

# Baseline Survey Report

## Perceptions on Gender Based Violence in the Bolgatanga East and Nabdam Districts

7/30/2021

By

**Widows and Orphans Movement (WOM)**

Bolgatanga, Upper East Region



**WOMEN'S VOICE  
AND LEADERSHIP  
IN GHANA**

**Canada**



WOMEN'S VOICE  
AND LEADERSHIP  
IN GHANA

## Final Report

Baseline Survey: Perception of Gender Based Violence Against Women and Girls

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## Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction and Purpose of the Baseline .....	9
Chapter 2: Methodology .....	10
Chapter 3: Findings Demographic Characteristics .....	12
Chapter 4: Key Findings on Perceptions .....	15
Chapter 5: Perceptions on the rights of Widows.....	24
Chapter 5: Beliefs, Perception and Sexual and Gender Based Violence.....	35
Chapter 6: Cultural practices, Sexual and Gender Base Violence and Consequences.....	41
Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations .....	45

## Chart and Tables

Chart 1. Respondents' perspectives on aspects of SGBV

Table 1. Age and sex of respondents by district

Table 2. Occupation of respondents

Table 3. Marital Status of respondents

Table 4. Perceptions about physical abuse of women

Table 5. Perceptions about physical abuse of women from Bolgatanga East

Table 6. Perceptions about physical abuse of women from Nabdam

Table 7. Perceptions about "rights" of male partners to sex from female partners

Table 8. Perceptions about "right" of males to verbally abuse females

Table 9. Perception about the right of males to control the economic affairs of their female partners

Table 10. Perceptions about the appropriateness of emotional abuse of females by their male partners (husband/partners/boyfriends).

Table 11. Awareness of the term Gender Based Violence among respondents

Table 12. Perceptions on whether widows should inherit the property of their husbands or not

Table. 13 Perception on whether or not a widow should be forced to marry a male from her husband's family

Table 14. Perceptions on the appropriateness of referring to a widow as a witch

Table 15. Perceptions about widows' access to agriculture land of her husband

Table 16. Perceptions about what should happen to the dowry of a married daughter when a woman becomes a widow

Table 17. Perceptions on the equal sharing of a female child's dowry between her parents

Table 18. Perceptions on the participation of widows in widowhood rites

Table 19. Perceptions about compelling widows to shave their heads

Table 20. Perceptions on the need to isolate widows and confine them to a room alone is NOT a necessary practice

Table 21. Perceptions on the necessity of forcing widows to bath publicly on rubbish dump

Table 22. Perceptions on the forcing of widows to drink "concoctions."

Table 23 Perception on the appropriateness of any male member of a widow's husband's family coercing her to have sex

Table 24. Perceptions on what constitutes rape of widows

Table 25. Perception on the relationship between the way a woman dresses and rape in Bolgatanga East

Table 26. Perceptions on the relationship between the way a woman dresses and rape in Nabdam

Table 27. Perceptions about "lack" of resistance by females as a justification of rape in Bolgatanga East

Table 28. Perceptions about "lack" of resistance by females as a justification of rape in Nabdam

Table 29. Perceptions about a belief that may invalidate rape survivor's claims

Table 30. Perspectives about whether or not some cultural practices disadvantage women

Table 31. Perceptions about the relationship between SGBV and health problems for individuals, families and communities

Table 32. Perceptions about the relationship between SGBV and economic impoverishment for individuals, families and communities

Table 33. Perspectives on what should happen in regards to SGBV

## **Executive Summary**

The Widows and Orphans Movement (WOM), in partnership with Plan Ghana, is implementing a behavior change communication project designed to positively transform some of the complex social norms that enable sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) against women and girls. To support the positive development and implementation of the project, WOM is conducting a baseline survey designed to gain insights into existing perceptions about women's health and well-being. More specifically, focused on Bolgatanga East and Nabdram districts, the baseline documents perceptions about sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), especially in relation to widows.

Currently, a number of laws exists that ostensibly support women's rights. However, despite these laws, sexual and gender based violence against women and girls continues to be widespread. This baseline sought to document perceptions in regards to specific cultural practices in regards to widowhood rites as well as attitudes and perceptions in regards to sexual violence against women, including widows.

### **Perceptions about SGBV and Widow**

The baseline study found that the survey often elicited what seems to be considerable positive perceptions in regards to SGBV. That is, the majority of respondents tend to provide what can be seen as "appropriate" answers. However, these seem to be contradicted by what actually exist in many communities within the two districts. Here are a few examples of the findings.

Respondents were asked to respond to a number of statements. They could choose any of the following options: agree; strongly agree; disagree; strongly disagree; or Not applicable.

The first statement was: It is necessary to take away all of a widow's food from her when her husband dies. These were the responses: A small number of the female respondents agreed. For instance, 3.9% of the female respondents agreed, whereas 1.8% strongly agreed. On the other hand, 41.6% disagreed; and 51.4% strongly disagreed. Those choosing "Not Applicable" were 1.2%.

Of the Male respondents, 3.3% of them agree; 1.7% strongly agree; the majority of male respondents disagree with the statement. More specifically, 44.6% disagree 42.5%. 2.1% of the respondents chose the "Not Applicable" option.

A second statement was: A widow should be forced/compelled to marry a male from her late husband's family

When asked to respond to this statement respondents answered in the following way. A small number of respondents agreed (2.5%) and 1.8% strongly agreed with the statement. Conversely, 32% of respondents disagreed and 64% strongly disagreed. Male respondents were slightly more inclined to agree with the statement; 4.8% of them did and 1.6% of them strongly agreed with the statement. Some males were also in disagreement (34.2%) and 59.4% of males strongly disagreed.

A third statement was: A widow should have access to all of the agriculture land owned or used by her late husband.

Thirty eight percent (38.3%) of agreed with the statement; and an even larger percentage of females strongly agreed (55.7%). The number of females that disagreed and disagreed strongly were the same: 2.9%. The percentage of males that agreed with the statement was 39.2%, whereas those that strongly agreed were 49.2%. The percentage of males that disagreed was 7.8% and those that strongly disagreed was 3.9%.

A fourth statement: The land of her dead husband should be taken away from a widow. When asked to share their thoughts about a widow maintaining access to the land of her husband, respondents answered in the following way. A small percentage of females (1.6%) agreed and 1.3% strongly agreed. On the other hand, 41.3% of females disagreed and 54.8% strongly disagreed. Indeed, 96.6% of females either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Those females that chose "not applicable" is .5%

The perspective of males was a bit different. For example, 6.1% of males agreed and 0.6% strongly agreed. Males also disagreed with the statement. A little more than forty three percent (43.4%) of males disagreed and 49.8% strongly disagreed. That is, 93.2% of the respondents chose either disagree or strongly disagree.

### **Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV)**

The survey also sought to assess perception on sexual gender based violence, specifically perceptions of respondents about what constitutes sexual violence, assault and/or rape in relation to widows. Respondents were asked to respond to this



statement: It is appropriate for any male member of a widow's husband's family to force her to have sex.

The total number of respondents was eight hundred and sixty four (864). This was comprised of 554 females and 310 males. A large number of females (165; or 29.8%) respondents disagreed and an even larger number (383; or 69.1%) disagreed strongly. The numbers of respondents who disagree and who disagree strongly are 98.9% of all female respondents. The responses of females are not too different from the responses from males. Ninety three males (30%) disagreed with the statement whereas 68.4% strongly disagree. Combined these two categories, disagree and disagree strongly, comprise 98.4% of all male respondents.

