



CSV

The Centre for the Study of  
Violence and Reconciliation

# Where is the money to address gender-based violence?

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
CBO	Community-based organisation
CSO	Civil society organisation
CSVR	Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation
FAMSA	Family and Marriage Society of South Africa
GBV	Gender-based violence
HBF/S	Heinrich Böll Foundation/Stiftung
NICRO	National Institute for Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation of Offenders
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
ODA	Overseas development assistance
PEP	Post-exposure prophylaxis
SANGOCO	South African National NGO Coalition

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## **Executive summary**

This report discusses the trends and patterns of funding for organisations in South Africa that address gender-based violence. This report is the result of the efforts of a number of people. Julia Kuhn wrote the literature review, analysed the data from twenty-nine CSO questionnaires and twelve CSO interviews and wrote up these findings, and conducted seven interviews with donors. Debbie Budlender of Community Agency for Social Enquiry analysed the data from twelve interviews with donors and wrote up these findings. The recommendations were compiled by Julia Kuhn and the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.

### **Methodology**

The study was conducted in two phases. The first phase sought to uncover general perceptions and experiences of civil society organisations (CSOs) that focussed on gender-based violence (GBV) or had a dedicated programme or project addressing GBV. A total of 32 questionnaires were returned to CSV. From this group 14 CSOs were also engaged through follow-up interviews. In the second phase, a literature review was conducted and 16 donors were interviewed either telephonically or face-to-face. The donors interviewed were chosen based on having a previous track record of funding GBV projects.

### **Literature review**

Of particular importance to this report is the context in which funding occurs. Worldwide funds have tended to decrease for gender-specific initiatives over the past ten years (Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), 2005). Various authors, including the international NGO AWID, suggest that this decline may be due partly to the corporatisation of some donor agencies according to neo-liberal capitalist agendas and the increasing marginalisation of women's rights in a political environment characterised by religious fundamentalism, militarism and global capitalism. The widespread shift to a "mainstreaming" approach has also contributed to the decrease in funding. In addition to being affected by these worldwide trends, funding in South Africa has its own specific challenges.

After 1994, with the establishment of a democratic state in South Africa, official funding shifted from civil society to government. The total amount of overseas development assistance (ODA) increased in the first years. However, since 1998, ODA in general has been declining in South Africa. CSOs in the GBV sector have not been unaffected by this.

The South African government has shown commitment to addressing gender inequality and GBV. It has also recognised CSOs' role in providing services to communities. However, state support for these initiatives is uncoordinated and difficult to access.

### **Findings**

#### **The view from CSOs**

Counselling was the most common activity engaged in by the CSOs interviewed, followed closely by prevention initiatives at community level. Other areas of activity included networking, training of other service providers, advocacy, and legal/para-legal assistance.

In examining how funding trends have affected the staff component of these organisations, it emerged that some organisations had transferred paid staff to work on a voluntary basis. In other instances funding cuts led to the recruitment of more voluntary staff to assist with projects.

Further, a number of activists in the GBV sector were reported to have left to take up positions in government. While funding cuts were not the only reason for this movement, the cuts were perceived to have contributed. The departures of key activists had led to fragmentation within the sector and contributed to problems related to the availability of funding. In addition, the sector has not been as vocal as it was prior to 1994. Fragmentation and rivalries had also weakened the sector, resulting in, among other things, duplication of programmes. This had influenced the perception of some donors that poor quality programmes were being delivered with minimal impact. Meanwhile, there had been an increasing emphasis from donors on CSOs forming partnerships. These partnerships were, however, not necessarily beneficial.

Funding for most organisations came primarily from foreign donors followed by government grants and South African corporate and private funding sources. Most respondents reported that they were receiving less funding in 2005 than they had received in 2000. Fees that CSOs required for service provision were reported to have increasingly become a primary source of support in 2003 and 2004.

Foreign donor support for the CSOs interviewed reached a peak in 2002 and 2003 and then declined in 2004. Conversely, South African corporate and private donor support increased during this period and remained stable over the three years prior to the interviews. Government grants to CSOs had slightly increased since 2002.

Programmes suffering the most during 2000 and 2004 in respect of funding were those focussed on victim empowerment, counselling services, shelters and the delivery of other welfare services. Some respondents simply said that “GBV programmes” were those that had suffered most. Across all respondents, 11 projects and programmes had been suspended between 2000 and 2004 due to lack of funding. In some cases, planned programmes and projects were unable to be initiated because of lack of funding.

Funding for core costs such as salaries, volunteer stipends, and operational costs had become harder to source. Meanwhile funding had become more easily available for HIV/AIDS programmes, programmes for the youth, and training and skills development.

A complaint from respondents was that donors’ funding criteria and rules in respect of funding proposals were continually changing. This resulted in more time and resources being spent on fundraising rather than on the core activities of the organisation. In addition, respondents noted that smaller and rural CBOs might not have the capacity to comply with all funding requirements of donors.

Organisations that found it difficult to raise funds reported that internal reasons for this included the lack of sufficient human resources, management being uninvolved in fundraising, and a poorly defined fundraising strategy in which funding was done on an ad hoc basis resulting in a poor relationship with funders. External factors included the shift in donor’s funding priorities, a general lack of interest in funding GBV, and the diversion of funding towards HIV/AIDS programmes.

Successful fundraising was characterised by organisations approaching new donors, raising their organisational public profile and demonstrating to funders that the organisation was legitimate and

professional. Also important in sourcing funding was the ability to link funders' agendas to those of the organisation.

CSOs reported that foreign donors were increasingly requiring more stringent monitoring and evaluation in line with their demand for measurable outcomes. Some donors had been emphasizing the need for CSOs to work in partnership with government.

Larger organisations felt that they would have more power than smaller organisation in influencing donors. The suggestion was made that the sector approach donors as a 'consortium' bringing to the fore their concerns and raising awareness of GBV.

### **The view from donors**

Of the 12 interviews available for analysis, five were with embassies or foreign bilateral development cooperation agencies, one was with an organisation funded by several developed Western countries, two were with foreign foundations, two with international NGOs, and two with South African corporate responsibility foundations.

The donors interviewed had a range of priority areas. Within their gender focus, GBV was over-represented due to the way in which respondents were chosen. Apart from gender, the most common focus was HIV/AIDS. Agencies generally had multi-year strategies which determined the overall priorities. In general, priority areas were said to be decided upon with input from donor headquarters and locally based officers. In some cases the respondents said there was also input from local people other than their staff.

Respondents had various approaches to funding of gender-related activities. While some focussed on gender mainstreaming, others funded specific gender-related activities and yet others used both approaches. Few donors had gender policies, although most felt that they were addressing gender issues through some of the activities that they were funding. Where there was an individual in a donor organisation that championed gender issues, there seemed to be more funding of gender-related activities.

