

A REVIEW OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ORGANISATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THEIR INFLUENCES OF DECISION-MAKING

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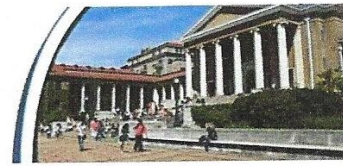
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Abstract

As a country attempting to come to grips with high levels of Gender-based Violence (GBV) corroding the social and political fabrics of society, it has never been more important to acknowledge the dimensions of struggles, activism, and interventions of GBV in South Africa. This research explores what intervention designs are used, what is inhibiting and preventing a positive change in the GBV sector, and what influences GBV non-government organisations' (NGO) decisions regarding programme design, implementation and evaluation. Interview data of nine GBV NGO staff members were collected and thematically analysed to answer the research questions. From the results of this analysis, a model of decision-making for GBV NGOs is proposed. This model includes the influences of funder requirements, organisational learning, and evidence-based literature and theories. Furthermore, the constraints of these influences and the strategies that NGOs take to manage them are revealed. This model shows that while the influences of funder requirements and organisation in-learnings seem to be comparable in scope and frequency, in-learnings are more valued than funder requirements. Moreover, evidence-based research was only found to have a small influence on decision-making and programme design especially due to the perception of "outsider" feedback versus organisational in-learnings. This study presents preliminary best practise suggestions for both funders and GBV NGOs and a broad view of the trends, practises, and drivers of decision-making in the GBV NGO sector. Various stakeholders, NGOs, and funders can draw learnings from the results of this research and adjust where necessary and possible to improve their interventions and/or their practise.

Preface

As a MPhil Programme Evaluation Masters student, we need to complete a 60-credit dissertation. This research is usually an evaluation conducted for a local intervention and written up as a client report. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and various lockdown restrictions, at the time of my registration, South African Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) were unable to deliver their interventions and this affected the possibility of evaluating a programme, as such I received approval to conduct research about evaluation practice in South Africa instead. This dissertation reports my research project. This research was borne out of my interest in Gender-based Violence (GBV) in South Africa.

Introduction

As a country struggling to come to grips with the extremely high levels of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) corroding the social and political fabrics of society, it has never been more important to acknowledge the dimensions of struggles and activism, and investigate what is hindering the impact of GBV interventions of GBV. In preparing the scope of this research, I conducted informal interviews with individuals working for GBV NGOs. Anecdotal evidence from this preliminary investigation suggested that these organisations were struggling with various complexities in this sector.

Firstly, staff suggested that funders dictated and had strong influence over GBV organisations' programmes (anonymous, personal communication, April 15, 2021). This included prescribing programme designs and implementation strategies, as well as exerting unnecessary pressure on M&E practises. Secondly, a lack of information to aid the design of programmes was experienced (anonymous, personal communication, April 21, 2021). Staff felt that their organisations were isolated and outlined that there was no sense of community within the sector. They stated that organisations rarely shared evaluation results and best practise frameworks, and that there were no opportunities for collaboration (anonymous, personal communication, April 15, 2021). I confirmed the lack of accessible information and limited published research in this area, aside from short website descriptions of interventions. This means that it is difficult to devise for whom these interventions are working and in what context, which is alarming for a country with such a severe GBV prevalence. The lack of design and process evaluations also makes designing successful programmes difficult for NGOs (anonymous, personal communication, April 21, 2021).

Based on the feedback obtained, my research project was designed to examine the practices of GBV NGOs in South Africa (with a specific focus on what informs organisational decision-making regarding GBV programme theory, design, implementation and evaluation) in the hope of providing some insight into what could be hindering the impact of GBV interventions in South Africa.

The research question was therefore:

What influences NGOs' decisions around the theory, design, implementation, and evaluation of SA GBV interventions?

Literature Review

A literature review was conducted to report on the context of GBV globally and in South Africa, showing the magnitude thereof and the global goals concerning the eradication of GBV. To understand decision-making regarding intervention approaches and designs for GBV NGOs, the review then identified the types of interventions implemented in South Africa and the most prolific GBV NGOs active today. Next, the common intervention designs used globally and locally were explored. Finally, the literature review looked at the use and frequency of evaluations, the roles of funders, the various responses NGOs have adopted globally to deal with funders' influences, and the NGO-researcher relationship.

Global Magnitude and State of Gender-based Violence

GBV is physical, psychological, or sexual violence perpetrated against a group or individual based on their gender or gender norms (Dlamini, 2021; see also Cooper et al., 2013). Forms of GBV include but are not limited to threats of violence, coercion or indiscriminate deprivation of liberty, intimate partner violence, and sexual abuse and assault, whether occurring in public or private life (UN Women, 2022). Global empirical evidence shows that GBV is most often perpetrated by men against women and children and is widespread throughout the life cycles of women – infancy, adolescence, adulthood and old age (Gevers et al., 2013; see also Arango et al., 2014; Gevers & Dartnall, 2014).

The terms 'violence against women' and 'gender-based violence' are frequently used interchangeably in the literature, however, the latter highlights the gendered dimension of the violence; that is, the relationship between females' vulnerability to violence and their subordinate status to men in society (UN Women, 2020) which is vital to understand when discussing these issues.

Globally, women are battling GBV which includes and ranges from assault and rape, sexual harassment, domestic violence, and intimate femicide (Hicks & Segooa, 2011). The prevalence rates and indicators thereof vary, and robust and reliable statistics are scarce (Cooper et al., 2013). Global estimates published by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2021) specify that one in every three women (35%) will experience sexual or physical abuse in their lifetime (WHO, 2021). Globally, 7% of women have been sexually assaulted by someone who is not their partner; furthermore, as many as 38% of murders of women are committed by an intimate partner (WHO, 2021). GBV remains enveloped in a culture of silence despite its obvious adverse effects on the security, dignity, health, and autonomy of its

victims. It has been found that less than 40% of women who experience such violence choose to report it; and of those who do, most seek help from a family member or a friend and less than 10% go to the police (UN Women, 2022).

The cost violence against women and girls globally, including loss of work, medical and mental healthcare, and impact on the quality of life was estimated at US\$1.5 trillion, or approximately 2% of the global domestic product in 2020 before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (UN Women, 2022).

The growing globalisation of the women's movement has ensured the development of data-collection initiatives that aim to achieve international comparability of indicators, as well as the ongoing improvement of the definition and understanding of violence against women, which currently incorporates cultural forms of violence, such as female genital mutilation, as well as health and survival related issues that were previously excluded (Swart, 2015). The WHO, in collaboration with partners, is gathering evidence regarding the size and nature of violence against women in different settings as well as supporting countries' strategies to measure and document violence and the consequences thereof (WHO, 2022). This is being done in the context of monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals which were implemented in 2015 to supersede the Millennium Goals.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a plan of action for a global society that seeks to "strengthen universal peace and larger freedom" and is to be implemented by all stakeholders and countries (United Nations, 2017, p. 3). Development Goal 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. The goals, targets, and their relevant indicators, as well as South Africa's current progress, are shown in Appendix A, Table A1.

GBV in South Africa

South Africa is considered to have one of the most comprehensive definitions of "domestic violence" and "sexual offences" worldwide. According to the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998, "domestic violence" includes:

- a) physical abuse; b) sexual abuse; c) emotional, verbal and psychological abuse; d) economic abuse; e) intimidation; f) harassment; g) stalking; h) damage to property; i) entry into the complainant's residence without consent, where the parties do not share the same residence; or j) any other controlling or abusive behaviour towards a complainant, "where such conduct harms, or may cause imminent harm to, the safety, health or wellbeing of the complainant.

Each of the mentioned abuses are then further defined in the act, as summarized in Appendix B. Furthermore, on 28 January 2022, President Ramaphosa signed three new GBV

laws aimed at strengthening the country's efforts to end GBV: the Domestic Violence Amendment Act (Republic of South Africa, 2022a), the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (Republic of South Africa, 2022b), and the Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Act (Republic of South Africa, 2022c).

However, despite these comprehensive and relevant definitions and specific laws in South Africa's legislation, the statistics on GBV in South Africa are alarmingly high. The Africa Health Organisation (2021) outlines that about 51% of women in South Africa state that they have suffered GBV and 76% of men state that they have perpetrated GBV at one point in their lives. In 2019/2020, 53 293 sexual offences were reported, which is an average of 146 cases a day (South African Police Service, Strategic Management, 2021). Additionally, in 2019/2020, a total of 2 695 women were murdered by femicide, revealing that, femicide in South Africa is five times higher than the global average (Wilkinson, 2019). Similarly, according to the WHO (2021), South Africa has the fourth-highest female interpersonal-violence death rate. Moreover, it is estimated that these numbers far exceed those reported, as these acts of violence often go unreported in South Africa. In the South African Police Service Annual Crime Report 2020/2021, domestic violence is named as one of the leading causes of contact crimes (SAPS Strategic Management, 2021). Additionally, violence against women and children makes up 224 912 of these reports where common forms of violence include incidence of assaults (common, grievous bodily harm and sexual assault), attempted murder, and murder (SAPS Strategic Management, 2021).

GBV in South Africa, particularly, "pervades the political, economic and social structures of society and is driven by strongly patriarchal social norms and complex intersectional power inequalities, including those of gender, race, class, and sexuality" (Cronelious et al., 2014, p. 3). Furthermore, GBV is more prevalent in societies, like South Africa, where male superiority is perceived as the norm, and a culture of violence exists (Cornelious et al., 2014). South Africa has developed progressive legislative and policy frameworks which attempt to address GBV; these include various campaigns and national strategies, such as the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children and 365 Day National Action Plan to End Gender Violence.

In 2019, amidst heightened public concerns and increasing media coverage of the escalating incidences of GBV in South Africa, President Cyril Ramaphosa answered the mounting pressure from civil society for urgent action by introducing an Emergency Response Action Plan (ERAP) to address GBV and femicide in the country. This ERAP was adapted in 2020 to create a National Gender-based Violence and Femicide Strategic Plan

(NSP) which is a government and civil society's multi-sectoral strategic framework to work towards a South Africa free from GBV and femicide (National Strategic Plan on Gender-based Violence & Femicide, 2020). Strategies such as strengthening state and societal accountability, driving prevention, addressing harmful gender norms in society and institutions, and rooting responses in communities underpin the objectives of the NSP. The NSP comprises a thorough and detailed monitoring and evaluation framework which includes the various interventions and their activities, indicators, and targets. Furthermore, it outlines the accountability of lead departments for each activity's monitoring. While this is a positive step towards addressing GBV, it is not yet clear whether positive impacts are being achieved.

The obligation to prevent GBV, provide comprehensive services to survivors, and challenge the gender inequality that both causes and perpetrates GBV lies with the state, and in many contexts around the world the normative frameworks to tackle GBV exist (ActionAid, 2012). In reality, however, no government in the world is proficiently fulfilling these obligations (ActionAid, 2012). The reasons for this vary and incorporate a lack of political will and low institutional capacity at national, regional, and local levels (ActionAid, 2012). In countries like South Africa, resources are limited to deal with this type of violence. Additionally, political will is lacking to find long-term resolutions (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012; see also Jewkes, 2002). As a result, many women turn to civil society, specifically NGO services, when they are victims of GBV. By supporting GBV NGOs, for example, by providing core funding (in South Africa's context via the Department of Social Development), the state can ensure that civil society has the resources to share its good practice with the state, raise awareness of services and rights, increase access to justice, and hold the state accountable (Mahlangu et al., 2021; see also ActionAid, 2012; Jewkes et al., 2008).

Intervention Approaches and Designs

As a Global Development Goal, many strategies have been employed in the fight against GBV and each has strong theoretical underpinnings and pathways to impact. Public health and civil society interventions can be divided into three types: primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention (Figure 1).

In the context of violence, primary prevention aims to prevent the violence from occurring, while secondary prevention aims to identify the violence early and prevent the development or repetition of the event (Kirk et al., 2017). Tertiary prevention aims to prevent negative long-term outcomes associated with violence (Kirk et al., 2017).

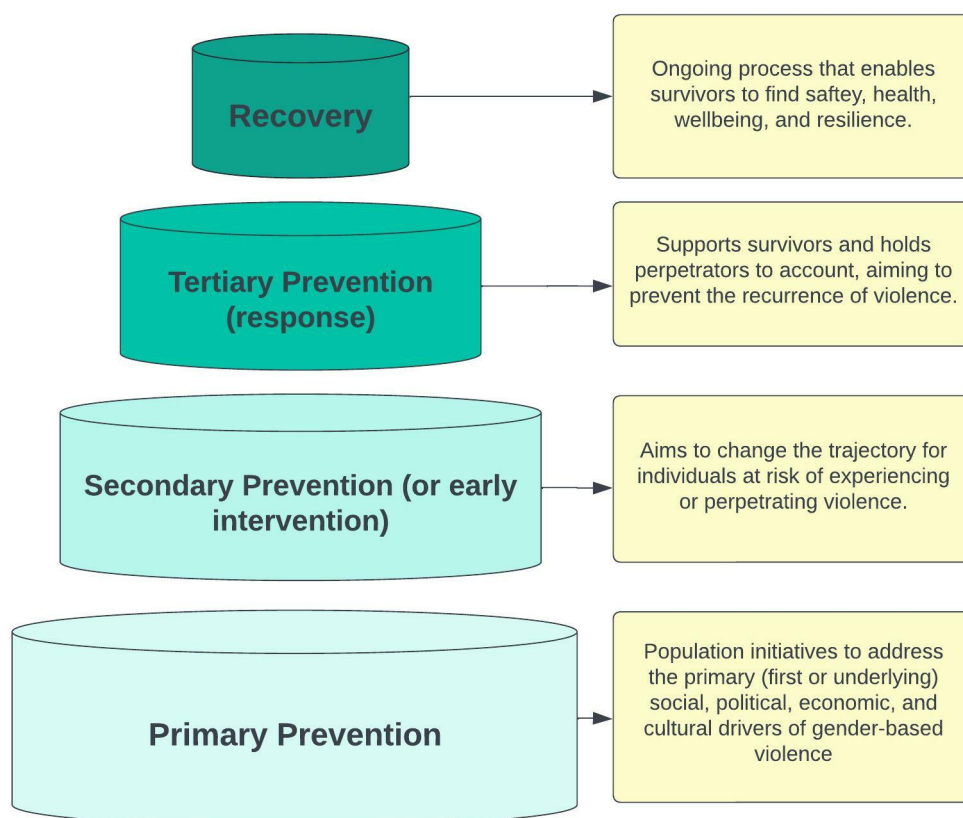


Figure 1. Primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention strategies for GBV

Types of Interventions

Secondary and Tertiary Prevention Interventions. Numerous NGOs in South Africa and globally provide essential support to survivors. These secondary and tertiary interventions seek to address or treat violence once it has already occurred and prevent further damage as a result of the violence; this is often at the situational or individual victim levels (Cooper et al., 2013). The rationale behind this approach is that survivors of GBV are likely to suffer negative physical, mental, and sexual health outcomes as they frequently develop posttraumatic stress disorder and high levels of depression and anxiety (O'Brien & Macy, 2016). Survivors who suffer from psychological symptoms often find it difficult to effectively participate in their treatments (i.e., mental and physical health treatments and/or psychosocial services) and often these circumstances, as well as lack of economic resources, mean that women stay in situations where violence is likely to occur again. In response to this, Kim et al. (2007) outline two thematic areas of secondary and tertiary responses to

GBV, including 1) increasing access to justice for survivors, and 2) providing support to the women and children who have been affected by violence.

Interventions available offer a wide range of aid for women such as counselling, legal and economic empowerment, legal advice and advocacy, workshops and training, and shelter services. These interventions aim to empower women to remove themselves from adverse situations or recover adequately so that GBV does not cause long-term consequences. These interventions should be culturally specific and sensitive as cultural context can influence one's risk for GBV and their resiliency in surviving GBV (O'Brien & Macy, 2016; see also DeGue et al., 2012). For example, unequal gender norms persevere in cultures worldwide as the roles of women and men are significantly imbalanced. This often ensures that social and cultural pressure works to ensure women remain passive and innocent, whereas few cultural demands are placed on men to practise sexual self-control or treat women with respect (O'Brien & Macy, 2016). There are different expectations of men and women which obstruct the establishment of responsible, healthy and equitable intimate and familial relationships that promote women's wellbeing, autonomy, and mental health. Secondary and tertiary interventions target prescribed gender roles of communities, religions, and collectivism that may both perpetuate and normalise GBV. They further engage to improve women's abilities to make informed decisions about their health and work with local service providers in the pursuit of justice or support.

In Kirk et al.'s (2017) systematic review of the success of secondary and tertiary prevention strategies for GBV in low and low-middle income countries, 22 studies were included and explored. Only primary research and studies that focused on secondary or tertiary prevention for survivors of GBV were considered. This study found that there is some indication that interventions targeting substance abuse (mainly alcohol-use), both among perpetrators and survivors, may be successful in reducing GBV through secondary prevention, and psychotherapy may be successful for survivors of GBV through tertiary prevention (Kirk et al., 2017). They did, however, highlight that evidence of impact is weak and various study limitations prevented definitive conclusions about what is successful in this area.

Figure 2 provides an impact pathway diagram for secondary and tertiary interventions tackling GBV which I developed from a review of the literature. This theory of change is presented as linear (for ease), however, the processes of change around GBV are complicated, multidirectional and highly context-specific. This impact pathway therefore,

should be considered as an analytical framework that should be cross-examined and modified to specific contexts where the relevant feedback loops within and between the various elements are considered. The secondary and tertiary nature of the theory of change is evident in the focus on women and girls (victims), rather than men and boys (most often perpetrators).

This impact pathway broadly outlines the series of steps involved in certain secondary and primary interventions to make their desired change or impact. This figure first presents the problem that the impact pathway seeks to solve and the barriers that have been identified against this goal. These barriers include assumptions of the context within which the impact pathway is located that can hinder the progress and efficacy of the interventions. The causal chain of events outlined in this figure include: inputs, outputs, outcomes, impacts, and long-term impacts. The inputs refers to the strategies, activities, or interventions employed; in this case, the broad inputs include the different types of interventions according to their aims and their strategies to achieve these aims. The outputs identify who is affected by the specific described inputs and what is produced (the direct result of the service). The outcomes identify the humanitarian value derived from the outputs, including changes related to behaviour; practice; policy; and social, economic, and political conditions. Finally, the impacts and long-term impacts identify the systematic changes that are the result of the accumulation of outcomes described above. Impacts usually take years to occur and are difficult to measure, however they provide a good foundation to define the possible appropriate outcomes and their measures.

