

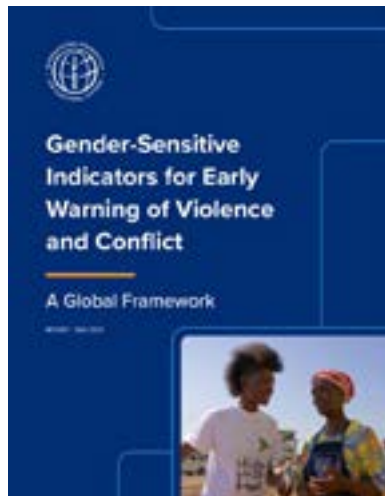


Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Early Warning of Violence and Conflict

A Global Framework

REPORT | MAY 2021





Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Early Warning of Violence and Conflict: A Global Framework

Gender-sensitive indicators help provide nuanced and complete contextual information to strengthen the predictive capacity of forecasting models for violence and conflict.

In collaboration with the United States Department of State Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (State/CSO), the International Foundation for Electoral Systems has developed a new global framework to strengthen the integration of these indicators in early warning systems and violence monitoring efforts.

Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Early Warning of Violence and Conflict: A Global Framework

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Cover photo: During the Kenya 2017 election period, IFES supported the implementation of a Youth Vote (YVOTE) campaign to encourage participation of women and youth in 66 constituencies.

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About IFES

IFES advances democracy for a better future. We collaborate with civil society, public institutions and the private sector to build resilient democracies that deliver for everyone. As the global leader in the promotion and protection of democracy, our technical assistance and applied research develops trusted electoral bodies capable of conducting credible elections; effective and accountable governing institutions; civic and political processes in which all people can safely and equally participate; and innovative ways in which technology and data can positively serve elections and democracy. Since 1987, IFES has worked in more than 145 countries, from developing to mature democracies. IFES is a global, nonpartisan nonprofit organization based in Arlington, Virginia, and registered as a 501(c)(3).

IFES By The Numbers



Reached 205M+
people with civic and
voter education



Trained 759,326
election officials
in fiscal year 2019



Worked in 145+
countries

Acknowledgments

So many individuals across the world contributed to this project, and we appreciate every contribution, big or small.

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I. Executive Summary

Efforts to date to integrate gender-sensitive indicators into local, national, regional, and global early warning systems have been ad hoc and inconsistent, despite extensive empirical research demonstrating the links between gender inequality and risks of conflict and instability. Gender-sensitive indicators are important for providing nuanced and complete contextual information to strengthen the predictive capacity of forecasting models for violence and conflict. International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) research indicates that two primary factors limit the effective integration of gender-sensitive indicators in early warning systems: 1) the unavailability of subnational gender data and the challenges inherent in collecting it; and 2) an over-reliance by existing early warning systems on long-term structural gender indicators, such as the rates of women in parliament, literacy rates among women and men, or the level of protection for women's rights enshrined in constitutions or legislative instruments. While these structural indicators are important to measure as part of longer-term conflict prevention and stabilization efforts, they do not provide sufficient variations over the course of a year to detect any rapid changes in risk, which could help signal new levels of community insecurity, tensions, or the outbreak or escalation of violence in the shorter term.

This global framework, developed by IFES in collaboration with the United States Department of State Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (State/CSO), is intended to overcome these challenges and strengthen the integration of gender-sensitive indicators in early warning

For the purposes of this framework, gender is defined as

the socially constructed set of roles, rights, responsibilities, entitlements, and behaviors associated with being a woman or a man in society.

The social definitions of what it means to be masculine or feminine, and negative consequences for not adhering to those expectations, vary among cultures, change over time, and often intersect with other factors such as age, class, disability, ethnicity, race, religion, and sexual orientation (U.S. Gender-Based Violence Strategy, 2016).



systems and violence monitoring efforts. This guiding document will be useful for supporting early warning system analysts, data scientists, gender specialists, national governments, civil society organizations, and international implementors to integrate gender in their early warning and violence monitoring initiatives. As well as building on previous efforts, this framework seeks to also provide a strong rationale for continued investment in gender-sensitive conflict prevention and stabilization.

Our research consisted of a comprehensive literature review (included as Annex A), expert consultations with gender experts and early warning analysts, and a three-month pilot to test five new and modified gender-sensitive indicators across nine states in Nigeria. The findings from our research highlight the importance of identifying subnational gender-sensitive indicators that monitor changes in gender norms that could signal rising insecurity or risks of violence and conflict.

This framework provides new and modified gender-sensitive early warning indicators, in four categories: 1) security and justice; 2) politics and governance; 3) social norms and gender equality; and 4) economic factors. Some of the changes the indicators seek to measure include: changes to women's mobility and dress; unusual movements of all-male groups; violent incidents toward women and men; rates of sexual and gender-based violence; increases in misogynistic, homophobic or sexist references or propaganda; restrictions on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), including women's organizations; women's rapid attempts to acquire cash including through the sale of jewelry and personal goods; and increased targeted attacks against women in public roles and gender equality campaigners. The utility of some of these indicators will be context-specific; this framework offers a catalog of new and modified gender-sensitive indicators and associated guidance for integration in early warning systems or violence monitoring efforts, which can be expanded upon and adapted to local contexts. The gender-sensitive indicator table provides a menu of indicators, rationale for their inclusion, suggested definitions, and suggested data collection strategies.

Two overarching conclusions can be drawn from this research and the lessons learned from the Nigeria pilot. First, further investments are needed to support the collection of regular, publicly available sex-disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data at the subnational level to track the gender-sensitive early warning indicators proposed, which could point to growing insecurity or risks of violence and conflict. Second, it is important to continue to build on the publicly available evidence base that demonstrates the benefits and importance of meaningfully integrating gender in early warning systems and violence monitoring efforts as part of overall efforts to improve early warning systems and to support those systems to integrate gender into their current practices.

II. Introduction

More than two decades of empirical and peer-reviewed research establishes direct links between the status of women and a country's propensity for violence (cumulative research is summarized in the Literature Review in Annex A); the importance of women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution efforts; and the necessity of integrating gender in such efforts. Despite a growing wealth of evidence documented by women, peace, and security (WPS) researchers and significant growth of the normative framework around WPS, challenges remain in the development and integration of gender-sensitive indicators in early warning systems for conflict and violence.

To advance these efforts, IFES and State/CSO undertook this project to develop the *Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Early Warning of Violence and Conflict: A Global Framework*. This global framework is the culmination of this project and includes a set of new and modified qualitative and quantitative gender-sensitive indicators that can enhance the effectiveness of global risk analyses, early warning systems, and violence monitoring efforts.

This global framework supports the objectives set out in the U.S. Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017, which calls for the perspectives and interests of affected women to be integrated in conflict prevention activities and strategies; and for the collection and analysis of gender data for the purpose of developing and enhancing early warning systems of conflict and violence.¹ This framework supports the U.S. State Department's commitments under its Implementation Plan² on the U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security of 2019.³ It further complements the goals set out in the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018 to strengthen the diplomatic, risk analysis and monitoring, strategic planning, early warning and response capacities of the U.S. government as part of its strategy to identify, prevent and respond to the risk of atrocities.⁴ The framework also supports U.S. government efforts to implement the Global Fragility Act of 2019, which aims to strengthen U.S. efforts to stabilize conflict-affected areas and prevent violence globally.⁵

The global framework consists of four key components:

1

An overview of previous efforts and associated challenges with integrating gender in early warning systems, as identified through a comprehensive literature review and consultations with gender and early warning systems experts and data specialists.

2

A list of new and modified gender-sensitive indicators for integration in early warning systems, including the rationale for why these were chosen, suggested definitions and proposed data collection strategies. The gender-sensitive indicators are grouped in four categories: 1) security and justice; 2) politics and governance; 3) social norms and gender equality; and 4) economic factors.

3

Summary findings from the pilot conducted to test an adapted selection of the indicators in nine states in Nigeria, including guidance on gender-sensitive data collection (the full report on the pilot is included as Annex B).

4

Recommendations for integrating gender-sensitive indicators in existing local, national, regional, and global early warning systems and outlining the limitations of the framework, ongoing challenges relating to gender-sensitive early warning indicators, and future opportunities to build on this work.

III. Methodology

This project to develop the *Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Early Warning of Violence and Conflict: A Global Framework* consisted of five interconnected phases: 1) a literature review and compilation of known, existing gender-sensitive early warning indicators; 2) the development of new and modified gender-sensitive indicators; 3) expert consultations; 4) a context-specific pilot; and 5) validation workshops to produce a final global framework.