Some donors had specific budgets set aside for gender projects and programmes while others did not. In funding CSOs, donors were generally reluctant to fund services that they felt should be provided or supported by government. There was, however, greater willingness to fund service delivery in the GBV sector than in most other sectors. Two donors had mechanisms in place for monitoring and evaluating gender-equity outcomes while others did not differentiate this from other monitoring and evaluation. Several expected their partners to do the gender-equity monitoring and evaluation, while several other donors acknowledged weaknesses in their monitoring and evaluation to date.

In respect of application processes, again a variety of practices occurred across donors. Some issued formal calls for proposals at specific times while others accepted applications at any time of the year. In terms of the criteria that were used to assess applications, most stressed having a clear purpose that was in line with their strategies or objectives. The period of funding varied, with the most common period being one year. In many cases, however, funding is provided for successive years.

Donor requirements in respect of partnership with government generally acknowledged that this needed to vary based on the nature of the activities. Thus a service delivery project might be expected to have some sort of relationship with government, while an advocacy-focused activity

would not. Donors were almost unanimously in favour of promoting partnerships within the sector itself.

Challenges reported from donors included the poor quality of proposals and reports they received. Many were interested, in particular, in the CSOs they funded being able to show impact.

## **Recommendations**

CSOs working in gender need to raise awareness among donors that levels of funding for GBV have been declining in recent years and that GBV is a significant issue for which sustained donor commitment is essential.

CSOs need to make donors aware that meaningful work in the sector is by nature long-term and is therefore contingent on healthy funding of the operational costs of GBV organisations and provision of funding for at least three years.

In order to appreciate the integral role that counselling plays in the GBV sector and thus make funding available for this activity, donors need to be lobbied by CSOs about the value of counselling as a strategic activity. Approaches to service delivery in Northern countries may not be applicable without adaptation to the South African context.

Instead of forcing GBV programmes into donor's HIV/AIDS agendas, CSOs need to motivate for separate GBV funding while clearly linking the objectives of GBV projects to the issue of HIV/AIDS.

CSOs should diversify their funding bases by seeking more funding from local businesses. CSOs can promote their programmes as opportunities for companies to meaningfully implement their corporate social responsibility initiatives with the communities in which they operate.

SANGOCO should lobby government to make funding more accessible.

In order to engage meaningfully with the question of gender equity, donors need to undertake critical evaluations of their gender mainstreaming programmes and formulate sound gender policies in consultation with the sector. In order for policy to be effective, it must be backed up by strong budgets for the gender-relevant aspects and monitoring and evaluation of gender equity targets.

More time should be allocated for project visits as these have the potential to be mutual learning processes.

Where donors require that grantee projects are evaluated, they should provide a budget for external evaluation so as not to prejudice smaller CSOs who do not have the resources to undertake internal evaluations.

CSOs have requested that funders simplify and standardise their application forms and provide feedback on unsuccessful applications.

CSOs must ensure that they allocate resources and expertise for fundraising and that fundraising skills are spread from the Board to the rest of the staff. CSOs must pay attention to their public



profiles by ensuring, for example, that they showcase their image, accountability and track record on their web sites.

CSOs must also demonstrate that their programmes are relevant and effective, and be prepared to challenge donors to think beyond standard notions of impact and outcomes, discuss with them developments in the GBV field and point out potential contradictions in their positions on service delivery, advocacy, government partnerships and the diversion of funds to HIV/AIDS.

CSOs can enhance their relationships with donors by “bringing home the personal face of the organisation”, sharing success stories with their donors, acknowledging their contribution and providing them with opportunities for exposure.

Established CSOs should attempt to partner with CBOs and transfer skills as this will benefit the strength and sustainability of the sector as a whole.

CSOs in this sector are advised to appreciate that they face particular funding challenges that other sectors may not face, and to factor these into their fundraising strategies. In particular, a strong case is made for GBV CSOs to wield influence in donor decision-making by engaging proactively and collectively with donors.

GBV CSOs should make an effort to network in an efficient and effective manner in order to approach donors as a consortium and raise donor awareness about the urgency of funds for GBV work. Individual meetings with donors should also be used as opportunities for advocacy and lobby about GBV and convince them of the need for increased funding.

Further dialogue between donors and CSOs, particularly CBOs in the sector, is needed. The Donor Network on Women can be instrumental in this respect. Convening other fora for donor-CSO dialogue will provide further opportunities for engagement.

Distributing research such as this to donor organisations will raise awareness of the difficulties and nuances in fundraising that face CSOs in the GBV sector in South Africa.

Where donors look primarily to the South African government when determining their priority areas, GBV CSOs may exercise influence in this regard by building relationships with government and ensuring that the GBV agenda remains a government priority.

Further research is required into the relationship between service delivery, advocacy and policy formulation in the sector so as to illuminate points of connection and departure between these respective areas.

# 1. Introduction

## Rationale for the research

While South Africa performs well on many indicators of gender equality, it has particularly high levels of violence against women. GBV is a strong indicator of inequality between the genders. The allocation of resources to address GBV should thus be a national priority for government and donors. Instead, however, funding to this sector remains woefully inadequate and in the case of Northern donors in particular, seems to have declined. Government, donors and CSOs need to understand the reasons for this pattern and the implications it has for efforts to address GBV in the country.

In 2005, CSVr therefore initiated research into the funding trends and patterns of available funding to South African organisations addressing gender-based violence (GBV). In the first phase of the research, 32 civil society organisations filled in questionnaires about the funding they had received. Twenty-nine of these responses were coded and written up to reflect emerging themes. In the second phase of the research, a literature review was conducted and interviews were carried out with 16 donor organisations. Four of these interviews had to be excluded from the analysis due to the poor quality of the recording.

## Methodology

CSVr chose to focus on three provinces. Gauteng was selected as the wealthiest, and Eastern Cape and Limpopo as the two poorest. Limpopo is also almost exclusively rural. All CSOs listed in the CSVr Directory for these three provinces were contacted and questionnaires sent to them.

The CSOs were selected for interviews on the basis of their work content. All either focused exclusively on GBV or had a strong GBV component to their work, in the form of a dedicated project or programme.

A two-pronged approach was used with the CSOs. Firstly, the questionnaire was administered by fax and post to all the CSOs listed for the three provinces in the CSVr Directory. CSOs were asked to return the form to CSVr. The questionnaire included both closed- and open-ended questions. A total of 32 questionnaires were returned. Of these, 29 were coded and analysed. Two of the remaining three were too scantily filled in to be useful. The final questionnaire was filled in by an organisation that had only just been established and therefore they had not yet received donor funding.

Secondly, 14 CSOs indicated that they would be available for a follow-up interview. Interviews were conducted (face-to-face and by telephone, for those out of Johannesburg) and twelve were coded and analysed. Two were excluded from the analysis owing to limited content. These follow-up interviews were intended to provide qualitative texture to the quantitative information gathered through the questionnaires.

With both the initial CSO questionnaires and follow-up interviews, each organisation did not necessarily answer every question. This must be borne in mind when reading the analysis presented below.

