



# **MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY**

**FACULTY OF ARTS**

**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

**RESEARCH TOPIC**

**THE EFFECTS OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN: THE CASE OF  
CHIKANGA WARD 14-MUTARE**

**BY**

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**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF  
BACHELOR OF ARTS HONOURS DEGREE IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES.**

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**RESEARCH SUPERVISORS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

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***THE EFFECTS OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN: THE CASE OF  
CHIKANGA WARD 14 MUTARE***

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Signed..... Date.....

## **Dedication**

First and foremost I dedicate this to the Almighty God for His guidance and love throughout the whole course. I also dedicate this to my family, my mother and father for their spiritual and financial support which kept me going. Special mention to my sister Priscilla Abigail Dangaiso for the amazing support, may the God Almighty continue to fruitfully bless you for my sake.

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## **Abstract**

*The study focused on the effects of Gender Based Violence on children in Chikanga ward 14, a high density suburb in Mutare. The children have experienced the violence at home due to poverty, unemployment, infidelity and economic challenges among other causes. Twenty children from this area were identified as a sample of the study to have experienced the effects of violence directly or indirectly. All twenty of the children are of school going age between the ages of 10-18 years. The researcher used interviews and questionnaires as the data collection tools. The results are based on questionnaires and interviews directed to the children. The study found that Gender Based Violence has positive and negative effects on children. Due to Gender Based Violence some families have being legally disconnected from abusive relationships and because some are paying maintenance the children now have good education, good health facilities, good food and good shelter among many other basic necessities. Generally the children's standards of living have improved for the better. However, it is important to note that 80% of the respondents confirmed that Gender Based Violence has brought more evil compared to the good. The affected children highlighted issues like school drop outs, low self esteem, engaging into prostitution, crime, dropping grades in school, fear of the perpetrator, vulnerable to be abused by other people, looking up to other family units, attitude and behaviour bound to change and also early marriages to be the effects they experience due to Gender Based Violence. To survive these children beg, steal, do vending and also engage into piece jobs. Despite the few that have said to benefit from the Gender Based Violence it is a fundamental reality that cannot afford to be ignored that the larger number of children have been affected negatively by the violence.*

## Acronyms

ACRWC.....African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

DVA.....Domestic Violence Act

GBV.....Gender Based Violence

GCN.....Girl Child Network

MDGs.....Millennium Development Goals

MWAGCD.....Ministry of Women’s Affairs Gender and Community Development

NGO.....Non-Governmental Organisation

UNCRC.....United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

UNICEF.....United Nation International Children's Education Fund

UNPF.....United Nation’s Population Fund

VFU.....Victim Friendly Unit

ZDHS.....Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey

ZWLA.....Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association

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## INTRODUCTION

The study focus on the effects of Gender Based Violence on children in Chikanga ward 14, a high density suburb in Mutare one of the major cities in Zimbabwe. Bloom (2008) states that Gender Based Violence is a general term used to capture violence that occurs as a result of normative role expectations associated with each gender, along with the unequal power relationships between the two genders, within the context of a specific society. However, according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992) article #1 is on definition of the child. The Convention defines the “child” as a person less than 18 years of age, unless the law of a particular country set the legal age of adulthood younger. It acknowledges the primary role of parents and the family in the care and protection of children, as well as the obligation of the State to help them carry out these duties. It is however, a fundamental reality that cannot be ignored that gender based violence has negative effects on children and for a better nation there is need to reduce the sky rocketing levels.

GBV is a global pandemic that is inflicted upon men, women and children. However, women and girls are the most at risk and most affected by gender-based violence. An estimated one in three women worldwide has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. According to the UN Population Fund, almost 50 percent of all sexual assaults worldwide are against girls 15 and younger. Although statistics on the prevalence of violence vary, the scale is tremendous, the scope is vast, and the consequences for individuals, families, communities, and countries are devastating. The weekend post of the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2014 highlighted that, “... recent figures released by the police point to a rise in domestic and gender-based violence.” The number of gender-based violence victims who went to Musasa Project an advocate organisation against gender-based violence grew from

671 in 2013 to 1 019 in October 2014 and between 2013 and 2014 and from 297 in 2013 to 924 in 2014 for August. The Newsday published on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2014 highlighted that a study by the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development in conjunction with Gender Links has revealed shocking statistics that conclude that at least 68% of women in Zimbabwe have suffered from gender-based violence (GBV) perpetrated by men.

Newton (2001) suggests that ‘battered women may use more punitive child-rearing strategies or exhibit aggression toward their children’. And that battering fathers are less affectionate, less available, and less rational in dealing with their children hence, indicating that GBV has negative effects on children. Thus, the other major effects of GBV on children include school dropouts, low self esteem, engaging into prostitution and crime, early marriages, vulnerability to abuse, drop in school grades among other effects. Gender based violence can be caused by a number of factors in different sectors namely in the society, community, in relationships and on an individual. The causes include poverty, unemployment, alcohol use, witnessing marital violence as a child and marital conflicts among others.

## **BACKGROUND**

Since the end of the sixth decade Gender Based Violence has become one of the most controversial topics in general social sciences discourse as well, as different schools of thought sought to implement their own perspectives on the issue. Looking at Zimbabwe the issue of GBV recently became a hot topic leading to the formation of a ministry responsible for women to try and reduce the levels of GBV. The government of Zimbabwe enacted the Domestic violence Act in 2007 to protect women from GBV but such violence continues to occur. The Domestic Violence Act in its pre-amble spells out that the act is intended to

“make provision for the protection and relief of victims of domestic violence and to provide for matters connected with or incidental to the foregoing”. Establishment of VFU in police stations for reporting of abuse has assisted in addressing GBV.

GBV has resulted in collateral effects on children who witness violence at home (emotional and behavioural disturbances, e.g. withdrawal, low self-esteem, nightmares, self-blame, aggression against peers, family members, and property; increased risk of growing up to be either a perpetrator or a victim of violence) GBV comparatively is most common in urban areas than in rural areas this is mainly because of the show of reports at VFU offices. Possible reasons include the culture and norms that people in rural areas still adhere to. Another reason is that there are long distances to travel to the close police station and being a victim one might as well decide to rest than walk to report an example is Marange area where people have to walk close to 15km to get to the police station.

The impact on their social development Gender-based violence against girls and boys deprives them of the environment and the means to fully develop their potential. Children become desensitised to suffering; they may learn to see the use of violence as a legitimate means to achieve their own aims. All these risks of impairments to the development of children into adults affect society as a whole, constraining their contribution to its development. Inequality and power relations Gender based-violence perpetuates power inequalities in interpersonal relations and in society, thus reproducing the structures that enable gender-based violence to exist. An overwhelming factor at the heart of gender-based violence is the pervasive inequality between women/girls and men/boys and the discrimination that women and girls face within society as a whole. Economic and social underdevelopment is in itself an expression of unequal power relations and violence. Moreover, gender-based violence is the ultimate means of enforcing unequal social,

economic and political relations between women and men, at all levels of society and in all countries of the world.

According to the reports from the Victim Friendly Unit in Chikanga a number of points were raised as impacts of domestic violence on the children in Chikanga specifically. These include instilling a disruptive behaviour, problems of mental and physical health. Children mainly of school going age who are facing direct domestic violence have reported that their educational studies are greatly affected due to emotional stress. Some have also indicated that the impact of domestic violence on them is that they feel hopeless as they often blame themselves for the violence and feel powerless to prevent, stop or escape from it. These are however, the major impacts of domestic violence on children in Chikanga.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Domestic Violence has got negative effects on development, because it undermines an individual's self esteem. In as much as GBV affects women as well but it is a major concern that a child becomes a victim of circumstances and children being the future of tomorrow it motivated me to do this research to help enlighten the government, NGOs and responsible persons on the impact it has on children.

