

Committee: United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Issue: Addressing gender-based violence and resolving the consequences of domestic violence against women.

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Introduction

Violence against women and girls is widely recognised as a significant problem affecting women's and children's health and well-being. Gender-based violence, commonly called domestic violence against women, represents a universally reprehensible global phenomenon transcending racial, socioeconomic, and cultural boundaries. Recognising that domestic violence has profound and deleterious effects on women's physical and psychological well-being is imperative, this issue persists as a persistent and profoundly disconcerting challenge in societies across the globe. It constitutes a stark infringement upon fundamental human rights, perpetuates pervasive gender disparities, and inflicts grievous physical, emotional, and psychological trauma upon its victims.

A significant number of women opt not to report instances of violence due to feelings of shame, humiliation, or a perceived lack of efficacy and responsiveness on the part of relevant agencies in addressing their grievances. When coupled with technical deficiencies in the collection and documentation of such reports, these factors undermine the reliability of extant data as accurate indicators of the prevalence of gender-based violence. Women are disproportionately impacted by intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence. The incidence of violence against women and girls, in particular, has the potential to result in fatalities, severe injuries, disabilities, and a spectrum of mental, physical, sexual, and reproductive health complications. Women who have experienced childhood sexual abuse face a twofold increased likelihood of developing panic disorders, a one-third higher probability of post-traumatic stress disorder, and a heightened risk of suicide attempts compared to men with similar experiences. These ramifications exert a profoundly adverse influence on the overall health and well-being of women and girls, consequently affecting their families, communities, and societies at large.

Confronting gender-based violence and mitigating the fallout of domestic violence against women is not solely a matter of ethical obligation but also an essential stride toward establishing inclusive and equitable communities.

Addressing gender-based violence and resolving the consequences of domestic violence against

women is an ongoing struggle that requires coordinated efforts at all levels of society. By tackling the underlying causes, challenging harmful norms, and providing comprehensive support to survivors, we can work towards creating a world free from violence and discrimination, where all individuals, regardless of gender, can live with dignity and equality.

Definition of Key Terms

I. Gender Inequality

Gender inequality means discrimination based on gender or sex, causing one gender or sex to be commonly privileged over another. It is a social phenomenon in which both genders are not treated equally. The behavior may arise from differences in biology, psychology, or cultural norms prevalent in society. While some of these distinctions are empirically grounded, most are social constructs. Gender inequality is experienced differently across different cultures, with the common ground that people's rights are violated through gender-based discrimination.

II. Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence is violence directed at individuals due to their gender or that disproportionately affects a particular gender. It encompasses various forms of abuse, discrimination, and coercion based on gender identity, expression, or biological sex. This violence can occur in diverse settings, impacting people of all ages, and may involve intimate partners, family, acquaintances, strangers, or institutions. Violence against women is viewed as a human rights violation and a form of gender discrimination.

III. Domestic violence

Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior in any relationship used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Domestic abuse is typically manifested as a pattern of abusive behavior toward an intimate partner in a dating or family relationship, where the abuser exerts power and control over the victim. Domestic abuse can be mental, physical, economic or sexual. Incidents are rarely isolated and usually escalate in frequency and severity. Domestic abuse may culminate in serious physical injury or death. Domestic abuse can occur within a range of relationships, including couples who are married, living together or dating. Domestic violence affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels.

History

Gender-based violence is a pervasive and deeply rooted issue that affects millions of women globally, cutting across geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic boundaries. It encompasses various forms of violence, including physical, sexual, emotional, and economic abuse, primarily perpetrated against women due to gender. Among these forms, domestic violence against women remains one of the most prevalent and insidious manifestations of gender-based violence.

The roots of gender-based violence can be traced back to historical and systemic gender inequalities that included discriminatory attitudes and harmful social norms that reinforce unequal power dynamics between men and women. These power imbalances often create an environment where violence against women is tolerated. Domestic violence occurs within intimate partner relationships, where current or former partners commit a significant portion of reported violence. The private nature of domestic violence makes it challenging for victims to seek help or speak out, further perpetuating the cycle of abuse.

The consequences of domestic violence against women are profound and far-reaching. Beyond the immediate physical injuries, survivors often endure long-term emotional trauma, leading to anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Victims may also suffer from social isolation, economic dependency, and reduced access to education and job opportunities.

Furthermore, the impact of domestic violence extends beyond the individual level and affects entire communities and societies. The economic costs of gender-based violence, including healthcare expenses and lost productivity, are substantial. Moreover, the negative consequences for children who witness domestic violence can lead to intergenerational cycles of abuse and trauma.