Another statement was used to gain insights about perceptions on SGBV in relation to widows. The statement was: *If any man forces a widow to have sex with him when she is confined in a room or anywhere else it is rape.*

First, there were 863 respondents and 554 of them were females. One hundred and sixty (160) of the females agreed (28.9% of respondents). More than twice that number, 374 respondents (or 67.5%), strongly agreed. Thirteen (or 2.3%) of the females strongly disagreed with the statement. One hundred and five males (34%) agreed with the statement, whereas 191 (61.8% strongly agreed with the statement. Nine males (2.9%) strongly disagreed with the statement. This indicates that a larger percentage of females agreed with the statement compared to males.

The baseline provided an opportunity for the development of monitoring and evaluation indicators which could help with monitoring of positive shifts in perceptions and behaviours in regards to SGBV. For instance, an important outcome of the project would be a shift in females and males believing that males have a right to sex from their female partners. Based on the baseline survey 26.4% of males believe they have a right to sex and 16.5% of females share that perspective. This could be as an indicator for monitoring.

Given the findings from the baseline survey, is recommended that WOM is meticulously with the development of its behavior change communication content. It important that the content developed is holistic and adequately engages the extant social norms.

## Chapter 1: Introduction and Purpose of the Baseline

The Widows and Orphans Movement (WOM) is the preeminent civil society organization in Ghana specifically advancing the well-being of widows and orphans. In partnership with Plan International Ghana, WOM will be conducting a three (3) year project titled “Women’s Voice and Leadership (WVL).

This project seeks to contribute to the critical work of value formation and social norms (re)construction. This project strategically focuses on enabling change through cultural transformation. In other words, the project sees culture, how it is understood, interpreted and engaged as a potential enabler or delimiter of women’s rights. From this perspective, some societal norms are seen as constitutive of gender inequality. More specifically, certain cultural practices, “traditions” have and do enable many form of abuse against women, including domestic violence. It is on this basis that, WOM seeks to contribute to shifting social norms.

To enable the project assess its effectiveness as well as to help identify key areas of focus for the design of the intervention, this baseline survey was conducted. It focuses on assessing current perceptions of people in relation to Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) against women and girls.

As an organization employing a human rights based approach, WOM advances the rights of all; however, deliberate in its prioritization of the marginalized. Gender Based Violence (SGBV) is a global problem. This is also true for many countries in Africa, including Ghana. Gender Based Violence (GBV) affects women, girls, boys and men. However, GBV disproportionately affects women and girls. They are the most likely to be survivors of GBV. Therefore, this baseline focused on perceptions of women and men regarding the relationship between SGBV the well-being of widows, women and girls; That is, the survey focuses on Sexual and Gender based violence against women and girls, with a specific emphasis on widows.

## Chapter 2: Methodology

This baseline was conducted via the use of a survey tool. The surveys were conducted in person and carried out face to face. To ensure confidentiality and data protection: all quantitative surveys were confidential. No personal data was collected. At the start of the survey it was emphasized that no names or identifying information would be stored or shared in the report. All surveys were conducted on the basis of informed consent and a fully voluntary basis. Respondents were informed that they were free to stop the survey at any point they so wished. Utmost attention was given to personal safety given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. All efforts were made to protect respondents and enumerators from COVID-19. Enumerators were provided with hand sanitizers and face masks.

The survey tool used to collect data for the baseline was designed to do the following:

- To generate information on the perceptions of females and males in regards to Sexual and Gender Based Violence against women and girls
- To generate information that can be used to design and/or redesign project interventions, especially behavior communication interventions focused on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (GBV).
- To generate evidence for use in advocacy as well as to support the design of SGBV focused projects for fund-raising purposes.

In order to ensure quality data collection, skilled enumerators were identified. All the enumerators were provided by the Widows and Orphans Movement (WOM). All enumerators participated in a training session and review of the survey tool. A key aspect of the review was to practice translating the questions from English into the Grunne language. Subsequently, the enumerators piloted the tool in a context similar to the intended context and then participated in an additional review to revise the survey tool, before it was finalized for use. To increase the quality of data collected, the need for data entry from paper surveys into a specialized software was eliminated. Rather, a data collection tool, Kobo toolbox was used for the collection of data for the entirety of the data collection.

The survey was administered over the course of eight days: four days in Bolgatanga East district and four days in the Nabdam district. A total of 867 respondents participated in the survey.

## Survey Location

The survey was conducted in Bolgatanga East and the Nabdam Districts. These are two of the 15 districts in the Upper East Region.

## Sampling Strategy

The survey was strategically administered. For instance, it was administered in specific communities where WOM is already working. Also, the survey was administered in public spaces, including markets to reach a wide cross section of the population.

## Sampling Size Estimation

The sample size was based on a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. Given the population size of both districts the sample size required was 383 persons per district.

## Developing Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was developed by a consultant working with collaboration with the WOM. The tool was developed and then used in day long training workshop with enumerators. Informed, by the feedback from the enumerators, the survey was further revised. Subsequently, the tool was piloted by each enumerator in a real time setting, which was followed by a feedback and revision session. This enabled a further revision of and finalization of the survey tool. Full deployment of the final tool began the next day for a total of eight days.

### *Limitations of the study*

This baseline is not representative of all groups. For example, the study did not include enough people working with state institutions, especially those responsible for ensuring women's rights (e.g. police officers, staff of Local Government Authority, members of DOVSU etc.). Under ideal conditions, they would have participated in the study via individual direct interviews and/or focus group discussions. Therefore, the study did not benefit from their perspectives.

## Chapter 3: Findings Demographic Characteristics

This chapter presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Eight hundred and sixty seven persons participated in this survey across the two districts. There were 557 females (64.2% of all respondents) and 310 males (35.8% of all respondents). In Bolgatanga East, 427 persons participated in the survey. This was comprised of 281 females and 146 males, in Bolgatanga East. In Nabdam, 430 persons participated in the survey. There were 272 females and 158 males. There were 10 respondents (4 female and 6 males) who were from other districts. The majority of the respondents (248) were between 26 and 35 years; this was 28.6% of the total respondents. One hundred and ninety seven (197) females and males respondents between 18 to 25 years were the second largest group of respondents. This group contained 197 (22.7%) of the total respondents. One hundred and eighty respondents were between 36 to 45 years and were the third largest group with 20.8% of all respondents.

**Table 1. Age and sex of respondents by district**

Age	Female			Female Total	Male			Male Total	Grand Total
	Bolgatanga East	Nabdam	Other		Bolgatanga East	Nabdam	Other		
18 to 25 years	54	64		118	33	45	1	79	197
26 to 35 years	71	80	2	153	49	42	4	95	248
36 to 45 years	58	59	1	118	28	33	1	62	180
46 to 55 years	46	30	1	77	21	25		46	123
56 to 65 years	33	27		60	12	9		21	81
66 and above	19	12		31	3	3		6	37
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>866</b>

### Occupation

The majority of the respondents (242) identified their *Occupation* as **Other**. One hundred and twenty two (122) of these respondents were female and one hundred and twenty (120) were men. Although the **Other** category included an option to provide details, the majority of respondents declined to do so, It is important that future survey tools include a category such as “homecare provider” to glean further details on the occupation of respondents The second largest category of respondents identified as farmers (196); 100 females and 96 males chose farming as their occupation.