The research examined the effects of gender based violence on children. It also highlights the commitment of the Zimbabwean government in trying to reduce the sky rocketing cases of GBV. With regard to the impact of GBV on children, the research highlights its impacts on the children's health, education and welfare. This research is therefore, is focusing on Chikanga ward 14 Mutare.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Russo and Pilot (2006) Gender-based violence is defined as violence that is directed against a person on the basis of gender, including acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or threats of such acts, coercion or other deprivations of freedom. Gender-based violence (GBV) has been defined by The European Institute Of Gender Equality as violence that is directed against a person on the basis of gender. It constitutes a breach of the fundamental right to life, liberty, security, and dignity, equality between women and men, non-discrimination and physical and mental integrity. According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) a child is defined as any persons under the age of 18years unless there is a law at which provides for the child to reach the age of majority at a younger age. Thus, people who are below 18years are minors. However for Zimbabwe the Children's Act differentiates between a child and a young person a child is defined as a person under the age of 16years and includes infants. A young person is a person who has reached the age of 16years but has not yet reached 18years.all the same any person under the age of 18years is defined as a minor under this act. This research is mainly going to focus on the effects of GBV on children especially their health, education, psychological stature, abuse of children's rights. It will also look at the consequences of GBV which include health wise: homicide, suicide, injury, shock, disease, and infection, disability, eating and sleeping disorder. Psycho-social wise: post-traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, fear, anger, shame, insecurity, self-hate and blame, mental illness, suicidal behaviour and thoughts.

## **THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK**

In this research study, the researcher used the systems theory. Parts that are linked, organised and compiled together to achieve a common goal are found in a system. Among its components there is interaction within the system. There is interaction within the system among its components. Therefore, a family is a system that consists of interrelated components of individuals.

The understanding of individuals needs not to isolate but to include everyone because family is a system that is composed of interrelated and mutually dependent individuals. Pryor and Rodgers (2001) states that this theory posits that within each family there is an underlying infrastructure of dyadic relationships and other sub-system relationships, comprising members of, for example, the same generation, the same sex, or function. Therefore, the child's wellbeing relies on the components operation of the family system as a whole. This means that if the family affected the child also affected since is part of the family system.

In the systems theory, family members influence each other in a circular style that is circular causality. In the case of domestic violence, the children will be affected due to the psychological effects. In a system if one related part is affected the whole system will be affected.

The systems theory suggests that sometimes our actions are connected to the system that we are in as it may shape the individual character within the system.

According to Patton and McMahon (2006), fundamental to understanding the systems theory is the notion that each system is an open system, which is subject to influence from outside and may also influence that which is beyond its boundaries. In this case, the outside environment might affect the child left behind, or the child affect the outside environment since will be trying to adjust to the new environment which is prone to abuse.

This theory, therefore, links with the research in the sense that GBV involves a breach of the fundamental right to life, liberty, security, and dignity, equality between women and men, non-discrimination and physical and mental integrity and these men and women can be parents who are the pillars in a family system. The presence of GBV on a child has negative effects on the child. This domestic violence between parents will affect the proper functioning of the entire family system and the child, in particular, will be affected with the changes in the system itself and the outside environment. Children feel safe within their family system.

### **OBJECTIVE OF RESEARCH**

- ❖ To examine the phenomenon of GBV in Chikanga.
- ❖ To examine the effects of GBV on children in Chikanga ward 14.
- ❖ To offer measures of protecting children from GBV.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- ❖ What is the GBV phenomenon in Chikanga?
- ❖ What are the effects of GBV on children in Chikanga ward 14?
- ❖ What measures can be implemented to protect children from GBV?



## **JUSTIFICATION**

The desire to examine the effects of GBV on children instigated this research, as very little has been said yet it is known reality that children are the future of tomorrow and hence if they are disturbed it simply means we are destroying the hope of the future. Chikanga ward 14 urban Mutare was the selected area of study as it is one of the places where the highest reports of GBV have been reported to the VFU Manicaland province hence, data for children affected by the GBV is readily available directly from those directly involved. Another reason for focusing on Chikanga ward 14 is due to the sky rocketing statistics reported by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development. This study is also crucial to different stakeholders such as non-governmental organisations involved in safeguarding the rights of children and protection of children as they are part and parcel of the vulnerable group as it will guide their programming, academia, on knowing and understanding the contribution of children in the economy, social and political spheres of life and the state government as a base data for policy formulation on youth empowerment and development.

## **LIMITATIONS OF STUDY**

- ❖ First and for most financial challenges for travelling costs to get access to the people especially the children directly involved
- ❖ Accessibility of the information givers as they are sparsely located and cannot be found on one area which delayed progress

- ❖ There were a number of protocols to be observed especially in schools so as to carry out interviews directly to children who are being affected by GBV
- ❖ Lack of cooperation from some children especially on the questionnaires
- ❖ Busy schedules at government offices to enquire the statistics or information.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research was carried out through the use of qualitative type of research. Kerlinger (1986) says a research design can be defined as an idea, arrangement and approach of examination that considered attaining answers to study demands or problems. According to Nicholls (2011) qualitative research methods serve to provide a bigger picture of a situation or issue and can inform in an accessible way. The method allow for much more detailed investigation of issues - answering questions of meaning, who is affected (by the issue) why, what factors are involved, do individuals react or respond differently to each other.

According to Mounton J. (1996), qualitative research aims at gaining the subject's firsthand experience of the phenomenon using flexible methods such as interviews and questioners. Qualitative methods make use of open-ended questions and probing gives participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses. Open-ended questions have the ability to evoke responses that are meaningful and culturally salient to the participant, unanticipated by the researcher, rich and explanatory in nature.

The study is qualitative in nature and therefore employed qualitative research methodology. FHI (2006) Qualitative research methodology is a more exploratory method that provides deep descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. Qualitative research

method enabled the researcher to understand the social issues evolving around the informal sector in the area of study. More so, the strength of qualitative research is its ability to explore personal experiences of a given research issue and enables the researcher to solicit in-depth effects of gender based violence in children. Thus qualitative enabled the researcher to capture information beyond just answers as the researcher could analyse the attitudes, behaviour and emotional attachments to responses.

## **DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENTS**

### **INTERVIEWS**

This is a more commonly interview frame worked technique that follows an order to address key themes. MacDonald and Headlam (2008) highlights that the same time, it allows flexibility that allows the researcher to get an in depth understanding of the interviewee's response and therefore develop the themes as they arise. Semi structured interviews were used in this research and they were more preferable to carefully capture the relevant information that provide answers to the research issue. Furthermore, semi structured interviews enabled the researcher to capture personal experiences and challenges encountered by children as a result of GBV. In this research, only children who have been affected as a result of GBV are interviewed.

### **QUESTIONNAIRES**

This is a method of gathering data through written questions, where respondents provide answers to the questions. Questionnaires are important because they save time and enable the

researcher to gather both qualitative and quantitative data from a wide range of respondents. Questionnaires are important in that written data will not be lost easily. Once data has been written, that information can be kept safely and cannot be easily lost due to human error like forgetting. They are also crucial in that the respondent will take his/her time to complete the questionnaires. The questionnaires were left in respondents' hands to complete and collected later. This was so to give the respondent enough time to fill in the questionnaires. Questionnaires are also crucial in that they get rid of Hawthorn effect.

