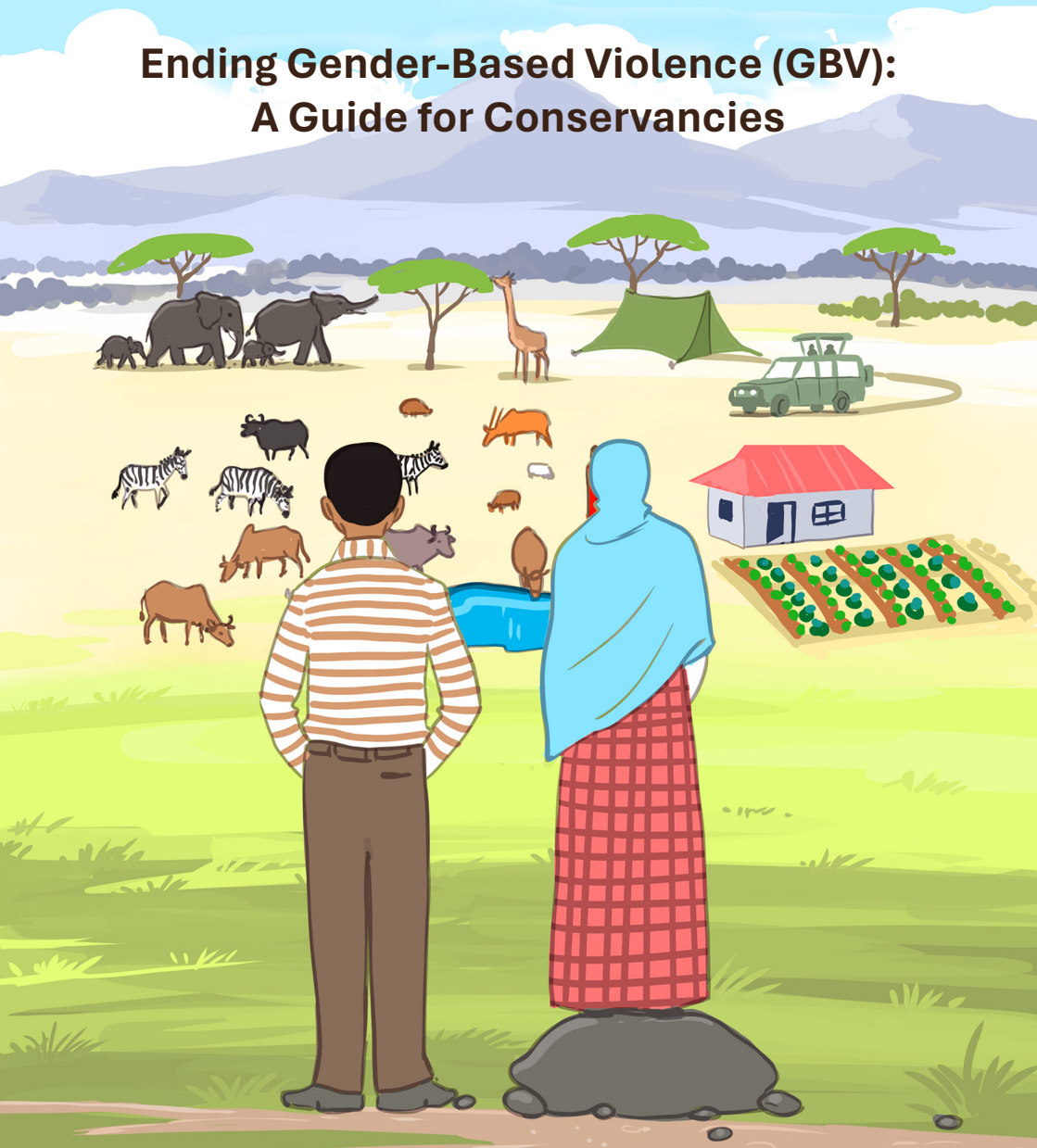
KWCA

Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association

Living nature, Living people

# Ending Gender-Based Violence (GBV): A Guide for Conservancies



Published in 2024 by

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KWCA is the national representative body and voice for conservancies in Kenya. KWCA works to catalyse the conservancy network in Kenya by convening, connecting, informing, and representing conservancies to enhance their growth and development. KWCA recognizes conservancies are a strong mechanism to promote wildlife stewardship and custodianship by local communities and landowners sharing land with wildlife. For more information about our work, please visit www.kwcakenya.com

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# What is Gender Based Violence (GBV)?