**Table 2. Occupation of respondents**

Occupation	Bolgatanga East	Nabdram	Other	Grand Total
Airtime and MoMo Merchant	11	4	2	<b>17</b>
Dress maker	29	32		<b>61</b>
Farmer	63	132	1	<b>196</b>
food vendor (e.g. brofot)	14	23		<b>37</b>
Hairdresser	12	20		<b>32</b>
Hardware vendor	2	2	1	<b>5</b>
Leather product trader	3	3		<b>6</b>
Mechanic	7	8		<b>15</b>
Other	129	112	1	<b>242</b>
Provision shop	24	30		<b>54</b>
Taxi driver	13	6	1	<b>20</b>
Teacher	17	15	3	<b>35</b>
Vegetable and grain vendor (e.g.	39	16		<b>55</b>
Weaver	64	27	1	<b>92</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>867</b>

### **Marital Status**

The majority of respondents (551) were married. This accounts for 63.6% of all respondents. There were 157 single persons, which was the second largest category and 18.1% of all those surveyed. This was slightly larger than the third largest category: widowed persons. There were 141 widowed persons, 16.3% of all those surveyed. There were 133 widows and 8 widowers. In Bolgatanga East, there were 77 widows, accounting for 97.5% of the widowed persons in that district. In Nabdam, there were 56 widows, accounting for 90.3% of the widowed persons in that district.

**Table 3. Marital Status of respondents**

Marital Status	Female			Female Total	Male			Male Total	Grand Total
	Bolgatanga East	Nabdram	Other		Bolgatanga East	Nabdram	Other		
Cohabiting	3	1		4					4
Divorced	3	4		7	3	2		5	12
Married	166	182	4	352	88	109	2	199	551
Single	32	28		60	53	41	4	98	158
Widowed	77	56		133	2	6		8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>866</b>

## Chapter 4: Key Findings on Perceptions

This chapter presents information on the perceptions of respondents in regards to Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV). It begins with general perceptions regarding various dimensions of SGBV against women and girls. Subsequently, it explores perceptions specifically in regards to SGBV against widows. Next, perceptions regarding specifically “Sexual” Gender Based Violence against women and girls are explored. The final findings encompass perceptions about the need to stop SGBV against women (including widows) and girls.

To gain insights about SGBV towards women a number of questions were asked. Question 1. *Do you think a husband/male partner/boyfriend has a right to physically abuse (e.g. beat, slap, punch etc.) his wife/female partner/girlfriend if she annoys him?*

The total number of responses to this question was 863. Five hundred and fifty five (555) of those respondents were female; that is, 64.3% of respondents. The number of male respondents was 308 (35.7%). In response to this question, 531 female respondents answered “No.” This indicates that 95.7% of females do not hold the perception that a husband/male partner/boyfriend has a right to physically abuse their wife/female partner/girlfriend. Twenty four females answered “Yes” in response to the question. Two hundred and eighty seven (287) males, which accounts for 93.2% of all male respondents, responded “No” to the question; One male answered “I do not know” and twenty (20) answered “Yes.”



**Table 4. Perceptions about physical abuse of women**

Age	Female		Female Total	I do not know	Male		Male Total	Grand Total
	No	Yes			No	Yes		
18 to 25 years	114	3	117		74	5	79	196
26 to 35 years	152	1	153	1	90	3	94	247
36 to 45 years	111	7	118		59	3	62	180
46 to 55 years	73	3	76		40	6	46	122
56 to 65 years	52	8	60		18	3	21	81
66 and above	29	2	31		6		6	37
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>863</b>

**Table 5. Perceptions about physical abuse of women from Bolgatanga East**

Age	Female			Female Total	Male			Male Total	Grand Total
	I do not know	No	Yes		I do not know	No	Yes		
18 to 25 years		53	1	54		30	3	33	87
26 to 35 years		70	1	71	1	47	1	49	120
36 to 45 years		55	3	58		27	1	28	86
46 to 55 years		42	3	45		17	4	21	66
56 to 65 years		29	4	33		9	3	12	45
66 and above		19		19		3		3	22
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>426</b>

**Table 6. Perceptions about physical abuse of women from Nabdam**

Age	Female		Female Total	Male		Male Total	Grand Total
	No	Yes		No	Yes		
18 to 25 years	61	2	63	43	2	45	108
26 to 35 years	80		80	40	2	42	122
36 to 45 years	56	3	59	31	2	33	92
46 to 55 years	30		30	23	2	25	55
56 to 65 years	23	4	27	9		9	36
66 and above	10	2	12	3		3	15
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>428</b>

No respondent chose the “I do not know” option, so it does not reflect in the table.

The second question sought to understand perceptions and social norms regarding “the right to sex.” Put differently, are there social norms that assumes that males are entitled **to have sexual relations with their female partners as long as the males wish to do so.**

*Question 2. Do you think a husband/male partner/boyfriend has a right to have sex with his wife/female partner/girlfriend any time he wants?*

There were 863 responses to this question. Six hundred and eighty six (686) respondents chose “No.” This is 79.5% of the total respondents. One hundred and seventy four (174) respondents chose “Yes.” This is 20.2% of the total respondents. Three (3) respondents chose “I do not know.”

Four hundred and fifty nine females (53.3%) and two hundred and twenty seven males (26.2%) chose the No option among all respondents. One hundred and seventy four (174) respondents chose the Yes option among the total 863 respondents. Ninety three (10.8%) of the respondents choosing Yes were females; Eighty one (81) males accounted for the other (9.4%) respondents choosing the Yes option.

To understand what this data means it may be better to explore it from the vantage point of the total number of female and male respondents. Eighty three (83.2%) of all female respondents chose the “No” option, whereas 73.6% of males chose “No” option. On the other hand, 16.5% of females chose the “Yes” option, whereas 26.4% of males chose the “Yes” option. **Clearly, males are more likely than females to believe that males are entitled to sex whenever they desire it from their female partners. However, it is striking that almost 20% of females share this belief.**

**Table 7. Perceptions about “rights” of male partners to sex from female partners**

Age	Female			Female Total	Male			Male Total	Grand Total
	I do not know	No	Yes		I do not know	No	Yes		
18 to 25 years	1	94	21	116	1	63	15	79	195
26 to 35 years	1	126	26	153		71	23	94	247
36 to 45 years		95	23	118		39	23	62	180
46 to 55 years		65	12	77		34	12	46	123
56 to 65 years		53	7	60		15	6	21	81
66 and above		27	4	31		4	2	6	37
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>863</b>

Another question was asked to gain insights into perception regarding verbal abuse of women. The question was asked: *Do you think a husband/male partner/boyfriend has a right to verbally abuse (repeatedly use words to demean, humiliate, frighten or control) his wife/female partner/girlfriend if she makes him angry?*

The total number of respondents to this question was 861. The total number of respondents who answered “No” were 804 (93.4%); of the respondents who answered “No,” 525 (61.0%) of them were females and 279 (32.4%) were males.

The total number of respondents who answered “Yes” was 56 (6.5%) out of 861 respondents. Of the respondents who answered “Yes” 27 (3.1%) of them were female and 29 (3.4%) were males. The one respondent who answered – “I do not know” was female.

A closer look at the numbers is instructive. The total number of female respondents was 554. Approximately Ninety five (94.9%) percent of them answered “No” whereas 4.9% of them answered “Yes”. On the other hand, of the 308 males who responded, 90.6% of them chose “No,” whereas 9.4% of them chose “Yes.” Therefore, a higher percentage of males than females believed that they had a “right” to verbally abuse a female (wife/partner/girlfriend).