## **DESKTOP RESEARCH**

The researcher also conducted an in-depth study of the available literature on the subject under study, both on the area of study and broadly on the theme effects of GBV on children. Desktop research was also useful to the researcher in that it enabled the researcher to find broader statistics and find the knowledge gap. Thus, desktop research helped the researcher to avoid duplication of other scholars and researchers' work.

## **DATA GATHERING TECHNIQUES**

### **SAMPLING**

Sampling is a method of studying from a few selected items, instead of the entire big number of units. It is very crucial in this research. The major importance is that because of the large population in the research area, it is expensive, difficult if not impossible to consult each and every individual. Therefore sampling allows for choosing specific group of people as respondents. There is an opportunity for highly representative if all subjects participate.

With the large numbers of GBVcases being reported at the VFU departments resulting to large numbers of children being affected in Chikanga ward 14 directly; it is a difficult task to interview every child who is being affected hence only a sample size was used as a representation of other children. Fridah (2002) states that sampling can be generally defined as an act of selecting a part from a whole for the purpose of providing insight on the characteristics of a whole. Thus sampling was crucial as it served time and resources during the research.

### **PURPOSIVE SAMPLING**

Purposive sampling method was used in the study by the researcher. It is a sampling technique, which is judgemental, selective and subjective. It groups participants according to pre-selected criteria relevant to a particular research question. The main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest and this has enabled the researcher to answer the research questions. Respondents were hand-picked on the basis of specific characteristics. It is important in that it ensures balance of group sizes when multiple groups are to be selected. Selection of the respondents in this research relied on the judgment of the researcher.

Purposive sampling is therefore most successful when data review and analysis are done in conjunction with data collection. The researcher used purposive sampling because it uses respondents that are or that understand what exactly I am studying about. The key respondents were the children who are directly facing domestic violence.

## **TARGET POPULATION**

Generally Mutare has an estimate population of about 262 124 people Wikipedia (2012). The constituency has a population of 66 177 people, made up of 31 945 men and 34 232 women Census Report (2002). The constituency's population is housed in about 15 973 households with an average House Hold size of 4 people. However this research only focused on children directly affected by GBV and this research targeted 20 children as respondents for both interviews and questionnaires.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

A gender analysis shows how gender-based violence appears in different contexts, and is perpetrated by a wide range of actors, for example: the army or other armed groups, the State, transnational corporations and transnational organised criminal groups, community members or family members and relatives.

During commemorations by Musasa Women's Project of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence in Harare, Muchinguri said the minimum sentence for rape should be 20 years adding it should be more deterrent than cattle theft sentences. The minister also said 75% of women in Zimbabwe were raped by their husbands, but were afraid to report the cases to the police. Zimbabwe has also formulated the National GBV strategy. The purpose of this strategy is to provide stakeholders with a framework which outlines where greater effort should be placed in order to address GBV challenges systematically. This document

Innocenti Digest (2001) says gender-based violence also occurs in the process of bringing up children in their family homes and in educational institutions where corporal punishment is considered an educational tool. This kind of violence against the child is also gendered: while physical punishment is more often inflicted upon boys, girls suffer an enormous amount of psychological abuse to force them to conform to traditional gender stereotypes. Assumptions that boys are physically stronger than girls and that physical abuse helps them grow as proper men underlie these differential expressions of gender based violence. In addition, discriminatory ideas about children being inferior to adults, and that parents are entitled to use violence to educate their children are also seen in the use of punishment as an educational tool.

Another effect of gender based violence fact is male children who see their father beat their mother are 7 times more likely to be violent as adults than those who did not witness such violence Straus (1981 ) supports this. Children need healthy role models. Unhealthy role models damage children now and in the future. Men who batter women are more likely to batter children physically, sexually, and emotionally. Their need for power and control of family members often stifles the healthy development of their children. Nearly 90% of children who grow up in abusive homes witness the assaults. Nearly half of the barterers also abuse their children.

Kithaka (2008) describes sexual offences legislations cropping up in the region in the last two decades as intended to prevent and protect people from harmful and unlawful sexual acts. Armed with these International Human Rights instruments, women human rights activists around the world campaigned for legal reform to bring local laws up to universal standards. Chiefly, they engaged the state demanding it to take action to safeguard the personal integrity, dignity, liberty of women and children as required under international law.

According to the GBV indicator study over two thirds of women in Botswana (67%) have experienced some form of gender violence in their lifetime including partner and non-partner violence. A smaller, but still high, proportion of men (44%) admit to perpetrating violence against women. Nearly one third of women (29%) experienced Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in the 12 months to the prevalence survey that formed the flagship research tool in this study. In contrast, only 1.2% of Botswana women reported cases of GBV to the police in the same period. Thus the prevalence of GBV reported in the survey is 24 times higher than that reported to the police. This suggests that levels of GBV are far higher than those recorded in official statistics and that women have lost faith in the very systems that should protect them as well as offer redress. Most of the violence reported occurs within intimate relationships.

About three in every five women (62%) experienced violence in an intimate relationship while about half of the men (48%) admitted to perpetrating intimate partner violence. About 30% of women experienced while 22.4% of men perpetrated GBV in the 12 months before the survey. Emotional partner violence is the most common form of IPV experienced by women (45%) and perpetrated by men (37%) in the sample in their lifetime. Similar proportions of women (11.4%) and men (10.7%) reported experiencing or perpetrating non-partner rape respectively. Despite the high levels of rape, only one in nine women report rape to the police and only one in seven women seek medical attention.

Women and girls are the most at risk and most affected by gender-based violence - something all too well known within the South African context. Consequently, the terms "violence against women" and "gender-based violence" are often used interchangeably. However, boys and men can also experience gender-based violence, as can sexual and gender minorities. Regardless of the target, gender-based violence is characterised by the use and abuse of physical, emotional, or financial power and control. According to the 2012 South African



Police Service statistics, 64, 514 sexual offences occurred between April 2011 and March 2012, meaning a staggering 176 cases per day.

Independent research carried out in Gauteng by Gender Links showed that 51% of partnered women disclosed they had had been a victim of abuse at the hands of an intimate partner (33.1% experienced physical abuse and 18.8% experienced sexual abuse). Conversely, the research also showed that 78% of ever-partnered men disclosed having ever perpetrated emotional, economic, physical or sexual abuse with an intimate partner. Furthermore, the study also showed that 37.4% of men had ever raped a woman who was a stranger, acquaintance, family member or intimate partner.

Throughout the world, boys and men are largely the perpetrators of sexual violence, and girls and women are the victims. It is increasingly understood that men's use of violence is generally a learned behaviour, rooted in the ways that boys and men are socialized. There are various causes behind acts of gender-based violence; research into the subject has yielded some insight into a few of these causes.

## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethical considerations are norms for conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. There are several reasons why it is important to adhere to ethical norms in researching on the effects of gender based violence on children. First, norms promote the aims of research, such as knowledge, truth, and avoidance of error. For example, prohibitions against fabricating, falsifying, or misrepresenting research data promote the truth and avoid error. Second, since research often involves a great deal of cooperation and coordination among many different people in different disciplines and institutions, ethical standards promote the values that are essential to collaborative work, such as trust, accountability, mutual respect, and fairness especially when dealing with children. Third, many of the ethical norms help to ensure that researchers can be held accountable to the public. Finally, many of the norms of research promote a variety of other important moral and social values, such as social responsibility, human rights, and animal welfare, compliance with the law, and health and safety. Ethical lapses in research can significantly harm human, students, and the public. For example, a researcher who fabricates data in a clinical trial may harm or even kill patients and a researcher who fails to abide by regulations and guidelines relating to radiation or biological safety may jeopardize his health and safety or the health and safety of staff and students.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **AN OVERVIEW OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE IN CHIKANGA WARD 14.**

#### **1.0 CHAPTER OVERVIEW**

In this chapter, attention will be paid on the causes of Gender Based Violence in Zimbabwe as a whole and also in Chikanga ward 14 Mutare as the area of study. There will be strong emphasis on what really triggers GBV in this particular area. It is a fundamental reality that cannot afford to be ignored that GBV has been and is handled differently from one country to another either positively or negatively. Thus, this chapter is also going to look at the compliancy of Zimbabwe as a nation towards the issue of GBV. It is also crucial to look at the contribution of civil societies and Non Governmental Organisations in Zimbabwe.

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND OF GBV IN ZIMBABWE**

Gender based violence has been defined as any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will based on socially ascribed differences between males and females. Thus, according to Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey 2010-2011 looking at GBV cases 99% of victims are women and 30% of women have experienced physical abuse since 15 years. 42% of Zimbabwean women have experienced physical, emotional or sexual violence at some point in their lives. On average 20 women are abused by their spouses everyday, 60% of murder cases that go through the Harare Courts are a result of Domestic Violence.

According to the Ministry of Health's research (2012) report experiences of GBV by region showed the following statistics; Bulawayo 18%, Midlands 55%, Manicaland 32%, Mashonaland East 47%, Harare 30% and Mashonaland Central 41%.

It is important to acknowledge the government's efforts in trying to reduce the levels of GBV. The following government departments are greatly involved in reducing the levels of GBV; the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development, Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs, Ministry of Health and Child Welfare, Ministry of Education, Sports, Art and Culture, Department of Social Services and the Zimbabwe Republic Police. The Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development was formed in 1995 an arm of the government that is responsible for gender and community issues in Zimbabwe. It also empowers women through policies, strategies and programs that promote their participation in national development. It also promotes gender equality and equity so that there is equal and equitable access, control, utilization and ownership of resources. It empowers communities so that they are self-reliant and are able to participate at all levels, in all spheres of their lives for sustainable development.

The government of Zimbabwe has enacted the Domestic Violence Act (Chapter 5:16) on the 26<sup>th</sup> of February 2007. The act is there to provide for more effective protection of the rights of women guaranteed under the constitution that are victims of violence of any kind occurring within the family and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. Another effort such as counseling is offered at ministerial offices for example the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development. Zimbabwe has also been offered by the government. The government has also participated in the 16 Days of Gender Activism; this is an international campaign to raise awareness of the reality of domestic violence and to push for positive change to increase women's safety. It takes place from the 25<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> of December yearly.

Other activities that the government of Zimbabwe has engaged into include the International Women's Day held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March and the International Families Day held on the 15<sup>th</sup> of

May. The government of Zimbabwe is also a signatory of Convention on the Elimination of the Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1991, Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), and Global Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration in 1995. The SADC Declaration on Gender as well as its addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children, the Legal Age of Majority Act, the Sexual Discrimination Removal Act, the Matrimonial Causes Act, the Sexual Offences Act are some of the legislation put in place to protect and promote women. It is also important to note that traditional leadership has workshops organized by the government together with some NGOs on issues to do with GBV. Legal representation is also offered by the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs. Raising awareness through awareness campaigns is also done by different ministries that handle domestic violence.

The causes of gender-based violence are many and varied depending on the types of violence. Some of the forms of GBV include: physical abuse, emotional and psychological abuse, economic, harmful cultural & religious practices, rape, indecent assault, insult & threats, indecent exposure and pornography. The major causes of GBV in Zimbabwe include poverty, socialization, cultural difference, traditional practices e.g. polygamy, religious factors, drug and alcohol abuse, extended family influence, negotiation for safer sex, infidelity, infertility, lack of training in anger management, conflict and dispute resolution between individuals and family members.

Non- Governmental Organizations and Civil Societies have also played a pivotal role in complimenting government's activities either by legal representation, counseling, and provision of safe shelter. Organizations such as Zimbabwe women lawyers association, PADARE, Musasa Project, International Rescue Committee, Childline, Girl Child Network, Plan International, Leonard Cheshire, Legal Resources Foundation, Campfed, Mercy Corps

among many other have help the government achieve their goal through funding, awareness campaigns, community dialogues, transport and provision of IEC material.

## **1.2 CAUSES OF GBV IN CHIKANGA**

According to the Ministry of Health's research (2012) report on experiences of GBV by region Manicaland has 32%. Hence according to the Victim Friendly Unit's report (2013) in Mutare Urban Chikanga ward has been noted for high levels of GBV cases. Assistant Inspector Muchandibaya of the VFU department in Mutare however, mentioned the following to be the major causes of GBV in Zimbabwe as a whole:

- Norms granting men control over female behaviour
- Acceptance of violence as a way to resolve conflict
- Notion of masculinity linked to dominance, honour and aggression
- Rigid gender roles
- Poverty, low socioeconomic status, unemployment
- Associating with peers who condone violence
- Isolation of women and family
- Marital conflict
- Male control of wealth and decision-making in the family
- Witnessing marital violence as a child
- Absent or rejecting father
- Being abused as a child
- Alcohol use

In Chikanga the most common of the causes of Gender Based Violence according to the cases reported include poverty, unemployment, infidelity, and use of alcohol, abuse as a child or witnessing abuse as a child.

To start off with the issue of poverty has been singled to be one of the major causes of GBV in Chikanga at community dialogues held by the Ministry of Women's Affairs Gender and Community Development in conjunction with other stakeholders. The basic definition of poverty is the condition where people's basic needs for food, clothing and shelter are not being met. Poverty is however divided into two, absolute and relative poverty. Absolute is when people lack the basic necessities for survival for example starving, lack of clean water, proper housing, sufficient clothing or medicines and struggling to stay alive. The UN tends to focus on eliminating absolute poverty as it is the 1<sup>st</sup> goal of the UNMDGs to eradicate poverty and hunger. Relative poverty on the other hand is when some people's way of life and income is so much worse than the general standard of living in the country or region in which they live that they struggle to live a normal life and to participate in ordinary economic, social and cultural activities. Hence it is important to note that both types of poverty are experienced in Chikanga and result to GBV. Njenga (1999) concluded that poverty, which also determines where and how a person lives, is one of the contributing factors of GBV. One of the children had this to say about poverty being the major cause of GBV was:

*"...at home my parents fight regularly, mainly because there is never enough whether to eat or to wear."*

It has been noted that when a family has nothing in the house or are experiencing financial difficulties this affects a couple's relationship as pressures to settle debts, buy groceries

becomes too much to handle yet there is no money to buy these things. The father mostly is the breadwinner and in a case of retrenchment he may fail to provide for the family. That strain which comes with the inability to provide for his family overcomes him and he takes it out on his wife. The same situation can work vice versa when the wife is working and the husband is not she may as well take it out on her husband labelling him useless. WHO(2010) highlighted that poverty may also put women under pressure to find or maintain jobs and in turn render them vulnerable to sexual coercion or push them into occupations that carry a high risk of sexual violence such as sex work. In Chikanga the case of sex work is not common but one can easily relate it to women who work piece jobs or collect firewood due electrical load shadings alone which put them at high risk of rape. One girl had this to say:

