

ANNEX A: Methodology

Scoping review of the literature

STUDY DESIGN

The study design is a scoping review of the literature on GBV in HEIs in Africa and the Middle East. The research draws from Arksey & O'Malley's (2005) five-stage approach to conducting scoping reviews to identify research gaps in the existing literature: (1) identifying the research question, (2) identifying relevant studies, (3) study selection, (4) charting the data and (5) collating, summarising and reporting the results.¹

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The scoping review was guided by the following research questions and sub-questions.

What is the current state of the evidence on GBV in HEIs in Africa and the Middle East?

- What are the types, characteristics, prevalence, and correlates of GBV in HEIs in Africa and the Middle East?
- What are the consequences of GBV in HEIs in Africa and the Middle East, including physical, psychosocial, educational, and professional impacts?
- Which types of GBV response and prevention interventions have been developed and implemented in HEIs in Africa and the Middle East and with what effect?

What are the key gaps in the evidence related to GBV in HEIs in Africa and the Middle East that need to be addressed to advance the field?

IDENTIFYING RELEVANT STUDIES

Scope

Geographical scope. The scoping review focused on GBV in HEIs in Africa and the Middle East. These regions were selected during the proposal phase because this is where the literature was expected to be most and least concentrated. Further, during the inception phase for the research, the types of literature across these two regions appeared to stretch across key domains, with a significant amount of work done in sub-Saharan Africa on prevalence, correlates and impacts of GBV in HEIs, and, more recently, work on interventions, and an emerging literature in MENA on social norms and policies. While SVRI's work is concentrated predominantly in LMICs, the systematic review covered all countries in Africa and the Middle East, including HICs in the Middle East (e.g., Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates etc), in order to deliver a comprehensive regional review.

Types of GBV. The systematic review focused on six key types of GBV in HEIs. These encompass both offline and online forms of GBV.

¹ Arksey H. & O'Malley L. (2005) Scoping studies: towards a methodological framework. International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 8(1): 19-32.

- IPV and dating violence where this type of violence occurs within HEI settings or impacts on higher education outcomes
- Non-partner sexual violence (NPSV), including rape and other forms of sexual assault
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual exploitation and abuse, including 'sex for grades'
- Bullying and peer victimisation
- Gender microaggressions.

Language scope. The scoping review was conducted in four languages: Arabic, English, French and Portuguese.

Time scope: The scoping review covered evidence produced between January 2010 and December 2023.

Data sources

The scoping review drew from two types of data sources.

1. The first type of data is peer-reviewed publications sourced from electronic databases used to search for papers in all four languages.² In addition, specific language databases were used to search for literature in Arabic³ and French⁴. No Portuguese language databases containing evidence in Africa were identified.⁵
2. The second type of data is grey literature sourced from organisational websites and online digital repositories.⁶

Search strategy

The search strategy contained three levels:

1. Keywords associated with different types of GBV;⁷
2. Keywords associated with geographical regions and countries included in the review (Africa and the Middle East); and
3. Keywords associated with higher education institutions and settings.

Keywords were established by testing different combinations of keywords in PubMed and identifying (a) key words most commonly used within the criteria and parameters for the scoping review, and (b) keywords that were likely to bring up articles that did not correspond to the criteria and parameters (e.g., the keyword "Africa" also brought up articles focused on "African Americans").

Keywords were combined into a phrase including Boolean (AND, OR, NOT) terms, as outlined below in English, French, Portuguese and Arabic. The search terms were applied within title and abstract fields rather than all fields, the latter which would significantly increase the number of hits that did not correspond to the criteria and parameters.

English search strategy

(IPV OR "intimate partner violence" OR "dating violence" OR rape OR "sexual violence" OR "sexual abuse" OR "sexual assault" OR "sexual misconduct" OR GBV OR "gender-based violence" OR SGBV OR "violence against women" OR "non-partner sexual violence" OR "sexual harassment" OR "sex for grades" OR "sexual exploitation" OR bullying OR "peer victimisation" OR microaggression OR safeguarding)*
AND

² African Journals Online (AJOL), Cochrane, EBSCO, Elsevier (Science Direct), Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), PubMed, Sabinet African Journals, SAGE Journals, Taylor & Francis and Wiley.

³ Cairn and Persée.

⁴ Mandumah and EKB Journals.

⁵ Only online databases contain evidence from Brazil were identified.

⁶ Including the SVRI website, UNESCO Digital Library, UN Women Africa Digital Library, UN Women Arab States Digital Library, the WHO Institutional Repository for Information Sharing (IRIS) and other webpages.

⁷ The search term 'safeguarding' was added to this level to ensure that we captured interventions and policies related to safeguarding against GBV.

(MENA OR "Middle East" OR Africa OR Benin OR "Burkina Faso" OR Burundi OR "Central African Republic" OR Chad OR Congo OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Gambia OR Guinea OR "Guinea-Bissau" OR Liberia OR Madagascar OR Malawi OR Mozambique OR Niger OR Rwanda OR "Sierra Leone" OR "South Africa" OR Somalia OR "Sao Tome" OR "São Tomé" OR Sudan OR Tanzania OR Togo OR Uganda OR Yemen OR Angola OR "Cabo Verde" OR Cameroon OR Comoros OR "Côte d'Ivoire" OR Djibouti OR Egypt OR Eswatini OR Ghana OR Kenya OR Lesotho OR Mauritania OR Morocco OR Nigeria OR Senegal OR Tunisia OR Palestine OR "West Bank" OR Gaza OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe OR Algeria OR Gabon OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jordan OR Lebanon OR Libya OR Maldives OR Mauritius OR Namibia OR Bahrain OR Kuwait OR Oman OR Qatar OR "Saudi Arabia" OR "United Arab Emirates" OR UAE)

AND

("higher education" OR "tertiary education" OR university OR college OR "Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics" OR STEM OR "tertiary institution")

NOT

("African American")