Gender Based Violence (GBV) is one of the most pervasive symptoms of gender inequality. GBV is **defined as violence that is directed at individuals because of their biological sex, gender, or perceived cultural norms of what it means to be a woman and man, girl and boy.** GBV includes many different expressions of violence. It is not just the physical or sexual violence and abuse that is most commonly associated with GBV.

GBV affects individuals and communities all over the world. While both women and men can and do experience GBV, it is most frequently perpetrated against women and girls. It is estimated that one in three women will experience GBV at some time in their lives.

# What are the causes of GBV?

Whilst the main cause of GBV is the person who commits the violence, the root cause of GBV is gender inequality and long-standing discriminatory social and gender norms. GBV reinforces gender inequality within a community. Acceptance of GBV is a harmful gender norm in itself, and GBV can be used to uphold other harmful gender norms. The norms, practices and beliefs that lead to women's marginalisation within communities and conservancies are both perpetuated by and contribute to GBV.

**Social norms** are the unwritten rules that guide behaviour within a society

**Gender norms** are those social norms that relate to what is believed to be appropriate for women and for men in terms of their different roles, behaviour and desired characteristics.

Rates of GBV are known to increase when communities are under stress, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic, drought, and due to environmental degradation. The actions and interventions of organisations, including conservancies, can also unintentionally lead to increased rates of GBV. The precise drivers of GBV in a location will be specific to that context, although there are commonalities across different locations and gender inequality is always the underlying cause.

# Why conservancies should address GBV

Conservancies should prioritise ending GBV for various reasons.

- GBV is a human rights violation prohibited under international humanitarian law and a barrier to civic, social, political, legal, and economic participation. By addressing GBV, conservancies not only adhere to international and Kenya laws and policies that promote human rights and gender equality but also contribute to the success and sustainability of conservancies.

- GBV disrupts the social fabric of communities by creating tensions and divisions among communities that make up conservancy membership and that live within and adjacent to conservancies. By addressing and ending gender-based violence, conservancies can promote social cohesion, and inclusion, among its community members.

- GBV leads to gender inequalities and marginalization of women, hindering women's meaningful participation in conservancy activities. When women fear for their safety or experience violence, they are less likely to engage in conservancy meetings and decision-making processes. Addressing gender-based violence can empower women to take on leadership roles within conservancies, contribute their perspectives and make informed decisions on various conservancy projects.

- Conservancy projects and activities can unintentionally cause or exacerbate conflicts over access to and control of natural resources within conservancies. When gender-based violence occurs, it can undermine efforts to manage resources sustainably and equitably. By addressing and preventing gender-based violence, conservancies can promote more effective resource management practices that benefit both people and the wildlife and equitable benefit-sharing practices that benefit both men and women.

- Gender-based violence is often rooted in harmful cultural norms and practices. By challenging these harmful norms and promoting gender equity and equality and respect for human rights, conservancies can contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage while creating a safer and more inclusive environment for all community members.

- Gender-based violence has significant impacts on the overall well-being of conservancy employees and communities. It can lead to physical and psychological harm, decrease productivity, and hinder economic development. By addressing gender-based violence conservancies promote a conducive work environment that is healthy, safe, and fair for both male and female employees

> ***GBV disrupts the social fabric of communities by creating tensions and divisions among communities that make up conservancy membership and that live within and adjacent to conservancies.***

**Some relevant laws and policies**

***Constitution of Kenya 2010***

The Bill of Rights in the constitution states that every person is entitled to fundamental rights and freedoms and women and men are equal before the law. It prohibits discriminatory customary practices and stipulates the elimination of sex discrimination in law, customs and practices.

***National Policy for Prevention and Response to Gender Based Violence 2014***

This policy provides a framework for effective prevention and response to GBV. The principal objective of the policy is to accelerate implementation of legislation, policies and programmes for prevention and response to GBV by state and non–state actors for the realisation of a society where men, women, boys and girls are free from all forms of violence.

Further information on relevant laws and policies is available in KWCA's gender guidelines.

