



**ITU
MUN**

UNWOMAN

STUDY GUIDE

- **Focusing on accountability for perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict**
- **Improving Women's Rights in the African Region; Focusing on Education and Employment**

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Letter from the Secretary-General

Most esteemed participants of ITUMUN24,

I, as the Secretary General of ITUMUN24, welcome you all to the 7th edition of Istanbul Technical University Model United Nations. It is an honor and a pleasure to be able to present to you what we have been preparing for months and dreaming for years. My team has worked tirelessly to bring the best you have ever seen, starting with our organization to our academics.

Our objective is to facilitate proficient and elevated diplomatic deliberations, fostering valuable and constructive solutions throughout the four-day duration of ITUMUN, enriched by the collective contributions of all participants. As a delegate, your journey begins here, with the study guide prepared by our dedicated members; your most honorable chairboard.

I advise you to read this study guide thoroughly and expand your research on different perspectives; focusing on your allocated country. It is essential to bear in mind that each nation and every perspective holds significance if you are adequately prepared to engage with the agenda at hand.

You have my best wishes for success and enriching discussions during these four days of enjoyment. I eagerly anticipate witnessing the valuable contributions you'll make to our conference.

Best regards,

Zehra Akçay

Secretary General of ITUMUN24



Letter from the Committee Board

As being the President Chair and Deputy Chair of this esteemed committee, it is with great pleasure that we write to you today. First and foremost, we want to express our gratitude for the dedication and enthusiasm you have shown as delegates thus far. Your commitment to tackling issues related to gender equality and women empowerment is commendable, and we are confident that your contributions will help shape meaningful resolutions. The study guide that has been meticulously prepared for the UNWOMEN Committee covers a range of critical topics that deserve our utmost attention.

As we delve into the topics at hand, let us always prioritise inclusivity, diversity, and the well-being of all women. We must aim to create an environment where every voice is heard and where we work towards breaking down barriers that hinder progress. By empathetic understanding the unique challenges faced by women around the world, we can develop comprehensive and informed policy recommendations. Throughout the conference, we encourage all of you to actively participate in discussions and collaborate with one another.

Remember, this committee is a platform for you to voice your ideas and ultimately bring about positive change.

Preparation is the key to success in any MUN conference. We encourage you all to thoroughly research your respective countries' positions on the agenda items. Understand the unique cultural, social, and political context that shapes your nation's stance, and be ready to articulate your positions with clarity and conviction.

As we engage in this committee session, remember that collaboration and compromise are integral to the success of our resolutions. We encourage you all to approach this conference with an open mind, ready to learn from one another and broaden your horizons. Building lasting connections and friendships with fellow delegates is a rewarding aspect of participating in Model United Nations conferences, and we urge you to seize this opportunity to foster meaningful relationships.

In closing, we wish you all the best in your preparations and eagerly await the productive discussions and outcomes that will emerge from our committee. Let us work together to inspire positive change and empower women across the globe.

We look forward to meeting each one of you at the conference. Let us approach the UN WOMEN Committee with a commitment to making a difference. If you need any assistance before the conference, please feel free to contact with us via;

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2. Introduction to the committee.



UN Women is the United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities:

- Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems
- Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy
- All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence
- Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action

UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality, and in all deliberations and agreements linked to the 2030 Agenda. The entity works to position gender equality as fundamental to the Sustainable Development Goals, and a more inclusive world.

Gender equality is not only a basic human right, but its achievement has enormous socio-economic ramifications. Empowering women fuels thriving economies, spurring productivity and growth. Yet gender inequalities remain deeply entrenched in every society. Women lack access to decent work and face occupational segregation and gender wage gaps. They are too often denied access to basic education and health care. Women in all parts of the world suffer violence and discrimination. They are under-represented in political and economic decision-making processes.

Over many decades, the United Nations has made significant progress in advancing gender equality, including through landmark agreements such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Working for the empowerment and rights of women and girls globally, UN Women's main roles are:

- To support inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms.
- To help Member States implement these standards, standing ready to provide suitable technical and financial support to those countries that request it, and to forge effective partnerships with civil society.
- To lead and coordinate the UN system's work on gender equality, as well as promote accountability, including through regular monitoring of system-wide progress



3. Key Words

Sexual Violence in Conflict: Sexual Violence in conflict has been defined in the Secretary General's annual report 2021/312 as "rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage, and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict.

Immunity: In terms of politics, the state of being immune from the repercussions and responsibilities of any crimes committed to a given degree. It must be noted that perpetrators of sexual violence frequently experience near-complete

impunity due to the general breakdown of law and order that occurs throughout warfare and relocation, as well as the government's failure to prosecute and convict the perpetrators.

Impunity: Similarly, to immunity, the state of being immune from any conceivable legal consequences of committing crimes. The distinction between immunity and impunity in this context is that immunity refers to the condition of being insusceptible to the repercussions, exempt from obligation imposed by others and legally granted freedom from prosecution whereas impunity refers to the lack of punishment or retribution.

Gender-Based Barriers: Societal norms and discrimination may create barriers for survivors, particularly women, in reporting and seeking justice for sexual violence.

Tribunal: A tribunal, generally, is any person or institution with authority to judge, adjudicate on, or determine claims or disputes

Accountability Measures: Mechanisms and processes to hold individuals and entities responsible for committing sexual violence in conflict.

International Criminal Court (ICC): The ICC serves as a global forum for prosecuting individuals responsible for sexual violence in conflict as part of crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Specialized Tribunals: Ad hoc or permanent tribunals, specific to certain conflicts, play a crucial role in prosecuting perpetrators of sexual violence and ensuring accountability.

