



ICRC Strategy on Sexual Violence 2018-2024

This strategy has been drafted to support the Institution in realizing the following vision:

The ICRC works towards eliminating sexual violence in armed conflict, OSV and detention, ensuring that its victims/survivors have access to all necessary services, and that communities and individuals strengthen their resilience

Introduction

In 2013, the ICRC made a four-year commitment (2013-2016) to enhance its response to sexual violence. This decision to be more proactive in addressing sexual violence followed from the recognition of the fact that, despite the severity of the problem in many conflicts around the world, field teams faced the obstacle of the invisibility of the phenomenon. The ICRC was often not aware of sexual violence taking place in contexts where it was operational, resulting in no or limited action taken to respond to the issue.

Despite considerable progress made in these four years in the field and at HQ, in various aspects of ICRC's response to sexual violence (response both to risks and consequences of sexual violence), the ICRC recognizes that it still has a long way to go and needs to continue to focus on this particular violation, including improving its understanding of it and ways to prevent and address its occurrence. For the purposes of this strategy, the term "response" is used to describe all activities and programs developed by ICRC in order to respond to the threat or consequences of sexual violence.¹

This multidisciplinary strategy on sexual violence (1) provides a brief overview of the issue, and analysis of ICRC's work on it, including achievements and remaining challenges; and (2) explains ICRC's approach to sexual violence (including the "reversal burden of proof", holistic and multidisciplinary approach) and scope of ICRC's ambition on the issue; and (3) defines clear objectives of the ICRC to address sexual violence in armed conflicts, other situations of violence (OSV) and detention in the period 2018 to 2022.

1. Background

1.1. External Analysis: Global context

The ICRC defines **sexual violence** as acts of sexual nature committed against any person by force, threat of force or coercion². It includes rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy and enforced sterilization or any other act of a sexual nature of comparable gravity³.

¹ It encompasses engagement with actors of influence to change behaviour, persuasion and support to improve legal frameworks, and activities to reduce risk, either by limiting the threat (e.g. installing better lighting or closer water sources), or by enhancing communities' capacities and supporting their coping mechanisms, as well as activities to protect rights of victims/survivors, and of a range of services such as primary healthcare, psychological, psychosocial, and economic support to survivors of sexual violence.

² For sexual violence as defined above to fall under the scope of application of international humanitarian law, it needs to take place in the context of, and be associated with, an armed conflict.

Coercion can be caused by circumstances such as fear of violence, duress, detention, psychological oppression or abuse of power. The force, threat of force or coercion can also be directed against another person. Sexual violence also comprises acts of a sexual nature committed by taking advantage of a coercive environment or a person's incapacity to give genuine consent. It furthermore includes acts of a sexual nature that a person is caused to engage in against another person through the factors/circumstances outlined above. See ICTR, *Prosecutor v. Jean-Paul Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4-T, 2 September 1998, para 688, available at <http://unictr.unmict.org/sites/unictr.org/files/case-documents/ictr-96-4/trial-judgements/en/980902.pdf>.

³ Other forms of sexual violence may include forced nudity, forcing a person to commit or to watch an act of sexual violence, etc.

Sexual violence remains prevalent and widespread in many armed conflicts and OSV worldwide, with grave and devastating consequences for victims/survivors, their families and communities. While it is not an inevitable consequence of conflict, the climate of impunity, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and destruction of community ties increase the risk of sexual violence occurring. Certain groups, such as migrants, IDPs/refugees, female heads of households, children and adolescents, or persons deprived of their liberty may be particularly vulnerable to sexual violence. Sexual violence does not occur in isolation, usually constituting part of a pattern of violence, and is often linked to other violations such as torture, killings, child recruitment, looting or destruction of property not justified by military necessity.

Sexual violence is a gendered phenomenon, in that it is often linked to, and stems from, harmful social and traditional practices related to perceptions of gender and power dynamics surrounding them. In times of conflict, OSV or in detention, prevalent power dynamics and the practices linked to them can be further exacerbated leading to higher prevalence of sexual violence. Gender can influence both vulnerability to sexual violence and ability to access care and services following its occurrence. For example, men often encounter major difficulties in disclosing sexual violence and thus accessing care, precisely due to the belief that they cannot constitute a victim of sexual violence as a result of norms surrounding masculinity. However, gender is not the only factor to determine and interact with power dynamics in society, and shape vulnerability to and experiences of sexual violence. Rather, it is one among a range of other complex and interconnected factors/identities (including race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, migrant status, disability, class, health, religion, caste or sexual orientation), which combine to influence a person's positioning within society.⁴

Despite its prevalence, sexual violence remains severely underreported, with little to no reliable evidence, figures or data. This is due to a number of reasons, including stigma attached to it in many societies, fear of being rejected and isolated or fear of reprisals. Finding appropriate entry points to identify and access sexual violence victims/survivors and to develop activities aimed at preventing sexual violence and responding to victims'/survivors' needs, therefore remains a serious challenge for many humanitarian actors, including for the ICRC. This challenge is further aggravated with regards to male and child victims/survivors of sexual violence.

