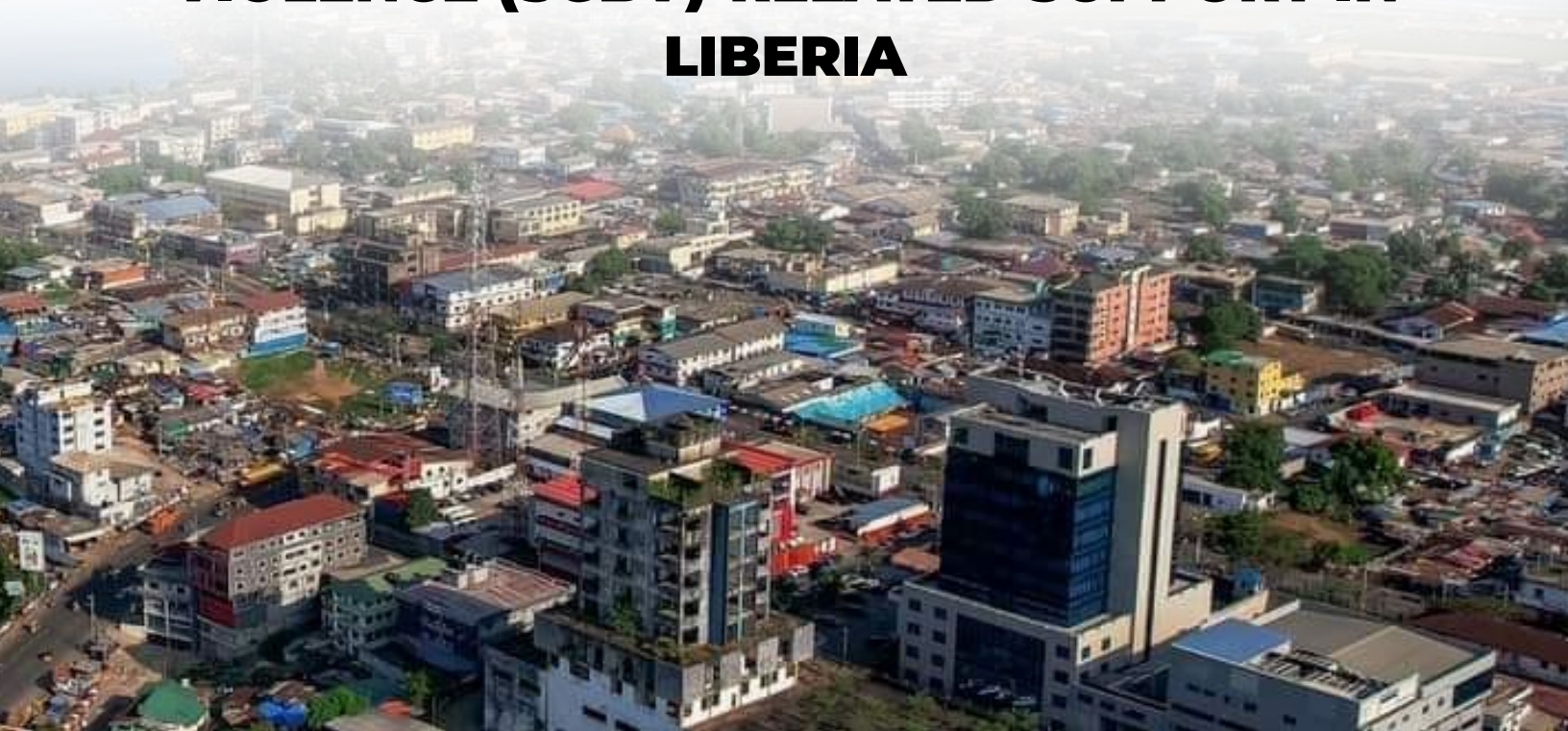




NATIONAL BUDGET ANALYSIS REPORT

**TO DETERMINE SEXUAL & GENDER-BASED
VIOLENCE (SGBV)-RELATED SUPPORT IN
LIBERIA**



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Abbreviations or Acronyms

AFELL	The Association of Female Lawyers
ARREST	Agriculture Roads, Rule of Law, Education, Sanitation and Tourism
BMZ	Medica Mondiale
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
BFP	Budget Framework Paper
CCE	Criminal Court E
CEDAW	United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women
CESP	Christian Empowerment and Sustainable Programme
CPS	Community Policing Section
ECM	Early Childhood Marriage
ERU	Emergency Response Unit
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation and Cutting
GAC	General Auditing Agency
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GoL	Government of Liberia
GRPB	Gender-responsive Planning and Budgeting
GRB	Gender-responsive Budgeting
HTPs	Harmful Traditional Practices
IDA	International Development Association
IFISH	Institutional Foundations to Improve Services for Health
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organizations
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ITSGBV	Inter-Ministerial Taskforce on SGBV
LNP	Liberian National Police
MDAs	Ministries Departments and Agencies
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoE	Ministry of Education
MFDP	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
MOGCSP	Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection

MoH	Ministry of Health
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MSF-B	Médecins San Frontier- Belgium
NAP	National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2019–2023
NGP	National Gender Policy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
OSIWA	Open Society Initiative for West Africa
PAC	Joint Public Account Expenditure and Audit Committee
PAPD	Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development 2018 to 2023
PSD	Professional Standards Division
PSU	Police Support Unit
RCV	Raising Community Voices
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SGBV-CU	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Crimes Unit
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
THINK	
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
VAW	Violence Against Women
WACPS	Women and Children Protection Services
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPNET	Women in Peacebuilding Network
WONGOSOL	Women's NGO Secretariat of Liberia
WPS	Women, Peace, and Security

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Executive Summary

National Budget Analysis 2024 Liberia

The National Budget Analysis Report on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in Liberia evaluates the government's financial commitment and resource allocation towards addressing SGBV for the fiscal years 2019-2023. Despite progress in policy development and international commitments to eliminate SGBV, substantial challenges remain in tackling the issue effectively.

This study was commissioned by Members of the **Feminist Alliance to End SGBV in the Mano River Region** /Liberian Chapter in parallel to a similar study in Sierra Leone.

The Feminist Alliance serves as a collaborative initiative for joint advocacy to address women's and girls' issues and promote gender justice in the MRU region. The goal of the Feminist Alliance is to increase accountability from decision-makers for a violence-free region where women and girls are secure and protected from sexual and gender-based violence.

The Issue at Hand

SGBV remains a pervasive problem in Liberia, exacerbated by the legacy of civil conflict. High rates of violence against women and girls, including rape, domestic abuse, and female genital mutilation, persist. Despite declaring rape a national emergency in 2020, efforts to combat SGBV continue to face obstacles, particularly due to limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of dedicated funding.

The findings of this report stand in stark contrast to the international obligations and implementation of concordant national frameworks by the government of Liberia and its partners. The most recent high-level policy pursued within the timeframe of this study is the "Anti SGBV Roadmap (2020- 2022)". In which the former government led by the Presidential Taskforce on SGBV committed to combating SGBV against women, girls and children by providing concrete measures.

The report emphasizes the importance of aligning budgetary allocations with the national and international obligations to combat SGBV effectively in line with international frameworks that are supposed to be transferred to national commitments that are enforceable and can tangibly protect women's rights and combat gender-based violence.

International Frameworks and Commitments

1. **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW):** This United Nations convention, adopted in 1979, frames gender-based violence as a form of discrimination and a human rights violation. It requires state parties to take comprehensive measures to eliminate

discrimination against women and implement policies to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

2. **Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA)**: Adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, the BPFA identifies violence against women as a critical area of concern. It outlines specific measures that states, and other stakeholders should undertake to prevent and address violence against women.
3. **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**: Particularly Goal 5, which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, includes targets to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in both public and private spheres.
4. **UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS)**: Calls for increased participation of women in peace and security efforts and urges states to protect women and girls from gender-based violence during conflicts.
5. **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)**: Article 2 emphasizes the need for states to use all available resources to progressively realize the rights recognized in the covenant, including measures to prevent violence against women and girls.

Regional Frameworks

1. **Maputo Protocol**: The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa emphasizes eliminating harmful practices, including SGBV, and mandates the protection of women from all forms of violence.
2. **ECOWAS Commitments**: Includes efforts by Liberia and neighboring countries to harmonize strategies for eliminating SGBV across borders, as seen in programs like **The UNSCR 1325 Regional Action Plan (2010-2015), or the ECOWAS regional strategy for the prevention of and response to gender-based violence (2021) V.**"

National Legal and Policy Frameworks in Liberia

1. **The Constitution of Liberia (1986)**: Guarantees equality and freedom for all citizens, establishing a foundation for gender equality and anti-SGBV efforts.
2. **The Rape Law (2005, amended in 2009)**: Criminalizes rape, with amendments increasing the age of sexual consent and stipulating harsher penalties for aggravated rape.
3. **Domestic Violence Law (2019)**: Recognizes domestic violence as a serious crime and outlines the responsibilities of various stakeholders in providing protection and support for survivors.
4. **The Children's Law (2011)**: Aims to protect the rights of children, including protection from SGBV, and aligns with international conventions on children's rights.
5. **National Gender Policy (2018-2022)**: Provides a framework for integrating gender equality into policies and programs, including measures to prevent and respond to SGBV.

6. **National Action Plans on Women, Peace, and Security (2009-2013, 2019-2023)**: Emphasize the need for protection, participation, and prevention of SGBV, particularly in post-conflict settings.
7. **Anti-SGBV Roadmap (2020-2022)**: A recent national policy aimed at reducing SGBV through improving access to SGBV services, strengthening legal frameworks, building the capacity of actors involved in SGBV services and support, community engagement, and ensuring accountability. The Anti-SGBV Roadmap (2020-2022) faced shortfalls in meeting key commitments. Specifically, the goals of improving access to SGBV services were not fully realized, as the planned expansion of safe homes was not built and only two additional One-Stop Centers were established in Montserrado. Furthermore, commitments to ensure accountability, monitor progress, and secure necessary resources for sustained action were not thoroughly addressed and insufficient, limiting the roadmap's impact on enhancing SGBV services and support.

The Anti-SGBV Roadmap set an ambitious commitment to establish additional one-stop centers in nine counties to provide comprehensive, survivor-centered services for SGBV survivors. However, the current reality reflects significant gaps. There are only 10 one-stop centers across 7 counties, with Montserrado hosting 5 centers, and Margibi, Bong, Sinoe, Bomi, and Grand Bassa having one each.

Nine counties, including Grand Cape Mount, Nimba, Rivercess, Gbarpolu, Lofa, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Grand Kru, and Maryland, still lack dedicated one-stop centers. Survivors in these underserved counties rely on referral hospitals, which offer limited services. Furthermore, most one-stop centers are concentrated in urban areas, creating accessibility barriers for rural survivors. Many of these facilities also face resource shortages, such as a lack of essential commodities, and suffer from irregular training for health workers, compromising their ability to provide adequate care.

In terms of safe homes, the government committed to refurbishing three existing safe homes and constructing four new ones—two in Montserrado and one each in Grand Gedeh and Grand Kru. Despite these commitments, only nine safe homes are operational across seven counties, with most of these predating the Anti-SGBV Roadmap. Montserrado has two functional safe homes (OSIWA and THINK), while Bong, Bomi, River Gee, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Bassa, and Nimba each have one. Grand Gedeh and Grand Kru, among others, still lack any safe homes, leaving survivors in these areas without access to secure and supportive environments. Many existing homes face challenges such as insufficient funding and poor maintenance, further limiting their capacity to support survivors effectively.

These gaps between commitments and reality underscore the urgent need for increased investment, better resource allocation, and focused efforts to expand these critical services to underserved areas.

Findings

Implementation and Funding Gaps towards the realization of effective SGBV Prevention and Response measures in Liberia

1. Budgetary Gaps and Funding Challenges: The analysis reveals that the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MoGCSP), which coordinates SGBV interventions, receives less than 1% of the national budget. Other key ministries, such as the Ministry of Health (MoH) and Ministry of Justice (MoJ), also lack dedicated budget lines for SGBV services. Furthermore, as there is no dedicated government funding line, most interventions depend heavily on donor funding, leading to sustainability concerns and a lack of agency.

2. Limited SGBV Infrastructure: Limited state services, such as safe homes and One-Stop Centers, yet they remain insufficient in number and distribution. Many are non-functional, and critical facilities like Criminal Court E are limited to specific areas, critically affecting access to justice for survivors.

- **One stop center:** there are only 13 one stop center in the country (Montserrado county has five one stop centers, Margibi (1) Bong (1) Sinoe (1) bomi (1) Bassa (1)) The remaining counties (Grand Cape mount, Nimba, Rivercess, Gbarpolu, Lofa, Grand Gedeh, RiverGee, Grandkur, Maryland don't have designated spaces for One stop centers but referral hospitals provide services for SGBV survivors, and most are often under equipped, lacking essential commodities need to provide care for survivors and training of health workers at these centers are often irregular and scarce.
- **Safe homes:** There are ten (10) Safe Homes" for SGBV survivors in nine (8) counties (Montserrado Bong, Bomi, Lofa, Margibi, River Gee, Grand Cape mount, Grand Bassa and Nimba.
- **Criminal Court E:** There are only three operational criminal courts in Liberia (Montserrado, Nimba, and Bong with the one recently renovated in Lofa by UNDP not being functional due to a judge not being appointed. The absence of these services in rural areas have significantly affected the resolution of SGBV cases.

3. Budget Credibility Issues: There is a significant discrepancy between budget allocations and actual expenditure, with funds often diverted or not disbursed as planned. Budget execution data are often unavailable, hampering transparency and accountability.

4. Underreporting and Data Collection Challenges: Accurate data collection remains a major issue due to lack of resources, and weak monitoring frameworks. This makes it difficult to measure the true impact of SGBV interventions or make data-driven policy decisions.

For instance, one of the overall objectives of the Anti-SGBV Roadmap was to create 9 fully functioning safe homes from a baseline of 2 by the end of the action plan in 2023.

However, there has not been a formal report nor comprehensive data available on the degree of achievement nor on currently existing infrastructures build or refurbished up today.

Therefore, it must be assumed that the targets were not reached.

In this specific case of the Anti-SGBV Roadmap, the issue at hand is that the figures for One Stop Centres and other planned implementations to compare the commitments made by the governments are not available. However, due to the difference in planned and received funding, it is clear that the commitments were not able to be reached. Other explicit commitments for the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection included: Construction of four Safe Homes (US\$ 640,000.00), Operationalization of a Taskforce (Mobility) (US\$ 330,000.00), Provide care & services for Adolescent Girls at Risk (US\$ 95,000.00), Children & Social Protection Funds (US\$ 233,100.00), Logistical support (US\$ 110,000.00), Administrative & Personnel Funds (US\$ 78,000.00), Legal review and Validation of the Liberian Children's Law (US\$ 60,000.00).

Limitations of the study

1. **Lack of information:** The analysis was unable to analyze SGBV budget allocation and efficiency for MoH, MoJ, LNP, and Judiciary which offer SGBV services due to lack of information in the national budget as SGBV interventions are not suitably classified or explicitly stated but rather subsumed under other budget items. Furthermore, most of the interventions on SGBV were funded through donor sponsored projects rather than the national budget.
2. **Lack of verification possibilities:** Efficiency of expenditure on the SGBV Road map implementation could also not be analyzed due to lack of verifiable data. The study was done between Dec 2023-Feb 2024 after regime change as such those who implemented were not available for questioning.

The analysis underscores the need for increased national ownership and accountability to strengthen national efforts and effectively implement strategic planning, track funding, and monitor progress through a targeted budgeting approach towards SGBV Prevention and Response in Liberia.

Recommendations

1) Increase National Ownership, Budget Allocation and Accountability

- a. **Establish a Dedicated SGBV Budget Line:** Allocate a specific budget for SGBV services across relevant ministries to ensure sustainable funding and implementation of programs. This will lead to an increase in national ownership and funding allocation to SGBV Activities and reduce reliance on external donors.

Financial Accountability: Implement stringent financial accountability measures, including regular audits and transparent multi-level reporting mechanisms, to ensure funds are utilized effectively and that the impact of SGBV interventions can be measured and realized.

Mobilization of international donors to provide sector budget support targeted to SGBV prevention and response measures combined with the establishment of transparent multistakeholder mechanisms for effective implementation and monitoring.

- b. **Expand and Upgrade SGBV Services:** Increase the number of functional safe homes, One-Stop Centers, and specialized courts especially in rural areas to improve access to justice and support for survivors.

Resource Allocation: Provide adequate resources for existing centres, including essential medical supplies, trained personnel, and maintenance of infrastructure.

Strengthen Legal and Judicial Support

Expand Criminal Courts E: Establish additional Criminal Courts E in key regions and ensure that they are fully operational with appointed judges and necessary resources.

Survivor Support Fund: Ensure the survivor support fund is adequately financed, preferably through national funding and sustainable donor contributions, to cover transportation and other logistical needs for accessing justice.

2. **Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation:**
Implement a robust monitoring framework with clear indicators to track the effectiveness of SGBV programs and ensure accountability.

M&E Framework: SGBV actors should develop and implement a robust M&E framework to regularly assess the effectiveness of SGBV services and programs. Set clear indicators and benchmarks for success.

Data Collection and Analysis: Government and implementing agencies should strengthen data collection and analysis capabilities to track SGBV incidents, service utilization, and outcomes. Use this data to inform policy and programmatic decisions.