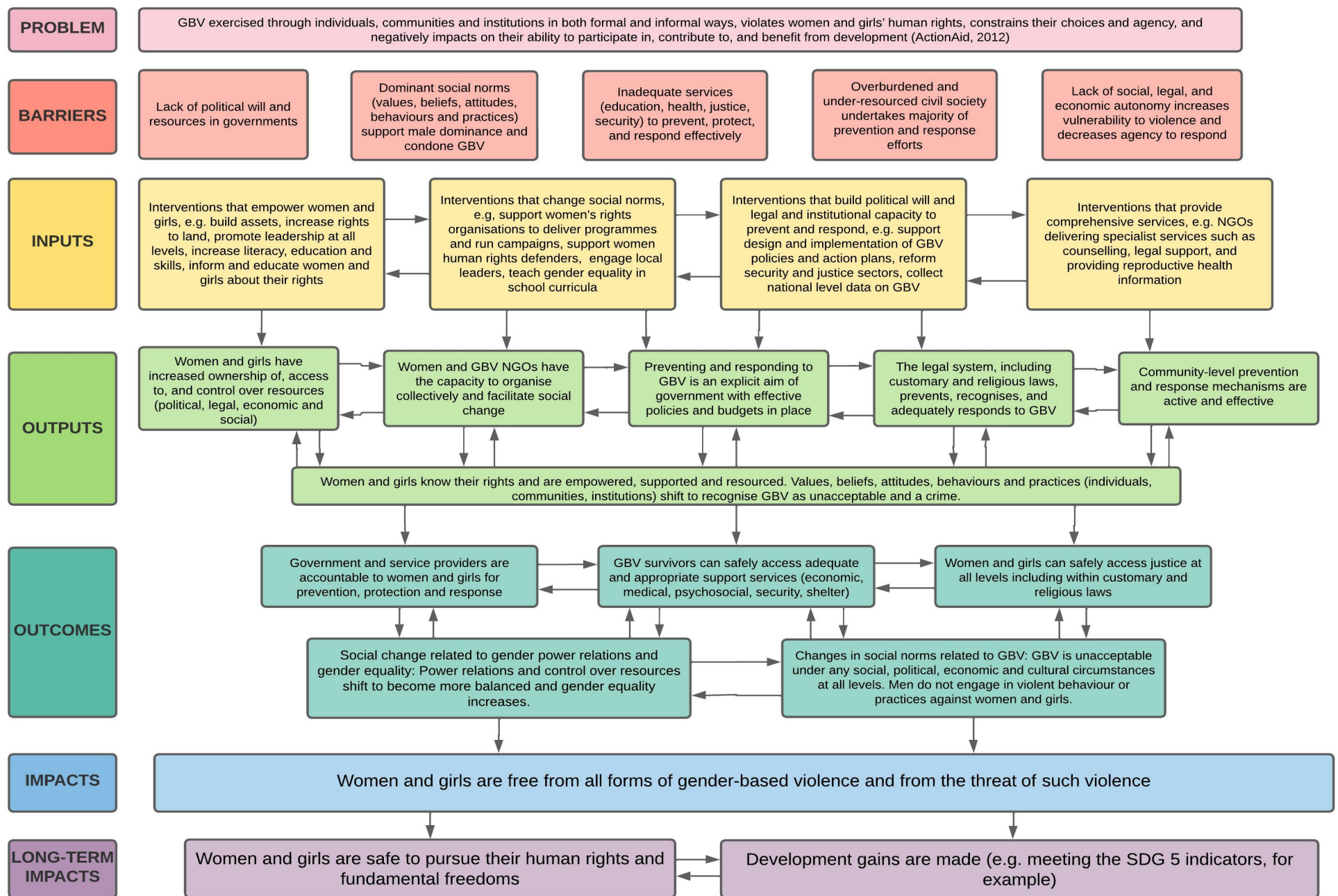


Figure 2. Impact pathway diagram for secondary and tertiary interventions for GBV as developed from a review of literature

Primary Prevention Interventions. Primary prevention interventions aim to prevent violence before it has happened by targeting the source of the violence, usually through educational outreach and/or targeting social norms through societal and situational levels (Dworkin & Barker, 2019; see also Cooper, et al., 2013; Gevers et al., 2013). The underlying logic of primary interventions is based on the idea that ending GBV is an matter of social justice on the collective-level, not only for the individual survivors. Thus, engaging men and boys as stakeholders and participants in GBV prevention initiatives is an progressively institutionalised element of international efforts to end GBV. This is not, however, a leading strategy in South Africa (Dworkin & Barker, 2019; see also Gevers et al., 2013).

Research by Gevers et al. (2013) identified common strategies of primary prevention interventions. These included: a) achieving gender equality and challenging hegemonic masculinities (otherwise known as gender-transformative interventions (Dworkin & Barker, 2019)); b) challenging the prevalent sociocultural behaviours and attitudes that are accommodating of the use of violence; c) reducing substance abuse; d) developing relationship-building skills; and e) improving conflict resolution and communication skills.

While reviews by Barker et al. (2007), Barker et al. (2010), and UNFPA and Promundo (2010) are not able to provide a particular set of tools and strategies to employ men and boys in these complex issues, the researchers did propose, however, that the most successful strategies for changing behaviours and attitudes use a gender-transformative approach. This approach challenges strict gender roles and questions the influence of community, social-cultural, and institution factors as well as individual attitudes and beliefs (Dworkin & Barker, 2019; see also Casey et al., 2012). By engaging and targeting men and boys to foster gender-equitable masculinities and encouraging them to actively fight for the prevention of GBV, primary interventions broadly aim to achieve positive change in four components: transformative, relational, sustained, and structural (Dworkin & Barker, 2019).

Feminist theory and social norms theory underpin the approaches used in primary and in some secondary prevention strategies (Dworkin & Barker, 2019). The feminist rationale is a theoretical framework, frequently known as a key paradigm related to gender equality work (Carlson et al., 2015). This rests on the argument that if the goal is to end GBV, then men, as the primary perpetrators of violence against women, should be included and involved (Black et al., 2011). The pro-feminist theory further highlights that the ending of GBV is also in the interest of men and boys. In feminist-informed programmes, critical examinations of

traditional assumptions regarding masculinity and gender are essential components of engagements with men concerning dismantling violence (Casey et al., 2013).

Another theory-informed approach includes addressing social norms which is often used when discussing the commitment of men and boys in violence prevention. This perspective posits that individuals' misperceptions of social norms increase problem behaviours and decrease the incidence of healthy behaviours. It then follows that engaging men and identifying the misunderstandings of men's agreement with each other's violent and sexist supportive norms, thereby challenging their own attitudes and beliefs, can decrease the perpetration of GBV by men (Carlson et al., 2015). Through education and media campaigns, for example, social norms approaches endeavour to resolve misperceptions and empower the quiet majority of men who value non-violence to take a more active stand in supporting those ideals (Carlson et al., 2015).

In a review by Barker et al. (2010), data from 58 GBV evaluation studies, from around the world, were analysed. Results show that the promotion of gender-transformative approaches with men is beneficial (Barker et al., 2010). The findings specifically point to best practices that included group education, such as; mass media campaigns, community outreach, mobilisation; and service-based programs (Barker et al., 2010; see also Carlson et al., 2015). While primary prevention is undeniably crucial for the long-term decline or eradication of GBV, the process of altering deep-rooted societal beliefs is slow; therefore, the current need for secondary and tertiary GBV interventions is dire. Furthermore, in South Africa, it is found that NGOs focus predominantly on secondary interventions despite the positive results from primary interventions (Jewkes et al., 2019).

Organisations and Interventions in South Africa

Table C2 in Appendix C includes information on 10 NGOs implementing GBV programmes in South Africa. Where available, evaluation reports and results are presented. The number of GBV NGOs in South Africa is difficult to obtain as there are various organisations, both registered and unregistered, that work in specific local communities, provinces, or nationally and internationally in neighbouring African countries. Table 2 provides insight into some of these organisations by looking at those mentioned in literature about GBV interventions and mentioned as being some of the largest and longest established organisations working in major cities in South Africa.

Primary interventions available in South Africa include fostering gender-equitable and non-violent attitudes and behaviours among men through programmes such as

MenEngage, *One Man Can*, *MenCare+*, and awareness and advocacy campaigns. Evaluators have conducted positive impact evaluations for these interventions (Gibbs et al., 2020; see also Jewkes et al., 2008; Skevington et al., 2012). Casey et al. (2013) highlight the *MenCare* global programme as being effective in gaining the initial engagement of men by centring conversations around topics that are focused on men, such as promoting men's involvement in fathering and effective parenting and providing men with opportunities to reflect on ideas about positive, healthy masculinity. Similarly, Casey et al. (2017) found that strategies that tailor messaging to topics of particular concern to men were rated most highly by their sample of men who had previously taken part in GBV prevention interventions.

There are a wide variety of secondary and tertiary GBV interventions operating in South Africa as our effort has been focused predominantly on this response (Safer Spaces, 2020). These include multifaceted response approaches to enable survivors or people and communities at risk to avoid GBV and the negative effects it has on individuals, families, and communities. These responses include psycho-social counselling and psycho-therapy for rape and sexual assault survivors, support groups, and social work support (e.g. *Rape Crisis*' rape counselling services), where individuals' psychological health and the abilities to cope are targeted by professionals who are equipped and trained to deal with traumatic events such as rape and assault. Shelter services aim to help women and children leave unsafe spaces where violence can occur and provide them with safe living spaces, resources, and skills to empower themselves (NSMSA, 2022). For example, the Mpumalanga Shelter Service, while providing shelter for survivors, also implements economic empowerment and skills development programmes to ensure that women are no longer dependent on perpetrators (Booyesen, 2020). Skills training is a widely implemented strategy of response and includes economic (e.g. banking and budgeting workshops), agricultural (e.g. subsistence farming skills), psycho-social (e.g. strategies for coping), and professional skills (e.g. skills that can render income such as typing, driving, and beauty therapy). Other forms of secondary and tertiary prevention interventions employed in South Africa include medical and legal aid services and advocacy work.

When considering the types of GBV interventions and their successes both globally and in South Africa, it is necessary to explore the current state of monitoring and evaluation practises and the possible influences thereof.

Evaluations of GBV Interventions

One of the best ways to explore GBV interventions, evaluations, and successes worldwide is through systematic reviews of literature about the impacts or characteristics of programmes. Three seminal reviews have built on each other since 2007 and are continuously mentioned in the literature. These reviews pertain directly to gender-transformative interventions, namely Barker et al. (2010), Dworkin et al. (2013), and Casey et al. (2018). These systematic reviews outline the most effective programmes and intervention strategies from groups of studies. The eligibility criteria, however, of the studies reviewed in each of the three seminal reviews are slightly different. This means that while one can grasp the changes in the sector through time, it is imperative to remember that the conditions vary, and the results should not be compared without this knowledge.

Barker et al. (2010), reviewed 58 evaluation studies of programmes with men and boys in reproductive and sexual health; father involvement; GBV; and gender socialisation. The criteria for inclusion in the review included: a) the programme exemplified a strategy to work with men and boys; b) some level of qualitative and/or quantitative data was collected for evaluations of impact; and c) the evaluation data or results had been published within the previous 20 years (Barker et al., 2010). The overall success of the considered programmes was calculated according to the rigour of the evaluation design and level of impact which were ranked according to outlined criteria. Of the 58 studies: 29% were evaluated as being successful in changing behaviours or attitudes of men, 38% were evaluated as being promising, and 33% were evaluated as being unclear (Barker et al., 2010). Limitations of this review include that only a few of the reviewed programmes go beyond the pilot stage, or had somewhat short-term timeframes. Thus, while it offers compelling evidence that well-designed programmes can lead to positive changes in certain spheres, the results should be critically explored. Similarly, the considered programme evaluation's impact was measured nearly entirely by changes among individual men and not at the level of broader social norms (Barker et al., 2010).

Dworkin et al. (2013) conducted a systematic review that examined HIV and GBV outcomes for eight gender-transformative interventions around the world. They found that six of the eight interventions, situated in China, India, Ethiopia, and South Africa, had significant positive outcomes resulting in the reduction of the perpetration of sexual and physical violence against women. The level of analysis used by the evaluations carried out, included small group discussions, cluster-randomised trials, and community engagement (Dworkin et al., 2013). Outcomes included changes in sexual, physical, emotional or psychosocial

violence and attempted rape. It was found that 10 of the 17 indicators had shifted positively, while the other seven showed no change.

Casey et al. (2018) systematically reviewed ten new interventions that had emerged to reduce GBV. This review excluded manuscripts included in Dworkin et al.'s 2013 review. The inclusion criteria differed from Barker et al. (2010) as it required each evaluation to use an indicator of at least one attitudinal or behavioural change in men to show impact. In the study, seven of the ten interventions improved gender-equitable attitudes among men, and eight resulted in a decrease in women's experiences of intimate partner violence (Casey et al., 2018). None of the studies showed substantial negative results, such as an increase in GBV, therefore bolstering the case for a trend toward effectiveness.

Kirk et al. (2017) is the only systematic review found that looks at the effectiveness of secondary and tertiary prevention strategies for GBV that address the needs of survivors of violence and aim to prevent recurrence. All studies that examined a client-related outcome measure (e.g., incidence of violence, health outcomes, or client satisfaction) were eligible. From reviewing 22 eligible studies, it was found that the evidence for intervention impact was weak and various study limitations prevented definitive conclusions on what works. As mentioned previously, there is some evidence for interventions targeting alcohol use or implementing psychotherapy in tertiary prevention strategies (Kirk et al., 2017).

There is a limited number of high-quality studies on programme effectiveness available worldwide and especially recently (Kirk et al., 2017). From the literature available, however, evaluations of GBV programmes and their impact on a global front generally show positive impacts and favour primary strategies that focus on the prevention of GBV, not just on services for its survivors (Willman & Corman, 2013; see also Heise, 2011).

Several reviews and studies have been undertaken that provide good evidence of effective and promising primary prevention GBV programmes in developing countries. These incorporate gender-transformative and women's economic empowerment interventions (e.g., *IMAGE*; *Creating Futures*; and *Stepping Stones*) (Jewkes et al., 2013); workshop-based programmes aiming to build gender equity and strengthen relationship skills (Wagman et al., 2016); school-based interventions (Mathews et al., 2016); and community action and outreach and group education (e.g. *SASA!*) (Abramsky et al., 2014).

Published evaluations and reports of GBV programmes in South Africa are scarce. A literature search and thorough review of resources available on organisation websites showed that, when available, these documents are not up to date and often only report on the scope of the evaluation (as seen in Table 2). Limited information is shared about programme impacts,

lessons learned, and best practice strategies. With limited evaluation reports available, the positive impacts, if any, of South African interventions are unknown.

Of the 10 organisations in South Africa depicted in Table 2, only three have their evaluation results available to the public. These evaluations included four impact evaluations and one process evaluation, with the most recent being in 2018 (Marock et al., 2018; Jewkes et al., 2008; Pronyk et al., 2006; Colvin et al., 2009; Hargreaves et al., 2010). The impact evaluations found successes in the awareness of gender equality and the understanding of masculinity, a reduction in sexual and violent behaviours among men, an increase in condom-use, a decrease in HIV infections reported in women, and significant effects in domains relating to women's empowerment (Marock et al., 2018; Jewkes et al., 2008; Pronyk et al., 2006; Hargreaves et al., 2010; Colvin et al., 2009). The process evaluation on *Intervention with Microfinance and Gender Equality* (IMAGE) found the microfinance and gender training programme to be feasible, accessible and acceptable for female participants (Hargreaves et al., 2010). Barriers to collective action were found to be experienced by participants and noted as a possible reason for the lack of impact found among household/community members found in the previous Pronyk et al., (2006) study. This process evaluation also concluded that the programme delivery was feasible in the short-term but likely unsustainable in the long-term (Hargreaves et al., 2010).

There are no systematic reviews or meta-analyses that consider the effectiveness of South African GBV interventions. Some studies on South African programmes have been used in global reviews, however, in a subject where context and culture are so imperative and sensitive, it would be beneficial to have a systematic review investigating the state or history of South African GVB interventions and their impacts. This would only be achievable if evaluations are regularly and consistently conducted, however, this is not apparent in the research available online.

Context is Critical

To understand the specific factors that affect GBV in a particular context, the first step for any programme aimed at challenging GBV must be to conduct comprehensive situational analyses, including a gendered power analysis (i.e., an analysis of the particular socio-economic situations of men and women) (ActionAid, 2012). These analyses should contain questions concerning what the leading types of violence in the context are; who is affected by GBV, and how; who the perpetrators are; where the violence takes place; how different types of violence and their causes and consequences are perceived by various

stakeholders; what the current state of accessibility to services is; and the prevalence of GBV (ActionAid, 2012).

As unequal gender power relations and related social norms are foundational causes of GBV and occur differently in different social, political and cultural contexts, it follows that context is crucial when it comes to decisions about GBV interventions. Successful interventions need to be tailored and based on rigorous analyses of particular factors affecting GBV in a given context. These factors include the setting (such as conflict, humanitarian or more stable situations); the level at which the violence occurs (e.g., within an intimate partner relationship); the forms of violence (examining perpetrators and types of violence); and the population affected by the violence (e.g., women living with HIV or women involved in the sex industry) (ActionAid, 2012). Once these factors have been analysed the interventions can be appropriately planned and selected.

The Influence of Funders on Decision-making in NGOs

Donors are key players in aiding recipient and developing countries and often funding civil society organisations. Most civil society in the Global South depends on donor agencies and funders for their survival (Elbers & Arts, 2011). To qualify for funding, NGOs typically have to meet a range of funding conditions. Dworkin and Barker (2019) highlight that it is critical to consider how the constraints and conditions of funders can influence interventions and cause some programmes to change their more radical content. Through their funding conditions, donors are known to exercise influence over NGOs' project designs and implementations; set requirements for monitoring, reporting, and evaluation; and withhold funding except for specific activities (Elbers & Act, 2011; Ismail, 2019). Ismail (2019) considers funders to be administrative barriers that curtail access to funding for NGOs in the Global South by influencing their profiles and programmes.

Elbers and Art (2011) conducted qualitative research on 41 NGOs in India and Ghana to explore the potentially adverse effects of donor conditions on NGOs and the strategies employed to deal with these conditions. This study found that donor conditions cover three main areas: project design and planning; accountability; and funding arrangements (Elbers & Art, 2011). Regarding project design and planning, essentially all donors work with requirements that prescribe the type of projects they wish to support; the criteria typically include themes, target groups, strategies, and geographical areas (Elbers & Art, 2011). Dworkin and Barker (2019) indicated that radical programme content is often changed by donors who stipulate the types of activities and overall programme designs that they are

prepared to fund. In times of funding fluctuations, there is evidence that some NGOs automatically follow donors' interests or voluntarily adapt to their situations (AbouAssi, 2013). An NGO establishes credibility by demonstrating that it represents the interests of a particular constituency or the national interest; therefore, NGOs that receive foreign funding face a significant challenge in proving that they are politically independent and that their programme designs and implementations are not unduly influenced by their donors (Mutongwizo, 2018). It has been found in past literature that as donor priorities expand into new areas, NGOs are compelled to pursue this funding and change their programme designs, implementation, and activities, even if it is in areas where they have little experience (Parks, 2008).

The second aspect affected by funder requirements, outlined by Elbert and Art (2011), relates to accountability as most donors expect periodical financial and narrative reports that present the progress and performances of projects against precontracted goals, intended results, indicators, timelines, and budgets (Elbers & Art, 2011). Hulme and Edwards define accountability as how "individuals and organisations report to a recognised authority and are held responsible for their actions" (cited in Meuller-Hirth, 2012, p. 4). A distinction is often made between upward and downward NGO accountability, with upward accountability mechanisms involving presenting NGO outcomes and actions to donors, usually following the formats and processes required by funders, and downward accountability being dispensed to the beneficiaries of programmes (Agyemang et al., 2018). It is often stated that upward accountability functions in an overly restraining manner which may render improvements in and assessments of intervention success more problematic.

These accountability requirements have been considered in the literature to affect the M&E practises of NGOs (Agyemang et al., 2018; see also Meuller-Hirth, 2012). M&E, and the types of vocabularies, expertise, and practices encouraged, is vital area that is often neglected in the research of NGOs, despite the significant impact they have on NGOs' logic of operation (Meuller-Hirth, 2012). M&E provides NGOs with tools to measure success and efficiency, and is also beneficial in encouraging political and public cooperation, promoting skills development, satisfying needs for information, and encouraging organisational learning (Agyemang et al., 2018; see also Meuller-Hirth, 2012). Meuller-Hirth (2012) found that organisational sustainability, organisational learning, and power relationships with donors were the key themes of their research to affect NGO professionals' perceptions and practices of M&E in their organisations in South Africa. Ideally, M&E should encompass both NGO-determined and externally-determined systems; that is, donor accountability and NGO

learning (Meuller-Hirth, 2012). Furthermore, these two should significantly overlap; however, it remains to be seen if this is the case in the GBV NGO sector of South Africa. While the broad notion of external accountability has been widely studied, there is a lack of literature that analyses the internal organisational responses to such accountability pressures. It is necessary to investigate how M&E and accountability requirements affect GBV NGOs, particularly regarding the influence on organisational culture and specific capacities, resources, and skills needed to fulfil donors' data requirements.

Dworkin and Barker (2019) further demonstrate that to secure funding, programmes' formal evaluations are often pressed into short-format randomised trials as there is often increased pressure to use the gold standard randomised control trial (RCT) to produce evidence that an intervention works. For example, the Centre for Disease Control Prevention (CDC), a funder in the United States of America, urged the *Manhood 2.0* programme to be shortened from a 16-week to a 6-week curriculum with the belief that a shorter intervention would be more likely to be taken to scale and the need to make decisions based on an RCT quickly (Dworkin & Barker, 2019). While well-intentioned in reducing costs and time, such approaches have been found to water down an intervention and decrease its effectiveness (Dworkin & Barker, 2019).

The final set of conditions, according to Elbert and Art (2011), regarding funding arrangements demonstrate how funders often earmark their funds for particular expenses and do not allow the organisations to use their funds for overhead costs (e.g., human resources and fundraising). This is considered to have an impact on NGOs' sustainability and abilities to strengthen and grow their organisations in the long-term (Cammack, 2013). Moreover, funders work with fixed periods for which they agree to provide funding. If the project runs over time, additional funding to complete it is not guaranteed (Elbert & Art, 2011).