*“..my father worked for Mutare Board and Paper Mills and when it closed down he has been home for 5months unemployed and my mother being the breadwinner now through selling firewood they fight almost every day because the money is not enough to feed the whole family and also the fact that my mother goes to collect the firewood in dangerous areas that put her life at risk of sexual violence.”*

Njenga (1999) commented that if a man cannot establish his authority intellectually or economically, he would tend to do so physically. The next major cause of GBV in Chikanga is unemployment. The estimated unemployment rate for Zimbabwe is 95% (2009) and 80% (2005) meaning the rate is increasing by the year. The definition for these statistics is that the entry contains the percentage of the labour force that is without jobs. There are basically three types of unemployment namely structural, frictional and cyclical. Structural unemployment refers to the changes that occur in market economies such that demand increases for some jobs skills and decrease for others for example in Zimbabwe most people are becoming car owners thus, for those who work in the commuter omnibuses business their job demand decreases. Frictional unemployment, on the other hand refers to when workers are voluntarily



between jobs. This can take time as the individual searches for a better job a new location or other factors that can delay employment. Lastly cyclical unemployment, this occurs due to downturns in overall business activities. When business cycles are at their peak cyclical unemployment will be low. If the business cycle is low cyclical unemployment will rise. It is a fundamental reality that cannot afford to be ignored that whilst looking at the causes of GBV unemployment and poverty go hand in hand. This is so because when one is unemployed the chances of having enough money to cater for a family is low hence leading to poverty which is generally a state of lacking enough of the basic necessities. In Chikanga it is important to note that of the 3 types of unemployment 2 of them are common namely structural and cyclical. One boy had this to say:

*“...my father worked at a cotton company ginnery and hence, when the business cycle was high no one lost their job but now because the business cycle is low most workers where let off...”*

Straus (1981) highlights a fact that male children who see their father beat their mother are 7 times more likely to be violent as adults than those who did not witness such violence. MINCAVA (2004) states that nearly 90% of children who grow up in abusive homes witness the assaults. According to an article by WHO children who grow up in families where there is violence may suffer a range of behavioural and emotional disturbances and these can also be associated with perpetrating or experiencing violence later in life. Another major cause of GBV in Chikanga is that either of the parents would have witnessed violence in their childhood hence they become violent as well. A common argument in child custody cases is that a child needs their father even if he is a barterer. One of the pupils asked what could be the main reason for the occurrence of GBV at their home she had this to say:

*“...my grandfather is serving I am not sure how many years for attempted murder of my grandmother which was as a result of GBV so I would like to think what happens between my parents could be a result of my father having witnessed the violence as a child and thinking it is the way to resolve issues.”*

Another common cause of GBV in Chikanga is the abuse of alcohol. The general definition of alcohol abuse is a pattern of drinking that results in one or more of the following situations within a 12month period: having recurring alcohol related legal problems such as being arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or for physically hurting someone while drunk and continued drinking despite having ongoing relationship problems that are caused or worsened by the drinking among other situations. Alcoholism is the most severe form of alcohol abuse. It is a chronic disease characterised by the consumption of alcohol at a level that interferes with physical and mental health, family and social responsibilities. An alcoholic will continue to drink despite serious health, family or legal problems. Alcoholism may result in one having depression and anxiety. People consume alcohol for different reasons some believe it is a stress reliever hence, due to financial instabilities some drink and when their senses come back together and notice the problem still awaits they become violent. However in the community dialogues held by MWAGCD it was pointed out that after alcohol consumption the partner comes home late and can beat up the family for no apparent reason or even for the minute things like there is not enough salt in the food prepared.

Weeks (2003) define infidelity as a violation of couples assumed or stated contract regarding emotional and sexual exclusivity. Leeker and Carlozzi (2012) define infidelity as the subjective feeling that one’s partner has violated a set of rules or relationship norms this

violation results in feelings of sexual jealousy and rivalry. In Chikanga the issue of infidelity has been reported a number of times. SAFAIDS (2009) states, that the “small house” phenomenon is a relatively recent cultural practice in which the western concept of monogamous marriage is upheld nominally, but in fact the husband has another secret family whom he keeps in a “small house”. Infidelity causes economic strains as most males are breadwinners and in trying to balance the two families the funds do not permit leading to poverty. When a couple faces economic challenges there is bound to be GBV. One of the children highlighted that her parents usually fight because her father is cheating with someone he works with and on some cases he does not sleep at home.

Elkin and Handel (1972) saw socialisation as a social learning of beliefs and behaviour typified by the individual’s adaptation and conformity to social norms. This also includes learning of expectations habits values motives skills beliefs that are necessary to interact with one’s own social groups. Socialisation thus, becomes a cause of GBV. The agents of socialisation include the family, peers, school and church among others. There are certain traditional attitudes towards women around the world that help perpetuate the violence. Stereotypical roles in which women are seen as subordinate to men constrain a women’s ability to exercise choices that enable her to end the abuse. The socialisation of both men and women has resulted in an unequal power relationship between men and women. Men are socialised to be dominant, controlling, unemotional, powerful and aggressive. Whereas, women are socialised to be passive, nurturing, emotional, weak, powerless and dependent on men. Most men who are reported in Chikanga as the perpetrators of violence have the element of having grown up being indoctrinated of the relevant behaviours.

### **1.3 CONCLUSION**

The sky rocketing levels of GBV in Zimbabwe started as early as the early 90s hence, the formation of the MWAGCD in 1995. the causes of the violence included poverty, unemployment, economic challenges, children witnessing violence at an early stage, alcohol abuse, infidelity and socialisation among other causes. These causes have brought negative effects on the children. However, GBV has left these children vulnerable to much pressure from the outside environment in which they could overcome if the family system was still intact. Children change their behaviours, vulnerable to exploitation as well as depression among many factors. The children who witness the violence are affected more negatively if one is to consider the socio-economic hardships facing Zimbabwe today some are forced to drop out of school and engage in prostitution and other crimes.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE EFFECT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN**

#### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

The chapter presents an analysis of the data collected and findings arrived at from the different interviews with the targeted sample. The findings present how children are affected by GBV in Chikanga ward 14 Mutare. The findings presents whether GBV has negative or positive effects on children in Chikanga. This research is focusing on children directly affected by GBV and this research targeted 20 children as respondents for both interviews and questionnaires.

#### **2.1 THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN IN CHIKANGA BEFORE EXPERIENCING GBV.**

1 in 15 children are exposed to intimate partner violence each year, and 90% of these children are eyewitnesses to this violence. The research respondents acknowledge that before experiencing GBV, children were feeling good and comfortable staying with their parents as one big family as GBV can lead to separations. The presence of their parents means a lot to their everyday life. The children themselves acknowledge that they feel the presence of love when their parents were there. They said that their parents did everything for them despite the hardships they faced before experiencing domestic violence mailing economic abuse. One of the children responds as the researcher was interviewing her. She was comparing her life before her parents engaged into domestic violence and the present life in the custody of her paternal aunt, sister to her father.

The children acknowledged that their parents played a very important role in their life before they left for they witnessed cases of domestic violence. The children said that they performed well at school because their parents used to help them their homework. A form 1 student among the respondents said that, *“At my primary level my parents used to instruct me to do my homework before I hang out with my friends or before I sleep, and when I am stuck they helped me.”* Some other guardians also acknowledged that their parents usually monitored them very closely than what they do and there are some changes they have noticed especially their behaviours.”

