising. However, in some cases the level of staffing also reflects the level of priority, or lack of it, given to GBV / gender. It is very clear that where organisations invest in capacity, there is a corresponding reward in terms of a greater emphasis on GBV at institutional and programme levels. As illustrated in Section 5.1.3, Irish Aid, Trócaire and Defence Forces have invested in staff capacity in a variety of ways. For a larger organisation, GOAL's level of investment in a part-time focal person is very light. While smaller organisations often rely on specialist support within their international networks the examples of Oxfam and Red Cross illustrate how smaller organisations can prioritise gender issues, either via direct recruitment or through strategic funding of technical positions in broader networks.

f) There has been a substantial rise in the level of programming on GBV but this rise is not evenly spread across or within member organisations

Reports to the Consortium reflect a significant increase in the level of programming on GBV⁴⁰, either through GBV specific programmes (a limited number) the incorporation of GBV into other thematic programmes (mostly) or the application of gender mainstreaming (some). However, some agencies would acknowledge that the level of increase in GBV programming is often related to the particular knowledge, interest or technical capacity of individual managers and programme officers. There are some exceptions to this (as outlined in Section 5.2.2) where agencies have made a particular effort to increase knowledge and capacity throughout their global programme of work, by investing in staff training at global, regional or country levels.

The annual reports may be somewhat misleading in that they emphasise examples of positive programming developments, but do not reflect the actual status of GBV across the entire programme portfolio of individual organisations. A very extensive field based exercise would be required to assess this for each member, and that was clearly beyond the scope of this evaluation. In the absence of a comprehensive mapping of GBV programming activities, it is

⁴⁰ The term 'programming on GBV' used throughout this report does not refer exclusively to GBV-specific projects or programmes. Rather, it refers to GBV prevention and response being addressed in an appropriate and sufficient manner in a number of different ways: through direct GBV projects or programmes, through the integration of GBV components within wider gender programmer or other thematic programmes, or via gender mainstreaming activities.

difficult to assess the degree to which each member organisation has progressed to date and how far they still have to go. However, comments from a wide range of interviewees suggest that there are still large gaps in programming in many regions and countries. That said, it should be acknowledged that the institutionalisation of GBV and the GBV-related programming that should follow, will take many years to achieve, and universal progress cannot be expected overnight. What is needed now is a more specific assessment of where each member organisation is at in relation to GBV programming, together with an action plan for each member to ensure that progress is made on a systematic and consistent basis.

g) Some Consortium members currently engage very strategically with their international networks in addressing GBV. Others have opportunities to be more strategic in this regard.

The success of the Irish Red Cross in influencing the wider Federation to develop a gender / GBV policy was highlighted in Box 3, Section 5.1.5. More locally, the example in Box 2, Section 5.1.4 shows how Trócaire, in conjunction with Irish Aid, used its relationship with the extensive church network in Uganda to develop a successful national campaign on domestic violence. Other cases referred to in Section 5.1.5 also show that relatively small Irish affiliates can influence much bigger organisations if they focus their resources geographically or thematically and are persistent in their approach.

Elsewhere, there are some opportunities for Irish NGOs to achieve greater influence or to bring learning from the networks back to Ireland where their networks had a strong interest in GBV programming. For example, Plan International has a strong gender focus in its work. To date Plan Ireland does not appear to have invested heavily in linking specifically with its broader network for mutual sharing and learning on GBV. The recent recruitment of a gender officer provides an opportunity for Plan to develop its work on GBV more specifically within its broader confederation. Similarly, ActionAid Ireland has suffered from a staffing gap that has impacted on its relationship with the Consortium over the last year. Now that a new Project Officer has been recruited, there is an opportunity for ActionAid to bring the learning and approaches from the new ActionAid International strategic plan, which has a very strong GBV focus, into the Consortium and to also share the learning from the Consortium with its ActionAid sister agencies.

h) Consortium members lack formal action plans for addressing GBV institutionally and programmatically on a systematic basis

The lack of specific action plans on the part of individual members to systematically institutionalise GBV response has been referred to directly above in relation to policies (Point a), leadership (Point d), and programming (Point f). As previously stated, there is no doubt that substantial progress is being made by individual member organisations on institutionalising GBV, but much of this progress appears to be delivered in an unstructured way, rather than through systematic planning. There are some notable achievements particularly where individual managers or staff have a particular knowledge or interest in addressing GBV, but the broader challenge is to ensure that the institutionalisation process is implemented throughout the organisation on a consistent and systematic basis, regardless of the interest or capacity of individual managers or staff.

In the same way that the Consortium as a whole developed its strategy in 2009, individual members of the Consortium also need to develop their own organisational action plans on GBV. These action plans should include the following:

- A clear plan to ensure that all relevant organisational policies, strategies and processes are reviewed to address GBV in line with a specific schedule and timeframe.

- A plan to ensure that all country and thematic programmes will be assessed in relation to appropriate GBV prevention and response interventions on a systematic basis, within a clear schedule and timeframe
- A plan to ensure that all aspects of relationships with partner agencies (both institutional and programmatic) are assessed from a GBV perspective and appropriate responses adopted within a clear schedule and timeframe.

It is not necessary to have a major section on GBV in the organisational strategic plan in order to develop a GBV action plan. Nor does it require a major piece of work: the Consortium's own strategy and three-year action plan is a relatively short document. Crucially, the development of an action plan does require senior management buy-in, but once this is achieved it should be easier to get the leadership that is required to institutionalise GBV on a systematic basis.

i) The current reporting format highlights many positive examples in institutionalising GBV, but does not give an accurate sense of the actual level of achievement in each agency.

As illustrated under Point (f) above, the reports from members to the Consortium are very useful in highlighting positive examples of progress in GBV programming, but they do not reflect the actual status of GBV across the entire programme portfolio of individual organisations. Similarly for policy and processes, the reports focus only on positive developments. The need to illustrate positive outcomes should not be underestimated, but a more thorough and accurate review of progress would look at all of the policies within the organisation and assess where each one is in relation to GBV. Similarly, an accurate review of programme progress would refer to all programmes in the organisation and how they address GBV, or not, as the case may be. The development of a more comprehensive reporting format is directly related to the development of individual agency action plans on institutionalising GBV, as referred to under Point (h), above. In seeking more accurate reporting, it must be acknowledged that it may take several years to address GBV in an appropriate manner across all organisational policies, processes and programmes, but that should be the overall aim. Having an organisational action plan on GBV with realistic timeframes will help the process.

6.1.3 Summary of Effectiveness in Relation to Objective 1: Systematically Addressing GBV

In overall terms, it is clear that the Consortium itself has taken a very strategic, systematic and professional approach towards institutionalising GBV across the membership since 2004, and has tracked and reported on this process to a significant degree. This has required a lot of hard work on the part of the member representatives on the Consortium.

The picture in relation to the progress of individual members of the Consortium on institutionalising GBV is more mixed. There has certainly been some significant progress across a range of activities, including organisational strategies, policy development, codes of conduct, capacity and programming on GBV, and on developing strategic relationships within networks. However, progress in these areas is uneven across the membership and equally uneven within individual agencies.

Given the commitment by all Consortium members to institutionalise GBV, all agencies should articulate a clear gender statement and approach in their organisational strategic plans, where they have not already done so. More leadership is needed at senior level in order to accelerate the process, and the development of a work plan to institutionalise GBV in each member organisation is essential to ensure that progress is made on a systematic and consistent basis.

6.2 Effectiveness in Relation to Objective 2: Strengthening the Skills and Capacities of Member Agencies

6.2.1 Effectiveness of the Consortium itself in Developing Skills and Capacities

a) Events organised by the Learning & Practice group are of a high quality and very relevant to the members

The series of workshops and events organised by the Learning and Practice group were generally recognised by those who attended them to be of a high quality, including internationally-acclaimed speakers, talking about practical topics that were highly relevant to the members. Given that most of the membership had a relatively limited understanding of GBV issues in the early years, these events were particularly important in building collective knowledge. The fact that they did not always attract a wider audience might be considered as a cause of concern as it could suggest that GBV may not be a high priority for staff and managers not directly involved in the Consortium. However, it must also be recognised that events of this nature on any specific thematic topic can struggle to find an audience because of competing priorities for managers and staff within organisations. The events were still very valuable exercises, and have helped to keep members up to date with the latest thinking and best practice in the sector. Perhaps the best route to developing greater understanding on GBV lies within individual agencies themselves, and the expertise acquired through the learning events was a good starting point to facilitate this approach.

b) Resources produced by the Learning and Practice Group are of a high quality and very relevant to the members, but the degree to which they have been used more widely is not clear.

The learning briefs and videos produced by the Learning and Practice Working Group following the learning days provide a logical method of ensuring that the learning from these days can be disseminated more widely across the membership. The documents themselves appear to be well researched, and of high quality. Feedback from interviewees on the quality of documents was also very positive, with many interviewees stressing the value of the practical advice provided.

While members have made efforts to distribute the documents widely within their own organisations and within broader international networks, it remains unclear to what extent they have been used by either constituency. Some organisations have made very good use of the documents in organising training workshops for their own staff. An important point here is that dissemination of documents is not in itself sufficient to ensure an improvement in practice. Dissemination needs to be supported by training, technical support and review of progress.

c) The Learning and Practice group has adapted its work to the evolving needs of the Consortium members.

In the early days of the Consortium, the focus of work was very much on humanitarian emergencies and the initial research in Sierra Leone reflected that. As members sought more information on GBV in longer term development situations, the learning days reflected a change in emphasis to that work e.g. to engaging men, GBV in schools, and community-based approaches.

The specific learning day and paper on MDG1 in 2010 was timed to support work by members in advance of the MDG Summit in September 2010. When the mapping exercise in 2010 revealed that the emphasis had moved too far from GBV in humanitarian contexts, the group adapted its work and hence the emphasis in 2011 on '*Addressing GBV in Humanitarian Settings*', and the commissioning of the Sierra Leone research project. The above examples illustrate how the

Learning and Practice group has adapted its activities as the priorities of the membership changed at various stages.

d) The focus of learning and practice needs to move out from the centre of the Consortium to the membership, and to field level in particular

Up to now, the primary beneficiaries of learning and practice have been those who are most closely involved in the Consortium itself. This was an appropriate approach in the early years of the Consortium as it was necessary to build the knowledge base at central level first, so that the individual experts and advisers could then develop the knowledge base in their own organisations.

After more than six years of operation, one would expect to see a greater emphasis on broader learning throughout the organisations at this stage. Attempts to broaden the learning to other home based staff e.g. through invitations to learning days and the establishment of the DTALK course did not work very well, and this is something that needs to be reviewed. Some of the reason for the lack of participation is likely be down to the leadership issues highlighted in Section 6.1. As suggested above, greater ownership of training and capacity-building now needs to be taken by individual members of the Consortium at both headquarters and field levels.

The presence of an academic and training centre in the Consortium is in itself a significant resource for the wider membership. The move to a distance learning programme run by KODE is a very good initiative and provides a particular opportunity to roll out the learning at field level, as it does not require participants to travel to particular locations. There is also a case for a limited amount of joint training and capacity-building for agencies at field level, possibly utilising the resources of Kimmage or other training institutions. Ideally, this training would be based on learning from each others' approaches at field level.

e) The growing body of research, learning and evaluations on the part of individual Consortium members can provide a very useful resource to inform the development of future programmes

The level of research, learning and evaluations has grown in line with the increase in GBV related programming of the members, as is illustrated in Section 5.2.2. This is further complemented by some interesting training initiatives run by members e.g. the Defence Forces course on International Human Rights. All of these resources, if used well, can be of considerable benefit both in terms of the development of future programmes at field level, but also to feed into broader level learning for the Consortium as a whole. Apart from Kimmage DSC, the Consortium has existing links to academics in a number of locations e.g. University College Galway. There is good potential to link some of the expanding field research with academic institutions in Europe and at field level.

f) The agenda of the Learning and Practice Working Group needs to adapt to reflect a broader approach to learning.

There is an impressive level of interest in the work of the group, with 9-10 agencies active at any one time. The group also carries a heavy workload, the bulk of which is carried by a few members, and by the Chair in particular. If a greater emphasis is now put on the development of skills and capacity within individual member organisations and at field level, as suggested above, the Consortium will need to reflect on how this is best achieved. Given the importance of skills development and learning, there is a strong case for retaining a working group at central level to ensure that there is a structured and coherent approach to learning, but the way in which the group works is likely to be quite different to how it operates right now. The group is likely to spend more time supporting specific learning at field level, while also ensuring that this learning is captured centrally for wider application. Some possible options in relation to the future are discussed in Section 7.3.5

6.2.2 Summary of effectiveness in relation to Objective 2:

The Consortium has been very effective in developing a lot of high quality research, learning events and learning documents to date for the benefits of its members and wider audiences. The investment in these processes was very important for the Consortium in its early years in order to build the internal knowledge base of the membership at central level. Some individual members have been very successful in rolling out training on GBV within their own organisations, but while learning resources have been distributed widely by many members, it is not clear that they have been widely used. The focus of learning and practice now needs to move out from the centre into individual member organisations and to field level. The work of KODE and the increasing level of research and learning by individual members provide a good basis for doing this. The Learning and Practice Group will need to adapt and focus its work to adjust to this changing emphasis.

6.3 Effectiveness in Relation to Objective 3: Informing, Effecting and Monitoring Policy

6.3.1 Effectiveness of the Consortium in relation to advocacy and policy development

a) The Consortium has undertaken a significant body of work on advocacy

Notwithstanding the differing views and approaches of members (see Points (d) and (e) below), the Consortium has undertaken a substantial body of work on advocacy since it was founded, including the 2006 research on Darfur to identify advocacy targets and issues in a very complex environment; research and policy work on the MDGs in the run up to the MDG Summit in September 2010; and a lengthy engagement with the development of the National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325. All of these tasks required a substantial investment of time and energy on the part of some members. Five members of the consortium were centrally involved in this work.

b) Advocacy work has been well researched, planned and thoroughly implemented

Thorough research has been a feature of all of the advocacy work, starting with the research on Darfur in 2006, the Issues Paper and the Learning Brief on the MDGs, and in particular the research and publication of *'Stepping Up Ireland's response to Women, Peace and Security, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325'* that was launched in November 2008. The latter was based on extensive research into other national action plans. It provided a rationale as to why Ireland needed to act on the NAP, and it outlined what the process and content of the NAP should look like. This was followed up by intensive work on lobbying on the NAP, where three Consortium members took a strong role in voicing civil society concerns on various issues relating to the process and the content of the NAP, while two other members participated as government representatives on the Consultative Group (CG). All of this work required very intensive input from some Consortium members, both individually and collectively.

c) Policy / Advocacy work, particularly in relation to the National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 has been very successful.