The funder-NGO relationship is described by AbouAssi (2014) as volatile; where frequent fluctuations in funding priorities foster uncertainty in the NGO sector and lead to additional confusion and competition among organisations. Past literature has suggested that competition among NGOs for donor funding creates incentives for organisations to work harder, ignore tendencies to misappropriate funds, and decrease unnecessary costs (Parks, 2008). In theory, therefore, a highly competitive NGO sector could improve the influence and successfulness of civil society as high-performing NGOs will improve and prosper while the ineffectual organisations gradually fail (Parks, 2008). The negative effects of competition among NGOs in the literature include the decrease in NGO cooperation (Koch, 2011), the adoption of objectives and activities that fall out of the sector's scope (Mutongwizo, 2018),

fostering opportunistic behaviour, weakening coordination, and undermining collective action goals (Willner-Reid, 2018).

NGO-researcher Relationship

Throughout the literature, there are calls for GBV programmes to be evidence-based, that is, built on what has been implemented before and found to be effective; informed by theoretical models; guided by formative and pilot research; and multifaceted to address several causal factors (Safer Spaces, 2020). This necessitates the learning of organisations through the use of external research. There is various literature regarding the NGO-researcher relationship during the process of research, while conducting data collection when researchers and organisations collaborate to conduct studies (Farnworth & Vaarst, 2012; Olivier et al., 2016); however, only a few articles outline the implementation of study results by NGOs and the success thereof.

When investigating collaborative studies between NGOs and external researchers, past literature has highlighted the need for sufficient prior agreement of mutual expectations of the contributions of the study and the research principles (Olivier et al., 2016) and continuous feedback and reflection processes involving the host organisation, research team, and intended end-users of the results (Farnworth & Vaarst, 2012). Successful and sustainable NGO-researcher partnerships should be characterised by trust, transparency, respect, and mutual contributions (Rathgeber, 2009). The key challenges described in the literature for such a relationship are asymmetric power relations; lack of recognition and respect for the contributions made by each partner (Olivier et al., 2016); and divergent goals and approaches (Rathgeber, 2009).

While not widely investigated, various barriers have been found to inhibit the uptake of external researchers' suggestions by NGOs. These include NGOs' sense of distrust; decreased value placed on findings due to an assumed lack of researchers' consideration for the context in which the NGO operates (Ormel et al., 2020); and differences in the institutional cultures and research goals of NGOs and researchers (Olivier et al., 2016; Rathgeber, 2009). It is not clear if these hindrances are affecting GBV NGOs in South Africa and the possible learning and improvement that NGOs can experience in the growing field of research regarding GBV.

Research Aims, Objectives, and Questions

As confirmed in the literature review, the state of the GBV NGO sector is not only vital to address but also fairly unknown to stakeholders of the sector seeking to achieve drastic positive impacts. The mechanisms of decision-making, as well as the influences thereof, for GBV NGOs in South Africa, remain unresearched. An understanding of how these important NGOs function with regard to inter-organisational collaboration and cooperation can further elucidate possible organisational practices and cultures that are inhibiting positive impacts, therefore highlighting positive changes that may need to be considered by NGOs and funders alike.

Based on the literature explored as well as anecdotal evidence, I have developed a preliminary model that depicts how NGOs' decision-making regarding the theory, design, implementation, and evaluation of programmes is influenced by three factors. These include 1) funder requirements, 2) internal organisational learning, and 3) scientific evidence-based literature and theories (see Figure 3). In this figure, the three factors are presented along with their employed strategies or methods of influence that emerged through the literature review and anecdotal evidence. The employed strategies outline how the NGO's decision-making has been described as being influenced. The Funder Requirements factor includes strategies employed by funders that have been found to influence GBV NGO decision-making; Internal Organisational Learning outlines the methods employed by the NGOs in their decision-making; and Scientific Evidence-based Literature and Theories include the types of research results, theories, and evaluations that have been described as influencing decision-making.

This literature review and the developed model helped frame the research and create relevant interview questions that could elaborate on the holes in the literature and make additions to the knowledge that is more specific to the South African GBV context. The study was designed to test the preliminary model from the perspective of GBV NGOs in South Africa.

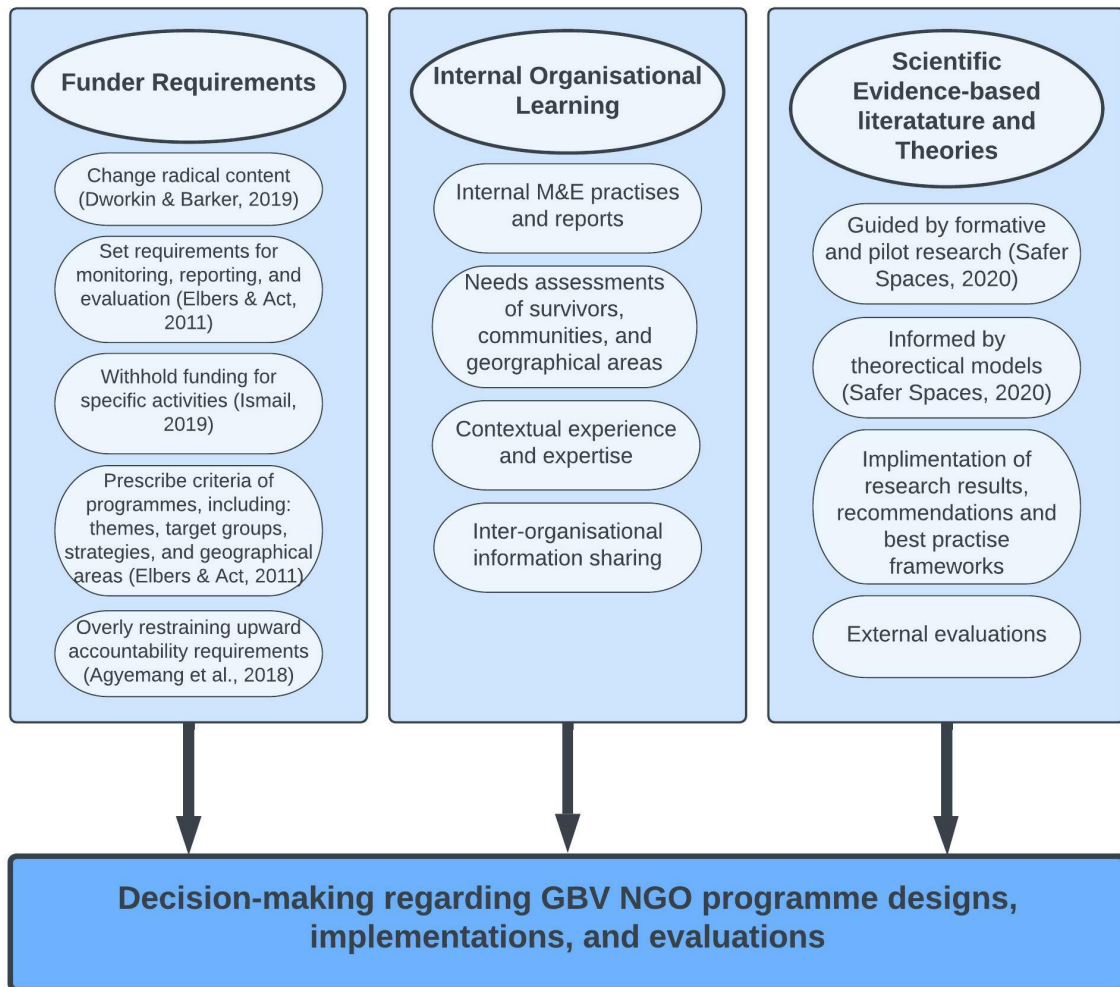


Figure 3. Preliminary proposed model depicting the influences of decision-making for GBV NGOs in South Africa.

This research seeks to explore to what extent this model confirms/reflects the trends, practises, and drivers of decision-making in the GBV NGO sector. To remind the reader the research question is represented here (with sub-questions):

1. What influences NGOs' decisions around the implementation, design, and evaluation of South African GBV interventions?
 - a. How do funder requirements influence decisions around the implementation, design, and evaluation of GBV interventions?

- b. How do NGOs experience collaboration, learning and sharing of GBV intervention evaluations?
- c. How does scientific evidence-based literature influence decisions around implementation, design and evaluations of GBV interventions?

Method

This chapter presents the research paradigm and design, study setting, sampling and data collection methods and procedures followed to analyse the data for this study. The rationale for each of my methodological choices is also included.

Research Paradigm

This research is embedded within the interpretivist paradigm. Interpretivist/experiential qualitative research validates meanings, views, perspectives, and experiences expressed and found in the data; the term experiential refers to how participants' interpretations are prioritised, accepted, and focussed on (Braun & Clarke, 2013; see also Wilson & MacLean, 2011). Therefore, it is best suited for this research because the research questions require the perceptions and understandings of organisation decision-making from the perspective of the organisation as this would reveal the real consequences and patterns of such influences in the sector. Appropriately, the interpretivist approach used in this study has traces of both the relativist and realism ontologies which assume that reality as we know it is constructed inter-subjectively through meanings developed through social experiences, furthermore, any claim about truth or knowledge is relative to the context in which it is made (Braun & Clarke, 2013; see also Wilson & MacLean, 2011). This paradigm posits that humans interpret and attach meaning to their experiences, either through language or a kind of interpretive system (Wilson & MacLean, 2011). Interviews are well suited to this approach as findings emerge through dialogue and only through this dialectical process can a more informed understanding of the social world be constructed (Wilson & MacLean, 2011). Specifically, the information that this research seeks to uncover would not be found in organisation literature or secondary data, but is rather only accessible through interviews with participants that have experienced the GBV NGO sector in South Africa as an organisation stakeholder. It follows that all interpretations are located in a specific context, situation, and time, and the emergent meanings identify a reality that is socially constructed and fluid (Willig, 2017).

As this research uses context-driven interviews with stakeholders to gain insight into the perspectives of the GBV NGO sector, the assumptions of reality and research from the interpretivist approach best suit the research questions. To find emergent truths, the researcher and the research methods need to consider that what we know is always negotiated within cultures, social settings, and relationships with other people (Willig, 2017).

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design which allows for a thorough investigation and exploration of subjects and phenomena as well as possible mechanisms and reasoning (Braun & Clarke, 2013; see also Lincoln et al., 2011). A qualitative design is best suited for this research as it allows for the illustration of important themes, the development of new theories, and the understanding of participants' perspectives, experiences, and needs (Wu et al., 2016). Furthermore, this design is open-ended, organic, and flexible, and can evolve to suit the needs of the study, such as accommodating unanticipated themes found in the data (Willig, 2017). Qualitative research is interested in how people make sense of their lives, experiences, and structures of the world and allows for rich and detailed data to reveal complex findings regarding systems that would not otherwise be found without analysing qualitative data. The purpose of qualitative research is to contribute knowledge or understanding by describing phenomena within certain groups or populations of interest; in other words, qualitative research is not meant to provide generalisable findings, but rather aims to explore and discover, and often uses an iterative approach (Wu et al., 2016).

In qualitative methodologies, multiple accounts and perspectives about a phenomenon of interest are essential as results are best inductively derived or discovered from people with personal experience regarding the target phenomenon. Furthermore, in experiential qualitative research, language is seen as “a window to the person’s interior,” and how people report their experiences, practises, and meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 24). Therefore, the data in this study are sourced from interviews with GBV NGO staff which were thematically analysed, giving a somewhat detailed account of the inner workings and drivers of decision-making in the organisations and overall sector.

Study Setting

This study’s setting is the GBV NGO sector in South Africa. The spheres of GBV interventions covered by the organisations in this study include shelter support for women and children, counselling services, legal aid services, psycho-social training, medical services, skills training, and advocacy work. In most, the intervention targets comprise women and survivors of GBV, and in some cases, also children. The models used in the GBV programmes are guided by feminist theories, as described on various organisation websites and related content (for example, POWA, <https://www.powa.co.za/POWA/about-us/>; Sonke Gender Justice, <https://genderjustice.org.za/>). Feminist theory is considered by organisations as it posits that GBV is a phenomenon with roots in society, and interventions involving

people, clients, and service users can “pull them up” to create change for the better (Mackay, 2021). Feminist theory sees GBV as a cause and consequence of gender inequality and indicates that boys are socialised into patriarchy by systems of masculinisation and expectations about the nature of power in a dominator culture (Mackay, 2021). The adoption of this feminist context means that interventions conducted by the organisations included in this study seek to aid women in various facets of their lives to either encourage justice, ensure their safety and health, upskill them to facilitate independence and empowerment, or advocate for legislative changes.

Shelter service organisations offer places for women and children to live to ensure that they can get out of unsafe home situations. The shelter organisations included in this study all offer long- and short-term living options as well as various other interventions including skills training and counselling services.

The skills training programmes run by the organisations included in this study aim to empower women to generate an income, speak out about abuse and become less dependent on their abusers (Mahamba, 2022). These skills can break survivors out of the cycle of abuse and grow their confidence. Some of the types of skills offered by the organisations in this study include wig-making, nail care, beauty therapy, learning how to drive, sewing, farming, computer skills, and small business training.

Counselling services are offered by several organisations included in this study. This involves hotline or call centre facilities, or face-to-face meetings, for women of abuse to gain counselling or referrals. Specifically, in this sample, rape counselling and intimate partner violence counselling and support groups are provided. Counselling is often conducted by social workers and social auxiliary workers who aim to address incidents of trauma and minimise further exposure to GBV by supporting survivors and their families in healing and reclaiming control of their lives. Within counselling services, there are also psycho-social skills training interventions which involve providing survivors with a set of methods and practices to address the emotional issues that affect their daily lives.

The legal aid services provided by the organisations in this study include court support, where trained support workers offer emotional support and a vital understanding of the legal procedures and requirements that survivors must undertake during the court process. These interventions help to empower women and prioritise justice for survivors.

The medical services provided by organisations in this study include forensic examinations, HIV and STI testing, providing medicine such as PrEP and contraceptives, and medical referrals where necessary. These interventions aim to decrease the detrimental health effects that GBV can have on survivors.

Most of the organisations in this study conduct advocacy and lobbying work which aim to secure legal measures for appropriate action against GBV and revise legislation that impedes justice. National advocacy and lobbying work hold parliament and government accountable in ensuring the domestication and implementation of protocol regarding GBV issues. They seek to evaluate the effectiveness of current strategies to improve GBV prevention and mitigation interventions and to unpack patriarchal practices and the adverse effects of gender inequality. Advocacy work is often done collaboratively between organisations to increase pressure and possible impacts.

Table 1 outlines the participants and their affiliated NGOs; specifically, the locations of the NGOs and a brief idea of the types of GBV interventions provided. The final sample included nine participants from nine different GBV NGOs. As this topic is under researched in the GBV sector in South Africa, it was clear from the literature that the first investigation thereof should focus on the organisations and what they perceive to be drivers or hinderances, rather than the funders and their motivations or practices. The literature suggested volatile relationships between funders and NGOs, and to investigate this fully, each stakeholder should first be explored singularly, therefore, the study was designed to interview NGO staff members.

Table 1

Participant numbers and NGO locations and interventions.

Participant number	Location of NGO services (province)	Type of GBV interventions provided
1	Western Cape	Shelter services
2	Gauteng	Counselling, training, and shelter services
3	Gauteng	Psycho-social, legal, and sheltering support services

4	Western Cape	Legal, psycho-social support and training services
5	Western Cape	Training and advocacy services
6	Eastern Cape	Legal and sheltering support services
7	Gauteng	Medical and legal services
8	Mpumalanga	Shelter and counselling services
9	Kwazulu-Natal	Counselling and training services

Sampling Strategy

In qualitative research, the sample is chosen according to how appropriate the cases are concerning the research questions (Wilson & MacLean, 2011). For this study, the sample consisted of 1) an NGO based in South Africa, 2) an NGO that was financially or otherwise funded by external sources, and 3) an NGO that was offering a GBV initiative. I was able to identify 25 organisations that met all three of these criteria and comprised the sample for the research.

The sampling strategy used was non-probability snowball sampling, which allows a researcher to make judgements regarding which individuals and settings will provide the richest information for the research questions (Naderifar et al., 2017). The snowball sampling procedure is a chain-referral sampling technique in which existing contacts or subjects provide referrals to recruit participants for a research study (Naderifar et al., 2017). Initially, I contacted an individual from my network who worked at a GBV NGO; they were able to put me in contact with my first interviewee. From there I asked each interviewee which NGOs or individuals they could suggest I contact from their network. In some instances, contact details were shared, or introductions, via email, were provided. It was preferable that each NGO respondent worked in the M&E department, formed part of top management in the NGO, or worked in programme management to ensure that they were able to provide relevant and in-depth responses to the interview questions, however, this was not a strict criterion. Through this sampling technique, I was able to contact and invite 32 individuals from the 25 different organisations to be part of the study, out of which nine individuals agreed to participate. Eight interviews were conducted via Zoom and one was conducted in person at a coffee shop as convenient for the interviewee.

Data Collection Methods and Procedures

Semi-structured interviews were used to obtain a rich understanding of the GBV NGOs in South Africa in regard to their decision-making, collaboration, and funder relationships. These interviews enabled an exploration of how NGOs work internally with funder expectations and externally with information sharing and collaboration. Semi-structured interviews were appropriate as I had a series of general and specific questions for the interviewees that allowed elaboration and clarification probes where necessary (Stuckey, 2013). Semi-structured interviews also provided rich and detailed information about the NGOs' practises and the participants' perspectives about GBV in South Africa. Due to COVID-19 restrictions and the majority of interviewees working from home, interviews took place using Zoom as this software has video capabilities, therefore allowing indirect cues (such as body language) to be observed, and for the researcher to probe further where appropriate. Interviews lasted between 45 minutes to an hour and no incentive was offered for participation. The semi-structured interview schedule can be found in Appendix D. The interview schedule includes the four different types of questions, as outlined by Willig (2017), including descriptive, structural (i.e. how the interviewee structures their knowledge), contrasting (i.e. allowing the interviewee to make comparisons between experiences), and evaluative (i.e. asking about interviewees feelings towards someone or something) questions.

The development of the interview questions was informed by the emerged influencers of decision-making, as shown in Figure 3 above, as well as what the researcher identified as being included or excluded in the current literature. The literature review revealed a lack of published and publicly available evaluations of GBV NGO interventions in South Africa. Interview questions regarding the organisation's evaluations were, therefore, necessary to include to identify whether evaluations are not being conducted regularly or whether the organisations complete evaluations but do not publish or share the results. Furthermore, despite the anecdotal evidence pointing to organisations not collaborating, the literature does not fully explore this in the sector further than the consequences of competition and a lack of collaboration among organisations; therefore, the interview questions seek to identify the reasons behind this, as well as the specific drawbacks that this can have on the GBV sector's impact.

Data Analysis

The research questions were answered using thematic analysis of the interview data. Thematic analysis is a method used for "identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns, or

themes” within the data collected (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.6). Thematic analysis was best suited for this study as it allowed the summarising of key features of large bodies of data to obtain rich descriptions of similarities and differences across the data set. The transcribed interviews were imported into the Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software data management tool, NVivo. This served as a supportive tool during the process of qualitative data analysis where data can be organised and coded.

To analyse the data qualitatively, Braun and Clarke’s (2006) steps for realist thematic analysis were used. The six steps, as described below, set out by Braun and Clarke (2006) attain trustworthiness in qualitative data as they require that the researcher follows a well-documented, clearly laid out logical process. To be accepted as trustworthy, the data analysis must be conducted in a precise, consistent, and exhaustive manner through recording, systematizing, and disclosing the methods of analysis so that the process is considered credible (Nowell et al., 2017); the method of using the six steps allows this detail to be captured. For this research, theoretical thematic analysis methods were used as this allows the researcher to analyse data, as guided by their research questions. The employed deductive form of thematic analysis, as compared to an inductive form of thematic analysis, tends to provide a more detailed analysis of some aspects of the data as the themes identified are somewhat driven by the researcher’s theoretical or analytical interest (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This meant that emergent themes that did not relate to the research questions were not included in the final results. The thematic analysis was conducted at the latent level, which goes beyond the semantic content of the data, to identify underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualisations that could be shaping or informing the semantic content (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In the semantic approach, themes are identified within the surface meanings of the data, therefore, the researcher does not look beyond what has been said or written. However, in this research, the analysis involves a progression from this type of description to the latent level that fosters the interpretation of the significance of patterns and their broader meanings and implications in relation to previous literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Furthermore, thematic analysis conducted within an interpretivist framework seeks to theorise the socio-cultural contexts and structural conditions that enable individual accounts, rather than the psychologies or motivations of individuals (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I adhered to the following steps to analyse the collected interviews:

Stage One: Familiarisation with the data

In this stage, I became familiar with the data by initially listening to the audio recording of the interviews and transcribing them verbatim. The transcriptions were then read and re-read while initial codes and rough ideas were noted and written down.