French search strategy

(VPI OR "violence conjugale" OR "violence dans les fréquentations" OR viol OR "violence sexuelle" OR "abus sexuel" OR "agression sexuelle" OR "inconduite sexuelle" OR VSS OR "violence sexuelle et sexiste" OR "violence basée sur le genre") OR VBG OR "violence contre les femmes" OR "violence sexuelle non-partenaire" OR "harcèlement sexuel" OR "sexe pour avoir de bonnes notes" OR "points sexuellement transmissibles" OR "sexe pour les notes" OR "exploitation sexuelle" OR intimidation OU "victimisation par les pairs" OR microagression* OU protection)

AND

(MENA OR "Moyen-Orient" OR Afrique OR Bénin OR "Burkina Faso" OR Burundi OR "République Centrafricaine" OR Tchad OR Congo OR Érythrée OR Éthiopie OR Gambie OR Guinée OR "Guinée-Bissau" OR Libéria OR Madagascar OR Malawi OR Mozambique OR Niger OR Rwanda OR "Sierra Leone" OR "Afrique du Sud" OR Somalie OR "Sao Tomé" OR "São Tomé" OR Soudan OR Tanzanie OR Togo OR Ouganda OR Yémen OR Angola OR "Cabo Verde" OR Cameroun OR Comores OR "Côte d'Ivoire" OR ivoir* OR Djibouti OR Egypte OR Eswatini OR Ghana OR Kenya OR Lesotho OR Mauritanie OR Maroc OR Nigéria OR Sénégal OR Tunisie OR Palestine OR Cisjordanie OR Gaza OR Zambie OR Zimbabwe OR Algérie OR Gabon OR Iran OR Irak OR Jordanie OR Liban OR Libye OR Maldives OR Maurice OR Namibie OR Bahreïn OR Koweït OR Oman OR Qatar OR "Arabie Saoudite" OR "Émirats arabes unis" OR EAU)

AND

("éducation tertiaire" OR "enseignement tertiaire" OR "enseignement supérieur" OR université OR collège OR "Sciences, technologies, ingénierie et mathématiques" OR STEM OR "établissement d'enseignement supérieur" OR universitaire)

NOT

("Afro-américain")

Portuguese search strategy

("Violência por parceiro íntimo" OR VPI OR "violência no namoro" OR violação OR "violência sexual" OR "abuso sexual" OR "agressão sexual" OR "comportamento sexual impróprio" OR "violência baseada no gênero" OR VBG OR "violência sexual e baseada no gênero" OR VSBG OR "violência contra a mulher" OR "violência sexual por parte de um não parceiro" OR "assédio sexual" OR "boas notas em troca de sexo" OR "exploração sexual" OR bullying ou intimidação OR "vitimização entre pares" OR microagressão* OR salvaguarda)

AND

("Oriente Médio" OR África OR Benim OR "Burkina Faso" OR Burundi OR "República Centro-Africana" OR Chade OR Congo OR Eritreia OR Etiópia OR Gâmbia OR Guiné OR "Guiné-Bissau" OR Libéria OR Madagáscar OR Malawi OR Moçambique OR Níger OR Ruanda OR "Serra Leoa" OR África do Sul OR Somália OR "São Tomé" OR Sudão OR Tanzânia OR Togo OR Uganda OR Iêmen OR Angola OR "Cabo Verde" OR Camarões OR "União das Comores" OR "Costa do Marfim" OR Djibouti OR Egito OR Essuatíni OR Gana OR Quênia OR Lessoto OR Maurítânia OR Marrocos OR Nigéria OR Senegal OR Tunísia OR Palestina OR "Cisjordânia" OR Gaza OR Zâmbia OR Zimbabwe OR Algéria OR Gabão OR Irã OR Iraque OR Jordânia OR Líbano OR Líbia OR Maldivas OR Maurício OR Namíbia OR Barém OR Kuwait OR Omã OR Catar OR "Árabia Saudita" OR "Emirados Árabes Unidos" OR EAU)

AND

("educação universitária" OR "educação terciária" OR universidade OR faculdade OR "Ciência, Tecnologia, Engenharia e Matemática" OR STEM OR "instituição terciária" OR "ensino superior")

NOT

(Afroamericano/a)

Arabic search strategy

"الإيذاء" OR "العنف الجنسي" OR "الاغتصاب" OR "العنف في المواعدة" OR "عنف الشريك الحميم" OR (IPV OR "الاعتداء الجنسي" OR "الإساءة الجنسية" OR "العنف القائم على النوع الاجتماعي" OR "العنف الجنسي والجنساني" OR "العنف ضد النساء" OR "العنف الجنسي من غير الشريك" OR "التحرش الجنسي" OR "الجنس مقابل الدرجات" OR "الاستغلال الجنسي" OR "التنمر" OR "إيذاء الأقران" OR "العدوان المصغر" OR "الحماية")

AND

(MENA OR "الشرق الأوسط" OR "أفريقيا" OR "بنين" OR "بوركينافاسو" OR "بوركينا فاسو" OR "جمهورية أفريقيا الوسطى" OR "تشاد" OR "الكونغو" OR "إريتريا" OR "إثيوبيا" OR "غامبيا" OR "غينيا" OR "غينيا بيساو" OR "ليبيريا" OR "مدغشقر" OR "ملاوي" OR "موزمبيق" OR "النيجر" OR "رواندا" OR "سيراليون" OR "جنوب أفريقيا" OR "الصومال" OR "ساوتومي" OR "ساو تومي" OR "السودان" OR "تنزانيا" OR "توغو" OR "غندا" OR "اليمن" OR "أنغولا" OR "الرأس الأخضر" OR "الكاميرون" OR "جزر القمر" OR "الكويت" OR "ديفوار" OR "جيبوتي" OR "مصر" OR "إيسواتيني" OR "غانا" OR "كينيا" OR "ليسوتو" OR "موريتانيا" OR "المغرب" OR "نيجيريا" OR "السنغال" OR "تونس" OR "فلسطين" OR "الضفة الغربية" OR "غزة" OR "زامبيا" OR "زيمبابوي" OR "الجزائر" OR "الجابون" OR "إيران" OR "العراق" OR "الأردن" OR "لبنان" OR "ليبيا" OR "جزر المالديف" OR "موريشيوس" OR "ناميبيا" OR "البحرين" OR "الكويت" OR "عمان" OR "قطر" OR "المملكة العربية السعودية" OR "الإمارات العربية المتحدة" OR UAE)