The issue of sexual violence in armed conflict has received considerable international attention in the past years, and was raised in a number of international resolutions and initiatives.⁵ Some of these initiatives have a broad focus, including forms of gender based violence (GBV) other than sexual violence, or sexual violence in peacetime and disasters; they often only peripherally mention, sexual violence against men and boys, and in some cases focus only on one aspect of the response to sexual violence in armed conflict, such as criminal investigations (as is the case with the UK-led Preventing Sexual Violence in conflict Initiative - PSVI). Sexual violence in detention is rarely considered. Finally, due to limited access, the international community struggles in engaging non-state armed groups on the issue. Therefore, ICRC stands to have a great added-value in addressing sexual violence in armed conflict, given its unique experience and access.

1.2 Internal Analysis: Achievements and remaining challenges

In 2013, the Director of Operations identified the need to enhance the ICRC's response to sexual violence. In 2014, planning for results (PfR) instructions emphasizing the importance of a proactive approach, in line with the "reversed burden of proof"⁶ principle, in responding to and preventing sexual violence were developed and shared with the HQ and the field. In addition, a four-year plan was also produced through a Special Appeal Strengthening the Response to Sexual Violence 2013-2016 in which the ICRC committed to strengthening its response to the issue by focusing its efforts on four key areas: (1) holistic response to the needs of victims/survivors; (2) prevention of sexual violence; (3) Movement mobilization; and (4) staff sensitization and training.

A dedicated position of a Sexual Violence Advisor was created under OPDIR in 2014 to, among others, support coordination between concerned divisions and units at headquarters and strengthen ICRC's positioning on sexual violence in regional/international fora. Focal points on the issue were appointed in relevant HQ units.

⁴ See 'Diversity and Inclusion in the ICRC: A New Global Framework (2017).'

⁵ These include: UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security; Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (Call to Action); IASC Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Interventions into Humanitarian Action, and UK's Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI), among others.

⁶ Please see Section 2.2.1., "Key principles of ICRC's approach" for definition of the "reversed burden of proof".

Over the period of the four-year commitment, ICRC made important progress in all four areas mentioned above, resulting in developing ICRC's external role and position as an expert on the issue, particularly on sexual violence in time of armed conflict.⁷ A number of delegations included sexual violence as a priority in their work and developed specific activities on the issue, or integrated it into existing activities. Nonetheless, ICRC also encountered significant challenges, particularly operationalizing this work in some very challenging contexts.

Strategy 2018-2022

2.1 Vision

The ICRC works towards eliminating sexual violence in armed conflict, OSV and detention, ensuring that its victims/survivors have access to all necessary services, and that communities and individuals strengthen their resilience.

To contribute to this, the ICRC addresses sexual violence in armed conflict, OSV and detention in a multidisciplinary and holistic manner, keeping the victim at the center of its activities. It does so through its operational response, humanitarian policy and diplomacy, and various interventions.

As a result, the ICRC is seen as a relevant actor on the wider issue of sexual violence and recognized for its unique contribution in and outside of detention, stemming from the quality and multidisciplinary nature of its activities, the concern for the victim, and its ability to deliver an appropriate and effective response at various stages.

Within the Movement, the ICRC exercises leadership in preventing and responding to sexual violence specifically related to armed conflict and OSV, and contributes to a coordinated and complementary Movement response on the issue of sexual violence more broadly.

2.2 Legal Framework

When committed **in the context of and in connection with an armed conflict**, either international or non-international, rape and other forms of sexual violence constitute violations of international humanitarian law (IHL).⁸ Acts amounting to serious violations of IHL constitute war crimes. Rape and other forms of sexual violence can also, depending on the circumstances, constitute crimes against humanity, torture or genocide.⁹

At all times, including in OSV, acts of sexual violence fall under provisions of international human rights law (IHRL)¹⁰ and of domestic and traditional laws.

2.3 ICRC's operational approach

2.3.1. Key principles of ICRC's approach

ICRC's operational approach is based on a number of key principles, explained in detail below:

- **“Do no harm”**: The ICRC keeps the victims'/survivors' well-being and dignity at the core of its work. All ICRC's working modalities are derived from this approach. Ensuring well-coordinated and multidisciplinary responses prevents re-traumatizing victims/survivors by exposing them to multiple interviews with different service providers, while addressing a range of their needs. To avoid stigmatization or labelling of victims/survivors,

⁷ See the UK Department for International Development's (DFID) [study](#), in which ICRC is characterized as “(...) [one that] has taken particular action on preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in conflict” (p.19).

⁸ For further details, see <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/prevention-and-criminal-repression-rape-and-other-forms-sexual-violence-during-armed>

⁹ Article 6 b) c) d) of the ICC Statute, *op. cit.*; and ICTR, *Prosecutor v. Jean-Paul Akayesu*, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ Under IHRL, sexual violence is prohibited primarily through the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; art. 7 of the ICCPR; art. 3 of the ECHR.

the ICRC provides responses to sexual violence (e.g. Health, Economic Security) within a broader approach that addresses the needs of victims/survivors of all types of violence.