Despite all of the tensions around the work on UNSCR 1325, it was ultimately very successful. Government and civil society sources alike have indicated the National Action Plan would not have progressed at all if it hadn't been pushed by the Consortium. A comparison of the plan with the submissions from the civil society side confirms that Consortium members had a major input on the content of the plan, and this was acknowledged in writing in a letter from the Tánaiste's office. Researchers with technical expertise on NAPs have suggested that the Irish NAP could be used as a model for the development of other NAPs in the future. The work of the Consortium on the MDGs was also successful, in that it helped to bring a strong gender dimension to the input of both Irish Aid and NGO representatives in the lead up to the MDG Summit in 2010.

d) The differing roles that individual Consortium members play in relation to the development of advocacy / policy have not been reconciled

The differing approaches towards advocacy among the membership were outlined in Section 5.3. Some of these differences are due to the diversity in the nature of the membership i.e. the presence in the Consortium of two Government institutions (Defence Forces and Irish Aid), a member of the politically-neutral Red Cross Federation, a highly vocal advocacy human rights organisation (Amnesty) and a group of 10 NGOs. While each member of the Consortium acknowledges these differences and the particular limitations on the Defence Forces, Irish Aid and Red Cross representatives in terms on what they can and cannot do, insufficient thought was given at the beginning as to how the Consortium would function in relation to advocacy, and how some of these restrictions / limitations could be addressed. While all of the members value each others' opinions and insights, there is a need to learn from the process to-date and to develop an approach in future where all roles and voices will be respected, while ensuring that all those who wish to can play a positive role in policy development, within the boundaries of their individual role and functions.

e) The differing views on the level of priority that should be given to advocacy have created significant tension among the membership of the Consortium.

Apart from the diverse roles that certain members play in relation to advocacy, there are also significant differences of opinion on the degree to which advocacy should feature on the agenda of the Consortium. Agencies like Amnesty and Trócaire take a very overt and public approach towards advocacy while others such as Concern prefer to adopt a quieter influencing role with government. Some organisations have a strong emphasis on service-delivery in their programmes, and do not invest in advocacy e.g. Self Help. In some cases, these organisations are happy to let the more vocal ones continue with advocacy, and recognise the achievements that have been made. In other cases, they do not see the added value of the advocacy work. There is a need for the membership to discuss the future of advocacy within the Consortium, and to agree how it might be addressed in a manner that meets the needs and approval of all parties.

f) An Advocacy Working Group must be recreated if advocacy work is to continue

The loss of certain key members of the group was a significant factor in the decision to disband the working group, and the Steering Committee was in a position to take up the role at the time. However, this in turn led to Steering Group business being dominated by advocacy, and a sense of frustration among those with less interest in advocacy that their concerns were being sidelined. The Steering Group cannot realistically sustain a role in the direct management of advocacy in the medium-term, so if Irish-based advocacy work is to continue (See Section 7.3.3) an advocacy working group will need to be re-created.

6.3.2 Summary of Effectiveness in Relation to Objective 3:

The Consortium has undertaken a large body of work on advocacy since 2005, particularly in relation to the NAP on UNSCR 1325. Advocacy work has been based on very good research, and has been implemented very thoroughly. The Consortium's approach to the NAP was ultimately very effective and delivered significant results. However, the differing views on advocacy and the differing roles that members of the Consortium play in relation to policy / advocacy work are a source of significant internal tension, and could undermine the future of the Consortium itself if not properly addressed.

6.4 Effectiveness of the Consortium as a Whole: Structures and Processes

a) Role of the Patron

The role of the Patron in facilitating the annual reporting cycle, challenging members to account for their actions, bringing recognition to the Consortium, increasing its media profile, engaging with CEOs, and providing direction to the Consortium has been documented in Section 5.4.2. It could be argued that there is a risk of the Consortium becoming over-dependent on the Patron, but there is no doubt that her role has contributed significantly to the success of the Consortium in comparison with many networks and working groups in the development sector that lack this type of challenging support.

b) Relationships among Members

Given the cultural differences that exist between government agencies and civil society organisations, it might have been expected that there would be substantial tensions between members on several fronts. NGOs are more accustomed to dealing with Irish Aid as a donor rather than as a colleague in a consortium. Similarly the 'command and control' culture of military units often clashes with the highly participative approaches of NGOs. The Red Cross, because of its political neutrality stance is sometimes restricted in what it can say publically, in stark contrast with Amnesty's role as an outspoken advocacy human rights organisation. Yet, notwithstanding the differing views on advocacy and the tension that has created, it is clear that the members get on well with each other and take a constructive approach towards the Consortium, while debating the issues with considerable vigour.

In a world where issues relating to 'humanitarian space' often lead to tensions and suspicions between NGOs and military forces, the inclusion of the Defence Forces alongside the traditional development and human rights agencies has drawn attention to the unusual nature of the Consortium and given it a certain kudos in the international arena.

c) Working Structures

There is general agreement that the Steering Group works reasonably well at the present time, but is overloaded with work particularly since the Advocacy WG was disbanded. The need to re-create the Advocacy WG has been referred to earlier, and this would help to reduce some of the workload on the Steering Group. The workload on the Chair in particular is a challenge and this may need to be addressed in some other form (See Section 7.3.8 on Future Options)

d) Communications Strategy

The lack of general awareness or reference to the Communications Strategy confirms that it is not a live document. Consortium members have suggested that this lack of ownership is related to a poor choice of consultants for the project. However, as highlighted in Section 5.4.4, there is also evidence from the strategy document itself that the Consortium was not clear on what it wanted to achieve from the communications review exercise that led to the development of the strategy. Notwithstanding any weaknesses in the strategy document itself, the Consortium did not develop an action plan to follow through on the exercise, so that, for example, suggestions such as the appointment of a communications officer were not given any further consideration. While the Learning and Practice Group is working on the development of the website for internal and external purposes, there is still a clear need to address the issue of internal communications and relationships in relation to advocacy, and also to improve the public profile and messaging of the Consortium.

e) Commitment and Engagement of Members

Section 5.4.5 refers to the Consortium being primarily driven by 4-5 very active members, with another group of 7-8 who are less active and 2-3 members who are fairly inactive. Inactivity in small organisations sometimes occurs when a staff member changes job internally or moves out of the

organisation, leaving the agency with no representative on the Consortium. The situation is more serious where organisations do not see the relevance or added value of the Consortium to their work or feel that it is being dominated by larger agencies. Three agencies have significant concerns about the functioning of the Consortium at present in relation to their needs. Some suggestions on how these issues might be addressed in future are outlined in Section 7.3.4.

f) Relationships with other Networks

The decision that Dóchas itself would not become a member of the Consortium was a good one, as the onus should be on individual members of Dóchas to apply for membership rather than the network doing so on their behalf. The Consortium is currently working on steps to improve its linkages with the two Dóchas working groups on HIV & AIDS and humanitarian issues. This is a good approach, as specific linkages with the working groups on topics of mutual interest are more likely to be of practical benefit to both sides, than a broader and more formal strategic relationship with Dóchas would be. The Consortium has also clarified its stance in relation to Irish-facing GBV organisations, and will continue to engage with them on specific issues (e.g. learning events, common advocacy), but not inviting them to become members of the Consortium. Again, this seems like a practical approach that is based on mutual benefit and avoids the creation of unnecessarily complex structures and procedures.

g) Budget and Fees

The fee structure in the Consortium at present, as outlined in Section 5.4 does not seem to reflect the differences in scale of member organisations, with smaller agencies paying proportionately more in relation to their size. The Consortium needs to look at a fairer formula for defining the overall fee structure that will probably result in the larger members contributing a greater portion of the overall budget.

Summary of Effectiveness in relation to Structures and Processes of the Consortium

The current role played by the Patron is working very well. Relationships among members are generally good, notwithstanding a clear need to address differences on advocacy. However, there are some significant issues to be addressed in relation to the workload on the Steering Group and Learning and Practice Group, and in particular in relation to the reasons behind the lack of engagement by some members with the Consortium. The Consortium needs to review its structures and processes in the light of all these issues, and when it has agreed on its future strategy. Some possible options for the future are discussed in Section 7.3.

7. THE FUTURE OF THE CONSORTIUM

7.1 Members' Views on the Future

a) The Consortium in general

Interviewees were asked for their views on issues relating to the future of the Consortium. In general there is a fair degree of fatigue among members at present, arising in particular from the intensity of the discussions around advocacy issues and the degree of tension this has created, both externally with other organisations and also internally among the members themselves. Some individuals have given a very high level of commitment to the Consortium over several years because of their belief in the importance of its work, and the workload at the centre of the Consortium is very heavy.

There is also a fair degree of uncertainty about the future, as the Consortium has now been in existence for seven years and most members feel that a review of its overall strategy and functioning is both timely and necessary. Hence the reason for conducting this evaluation in advance of the strategic planning process in 2012. It is noted that only 3-4 of the people who were originally

involved in the Consortium's work in 2005 remain involved at this stage. Turnover of staff within agencies is a significant threat to institutional memory of the Consortium.

Most members feel that the Consortium has performed well overall and that it should continue to function. A lot of work has been done across each of the three objectives, notwithstanding some gaps in progress. Significant resources have been developed to support members in taking their work forward both institutionally and programmatically. While much of the onus is on individual members to continue the work from here, most members still feel that there is a need for a collective approach to guide and support them and to achieve greater impact. A few agencies (2-3) are not fully convinced that the Consortium is achieving much, has much relevance to them, or adds much value to their work, and would not necessarily miss it if it disappeared.

b) GBV or Gender Equality

The Mission Statement of the Consortium refers to GBV as '*a key manifestation of gender inequality*'. Some members are grappling with the very specific focus of the Consortium on GBV and feel a need to place more emphasis on broader gender equality issues. During the evaluation workshop, it was noted that gender equality was to be a focus of the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan in late 2011, but that there is no network or working group of international development agencies in Ireland that deals with gender equality issues, apart from the GBV Consortium. While this is a legitimate concern, most members feel that in broadening the agenda to deal with gender equality rather than just GBV, the Consortium could well lose its focus and members could start to lose interest over time. This issue is discussed further in Section 7.3.2.

c) Membership of the Consortium

Members place a very high value on the diversity of the Consortium at it currently exists, and particularly on the continuing involvement of the Defence Forces. In general, members are not keen to expand the membership of the Consortium right now, and most want to retain the focus on international work. They do recognise the need for practical links with Dóchas working groups, but most do not see a closer relationship developing with Dóchas apart from these links. Some also see the potential of creating better linkages with Irish-facing GBV agencies, in the same way that the Dóchas HIV & AIDS WG has developed successful links with Irish-facing HIV agencies in the past. Members are keen for the role of the Patron to continue, and with the current Patron remaining in place for the foreseeable future.

d) Advocacy

There are differing views on the future of policy and advocacy work in the Consortium. The more advocacy focussed members, including some of those who have not taken a major role on advocacy recently (e.g. Oxfam) see it as vital to the future of the consortium. Some have stressed the need to continue working in particular on the monitoring of the Irish NAP on UNSCR 1325. Several agencies stressed the importance of maintaining a space for open but confidential discussions among the members on sensitive policy / advocacy issues, to provide greater insight to all parties while respecting organisational mandates and boundaries. Most members that are not so closely involved are quite happy for the advocacy to continue even if they have no direct role in it. 3-4 agencies feel that advocacy work should be reduced or even eliminated, and a greater focus placed on learning and programming. Even those agencies that want policy / advocacy work to continue want greater clarity on how the Consortium will undertake this work in future, on the expectations and roles of each member organisation, and on processes that will be adopted to progress this work

e) Resourcing

The bulk of agencies are happy to continue with their current investment of staff time in the Consortium, and a few have indicated that they will increase their input now that they have more overall capacity in place. Two agencies are questioning the added value of the time spent by their

staff on Consortium business. Most agencies are happy to commit to the current level of funding for the Consortium, but some of the smaller agencies question the fairness of the allocations in relation to the size of members overall budgets.

7.2 Learning from a Similarly Diverse Network: The Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC) Network

A discussion with a similar type of network was included in the Terms of Reference for the evaluation, with a view to drawing lessons and insights to inform possible future options for the GBV Consortium. There are numerous networks that could provide insights on how agencies can work together for maximum effect on a particular topic, but the particular diversity of the Consortium membership means that the experience of many of these networks is not directly comparable to that of the Consortium. Hence, efforts were made to find a network of similar diversity and complexity for useful comparison. It was not easy to identify such a network, but the Irish Red Cross suggested the UK-based Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC) network as an option, and the consultant discussed the workings and progress of CDAC with its Co-ordinator, Rachel Houghton.

CDAC is a relatively new network in that it was only founded in April 2009. Recognizing that information is both a key humanitarian deliverable to disaster affected people, and is also an essential tool in promoting aid effectiveness, eight agencies came together to improve humanitarian interventions through better communications. The initial eight members included British Red Cross, Irish Red Cross, Save the Children (SCF), UN OCHA, BBC World Service Trust, International Media Services (IMS), Internews and the Thomson Reuters Foundation. Others that have joined more recently include Infosaid (a joint project of BBC and Infonews), UNFPA, NGOs Plan and Merlin, and accountability / learning networks HAP and ALNAP.

While CDAC has more of an international membership than the GBV Consortium, it has an equally diverse membership in that it includes UN agencies; members of the Red Cross movement; a number of media organisations with a development agenda, some of whom also have a commercial agenda; a number of humanitarian NGOs; and humanitarian networks focussed on accountability and learning. There are plans to include academic institutions and technical providers in the future.