**Table 8. Perceptions about “right” of males to verbally abuse females**

Age	Female			Female Total	Male		Male Total	Grand Total
	I do not know	No	Yes		No	Yes		
18 to 25 years	1	112	4	117	78	1	79	196
26 to 35 years		149	4	153	83	11	94	247
36 to 45 years		110	7	117	52	10	62	179
46 to 55 years		71	5	76	42	4	46	122
56 to 65 years		53	6	59	18	3	21	80
66 and above		30	1	31	6		6	37
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>861</b>

### Perceptions on Economic abuse

There is widespread consensus that economic abuse is an aspect of SGBV. The survey sought to identify perceptions about economic abuse. It asked the following question: *Do you think a husband/male partner/boyfriend has a right to prevent his wife/female partner/girlfriend from generating her own money and/or restricting how she uses it?*

Eight hundred and sixty four (864) respondents of a total of 867 respondents answered this question. Sixty four (64.4%) of the total respondents were females, whereas 35.6% of respondents were males. None of the respondents chose “I do not know.” Of the total female respondents, 515 (92.6%) of them chose the “No” option, whereas 41 (7.4%) of them chose the “Yes” option.

Three hundred and eight (308) of the respondents were males. They accounted for 35.6% of the total respondents. Two hundred and sixty five male, which are 86% of all male respondents, chose the “No” option. On the other hand, forty three males (14%) of the total male respondents, chose the “Yes” option. This means that there are a higher percentage of males choosing the “Yes” option than females. Indeed, the percentage of males choosing the “Yes” option asserting a male “right” to what is considered economic abuse, is almost twice that of female respondents.

**Table 9. Perception about the right of males to control the economic affairs of their female partners**

Age	Female		Female Total	Male		Male Total	Grand Total
	No	Yes		No	Yes		
18 to 25 years	105	12	117	70	9	79	196
26 to 35 years	145	8	153	80	14	94	247
36 to 45 years	108	10	118	55	7	62	180
46 to 55 years	70	7	77	38	8	46	123
56 to 65 years	57	3	60	17	4	21	81
66 and above	30	1	31	5	1	6	37
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>864</b>

### Perceptions on Emotional Abuse

Less visible than physical abuse, but as deadly if not more so, emotional abuse is another dimension of SGBV. The survey sought to understand extant perceptions on emotional abuse. The question posed was: Do you think a husband/male partner/boyfriend has a right to intimidate and/or manipulate the emotions of his wife/female partner/girlfriend, for example, by threatening to harm your children, breaking your belongings, belittling/insulting you in public?

This question was answered by 862 respondents. Five hundred and fifty five (64.4%) of all respondents were female. Three hundred and seven respondents, comprising 35.6% of total respondents, were males. Two (2) females responded – “I do not know.” Ninety eight percent (98%) of all the female respondents chose the “No” option, whereas 1.6% of female respondents chose the “Yes” option.

Of the male respondents, ninety seven percent (97.1%) of them chose the “No” option and nearly three percent of them (2.9%) chose the “Yes” option.

**Table 10. Perceptions about the appropriateness of emotional abuse of females by their male partners (husband/partners/boyfriends).**

Ages	Female			Female Total	Male		Male Total	Grand Total
	I do not know	No	Yes		No	Yes		
18 to 25 years	1	111	4	116	77	2	79	195
26 to 35 years		151	2	153	92	2	94	247
36 to 45 years		115	3	118	58	3	61	179
46 to 55 years	1	76		77	45	1	46	123
56 to 65 years		60		60	21		21	81
66 and above		31		31	5	1	6	37
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>862</b>
%	0.4	98.0	1.6	100	97.1	2.9	100	

### **Awareness of the term Sexual Gender Based Violence (GBV)**

The survey also sought to find out about awareness of term Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV). Respondents were asked: *Do you know what the term Gender Based Violence (GBV) means?*

The total number of respondents to this question was 863. Five hundred and fifty five (64.3%) of the respondents were females and three hundred and eight (35.7%) of the respondents were male. Six hundred and seventy one (671) of the 863 respondents indicated that they were aware of the term Gender Based Violence. Four hundred and fifty two of the five hundred and fifty five females were aware of the term. In other words, 81.4% of all female respondents were aware of the term. On the other hand, 18.6% of all female respondents answered “No” when asked if they were aware of the term. There was also considerable knowledge about the term GBV among male respondent. Two hundred and nineteen (219) males, 71.1% of all male respondents were aware of the term, whereas 28.9% of male respondents answered “No” when asked if they were aware of the term. The survey revealed that was considerable knowledge of the term Gender Based Violence. Female respondents were more aware of the term GBV than their male counterparts.

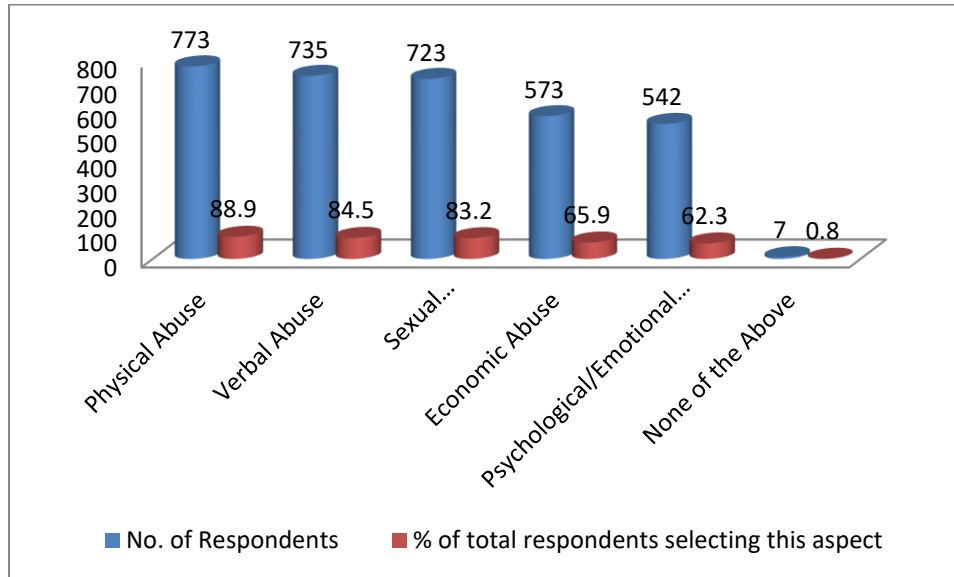
**Table 11. Awareness of the term Gender Based Violence among respondents**

Age	Female		Female Total	Male		Male Total	Grand Total
	No	Yes		No	Yes		
18 to 25 years	28	89	<b>117</b>	31	48	<b>79</b>	196
26 to 35 years	23	130	<b>153</b>	20	74	<b>94</b>	247
36 to 45 years	14	104	<b>118</b>	21	41	<b>62</b>	180
46 to 55 years	15	61	<b>76</b>	8	38	<b>46</b>	122
56 to 65 years	13	47	<b>60</b>	8	13	<b>21</b>	81
66 and above	10	21	<b>31</b>	1	5	<b>6</b>	37
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>863</b>

The survey sought to gain insights into the depth of understanding of SGBV, so it provided respondents with recognized aspects of SGBV and asked them to select the ones they deemed to be aspects of SGBV: *Select all of the options that you think are aspects of Gender Based Violence (SGBV).*

Eight hundred and thirty three (833) respondents answered this question. Thirty four respondents did not provide answers. The majority of respondents selected physical abuse as an aspect of SGBV; that is, 88.9% of all respondents selected this. Economic Abuse was not as readily selected by respondents as an aspect of SGBV. Five hundred and seventy three (573) respondents identified this as a component. However, this was only 65.9% of all respondents and almost 20 percentage points lower than the third most widely chosen category – sexual violence. These findings indicate that economic violence is not as well appreciated as a dimension of SGBV. Similarly, psychological and emotional abuse, are also not as readily identified as SGBV. Only 542 (62.3%) of respondents selected this as a dimension of SGBV. The total number of respondents who selected the option – “None of the above” – was seven (0.8%).