3. **Sustainable Funding Strategies:**
Diversify funding sources through public-private partnerships, international grants, and community-based initiatives to ensure long-term support for SGBV interventions. Furthermore, it is necessary to create long-term funding plans that outline specific financial goals and strategies for sustaining SGBV services over the next decade.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is a pressing global ¹ problem. The Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) report (fifth edition) states that in 2023, nearly one in three women experienced intimate partner violence at least once in her lifetime; and one in ten has survived it within the previous year². As a consequence of the civil war, Liberia, is struggling with the harrowing reality of SGBV, which permeates the society overall. Children under six years old are being raped, devastatingly impacting their health and wellbeing. The associated stigma and taboo of rape in Liberia³ is immense. Women and girls affected by SGBV are mostly economically disadvantaged, lacking the necessary financial means to seek justice and psychosocial support⁴. The World Health Organization's 2002 World Report on Sexual Violence estimated that between 61% and 77% of women and girls in Liberia were raped during the war⁵. Rape as sexual violence was declared a national emergency in 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic thereby making sexual gender-based violence complex and multi-layered.

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) defines sexual and gender-based violence as “violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately. This includes acts that inflict physical, mental, or sexual harm or suffering, the threat of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty.”⁶ SGBV encompasses a wide variety of abuses that include: female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C), sexual assault, early childhood marriage (ECM), exploitation, domestic violence, sodomy, and rape among others. Due to the widespread and devastating effect of SGBV, gender equality, women's rights, and ending gender-based violence (GBV) have been set as explicit targets and critical drivers of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) under the gender equality goal (Goal 5), which seeks to “eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and other types of exploitation.”

The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights adopted in 1966, reaffirms the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world. Hence, Article 2 of the Covenant urges each State party to the Covenant to take steps, individually and through international assistance and cooperation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of its available resources. The intent is to progressively achieve the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Covenant by all appropriate means, including particularly, the adoption of legislative measures.

¹ Social Institutions and Gender Index 2023 Global Report: Gender Equality in Times of Crisis

² Social Institutions and Gender Index 2023 Global Report: Gender Equality in Times of Crisis

³ UN Women: Reversing the tide of rising violence against women in Liberia

⁴ UN Women Assessment of the Existing Initial Services Available for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Cases

⁵ UNDP: Sexual Violence in Liberia: End the Silent Epidemic

⁶ <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/feature/2004/09/01/definitions-sexual-and-gender-based-violence>

The government of Liberia as duty bearer has taken steps to guarantee equality between men and women breaking away from the ugly post-war phenomenon of sexual and gender-based violence. These strides range from the development and operationalization of policies and strategies to advocacy, awareness raising, capacity building, and the provision of basic social services. From the legislative and policy angle, the Constitution of Liberia, amended in 1986, establishes a framework that promotes the realization of social justice and increases citizens' access to political and economic participation. Article 11 crystalizes the principle of no discrimination in these processes. Other national instruments exemplifying these actions include the establishment of the following: The National Gender Policy (2017), revised (2018-2022); the Domestic Violence Law approved August 13, 2019, recognizes domestic violence as a serious crime against the individual and society; The Rape Law approved in December 2005 and amended in 2009 addresses the escalating levels of rape and provides justice to survivors, increase correctional measures for offenders and strengthen prevention measures. This amended rape law is punishable by up to ten (10) years or lifetime imprisonment depending on the degree of the rape (rape of a minor, rape resulting in serious bodily harm, rape using a weapon, gang rape); the Children's Law of Liberia, 2011. facilitates the respect, protection, promotion, and provision of the realization of child rights in order to make maximum contribution to the survival, development, participation, and protection of every child in Liberia; the Public Health Law (2011 National) provides comprehensive legislation on matters relating to public health, including control of diseases, environmental sanitation, and regulation of drugs; Six-count policy on abolishing female genital mutilation (FGM); the 2018 Land Rights Act, and the Decent Work Act.

In 2006, the National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Management of Gender-Based Violence in Liberia (GBV-POA) (2006-2011) was developed as the first post-war framework within which all activities related to preventing and responding to GBV were outlined. The goal of GBV-POA was to minimize GBV by 30% by the year 2011 and to provide appropriate care and services to survivors. The Plan comprised five thematic areas; (1) psychosocial, including economic empowerment for women and girls (2) medical, (3) legal, (4) security and protection, and (5) coordination. The second phase of the GBV National Action Plan (2011-2015) was implemented as a follow-up plan to the first. The United Nations agencies, comprising UNICEF, UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNMIL, and WHO, implemented several Joint Programmes in phases between 2008 and 2016 in support of each of the five pillars in the Plan of Action, with a range of interventions in each⁷, using a One-Stop-Shop approach.

In 2009, Liberia launched the first Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security, for the period (2009-2013), becoming the first post-conflict country to implement Resolution 1325. The Plan, which was constructed under five main pillars, prevention, protection, participation, relief and recovery, coordination and accountability, stressed the importance of giving women equal participation and full involvement in peace and security matters and the need to

⁷ Republic of Liberia (2006) National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Management of Gender-based Violence in Liberia (GBV-POA)

increase their role in decision-making. It also calls on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from GBV, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse. The Second Phase National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019-2023) was developed with similar objectives as the first and with an analysis of progress made, best practices and lessons learned from the implementation of the first NAP. Another Gender Based Action Plan was developed in 2022 through the Institutional Foundations to Improve Services for Health (IFISH) project. This program focused on improving service delivery for SGBV, particularly psychological and legal services, as well as information and service gaps⁸.

The government established a Gender Based Interagency Task Force to support the coordination of GBV activities, led by the MoGCSP. Between 2008-2009, the Task Force developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for SGBV along with safe home guidelines targeting operators of safe homes across the country. The justice system was also strengthened nationwide, to enhance access to justice and ensure fair and timely judicial response. The government established a judicial training Institute to educate magistrates and other court officers on procedures for handling SGBV and other cases. The MoJ developed a Sexual Assault and Abuse Prosecution Handbook to provide guidance and direction for the prosecution of sexual offences, and trained prosecutors and judges on using the handbook. The Criminal Court “E” a special crimes court was established in 2008 to deal exclusively with sexual offenses and improve access to justice and protection for victims of SGBV. The GBV reporting system was also strengthened, and referral systems are now led by relevant stakeholders (Ministry of Justice (SGBV Crimes Unit and the Liberian National Police—Women & Children Protection Section), Civil Society Organizations, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection). A Teacher Code of Conduct for safe schools was developed, adopted and disseminated⁹.

In consultative meetings, the Government of Liberia and its partners developed an Anti SGBV Roadmap (2020- 2022), as the most recent framework on SGBV. The goal was “reducing SGBV against women, girls and children through driving change and fostering accountability amongst duty bearers in addressing SGBV policies, systems and mechanisms to mitigate SGBV risks.” The roadmap was informed by approaches and lessons from past and key ongoing SGBV interventions, since the civil conflict in 2003. This initiative was led by the Presidential Taskforce on SGBV and endorsed by the President of the Republic of Liberia. In addition, the GoL has committed to end all forms of VAWG and harmful practices through its contribution to Agenda 2030, under goals 5 and 16 of the SDGs.

Despite these interventions, SGBV is still widely acknowledged and reported to affect women and girls in all areas of life, with impunity. While Liberia has ratified key international and regional instruments that address violence against women, the SGBV response mechanisms are plagued by lack of institutionalization and inadequate human resource capacity. The UN Women Assessment of Existing Initial

⁸ Republic of Liberia (2022) Gender-based Violence Action Plan Institutional Foundations to Improve Services for Health (IFISH)

⁹ Republic of Liberia (2022) Gender-based Violence Action Plan Institutional Foundations to Improve Services for Health (IFISH)

Services Available for Sexual and Gender Based Violence Cases conducted in 2018, highlighted that SGBV prevention and response in Liberia faced innumerable challenges. The report indicated that although necessary policy instruments have been developed and are available, adherence to the dictates of the instruments is a challenge, while implementation is weakened by significant gaps in policies and regulations. For instance, the Children’s law enacted in 2011 is in line with international conventions, yet it is not enforced or operational within any regulatory framework. The amended Domestic Violence law failed to end FGM despite an intense debate; and even though the President issued Executive Order No. 92 prohibiting FGM in January 2018, the practice remains rampant. While the Penal Code criminalizes rape, there is no mention of marital rape¹⁰.

At the program level, budgetary and logistical constraints render many institutions ineffective or unresponsive. Service providers lack essential equipment and the capacity to adequately do their jobs. Only eight counties have established safe homes, most of which are nonfunctional or abandoned. In Monrovia, there are only five One-Stop Centers (OSCs) which are not opened 24 hours as required, because they are all closed at night and on weekends. OSCs are also available in Bomi, Grand Bassa, Bong, Margibi, River Gee, and Grand Gedeh counties, leaving seven counties without these centers.¹¹

Public Defenders provide free legal representation to all persons accused of crimes. However, they often do not provide free representation to persons accused of SGBV during the trial processes. Furthermore, the MoJ SGBV Crimes Units (SGBV-CU) are available only in 9 counties, 43 of which have only 42 officers, including prosecutors, case liaison officers, and victim support officers. The Criminal Court E (CCE) was established to fast-track cases of rape and other sexual offenses. Yet, CCE services are only available in Montserado County, with one resident judge operating from the Temple of Justice in Monrovia.¹² Most SGBV programs depend on donor funding, making their mere existence uncertain. There is no centralized or systematic mechanism for collecting SGBV data in Liberia. Therefore, measuring program impact on policy decision-making and financing is daunting.

The government’s financial commitment that guarantees the implementation of laws, policies, and programs supportive of eliminating gender-based violence is expressed through the national budget. Budget analysis to delineate SGBV support is important for several reasons. Firstly, analyzing the composition of the national budgets and expenditure on SGBV from a multi-sectorial perspective helps SGBV stakeholders to fully understand and constructively engage with various levels and stages of the national budget decision-making processes. Secondly, it informs policy as to whether budgetary allocations are balancing the demands of SGBV prevention and response appropriately, and whether the SGBV prevention system has the range of inputs it requires to function effectively. Thirdly, accurate cost and budgeting information of SGBV services can leverage cost information for evidence-based advocacy efforts to

¹⁰ Spotlight Initiative Country Programme Document (2018)

¹¹ Liberia’s Second Phase National Action Plan on Women, Peace and security 2019-2023

¹² Liberia’s Second Phase National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2019-2023

scale up services in areas where SGBV is prevalent. Stakeholders can advocate for additional funding from multiple sources (domestic/national, international and private). Fourthly, analyses of national SGBV budget support will provide information that can help the government consider what resources would be required if donor funding of supported projects were reduced. Lastly, with the overwhelming need for inter-agency collaboration and the multiplicity of actors involved in the response to SGBV, budget analysis provides a medium to ensure that programs budgeted do not remain dry letters on parchment but are funded and implemented.

Sexual and gender-based violence is addressed through a multi-faceted approach; various institutions such as the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MOGCSP), Ministry of Health (MoH), and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) work collaboratively to provide a comprehensive response. This budget analysis explores how government budgetary allocations are made to these sectors addressing SGBV issues. For this budget analysis, the focus is on the budgets and expenditures of the three ministries stated above.

1.1 Background to National Budget Analysis on Gender-Based Violence Support Medica Mondiale and six partner organizations in Sierra Leone and Liberia implemented the regional program “Concerted action for zero tolerance against SGBV in the Mano River Region” with funding from BMZ (Medica Mondiale). The six partner organizations are: in Liberia - medica Liberia (mL), Aiding Disadvantaged and Traumatized Women and Girls (ADWANGA), and Rising Youth Mentorship Initiative (RYMI); in Sierra Leone - Women Against Violence and Exploitation in Society (WAVES), Girl2Girl Empowerment Movement (G2G), and Choices and Voices Foundation for Women and Girls (CVF).

The goal of the BMZ-medica mondiale regional program is that women and girls in the Mano River Region can live in an inclusive society, in dignity, and free from sexual and gender-based violence and discrimination which can be achieved through increased accountability of decision makers to a violence-free region where women and girls are secured and protected from SGBV. To achieve this goal, the regional program developed a National Advocacy Strategy that will guide the Liberia partner organizations to make concerted and visible advocacy contributions at the in-country level. The National Advocacy Strategy contributes to Module 1 of the Regional Program i.e., prevention of SGBV through changing laws and policies through advocacy work, and joint networking and advocacy on the regional level by building a regional “Feminist Alliance. The strategic objective of the advocacy strategy is to increase accountability of decision makers to a violence-free region where women and girls are secured and protected from SGBV.”

1.2 Purpose of the Budget Analysis

The budget is an important governance framework that informs advocacy action on the quest for a gender-responsive budget, especially in the context of freedom from SGBV. The objective of this budget analysis is to understand national budgetary allocations and expenditures specifically earmarked for SGBV-related initiatives, programs, and services for five fiscal years (2019 – 2023). The analysis is to guide

members of the feminist alliance and other implementing partners to make concerted and visible advocacy contributions in-country with the relevant governmental institutions that would lead to improvement in the budget allotment to SGBV prevention/response mechanism and gender equality in Liberia.

More specifically, the analysis investigates:

- a. Trends and changes in budget allocations over the 5 years.
- b. The effectiveness of budget utilization for SGBV programs.
- c. The impact of SGBV-related budget allocations on the ground.
- d. Liberia's compliance with international laws, policies, and treaties related to SGBV issues, and how the government has responded through budget allocations.

The analysis identifies key gaps across these areas of investigation based on inputs from the feminist alliance, government agencies dealing with SGBV response/prevention, and from a desk review. It concludes with several recommendations. The analysis also spotlights the Government of Liberia Roadmap on Ending SGBV (2020-2022), drawing lessons from its implementation in regard to opportunities, gaps, and challenges.

1.3 Methodology

The report is informed by a situational analysis, desk review and stakeholder consultations, followed by data analysis and report writing.

1.3.1 Situational Analysis

The situational analysis was based on discussions with stakeholders which included employees from the SGBV unit at the MOGCSP and consulting institutions (medical Liberia, ADWANGA and Rising Youth Mentorship Initiative (RYMI)). These discussions provided insights into critical SGBV issues from the perspective of these stakeholders.

1.3.2 Desk Review

The desk review was in two folds. The first consisted of a review of international conventions that Liberia is a signatory to, national legislation, legal and policy environment in Liberia, research reports on SGBV, and other literature obtained online and from the consulting institution. The desk review provided contextual situation analysis, including relevant information, gaps, and recommended actions. The second desk review involved a review of the national budget published on the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning website.

The budget analysis focused on the national budgetary allotment and expenditures of key ministries working on SGBV issues (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Justice) for fiscal years (2019 – 2023). For the expenditure towards SGBV services, a questionnaire was designed with the list of possible services rendered by these institutions. The list was developed based

on discussions held with stakeholders and from review of literature. The questionnaire was sent to officers in charge of SGBV activities in the four institutions under study, to validate the list and either add or omit from the list and then attach costs to those activities.

1.4 Data sources for this analysis

The following data sources were available for this budget analysis: The National Budget from 2018/19 fiscal year up to 2023; data from documents (MOGCSP Sexual & Gender-based Violence Annual Report, 2023; Anti –SGBV Roadmap (2020-2022)),

1.5 Limitation

This budget analysis is primarily based on the Government of Liberia’s national budget allotment to the various sectors involved in SGBV issues. The analysis was unable to capture expenditure data from some institutions relative to SGBV expenditure due to lack of information. The reason is that this analysis took place just after the change of government in October 2023. Most of those officers dealing with SGBV issues were newly appointed and even those who retained their positions were skeptical in providing information on the previous administration’s activities. The study did not cover assessment of allocations for mainstream SGBV infrastructure and actual availability and/or quality of the service provided through the budgetary allotment. Budget efficiency analysis could also not be conducted as allotment on some SGBV interventions are not suitably classified or explicitly stated but rather subsumed under other budget items.

1.6 Organization of Report

This report is organized into seven chapters. Chapter one presents the introduction, background of the budget analysis, objectives, methodology as well as limitations of the study. Chapter two presents situational analysis of SGBV in Liberia which encompass the review of the national and international framework as well as interventions carried out. Chapter three presented analysis of the national budgeting cycle, key stakeholders and entry points for advocacy for increased budgetary allocation for SGBV interventions. Chapter four provides analysis of government budgetary allocations to three core national institutions involved with SGBV activities. Chapter five presents costs associated with SGBV interventions while Chapter six looks at issues surrounding budget credibility and sustainability. The last chapter provides a summary of observations from the analysis with policy recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

SITUATION ANALYSIS OF SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

2.0 Overview

The situational analysis was based on the review of MoGCSP annual report, key government strategic documents and policies on sexual and gender-based violence, other relevant reports and stakeholder consultations. The analysis proceeds with the state of SGBV in the country with focus on prevalence rate, patterns and key issues contributing to SGBV. It then concludes with a review of international and national legal policy frameworks and the environment.

2.1 Sexual and Gender-based Violence Situation in Liberia

Liberia has made meaningful gains towards ending all forms of violence against women and children through several preventive initiatives. SGBV continues to be a deeply rooted problem and major post-conflict challenge confronting the government. About 50% of Liberian women interviewed in the Afrobarometer 2023 survey rated SGBV as a common occurrence in their communities¹³. The 2020 Liberia Demographic survey also indicated that about 60% of Liberian women between the ages of 15-49 have experienced physical or sexual violence¹⁴. Female genital mutilation (FGM) is another form of gendered violence experienced by women and girls that is also actively practiced in 11 out of the 15 counties in Liberia. This is because its practice is entrenched in social norms and values. Report from the United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) indicated that from 2008–2011, 44% of women and girls aged 15–49 have undergone FGM in Liberia (UNICEF Report 2008).

Although the incidence of SGBV is said to be a common occurrence, survivors of abuse rarely consent to make complaints formal, which further complicates the collecting, storing, and analyzing of data. Formal reporting of SGBV, however, provides information and allows accurate estimation of the prevalence of the violence which enables proper resource allocation towards interventions to reduce SGBV and provide appropriate care to survivors.