AND

("التعليم العالي" OR "التعليم الجامعي" OR "الجامعة" OR "الكلية" OR "العلوم والتكنولوجيا والهندسة والرياضيات" OR STEM OR "مؤسسة التعليم العالي")

NOT

("الأفارقة الأمريكيون")

STUDY SELECTION

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The study selection for the scoping review was guided by the following inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Inclusion:

- Literature published in English, French, Portuguese and Arabic.
- Literature published from January 2010 to December 2023.
- Studies based in countries in Africa and the Middle East.⁸
- Literature where GBV in HEIs is a primary theme (not a secondary theme).
- Literature that reports on NPSV, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse, bullying, peer victimisation and gender microaggressions in HEI settings.
- Literature that reports on IPV and dating violence in HEI settings, or papers that measure the impacts of IPV or dating violence on higher education outcomes (e.g., learning, attendance, graduation, professional entry etc).
- Review articles including systematic reviews, meta-analysis, scoping reviews, peer-reviewed journal articles and rapid reviews.
- Grey literature sources such as documents from government and non-governmental organisations and academic dissertations.
- All types of study designs such as cohort studies, cross-sectional studies, qualitative studies, quantitative studies, RCTs and quasi-experimental studies.

Exclusion

- Non-English, French, Portuguese or Arabic literature.
- Literature published before January 2010.

⁸ According to World Bank classifications.

- Studies based outside of Africa and the Middle East.
- Interventions or studies that do not include any form of GBV.
- Literature where GBV in HEIs is the secondary theme (not primary theme).
- Literature related to IPV or dating violence that occurs outside of higher education settings, or where students in higher education settings constitute convenience samples for IPV studies.
- Literature focusing on primary or secondary education settings, or non-HEI workplace settings.
- Newspaper or media articles with no methodological or theoretical approach.

Additional quality appraisal

An additional set of exclusion criteria were applied through a quality appraisal analysis of all papers undergoing the second round of screening to ensure a minimum standard for the quality of selected papers. The quality appraisal contained six criteria:

1. Adequate sample size, defined as minimum of 100 for quantitative studies, and 30 for experimental studies
2. Adequate measurement of outcomes for quantitative studies, including through valid and reliable approaches
3. Appropriate analysis was conducted for all types of studies
4. Congruity between the research methodology and the questions, methods, analysis and interpretation of results for qualitative studies
5. Reproduction of 'blame the victim' discourses in the study's methodology, measures, reporting or recommendations
6. Non-publication in a Predatory Journal.⁹

Screening and selection process

A flow chart depicting the screening and selection process for all papers is presented in Figure 1. A total of 1665 papers identified through the application of the search strategy were uploaded to a Zotero database and duplications were removed, leaving 1254 papers: 291 in Arabic, 929 in English, 18 in French and 16 in Portuguese. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to screen papers for inclusion in the scoping review in two phases.

During the first round of screening, a rapid review of titles of papers were reviewed and the inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to these papers.¹⁰ During this phase, 868 papers were excluded leaving 386 papers to move through to the second phase of data screening. The majority of papers were excluded during this phase as they were unrelated to the scoping review topic (n=670). A smaller proportion of papers addressed GBV in HEIs as a secondary rather than primary theme (n=36). These were mainly papers exploring other key thematic areas (e.g., wellbeing or general campus experiences), of which GBV was one dimension or experience. A total of 72 papers were excluded in this first phase as they comprised incomplete studies or without appropriate methodologies; for example, opinion pieces, news items, studies with only one data source (e.g., a one person case study) or studies without detailed or clear methodologies. Fifty-six papers were excluded as they fell outside of the geographical or language scope of the review, and 33 papers were excluded because they comprised convenience samples of students or teachers for studies about GBV but without directly addressing GBV in HEIs.

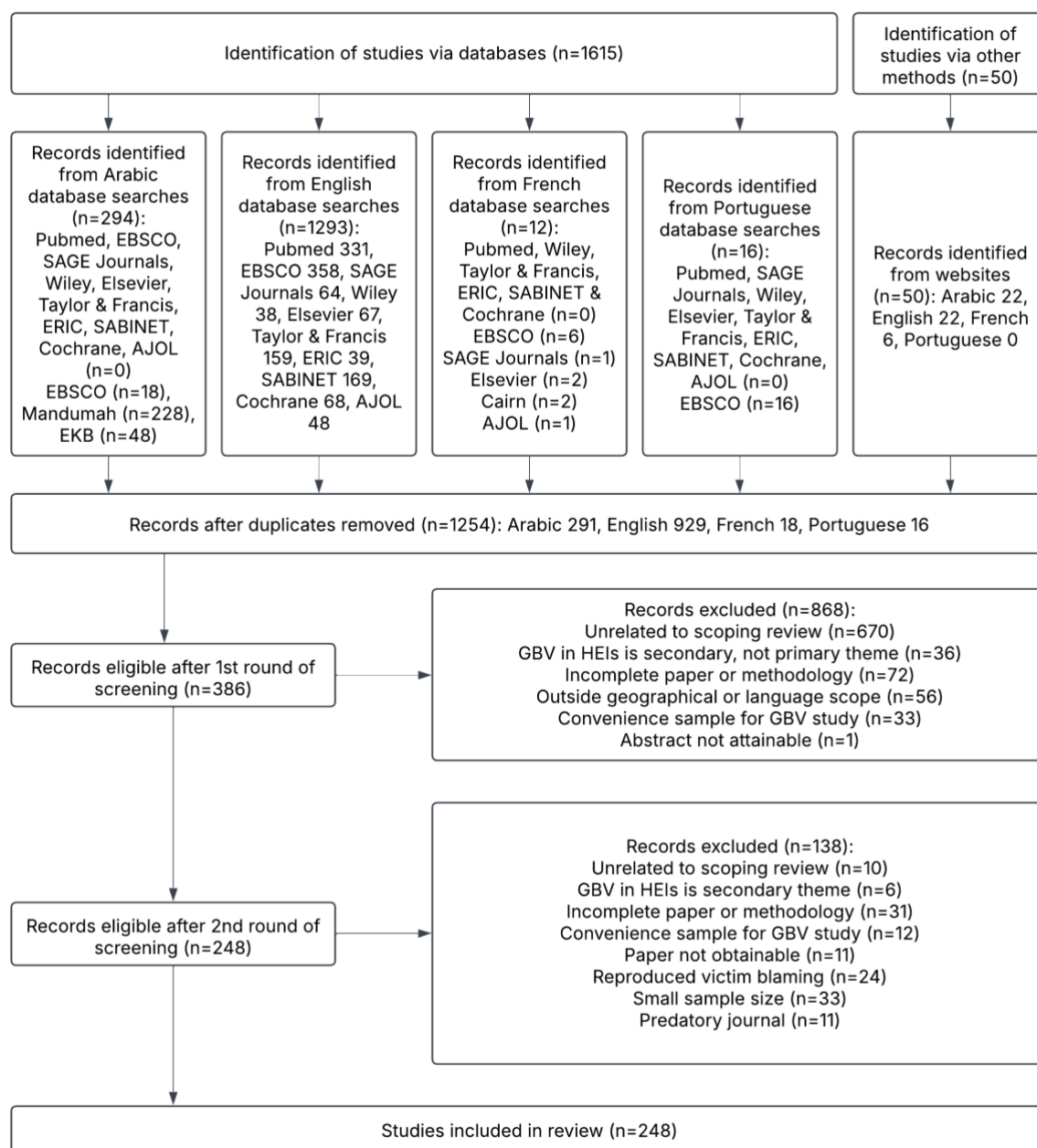
During the second round of screening, abstracts and paper content were reviewed and the inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied, as were the quality appraisal criteria. This phase was combined with charting the data (see following section) in order to ensure that appropriate quality appraisal could be conducted, including in relation to identifying papers that reproduced victim-blaming narratives, and identifying the appropriateness of methodologies and measures. During this phase, a further 138 papers were excluded leaving 248 papers eligible for inclusion in the scoping review. Of the 138 papers excluded, reasons for exclusion included: papers being unrelated to the scoping review thematic focus (mainly because they focused on GBV in primary or secondary education institutions) (n=10); GBV being a secondary theme (n=6); papers being incomplete or having incomplete or inappropriate methodologies (n=31); papers comprising convenience samples for GBV studies (n=12); and papers