**Chart 1. Respondents' perspectives on aspects of SGBV**





## Chapter 5: Perceptions on the rights of Widows

An objective of this baseline survey was to identify perceptions sexual and gender based violence, specifically in relation to widows. Of particular interest were perceptions about widowhood rites and their impact on the well-being and rights of widows. To explore this we asked a series of questions: *A widow should not inherit the property of her husband (spouse) if he dies before her.*

There were eight hundred and sixty four (864) responses to this question. The number of female respondents totaled: 556. The male respondents totaled: 308. The total number of people who agreed with the position was: 113 (67 female and 46 males). The total number of respondents who strongly agree were: 72 (39 females and 33 males).

On the other hand, the total number of respondents who disagreed with the statement was 301 (194 females and 107 males). Three hundred and seventy six respondents stated that they “strongly disagree” with the statement. Of these respondents, 254 were females. A large number of female respondents (80.6%) chose either “disagree” or “strongly disagree.” The 122 males who chose “strongly disagree” comprised 39.6% of all respondents. The males who chose either “disagree” or “strongly disagree” were 74.3% of the male respondents.

**Table 12. Perceptions on whether widows should inherit the property of their husbands or not.**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male				Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Cohabiting			1	3		4						4
Divorced	2	2	2	1		7	1	1		3	5	12
Married	42	25	119	164	2	352	34	20	71	74	199	551
Single	3	4	15	38		60	10	9	34	43	96	156
Widowed	20	8	57	48		133	1	3	2	2	8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>864</b>

Five hundred and fifty six females responded to the statement: *A widow should be forced/compelled to marry a male from her late husband's family.* Only nine of them indicated that they “agree” and ten females indicated that they “strongly agree.” This is 1.6% and 1.8% of the female respondents respectively. Conversely, 178 females (32%) disagreed and 356 females (64%) strongly disagreed. Male respondents were not much more in agreement with the statement than were the females. Fifteen (4.8%) males “agreed” with the statement and only five males (1.6%) “strongly agreed.” On the other hand, many males (34.2%) indicated that they “disagree” and even more (59.4%) claimed that they “strongly disagree” with the statement. **This indicates that 96% of all female respondents and 93.6% of all male respondents either disagree or strongly disagree with belief and practice of a widow being forced to marry a male from her dead husband's family.**

**Table. 13 Perception on whether or not a widow should be forced to marry a male from her husband's family.**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male				Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Cohabiting			2	2		4						4
Divorced			3	4		7	1	1		3	5	12
Married	6	5	108	231	2	352	10	1	77	111	199	551
Single		2	23	35		60	3	2	26	67	98	157
Widowed	3	3	42	84	1	133	1	1	3	3	8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>866</b>

The baseline survey also sought to understand to what extent do females and males agree or disagree with the statement: *It is ok to accuse or refer to a widow as a witch.* For both females and males those in agreement with the statement were relatively small. Respectively, eleven females and nine males agreed with the statement. Similarly, four females and 1 male strongly agreed respectively. However, the number of respondents who “disagree” and “strongly disagree” were considerable. Thirty two percent (32.1%) of female respondents and thirty two percent (32.6%) of males “agree” with the statement. Similarly, sixty four percent (64.5%) of female and sixty one percent (61%) of male respondents “strongly agree” with the statement. **Moreover, 96.6% of females and 93.5% of males either disagree or strongly disagree with the notion that it is appropriate to refer to a widow as a witch.**

**Table 14. Perceptions on the appropriateness of referring to a widow as a witch**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male					Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		
Cohabiting			1	3		4							4
Divorced	1		3	3		7	2			3		5	12
Married	6	3	122	216	4	351	4	1	69	116	9	199	550
Single			14	46		60	3		31	64		98	158
Widowed	4	1	38	90		133			1	6	1	8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>865</b>

The baseline sought to gain insights into perceptions and beliefs about widows and their access to economic/livelihood assets. Respondents were asked to respond to the statement: *A widow should have access to all of the agriculture land owned or used by her late husband.*

Of the 553 females respondents who answered this question, 212 (38.3%) them claimed that they agreed with the statement above; and 308 (55.7%) of them posited that they strongly agree. This accounted for 94% of all female respondents. Many male respondents also agreed with the statement above. **One hundred and twenty one (121) or (39.2%) of males “agree” whereas 152 (49.2%) of them “strongly agree” with the statement. This means that 88.3% of males either “agree” or “strongly agree.” This is almost 6 percentage point lower than females. Significantly, a higher percent of females are in agreement with the statement than males.**

**Table 15. Perceptions about widows' access to agriculture land of her husband**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male				Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Cohabiting	1	3				4						4
Divorced	4	2	1			7		4		1	5	12
Married	142	191	7	9	1	350	77	97	16	8	198	548
Single	16	38	2	3		59	39	50	7	2	98	157
Widowed	49	74	6	4		133	5	1	1	1	8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>862</b>

**Perceptions about widows and access to a woman's marriage dowry**

A total of eight hundred and sixty two respondents articulated their perspectives in regard to this statement: *When a woman becomes a widow the dowry of her married daughter should go to the widow not to the daughter's uncles.* One hundred and fifty five (22.8%) females “agreed,” whereas 151 (27.3%) “strongly agree” with the statement. On the other hand, 179 (32.3%) females “disagree” and 65 (11.7%) “strongly disagree.” **This means that 55.2% of females either agree or strongly agree compared to the 44% of females who disagree or strongly disagree.**

Male respondents provided essentially the opposite results to that of female respondents. For instance, a total of 143 (46.4%) males either “agree” (25.6%) or “strongly agree” (20.8%). This 46.4% is almost 10 percentage points less than that of female respondents who “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement. **Similarly, male respondents were also more likely to “disagree” (33.4%) or to “strongly disagree” (19.5%) with the statement. This indicates that 52.9% of male respondents either “disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Put differently, males are likely to either “disagree” or “strongly disagree” more than females by almost nine percentage points.**

**Table 16. Perceptions about what should happen to the dowry of a married daughter when a woman becomes a widow**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male					Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		
Cohabiting	3	1				4							4
Divorced		1	5	1		7	1	1	2	1		5	12
Married	108	93	100	47	2	350	51	38	70	39	1	199	549
Single	16	17	18	9		60	25	25	29	17		96	156
Widowed	28	39	56	8	2	133	2		2	3	1	8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>862</b>

Perception about a woman's access to a dowry, *before* (assuming that it is possible) she becomes a widow, may provide insights into the depth with which specific norms are held. The baseline asked respondents to indicate their position on the following statement: *When a female child is married the dowry should be shared equally between the mother and the father.*