Literature Review and Compilation of Known, Existing Gender-Sensitive Indicators

Drawing on more than 60 documents and preliminary consultations with gender and early warning systems experts and data specialists, the literature review catalogued attempts to integrate gender in early warning systems to date; outlined persistent data collection and analytical challenges associated with these efforts; and compiled an inventory of all previously referenced gender-sensitive indicators that were publicly available to have a complete understanding of existing efforts. The key findings from the literature review are summarized in Section IV and the complete document is included as Annex A.

Development of New and Modified Gender-Sensitive Indicators

While drafting the literature review, IFES compiled an extensive inventory of more than 300 gender-sensitive indicators that had been previously included or suggested for inclusion in early warning systems, as referenced in the section above and included as Annex E. Once all of the known gender-sensitive indicators were identified, IFES sought to adapt, modify and generate new gender-sensitive indicators that could be measured in real time and that would be applicable to most contexts, as detailed below. The results are the new and modified gender-sensitive indicators presented in the table in Section V of this framework.

The inventory includes structural indicators (e.g., the number of women in parliament), context-specific subnational indicators (e.g., fluctuating bride-to-cattle prices) and dynamic indicators (e.g., increase in trafficking of women). The vast majority of these indicators had not been tested for their effectiveness nor could they be linked to an existing, available dataset. Literature review findings and consultations with experts revealed that while structural indicators related to gender might be successful in prediction models over longer time horizons, they do not provide helpful data to track more dynamic changes (daily, weekly, or monthly) at the local level that could lead to increased risks of violence or conflict. Based on this finding, IFES – in consultation with State/CSO and gender, conflict and data experts – decided to focus this project on dynamic indicators that can be measured in near real time instead of structural indicators that measure gender inequality over a longer time horizon. The aim of dynamic indicators is to monitor rapid changes in behavior and incidents related to gender at the subnational level, which could signal growing tensions, insecurity or rising risks of violence and conflict. Drawing on the more comprehensive inventory of indicators compiled during the desk review, the

researchers drafted a short

list of new and modified dynamic (or “fast-moving”) gender-sensitive indicators that formed the basis of more in-depth expert consultations.

Expert Consultations

Building on the preliminary interviews conducted during the desk review, IFES held 24 key informant interviews to seek feedback on the findings of the literature review and the draft short list of new and modified dynamic gender-sensitive indicators. IFES approached experts based on their work on early warning systems or gender, or upon recommendations obtained from other key informant interviews. Interviews were conducted with early warning specialists as well as representatives from: the United Nations (UN), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the World Bank; global, regional, and national women’s organizations working on conflict prevention; and international relations think tanks. A full list of individuals consulted throughout this project is in Annex C.

Context-Specific Pilot Implementation

IFES worked with implementing partner – and long-term partner on electoral violence monitoring initiatives – Kimpact Development Initiative (KDI) to adapt and test the integration of five gender-sensitive indicators into KDI’s existing electoral violence monitoring efforts across nine states in Nigeria from October to December 2020. Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, IFES did not provide in-country support to KDI but was able to maintain close collaboration through remote/virtual methods. Nigeria was selected as the pilot country per the criteria established by IFES and State/CSO, as Nigeria had: 1) experienced different forms of political, electoral and extremist violence; 2) upcoming pertinent political events (elections); 3) established early warning monitoring efforts; and 4) significant cultural diversity within the country. The indicators aimed to measure rapid and differentiated behaviors and incidents related to gender that could potentially signal growing insecurity. Additional details about the pilot are outlined in Section VI and in Annex B.

Validation Workshops

Upon completion of the pilot in Nigeria, the main findings and recommendations from the framework were discussed at two validation workshops, the first with representatives from the U.S. Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development, and a second with experts who were consulted during the earlier phases of the project. The two validation workshops gathered feedback on the framework new or modified indicators, and recommendations on how to adapt context-specific indicators into other local, national, regional, or global early warning systems and violence monitoring efforts. This global framework reflects the feedback received in these two workshops.

IV. Literature Review and Expert Consultation Findings



This section provides an overview of the literature review (available in full in Annex A), which analyzed more than 60 documents, and the key takeaways from consultations with key gender, data collection, and early warning experts. IFES found that previous efforts to include gender-sensitive indicators in early warning systems were infrequent and inconsistent, and studies about their effectiveness are not publicly available. These shortcomings persist despite efforts dating back to 2002 to “engender” early warning systems. There is still a widely held, incorrect view among early warning system experts that gender-sensitive indicators do not provide useful or relevant data that can contribute to enhancing the effectiveness and predictive capacity of early warning systems.⁶ This misconception is, in part, due to a lack of reliable, gender-sensitive data and associated datasets – particularly at the subnational level – that can be used to monitor dynamic gender-sensitive indicators.

Within global early warning systems, such as those related to mass atrocities and genocide, gender-sensitive indicators are predominantly absent.⁷ This gap persists despite international legal definitions and/or customary law interpretations for genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity that include gender-specific human rights abuses and violations such as rape and forced sterilization and abortion.

The literature review found that regional early warning systems are more likely than global systems to integrate gender; however, such efforts are ad hoc. Two notable attempts to integrate gender include: 1) the Economic Community of West African States Early Warning and Response Network; and 2) the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism, an initiative of the seven-member Intergovernmental Authority on Development that promotes peace and security in the Horn of Africa. Both of these regional early warning systems have integrated gender-sensitive indicators, but information on the effectiveness of these efforts is not publicly available.

Publicly available information on the integration of gender-sensitive indicators within national and subnational early warning systems is lacking, and there has been little to no published research on the effectiveness of the gender-sensitive indicators within these systems or how these indicators could be modified or applied to other contexts. One noteworthy national initiative frequently cited in other literature is the 2006 United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, now UN Women) pilot in the Solomon Islands, which developed 46 conflict early warning indicators that were gender-sensitive in consultation with local partners, and tested them in different communities.⁸ While this pilot is frequently referred to in other studies, the extent to which these indicators informed other global or national early warning systems is unknown, and there is no current information on whether these indicators continue to guide preventative action in the Solomon Islands.

The literature review identifies three key challenges relating to integration of gender-sensitive indicators in early warning systems: 1) connecting gender-sensitive indicators to existing public datasets, as there is often no publicly available data that accurately measures the relevant information for the indicator; 2) developing global indicators that also reflect context-specific dynamics and can be adapted to national or subnational early

warning systems; and 3) ensuring gender-sensitive data collection approaches, such as women's participation as monitors and analysts.

Since 2002, gender experts and researchers have been outlining the importance of overcoming these identified challenges and the implications of inconsistent gender integration in early warning systems. The experts consulted in this project echoed the findings from the literature review and further reiterated the need to continue building on efforts to date to integrate gender in early warning systems and more effectively share lessons learned from such projects to inform other initiatives seeking to enhance early warning systems.

During the interviews, experts spoke of the:

- Need for better coordination among gender and early warning communities;
- Importance of having an existing baseline of data to compare new data;
- Lack of commonly accepted gender-sensitive indicators;
- Inconsistencies in the collection of sex-disaggregated data (and associated datasets) even within large institutions and multilateral organizations;
- Importance of data analysts receiving training on gender-sensitive data collection and how to conduct gender analysis at the subnational level; and
- Importance of context specificity, and ongoing consultations with local women and girls, when developing suitable indicators and data collection strategies.

The insights from both the literature review and expert consultations directly shaped the indicators that were adapted and tested during the pilot in Nigeria, as well as the content of this global framework.



Two women take part in a mock polling observer training in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.

V. New and Modified Gender-Sensitive Early Warning Indicators

incidents involving women, men, boys, and girls that may be overlooked in existing early warning systems but could signal potential violence or conflict. IFES' literature review found that, where gender was included in early warning systems, it was primarily focused on measuring gender-based violence. This approach led to the consideration of gender only as an outcome (dependent variable) of violence rather than a predictor of violence (independent variable). It is certainly important to monitor increases in gender-based violence (including conflict-related sexual violence), and this is included in this framework's list of indicators; however, omitting other gender indicators risks discounting key factors that could enhance the prediction of violence. Attempts to restrict or rescind women's political, social, economic, and legal rights should also be seen as potential precursors to violence and conflict, as should any public narrative aimed at cementing narrowly defined gender roles, as these point to an increase in exclusionary or discriminatory practices. It is equally important that gender-sensitive indicators capture changes in behavior among or incidents involving men and boys as gender norms are also driving their behavior and can contribute in some instances to young men joining armed groups⁹ or being persecuted for defying traditionally prescribed gender roles based on societal definitions of masculinity.¹⁰

It is important to distinguish between the dynamic indicators suggested in this framework and more structural gender inequality indicators such as rates of women's political and workforce participation, literacy and maternal mortality. Structural indicators are important to monitor as part of longer-term conflict prevention, stabilization, and sustainable development efforts. These structural indicators tend to include more readily available (although often time-lagged) associated public data sets on a global level. However, unless there are extreme sudden changes in these structural indicators, they do not provide early warning analysts with sufficiently rapid-changing data that could signal an imminent outbreak or escalation of violence or conflict. For example, a national structural indicator such as "number of women in parliament" might only change whenever there is an election (generally every three to five years). Monitoring this structural indicator would not give early warning analysts who monitor daily, weekly, or monthly changes in an environment relevant information for their analysis. Indicators that monitor longer-term structural measures are still critical; in this framework, however, we have chosen to focus on more dynamic indicators. While the indicators in this framework focus on changes in *behavior* and *incidents* that might indicate upcoming violence or conflict, indicators that measure changing *attitudes* on gender equality and gender norms, when available, can serve as a bridge between dynamic indicators – which measure shorter-term changes – and more long-term structural indicators.

