

ILLUSTRATED GUIDE to GBV

 actalliance FOR
 GENDER JUSTICE

Language matters...

Words and definitions shape culture, rights and social norms. The way we define an injustice and the decision to use gender-inclusive language are political acts. Language has the ability to change the status quo and make our positions on gender justice manifest.

Gender equality in language is achieved when all genders are recognised as agents who are granted equal dignity, value and rights.

Unpacking issues using a gendered lens is a step towards acting against systemic discrimination, rising fundamentalisms and gender stereotypes.

This work can only be meaningful if we recognise our responsibility as agents of change in perpetuating the problem.

This co-created illustrated guide to gender-based violence is limited, it does not have the presumption of being comprehensive. It shares part of the story and some of the forms of violence that women and girls, men and boys, in all their diversities, are subject to.

It is a first step to define and unfold the different injustices that we as a faith-based alliance try to address in our advocacy, humanitarian and development work. Gender-based violence is a complex issue. Violence has multiple forms and different nuances that are not always manifest. This guide is our collective effort to explore some of the complexity, while working for transformative change.

Religious leaders, grassroots faith actors, and practitioners, from within ACT Alliance's global network and Forums, have worked to define the different gender-based violences. We believe that the voices of those working on the frontline need to be listened to and their courageous calls to action can contribute to having a more inclusive and intersectional approach towards achieving real change.



Online Violence

Online violence is an extension of offline violence experienced by all genders but disproportionately by women, girls and LGBTIQ-persons. Women human rights defenders (WHRD) are particularly targeted.

Violence in virtual spaces can take multiple forms, including harassment, bullying, stalking, discrimination, verbal attacks and threats of violence, such as rape or other forms of sexual violence. Online violence can also include unwanted sexual remarks, or non-consensual posting of sexual media and body-shaming.

Online violence is a violation of human rights. It intersects with racial, economic and other forms of violence. Ultimately, online violence is used to shrink the democratic space and silence voices speaking out for justice.

A call to action

- **Promote, defend** and uphold the **freedom of speech and democracy**.
- **Counter hate speech** and misinformation online.
- Practice solidarity with persons who are targeted online, in particular **women human rights defenders (WHRD) that are disproportionately affected by online violence**.
- **Create safe spaces** to address the polarisation of debates.
- **At the national level, call for more regulations and laws** that prevent and protect women, girls and LBGTIQ-persons from all forms of online violence;



ECONOMIC
VIOLENCE

UNPAID WORK

UNEQUAL REMUNERATION

UNEQUAL MENTAL LOAD

UNEQUAL ACCESS TO EDUCATION

LIMITED ACCESS TO FUND AND CREDIT

INHERITANCE LAWS AND ACCESS TO LAND

Economic Violence

Any act or behaviour which causes economic harm to an individual. This is particularly relevant for women and girls and has consequences on their health and development.

Economic violence can take many forms including but not limited to discriminatory traditional laws on inheritance and land ownership, restricted access to financial resources, education opportunities or the labor market.

Economic violence may lead to physical violence, promote sexual exploitation and the risk of contracting HIV infection, maternal morbidity and mortality, and trafficking of women and girls.

A call to action

- Advocate for **victim assistance's services**;
- Work with **law enforcing bodies**;
- **Improve norms and values** at society and institutional level by involving religious and opinion leaders and community based organizations;
- **Raise awareness in the community** through media and awareness campaigns;
- Work to improve the poverty situation in the community and **provide economic assistance** for the poorest of the poor and the most marginalised;
- Work to **improve the power dynamics at household level**.



Cultural Violence

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage are two examples of cultural violence against women and girls and are human rights violations. These harmful practices affect millions of women and girls across the world. Where they exist together the impact is even greater. These practices are both driven by social expectations and patriarchal norms that aim at controlling the sexuality of women and girls.