Stage Two: Forming initial codes

Initial codes, which identified interesting or noteworthy features in the data, were then generated. These codes identified relevant features of the data that may form repeated patterns across the data set. In this stage, I highlighted and labelled specific parts of the transcriptions as themes and patterns became apparent. Initial codes were determined and listed, and the highlighted data were extracted and entered into a table with their relevant codes. At this stage, a list containing 187 codes was generated.

Stage Three: Finding themes

The list of initial codes was then revised to determine if any could be mapped and grouped into themes. Some codes became themes on their own, such as Influences of Decision-Making, and initial sub-themes were identified within them, while others were combined, such as Wrong Motivation and Funder Considering Context. No codes were removed at this stage.

Stage Four: Review

In this stage, the themes were reviewed to generate a thematic map of the analysis to ensure that the themes were correct with their coded extracts. Each theme was analysed to determine whether there was enough data to support them as all the extracts from the interview transcripts were examined to confirm a clear pattern. If a pattern was not apparent the theme was then removed or amalgamated into another new or renamed theme. This was done by printing out each code, cutting them into separate quotes and sticking them on a wall (see Figure 4). This allowed the researcher to move codes easily and have a constant overview of the themes, how they interact, and if codes suited their themes. Themes were then looked at in conjunction with the rest of the data to determine if they were relevant and reflected the data correctly. Irrelevant codes or those taken out of context were removed. The final number of codes sorted into the three emerged themes and numerous sub-themes was 122.

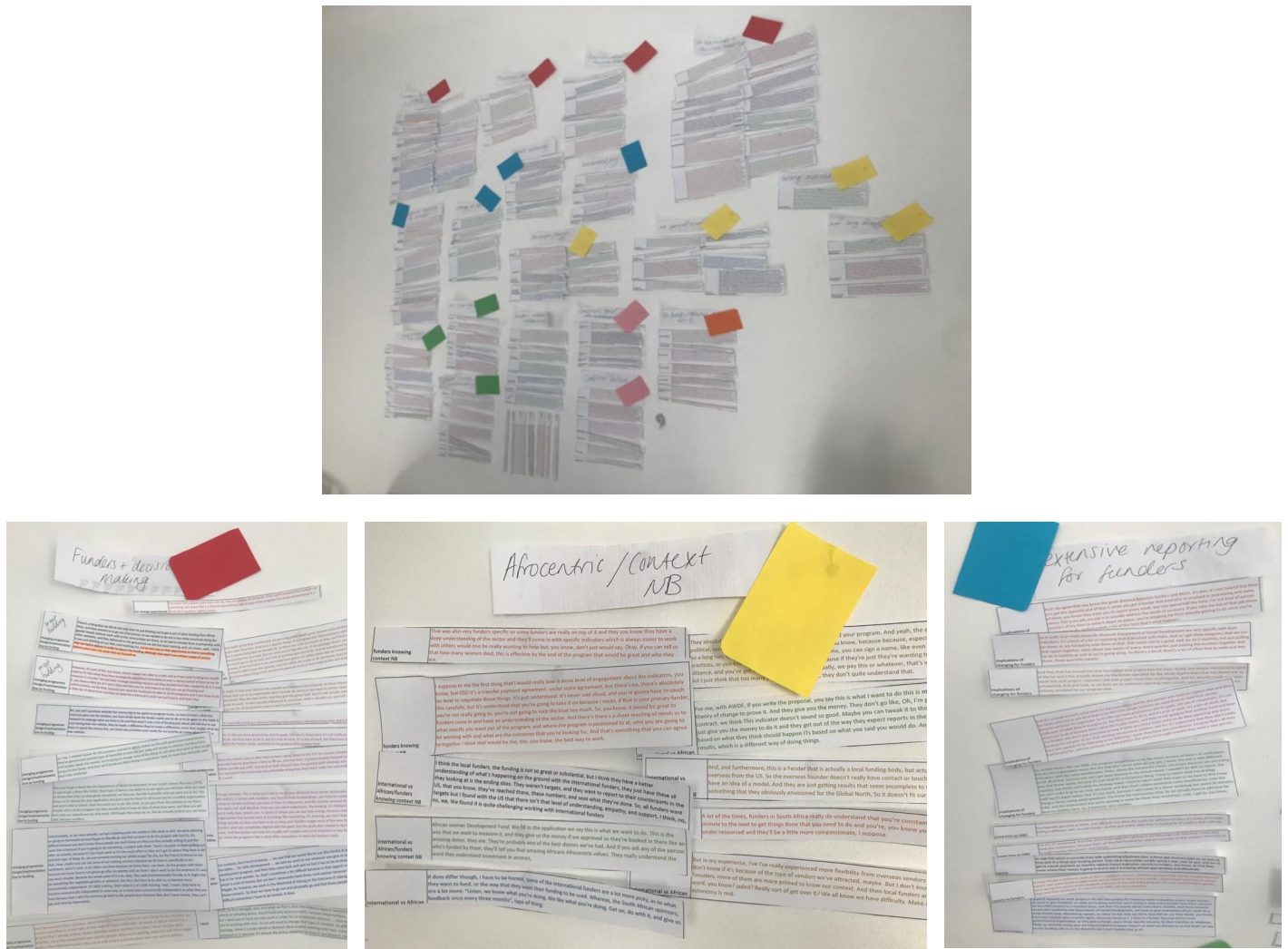


Figure 4. Stage four of thematic analysis. Pictures include the reviewing of themes and coded extracts

Stage Five: Defining and naming

In this stage, the themes were further refined. Names were assigned to each theme to encapsulate the content and ‘story’ of the theme while identifying it from the others. Subthemes were also identified at this stage where necessary.

Stage 6: The Report

Finally, a scholarly report was produced by selecting compelling extracts from the final analysis and using them to answer the proposed research questions. Data extracts and evidence have been included in the write-up to support the use of each theme.

Context

Regarding the context in which the investigation took place, data was collected during hard lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the analysis of results and writing of the report also took place under lockdown regulations. Broadly, during lockdown in South Africa, all gatherings were prohibited and non-exempt people were only allowed to leave their homes to access health services, collect social grants, and shop for essential goods. Movement between provinces, and between metropolitan and district areas, was prohibited except for essential workers to and from work. During this period, NGOs made significant efforts to keep GBV services available and their administration offices open, however, barriers of accessibility, indicative of the lockdown challenges, made research communication with organisations and their staff difficult. Despite NGO staff being classified as essential workers, and therefore being exempt from certain lockdown regulations, most staff members worked from home where possible, which meant that initial communication was only possible via email. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic increased pressure on civil society organisations, particularly in the GBV sector, as the related lockdowns and layoffs increased the risk of GBV by simultaneously isolating people with their violent partners during times of economic and social stress, as well as preventing them from accessing available resources (UN Women, 2020).

This meant that the organisations and their staff were under extreme pressure with increased need and barriers to accessibility. It cannot be ignored that many interviewees might have been distracted or not fully invested in the investigation of this study, which may have impacted the data collected. Furthermore, some staff members may not have had the capacity to engage in research during this period at all, leading to the smaller than anticipated sample.

Ethical Approval and Considerations

Ethics approval was sought and obtained from the Commerce Faculty's Ethics in Research Committee (Ref No. REC 2021/03/016) (See Appendix E for approval letter). The interviewees' participation in this research was voluntary and respondents could opt out at any time with no consequences.

An individual's participation in this research did not pose any risk to the interviewee or any affiliated NGOs or funders. As shown in the interview schedule (Appendix C), the interview questions were specifically based on programmes designs, implementation and

decision making as well as evaluations around the programmes and weren't related to the programme participants. Respondents signed informed consent letters before the interview took place (Appendix F). The consent letter informed the respondent about the purpose of the interview and research, that participation was voluntary, and that the interviews would be recorded and transcribed. The names of the NGOs and any identifiable quotes from the interviews were removed to ensure anonymity.

UCT's data management policy is specifically designed for research receiving funding to ensure that data is available for readers and other researchers and there is a university-wide drive to encourage students to create and implement data management plans for their research. Regarding this research, it became clear that the availability of the interview data would pose a threat to the security of anonymity of the participants, NGOs, and funders; therefore, I made the decision not to upload the data to an open source. Data was stored on my password-protected hard drive and online via OneDrive.

Summary

In summary, this study followed a qualitative design to thematically analyse data collected through semi-structured interviews with GBV NGO staff members. Nine interviewees from NGOs spanning various provinces participated in this study and addressed organisation decision-making, organisation-funder relationships, and sector collaboration and information sharing. Themes emerged in the data that answered this study's research questions and provided vital insights into the GBV NGO sector in South Africa.

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents three key themes that emerged from a thematic analysis of the interview data. These include a) Losing autonomy as an organisation; b) “One person doing seven people’s jobs”: The NGO workload burden; and c) Struggles with collaborative and organisational learning. These themes emerged in the analysis of 187 initial codes. The analytical process of using Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six steps for thematic analysis involved a deep methodological examination of the findings which included considering the literature-led model identified in Figure 2; extensively manoeuvring of the codes (as depicted on the wall in Figure 4) to identify the best flow of the results and themes; reviewing the themes with my supervisor, who considered the key codes and confirmed my themes; and polishing the results write up with a qualitative research specialist, who assisted in developing a cohesive presentation of the themes to best and orderly answer the research questions.

The next section will present and discuss each theme and its subthemes as well as provide quotations from the interviews which substantiate the findings. Where possible, the findings are discussed in reference to previous research; however, where findings are somewhat novel and could not engage previous literature due to an absence of literature regarding certain themes, the researcher’s own perspective on the findings is offered and suggestions for future research are presented.

Theme One: Losing Autonomy as an Organisation

An overarching theme that was present in all interviews was the NGO’s loss of autonomy, that is, the loss of an NGOs’ power and freedom to make decisions regarding the implementations, designs, and evaluations of their programmes; how money is used in the NGO and allocated; how long programmes can run for; and the types of indicators collected to show success. Many participants used language such as, “losing our autonomy,” “they own my programme,” and “we’ve lost our sense of ownership”, which speaks to the power dynamics implicated in their NGO’s relationships with their funders. The interpretivist framework allows the researcher to look deeper into the semantic language used, as above, and find the context specific latent meanings thereof. Consequently, this loss of autonomy described in the interviews was found to be rooted in the funder-organisation relationship, and especially in the requirements funders impose on the NGOs. This theme contains two sub-themes: Dictating finances: Funding in the Global South and unequal positions; and

Dictating design, implementation, and funding cycles. Both themes speak directly to the unequal positions between funders and NGOs and how these have affected the operations and possible impacts of the NGOs.

Dictating Finances: Funding in the Global South and Unequal Positions

Three interviewees mentioned that despite having the skills and expertise in the South African GBV sector to make valuable and relevant decisions, funders have managed to take the lead and prescribe action to an extent that diminishes the organisation's autonomy. For example, Participant 7 commented:

I just find that because they bring in the money you seem to lose the autonomy, despite the fact that you bring in all the experience, expertise, skills, because they are now stipulating, how many people you employ, what your programme should do, how it should be done, and unfortunately for us, where it should be implemented. (Participant 7, Gauteng medical and legal services)

Participant 7 spoke to how their organisation proposed directions for the running of the programmes, how many people to employ, and where to implement an intervention, yet were ignored by a funder who instead prescribed these aspects to the organisation. This participant particularly highlighted when an area in Gauteng with extraordinarily high GBV incidences, but very few cases brought to court, was excluded from the scope of their legal assistance intervention due to the funder's instruction of focussing on rural areas. Similarly, Participant 6 highlights that "the moment they give you money, you find that they become prescriptive and basically have a sense of ownership over how you steer that ship..." They indicated that the experience and knowledge of the organisation are not valued by funders or considered when creating requirements of programmes.

One avenue through which NGOs experienced a loss of autonomy is having limitations imposed on the utilisation of their funds. Five interviewees explained that the parameters placed on how funds can be used in the organisation by the funders create complexity and shortfalls. Some funders either stipulate what funds cannot be used for, for example, electricity and admin or operational costs, or do not provide enough for the specific areas in which the funding can be used, for example, salaries. The funds that are not specifically allocated were referred to as "general funding" or "yellow money" by

interviewees; "... money you can use for whatever you want," (Participant 5, Western Cape counselling, training and advocacy services).

... [we need] general funding ... I mean you need money to keep lights on, you need money to buy food and fuel and that type of thing, which you don't necessarily get if [funders] are specific in what they are funding for ... So, you know I would personally feel that [funders] should say let's rather let the actual people that have to work with us on a daily basis decide where the funding should be used. (Participant 3, Gauteng psycho-social, legal and sheltering support services)

Participant 5 mentioned that their funds were only allowed to be used to train one representative coordinator, who then had to train the rest of the coordinators, approximately 20 individuals. This meant that the skills were "heavily diluted" (Participant 5) and, without funded ongoing technical support, unlikely to make substantial impacts. An indicator of success for this NGO is the extent to which women in their workshops have been upskilled or informed, therefore, if their ability to train coordinators and provide ongoing technical support is hindered, their possible impacts can be directly affected as well. Multiple requests for funds to train all the coordinators have been consistently denied by the funder. Ismail (2019), an author based in the UK, highlighted that there should be a shift for an emphasis on specific project funding towards funding which provides incentives for NGOs in the Global South to build their long-term capabilities. Therefore, funders must invest in the core capacities of GBV civil society in South Africa and allow funds for the areas that support these capacities. According to this research, more generalised funding would facilitate this.

Similarly to the issue of non-generalised funding, the interviewees outlined that funders often do not provide enough funding in aspects such as salaries. In the case of shortfalls regarding salaries, two interviewees said that their organisations then needed to find other partial funds to supplement the salaries to market salaries in South Africa. The following quotations outline this:

Our primary funders basically cover only the Social Work posts; however you need to understand that it is not a market related salary. So, they give us a basic level and it's about 40%. We need to augment that and cover all our operational costs and any admin printing equipment etc ... (Participant 6, Eastern Cape psycho-social, legal and sheltering support services)

[The funders] don't fund [things] maybe to the way that fits our standards. They pay half the salary, that we want to pay our staff, ... So there's an imbalance and you can imagine how it can create some kind of resentment. (Participant 5, Western Cape counselling, training and advocacy services)

The lack of funding allocated to the above areas of daily running costs, ongoing technical and training support, and market-related salaries, puts extra pressure on organisations and creates resentment towards the funder. The call for more generalised funding is directly connected to the need for funders to be familiar with the South African GBV and Global South contexts as more understanding can lead to less rigid funding allocations. To understand the specific factors that affect GBV in a particular context, it is important to follow through on ActionAid's (2012) recommendation that a thorough situational analysis be conducted by funding organisations planning to impact the sector. This should be normalised and regulated as a practice for funders when working outside of their geographical countries. Context is crucial as it would elucidate the political, social and environmental factors that affect GBV NGOs in South Africa and their abilities to use funds as stipulated by funders, complete long-term programmes, and adhere to the accountability processes of funding. Furthermore, this learning of context by funders can be done by consciously validating and recognising the expertise of the NGOs in the GBV sector and South African context. Ismail (2019) further outlines that grant decisions should reflect a deeper understanding of the effects of disruptions on the ground. NGOs in South Africa contend with many disruptive changes, which is particularly true in the GBV sector where political will and social context can influence the working environments of the NGOs and consequently their programmes, and therefore necessitates flexible funding (Ward & Bigg, 2016).

While an NGO's autonomy is impacted by a lack of control over its financing decisions, it is further affected when funders dictate programme designs, implementation, and funding cycles. The constraints imposed in these areas then impact the M&E practices and opportunities for the NGOs.

Dictating Design, Implementation, and Funding Cycles

This sub-theme traces how programme designs and funding cycles were described by the interviewees as being non-negotiably prescribed to NGOs and how this often shapes the implementation of their GBV programmes and the evaluation opportunities. Participants discussed how these changes impact certain processes in the running of the NGOs and how their autonomy to use their expertise and skills garnered by working in the sector and being familiar with the South African GBV context has been affected.

Three interviewees stated that often changes need to be made to current and running interventions or programmes to secure funding as funders have certain objectives that fall close to those of the NGO but require a shift in design or an extra element to meet completely. Participant 5 stated:

We had to do some things for the first time. So maybe a workshop on a new topic, or new angle of a topic within GBV, of course, to add an element to a program that's already running. ... [The funders] had a plan, a specific design of a programme they wanted to roll out, several other services that they want you to do as well, and we needed money for a certain thing we already do. (Participant 5, Western Cape counselling, training and advocacy services)

Participant 5 explained that a specific counselling service that had been running successfully for years needed to incorporate a new element to secure a new funder and maintain the programme. Specifically, the funder wanted them to include a new intervention regarding HIV along with the current rape counselling services, using the NGO's reach and labour to run a health intervention alongside a GBV intervention. This exemplifies the loss of autonomy by the organisation not being able to design their programme to align completely to their aims and needing to incorporate the agenda of the funder who was more interested in an HIV health intervention. While Dworkin and Barker (2019) ascertain that the more radical content is often changed by funders, the results of this study show that the content of the intervention is not the leading reason for funders requiring changes designs or implementations. Rather, the common reasons behind this were perceived by NGO staff to be that funders have an agenda of their own that programmes need to fit into. This could be done with the interest of securing the largest possible results regarding numbers, or collecting data on a different, but linked, issue, such as HIV. It seems that GBV NGOs are overwhelmed with goals within goals that dictate their work and overshadow their organisational objectives (Mutongwizo, 2018). While HIV and GBV are to an extent connected in the context of South

Africa, the worry here is the tendency for an NGO to informally pursue alternative objectives to formally meet key goals set out by funders (Mutongwizo, 2018).

Another way in which this idea of losing autonomy emerged in the data, was through NGOs needing to change running programmes for which funding had already been approved. In these instances, previously agreed upon aspects of interventions required speedy changes to designs or implementations due to funders changing or backtracking on the allocation of funds or objectives of programmes. The interviewees outlined that this removed the opportunity for NGOs to negotiate and make suitable suggestions or request compromises, therefore affecting their autonomy and sense of ownership over the programmes.

... we said that we would like to use [the funds] as part of our skills development program, and then they came back after [awarding us the funds] and said no but it has to be environmentally friendly and it has to be rural women. ... we are currently revising our whole project ... Because [the funder] said environmentally friendly, we have to include something like vegetable gardens ... but [the survivors] also have to be able to become more economically independent ... because that's why the survivors go back to the perpetrators because they don't have money, they can't pay and care for themselves. And all this change needs to be done quickly while still implementing the urban programmes as before. (Participant 3, Gauteng psycho-social, legal and sheltering support services)

Participant 3 described an instance when a funder had approved funds for a skills development programme in urban Johannesburg and then required that the programme be environmentally conscious and include specific environmentally-friendly skills training and practices. This necessitated the NGO to increase their scope to rural areas, retrain their skills development trainers, and overhaul their implementation strategy. This meant that the NGO needed to design a new rural-based counselling plan to add to their initial programme. These changes included training staff to work in rural areas, ensuring safe and reliable transport to the areas in question, and conducting extra research to substantiate their change in scope for their other funders. Through their funding conditions, donors are known to exercise influence over NGOs' project design and implementation; set requirements for monitoring, reporting, and evaluation; and withhold funding except for specific activities (Elbers & Act, 2011). Concerning project design and planning, virtually all donors work with requirements that outline the type of projects they seek to support; the criteria usually include themes

(programme subject matter), target groups, strategies, and geographical areas (Elbers & Art, 2011), issues that similarly emerged in this study.

From the results of this study, in the GBV sector in South Africa, it can be confirmed that NGOs are required to meet criteria outlined by their funders, as Elbers and Art (2011) suggest: regarding themes, in this research, health interventions regarding HIV; strategies, for example, including environmentally-friendly interventions; and geographical areas or target groups, that is, rural areas and rural women. As outlined by Batti (2014) human-rights NGOs in most developing countries are almost entirely dependent on foreign donors and with the growing evidence that the shifting of criteria or priorities of donor funding undermines the credibility and effectiveness of the NGOs, this issue must be addressed by both donors and NGOs.

Along with changing designs and implementations to meet funders' objectives or to cope with the backtracking of allocated funds, autonomy was also hindered during the initial stages of designing according to the interviewees. All nine interviewees outlined instances when a programme has needed substantial changes made or considerations to secure funding. It was found to be common to design interventions with the funders and their specific requirements in mind, therefore letting the funders somewhat dictate decision-making in the organisation and losing a sense of ownership over the programme.