National Prosecutions: Countries have a responsibility to prosecute individuals within their borders for sexual violence in conflict, contributing to accountability on a domestic level.

Jurisdiction: Jurisdiction is a sovereign power's authority and obligation to regulate and legislate with the objective of dispensing justice via means such as the interpretation and application of the law by judicial institutions.

Conviction: The verdict of a criminal prosecution in which the defendant is found guilty of the offence accused.

Rwandan Genocide: Genocidal mass killings that occurred in Rwanda in 1994.

UN Security Council Resolution 1820: UN resolution addressing sexual violence in conflict, recognizing it as a tactic of war.

Survivor-Centric Approaches: Approaches prioritizing the well-being, dignity, and rights of survivors of sexual violence.

National Legislation and Prosecutions: Development and implementation of laws at the national level to prosecute individuals for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

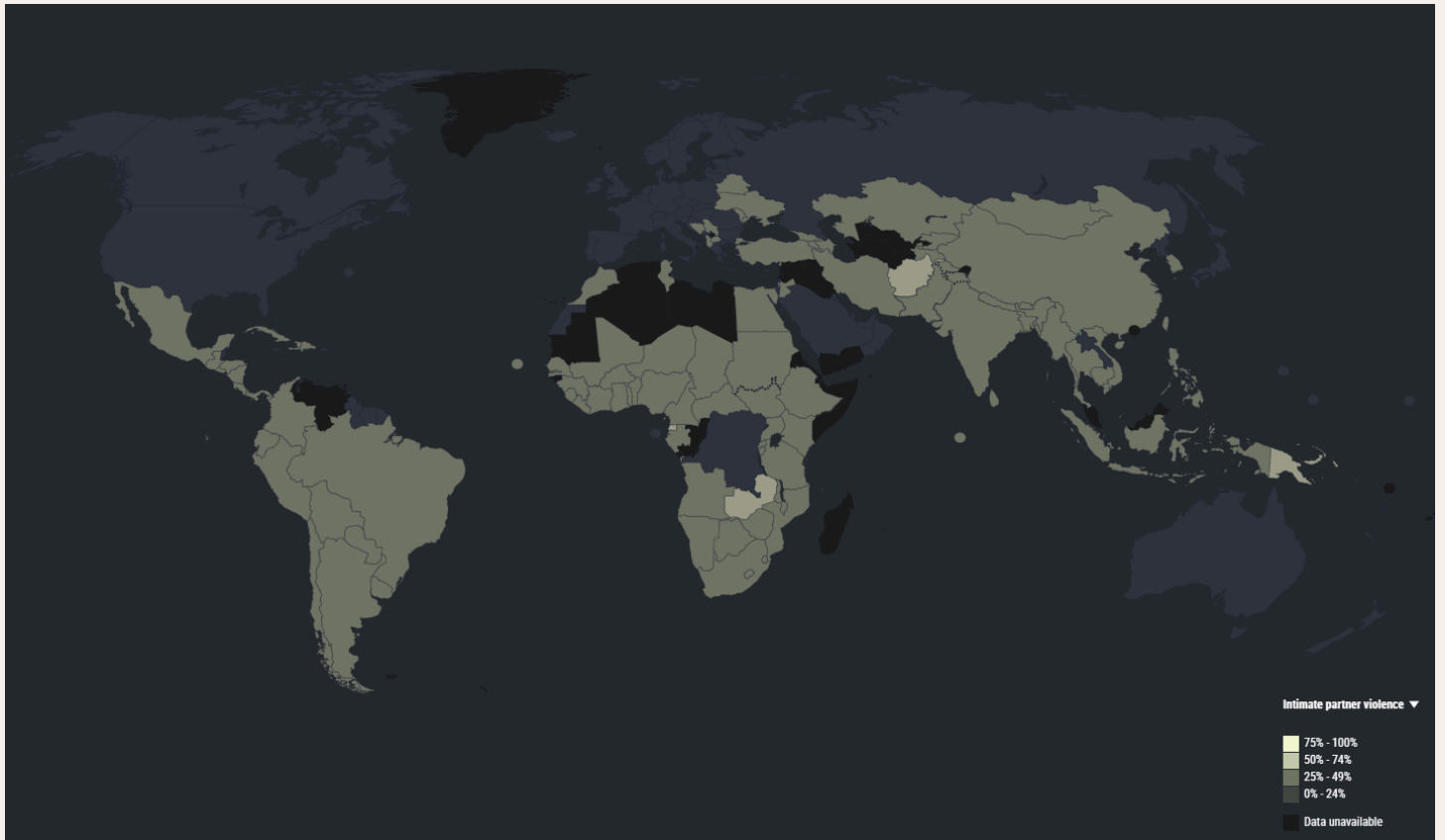
4. Introduction to the Agenda Item A

Focused overview A: Accountability for perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict

Sexual violence in conflict is a deep violation of human rights, inflicting profound trauma on individuals and unraveling the social fabric of affected communities. Historical contexts and contemporary instances illustrate the pervasive nature of this issue, emphasizing the urgent need for international efforts to comprehensively address and combat sexual violence in conflict zones. UN-Women is dedicated to eradicating gender-based violence (GBV) in emergency and post-disaster recovery situations, recognizing it as a severe violation of human rights. The term GBV was introduced in 1993 through the adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW) by the General

Assembly. GBV encompasses gender-based motivated violence, disproportionately affecting women and girls, manifesting in physical, mental, or sexual abuses. Forms of abuse and exploitation include rape, attempted rape, sexual exploitation, forced early marriage, domestic violence, marital rape, trafficking, and female genital mutilation. The repercussions of GBV include sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies, emotional and psychological consequences such as guilt and shame, and social consequences like isolation and rejection.