2.1.1 Trends in Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Figure 1 presents trends in SGBV for eleven years from 2013 to 2023. Trend analysis of SGBV provides a clear picture and a wake-up call for action. The data shows the incidence of SGBV, which stood at 2,156 in 2014, saw a decline in 2013. It however saw an upward trajectory reaching a high peak of 2,708 cases in 2019. This high trajectory in SGBV incidences precipitated the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative discussed below.

2.1.2 SGBV Trend during the Spotlight Initiative

The Spotlight Initiative in Liberia titled UN/GoL Joint Project for the ‘Prevention and Response to SGBV and Harmful Traditional Practices’ (2016-2020) was implemented between 2019-2021 with funding from the European Union and the United Nations organizations (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, UN Women) and Rand. The primary purpose of the program was to reduce significantly the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), harmful traditional practices (HTPs) and their inter-

¹³ Afro Barometer <https://www.afrobarometer.org/articles/gender-based-violence-a-high-priority-in-liberia-many-citizens-say-it-is-a-common-occurrence/>

¹⁴ Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (2021)

linkages with sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). The program was focused on six thematic areas - legislative and policy development and reforms; institutional strengthening to enhance capacities to respond to cases of all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG); enhancing preventive measures and social and behavior change around harmful social norms and practices; strengthening access to health and social services for women and girls surviving/affected by violence; standardizing tools for data and information collection and sharing to support decision-making and policy work, and working with women's organizations (especially those from the grassroots) across the nation to develop strategic interventions for ending VAWG.

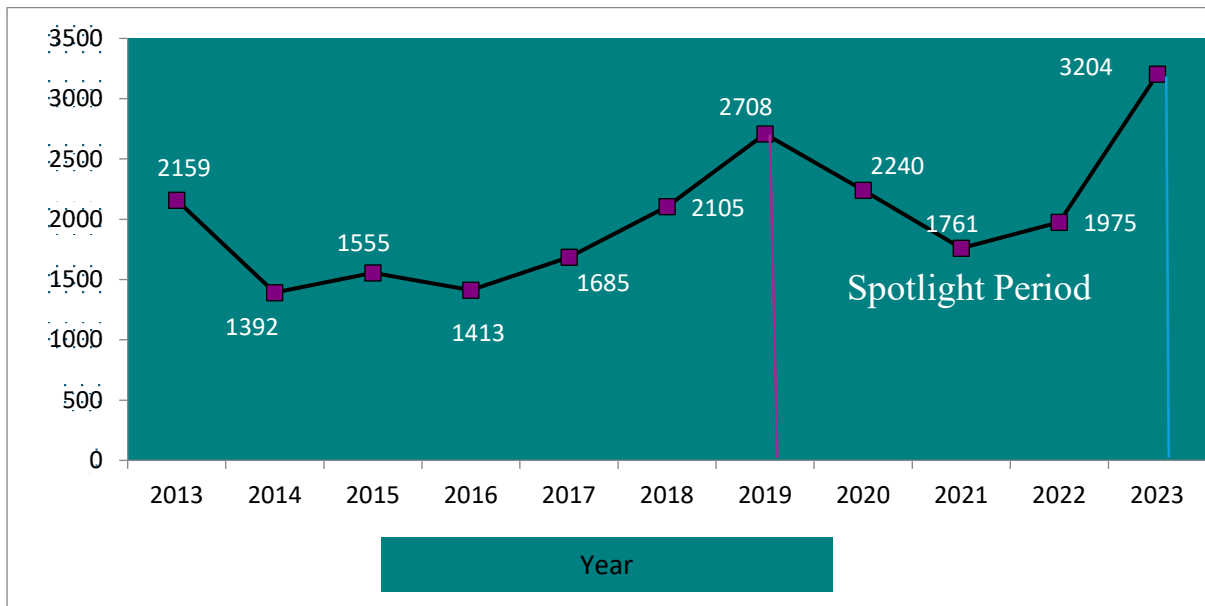
The program targeted five out of fifteen counties in Liberia: Nimba, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Grand Cape Mount, and Montserrado in phase 1 of implementation. These counties were prioritized because of the high prevalence of SGBV/HPs and fewer SRHRs. In Phase II, the elimination of the FGM component was expanded to an additional six FGM practicing counties: Bong, Gbarpolu, Margibi, Grand Bassa, and Rivercess covering the total of 11 out 15 counties in Liberia. Total Phase I budget, 15,844,000 USD and Phase II Spotlight funding: 22,634,286 USD. Agency Contribution: 3,586,637 USD¹⁵.

The initiative partnered with the Liberia National Police (LNP) through the Women and Child Protection Section (WACPS) and SGBV Crimes Unit on issues of security and justice for SGBV survivors including children, as well as with the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the Judiciary. The Spotlight Initiative also provided alternative economic livelihoods for Zoes (high ranking officials in the Poro and Sande society in Liberia) including climate-smart agriculture ¹⁶. During the spotlight initiative, the incidence of violence reduced but later picked up again in 2022 and reached a high of 3,204 cases in 2023.

¹⁵ Spotlight Initiative to Eliminate violence against women and girls: Country Program Document September 2021 (Updated) December 2018 (Original)

¹⁶ Spotlight initiative Liberia 2019-2021 Results Newsletter

Figure 8: Trend in Sexual and Gender-based Violence

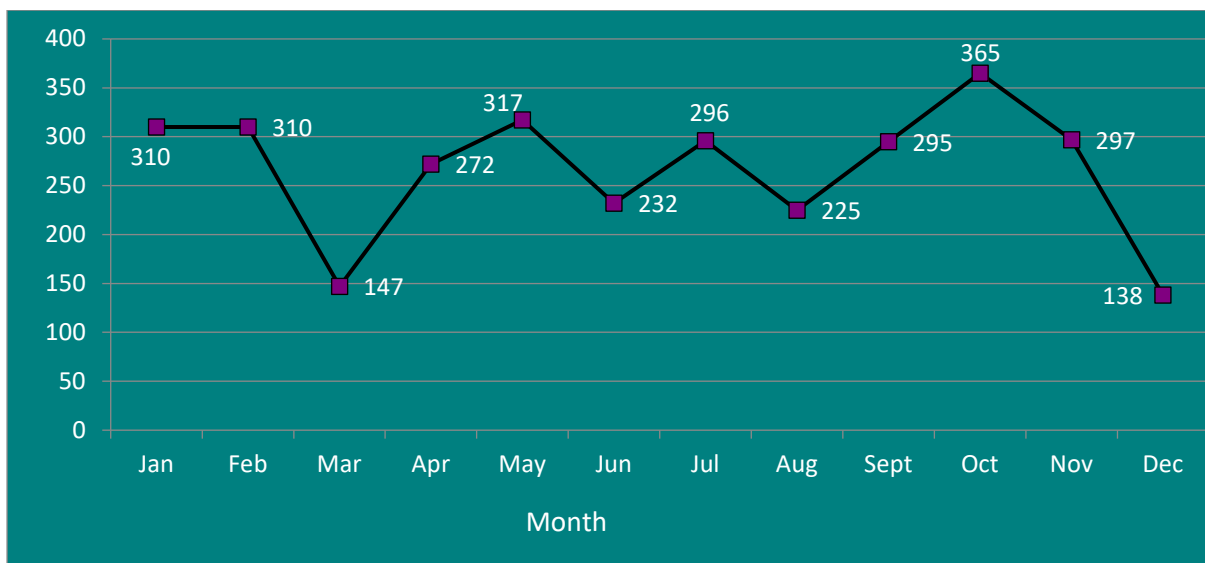


Source: MoGCSP 2023 Annual Report

2.1.3 Monthly Distribution of SGBV Cases

Figure 2 presents monthly disaggregation of the 3,204 cases of violence in 2023. While the yearly numbers in figure 1 provide an eyeballing view of SGBV incidences, disaggregation into monthly figures unmasked patterns of occurrence. The data shows a non-linear trend in the occurrence of SGBV reported cases. The month of October recorded the highest incidence with 365 cases while the lowest incidence of SGBV was recorded in December with 138 cases.

Figure 9: Monthly SGBV Cases, 2023

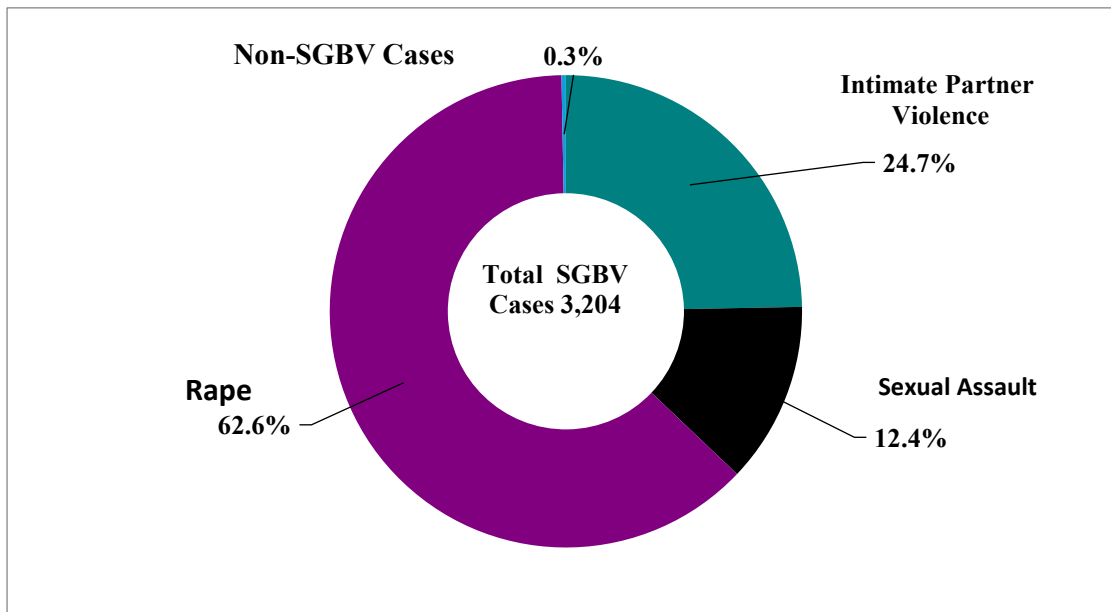


Source: MoGCSP 2023 Annual Report

2.1.4 Distribution of SGBV Cases by Type

Gender based violence is comprised of several human rights violations. Although some SGBV incidences do overlap, often involving more than one form of violence, a categorization was created globally based on the understanding that the cases are mutually exclusive. Figure 3 below presents the classification of SGBV cases which constituted the 3,204 cases reported in 2023 as indicated by MoGCSP annual report.

Figure 10: SGBV cases by Type



The distribution of SGBV cases by type is presented in figure 3. Out of the total of 3,204 incidence of SGBV reported 62.6% were rape cases while 24.7% were as a result of partner violence. Sexual assault constituted 12.4%. Non-sexual violence cases were the lowest constituting 0.3%.

2.1.5 Distribution SGBV Survivors by Gender and Age

Women and girls are most often the target of SGBV. Though uncommon, men and boys are sometimes victimized too. Hence collecting information from both sexes provides an understanding on the full scope of SGBV as well as strategies to prevent and respond to the problem. The age distribution also shows that SGBV affects people of all ages.

Table 1: Distribution of SGBV Survivors by Gender and Age

Age Range	Age by Gender		Total	Percentage
	Female	Male		
0-5 yrs	185	14	199	6.21%
6-10 yrs	342	33	375	11.70%
11-15 yrs	1297	35	1332	41.57%
16-20 yrs	673	83	756	23.60%
21-25 yrs	215	39	254	7.93%
26-30 yrs	49	5	54	1.69%
31-35 yrs	16	2	18	0.56%
36-40 yrs	15	0	15	0.47%
41-45 yrs	5	2	7	0.22%
46-50 yrs	5	0	5	0.16%
50+	7	1	8	0.25%
Unknown	180	1	181	5.65%
Total	2989	215	3204	100

Table 1 shows that survivors in the age range of 0-15 years are the most victims of statutory rape accounting for 60% or 1906 cases of SGBV but the most affected age group are survivors in the age range of 11-15 years with a total of 1,332 as shown in the table.

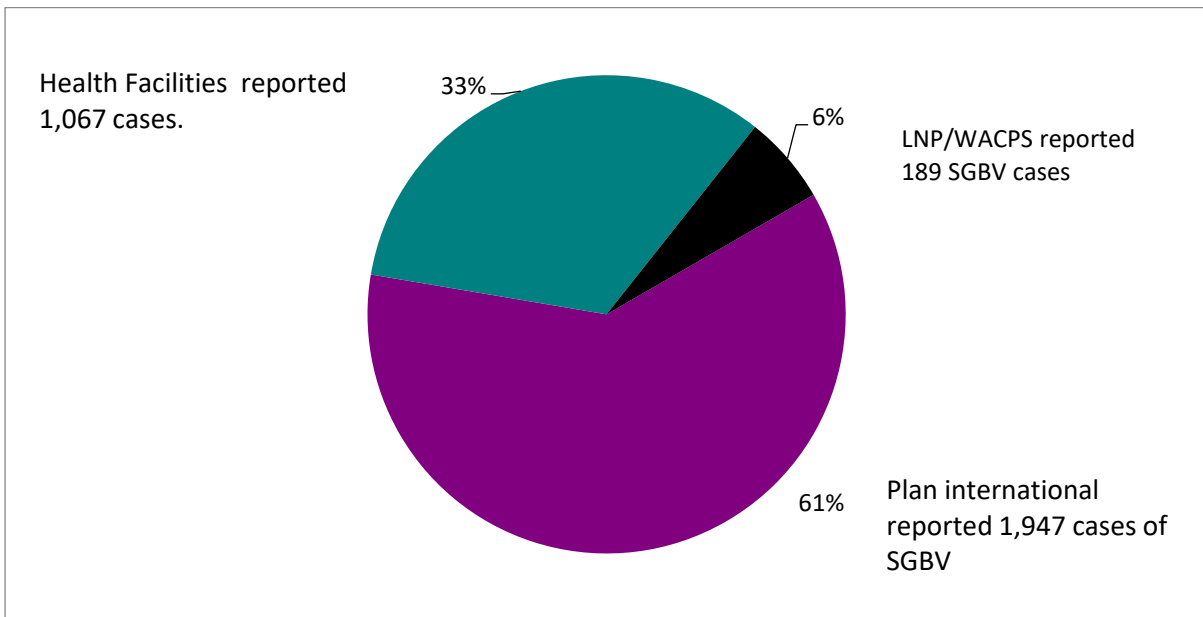
Source: MoGCSP Annual Report

2.1.6 Stakeholders Working on SGBV Issues

Reporting SGBV cases enhances proper resource allocation towards interventions, toward reduction as well as the provision of appropriate care for survivors. SGBV reporting and referral systems are led by relevant stakeholders (Ministry of Justice (SGBV Crimes Unit and Liberian National Police—Women & Children Protection Section), Civil Society Organizations, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection) as well as NGOs. Analysis from the MoGCSP report, Plan International Liberia an NGO, reported 1,947 which is 61% of the 3,204 SGBV cases reported in 2023, making it the highest reporting agency.

Plan International implemented the Raising Community Voices (RCV) project that was previously implemented by International Rescue Committee (IRC) which seeks to respond and prevent SGBV and restore hope and dignity to SGBV survivors. Health Facilities reported 1,067 cases which is 33% and LNP/ Women and Children Protection Services (WACPS) reported 189 SGBV cases.

Figure 11: Reporting Agencies of SGBV Incidences

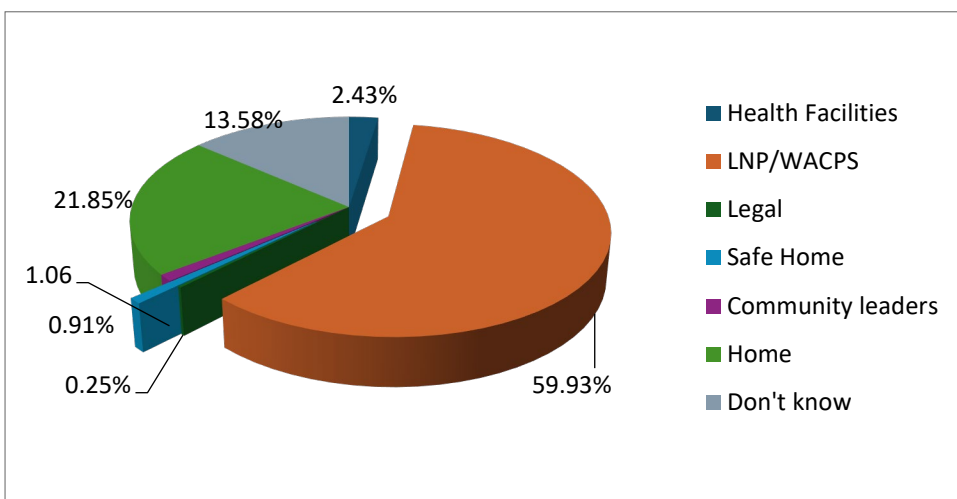


Source: MoGCSP Annual Report

2.1.7 Service Providers Where Survivors Were Referred to Seek Different Services in 2023

Most women and girls who fall prey to SGBV are mostly economically disadvantaged and lack financial support to seek services such as medical care, legal and psychosocial support. Therefore, the availability of a user-friendly referral pathway that provides efficient services will provide some relieve for victims and their families. Figure 5 provides institutions where SGBV survivors were referred to in 2023. The data shows that majority of survivors were referred to the LNP/WACPS (59.93%) while (21.85%) handled the matter at home and 2.43% were referred to the hospital.