“[In the beginning] the goals are created in terms of what the funders want. So, I think the program's like a little conception of what we think the funders want and what they think will solve the GBV issue in South Africa.” (Participant 9, Kwazulu-Natal counselling and training services)

Here, Participant 9 explains how their NGO prescribes to the funder requirements and agendas pre-emptively, before reaching out to funders, and after initial discussions with funders to find out their visions and goals. In this way, the NGOs somewhat attempt to shift power dynamics and gain greater control over how the programme is designed and implemented, however, their sense of ownership is still jeopardised. Other participants also mentioned that the funders know that NGOs in South Africa, particularly those in the GBV sector, where radical and fast change is necessary, would have no choice but to accept and implement changes due to requirements as there is a dire need for funds and NGOs will seldom turn funders down. This echoes AbouAssi (2013), who outlined that in times of

funding fluctuations, there is evidence that some NGOs automatically follow donors' interests or voluntarily adapt to their situations. With evidence of NGOs needing to meet a range of funding conditions and deal with the resulting constraints (Dworkin & Barker, 2019; see also Cordery et al., 2019), it is no surprise that the results of this study highlight this as common practise and a persisting issue in the GBV sector that impacts the autonomy of an organisation. Similarly, Bawa's (2013) study on Ghana as a Global South case study outlines that programmes are, to a large extent, developed by funders without grantee participation in the decision-making process as interests in particular projects limit this negotiation; furthermore, the grantee's participation is then reduced to project management and maintenance. This is particularly worrying for the GBV sector in South Africa as nuanced and in-depth understandings of the sector context are vital for NGOs' sustained impacts (Britton, 2006).

This lack of knowledge and sensitivity about the South African context was further mentioned by two interviewees as to why their international funders are often preoccupied with reaching numbers or chasing different results that are not best suited for the GBV context in South Africa. Their motivations are not geared to support interventions in the Global South where targets are often affected by issues regarding access, inequality, and politics. The following quotation supports this:

With the international funders, ... all they are looking at is the ending sites [numbers]. They want targets, and they want to report to their counterparts in the US, that ... they've reached these numbers. So, all funders want targets, but I found with the US that there isn't that level of understanding, or empathy, and support. We found it is quite challenging working with international funders. (Participant 7, Gauteng medical and legal services)

This is not expressly identified in the previous literature, however, it is alluded to in discussions regarding indicators of success, mentioned by four interviewees in this data, and it is my perspective that an appropriate understanding of the programme context in the Global South would decrease inconsistencies between funder and organisation indicators. Four interviewees mentioned that the differences between the funder's and organisation's indicators of success created challenges as often organisations would need to change their indicators completely or collect data on indicators that they had not planned for. This difference in indicators was generally due to funders needing specific verifications of impact

to suit their aims or goals. As Participant 5 stated, “... we have new indicators that are entirely unrelated to our programme plan.”

Participant 4 describes this well and highlights that there is complexity in maintaining the organisation’s original GBV indicators while still ensuring that they collect, report, and consider the funders’ indicators:

... [the funder] won't count the fact that I've given [the survivor] support. They will count if she agrees to get tested, and she takes PrEP, and all of that, you know. My normal work, which is providing counselling and ensuring the well-being of the survivor, doesn't count to [the funder]. ... So, I have to incorporate what they want, in order for me to get access to the money. This is a big challenge because now I have to manage my monitoring and evaluation officer because I must remind them: the donor wants it but don't forget our primary monitoring. ... And often that's the balance you know that's where you find employees sometimes get confused with that idea of what the donor says, but I'm like no, you work for [omitted organisation], not the donor. (Participant 4, Western Cape legal, psycho-social support and training services)

In this particular example, a counselling and legal intervention for rape survivors had to incorporate new indicators of success including whether the client takes an HIV test or PrEP medication; however, the organisation measures success by whether the client received counselling. This issue of funders requiring indicators that misalign with those of the NGO is not widely discussed in the literature. It is partially outlined as a problem faced by NGOs in the Global South by Ismail (2019) and described by Mueller-Hirth (2012) to impede genuine learning, since the indicators function to highlight the short-term successes of a project. This is alarming as the interviewees outlined it as a prominent reason for complications in monitoring data collection and an overall sense of autonomy, described in the above quote as staff getting confused about who they are collecting data for. The fact that development indicators are set by funding agencies situated outside of the country, does raise questions about M&E in South Africa being shaped by relations of power and the implication identified in research that “Africa is unable to evaluate” (Mueller-Hirth, 2012). This highlights an area for future research and consideration by funders, NGOs, and researchers.

Along with the loss of autonomy through the misalignment between funder and organisation indicators of success, the results also identified that the short funding periods prescribed by funders affect the abilities of NGOs to make decisions regarding intervention/programme lengths and inhibit the possibilities of evaluations.

Most GBV NGOs in South Africa have funding periods of one to three years with others securing short-term or once-off donations from foundations or other private donors. Six interviewees considered these periods to be too short and outlined that longer funding periods would increase programme sustainability and impacts.

... it went from year-on-year funding to now a three-year funding cycle which has been helpful, because it allows for a lot more stability within the organization. Often when you have year-on-year funding it's difficult. Your programs are not as sustainable because you're constantly running after ... calls for proposals and you're trying to raise money to ensure that the program's sustainable. A lot of the programs that we run show that the longer and more sustainable the program or project, the better the results. If you go in and do once-off initiatives, the results are not as worthwhile and long lasting. But we can't plan for long programmes with short funding periods. (Participant 2, Gauteng counselling, training and shelter services)

Participant 2 outlines how when one of their funders changed from a one-year funding period to three-year it improved the organisation's stability and lessened the pressure of needing to submit yearly funding proposals. As outlined by AbouAssi (2013), short-term funding can be useful during acute emergencies when quick impact is desired; however, in the South African GBV sector where the causes and maintenance of gender issues stem from deep ideological and historical beliefs and a lack of political will for address (Britton, 2006), short-term funding cannot contribute to strengthening the capacities of NGOs. Rather, long-term partnerships between funders and NGOs can ensure better sustainability, and the revision of strategies to include more flexible, long-term approaches can encourage changes in local contexts (Ismail, 2019; Parks, 2008). By reducing the short-term threat of a drop in funds and allowing longer funding periods, funders can improve the chances for NGOs to maintain their autonomy and amplify their impacts through longitudinal interventions (Parks, 2008).

The short funding periods were also mentioned to affect M&E practises as organisations are unable to allocate funds to evaluations because often the funders are not around long enough to complete a worthwhile impact analysis. If the programmes and interventions have been created to align with the funder requirements and scope, often NGOs will ensure that it runs up until funding has been granted as it is not certain that any further running of the intervention would be funded. Therefore, these short periods also dictate the length of the intervention and subsequently the evaluation possibilities. Participant 4 outlined

this issue, suggesting “... you need long-term funding to be able to engage and then do an impact analysis. Five to ten years. I think that will be the golden standard.” (Participant 4, Western Cape legal, psycho-social support and training services)

From the results of this study, it is clear that NGOs believe that they would benefit from longer funding periods as this can ensure the sustainability and meaningful impacts of interventions. Similar to previous literature, interviewees mentioned that longer funding periods would make large-scale evaluations more possible due to the longer-term programmes and interventions that could be rolled out (AbouAssi, 2013; see also Cammack, 2013; Meuller-Hirth, 2012).

Elbers and Art (2011) further highlighted that funders often do not fund projects that run over-time and suggested less rigid periods for funding as well as periods that allow long-term reporting. The current focus on short-term functional accountability responses is at the expense of longer-term strategic processes that are necessary for lasting social and political change and impact (Cammack, 2013).

Interestingly, one participant offered a contrasting experience regarding organisational autonomy by speaking about how their organisation managed to shift the power imbalance between their organisation and funders. Participant 5 expressed how their organisation noticed that their sense of autonomy was being impacted and decided to change their engagement with their donors to create a space of openness and negotiation. This conscious change in engagement meant that the organisation felt more ownership over their programmes despite still agreeing to many funder requirements.

NGO autonomy is pretty vital and it's something we used to have a problem with regarding funders. But, I've seen how the managers and the director, how they now engage with donors, everything is a conversation, not received instruction. So there's negotiation. And we say, yes, we can take that on, not that. That has helped us regain ourselves in our programmes. (Participant 5, Western Cape counselling, training and advocacy services)

Mutongwizo (2018) suggested that NGOs in South Africa should ward off external challenges and pressures by reinforcing their presence rather than yielding to funders' influences. He outlines that the external pressure felt from funder requirements can either materialise as challenges or opportunities and that at times there are no alternative ways to assert NGO autonomy when they are forced to accept challenges or deadlocks (Mutongwizo,

2018). It is clear from the current results that such deadlocks are what lead to shifts in focal points, and in some cases, the adoption of specific designs and implementation strategies. As a result, NGOs should engage in a process of negotiation with funders, as described in the above example from Participant 5; however, such negotiation is heavily influenced by the relative power of the two actors (Agyemang et al., 2018; see also Parks, 2008). In the GBV NGO sector in South Africa, where competition between organisations lobbying for the same aims and objectives is prevalent, NGOs hold limited bargaining power over their funders (Mueller-Hirth, 2012). If there are only a few NGOs in the country with reputations and capacities to implement programmes that funders value, then these NGOs would tend to have some leverage in relations with funders (Agyemang et al., 2018). Mueller-Hirth (2012) identified NGOs as development actors that apply diverse techniques and forms of knowledge and action to shape the conduct of others and themselves; however, he posits that for NGOs to have strong impacts in South Africa, they need to have the autonomy to choose their conduct and to practise responsabilisation, when individuals, communities or organisations are responsible for their change.

This theme speaks directly to the first research question outlined in this study: How do funder requirements influence decisions around the implementation, design, and evaluation of GBV interventions? The interviewees provided examples of their lack of autonomy and ownership over decision-making regarding their allocations of funds, intervention designs and implementations, and often intervention length and consequent M&E practises. This theme highlights the areas that both funders and NGOs should consider in their funder-NGO relationship, and provides a background from which preliminary best practice suggestions can be offered.

Theme Two: “One person doing seven peoples’ jobs”: The NGO Workload Burden

All interviewees outlined the strain placed on the NGOs due to the burden of incredibly high workloads and insufficient support or funds to meet these workloads. This theme outlines the pressure placed on organisations and the consequent common challenge of a lack of resources for the increased workloads.

Data obtained from four interviewees indicate that funder requirements result in excessive reporting exercises that often create unbalanced M&E practises or place

unnecessary strain on the organisation. All interviewees outlined that funders require monthly or quarterly reports and often make organisations submit yearly proposals even when they have been approved for multi-year contracts. These yearly reports were not considered excessive as the interviewees agreed that it is important to “keep the funder in the know about where their funds have been used” (Participant 8) throughout the year. However, when coupled with programme changes to meet the funder requirements, the reporting can become difficult as the organisation needs to create new monitoring strategies or juggle multiple reports using different indicators according to their different funders. Participant 6 described the reporting as “completely excessive,” and further stated that they “are drowning in funder reports every month.”

[The funder] came with very specific indicators, it's a heck of a lot of reporting. But just pulling that report together, takes about two weeks every quarter, just putting the numbers together and we do it monthly... So, there's too much effort that we put into those new quarterly reports.
(Participant 1, Western Cape shelter service)

... [the new reporting] created so much extra work for the counsellors, for the people who have to capture that, and then for [the M&E specialist], who has to put all of that together for [the funder], ... It's a ton of work, ... and then the funders also don't pay overhead so if it takes you three hours extra to do data capturing it's because it's not part of our existing structures or systems but we won't get paid for the shortfall. (Participant 9, Kwazulu-Natal counselling and training services)

These quotations from Participants 1 and 9 depict the strain that is placed on their monitoring practices after specific indicators were required by their funders; furthermore, they highlighted that their organisations are lacking in the specific capacities, resources, and skills needed to fulfil their funders' monitoring and accountability requirements and to qualify for further funding (as seen in Meuller-Hirth, 2012). Agyemang et al. (2018) have outlined that the accountability measures demanded by funders negatively affect the impacts NGOs could be having. These accountability mechanisms, found in my study to be excessive reporting practices (yearly proposals for already secured funds and indicators of success outside the aim of the intervention), are widely explored in the literature (Belal & Thomson, 2019; see also Agyemang et al., 2018; Cordery et al., 2019; O'Dwyer & Boomsma, 2015; Bornstein, 2006; Mueller-Hirth, 2012; Ebrahim, 2003). Furthermore, NGOs are increasingly challenged to demonstrate their relevance and accountability, with reporting, monitoring, and

evaluations having become developmental activities in their own right (Mueller-Hirth, 2012). The relationships between international donors and NGOs are increasingly shaped by these procedural systems that are designed to assure that funds do not “go astray” and that they have a “developmental impact” (Bornstein, 2006, p. 52). However, as found in this study, and previous literature, this is not the case as the negative effects of the accountability systems can shape organisations’ values and cultures, as well as influence their programme effectiveness (Agyemang et al., 2018; see also Mueller-Hirth, 2012).

Further negative effects of excessive reporting, found in these results and literature, include placing demands on NGOs’ attention, which in turn make their M&E practices unbalanced, promoting positivist and easily quantifiable valuations of success and failure by “chasing the numbers” (Participant 2, Gauteng counselling, training and shelter services), and encouraging tensions between NGOs and their funders (Agyemang et al., 2018; see also Ebrahim, 2002b; Elbers & Art, 2011). Similarly to Mueller-Hirth (2012), interviewees in this study outlined that some of the funders’ measurable indicators required capacities that did not fall within the core expertise of their NGOs creating pressure in an already under-resourced sector. Agyemang et al. (2018) and O’Dwyer and Boomsma (2015) similarly have called for financial audits, reporting, and evaluations to be mutually agreed upon and co-constructed between funders and NGOs. From the results of this study, it is clear that there needs to be consistent and honest communication regarding the reporting and monitoring that is required for the funders, and that these expectations should be agreed upon according to the capacities of the NGOs. This is particularly important for the GBV space where, as mentioned by interviewees and flagged in the following theme, monitoring data can be used to make fast and vital changes to programmes according to the fluctuating political and social landscapes of South Africa. Participant 1 further outlined that the excessive reporting requirements of their funders impede their organisation’s impacts by taking time and human resources away from bettering and running their interventions. They explained that their job as a GBV NGO is to “address the needs of the survivors in South Africa” and the reporting and monitoring requires “three quarters of my time” and therefore “stops me from actually getting to do what [the funders are] paying me to do.” (Participant 1, Western Cape shelter service)

Five interviewees further commented that a key challenge they are facing is a lack of funds and resources to conduct the necessary evaluations to prove impacts. While most of the participants agreed that conducting evaluations is vital and a much-needed practice for GBV NGOs, many did not have any planned future evaluations, or past external evaluations

available within the last five years. The most common reason cited for this was that there is not enough funding to cover evaluations, or the allocated funding is not sufficient enough to run large-scale, external, longitudinal studies due to the workload burden. For example:

... evaluations have become less as the funding has gotten less. ... there often is money for monitoring and evaluation as [the funders] want to see some kind of return in investment ... but it is not enough to get an external person to come in and do it for the organisation, so it's usually done with a degree of bias. (Participant 2, Gauteng counselling, training and shelter services)

Participant 2 outlined that their organisation does conduct evaluations, however, they do not have the funds to outsource these to external companies or researcher, which would decrease the bias that is inevitable from conducting your own evaluations. Similarly, Participant 5 mentioned that funders are interested in seeing their impacts using monitoring data but do not follow through with funds to allow for such evaluative studies:

... donors want to see these high impacts, but they don't pay for the longitudinal study ... we have to sort of pull it out of somewhere. ... They have great indicators that they want for evaluation, they want to know quality, qualitative feedback, and proof of impact. But they don't pay us to carry out the evaluation exercises. And they forget that we need people and we need time to run interviews and to do survey questionnaires ... essentially all those things need time and human resources and funders can put the metric in but they don't give the money towards [M&E]. (Participant 5, Western Cape counselling, training and advocacy services)

Keeping in mind the previous themes of funders not making general funds available and only covering partial aspects of projects, this participant further adds that funders often forget the need for time and personnel to complete evaluative tasks. Where the results of this study differ from previous literature is that funders influence evaluations, and impact assessment methodologies (Giffen, 2009), the types of evaluations, and dates of evaluations (Holma & Kontinen, 2011), for example, were not found to be extremely common. Rather it was outlined that the funders' influence is that they did not allocate funds for large-scale and helpful evaluations to be conducted. This control creates donor-determined M&E which shapes the development of future projects and the self-management of NGOs by creating an either/or scenario (Mueller-Hirth, 2012). This echoes Mueller-Hirth (2012) who similarly used interviews and observation research to examine the impact of intensified monitoring and evaluation requirements on South African NGOs and found that, despite the intensified

systems of reporting that demand considerable NGO resources, a lack of funds allocated to evaluation practices creates a gap in the possible learning within the sector.

Participant 1 spoke about not having enough funds to employ an M&E officer and therefore the pressure of not having the staff or time to conduct in-depth and detailed evaluations with their collected monitoring data. They described the current issue around not doing evaluations as: “the sad old story about being an NGO and having to deal with one person doing seven peoples’ jobs.” When asked about the funder’s role in this issue, they replied: “there’s definitely an understanding of how important [evaluation] is, but the goal is just to keep your head above water and keep on swimming, and the resources to undertake the general running is more of their primary consideration.” (Participant 1, Western Cape shelter service)

After researching South African NGO and funder relationships, Bornstein (2006) found that although such reporting systems are introduced to enhance the accountability of NGOs and better guide implementation, the excessive nature of the reporting can foster fear and deceit, which further results in systematic distortions of information and limited improvements of programme designs, implementations, and evaluations. While this was not expressively found to be a theme in this study, it is expected that this issue of resentment or deceit of the NGO toward the funder persists and perhaps is one that the interviewees were not comfortable discussing. This could be better investigated in a sector other than GBV where competition between NGOs is currently increasing, or by a larger study where interviewees might feel more comfortable discussing such sensitive topics regarding their funder-NGO relationships.

This theme outlines the consequences of various funder accountability requirements and an overall lack of resources allocated to vital M&E practises in the GBV NGO sector. By identifying the common issue regarding the growing workload and lack of capacity to effectively tackle it, this theme answers both Research Questions 1 and 2: How do funder requirements influence decisions around the implementation, design, and evaluation of GBV interventions?; and How do NGOs experience collaboration, learning and sharing of GBV intervention evaluations? The former is answered by providing the implications of funder accountability requirements on M&E practises and organisational operations. The emerged issue regarding a lack of funds for quality evaluations speaks to the second question as NGOs’ capacities for development and learning are impacted by the lack of funds available for the conducting and sharing of evaluations. This theme has provided valuable information

that can be utilised to present possible best practice suggestions for the stakeholders in this sector.

Theme Three: Struggles of Collaborative and Organisational Learning

This theme refers to the difficulties that the interviewees outlined regarding collaborative and organisational learning. While the interviewees could all recall instances of successful collaboration and sharing, categorised into formal and informal methods, eight of the nine interviewees outlined that sharing and collaboration can improve in the sector, and provided examples of the aspects of the sector that hinder successful collaboration.

Collaborative learning includes collaboration and the sharing of information between NGOs in the sector, such as best practice guidelines or evaluation results and collaborative advocacy work; using external research and evaluations; and joining coalitions. Organisational learning includes the use of informal needs assessments and internal monitoring and evaluation results in organisational decision-making. This theme has two subthemes: Working in silos; and “Us vs. them”.

Working in silos

This sub-theme identifies the issue of South African GBV organisations working only in silos, that is, only communicating or collaborating with those in their organisations or departments. The data from the interviews reveal the drawbacks that organisations experience by not openly communicating and working with each other, and the reasons for this sector culture, which include a lack of resources and technical knowledge, funders not funding collaborative work, and sector-wide competition.

Six interviewees mentioned that the reason that information is not shared between organisations via online resources, informal methods, or formal pathways is that it is not a priority. The top priorities include the intervention targets and securing the funds for various interventions, therefore, information distribution is often neglected. Participant 9 (Kwazulu-Natal counselling and training services) said: “There's no active sharing because it falls off the radar because they're so busy doing other things.” Furthermore:

From our side it's an issue around just the time and the ability to share those kinds of documents more widely. We would definitely like to share it more widely because, ... if our documents are valuable to the next organization, and it's able to help women from a different geographical

location, then that's awesome. But at the end of the day, our main aim is to help abused women and their children to live lives with less discrimination and less violence against women and our first priority is our programmes, not other people's programmes. (Participant 2, Gauteng counselling, training and shelter services)

The above quotation refers directly to the sharing of evaluations or theories of change as Participant 2 outlines that while their organisation realises the benefit of working and sharing with other organisations, they are unable to spend the time and money required to do this successfully. The benefits of collaboration and information sharing provided by this interviewee, including helping women in other geographical locations, is supported by Cooper & Shumate (2012) who found that when NGOs' systematic capacities are boosted, more clients can be offered more various services. This is particularly important regarding GBV as it is a multifaceted issue in which clients have multiple needs; therefore, NGOs can increase the quality of care for GBV clients by referring them to organisations with different specialisations.