The physical consequences of GBV can result in long-term damage, as women who have experienced violence are statistically twice as likely to suffer from depression, almost twice as likely to have alcohol use disorders, and 16% more likely to give birth to a low-weight baby. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), approximately 35% of women globally have encountered physical and/or sexual violence, with regional variations ranging from 16.3% in East Asia to 65.64% in Central sub-Saharan Africa. This prevalence is exacerbated by a rising number of disasters, heightened unpredictability due to climate change, prolonged conflicts, and increasingly complex emergency situations.



(The prevalence of intimate partner violence around the world, UNFPA)

- [4.1 Link between Sexual violence and Conflicts](#)

CRSV is deliberate and brutal and intended to humiliate and/or punish individuals and their communities. It causes long-term trauma to individuals and their communities. It may be used as a weapon of war and/or tactic of terrorism (see the following section). Although the scale may vary, CRSV rarely occurs in isolation and is often perpetrated alongside other acts of violence such as killings, child recruitment into armed groups, looting, or destruction of property. For sexual violence to be considered as conflict-related, a direct or indirect link to the conflict or situation of concern is necessary (i.e., temporal, geographical, and/or causal link). The section below outlines key principles to consider when assessing whether sexual violence is conflict-related and provides examples. United Nations Field Mission personnel should read the definitions provided in this handbook considering the specific context in which they serve.

- [4.2 International and Regional Framework](#)

The main global rule for dealing with violence against women is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948. This rule focuses on a few key articles, like 1, 2, 3, and 5, which talk about everyone's right to respect, freedom, and safety. It also says no one should be treated badly or inhumanely because of their gender. Another important set of rules is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), made in 1979. People often call it the "bill of rights for women." This set of rules is like a promise that countries make to treat women fairly and stop discrimination based on gender. It gives suggestions to countries on how to do this and is a treaty that countries agree to follow.

The effort to stop violence against women is also a part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was agreed upon in 2015. One of the specific goals, known as SDG 5, has a target (Target 2) that aims to get rid of all kinds of violence against all women and girls, whether it happens in public or private places, including things like trafficking and different forms of exploitation. Another goal, SDG 16, is about peace, justice, and strong institutions. The first target of SDG 16 asks the international community to work together to decrease all kinds of violence, including physical, sexual, and psychological violence. This means that countries around the world are making a promise to take actions to make sure that women and girls are safe from all forms of violence.

- [4.3 Different approaches and Community Empowerment](#)

The aftermath of sexual violence in conflict necessitates an approach that not only holds perpetrators accountable but also empowers survivors and communities. This section delves into the vital role of survivor-centred approaches, underscoring the importance of comprehensive support services, access to justice, and reparations. By showcasing successful models that prioritize survivor empowerment, the section argues for a holistic strategy that addresses the multifaceted dimensions of sexual violence. Through this lens, it advocates for initiatives that foster resilience within affected communities and amplify the voices of survivors.

- 4.4 Challenges in Combating Sexual Violence

- 4.4.1 Lack of worldwide attention and case underreporting

Despite several resolutions it was only a little more than a decade ago in 2008 that the United Nations (UN) first acknowledged sexual violence as a war strategy and commenced adopting methods to combat and react to such violence on a worldwide scale. This delay and lack of worldwide attention are the result of a number of long-held ideas regarding rape, sexual assault, and consent, as well as an understanding of conflict-related sexual violence as inevitable. Furthermore, escalating worldwide attention and public indignation over rape in wartime have not resulted in thorough investigation and conviction of offenders, a vital component of any real endeavor to curb such violence. Unequivocally, conflict-related sexual violence is underreported by victims/survivors and family members, but at the same time national legal systems and institutions fail to prioritize and adequately resource preparedness and response to CRSV. Due to underreporting, CRSV is sometimes undetectable, rendering it impossible to determine the scope of its transmission, even when it is prevalent. The conditions under which it occurs, as well as the identity and motivations of offenders, are often obscure, further hindering any preventative efforts

- 4.4.2 Lack of health infrastructure:

In many conflict-affected communities, a lack of health infrastructure precludes and limits victims/survivors from accessing medical treatments, particularly sexual, reproductive, and mental health care. CRSV has substantial and life-altering implications for victims/survivors, and a dearth of access to resources makes it more difficult for them to seek the assistance necessary to restore their lives. As such, it is a significant impediment to prosecuting and overall addressing CRSV.

- **4.4.3 Lack of governmental engagement:**

Inadequate aid for survivors of wartime sexual assault reflects a lack of government concern for the harm caused on women and girls during conflict and a lack of commitment to reintegrating rape survivors into society. In conflict-affected areas, a lack of state authority and a lack of reaction by national legal systems to CRSV occurrences may potentially contribute to the growth of an impunity culture. There may be little or no public trust in the formal justice system, as well as opinions that the police and courts are biased, discriminating, and/or that members of these institutions are themselves violent. Victims/survivors of CRSV often confront immeasurable barriers to justice and are hence hesitant to file reports against their assailants. Conventional, informal, and community-based methods may be insufficient to prosecute sexual assault offences in accordance with international human rights and legal standards, and guidelines.

- **4.4.4 Lack of health infrastructure**

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5. Accountability Measures: An Overview

Accountability measures constitute a critical foundation in addressing sexual violence in conflict, offering a multifaceted response to deter atrocities and deliver justice for survivors. The historical evolution of accountability mechanisms includes pivotal moments, such as the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2002. Countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina, actively pursuing national prosecutions, showcase potential efficacy, while challenges persist in conflict-ridden nations like Afghanistan. The dynamic nature of accountability mechanisms necessitates an exploration of international cooperation and individual countries' commitment to pursuing justice comprehensively.