As there are different types of early warning systems with varying geographic scopes, purposes, and data collection methodologies, the proposed gender-sensitive indicators may need to be adapted to ensure their compatibility with specific early warning systems (acknowledging that not all the indicators will be suitable in every context). They have been drafted to maximize applicability to different early warning systems and

violence monitoring efforts across varying regional and country contexts. There may be additional indicators beyond this list that reflect more context-specific metrics of changing attitudes, growing hostilities and volatility, or increased community radicalization or support for armed groups, which can be monitored through tracking behavior changes or incidents based on gender norms. Implementors can ensure the context-specific adaption of these indicators, their definitions, and data collection strategies by holding consultations with local women and civil society groups in advance of the monitoring period to identify how gender behaviors and incidents could be monitored in a safe and efficient way by local monitors or through existing monitoring efforts.

As well as having different geographic scopes, time horizons, and data collection strategies, early warning systems can have different categorizations of indicators. The grouping of these indicators may vary but tend to be categorized as: security and justice; politics and governance; human rights; health; and economic factors. For gender to be comprehensively integrated in early warning systems, at least one gender-sensitive indicator must be included in each of these categories, and these gender-sensitive indicators should be analyzed contemporaneously. It is unlikely that variances in only one gender-sensitive indicator would sufficiently point to a changing security environment within a community. However, if noticeable changes appeared across several of the gender-sensitive indicators – such as a rapid decrease in women’s freedom of mobility, a sudden decrease in their presence in common places, and their increased efforts to acquire cash – these sudden changes could be indicative of growing insecurity or impending violence or conflict and highlight the need for more careful analysis. Another example of a sudden change could be the closing of factories, which could lead to a sudden spike in male youth unemployment, then an increase in gatherings of young men at religious sites and an upsurge in hypermasculine propaganda. Changes in these gender behaviors and incidents involving women, men, girls, and boys could signal an impending uptick in violence or conflict.

The table below includes the new or modified gender-sensitive indicators, rationale for inclusion in this framework, considerations to inform development of indicator parameters for specific contexts, and suggested data collection strategies.

A step-by-step guide on how to integrate these indicators in early warning systems and violence monitoring efforts is provided in Section VII; however, when considering the table below, it is important to highlight that:

- The indicators should be tailored to the specific context and existing early warning system or violence monitoring effort prior to integration.
- The definitions and data collection strategies should be adapted to reflect the local context and supplemented with additional context-specific information to ensure indicators, definitions, and data collection strategies are feasible and contextually appropriate.
- The indicator table presents a menu of indicators so that implementors can choose ones most



A voter in Georgia casts her ballot during the election.

relevant to their local context. The expectation is not that every single indicator mentioned here will be integrated in an early warning system or monitoring effort.

- Baseline data needs to be recorded for each of the gender-sensitive indicators at the beginning of the monitoring period to provide analysts with comparative data.
- This table focuses on gender-sensitive indicators to monitor and does not make suggestions about responses to changes in that indicator. Existing early warning systems or violence monitoring efforts often already have specified actions to undertake in response to a sudden change in risk.
- Indicators marked with an asterisk (*) in the table were tested as part of the Nigeria pilot – and include more detail than others as a result. Future pilots and other efforts to integrate indicators beyond those piloted in Nigeria during this project will help provide additional lessons learned.

Gender-Sensitive Early Warning Indicators

While endnotes for the global framework can be found at the end of this document, endnotes for this table are found on page 28.

CATEGORY 1

Security and Justice

Indicator	Rationale for Indicator	Definition Considerations	Possible Data Collection Strategy
Percentage of individuals who are women present in designated common places*	To monitor changes in women and girls' mobility and movement. A sudden change, particularly a sudden decrease, in women appearing in common areas they usually frequent could signal a fear of imminent violence, conflict or insecurity.	<p><i>Implementors will need to define "designated common places."</i></p> <p><i>Considerations and suggested definitions to tailor to the local context:</i></p> <p>"Designated common places" refers to locations in target states that are highly frequented by the public, such as markets, places of worship, locations for political events, public transportation, eateries, or places of leisure (e.g., parks or pools).</p> <p>These locations should be designated at the beginning of the monitoring period and should not change. For each location, the numerator will refer to the number of women present. The denominator will be the total number of people present at that location, generally ascertained by a rough count by the monitors.</p> <p>It is important to ensure the common place being monitored reflects local customs and norms. For example, in northern Nigeria, it is not the custom for women to go to markets, so monitoring their presence there would be ineffective.</p>	<p>It is critical for monitors to visit common places for monitoring on the same day of the week and at the same time to keep external variables as consistent as possible.</p> <p>In the reporting form, monitors should be requested to provide the following information:</p> <p>Location Type (e.g., market, townhall meeting, place of worship, political rally/event, other)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people (e.g., 0-25; 25-50; 50-100; more than 100) • Percentage of women present out of total number of people (e.g., 0-25%; 25-50%; 50-75%; mostly or all women) • Change in % from previous week (e.g., about the same; fewer women than previously; more women than previously; unknown) • Reasons for changes to number of women (open-ended) • Total number of people present (open-ended)

Indicator	Rationale for Indicator	Definition Considerations	Possible Data Collection Strategy
Number of male gatherings and presence of non-local men	<p>Increases in all-male gatherings and unusual movements of all-male groups are possible signs of community unrest or mobilization for the purpose of committing violence or causing conflict. In some contexts, there may be increased presence of men in a community ahead of a rally or campaign event during an election period.</p> <p>Supporters of some political parties may resort to violence and intimidation to show dominance, strength and superiority, as well as to intimidate potential voters supporting an opposing party.</p> <p>Instances of male groups descending on a community for violent purposes frequently occur around the world. For example, local women told the authors of this framework that they did not recognize the majority of hardliner Sinhalese men who were responsible for the March 2018 violence against Muslims in central Sri Lanka. It was suspected that the violence had been pre-organized with members of the group mobilizing on social media and travelling to the town for violent purposes.</p>	<p><i>Implementors will need to define “male gatherings” and “non-local men.”</i></p> <p><i>Considerations and suggested definitions to tailor to the local context:</i></p> <p>Unusual gathering sizes may differ depending on the context; for example, sporting events often expectedly draw larger crowds of men, so the emphasis should be on monitoring gatherings which are out of the ordinary for the time and day that the gathering is observed.</p> <p>Non-local men can include anyone suspected of not being a local resident. This, of course, is easier to ascertain in smaller towns that it is in urban settings; however, even in urban settings an influx of men from different areas may be noticeable.</p>	<p>Incident reporting forms should include estimated number of gatherings; estimated age range of those gathering; and number of men suspected of not being local residents of that area per gathering.</p> <p>Primary sources could include observation, eyewitness accounts or reports from a community reporting phone line; secondary sources could include weekly police reports and media reports. Some gatherings that do not lead to violence or lead to only minor scuffles may not be reported officially, but should be included where there is sufficient anecdotal information available or where the incident was observed by a local monitor or another eyewitness.</p>
Number of violent arrests by police or security force personnel* <p><i>Disaggregated by gender of person arrested; further disaggregated by: level of violence during the arrest (some heightened level of force; excessive force; unknown)</i></p>	<p>An increase in arrests of women active in protests, activism, or political and electoral processes may be viewed as an attempt to dissuade women from participating in political processes or opposition groups. An increase in arrests of women could also indicate an increase of police or security forces interested in or ordered to reaffirm harmful gender norms (i.e., that women should not participate in protests, activism, and/or politics), which can be an indicator of future violence or conflict. This increase can also indicate broader closing of civic space and an overall decline in peace and security. For example, during 2020 protests in Belarus,¹ women protestors and activists were disproportionately the targets of violent arrests.</p>	<p><i>Implementors will need to define level of violence pertaining to the violence used during arrest for the disaggregation.</i></p> <p><i>Considerations and suggested definitions to tailor to the local context:</i></p> <p>“Heightened level of force” refers to an arrest that was heavy handed despite the individual being arrested not resisting arrest, or which resulted in a scuffle or use of verbal intimidation by arresting officer towards the individual being arrested.</p> <p>“Excessive use of force” is when the force used to arrest the individual exceeds what is necessary. It can involve the use of a weapon and result in injury to the individual being arrested.</p>	<p>For this indicator, it is important to monitor the number of arrests and violent incidents against both women and men.</p> <p>Primary sources could include observation, eyewitness accounts or reports from a community reporting phone line; secondary sources could include weekly police reports and media reports where available (though noting the possible unwillingness of police to provide such data).</p>