The results are striking. One hundred and twenty three women (25.3% of female respondents) "agreed," whereas seventy two (14.8% of female respondents) "strongly agree." However, 38.8% of women "disagree" and 20.5% "strongly disagree." Males are generally more opposed to this statement. Consider that only 13.4% of all male respondents agree and only 4.2% strongly agree. The difference between females and males is almost the same when it comes to "disagree." Almost thirty eight percent (38.7%) of male respondents "disagree" with the statement. This is almost identical to the female respondents. Conversely, "strongly disagree" elicits a stark difference between females and males. Approximately, forty four percent (43.7%) of male respondents chose to "strongly disagree" with the statement. In other words, males are twice as likely to "strongly disagree" with the statement: *When a female child is married the dowry should be shared equally between the mother and the father.*

**Table 17. Perceptions on the equal sharing of a female child's dowry between her parents**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male				Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Cohabiting			3			3						3
Divorced		1	4	1		6			2	3	5	11
Married	84	43	121	55	2	305	19	5	75	85	184	489
Single	13	13	18	10		54	18	7	31	32	88	142
Widowed	26	15	43	34	1	119	1		2	4	7	126
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>771</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>38.8</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>43.7</b>	<b>100</b>	

### Widowhood Rites

To glean insights into other aspects of widowhood and sexual gender based violence a number of other statements were presented to respondents. Below are the statements and the.

Statement: It should be compulsory for a widow to participate in widowhood rites.

**Table 18. Perceptions on the participation of widows in widowhood rites**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male					Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		
Cohabiting			3	1		4							4
Divorced	1	2	2	2		7	2		1	2		5	12
Married	51	22	149	124	3	349	55	41	54	48	1	199	548
Single	12	10	21	17		60	18	16	32	32		98	158
Widowed	25	5	59	43	1	133	3	4		1		8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>863</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>42.3</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Statement: It is necessary to compel widows to shave their heads.

**Table 19. Perceptions about compelling widows to shave their heads**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male					Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		
Cohabiting			2	2		4							4
Divorced	3	1	2	1		7	2	1		2		5	12
Married	51	16	162	117	2	348	70	19	61	48	1	199	547
Single	6	7	24	23		60	17	13	34	33		96	156
Widowed	28	7	50	47	1	133	2	5		1		8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>861</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Statement: *Isolating widows and confining them to a room alone is NOT a necessary practice.*

**Table 20. Perceptions on the need to isolate widows and confine them to a room alone is NOT a necessary practice.**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male					Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		
Cohabiting	3			1		4							4
Divorced	2		4	1		7	3	1	1			5	12
Married	117	69	116	43	5	350	65	31	69	27	7	199	549
Single	16	14	20	10		60	24	29	32	10	2	96	156
Widowed	47	22	38	25	1	133	5		2	1		8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>863</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>33.4</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>31.4</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>33.7</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Statement: *Forcing widows to bath publicly on a rubbish dump is an important practice.*

**Table 21. Perceptions on the necessity of forcing widows to bath publicly on rubbish dump**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male					Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		
Cohabiting			1	3		4							4
Divorced	1	1	3	2		7	2	1	1	1		5	12
Married	26	14	132	175	1	348	40	17	77	64	1	199	547
Single	3	1	21	35		60	6	4	33	55		97	157
Widowed	11	1	52	69		133	3	1	2	2		8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>862</b>
	<b>7.4</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>37.9</b>	<b>51.4</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>36.5</b>	<b>39.4</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>	



Statement: *It should be compulsory for a widow to drink any “concoction” that she is given.*

**Table 22. Perceptions on the forcing of widows to drink “concoctions.”**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male				Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Cohabiting			1	3		4						4
Divorced	2	2	2	1		7	2	2		1	5	12
Married	25	9	168	143	3	348	48	15	83	53	199	547
Single	4	2	20	33	1	60	16	5	38	38	97	157
Widowed	15	2	55	61		133	4	2	1	1	8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>861</b>
%	8.3	2.7	44.6	43.7	0.7	100.0	22.7	7.8	39.5	30.1	100.0	

Statement: *It is appropriate for any male member of a widow’s husband's family to force her to have sex.*

**Table 23 Perception on the appropriateness of any male member of a widow's husband's family coercing her to have sex**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male					Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		
Cohabiting		1		3		4							4
Divorced			4	3		7				5		5	12
Married	1	2	115	231	1	350	2	1	66	130		199	549
Single			13	47		60		1	25	71	1	98	158
Widowed		1	33	99		133			2	6		8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>864</b>
%	0.2	0.7	29.8	69.1	0.2	100.0	0.6	0.6	30.0	68.4	0.3	100.0	

## Sexual Violence against Widows

Statement: If any man forces a widow to have sex with him when she is confined in a room or anywhere else it is rape.

**Table 24. Perceptions on what constitutes rape of widows**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male				Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
Cohabiting	1	3				4						4
Divorced	3	4				7	1	4			5	12
Married	103	234	4	8	1	351	63	127	2	6	198	549
Single	19	40	1			60	36	58	2	2	98	158
Widowed	34	93	1	5		133	5	2		1	8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>864</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>28.8</b>	<b>67.4</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34.0</b>	<b>61.8</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

## Chapter 5: Beliefs, Perception and Sexual and Gender Based Violence

Powerful myths help produce and recreate the set of ideas and belief that normalize coercive sex by males against females as not-rape. That is, sexual violence against women is normalized and when it occurs it is often projected onto women as consequences of their own desires and or actions. It is important to explore perceptions about these myths and beliefs. Perceptions about three particularly important myths are the focus of this chapter.

One myth postulates that females may be raped because they fail to dress appropriately. Statement: *The way a woman/girl dresses - wearing revealing clothing - can justify why a man can rape her.*

Responses from the two districts reveal that this myth is still widely believed. For example, in Bolgatanga East thirty two percent (32%) of female respondents chose "agree"; Forty six (46.3%) of respondents chose "strongly agree." This was not very different from the males. As many as 37 males (25.3% of male respondents) chose "agree," whereas nearly half of all respondents, 43.8% of them strongly agree.

These findings, for females and males, are similar to what pertains in Nabdam. There 35.7% and 49.4% of females "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement. For males in Nabdam, the situation is also similar to finding in Bolgatanga East. Approximately twenty three percent (23.6%) of males "agree" with the statement. However, Males in Nabdam more "strongly agree" with the statement than their counterparts. Fifty four percent (54.8%) of males there "strongly agree" with the statement.