- [5.1 International Criminal Court \(ICC\): A Global Mechanism for Accountability](#)

The International Criminal Court (ICC), founded in 2002, stands as a global beacon for accountability, particularly in addressing sexual violence in conflict. Historical examples, such as the ICC's involvement in cases from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan, underscore its significance in the pursuit of justice on a global scale. Rwanda's post-genocide experience serves as a poignant example of the need for an international mechanism to address such heinous crimes. However, challenges persist, including the reluctance of powerful states to recognize ICC jurisdiction, thus highlighting the global disparities in embracing accountability for sexual violence in conflict.

- [5.2 Specialised Tribunals: Tailoring Justice to Conflict Contexts](#)

Specialized tribunals play a crucial role in addressing sexual violence, offering context-specific justice tailored to the complexities of conflict situations. Historical insights from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) showcase their effectiveness in setting precedents and addressing challenges. Ongoing conflicts, exemplified by Syria, underscore the need for dynamic mechanisms to effectively address sexual violence. The experiences of countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina further illuminate the potential and challenges associated with specialised tribunals, emphasising the nuanced nature of justice in conflict contexts.

- [5.3 National Prosecutions: The Role of Domestic Justice Systems](#)

National prosecutions emerge as pivotal in addressing sexual violence within a country's legal system, offering a direct approach to accountability. Countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina, actively pursuing domestic prosecutions, exemplify potential efficacy, while challenges persist in nations like Afghanistan, where conflict exacerbates the complexities of pursuing justice. The experiences of the Democratic Republic of Congo underscore the imperative of strengthening domestic justice systems. A nuanced exploration of national prosecutions offers insights into global variations in accountability for perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict, emphasizing the intricate relationship between domestic efforts and international justice. The historical evolution of accountability mechanisms demonstrates a growing recognition of their paramount importance in addressing sexual violence in conflict.

The ICC, specialised tribunals, and national prosecutions collectively form a comprehensive strategy seeking to deter future crimes and secure justice for survivors. Varied global experiences, ranging from Germany to Syria, offer valuable insights into the successes and challenges associated with accountability measures. This study guide aims to equip delegates with a nuanced understanding, fostering a collective commitment to eradicating sexual violence and championing a world where accountability prevails over impunity.

6. History of Events.

- 6.1 Bosnian War (1992-1995)

The Bosnian War, fueled by ethnic and religious tensions, witnessed widespread atrocities, including sexual violence. The conflict emerged as Yugoslavia disintegrated, and Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence. One of the most significant challenges was the perpetration of sexual violence as a tool of war, leading to a culture of impunity. The biggest problem was the lack of accountability for perpetrators, allowing them to evade justice. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) was established in 1993 to address war crimes, including sexual violence. The ICTY played a crucial role in prosecuting individuals responsible for such crimes, marking a turning point in establishing accountability and setting a precedent for future international responses.

- 6.2 Rwandan Genocide (1994):

The Rwandan Genocide, rooted in longstanding ethnic tensions between the Hutu and Tutsi populations, led to mass killings and widespread sexual violence. The conflict escalated rapidly, resulting in the deaths of nearly a million people. A significant challenge was the delay in addressing sexual violence and holding perpetrators accountable, contributing to a culture of impunity. The lack of reporting due to cultural norms and fear of reprisals exacerbated the problem. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) was established in response to the genocide, addressing war crimes, crimes against humanity, and sexual violence. The tribunal played a crucial role in holding individuals accountable for their actions during the genocide, contributing to justice and reconciliation efforts.

- 6.3 Syrian Conflict (Ongoing)

The ongoing Syrian conflict, which began in 2011 as a result of political unrest and government crackdowns, has been marked by widespread human rights abuses, including sexual violence. One of the biggest problems has been the persistent culture of impunity, with limited international accountability for perpetrators of sexual violence. The complexities of the conflict, including the absence of a specialised tribunal and geopolitical challenges, have hindered effective responses. A lack of reporting on sexual violence, fueled by fear and insecurity, further complicates the issue. Efforts to address these challenges remain ongoing, with the need for stronger international mechanisms and global cooperation to ensure accountability for perpetrators.

- 6.4 Sweden's Initiatives (Exemplary):

In contrast to conflict-ridden scenarios, Sweden's initiatives to address sexual violence stand as an exemplary model. Sweden actively combats the lack of reporting and works to dismantle barriers survivors face. The nation has implemented comprehensive measures, including prioritising survivor confidentiality, providing accessible reporting avenues, and dismantling social barriers. Sweden's proactive approach sets an example for addressing the historical challenge of underreporting on sexual violence in conflict. By fostering a supportive environment for survivors and implementing robust reporting mechanisms, Sweden showcases a successful model for creating a culture of accountability and support within a nation.



Event	6.1 Effects on Accountability Measures
Bosnian War (1992-1995)	The Bosnian War marked a turning point with the establishment of the ICTY in 1993, playing a significant role in prosecuting individuals responsible for sexual violence during the conflict. The tribunal set a precedent for addressing such crimes at the international level.
Rwandan Genocide (1994)	The international response to the Rwandan Genocide led to the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), reinforcing the commitment to holding perpetrators accountable for sexual violence. The tribunal played a crucial role in addressing crimes committed during the genocide.
Syrian Conflict (Ongoing)	The Syrian conflict highlights the challenges in ensuring accountability measures, with the absence of a specialised tribunal and geopolitical complexities hindering effective international responses. Global efforts are needed to strengthen accountability mechanisms both at national and international levels.
Sweden's Initiatives (Exemplary)	Sweden's initiatives showcase a proactive stance in addressing sexual violence in conflict. Comprehensive measures, including prioritising survivor confidentiality and providing accessible avenues for reporting, contribute to dismantling barriers and setting an example for other nations in enhancing accountability measures.