⁹ See <https://predatoryjournals.org/>

¹⁰ In some cases abstracts or papers were consulted where titles did not provide sufficient information.

not being attainable (n=11). In addition, 33 papers were excluded because they had insufficient sample sizes and 11 because they were published in Predatory Journals.

Figure 1: Flow chart of papers selected for the scoping review



It is important to note that during the screening process, 24 papers were excluded because they reproduced 'victim-blaming' discourses, either through the methodologies used, the findings reported or the conclusions and recommendations made. The majority of these papers focused on the clothes that survivors of sexual violence or harassment wear. For example, we identified papers focused on measuring risk factors for GBV experience that emphasised what survivors were wearing at the time of a sexual assault, rather than emphasising the characteristics of perpetrators. Other papers made recommendations about GBV survivors modifying their clothes or universities policing women's dress codes. We also found examples of papers that framed staff-perpetrated sexual harassment or 'sex for grades' through the lens of women being predatory or seeking money and male academic staff being tricked or hard done. These narratives divorce sexual harassment and exploitation from the inherent power relations that exist in staff/student relations. The majority of papers using blame-the-victim narratives were based in religious contexts or universities, particularly Nigeria and the MENA region, with some also found in Zimbabwe.

CHARTING THE DATA

Selected literature was reviewed and synthesised in preparation for analysis through the population of a review framework in Excel comprising two types of data charting. The first, presented in Figure 2, was the summary of key characteristics of papers, including study themes, geographical information, the key population sampled for the research (with details about any marginalised populations), methods employed, types of GBV addressed and survivor/perpetrator dyad.¹¹ The second type of data charting covered the summary of key findings of papers according to categories aligned with the research questions (see Figure 3).¹²

Figure 2: Framework categories for charting characteristics of papers



Figure 3: Framework categories for charting key findings reported in papers



The review, screening and charting of data in English, French and Portuguese was conducted by the Principal Investigator, who is a native English speaker and who can read French and Portuguese. The charting of data in Arabic was done by SVRI's partner, the Information and Research Center at the King Hussein Foundation in Jordan. A team of analysts reviewed and charted Arabic papers, translating recorded findings into English.

COLLATING, SUMMARISING AND REPORTING

All data entry for 248 papers was analysed by collating key findings and trends across the main thematic areas aligned with the research questions. These findings and trends were further disaggregated, where appropriate, by characteristics of research papers, including sub-region, countries, methods, type of GBV and type of survivor/perpetrator dyad. The results of the scoping review are presented in alignment with the research questions, with key findings summarising trends and gaps identified.

GBV policy study

STUDY DESIGN

The study is a mixed method design, drawing from an online desk review of HEI policies related to GBV and qualitative key informant interviews (KIIs) with HEI staff knowledgeable about the implementation of GBV policies or protocols for responding to GBV in the institutional environment.

¹¹ The survivor/perpetrator dyad identifies which relationships of victimisation and perpetration research focuses on, for example: student (survivor) and teacher (perpetrator); student (survivor) and student (perpetrator); or staff (survivor) and staff (perpetrator).

¹² Characteristics include perpetrator type, victim/survivor and perpetrator experiences, and attitudes and social norms related to GBV. Prevalence includes the prevalence of GBV experience or perpetration in HEIs, including relevant disaggregation. Correlates include risk or protective factors associated with different forms of GBV in HEIs, including demographic characteristics. Impacts include the consequences of GBV in HEIs, including on health, mental health, educational outcomes, professional outcomes and other outcomes of interest. Interventions corresponds to findings related to the design, implementation or evaluation of GBV interventions in HEIs, including GBV response, prevention and policies. Reporting and help-seeking refers to barriers to and wider perceptions related to victim/survivors' help seeking. Gaps and limitations comprise any gaps or limitations reported on in the paper or identified by the research team.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The GBV policy study was guided by the following research question and sub-questions.

What is the current state of GBV-related institutional policies in HEIs in Africa and the Middle East?