- **Reversed burden of proof¹¹:** Recognizing the often “hidden/invisible” nature of sexual violence, the ICRC adopts a **proactive approach**.

This means that **in all contexts of armed conflict and detention** where ICRC operates, **ICRC staff assumes that sexual violence occurs unless proven otherwise**. In practice, staff will not only rely on statistics, tangible allegations, or victim’s testimonies, but instead will seek to proactively¹² and through various sources analyze the context to determine patterns and trends indicating a prevalence of armed conflict-related sexual violence, or the absence thereof. Unless the delegation definitely establishes that sexual violence in armed conflict does *not* occur in the context, it should: (1) at the minimum, integrate a response to the issue into its existing activities; (2) consider developing specific activities addressing specific concerns related to sexual violence – from reducing the risk of the violation occurring, to providing a range of services to the survivors. This should be done based on the assessment of the patterns of violence and their consequences, the specific needs of victims/survivors and gaps in the response, the ICRC’s added value vis-à-vis other actors, the concern for NIIHA principles, and the delegation’s capacity and access.



Figure 1 Key principles of ICRC's approach

In OSV and in countries “at-risk” of future violence/armed conflict, ICRC also assumes that sexual violence may occur in case of outbreak of violence. As such, delegations should systematically integrate the issue into existing activities. For instance, as far as possible, staff carrying out Protection and Prevention activities should include sexual violence (definition, nature, prohibition, safe access to services, etc.) in their dialogues, as well as other general activities, with weapon bearers, detaining authorities, and communities.

By prioritizing the issue of sexual violence, the ICRC is not suggesting a hierarchy of violence. The ICRC recognizes that sexual violence does not occur in a vacuum and that it is linked to other violations and to the multiple aspects of the reality of victims/survivors living in the context of armed conflict, OSV or detention.

- **Evidence-based approach:** While, in line with the reversed burden of proof approach, ICRC assumes sexual violence occurs even in absence of direct evidence, the ICRC strives to base its response to sexual violence on context-specific analysis and understanding of the issue, its causes and consequences, risks, links to other violations, the most vulnerable populations and the diverse needs of the victims. Such analysis can be based on all available sources of information, including the perceptions of the communities. The evidence-based approach also refers to the need to draw lessons learned and best practices regarding activities addressing sexual violence in order to improve ICRC’s own work and influence the work of other actors.
- **Holistic approach:** The ICRC recognizes that sexual violence requires a response at various stages from risk analysis, prevention and risk reduction to clinical, protection, livelihood and other support, as victims/survivors of sexual violence and individuals at risk have a wide range of needs. As a result, the ICRC strives to provide a holistic response, when relevant and feasible, either through its own multidisciplinary work or through relevant partnerships and referrals, including partnerships with components of the Movement.

¹¹ The principle is not of a legal nature. Instead, it stands as an internal principle that under no circumstances entails putting blame on any actor or group of actors, nor violating the “presumption of innocence.”

¹² This can be done through an in-depth multidisciplinary assessment specifically focused on sexual violence or through a larger needs assessment as often conducted by EcoSec in collaboration with Protection and other relevant departments.

Partnerships should always be based on a careful analysis of partners' capacities, and with victims' interest at the center.

- **Multidisciplinary¹³/integrated approach¹⁴:** ICRC teams and units must improve coordination and work in a complementary fashion that maximizes their specific competencies towards addressing sexual violence. Not only Health and Protection, but also JUR, FAS, POL, COOP, COM, EcoSec, or WatHab bring added value in addressing sexual violence and should be fully involved in the process of choosing and developing the most appropriate multidisciplinary response, in line with the “reversed burden of proof” approach. When sexual violence is addressed through more than one type of activity (either through specific activities or activities with the issue of sexual violence integrated into them), the ICRC should work in a multidisciplinary manner, with strong coordination and information sharing between the different teams involved.
- **Intersectional approach¹⁵:** Vulnerability to sexual violence, as well as coping strategies and ability to access care and services in case of its occurrence, is influenced by a complex interplay of categories (e.g. gender, race, ethnicity, class, caste, religion, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity), which together comprise an individual's particular positioning within power structures in a given context. LGBTI¹⁶ persons, for instance, may both be particularly vulnerable to sexual violence given perceived transgressions of norms relating to gender expression and/or sexual orientation and face compound challenges in accessing care (e.g. due to the existence of national laws criminalizing same-sex relations). The barriers towards accessing support may be even more challenging for an LGBTI person who also has a physical disability.