Event	6.2 Impunity
Bosnian War (1992-1995)	The Bosnian War exemplifies impunity with widespread sexual violence going unprosecuted despite the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Perpetrators often evaded justice, contributing to a culture of silence and complicity.
Rwandan Genocide (1994)	The Rwandan Genocide witnessed challenges in addressing sexual violence, allowing many perpetrators to escape justice initially. The delayed response and limited accountability contributed to a culture of impunity, hindering survivors' pursuit of justice.
Syrian Conflict (Ongoing)	In the ongoing conflict in Syria, impunity for sexual violence remains a critical concern. Limited international accountability, the absence of a specialized tribunal, and geopolitical complexities have hindered effective responses, allowing many perpetrators of sexual violence to evade justice.
Sweden's Initiatives (Exemplary)	Sweden's comprehensive measures to encourage reporting and support survivors stand as an exemplary response. By prioritising survivor confidentiality, providing accessible avenues for reporting, and dismantling social barriers, Sweden has set an example for addressing the historical challenge of underreporting.

Event	6.2 Lack of Reporting
Bosnian War (1992-1995)	In the early stages of the Bosnian War, survivors faced significant barriers to reporting sexual violence, influenced by social stigma, fear of reprisals, and the absence of mechanisms ensuring survivor confidentiality. The underreporting contributed to an environment where perpetrators operated with impunity.
Rwandan Genocide (1994)	In the aftermath of the Rwandan Genocide, the lack of reporting on sexual violence was influenced by cultural norms, societal pressure, and fear of retribution. The underreporting during this period contributed to an incomplete understanding of the scale and nature of sexual violence.
Syrian Conflict (Ongoing)	The lack of reporting on sexual violence in Syria has been exacerbated by the pervasive climate of fear and insecurity. Survivors are reluctant to report incidents due to the complexities of the conflict, including the presence of multiple armed groups and shifting territorial control.
Sweden's Initiatives (Exemplary)	Sweden's initiatives to encourage reporting and support survivors exemplify a proactive approach. By prioritizing survivor confidentiality, providing accessible reporting avenues, and dismantling social barriers, Sweden has set a standard for addressing the lack of reporting on sexual violence in conflict.

7. Major Parties Involved and Their Views.

- 7.1 The International Criminal Court (ICC),

Established in 2002, The **International Criminal Court (ICC)** stands as a pivotal institution in prosecuting individuals for sexual violence in conflict. Member states contribute both politically and financially to the ICC's endeavours. However, differing views exist among member states regarding the ICC's jurisdiction and effectiveness in addressing sexual violence. Notably, the United States has expressed reservations, impacting the court's universal acceptance.

- [7.2 The United Nations \(UN\) and its agencies,](#)

Including **UN Women** and **UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict**, actively engage in combating sexual violence. UN Security Council resolutions, such as Resolution 1820, underscore the imperative to address this issue. Nevertheless, challenges persist, ranging from the lack of enforcement mechanisms to varying levels of commitment among member states. The effectiveness of UN initiatives is often shaped by the political will of its member states.

- [7.3 Non-Governmental Organisations \(NGOs\)](#)

Amnesty International and **Human Rights Watch** play a pivotal role in documenting instances of sexual violence, advocating against it, and providing support to survivors. These organisations contribute significantly to shaping the narrative around accountability. However, challenges such as restricted access to conflict zones, funding limitations, and potential political influence may impact their operations.

- [7.4 The European Union \(EU\)](#)

The **EU** has taken steps to address sexual violence, integrating it into its Common Security and Defense Policy. Member states within the EU may exhibit divergent views and priorities, creating challenges in achieving a unified stance on accountability measures.

- [7.5 Various national governments](#)

National Governments have implemented initiatives to address sexual violence in conflict. Germany, for instance, has been proactive in pursuing justice for crimes committed during conflicts, serving as an exemplar in the realm of accountability. However, challenges persist, with varying levels of commitment among nations, political considerations, and resource constraints influencing the effectiveness of national efforts.

- [7.6 Civil society and grassroots movements](#)

The Women's March Global, play a vital role in mobilising public opinion and advocating for policy changes. Civil society organisations contribute to holding governments

accountable and ensuring survivor-centric approaches. Challenges include navigating diverse opinions within civil society and overcoming potential political repression.

- 7.7 Specialised tribunals and ad hoc courts,

The **International Criminal Tribunal** for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), have been instrumental in addressing sexual violence. Challenges encompass limited resources, the time-consuming nature of trials, and varying degrees of cooperation from states involved.

- 7.8 Regional organisations,

The African Union, address sexual violence through regional conventions and initiatives. Challenges arise from differing levels of commitment and the need for robust enforcement mechanisms within regional contexts. **Academic and research institutions** contribute valuable insights and policy recommendations to the discourse on sexual violence. Collaboration with governments, NGOs, and international bodies enhances understanding and informs interventions. However, challenges include limited resources and potential biases in research.

Furthermore **Media and public opinion** play a crucial role in shaping government responses to sexual violence. Media coverage and public awareness campaigns contribute to holding perpetrators accountable. Challenges include potential sensationalism, misinformation, and the necessity for sustained public engagement.

8. Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue.