- What policies on GBV prevention and response have been developed and implemented in Africa and the Middle East?
- What are the key characteristics of policies targeting GBV in HEIs, and what are the strengths and limitations?
- To what extent are GBV-related policies implemented as intended?
- What works to implement GBV-related policies in HEIs?
- What are the barriers to successful implementation of GBV-related policies, and how can these barriers be reduced?

POLICY DESK REVIEW

We conducted an online desk review of GBV-related policies in HEIs in Africa and the Middle East, including policies related to safeguarding, and preventing and responding to sexual violence, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse, bullying and other types of GBV. Three approaches were used to obtain GBV policies.

1. Online search of university websites as per the sampling approach, which combined proportional stratified sampling to determine the target sample of universities per region and country, and randomly selected universities within countries.
2. Targeted online search of highly ranked university websites due to challenges identifying a sufficient number of universities with accessible policies in the first approach (above)
3. Directly from stakeholders participating in the project's Research Advisory Group (RAG) or from those participating in KIIs who shared policies with the research team.

Policy documents were extracted from websites if they addressed any kind of GBV, and these included specific policies or protocols addressing GBV in HEIs, or staff or students handbooks or codes of conduct explicitly referring to GBV.

The target sample for the online desk review was 105 universities: 68 in sub-Saharan Africa and 37 in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (see the inception report for a detailed description of the calculations used to determine the target sample). The initial achieved sample of universities for the desk review was 111. These were derived from the following three sources:

1. 57 universities selected from an online search of 943 university websites in Africa and the Middle East.
2. 21 universities selected from a targeted search of the 50 most highly ranked universities across the two regions: 25 in sub-Saharan Africa and 25 in MENA.
3. 33 universities selected via policies shared by the RAG and key informants.

There were several challenges identifying policies through the first two approaches noted above, particularly the first:

- Many universities do not make policies available on their websites and it is unclear if policies exist or not. In some cases, it was possible to identify through other available documentation that policies exist but are not publicly available.
- Some universities have restricted access to policies only for students and staff.
- Many smaller universities do not have websites at all, and some universities were found to have closed down.

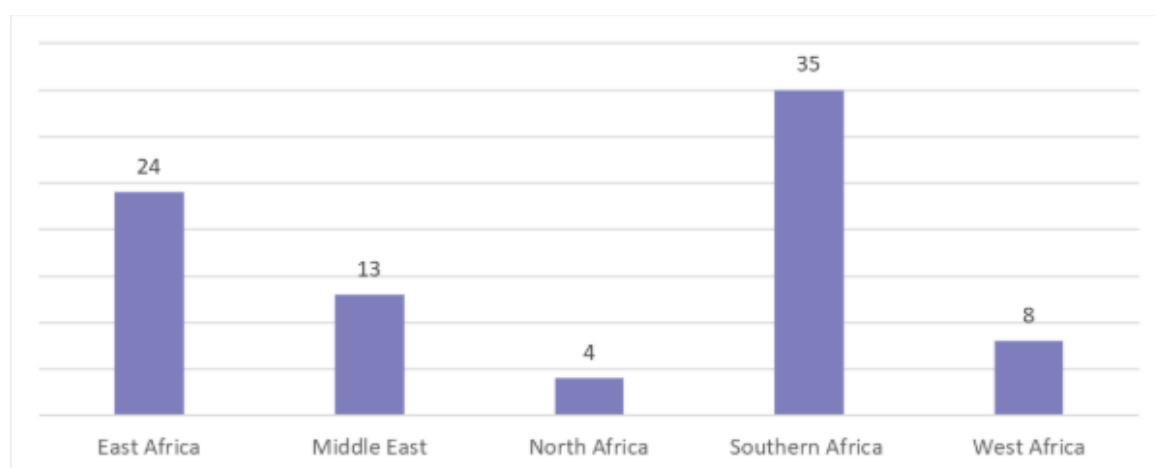
Policies from the 111 universities identified were reviewed, coded and analysed through a framework developed to record overall policy characteristics, including: the types of GBV addressed; components of the policy statement; coverage (who is protected under policies); whether policies address intersectionality or marginalised populations; whether there are adequate procedural elements; the

availability of adequate institutional structures; and whether monitoring and evaluation systems are in place.

After conducting this coding and analysis, a total of 75 universities (some with multiple policies) were retained in the sample, with a total of 84 policies reviewed. The reasons for removal of university policies from the sample was mainly due to policies mentioning GBV in brief but not having a sufficient focus on GBV to contribute to the study. This included for example some gender policies, anti-discrimination policies, human resources handbooks, student handbooks and codes of conduct. It should be noted, however, that some policies (e.g., gender policies) and handbooks (e.g., student handbooks) were retained as they had substantial sections or components addressing GBV.

Figure 4 shows the number of policies reviewed by sub-region, with the largest number of policies included in the policy review being owned by HEIs in Southern Africa and East Africa. It is particularly notable that no GBV policies were identified in Central Africa with few also identified in North Africa, despite a large amount of literature found in Egypt in the scoping review (see scoping review report).

Figure 4: Number of policies reviewed by sub-region



KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

We conducted KIIs with staff from HEIs engaged in some way with GBV policy development or implementation, including for example focal points from Staff and Student Health, Welfare and Protection Services, Heads of Faculties, Gender Departments and GBV Units etc. We used three sampling approaches:

1. **Open call for participation:** The SVRI disseminated open calls for participation in KIIs from staff in HEIs who were participating in some capacity in the design, implementation and/or monitoring of GBV-related policies, including handling protection and safeguarding issues, or managing complaints, response or prevention efforts. These open calls were shared on the SVRI Exchange weekly email updates for over three months.
2. **Targeted outreach:** The SVRI did targeted outreach through its extensive network of researchers and practitioners, including SVRI research grantees from universities in Africa and the Middle East and other university networks, the through the RAG.
3. **MENA partner:** The SVRI's partner in the MENA region, the Information and Research Center of the King Hussein Foundation, did targeted outreach through its extensive network.