# How does GBV look like in conservancies?

GBV exists everywhere, including in Kenya's conservancies. The following are some examples of GBV that have been observed or are thought to occur in conservancies. These examples might be more or less present in different landscapes and also occur outside of conservancies.

***Economic:*** Landownership in conservancies determines who can participate in and benefit from conservancy resources and benefits. women and youth are less likely to benefit equitably from conservancy benefits.

***Institutional:*** this includes harassment, discrimination or abuse perpetrated based on gender within a workplace or institution setting. Lack of gender awareness by conservancies could potentially promote a discriminatory and abusive organisational working culture. The exclusion of women from conservancy boards and other decision-making groups is not adequately addressed in conservancy policies and procedures. Annual General Meetings in some conservancies are volatile and voting may be by a show of hands, which can be intimidating for women and other marginalised groups.

***Physical:*** Beating or abuse leading to harm, injury or death. Projects that promote women's economic empowerment can cause tensions within a household and some women have reported physical abuse from their husbands who fear that their wives are becoming 'too empowered'.

***Psychological:*** Controlling behaviour, intimidation, harassment, bullying, verbal aggression, humiliation causing fear, stress, or shame. Efforts to promote women's leadership can lead to individual women being targeted with psychological or verbal abuse. Men who support women have reported being teased by their peers.

***Social:*** Social discrimination and marginalisation including harmful gender norms and cultural practices with negative impacts. Such norms and practices can normalise GBV, for example female genital mutilation and women's exclusion from decision-making.

***Sexual:*** Rape, assault, molestation and inappropriate touching, any actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

# What is safeguarding?

This guidance complements KWCA's guidance on safeguarding. Safeguarding is about protecting people, particularly those who are most vulnerable such as children or people living with disabilities, from abuse, exploitation or harm. This includes harm that may be caused by coming into contact with an organisation, as a result of the way its activities are designed and implemented or due to the conduct of its staff. Safeguarding tends to focus on protection from sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse. GBV is broader than sexual violence and considering GBV goes beyond the development and implementation of safeguarding, it means paying attention to GBV more broadly, including that which is already occurring in communities and which the actions of the conservancy might exacerbate.



***GBV is broader than sexual violence and considering GBV goes beyond the development and implementation of safeguarding, it means paying attention to GBV more broadly.***

# Approaches to addressing GBV

**GBV is addressed through 3 main approaches:**

1. GBV Risk Mitigation
2. GBV Prevention
3. GBV Response

| Approach | Aims | Focus | Should conservancies do this? |
|---|---|---|---|
| **GBV risk mitigation** | To reduce the risk of exposure to GBV | Considers the potential risks that may lead to or increase the risk of GBV for women and girls, and other groups who may be at risk of GBV, so that those risks can be reduced or mitigated. | Yes |
| **GBV prevention** | To stop GBV from occurring. | Addresses the root causes of GBV, specifically harmful gender and cultural norms. | Yes |
| **GBV response** | To address the effects of GBV after it has happened. | Provides specialist support to people who have experienced GBV. | No* |

***Although conservancies should not provide direct specialist support to GBV survivors, they should refer those individuals to organisations who can provide this support.***

# Actions conservancies can take to help mitigate and prevent GBV

The following are some actions that conservancies can take to ensure that conservancy activities do not contribute to or increase the risk of GBV (GBV mitigation) and to help prevent GBV within conservancies (GBV prevention)

**Important!**

GBV response should only be undertaken by specialists. Conservancy staff are not trained to - and therefore should not respond directly to - individual cases of GBV. Instead, they should know what GBV is, how conservancy activities and decisions should not increase the risk of or lead directly to GBV, and what to do if they observe or are informed of cases of GBV. Staff must also not directly cause GBV through their own actions.

### Promote the participation of women and men in conservancies, including planning and decision making

Both men and women should participate in conservancy activities and decision making. Care must be taken when engaging with different groups of people to ensure that conservancy actions do not reinforce inequality and GBV. Women especially should be consulted on whether and how conservancy actions have done or might impact them negatively including potentially contributing to an increase in GBV, and how to address this. Further information and ideas on ways to consult with and increase the participation of women, and other marginalised groups, is available in KWCA's gender guidelines.