In some communities parents believe that these practices help protecting women and girls and provide for a safer future or that these practices are required by religious requirements. No religious belief endorses or calls for these practices and religious leaders have a responsibility in debunking these misconceptions. Both make girls more likely to end their education and face a life of health issues, including maternal complications.

A call to action

- Develop **community sensitization** for duty bearers;
- Governments must provide **alternative source of income to practitioners**;
- **Challenge the harmful taboos** that deprive the women human rights;
- Communities must design **alternative rites of passages**;
- **Strengthen advocacy** and like-minded collaborations established;
- **Engage religious leaders** to help debunk misconceptions.

Sexual Exploitation, Harassment and Abuse in the Sector

Sexual exploitation: occurs where a church or humanitarian worker, who has a ministry or professional relationship with an adult or child who is over the age of consent, invites them to engage in sexual activity, or engages in sexual activity with them with their consent. It does not matter that the adult or child made the invitation or initiated the sexual activity.

Sexual harassment: occurs where a church or humanitarian worker makes an unwelcome sexual advance, or an unwelcome request for sexual favours, to a person. It may consist of a single incident or several incidents over a period of time, and may involve different forms of

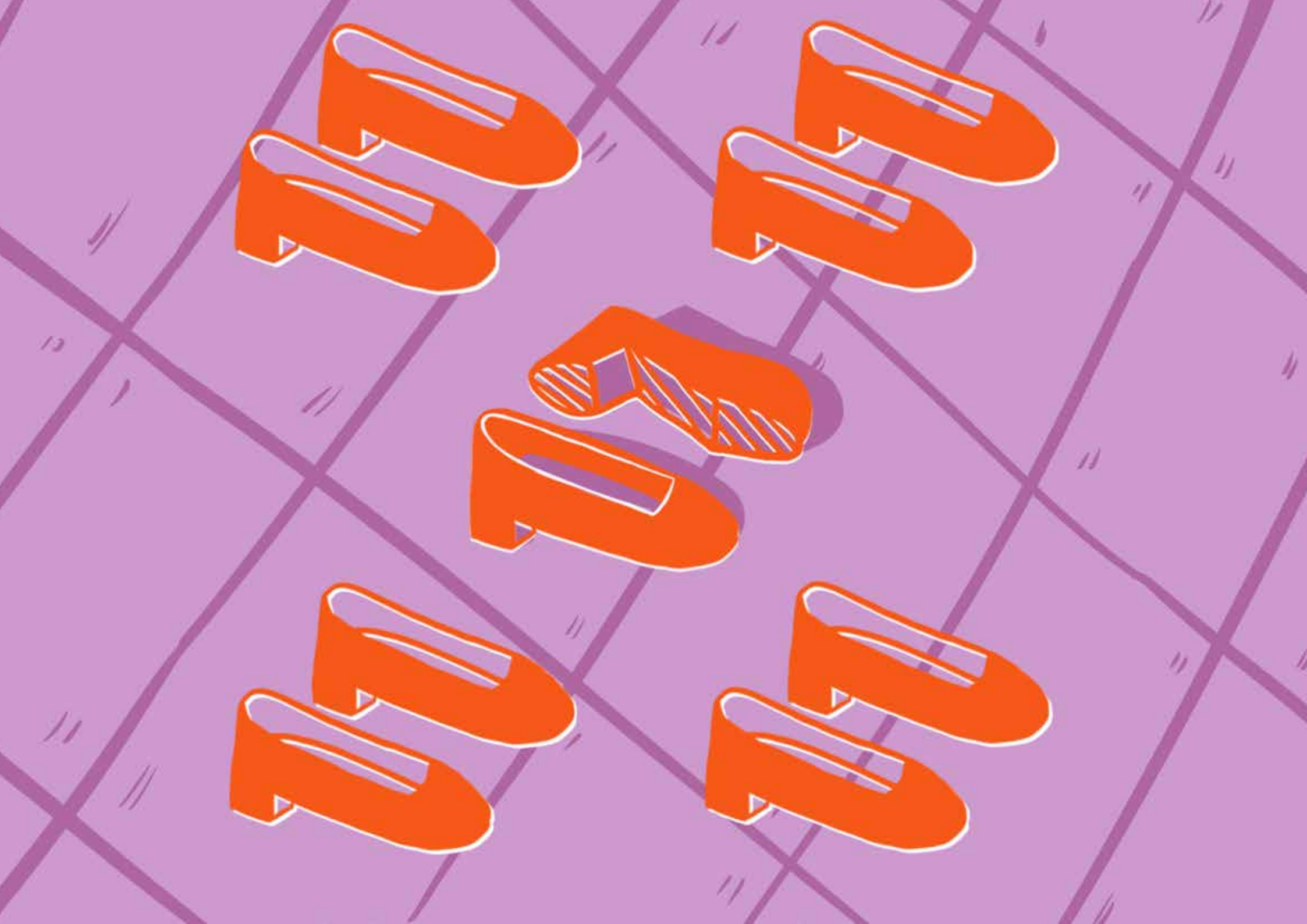
communication such as phone calls, email, text messages and social media. It includes: asking for sex; making gestures, jokes or comments containing sexual references; and showing sexually explicit material.