The donors were identified on the basis of having a track record of funding GBV projects and organisations. This method of selection is likely to result in a bias in the sample in terms of gender awareness and sensitivity, as well as interest in the topic. A total of 16 donor interviews were conducted either face-to-face or telephonically. Unfortunately, due to poor recording quality, only 12 interviews were analysed for this report. Virtually all of the donors who were approached were willing to participate. One was unavailable due to prior commitments.

A fairly flexible, open-ended interview schedule was developed. This allowed for the interviewer to explore issues appropriate to the particular donor. The schedule asked about budgets, but the details were often not available during the interviews because respondents did not have the factual information at their finger tips. In these cases, the researcher attempted to fill in the gaps through tracking down relevant documents (such as annual reports) and via internet searches.

A note of caution about the methodology in general: The CSOs were approached about their perceptions and experiences of donors in general, not specifically those covered in this research. They were given scope to talk about a wider 'pool' of donors. In contrast, the donors interviewed were, or had been, involved in GBV funding and thus spoke primarily in this capacity. This difference in targeting might have resulted in some discrepancy between what (gender-aware/sensitive) donors are saying about GBV funding and how CSOs have experienced and reflected on the donor climate more generally.

## 2. Literature review

### Introduction

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a pressing concern in South Africa, with levels of rape, domestic violence and femicide unabated during our 13 years of democracy. Despite this, civil society organisations (CSOs) working in the sector find themselves facing a deepening funding crisis, not unlike many other women's rights organisations worldwide (Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), 2005). In the literature, the analysis of this trend has been two-fold. Firstly it has been understood in the context of the corporatisation of donor agencies according to the economic imperatives of global neo-liberal capitalist agendas (Camay, 1998; Fani, 1998; Hearn, 1999; AWID, 2005). Secondly, it has been understood as an effect of the increasing marginalisation of women's rights in a political environment characterised by religious fundamentalism, militarism and global capitalism (AWID, 2005).

While women's rights organisations in South Africa face similar funding difficulties to those faced by their sister organisations in the rest of the world, the funding context in South Africa also has its own specific dynamics. CSOs working in South Africa thus have specific challenges. Thus, CSOs working in the GBV sector have to negotiate unique South African challenges as well as generic international difficulties peculiar to the sector.

### The funding landscape 1994-1999

The current patterns of donor funding in South Africa need to be understood against the background of what happened in the funding arena in the years immediately following the first democratic elections as this period presented a unique situation, although perhaps it should have been apparent that funding patterns would not continue.

Total overseas development assistance (ODA) to South Africa reached its highest level of R3,8 billion in 1997 (Daya and Govender in Kihato, 2001). It declined very rapidly from this peak. In 1999, it stood at just less than R1,5 billion. Some donors, notably the Scandinavians, reduced funding gradually over a five-year period after 1994. After the elections of 1999, some funding contracts were not renewed.

During the period 1994-1999, the bulk of ODA was channelled through bilateral agencies, as donors shifted their attention away from civil society to the state after the transition to democracy in 1994. Cawthra and Kraak (1999) note that while the assumption was that some of this funding should reach non-governmental organisations (NGOs) via contracts with government, the reality was somewhat different. In particular, they suggest that the bureaucratic incapacity of a new government faced with the task of transformation resulted in little of the available funding reaching CSOs.

Between 1994 and 1999, 54,6% of ODA went to government, 24,4% to parastatals, 11% to NGOs (R1.182 million) and 10% to the private sector (Daya & Govender in Kihato, 2001). On average, ODA to civil society represented one fifth of the amount that went to government, although the annual amounts varied considerably. ODA to civil society plummeted to almost nothing between 1994 and 1995, gradually rose to a peak of R400 million in 1998 and then declined to half of this in

1999. More generally, since 1998 ODA has been declining across the board to all types of recipients.

The above figures show that many of the donors that continued to fund CSOs in the early post-apartheid era did so on a reduced scale. The rationale offered for this shift has been a realignment of funding priorities with the recognition that poverty in South Africa is due to structural inequalities and thus redistribution of resources, rather than the provision of aid, is the more deep-rooted solution to poverty. In addition, some funders consider South Africa's comparative wealth and power in the region as a potentially destabilising factor and have therefore broadened their focus to include aid to the Southern African Development Community as a whole (Cawthra and Kraak, 1999).

A study conducted by the Independent Development Trust in 1995 in which 128 CSOs were surveyed found that most organisations reported having experienced deficits in their budgets of between 30 and 60 percent (Cawthra and Kraak, 1999). A 1997 survey by the South African National NGO Coalition (SANGOCO) of about 20% of its members presented a more optimistic picture, with 59% having increased their budgets while almost 20% had to cut back on expenditure due to funding shortfalls (Cawthra and Kraak, 1999). This study almost certainly gives an over-optimistic picture as it would not have captured any NGOs that had been forced to close over the intervening period. Anecdotal evidence from other quarters suggests that a number of prominent NGOs were forced to close between 1994 and 1999 due to funding cuts. Smaller CBOs have also felt the pinch. Cawthra and Kraak (1999) suggest that those NGOs offering direct service delivery functions such as housing construction and rural development were better placed to survive this period than those with a "less tangible delivery role" such as "research and policy formulation or in lobbying and advocacy for human rights" (1999:145). This observation contrasts with the finding reported below, from both donor and NGO informants, that donors are currently less willing to fund service delivery than areas such as advocacy or even research.

The difficulties that arose out of the new funding climate post-1994 resulted in a more critical engagement between CSOs, Northern donors and the post-apartheid government. Questions of accountability of donors to their grantees, the power imbalance in this relationship and the donor policies that inform funding strategies were raised by CSOs. An outcome of this engagement was the publication in the late 1990s of the "Guidelines for Good Practice for Northern Donors", as a joint initiative of SANGOCO, the South African Grantmakers Association and an informal network of northern NGOs. The guidelines detailed ethical and accountable practices towards grantees in South Africa. They suggested, among others, that such practices would include "the need for donors to consult more closely with grant recipients, and to negotiate defined funding agreements and time-frames for grants to protect projects to avoid sudden withdrawals or interruptions of funding cycles" (Cawthra and Kraak, 1999: 146).