Indicator	Rationale for Indicator	Definition Considerations	Possible Data Collection Strategy
<p>Number of reported incidents of gender-based violence, including sexual violence*</p> <p><i>Disaggregated by gender of victim</i></p>	<p>Levels of gender-based violence are known to rise in times of crises, including economic downturns, humanitarian emergencies and conflict, as well as during pandemics as has been observed during COVID-19 lockdowns. An increase in gender-based violence can signal rising insecurity. It can also indicate growing political instability and be used as a strategy to discourage women from participating in politics.</p> <p>For instance, in late 2015 in Burundi, there was a surge in sexual assaults committed against women living in neighborhoods with strong support for the opposition.²</p> <p>Research undertaken in Indonesia, Bangladesh and the Philippines in 2018-2019³ also found that individuals who support violence against women are three times more likely to support violent extremism and that support for violence against women predicted support for violent extremism more than any other factor, including degree of religiosity.</p>	<p><i>Implementors will need to define the types of violations covered under “gender-based violence” for the monitoring effort.</i></p> <p><i>Considerations and suggested definitions to tailor to the local context:</i></p> <p>“Gender-based violence” is an umbrella term which covers a broad spectrum of gendered sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or violence including rape; attempted rape; sexual exploitation; domestic violence; trafficking; forced sex work; female genital mutilation (in some contexts); and reproductive coercion.</p>	<p>While most cases of gender-based violence are perpetrated against women and girls, men and boys also experience this type of violence. It is therefore important to measure the number of reported instances of sexual violence against women and girls, men and boys (i.e., disaggregate the number of incidents based on gender). It is also important to note that reporting on instances of sexual violence against men and boys tends to be low due to the associated stigma.</p> <p>While monitoring changes in the number of incidences of gender-based violence is frequently included in lists of gender-sensitive early warning indicators, it is challenging to collect reliable data because cases of gender-based violence are systematically underreported, and monitors may encounter bureaucratic resistance to gathering this information on a regular basis from local police stations and hospitals.</p> <p>Secondary data sources can be used for this indicator, though accurate reporting of gender-based violence at the sub-national level and on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis is rare. The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) collects data on conflict related sexual violence targeting women, men and children but does not track sexual violence outside of the political/public sphere.⁴</p> <p>Implementors could also disaggregate by type of gender-based violence, but this decision would depend on the local context and availability of data.</p>

Indicator	Rationale for Indicator	Definition Considerations	Possible Data Collection Strategy
<p>Number of threats against/ incidents of intimidation of/ attacks on women in public roles</p> <p><i>Disaggregated by physical threats/ attacks and threats received online</i></p>	<p>In highly patriarchal societies, women in public roles, such as politicians and journalists or high-profile gender equality campaigners, can be seen as challenging gender norms and threatening the narrowly defined roles and rules for women and men. As with the sexist or homophobic propaganda indicator below, attacks or threats against women in public life can signal a growing intolerance for individuals not seen to be subscribing to strict gender roles or coming from minority groups.</p> <p>In February 2019, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders reported that women and gender-nonconforming human rights activists are facing increased repression and violence and that a rise in misogynistic, sexist and homophobic speech by political leaders in recent years has normalized violence against women human rights defenders.⁵</p> <p>In September 2020, the U.S. embassy in Kabul warned that Afghan women, in particular female government employees, teachers, and human rights activists, were at increased risk of attack by extremist groups following a wave of assassinations and assassination attempts of women.⁶</p> <p>In light of rising rates of online violence against women, it is also necessary to consider all forms of online harassment, intimidation and threats against women in public roles. For instance, a 2020 report by the UN Special Representative on Violence Against Women found that women journalists are increasingly and disproportionately targeted online.⁷</p>	<p><i>Implementors will need to define “threats,” “intimidation,” “attacks,” and “women in public roles.”</i></p> <p><i>Considerations and suggested definitions to tailor to the local context:</i></p> <p>The UN defines threats/ intimidation and attacks on women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.”⁸</p> <p>Online violence refers to the use of mobile phones, the internet, social media platforms or email used to harass, intimidate, bully or threaten individuals. A newer form of online violence also includes “doxing,” whereby an individual’s personal details, including phone number, address and email, are published online.</p>	<p>Primary sources could include observation, eyewitness accounts or reports from a community reporting phone line; secondary sources could include media reports where available.</p> <p>Data collection could also rely on social media monitoring. IFES experience collecting data on online violence and harassment against women highlights how challenging these efforts are, however. IFES has used data mining software, machine learning, and artificial intelligence to collect and sort online violence and harassment against women, but none of these techniques provided sufficient data quality to recommend this strategy. If resources allow, implementors could select a certain number of social media accounts or pages on one or multiple widely used social media platforms to monitor at regular intervals to record the number of threats against women in public roles. The selection of accounts/pages to monitor should be based on identified women in public roles (as is most relevant for the context) in addition to political party pages and other popular pages that might be associated with political or civic activism. The selection of social media platforms should be based on what the most popular platforms are in the context.</p>

CATEGORY 2

Social Norms and Gender Equality

Indicator	Rationale for Indicator	Definition Considerations	Possible Data Collection Strategy
Number of misogynistic, homophobic or sexist references or propaganda in the media, social media and at campaign rallies or public events*	<p>Increased use of misogynistic, sexist and homophobic propaganda and hate speech by political, community leaders and non-state actors is used to reinforce traditional gender norms and stereotypes, belittle political opponents and further ostracize minority population groups. Not only does it undermine efforts to promote gender equality and inclusion, but it also points to growing intolerance, radical exclusionary ideology and seeks to cement what is socially expected gendered behavior.</p> <p>This type of speech can include growing attacks and hatred towards LGBTQI individuals or those suspected of being gender non-conforming; increased public pressure for women to bear more children and leave the workforce; or increased propaganda on masculinity and societal expectations on what it means to be a man. Increased misogynistic propaganda and hate speech demonstrates an increasing “us vs. them” rhetoric and can lead to violence, conflict and instability. This indicator extends to monitoring draft laws restricting women’s movement, access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, or reinforcing traditional gender narratives.</p> <p>Misogynistic propaganda is also used as part of recruitment strategies of violent extremist groups. For example, in 2019, researchers in Libya catalogued the recruitment messaging being used by violent extremist groups promoting gender regressive ideologies and intolerance.⁹ In 2018 a study commissioned by UN Women also found significant gendered messaging formed part of ISIS’s recruitment and control strategies.¹⁰</p>	<p><i>Implementors will need to define “misogynistic, homophobic or sexist reference or propaganda.”</i></p> <p><i>Considerations and suggested definitions to tailor to the local context:</i></p> <p>“Misogynistic, homophobic and sexist references or propaganda” refers to the use of social norms to undermine or belittle opponents. This can include, but is not limited to: calling into question a person’s masculinity/ fatherhood/breadwinner status, femininity/ motherhood, or sexual orientation; bragging about sexual exploits or prowess, including sexual assaults; making sexually derogatory comments about a man’s mother, wife or sister; speaking about sexual violence to attack opponents, and using perceived negative stereotypes to discredit individuals (such as calling women “aggressive” or “emotional”).</p> <p>Implementors could work with local women’s groups to develop a hate speech lexicon to assist with consistent data collection on this indicator.</p>	<p>Data collection for this indicator could consist of media and social media monitoring as well as attending public events, campaign rallies, places of worship or other gatherings where people come together to listen to influential people speak.</p> <p>As mentioned above, social media monitoring is challenging, but can be done by choosing a specific number of social media accounts to monitor, agreeing on definitions of misogynistic, homophobic or sexist references (or developing a hate speech lexicon) and monitoring those accounts regularly.</p>