Consequently, it is important that the ICRC strive to apply an intersectional analysis¹⁷ when designing and implementing response to sexual violence, taking into account the interconnected identities of persons and resulting range of needs. This is necessary to ensure that services for victims/survivors of sexual violence, as well as activities to mitigate risk, are tailored in a way that makes them accessible to all victims, regardless of gender and other identities, and takes their specific needs and capacities into account. As part of said approach, it is imperative that delegations strive to engage victims/survivors and communities throughout all stages of response, in order to ensure that the diverse needs of all persons affected by armed conflict, OSV or detention in which the ICRC operates are effectively met and the ICRC remains accountable to the communities in which it is present.

2.3.2. Scope of ICRC's work on sexual violence

In accordance with its humanitarian mandate, the ICRC seeks to respond to the needs of victims/survivors of violence, including sexual violence and to prevent SV in particular where **SV is connected to armed conflicts and OSV**.

In detention settings, the ICRC addresses sexual violence as systematically as it would do for other types of violence or abuse, regardless of whether or not there is a connection to armed conflict or OSV and regardless of the particular status of detainees¹⁸. The ICRC will in particular seek to address and prevent sexual violence committed during arrest and questioning by police and detaining authorities, in places of detention, either formal or informal (including by co-detainees), as a form of torture or ill-treatment, as well as during law enforcement operations.

Engagement criteria (outside of detention)

¹³ While “multidisciplinary approach” can be interpreted in two different ways – internally (the way the different ICRC teams cooperate and coordinate together) and externally (whether the victims/survivors of sexual violence have all their needs satisfied, whether it is done by the ICRC or a third party), for the purposes of this strategy, the internal definition is used.

¹⁴ For the purpose of this strategy, “multidisciplinary” and “integrated” are used as synonyms

¹⁵ The ICRC's institutional approach to diversity and inclusion in operations, with a focus on gender, is currently being developed, in concert and connection with the ICRC's work to ensure accountability to affected populations.

¹⁶ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and inter-sex.

¹⁷ For further concept of ‘intersectionality,’ see works by scholars Kimberlé Crenshaw and Patricia Hill Collins.

¹⁸ [For more details on ICRC's approach to sexual violence in detention see the publication “Sexual Violence in Detention” published by the PROT DET unit in 2017.](#)

Determining the extent to which sexual violence in a given context falls within ICRC's humanitarian mandate (outside of detention) can be complex and challenging in the field. This is in part due to the fact that the strength of the connection between sexual violence and armed conflict/OSV is not always easy to determine, especially in contexts affected by migration and refugee flows, or where armed conflict/OSV has recently ended, yet its consequences may still be visible.

Therefore, the following criteria were designed to guide and support ICRC delegations in determining objectives, strategy and activities to be undertaken in their respective contexts: a) The **strength of the connection** with armed conflict/OSV; b) The **prevalence and humanitarian impact** related to sexual violence; c) The **specific added value of the ICRC** in addressing sexual violence in the context; and d) The **delegation's capacity** to intervene.

- However, regardless of the engagement criteria, all delegations are required, **as a minimum, to integrate the issue of sexual violence into existing activities, in particular in prevention and risks reduction**. This may take the form of including sexual violence in awareness campaigns and dissemination sessions with armed forces, non-state armed groups, authorities or actors of influence; taking the potential risks of sexual violence and the needs of victims/survivors into consideration when designing and implementing all activities (e.g. Ecosec distribution, Wathab activities); taking measures to increase awareness and sensitivity of all ICRC staff on the issue.
- In addition, delegations should use the criteria explained below to guide them in **developing a range of activities specifically designed to address sexual violence**, directly or within broader programs, covering one or all phases, from risk mitigation and prevention, to health or protection response. In order to do so, a **multidisciplinary assessment** should be conducted to better understand the extent of the humanitarian consequences/impact linked to sexual violence and related needs, assess ICRC's added value and identify the most appropriate activities to be developed in response, in accordance with ICRC's framework on AAP, described above.
- Finally, where the ICRC provides health services to victims/survivors of armed conflict/OSV-related SV, **victims/survivors of SV unrelated to armed conflict/OSV** must have equal access to all services and programs.

a. **Strength of the connection with the armed conflict/OSV**

The stronger the connection between the acts of sexual violence and the armed conflict/OSV, the **stronger the imperative for the ICRC is to address it**.

To assess the **strength of the connection**, one should consider **several factors** including:

- **The type of perpetrator:** in cases of violence perpetrated by (or against) weapon bearers involved in an armed conflict or OSV; members of armed and security forces; members of armed groups; private security; the military and police components of UN peace operations¹⁹ and other multinational forces, the **link to the armed conflict is usually straightforward and strong**;
- **The circumstances surrounding act(s) of sexual violence:** Sexual violence committed during an attack on a community, at a checkpoint, used to create fear, as a form of reprisal, to humiliate, etc., shows a strong connection with the armed conflict/OSV.
- **Other factors** that can link to the armed conflict or OSV. Sexual violence may be part of a pre-existing pattern of sexual violence **aggravated by** the armed conflict or OSV due to increase in poverty, insecurity, distress and breakdown of laws and State institutions creating a general climate of impunity; or new patterns of sexual violence may appear in relation to the situation. It can include rape committed by civilians and against civilians in IDP/refugee camps; forced prostitution or survival sex; early or forced marriage aggravated by the armed conflict or the OSV, etc. It also includes sexual violence committed by humanitarians and civilian members of UN Peace operations.