### **Implications of donor agendas for CSOs**

Kihato (2001) discusses how the funding environment under apartheid gave rise to a set of conditions in which civil society was relatively unconstrained in determining its priorities, in contrast to the funding environment post-1994 in which many foreign agencies opened offices in South Africa and played a more active role in providing grants to CSOs, and therefore in determining a funding agenda. Kihato (2001) notes that during the apartheid era, with legislation such as the Prohibition of Political Interference Act (Act 51 of 1968), the Affected Organisations Act (Act 31 of 1974), the Disclosure of Foreign Funding Act (Act 26 of 1989) and the Fund-Raising Act (Act 107 of 1978), some anti-apartheid organisations were prevented from receiving

funds from overseas donors. To circumvent these restrictions, a large portion of donor funding was channelled primarily through three local organisations – the Catholic Bishops Conference, the South African Council of Churches and Kagiso Trust. These three organisations were generally given full discretion by the original northern donors as to how these funds should be disbursed. Kihato notes that there was little effective monitoring of how these funds were used. For example, very few of the recipients were asked to implement accounting systems or to report back on how the money was used, for fear of drawing their activities to the attention of the apartheid state. Kihato (citing Shubane, 1999) argues that the apartheid funding environment worked against the interests of CSOs in the long term, as the extremely relaxed conditions under which funding was granted did not equip organisations to develop the skills necessary to compete in the more normalised environment after 1994.

Other analysts suggest that South Africa's transition to democracy provided for entry to the global economy and thereby an opportunity for Western governments and donor foundations to impose a neo-imperialist agenda on civil society through the implementation of their funding priorities (Camay, 1998). While this analysis is dismissed as naïve by Reitzes and Friedman (2001), these authors also note that the real effects of funding cuts to civil society have undermined the vigour of the sector and this has negative implications for the full exercise of citizenship in the new democracy. Kihato (2001) suggests that the erratic nature of funding over the first five years of democracy created levels of financial instability among CSOs that impacted on their ability to achieve their objectives such as influencing policy processes or effectively articulating their members' interests and lobbying the government.

A survey done by Interfund in 1996 found that the single largest cause of the collapse of CSOs post-1994 was the withdrawal of donor funding, particularly by the European Union and USAID (quoted in Kihato, 2001). In addition, many of the CSOs that existed during the apartheid era were welfarist organisations that catered to the white population and therefore thrived under apartheid (Finance Week, 1998 cited in Kihato 2001). However, these organisations were not the main beneficiaries of donors such as the European Union during the last years of apartheid. Other research (Budlender et al, 2001) shows how the smaller pool of funding available post-apartheid has been biased to urban CSOs that have greater capacity and access to resources. One of the results of this is that the sustainability of community-based organisations (CBOs) in rural areas has been undermined. This has serious implications for the strength of this sector of civil society to represent the issues of the poorest and most marginalised citizens (Reitzes and Friedman, 2001).

Research conducted by Hearn in 1999 suggested that CSOs committed to the promotion of economic liberalism and liberal democracy were most popular with donors at that time. Further, internationally, the internal dynamics of donor agencies often conform to market-driven principles of results-based management and the promotion of technical solutions to social problems, at the expense of nuanced analyses of the political nature of change processes (AWID, 2005).

Ben Fani, the then co-ordinator of the National Network of Community Based Organisations, argued in the late 1990s that CBOs had borne the brunt of funding cuts by Northern donors, resulting in a side-lining of the issues of the poor and excluded (Fani, 1998). He noted that in the funding climate prevalent at the time, CBOs were forced to tailor their activities according to development priorities that had been determined by donors. Fani analyses this as a form of neo-imperialism in which Western agendas are met at the expense of what is really “good for communities” (1998:38). The result, he argues, is that the CBO sector has fragmented in the effort to align with donor agendas and the collective power of CBOs as social movements has thus been undermined.

Fani accuses donors of interfering with the mandates of CBOs by imposing interventions without consulting the recipient communities. He argues that “the determinants for development were imported and disempowered the very people who were most reliant on them. Education [for example] was based on alien ideas rather than local grassroots experience” (1998:38). He launches a scathing attack on the relationship of patronage that he perceives existed between donors and CBOs and suggests that the underlying dynamic reflects both Western prejudices against Africans, and a patriarchal model in which women’s work goes unpaid. For example, CBOs are expected to operate by means of volunteer services as core costs such as salaries are not met by funders. He also accuses donors of being quick to accuse CBOs of mismanagement when donor-identified outcomes are not forthcoming when in fact, he says, standards have not been negotiated with the community in question and the conditions under which donors force CBOs to operate undermine their efficacy.

### **Government-CSO partnership**

According to Kihato (2001), the 1990s funding crisis for CSOs raised the alarm in government as government realised that CSOs were providing invaluable services to communities, a role for which the fledgling government was ill-equipped. Donors also realised the importance of civil society in promoting democracy and thus gradually increased their funding to CSOs in 1995. However, much of this funding was partnership-orientated. Thus CSOs were granted funds when they could demonstrate that they could work in partnership with government (Budlender & Mbere, 2000). At the same time, most donor funds were channelled directly to government via bilateral agreements, in accordance with donor conceptions of the state as the primary agent of development. The contradictions of this approach were succinctly articulated by a respondent in Budlender and Mbere’s 2000 research on ODA to the gender sector:

*government is now saying they can’t deliver, and need to outsource, and the NGOs are the obvious place to look, meanwhile the bilaterals decide to up the money to the state and give less to NGOs. They pour it in when the state can’t absorb it (2000:41).*

The positioning of CSOs as “developmental partners” of government has been problematic in a number of ways. A proposal by government to centralise funding of civil society in the mid-1990s was perceived by many NGOs as attempting to control the sector and “buy” support for government policies and programmes. Further, CSOs claimed to be more effective conduits of funding than government and there was widespread dissatisfaction with government inefficiency in disbursing money. In addition to the practical constraints and concerns about the distribution of funds, ideological differences arose between the state and CSOs around the perceived role of these organisations in the new South Africa. The state’s perception of “ideal” CSOs as apolitical, technical partners that would bolster its capacity was contrary to CSO definitions of themselves as guardians of democracy that might oppose government in respect of some of its policies (Kihato 2001).

In contrast to those who see an antagonistic relationship between the state and CSOs, Habib (in Moyo, 2005) argues that the state viewed CSOs as important instruments in service delivery and showed political will to form partnerships with them. Thus Minister for Social Development, Zola Skweyiya, announced that not only did government expect CSOs to continue to play a watchdog function to government, but government also expected CSOs to “assist in expanding access to social and economic services that create jobs and eradicate poverty among the poorest of the poor” (Barnard & Terreblanche, cited in Moyo 2005: 43). Further, the state created financial

institutions such as the National Development Agency to provide support to CSOs. Tax laws hostile to CSOs were repealed and registered. Some CSOs were granted tax exemption status to encourage philanthropic giving. Habib (in Moyo, 2005) is of the opinion that all of these measures facilitated a collaborative relationship between the state and CSOs, with a resulting increase in professionalism and commercialisation of CSOs.

Research done by Vetten & Khan in 2002 on government funding to the GBV sector reveals a somewhat different reality. This research found that during the period January 2000 to May 2001, only 56 of the 141 organisations surveyed received funding from government departments. The total amount provided by government amounted to R11,3 million, just over half the amount allocated by Lotto for the sport and recreation sector during the same period. That less than half the organisations surveyed received funding from government was reported to be a result of limited access to information about this funding, a lack of clear and uniform funding policies at government level, and formidable application procedures.