Cooper and Shumate's (2012) study on GBV NGOs in Zambia illustrates the obstacles to collaboration between organisations and introduces the bona fide network perspective for examining inter-organisational collaboration. The bona fide network perspective investigates the multiplex relationships that compose networks of collaboration among NGOs, including joint projects, referrals, information sharing, and grassroots or donor-driven coalitions (Cooper & Shumate, 2012). The impetus for collaboration plays an important role in inter-organisational collaboration as, depending on environmental constraints, collaborative partners will always have different levels of commitment and involvement, or as expressed by the interviewees, different levels of priority (Cooper & Shumate, 2012; see also Stohl & Walker, 2002; Walker & Stohl, 2012). The environmental constraints outlined in the literature to impact NGO collaboration include the inter-organisational networks in which the stakeholders are embedded and the environmental factors that exist outside of this network (Cooper & Shumate, 2012; see also Stohl & Walker, 2002). In this study, these are revealed to be the fostered competition in the network, funder influence, and lack of organisational resources and capacity.

While it is not considered a priority in many organisations, four interviewees further commented that online publishing is not done by their organisations because they lack resources such as technical knowledge and money to pay someone to manage their websites

and disseminate the information. The following two quotations illustrate how organisations have the information available but lack the money, capacity, or skills to put formal and frequent information-sharing practices in place:

... in terms of marketing the work that we have done and if there's any new information we want to add on the website we have to go contact somebody. We don't have that ability [or] skills within the organisation to be able to say this has just come about and we want it to be published. (Participant 2, Gauteng counselling, training and shelter services)

... knowledge sharing is awful. I mean we've had three national roundtables; reports have been written for all of them, but none of them have been shared. I don't think we even know who to contact about that, who can help us get it out there online. (Participant 9, Kwazulu-Natal counselling and training services)

Participants 9 and 2 recall that they do collect and “write up” new information, however, it fails to be distributed. Participant 9's organisation has attended multiple national round tables and collected information intending to share it with the public and those organisations that were not in attendance; however, they cited not having the skills or contacts to publish their information online. This finding is supported by Atouba and Shumate (2010) who note that issues such as lack of staff and skills to maintain collaboration and information-sharing practices create significant barriers, specifically to NGOs in the Global South that have less financial and social capital than their Northern counterparts.

While a lack of resources and technical knowledge is a large contributor to NGOs working in silos in the sector, the role of funders in this issue was also mentioned by the interviewees. Five interviewees outlined that collaborative work is pursued in the sector if funders expressly require or it. Participant 4 (Western Cape legal, psycho-social support and training services), stated that: “we are very donor driven so if a donor doesn't require [collaboration], we don't do it.” Similarly:

I think we all know we work in silos. It's because we are donor driven and it's difficult to collaborate ... often donors, as much as they talk about collaboration, they do pit against each other ... If they funded collaboration, we are ready to do it. (Participant 6 Eastern Cape psycho-social, legal and sheltering support services)

The above results of this study identify a lack of funding and the intrinsically dependant capacity of the GBV NGOs on funders to be obstacles to collaboration and information sharing. Cooper and Shumate's (2012) research similarly revealed this issue of funder influence after finding some obstacles to collaboration and outcomes at individual and network levels. Therefore, funders should consider directly funding collaborative work and necessitating information-sharing practices between NGOs as one of their aims or requirements.

The lack of resources and funder support regarding collaboration and information sharing is directly linked to the subsequent competition that is fostered in the sector which many interviewees highlighted as the main hindrance of collaboration and a driving force in maintaining the practice of working in silos. Five interviewees outlined that as the sector is resource-scarce regarding funding, organisations are nervous about losing out to others if they share what makes them "unique," "successful," and "attractive to funders" (Participants 2, 5, and 9, respectively).

The following quotations illustrate this effectively as interviewees comment on the lack of information shared online and the absence of formal information-sharing pathways between organisations:

You won't find best practices [because] you're dealing with a sector where you're so vastly under resourced and there is so much competition for funds. And it's terribly unfortunate but that's what it boils down to is that *this is my model* and I have to hold on to this model because that is what distinguishes me from every other NGO in the Western Cape. So, if I put this up on my website, online, I speak too much about it, somebody else is going to take it over and before you know it, I'm going to start losing funding. (Participant 1, Western Cape shelter service)

... but everyone's holding on to their own [information] for their own interests. People will purposely not share, because it could jeopardize their opportunity to maybe get some funding or be invited to a certain space. (Participant 6, Eastern Cape psycho-social, legal and sheltering support services)

Participants 1 and 6 spoke about the distinguishing factors of an NGO being their models and theories of change and best practice guidelines, and how making these available can jeopardise future funding opportunities. The competitive nature of the sector has been revealed as a barrier to collaboration and information sharing as NGOs that seek the same

goal often compete for volunteers, staff, and funds (Cooper & Shumate, 2012; see also Koch, 2011). When organisations view each other as competitors, a collaborative spirit is difficult to maintain. In this study, interviewees stated that they want to work together to combat GBV, or at least realise that they should be working together, but the lack of infrastructure and the communicative challenges, largely recently due to COVID-19, hinders the honest communication, information sharing, and collaboration possible in the sector. This finding is identical to that of Cooper and Shumate (2012) who found that GBV NGO staff members realised the advantage of partnering but refrained from it because another organisation did similar work and was thus a competitor rather than a partner; this tension was managed, but also ultimately exacerbated, by the participants by limiting their information sharing practices. Similarly, the interviewees of this current study revealed that they struggled to balance their desire to collaborate with the need to protect the interests of their respective organisations.

A triangle of association exists between working in silos, not having enough resources for sharing, and competition as it is clear that each aspect maintains and facilitates the other. In a sector where organisations are “fighting for funding” (Participant 9), the purposeful practice of organisations “holding things close to [their] chest[s]” (Participant 1) creates a “dog-eat-dog, competitive, and weirdly secretive” culture (Participant 9). When asked what would facilitate a change regarding information sharing and competition in the sector, most interviewees answered that funders could encourage and fund collective work or ensure that more funds are available (an answer that interviewees expressed was likely an impossibility).

For example, contrastingly to the above discussion about a lack of funder support for collaboration and sharing, Participant 5 commended one of their funders for their commitment to encouraging information sharing and networking in the sector:

The thing I could give [funder] is that they do create those [information sharing] platforms, or they're trying to create those platforms. They have quarterly meetings where they bring all their “fundies” together; naturally, you're going to have crossover and discussion and all of that. ... you meet other organizations, doing similar things, as well as struggling with the same project. And then you do share and learn from each other. (Participant 5, Western Cape counselling, training and advocacy services)

Participant 5 outlines being able to learn from and share with the other organisations that are funded by a specific funder. Similarly, Atouboa and Shumate (2010) found that a

similarity or commonality in funding sources is a significant predictor of the development of ties and connections between organisations. They outlined that organisations with the same funding sources are more likely to network as they have comparable statuses or reputability and therefore, are less likely to feel threatened by the other. This could be a direct suggestion for funders regarding how they can foster and encourage information sharing and collaboration in the GBV sector.

Despite the discussed issues above, some types of informal and formal collaborative and organisational learning do take place in the sector and have positive implications and contributions for organisations and the sector at large. The informal methods include staff members from other organisations talking to each other and asking questions. Interviewees said that information is often given when asked for and that staff from other organisations speak to each other to gain insight and advice. Specifically, two interviewees highlighted that friendship or “running into each other” (Participant 2) facilitate information sharing between organisations. For example:

We do [share information] in an unofficial capacity, not in any kind of formal capacity, a trade of learning and things like that. And directors talk, they know each other, or they run into each other. And they might share how they figured something out or how they shaped a program or something. (Participant 5, Western Cape counselling, training and advocacy services)

Six participants discussed the formal sharing strategies that their NGOs implement or common methods for collaboration in the sector that have been beneficial in the past and should be more widely practised in the sector. Two participants outlined formal information sharing practices whereby reports, best practice suggestions, organisation learnings, and sector information or research are shared. For example:

So, we also have an annual research day where any research that has been conducted by students or staff is presented during the 16 days of activism; we then put it on YouTube Live. We open it up to organizations and invite them. This year we're going to do it differently, ... so we're going to have a webinar, and the impact evaluation of the diversion program will also be released on that same platform. (Participant 7, Gauteng medical and legal services)

Participant 7 mentioned the importance of the 16 days of activism for their organisation, having highlighted it as a time in which they secure a lot of their donations that

cover the shortfalls of funding. This interviewee described a concerted effort to share information for both donor reasons and to ensure that other organisations have access to their practises and knowledge.

Regarding formal collaboration and information strategies, six interviewees expressed that coalitions are good spaces that encourage formal information sharing and collaboration amongst NGOs in the GBV sector. The most mentioned coalitions in the interview data were the Shukumisa Coalition, The Mpumalanga Shelter Movement, and the Western Cape Women's Shelter Movement (WCWSM). A coalition was described by participants as "an alliance that encourages collective actions," (Participant 3), and an opportunity for "a lot of updating one another and gaining input on problems," (Participant 8). In the GBV NGO space, this often refers to advocacy work where an increased number of NGOs standing together regarding certain legislation or issues is stronger and more likely to garner change due to the pressure a multi-organisation request can exert.

Three interviewees highlighted the positive outcomes of coalitions and the collaborative learning that is encouraged in those spaces. For example:

... if you have an advocacy ask or a cause that might overlap a bit, if not be the exact same, you'd form a coalition and then that just makes your voice louder when submitting briefs or notes or anything to Parliament. That should be ongoing. That's a very good healthy form of advocacy in this country and sector. (Participant 5, Western Cape counselling, training and advocacy services)

Cooper and Shumate (2012) further identify that the role of the convener in creating coalitions and the influence these coalitions can have on NGO networks is imperative, and grassroots conveners garner more success and engagement than donor conveners. Shukumisa would be an example of a grassroots convener coalition, which according to the bona fide network perspective, can produce positive outcomes at two levels. First, on the individual organisation level, organisations may improve their reputation or influence in the sector by opting to join coalitions; second, on the system network level, gains in capacity, defined by Cooper & Shumate (2012) as the joint ability to identify shared problems, develop policies and programmes to address them, and mobilise the necessary resources, are possible through coalitions.

However, and unfortunately, regarding the Shukumisa Coalition, to which eight of the nine organisations in this study are/were members, five participants stated that it is

ineffective and has not facilitated the positive outcomes described by interviewees for a few years. The reasons for this failure are mentioned to be a lack of funding, as Participant 2 stipulates: “I think as a result of lack of funding, [Shukumisa’s] work has decreased,” and unresolved or absent leadership within the coalition. For example:

Shukumisa is essentially dysfunctional; there's no leadership structure and people are just doing things voluntarily, so nothing is getting done. (Participant 9, Kwazulu-Natal counselling and training services)

I did mention and describe [Shukumisa] as how NGOs can collaborate, [but] it doesn't always mean it happens, or that it's effective. ... You have to have somebody spearheading it, you have to have someone organizing the travel and giving the incentive for people to actually pitch up for meetings. (Participant 5, Western Cape counselling, training and advocacy services)

While participants could all give instances when collaborative learning and work had positively influenced their organisations or the GBV sector at large, it was still widely understood that these GBV organisations work predominantly in silos. This is due to being under-resourced regarding skills, money, and personnel, not seeing information sharing as a priority, not being encouraged by stakeholders such as funders to collaborate and share, the failure of coalitions, and the unavoidable competition fostered in the sector. However, it also emerged in the data that the struggles of collaborative learning require an in-depth look at how organisations undertake their learning and improvement, what strategies are most valued by them and why.

“Us vs. Them”

This sub-theme traces the way that the participants described their organisational learning methods and struggles. The interviewees spoke as if there is a sense of “us vs. them” when hearing and acting on feedback. Learning from inside their organisations (internally), is revealed to be more valued than learning from external sources. For example:

But using the findings [of formal evaluations] is a bit difficult. Because the external evaluations, ... they expose systemic issues and difficulties and maybe which processes could be better, and so on. So that is fed back to the staff, but it's not acted upon as quickly and is not nearly as effective

as informal internal reviews which are more collaborative and a discussion. (Participant 5, Western Cape counselling, training and advocacy services)

Here, Participant 5 mentions that the staff respond better when receiving feedback from those inside the organisation, “us,” rather than those that have evaluated their work as an external entity, “them.” That is, they believe the influence of internal organisational learning on decision-making is greater and more efficient than that of external learning. Participant 6 agreed by outlining the types of internal organisational learnings that their staff value and ensure are conducted at their NGO:

So, we definitely do an internal review every year with all the staff and volunteers to look at our programme plan and our progress towards our annual goals. ... I'd say that's used pretty well because everybody's present and they can comment, and then prepare for the remainder of the year. ... You have to couch [external learnings] differently, it's about never alienating your staff or volunteers. If you use things they are familiar with to make decisions, ... you get their buy in first and foremost. (Participant 6, Eastern Cape psycho-social, legal and sheltering support services)

This difference in perceived efficiency between internal and external learning is not identified in literature, however, it has clearly emerged in the interviews through the adopted interpretivist framework as the separating language, “them,” has been interpreted to carry context specific negative connotations and perspectives. Regarding the “us” aspect of collaborative learning, interviewees identified the internal learning practice of conducting evaluations or research and implementing the findings thereof into their programmes or future designs. For organisational learning to occur there needs to be certain feedback mechanisms, reflections on experience and the current context, monitoring on how things are working and what is being achieved, and reports from staff during strategic or monthly meetings. The use of formal monitoring and evaluation results was mentioned by four interviewees as successful strategies that have influenced programme designs or implementation.

We evaluate what we've monitored. So, we've got a theory of change with the most significant change, pre and post, and we do qualitative and quantitative research or at least monitoring. But we also have a very strong quantitative process around the most significant change, theory of

change, and appreciative inquiry. We make decisions informed by these data. (Participant 4, Western Cape legal, psycho-social support and training services)

So, all of our programs do have a monitoring and evaluation component built into it, and that's actually how we learn, and we are able to modify or change or design programs based on what is coming out of our monitoring and evaluation initiatives. ... That's how we knew that repeat meeting with the same groups of pupils would be more beneficial. (Participant 2, Gauteng counselling, training and shelter services)

Here, Participants 4 and 2 explain how they incorporated evaluation findings and monitoring data into their decision-making as organisations. Participant 2 specifically recounted an instance when a programme that ran mini workshops with school pupils was not delivering the anticipated outcomes to indicate success. To identify why the outcomes were lacking, the NGO conducted focus groups and interviews with the pupils and teachers. This formal investigation revealed that a once-off workshop with the pupils was insufficient, and a more longitudinal implementation was needed to ensure better results. The programme then changed to meeting the same group of pupils at least four times a year.

While some interviewees outlined the benefits and value of formal evaluations for their organisation's decision-making regarding programme designs and implementations, there is a particular lack of evaluations being conducted by these organisations. This can be attributed to the lack of resources, funds, will, and time, as outlined in a previous theme, and in recent years, the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the use of monitoring data is prevalent and does provide current information about the general running of programmes which can facilitate fast and impactful changes to programmes. This was exemplified as interviewees outlined informal learning strategies such as internal reviews, described as monthly or weekly staff meetings; annual strategy meetings in which staff members report their achievements and highlight their challenges; and informal needs assessments. These learnings would often make use of monitoring data collected throughout the interventions which depict indicators such as the number of women seen, number of workshops held, and number of cases taken to trial.

For example, Participant 1 explained how the use of monitoring data and monthly reports from staff regarding their achievements are used to highlight challenges and influence

decision-making. They described the instance where monthly meetings and the monitoring data regarding the number of women inquiring about their services revealed that COVID-19 regulations were inhibiting their reach regarding supplying information about their sheltering services to those in need. Following this, “the staff had a meeting to discuss the various possible changes to [their] implementation strategies, and for example, [they] decided to advertise in newspapers and move the skills classes to Zoom,” (Participant 1, Western Cape shelter service). They stated: “We are constantly looking to see ... where we can improve, where the gaps are.”

Furthermore, from the data, a specific type of informal organisational learning that was highly valued by interviewees emerged. This was described by three interviewees as when NGOs make changes to implementation or designs due to what they observe of their clients, their community context, or the political climate, for example. This is specifically looking at the needs of the target populations, speaking directly to the target population, or by “just keeping an ear to the ground” (Participant 6, Eastern Cape psycho-social, legal and sheltering support services). Specifically, many NGOs, have made major changes to current programmes in the last two years after identifying specific problem areas during the COVID-19 pandemic:

If I say that one amazing thing that really would inform [omitted]’s programs and direction ... [it] would be: what are the requirements of the survivor on the ground. The women that are coming through the door, what are their needs, what is that telling us about how we can either curtail, restrict, embroider, extend, or put a completely new program into place. We figure that out within the organisation as it is information that we can recognise faster than researchers. (Participant 1, Western Cape shelter service)

Participant 1 reinforces the “us vs. them” view as they outlined that these informal needs assessments by the organisation staff identify issues faster than external researchers. They then went on to recall how their NGO conceptualised and designed a substance abuse unit for GBV survivors when their staff members began to recognise the need for a specialised intervention. Similarly, this NGO established a home-schooling programme and food-drive intervention once observing how their clients were struggling under lockdown level 5. There were no formal needs assessments completed, evaluations to highlight possible shortfalls of their previous ongoing programmes, or monitoring data that could have

identified these needs; however, the experience of staff members facilitated and influenced these changes to their programme designs and implementation strategies.

Internal learning strategies were highly regarded by interviewees, however, it was clear that external learning did not inspire the same feelings of trust and positivity. Five interviewees regarded organisational learning through external sources in negative manners, such as: “researchers don’t get it and only report what makes them look good,” and “[research] is mostly geared for the North anyway.” (Participants 7 and 4). For example:

... but what's happening is [the researchers] sometimes think they know best, but they have academized it. You know, it's not the left, it's far from the left reality, and I blame researchers, because then they do this fancy research published things that are far removed from the reality of the people that actually need interventions. And then the funders look at this research and prescribe all sorts of nonsense. ... I'd rather we just do it in-house. (Participant 4, Western Cape legal, psycho-social support and training services)

This exemplifies the “them” aspect of the NGO-researcher relationship. Participant 4 above mentions that researchers and the research they produce are often far removed from the context and realities of the programmes that they are evaluating. This has fostered a distrust as they determine that organisation difficulties, such as funder requirements not aligning with the organisations’ aims, are due to the produced research and its shortfalls. Olivier et al. (2016) investigated the NGO-researcher relationship to identify the opportunities and shortfalls thereof. While their research concerned the process of researchers working with NGOs to conduct studies and collect data, and my study does not specifically separate this practice from the action of utilising research findings in decision-making, their findings of NGOs’ distrust and hesitation to implement suggestions from research echo this study’s findings (Olivier et al., 2016). NGOs do not value external research when they believe that the researchers have not included the organisations or considered the context and reality of the sector appropriately (Farnworth & Vaarst, 2012; see also Olivier et al., 2016). The difference in the institutional cultures and research goals of NGOs and researchers is highlighted in the literature as being a hindrance to the implementation of scientific research suggestions in development NGOs (Ormel et al., 2020; see also Olivier et al., 2016; Rathgeber, 2009). For academic and external researchers, these include expectations, norms and priorities for academic promotion and are thus likely to focus on increasing knowledge and communicating their findings through scientific publications (Rathgeber, 2009).

However, for NGO staff, these considerations are guided by their organisational mandates and missions and are focussed on achieving behavioural or policy change in specific sectors (Olivier et al., 2016). Furthermore, academic researchers typically assess the quality of their research by regarding standards of methodological and scientific rigour, however, NGOs may be driven by more pragmatic considerations in their assessments of research utility (Olivier et al., 2016). This is particularly true in the GBV sector as found from a participant's dismissal of research as "fancy research published things." It is possible that better communication, interaction, and increased participatory studies with NGOs and researchers can improve this negative view and better encourage the consideration of external research by organisations.

However, it should be mentioned that two interviewees could offer incidents of their organisations making use of external research to learn and inform their decision-making regarding their programmes. This included best practice outlines from other organisations or researchers, theory-driven research in the GBV sector both within and outside of South Africa, and external evaluations conducted by researchers or funders.