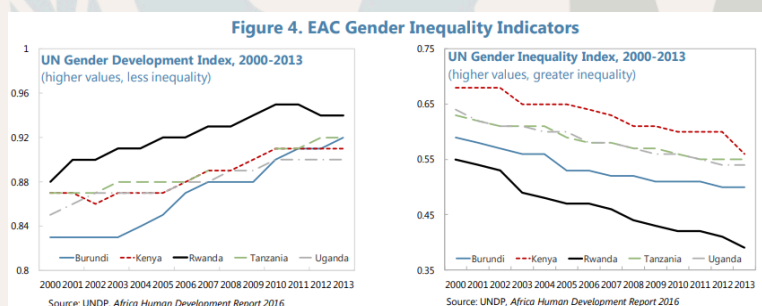
- 8.1 Educational and Awareness Campaigns:

A notable example of a country successfully implementing educational and awareness campaigns to address sexual violence in conflict is Rwanda. In the aftermath of the Rwandan Genocide in 1994, where sexual violence was pervasive, the government embarked on an extensive educational initiative. This included community workshops, school programs, and media campaigns aimed at raising awareness about the consequences of sexual violence and promoting gender equality. The result has been a significant shift in societal attitudes, with

increased recognition of the impact of sexual violence and a commitment to preventing its recurrence. While challenges remain, including the need for ongoing efforts and addressing deep-rooted cultural norms, Rwanda's success highlights the transformative potential of comprehensive educational and awareness strategies.

- **8.2 Conflict Prevention Strategies:**

Norway, a country that has effectively employed conflict prevention strategies to mitigate the risk of sexual violence in conflict. Norway has been actively involved in diplomatic efforts, peacebuilding initiatives, and international mediation. By contributing to peace processes, supporting conflict resolution mechanisms, and promoting inclusive governance, Norway has played a role in preventing the outbreak of conflicts where sexual violence might occur. The positive outcomes include a lower likelihood of conflict escalation and a reduction in incidents of sexual violence within the regions where Norway has been engaged. The success of Norway's approach is attributed to its commitment to diplomatic solutions, international cooperation, and addressing underlying causes of conflicts.



(Gender Inequality Indicators, From the article *“Staying the role model: Advancing Gender Equality in Rwanda, International Monetary Fund)*

- **8.3 National Legislation and Prosecutions:**

Germany has employed national legislation and prosecutions to combat sexual violence in conflict where Germany has enacted laws that explicitly address war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, allowing for the prosecution of individuals involved in sexual violence during conflicts. The country has actively pursued justice by conducting trials against perpetrators, sending a clear message that such crimes will not be tolerated. The success of Germany's approach is attributed to a robust legal framework, political will to prosecute offenders, and a commitment to survivor protection.

9. Introduction to the Agenda Item: Improving Women's Rights in the African Region; Focusing on Education and Employment

- 9.1 Overview of women's rights in the African region,

In the African region, advancements in women's rights have materialised through legislative reforms, expanded educational access, and increased political representation. Many countries



have passed laws relating to employment discrimination, reproductive rights, and gender-based violence. Economic empowerment initiatives, including microfinance programs and vocational training, underscore concerted efforts to uplift women economically.

Nevertheless, longstanding challenges persist, including violence against women, culturally ingrained

discriminatory practices such as child marriage, and persistent gaps in economic opportunities.

- 9.2 Historical Context

Historical context is crucial for understanding the evolution of women's rights in Africa.

Women's rights in the African region have evolved within a complex historical context.

Before colonialism, many African societies exhibited diverse gender roles where women held significant economic, social, and political positions. However, the colonial period, spanning from the late 19th to mid-20th centuries, imposed European legal systems and cultural norms, often erasing traditional roles and diminishing the status of women. The struggle for independence in the mid-20th century became a pivotal moment for women's rights movements across Africa, with women actively contributing to anti-colonial movements and advocating for their rights in the post-independence era.

Post-independence, African nations adopted legal frameworks acknowledging women's rights, influenced by international developments such as the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Despite progress, challenges persist. Deeply rooted cultural practices, gender-based violence, and economic disparities continue to hinder the full realisation of women's rights. In the latter part of the 20th century and into the 21st century, women across Africa have remained resilient advocates, pushing for legal reforms, access to education, and increased political participation. For instance, Rwanda holds a significant place in African women's fight in getting a foothold in politics, by being the only country in the world where women hold more than half the seats in the parliament, as of 2019.

- **9.3 Significance of education and employment focus**

Ann Cotton, co-chair of the UN Girls Education Initiative, identifies education for girls as one of the best solutions to reversing the relentless trend of poverty and disease devastating large portions of sub-Saharan Africa. Improving women's education and employment contributes significantly to economic growth and sustainable development. When women are educated and employed, they actively participate in the economy, which leads to higher levels of productivity and innovation. Moreover, educated and employed women often play key roles in community development. They are more likely to invest in their children's education, healthcare, and overall well-being, thereby creating a positive ripple effect. By investing in women's education, not only are individual lives improved, but entire communities benefit from the ripple effects of increased literacy, better health outcomes, and enhanced economic opportunities.

The employment of young women can also improve development directly through economic growth and productivity, and indirectly via increased agency and lower fertility. By engaging in economically productive activities, young women who have time and want to work contribute directly to the economy. Similarly, the misallocation of high-ability women into low-return occupations may reduce economic growth

10. Women's Education and Employment

• 10.1 Current Situation in Women's Education in African Region

Despite progress, women still account for nearly two-thirds of the 763 million adults without basic literacy skills according to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Poverty, geographical isolation, minority status, disability, early marriage and pregnancy, gender-based violence, and traditional attitudes about the status and role of women and men, are among the many obstacles that prevent children and youth from fulfilling their right to participate in, complete and benefit from education.