Figure 12: Service Providers for SGBV Survivors



Source: MoGCSP 2023 Annual Report

Although reporting sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) allows survivors to access support services to minimize the impact of the violence on their lives, a significant portion of violence is not reported which most often leads to underestimation of the real incidence of violence. Several factors have been attributed to underreporting. Among these are fear of stigma of the victim from the community, shame, guilt, distrust in public institutions and lack of access to assistance and protection that would enable safe reporting, lack of finance to cover costs associated with reporting of SGBV, such as transport for the complainant and other cost associated with court proceedings (GoL, 2020). Moreover, SGBV associated with rape, incest and other forms of sexual as well as emotional forms of violence are treated as private and mostly handled the “family way”. Meanwhile, the more public forms of violence which are more physical in nature, such as fighting/beating are often dealt with in accordance with traditional customary law, administered and enforced by the town chief in rural areas and town chairman in urban areas¹⁷. The incidences of SGBV were more prominent during the Ebola and COVID-19 pandemic crises as more women and girls became victims while increased number of adolescent girls became pregnant and eventually dropped out of school (GoL, 2020).

The case profile for two terms of court February and August 2023, showed that there was a total of 375 cases. The February term of court had 268 cases while the August term of court had 107 SGBV cases. The status of the cases according to the MoGCSP report shows that 145 cases were on the docket, 75 cases were from Criminal Court E, 56 cases were identified, 56 cases were non-compliance for February and May, 13 cases were bailed, 7 cases were dismissed, 7 cases were pending indictment, 4 cases were tried, 3 cases Noelle prosequoi, 3 cases were pending, 2 cases obtained ignoramus, 2 cases won, 1 case lost and 1 case had a hung verdict.

2.2 Legal and Policy Framework on Sexual and Gender-based Violence

Sexual and gender-based violence are human rights violations impacted by gender-based violence and are therefore safeguarded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants. Under international human rights law, states are required not only to avoid violating human rights, but also to prevent and respond to human rights abuses and punish rights violations by private actors. To combat violence and discrimination against women, the United Nations adopted specific instruments and measures. Table 2 presents international and regional legal frameworks that offer the tools needed to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls. Liberia is a signatory to most of these treaties and international commitments. The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (CEDAW), was the first international human rights instrument that framed gender-based violence (GBV) as a human rights issue and form of gender-based discrimination (No 19) and recognize the prohibition of gender-based violence as a norm. Although the Convention itself does not specifically address violence against women, it however requires state parties to take all appropriate

¹⁷ UNFPA, Liberia

<https://liberia.unfpa.org/en/topics/gender-based-violence-19#:~:text=For%20many%20Liberians%20women%20and,violece%20perpetrated%20in%20the%20communit ies.>

measures and without delay, implement a policy of eliminating gender-based violence, especially in the home. Furthermore, Section D of the Beijing Platform of Action provides countries direction in how to comply with human rights treaties and guidelines to eliminate and prevent gender-based violence. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) are benchmark documents in the field. Although not binding, the declaration was the first international text to deal exclusively with violence against women.

The CEDAW Committee's General Recommendations No. 19 and No. 35 provide a foundational international framework addressing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) as a human rights issue and form of gender-based discrimination. General Recommendation No. 19 first established violence against women as a core human rights violation and a form of discrimination, while Recommendation No. 35, adopted in July 2017, expanded on this by incorporating violations of sexual and reproductive health rights under the definition of gender-based violence. Recommendation No. 35 underscores that the prohibition of gender-based violence is a fundamental norm and provides comprehensive guidance for preventing and addressing SGBV.

Recommendation No. 35 calls on State parties to implement institutional measures backed by adequate budgetary resources, in coordination with all relevant government branches. This includes designing targeted public policies, creating monitoring mechanisms, and establishing and funding effective national tribunals. State parties are also encouraged to provide accessible, affordable, and comprehensive services to protect women from gender-based violence, prevent reoccurrence, and ensure survivors have access to healthcare, legal assistance, psychological support, and shelters. It emphasizes the importance of comprehensive recovery services, including reparations for survivors.

The Recommendation further mandates States to address institutional practices and individual conduct by public officials that contribute to or constitute gender-based violence. This includes the investigation and sanctioning of inefficiency, complicity, and negligence by public authorities responsible for preventing or investigating such violence or providing survivor services. States must also work to eradicate customs and practices that perpetuate discrimination or justify gender-based violence, with measures taken across all branches of government.

Additionally, the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, identified violence against women as a critical concern and called on States, international organizations, and NGOs to implement measures aimed at preventing and addressing all forms of violence against women.

2.2.1 National Framework for Eliminating Sexual and Gender Based Violence

Addressing gender-based violence requires comprehensive policies, programs, and interventions that prioritize prevention, protection, and support for survivors. Liberia has updated or enacted several legal and policy instruments that comprehensively protect women and girls from all forms of violence. Article 11 of the 1986 constitution

of Liberia which guarantees equality and freedom for everyone irrespective of your sex and ethnicity is the founding pillar for other policies and national framework on sexual and gender-based violence. The legislation not only sends a strong signal that SGBV is a serious crime but also contributes to changing social norms so that victims/survivors enjoy effective protection of their human rights. The National Gender Policy which was first released in 2009 and a second revised version covering 2018–2022 provides the framework for mainstreaming gender equality into the institutions’ policy, procedures, programs budget, management and practices. The National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2019–2023 was released with the goal of ensuring women and girls’ safety, physical and mental health, and security. The Domestic Violence Law strengthens the reporting pathway of domestic violence cases, clarifies the responsibilities of all actors and supports the efforts of law enforcement officers to provide immediate, effective assistance and protection to survivors/victims

Table 2 presents comprehensive legal frameworks that stipulate government’s commitment to protect women and girls from all forms of SGBV. These legal documentations which are guided by the constitution as well as international and regional conventions constitute a vital step to putting an end to impunity and societal acceptance of SGBV. The policies and legislations, are an essential part of the SGBV prevention ecosystem.

Table 2: National Framework on Sexual and Gender Based Violence

Legislation	Policies	National Plans and Frameworks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution of Liberia; • The Rape Law: passed in 2005 and amended in 2009, both of which increased the age of sexual consent from 16 to 18 years of age. An amendment to the Penal Code, “Rape Law” amends chapter 14, sections 14.70 and 14.71); • Inheritance Law 2003; • Customary Law; • The Children’s Law, 2011; • National Public Health Law; • Education Reform Act, 2011, seeks to advance girls’ education at all levels; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised National Gender Policy & Action Plan; • Reproductive, Maternal, New Born Child and Adolescent Health Policy; • National Child Welfare and Protection Policy, 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development 2018 to 2023 (PAPD); • National Action Plan for the Prevention and Management of GBV in Liberia, Phase III (2018 – 2023); • SGBV and Harmful and Traditional Practices (2016-2020) • National Action Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities; • National Health and Social Welfare Plan, covering the period (2011-2021); • UN Partnership Framework (2020-2024) • Anti-SGBV Road Map (2020-2022)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Violence Law, 2019 • Law Reform Commission Act of 2011, provides for the revision of laws including those with a bearing on women’s right • Anti-trafficking Act, including National Action Plan on trafficking, launched in 2014 		
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2.3 Institutional Arrangement, SGBV Initiatives and Interventions

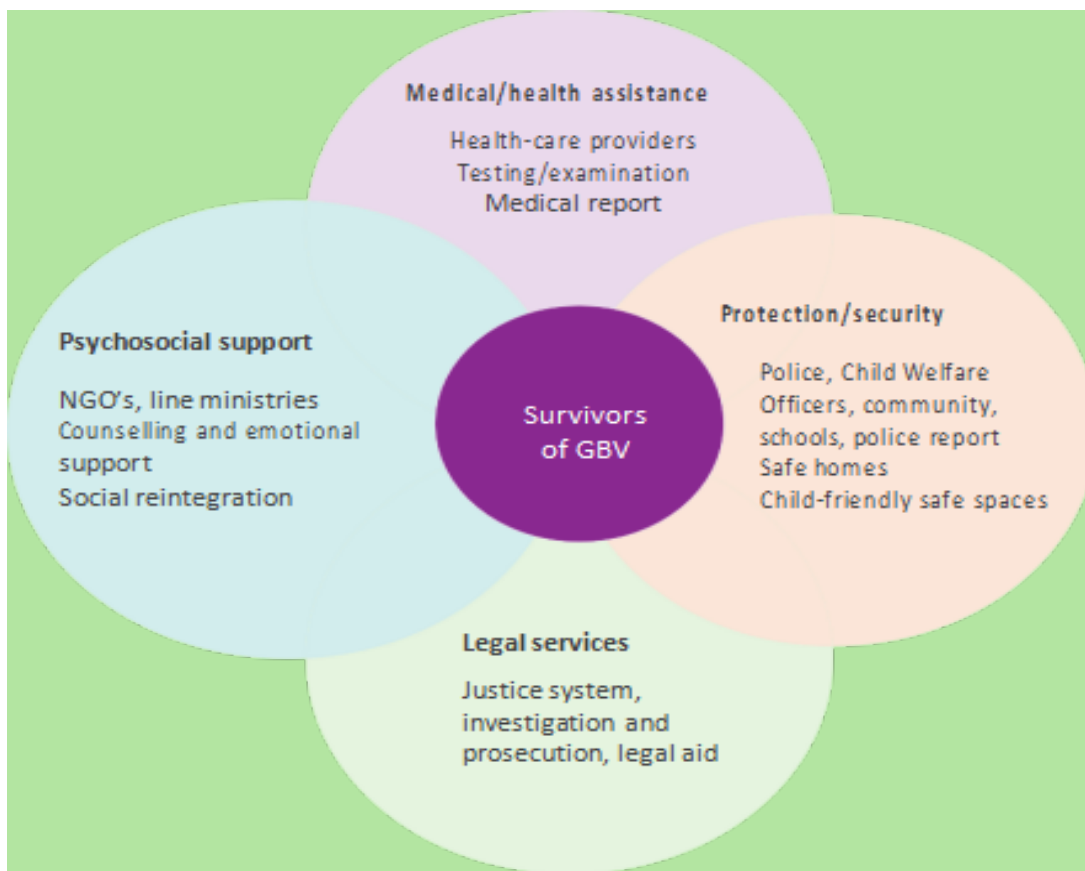
2.3.1 Institutional Arrangement for SGBV

Sexual and gender-based violence issues are addressed through a multi-sectorial leadership and governance structure. Although there are multiple state actors, there are three core ministries with cardinal responsibilities tied around the various pillars of SGBV prevention and response. The Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection is the national machinery that is charged with the responsibility for promoting gender equality, women’s advancement and children ‘s welfare in Liberia. They also spearhead the coordination pillar with the mandate to strengthen coordination, capacity building and management mechanisms to address SGBV. The Ministry of Health (MoH) spearheads the Psychosocial Pillar which enhances the psychosocial and medical well-being for SGBV survivors. The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) spearheads the Legal and Protection Pillar which is to strengthen the criminal justice system to effectively respond to SGBV. These pillar leads are jointly supported by a GBV Technical Committee and supervised by a GBV Steering Committee—comprising local and international partners.

The MoGCSP has the GBV unit that is housed within the ministry. The unit was established to monitor and report on SGBV cases nationwide. It serves as the secretariat for the SGBV inter-agency taskforce and coordinates all activities regarding women and children with UN agencies, traditional leaders, other government institutions and NGOs. It also provides psychosocial counseling and legal referral services to survivors, and supports education and awareness raising activities. The Unit has guidelines to ensure a coordinated and multi-sectorial approach to gender-based violence prevention and response. The MoGCSP also operates safe homes in some counties which are intended to provide temporal shelters that are safe and secure for SGBV survivors, especially rape survivors. These safe homes are operated by managers hired/employed by the ministry. Figure 6 shows other actors involved in the prevention and response to SGBV. In the area of protection, the LNP’s WACPS is responsible for responding to and investigating SGBV, along with other crimes

affecting women and children. WACPS has a total strength of 190 officers, including 100 females. WACPS coordinates with the SGBV-CU on all cases to obtain evidence needed for successful prosecution of perpetrators, while also coordinating and collaborating effectively with other agencies on SGBV response. With regards to legal services, the Criminal Court E was established by an Act of Legislature in 2008 to provide speedy trial for rape and other sexual offences. The office of the Public Defender based in the Temple of Justice provides free legal representation to all persons accused of crimes. During each term of court, two public defenders are assigned to CCE to represent those accused of SGBV crimes ¹⁸.

Figure 13: SGBV Actors



Source: MOGCSP GBV Unit

¹⁸file:///C:/Users/user/OneDrive/Desktop/Consultancy%20application/Carol/Report%20on%20Existing%20Initial%20Services%20on%20SGBV-rev.pdf

Table 3: Gender Based Violence Pillars and their Partners

Pillar (s)	Lead Agency (ies)	Partners working on Pillars
Psychosocial and Coordination Pillar	Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection	<u>Psychosocial</u> THINK, MSF-B, WIPNET, UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UNHCR, OXFAM, Medica Liberia, Christian Empowerment and Sustainable Programme (CESP), Mother Pattern College of Health Sciences, International Rescue Committee (IRC), EQUIP, ActionAid
		<u>Coordination</u> MoGCSP, MOJ, MOH, MOE, GBV Taskforce from all counties, LNP, UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR, UNFPA, UN Women
Legal and Protection Pillar	Ministry of Justice	MOJ, MOH, MOE, LNP, UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR, UNFPA, UN Women, Medica Liberia
Health Pillar	Ministry of Health	International Rescue Committee (IRC); THINK, MSF-B, UNFPA; Medica Liberia; Ministry of Education, UNICEF

Source: Gender-based Violence Action Plan, MoH (2022)

2.3.2 Analysis of SGBV Initiatives and Interventions

2.3.2.1 National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Management of Gender-based Violence in Liberia (GBV-POA)

The GBV-POA was developed to serve as a framework for a one-stop-shop approach to address issues of uncoordinated efforts of GBV interventions which resulted in duplications of efforts, wastage of resources, with minimal impact on the targeted group, as they relate to positive behavioral change as was often indicated. The GBV-POA which had a budget of fifteen million, two hundred, twenty five thousand (\$15,225,000.00) United States dollars to be implemented over a period of 5 years, committed to achieving the following: 1) A system and outreach service in place for psychosocial support, including safe homes and economic empowerment for survivors of GBV, including Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA); 2) A strengthened health sector for effective and efficient response to GBV case management, diagnostic, documentation and reporting on clinical evidence. 3) A strengthened criminal justice system where cases of gender-based violence are judiciously adjudicated without delay, and where due process is given to survivors and perpetrators of GBV. 4) A well developed and integrated national protection system with the capacity to prevent and respond effectively and efficiently to GBV and 5) A strengthened institutional framework for the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the National GBV Plan of Action for the prevention and case management of GBV, including SEA.

Under the first thematic area, the objective was to provide psychosocial support and facilities to GBV programs, including economic empowerment for women and girls. This objective had various activities with an estimated total budget of US\$ 3,000,000.00 with major actors being (MGD, MOH, MOJ, MOE & MIA) Local & International NGOs, UN Agencies. One major activity and deliverable was to identify,

construct, staff and equip safe homes in each of the fifteen counties between February 2008 and 2011. There was no specific amount allotted for the implementation.

Another activity under the health thematic area was to develop a GBV syllabus and adapt to formal educational level. The final outcome at the end of the NAP was that the formal educational sectors use the GBV syllabus. % of students, educators and school authorities have knowledge about SGBV issues. According to the implementation arrangement of the GBV-POA, the various aspects of the NPA will be implemented by interested stakeholders engaged in GBV prevention, management and care. These will be done in the context of their respective programs.

Although the GBV-POA provided the framework on addressing SGBV issues, analysis of the report showed that implementation had several gaps. For instance, there was no government financial commitment. The implementation of the program relied primarily on coordinated resource mobilization from United Nations agencies and donors. The NAP did not clearly articulate the roles of lead agencies in each pillar. Allocation of funds did not have a detailed budget specification, containing a line-by-line breakdown of the cost of implementing specific activities. Instead, financial allocations were made by thematic areas, making accountability for implementation vague.

2.3.2.2 The Government/ UN Joint Programme to Prevent and Respond to Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Liberia

The Government of Liberia/United Nations Joint Programme to Prevent and Respond to SGBV, or 'JP on SGBV', was designed in 2008 as an anchor of the various pillars and objectives of both the GBV-POA and the PRS, both of which were developed through consultative processes that included a range of stakeholders. In 2010, Phase 1 was extended until 2011, to align with the NPOA on GBV, whose priorities also informed the design of Phase 2. In 2011, the extension to Phase 2 (2011-2013) secured funding from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) for at least 75 per cent of the projected budget. In 2012, a landmark planning meeting was held to develop a joint plan and results matrix for 2013 (as a condition for SIDA support). The program was implemented in two phases. Phase 1 (2008-2011) and Phase 2 (2011-2013). The project projected budget was \$13,443,427. Most of the funding for phase 1 was provided by SIDA with Norway contributing \$809,000. Other contributions for Phase 1 were from participating United Nations agencies to a total of \$2,861,345. For Phase 2, SIDA committed \$10 million, which covered 75 per cent of the projected budget of \$3,443,427. No other funds apart from SIDA was pledged¹⁹.

The third phase joint Government of Liberia and United Nations (UN) Program to Prevent and Respond to Sexual and Gender Based Violence and Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPS) was implemented from (2016 to 2020). Implementing UN agencies included UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF and OHCHR. The goal was to reduce SGBV by 80 per cent by 2020. The Joint Program which used a community-based approach to leverage solutions through its five pillars, aimed to prevent, respond, strengthen institutions, advocate and mobilize funds and finally coordinate SGBV

¹⁹ /UNW_Eval_Liberia_CaseStudy_FINAL%20(2).PDF

issues at the national and sub-national levels within the 15 Counties. The program had a total budget of US\$36,000,000.00. The Swedish International Development Agency provided 3,200,000.00 USD with a funding gap of 32,000,000.00 USD²⁰.