Olivier et al. (2016) has outlined that NGOs that consider external research and findings can gain opportunities to validate their practices, expand the evidence base for their work, and conduct necessary changes to programmes that they might not have seen themselves. Furthermore, NGOs that interact with external research, either through collaboration when conducting it or implementation and consideration of the results and suggestions, are well placed to: 1) suggest orientations to better align future research efforts with the local needs and political realities (mentioned by an interviewee to be an issue they have with research findings); 2) assist in transferring vital research findings to the relevant policy-makers; and 3) facilitate the uptake of the research suggestions by the NGO sector and through community engagement (Olivier et al., 2016; see also Ormel et al., 2020).

This theme outlines the struggles of collaborative and organisational learning in the GBV NGO sector in South Africa and answers both the second and third research questions of: How do NGOs experience collaboration, learning and sharing of GBV intervention evaluations?, and How does scientific evidence-based literature influence decisions around implementation, design and evaluations of GBV interventions? The results of this suggest that organisation information is: a) helpful if shared; b) shared most successfully through informal methods and collaboration; and c) not shared due to competition within the sector, lack of funds, and the failure of coalitions. It was found that collaboration and coalitions were spaces that could garner trust and sharing; however, the breakdown of The Shukumisa

Coalition exemplifies the issues of lack of will, capacity, and funding regarding collaboration.

Furthermore, the feeling of “us vs. them” regarding external research and its influence on organisational learning has revealed that NGOs prefer to learn from inside their organisations, from their staff members and data. It can be interpreted that they are reluctant to use external research, evaluations, or recommendations because these are less valued by staff members and difficult to present in a manner that will facilitate trust and successful implementations of the suggestions. These findings can be used to offer preliminary best practice suggestions that aim to increase and streamline organisational learning and collaboration within the GBV NGO sector.

Conclusion

This exploratory research aimed to investigate and test a proposed model of decision-making for GBV NGOs in South Africa by considering: a) how funder requirements influence the decision-making of GBV NGOs regarding programme implementation, design, and evaluations; b) how GBV NGOs experience collaboration, learning and sharing of information; and c) how scientific evidence-based literature and studies influence decision-making regarding implementation, design and evaluation of GBV programmes. The research used semi-structured interviews with nine professionals working in nine different GBV NGOs in South Africa and thematically analysed the data to find trends and common beliefs in the sector regarding the research topics. Research into the various types of interventions and their successes and impacts in the GBV sector is imperative. It can not only allow for improvement but also the potential to provide recommendations from which future and current organisations can learn.

This chapter is organised as follows: First, the contributions of this study are discussed, and the recommendations for improvements to current organisation and funder practises. Furthermore, the model of influences on decision-making presented at the beginning of this dissertation is updated according to the emergent findings. Next, the limitations of the study are discussed. Finally, various future research recommendations are presented.

Contributions of This Study

This paper contributes to the literature and the sector by elucidating possible problematic practices or shortfalls in the GBV NGO sector in South Africa. Specifically, provisional best practice recommendations can be devised from the results of this study. Furthermore, the model of decision-making devised from the literature and anecdotal evidence has been revised to better reflect the nuances and complexities of the South African GBV context.

Best Practise Suggestions for Funders

This research has identified various areas and aspects of the funder-NGO relationship that may be hindering the contribution and impact of GBV programmes in South Africa. These include mechanisms and considerations that may facilitate greater feelings of

autonomy of the funded organisations, therefore decreasing possible tension and resentment for the funders, and increasing organisational capacities and potential impacts of the implemented programmes. One of the hindrances of capacity within the GBV sector in South Africa included the upward accountability practices required by funders. This study's analysis uncovers how some organisations work around the discipline of reporting against pre-determined measures for upward accountability requirements by showing a certain level of agency to negotiate certain funder requirements; however, interviewees did express that changes can be made in the practises and expectations of the funders to decrease the pressure felt.

Common in the discussion of how funder requirements influence decision-making in this study was the lack of general funding and how this increases pressure and inhibits the autonomy of organisations. The best practice recommendation regarding this would include funders being more flexible regarding the allocations of their pledged funds. This study further found that when funders change programme designs or implementations of already running programmes, the NGO staff often feel unsupported when making such changes and cited a lack of communication and negotiation as reasons for this impacting their feelings of autonomy. It may not be reasonable to suggest that funders do not require changes to current programmes, however, the provision of flexibility and support regarding these changes would be a good practise to implement.

Upward accountability requirements from funders were found to create imbalances within organisations, increase pressure due to excessive workloads, and affect decision-making regarding evaluations. Increasingly to the results of this study, South African NGOs are expected to be efficient financial managers in addition to, or perhaps as opposed to, being effective at their main objectives. The time and resources spent on donor-led monitoring distract from the NGOs' core objectives as well as from evaluating their work in self-determined ways, as shown by the conversation in this study about what hinders organisations' autonomies. It follows, that an appropriate best practice recommendation would include increased communication and negotiation between NGOs and funders regarding the required accountability strategies.

Vital to the GBV NGO sector in South Africa is the implication that funders should be more familiar with the context in which programmes are being implemented and organisations are working. While this conversation can be better discussed to highlight and investigate the nuances of international versus local funders, the result from this study can

still be used for provisional best practice recommendations. Regarding the discussion of international funders, it is clear that GBV staff feel like their experience in the sector and South African context is often dismissed or undervalued. The discussion in this study regarding the organisational learning strategies employed by organisations, suggests that these be better considered by funders in conversations about funding requirements and programme objectives.

Furthermore, this study found that funders can facilitate positive changes in the GBV NGOs sector through their requirements and objectives by including a focus on sector collaboration and information sharing. This can be done by either stipulating funds to be used for information sharing strategies, such as posting evaluation results on websites or organising events with their funded organisations that have similar objectives and aims, or by directly funding coalitions and work that involves collaboration between organisations. While it is a difficult recommendation to make as this study found that donor-driven collaboration was not always considered as positive by organisation staff, the results of how information sharing and collaboration can decrease competition in the sector and facilitate greater organisational learning cannot be ignored. Funders are in a position to encourage behaviours and practise in the sector, however, this must be done in a way that does not inhibit autonomy or increase workloads and pressure for the staff members.

With past literature and the current study's findings in mind, a provisional list of best practice suggestions for funders of GBV NGOs is:

1. If possible, do not make changes to programme designs and implementations midway through the programmes.
2. If the above-described changes are necessary, assist NGOs with dealing with these changes.
3. Offer more general funding so that shortfalls are less frequent and crippling for the organisations and they can cover the daily running costs of their programmes.
4. Validate and recognise the NGOs' expertise in the context of the South African GBV sector as a whole.
5. Ensure that you are familiar with the South African and Global South context with regards to GBV and the issues that can impede NGO impact and implementation.

6. Consider granting longer funding periods to increase the sustainability and impact of programmes.
7. Consider decreasing or redesigning the reporting requirements for organisations through a collaborative process with each organisation.
8. Prioritise information sharing and collaboration among GBV NGOs by funding it directly and acknowledging its importance in this sector.

This list is provisional as the current research does not provide exhaustive and generalisable results.

Best Practice Suggestions for South African GBV NGOs

The results of this study elucidate possible practices that could lead to more efficient and effective decision-making for GBV NGOs. This research outlines the influences of decision-making and the shortfalls and opportunities of collaboration and information sharing concerning organisational learning in the GBV NGO sector.

An emergent theme of this research and Bawa's (2013) study, concerns the autonomy of NGOs and how this is affected by funder requirements and the competitive nature of the GBV sector, meaning that organisations have to design programmes specifically with the funders in mind to ensure they secure funding. This is covered in the best practice suggestions for funders through highlighting the validation and recognition of organisations' expertise and knowledge in the sector and calling for collaborative discussions regarding the redesigning, reporting, and implementation of programmes. However, a comment from Participant 5 about how their organisation has worked to "reclaim their autonomy" in a system that so often puts it under threat, warrants a best practice suggestion for organisations. Literature has highlighted the need for NGOs to maintain their autonomy, programme integrity, and organisational and operational effectiveness and how pushback or coming to a compromise is a viable solution (Dworkin & Barker, 2019; see also Ismail, 2019; Mutongwizo, 2018). Therefore, organisations should aim to request negotiations and conversations as often as is necessary for them to feel a sense of ownership and perhaps shared control.

The results of this study found that the reasons for not sharing more online and making information accessible to the public ranged from a lack of capacity within the organisation, lack of resources, lack of technical know-how, and the fear of work being used

by others and ultimately losing out on funding. It was found that spaces of collaboration and coalitions could garner trust and sharing; however, the recent inactivity of The Shukumisa Coalition exemplifies the issues found in this study of lack of will, capacity, and funding regarding coalitions in the GBV NGO sector. It can be recommended that organisations be more aware of the benefits of information sharing and collaboration regarding the overall impact of the GBV sector and make reasonable changes to facilitate these practices.

A surprising result of this study has highlighted GBV organisations' perceptions of external learning strategies, such as external scientific and academic research. It was clear that these learning strategies were not highly valued when it came to influencing decision-making. Interviewees outlined that research often "academises" the issues in the sector due to their publishing aims. Furthermore, the external research was linked by one interviewee to the misdirection of certain funder requirements. Perceptions cannot be changed with a best practice recommendation, and simply suggesting that organisations use external research more often would be futile in changing the negative perceptions and practices. Therefore, this can be tackled by suggesting that NGOs be more open to collaborating with researchers in participatory studies where they can ensure that mutual benefits can be achieved as this would increase the likelihood of the results and suggestions being implemented by the NGOs and considered in their decision-making.

Therefore, the following suggestions for GBV NGOs in South Africa can be made considering the results of this study and what has been found in the literature:

1. Ensure that your autonomy is asserted and maintained by creating ongoing discussions and negotiations with funders regarding changes, requirements, and reporting.
2. Communicate openly with other NGOs to mitigate the effects of competitiveness in the sector.
3. Make information readily available to the public and other organisations to increase the chances of impact and organisational learning in the sector.
4. Join coalitions with the goal of collaboration, information sharing, and joint impact, rather than to satisfy funders.
5. Consider more primary prevention interventions, as suggested in the literature.

6. Where possible and appropriate, work with external researchers in a participatory and collaborative manner to conduct relevant and contextually sensitive research.

Model of Decision-making

The results of this study revealed that the previously suggested model of decision-making within GBV NGOs (as shown in Figure 1) was partially correct. However, the value placed on certain influences was elucidated through the interviewee analysis. Therefore, the revised model shown in Figure 5 is proposed.

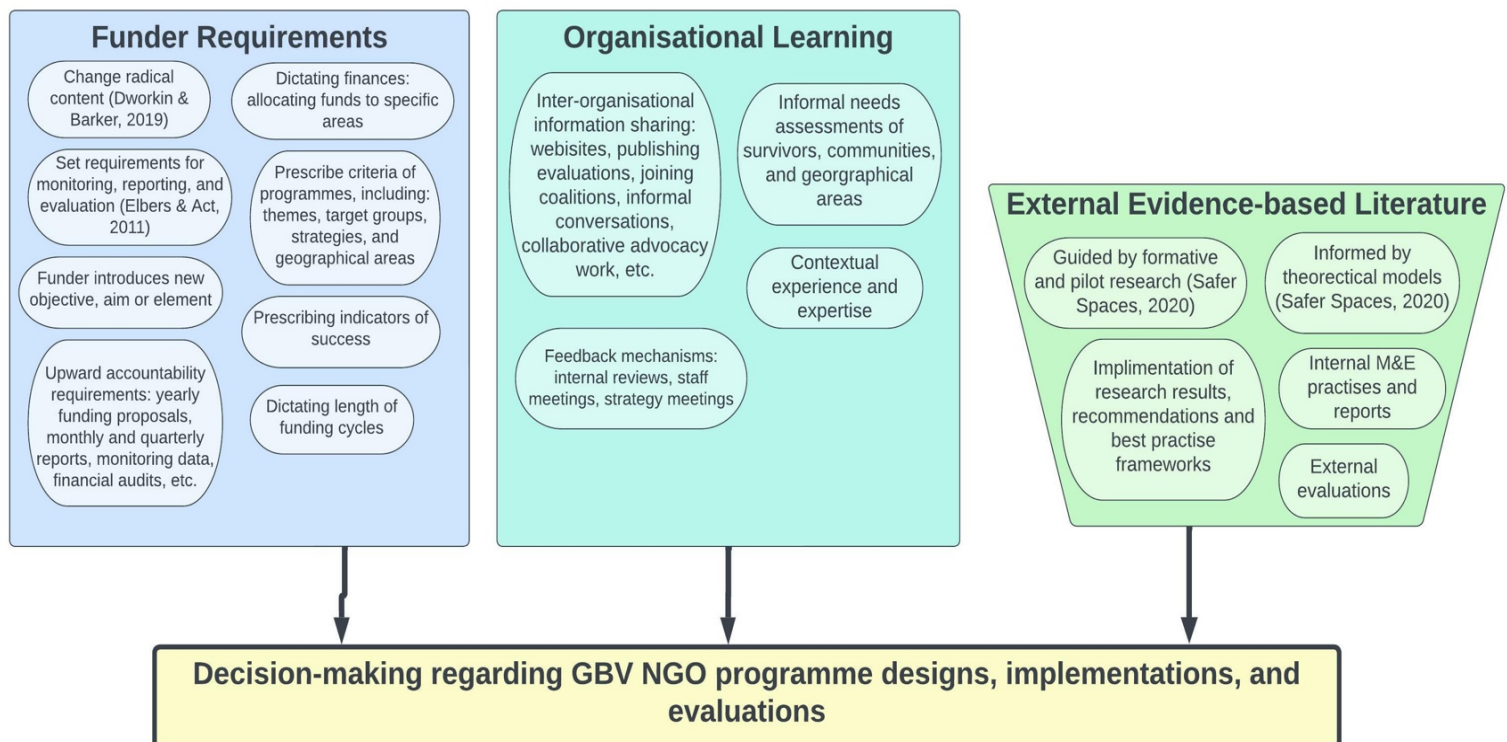


Figure 5. Proposed model depicting the influences of decision-making for GBV NGOs in South Africa.

This model shows that while funder requirements and organisation in-learnings seem to be comparable in scope and frequency, in-learnings are more valued than funder requirements. Furthermore, the different types of in-learnings were found to occur through various formal and informal methods not previously suggested by the model. While not surprising, this finding does show that the previous assumption of equal influence between in-learnings, funder requirements, and scientific research is not true in the GBV NGO sector in South Africa as underlying tensions and perceptions affect the influence each aspect exerts. Rather, scientific research was only found to have a small influence on decision-

making and programme design especially due to the perception of ‘outsider’ feedback versus organisational in-learnings. The minimal use of academic and scientific research was not anticipated as one would expect organisations working within such a multiplex sector to engage with the growing knowledge base on GBV strategies and interventions. This is particularly true as literature has highlighted the importance and benefits of NGOs’ interactions with external research either through collaboration during the research, or through implementing the results and implications of the research (Ormel et al., 2020; see also Olivier et al., 2016;). Figure 6 further explores the proposed model by including the constraints of the various influences of decision-making. These constraints highlight the mechanisms by which funder requirements, organisational learning, and external evidence-based literature influence decision-making in South African GBV NGOs regarding programme design, implementation, and evaluations. These constraints emerged in the analysis, either when the participant explicitly mentioned a specific influence and the resultant difficulties, or when they outlined a difficulty that, through an interpretivist framework, could be traced back to a context of an influence of decision-making.

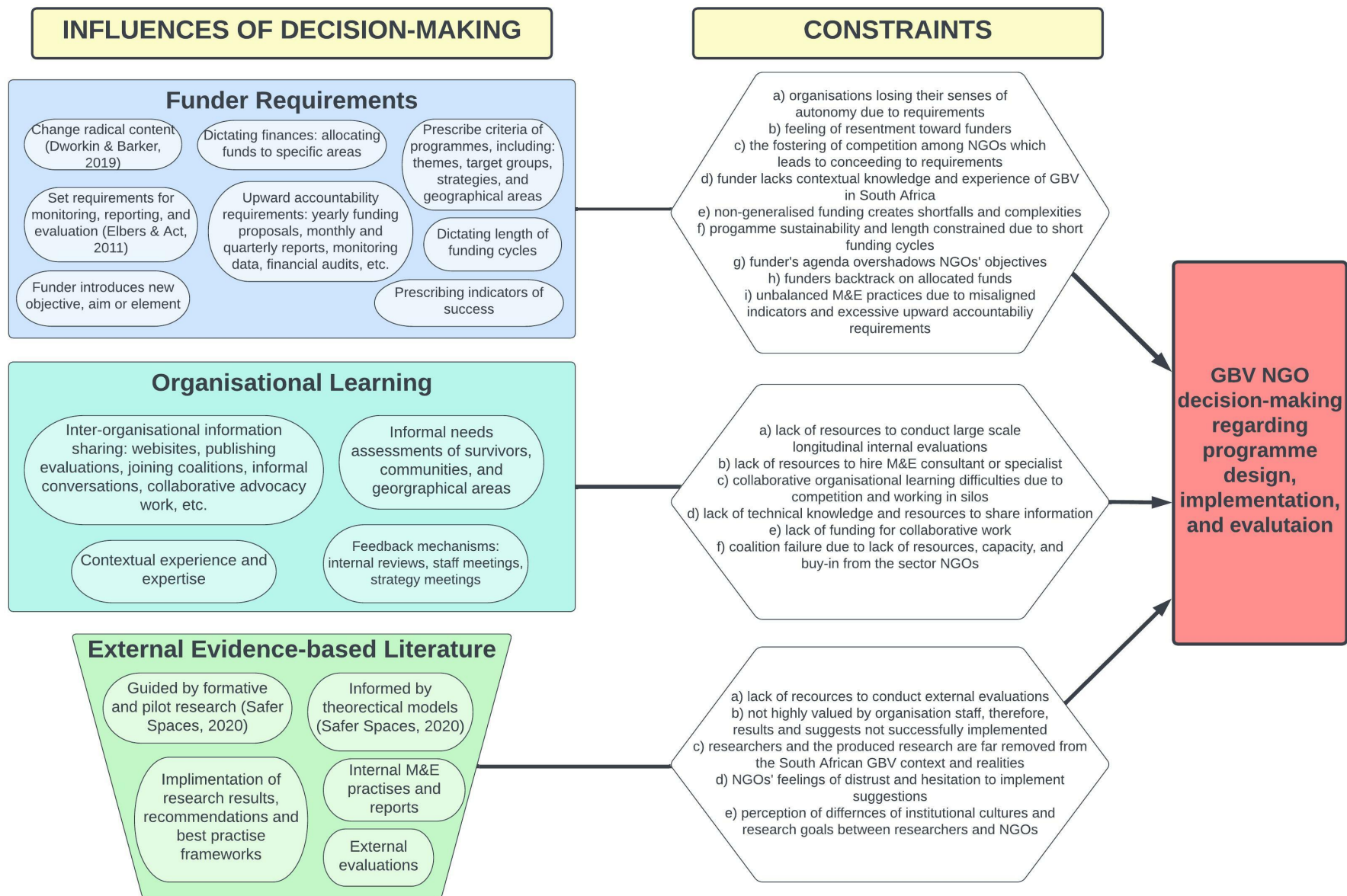


Figure 6. Proposed model depicting the influences of decision-making for GBV NGOs in South Africa and the constraints thereof

Limitations

This study has some limitations that affect how the results can be generalised and interpreted. An increased sample size would have facilitated more generalisable results and allowed a more in-depth analysis of data. While this study did succeed in contacting participants from various provinces around the country, it would have been preferable to ensure that every province was represented by more than one organisation. Furthermore, the inclusion of more organisations would have allowed inferences to be made depending on the type and activities of the organisations. Perhaps shelter service organisations perceive funder requirements differently than organisations that focus on psycho-social counselling. It was slightly implied that there is less competition in the shelter sector and that more information sharing takes place than with other types of organisations, however, this comparison cannot be confidently made based on the sample.

Second, to secure interviews, I ensured that they did not exceed one hour as prospective participants might have been hesitant to be interviewed for longer due to time pressures, especially due to the increased pressure of the COVID-19 restrictions. Interviews would have preferably taken 1–1.5 hrs as this would have allowed more detailed data. While this has allowed for viable future research suggestions, some results could have been better explored if more time had been allotted.

Third, the use of online interviews came with the risk of losing the benefits of face-to-face interviews. The interviewees' subtle visual cues may have been missed by the interviewer and creating a good rapport might have been better if done in person. Technical issues were also a limitation as poor internet connections or disruptions, for example, video freezing, phone calls abruptly ending interviews, and poor picture or sound qualities may have affected the transcription process. Furthermore, these elements may have frustrated the interviewees and impacted their willingness to continue with the interview (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014).