**Table 25. Perception on the relationship between the way a woman dresses and rape in Bolgatanga East**

Age	Female				Female Total	Male				Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
18 to 25 years	16	26	4	8	54	6	19	3	5	33	87
26 to 35 years	28	31	7	5	71	13	17	9	10	49	120
36 to 45 years	15	31	6	6	58	8	13	3	4	28	86
46 to 55 years	17	21	4	4	46	5	10	1	5	21	67
56 to 65 years	10	14	3	6	33	3	5	2	2	12	45
66 and above	4	7	4	4	19	2			1	3	22
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>427</b>
%	32.0	46.3	10.0	11.7	100.0	25.3	43.8	12.3	18.5	100.0	

**Table 26. Perceptions on the relationship between the way a woman dresses and rape in Nabdam**

Age	Female				Female Total	Male				Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
18 to 25 years	18	31	4	9	62	14	20	4	7	45	107
26 to 35 years	29	38	6	7	80	5	24	7	6	42	122
36 to 45 years	23	30	2	3	58	10	18	2	3	33	91
46 to 55 years	12	14	4		30	5	17	1	2	25	55
56 to 65 years	9	13	4	1	27	2	5	1	1	9	36
66 and above	5	7			12	1	2			3	15
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>426</b>
%	35.7	49.4	7.4	7.4	100.0	23.6	54.8	9.6	12.1	100.0	

Another myth used to justify rape is allegedly a female's failure to "resist." That is, if a female does not attempt to resist, to fight her would be rapist, then this is taken to indicate that the female wanted to have sex and was not in fact raped. The survey sought to explore perceptions about this myth. Respondents were presented with the Statement: *If a woman does not fight/resist a man who initiates unwanted (non-consensual) sexual intercourse, then it means she wanted to be raped.*

These were the findings in Bolgatanga East. More than twenty one percent (21.7%) of females "agree" with the statement above. This is less than half of those respondents that "strongly agree." **In fact, more than fifty six percent (56.5%) of female respondents claim that they "strongly agree" with the notion that a female who does not resist rape wanted to be raped. That is, more than 78% of the female respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" with this myth.**

Male perceptions about this myth are not too different. Twenty nine males out of 146 "agree" with the statement above. They account for 19.9% of male respondents. Seventy eight males (53.4% of total male respondents) "strongly agree" with the statement. **This reveals that more than 73% of male respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement above. It is striking that females are more likely than males to support this myth.**

**Table 27. Perceptions about "lack" of resistance by females as a justification of rape in Bolgatanga East**

Age	Female				Female Total	Male					Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		
18 to 25 years	13	26	7	8	54	4	22	4	3		33	87
26 to 35 years	19	37	9	6	71	9	22	13	4	1	49	120
36 to 45 years	9	35	8	6	58	7	14	3	3	1	28	86
46 to 55 years	12	30	2	2	46	6	11	2	2		21	67
56 to 65 years	6	18	6	3	33	3	7	2			12	45
66 and above	2	13		4	19		2		1		3	22
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>427</b>
%	21.7	56.6	11.4	10.3	100.0	19.9	53.4	16.4	8.9	1.4	100.0	

Note. No females chose “Not applicable” hence no data for that is provided in the table.

Here are the findings from Nabdam. Ninety females out of 268 (33.6%) indicated that they “agree” with the statement. This was 14.8% less than the number of females who “strongly agree” with the statement. That is, 44.8% of female respondents “strongly agreed” with the statement which suggested that females who did not resist their rapist wanted to be raped. When you combine the results, **it means that more than 78% of females “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement.**

Approximately, thirty one percent (31.2%) of males “agree” with the statement and 41.4% of males “strongly agree” with the statement. Therefore, 72.6% of males either “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement. As in Bolgatanga East, males are slightly less likely than females to “agree” or “strongly agree” with this myth.

**Table 28. Perceptions about “lack” of resistance by females as a justification of rape in Nabdam**

Age	Female				Female Total	Male				Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
18 to 25 years	12	28	9	13	62	14	17	5	9	45	107
26 to 35 years	29	35	8	7	79	13	13	10	6	42	121
36 to 45 years	25	23	5	5	58	12	15	5	1	33	91
46 to 55 years	8	14	7	1	30	9	12	2	2	25	55
56 to 65 years	12	12	2	1	27	1	5	2	1	9	36
66 and above	4	8			12		3			3	15
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>425</b>
%	33.6	44.8	11.6	10.1	100.0	31.2	41.4	15.3	12.1	100.0	

This baseline survey sought to explore the perceptions of females and males about the beliefs that may make it difficult for female survivors of sexual gender based violence. Respondents engaged the statement: *A woman who is not a virgin or a "promiscuous" woman cannot be raped.*

Here are the combined responses from all respondents. Five hundred and fifty three females responded. One hundred and thirty six of them (24.6%) indicated that they "agree" with the statement. Those who "strongly agree" were 8.3%. Contrast this to the 41.2% of females who "disagree" and the 23.9% who "strongly disagree." This means that more than 65% of females "disagree" or "strongly disagree" with the statement. What are the perceptions of males? Approximately twenty seven percent (27.2%) of males "agree" and 5.8% "strongly agree." Conversely, 37.9% of all male respondents "disagree" and 26.2% "strongly disagree" with the statement above. This means that more than 64% of males "disagree" or "strongly disagree" with the statement.



**Table 29. Perceptions about a belief that may invalidate rape survivor's claims**

Marital Status	Female				Female Total	Male					Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		
Cohabiting	2		1	1	4							4
Divorced	1		5	1	7	2	1	1	1		5	12
Married	93	24	142	84	350	49	14	81	47	8	199	549
Single	15	4	21	19	60	30	2	32	32	1	97	157
Widowed	25	18	59	27	132	3	1	3	1		8	140
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>862</b>
%	24.6	8.3	41.2	23.9		27.2	5.8	37.9	26.2	2.9	100.0	

## Chapter 6: Cultural practices, Sexual and Gender Base Violence and Consequences

### Cultural Practices: Are women disadvantaged?

In this penultimate chapter findings related to perceptions about some cultural practices and how they disadvantage females along with consequences of SGBV and perspectives on what should be done about SGBV are presented.

The survey also sought to gain insights into the extent to which females and males perceived cultural practices to be advantageous or disadvantageous to females. Respondents were asked to respond to this Statement: *some of our cultural practices disadvantage women.*

The responses to this are presented here.

Nearly fifty percent (46.8%) of female respondents indicated that they “agree” with the statement. This is a bit smaller than the 47.4% of females who indicated that they “strongly agree.” This means that more than 93% of females indicated that they either “agree” or “strongly agree” that some cultural practices disadvantage them.

The perspective of males is not considerably different. Almost fifty percent of males, (48.4%) indicate that they “agree” with the statement and 34.4% of male respondents indicated that they “strongly agree” with the statement. Indeed, less than 20% of males either “disagree” or “disagree strongly”; this is almost four times the perspective of females (5.4%) for the same categories.

**Table 30. Perspectives about whether or not some cultural practices disadvantage women**

Age	Female					Female Total	Male					Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable		
18 to 25 years	57	53	4	2		116	31	35	9	3		78	194
26 to 35 years	77	73	2	1	1	154	42	39	11	3		95	249
36 to 45 years	50	55	8	3	1	117	36	16	8	2		62	179
46 to 55 years	30	44	3			77	27	9	10			46	123
56 to 65 years	31	27	2			60	11	4	5		1	21	81
66 and above	15	11	4	1		31	2	3	1			6	37
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>863</b>
	46.8	47.4	4.1	1.3	0.4	100.0	48.4	34.4	14.3	2.6	0.3	100.0	

## Consequences of SGBV

In community development and women's rights literature it is often posited that SGBV, generally, and against women and girls, in particular, has negative implications for community development. More precisely, does SGBV have negative implication for the health and well-being of women and girls, men and boys as well as the wider community? Thus the baseline survey sought to gain perspectives of respondents in this regard. Respondents engaged two statements: 1) *Gender based violence causes health problems for individuals, families and communities;* and 2) *Gender based violence causes economic impoverishment for individuals, families and communities.*

Many respondents had the perception that SGBV can cause health problems. Responding to this question 54.7% of female respondents chose "agree." Another 43.1% of them chose "strongly agree." Thus, 97.8% of females chose either "agree" or strongly "agree".