Sexual abuse: occurs where a church or humanitarian worker engages in any of the following conduct: grooming; image-based abuse; sexual assault; sexual exploitation; sexual harassment; or viewing, possessing, producing or distributing child pornography. It is the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.



A call to action

- **End impunity ;**
- **Break the silence;**
- Identify and **challenge the roots causes** of SEAH (gender, disability and other power imbalances) through education and awareness;
- Culture change within institutions;
- **Institutions adopt a zero policy of inaction.** A commitment to zero tolerance of inaction with respect to alleged incidents of SEAH;
- **Prevention.** Investment in the prevention of SEAH, including strong recruitment screening measures in churches and humanitarian organisations;
- **Survivor support.** A “do no harm” approach, prioritising the rights, needs, and wishes of the survivor;
- Invest in **strong reporting mechanisms;**
- **Shared responsibility.** National, subnational, community leaders, institutions, faith and traditional leaders working with NGO’s, government ministries and the private sector.



Femicide

it is the murder of a woman by a male because she is a cisgender woman or whose self-perceived identity is female. These are murders of women by men, by men motivated by contempt and hatred, pleasure, or a sense of ownership over women.

However, it is essential to emphasize the responsibility and impunity behind these extreme forms of violence in Latin America. For this reason, the term femicide was coined, which encompasses the set of crimes against humanity that include crimes, kidnappings, disappearances of women and girls in the absence of solid institutions. It is not just a matter of a man acting on his own but of a State allowing this crime to happen by action or omission.

There is femicide when the State does not provide guarantees to women or create the conditions of security for their lives in the community, the home, workspaces, or public space.

A call to action

- **Communities and groups in organizations, churches, and communities should reflect on the different types of violence against women** and paint a bench or object colored red, and install it in some public circulation space to denounce violence against women and commit to its eradication. Next to the object (bench, chair, women's shoes, door, or any object that can be visible and attract attention), they can add a phrase, biblical text, prayer, or reflection that clarifies the objective of the action.
- **Challenge gender stereotypes** and work with men and boys to discuss the patriarchal clichés and expectations they are subjected to;
- **Advocate at national level** for laws that strengthen protection and prevent femicide



Domestic and Family Violence

Domestic and family violence encompasses different forms of violence and abuse against members of the close or extended family and can continue even when partners are no longer together. Domestic violence happens inside or outside the home and can be psychological, emotional, sexual, physical, moral, economic, and religious.

It affects the whole family, but disproportionately women and girls who are trapped in a circle of control, power and shame. Domestic and family violence episodes can escalate in frequency and severity. In many cases, victims of femicide denounced episodes of domestic violence first. Domestic and Family violence is a sin and a crime.