The report on the final evaluation of the Government of Liberia/ UN Joint Program against sexual and gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices in Liberia (2020)²¹, in addition to a Case Study Report on the Joint Evaluation of Joint Programmes on Gender Equality in the United Nations System (2013²²), showed that several interventions were implemented to address the high rate of SGBV issues that were prevailing. These included: strengthened procedures and systems for handling SGBV survivors, rolling out standard operating procedures for SGBV services, referral pathways for psychosocial support, the One Stop Center, and SGBV modules in institutional curriculums which had the potential for long-term capacity enrichment for national partners. Greater protection for survivors of SGBV, including established safe havens in different parts of the country, through the safe homes model, coupled with the integrated approach being adopted to link SGBV survivors to economic empowerment, increased public awareness of SGBV. An information campaign, with a strengthened justice system, supported the prosecution of rape crimes (after the enactment and amendment of the rape law), and the establishment of the Criminal Court E specifically dedicated to prosecution of SGBV crimes.²³

A key finding in the report shows that although several gains were made through program implementations, there were also several major gaps in the design of the joint program. It specified that United Nations agencies, rather than national partners (or both), had programmatic accountability within the pillars. Except for the Ministry of Health which had more autonomy in national execution, other national partners were not in charge and could not be categorized as having 'ownership' of the program. Ownership at the national level was further constrained by management modalities and bureaucratic procedures of the United Nations, which were inflexible despite concerns voiced by national partners, regarding the disbursement periods and return of funds.

The report also indicated the absence of a strong role for civil society organizations, beyond service provision. United Nations agencies delivered their outputs – with reasons that CSOs in Liberia are weak and lack the capacity to implement the program. There was no shared understanding among stakeholders on roles and responsibilities. Effectively, there was no joint planning and agencies merely 'pieced together existing activities, commitments, and resources' in a 'cut-and-paste' exercise. As with other joint programs, the joint gender program depended on the availability of donor funds. Accountability arrangements were vague. Undefined institutional relationships between the JPMT and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social

²⁰ /Liberia_SGBV_Joint_Programme_Brief.pdf

²¹ Final Evaluation of the Government of Liberia (GoL)/UN Joint Programme Against Sexual and Gender-based Violence and Harmful Traditional Practices in Liberia (2020)

²² Joint Evaluation of Joint Programmes on Gender Equality in the United Nations System joint programme to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence in Liberia (2013)

²³ Final Evaluation of the Government of Liberia (GoL)/UN Joint Programme Against Sexual and Gender-based Violence and Harmful Traditional Practices in Liberia (2020)

Protection, JPMT and UNFPA and JPMT and UNDP, are unhelpful, and prevent full ownership. The report further noted that United Nations agencies did not meaningfully account to citizens regarding the program, leading to a poor grasp of actual results and benefits for citizens.

National partner budgetary allocations could not be discerned from documentation, according to the report, because budgetary allocations are only reported regarding activities and pillars. The Phase 1 and 2 results matrices specify that for Phase 1, these budgetary figures are directly allocated to the United Nations agency, with no resources cited as being allocated to the national partner. For Phase 2, figures are allocated by activity, with United Nations and implementing partners reflected in different columns. The implication is that the resources allocated to the United Nations agency are for expenditure on activities within the output area, some of which would be implemented by national partners. This reflects a lack of transparency on how the money is allocated to, and spent by, national partners. Bureaucratic obstacles in the United Nations system also caused delays in funds disbursement and program implementation. National partners were asked to return unspent funds at the end of the year, which often arrived late in the first place. The evaluation also indicated limited funding as one of the major challenges, as only US\$3 million was available for program implementation against a budget of US\$36 million for the joint project SGBV/HTPs.

2.3.2.3 Liberia First National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2009-2013)

Liberia's first phase of the National Plan (2009-2013) was launched in 2009. The launch coincided with the historic International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security, in March 2009. The Plan is aligned with the pillars of global women, peace and security (WPS) agenda which urges all actors to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspectives in all UN peace and security efforts. The resolution also calls on all parties to conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence (GBV), particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse. The NAP was developed through a rigorous consultative process that involved women's groups, youth groups, civil society actors, government agencies and ministries, and international partners. It was divided into four pillars: 1) Protection 2) Prevention 3) Participation and empowerment and 4) Promotion.

Assessments of the implementation of the plan by the Institute for Inclusive Security in 2014, indicated that the first national plan which was developed using an inclusive process, catalyzed critical conversations in Liberia about the important role of women in peace building, and advanced the inclusive security agenda, both of which had impacts locally, nationally, and internationally. The report highlighted that while significant progress was made in addressing several pressing gender issues during the implementation of the NAP 2009-2013, there were several challenges, despite the NAP's alignment with international policies. Government efforts to similarly align key national policies were minimal. Awareness among implementers of the NAP (ministers, deputies and assistant ministers; LNAP gender focal points (GFPs) in relevant ministries; Legislators in the House of Representatives; civil society implementers, including the Women's NGO Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL) and

individuals from a prominent private, was limited in scope. Dedicated government funding for the implementation of the NAP was grossly inadequate, while international funds were committed to support coordination within the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) and not to support program activities. Consequently, staff were insufficiently trained and activities were left incomplete or never started at all.

Despite roles and responsibilities being explicitly spelled out in the NAP, the report highlighted that, there was confusion about implementing responsibilities, which left many unfulfilled. Already limited resources were thus inefficiently utilized, and there was no clear point of contact for activities, thereby decreasing ownership. The report also iterated ambiguity in the coordinating role of the MoGCSP, which was unclear to implementing actors in and out of the ministry. That situation resulted in a communications breakdown with information lost during the implementing process as there was no coordinating body to facilitate realization of the NAP. The assessment also indicated that implementers lacked the capacity to monitor and evaluate impact, which resulted in a lack of evidence of the NAP's impacts, and led to a decrease in overall commitment to advancing its mission and the inability to use data to inform decisions regarding changes to programming, strategy and more.

2.3.2.4 Liberia Second Phase National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019-2023)

Liberia's second phase of the National Plan was launched in 2019. The second NAP, which ran for five years, from 2019 to 2023, was built on the successes of the first, while addressing the challenges to achieving its successful implementation. The Plan was constructed on five pillars: 1) Protection 2) Prevention 3) Participation and empowerment 4) Promotion and 5) Coordination and accountability. The overall goal is: "Women and girls' safety, physical and mental health and security are assured; and are fully protected under legislation and policies that promote their empowerment and full participation at all levels, in building sustainable and inclusive, peace and security in Liberia." The cost of implementation of the plan for the five thematic areas was US\$28,215,000. The NAP was designed to enhance financial commitment from ministries and other partners in ways that activities were aligned to complement the responsible ministries' own policies, strategies, workplans, etc., to ensure that taking on these activities is not far removed from their own priorities and therefore, incorporating the NAP activities into their existing budgets should be sufficient. The LNAP could also be used as a fundraising tool by various ministries to enhance donor commitments to the advancement of women, peace and security issues in Liberia.

The key focus under Pillar 2 of the NAP is Protection, with women, young women and girls' safety, physical and mental health assured, and their human rights respected. This outcome falls under activity section 2.1.6. The indicator under this outcome is the number of fully functioning safe homes set up to provide safe and secure temporary shelter, psychosocial, justice continuum and formal schooling support to SGBV survivors, including victims of rape and HTPs starting from a baseline figure of 2 fully functioning safe homes (9 established in 9 counties) based on the Assessment of the Existing Initial Services available for SGBV cases in 2018 as shown in Table 4. The target was that by 2023 at the end of the action plan, an additional 6 safe homes would

be established in 6 counties. Under activity 2.1.6.1 of the NAP, the MGCSP was to refurbish existing safe homes that were dilapidated and construct new ones where needed. The projected amount to implement this activity was US\$1,600,000. These safe homes provide temporary protective shelters for abused women and children as well as psychosocial counseling, recreation, and follow-up treatment for survivors of rape. Additionally, training has been conducted for security and medical personnel to respond to SGBV cases with sensitivity, taking the rights, health needs, interests, and privacy of the victims into consideration²⁴.

Although there is no formal evaluation report yet available for the second phase of the NAP implementation, it is clear that there is no specific government allocation or pool fund for its implementation. Instead, implementation is subsumed under activities of the ministries, while also awaiting donor intervention. Visible structures such as safe homes which were to be constructed are not seen anywhere around.

Table 4: List of functional and non-functional Safe Homes

	County	Safe Home	Status
1	Montserrado	THINK	Partially functional
2	Montserrado	OSIWA	Functional
3	Nimba	Sanniqueellie	Functional
4	Bong	Gbarnga	Partially Functional
5	Lofa	Voinjama	Not functional
6	Margibi	Kakata	Not functional
7	River Gee	Fish Town	Partially functional
8	Grand Cape Mount	Robertsport	Totally abandoned
9	Grand Bassa	Buchanan	Not functional

Source: MoGCSP

The One Stop Centers (OSCs) were an output of the multi-sectorial response initiative to SGBV. The OSC was established within government referral and private hospitals to provide a full range of free health care, psychosocial and legal services, under one roof. The centers also provide short-stay accommodation for survivors who are brought at night or on holidays. These centers are, however, only established in Montserrado County.

²⁴ chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://africa.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Africa/Images/Publications/2020/Report%20on%20Existing%20Initial%20Services%20on%20SGBV-rev.pdf

Table 5: One-Stop Centers Serving Project-Affected Communities

One Stop Centers	Location
James N. Davis Jr. Memorial Hospital	Neezoe community
Redemption Hospital	New Kru Town
Star of the Sea Clinic	West Point Community
Duport Road Clinic	Duport Road
Hope for Women International	A. B Tolbert Road

2.3.2.5 The Government of Liberia & Partners’ ANTI –SGBV Roadmap (2020-2022)

The Government of Liberia & Partners’ ANTI –SGBV Roadmap (2020-2022) is the most recent GBV policy promulgated in response to the increased cases of SGBV following restrictive measures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The road map was developed following a series of meetings of the Inter-Ministerial Taskforce on SGBV (ITSGBV) on how to address the scourge of rape and other forms of SGBV cases during that period. The discussions culminated into a high-level meeting chaired by former President George M. Weah with high level former officials of government, including the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President Pro-Tempore of the Senate, the Chief Justice of the Honorable Supreme Court, the Vice President, and other cabinet ministers. Here are several recommendations that emerged as a result of that meeting. The revision of the existing laws (Rape, Children’s, Domestic Violence, and Inheritance, in particular), strengthening the Government’s funding support to the Ministries of Gender, Justice and Health, in order to reinforce their legal, well-being and health care support for survivors. Specifically, these interventions would be achieved by providing support to safe homes and One Stop Centers; by the institutionalization of the Survivor’s Trust Fund; the operationalization of the Sex Offenders Registry and a specialized Gender Taskforce Unit within the Liberia National Police, attached to the Women and Children Protection Services (WACPS), the same as the Emergency Response Unit (ERU) or Police Support Unit (PSU), explicitly tasked to handle SGBV cases; by establishing Community SGBV Case Finders and Monitors; and by hosting an Anti-SGBV National Consultation or Conference²⁵.

Following the high-level meeting, the ITSGBV was mandated by the President to engage all SGBV stakeholders and develop a roadmap to direct prevention and response programming on ending SGBV. Subsequently, a roadmap was developed to be implemented from 2020 to end at 2022. The goal of the roadmap was to “reduce SGBV against women, girls and children through driving change and fostering accountability amongst duty bearers in addressing SGBV policies, systems and mechanisms to mitigate SGBV risks, especially violence against women and girls; and to provide safe and comprehensive prevention and response services for SGBV survivors, particularly within the context of the PAPD.” The roadmap has four thematic pillars: 1) health, 2) community engagement, 3) legal and strengthening coordination and 4) data collection for reporting. The preparation of the roadmap was informed by

²⁵ Government of Liberia & Partners’ ANTI –SGBV Roadmap (2020-2022)

approaches and lessons learned from past and key ongoing interventions in addressing SGBV in Liberia since the conflict in 2003. Based on its goals and thematic areas, the roadmap had three specific outcomes that were to be achieved from September 2020 to September 2022.

- Outcome 1: Strengthened and enforced legislations, policies and standards that support the prevention and response to SGBV including, eradicating FGM and other harmful traditional practices.
- Outcome 2: Women, girls, boys, and other vulnerable people at risk of abuse, have increased access to information, protection, and specialized services; and
- Outcome 3: All levels across the ITSGBV have effective and accountable inter-sectorial SGBV leadership that is functional and well-coordinated.

The total budget for the implementation of the roadmap was US\$ 6,133,243.00 distributed among the ITSGBV as indicated in Table 6 below. Stakeholders identified categorically for the management and implementation of the roadmap are as follows: the GoL; the CPG – international organizations/donors; international & national NGOs specific to SGBV interventions; and the affected population. Although the roadmap has a budget and timelines for the implementation of activities by the ITSGBV, there is no government financial commitment for its implementation. Inquiry as to whether these agencies received the amounts presented in the table below proved futile as most of those who were responsible for implementing the projects were no longer in office.

Table 6: Anti-SGBV Roadmap Resources

Ministry	Financing Needs (USD)
Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Protection	US\$ 1,637,500.00 (26%)
Ministry of Justice	US\$ 1,462,830.00 (23%)
Ministry of Health	US\$ 458,000.00 (7%)
Ministry of Internal Affairs	US\$ 1,422,000 (23%)
Ministry of Labor	US\$ 214,500.00 (4%)
Ministry of Youth & Sports	US\$ 104,907.00 (2%)
Ministry of Education	US\$ 91,366.00 (1%)
Monrovia City Corporation	US\$ 742,140.00 (12%)
Total	US\$ 6,133,243.00

Source: Source: Government of Liberia & Partners’ ANTI –SGBV Roadmap (2020-2022)

The MoGCSP budget which was US\$ 1,637,500.00 was divided into eight components as indicated below.

- Component 1: Construction of four Safe Homes – US\$ 640,000.00
- Component 2: Operationalization of the Taskforce (Mobility)-- US\$ 330,000.00
- Component 3: Provide care & services for Adolescent Girls at Risk – US\$ 95,000.00
- Component 4: Children & Social Protection – US\$ 233,100.00
- Component 5: Logistical support – US\$ 110,000.00

- Component 7: Administrative & Personnel Cost – US\$ 78,000.00
- Component 8: Legal review and Validation of the Liberian Children's Law – US\$ 60,000.00

Outcomes or activities under component one was the construction and furnishing of 4 safe homes in Montserrado County and the Southeast and the renovation and refurbishing of three existing safe homes (River Gee, Grand Bassa and Cape Mount Counties) and support to one stop centers. The breakdown of funds for implementation is presented in Table 7. Discussion with some staff at the MoGCSP as to whether these safe homes were renovated or refurbished, is stipulated in the document stated below.

“I contacted a staff from the MoGCSP concerning the deliverables and this is what she said. “We are struggling to get a report from the roadmap. The money they got was not spent for the intended purpose. In the few counties we visited where they said they were constructing safe homes, there were no structures. MoGCSP has set up a committee to gather findings. All the staff that were in charge of the program have resigned, and the comptroller traveled to the States. It's crazy. The whole week we were on it. I'm still liaising with the finance office to get something from them. I'm in touch with the acting comptroller.”

Table 7: Component 1: Construction of four Safe Homes – US\$ 640,000.00

No	Activities / Outcomes	Unit Cost	Quantity Required	Budgeted Amount (US\$)
1.1	Construction of two safe homes in Montserrado and furnishing	100,000.00	2	200,000.00
1.2	Construction of two safe homes in the South-East and furnishing	1000,000.00	2	200,000.00
1.3	Renovation and refurbishing of three existing safe homes in (River Gee, Grand Bassa and Cape Mount Counties)	60,000.00	3	180,000.00
	Support to one stop centers	5,000.00	12	60,000.00

Source: Government of Liberia & Partners’ ANTI –SGBV Roadmap (2020-2022)

Table 8 shows the Ministry of Health’s activities and budgetary allotment for each activity. The first activity is the procurement of a deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) testing machine. On March 8, 2021, the Government of Liberia unveiled a DNA testing machine. However, there were concerns that the machines were not functional. The reasons given by the Joint Task Force on SGBV was that the equipment was huge, and it needed to be set up in separate facilities. Also, there were no trained pathologists in the country to operate the equipment to analyze forensic evidence of rape, and aid in the prosecution of cases. It was also indicated that the government sent three people out of the country to learn how to operate the machine. It is not clear at present whether the machine is operational. It is also not clear whether the Ministry received the allotted amount from the government for implementation, as this

information could not be verified due to the change of government and hence, turnover of staff at the Ministry.

Table 8: Breakdown of Budget - Ministry of Health

No	Activities / Outcomes	Unit Cost	Quantity Required	Budgeted Amount (US\$)
1	Procure a DNA machine with accessories	58,000.00	2	116,000.00
1.2	Develop, validate, and disseminate training manual on the use of the DNA machine	60,000	200	60,000
1.3	Provide specimen collection kits for use in One Stop Centers	10	1500	60,000
	Train pathologist, laboratory technicians & staff in all One Stop Centers	1,000.00	48	48,000
	Conduct quarterly staff mentoring and support monitoring of performance in all existing One Stop Centers in six counties for four quarters	1,000	6	24,000.00
	Scale up establishment of One Stop Centers in additional three counties	10,000.00	3	30,000.00
	Scale up establishment of One Stop Centers in remaining six counties	10,000.00	6	60,000.00
	Continue quarterly staff mentoring and support monitoring of performance in One Stop Centers in 15 counties	1,000.00	15	60,000.00

Source: Government of Liberia & Partners' ANTI –SGBV Roadmap (2020-2022)

Table 9: Summary of SGBV Interventions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A specialized court, Criminal Court E, was established in 2009 with exclusive jurisdiction in all matters related to sexual offences, with concurrent jurisdiction granted to circuit courts in other areas. • The establishment of the Sexual and Gender Based Violence Crimes Unit in 2009, situated in the Ministry of Justice, to provide rapid investigative and prosecutorial response. • Physical infrastructure development or rehabilitation has taken place in 15 counties for women and child protection units of the Liberia National Police (LNP) and 7 safe homes in 7 counties. • SGBV One-Stop Center is a facility where survivors of sexual violence access holistic response services (health, psychosocial, police & legal) all
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under the same roof free of charge. The SGBV One-Stop Center is normally situated within a major health facility.