CDAC has a similar range of activities / objectives to the GBV Consortium, covering four areas: (a) policy / advocacy, (b) capacity building and support for local organisations, (c) learning, and (d) convening. Advocacy work has similar complications to the GBV Consortium in that lobbying of OCHA (one of its own members) in relation to its role in co-ordinating communications is part of the agenda, as well as having members of the politically neutral Red Cross Federation on board. There are also significant cultural differences among CDAC members in that NGO members are used to highly participative processes, while media organisations are more accustomed to working on an individual basis. CDAC has an operating budget of £45,000 (smaller than that of the Consortium) and two staff, including the Co-ordinator.

CDAC is currently undergoing a major strategy, structure and process review, the results of which will be available in December 2011. CDAC is happy to share the learning from that review with the Consortium. In the meantime, there are a number of lessons that can be drawn from the CDAC experience to date that may have some resonance for the GBV Consortium:

- a) The role and work of the network must be based on clear added value and need, and should not duplicate work that is already, or will be, delivered elsewhere by individual members, groups of members, or outside agencies. In the case of CDAC, when two of its members, BBC Trust and Internews, combined to create Infosaid as a joint project funded by DFID (as well as being a third member of CDAC) the mandate of Infosaid clearly overlapped with that of CDAC. There are two lessons for the GBV Consortium on this:

- The Consortium’s strategy in the next phase should be designed to add value to the existing or planned work of the members, and not duplicate that work
 - The Consortium’s future strategy should be based on adding value within the broader Gender / GBV sector – not duplicating what might be planned elsewhere in the sector, and also developing a clear niche for the Consortium at international level.
- b) Given the diversity of the membership, the amount of coordination required, and as CDAC operates on an international basis, the recruitment of a Co-ordinator (in February 2011) was seen as essential from an early stage. If the GBV Consortium is to expand its international influencing role (see Section 7.3.8) the recruitment of a co-ordinator may be essential.
- c) Some members of CDAC wanted the Co-ordinator to act as a leader or CEO-type, and felt frustrated when the Co-ordinator did not do this. Others had a completely opposite view. The learning for the Consortium (from CDAC and from other network experiences) is that where a Co-ordinator is appointed, the parameters of the role must be agreed by and be clear to all members in advance i.e. the Co-ordinator is primarily a facilitator who can do some (but not all) of the representation work on behalf of the network and can reduce the burden on staff of members by co-ordinating and overseeing day-to-day activities, working groups etc. The network / Consortium should continue to be led by the membership and chaired by one of its members, with the Co-ordinator reporting to the Chair and the Board / Steering Committee.
- d) CDAC felt that it was beneficial to do some collective practical work at an early stage in order to gain some experience of working together, but following that, it was important to formalise the processes in writing as soon as possible. This relates to both advocacy and field work (see below).
- e) CDAC’s experience of field projects would suggest that having a lead agency or a lead person from one of the members is very important, but the parameters in which that person operates must be clearly defined also. In CDAC’s case, some of the media organisations are accustomed to operating without any consultation with others, and this led to problems in field activities. Most of the GBV Consortium members are more accustomed to participative processes, but if joint activities are planned for field level in future (see Recommendations), the structure and processes within which these take place, including the link with the Consortium in Ireland need to be clearly defined in advance.
- f) The policy / advocacy tensions in CDAC are quite similar to those in the GBV Consortium. In both cases, the diverse membership makes it essential firstly to set out clearly and collectively the boundaries (if any) that restrict each member in relation to advocacy / policy work; the differing organisational approaches and views on advocacy work; and specific policy / advocacy issues that may give rise to internal conflict within the Consortium. Advocacy processes should then be based on a plan that takes account of all of these issues.
- g) For a small and relatively new organisation with a small budget, CDAC is currently undergoing an extensive strategic, structure and process review involving a team of consultants from various sources,⁴¹ and that will address the formal governance of CDAC. The GBV Consortium has already undertaken significant pieces of work that will help to inform its next strategic planning stage, including this evaluation, the review of members practice in Sierra Leone and the 2011 reporting process against specific indicators. This work needs to be built on in 2012 in terms of a thorough strategic planning process that should also consider the future governance structure for the Consortium.

⁴¹ The review as a whole at approximately €40,000 will cost a sum that is close to the annual budget of CDAC.

- h) One of CDAC's four areas of work is on actively convening meetings for wider groupings in relation to humanitarian media work. The GBV Consortium could explore this role further and consider what role it might play in the future in terms of convening or engaging with wider audiences in relation to specific aspects of GBV work in Ireland or internationally.

The initial discussion with CDAC indicates that there are quite a few similarities in the approaches and issues facing both networks. There is clearly potential for the Consortium to learn from the experience of CDAC to date and from the forthcoming strategic review in particular. The two networks should continue to share experiences over the coming years. CDAC also has contact with the Emergency Capacity Building Project to which some Consortium members also have linkages. The Emergency Capacity Building Project may be another source of learning for the Consortium to engage with in future.

7.3 Options for the Future

7.3.1 To continue or not

The Consortium has now been in existence for seven years, and it cannot be presumed that it should automatically continue indefinitely, even though the problem of GBV is as pervasive as it was in 2004. It could be argued that a lot of resources have been put in place to enable member organisations to institutionalise their response to GBV, and to improve their GBV programming with the assistance of the learning resources generated by the Consortium. It is certainly true that individual member agencies need to increase their internal leadership on GBV and take responsibility for institutionalising it within their organisations. However, there is still a significant role that the Consortium can play as a collective in supporting the institutionalisation processes, but with a greater emphasis now on supporting better practice at field level. For this reason, it is recommended that the Consortium should continue to function under a new strategic plan with a three-year time frame to 2014⁴².

7.3.2 GBV or Gender Equality

The lack of a formal working group or network in the international development sector in Ireland to tackle the broader gender equality issues is a concern. The establishment of such a group now would not make sense as its membership would overlap significantly with that of the GBV Consortium and this would generate unnecessary additional work for those involved. The Consortium's Strategic Plan is very explicit in setting GBV in the context of wider gender equality issues, as outlined in the Mission statement: *'believing that GBV is a key manifestation of gender inequality ...'* and further elaborated in the text of the plan.

The Consortium has been very successful to date in ensuring that its work does set GBV in a broader gender equality context. The gap to be bridged in an Irish context arises where key policy issues or opportunities relating to gender surface in the international arena e.g. in preparation for the High Level Forum on Development Effectiveness in Busan in November 2011. In the past, the Consortium has dealt effectively with GBV and gender in relation to the MDG Summit, and should continue to do this type of work, wherever possible. Moving the entire emphasis of the Consortium from GBV to gender equality could risk a loss of focus within a much broader issue. GBV also gives the Consortium a particular niche and added value in relation to other actors and networks working on gender. For these reasons, the Consortium should continue to focus primarily on GBV.

⁴² The Chair of the November 25th Conference, Inez McCormack, noted that an additional three-year plan would take the Consortium up to 10 years of operation in 2014, also coinciding with the newly developed NAP on UNSCR 1325 that is due to finish in 2014, therefore providing a useful reference point from which to evaluate 10 years of Consortium activity and the delivery of the three-year NAP at the same time.

7.3.3 Advocacy and Policy Work

There are very differing views on the future of advocacy in the consortium. Some organisations that do not have an advocacy focus in their own work are not convinced of the benefits of it. Others who do not have an advocacy focus are happy to let their advocacy-focussed colleagues continue with that work, and recognise the impact of it. Organisations with a strong advocacy agenda in their own right see it as a core part of the Consortium's work. Notwithstanding these differences, the Consortium has had significant success on advocacy and policy work, particularly in relation to the NAP on UNSCR 1325.

There are a number of possible options that the Consortium could consider in relation to advocacy in the future, including the following:

- i. Dropping advocacy from the Consortium's agenda, but maintain an informal discussion group
- ii. Focussing on field-based advocacy / policy in certain countries, with particular reference to the implementation of National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325
- iii. Continuing with Irish-based advocacy, but with much greater clarity on roles and processes

Option (a) would allow members who want to continue advocacy to do so outside of the Consortium. The Consortium could achieve more focus and reduce its overall workload by concentrating on institutionalising GBV and programme work only. This option would lead to less tension between members both in terms of the roles that they need to play in the policy arena and on the value of advocacy more generally. The much-valued 'private space' for discussion could be maintained, but in the absence of a formal advocacy agenda it is likely that interest in it might fade away over time. The Consortium has also derived much of its credibility from its advocacy work⁴³ so there would be a significant loss of credibility if advocacy was to be discontinued. A decision to drop advocacy would also be likely to result in Amnesty International Ireland leaving the Consortium, as advocacy forms the core of Amnesty's work.

Option (b) might be of more interest to some member agencies that do not want to engage on high-level Irish or international advocacy, but might want to do so at field level, or at least to allow other members to do so at field level. This work would be led from the field with some technical support from the Consortium, and would also reduce the workload at central level. There are a number of opportunities for future field-based advocacy, including follow-up monitoring of the Irish NAP on UNSCR 1325 at field level, specific advocacy and policy work on the development and implementation of NAPs by other Governments, and the possibility of a 'twinning' process⁴⁴ between Ireland and a developing country on the implementation of NAPs.

A pre-condition for the Consortium continuing to work on advocacy at Irish and international level under Option (c) is that issues relating to the conduct of advocacy would have to be clarified, including respect for the roles that different members can and cannot play in relation to policy and advocacy. Processes on sign off of advocacy positions would also have to be agreed so that there is no confusion or unnecessary delay when sign off is required. Options (b) and (c) above are not mutually exclusive, and there is a strong case for continuing with advocacy on the home front while linking this to work at field level (e.g. on UNSCR 1325).

⁴³ Some of what is referred to as the Consortium's advocacy work can be defined more accurately as the advocacy of individual member organisations adopting a variety of roles on a particular issue e.g. the work of five members playing various roles on the Consultative Group on the NAP on UNSCR 1325. Other advocacy projects e.g. publications on the MDGs or the 2008 lobbying report on UNSCR 1325 were conducted in the name of the Consortium as a whole.

⁴⁴ Such a twinning process had been suggested by the Patron, Mary Robinson, previously and the possibility of Ireland twinning with Sierra Leone was looked into at the time. The process never took off, in large part because Sierra Leone was well advanced with its NAP at the time while Ireland had yet to begin the process. The possibility of twinning was raised again by the Patron at the annual roundtable with CEOs on 25th November 2011.

In its planning process for the future, the Consortium needs to reflect on the *pros* and *cons* of these three options. However, the continuation of advocacy is strongly recommended for a number of reasons:

- The Consortium's clear articulation (in the Strategic Plan and elsewhere) of the need to address GBV as a human rights issue
- The success of its advocacy work to date, and the profile that this work has given to the Consortium
- The highly unusual ability that the Consortium has to participate in advocacy processes from a variety of perspectives, because of the unique diversity of its membership
- The particular opportunities that now arise at both Irish and field levels to build on the work to date on UNSCR 1325.

Extending advocacy work to field level would also tie in with other proposals in this report to move the focus of institutionalisation and learning activities to field level.

7.3.4 Engagement of Members

The Consortium needs to look more closely at why some organisations feel disengaged from it, and how space can be created for all members to play a role that is appropriate to their capacity and interests. Some of the possible options that could be considered here are as follows:

- A formal two-tier structure could be created with two distinct levels of membership.
- Disengaged members could opt to leave the consortium, but be invited to key events that are of interest to them and be informed of the latest tools, publications and learning from the Consortium.
- A single tier of membership could be retained (with a more balanced formula for payment of fees) but with sufficient flexibility to allow members to engage in events and processes of their choice without feeling obliged to be involved in everything. The steering group could be reduced in size to accommodate this.

7.3.5 Learning and Practice in Future

Much has been achieved in terms of Learning and Practice to date, but as indicated in Section 6.2 there is now a significant risk of continuing to 'preach to the converted'. As the awareness of the need to address GBV in programming increases, there is a need to support staff more widely, particularly at field level. Individual agencies can do this, and some already are. However, the Consortium could also consider the possibility of joint learning and training at field level. This would be led from the field preferably through a designated lead agency with two aspects to it:

- Basic training in relation to addressing GBV institutionally and in programming at field level, particularly for those who are new to it (with a potential role for Kimmage DSC and / or other academic experts in this)
- Sharing experiences and drawing lessons from existing programme work, ongoing research, and evaluations at field level – potentially feeding into collaborative work in-country

Some support would be required from the centre e.g. in terms of identifying the right experts to lead the workshops. The particular country or countries for this training would need to be carefully chosen, so that there is an interest and willingness to collaborate, and it is not just driven by head offices.

The Consortium also needs to decide on the level of learning activity that will continue at central level. There will be an ongoing need to keep up with best practice, so occasional learning days and learning documents may still be valuable, but perhaps not as frequent as before. Preferably, future learning documents would be based on practical lessons from field experience and field workshops. The best structure to achieve all this might be for the Consortium to facilitate direct linkages

between academic experts / institutions and groups at field level. This might not require the existence of a formal Learning and Practice Group in Ireland, but perhaps small task groups to facilitate specific events or processes.

7.3.6 Focus on Two or Three Countries

The analysis in this report across all three objectives of the Consortium's work has highlighted the need and opportunities to move out the focus of the Consortium's work from the centre, into the individual member organisations, and to field level in particular. One of the best ways that the Consortium could support this evolution in strategy in the short term would be to identify two or three countries where the Consortium will focus its energy over the next three-year cycle. Interventions in the selected countries could include the following:

- A particular emphasis on institutionalising the approaches of member organisations to GBV in these countries, and on supporting partner agencies on the ground to do the same
- Joint training of field staff and partner staff on how to address GBV both institutionally and programmatically at field level (as discussed in Section 7.3.5, above)
- Linking of programmatic initiatives of member agencies in-field for complementarity and added value
- Joint research and joint learning initiatives at field level, with possible links to local or international training or research institutes, and the results being fed back to the Consortium at central level for wider dissemination
- Joint policy and advocacy work, particularly in relation to the implementation of the Irish NAP on UNSCR 1325 in-country, and the development and implementation of NAPs in host countries, including a possible 'twinning' approach as outlined in Section 7.3.3

The country approach would include pilot initiatives that could be tested on the ground and provide learning for the Consortium as a whole and for wider application in other countries over time. Given the dual approach taken by the Consortium to date, the focus countries should include at least one conflict / post-conflict situation and one more stable long-term development country. The report on the recent research project in Sierra Leone⁴⁵ highlights a number of gaps in current practice of members in that country, but also a number of opportunities for future collaboration. Sierra Leone is therefore an obvious choice for a post-conflict focus country.