Vetten & Khan (2002) conclude that although organisations working in the sector saw themselves as the delivery arm of the state, they were seriously under-funded by government. However, the authors note that the state was not unwilling to provide funding for GBV work. Instead the problem lay with a lack of available information about government funding, onerous tendering applications and bureaucratic hurdles that imposed obstacles for organisations in the sector. Further, the authors warn that in becoming “resources” of the state in the fight against GBV, CSOs in the sector risked becoming merely welfarist to the detriment of “advocacy and critical engagement with policy, strategy and thinking around violence against women” (2002:9). All these latter activities are critical to the role of watchdog of the state, as well as to the formulation of strategies and interventions that address multi-dimensional change to the core structures and values of society.

### **ODA to the gender sector in government**

Budlender & Mbere’s *Development Cooperation Report: Evaluation of ODA to the Gender Sector* (2000:6) states that at the turn of the century:

*“many donors were clear that government was or should be in the driver’s seat in relation to gender-related ODA, in particular, given the priority accorded to gender equity in the country.”*

While many of these donors nevertheless said that implementation of their gender-specific initiatives was occurring via the projects of NGOs they were funding, they stressed that these funds were only granted on the condition that these organisations worked in partnership with government. The report documents several instances of the tensions arising when “donors prioritise relationship with government and self-sufficiency and, on the other hand, government does not feel able to pay for the services of NGOs” (2000: 7). The report concludes that the overall picture is that support for GBV initiatives was “somewhat ad hoc” (2000:7). The donor-funded National Network on Violence Against Women, for example, while lauded as “a serious attempt at coordination” had limited support from government outside the departments of Justice and Welfare. Budlender & Mbere write that where government lacks a coordinated approach across departments and agencies, initiatives such as the now-closed National Network will be hampered in their efforts, despite healthy support from donors.

Budlender & Mbere report that donors and government were performing relatively well in terms of gender-specific initiatives (within government), but less so in terms of gender mainstreaming. The



authors suggest that gender mainstreaming has greater potential for impact than gender or women-targeted initiatives. However, the implementation of mainstreaming was found to have encountered many difficulties. Within donor agencies, gender was often not properly integrated into the sectoral programmes even where gender was a special interest.

Concerns about the prioritising of donor money for gender mainstreaming at the expense of organisations with gender-specific programs, have been raised by women's rights organisations worldwide (AWID, 2005). While support has generally shifted away from women-specific programmes to gender mainstreaming, the latter approach has not lived up to expectations. Instead, mainstreaming appears to have created conceptual confusion which has detracted from the goal of gender equality. Where it has been successful, mainstreaming has been strongly dependent on commitment at the highest levels of leadership, backed up by sufficient resources, accountability mechanisms and appropriate expertise. These are conditions that, on the whole, have not existed in organisations and institutions. Nevertheless, many donors still favour this approach over the funding of women's organisations. The authors of the AWID document argue that while funding for women's rights should be seen as a necessary and ongoing investment, as well as a precondition for successful mainstreaming, donors generally see it as merely a phase with the ultimate aim being redundancy of women's organisations (AWID, 2005).

### **Global trends in funding to women's rights organisations**

AWID's (2005) research involved a survey of 406 organisations working in the field of women's rights. The survey covered organisations in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, and North America and Western Europe. The research found that half of these organisations were receiving less funding than they did five years previously, around 25% were receiving about the same and 25% were receiving more than they did five years previously. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the pattern was somewhat more depressing – only 18% of the organisations covered in the survey were receiving more funding, 28% had static levels of funding and 49% had experienced a decline.

Static and declining funding levels for women's rights work was found to be more common among smaller organisations while bigger organisations experienced the most growth in their funding levels as donors reportedly favoured funding larger, well-established groups. Nevertheless, organisations with budgets of over \$100 000 had also experienced less growth after 2000 than they did in the period 1995-2000. Those organisations experiencing increases in their funding levels since 2000 attributed this to favourable leadership changes in their organisations, improved fundraising capabilities and favourable donor agendas. Those with less funding attributed this to changes in donor priorities, the economic and political climate, and a decline in funding globally.

The majority of organisations reported that they were spending more time on fundraising in 2005 than they did ten years previously. It seems, however, that while organisations were expending increasing efforts on fundraising, these were not always paying off. Further, in some quarters there was the perception that it is those who "best work the system" who received funding at the expense of those who "understand the issue and have been working on it for some time" (AWID, 2005:48). This sentiment echoed the findings of Budlender et al (2001) in respect of CBOs working in the HIV/AIDS sector in South Africa. A respondent in this survey said that established, urban-based NGOs are favoured for funding as they "talk the language of funders" (Budlender et al, 2001:13), with the result that CBOs closer to issues on the ground were marginalised.

Many of the organisations surveyed by AWID had been creative in adjusting to shifting donor interests in order to secure funding. Thus organisations reported having become expert at “refining their discourse... while still remaining true to their core work and principles” (2005: 48) in order to meet donor requirements. However, the difficulties in having to fit in with donor agendas had also resulted in compromises that made it difficult to develop holistic strategies. There were also other costs in meeting donor requirements. Thus in one case, the director of a women’s rights group noted with frustration that she had had to employ more technical staff, with little feminist or political understanding, to complete log frames and to develop and report on impact indicators so as to meet donor demands. The research notes that some organisations had risen to the challenge by viewing fundraising as advocacy, given the fact that funders increasingly play the role of policymakers. They thus engaged funders in dialogue, educated and persuaded them, and were innovative in connecting donor interests with strategic women’s rights agendas.

Globally, the largest revenue sources for women’s rights work over the period 1995-2004 were reported to be ODA and public foundations, followed by women’s funds and large independent foundations. Over the ten years, women’s funds had become increasingly significant sources of funding for women’s rights work and in 2004 they were the most often quoted source of funding. Meanwhile funding from individuals and revenue from religious sources and membership dues had decreased. Funding from local government sources and income generation increased slightly while funding from the corporate sector remained static.

The situation in sub-Saharan Africa was largely consistent with the global picture, but there were also important differences. According to the AWID (2005) survey, while ODA and public foundations were also the top two sources of revenue in sub-Saharan Africa in 2004 (mentioned as top sources of funding by 34% of NGOs surveyed and 38% of NGOs surveyed respectively), these two sources had decreased significantly since 2000 (by ten percentage points for bilateral agencies and 7 percentage points for public foundations). Following the global trend, women’s funds had shown a steady increase over the ten years (33% of NGOs surveyed mentioned this as a source of funding support) and in 2004 were the third most frequently mentioned source of support in the region. Further, corporate (mentioned by 9%), individual (mentioned by 25%) and family foundation (mentioned by 4%) giving had also increased in the region over the ten years, in contrast to the global trend. Funding from religious sources declined sharply in the region over this period (mentioned by 6%) while funding from local government (mentioned by 24%) and large independent foundations (22%) had remained fairly stable. Membership dues (mentioned by 26%) and income generation (mentioned by 18%) in the region had shown significant increases since 2000, and this, too, was contrary to the global trend, as the respondents indicated more than one source of funding support.