However, other children refuted the view that before the domestic violence their lives were getting out of hand this was the view of those whose parents divorced. The children acknowledged the domestic violence led to separation of their parents though for the best because they were facing economic abuse as the father was having infidelity issues. Due to the legal processes maintenance of children is guaranteed thus, ensuring no interruptions on their education.

Some of the respondents including the guardians are of the view that the situation before the resulting of domestic violence which resulted in separation the environment not good for the wellbeing of the children. A mother of three was quoted saying that,

*“Their father was having an affair with another woman and dividing the little financial resources we had and it strained the children’s education as one had to enrol into school a year later. Every little money, we had been hand to mouth but the violence which transpired helped us to get legal assistance and now we get maintenance for each child.”*

The respondents had pointed out different views as they were comparing the situation before experiencing domestic violence and the present situation. Those who were saying that life before the domestic violence was better off than that after domestic violence are the one who

are being mostly affected negatively by the domestic violence and they consist of 76%. About 24% are happy with the current situation because their parents are supporting them regularly and are in a positive domestic environment and a certain amount is expected to assist financially monthly.

## **2.2 EFFECTS OF GBV ON CHILDREN IN CHIKANGA**

Key stakeholders in this category were pupils/ students, teachers and parents. Pupils affected by domestic violence were reported to exhibit violent bullying behaviour, including beating other children, pushing and other cruel actions. Some pupils showed signs of neglect, for example not being supplied with enough school materials. As a result, some ended up playing truancy for fear of victimisation by the school, and sometimes committing petty thefts to make up for the shortages. The school performance of some of the affected children dropped; they reportedly tended to become restrictive and to show diminished ability to explore new ideas. Some became too reserved, withdrawn and easily frightened which affected their learning and interaction with others. Some of these unusual behaviours had effect on other children in the school, thereby affecting their performance as well.

Many children and young people in Chikanga witness domestic violence daily at home. Early researchers spoke of these children as either "witnesses" or "observers" of the violence. In the past few years, these terms have been replaced by "exposure" to the violence, which is more inclusive and does not make assumptions about the specific nature of the children's experience of violence. Exposure to domestic violence can include watching or hearing the violent events, direct involvement (such as trying to call the police), or experiencing the

aftermath (such as seeing bruises).this witnessing of domestic violence causes emotional stress on the child. Some of the children interviewed for this research however highlighted that;

*“..I fail to concentrate in school thinking of what would have happened, the voice of my mother screaming for help whilst being beaten by my father or just the exchanging of words they do. I feel as if the burden is all mine and the fact that other people my age are not facing the trauma I cannot help think about the incidences.”*

Another major effect of GBV on children is early marriages. According to the International Centre for Research on Women, it indicated that one third of girls in developing world are married before the age of 18 and in 2012, 70 million women 20-24 around the world had been married before the age of 18. Child marriages is generally defined as the formal marriage or informal union entered into by an individual before reaching the age of 18.in as much as child marriages are triggered by different means experiencing GBV is one of them hence one thinks early marriages is the solution to run away from the violence. It has been noted that girls who marry before 18years are more likely to experience domestic violence than their peers who marry later. Child brides often show signs symptomatic of sexual abuse and post traumatic stress such as feelings of hopelessness, helplessness and severe depression.

Absenteeism increased among the teachers having domestic problems. Some were reported to exhibit high levels of anger and frustration which they tended to vent on the pupils; they were unfriendly towards their pupils, used an iron fist, and were often intimidating. Communication with other teachers became difficult as they were internally consumed with their own domestic issues. Sometimes they showed signs of stress, were bitter towards



everybody and everything, were easily irritated and could not interact freely with others. Greenberg (2003) clearly states that the mission of every school should be to educate students to equip them to become “knowledgeable, responsible, socially skilled, healthy, caring and contributing citizens.” This is a very important effect of GBV on children as the teachers attitude affects the grades of the students especially those of writing classes as their lives and careers depend of those scores. One student had this to say;

*“...one of the reasons why my grades have dropped is because of the experiences we go through at school because some of the teachers are experiencing GBV at their homes and they often absent themselves several days in a week and when they come to school they take it out on the students. We are even afraid to ask where it is not clear.”*

Another major effect of GBV on children in Chikanga is that of school drop outs. APA (1996) highlights that the UNCRC states that every child has the right to an education that develops their personality talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. Education remains the major tool by which people become empowered and economic, social and pluralistic society increases. Most boys drop out of school to go and search for work and as a way of running away from home whereas for girls they drop out of school into child marriage. The occurrences of GBV in the family can be because of economic abuse which leads to no money for school fees. One boy confirmed a case of another student who dropped out of school because of GBV;

*“...he ran away from home because his father used to beat up his mother in his presence and at times beat him up, he said he was running away from the fear of witnessing the violence and to work since no one was responsible for his fees anymore.”*

Children who witness GBV are likely to run away from home and engage into child

prostitution. Child prostitution is generally a form of commercial sexual exploitation of children; the term normally refers to prostitution of a minor or a person under the legal age of maturity. This is because they fail to get basic needs at home. It is a fact that most GBV cases are linked to economic issues hence, mostly girls engage into prostitution to earn extra money for personal needs. The boys however engage into crimes like robbery just to earn more.

Children in Chikanga ward 14 who are facing violence happen to have a low self esteem. When one has a low self esteem it is when they put little value on their opinions and value, not feeling good about them seeing themselves not deserving the respect others have or get. The crucial experiences that help to form our beliefs about ourselves often occur early in life what one sees, hears and experiences and their childhood, family community or school influences the way they see themselves. Among the experiences that can lead to low self esteem is systematic punishment neglect or abuse, failing to meet parental standards, being on the receiving end of other peoples stress or distress and an absence of praise, warmth, affection or interest. Hence, clearly looking at children who come from where they witness violence they lack the warmth and praises all they know are harsh surroundings. Half the children interview agreed to this fact that they fail to get the special attention children of their age deserve.

One child said that the effect of GBV that affected him the most was he had to live in a child headed family after his mother went to South Africa to look for work and the father remarried and left them alone with his older sister making life hard and difficult. Generally a child headed household is a family which a minor has become the head of the household. This is common in developing countries and in areas of war where the children's parents have been killed by conflict or disease. The case of child headed families due to GBV is a reality articulated in the Situational Analysis (Sitan) on the Status of Women's and

Children's Rights launched by UNICEF and the government of Zimbabwe. The major effect is a child needs special treatment and care from a parental figure not from another child. There are higher chances of children who are in child headed families to be vulnerable to abuse from other people.

Another common effect of GBV on children is that children look up to other family units as they fear the perpetrators of violence in their homes. Any child below the age of 18 years has a tendency of comparing lifestyles and wishing they had a different family because of the situations they are facing for example poverty. When it comes to GBV the case is even worse because they will be hoping for the love and care the next child is getting from their parents. This also affects the child psychologically which then affects his/her education it becomes a cycle as the effects are intertwined. Half the children interviewed also agreed to this effect that they cannot help admire the other children and wish they lived in different homes.

It is also important to look at the nexus between the effects of GBV and development. The general definition of development is that it is the process of growing or causing something to grow or become larger or more advanced. The effects of GBV on children affect the development of a country in many different sectors the economic, social and political spheres. To start off with the drop in grades of a child in school affects the development of the country as the children are the future of tomorrow be it business wise. To get a formal employment there is need to obtain certain grades and a certain level of education hence, if the education is disturbed due to emotional abuse then the future of tomorrow which is the child is destroyed. The better job one gets the better the qualifications hence, a child who dropped out of school because of the effects of GBV such as lack of school fees or failing grades has a higher chance of being employed informally and the wages are low.