¹⁹ For more information see the *ICRC approach to United Nations Peace Operations*, 2014, developed as part of the OP_DIR_GLOB strategy.

*In those cases, the link between the acts of sexual violence and the armed conflict/OSV will vary depending on the circumstances, but it **may also be strong and should not be overlooked**.*

- ⇒ **Where there is no connection at all** to the conflict/OSV, the ICRC **does not, in principle, develop specific programs** addressing needs of victims/survivors of sexual violence committed by civilians, outside of detention.
- ⇒ In all contexts, **regardless of the connection** with the armed conflict/OSV, the issue of sexual violence, like any other violation, should be systematically included in dissemination activities with actors of influence, as a **preventive measure**.

Particular cases:

- **In post-conflict situations**, the ICRC may also address sexual violence, depending on the extent of outstanding humanitarian needs related to sexual violence, delegation's capacity and added-value (e.g. through a referral system, interventions to authorities, support for the transitional justice process and other measures).
- **Along migration routes**, risks of sexual violence are particularly elevated due to armed conflict-related poverty, insecurity and distress. Although addressing sexual violence committed by and against migrants is often challenging, the ICRC is committed to developing its capacity to respond to it as much as possible in line with the Migration Strategy.²⁰ This can also be done in partnerships with other actors, notably the National Societies involved in migration response.

b. Prevalence and humanitarian impact related to Sexual Violence

In addition to considering the connection between sexual violence and armed conflict/OSV, the ICRC should also consider **the prevalence and humanitarian impact related to it, that is to say, the extent of humanitarian consequences/needs** caused by it. In line with the “reversed burden of proof”²¹ approach, this can be done relying on available information, including secondary sources and perceptions of various actors, and does not have to be necessarily derived from direct allegations.

In all circumstances, ICRC staff must refrain from using the socio-cultural context to trivialize or justify sexual violence, denying its gravity or the suffering of the victims. Multidisciplinary assessment can be used to better understand the extent of humanitarian consequences and needs, in particular in settings wherein this form of violence is particularly “invisible” due to prevalent stigma (caused by social inequality and victim blaming attitudes) and should be carried out prior to designing activities in response to sexual violence.

c. ICRC's added value

The question of **ICRC's added value** depends on the type of needs related to sexual violence in a given context and the presence and capacity of other actors, among other factors. If the delegation determines that patterns of sexual violence and their consequences warrant a specific response, it should consider conducting a multidisciplinary assessment to **determine ICRC's added value, potential response and appropriate entry points**.

d. Delegation's capacity in addressing sexual violence

Following the multidisciplinary assessment, the delegation should then **assess its ability** to implement its recommendations, taking into account its **capacity**, as well as **the NIIHA principles**. If capacity to act is deemed to be inadequate in any given context, delegations should consider strengthening links with external actors and ensuring that a referral system is in place.

²⁰ Please see “ICRC Strategy Regarding Migration 2012-2014”, available at: https://collab.ext.icrc.org/sites/TS_PROT/Migration/A_KEY_DOCUMENTS/ICRC%20Reference%20Documents/2012_2014_ICRC_Strategy_on_Migration.docx?Web=1

²¹ For definition, see section 2.3.1, *Key principles of ICRC's approach*

2.4 Strategic and operational objectives

All objectives defined in this section were developed in line with the **SMART principles**, meaning they are **specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented and time-bound**.

The ICRC does not see success in work on sexual violence in terms of the **number** of new responses, activities and programs on the issue, but rather in terms of **quality** of its responses and activities, their multidisciplinary nature, and the outcomes for the affected populations.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Objective 1: The ICRC is able to effectively address sexual violence in a multidisciplinary way and at various stages (from preventive measures to responsive actions).

This objective focuses on the developments ICRC wants to achieve at the institutional level in order to be able to better address sexual violence in and outside of detention. They will be achieved through the collaborative efforts of various units at the HQ level, including the Sexual Violence advisor, in order to:

- **Strengthen multidisciplinary work** and coordination at HQ and in the field (indicators 1.1 – 1.2)
- **Increase staff capacity, sensitivity and confidence** to address sexual violence (indicator 1.3);
- **Better monitor ICRC's work** on sexual violence, to fill data gaps and draw lessons learned (indicator 1.4);
- **Improve ICRC's understanding** of the issue of sexual violence through dedicated research (indicator 1.5).

Taken together, improvements in these areas will enable ICRC to address sexual violence at various stages, be it through its own multidisciplinary work or through partnerships and referral systems developed with trusted providers.