As stated elsewhere in this report, a move to a field focus would require the structure and processes of the Consortium itself to be adapted to place a greater emphasis on facilitation and support for field-led activities. The lessons and experience from the Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC) network in relation to leadership of field projects, as outlined above in Section 7.2, should also be applied to field collaboration activities. Members of the Consortium that do not have a presence in the focus countries could encourage and support their sister agencies on the ground to participate in the joint initiatives.

7.3.7 Putting GBV Higher up on the Agenda - The White Paper Review

The Consortium's Strategic Plan⁴⁶ highlights GBV as a human rights issue, but also as a development issue affecting many aspects of poverty, social development and economic growth. There is a wealth of evidence in the international arena to indicate that addressing gender inequality issues (e.g. via promotion of education for girls) can have a huge impact on development as a whole.⁴⁷ Given the fundamental importance of GBV and gender equality to the international development agenda, the

⁴⁵ Aisling Swaine for the Joint Consortium on GBV: *Learning from Practice: the Experiences of GBV Programming by Irish Joint Consortium Members in Sierra Leone*. Draft Report, 30th October 2011.

⁴⁶ See Strategic Plan: Section 1 (Introduction) Page 8.

⁴⁷ The Consortium's Issues Paper *Keeping Gender on the Agenda: Gender Based Violence, Poverty and Development (2009)* makes this point with reference to each of the MDGs.

Consortium should lead the way on ensuring that GBV is given a much higher priority than heretofore, both in Ireland and abroad.

Despite the specific references to GBV and gender more broadly in the White Paper, as outlined in Box 1, Section 5.1.2), GBV has not received the same attention or resourcing as, for example, given to other initiatives under the White Paper such as the Irish Hunger Task Force, the Conflict Resolution Unit or the Rapid Response Initiative. While GBV was certainly on the map in 2006, and Irish Aid has invested in gender, the progress made by the Consortium and its members on GBV since then creates an opportunity for the Consortium to influence the current review of the White Paper (to be completed in mid-2012) and to seek a greater emphasis on GBV within the next phase of implementation.

Given the significant body of learning on GBV by the Consortium over the last seven years and its uniquely diverse membership, the Consortium should also seek to promote its work more widely on the international stage over the coming years e.g. in major development conferences and events, in gender specific networks, at the UN and with bilateral donors.

Some of the areas where the Consortium could add value through documentation and presentation at international level are as follows:

- The learning for the Defence Forces from participating in the Consortium, and the lessons that this might provide on addressing GBV and protection issues for defence forces from other countries, or UN agencies operating at field level
- The learning for NGOs and Irish Aid in participating in a consortium with the Defence Forces, and the lessons this might provide for other actors in the international development sector
- The experience of Consortium members in taking a number of differing roles in the development of the National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325, while being active participants in the Consortium at the same time
- Specific lessons, both in terms of process and content, from the Irish experience of developing the National Action Plan
- Specific lessons on how to institutionalise GBV prevention and response throughout organisations
- Future learning from joint activities on various fronts at field level in specific countries i.e. in relation to co-ordination of programming, joint advocacy / policy initiatives, joint research or learning processes

7.3.8 Recruitment of a Co-ordinator

Given the scale of work that the Consortium undertakes presently, and if it is to increase its international profile in future, as suggested in the previous section, the Consortium needs to consider placing additional capacity at its centre. A Co-ordinator could be recruited to support the membership in delivering all aspects of the work. The Co-ordinator could be placed in the office of one of the smaller members, but would report to the Chair. The Co-ordinator would have a technical as well as an administrative role, and could perform the following tasks:

- Representing and promoting the work of the Consortium in international fora (not exclusively, but in conjunction with the members)
- Liaising with all of the members to ensure they are supported and can engage in the best way possible with the Consortium
- Taking steps to ensure that disputes or tensions are resolved quickly and amicably when conflicts arise
- Co-ordinating the day-to day activities in the three areas of work - but not doing it for the members. The membership has to retain control and overall responsibility.

- Helping to streamline the work of the Steering Committee and working groups by improving procedures and using task groups etc.
- Line managing the part-time administrator and managing the budget.

The presence of a Co-ordinator would help to reduce the workload on the chair and the steering committee, and possibly some of the working group workload also. This would make it easier for others e.g. a CEO to take on the role of Chair. The cost of a co-ordinator would require an increase in the level of the budget of the Consortium, but given the potential of the role, and the added value it could bring, it could be a very cost-effective investment.

7.3.9 Budget and Value for Money

The current budget of the Consortium is approximately €78,000⁴⁸. It could be argued that this is a considerable level of funding and much higher than many other inter-agency working groups have at their disposal (e.g. Dóchas working groups). However, considering the fundamental importance of GBV as an issue in development, and the considerable level of achievement to date, it would appear to be money well spent. Less quantified is the cost of time invested by individuals to keep the Consortium functioning, but the fact that most agencies are happy to continue investing that time and energy, is an indicator in itself that their organisations place a high value on the work and future potential of the Consortium.

7.3.10 Risks to Sustainability

There are a number of key risks that could jeopardise the sustainability of the Consortium if they are not adequately addressed:

- A loss of key individuals could significantly affect the capacity of the Consortium to deliver on its objectives. Members have stressed the need to have a much better induction process for new members so that they can participate actively at an early stage.
- A significant number of the smaller NGOs become disengaged from the work because they don't see it as relevant to them. This has been discussed under 7.3.4 above
- Organisations that bring a different dimension to the work e.g. Amnesty, Defence Forces, KODE become disengaged because there is too much focus on 'development' or 'programming' issues. The Consortium needs to ensure that it maintains a space or niche where each of these agencies can continue to contribute to and learn from the consortium
- The Patron decides to terminate her involvement in the Consortium. Every effort should be made to ensure that the Patron continues to work with and challenge the Consortium to achieve its goals.
- The workload on members becomes unbearable and they gradually drop out. Provision must be made to give greater capacity to the Consortium to achieve its considerable workload.
- The work of the Consortium becomes repetitive and boring, and members start to lose interest. The Consortium is at a critical stage of its development where it has achieved much but now needs to develop some new approaches to re-invigorate both the membership and the Consortium as a whole. The focus countries approach suggested in Section 7.3.6, together with a more expansive approach outlined in Section 7.3.7 would help to re-energise the Consortium.

Many of these issues have been touched on in various parts of this report, but they all need to be considered in depth as the Consortium now starts its next strategic planning cycle in 2012.

⁴⁸ Based on the official contributions of €3,500 from nine members, €2,500 from three members and Irish Aid providing matching funds that covers the participation of the remaining three members. This does not allow for reductions in fees granted in 2011 because of under-expenditure in previous budgets.

8. CONCLUSIONS

1. The Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence took a very strategic approach to addressing GBV from the beginning, in recognising the importance of institutionalising GBV prevention and response across the policies, procedures and programmes of its members. The Consortium then put in place the systems and structures to support its members in a very organised and coherent manner.
2. The approach of the Consortium was very comprehensive and ambitious, with a significant body of work undertaken under each of the three objectives:
 - Objective 1: Systematically addressing GBV in policies, procedures and programmes
 - Objective 2: Developing and strengthening the skills of its members
 - Objective 3: Informing, effecting and monitoring policy on GBV
3. The unusual, if not unique, diversity in the membership of the Consortium, in terms of the nature and roles of the organisations, their scale and size, and how they relate to wider international networks, is both a great asset and a great challenge. This diversity has great benefits in enabling members to learn from each other and to share with individuals and organisations that they might not normally engage with. The challenges come from trying to accommodate the needs and views of such a diverse group, particularly on advocacy.
4. Interventions under all three objectives were based on solid research and independent external support from consultants and academics with particular expertise in gender equality and GBV issues.
5. The Consortium itself has achieved considerable progress in relation to Objective 1. The progress of individual members on institutionalising GBV response is more mixed. Members have achieved significant progress in certain areas relating to policy development, organisational procedures and programming, but overall progress is uneven across member organisations and within them, and there are some significant gaps. Some members have invested heavily in institutionalising GBV, while others have not.
6. While member organisations have been working to make progress in a lot of different areas, very few, if any, of them could be said to have an overall strategy or action plan that informs how they will institutionalise GBV on a systematic basis within their organisation over a specific timeframe.
7. The work of the Consortium has raised the profile of GBV within individual member organisations, and the annual roundtable has been particularly useful in engaging the CEOs. However, more leadership is required at this stage to deliver fully on institutionalising GBV within organisations. Developing an action plan for institutionalising within each organisation would help to get more leadership buy-in from senior managers.
8. The current reporting systems of the Consortium are useful and informative, but they tend to accentuate the positive developments at the expense of gaining a more accurate picture of overall progress. If each member had a clear action plan, with targets, on institutionalising GBV, it would help to provide a more informed view of progress.
9. In relation to Objective 2, the Consortium has been very effective in developing high quality research, learning events, and learning documents. The investment in these processes at

central level was very important in the early years of the Consortium, in order to build the internal knowledge base of its members.

10. The focus of learning and practice now needs to move out more from the Consortium itself into individual member organisations, and to the field. The emerging research and learning from individual members, and the training capacity offered by KODE, provide some opportunities to do this.
11. Under Objective 3, the Consortium has undertaken a large body of work on advocacy since 2005, particularly in relation to the Irish National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSC Resolution 1325. The work of the Consortium on the NAP was ultimately very effective, and Consortium members had a significant influence on both the process and the content of the NAP.
12. The differing views on advocacy, and the differing roles that Consortium members play in relation to policy and advocacy work are a source of significant internal tension, and could undermine the future of the Consortium if not adequately addressed.
13. The challenging role adopted by the Patron has had a very positive influence in helping the Consortium to achieve its objectives
14. Relationships among members of the Consortium are generally good, notwithstanding a clear need to address differences on advocacy. However, there are some significant issues to be addressed in relation to the lack of engagement by some members with the Consortium.
15. The Communications Strategy developed by the Consortium was not a success, and a new strategy and action plan to apply to both internal and external communications is badly needed.
16. The structures and processes of the Consortium place a heavy burden of work on the individuals who participate on the Steering Committee and working groups. These processes need to be adapted and streamlined to take account of necessary changes in strategy across all three objectives.

In summary, the Consortium has made significant progress over the last seven years in supporting its members to work on Gender Based Violence at institutional and programme levels. The focus of this work now needs to move out from the Consortium centre, with greater ownership being taken by individual member organisations, and at field level in particular.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Given that the work of the Consortium is still highly relevant to its members and to the sector as a whole, the Consortium should continue to function for a further three-year period until 2014 following a new strategic planning process. The structures and processes of the Consortium should be adapted and streamlined to take account of the changes in strategy.
2. The Consortium should maintain its primary focus on GBV while looking for ways to ensure that broader gender equality issues are addressed within the various strands of its work and that of its individual members - as it has done successfully in the past
3. The Consortium should maintain its focus on the internationally-facing GBV agenda, with particular reference to the countries where its members work. It should not recruit

organisations with an Irish-facing GBV agenda, but should seek to develop limited but focussed linkages with organisations of this nature on specific topics of mutual interest and learning.

4. Given the growing body of knowledge and experience that the GBV Consortium is now generating, and the particular learning that is derived from its unique membership, there is a real opportunity for Ireland to take a lead at international level on addressing GBV, just as it is doing, for example, on hunger at present. The Consortium should therefore engage very actively with the White Paper review process to ensure that GBV is given a substantially greater emphasis in the next stage of implementation.
5. In line with the previous recommendation, the Consortium itself should seek to promote its unique experience more broadly at international level over the course of its next strategic plan, for example, at major development conferences, within gender specific networks, at the UN, with bilateral donors, and in the broader development sector.
6. The Consortium's work on systematically addressing GBV in policies, procedures and programmes (Objective 1) should build on existing work, but place a greater emphasis on supporting members to roll out GBV response at field level, and on supporting partner agencies to do the same.
7. Each member of the Consortium should develop a specific action plan for institutionalising its response to GBV at policy, process and programming level, with clear targets, timeframes and commitments from senior management. This should be accompanied by a broader annual reporting format for the Consortium that would look right across the activities of each organisation, and not just at examples of good progress.
8. The Consortium's work on building capacity and skills of its member organisations (Objective 2) should move out more from head office level to focus more on skills development for staff deployed overseas, and the staff of partner agencies. This work should include mutual learning from specific field interventions and specific field-based training and distance learning programmes.
9. Given the success of its advocacy work to date (Objective 3) and its strong articulation of GBV from a human rights perspective, the Consortium should continue to work on advocacy at Irish and international levels. In follow-up to their work on the development of the Irish National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Consortium members should continue to engage in monitoring the implementation of that plan. Consortium members should also engage in advocacy and support for the development and implementation of national action plans and other GBV-related policies at field level.

Before initiating any further advocacy initiatives, the Consortium should organise an internal workshop to review the advocacy processes to-date, with a view to agreeing how the specific mandates and boundaries of all members and their staff can be fully respected, while developing processes for strong and coherent policy work based on vigorous but constructive dialogue.

10. The Consortium should identify two or three countries where it will focus its energy over the next three-year cycle. Interventions in the selected countries could include the following:
 - An emphasis on institutionalising the approaches of member organisations to GBV in these countries
 - Support for partner agencies on the ground to institutionalise their approaches to GBV

- Joint-training of field staff and partner staff on how to address GBV both institutionally and programmatically at field level
- Linking of GBV programming initiatives of member agencies at field level for complementarity and added value
- Joint research and joint learning initiatives at field level, with possible links to local or international training or research institutes
- Joint policy and advocacy work, particularly in relation to the implementation of the Irish NAP on UNSCR 1325 in-country, and the implementation of NAPs in host countries

The focus countries should include Sierra Leone as a post-conflict context, and at least one country that is in a more stable long-term development situation.