In recent years, global efforts have been made to address gender-based violence and support survivors of domestic violence. International treaties, conventions, and frameworks, such as the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, have laid the foundation for legislative and policy measures to combat violence against women. Many countries have implemented domestic violence laws, established helplines and support services, and increased public awareness campaigns to break the silence surrounding gender-based violence. Additionally, advocacy groups, non-governmental organizations, and grassroots movements have played a crucial role in raising awareness, providing support, and advocating for policy changes to address this pressing issue.

Despite these efforts, challenges remain. Implementation gaps, inadequate resources, and cultural resistance hinder the full realization of effective measures to address gender-based violence comprehensively. Violence against women and girls is one of the world's most widespread human rights

violations. Globally, an estimated one in three women will experience gender-based violence in her lifetime. Gender-based violence can undermine victims' health, dignity, security and autonomy.

Key Issues

Addressing gender-based violence and resolving the consequences of domestic violence against women are critical social and human rights issues that require attention and action from governments, organizations, and society.

Gender-based violence, including domestic violence, is a pervasive global issue significantly underreported due to many factors. Fear of retaliation or further violence from abusers, coupled with the deeply ingrained stigma and shame associated with being a victim, often act as powerful deterrents against reporting such incidents. Economic dependence on perpetrators can further complicate the situation, as survivors may fear losing financial support or access to essential resources. Additionally, a lack of awareness about available support services and legal protections can contribute to the underreporting problem. These factors make it exceptionally challenging to fully understand the true extent of gender-based violence and its devastating consequences on individuals and communities worldwide.

Gender-based violence represents a grave violation of fundamental human rights, encompassing the core principles of life, liberty, and security of person. It infringes upon an individual's right to live free from violence and fear, denying them the basic human dignity they deserve. Moreover, this form of violence contradicts the principles of gender equality enshrined in numerous international treaties and conventions. It undermines the fundamental notion that all individuals, regardless of their gender, should enjoy equal rights, opportunities, and protections. Society perpetuates inequality and injustice by perpetuating gender-based violence, underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive efforts to eradicate this pervasive human rights violation.

Victims of domestic violence experience profound and enduring effects on their health. The physical and psychological trauma inflicted by domestic violence can have dire consequences. Physically, survivors often bear the scars of their abuse, including bruises, broken bones, and even life-threatening injuries. Beyond the visible harm, the mental health toll is significant, as survivors frequently grapple with conditions such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, and complex trauma. These mental health disorders can erode one's well-being and overall quality of life. Tragically, in the most extreme cases, domestic violence can culminate in the loss of life. The long-term health implications underscore the urgency of addressing this issue comprehensively and providing support and resources to survivors seeking to heal and rebuild their lives.

Addressing gender-based violence and its consequences is a complex and multifaceted challenge. It requires a coordinated effort from governments, civil society organisations, and individuals to change attitudes, improve laws and services, and support survivors on their path to healing and justice.

Significant Parties Involved and Their Views

Organisations

I. United Nations (UN)

The UN plays a significant role in addressing gender-based violence through various initiatives such as the UN Women, the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, and the Spotlight Initiative.

II. World Health Organisation (WHO)

The WHO provides technical guidance, research, and resources on addressing gender-based violence and its health consequences. It works with countries to develop policies and programs to prevent violence and support survivors.

III. UNICEF

UNICEF focuses on the rights and well-being of children, including protecting girls from violence and promoting gender equality. It works with governments and partners to address violence against children, including domestic violence.

IV. International Women's Rights Organisations

Organizations like Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Global Fund for Women advocate for women's rights, including addressing gender-based violence and supporting survivors.

V. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

Numerous NGOs around the world work to address gender-based violence and support survivors.

Examples include the International Rescue Committee, CARE International, and Women's Aid.

Timeline of Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women - The UN General Assembly adopted this declaration, recognising violence against women as a violation of human rights and calling for action to prevent and eliminate it.
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UN Security Council Resolution 1325 - Acknowledges the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and stresses the importance of women's participation in peace processes and decision-making. - It calls for the prevention of violence against women in conflict situations.
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women - The United Nations designates November 25 as the International Day for Eliminating Violence against Women. - It aims to raise awareness and mobilise action to end violence against women globally.
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UN General Assembly - Resolution on Intensification of Efforts to Eliminate All Forms of Violence Against Women - The General Assembly adopted a resolution calling on states to strengthen their efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women. - It emphasises the need for comprehensive strategies, legal frameworks, and support services.
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes Goal 5, which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. - It includes specific targets to eliminate violence against women and girls in all its forms.