The achievement of this objective will be measured through the following indicators:

- **Indicator 1.1. Intra-unit coordination: The level of coordination and collaboration between the relevant units working on sexual violence at HQ**

Means/ Example activities

- Ensure regular information exchange and sharing between units within HQ, including through regular meetings, online tools etc.;
- Ensure that all methodological decisions and new initiatives on sexual violence are taken in a multidisciplinary manner, through regular meetings of the Working Group on sexual violence

- **Indicator 1.2. Strategy and Protocol: Number of delegations supported to develop specific multidisciplinary guidance/protocols/strategies and development of other institutional documents on sexual violence**

Means/ Example activities

- Support delegations to ensure that appropriate and consistent protocols, strategies and minimum standards underpin multidisciplinary work on sexual violence, through the Working Group on sexual violence, *ad hoc* or bilateral meetings and field visits.

- **Indicator 1.3. Staff competence: Level of confidence and ability to address sexual violence appropriately, including those ICRC staff that attended training on the issue**

Means/ Example activities

- Continue and improve content and coverage of existing training and develop additional training on addressing sexual violence in a multidisciplinary way, with aim to ensure that all ICRC staff (resident and mobile, management and technical) that may encounter the issue of sexual violence know their responsibilities and where to obtain support
- Evaluate the impact of trainings on staff confidence and work.

- Review and update existing tools on sexual violence and create new ones if needed to fill the remaining gaps, including a multidisciplinary “guidance document” on addressing sexual violence in the field for use of delegations.
- Continue supporting the existing external (CERAH) training co-developed by the ICRC and evaluate its impact on staff confidence and its relevance to their work.

➤ **Indicator 1.4. Monitoring and Reporting: Extent to which relevant actors at the HQ are aware of and able to report on the ICRC activities and results (outputs and outcomes) related to sexual violence in the field**

Means/Example activities

- Support delegations during the Planning for Results process, in particular in terms of developing SMART SOs and corresponding indicators on sexual violence;
- Ensure that baseline data is collected, and mapping of actors is conducted and regularly updated to facilitate monitoring our work and evaluation of our impact;
- Improve data collection – through protocols/guidance on information sharing; synergies with PROT 6; and evaluation of selected contexts.

➤ **Indicator 1.5. Research and Understanding: Extent to which specific issues of humanitarian concern related to sexual violence are explored/better understood by the ICRC**

Means/ Example activities

- Conduct research on key thematic issues related to sexual violence such as sexual violence against men and boys, mandatory reporting or the nature of sexual violence in particularly challenging contexts such as NAME region and Afghanistan, among others (from anthropological and sociological perspectives)

MOVEMENT WORK

Strategic Objective 2: Movement components that work on the issue of sexual violence do so in a coherent, coordinated and aligned manner, effectively responding to it in a complementary manner and within their respective mandates, in line with the joint Resolution 3: “Sexual and gender-based violence: Joint action on prevention and response.”

This objective reflects ICRC’s recognition that to deliver its operational objectives and successfully implement preventive measures and responsive actions towards sexual violence, it needs to rely on its own capacity, but also that of the relevant and trusted partners and the Movement.

Although it may not be possible in all contexts, the ICRC strives to work with National Societies as partners. Therefore, whenever possible and appropriate, the ICRC is committed to strengthening the coordination of Movement’s work on sexual violence and building National Societies’ capacity to respond to the issue within their mandates, in line with the joint resolution on SGBV passed at the 32nd International Conference in 2015.

Progress on this objective will be evidenced through the extent to which ICRC and Movement partners coordinate and collaborate on issues related to Sexual Violence and the extent to which ICRC contributes (in line with its capacity and abilities) to building Movement capacity to respond to sexual violence.

➤ **Indicator 2.1. Movement Collaboration: Extent of coordination and collaboration on the issue of sexual violence between the ICRC and other Movement components**

Means/Example activities

- Continue regular dialogue and engagement with the Movement at HQ level (particularly through the SGBV coordination working group and bilateral and regular meetings with PNS and IFRC)
- Align positions and develop joint initiatives with the IFRC, including on sexual violence perpetrated by Movement staff (referred to by IFRC and the UN as “sexual exploitation and abuse”)
- Continue regular dialogue and engagement with the Movement in the field (for example through co-hosting regional conferences, fora etc.)

- Whenever possible, explore potential partnerships and carry out joint programs with National Societies

➤ **Indicator 2.2. Support to National Societies: Extent to which National Societies are familiar with the issue of sexual violence and are equipped to address it and in line with the Resolution 3 on SGBV.**

Means/Example activities

- Whenever possible, support and build the capacity of National Societies, making sure to integrate sensitivity to sexual violence
- Develop and roll-out joint training on SGBV in armed conflict and other emergencies for all Movement staff
- Provide technical support to key National Societies who are or may be involved in the prevention or response to sexual violence
- Conduct mapping of the competencies and interests of key National Societies in dealing with the issue of sexual violence
- Encourage staff from Operating National Societies to participate in the CERAH course on sexual violence with financial support from Partner National Societies

POLICY AND DIPLOMACY

Strategic Objective 3: Key stakeholders and actors of influence demonstrate increased understanding of and respect for the international legal provisions related to sexual violence, enabling them to create or maintain an environment conducive to the elimination of sexual violence in armed conflict, OSV and detention and to the respect for its victims/survivors and their needs.