In terms of the African region, many African countries have implemented policies to promote gender equality in education, resulting in increased participation of girls in schools. Efforts have also been made to address cultural barriers and discriminatory practices that historically limited girls' access to education. According to The World Bank, the literacy rate of adult females in Sub-Saharan Africa was 46.8% in 2000, whereas it increased to 58.8% by 2019. Despite the promising changes, UNESCO reported in 2022, that across the region of



Sub-Saharan Africa, 9.5 million girls between the ages of about 6 and 11 don't have any chance of going to school at all, compared to 5 million boys.

The World Bank expects an increase in girls secondary school gross enrollment from 42% to 57% percent by 2030 and help shift socio-cultural norms that

negatively impact girls in West and Central Africa.

In terms of higher education, The Higher Education Authority of Rockview University issued a report in 2020 on The State of The Higher Education System in Africa. It stated that of 1,681 academic staff in public universities, only 429 are women, accounting for approximately 25.5% of the total staff.

- 10.2 Current Situation in Women's Employment in the African Region

The current situation of women's employment in Africa is characterised by a complex interplay of progress and challenges. On one hand, there have been notable advancements in certain sectors, with increasing numbers of women participating in the formal workforce, especially in urban areas. This shift is partly attributable to efforts aimed at fostering gender inclusivity in employment, including affirmative action measures, skill development programs, and initiatives to dismantle discriminatory practices.

However, substantial challenges persist, impeding the full realisation of women's economic potential across the continent. Gender wage gaps prevail, reflecting disparities in pay between men and women performing similar roles. Occupational segregation remains a concern, with women often concentrated in low-paying and less prestigious sectors. Moreover, cultural norms and societal expectations regarding women's roles and responsibilities can limit their opportunities for career advancement, especially in male-dominated fields. Challenges related to work-life balance, inadequate family support structures, and limited access to affordable childcare facilities further contribute to the complexities faced by women in the workforce.

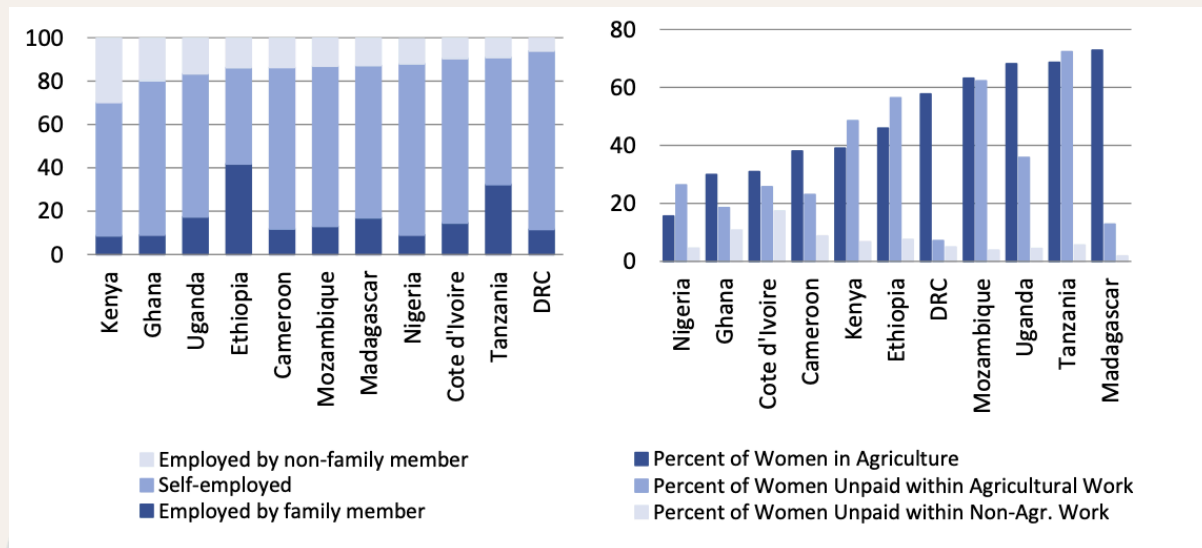
Women's participation in labour in the African region is examined in a field-based sense. As for the agricultural field, a study made in six Sub-Saharan countries estimates that the average female labour share in crop production at 40 percent. It is slightly above 50 percent in Malawi, Tanzania, and Uganda, and substantially lower in Nigeria (%37), Ethiopia (%29), and Niger (%24). There are no systematic differences across crops and activities, but female labour shares tend to be higher in households where women own a larger share of the land and when they are more educated.

While the agriculture field holds a relatively equal environment for women, African women now advocate their right to be in more prestigious fields. Even though, compared to the last



century, they are more likely to be a part of other fields of work, women are less likely to be employed than men. Even when employed, they often do not work to their full potential: part-time employment is much more of a reality for women than it is for men.

Waste of potential is not the only challenge African women face. The International Labor Organisation (ILO) classifies self-employment and working for families as “vulnerable employment” due to its informal nature. Women are more likely to be in terms of vulnerable employment (61% for men and 74% for women), and less likely to be employees or employers (31.6% for men and 20.6% for women) (ILO, 2014).



(Vulnerable Employment, Agriculture, and Unpaid Work by women in select countries)

- 10.3 Barriers Faced in Resolving the Issue
- 10.3.1. Barriers faced in overcoming the issue of education

Resolving the issue of education and employment for African women involves overcoming several barriers rooted in social, economic, and cultural factors. Key barriers faced in overcoming this issue are:

Poverty: In Africa, a large number of families struggle to pay for the expenses of sending their kids to school, including school fees. Even in areas where there is free education and parents don't have to pay school fees, it is always costly for them to pay for additional costs such as school materials, uniforms, and transportation.