Globally, donor funding priorities in 2004 were found to overwhelmingly favour HIV/AIDS-related health issues and GBV. In all regions with the exception of North America and Western Europe, it was reported that it was more difficult to raise funds for non-HIV/AIDS related health issues, reproductive rights, sexual and lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-gender rights, and civic/political rights than the two favoured issues. Respondents from all regions also indicated that funding for salaries, administration and capacity building were hard to come by. It was significantly easier to find funding for media, technology and communications work, leadership development and networking.

While some areas were easier to find funding for than others, many of the women’s rights organisations surveyed felt that women’s rights were out of fashion with donors. Although the United Nations conferences of the 1990s created momentum around mobilising major resources for

women's rights and gender equality, donors had by 2005 lost interest in these issues. What funding was allocated tended to focus on "safe" issues such as women's health and public participation while "bottom-line issues of choice and consent are increasingly hard to get funding for" (AWID, 2005: 6).

Changing global policy around the achievement of gender equality has also impacted on donor agendas and dictated the direction of donor money. Policy documents developed at the Beijing Conference and international instruments such as the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* have been increasingly marginalised in favour of the goals of the more recent global policy agendas such as the *Millennium Development Goals*. The authors of the AWID document suggest that these agendas are significantly watered down from those of Beijing and as such represent a significant shift backwards. They pose the question "if the real challenge is the implementation of already existing normative frameworks, why should everyone invest in the development of yet another, watered down framework?" (2005: 7).

The authors argue further that donor agencies have become increasingly "corporatised", in line with global neo-liberal economic trends. They suggest that this has had both favourable and unfavourable results. One of the negative effects has been that a more technical approach has been adopted which obscures the links between process and outcome, and links between issues, thus compromising the formulation of a conceptually coherent "big picture". Funding partnerships are also said to have been affected in that interactions with donors are reportedly dominated by directives about administration and donor agendas, rather than "open dialogue about strategy, ambitions or reflection on each others' work" (2005: 7). In line with these shifts are moves away from core funding to project funding. This has impacted significantly on the key infrastructure, sustainability and effectiveness of many organisations at the same time as donors are increasing the demands on organisations for "agility, innovation, accountability and measurable impact" (ibid.).

The inherently unequal power dynamics between donors and grantees were also highlighted in the AWID research. One manifestation of this has been the imposition on organisations by donors of fashionable approaches, such as including men in programmes, without the requisite understanding that "the choice to engage men or not in a woman's program must be a strategic decision, not a one-size-fits-all mandate" (2005: 8). Several respondents called for greater opportunities to discuss openly with funders the power dynamics at play in their relationships.

The authors of the AWID research offer further observations about the overall direction and impact of donor patterns. They argue that the current neo-liberal economic paradigm furthers the interests of global capital by promoting individualism and the values of the "free" market while undermining the capacities and roles of governments to provide basic services and protect human rights. In this environment, donor assistance is increasingly used to shore up fragile governments, at the expense of resource allocation to civil society. Religious fundamentalism has resulted in the rolling back of women's rights in many areas, with the result that donors funding women's rights organisations have come under political pressure to retreat from funding this work. US government funding has also come under pressure from domestic conservative religious trends, exemplified by the Bush administration's reinstatement of the Global Gag Rule in 2000 which prohibits the US government from providing funding for sexual and reproductive rights. Militarisation has also led to shifts in resources to defence and security throughout the world and in the US, increased monitoring and regulation of giving against a "terrorist watch list".

Many of these findings are echoed in an on-going research project initiated by the Oxford Brookes University into the impact of funding shifts on NGOs in South Africa, Uganda and Ghana (see

Hearn, 1999 for further details). The research project explores how the adoption of donor policies and procedures affects the way development is understood and addressed by CSOs. The research also examines, more specifically, how the new funding conditions that supposedly facilitate increased accountability, effectiveness and impact often contradict the objectives of promoting participation and empowerment. The findings that have so far emerged from the study are summarised as follows: i) funding is increasingly done in line with each donor's priorities, strategies and criteria rather than the CSO's own agenda. The situation is exacerbated by the constant shifts in donor priorities; ii) there is a clear trend towards grant making to large CSOs with less money available for medium and small CSOs; iii) very few CSOs are entirely independent of institutional and other donors, making the majority vulnerable to shifts in donor priorities; iv) most sources of funding are becoming less flexible with increased requirements for planning and implementation. Furthermore, the conditions often change; v) there is little donor coordination around procedures; vi) there is an increasing tendency to support only project costs, making the running of the organisations and institutional capacity building difficult; vii) despite clearly stated commitments to downward accountability, funding remains top down and does not encourage local actors to assess critically the effectiveness of their intervention strategies (Hearn, 1999).

### **Summary of trends described in the literature**

Globally, less money is available for gender-specific initiatives than it was ten years ago, although the GBV sector might have fared less badly than some other gender-oriented work. In South Africa, the GBV sector faces similar difficulties in accessing funds for their work from overseas donors to those faced by NGOs in other countries, but with some country-specific nuances. While the South African government has demonstrated a commitment to addressing gender inequality and GBV in particular, state financial support for the sector is disorganised and difficult to access. At the same time, the state is dependent on CSOs in the sector to provide services to communities, ranging from service provision such as counselling, the provision of shelters, medical treatment and clerk of the court functions, to preventative programs such as public education and rights awareness training. The increased time and resources that need to go into fundraising detract from the central objectives of organisations in the sector and increased financial dependence on the state undermines the development of critical work in the field to address the structural causes of gender inequality. Further, donor agendas and conditions are shaped by neo-liberal economic imperatives that favour a technical, management approach at the expense of nuanced analysis of the political nature of change processes.

### 3. Findings

This section of the report discusses the findings from the primary research undertaken for this study. The first part of the section describes the findings from the survey of, and interviews with, CSOs working in the GBV sector in South Africa. The second part describes the findings from interviews with donors.

#### **The view from the civil society organisations**

Twenty-nine questionnaires and twelve interviews with CSOs working in the area of GBV were coded and analysed. The responses from the questionnaires and the interviews are reported on together in the analysis as the interviews provide qualitative in-depth information to enhance the information obtained from the larger number of CSOs who responded to the questionnaire. As noted above, and as is common for self-completed questionnaires, each organisation did not necessarily answer every question. Thus, responses to particular questions are recorded in relation to the number of responses received for that particular question, as opposed to the number for the collective group.