This objective reflects ICRC's commitment to not only directly address sexual violence through a range of preventive measures and responsive actions, but to also aim to influence actors at national, regional and international level to create a legal and policy environment, in which sexual violence is absolutely prohibited (and not tolerated), and to ensure that victims'/survivors' dignity and needs are at the center, with their agency recognized and respected. It will be achieved through strategic diplomatic engagement – in line with the ICRC's added value and expertise – as well as provision of technical support to State governments to integrate IHL in domestic frameworks.

Progress against this objective will be evidenced through the ICRC's ability to influence relevant policy and legal frameworks.

➤ **Indicator 3.1. Law and Policy: Extent to which the ICRC is able to ensure that its concerns and recommendations related to sexual violence in armed conflict, OSV and detention are reflected in relevant discussions in legal, policy and diplomatic fora at international, regional and local levels**

Means/ Example activities

- Monitor and map relevant discussions, initiatives and developments in policy and diplomatic fora, in order to be able to find appropriate entry points and influencing angles in line with ICRC's added value and expertise
- Provide recommendations from ICRC field practice and experience into relevant discussions and initiatives in intergovernmental fora at international, regional and local levels. Include SV in dialogue/engagements with relevant governments, including but not limited to those that can be champions on the issue
- Strengthen dialogue with the UN (including DPKO) and other intergovernmental organizations (AU, ASEAN, EU, NATO, AALCO, etc.) on their role in prevention and response to sexual violence, including on the training on sexual violence for weapon bearers
- Develop an official ICRC position on sexual violence committed by multinational forces and humanitarians, and ensure consistent implementation, dissemination and sensitization within delegations.
- Participate in public events, debates etc. on the issue of sexual violence
- Include SV in ICRC policy and diplomatic objectives
- Enhance public communication outreach through various media on issues to which the ICRC wants to draw more attention
- Respond to consultations/requests by key stakeholders related to sexual violence

- **Indicator 3.2. Support to authorities: Number of contexts in which the ICRC has provided sensitization and technical support to authorities to integrate international obligations related to sexual violence in domestic frameworks and ensure their implementation**

Means/ Example activities

- Organize dissemination, training or sensitization on sexual violence to relevant authorities;
- Provide legal and technical support to authorities to ensure prohibition of sexual violence and appropriate response to it.

OPERATIONS

Strategic Objective 4: Populations of concern benefit from an effective response to the risk and consequences of sexual violence.

This objective focuses on the impact that ICRC wants to have on populations and individuals affected by, or at risk of, sexual violence in armed conflict and OSV (and in contexts where the ICRC works in detention).

In contrast to the first three objectives, which will be monitored primarily at the level of HQ, this objective applies first and foremost to ICRC's work in the field and is also intended to be monitored at field level. To facilitate its achievement, the sub-objectives below have been designed to guide delegations and staff working on the issue in developing their SO and planning their activities in the PfR exercise. Each sub-objective includes a few indicators that will be monitored at the centralized level (by Sexual Violence team in Geneva, with support from the Working Group), as well as a number of example indicators and means/activities that can be used by delegations during their planning using the new PMT tool. The Sexual Violence team and other technical teams at HQ remain available to support delegations to develop indicators that will adequately capture progress and achievements linked to this objective.

As indicated by the sub-objectives below, this Objective is achieved through ICRC delegations' work in four main areas:

- **Improving delegation-level understanding of the nature sexual violence in their context, related trends and needs.**
- **Response to health needs of the victims/survivors;**
- **Response to non-health needs of the victims/survivors** (including protection needs, but also livelihood/economic needs etc.);
- **Response to the risk of sexual violence** (i.e. reducing the risk and adopting preventive measures).

The first sub-objective can be applied in all delegations. The other three should be considered and applied in different delegations as appropriate, in line with the scope and engagement criteria.

- **Sub-Objective 4.1. Understanding and Analysis: ICRC has a sound understanding of the context-specific patterns of sexual violence, related humanitarian consequences and needs in all contexts where it operates.**

For the use by field delegations

Possible field-level/PMT indicators²²:

- ➔ Extent to which the key issues, trends, stakeholders and perceptions related to sexual violence in a given context have been analyzed and understood by the delegation;
- ➔ Number of relevant and appropriate interventions/initiatives developed based on the analysis of key issues, trends, stakeholders and perceptions related to sexual violence in the context.

²² These indicators will not be reported on at the centralized/institutional level, but rather are to be used as a guidance for field delegations to use in their reporting.