11. Given the pivotal role played by the Patron to date, this role should continue with the Patron continuing to hold the members to account on an annual basis.
12. The Consortium should look at how it might make its activities and processes more relevant to the small number of members who feel that it is not relevant to them. Three options should be considered for this:
 - The development of a two tier-membership structure
 - Some members to opt to leave the Consortium, but to be invited to key events and have access to the resources of the Consortium
 - A single tier of membership to be retained, but with agreement on flexibility for members to engage in events and processes as best fits their organisation.
13. The Consortium should develop a new communications strategy and action plan that will address both internal and external communications issues, with a particular emphasis on public messaging on GBV issues and the work of the Consortium in this area.
14. The Consortium should continue to develop specific linkages with the Dóchas Humanitarian and HIV working groups (through existing crossover on representation by staff) on specific issues relating to HIV, protection and GBV.
15. The Consortium should seek to inform, via Dóchas and IMU, a broader range of Irish development agencies on the output of its work to date, including the learning and resources that it has developed, while resisting the temptation to expand the membership of the Consortium to any significant degree.
16. The Consortium should give serious consideration to the recruitment of a co-ordinator to support the membership in the delivery of all aspects of its work. Key tasks for the co-ordinator would include representing the Consortium in international fora, liaising with and supporting individual member organisations, and helping to streamline some of the procedures and systems of the Consortium.

10. Management Response to the 2011 Evaluation

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Given that the work of the Consortium is still highly relevant to its members and to the sector as a whole, the Consortium should continue to function for a further three-year period until 2014 following a new strategic planning process. The structures and processes of the Consortium should be adapted and streamlined to take account of the changes in strategy.

Agree

2. The Consortium should maintain its primary focus on GBV while looking for ways to ensure that broader gender equality issues are addressed within the various strands of its work and that of its individual members - as it has done successfully in the past.

Agree

3. The Consortium should maintain its focus on the internationally-facing GBV agenda, with particular reference to the countries where its members work. It should not recruit organisations with an Irish-facing GBV agenda, but should seek to develop limited but focussed linkages with organisations of this nature on specific topics of mutual interest and learning.

Agree. However, the Consortium needs to be very focused in this regard. Links with domestic agencies should be to share learning on issues of mutual interest and parameters for this engagement need to be clearly agreed from the outset.

4. Given the growing body of knowledge and experience that the GBV Consortium is now generating, and the particular learning that is derived from its unique membership, there is a real opportunity for Ireland to take a lead at international level on addressing GBV, just as it is doing, for example, on hunger at present. The Consortium should therefore engage very actively with the White Paper review process to ensure that GBV is given a substantially greater emphasis in the next stage of implementation.

Agree. There are important opportunities to engage at international level through networking, joint research and implementation of UNSCR 1325 (see point 5 for more details).

Agree. The Steering Committee already has a process in place to prepare a Consortium submission to the White Paper Review by end of April 2012

5. In line with the previous recommendation, the Consortium itself should seek to promote its unique experience more broadly at international level over the course of its next strategic plan, for example, at major development conferences, within gender specific networks, at the UN, with bilateral donors, and in the broader development sector.

Agree. There is scope to share learning both on the process of the Consortium and learning emerging from work commissioned by the Consortium. However, we need to be aware of sensitivities around a Consortium representative speaking on behalf of all members of the Consortium (including government) at international fora and all such engagements should be treated on a case by case basis with clarity ensured around the issue of representation.

The Consortium should also do more to exploit existing networks for learning & sharing purposes. The wider family networks of member agencies represent an important opportunity where the Consortium can add value.

The Consortium also needs to consider the resource implications of this engagement. Processes and resources to enable it will be considered in the strategic planning process 2012.

6. The Consortium's work on systematically addressing GBV in policies, procedures and programmes (Objective 1) should build on existing work, but place a greater emphasis on supporting members to roll out GBV response at field level, and on supporting partner agencies to do the same.

Agree. However it needs to be done in a way that recognises the different capacities, needs and approaches of member agencies to ensure that it adds value and is demand driven. The resource implications of this have also to be thoroughly considered and planned for. A variety of options should be explored as to how this can be done during the strategic planning process (including increase use of video-conferencing, web casts and skype to engage with the field) based on learning from processes such as the recent Sierra Leone work. In addition, each member agency is expected to take a leadership role to promote, encourage and facilitate effective GBV responses and draw on the substantial learning within the Consortium.

7. Each member of the Consortium should develop a specific action plan for institutionalising its response to GBV at policy, process and programming level, with clear targets, timeframes and commitments from senior management. This should be accompanied by a broader annual reporting format for the Consortium that would look right across the activities of each organisation, and not just at examples of good progress.

Agree. Accountability and annual reporting are very important and the Consortium wishes to continue to strengthen its culture of mutual accountability between members. However we believe that related processes should be kept light in the context of the Consortium and on the basis that individual members will have different approaches in terms of how they plan for and implement GBV and broader Gender Equality responses. The Consortium's annual reporting should make use of the baseline that emerged from the Mapping Exercise in 2010 and the 2011 Annual Reports submitted by members in order to demonstrate progress or areas which need additional focus.

8. The Consortium's work on building capacity and skills of its member organisations (Objective 2) should move out more from head office level to focus more on skills development for staff deployed overseas, and the staff of partner agencies. This work should include mutual learning from specific field interventions and specific field-based training and distance learning programmes.

Agree. Notwithstanding the challenges represented by the different capacities/approaches etc referred to under point 6 above, practical steps can be taken in this regard such as further work to promote KODE's distance learning programme. In addition, the Consortium website could be updated to highlight the availability of relevant courses and members encouraged to access these at the field level. There may also be additional opportunities for more cross learning between agencies operating at field level and between the field and HQs.

9. Given the success of its advocacy work to date (Objective 3) and its strong articulation of GBV from a human rights perspective, the Consortium should continue to work on advocacy at Irish and international levels. In follow-up to their work on the development of the Irish National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Consortium members should continue to engage in monitoring the implementation of that plan. Consortium members should also engage in advocacy and support for the development and implementation of national action plans and other GBV-related policies at field level.

Before initiating any further advocacy initiatives, the Consortium should organise an internal workshop to review the advocacy processes to-date, with a view to agreeing how the specific mandates and boundaries of all members and their staff can be fully respected, while developing processes for strong and coherent policy work based on vigorous but constructive dialogue.

Given the composition of the Consortium, advocacy will continue to be a sensitive area. The focus should be on building the evidence base to support the advocacy of individual agencies. In relation to 1325, while it will not be possible, given its composition, to have the Consortium formally represented on the Monitoring Committee, the Consortium will continue to monitor the NAP and use its own channels to engage on UNSCR 1325. Individual Consortium members who may be appointed to the Committee can act as “focal points” and can then report back to other members at steering committee in order to keep members up to date. The Consortium should consider further how it will engage with the process. This will likely be in the form of commissioning research or documenting and sharing learning etc. This issue will require specific attention during the forthcoming strategic planning process.

10. The Consortium should identify two or three countries where it will focus its energy over the next three-year cycle. Interventions in the selected countries could include the following:
- An emphasis on institutionalising the approaches of member organisations to GBV in these countries
 - Support for partner agencies on the ground to institutionalise their approaches to GBV (taking point 6 into account).
 - Joint-training of field staff and partner staff on how to address GBV both institutionally and programmatically at field level
 - Linking of GBV programming initiatives of member agencies at field level for complementarity and added value
 - Joint research and joint learning initiatives at field level, with possible links to local or international training or research institutes
 - Joint policy and advocacy work, particularly in relation to the implementation of the Irish NAP on UNSCR 1325 in-country, and the implementation of NAPs in host countries

The focus countries should include Sierra Leone as a post-conflict context, and at least one country that is in a more stable long-term development situation.

Agree. However, not all of these activities may be possible or practical. The strategic planning process should consider this in relation to a small number of countries. It is also an area that requires effective engagement with the relevant field staff.

11. Given the pivotal role played by the Patron to date, this role should continue with the Patron continuing to hold the members to account on an annual basis.

Agree

12. The Consortium should look at how it might make its activities and processes more relevant to the small number of members who feel that it is not relevant to them. Three options should be considered for this:

- The development of a two tier-membership structure
- Some members to opt to leave the Consortium, but to be invited to key events and have access to the resources of the Consortium
- A single tier of membership to be retained, but with agreement on flexibility for members to engage in events and processes as best fits their organisation.

Agree. It is felt that a single tier of membership is preferable but the Chair will follow up with the relevant members to discuss options.

13. The Consortium should develop a new communications strategy and action plan that will address both internal and external communications issues, with a particular emphasis on public messaging on GBV issues and the work of the Consortium in this area.

Agree. The new Strategic Plan will include a strong communications component to address these issues.

14. The Consortium should continue to develop specific linkages with the Dóchas Humanitarian and HIV working groups (through existing crossover on representation by staff) on specific issues relating to HIV, protection and GBV.

Agree. Where appropriate, linkages with other groups such as the Dóchas Food Security and Livelihoods should also be developed.

15. The Consortium should seek to inform, via Dóchas and IMU, a broader range of Irish development agencies on the output of its work to date, including the learning and resources that it has developed, while resisting the temptation to expand the membership of the Consortium to any significant degree.

Agree. This will be specifically addressed in the communications component of the strategic planning process.

16. The Consortium should give serious consideration to the recruitment of a co-ordinator to support the membership in the delivery of all aspects of its work. Key tasks for the co-ordinator would include representing the Consortium in international fora, liaising with and supporting individual member organisations, and helping to streamline some of the procedures and systems of the Consortium.

The Consortium is open to considering this recommendation and it will be looked at during the strategic planning process.

April 2012

Annex 1: Members of the GBV Consortium – Approximate Budgets and Staffing⁴⁹

	Organisation	Approx. Annual Budget (€)	Staff in Ireland	Staff Overseas
1.	ActionAid Ireland	3.5m	6	0
2.	Amnesty Ireland	4.1m	35	0
3.	ChildFund Ireland	2.4m	6	0
4.	Christian Aid Ireland	8.0m	23	0
5.	Concern Worldwide	150m	180	4,000
6.	Irish Defence Forces	2,400m	9,500	variable
7.	GOAL	60m	50	2,640
8.	Irish Aid	522m	140	24
9.	Irish Red Cross	9m	35	9
10.	Kimmage DSC / KODE	N/A	14	0
11.	Oxfam Ireland	6m	58	14
12.	Plan Ireland	8m	18	1
13.	Self Help Africa	7.8m	13	188
14.	Trócaire	55m	130	200
15.	World Vision Ireland	8m	14	0

⁴⁹ This table aims to demonstrate indicatively the relative scales and capacities of member organisations for comparison purposes. Figures are approximate only, based on most recent available annual reports or information from organisations themselves.

Annex 2

Terms of Reference for an Evaluation of the Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence

1. Background

The Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence was established in 2005. It comprises fifteen organizations⁵⁰ with diverse mandates and operational approaches representing development, humanitarian and human rights organisations, Irish Aid (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) and the Irish Defence Forces. These organisations have come together to tackle gender based violence in a coherent and strategic way in both conflict and non-conflict situations with the common goal of protecting and upholding the human rights of vulnerable people.

The consortium was established in 2004 at the initiative of Irish Aid and Amnesty International, who brought together a group of Irish development and human rights NGOs in response to a number of key events in 2004. An Amnesty International report on the crisis in Darfur highlighted the failures of the national authorities and the international community to respond to gender based violence (GBV). The then Irish Minister of State for Development Cooperation and Human Rights visited the region at about the same time and noted similar inadequacies, and committed to supporting an initiative on GBV in Darfur. The reality was, however, that few of the Irish NGOs operational on the ground in Darfur (or elsewhere) had a comparative advantage on working with GBV. An opportunity was recognised to shift the interest from what might have been a fairly typical response-type *project* focusing on reproductive health and counselling, to encompassing a broader and more *strategic approach* to addressing GBV, whether in humanitarian, conflict, or more long term development contexts.

In 2005 the Consortium published the report, '*Gender Based Violence, a Failure to Protect - A Challenge to Action*' and since then the Consortium members have been working to fulfil six key recommendations within their organisations:

1. Institutionalise GBV responses at organisational level.
2. Support GBV Programming.
3. Make Prevention and Protection Central to Programming.
4. Improve Service Delivery: Respond to GBV.
5. Engage with Civil Society.
6. Coordinate and Collaborate with Partners/other agencies.

This report was followed by the publication of "Gender Based Violence, Ireland Responding: A Guidance Note on Institutionalising Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response within Organisations". This provides guidance for organisations in responding to recommendation 1 above on institutionalising GBV at organisational level.

The Consortium itself is structured as a steering committee which meets regularly on which all members are represented; working groups focused on achieving tangible outputs; learning

⁵⁰ Action Aid Ireland, Amnesty International Ireland, Child Fund Ireland, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide, the Defence Forces, Kimmage Manor (including Dtalk and KODE), GOAL, Irish Aid, Irish Red Cross, Oxfam Ireland, Plan Ireland, Self Help Africa, Trócaire and World Vision.

workshops and high profile public events, an annual round table discussion with Mary Robinson; and an annual review process that maintains focus and momentum. The Chair rotates annually between Consortium members; for 2011 the Chair is Concern Worldwide.

The two working groups are the Advocacy Group and the Learning and Practice Group (though the Advocacy Group is currently lapsed).

The Consortium has conducted a wide variety of activities since its establishment in 2005 in three broad areas:

- a) institutionalising GBV concerns with organisational policies, systems and programmes
- b) building capacity of members for GBV related work
- c) advocacy nationally and internationally

In 2009 these broad areas were formalised in the Strategic Plan 2009-2012 with the following vision, mission and objectives:

The **vision** of the Consortium is 'a world free of gender based violence'.