### Work with men as well as women

Gender is about both women and men and GBV affects both women and girls, and men and boys. Working towards gender equality, including addressing GBV, should therefore involve working with men as well as with women. Men can affect women in many ways, both positively and negatively, including their choices, their freedom, their mobility outside the home, their ability to pursue opportunities, and their influence in decision making in the household, community and conservancy.

Actions to address GBV should therefore include men as well as women. Only by working with men and women can we bring about changes in attitudes, behaviours, and practices that contribute to GBV. Further information on engaging men on gender issues, including women's empowerment, can be found in KWCA's gender guidelines.

**Explore and implement actions and initiatives that specifically aim to address harmful gender norms**

Seek to understand, build awareness of and challenge the gender norms, attitudes and practices that allow GBV to take place. This could be through promoting relationships between women and men that are mutually respectful, as well as supporting women to engage in decision making and take up leadership positions within the conservancy and in their households, although care must be taken to ensure that women will are not be at a higher risk of GBV as a result of this. It could also include challenging policies and practices that explicitly or implicitly discriminate against women, or other marginalised groups, and revising or developing and promoting gender equitable conservancy policies and practices. Further information and ideas can be found in KWCA's gender guidelines.

**Link with gender and GBV experts and organisations**

Identify and contact individuals and organisations who focus on gender and GBV issues within your region. Ask them for information to help increase understanding of the type and prevalence of GBV in the conservancy and surrounding areas, and seek advice from them on how conservancy activities could unintentionally be contributing to GBV as well as what the conservancy can do to mitigate and prevent GBV (including seeking their input into any actions suggested in this document). If resources allow, ask them to provide training for conservancy staff and board members, and to raise awareness on GBV with conservancy and/or community members.

**Gather information and learn about GBV**

Gather information about GBV, including the types and prevalence of GBV, in Kenya and in your region. This will mainly be data that other organisations have collected, for example from government or NGO surveys, or the Demographic and Health Survey (available at https://dhsprogram.com/). This can be complemented with more qualitative information from women's organisations and specialist gender and GBV focused organisations. Try to gain a deeper understanding of the specific

gender norms and drivers of GBV in the conservancy, the most frequent form of GBV, those who are most at risk of GBV, and local groups and services available for those who experience GBV.

**Carry out a risk analysis and plan how to mitigate risks**

Having learned about GBV in the local context, carry out a risk analysis to identify the ways in which the conservancy may be inadvertently contributing to GBV. Use this information to plan how the conservancy can avoid or reduce these risks (including through the actions suggested in this guidance). Ideally, this risk analysis and planning should be carried out with the support of local women's rights groups or another appropriate organisation. It should be monitored and updated so that new risks can be identified and addressed. An example risk analysis and planning template is available at Annex 1.

**Create and maintain a referral list of specialist support**

Create, or obtain and update, a referral list so that conservancy staff and officials can advise people on where to seek help if they witness or experience GBV. A referral list is a list of organisations or services that provide specialist support and advice. It can include formal organisations and services (such as hospitals or medical centres, NGOs working on GBV, legal offices, and government offices including the police), as well as informal ones (such as community organisations especially women's groups, and religious leaders or places of worship). Local government offices or NGOs that specialise in GBV may be able to share an existing referral list. An example template for a referral list is at Annex 2. The referral list should be kept updated and must be easily accessible to all those who may need it.

**Establish a simple tracking system**

Establish a simple anonymous tracking system to document GBV incidences that conservancy staff and officials hear about and observe. This could be as simple as a notebook where they can record their name, the date, location, whether a specific event or activity was taking place, and what they have seen or heard, but without including any identifying information (such as the names of the people believed to be involved). This will enable the conservancy to track whether any spikes in incidences of GBV are linked to conservancy events or activities. If it will be useful for them, the data can be shared with the relevant government office and other appropriate organisations.

**Develop guidance for staff**

Develop simple GBV guidance or a protocol for conservancy staff and officials so that they are aware of their responsibilities and know what they should do and why, for example how to record and refer cases of GBV to the appropriate person or organisation. This should also include what they should not do, for example, at no point should staff ask direct questions to people about their personal experiences of GBV or ask people about specific cases of GBV. As noted above, dealing with cases of GBV requires specialist training and well-meaning interventions could cause more harm, so conservancies must refer cases to the appropriate person or organisation.