Means/ Example activities

- Develop basic awareness and capacity on the issue on sexual violence among the staff (including management) to ensure they can assess and respond to the issue in an appropriate manner, within the scope of their métier and in complementarity with other relevant métiers, ensuring the 'do no harm' principle is upheld
 - Collect and analyze available information on sexual violence in a specific context, including through mappings/discussions with other actors/research and public reports/media screening/assessments etc. to better understand the issue
 - Conduct multidisciplinary assessments to better understand the issue, in contexts where sexual violence is strongly associated with armed conflict/OSV
- **Sub-Objective 4.2. Health-care: Victims/survivors of sexual violence in and outside of detention have access to quality health care as needed, either through existing service providers, direct ICRC services or through partners/referral system**

For the use by field delegations

Possible field-level/PMT indicators:

- ➔ Number/Percentage of rape victims/survivors who received clinical support within 72 hours from the rape (in/outside of detention);
- ➔ Number/Percentage of rape victims/survivors who received MHPSS support within 72 hours from the rape;
- ➔ Number/Percentage of sexual violence survivors receiving MHPSS who show reduced distress/ improved functioning/improved coping;
- ➔ Number of health staff trained to provide clinical care/MHPSS to victims/survivors of sexual violence;
- ➔ Number of key community actors trained to provide MHPSS to victims/survivors of sexual violence;
- ➔ The extent to which communities are aware of ICRC and other services for victims/survivors of violence, including SV.

Means/ Example activities

- Ensure care is available through:
 - Supporting the provision of clinical care and MHPSS, directly or through qualified partners;
 - Awareness raising/sensitization and training for health care providers and key community actors likely to provide psychosocial support to victims, including on identification of victims/survivors
 - Awareness raising/sensitization on stigma reduction and health-seeking behavior of individuals
 - Strengthening existing psychological and psychosocial coping mechanisms through MHPSS activities
 - Outreach activities to identify the "invisible" survivors and facilitate access to integral health care
 - Supporting hospitals/PHCs to ensure quality care is provided;
 - Interventions with authorities, including Health providers (State and non-State) to ensure access to necessary care for all victims
- Raise awareness of the existing services and the importance of accessing care

- **Sub-Objective 4.3. Other needs and acceptance in society: Victims/survivors of sexual violence have their rights re-established and other non-medical needs satisfied**

For the use by field delegations

Possible field-level/PMT indicators:

- ➔ Extent to which victims/survivors of sexual violence have access to necessary services
- ➔ % of targeted persons (victims/survivors of sexual violence)/households that are able to cover their basic needs
- ➔ Extent to which allegations of sexual violence are appropriately followed-up and investigated, and perpetrators punished

Means/ Example activities

- Interventions with authorities, including with international peace operations, and to NSAG
- Awareness-raising/sensitization in communities and with families of survivors, including a focus on stigma reduction
- Economic/microfinance programs to support reduction of risk-taking behavior and reintegration of survivors (and/or their families) within their homes and communities.
- Ensuring legal environment that in which appropriate accountability mechanisms and accessibility are in place, and victims'/survivors' rights can be respected and protected (through interventions, dissemination and technical support to authorities).
- Facilitating access to justice through referrals and informing people of their rights and responsibilities
- Ensuring physical protection of survivors and family members (if relevant and when possible), through referrals, relocation etc.

- **Sub-Objective 4.4. Prevention and risk reduction: The risk and occurrence of sexual violence in and outside of detention is reduced**

For the use by field delegations

Possible field-level/PMT indicators:

- ➔ Various actors of influence's level of understanding of the issue of sexual violence pre and post-dissemination session/training;
- ➔ Extent to which actors of influence take relevant measures to prevent sexual violence;
- ➔ Extent to which the communities particularly affected by sexual violence take measures and are able to reduce the risks;
- ➔ Extent to which detention authorities have adopted and implemented Standard Operating Procedures to prevent ill-treatment
- ➔ % of targeted vulnerable households able to meet at least XX% essential monthly expenses/essential needs

Means/ Examples activities

- Changing behavior of weapon-bearers, detaining authorities and other actors of influence, including through interventions, trainings and sensitization;
- Reducing risk of sexual violence, including through:
 - Providing or ensuring better infrastructure/lighting;
 - Assistance aimed at reducing risk exposure (e.g. targeting most vulnerable with economic initiatives);
 - Awareness-raising/sensitization in communities,
 - Reinforcement of self-protection and adopting of safe behavior (less risky behavior);
 - Increasing resilience and supporting coping mechanisms of communities at risk;
 - Facilitating engagement strategies
- Supporting self-organization and community cooperation processes
- Ensuring effective prohibition and legal/normative environment conducive to compliance (ethical codes, SOPs, regulations, laws, disciplinary procedures, sanctions, including through technical support to authorities;
- In detention, ensuring that detainees' basic needs are covered in a sustainable manner (food, water, hygiene, clothing and bedding, habitat, health care, family visits, separation by age and sex unless from same family, risk assessment etc.) through interventions with authorities;
- Training and sensitizing all staff working on prevention and risk reduction on the issue of sexual violence;
- Developing effective monitoring mechanisms and exploring the ways to evaluate the impact of ICRC prevention of sexual violence