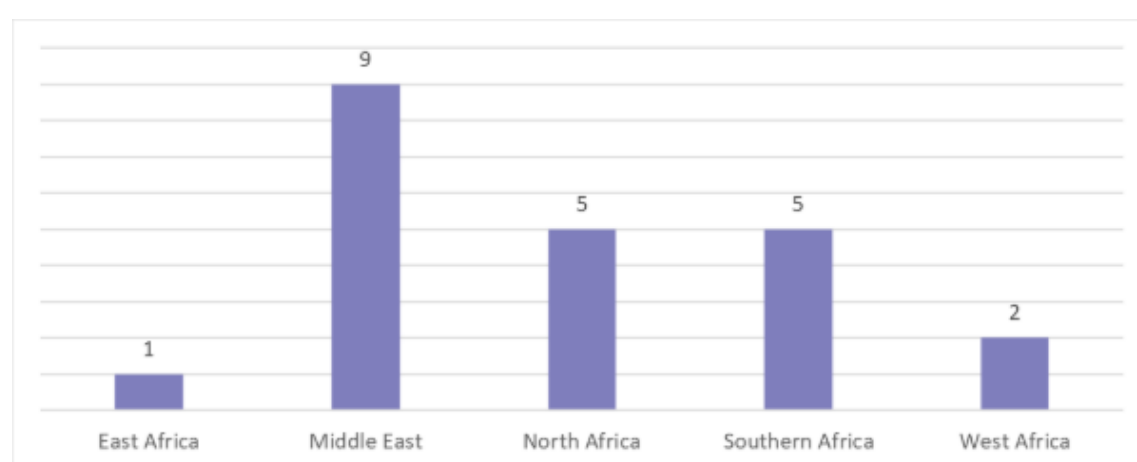
Information about the study for recruitment purposes was published in four languages, including Arabic, English, French and Portuguese, and interviews were also offered in these four languages. The team also communicated that the SVRI would attempt to arrange translation services for any other languages.

The research team encountered significant challenges recruiting participants into the KIIs. While the team initially received substantial interest through the open call for participation, when the team followed

up with interested persons, very few responded or shared back consent forms. Some who did share consent forms did not show up for interviews. There was also a substantial number of persons who expressed interest in participating but who were not staff of universities (e.g., civil society organisations).¹³ The team also encountered some challenges with key informants attending interviews only to find out that they were doing so in the hope that SVRI would assist them to produce a GBV Policy for their university. These challenges led the SVRI team to rely more heavily on targeted outreach and interviews conducted by its partners in the MENA region.

A total of 22 KIIs were conducted, with 14 in the MENA region and eight in sub-Saharan Africa (see Annex 1 for the KII tool). A break down by sub-region is included in Figure 5. Much like for the policy desk review, there were some sub-regional gaps, with no key informants recruited in Central Africa despite targeted attempts to do so.¹⁴ Interviews were transcribed and translated (when these were conducted in non-English languages) and transcripts were coded into a MAXQDA database through a hybrid deductive and inductive thematic approach.

Figure 5: Number of KIIs by sub-region



Research priority setting

STUDY DESIGN

The study drew from an adapted Child Health and Nutrition Research Initiative (CHNRI) research priority setting approach, which pools individual rankings of research priorities and reduces the dominance of the voices of a few, powerful stakeholders. Since 2019, the SVRI has been using adapted CHNRI approaches in various priority setting exercises in alignment with SVRI's organisational emphasis on decolonising knowledge.

The adapted process for this project on GBV in HEIs involved mixed quantitative and qualitative methods and included four key processes: the development of a set of domains to guide the priority setting process and classify research questions; the development of research questions; facilitation of a series of online focus group discussions (FGDs) to discuss and validate research priorities; and he dissemination of an online survey for experts to rank priority research questions.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research priority setting exercise was guided by the following research question and sub-questions.

¹³ These focal points were contacted for the priority setting component of the research to enable their participation in other parts of the research, with strong representation from these focal points in the focus group discussions conducted for research priority setting.

¹⁴ Note however that the research team was able to recruit focal points from Central Africa in its French focus group discussion on research priority setting.

What are the key gaps in the evidence related to GBV in HEIs in Africa and the Middle East that need to be addressed to advance the field?

- What are the priority research questions that will advance the field in 5-10 years?
- How do research priorities differ in different sub-regions and according to different expert characteristics (e.g., gender, professional role, disability etc.)?

DEVELOPMENT OF DOMAINS

Five domains were developed to categorise research priorities. These are presented in Table 1. The domains were developed based on the results of the scoping review and refined after feedback from the Advisory Group.

Table 1: Domain definitions

DOMAIN 1: Understanding the issue	DOMAIN 2: Perceptions, norms and institutional cultures	DOMAIN 3: Impacts and consequences of GBV	DOMAIN 4: GBV interventions and policies ⁴	DOMAIN 5: Measures and methodologies
Research on understanding the different forms of GBV, prevalence of GBV, and the causes, risk factors and protective factors for GBV experience and perpetration.	Research on perceptions and attitudes towards GBV and survivors, and social norms and institutional cultures associated with GBV in higher education.	Research on the consequences and impacts of GBV in higher education settings, including health, psychosocial educational, professional and economic consequences.	Research on interventions and policies that aim to prevent, respond to and protect stakeholders from GBV in higher education settings, and processes for reporting and handling cases.	Research on ways to measure GBV in higher education settings, and methodologies for monitoring and evaluating GBV interventions and policies.

DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research team developed a series of research questions in each domain based on four key methods or processes.

1. **Scoping review:** The results of the scoping review formed the primary basis for the research questions across all domains, including key gaps in evidence observed in the literature.
2. **GBV policy study:** The results of the GBV policy study also informed the development of research questions, particularly in relation to Domains 2 and 4.
3. **SVRI Forum:** An SVRI and IDRC hosted participant driven event on GBV in HEIs at the 2024 SVRI Forum generated rich discussion about the current evidence and gaps in evidence on GBV in HEIs, which the research team drew from when developing priority research themes and questions.
4. **Advisory Group:** The project's Advisory Group provided feedback on a set of themes developed from the three elements outlined above, which were converted into structured research questions.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Four online FGDs with experts were conducted to: further explore and validate the research domains and priority themes and questions emerging from the study; identify any additional priorities not captured in the domains and research questions; and introduce the online ranking survey to capture research priorities (see below). To ensure regional and linguistic coverage, two FGDs were conducted in English, one in Arabic and one in French.