#### **Organisational profiles**

Of the 19 organisations that responded to the question about the **age of the organisation**, close on half were over 10 years old, and thus likely to have been in existence during the apartheid era. The oldest of the organisations was established in 1917. Three were younger than five years and seven were between 5 and 10 years old.

summarises information provided about the organisations' **areas of activity**. Twenty-nine organisations responded to this question. Organisations were asked to tick as many areas as were applicable. The most common area of activity was counselling (25), followed by prevention at community level (including job skills training), networking, training other service providers and advocacy. Between them, the respondents ran ten income-generating projects. Nine organisations ran 15 shelters for women and children, with eight running one shelter each while the ninth managed six shelters in different locations across the country. Nine of the respondents provided legal or para-legal assistance, nine produced media or publications and six produced research.

**Table 1 Areas of activity**

Activity	Number of organisations (n=29)
Counselling	25
Legal/para-legal assistance	9
Shelter	9
Income-generation projects	10
Training of other service providers	17
Prevention at community level	24
Advocacy	14
Research	6
Media/publications	9
Networking	19
Pregnancy crisis support	1

In terms of **status**, 16 of the 28 organisations that responded to this question were registered as Section 21 not-for-profit companies. (Organisations could report more than one status.) Nine organisations reported registering as a public benefit organisation, while another seven organisations identified themselves as non-profit organisations. Two organisations were non-profit trusts. One organisation said it was in the process of registering at the time the research was conducted but did not specify the type of registration.

Fourteen of the 29 CSOs surveyed had only one **office**. Nine organisations ran between two and five offices. Four ran six or more, of which two had over ten offices country-wide.

Twelve of the 29 organisations employed between six and ten paid **staff** each. Eight employed fewer than six while the same number employed more than ten. Half of these employed over 20 paid staff, with one organisation employing 108.

In addition to paid staff, most organisations made use of **volunteers**. Twelve of those using volunteers had over 10 voluntary workers at any one time. Seven of these organisations used more than 30 volunteers. One organisation had 850 voluntary counsellors and a paid staff component of only three.

As a result of cuts to funding, some organisations had transferred paid staff to work on a voluntary basis. In addition, when funders had been unwilling to fund new initiatives (in particular shelters and counselling services), the organisations in question had sometimes employed more voluntary assistance to run these projects. Respondents reported that volunteerism was actively supported by some funders. One organisation noted that over the past five years funding has been readily available for stipends for volunteers. However, another reported that cuts in funding had even affected volunteer programmes as it had become more difficult to obtain funding for volunteer stipends.

In discussing staff, many informants spoke about the fragmentation of the GBV sector that resulted from the **departure of many activists in the sector to work in government**. They said that this had contributed to problems in respect of availability of funding, while limited availability of funding had, in turn, contributed to people leaving the sector. The respondents who raised this issue felt that the sector was no longer as vocal as it had been before government started to put “gender machinery” in place directly after 1994. As a result, the sector’s public profile had waned, the issues

had fallen off the radar and the sector had not been able to challenge government and donors effectively to make funding readily available on a sustained basis. The weakening of the sector had resulted in fragmentation and rivalries, which were compounded by the shrinking pool of funds. As a result, programmes were being duplicated without input from organisations that had already “invented the wheel”. This then contributed to the perception among funders that poor quality programmes were being delivered with minimal impact. However, donors’ increasing emphasis on networking and partnerships also came under criticism, being perceived as prescriptive and forcing organisations into partnerships that were not necessarily beneficial as the role-players sometimes had differing focal areas.

Of the 19 responses to the **budget**-related question, ten organisations had a budget of less than R1 million in 2004. Most falling into this category were operating on a budget of between R450 000 and R800 000. Nine organisations had a budget of over R1 million. Four of these had a budget of between R2 million and R5 million. One was operating on a budget of R7 million.

### **The funding landscape 2000-2004**

When asked to compare their current overall funding situation with that in 2000, the overwhelming majority of organisations (16 of 23 respondents) said that they were now receiving less funding. Four were receiving the same amount as before. Two indicated that their organisations were receiving more than previously. Of these, both were primarily funded by South African corporates or received private South African donor support.

Overall, foreign donor support was cited as the source that assisted organisations the most over the five years in question, followed by government grants and South African corporate and private donor support. Private individual donations, while relatively small, seem to have remained stable over the period. The number of respondents who reported fees for service provision as their primary source of support increased somewhat in 2003 and 2004. This may be a reflection of organisations finding alternative and more sustainable strategies for raising revenue in the current funding climate, in conjunction with the growth of a middle class that has the resources to pay for services. Revenue from membership fees and the sale of merchandise had also increased slightly over 2003 and 2004, but on the whole remained less lucrative sources of income than donor funding. Fundraising events were reflected as a consistently poor source of support for the respondents.

Foreign donor support for the organisations surveyed reached a peak in 2002 and 2003 and then declined dramatically in 2004. This contrasts with South African corporate and private donor support which increased significantly from 2000 to 2002 and remained stable over the next three years. The number of organisations receiving government grants had been slowly increasing since 2002 but it is unclear whether this also represented an increase in the amount of funding received by each organisation, or whether the same size pie was being divided between more organisations. Of the six organisations who responded to the enquiry about the source of their primary funding, five reported that they received their primary funding from local sources, three of which were government. While the sample is too small for generalisation, these figures suggest that there may be an increase in funding from government, concomitant with declining foreign funds for the sector. However, other data points strongly to government inefficiency in making funding available and that it is increasingly smaller organisations that suffer as a result. Government may be making large lump sums of money available to some well-established organisations while the vast majority of organisations servicing local communities are left out of the funding loop.

shows all funders mentioned as active in 2005. Comparison of this list with the funders interviewed for this research reveals over-representation of bilaterals among the donor interviewees, and under-representation of South African funders.

**Table 2 Funders to the sector in 2005**

<b>Bilaterals &amp; multilaterals</b>	<b>Global NGOs &amp; foundations</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>Other South African</b>
n Ausaid DANIDA Finnish Embassy Themba Lesizwe*	Norwegian People's Aid Global Fund for Women Heinrich Böll Stiftung (HBS) Ford Foundation Open Society Foundation Oxfam Canada	Eastern Cape Department of Health Eastern Cape Department of Labour Gauteng Provincial Government Gauteng Department of Social Development Gauteng Department of Social Services Limpopo Department of Social Development	South African Breweries Anglo American Chairman's Fund De Beers Chairman's Fund Business Against Crime Telkom Community Chest Lotto Nelson Mandela Children's Fund Ikhala Trust Alexandra Renewal Project

\* Themba Lesizwe received all its funds from the European Union in terms of an agreement with government. It was therefore classified as an official donor.

On average, donors entered into **funding agreements of one year**. Some informants said that the length of funding agreements had got shorter over the past five years as previously donors funded in two- or three-year cycles. However, the same number of informants said that there had been no change to the length of funding agreements.

Despite generally reporting one-year funding agreements, most of the organisations in the study had received funding over a period of more than one year from particular funders. In some cases this would have taken the form of a multi-year contract. In other cases, it could have been one-year funding extended over several years.