2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The COVID-19 pandemic and the increase in gender-based violence - The global pandemic leads to a surge in gender-based violence as lockdown measures exacerbate the risks for women in abusive situations. - Efforts are made to address this issue and provide support to survivors.
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Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Addressing gender-based violence and resolving the consequences of domestic violence against women has been a long-standing issue, and various attempts have been made to address it.

Many countries have enacted laws and legal reforms to address gender-based violence. These include criminalising domestic violence, sexual assault, and harassment and establishing protection orders and support services for survivors. These legal measures aim to hold perpetrators accountable and provide legal remedies for survivors.

Public awareness campaigns have played a crucial role in bringing attention to the issue of gender-based violence. These campaigns aim to challenge societal norms, raise awareness about the prevalence and consequences of violence against women, and promote a culture of respect and gender equality. Efforts have been made to provide comprehensive support services to survivors of gender-based violence. This includes establishing helplines, shelters, counseling services, and medical support. These services help survivors access the assistance they need and provide a safe and supportive environment for their recovery.

Promoting education and training on gender equality and violence prevention is essential in addressing gender-based violence. Educational initiatives target various stakeholders, including students, teachers, healthcare providers, law enforcement, and community members, to raise awareness, challenge stereotypes, and promote healthy relationships. International agreements and frameworks have been established to address gender-based violence globally. Examples include the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These agreements set standards and guidelines for governments to address gender-based violence and promote women's rights.

Recognising the importance of engaging men and boys in efforts to address gender-based violence, initiatives have been developed to promote positive masculinity, challenge harmful stereotypes, and foster respectful relationships. Engaging men and boys as allies in the movement against gender-based violence help to shift attitudes and behaviors.

While progress has been made in addressing gender-based violence, it remains a complex and persistent issue. Ongoing efforts are needed to strengthen existing strategies, increase funding for prevention and support services, promote accountability, and challenge societal norms perpetuating violence against women.

Possible Solutions

Tackling gender-based violence and addressing the aftermath of domestic violence against women necessitates a comprehensive approach that engages diverse stakeholders and employs various strategies. It entails a holistic effort involving multiple parties and different approaches to effectively combat these issues and support survivors in their journey toward recovery and empowerment.

Enacting and enforcing robust domestic violence laws prioritising protecting women's rights and holding perpetrators accountable is essential for any just and equitable society. These laws must recognise the unique vulnerabilities and experiences women who suffer from domestic violence face. This entails drafting legislation encompassing a wide range of behaviours and forms of abuse, from physical violence to emotional and economic abuse, to ensure that no aspect of a survivor's ordeal goes unaddressed. It is vital to rigorously enforce these laws, ensuring survivors can access legal remedies and essential support systems promptly. The creation and enforcement of these laws represent a society's commitment to upholding the fundamental rights and dignity of women while sending a clear message that domestic violence will not be tolerated in any form.

Raising awareness and education is paramount in the ongoing battle against gender-based violence. To address this pervasive issue effectively, it is crucial to launch public awareness campaigns that actively challenge harmful gender norms and stereotypes deeply ingrained in society. These campaigns are a powerful tool for shifting societal attitudes and behaviours towards greater gender equality. It is crucial to incorporate gender equality education within educational institutions and communities. Instilling these principles from an early age is essential for nurturing a future generation that places a high value on qualities like non-violent problem-solving.

Involving men and boys as partners in the battle against gender-based violence is a crucial strategy. Promoting programs that challenge toxic masculinity and endorse healthy and respectful relationships is key to dismantling the roots of violence against women. Encouraging men and boys to take an active stance against gender-based violence contributes to dismantling harmful stereotypes and creates a more inclusive and supportive environment for all individuals. A comprehensive approach that combines awareness, education, and the active involvement of men and boys is crucial in pursuing a safer

and more equitable world for everyone.

To comprehensively address the urgent needs of survivors of domestic violence, it is imperative to enhance support services through a multi-faceted approach. This involves governmental efforts to encompass a range of critical resources that ensure survivors receive holistic and effective support. Through dedicated investment and a focus on advancing these support services, they can establish a protective network for survivors, which provides them with vital aid and direction to break free from abusive situations and recover from trauma. This cooperative and multifaceted strategy emphasises society's unwavering dedication to the welfare and empowerment of survivors.

By integrating these solutions and cultivating a shared dedication to gender equality and human rights, societies can make substantial progress in eradicating gender-based violence.

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