The **mission** is: 'believing that gender based violence is a key manifestation of gender inequality, the Consortium works collectively to promote action in order to eliminate gender based violence in international development and humanitarian contexts'.

The Consortium's **objectives** for the three year period of the Strategic Plan are:

1. To ensure that actions to prevent and respond to gender based violence are visible and systematically addressed in the policies, procedures and programmes of all members agencies.
2. To develop and strengthen skills and capacities of member organisations for more effective prevention of, and response to, gender based violence, at programme level.
3. To inform, effect and monitor policy implementation to improve actions on prevention of and response to gender based violence.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide the Consortium members with an independent, evidenced based assessment of the structure, functioning and strategy of the Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence which will help inform the future direction of the Consortium from 2013.

3. Scope

The evaluation will focus in particular on the Consortium's Strategic Plan period 2009-2012, but also with reference to previous annual plans and other relevant documentation since the establishment of the consortium.

The evaluation will use the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of effectiveness, relevance and sustainability (see Annex 1 for DAC guidance on definitions). As appropriate, assessments against these criteria will be backed by evidence of progress in undertaking activities set out in the three year action plan and achieving identified indicators.

Key questions for consideration include:

Effectiveness

1. To what extent have the objectives of the Consortium as set out in the Strategic Plan 2009 to 2012, and previous annual plans, been achieved, specifically:
 - a. To what extent has it ensured that actions to prevent and respond to GBV are visible and systematically addressed in the policies, procedures and programmes of all members agencies?
 - b. To what extent has it contributed to developing and strengthening skills and capacities of member organisations for more effective prevention of, and response to, GBV at programme level?
 - c. To what extent has it informed, effected and monitored policy implementation to improve actions on prevention of and response to GBV, in particular in relation to participation in the development of the National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325?

Relevance

2. To what extent is the Consortium initiative, its structure and ways of working a useful and effective mechanism in supporting members' implementation of the identified recommendations of the 2005 report '*Gender Based Violence, a Failure to Protect - A Challenge to Action*' and achieving the Consortium's Strategy objectives?
3. Are the objectives of the Consortium still relevant to the programmes of member organisations?
4. Is there a better way to achieve the higher level mission and vision of the Consortium?

Sustainability

5. To what extent is the work of the Consortium and the structure sustainable in its current form in the longer term?

4. Methodology

While the Consultant is required to include their proposed methodology in their tender submission, it is expected that the evaluation methodology will include, inter alia:

- interviews with key informants in each Consortium member organisation, to include representatives of senior management and field staff as well as the Consortium focal point person; a questionnaire may also be useful to glean certain information;
- desk review of relevant documentation (see Section 8 below);
- interviews with other relevant stakeholder organisations.

Consideration should also be given by the Consultant holding a facilitated session with all Consortium members during the evaluation process, as well as to discuss the draft report.

Comparison with other such inter-agency consortia and networks would be useful.

The consultant will produce a draft report for review and comment by mid-October 2011, with a view to producing a final report by mid-November, for presentation to Mary Robinson at the annual round table meeting of the Joint Consortium in November 2011.

However in recognition of the fact that part of the work will take place over the "holiday period" so that key informants may not be readily available, if this timetable slips, the consultant may be

required to prepare a presentation of “key findings” for the November meeting with Mary Robinson.

5. Output

The expected output of the assignment is a report that will include the findings, analysis, key lessons, challenges and recommendations. The report will outline key recommendations for the Consortium going forward after 2012 including consideration of the Consortium’s sustainability and possible alternative mechanisms.

The consultant will be also be required to present and discuss findings of the evaluation at draft and/or final report stages to the Joint Consortium, to Irish Aid, as well as at the round table meeting in November.

6. Evaluation Consultant’s Expertise and Selection Criteria

Intending service providers will demonstrate the following expertise required:

- Proven capacity and understanding of organisational change and management processes, particularly in a development environment
- A strong understanding of inter-organisational coordination mechanisms and relationships to effect change
- Strong evaluation experience
- Experience and understanding of issues of gender and gender based violence
- Availability within the timeframe outlined

The consultant selected will clearly demonstrate the above expertise and set out how this relates to the evaluation work required.

The consultant will be selected according to the following criteria:

- Understanding of the terms of reference, methodology and timeframe proposed by the consultant and planning of the assignment (20%)
- Demonstration of required expertise:
 - Proven capacity and understanding of organisational change and management processes, particularly in a development environment (15%)
 - A strong understanding of inter-organisational coordination mechanisms and relationships to effect change (15%)
 - Strong evaluation experience (10%)
 - Experience and understanding of issues of gender and gender based violence (10%)
- Experience with and understanding of the wider development community (10%)
- Cost (20%)

7. Timeframe

It is expected that the evaluation will commence by late July/early August 2011 and that a draft report will be ready by mid October 2011. The consultant will be required to make a presentation of findings at the Joint Consortium’s annual round table discussion with Mary Robinson in November 2011. A maximum of 30 consultancy days will be available for this assignment.

8. Management Arrangements

The evaluation will be an independent, external exercise managed by the Evaluation and Audit Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs. The consultants will report directly to Ms Laura Leonard of the

Evaluation and Audit Unit in Limerick. A reference group will be established to support the evaluation, consisting of 3-4 members of the Consortium and chaired by the Evaluation and Audit Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

9. List of Key Documents

Key documents to be provided to the consultant for the evaluation will include:

- Consortium of Irish Human Rights, Humanitarian and Development Agencies & Development Cooperation Ireland: Gender Based Violence Study, July 2005
- Gender Based Violence, a Failure to Protect - A Challenge to Action
- Gender Based Violence, Ireland Responding: A Guidance Note on Institutionalising Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response within Organisations
- Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence Strategic Plan 2009-2012
- Consortium's annual progress reports from 2006 to 2010
- Stepping up Ireland's Response to Women, Peace and Security: UN Security Council Resolution 1325 – A Report by the Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence
- Institutionalising Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response: Sample Indicators and Annual Reporting Format
- A Good Practice Guide for the Monitoring and Evaluation of National Action Plans on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security
- Learning and Practice Briefs (4 briefs)
- Keeping Gender on the Agenda: Gender Based Violence, Poverty and Development – An Issues Paper from the Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence
- Women, Peace and Conflict: UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Conference Report 17th November 2008
- Website: www.gbv.ie
- Communications Strategy
- Stocktake /mapping conducted in 2010
- Gender audits conducted by some individual Consortium member agencies
- Other relevant reports and documents

ANNEX 1: DAC CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

When evaluating programmes and projects it is useful to consider the following DAC Criteria, as laid out in the DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance:

RELEVANCE: The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor.

In evaluating the relevance of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- To what extent are the objectives of the programme still valid?
- Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?
- Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the intended impacts and effects?

EFFECTIVENESS: A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.

In evaluating the effectiveness of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- To what extent were the objectives achieved / are likely to be achieved?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

EFFICIENCY: Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term which signifies that the aid uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted.

When evaluating the efficiency of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- Were activities cost-efficient?
- Were objectives achieved on time?
- Was the programme or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?

IMPACT: The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators. The examination should be concerned with both intended and unintended results and must also include the positive and negative impact of external factors, such as changes in terms of trade and financial conditions.

When evaluating the impact of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- What has happened as a result of the programme or project?
- What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries?
- How many people have been affected?

SUSTAINABILITY: Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially sustainable.

When evaluating the sustainability of a programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

- To what extent did the benefits of a programme or project continue after donor funding ceased?
- What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the programme or project?

www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation

Annex 3: List of Interviewees for the Evaluation

	Organisation	Name	Position in Organisation
1.	ActionAid	Olga McDonagh	CEO
2.		Annelien Groten	Programme Manager
3.	Amnesty Ireland	Colm O’Gorman	CEO
4.		Siobhan Curran	Campaigns Officer
5.		Sorcha Tunney	Campaigns Officer
6.		Eilis Ni Caithnia	Campaigns Co-ordinator
7.	ChildFund Ireland	Mick Kiely	CEO
8.		Pam McHugh	Programme Manager
9.		Jean McGrath	Programme officer
10.	Christian Aid	Nazma Kabir	Head of Programme Development
11.		Josh Levene	Gender, Power and Exclusion Adviser, UK
12.	Concern	Tom Arnold	CEO
13.		Paul O’Brien	International Director
14.		Angela O’Neill	Regional Director Southern Africa (Chair of the JCGBV)
15.		Bernadette Crawford	Desk Officer / Equality Adviser
16.	Defence Forces	Ollie Barbour	Director of Personnel & Support Services
17.	GOAL	Fiona Gannon	Overseas Director
18.		Chris Boucher	Desk Officer, Sudan - Gender Focal Point
19.		Marie Hallissey	Programme Specialist
20.	Irish Aid	Aine Doody	Gender Adviser
21.		Susan Fraser	Senior Devt. Specialist (Emergencies)
22.		Fionnuala Gilsean	Principal Devt. Specialist (Civil Society)
23.		Kevin Carroll	Senior Devt. Specialist Uganda
24.	Irish Red Cross	Donal Forde	CEO
25.		Colm Byrne	Policy & Donor Liaison Officer
26.	Kimmage DSC / KODE	Paddy O’Reilly	Director
27.		Deirdre Healy	Development Officer, KODE
28.	Oxfam Ireland	Jim Clarken	Executive Director
29.		Niamh Carty	Head of Overseas Programme
30.	Plan Ireland	David Dalton	CEO
31.		Damien Queally	Programme Manager
32.		Dualta Roughneen	DRM Co-ordinator
33.		Michael Moriarty	Finance and Compliance Officer
34.	Self Help Africa	Ray Jordan	CEO
35.		John Moffett	Director of Policy and Strategy
36.	Trócaire	Eamonn Meehan	Deputy Director
37.		Finola Finnan	Programme Leader – Gender and HIV
38.		Maurice McQuillan	Programme Leader - emergencies
39.		Ian Dolan	Regional Manager, Southern Africa
40.	World Vision	Helen Keogh	CEO
41.		Juliet Lang	Senior Programmes Officer
42.	Consultant	Mary Jennings	Consultant
43.	Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC)	Rachel Houghton	Co-ordinator

Annex 4:

Evaluation of Irish GBV Consortium
Interviews – Guideline on Areas of Questioning
Mike Williams

Organisation:	
Interviewee(s):	
Position	
Date:	

Organisational Information	
Annual Budget:	
Total staff:	
Overseas Staff:	

	Line of questioning	Response	Documents / Evidence
1.	Individual Involvement in Consortium		
	What is / are your role(s) in your organisation?		
	How does this role relate to work on GBV (% time approx)?		
	What is your role in relation to the GBV Consortium (steering, working groups etc)?		
	How much time have you invested in working with the consortium (days / year)?		
	How much additional time as part of, or beyond, your normal job is invested in the Consortium (%)?		
	Is this the best use of time / resources? Elaborate.		

2.	Impact at Organisational level		
2.1	How has the issue of GBV been incorporated into your organisation since 2005 in comparison with previous practice		
	a) Reference in the organisational strategic plan		
	b) Reflection in other organisational policy / strategy documents		
	c) Reflected in organisational processes: meetings, internal working groups etc.		
	d) Specific events in relation to GBV?		

	e) Specific research in relation to GBV. How has it been applied?		
	f) Specific reports / communications in relation to GBV?		
	For each of the above, to what degree has this work been influenced by the work of / your participation in the GBV consortium: (a) completely, (b) heavily, (c) partially, (d) slightly, (e) not at all? Explain.		
2.2	How has the leadership of your organisation taken the issue of GBV on board? Examples.		
	a) CEO activity / role		
	b) Senior Management role?		
2.3	How has your organisation built its internal capacity on GBV programming?		
	a) Internal training / workshops		
	b) Toolkits / guidance notes		
	c) Other		
	To what extent has this internal capacity building been influenced by the work and materials of the Consortium: (a) completely, (b) heavily, (c) partially, (d) slightly (e) not at all. Explain.		
2.4	What other factors hindered or helped progress on GBV at institutional level?		

3.	Impact on Programmes		
3.1	How has programming work on GBV evolved since 2005. (specifically for <u>your organisation</u> i.e. for wider networks, see later)		
	a) Specific programming on GBV? Range / examples / tracking system. Was there a baseline?		
	b) Scale of Programming on GBV (€m), % of overall spend / trend.		
	c) Within the context of broader gender equality projects / programmes. Define / examples		
	d) Within the context of gender mainstreaming. Outline.		
	e) Addressing GBV within projects / programmes more generally (e.g. in relation to HIV, livelihoods programming). Examples.		

	To what degree have each of these been influenced, supported by the work / materials from the GBV consortium. Which resources?		
3.2	What other factors hindered or helped progress on GBV in programme work?		

4.	Policy Influencing, Implementation and Monitoring		
4.1	How much focus does your organisation place on advocacy: (a) none (b) a little (c) considerable (d) major focus (d) entire work		
4.2	What specific policy related work on GBV has your org. Done:		
	a) Direct advocacy work (excluding work done via the Consortium)		
	b) Specific advocacy work on UNSCR 1325?		
	c) Campaigning work and achievements?		
	a) Specific Dev Ed work on GBV?		
	How much were all of your above work influenced or supported by the work of the Consortium?		
4.3	What other factors hindered or helped progress on advocacy on GBV?		

5.	Networks		
	Is your organisation a member of an international or other network?		
	How / to what degree has your work on GBV influenced the work of the wider network - Specific examples		
	How / to what degree has this networking been influenced in turn by the GBV consortium? - examples		

6.	Evaluations		
	What specific evaluations / audits do you have (external or internal) of your organisation's approach or work on GBV		
	a) Evaluations of your GBV programme work		
	b) Specific reference to GBV in broader evaluations of your programme work		
	c) Audits of your organisational approach to gender / GBV		

7.	Progress of Consortium in relation to the original objectives and current SP		
7.1	How has the work of the consortium helped to ensure that actions to prevent and respond to GBV (Objective 1) are addressed in		
	a) Policies and procedures of the members. Evidence?		
	b) Programmes of the members. Evidence?		
7.2	How effective has the work of the consortium been in developing skills and capacity of members on GBV? (Objective 2) Explain.		
7.3	How effective has the work of the consortium been on informing, effecting and monitoring policy in relation to GBV (Objective 3). Specifically:		
	a) How relevant was the work on UN Resolution 1325 to your organisation?		
	b) How much did you engage participate in the work on UNSCR 1325?		
	a) What was the level of achievement on UNSCR 1325?		
	b) On other issues?		
7.4	In overall terms, to what degree has the consortium achieved its original purpose and objectives : (1) not at all (2) slightly (3) reasonable level (4) high achievement (5) complete success in all areas. Elaborate.		