Recruitment into the FGDs was conducted through three key entry points:

- Open invitation for participation through the weekly SVRI Exchange (email updates).

- Targeted invitations shared with those who had expressed interest in the research.¹⁵
- Targeted invitations shared with the project's Advisory Group and SVRI's network.

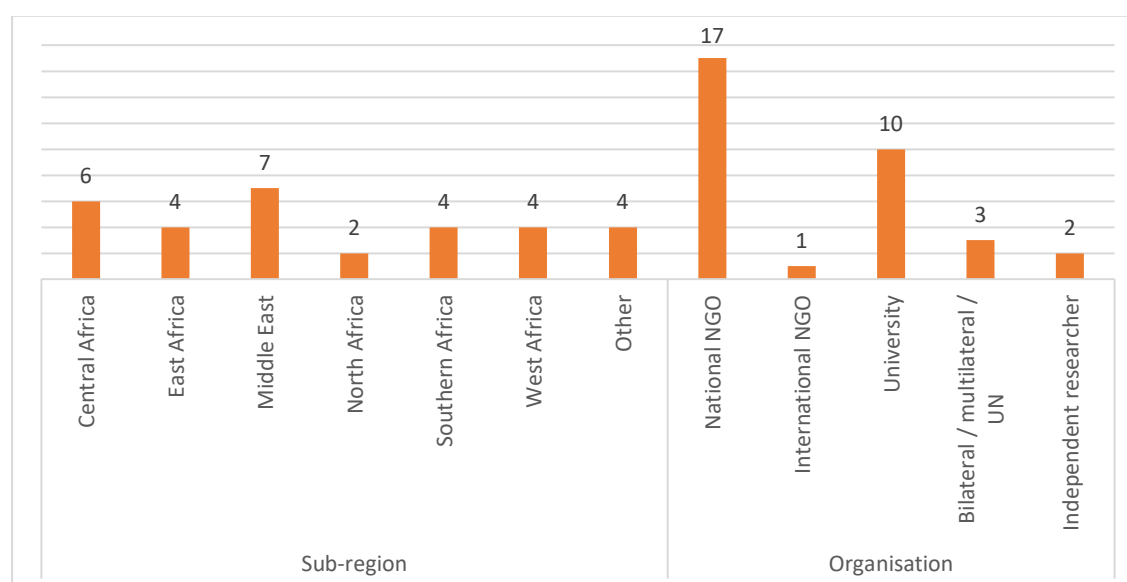
Participants were asked to register for the FGDs and provide consent to participate, after which they were provided with a calendar invitation and link to join the FGD.

The FGDs were structured in five parts.

1. **Introduction:** Sharing the background to the project, including the objectives of the FGD, and participant introductions, including name, organisation and role related to GBV in HEIs
2. **Current research:** An open question about what kind of research in GBV in HEIs is currently being conducted in respondents' country or region.
3. **Research priorities:** An online poll recording participants' response to the following question, with facilitated discussion of the responses: *Imagine that you went away for a five-year trip and returned to find that some very important research had taken place on GBV in higher education institutions in your country or geographical region, and this research provided really important answers that would assist your work. What would this research be about?*
4. **Ranking research domains:** An online ranking poll to explore the domains that were most useful for the participants' work, in order of what would advance their work on GBV in HEIs most in the next 5-10 years, and a discussion of the results.
5. **Introduction to online survey:** The FGDs were wrapped up with an introduction to the online ranking survey (see below), including assistance with accessing and completing the survey.

A total of 33 people participated in the online FGDs, with representation from 15 countries in Africa and the Middle East, including: Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, Syria and Uganda. Figure 6 shows the distribution of FGD participants by sub-region, with representation from all sub-regions, particularly Central Africa and the Middle East. Figure 6 also shows the distribution of FGD participants by type of organisation, with the majority of participants representing a national NGO/civil society organisation or a university.

Figure 6: Distribution of FGD participants per sub-region and type of organisation



¹⁵ For example, during the GBV Policy Study, some representatives of civil society organisations expressed interest in participating in interviews were not eligible given that the KIs were targeted towards HEI staff. These stakeholders were invited to share their inputs in the research priority setting FGDs.

ONLINE RANKING SURVEY

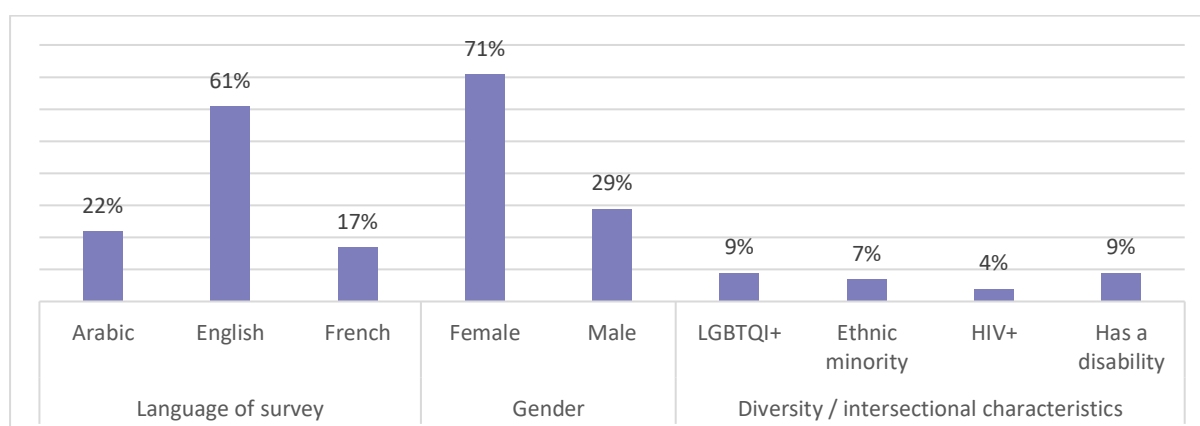
An online ranking survey in Qualtrics was developed and launched in three languages: Arabic, English and French. The survey contained six sections. The first section comprised demographic questions in order to understand respondents' characteristics, including gender, intersectional characteristics, region of work and residence, and type of organisation and role. The remaining five sections of the survey presented research questions for each of the five domains and asked respondents to rank them in order of their own priorities. In each of these five sections, research questions within domains were randomised to mitigate the risk of ranking bias. In each of the five sections, an open ended question was posed to capture additional priority research questions not captured in the questions presented.