- The Association of Female Lawyers (AFELL) and the National Bar Association have established legal clinics where women can get free legal aid. These services are free of charge to women and victims of sexual violence. AFELL opened a sub office in Bomi County in May 2013 as a first step to decentralize their services to other parts of Liberia.
- Development of a National Framework for Standard Operating Procedures for Prevention and Response to Sexual Gender Based Violence in Liberia, developed in 2009.
- Operationalization of national and sub national standard operating procedures and systems for rapid referral of survivors to medical services, including 12 One Stop SGBV Centers currently offering comprehensive clinical services for survivors of SGBV in 7 Counties.
- Establishment of the Women and Children Protection Section (WACPS), the Gender Affairs Section, the Community Policing Section (CPS) and the Professional Standards Division (PSD).
- SGBV Ledger has been developed and integrated into the Health Management Information System (HMIS) to collect monthly SGBV reports from one stop centers and give updates to partners and line ministries.
- Sexual and Gender Based Violence Crime Unit (SGBV-CU) was established in 2009 to specifically prosecute alleged perpetrators of SGBV. Available in 9 Counties (Bong, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, Lofa, Maryland, Montserrado, Nimba, River Gee and Sinoe).

2.4 Challenges in Responding to SGBV Issues

The situational analysis from both literature review and stakeholder discussions shows that although much effort has been made by the government, international and local partners in SGBV prevention and response, multiple challenges remain overall. These challenges are as follows:

- Necessary policy instruments to address SGBV issues have been developed and are readily available. Adherence to the dictates of the instruments remains a challenge.
- Institutions were created by policies to synergistically respond to SGBV issues. However, they are yet to be fully equipped to perform their roles and responsibilities.
- The One-Stop Centers have an important function in the multi-sector initiative in response to service delivery for survivors of GBV/SGBV; yet, the centers are ill equipped and without committed staff, due to low wages in some centers. Consequently, service delivery is inefficient. In addition, health personnel do not receive regular refresher training and the necessary logistics to attend to SGBV survivors. The establishment of Criminal Court E is a necessary step towards ensuring justice of SGBV victims. Absence of the services outside Monrovia has significantly affected disposal of SGBV cases, creating a large case backlog in many counties.

- Limited space in the courtroom at the Criminal Court E makes it impossible for the two judges to have court sittings simultaneously, hence, few SGBV cases are heard per court term.
- Lack of office equipment and other logistics continue to hamper service delivery by the WACPS and the courts.
- The social workers are volunteers who do not receive regular salaries from MoGCSP, but occasionally get stipends from the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), making it difficult for them to afford the fare to travel to and from work. This eventually leads to the absence of WACPS officers and social workers to provide psychosocial counselling and support to survivors.
- Limited budgetary support for the MoGCSP constrains the deployment of gender coordinators to all 15 counties, also to monitor SGBV cases and promote community sensitization and awareness.
- Some counties do not have safe homes and even among those that do, some homes are not functional.
- Resistance from traditional and religious leaders tends to compromise cases because of their acquaintance with families of survivors and perpetrators. They are inclined to cover up cases and hide alleged perpetrators. They also lack knowledge on investigation of SGBV cases and the statutory system of justice.
- The lack of forensic laboratories and inadequate logistical support hinders timely and appropriate response and support to survivors. Furthermore, gaps in the law and legal procedures, such as inaccessibility of courts and limited court terms, facilitate impunity for perpetrators of SGBV.

CHAPTER THREE
THE NATIONAL BUDGET PROCESS

3.1 Overview

This section presents the budget formulation and preparation process, the budget cycle and key actors. It also highlights entry points for budget advocacy towards increased SGBV budgetary funding.

3.2 Definition of Budget

The national budget is an annual financial plan indicating an estimate of expected government revenues and proposed expenditures. It is a key instrument that translates a country's national development goals into annual spending plans and priorities for implementation during the year. There are two main components of the budget: Revenues and Expenditure. Revenue is money that the government collects which consists of taxes, customs duties and fees, inputs, exports, and other receivables from businesses as well as donors' contributions from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and others. Expenditure represents authorized spending on various aspects of public service delivery by government agencies and line ministries²⁶.

3.3 The National Budgeting Process

The Government of Liberia previously formulated its yearly fiscal budget that ran from June in one calendar year to June of the next. It was recently changed by the National Legislature to begin from January to December every calendar year. The budget process involves several steps. The preparation process proceeds with the preparation of the Budget Framework Paper (BFP) by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) which has the oversight responsibility to prepare the annual budget for approval by the National Legislature. The BFP provides analysis of the economic and fiscal trends, assumptions underlying the macroeconomic and fiscal framework of the budget; an explanation of the government's policy priorities and how these are reflected in the budget, as well as a statement of key fiscal risks that may affect budget execution. Thereafter, the MFDP sends out the budget call circular for preparation of sectorial budget proposals, followed by technical support and bilateral discussions between ministries, departments, and government agencies (MDAs). These discussions provide guidelines on the MDAs budget ceiling.

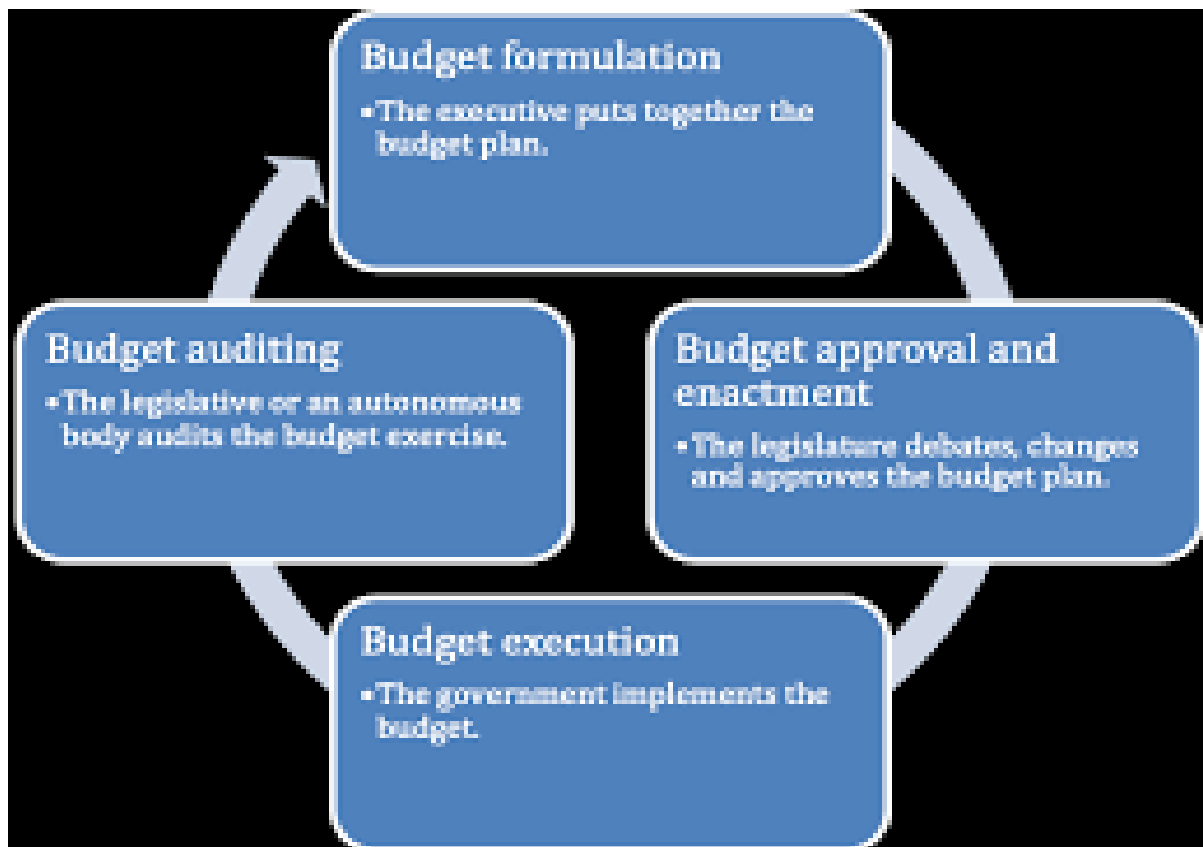
The MFDP then collects and collates submitted draft budgets from ministries and agencies and makes amendments where necessary. Budget proposals from ministries and agencies are then consolidated into a draft national budget and submitted to the president for consideration and onward submission to the Legislature. After review of the budget, the president, then submits a final draft of the national budget to the Legislature for review and passage into law. The Legislature then conducts budget hearings and invites ministries and agencies to justify their proposed budgets before plenary. After the budget hearing, the Legislature makes amendments and reprioritization where necessary, in a joint session, and then votes and or passes a resolution to enact the budget. An approved budget is then returned to the President. Finally, the President signs into law, the final approved budget from the Legislature, making it a bonding legal instrument for implementation of the government's programs, projects, policies and development agenda.

²⁶ RoL, 2024 Restated Budget Framework Paper for Fiscal Year 2024

3.4 The National Budget Cycle and Key Actors

The national budget consists of four distinct processes as presented in figure 7. These include formulation or preparation of the budget; legislative approval/authorization; execution and monitoring/oversight. The executive branch of government has the sole responsibility to formulate the budget. This is done by the MFD with input from line ministries and agencies. The legislative branch has the oversight to review the budget, amend the budget and then enact it into law. The executive branch is responsible for budget execution and implementation through the collection of revenue and then spends money as per approved allocations made in the budget law. The Legislature also has monitoring and oversight functions to ensure that all appropriations made are enforced in accordance with approved budgetary allocations. They also have the mandate to ensure full compliance of the approved budget and ensure public resources are used appropriately in a transparent manner, with value for money, with a view to reduce mismanagement or corruption and ensure transparent use of public resources. They ensure that the budget accounts are audited, and audit findings are reviewed by the Legislature which requires investigations and actions to be taken. The Legislature has in place a Joint Public Account Expenditure and Audit Committee known as (PAC) established by Rule 57, section 6 and Rule 44 Section 22 of standing orders of the House of Representative and Senate.

Figure 14: The Budget Cycle



3.5 Highlights on SGBV Advocacy Entry Points within the Budget Cycle

3.5.1 Budget Formulation and Preparation

The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and the Presidency are the major actors at this stage of the budget process that can be leveraged for advocacy on SGBV support.

Highlight on entry points for budget advocacy

The engagement can take place at two levels, from the MFDP which prepares the budget and at the level of the Presidency.

At the MFDP, engagement with the senior management team at the budget department, the Minister, principal deputies, and staff are key to achieving meaningful results since the budget preparation is at its initial stage. Other strategies and approaches include, but not limited to press conferences, formal letters outlining priorities and the need for attention; policy briefs on thematic issues for SGBV; formal meetings; policy dialogues; and joint planning and engagement sessions.

At the Presidency, engagement can be done directly with the President since he/she has influence over all appointed public officials including the Minister of Finance. The Presidency also has an oversight over submission of the budget envelop to the National Legislature. Apart from the Presidency, there are other external actors who could be relevant in the process, unofficially part of the budget process but are influential in shaping decisions.

For example, donors and partners could engage government on certain priorities, in the form of matching funds to complement their support. So, they could be influential in this way, but the chances are often limited. Therefore, it is important to engage donor partners in the process so that their engagements with public officials could help shape decisions and priorities in the best interest of the public with regards to SGBV.

3.5.2 Budget Approval and Enactment

The budget approval and enactment responsibility fall squarely with the Legislature. The Senate and House of Representatives have in place a Budget Committee that scrutinizes the budget, queries cabinet officials regarding allocations made in the budget estimates, and requests credible reasons and justifications in defense of their budgets.

Highlight on entry points for budget advocacy

At the budget approval stage, the Legislature takes full charge in determining what stays in the budget or not. It is at this point that sector ministries and agencies are invited to defend their respective budgets and make convincing arguments as to why they should be given the projected amount or even more. The approval stage is one area where NGOs and SGBV stakeholders can leverage and advocate for funding support to key institutions addressing SGBV intervention.

At this stage, the Legislature may identify potential revenue sources or redirect funds to different priority areas in the budget based on needs. This presents an opportunity

for engagement, whereby NGOs and civil society actors can accompany SGBV stakeholders and the ministries working on SGBV issues to defend their budget and or make pleas for budgetary increment.

Also, SGBV stakeholders can design different strategies to weigh in on what is being deliberated at the Legislature to engage and influence the hearing process. For example, strategic communication and engagement by civil society and SGBV stakeholders can be of immense value in this case. They can push and make a case for increment in budgetary allocations to those ministries dealing with SGBV issues by engaging the Budget Committee, Gender and Inclusion, the leaderships of both houses (Speaker and Senate Pro-Tempore), individual influential lawmakers, County Caucuses etc. Engagement here must be strategic, persistent and beyond the legislature, where necessary.

Efforts at each level should include holding policy dialogues, press releases, press conferences, strategic leadership, committees, individual and group meetings; preparation of policy briefs, convening workshops and working sessions, etc. Any of the above could possibly influence the budget and increase allocation to SGBV. However, this is only possible based on resource availability. Determine what is at your disposal, strategize on what could be prioritized. More importantly, be consistent until the final budget approval process is concluded ²⁷.

3.5.3 Budget Execution/Implementation

At the budget execution stage, the MFDP issues guidelines for the release of funds, allotments and disbursement to ministries and agencies. Funds are subsequently released for the execution of planned programs and projects as stipulated in the enacted budgetary allotment. The MFDP keeps a close watch on the expenditure and spending pattern of ministries and agencies to ensure that they keep their operations within their budgetary allotment.

Highlight on entry points for budget advocacy

At the budget implementation stage, SGBV stakeholders now need to focus their advocacy to ensure actual disbursement and utilization of funds as planned in the enacted budget. It is possible that budgeted amounts for certain items be diverted or channeled to other things if not monitored or tracked. Therefore, following the disbursement and expenditure processes closely, is key to achieving actual impacts of SGBV prevention and response activities from the budget.

3.5.4 Budget Auditing

At this stage, the Legislature ensures effective utilization of budgeted allotment by line ministries and agencies for the intended purpose to avoid mismanagement or corruption and ensure transparent use of public resources. To this effect, PAC ensures all audit reports are thoroughly reviewed and investigated. When issues of discrepancies or misapplications are discovered in spending and operations, they

²⁷ National Budget Cycles & Decision-Making Processes for the National Policy on Girls' Education (NPGE): A Critical Review of National Financing for Girls' Education in Liberia
Education Out Loud: <https://educationoutloud.org>

subpoena that entity involved and conduct hearings and investigations to validate GAC findings. This process allows the Legislature to know where money goes and hold ministries and agencies accountable.

Highlight on entry points for budget advocacy

At this stage, SGBV advocacy should be directed towards accountability, transparency, effective and efficient performance of public resources towards government spending on SGBV. This move is important to influence decisions during the next budget period.

Directing advocacy to accountability is also key because decisions resulting from the budget audit can have serious implications for future budgetary allocations in that if allotment spending was not properly used or accounted for, it might be difficult to receive any requested amount in that direction for the following budget year.

In addition, SGBV stakeholders should also engage with institutions benefiting from budgetary allotment to push them to produce good quality reports and timely submit same to the institutions concerned, for processing and onward submission to the Legislature to inform decision making and deliberations around the new budget.

CHAPTER FOUR
GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON SEXUAL
AND GENDER- BASED VIOLENCE

4.1 Overview

National budgetary allocations (current and capital expenditures) and distributions are the main engine of people's well-being and economic growth and development. Every year the national budget is prepared by government, and scarce resources are allocated covering compensation, procurement of goods and services, debts, social benefits and funding government policies and programs to provide public services.

The budget is therefore a key instrument for the implementation of the government's economic, political and human rights agenda. The integration of gender issues into national budgets by the government has therefore been increasingly recognized as an important way of gauging the impact of government policy on gender outcomes as well as mitigating the cost of violence against women²⁸. The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action called for integrating a gender perspective into government budget processes. Moreover the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) called for adequate resources and tools to track budget allocations for gender equality (SDG indicator 5.c.1).

In 2020, G20-Women, an official engagement group to the G20, called for greater investment of governments in addressing gender issues to ensure that fiscal policies advance gender equality in the short and long-term. Gender budgeting and mainstreaming has been widely acknowledged as an important public governance tool that governments can use to assess how decisions impact gender equality budget. Gender budgeting initiatives contribute to 'gender mainstreaming' by focusing on the gender dimensions of government budgets, both the revenue and the expenditure side. It also helps to expose how gender inequalities may have inadvertently become embedded in public policies and the allocation of resources and promotes budget measures that will be effective at closing gender gaps²⁹.

Although gender budgeting is being used to ensure sustainable funding towards achieving gender equality, there had been no international threshold set for governments to commit towards their national budgetary spending to ensure adequate funding. For instance, to ensure adequacy in education by 2030, the Incheon Declaration sets an international benchmark of education financing which urges countries to allocate at least 4-6 percent of GDP and/or at least 15-20 percent of public expenditure to education. Within the sub-region, the ECOWAS Child Policy and Strategic Plan of Action (covering 2019-2030) Priority under Goal 5: Revenue mobilization, budget allocation & expenditure for the realization of children's rights' indicates that states should ensure the allocation of at least 3% of the national budget to ministries responsible for child protection.