8.	Use of Resources		
	How useful were the following resources from the Consortium, and why? How did you use them? Rate from 1-5 (1= no use; 5 = extremely useful).		
	a) Guidance Note on Institutionalising GBV (2006)		
	b) Learning Briefs on: community based approaches; GBV in Schools; Engaging men; MDG 1?		
	c) Issues paper: Keeping GBV on the Agenda		
	d) Good Practice Guide for M&E on NAPs on UNSCR 1325		

	e) Sample Indicators and Annual reporting format for members		
	f) Other documents		

9.	Quality and Use of Reports		
	How would you rate the following reports & how did you use them?		
	a) Report on UNSCR 1325 (2008)		
	b) Other annual reports from the Consortium (following conference)		
	c) Sierra Leone research 2005 (and follow up 2011)		
	d) Darfur Report 2006		
	e) Mapping of members performance 2010		

10.	Working Structures		
10.1	For those directly involved, rate the following from 1-5: (1= very poor; 2= below average; 3= OK; 4= good 5= excellent). Comment on each.		
	a) The functioning of the Steering group		
	b) Functioning of the Learning group		
	c) Functioning of the Advocacy WG		
	d) Overall engagement of members		
10.2	How significant was the role of the Patron in relation to the impact of the Consortium. Explain.		
10.3	How important was the annual conference? What was its impact?		
10.4	How effective was the communications strategy developed in 2008?		

11.	Future of Consortium		
11.1	Should the Consortium continue to function. Why or why not?		
	Given the resources and experience now in place, what is to prevent individual members from taking the work forward on an individual basis?		
11.2	If it continues, what should its objectives be:		
	a) More / less on organisational policies and programmes?		
	b) More / less capacity building?		
	c) More / less on advocacy? What issues?		
	d) New initiatives? Name them		

11.3	Do you think the structure should change?		
	a) Does the membership need to change? How?		
	b) Change to the Steering Group / chairing process?		
	c) Change to Working groups?		
	d) Change to working processes?		
11.4	Is there a continuing need to have a patron for the consortium? Explain		
11.5	How should the Consortium relate to other Networks / groups (e.g. Dóchas)?		
11.6	What is your organisation's current level of commitment in terms of finance, personnel?		
	Is your organisation prepared to invest more / less, in terms of		
	a) personnel / time		
	b) funding		

Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence

STRATEGIC PLAN June 2009-2012

**Mary Jennings
June, 2009**

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Annex 1. Three year Action Plan

Executive Summary

This document presents the three-year Strategic Plan (2009-2012) of the Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence (GBV). It is underpinned by a consultation process, a discussion paper and a one-day workshop with members. The document summaries progress of the Consortium to date, and sets out the Consortium's approach to delivering on its objectives.

The Consortium understands the term gender based violence as embracing a range of concepts that incorporate an analysis of gender inequality as a root cause of GBV. In essence it refers to any act that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual and psychological harm or suffering, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. It can encompass sexual violence, domestic violence, sex trafficking, harmful practices (such as female genital mutilation/cutting, honour killings, acid throwing), forced/early marriage, forced prostitution, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation, to name but a few.

From the outset in 2005, members have committed to, and have been working to fulfil six key recommendations:

7. Institutionalise GBV responses at organizational level
8. Support GBV Programming
9. Make Prevention and Protection Central to Programming
10. Improve Service Delivery: Respond to GBV
11. Engage with Civil Society
12. Coordinate and Collaborate with Partners/other agencies

The **Vision** of the Consortium is 'a world free of gender based violence'.

The Consortium's **Mission Statement** is: '*believing that GBV is a key manifestation of gender inequality, the Consortium works collectively to promote action in order to eliminate GBV in international development and humanitarian contexts*'.

The **objectives** for the three year period of this Strategic Plan are:

1. To ensure that actions to prevent and respond to GBV are visible and systematically addressed in the policies, procedures and programmes of all members agencies
2. To develop and strengthen skills and capacities of member organisations for more effective prevention of, and response to, GBV, at programme level.
3. To inform, effect and monitor policy implementation to improve actions on prevention of and response to GBV

The indicators of achievement and the activities to be undertaken that underpin these objectives are set out in Annex 1. Broadly, the focus will be on three key areas, institutionalising GBV concerns within the policies, systems and programmes of members; strengthening the capacity of staff for GBV related work; and advocacy on a limited number of strategic areas including the UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan, and on the costs of GBV.

Monitoring of progress will take place at three levels: firstly, this document sets out indicators against which progress can be measured for each of the above objectives; secondly, the Consortium will continue its practice of reporting annually to Mary Robinson, its Special Adviser, and to public accountability; thirdly, members are cognisant of the need to demonstrate impact at field level and on the lives of vulnerable people, and thus over the three years may undertake research on member projects that address GBV in a given country context.

Finally, the work of the Consortium will be supported by part-time administrative assistance in order to reduce and free time for members to focus on the technical aspects of its work.

1. Introduction

The Joint Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence, established in 2005, has a unique membership of fifteen different organizations⁵¹ with diverse mandates and operational approaches representing development, humanitarian and human rights organisations, Irish Aid and the Irish Defence Forces. These organisations have coalesced to tackle gender based violence in a coherent and strategic way in both conflict and non-conflict situations and share a common desire to protect and uphold the human rights of vulnerable people. In publishing a report, *Gender Based Violence, A Failure to Protect - A Challenge to Action* (Nov 2005) members committed to taking forward the report's recommendations and to report annually on progress to Mary Robinson, special adviser to the Consortium.

The origins of the Consortium centre on a few key events in 2004. An Amnesty International report on the crisis in Darfur highlighted the failures of the national authorities and the international community to respond to gender based violence (GBV). The then Irish Minister of State for Development Cooperation and Human Rights visited the region at about the same time and noted similar inadequacies, and committed to supporting an initiative on GBV in Darfur. The reality was, however, that few of the Irish NGOs operational on the ground in Darfur (or elsewhere) had a comparative advantage on working with GBV and thus, initially it was thought of linking with Irish organizations that had experience of working with survivors of GBV in Kosovo. However, an opportunity was recognised to shift the interest from what might have been a fairly typical response-type *project* focusing on reproductive health and counselling, to encompassing a broader and more *strategic approach* to addressing GBV in development programmes generally – whether in humanitarian, conflict, or more long term development contexts.

Since that time, little has changed to protect women in situations of conflict as evidenced by the on-going abuses in such places as Darfur and the Democratic Republic of Congo. However, the United Nations has been to the forefront in adopting a number of resolutions on GBV, and in 2008, the UN Secretary-General launched the Campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women, (2008-2015)⁵². Representing civil society (humanitarian, development and human rights organizations), government and Irish Peace Keepers, the work of the Consortium is directly relevant to achieving the UN objectives which require a coordinated approach at national and international level.

⁵¹ The members include Action Aid Ireland, Amnesty International, Child Fund Ireland, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide, the Defence Forces, Kimmage Manor (including Dtalk and KODE), GOAL, Irish Aid, Irish Red Cross, Oxfam Ireland, Plan Ireland, Self Help Africa, Trócaire and World Vision. The Irish Red Cross participates with the consortium solely within the parameters of its mandate to prevent and alleviate human suffering without discrimination, to protect human dignity, and to promote international humanitarian law and the protection provided therein. The Irish Red Cross is a member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and is guided by the seven Fundamental Principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

⁵²The UNiTE campaign advocates five outcomes including a) the adoption and enforcement of national laws to address and punish all forms of violence against women and girls, in line with international human rights standards; b) adoption and implementation of multi-sectoral national plans of action that emphasize prevention and that are adequately resourced; c) the establishment of data collection and analysis systems; d) the establishment of national and/or local campaigns and the engagement of a diverse range of civil society actors in preventing violence and in supporting women and girls who have been abused; and e) systematic efforts to address sexual violence in conflict situation.

Moreover, recent reforms of aid delivery, most notably the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) set out principles for reform of aid intended to “*increase the impact of aid... in reducing poverty and inequality, increasing growth, building capacity and accelerating the achievement of the MDGs*”. In terms of meeting these objectives, it is widely acknowledged that whilst gender inequalities are costly and undermine aid effectiveness and development impacts, gender equality and women’s empowerment, on the other hand, are powerful multipliers of development efforts⁵³. This Strategic Plan furthers the Paris Declaration *Guiding Principles* of ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results, and mutual accountability.

The Consortium is committed to Gender Equality. Placing GBV firmly within a human rights framework and highlighting that GBV is a violation of numerous human rights instruments has been central to the dialogue. The Consortium also considers GBV as a development issue affecting poverty, social development, the spread of HIV and AIDS, and economic growth, and that its elimination is crucial to the achievement of development objectives. GBV is considered a manifestation of inequalities between men and women within families, communities and under the State, and is prevalent in different forms worldwide, and is an obstacle to reaching many development goals, and the Millennium Development Goals.

There are high economic, social, and psychosocial costs associated with GBV. These include direct costs linked to responding to, or preventing violence; indirect costs linked to the pain and suffering associated with violence; economic multiplier effects, related to the macro-economic, labour market, and intergenerational productivity impacts; and social multiplier effects, reflecting the impact on interpersonal relations and quality of life. GBV also increases women’s and girls’ exposure to HIV&AIDS as violence decreases their ability to negotiate safe sex and increases their risk of exposure to forced and unprotected sex. Studies have shown that women who are HIV-positive tend to have a higher degree of exposure to violence, and women in violent situations experience heightened vulnerability to HIV transmission.

The Consortium understands the term gender based violence as embracing a range of concepts that incorporate an analysis of gender inequality as a root cause of GBV. In essence it refers to any act that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual and psychological harm or suffering, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. It can encompass sexual violence, domestic violence, sex trafficking, harmful practices (such as female genital mutilation/cutting, honour killings, acid throwing), forced/early

The Consortium’s focus on GBV has functioned as an important entry point to, and has given a renewed impetus to gender mainstreaming, and to the fundamental agenda of gender equality and power relationships between women and men within member organisations.

Member Commitments

⁵³ DAC *Guiding Principles For Aid Effectiveness, Gender Equality And Women’s Empowerment*, Dec 2008

All members of the Consortium are committed to the implementation of six key recommendations contained in *Gender Based Violence: a Failure to Protect A Challenge to Action*, as follows:

1. Institutionalise GBV responses at organizational level
2. Support GBV Programming
3. Make Prevention and Protection Central to Programming
4. Improve Service Delivery: Respond to GBV
5. Engage with Civil Society
6. Coordinate and Collaborate with Partners/other agencies

The process adopted by the Consortium is a combination of an annual Round Table discussion with Mary Robinson; a steering committee which meets regularly, and on which, all members are represented; working groups focused on achieving tangible outputs; learning workshops and high profile public events. An annual review process maintains focus and momentum.

The criteria⁵⁴ for membership of the Consortium are:

1. A commitment to action on GBV which implies allocating time, human and financial resources to the Consortium, as well as ensuring that the actions in the Guidance note on institutionalising GBV prevention and response are implemented within the Member's own organisation
2. Working in an international development context, registered in Ireland and concerned about GBV as well as having a gender focus within the organisation.
3. Member organisations commit to addressing GBV internally within their organisations and in their programming/with partners, as follows:
 - the approval/commitment by its council/board
 - good internal policies and an action plan in place e.g. codes of conduct, identify needs of the organisation in relation to GBV and requisite staff development on GBV
 - awareness/training/knowledge on addressing GBV for all staff
 - an annual review process, and GBV reflected in monitoring and evaluation
 - commitment to learning for/from partners and the documentation of this learning
 - commitment to policy and strategy coherence in the field with members of the Consortium and with other actors
 - commitment to addressing GBV in long-term development, humanitarian and transition situations.

2. Consortium's Progress to date

The Consortium has been very active and has undertaken a number of activities to tackle GBV both internally within organisations, and externally among stakeholders in three broad areas: a) institutionalising GBV concerns with organisational policies, systems and programmes; b) building capacity of members for GBV related work; and c) advocacy nationally and internationally. Some of the Consortium's activities to date are as follows:

1. A study of the institutional capacity of member organisations to respond to GBV with particular reference to complex conflict environments.

⁵⁴ These criteria were agreed by the Steering Committee at its meeting in March 2007.

2. The following publications:
 - a. A summary of the above study entitled "*Gender Based Violence: A Failure to Protect; A Challenge to Action*" (November 2005).
 - b. *Guidance Notes on the Institutionalisation of Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response within Agencies* (Nov 2006)
 - c. A report *Stepping up Ireland's response to women, peace and security: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, (Nov 2008)
 - d. *A report on the Conference on Women, Peace and Conflict* (Forthcoming)
3. The commissioning of studies on:
 - a. The links between Poverty and Gender Based Violence (forthcoming)
 - b. A confidential report on GBV in Darfur, Sudan (2006).
4. The hosting of a photographic exhibition 'Broken Bodies, Broken Dreams: Violence Against Women Exposed' hosted in Ireland in March 2006 and at later Consortium events in 2006 and 2007.
5. Organisation of a conference on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in November 2008.
6. Advocacy with the Conflict Resolution Unit in the Department of Foreign Affairs to spearhead a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325.
7. Presentations at, and participation in Irish and international conferences.
8. GBV firmly embedded within the policy frameworks and implementation strategies of organisations including the government White Paper on Irish Aid.
9. The building of staff capacity, and the facilitation of a large number of internal learning and practice seminars and presentations on GBV for member organisations, held throughout the period 2006-2009.
10. Learning events (June 2009, November 2007) for representatives from member and other invited organisations, and the hosting of public events with a diverse range of international speakers.
11. The launch of an updated website in December 2007 which includes a resource library of publications and resources on GBV.
12. Development of a Communications Strategy (forthcoming).