The research team used three approaches to recruit survey participants:

1. Supporting FGD participants to complete the survey (see above).
2. Open invitation for participation through the weekly SVRI Exchange (email updates).
3. Targeted invitations shared with the project's Advisory Group and SVRI's network.

The survey remained open for four weeks and a total of 93 respondents completed and submitted survey entries.¹⁶ The majority of respondents completed surveys in English with approximately 40% completing surveys in Arabic or French (see Figure 7). The majority of respondents were female, with almost a third comprising male respondents. A small proportion of respondents identified as LGBTQI+, an ethnic minority, HIV+ or as having a disability. The large majority of survey respondents were from local or national NGOs or universities, with practitioners and academic staff comprising the largest proportion of roles represented (see Figure 8). There was a roughly even spread of sub-regional representation, with slightly higher representation from Southern, East and West Africa (see Figure 9).

Figure 7: Characteristics of online survey respondents



¹⁶ Ninety respondents started but did not complete/submit a survey and these entries were thus eliminated.

Figure 8: Organisational characteristics of online survey respondents

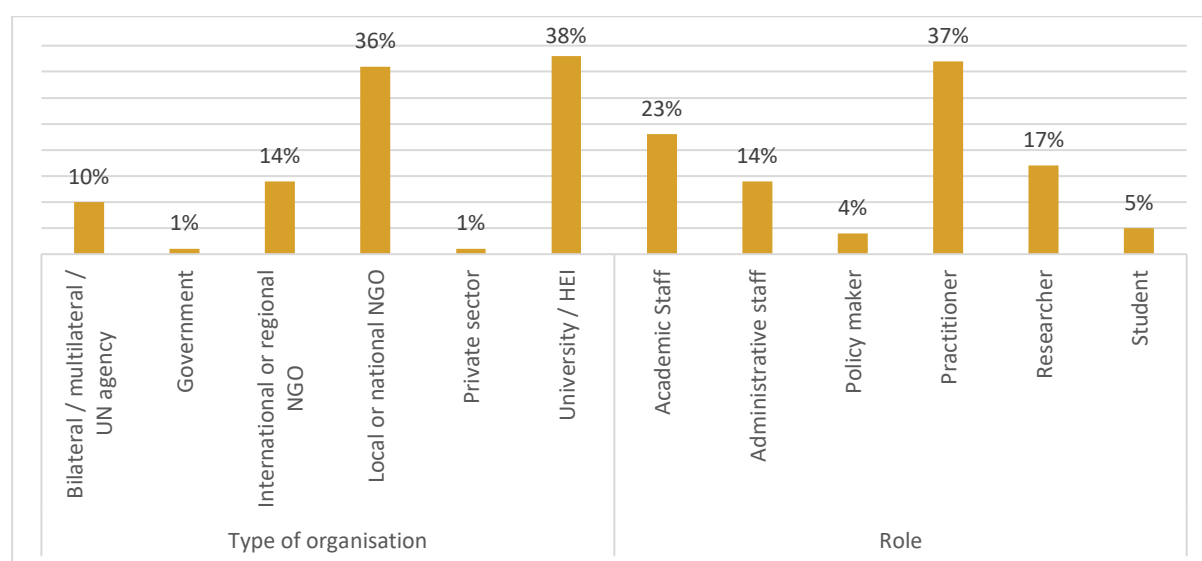


Figure 9: Sub-regional representation of online surveys



The survey ranking data was analysed by producing mean ranking scores for each question within each domain, and analysing ranking scores by different expert characteristics.

Annex 1: GBV policy KII tool

1. First can you tell me about your role in your university/institution?
2. Can you tell me about any policies your university/institution has related to preventing and responding to gender-based violence?
 - a. (Probe around types of violence covered in the policies, including sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, bullying, microaggression, etc)
 - b. (Probe around who these policies are targeted towards (e.g., students, staff, others)
 - c. (Probe around the extent to which policies are inclusive of marginalised groups, including LGBTQI+ people, people with disabilities etc)
 - d. (Probe around whether policies address GBV response only, and / or includes GBV prevention; and participant's understanding of response - prevention)
3. What are the procedures for reporting cases or complaints related to gender-based violence? (Probe around how these may differ for different types of GBV)
 - a. Is there a unit, department or focal point to whom cases are reported?
 - b. What happens when a case is reported? (Probe around the process of decision making about whether to carry forward a complaint, who makes this decision, and how)
 - c. Can you tell me about the process of investigation of complaints? (Probe around who is responsible for investigating, and how)
 - d. What kinds of disciplinary actions are put in place? (Probe around resolutions, punishment, and the extent to which these are implemented)
 - e. Are there any risks of backlash for those reporting cases? By backlash, I mean retaliation against or a negative or violent response towards those reporting cases, usually from perpetrators. (Probe around systems to protect from backlash)
 - f. How have you managed instances of backlash if any?
 - g. What is the uptake of complaints and reporting protocols? How many students or staff have filed complaints?
4. What are the strengths of the policies and protocols that you have described?
 - a. What has worked well and why?
5. Have there been any barriers to implementing these policies and protocols in your university/institution?
 - a. Could you describe these barriers?
 - b. How can these barriers be overcome?
 - c. Can you describe how your university is responding to the barriers?
6. Does your institution monitor the implementation of GBV policies?
 - a. If yes, how? If no, why?
 - b. Who is responsible for monitoring and how? Is it an individual or a unit/centre?
 - c. Is there a process for directing monitoring results into improvements in procedures or protocols? (Probe around what this looks like)
7. What else has your university/institution done to address GBV?
 - a. (Probe around GBV campaigns; GBV training for staff and/or students; other prevention interventions; infrastructural interventions; provision of support for survivors)
8. What would you say your university/institution could do better to address GBV?
 - a. What kind of policy changes or adaptations could facilitate these improvements?