At the country level, the government commitment in translating the implementation of gender equality priorities into fiscal actions through the public financial management system, was first included in the Budget Framework Paper of FY2013/14. Subsequently, in 2016, the Health Ministry was selected as the pilot institution by the MFDP to initiate the institutionalization of gender-responsive planning and budgeting

²⁸ See also IMF 2021 which calls for countries to deploy gender-responsive policies and budgeting, to help mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on gender equality and to address longer term structural issues

²⁹ Diane Elson (2003) Gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting; Gender Equality and Europe's future

(GRPB) in their planning and budgeting activities as the Ministry had already started the collection of gender disaggregated data as part of its normal activities. In addition, a Technical Working Group comprising representatives from the ministries of: Finance and Development Planning, Health, Gender, Children and Social Protection and Internal Affairs, as well as the Governance Commission and UN Women was formed. This group had the responsibility to facilitate the integration of GRPB within the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP), State Enterprises as well as in the institutions of other partners.

A Gender Responsive Planning and Budget Policy (GRPB) 2019-2023 was subsequently developed to ensure gender-differentiated allocation of public resources and expenditure. This policy mandates every governmental body to adopt a gender-sensitive budgeting structure and analyze the gender implications of public spending. With the mainstreaming of GRPB into the second Public Financial Management Strategy and Action Strategy and Action Plan (2017-2020), the Gender-responsive Budgeting Unit was also established by the MFDP, being embedded in Thematic Area 2 (Credible Budget to Support Service Delivery).

4.2 National Budgetary Allotment to SGBV Coordination Pillar (MoGCSP)

Table 10 presents analysis of the national budget allotment to SGBV activities through the MoGCSP budget. The analysis also shows the variance between the planned approved budget and the actual budget executed for each budget period. The data shows that the variance in the national budget is also reflected in the Ministry's budget which impacts the implementation of planned projects. The MoGCSP budget shows that resources were spread out among various priorities. More than 50% of their allotment is spent on compensation of employees and the remaining portion is allocated to the use of goods and services, subsidy, grants and non-financial assets. The Government of Liberia and donor funded projects are embedded within the non-financial asset portion. These projects include fight against rape, SGBV roadmap implementation, safe homes for girls, highly vulnerable population project, Albino Society Headquarters and Water and Sanitation Expansion Plan. Among the projects, those not specified in the budget are represented by X's while those budgeted for but with no finance allocated to them are represented by 0's.

In 2018/19 budget, US\$500,000 was allocated in the budget to finance the government project on highly vulnerable population. The actual budget implemented for the same period shows that the support of highly vulnerable population as a project was not indicated in the actual budget, instead, the fight against rape was indicated as a project but funds were allocated to the non-financial asset component and the fight against rape that was indicated on that line item. In 2019/20, the amount of US\$60,000 was budgeted on the non-financial assets line. Unfortunately, no funds were placed on the line for project execution. Also in the 2020/21 budget, US\$1,000,000 was budgeted towards the fight against rape but actual disbursement was made towards the safe home for girl's project. In the 2021 special budget, US\$200,000 was budgeted towards the fight against rape; actual budget allotment however shows that funds were not disbursed for project implementation. In 2022, US\$250,000 was allotted and approved for the implementation of the SGBV roadmap. Report shows that US\$1,000,000 was disbursed at the end of the budget year, 50% increment from what was originally

budgeted and approved. In 2023, US\$ 629,987 was approved by the Legislature towards the implementation of the SGBV roadmap. The actual implementation of budgets report for that period is not yet available to compare actual allocation. While SGBV-specific budget allocations are critical, the unavailability of funding for these specific items is an indication that government budgetary allocations do not appear to be prioritizing SGBV issues.

Table 10: National Budget Allocation to MoGCSP for SGBV (2018-2023) to in Millions (US\$)

Budget Item	2018/2019	2018/2019 Actual	2019/2020	2019/20 Actual	2020/2021	2020/2021 Actual	2021 Special Budget	2021 Actual	2022	2022 Actual	2023
National Budget	570,148,000	540,152,772	518,005,273	540,152,772	570,111,173	540,152,772	361,405,700	323,290,120	323,290,120	782,942,779	782,942,779
MGCSB Budget	2,869,595	2,251,697	1,677,153	2,251,697	3,244,150	2,251,697	1,261,430	1,071,353	2,807,226	3,578,446	2,890,006
Compensation of Employees	1,712,688	1,768,657	1,507,988	1,768,657	1,774,171	1,768,657	845,112	847,316	1,774,172	1,774,172	1,774,172
Use of Goods and Services	228,317	196,357	6,928	196,357	129,979	196,357	23,768	69,626	108,029	129,249	48,055
Subsidy	182,804	124,509	87,169	124,509	294,500	124,509	35,000	30,913	415,025	415,025	286,792
Grants	245,786	162,174	15,068	162,174	5,500	162,174	117,550	123,498	60,000	60,000	60,000
Non Financial Asset	500,000	0	60,000	0	1,109,947	0	240,000	0	450,000	1,200,000	720,987
Fight Against Rape	X	0	0	0	1,000,000	0	200,000	X	X	X	X
SGBV Roadmap Implementation Project	X	X	0	0	0	0	0	0	250,000	1,000,000	629,987
Safe Home for Girls	X	X	0	0	0	1,000,000	X	X	X	X	X
High Vulnerable Population	500,000	X	0	0	0	X	X	X	X	X	X
Albino Society Headquarters	0	0	0	0	0	0	40,000	39,999	200,000	200,000	0
Water and Sanitation Expansion Plan	X	X	0	0	0	0	X	X	X	0	0

Source: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning website:
<https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/docs/the-national-budget>

4.2.1 Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection Budgetary Allotment to SGBV

Table 11 presents budgetary allotment by the MoGCSP to SGBV in the national budget. The red indicates an approved budget for the implementation of SGBV activities while the green indicates actual funds paid to the Ministry for implementation. It can be recalled from Table 6 that MoGCSP budget allocated for the implementation of the SGBV roadmap project, scheduled to be implemented between 2020 to 2022, was US\$ 1,637,500.00. Within this budget, US\$ 640,000.00 was stipulated for the construction of 4 safe homes and renovation and refurbishment of 3 existing ones. This means that the 2020/21 budget of US\$1,000,000 which was budgeted towards the fight against rape, but actual disbursement made towards safe home for girl's project was geared towards the implementation of the SGBV road map which also includes a component for safe homes. The budget analysis for the MoGCSP shows that besides the road map project that was funded in 2021, there was no previous funding for SGBV activities.

Table 11: MoGCSP Budgetary Allotment to SGBV

Budget Year	MoGCSP Budget	Fight against Rape	SGBV Roadmap	Safe Home for Girls
2018/19 Approved	2,869,595	0		0
2018/19 Actual	2,251,697	0		0
2019/20 Approved	1,677,153	0		0
2019/20 Actual	2,251,697	0		0
2020/21 Approved	3,244,150	1,000,000		0
2020/21 Actual	2,251,697	0	0	1,000,000
2021 Special Budget	1,261,430	200,000	0	0
2021 SB Actual	1,071,353	0	0	0
2022 Approved	2,807,226	0	250,000	0
2022 Actual	3,578,446	0	1,000,000	0
2023 Approved	2,890,006	0	629,987	0

Source: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning website.

<https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/docs/the-national-budget>

4.2.2 MoGCSP Budget Composition

Table 12 presents percentage distribution of MoGCSP budgetary allotment in relation to the national budget. The data shows that budgetary allotment to MoGCSP has been less than 1% of the national budget over the period 2018-2023. The limited budget allocated to MoGCSP which has an oversight of coordinating SGBV activities has been among reasons of non-project execution or service delivery to SGBV survivors.

Table 12: Percent Composition of MoGCSP Budget to National Budget

Year	Approved National Budget	Approved MGCSP Budget	% of Approved National Budget	Actual National Budget Executed	Actual MGCSP Budget	% of Actual Budget
2018/2019	570,148,000	2,869,595	0.50%	540,152,772	2,251,697	0.42%
2019/2020	518,005,273	1,677,153	0.32%	540,152,772	2,251,697	0.42%
2020/2021	570,111,173	3,244,150	0.57%	540,152,772	2,251,697	0.42%
2021	361,405,700	1,261,430	0.35%	323,290,120	1,071,353	0.33%
2022	323,290,120	2,807,226	0.87%	784,989,497	3,578,446	0.46%
2023	782,942,779	2,890,006	0.37%			

Source: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning website.
<https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/docs/the-national-budget>

4.2.3 Trend in MoGCSP Budgetary Allotment

Figure 8 presents analysis of trends in budgetary allotment to the MoGCSP from the period 2018/19 to 2023 budget year. The data shows that the budget had been on an upward and downward swing with the Ministry receiving on average plus or minus US \$2 million for its operations which include responding to SGBV issues. Although there is no international benchmark stating the expected budgetary allotment to institutions responding to SGVB, it is clear that the budget allocated is insufficient to effectively carry out the core functions of the Ministry as well as responding to SGBV issues. The limited budgetary allotment also shows the government's constraints in allocating resources to several competing priorities. Given the government's budgetary constraint and flat-lining trends in the national budget, there may be a further tendency to focus narrowly on core sector goals of the government. Unfortunately, this may mean missing opportunities for increased multi-sectorial impact on the fight against SGBV.

The UN Action Coalition on Gender-Based Violence, which is one of six thematic Action Coalitions, established in 2021 indicated that without ambitious investments to scale-up prevention programs, implement effective policies, and provide support services to address violence against women and girls, countries will fail to end gender-based violence by 2030. They therefore recommended that governments must unlock financing from different sectors and adjust national budgets using gender-responsive budgeting to source more investments to prevent violence against women³⁰.

Figure 15: Trends in MOGCSP Budget Allocation



Source: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning website:
<https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/docs/the-national-budget>

30 UN Women: Making investment in violence prevention a priority <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/explainer/2023/11/making-investment-in-violence-prevention-a-priority>

4.3 National Budgetary Allotment to the Health Pillar (MoH)

The health sector's response to the harmful consequences of SGBV is spearheaded by the Ministry of Health. Healthcare services are the frontline response and door opener for identifying violence, providing support, and referring victims to other services. Addressing SGBV within the healthcare system offers an opportunity to detect and refer to a problem that may otherwise remain unnoticed and unaddressed³¹. Addressing SGBV from a public health perspective as a public health problem requires investing in health and social services that address SGBV. Table 13 presents national budgetary allocation to the health sector. A glance at the planned budget figures and actual implementation shows variance in both figures as earlier discussed above. The data shows that on average, 12% of the national budget is allocated to the health sector. The health sector is comprised of several sub sectors, among which is the Ministry of Health. The Ministry is mandated to formulate, implement, monitor and evaluate health policies, plans, and standards; coordinate the delivery of decentralized medical care in public facilities; develop health manpower; undertake preventive services and promote other health services including specific health interventions. Due to its vast functions, between 70-80% of the health budget is allocated to the Ministry of Health. While the Ministry allocates the budget to SGBV activities through the training of health personnel and emergency responders to recognize signs of GBV and its treatment, as well as the provision of SGBV-related health services to victims, explicitly allocating budget items to SGBV related projects rather than subsuming it in the Ministry's budget will better position the Ministry to implement these activities effectively.

Table 13: National Budgetary Allocation to Ministry of Health (2018-2023) in Millions (US\$)

Budget Item	2018/2019	2018/2019 Actual	2019/2020	2019/2020 Actual	2020/2021	2020/2021 Actual	2021 Special Budget	2021 Actual	2022	2023
National Budget	570,148,000	540,152,772	518,005,273	540,152,772	570,111,173	540,152,772	361,405,700	323,290,120	323,290,120	782,942,779
Health	73,064,527	64,767,713	86,956,420	64,767,713	70,422,369	64,767,713	41,138,162	33,225,564	78,368,300	74,271,689
Ministry of Health	54,555,620	47,785,324	71,330,655	47,785,324	53,687,079	47,785,324	31,763,423	25,557,611	61,000,942	55,895,341
% MoH to National Budget	12.8%	12.0%	16.8%	12.0%	12.4%	12.0%	11.4%	10.3%	24.2%	9.5%
% of MoH to Health Budget	74.7%	73.8%	82.0%	73.8%	76.2%	73.8%	77.2%	76.9%	77.8%	75.3%

Source: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning website:

<https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/docs/the-national-budget>

4.4 National Budgetary Allotment to the Legal and Protection Pillar (MoJ and Judiciary)

Justice institutions such as the Justice Ministry and the Judiciary play a key role in ensuring that the state's response to SGBV incidents is survivor/victim centered. The police are most often the first point of contact within the system for victims/survivors and can help through reporting and investigation process when the victim/survivor decides to seek justice. Similarly, the Judiciary through the courts ensures that victims/survivors of SGBV get justice while perpetrators are punished. Hence, for well-

³¹ Edin K, Högberg U. Violence against pregnant women will remain hidden as long as no direct questions are asked. *Midwifery*. 2002;18(4):268–78

functioning systems... legal and other systems... and structures to adequately address SGBV issues, budgetary allotment plays a significant role in ensuring free service delivery to victims/survivors. Table 14 presents national budgetary allotments for the Ministry of Justice and the Judiciary. The data shows that on average, about 6% of the national budget is allocated to the Ministry of Justice. The Ministry's allotment is distributed among other constituents such as the police. The police is a major component receiving about 50% of the Ministry of Justice budgetary allotment. Within the police, the Women and Children Protection Section (WACPS) unit was specially established to handle SGBV cases. Unfortunately, allocations for the police are not disaggregated in the national budget to reflect national allotment within the police towards SGBV interventions and activities. The Judiciary on the other hand receives approximately 3% of national budgetary allotment. From that amount, about 80-90% is spent on payment of employees' salaries. Allotments for courts from the Judiciary budget swing between low of less than 1% to as high as 17% in Montserrado and as high as 37% for other courts in the country, to as low as less than 1%. The budget shows no line item specifically dedicated to SGBV project or activity.

Table 14: National Budgetary Allocation to Ministry of Justice and Judiciary (2018-2023) in Millions (US\$)

Budget Item	2018/2019	2018/2019 Actual	2019/2020	2019/2020 Actual	2020/2021	2020/2021 Actual	2021 Special Budget	2021 Actual	2022	2023
National Budget	570,148,000	540,152,772	518,005,273	540,152,772	570,111,173	540,152,772	361,405,700	323,290,120	323,290,120	782,942,779
Ministry of Justice	32,923,010	34,600,638	34,128,162	27,496,217	33,310,658	34,600,638	17,119,862	16,981,440	40,381,274	40,973,529
Police	16,091,116	16,236,297	17,232,850	16,236,297	16,998,888	16,236,297	687,764	420,582	5,073,376	21,159,033
% of MoJ to National Budget	5.8%	6.4%	6.6%	5.1%	5.8%	6.4%	4.7%	5.3%	12.5%	5.2%
% of Police to MoJ Budget	48.9%	46.9%	50.5%	59.0%	51.0%	46.9%	4.0%	2.5%	12.6%	51.6%
Budget of Judiciary	16,965,505	17,523,371	13,384,661	17,523,371	15,730,680	17,523,371	8,511,404	8,110,040	18,980,928	18,626,994
Compensation of Employees	14,793,148	15,485,117	12,992,794	15,485,117	12,992,794	15,485,117	7,183,983	7,417,970	7,180,282	7,600,982
Montserrado Courts	2,988,104	2,975,091	45,520	2,975,091	241,831	2,975,091	42,000	33,599	295,690	304,600
Other County Courts	5,946,335	6,618,555	88,125	6,618,555	462,500	6,618,555	97,200	77,757	602,850	565,305
% of Judiciary to National Budget	3.0%	3.2%	2.6%	3.2%	2.8%	3.2%	2.4%	2.5%	5.9%	2.4%
% budget spent on employees	87.2%	88.4%	97.1%	88.4%	82.6%	88.4%	84.4%	91.5%	37.8%	40.8%
% Spent on Mont. Courts	17.6%	17.0%	0.3%	17.0%	1.5%	17.0%	0.5%	0.4%	1.6%	1.6%
% Spent on Other Courts	35.0%	37.8%	0.7%	37.8%	2.9%	37.8%	1.1%	1.0%	3.2%	3.0%

Source: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning website:
<https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/docs/the-national-budget>

4.5 Gender Responsive Budgeting

Liberia developed a Gender Responsive Planning and Budget Policy (GRPB) 2019-2023. The goal of the policy framework was to provide a linkage between gender equality with macroeconomic policy through gender-sensitive budget allocation and expenditure. It was also intended to serve as a tool for monitoring and evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness of the policy and budget allocation for all gender and to assess gender differentiated impact of government budgets. Towards this effect,

Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting (GRPB) Implementation Units were established to facilitate the process.

Although the timeframe for the GRPB has elapsed, the current development agenda “ARREST” has reiterated support for Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting. The 2024 restated budget framework document restated government’s support to the Social Development Sector through increase in budgetary support to adequately finance programs of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (establish psychosocial counseling centers for sexual gender-based violence survivors and safe homes) and to increase budgetary allotment and dedicate them to achieve specific gender targets under GRPB in FY2024 National Budget³². The framework paper for fiscal year 2024 stated that when preparing detailed budget proposals, ministries, agencies and commissions (MACs) are required to identify these requirements and ensure that the cost implications are integrated in budget estimates. Gender issues should be reflected in the MACs mission statements and should address the following:

- Where most of the money is spent and who is the ultimate beneficiary.
- Identifying budget items that specifically target women and men, boys and girls and the proportion of the budget going to these items;
- Programs which are most important for gender equality. This is important for large item expenditures (e.g., healthcare) as well as lower cost expenditures (e.g., sexual harassment training) and how much is being spent on these services/programs.
- Type of information needed to analyze impact (data and mode of collection); and
- MACs should disaggregate by sex all relevant indicators and include gender related indicators in performance measurements in the future and expected outcomes.