**Develop other relevant policies and plans**

The conservancy could develop other relevant policies and plans, such as a gender policy and action plan, or a safeguarding policy with associated guidance, and codes of conduct, to guide staff and help prevent harm, harassment, bullying, and abuse. Further information on safeguarding can be found in KWCA's safeguarding guidance.

**Train conservancy board, staff and members**

Seek funding or other support to train conservancy board and staff, and the wider membership if possible  on GBV concepts including what it is and what causes it, national laws and policies, and their responsibilities in helping to reduce GBV within the conservancy and their own community and households. Board and staff members also need to understand any policies and procedures the conservancy has in place to mitigate and prevent GBV, and their roles and responsibilities in adhering to these.

**Allocate a responsible staff member**

All board members and staff are responsible for their own behaviour and for following conservancy policies and procedures, but it might be appropriate to task one staff member who maintains any systems (templates, records, guidance and so on) to act as focal point for liaising with specialist organisations including referring cases of GBV to the relevant gender organisations or government offices.

# Additional resources and support

This document presents some ideas on what conservancies can do to mitigate and help prevent GBV. If your conservancy requires support to think through how to implement the actions presented here, or in the documents below, KWCA's gender officer can provide further advice and support.

The content of this document was drawn from KWCA's experience and from the following resources.

KWCA (2023) Towards Achieving Gender Equity: A Guide for Conservancies
*https://kwcakenya.com/download/towards-achieving-gender-equity-in-kenya-a-guide-for-wildlife-conservancies-2/*

CARE (2014) Guidance for Gender Based Violence (GBV) Monitoring and Mitigation within Non-GBV Focused Sectoral Programming
*https://www.care.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/CARE-GBV-ME-Guidance_0.pdf*

CARE (2022) Gender Based Violence Guidance for Development Programmes
*https://www.care.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/GBV-Guidance_final-external_Jul2022.pdf*

Conservation International (2020) Gender Based Violence: Recognising and Responding to Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Community Conservation
*https://www.conservation.org/docs/default-source/publication-pdfs/guidelines_gender-based-violence.pdf*

# Annexes

Annex 1: Example risk analysis and planning template
Annex 2: Example referral list template

# Annex 1: Example risk analysis and planning template

Note that the examples in this table are suggestions only. The categories, risks, and measures to address them should be specific to the conservancy. More rows should be added as appropriate.

| Risk category or project/conservancy activity | Potential GBV risk | People most at risk | Actions to address risk |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Women's leadership** | Men unhappy with the idea of women being leaders – tease, harass and abuse women who vie for leadership or who are nominated | Women board members, women who vie for leadership positions | Sensitisation sessions with men re importance and benefits of women leaders<br><br>Discuss further with KWCA |
| **Women's economic empowerment** | Husbands feel threatened by women earning income and becoming 'too empowered' resulting in physical and verbal abuse | Women participating in economic empowerment activities | Sensitisation sessions with men re benefits of women's economic empowerment<br><br>Talk to women participants about how the programme can help address this<br><br>Get an expert to facilitate dialogues with men and women |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **AGMs** | AGMs are very volatile and noisy – women feel uncomfortable attending | Women, youth (males and females) | Develop ground rules for AGMs and circulate them amongst members. Remove people who don't stick to the rules from the AGM. |
| **Voting** | Voting by show of hands is off-putting to those who are pressured to vote in certain ways or who want to keep their vote secret | Women and others whose husbands/family members tell them to vote in a certain way | Change the way votes are cast (e.g. by secret ballot) |
| **Rangers** | Calming an agitated community or group of individuals who are irate due to a predation incident is a risky affair some may take advantage of the situation and pose attack on female rangers<br><br>Due to cultural norms, female conservancy rangers may experience some level of GBV from their male counterparts through teases, harassment or abuse while undertaking wildlife conservation duties | Female rangers experience more risk in these situations | Conduct trainings on social safeguards and encourage employers to adopt social safeguards policies in their organisations e.g. safeguarding policies, grievance and redress mechanisms, HR policies etc and conduct regular trainings to the conservancy ranger workforce, on social protection and conflict management |

# Annex 2: Example referral list template

| Organisation | Type of services / support offered (including target group/s) | Best contact person | Contact information |
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| Organisation | Type of services / support offered (including target group/s) | Best contact person | Contact information |
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