A call to action

- **Break the silence** - name violence as a sin and a crime;
- Listen to and act on **reports and/or stories of domestic and family violence**;
- **Engage men and boys** to prevent and end violence;
Denounce cultural and religious practices and teachings that justify and perpetuate violence against women and girls;
- Adopt and implement **policies to prevent and respond** to domestic and family violence ;
- Engage law makers and duty bearers to adopt and **enforce laws to prevent** domestic and family violence;
- **Establish training programs for law enforcement agents and courts** in identifying, understanding and pursuing legal-ly cases of domestic and family violence.



Structural Violence

Structural violence has been defined as the social and cultural arrangements that put individuals and populations in harm's way and are embedded in our social, cultural and political systems. This means that our societies have been structured in a way so as to have a heavy toll on women and girls. Male-dominated and patriarchal social structures and socialization practices teach men and women gender-specific roles that can contribute to abuse.

Moreover, they create unequal power dynamics that are perpetuated by gender stereotypes and can affect women and girls' ability to be economically independent or complete their education. Structure violence does not only affect women and girls but people of all genders. Men and boys can be also confined in boxes that restrict their choices and opportunities and put societal pressure on their behaviours.

All forms of GBV are the result of unjust structures. Patriarchal structures perpetuate and reinforce gender based violence, which fail to deliver justice. For instance poor access to education for a woman can create the conditions where interpersonal violence can occur and expectations towards the role of a man in society can result in aggressive behaviors.

A call to action

- Advocate towards **changing all harmful social norms and cultural practices**;
- **Challenge culturally constructed messages** about the proper roles and behavior of men and women;
- **Work with religious leaders to address the role of faith institutions** and theological interpretations of the bible in perpetuating gender stereotypes;
- Work on **community mobilization programs** that aim at reducing violence by changing the public discourse;
- Promote **transformative masculinity and feminism**.

The ACT Alliance Gender Justice Programme

The ACT Alliance gender justice programme was **established in 2019 thanks to the generous support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).**

It focuses on **six different thematic areas**: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Transformative Masculinities, Migration and Displacement, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, Economic Justice, Family law and a cross thematic area, Climate change.

It is now active with **13 strategic projects across regions** where ACT Alliance Forums have implemented activities in the different thematic areas and have contributed to change the national, institutional or community debate around gender equality.

The ACT Alliance gender justice programme **advocates at at the national, regional and international levels** to promote gender- sensitive and inclusive laws and works to promote a change in cultural and social behaviours to ensure that people of all genders can enjoy their rights.

Internally, the gender justice programme aims at advocating for all members of the ACT Alliance to **develop and implement a gender justice policy** to promote institutional change.

The illustrator

Gabriela Basin has illustrated this guide.

She is a young Argentinian illustrator and muralist, currently based in Tarragona, Spain. She counts more than 10 years experience in the creative field.

She specializes on gender topics and works on illustration projects and commissions, always looking for an idea or feeling to translate it into the beauty of a powerful image.

To celebrate the International Women's day on March 8, Gabriela has painted murals about feminism and diversity in Tarragona.

Instagram: @GabrielaBasin

The definitions of the different forms of violence

The different forms of violence illustrated in this guide have been provided by ACT Alliance's network and Forums working across the world.

In particular, ACT Alliance gender justice programme would like to thank the following people and institutions:

Economic Violence: ACT Ethiopia Forum

Domestic and Family Violence: Lutheran World Federation (LWF)

Structural Violence: ACT Uganda Forum

Online Violence: Act Church of Sweden

Femicide: ACT Argentina Forum

Cultural violence: ACT Tanzania Forum

Sexual exploitation Harassment and Abuse in the sector: Anglican Overseas Aid, ACT Panz Forum
The definition has been adapted from the Anglican Commission Safe Churches Commission Guidelines, 2019.

This guide has been possible thanks to the generous contribution of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)

16 days of activism
AGAINST GBV