Indicator	Rationale for Indicator	Definition Considerations	Possible Data Collection Strategy
Changes in expectations and practice around dress codes for women and girls	<p>Changes in dress codes for women and girls could indicate changes in women's perceptions of societal openness towards women's choices and bodily autonomy. Women may elect to cover more of their body if they are anticipating a dramatic political shift towards conservatism, or risk of violence to protect themselves, or may choose to cover less of their body during political shifts in the other direction or in safer atmospheres. In 2019, the UN Secretary General warned that sudden and extreme restrictions on women's rights are among the earliest signs of the spread of violent extremism within a community.¹¹ One the most visible signs of community radicalization is a shift in conservative dress by women and girls. For instance, a 2017 study in Indonesia found that the increased and shifting use of conservative dress was one of four key indicators of increasing radicalization within a particular community. Similarly, Afghan women peacebuilders told the authors of this framework that women in some provinces are increasingly covered when they go outside to protect themselves from possible future attacks from the Taliban.¹²</p> <p>In Cambodia, women's rights activists in 2020 have been campaigning against a proposed law which could see police fine women for being inappropriately dressed.¹³ While it is being justified to preserve traditional values, women's rights activists see this as a first step in curtailing women's rights.</p>	<p><i>Implementors will need to define "changes in dress code."</i></p> <p><i>Considerations and suggested definitions to tailor to the local context:</i></p> <p>Changes in dress code could refer to women and girls wearing clothes different from the norm for that context, for example that reveal less of their body (sleeves down to their wrists, full-length skirts or pants, head coverings) or clothes that reveal more of their body (short-sleeved or sleeveless tops, shorter dresses, skirts, or shorts).</p>	<p>Where relevant, this indicator could be monitored alongside the indicator tracking changes to women's participation in common places. As well as recording the weekly number of women present at a particular location, monitors could also track any shifting patterns in changes in how women and girls are dressing.</p> <p>In the reporting form, if this indicator is being monitored alongside the commonplace indicator, monitors could record the percentage of women and girls wearing conservative dress (e.g., 0-25%; 25-50%; 50-75; mostly or all women) out of the total number of women, based on the definition decided upon for this indicator.</p> <p>This indicator may be difficult to capture in colder environments, so that should be considered when determining whether to include this indicator as part of monitoring efforts.</p>

CATEGORY 3

Politics and Governance

Indicator	Rationale for Indicator	Definition Considerations	Possible Data Collection Strategy
Number of electoral violence events* <i>Disaggregated by gender of victim and perpetrator</i>	<p>Electoral violence against women can be a sign of strict gender norms that emphasize that women should not participate in politics, and could indicate future violence or conflict. A 2018 UN Report found that physical and online violence against women in politics and during elections – including against female voters, candidates, and electoral and party officials – is widespread, often normalized and is tolerated as a result of deeply ingrained patriarchal stereotypes which favor men in public roles and relegate women to the private and home sphere.¹⁴</p>	<p><i>Implementors will need to define “electoral violence events.”</i></p> <p><i>Considerations and suggested definitions to tailor to the local context:</i></p> <p>This indicator tracks electoral violence against men and women as it is important to compare how these differ.</p> <p>“Electoral violence” is defined as “any random or organized act or threat to intimidate, physically harm, blackmail, or abuse a political stakeholder in seeking to determine, delay, or to otherwise influence an electoral process.”¹⁶</p>	<p>Incident reporting forms can capture incidences of electoral violence disaggregated by gender/number of perpetrators and victims.</p> <p>As in the Nigeria Election Violence Reporting (NEVR) electoral violence tool, establishing a well-publicized community phone line whereby community members can report instances of electoral violence is also a useful data collection method that is worth considering where possible with available resources.</p>
Restrictions on NGOs, in particular women’s organizations	<p>Restrictions, silencing and active clamping down on NGOs indicates a closing of civic space and curtailments on freedom of expression and assembly which can then fuel conflict and violence. Attempts to limit the work of local NGOs can take many forms but include imposing strict financial controls and bans on certain types of donors; requiring organizations be registered with local authorities or issued with licenses to operate; requiring organizations to apply for permits for all new activities; requiring pre-approval of operational plans; raids of offices and arrests of staff; or strict censorship laws prohibiting organizations from campaigning against or speaking out against government policies, institutions or officials.</p> <p>Women’s organizations promoting women’s rights and gender equality are frequently targeted as their work is seen as going against traditional values, cultures and norms, and supporting western concepts. A 2019 CIVICUS report found that organizations working on gender issues are disproportionately affected by growing restrictions on NGOs and groups advocating on women’s rights are the most commonly involved in civic space incidents.¹⁵</p>	<p><i>Implementors will need to define “restrictions.”</i></p> <p><i>Considerations and suggested definitions to tailor to the local context:</i></p> <p>“Restrictions on NGOs” refers to laws, policies or administrative regulations which aim to “to interfere with the right to freedom of association and to hamper the work of civil society organizations and individuals who participate in them.”¹⁷</p> <p>“Women’s organizations” refers to “civil society organizations with an overt women’s or girls’ rights, gender equality or feminist purpose; women’s rights organizations play a central role in spearheading change in support of gender equality.”¹⁸</p>	<p>This indicator can be tracked by monitoring any proposed new laws or regulations by local authorities. Where possible and relevant, local monitors could also regularly seek confidential feedback from local women’s organizations on whether they are experiencing new challenges in holding planned activities or in the ongoing implementation of their programs.</p> <p>In the reporting form, following interviews with local women’s groups, monitors could record if these women thought the environment for their organization was: significantly more restricted; slightly more restricted; the same; slightly less restricted; or significantly less restricted.</p>

CATEGORY 4

Economy

Indicator	Rationale for Indicator	Definition Considerations	Possible Data Collection Strategy
Rapid attempts by women to acquire cash, such as selling jewelry	<p>Women seeking to sell valuables and personal goods, such as jewelry, is a sign of extreme financial stress and hardship within a household and can also be a precursor to mass displacement if the rapid cash acquired is used to fund their journey or those of a family member. If women in the communities being monitored begin selling their personal goods, it may be a sign that they are anticipating violence or conflict, and therefore will need cash on hand.</p> <p>Increases in child marriage and sex work are also negative coping strategies resulting from severe economic hardship during crises and instability which should also be monitored in relevant contexts. The increase of sex work (whether voluntary or forced) can also be a result of the increased presence of military or armed groups in the area.</p>	<p><i>Implementors will need to define a “rapid attempt to acquire cash.”</i></p> <p><i>Considerations and suggested definitions to tailor to the local context:</i></p> <p>“Rapid attempts by women to acquire cash” refers to women making quick decisions, usually due to financial stress, to get income for an immediate need, such as selling valuables.</p>	<p>Where common place monitoring is taking place, monitors at marketplaces and shops could be encouraged to pay close attention to vendors buying and selling jewelry and other secondhand goods to determine whether there is an increase in traffic in women seeking to sell valuable jobs. Consultations with local women’s groups could also identify context-specific ways to monitor this indicator.</p>
Unemployment rate <i>Disaggregated by gender and age</i>	<p>An increase or decrease in the unemployment rate could indicate an increase or decrease in violence or conflict, as this indicator likely correlates with availability of income.</p> <p>Disaggregation by gender and age will allow implementors to see specific shifts in the unemployment rate for different segments of the population. For example, across multiple conflict and fragile settings, researchers have documented how the loss of income, inability to marry due to financial hardship and the then loss of perceived manhood have contributed to young men joining armed groups as a way of reaffirming their masculinity.¹⁹ An increase in the youth male unemployment rate in particular could indicate an uptick in violence and conflict.</p>	<p><i>Implementors will need to define “unemployment rate,” with a definition relevant to the country context and which enables data collection.</i></p> <p>The World Bank defines “unemployment” as “the share of the labor force that is without work but available for and seeking employment” and notes that “definitions of labor force and unemployment differ by country.”²⁰ In certain contexts, it may be important to consider that many existing measures of employment may lack a meaningful way to measure informal employment (such as women’s work in agriculture), may count people only working part-time or temporary jobs, and might not count people who want to work but cannot or do not seek work for a variety of reasons. If using existing employment or unemployment measures, these are factors to consider.</p>	<p>Implementors could be encouraged to keep track of unemployment figures, either by formally inquiring at local government offices (if that information is available) or through informally surveying local civil society groups who represent women or young people, or support people who are unemployed. Monitors could also monitor the media for news relating to closures of major employers.</p>