Assessment of the budget shows that between 2019-2021, only the gender budgeting unit within the MFDP was funded through the budget. Actual funding for the operationalization of these units as enshrined in the policy started in 2022. This framework serves as an important advocacy tool for NGOs and civil society for the quest to make budget responsive, especially in the context of freedom from SGBV.

Table 15: Transfer to Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting (GRPB) Implementation Unit

	2019/2020	2020/2021	2022	2023	2024
MoJ			40,000	40,000	99,552
MoGCSP			60,000	60,000	60,000
MFDP	70,000	70,000	100,000	100,000	150,000
MoH			40,000	50,000	50,000

Source: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning website:

<https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/docs/the-national-budget>

³² GoL,2024: Restated Budget Framework Paper for Fiscal Year 2024

CHAPTER FIVE

**DIRECT MONETARY COSTS
ASSOCIATED WITH SGBV
INTERVENTIONS**

5.1 Overview

This section presents services provided for SGBV interventions along with associated cost were possible. From the review of policy documents and stakeholder discussions, a list of potential SGBV service packages which includes: medical, protection, legal and psychosocial services were identified. Costs such as staff/labor support and management of SGBV services, medicines, medical supplies, facility operations among others were listed. A questionnaire was developed where the list of these services tailored to the various ministries were provided. The questionnaires were submitted to focal persons of these entities to validate and make the necessary additions or subtractions that ensured a comprehensive list of SGBV services provided by each institution was accounted for. The questionnaire provided a column for respondents to indicate whether those cost items were planned for in the ministry's budget, then the allocated amount should be stated. If the service is provided but not budgeted for, should there not be an explanation as to why it was not included and who covers the cost of such services? The respondents were also asked to indicate any challenges or opportunities related to budget planning if there were any.

5.2 Costs Associated with SGBV Services (MoGCSP)

Table 16 presents SGBV interventions and services offered by the MoGCSP with associated costs. These include costs associated with payment of salaries and maintenance of safe homes around the country, which have the highest expenditure of US \$300,000. It can be recalled from Table 5 that there are only two functional safe homes out of nine in the country. The next highest cost is the cost associated with the development of the national strategic plan and the cost of psychosocial counseling services with US \$250,000 each. Other costs include the cost of coordinating workshops, cost of transporting survivors from place of incidence to police station, cost of operating and maintaining safe homes among others. The total cost associated with SGBV services and interventions is US \$1,515,000. According to our respondent from the MoGCSP, these costs are embedded within their 2024 budget. The government in the 2024 budget statement committed US \$800,000 to the reactivation of National Call Center to Support (GBV) and US \$500,000 for SGBV Roadmap Implementation Program.

Table 16: Costs associated with SGBV Services- MoGCSP in US\$

No	Cost Item	Cost
1	Cost of operation and maintenance of safe homes	180,000
2	Cost for social workers for safe homes and maintenance of safe home facilities	300,000
3	Partial funding of NGO and local group involved in SGBV servicing	80,000
4	Cost for psychosocial counseling services either directly or by NGO	250,000
5	Transport cost of survivor from place of incidence or police to safe home	120,000
6	Cost associated with national strategic plan for SGBV	250,000
7	Cost of staff designated to SGBV activities	100,000

8	Cost of awareness creation on SGBV, posters, flyers	60,000
9	Cost of SGBV coordination workshops	175,000
	Total	1,515.000

Source: MGCSP SGBV focal person

5.3 Cost Associated with Health Care Service Delivery (MoH)

The One Stop Centers offer a comprehensive package of services that include psychosocial counseling, paralegal services, occupational therapy, sexual and reproductive health information and services, as well as re-integration of GBV survivors into society. The GBV One Stop Center functions as a key node for provision of comprehensive support against gender-based violence. Table 17 shows that providing medical services at the one stop center involves incurring costs for medical examination, medical supplies and cost of treatment. Our respondent at the Ministry of Health indicated that although these costs are incurred, they are not budgeted for in the national budget but rather funded through support from donors like UNFPA and NGOs such as PLAN. With the increasing importance and use of the OSC, the need for financial sustainability of the centers through national budgetary allotment is imperative.

Table 17: Costs Associated with Providing Medical Services at One-Stop Center –(MoH)

1	Costs associated with purchase of medicines and medical supplies and equipment used in the treatment of injuries related to violence
2	Cost for purchase of medicines to treat sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
3	Cost for post exposure prophylaxis
4	Cost for forensic specialist for the collection of evidence from victim's body in the case of sexual offence
5	Instruments and forms for forensic medical collection
6	The cost of forensic pathology and DNA analysis
7	Staff cost at the One Stop Center (HIV and STI counselors, nurses, cleaners, doctors, overtime personnel)
8	Cost for purchasing consumables at the One Stop Center
9	Cost for fuel and maintaining ambulances in life threatening cases

5.4 Cost Associated with Protection, Law Enforcement and Legal (MoJ & Judiciary)

The Ministry of Justice is the arm of government responsible to provide protection, law enforcement and legal services. Table 18 below presents cost items which include training of prosecutors, investigators and medical practitioners, cost of servicing documentations and cost of establishing SGBV offices within the 15 counties. For the cost of transporting perpetrators from police/court to the correction facility, the total cost of US \$48.000 is a yearly expenditure divided among the fifteen counties, with each county receiving US\$15 per day to be spent for that purpose. The cost of serving documentation is US \$5,000 and varies per county. Other costs pertaining to dedicated staff related to SGBV cases (clerks, magistrates, judges), cost of legal

aid/public defender to SGBV survivor or perpetrator are handled through the public defenders' office under the Judiciary. The WACPS operation is associated with cost of travelling to the site of incidence, stationary cost, cost of training WACPS in Standard Operating Procedure of SGBV cases. According to our respondent, these costs are incurred but not budgeted for in the national budget. Some of these operations, such as the cost of traveling to the incidence scene is either borne by the police or the survivor and some are provided by partner organizations or NGOs.

Table 18: Cost Associated with Protection, Law Enforcement Legal Representation for SGBV (MoJ)

No	Cost Item	Cost
1	Cost of training specialist staff	25,000.00
2	Cost of construction of SGBV offices within 14 counties in Liberia.	560,000.00
3	Cost of servicing documentations when the complainant cannot afford to pay	5,000.00
4	Cost of coordination of the justice and crime prevention services (monthly joint security meetings)	10,000.00
5	Transport cost for conveying perpetrators from police/court to the correction facility	48,000.00
Cost of WACPS Operation		
6	Vehicle cost in travelling to the site of the incidence, notifying the respondent and servicing protection orders	
7	Stationary cost	
8	Cost involving transporting victim to safe home, medical facility for examination and to court for trial	
9	Cost of training WACPS officers in Standard Operating Procedure of SGBV cases	

CHATER SIX
BUDGET CREDIBILITY AND
SUSTAINABILITY

6.1 Overview

This section examines the government's budget credibility in relation to the budget of the Ministry of Gender and Social Protection by examining deviation trends in sexual and gender-based violence budgetary allocations, releases and disbursements spending over five-years (2018-2022)

6.2 Budget Credibility

The national budget is the key policy instrument used by the government of Liberia to implement strategies, policies, and programs. Budget execution consistent with the legal appropriations for each line item in the Ministry's budget starts once the budget is approved by the legislative branch of government. Hence, adherence to planned budgets is an important indicator of the overall capacity of the government to deliver on the programs to which it has committed. Budget credibility is a significant issue in Liberia, with initial budget appropriations seldom resembling released budgets, and neither being a strong indicator of paid actuals for ministries and agencies. In most cases, gaps between allocated approved budgets and actual budgets are so large that it raises concern of budget credibility, efficiency and effectiveness. A particularly worrying situation is the government's low prioritization of SGBV appropriation and inadequate investment in prevention and response, which has the propensity to undermine progress made in eliminating the incidence of SGBV.

6.3 MoGCSP Budget Gap Analyses

Table 19 illustrates the difference between the approved budgets and the actual executed by MoGCSP for the period 2018 to 2022. The data shows that in 2019/2020 the MoGCSP spent 34.3% more than the approved budget and in 2022, the actual budget executed exceeded approved budgetary allocations by 27.5%. There are also large budget gaps as high as 30% due to deficit in the national budget. National budget shortfall has been attributed to unrealistic macroeconomic forecast, worsening of the government's fiscal position due to decline in GDP growth, emanating from changes in the International Development Association (IDA) lending policy (specifically the decline in grants and lower-than-expected royalties from iron ore due to delayed expansion of the Arcelor Mittal mining project, expenditure overruns on goods and services, transfers, and subsidies)³³. The limited budgetary allotments and gaps hamper the implementation of SGBV related projects.

³³ Government of the Republic of Liberia Draft National Budget, 2024

Table 19: MoGCSP Paid Actuals Relative to Approved Budgets (2018-2021) in Millions of US\$

Year	Approved MGCSP Budget	Actual MGCSP Budget	Budget Gap	% of Gap
2018/2019	2,869,595	2,251,697	-617,898	-21.5%
2019/2020	1,677,153	2,251,697	574,544	34.3%
2020/2021	3,244,150	2,251,697	-992,453	-30.6%
2021	1,261,430	1,071,353	-190,077	-15.1%
2022	2,807,226	3,578,446	771,220	27.5%
Total	11,859,554	11,404,890	-454,664	-3.8%

Source: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning website

6.4 Sexual and Gender-based Violence Budget Sustainability

The sustainability of activities for the prevention and response to SGBV depends on delegated financing through the national budget. Reliable financial commitment and payment through the budget provides opportunities for cross-sectorial activities to be funded, under a common overarching objective. Table 18 shows approved budgetary funding for SGBV activities relative to actual payment for the implementation. The data indicates a sparing and inconsistent stream of finance. In most of the budgets, there had been no allotment towards the implementation of SGBV activities. In 2020/21, US \$1,000,000 was approved for the fight against rape, which is a critical component of SGBV. The amount was actually paid but diverted towards the safe home project which is also an SGBV related project. In the 2021 special budget, an amount of US \$200,000 was approved towards the fight against rape. The funding was, however, not provided by the government. In 2022 and 2023, budget allotments were made towards the implementation of the SGVB roadmap. However, it has to be ascertained whether or not these funds were actually provided.

Table 20: Approved SGBV Budget Relative to Actual Paid

Budget Item	2020/2021	2020/2021 Actual Paid	2021 Special Budget	Special Budget 2021 Actual	2022	2023
Fight Against Rape	1,000,000	0	200,000	X		
SGBV Roadmap Implementation Project					250,000	629,987
Safe Home for Girls	X	1,000,000				

CHAPTER SEVEN

**SUMMARY AND POLICY
RECOMMENDATION**

7.0 Overview

This section provides a summary of observations from analysis and policy recommendations.

7.1 Summary

The following observations emerged from the analysis:

- Sexual and gender-based violence continues to be a global challenge. Yet, there is no international benchmark or threshold set for national governments. Countries are urged to allocate at least 4-6 percent of GDP and/or at least 15-20 percent of public expenditure to education. Governments are also urged to allocate at least 3% of the national budget to ministries responsible for child protection.
- The Government of Liberia has sanctioned or ratified several key national and international instruments as part of its effort to prevent SGBV. However, the application of these policy instruments is inadequate and therefore ineffective in implementation and enforcement. For instance, SGBV activities were not considered within the MoGCSP budget line prior to the implementation of the SGBV Roadmap. Moreover, even though the SGBV Roadmap received high political support by the president, it is not taken serious as a national issue. The implementation of key framework laws and policies is highly dependent on foreign funding. The national budget and the budget planning within the responsible line ministries are lacking budget lines / cost planning of key measures required for the fight against SGBV and for survivor centered services, according to international frameworks such as CEDAW.
- The study also shows that while there are elaborate frameworks for monitoring and evaluation for previous SGBV interventions by the government and international actors, accountability and monitoring remain a major shortcoming. Evaluation of previous UN/GoL Joint SGBV interventions indicated major deficiency with accountability. On the other hand, there seems to be a major shortcoming when it comes to demanding accountability within government agencies at different levels. Line ministries seem not to even be able to systematically provide a list of existing financing needs and financing gaps according to objectives as defined in the key policy frameworks.
- SGBV prevention and response services are carried out by various ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs). Consequently, there is no single “budget” for SGBV, but rather allocations are subsumed in various programs, sub-programs and activities across different institutions.
- The gender budgeting policy which was developed mandated all ministries and agencies to mainstream gender in their budgeting process. To date, it remains weak and ineffective either due to lack of interest and or political will among decision-makers.
- Although SGBV interventions are multi-sectorial, national budgetary support to implementing sectors remains a relatively low priority for the government.

For instance, budgetary support to the MoGCSP which is the coordinator of SGBV issues is less than 1% of GDP.

- The budget analysis showed that compensation of employees' accounts for almost half of the budgets of government agencies, such as MoGCSP, MoH, MoJ and the Judiciary. When compensation is deducted from those budgets, there is nothing substantial left to finance SGBV interventions and activities.
- The study found limited coverage of SGBV services such as safe homes and one-stop centers especially in remote areas and even those areas where services are available; it is inefficient due to limited financial resources and capabilities.
- Budget credibility is a significant issue in Liberia, with initial appropriation budgets seldom resembling release budgets, and neither being a strong indicator of paid actuals for MDAs. In 2019/2020 and 2022, actual budget executed by the MoGCSP exceeded approved budgetary allocations. In most cases there are large budget shortfall gaps as high as 30% between approved budgets, the actual executed budget and even funds disbursed. These gaps call into question the credibility of the entire budget process as a mechanism for determining spending priorities in the country.
- The analysis identified entry points and key actors at the various stages of the budget cycle that can be leveraged for advocacy towards increased budgetary support for SGBV. Rallying support from MFDP, the Presidency, the Legislature and external actors, who could be relevant in the process at the budget preparation and approval stages is vital.

7.2 Recommendations

Based on the above analysis and observations, the recommendations below are proffered to improve budgetary allocations to SGBV prevention and response.

- That national stakeholder working on SGBV issues should advocate for the setting of international benchmark or threshold on SGBV budgetary spending. This will enable stakeholders to track government spending commitment and also ensure sustainable national funding for the fight against SGBV.
- There is a need for increased national ownership and funding allocation to SGBV activities. This can be done through:
 - ✓ **Dedicated Budget Line:** Establish a dedicated budget line for SGBV services within the national budget to ensure consistent funding and reduce reliance on external donors. This means there should be concrete SGBV budget lines/ measures within the budgets of all relevant line ministries first, and then jointly define which of them need priority funding and were. Establish progressive funding targets for the long term.
 - ✓ **Incremental Budget Increases:** Plan for incremental increases in budget allocation for SGBV services over the next five years to meet the growing needs and expand services, especially in rural areas.
 - ✓ **Financial Accountability:** Implement stringent financial accountability measures, including regular audits and transparent reporting, to ensure funds are utilized

effectively and that the impact of SGBV interventions can be measured and realized.

- **Implement Robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)**
 - ✓ M&E Framework: SGBV actors should develop and implement a robust M&E framework to regularly assess the effectiveness of SGBV services and programs. Set clear indicators and benchmarks for success.
 - ✓ Data Collection and Analysis: Government and implementing agencies should strengthen data collection and analysis capabilities to track SGBV incidents, service utilization, and outcomes. Use this data to inform policy and programmatic decisions.
- Government should re-develop the gender budgeting policy that has expired and enforce its application by MAC, to ensure gender-transformative budgeting as well as explicit focus which would enable funding for better implementation for SGBV prevention and response policies spelt out under CEDAW.
- Since SGBV response is multi-sectorial, the government could adopt a policy-orientated funding and support for SGBV by setting objectives that cut across ministerial and budget boundaries and the budget system. Money may be allocated to specific policy areas, that are currently neglected and need more attention and investment, (for example, the SGBV roadmap), rather than to specific departments.
- SGBV stakeholders should track implementation of priority SGBV interventions and programs and expand service coverage and ensure their functionality. This can be done through the following:
 - ✓ Increase the number of one-stop centers and safe homes, particularly in underserved rural areas. Ensure these facilities are fully equipped and staffed.
 - ✓ Resource Allocation: Provide adequate resources for existing centers, including essential medical supplies, trained personnel, and maintenance of infrastructure.
 - ✓ Strengthen Legal and Judicial Support
 - ✓ Expand Criminal Courts E: Establish additional Criminal Courts E in key regions and ensure that they are fully operational with appointed judges and necessary resources.
 - ✓ Survivor Support Fund: Ensure the survivor support fund is adequately financed, preferably through a mix of national funding and sustainable donor contributions, to cover transportation and other logistical needs for accessing justice.
- Owing to the limited fiscal space of the government coupled with competing development needs, international organizations and donors should rally funding for SGBV activities. NGOs and civil society can advocate for donors and the private sector to commit long-term funds annually in support of programs conducted by national governments and women's rights NGOs, specifically, to prevent and respond to violence against women. It is also recommended that local actors such as district councils be integrated in

such activities and effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms be established.

- Government should develop Sustainable Funding Strategies
 - ✓ Diversified Funding Sources: Explore and secure diversified funding sources, including public-private partnerships, community-based funding, and international grants, to ensure long-term sustainability of SGBV services.
 - ✓ Long-term Funding Plans: Create long-term funding plans that outline specific financial goals and strategies for sustaining SGBV services over the next decade.