Still on the same line of thought it is important to look at the impact of health on development. When a child suffered psychological effects due to GBV his/her health is affected. When a child rushes into marriage running away from the effects of GBV her body is not ready for marriage and strong for pregnancy which causes complications and health problems. Better health is central to human happiness and well being. It also makes an important contribution to economic progress as healthy populations live longer and productive.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **CHALLENGES FACED IN REDUCING GBV AND WAYS OF PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM EFFECTS OF GBV**

#### **3.0 CHAPTER OVERVIEW**

This chapter is looking at the various challenges that are being faced in reducing GBV in Chikanga by both the state and NGOs. These challenges include the contribution of faith based institutions, distance to safe shelters and police, courts and police lack counselling and the lack of female representation in policy making among many others. This chapter will also discuss various ways in which children can be protected against GBV and coping mechanisms of those directly affected by the violence. These measures include the creation of foster care homes, stiffer penalties for perpetrators, more VFU centres, socialisation of children against GBV, involvement of local leadership, ministry of education should include rape and sexual abuse into curriculum and there is need for proper information dissemination at churches and women groups among other measures. . Therefore, recommendations will be suggested to reduce the impact of GBV on children. The conclusion to the whole study will be included as well.

#### **3.1 CHALLENGES FACED BY THE STATE AND NGOs IN REDUCING GBV**

##### **LEVELS**

The major challenge both the state and NGOs are facing in trying to reduce the sky rocketing levels of GBV is the role being played by the faith based institutions. The government has committed itself to putting in place laws which discourage gender based violence and the establishment of victim friendly courts that encourage victims to report any form of

victimisation. Despite those efforts the faith based institutions still strongly believe that even when a couple faces such situations they can resolve them without having to report to the police. The leaders of certain churches believe they can pray for couples who are facing marital problems and counsel them as well when they do not have the required professional qualities to be counselling marital affairs. In most of the cases the women are told to submit for the husband is the head of the house. This is quoted from Ephesians 5:22-23 which states that; "...wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head ..." this however, affects the efforts of the government and NGOs.

Another major challenge is most victims of GBV do not report because they fear the legal processes that may result in the arrest of the breadwinner. Thus, despite the efforts made by the government of creating a ministry that helps women a department of the police the VFU that handles violence related issue the reports will not come in. One would weigh the fact that it is better to have food on the table and be beaten rather than no food the table and sleeping peacefully because the perpetrator has been arrested.

Musasa project has enacted safe shelters in different provinces but the major problem in trying to reduce GBV comes when victims fail to report cases dreading the location of the safe shelters. Looking at Mutare the most reliable safe shelter is that of Musasa Project which is in Marange ward 11 under Herdsman Wendumba. The transport to get there pushes people away to even think of reporting their cases.

## **3.2 WAYS OF PROTECTING CHILDREN AND MEASURES TO REDUCE GBV**

### **EFFECTS ON CHILDREN**

One of the best ways of both protecting children from the effects of GBV and also reducing the levels of GBV is through micro financing. The Ministry of Women's, Affairs Gender and Community Development has used this method in trying to help women stand a better ground. Micro financing is generally a source of financial services for entrepreneurs and small businesses lacking access to banking and related services. Through the ministry women have been able to access funds to help them start or boost their businesses as some of them needed machinery for maximum production. By microfinance it has helped women as the major victims of GBV to have source of capital to protect their families and step away from below the poverty datum line. Women with businesses such as peanut butter making, tailoring, baking and cooking, tie and dye, hair braiding and cross border trading have found themselves prospering through micro financing. This indicates that through micro financing the effects of GBV on children such as having to drop out of school because of school fees shortages will be solved.

The measure of empowering women is very vital as a way of reducing levels of GBV and protecting children from the impact of GBV. Women have demanded equality with men in matters of education, employment, inheritance, marriage, politics and religion. In Zimbabwe it has been noted that women are playing a bigger role in the economic field as workers, consumers, entrepreneurs, managers and investors. This is one of the main reasons a ministry responsible for women was created in 1995 so as to empower women and in Zimbabwe there was greater need since the overall population estimation is that women constitute 52%. In the same line of thought the electoral reform, for example needs to introduce a combination of quotas proportional representation and first past the post systems to pave way for increased

representation of women in decision making positions. There is also need to find innovative ways to increase resources for women to campaign in elections. With women in decision making positions it helps them ensure they do what is favourable for their fellow women.

There is also great need to create a number of safe shelters for GBV victims and foster care homes especially for the children. Musasa Project has accomplished this mission of safe shelters but the problem is they are sparsely separated and the locations are far. A good example is the safe shelter in Marange which is used by people even in Mutare and surrounding areas. There is need to put safe shelters if possible in every district. Safe shelters are very important because they provide a conducive environment which allows a victim to be counselled and have their issue dealt with without having to face the perpetrator. This measure ensures that the children do not continue to witness the violence which affects them in their studies or psychologically. In the same line of thought the Zimbabwe council of social workers chairperson Mr Phillip Bhowa said the major challenge Zimbabwe is currently facing is that there is a shortage of social workers. He even mentioned that at the school of social work, they are training Para-social workers to fill the gap and encourage change in our society. Thus, there is need for more people to be involved in the social work department as qualified people know how to handle these issues.

Justice for Children's Trust programmes director Caleb Mutandwa said the government should focus on enforcing the good laws that have been enacted such as the domestic violence act and recently the progressive constitution which protects children from all forms of violence including domestic violence in section 81.those who violate the law should be prosecuted and given stiff penalties when found guilty. The Zimbabwe Women Resource Centre and Network(ZWRCN) executive director Pamela Mhlanga also agreed to the issue of stiffer penalties so did the minister of WAGCD. This measure helps reduce the level of GBV



cases as perpetrators will be dredging the sentence. This was done to eliminate sentences such as community service and anything less than 10years. CDE Oppah Muchinguri even highlighted the fact that how a cattle rustler case can deserve 20years whereas a case that involves human life is taken for granted

The government is also being challenged to come up with programmes that emphasise on the inclusion of men in global response to the problems of GBV. An example is what the Ministry of Health has done concerning the issue of maternal health and delivery. They are ensuring that the husband be present from the registering of the pregnancy up until the delivery day this however helps men to get the first hand understanding of what women go through. Same applies to GBV there is need to involve men rather than just labelling them as perpetrators of violence.

Another measure to reduce the skyrocketing levels of GBV is to increase the female representation in the National Assembly. The trend in increasing women's participation in decision making in all sectors shows a slight increase in the number of women representation in parliament from 14% in 1990 to 19% in 2008. This was below the 2005 target of 30%.it is an applaudable achievement that ought to be maintained that Zimbabwe has had a female Vice President since 2005 and a female Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Senate, Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly and Judge President of the High Court between 2006-2010. In Zimbabwe currently it has 85 women parliamentarians in the National Assembly compared to the 185 men. This helps to create a better heard voice for all women outside. It is important to note that of the 85 women parliamentarians only 25 are directly elected to the parliament while the other 60 are in the House of Assembly courtesy of a constitutional provision which reserves seats for women. Women are known to have a

maternal symbolism in them hence, issues to do with GBV and the effects it has on children will be dealt with no level of mercy.