CATEGORY 5

Other

Indicator	Rationale for Indicator	Definition Considerations	Possible Data Collection Strategy
Number of female-headed households	The absence of men from a community can be due to a number of factors, including targeting of men through arrests, killings or kidnapping; the departure of men to join armed groups or national security forces; or due to seasonal migration or employment reasons. Depending on the context, rapid changes in female-headed households could indicate the potential for an escalation or outbreak in violence or conflict.	<i>Implementors will need to define "female-headed household."</i> <i>Considerations and suggested definitions to tailor to the local context:</i> "Female headed households" refers to a "Household in which female is the sole or main income producer and decision-maker." ²²	Data collection for this indicator will depend on the monitoring context due to the varying ways that the number of female-headed households is counted but could rely on local government offices that might track this data. If data is not available from local governments, monitors could reach out to women's organizations who work with single women and/or single mothers to understand their perceptions on whether the number of female-headed households is significantly increasing, slightly increasing, staying the same, slightly decreasing, or significantly decreasing.
Increase in demand for contraception	Linked to increases in gender-based violence, the increase in demand for contraception can indicate a fear of widespread sexual violence either in a community or for women who are about to be displaced. For example, Amnesty International has reported on refugee and migrant women in Libya taking contraception as a precaution ahead of their onward journeys as sexual violence is so prevalent along the smuggling routes. ²¹	<i>Implementors will need to define "contraception."</i> <i>Considerations and suggested definitions to tailor to the local context:</i> "Contraception" is defined as the "deliberate prevention of conception or impregnation." ²³	Implementors could confidentially interview doctors or nurses at hospitals, health centers, and local clinics to determine if the demand has increased. Rather than collecting an absolute number of how many requests were being made for contraception, monitors could ask health care providers, including those in humanitarian settings, if they believe the demand has significantly increased, increased, stayed the same, decreased, or significantly decreased at regular intervals. Multiple health centers could be monitored to provide comparative data.
Increase in trafficking of women and girls <i>Disaggregated by whether the trafficking was for sex [yes, no, or unknown]</i>	The increased trafficking of women and girls for sex can be a result of a number of different factors, including the increased presence of armed groups or security forces in a region, as well as for recruitment and revenue generation by non-state armed groups.	<i>Implementors will need to define "trafficking of women and girls for sex."</i> <i>Considerations and suggested definitions to tailor to the local context:</i> "Human trafficking" refers to "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.	Implementers should consult with frontline service providers to develop a list of locally applicable signs that an increase in sex trafficking may be taking place. As with the indicator above, monitors could ask health care providers or other frontline service providers, including humanitarian actors, if they feel like rate of sex trafficking has significantly increased, increased, stayed the same, decreased, or significantly decreased at regular intervals.

Indicator	Rationale for indicator	Definition considerations	Possible data collection strategy
		Exploitation includes, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. ²⁴ For this indicator, only cases of human trafficking targeting women and girls should be counted.	

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VI. Summary of Pilot Implementation Findings

Between September and December 2020, IFES worked with Nigerian partner organization KDI to test five adapted gender-sensitive indicators as part of the NEVR initiative,¹¹ an existing KDI and IFES electoral violence monitoring project. Monitoring took place in six states holding by-elections and two states holding statewide local elections. One monitor also remained in Ondo to monitor any potential post-election violence and to test the common place monitoring indicator. A total of 42 monitors, including 23 women, were deployed across the nine states (Ondo, Bayelsa, Cross Rivers, Imo, Kogi, Lagos, Plateau, Gombe, and Abia). A full report on the pilot is included as Annex B.

Nigeria was chosen for the pilot in part due to IFES' history supporting electoral violence monitoring throughout the country in collaboration with KDI. KDI works alongside local and international organizations in Nigeria to promote peaceful elections, active citizen engagement in democratic processes, and a sustainable economy. As well as having an existing working relationship with IFES, KDI was selected as the local implementing partner for this pilot due to its established network of local monitors across Nigeria; knowledge of local customs and ethnic groups in different parts of the country; and expertise in collecting and analyzing subnational data. Nigeria also fit the criteria developed for selecting a pilot country as it has experienced political, electoral and/or extremist violence; had upcoming pertinent political events (elections); had regional and cultural diversity across states; and had existing violence monitoring efforts.

In partnership with IFES, KDI adapted five indicators from the short list created for this framework into its existing electoral violence monitoring effort. The indicators needed to easily fit into existing electoral violence monitoring efforts but also be applicable or adaptable to other early warning systems with a broader monitoring focus beyond elections. The indicators were selected after conducting desk research on gender norms and women's rights in the identified Nigerian states and holding consultations with KDI.

The five gender-sensitive indicators chosen were:

- Number of incidents of targeted violence and intimidation against voters, electoral officials, and party representatives – disaggregated by sex, victim, and perpetrator;
- Number of arrests of individuals active in political and electoral processes – disaggregated by sex and by the level of violence during the arrest;
- Number of campaign communications that utilize or refer to misogynistic, homophobic, or sexist references or propaganda;
- Percentage of individuals who are women present in designated common places; and
- Rate of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, leading up to and after the election.

As the pilot progressed, the focus further broadened beyond just monitoring electoral violence, in part due to the postponement of the elections and the temporary suspension of all campaigning.

Data Collection

The data collection strategy used for these indicators included a combination of a) filling out an incident reporting form that was updated to include additional gender, victim, and perpetrator disaggregates and pertinent pilot indicator information; b) weekly monitoring of social media accounts of candidates, whereby the local monitors developed a monitoring schedule to weekly check the Twitter and/or Facebook accounts of all candidates who had accounts as well as daily monitoring of local media outlets; c) identifying common places that are generally well attended by women and monitored them at the same time and day each week; and d) observing political events and campaign rallies to report on incidents and interview eyewitnesses. As per KDI's existing verification methods, all reported incidents that were not witnessed directly by the local monitor or reported on in mainstream news outlets had to be verified by a second source. These secondary reports could include incidents reported through eyewitness accounts (but not from monitors) or the toll-free phone line set up as part of NEVR monitoring efforts. This second verification layer could include seeking a second eyewitness account, obtaining confirmation from local police stations, or visiting hospitals to confirm a victim of violence had been hospitalized, while retaining confidentiality without identifying the victim.

Data Management

There is no value in collecting data without effective tools for managing it and quickly obtaining disaggregated values from new entries. To demonstrate that any organization – regardless of resources and capacity – could take up these efforts, it was important for the project to utilize cost-effective and user-friendly data management tools. The team created a spreadsheet-based database in Excel that can be hosted on a platform like Sharepoint or Google Sheets and permits simultaneous data entry and updating.

Given the remote collaboration between IFES and KDI, it was also beneficial to provide regular feedback on the quality of the data being collected and identify potential improvements in the data collection process (this was conducted on a weekly basis). Without this immediate feedback, adjustments would not have been made and the quality of the data would not have improved over the course of the pilot. As part of this effort to track data quality, a dashboard was set up to evaluate the weekly data being received across all five indicators. Data received for each of the indicators was scored weekly on a scale from one to five (with lower numbers reflecting weaker data quality). Despite the overall data collection challenges experienced during the pilot outlined below, this feedback system and data quality scoring process enabled the consistent improvement in quality of data being reported. The average data quality score improved from 1.5 to 4.3 out of five over the course of the monitoring period.

Data Collection and Monitoring Challenges

In addition to COVID-19 related restrictions on movement, there were other challenges that impacted the local contexts being monitored and the ability of monitors to safely and regularly collect data. These meant that some monitors were not able to systematically collect data on some of the indicators during this period, leading to less data than anticipated. Two of those challenges were: 1) deadly protests against police brutality in October, which led to curfews, lockdowns, and the postponement of several local elections, and 2) the small-

scale by-elections occurring in six of the states, which meant that the elections were so localized that they did not generate either much mainstream media attention or interest from the local communities in which they were happening. Small-scale elections are accompanied by a limited number of campaign events held, which drew small numbers of people.

In addition, given that training for monitors was done quickly to ensure that there was enough time in the pre-electoral period to allow for data collection, some edits to the data collection methodology – that affected the data being collected – occurred during the data collection period. Where possible, IFES continued to work with KDI to improve the quality of the data that could be collected.

In the post-pilot survey, the top three challenges listed by monitors in terms of data collection were concerns for their safety; lack of consistent access to police reports; and too many changes in data collection/indicators during the monitoring period. These are important lessons that need to be applied to future efforts, and a summary of key learnings from the pilot to address these issues is included below.

Other Key Adaptations and Improvements Made During the Course of the Pilot

Over the course of the pilot, there was also noticeable progress made in the collection of sex-disaggregated data. When reporting on violent incidents and arrests, monitors increasingly provided, where available, details on victims and perpetrators, including: the total number of victims; the number of female victims; the number of male victims; the number of victims whose gender is unknown; the total number of perpetrators; the number of female perpetrators; the number of male perpetrators; and the number of perpetrators whose gender is unknown. This sex disaggregation enabled IFES to have a greater understanding of the incidents being reported on and then analyze overall victim and perpetrator rates. IFES also worked with KDI to update its monitoring forms to disaggregate by type of perpetrator and type of victim to include perpetrator codes such as security force/police; member of the public; individual linked to a political party; partner/family violence perpetrator; sexual violence perpetrator; election worker; or unknown. The final victim codes included government/state actor; political party leader or supporter, candidate or candidate supporter; party agent; election observer/monitor; election worker; voter; protester; government/local authority property; gender-based violence victim; or member of the public. For future efforts, victim categories could be further expanded to include, where applicable, women activists, NGO workers, journalists, and prominent figures.