Negative social and cultural norms: Girls' access to school is restricted by cultural barriers such as early marriage and pregnancy, gender-based

discrimination, and traditional gender roles. Women Africa, a NGO issuing women's rights in Africa, claims that in historical context, colonial era and Europe's gift of patriarchal structures affected African women's place in society.

Conflicts and Climate Crises: For African countries hugely impacted by the conflicts and climate disasters are likely to translate into the end of schooling for girls and contributing to the rates of girls being married off young.

Unfriendly school-environments for girls; In most schools, girls face with violence and prejudice, and girls' needs for safety, hygiene, and sanitation—such as access to clean water, menstruation products, and safe toilets—are not met. The absence of gender-responsive teaching strategies, which leads to learning gaps between genders, also prevents females from completing their education.

- 10.3.2. Barriers faced in overcoming the issue of employment

Resolving the issue of education and employment for African women involves overcoming several barriers rooted in social, economic, and cultural factors. Key barriers faced in overcoming this issue are:

Gender Bias and Discrimination: African women often face significant gender bias and discrimination during the job application process. Preconceived judgements about their capabilities, stereotypes, and biased recruitment practices can limit their opportunities. Traditional gender roles, societal pressure to prioritise family over career, and cultural biases can create barriers to professional advancement. Breaking through these barriers requires addressing unconscious biases, promoting gender equality, and advocating for inclusive hiring practices that are tangible and practical.

Limited Access to Education and Skills Training: Education and skills training play crucial roles in securing employment opportunities. Unfortunately, African women often encounter limited access to quality education and vocational training, hindering their ability to compete on an equal footing. Addressing this challenge necessitates investing in educational infrastructure, expanding scholarship programs, and providing vocational training tailored to women's needs.

Inadequate Representation in Decision-Making Roles: The underrepresentation of African women in decision-making roles within organisations and governments is a persistent challenge. This lack of representation diminishes their voices and influence in shaping policies and practices that impact their careers. Promoting diversity and inclusivity at all levels, implementing gender quotas, and advocating for equal opportunities can help rectify this imbalance.

Safety and Security Concerns: In certain regions, African women face unique safety and security concerns when seeking employment. This may include issues such as harassment, gender-based violence, and unsafe working conditions. Establishing strict anti-harassment policies, providing safe working environments, and creating awareness campaigns are necessary steps towards ensuring the well-being of women in the workplace.

11. Major Parties Involved

- 11.1 African Union (AU)

Established in 2002, African Union is an organisation actively combating the inequalities that African women face in terms of education and employment. It has established the **African Union Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights**, which actively addresses gender-related issues. The AU has adopted key instruments, including the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (**Maputo Protocol**), emphasising the importance of women's rights. Through various initiatives, the AU works to promote gender equality, eliminate discrimination, and empower women economically and socially. Also in the educational and labour contexts African Union

established **African Union International Centre for the Education of Girls and Women in Africa (AU/CIEFFA)** as a specialised institution.

- **11.2 The United Nations (UN) and Its Agencies**

The United Nations and its agencies play a crucial role in promoting women's education and employment in Africa. Agencies such as UN Women and UNESCO work collaboratively with African governments and organisations to implement initiatives that enhance access to quality education for women and girls. UN programs focus on dismantling barriers to employment and education through skill development, entrepreneurship support, and advocating for policies that ensure gender equality in the workplace.

- **11.3 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)**

There are many non-governmental organisations working on resolving African women's social, economic and cultural issues. **Global Fund for Women, CARE International and Woman for Woman International** are global non-governmental organisations who actively work on African women's issues.

- **11.4 Regional Women's Rights Organizations**

African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) and Women's Initiative for Self-Empowerment (WISE) are significant non-governmental organisations based in Africa that are currently combating educational and economic inequalities on women.

12. Case Studies on Regional Measures:

- **12.1 Akilah Institute in Rwanda:**

The Akilah Institute is a women's college in Rwanda that focuses on empowering young women through education and preparing them for careers in high-growth sectors. The institute offers market-relevant courses, ensuring graduates are well-equipped for employment in fields such as hospitality, technology, and business.

- 12.2 Tech Women in Nigeria:

TechWomen, a professional exchange program in Nigeria, connects women in the technology sector. It facilitates mentorship, networking, and skill development, contributing to the empowerment and advancement of women in STEM fields.

- 12.3 Girls' Education in Malawi - CAMFED:

The Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) has been successful in promoting girls' education in Malawi. By addressing financial barriers, providing mentorship, and engaging communities, CAMFED has significantly increased girls' enrollment and completion rates in schools.

- 12.4 Ethiopian Women in Coffee:

In Ethiopia, women's empowerment in the coffee business has advanced significantly thanks to the Ethiopian Women in Coffee (EWiC) project. Through training, this program gives women in coffee-producing areas the chance to advance their knowledge of coffee processing, entrepreneurship, and farming.

13. Further Readings and Questions to Be Addressed

<https://blogs.worldbank.org/education/empowering-adolescent-girls-africa-through-education>

<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/862701468201600335/pdf/328170AFR0Girls1ed1AFHDno73.pdf>

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/publication/what-works-to-narrow-gender-gaps-and-empower-women-in-sub-saharan-africa>

How can international cooperation be enhanced to ensure the effectiveness of accountability measures for sexual violence in conflict?

What role can education and awareness play in preventing sexual violence during armed conflicts?

How can the international community support national prosecutions for sexual violence in conflict?

With which matters can the United Nations solve the educational issues that are being faced by African women ?