Justice for Children's Trust programmes director Caleb Mutandwa is also of the view that the government is urged to craft a budget that is sensitive to children's needs for protection in cases of abuse. This view follows the fundamental reality that children may not report their parents when they fight because they will not have anywhere to go or anyone to look after them if their parents are arrested and sent to jail. Director Mutandwa highlighted that it is the same thing in respect with women that are not empowered economically, they stay in abusive situations.

There is a greater chance that some children are not familiar with what GBV is, the forms of GBV, causes, perpetrators and effects. Children need to know the general statistics of GBV in the country and also the area they are located in. GBV will only end when we adopt the zero tolerance but this needs everyone to take part. The Ministry of Education needs to add the issues of rape sexual abuse in their curriculum. Teachers spend more time with the children than other working parents do with their children hence, it is important for them to be instilled this knowledge at school. Teachers need to speak of the harm and disadvantages of GBV and also provide them with resources of where to report or how to seek assistance on what to do and who to approach. This is another measure that can help protect children from the impact of GBV.

Another way of protecting children from the effects of GBV is by socialisation at home. Mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters all family members need to be well versed with the issue of GBV so as to know and understand the harm and disadvantages of GBV. This helps because when the children marry they will know boundaries even when they face marital

challenges. Fathers and uncles need to take time to talk to their children about the major negative impact of violence as men are the major perpetrators of domestic violence.

The other major way of reducing GBV is by information dissemination especially at churches where there are multiple gatherings church leaders, pastors, women groups, deacons, elders, prophets even the youths. They need to speak and preach against GBV in support of the major activities held regionally or internationally for example 16 Days of Gender Activism. There is need to speak to both males and females about the issue and not women only. This is when the ministry and other relevant organisations can chip in to hold these awareness campaigns or community dialogues. Parents need to know and understand the impact GBV has on the children.

Women as the major victims of GBV there is great need to educate them so that they can be an elimination of the dependency syndrome upon men. There are different organisations that are able to assist children especially the girl child in pursuing their education. Major examples are the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) a demand side response to the cost barriers affecting the ability of OVC to access education due to increasing poverty levels in the country. There is also the Capernaum Trust a scholarship program which is a comprehensive intervention and covers tuition and management levies, school uniforms, examination fees, textbooks and stationery and any other petty things such as food and transport. There is also CARDET whose mission is to inspire the next generation education. There is also Campfed a non-profit making organisation that assist girls in their education buy providing school fees and stationery among other things. Educating the girl child is however, another effective way of protecting the child from the effects of GBV.

There is also great need to involve the chiefs and other traditional leaders. They need to know what is GBV the causes and effects and their responsibility in reducing it. Their main

role is that they can be blind folded and believe in the traditional way of resolving issues hence, it can be a great disadvantage because justice and legal help is needed on cases of GBV. The local leaders need emphasise on the harm and disadvantages of GBV to their subjects.

### **3.3 CONCLUSION**

Since the beginning of gender sensitive issues for example gender equality and equity the cases of GBV reported have been increasing. It could be as a result of mis-interpretation of the privilege women have received through Zimbabwe being a signatory of various acts that protect women against violence. GBV has affected children in various ways which include emotional and psychological effects, low self-esteem, school drop outs, early marriages, child headed families, engagement into crime and prostitution and drop in grades among other effects. The measure that the government of Zimbabwe has taken with the help of NGOs has however helped to reduce GBV level and also protect children from the impact of GBV.

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## **APPENDICES**

Amanda Chenai Mutenha is my name. I am a student at Midlands State University doing an Honours Degree in Development Studies. I am doing a research on the effects of Gender Based Violence on children in Chikanga ward 14 Mutare. It is a requirement of the Bachelor of Arts Honours in Development Studies that each student does a research on any area of interest.

There is a guarantee that the information shared on the course of this research will remain private and confidential. The material and findings will be used for nothing outside academic purposes by the researcher only. Your sincere cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

NB: Answering the questions will be at will and not forced.

## **Appendix 1**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE AFFECTED CHILDREN.**

- a. INSTRUCTIONS: PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS*
- b. WHO DO YOU STAY WITH (PARENTS OR CHILD HEADED)?*
- c. HOW OLD ARE YOU?*
- d. DO YOU GO TO SCHOOL AND WHAT GRADE OR FORM ARE YOU?*
- e. DO YOUR PARENTS FIGHT OR QUARREL OFTEN?*
- f. HOW LONG HAS THIS BEEN HAPPENING?*
- g. WHO PAYS YOUR SCHOOL FEES?*
- h. DO THEY SUPPORT YOU FINANCIALLY TO CARTER FOR YOUR NEEDS?*
- i. HOW ARE YOU FEELING ABOUT THE VIOLENCE YOU EXPERIENCE?*
- j. WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT YOUR FUTURE?*
- k. WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES ARE YOU FACING?*
- l. HOW ARE YOU DEALING WITH THOSE CHALLENGES?*



## Appendix 2

### QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGNED FOR CHILDREN AFFECTED BY GENDER BASED VIOLENCE.

*Instructions: Please answer all questions.*

#### 1. HOW OLD ARE YOU?

	<i>Tick</i>
<i>10-12years</i>	
<i>13-15years</i>	
<i>16-18years</i>	

#### 2. ARE YOU MALE OR FEMALE?

	<i>Tick</i>
<i>Male</i>	

<i>Female</i>	
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**3a. DO YOU HAVE LITTLE BROTHERS OR SISTERS?**

	<i>Tick</i>
<i>Yes</i>	
<i>No</i>	

**b. IF YES, HOW MANY ARE THEY?**

	<i>Tick</i>
<i>1</i>	
<i>2</i>	
<i>3</i>	
<i>3+</i>	

**4a. DO YOU STAY WITH YOUR PARENTS?**

	<i>Tick</i>
<i>Yes</i>	

<i>No</i>	
-----------	--

***b. IF NOT, (TICK ALL THAT APPLIES):***

	<i>Tick</i>
<i>Child headed</i>	
<i>Parents friend</i>	
<i>Relatives</i>	

***OTHER (SPECIFY).....***

***5a. DO YOU AND YOUR SIBLINGS GO TO SCHOOL?***

	<i>Tick</i>
<i>Yes</i>	
<i>No</i>	

**b. IF YES, WHO IS YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORTER?**

<i>Mother</i>	
<i>Father</i>	
<i>Mother</i>	
<i>Family friend</i>	
<i>Extended family</i>	
<i>Self</i>	

*Other (Specify).....*

**6. WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND ABOUT GBV?**

.....

.....

**7. WHAT FORMS OF GBV HAVE YOU ENCOUNTERED?**

.....

.....

.....

**8. HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN FACING GBV?**

	<i>Tick</i>
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<i>0-1 year</i>	
<i>5years</i>	
<i>10years</i>	
<i>10<sup>+</sup>years</i>	

**9a. DO YOU FEEL SAFE IN YOUR CURRENT ENVIRONMENT?**

	<i>Tick</i>
<i>Yes</i>	
<i>No</i>	

**b. IF NOT, WHAT CHALLENGES ARE YOU FACING? (TICK ALL THAT APPLIES):**

.....  
 .....

**10a. DID YOU SEEK ANY HELP TO OVERCOME THOSE CHALLENGES?**

	<i>Tick</i>
<i>Yes</i>	

<i>No</i>	
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***b. IF YES, WHO IS ASSISTING YOU? (TICK ALL THAT APPLIES):***

	<i>Tick</i>
<i>Friends</i>	
<i>Teachers</i>	
<i>Non-Governmental organisation</i>	
<i>Neighbours</i>	
<i>Extended family members</i>	

***Other (Specify).....***