At the end of the pilot, 26 percent of local monitors indicated that data for gender-sensitive indicators was challenging to collect; 29 percent said it was both easy and challenging; and 45 percent thought it was easy. However, despite more than half of the monitors experiencing some challenges with gender-sensitive data collection, 88 percent of them agreed that gender-sensitive indicators are very helpful in understanding conflict in Nigeria, and 12 percent thought they were somewhat helpful. None of the monitors thought that gender-sensitive indicators were either somewhat unhelpful or not helpful at all. This finding highlights the understanding among early warning monitors of the need to continue improving the data collection strategies for gender-sensitive indicators and why these are important to integrate in early warning systems.

Summary of Key Learnings from the Pilot

While the pilot highlighted some significant challenges in collecting data on gender-sensitive indicators, it also provided IFES with key lessons learned related to planning, training, and data collection, which could inform and improve future efforts:

Planning

- Allocating sufficient time before the start of the monitoring period to develop, test, and finetune the context-specific gender-sensitive indicators and their data collections strategies in consultation with local implementing partners, women's organizations working on local conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts, and monitors who will be collecting the data;
- Integrating indicators and data collection methodologies into reporting tools already being used by local monitors rather than creating entirely new tools, forms, or processes;
- Crafting exact definitions of each indicator to allow for consistent data collection and ensuring that monitors understand all the definitions; and
- Issuing identification to local monitors to use when seeking eyewitness interviews or speaking with local authorities, only in contexts where identification will make monitors safer rather than targets of violence.

Training

- Ensuring the security training and ongoing guidance provided to the monitors is sufficient to alleviate the safety concerns of local monitors;
- Allowing for at least two days for in-person training that draws on context-specific scenarios and examples for monitors to practice, if resources allow (instead of a daylong training session provided in a hybrid in-person and virtual environment due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, as was done in this pilot); and
- Developing an accompanying toolkit for monitors for reference after the training sessions have been completed.

Data Collection

- Establishing a well-publicized toll-free community phone line to collect information on incidents of violence against



Fulani women in Nigeria queuing to get registered to vote in Kwara state. Photo credit: Nena Lukin

women, intimidation, threats, or attacks on women's organizations and women in public roles, or instances of sexist, misogynistic, or homophobic hate speech and propaganda. Such a tool can allow for safe reporting of incidences of violence and increase the data collected, when resources allow. If the phone line is staffed with live operators, these operators should be trained on how to speak with survivors of violence and should be able to share resources with survivors, as requested. If the phone line is not staffed, the answering machine message could provide a phone number or website of a local organization to which survivors could go if needed;

- Providing regular feedback to local implementing partners that could then be immediately implemented and reflected in the following week's dataset;
- Not relying on local police stations for arrest data and rates of reported gender-based violence. Instead, implementors should establish relationships with women's shelters, women's organizations, and/or humanitarian actors providing front-line services to survivors of sexual or domestic violence or working on other community-level gender equality initiatives. Implementors should ensure that the data collection strategy for arrests and gender-based violence in no way further jeopardizes the safety of the survivors or the organizations helping them;
- Seeking eyewitness accounts that can provide further details on who was involved in a particular incident, wherever possible, as media monitoring alone often does not provide sufficient sex-disaggregated data; and
- Developing, in consultation with local partners, a compendium of commonly used derogatory terms used in local contexts (e.g., a hate speech lexicon) as a way of providing more guidance on what to look for when monitoring for sexist, misogynistic, or homophobic hate speech and propaganda.

There would be significant benefit in retesting these five indicators across Nigerian states and conducting similar pilots testing these five indicators, or others included as part of this framework, in other countries and regions to expand on the lessons learned from this pilot.

VII. Integrating Gender-Sensitive Indicators in Early Warning Systems

IFES recommends a five-step process to facilitate the integration of gender-sensitive indicators in existing early warning systems and responses. This process includes: 1) conducting a gender analysis to understand local norms and dynamics, and how these relate to potential outbreaks or escalations of violence and conflict; 2) identifying applicable gender-sensitive indicators from the global framework and adapting them to local contexts; 3) developing safe and gender-sensitive data collection strategies based on the methods available; 4) analyzing the data in a gender-sensitive way; and 5) ensuring gender-sensitive policy responses.

Step 1: Conducting a Gender Analysis

Undertaking a gender analysis prior to selecting gender-sensitive indicators will enable early warning analysts to understand existing gender norms and roles; identify the differentiated experiences of women, men, girls, and boys (across political, economic, workplace, justice, educational, land, and health factors); and identify gender and community dynamics. It is important to apply an intersectional lens to this analysis to avoid seeing all women and girls as a homogenous group and to ensure that intersectionality issues are considered, including, but not limited to: persons with disabilities; LGBTQI populations; rural-residing; girls; ethnic and/or religious minorities; Indigenous populations; internally displaced persons or refugees; female-headed households; and/or others as applicable. If sufficient time and resources are available, the methodology for the gender analysis should consist of both a desk review of available information and data relating to that particular context, as well as key informant interviews with local women and civil society groups working on peacebuilding, deradicalization, or gender equality efforts.

A number of gender analysis toolkits are available online that can provide guidance and recommendations.¹² Key issues and questions to consider include:

- Existing discriminatory practices that restrict women's freedom of movement or ability to own land; participate in public life, the workforce, and religious activities; or undertake activism;
- Changes in livelihood opportunities that can limit the ability of men to earn an income and fulfill their traditional role as economic heads of households or that require women and girls to travel greater distances to collect food, water, and firewood;
- The different ways in which diverse men, women, boys, and girls are involved in inciting, committing, or preventing violence and conflict;

- Incidents of sexual violence and other forms of targeted violence against specific groups of women and girls, or men and boys, based on their ethnicity, religions, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or gender identity;
- The differentiated roles, responsibilities, and decision-making capabilities of women and men both inside and outside the household;
- Changing access for women and men to resources including land, water, and credit; and
- The prevalence of gender stereotypes and reinforcement of traditionally prescribed gender roles in public discourse.

Step 2: Identifying Applicable Gender-Sensitive Indicators and Adapting Them to Local Contexts

Based on the findings from the gender analysis, implementors should then consider the gender-sensitive indicators listed in the table above and determine which would be most applicable in the specific context being monitored. The selected indicators should also reflect the nature of the risk being monitored (whether political or electoral violence, conflict, extremist violence, or other forms of instability); and any pertinent political events that may instigate the outbreak or escalation of political tensions (such as elections, referendums, peace processes, or reconciliation dialogues). As mentioned above, if an existing early warning system has existing categories of different indicators, then at least one gender-sensitive indicator should be chosen for each category. When choosing indicators, it is critical that implementors decide whether they will use primary or secondary data for the indicators. If using secondary data, implementors will need to select indicators that have existing data sources (i.e., where data does not need to be collected firsthand by the implementor). Given the dearth of subnational gender-related data, using secondary data sources might greatly limit which indicators can be used. If using primary data collection, further guidance on designing data collection strategies is included in Step 3 below.

After selecting indicators from the global list, the indicators and their definitions should then also be amended accordingly to the local context. It is crucial to define each part of the indicator so that there is a consistent understanding among everyone involved in the early warning or violence monitoring process of what the indicator is and what it is aiming to measure. For example, if implementors are using the common place monitoring indicator, this phase of the process should include designating areas to monitor and designating fixed days and times to monitor these common places. Through the gender analysis, implementors might find there is a factor they want to track that is not included as part of the global framework indicator list. If that is the case, implementors should draft additional context-specific indicators and associated definitions and data collection methods similar to the table above.

Step 3: Developing Safe and Relevant Gender-Sensitive Data Collection Strategies Based on the Methods Available

Data collection strategies can include both primary and secondary sources and should specify the disaggregation of data by sex and, where possible, further disaggregate by other identity categories like ethnicity; religious or cultural background; and whether an individual identifies as part of the LGBTQI community, as possible and relevant. If using secondary data, it will be important for implementors to understand what data is already available, either publicly or that they might have access to through existing partnerships or connections.