Fourth, the subjective bias of the interviewees could have influenced the results captured. Even though anonymity was promised and understood by the participants, it is possible that they purposely portrayed their organisations and funders positively as I was aware of their organisations' and funders' identities. This could have been mitigated by interviewing stakeholders outside of management.

Finally, only staff members from GBV NGOs were included in the sample of this study. Therefore, results can only comment on the perceptions of NGO staff regarding these issues; however, interviews with other stakeholders, such as funders and coalition leaders, could have provided a multi-sided view of the sector. While this was not an objective of this study, which sought to look specifically at NGO decision-making, the motivations of the funders regarding their requirements and perceptions of NGO upward accountability can provide vital insights into the state of the GBV sector in South Africa and the possibilities for new practises and improved impacts.

Future Research Recommendations

This study has highlighted the need for more research on the GBV NGO sector in South Africa. The proposed model can be used to design larger-scale studies, particularly regarding the impact certain mechanisms have on operational activities and organisational learning and decision-making. A review into the context of the Global South and South Africa and how it affects GBV NGOs' daily running and possible impacts can be conducted to encourage funders to engage with these issues and adjust their expectations and rigidity.

Furthermore, a study on GBV NGOs' decisions around primary, secondary, and tertiary strategies can be conducted. While the discussion of primary, secondary and tertiary interventions was widely represented in the literature review, it did not emerge as a general theme during the analysis of the interview data. It was only commented on by one interviewee, outlining tradition and feminist theory as being a valued decision-making influence and why they do not implement large-scale primary prevention interventions, aside from school workshops, advocacy, and media campaigns. While the found literature uses feminist theory to rationalise and underpin the approaches used in primary prevention strategies (Bawa, 2013; Dworkin & Barker, 2019), this theory was used by an interviewee to substantiate why they do not consider men and boys in their programme designs. It is clear, however, that a possible best practice strategy involves targeting gender roles, individual beliefs and attitudes, and involving men in the dismantling of violence (Dworkin & Barker, 2019; see also Black et al., 2011; Casey et al., 2012; Carlson et al., 2015). Therefore, this study can only partially comment that the most common strategies do not include men and are heavily aligned to secondary interventions targeting women, GBV survivors, IPV survivors and children. However, more research including NGOs that work in primary prevention is needed to substantiate this claim and elucidate decision-making regarding prevention types.

For the larger organisations in this study, the increased reporting requirements from funders have necessitated the hiring of new staff or the need for current employees to work overtime due to the added workload. Personnel with high-level quantitative-analytic skills are increasingly sought after by NGOs grappling with M&E requirements (Meuller-Hirth, 2012). Therefore, the shift of balance between project staff and support staff might be prevalent in the sector. While also increasing the strain on financial resources, this can adversely affect organisational cultures as certain skills become more highly valued (Ebrahim, 2003). It was common in the NGOs in this study that the directors run the fundraising and reporting when no M&E specialist was hired; skills such as auditing were then outsourced as those skills were not available inside the NGO. Generally speaking, Meuller-Hirth (2012) found that the smaller NGOs in their study were most negatively affected by monitoring regimes; therefore, the best practice recommendations on these requirements and how to respond to them would differ depending on the size and current capacities of the NGO. This nuance in the influence of upward accountability practices and the resultant constraints on decision-making and possible shifts in the organisational culture of the sector would require further research that considers the comparison of NGO sizes in the study sample.

Moreover, further investigation into the NGO-researcher and research relationship in the GBV NGO sector is needed. An understanding of the perceptions that organisation staff have of external research can uncover the drivers thereof and provide more relevant and targeted best practice suggestions.

Concluding Remarks

The statistics regarding GBV in South Africa are devastating, and without strong and impactful civil society organisations, significant change is unlikely to occur. If any suggestions or shortfalls can be identified in the current state of the GBV NGO sector in South Africa, it is vital that these are shared, researched, and piloted by the relevant stakeholders. This study has provided various avenues for future research and practise and if only one woman or child is helped as a result of this, then it is the most valuable work I have done.

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Appendix A

Table A1

Sustainable Development Goal 5, indicators and progress

Development Goal 5 [#]	Indicators [#]	South Africa's progress [*]
5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	5.1.1 are there legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex.	The Commission of Gender Equality ensures the promotion of gender equality and monitors compliance of South Africa to gender international policies. Key legislative acts include: the <i>Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act</i> (PEPUDA) and the <i>Employment Equity Act</i> (EEA)
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation	5.2.1 is the proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age. 5.2.2 is the proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence.	Women aged 18–24 years were more likely to have experienced physical violence than older women (10% of 18–24-year olds in the 12 months prior to the survey). 3.2% of 18–24-year olds experienced sexual violence 12 month prior to the survey. 13.4% of women in the lowest wealth quintile reported having experienced physical violence by a partner in the preceding 12 months. 7 of the 8 provinces exceeded their targets of the number of victims of crime and violence accessing services. Most notable increase was found in Gauteng for the 2017/2018 period. There was a gradual decrease in incidents of human trafficking for sexual purposes brought to the attention of the police – highest incidences found in Eastern Cape, Free State, and North West provinces.
5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation	5.3.1 is the proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18.	The prevalence of marriage by girls under 15 years decreased significantly between 2010 and 2014, with only 7 recorded early marriages in 2014. The current decrease in the incidence of child marriages is a positive sign that Target 5.3 may be achieved by 2030. Data is only based on

		civil and customary marriages, however. Therefore, South Africa has developed an additional indicator of SDG 5.3.1: Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before 15. A significant decrease from 0.6 per 100 000 (2010) to 0.005 per 100 000 (2014) has been observed.
	5.3.2 is the proportion of girls and women aged 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting.	Progress not reported for indicator 5.3.2.
5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate	5.4.1 is the proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location.	Unpaid domestic work: 2000 - Males = 5.1% Females = 6.1%; 2010 Males = 12.6%, Females = 13.5% Unpaid care work: 2000 – Males and Females = 0.3% and 0.3%; 2010 – Males = 2.2%, Females = 2%
5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life	5.5.1 is the proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments.	a) Women in national assembly = 41.6% in 2016. b) South African women made up on average 39.2 of provincial assemblies in 2016. Highest proportion in Limpopo (46.8%) and lowest in North West (34.4%).
	5.5.2 is the proportion of women in managerial positions.	The proportion of women in managerial roles = 32.1% in 2017. Progress needs to be accelerated to attain parity.
5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences	5.6.1 is the proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care.	In 2017, 60.2% of South African women report making their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health.
	5.6.2 is the number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual	Progress not reported for indicator 5.6.2.

	and reproductive health care, information and education.	
5.A Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws	5.A.1 is (a) the proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure.	52% of South Africa's land is owned by men and 34% by women in 2017.
	5.A.2 is the proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control.	Progress not reported for indicator 5.A.2.
5.B Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women	5.B.1 is the proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex.	More South African women own mobile phones than men. In 2017, females = 66.6% and males = 64%.
5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels	5.C.1 is the proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.	Progress not reported for indicator 5.C.1.

Note: # information sourced from United Nations (2017)

<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2017/thesustainabledevelopmentgoalsreport2017.pdf>; * information sourced from Statistics South Africa (2020)

http://www.statssa.gov.za/MDG/SDGs_Country_Report_2019_South_Africa.pdf.

Appendix B

South Africa's legislative definitions

The following list includes the definitions of concepts used to operationalise GBV in South Africa's legislation, namely, "domestic violence," "coercive behaviour," "controlling behaviour," "economic abuse," "emotional, verbal, and psychological abuse," "harassment," "intimidation," "physical abuse," and "sexual abuse." These definitions have been sourced from the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998; however, The Domestic Violence Amendment Bill amends this Act to address the practical challenges, gaps, and anomalies which have manifested since the Act came into operation in December 1999. For example, the amended legislation includes new definitions, such as "controlling behaviour" and "coercive behaviour", and expands existing definitions, such as "domestic violence", to include spiritual abuse, elder abuse, coercive behaviour, controlling behaviour, and/or exposing/subjecting children to certain listed behaviours (The Presidency, 2022). Where appropriate, these amended definitions are provided below.

"domestic violence" means—

(a) physical abuse; (b) sexual abuse; (c) emotional, verbal [and] or psychological abuse; (d) economic abuse; (e) intimidation; (f) harassment; (fA) sexual harassment; (fB) related person abuse; (g) [stalking] spiritual abuse; (h) damage to property; (hA) elder abuse; (hB) coercive behaviour; (hC) controlling behaviour; (hD) to expose a child to domestic violence; (i) entry into the complainant's—

(i) permanent or temporary residence without [his or her] their consent, where the parties do not share the same residence; or

(ii) workplace or place of study, without their consent, where the parties do not share the same workplace or place of study;

or

(j) any other [controlling or abusive] behaviour of an intimidating, threatening, abusive, degrading, offensive or humiliating nature towards a complainant, where such conduct harms, or [may cause imminent harm to, the safety, health or wellbeing of] inspires the reasonable belief that harm may be caused to the complainant;

"coercive behaviour" means to compel or force a complainant to abstain from doing anything that they have a lawful right to do, or to do anything that they have a lawful right to abstain from doing;

“controlling behaviour” means behaviour towards a complainant that has the effect of making the complainant dependent on, or subservient to, the respondent and includes—

(a) isolating them from sources of support; (b) exploiting their resources or capacities for personal gain; (c) depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance or escape; or (d) regulating their everyday behaviour;

“economic abuse” includes—

(a) the unreasonable deprivation of economic or financial resources to which a complainant is entitled under law or which the complainant requires out of necessity, including household necessities for the complainant, and mortgage bond repayments or payment of rent in respect of the shared residence; or (b) the unreasonable disposal of household effects or other property in which the complainant has an interest;

“emotional, verbal and psychological abuse” means a pattern of degrading or humiliating conduct towards a complainant, including (a) repeated insults, ridicule or name calling; (b) repeated threats to cause emotional pain; or (c) the repeated exhibition of obsessive possessiveness or jealousy, which is such as to constitute a serious invasion of the complainant’s privacy, liberty, integrity or security;

“harassment” means engaging in a pattern of conduct that induces the fear of harm to a complainant including— (a) repeatedly watching, or loitering outside of or near the building or place where the complainant resides, works, carries on business, studies or happens to be; (b) repeatedly making telephone calls or inducing another person to make telephone calls to the complainant, whether or not conversation ensues; (c) repeatedly sending, delivering or causing the delivery of letters, telegrams, packages, facsimiles, electronic mail or other objects to the complainant;

“intimidation” means uttering or conveying a threat, or causing a complainant to receive a threat, which induces fear;

“physical abuse” means any act or threatened act of physical violence towards a complainant;

“sexual abuse” means any conduct that abuses, humiliates, degrades or otherwise violates the sexual integrity of the complainant

Sources: Domestic Violence Amendment Bill (B20-2020) Act 14 of 2021. (2022). *Government Gazette*. (No. 45824).

Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Bill (B17-2020) Act 12 of 2021. (2022).
Government Gazette. (No. 45822).

Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act Amendment Bill
(B16-2020) Act 13 of 2021. (2022). *Government Gazette*. (No. 45823).

Appendix C

Table C2

NGOs Implementing GBV Programmes in South Africa

NGO and Programme	Location	Approach	Activities	Evaluations	Results regarding impact
Saartjie Baartman Legal Advice and Training Project Residential Programme and Second Stage Houses	WC	Secondary interventions directed at women and children	24hr Emergency shelter Short- and medium-term residential care Childcare services Adult and children counselling (mental health support) Legal and economic support Job skills training Research in GBV	Els, 2002 (external evaluation report) Maharaj, SBCWC, 2006 – assessment of effectiveness using interview with organization staff and quantitative monitoring data	Publication not available Women's confidence and self-esteem increased as results of the skills and knowledge acquired. Women felt empowered. 9 of 18 shelter interviewees secured permanent or part-time work. Recommendations include extending the childcare assistance programme; implement ongoing M&E; conduct needs assessments; increasing residents' stay from 3 to 6 months.
Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust Road to Justice Making Change Road to Recovery	WC	Secondary interventions directed at women. Primary intervention awareness campaign and advocacy directed to the general population.	Court support Counselling Awareness-raising events and workshops Information talks and stalls Advocacy	Strydom, 2014 (unpublished) – Master's dissertation which reports a theory, process and outcome evaluation of the Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust's (RCCTT) Birds and Bees programme	There was substantial attrition, and implementation fidelity declines considerably throughout the programme. Key outcomes could not be measured due to incomplete monitoring data. A monitoring framework and revised programme theory was proposed.

Table C2 Continued

NGOs Implementing GBV Programmes in South Africa

Nisaa Institute for Women's Development Consent is Sexy! Change the Tune! Date Rape Campaign	Gauteng	Secondary interventions directed at women and children. Primary intervention awareness campaigns	Counselling and shelter services Awareness and advocacy Training for women Counselling Self-esteem and youth skills development GBV workshops	NISAA Evaluation Report, 2001 https://preventgbvafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/nisaaeval.pdf Interviews with stakeholders (staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, donors, board members) and secondary data analysis.	Various general, programme, and internal recommendations are made from the results. These include, but are not limited to: developing a strategic framework, 5-year financial plan, better utilizing academic institutions for research; increased and optimized M&E, reconsideration of the role of research, networking and publications as core functions; and hiring a database consultant, improving skills development among staff
Agisanang Domestic Abuse Prevention (ADAPT)	WC and Gauteng	Primary and secondary strategies	For women: Crisis counselling services Support groups Economic empowerment projects Outreach and community education programme For youth: Class workshops Art therapy Theatre in education For men: The best fathers' competition Counselling and support Men's forum Mentorship programme Prison project	Baseline Study Report for the "Teenz Alliance Project", 2017 – in partnership with POWA. Methods included survey, interview, and focus group discussions (a total of 522 community participants and 602 learner participants) https://www.powa.co.za/POWA/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Baseline-Report-of-the-Teenz-Alliance-Project_CJCP_July2017-1.pdf	Baseline information regarding the following were collected: perceptions and knowledge of sexual violence, learner experiences of violence at school, access to support services, community responses to victims, attitudes towards gender norms and social expectations, community and social cohesion, and community's role in preventing sexual violence. Recommendations include: prioritizing education on sexual violence at community and school levels, addressing gender norms, promoting equitable social expectations, focusing on boys in the design and implementation of activities aimed at male learners, bystander intervention training, and collaboration with community policing forums.

Table C2 Continued

NGOs Implementing GBV Programmes in South Africa

Masimanyane Women's Rights International	EC	Primary and secondary strategies	Justice advocacy programme Awareness campaigns Social support services for women	Unknown	NA
MOSAIC Access to Justice Social Support Services	WC	Primary and secondary strategies targeted at behavioural changes in men	For women: Court support Care centres (walk-in) Counselling, Psychosocial support services, Clinical services Mentorship programme For men MenCare+ Support groups Awareness raising workshops Boys2Men workshops Advocacy and policy development.	Unknown	NA
People Opposing Woman Abuse	Gauteng	Secondary interventions aimed at women and children. Primary intervention awareness campaigns	Shelters Counselling Legal advice Awareness workshops Training and development for organizations Feminist research and knowledge production	Baseline study report for the "Teenz Alliance Project", 2017 – in partnership with ADAPT Methods included survey, interview, and focus group discussions (a total of 522 community participants and 602 learner participants) https://www.powa.co.za/POWA/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Baseline-Report-of-the-Teenz-Alliance-Project_CJCP_July2017-1.pdf	Same as above description of this study (see Agisanang Domestic Abuse Prevention)

Table C2 Continued

NGOs Implementing GBV Programmes in South Africa

Sonke Gender Justice	All provinces	Primary and secondary strategies	Child rights and positive parenting Corporal punishment ban MenCare, MenCare+, MenEngage Communications and media advocacy – photovoice Safe Ride: radio drama, telling digital stories Social and structural drivers – faith and traditional sector workshop Decriminalization of sex work Prison transformations Community action teams – court monitoring wellness centres	Marock et al., 2018 – meta-review of secondary documents, interviews with 24 key contributors from South Africa, review of data on the reach across programmes Colvin et al., 2009 – an impact evaluation into the One Man Can Campaign	Increased awareness of gender equality Changes in community understanding of masculinity Attitudes and behaviour remained changed for more than a year post-intervention Facilitated change in regional bodies 50% of participants reported taking action to address acts of gender-based violence in their community, 25% accessed HIV voluntary counseling and testing services, and 61% reported increasing their use of condoms
Stepping Stones	Gauteng, KZN, EC, WC	Participatory HIV prevention programme to improve sexual health through building gender equitable relationships	Participatory learning: critical reflection, role play Single sex group sessions	Jewkes et al., 2008 RCT – Males ($n= 1,360$) and females ($n= 1,416$) age 15–26	Reduction in sexual and violent behaviours among men Increase in condom use Increase awareness of IPV and sexual aggression 15% lower HIV infection reported in women
IMAGE Intervention with microfinance and gender equality	Gauteng	Prevention of partner abuse and HIV – directed at women	Microfinance training Microfinance loans HIV training: structured training and community mobilization	Pronyk et al., 2006 Hargreaves et al., 2010 Process evaluation	Significant effects in domains relating to women’s empowerment and HIV risk behaviour Microfinance and gender training found to be feasible, accessible and acceptable for participants.

Participants experienced barriers to collective action (which could help explain the lack of impact among household/community members). Delivery was feasible in the short term but unsustainable in the long term.

Note. Boldface in column one indicates the name of the implementing NGO. The acronyms WC, EC, and KZN represent the Western Cape, Eastern Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal, all of which are provinces in South Africa.

Appendix D

Interview Schedule

- 1) Tell me a bit about what your role is in this organisation?
- 2) What GBV programmes does your NGO implement?
 - a. Who are your main funders for your GBV programmes and what is the length of the funding period?
 - b. What role does the funder have for this programme?
- 3) Some funders take a back-seat whereas others may influence programme design, implementation, and evaluation. Reflecting on the funder for your GBV programme, how much autonomy rests with the NGO?
- 4) Does your NGO conduct regular evaluations? If so, what types and in what ways are the findings used in the organisation? If not, why do you think this is?
- 5) Think about the most recent evaluation that has been conducted on your GBV programme.
 - a. What type of evaluation was this? For which intervention?
 - b. What were the information needs of the funder?
- 6) Is there any organisational collaboration between NGOs in the GBV sector?
 - a. If so, what type of information is shared?
 - b. If not, why do you think so and do you think there is a need for organisation collaboration in the GBV sector?
- 7) Is there anything else you feel I should know about funder requirements or organisational collaboration?

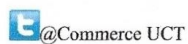
Appendix E

Ethics Clearance Letter



Faculty of Commerce

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UCT Commerce Faculty Office

23 03 2021

Jemma Kieser
School of Management Studies
University of Cape Town
REF: REC 2021/03/016

A REVIEW OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE PROGRAMMES IN SOUTH AFRICA: ASSISTING WITH PROGRAMME DESIGN AND COLLABORATION

We are pleased to inform you that your ethics application has been approved. Unless otherwise specified this ethical clearance is valid until 31-Mar-2022 .

Your clearance may be renewed upon application.

Please be aware that you need to notify the Ethics Committee immediately should any aspect of your study regarding the engagement with participants as approved in this application, change. This may include aspects such as changes to the research design, questionnaires, or choice of participants.

The ongoing ethical conduct throughout the duration of the study remains the responsibility of the principal investigator.

We wish you well for your research.

Signed by candidate 2021.03.23
15:59:06 +02'00'

Jacques Rousseau
Commerce Research Ethics Chair
University of Cape Town
Commerce Faculty Office
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"Our Mission is to be an outstanding teaching and research university, educating for life and addressing the challenges facing our society."

Appendix F

Interview Consent Letter



Consent for Participation in Interview

I, the undersigned:

1. Understand that Jemma Kieser will be interviewing me about my organisation's GBV programmes implemented in South Africa.
2. Am aware that the purpose of the interview is to get information about funder's requirements, organisation collaboration, and what the sector could possibly be lacking.
3. Am aware that the interview will take approximately an hour.
4. Understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time without penalty.
5. Can choose not to answer any question asked.
6. Give permission for the interview to be recorded so that the interview can be transcribed.
7. Am aware that my responses to the questions asked are confidential and our organisation's name or any identifying information will not be published.
8. Will not be identified on any published work.
9. Am aware that the research has been approved by the Commerce Faculty's Ethics in Research Committee at UCT.

Should you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact Miss Jemma Kieser directly via email (jemmakieser@gmail.com) or by telephone (083 456 0967).

Interviewee's Name

Signature

Date

Researcher's Name

Signature

Date