For males, 61% of these respondents chose to "agree" with the statement *Gender based violence causes health problems for individuals, families and communities.* An additional 35.2% of males chose "strongly agree." Like their female counterparts more than ninety percent of males (96.2%) indicated that they "agree" or "strongly agree."

**Table 31. Perceptions about the relationship between SGBV and health problems for individuals, families and communities**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male					Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Not Applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable		
Cohabiting	1	3				4							4
Divorced	5	2				7	5					5	12
Married	195	148	4	2	1	350	113	82	3		1	199	549
Single	32	26	2			60	67	25	5	1		98	158
Widowed	70	60	3			133	4	2	2			8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>864</b>
%	54.7	43.1	1.6	0.4	0.2	100.0	61.0	35.2	3.2	0.3	0.3	100.0	

Is there a causal relationship between SGBV and economic impoverishment? There is a perception that this is the case among many respondents. Based on the survey results, female respondents (48.7%) "agree" and another 39.5% "strongly agree." That is more 88% of female respondents chose either "agree" or "strongly agree." Conversely, 11% of females chose "disagree."

Male respondents shared similar perceptions. Fifty seven (57%) of males indicated that they "agree." This was approximately ten percentage points higher than that of female

respondents. Another 30.1% of males indicated that they “strongly agree.” The number of male respondents who chose the “disagree” option was 12%, a single percentage point higher than female respondents.

What explains this high level of support for an end to SGBV, on the one hand, and its continued and widespread practice in communities, on the other hand? Research has repeatedly demonstrated that people will say what is “politically correct.” This may help explain these results. Also, there is often a wide gap between peoples claimed beliefs and their actual actions. This may also help explain these results. Nonetheless, such findings can be used in behavior change communication to promote the emergence of “new” norms and make certain behaviour more and more unacceptable.

**Table 32. Perceptions about the relationship between SGBV and economic impoverishment for individuals, families and communities**

Marital Status	Female					Female Total	Male					Male Total	Grand Total
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable		
Cohabiting		4				4							4
Divorced	3	4				7	5					5	12
Married	184	133	32		1	350	108	68	20	1	1	198	548
Single	28	23	8	1		60	58	23	15	1		97	157
Unmarried							1					1	1
Widowed	55	55	21	2		133	4	2	2			8	141
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>863</b>
%	48.7	39.5	11.0	0.5	0.2	100.0	57.0	30.1	12.0	0.6	0.3	100.0	

### What should be done in regards to SGBV?

To gain some perspective on respondents’ perception on what should happen in regards to Sexual Gender Based Violence, respondents were asked to choose what they would like to see happen in regards to SGBV. The options were: “I do not know”; “It is something that should continue”; “it is something that we need less of”; or “it is something that we should stop.” A total of 642 respondents answered this question. Of these respondents, 544 of them were female and 298 of them were male. An overwhelming number of female respondents, Four hundred and ninety-eight (91.5%) of the female respondents indicated that GBV is *something that we should stop*. The second highest number of respondents (41), accounting for 7%, indicated that GBV is *something that we need less of*. Together these account for 99% of all female respondents.

Males also overwhelmingly chose the option “something that we should stop.” This was selected by 83.2% of males. The second most widely chosen option was: “something that we need less of.” Almost 15 percent (14.8%) of male respondents chose this. That is, 98.1% of males chose either of these two options. This is marginally lower than that of female respondents.

**Table 33. Perspectives on what should happen in regards to SGBV**

Age	Female				Female Total	Male					Male Total	Grand Total
	I do not know	It is something that should continue	It is something that we need less of	It is something that we should stop		I do not know	It is something that should continue	It is something that we need less of	It is something that we need more of	It is something that we should stop		
18 to 25 years			4	107	111	1		7	1	62	71	182
26 to 35 years	1	1	11	139	152	1		13		79	93	245
36 to 45 years			10	106	116			8		54	62	178
46 to 55 years	1		3	73	77	1	1	7		36	45	122
56 to 65 years			6	54	60	1		6		13	20	80
66 and above	2		7	19	28			2		4	6	34
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>842</b>
%	0.7	0.2	7.5	91.5	100	1.6	0.4	14.8	0.3	83.2	100	

## Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings of the baseline survey suggest that many respondents are aware of the term sexual gender based violence and many are opposed to it, at least when asked publicly.

The most prominent area where the perceptions and belief are most enabling of SGBV have to do with (1) belief that what a female wears can justify her being raped; (2) that non-resistance of a female when she is raped implies that she “consented” to sexual intercourse. For example, in Bolgatanga East more than fifty six percent (56.5%) of female respondents claim that they “strongly agree” with the notion that a female who does not resist rape wanted to be raped. That is, more than 78% of the female respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” with this myth.

With regards to widows, a key area for change has to do with widow’s access and ownership of property. One of the areas where there is least support for widows has to do with the sharing of dowry. The baseline findings reveal that males are twice as likely to “strongly disagree” with the statement: *When a female child is married the dowry should be shared equally between the mother and the father.*

### Recommendations

#### Partnerships

1. Develop and utilize a long term behavior change communication strategy to transform perceptions and behaviours about SGBV.
2. Build relationships with traditional authorities, religious authorities and other “influencers” and facilitate their participation in behavior change communication
3. Build relationships with local government authority, especially responsible agencies (e.g. DOVSU)
4. Build relationships with media houses and “creatives” and facilitate their participation in developing and disseminating behavior change communication

#### Content

Based on the survey findings, in trying to shift social norms and perceptions there is need for a holistic approach that engages the social norms in a nuanced manner. That

is, norms, rituals, cultural practices must not be presented as “bad” in a simplistic way. Rather, the development of content should focus on the following:

1. **Reinterpretation of specific social practices:** the reinterpretation of specific social practices should be designed to help citizens imagine different possibilities, different behaviors. For example, exploring why a practice is perceived as “necessary” and “good” will be important to not only draw in audiences because it reflects their reality and current beliefs, but also to better enable the critical reimagining of such practices.
2. **Historicizing of certain practices:** Historicizing certain practices can help citizens to explore the specific conditions under which certain practices may have developed and why it may also be appropriate to change them in changing conditions.
3. **Critically examine the consequences of specific practices:** By critically examining the consequences of certain beliefs and practices, it may be possible to enable shifts in perspective and behavior.

## Media

Given the findings from the previous baseline, the following are recommended:

1. Prioritize the use of radio base communication. Given that behavior change takes time it would be strategic to build long term relationships with radio stations in the districts (where they exists) or in the regional capital, Bolgatanga, and the staff of these radio stations and to influence them to become gender equality champions. Focus should be engaging radio show hosts that are focused on the following demographics: 18 to 25 and 26 to 35 age groups.
2. Increase the use of social media for behavior change communication focused on men, especially for men between the ages of 18 to 25 and 26 to 35 age ranges. These could be short skits that can be shared easily via WhatsApp. Priority should be given to developing behavior change communication content in collaboration with “creatives” from the target populations.

**Recommendation for Advocacy:**

WOM should work with its partner Widow Groups in its area of operation to document cases of SGBV at the community level. By strengthening the capacity of Widow Groups to monitor and document cases of SGBV it would enable WOM to generate data at the district level about cases of SGBV. This is a critical intervention given the current information gap. Importantly, at the community level, it will begin a process of empowering women and girls to potentially prevent future cases of SGBV as they document current cases if and when they occur.