3. What the Consortium will do

This strategic plan is a key instrument for the Consortium to achieve its objectives, and is underpinned by a consultation process and a discussion paper. At a one day workshop with members, the following was agreed:

The **Vision** of the Consortium is 'a world free of gender based violence'.

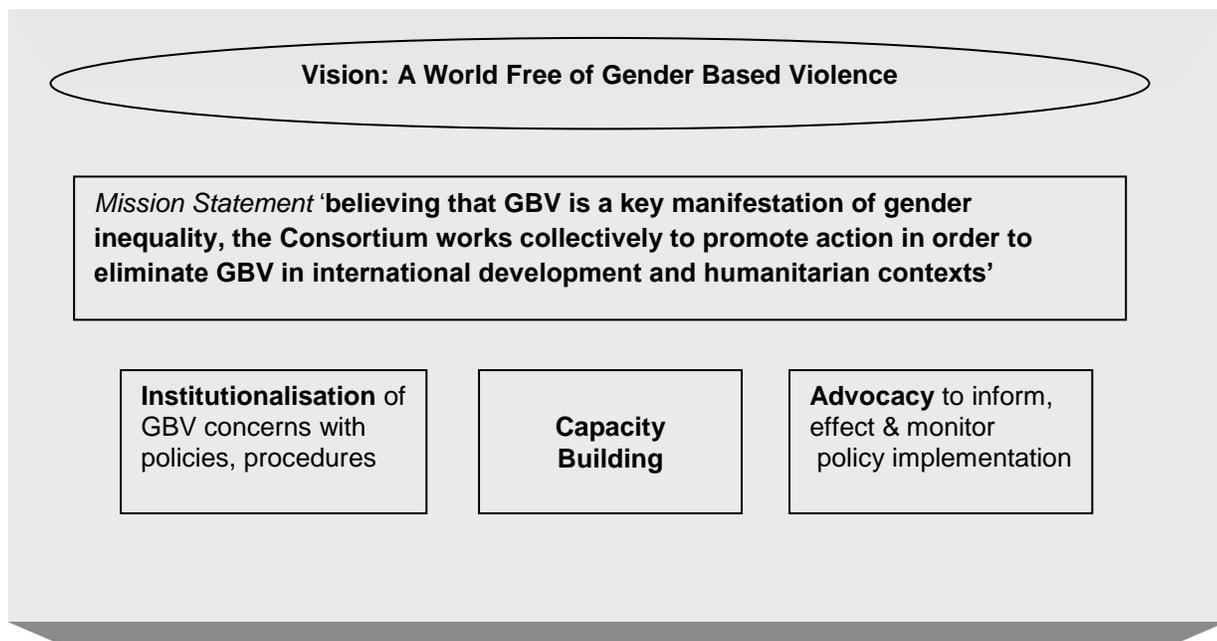
The **Mission Statement** is: 'believing that GBV is a key manifestation of gender inequality, the Consortium works collectively to promote action in order to eliminate GBV in international development and humanitarian contexts'.

The **objectives** for the three year period of this Strategic Plan are:

1. To ensure that actions to prevent and respond to GBV are visible and systematically addressed in the policies, procedures and programmes of all members agencies
2. To develop and strengthen skills and capacities of member organisations for more effective prevention of, and response to, GBV, at programme level.
3. To inform, effect and monitor policy implementation to improve actions on prevention of and response to GBV.

The indicators of achievement and the activities to be undertaken that underpin these objectives are set out in Table 1 while the main tenets of the plan are summarised in the following diagram:

Consortium Strategy for 2009-2012



Objective 1. *To ensure that actions to prevent and respond to GBV are visible and systematically addressed in the policies, procedures and programmes of all member agencies.*

Achieving this objective means that GBV concerns will be institutionalised in all aspects of member organisations' work. This includes a strong policy framework that addresses gender equality and GBV; standards of behaviour to be adopted by organisations and promoted among partners; and high level responsibility allocated within organisations for GBV. It will also necessitate that GBV and Gender Equality considerations are integrated at an operational level, including into systems and procedures for appraisals, programming design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and other learning events. By the end of the Strategic Plan, evidence of improved quality of response as a result of engagement in the Consortium will be provided.

At the commencement of the Strategic Plan, a stock take will be undertaken of progress of the Consortium to date; this will assist in assessing impact and will identify gaps to be filled which will subsequently be incorporated within annual plans.

Objective 2. *To develop and strengthen skills and capacities of member organisations for more effective prevention of, and response to, GBV, at programme level.*

The key focus in this objective is to strengthen the skills and capacities within member organisations at head office such that they ensure that GBV issues are addressed in their work. The starting point will be needs assessment to identify learning needs and to identify gaps in relation to programming, institutional issues, and in relation to achieving results focused programmes. The outcome of exercise will inform annual workplans, and specific learning milestones will be identified.

Impact on GBV at field level is critical but it is not feasible for the Consortium to be directly engaged in building staff and partner capacity at field level. In order to support positive preventive and response coordinated actions on GBV the Consortium will contribute to the development of a variety of learning mechanisms that can be taken up at field level. First amongst these will be a joint collaboration with Kimmage Open and Distance Education to develop a module to address humanitarian and development contexts and which is relevant for organisation staff, field workers and partners. The Consortium also wishes to extend its reach to non-member organisations and to domestic organisations working on GBV in Ireland, and in so doing will organise learning events.

It is envisaged that different members will have comparative advantage in different areas (e.g. sector, theme, geographical, or level of engagement). This comparative advantage will be harnessed in order to maximise the effectiveness of the work of the Consortium and different organisations may lead on certain areas in accordance with expertise, resources (as necessary).

Objective 3. *To inform, effect and monitor policy implementation to improve actions on prevention of and response to GBV*

The focus of this objective is furthering the advocacy agenda of the Consortium. The Consortium will respond to opportunities and emerging issues in advocacy as they appear over the period 2009-2011, while maintaining a priority focus on the main areas already identified and in which considerable work has already been done, for example UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Advocacy initiatives will give due consideration to the varying mandates of the members, and as is now established practice, will conduct research in order to inform evidence based advocacy, as necessary.

Research undertaken by the Consortium indicates that there is relatively little information available on the costs of GBV, and which does exist largely related to developed countries. In order that policy making will be informed by a knowledge and understanding of the costs of GBV, the Consortium will identify and address research gaps in a minimum of one key area related to GBV and poverty e.g. hunger/food security, growth.

Efforts will be made to develop a constituency of support to eliminate GBV. This may include networking with parliamentarians, and working with the European Union networks to encourage other countries to adopt a similar approach, and with media.

Finally, the Consortium has gained extensive experience of enabling very diverse organisations to collectively advocate on GBV issues, and will document and disseminate this experience.

Indicators and activities of each of the above three objectives are set out in Annex 1.

A similar three stage process will be adopted for each and includes a review of progress to date (stock take, mapping); identification or review of strategic priorities which will be expanded in annual action plans; and regular review and monitoring to adapt work plans, respond to new areas while at the same time maintaining the strategic focus.

4. Monitoring Progress

Monitoring the implementation of this strategic plan will take place at three levels:

- a) Indicators for achievement of the Consortium's three objectives are set out in Table 1 above.
- b) The Consortium will continue its annual practice of reporting progress to Mary Robinson, and to account publicly for its work.
- c) On a wider level, members are cognisant of the need to demonstrate **impact** in the field and on the lives of those most vulnerable. While this presents a complex challenge, the Consortium is committed to do so. This may include assessing impact of a sample of projects addressing GBV facilitated by member organisations working in a given country, and may be guided by academic institutions (Irish and local). A key focus would be the building of skills within the Consortium on methodology development and data collection, both quantitative and qualitative.

5. Communications

The Consortium's communications will be through the Chairperson, who with the agreement of the Steering Committee may in turn designate another member to support this work.

The Consortium places a very high value on the support provided by Mary Robinson to the Consortium. She will continue to be the special adviser and spokesperson for the Consortium. Members are committed to annual public accountability which has been in place for the past five years, and to sharing its experience.

The Consortium will seek to create a bank of press statements by government ministers and will post these and public communications, such as presentations, on the website.

The Consortium will maintain a website for a) the purposes of internal communications, b) as a focal point for field staff, and c) as a public advocacy and communications tool. The Consortium will update the resource library at the commencement of the Strategy and thereafter will maintain the website through administrative support.

Partnerships and Networking

In pursuance of its strategic objectives, the Consortium will explore opportunities for collaborative work with academic institutions that share common objectives. An important element of this will be to develop the skills and capacities of the staff of member organisations in methodologies for assessing impact.

There are numerous opportunities for the Consortium to network both internationally and nationally, including requests by groups to have closer links with the Consortium. However, taking cognisance of the demands of effective networking on time and resources, the Consortium will adopt a strategic approach, and will undertake a rapid mapping exercise to identify those networks that share common objectives and that will enable the Consortium to achieve the objectives set out in this Strategy. The Consortium will seek to strengthen its relationship with selected Irish organisations, such as Dochas, to enhance complementarity of objectives and work. The Consortium will continue networking to learn and share, and will keep in contact with other selected partners through its on-going work, including with domestic agencies.

6. Administration and Financial Planning

Administration

The work of the Consortium will be supported by a part-time administrator who will support it in event management, maintenance of the website, coordination of meetings, budget and finance, assistance with networking and correspondence, and other such work identified by the Steering Committee. This will facilitate members to focus their inputs on furthering the technical aspects of GBV work.

Financial Planning

Up to now the Consortium's work has been funded through the members in the form of an annual subscription paid by NGOs, and a matching of these funds by Irish Aid on behalf of Irish Aid and the Defence Forces. For the years 2010 and 2011, the Consortium will review alternative options to its current flat rate subscription to take account of the diverse resource base of members.

Members are committed in principle to seeking external funding to support *strategic* pieces of work that it may wish to undertake, and may seek to collaborate with funders who may share its objectives.

Joint Consortium on GBV Strategic Plan 3 year Action Plan

Objective	Indicators	Activities
<p>Obj 1. To ensure that actions to prevent and respond to GBV are visible and systematically addressed in the policies, procedures and programmes of all members' agencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies on GBV established or incorporated within policy framework. • Institutional GBV responses underpinned by strong gender equality policies and clearly articulated in the documents of the Consortium and the member organisations. • Standards of behaviour set & enforced for all staff. • Responsibility allocated within organisations at a high level for GBV. • GBV and Gender Equality considerations integrated into systems & procedures for appraisals, programming design, implementation & monitoring. • GBV visible e.g. at management & staff meetings, at regional & HQ level, in training events, and in reviews. • Evidence of co-ordinated learning on individual responses to GBV. • Evidence of improved quality of response as a result of engagement in the Consortium. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A stock take of where the Consortium has got to, since 2005 2. An identification of gaps that should be addressed. 3. Findings to be used as an advocacy tool to demonstrate the contribution of the Consortium (impact). 4. Effectively working together with civil society organisations including (inter/regional) national NGOs & human rights organisations.
<p>Obj 2. To develop & strengthen skills and capacities of member organisations for more effective prevention of, and response to, GBV, at programme level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and capacities of staff within member organisations built at head office (relevant to need). • Skills and capacities of organisation staff built at field level through a variety of learning mechanisms. • Experience shared with non-member organisations. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A rapid mapping exercise to identify comparative advantage/niche of organisations in relation to GBV; this would facilitate different organisations to take the lead on certain thematic/sector areas in relation to expertise, resources etc (as necessary). 2. In consultation with D-talk, carry out a learning needs assessment of HO and field staff. Focus to include: what learning people want to achieve a) in programmes, b) institutionally; c) what learning in relation to a results focused programme. The outcome of this would inform annual work plans, and specific learning milestones would be identified. 3. Deepening learning through participation in the content

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A completed piece of research at the end of the 3 years. 	<p>development of the KODE education module on GBV; module to address humanitarian and development contexts & suitable for organisation staff, field workers and partners</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. One 'public' learning event per year to reach audiences beyond the Consortium. 5. The might include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessing impact at field level e.g. through a sample of projects addressing GBV. This would be facilitated by member organisations working in a given country, and may be guided by academic institutions (Irish and local). • a key focus would be the building of skills within the Consortium on methodology development and data collection both quantitative and qualitative.
<p>Obj 3. To inform, effect and monitor policy implementation to improve actions on prevention of and response to GBV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the development of, and monitoring the implementation of a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 in keeping with the Consortium's report on Women, Peace and Conflict. • Knowledge and understanding of the costs of GBV informing policy- making in a minimum of one key area to be defined by end of 2009 growing out of the GBV & poverty study e.g. hunger/food security, growth. • Creation of a core constituency of support on GBV (MEPs, TDs, decision-makers) that will champion advocacy issues identified by the Consortium. • The Consortium's approach to advocacy updated and documented 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On-going participation in civil society consultative group on the NAP on UNSCR 1325, and monitoring work of CRU. This may include networking parliamentarians, the EU networks to encourage other countries to adopt a similar approach, and with media. 2. Taking forward the GBV and Poverty Study, either dissemination of findings, or identification of gaps that may need further research 3. Hosting an event on the costs of GBV linked to 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day March 2010. 4. Regular communications with parliamentarians and media 5. Networking with EU advocacy group to promote GBV issues at EU level. 6. Possible work in Year 3 to tie in with the Universal Peer Review on Ireland's Human Rights in 2011. 7. Review and possibly add to modify indicators depending on identification of new advocacy issues or opportunities.

<p>Communications and monitoring</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Accountability • Maintaining a website for a) the purposes of internal communications, b) as a focal point for field staff, and c) as a public advocacy and communications tool. • Tracking government policy in relation to GBV. • A resource library for reference for members both and HO and in the field. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual reporting to Mary Robinson, followed by press conference. 2. Recruitment of external support to maintain the website. 3. Creation of a bank of press statements by government ministers; these and public communications, such as presentations, to be posted on the website. 4. Updating of the resource library at the commencement of the Strategy and maintenance thereafter.
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