If implementors are using primary data collection for one or more of the gender-sensitive indicators, they will need to design data collection strategies for those indicators. For implementors already engaged in a monitoring effort, and thus already using an existing situational or incident reporting form that is submitted on a regular basis, this form can be updated to include questions to collect data needed for the newly included gender-sensitive indicators. This form update includes disaggregating existing data collected by sex; for example, if monitors are already tracking the number of violent events at political rallies, the form could be updated to ask for the gender of the victims and of the perpetrators. In addition, as highlighted above, perpetrator categories could also be added that include, where relevant: security force/police; member of the public; individual linked to a political party; and partner/family violence perpetrator. Victim categories could also be added to include: voter; protester; gender-based violence victim; activists or NGO workers; civil servants; teachers; journalists and prominent figures. For implementors who may not be already engaged in primary data collection, it will be important to develop a full monitoring plan, which would include: whether monitors will conduct in-person or remote monitoring (or a combination of both); how many monitors will be needed; where monitors will need to be deployed (if there is in-person monitoring); and how monitors will record and submit data. Once data collection strategies are designed, it is necessary to provide training so monitors understand what data to collect and how. It is also important to train monitors on how to interact with survivors of gender-based violence sensitively and appropriately. Some of the training materials IFES developed for the training sessions with local KDI monitors are included as Annex D. This step is critical to ensure consistency in data collection across all the monitors. All data collection strategies involving local monitors need to include the development of specific gender-sensitive security protocols that address the differentiated security risks that threaten the safety of women and men local monitors as well as the safety of any eyewitnesses or key informants they may speak with as part of their monitoring activities.

Collecting primary subnational sex-disaggregated data and identifying reliable secondary sources of such data is extremely challenging. This difficulty has hindered previous efforts to integrate gender-sensitive indicators in early warning systems. It is important, though, that implementors do their best to balance the rigorosity of the data being collected with the reality of what information is available on the ground, and not use challenges of collecting gender-sensitive indicators as a justification for noninclusion. While the data being collected might not meet the highest, most rigorous standards of data collection, implementors must find a middle ground between the resources and access they have and data collection best practices. For example, while it might not be possible to collect the exact number of requests for contraception at every health center in a community, it might be possible to interview health care workers about whether the demand increased or decreased (and data can be coded as “0” or “1” accordingly). This qualitative strategy might not be as methodologically rigorous for some data analysts, but, given the challenges with collecting gender-related data and the need for this kind of data, innovative approaches must be pursued.

Step 4: Analyzing the Data in a Gender-Sensitive Way

The indicators in this framework have been developed based on a hypothesis that sudden changes in the behaviors and incidents being monitored can signal increasing insecurity within a community or risks of rising hostility, violence, or conflict. Therefore, a system needs to be in place to monitor and analyze data collected on the gender-sensitive indicators for changes over time. If the gender-sensitive indicators are being integrated in existing early warning systems, then it is assumed that there will already be a system in place for data analysis. This system, however, will need to be updated, and analysts trained, to consider the new gender-sensitive indicators also being monitored. Analysts will need to determine the severity of fluctuations in the data over a certain period of time that would trigger alert mechanisms. For example, if implementors are monitoring common places, analysts will need to determine what percentage point signals a “sudden” increase or decrease of women present in those common places. Analysts would also need to determine how many locations that have a “sudden” increase or decrease of women would trigger a warning of violence or conflict (i.e., if a sudden decrease happened at only one common place being monitored, or if it was happening at multiple common places across the region or subregion). For example, analysts might determine that of the 10 common places that are being monitored, a 20-percentage point decrease in the percentage of individuals who are women in at least five of those 10 places over a one-week period would trigger a warning of potential violence or conflict. This type of analysis strategy should be determined for all of the gender-sensitive indicators being monitored.

Analysts might also be encouraged to examine why changes might be occurring: for example, the reasons for a sudden spike in female-headed households or a large uptick in the demand for contraception. Following up the data analysis with consultations with local women’s organizations or experts about reasons for the change might give the analysts more information than numbers alone could provide.

Step 5: Ensuring Gender-Sensitive Policy Responses

Once indicators reveal potential instability, violence, or conflict, timely and appropriate policy responses to potential risks are required. Existing early warning systems might already have mechanisms in place to respond when potential violence or conflict is detected. These mechanisms could include informing government and/or elected officials; informing service providers or civil society organizations that work closely with communities; or releasing public data, information, and/or reports. In responding to warnings of violence or conflict, decision-makers need to embed gender-sensitive approaches into their overall preventative measures as well as recognize that the erosion of women’s rights and gender equality is in itself a threat to peace and security as it furthers exclusionary and discriminatory practices that have been shown to indicate rising risk. In addition to broader efforts to strengthen the promotion of gender equality in laws, policies, and institutions, gender-sensitive policy responses also include actions such as systematically condemning targeted attacks against women human rights defenders, activists, and women in high-profile public roles; having zero tolerance for anti-women’s rights or homophobic rhetoric; and being vigilant to any attempts that seek to curtail women’s and girls’ rights and freedoms. It also means ensuring that any policy responses to curtail violence or conflict reflect the differential experiences of women, men, girls, and boys.

VIII. Recommendations



The efforts undertaken as part of this project and the lessons learned from the Nigerian pilot point to two principal needs: 1) to strengthen the collection of primary sex-disaggregated data (and develop associated datasets) at the subnational level, which can track changes in gender behavior and incidents; and 2) continued evidence-based interventions that further establish the importance of integrating gender perspectives in early warning systems.

The predominant view among early warning analysts remains that gender-sensitive indicators fail to provide any relevant or sufficient data that can be tracked, measured, or contribute to forecasting methods. This misconception stems from the unavailability of subnational gender data to serve as a baseline for future monitoring efforts and an over-reliance on long-term structural gender indicators that do not provide sufficient variations over the course of a year to detect any rapid changes in gender behavior or incidents or resulting risk of violence and conflict.

Addressing these challenges will require sustained interest and investment from a broad range of stakeholders and the further investigation, testing, and sharing of lessons learned to strengthen the integration of gender in early warning systems. As such, in addition to the five-step process outlined above, IFES makes the following recommendations to early warning systems and donors:

Recommendations to Early Warning System Implementors

- Link the development of gender-sensitive indicators with broader peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and deradicalization efforts already being undertaken by international and local organizations, including women's organizations;
- Invest in pilots focusing on localized context-relevant primary data collection in areas prone to violence or conflict ("hot spots"), in close collaboration and partnership with local women's organizations working on local conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts, to develop and test indicators and establish localized baselines of data;
- Ensure these initiatives identify women's organizations representing groups who may be at heightened risk of violence, including ethnic and religious minority and Indigenous groups;
- Institutionalize the collection of sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive analysis in early warning efforts, and where possible further disaggregate by ethnicity, religious, or cultural background, and LGBTQI individuals;
- Ensure gender parity within local monitoring teams to ensure that women monitors can meaningfully participate, and that safe and culturally sensitive interviews with local women are conducted;

- Ensure gender-sensitive indicators measuring rates of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, also collect instances violence against men and boys; and
- Set up tailored data management and analysis tools allowing for easy data entry and aggregating and disaggregating of data, so that analysts can quickly make sense of data received and logged. Data management tools can be created in existing, low-cost, or free spreadsheet applications.

Recommendations to International Donors

- Fund further initiatives across different geopolitical contexts and initiate knowledge sharing and lessons learned on the integration of context-specific gender-sensitive early warning indicators, data collection and policy responses;
- Invest in further research on documenting and analyzing concepts of masculinity as a driver of violence and conflict;
- Encourage the integration of gender-sensitive indicators in national conflict-prevention efforts, including in National Action Plans on Women, Peace, and Security and National Action Plans to Counter Violent Extremism; and
- Encourage multilateral and regional peacekeeping and monitoring missions to integrate gender-sensitive indicators as part of their protection of civilian-mandated tasks, in consultation with local women's organizations.



A Kenyan woman participates in a campaign for peace.

Annexes



Annex A: Literature Review

The literature review analyzed more than 60 documents, as well as the key takeaways from consultations with key gender, data collection, and early warning experts to inform this global framework.

Annex B: Nigeria Pilot Full Report

This report provides additional detail on the pilot implementation, where IFES and KDI tested five gender-sensitive indicators in nine Nigerian states as part an existing electoral violence monitoring project.

Annex C: List of Experts Consulted

This document includes a full list of experts consulted throughout this project.

Annex D: Training Materials for Nigeria Pilot

The training materials provide an example of some of the content that can be used to train local monitors for data collection on gender-sensitive indicators.

Annex E: Inventory of Existing Gender-Sensitive Indicators

To accompany the literature review, IFES compiled an extensive inventory of more than 300 gender-sensitive indicators that had been previously included or suggested for inclusion in early warning systems.

Endnotes

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