Multi-year periods funded ranged from two to twelve years. Lotto had funded three organisations for between two and five years. The Norwegian Embassy, Interfund, Telkom, and the Gauteng Department of Social Services had all funded organisations for five-year periods. Heinrich Böll Stiftung (HBS) had funded one organisation for twelve years. Of the donors listed in , Anglo American Chairman's Fund, de Beers Chairman's Fund, Lotto, Telkom, the Gauteng Departments



of Social Services and Social Development, HBS and the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund had all maintained funding to their respective partner organisations since 2000. Those funding on a multi-year basis thus included all types of donors.

The **largest single grant** a particular organisation received in the period 2003-2005 ranged from R2 million to R70 000. Two organisations received R2 million from the Gauteng Departments of Social Development and Social Services respectively. These two organisations generally received grants of between R100 000 and R500 000. Lotto made the second biggest grant of R1,8 million. Other primary sources of funding during this period for the participating organisations include R860 000 from DANIDA, R800 000 from Lotto, R100 000 from the Gauteng Department of Social Services and R70 000 from a South African corporation.

### **Shifts in funding and the impact on projects and programmes**

Gender-based violence programmes, counselling services, shelters, victim empowerment programs and the delivery of other welfare services were reported to have suffered the most due to **cuts in funding** during the period 2000-2004. Respondents reported that these difficulties had become particularly pronounced in 2004. Other activities mentioned by respondents for which it had been difficult to locate funding included a teenage girls' programme, a project relating to sexual harassment in the workplace and a programme for perpetrators of domestic violence.

Eleven projects and programmes run by the organisations surveyed had been suspended between 2000 and 2004 due to lack of funding. For the most part the activities affected involved service provision, including counselling, outreach centres, a victim empowerment help desk and a shelter. Two GBV programmes had been suspended, as had the rural office of another GBV organisation.

The organisations surveyed had in some cases not been able to initiate planned projects and programmes due to lack of funding. The pattern in this respect was similar to that described above. Three GBV programmes, a victim empowerment programme and two shelters were among the activities not initiated due to lack of funding. In the main, respondents identified 2004 as the year in which funding could not be found for these initiatives.

In total, five GBV programmes and three shelters had either been suspended or not initiated during the period 2000-2004 due to difficulties in securing funding. This data suggests that funding is becoming increasingly scarce for projects and programmes relating to GBV, possibly because these are perceived by donors as primarily involving service delivery, and therefore the responsibility of the state. In this respect, informants observed that foreign funding for service delivery was increasingly channelled through government. However, it was very difficult for NGOs to access this money from government. Respondents cited government inefficiency and corruption in this respect, particularly in the Eastern Cape.

When informants were asked to describe changes around what **budget line items and activities** donors did or did not fund in the period 2000-2004, the most common response was that it was more difficult than previously to secure funding for salaries, volunteer stipends, operational costs and capital costs. Second most common was the response that it was more difficult to secure funding for GBV programmes and services such as counselling, childcare and shelters, support for refugees, assistance to destitute families and food parcels. The third most common response was that areas and organisations that were relatively better off such as urban areas, Gauteng and South African NGOs and CBOs received less funding now than previously compared with rural areas, poorer provinces and organisations in other countries in the region respectively.

The most commonly cited activities for which more funding was perceived as readily available were HIV/AIDS programmes (50% of responses) and programmes for the youth. Next most “popular” were underdeveloped regions globally, poor provinces in South Africa such as KwaZulu-Natal (also the most populous province, and the one with the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence) and rural areas. Training and skills development were also said to be popular with funders.

summarises responses of organisations to a question about those **GBV programme activities for which it had become easier or more difficult to find funding** over the past five years. Thirty two organisations responded to this question. Respondents could indicate several areas in which it had become easier or more difficult to find funding.

Service provision, prevention at community level and core costs are GBV programme activities that were overwhelmingly identified as those for which it has become more difficult to raise funds over recent years. Networking, training and capacity building were reportedly activities favoured by funders. Fourteen respondents said funding was stable or increasing for training and capacity building, and thirteen reported the same for networking. This trend seemed to reflect the increasing requirements of funders for a skills transfer from NGOs to CBOs, as well as the pressure for increased cooperation so as to limit duplication of services. Advocacy, research and documentation were also activities for which funding was reported to be stable or increasing.

**Table 3 Relative ease of raising funds for GBV programme activities compared to the past 5 years**

	<b>More difficult</b>	<b>About the same</b>	<b>Less difficult</b>	<b>Don't work in this area</b>
Service provision (counselling, legal assistance, shelter etc.)	15	4	3	
Prevention at community level (community education, awareness raising, mobilisation etc.)	13	8	1	1
Training and capacity building	9	7	7	
Advocacy	4	6	1	4
Research/documentation	3	3	2	10
Media	5	2	3	5
Networking	4	10	3	3
General office and running costs	18	4	1	
Administration	17	4		
Salaries	20	3		

Regarding **core costs**, respondents identified salaries, volunteer stipends, general office, administration and running costs as budget items for which it was more difficult than previously to raise funds. In interviews with organisations, these were identified as their most important expenses, yet half of these organisations were not receiving core funding at the time the research was conducted. For those that were receiving core funding, Lotto, Themba Lesizwe, HIVOS, DANIDA and the Gauteng Department of Social Services were providing this funding.

Difficulties in securing funding for core costs was said to impact significantly on GBV organisations’ stability and sustainability, as well as their ability to carry out their programmes. Several organisations had had to retrench staff and one had shifted its focus to become a projects-based organisation employing contractual staff. As noted above, others had become more reliant on

volunteers. One drawback of using volunteers was that there was often a high turnover among them that undermined the achievement of organisational missions and goals.

A resounding complaint from CSOs was that funders' criteria continually changed, making it difficult to follow-through with long-term programmes which might be better positioned to have an impact than short-term projects. Further, the rules for funding proposals were very complex and continually changed, resulting in a lot of time and resources being expended on fund-raising, and putting the exercise out of the reach of many smaller and rural community-based organisations.

### **Fundraising strategies**

Most organisations reported that they approached fundraising proactively. Once a project or programme had been identified as a priority, a proposal was formulated and sent to a number of potential donors. The second most common strategy was to respond to calls for proposals found in the media or on the web. In addition, six of the 29 respondents to this question reported that they have received a direct request from a donor to submit a proposal.

Organisations which reported that they were struggling were asked what **internal factors** contributed to difficulties experienced in raising funds. The most common response was that the organisation did not have sufficient human resources to do fundraising or that management was not involved in fundraising. A poorly defined fundraising strategy in which fundraising was done on an ad hoc basis, resulting in poor relationship-building with funders, was also mentioned. Lastly, a history of mismanagement of funds or of bad organisational management was identified.

The most common **external factor** that was cited as contributing to difficulties in fund-raising was the continual shift in donors' funding priorities and parameters. In relation to this, the informants perceived that currently there was a lack of interest among donors in funding GBV. Instead, funding from donors and government (for those who had previously received this) had been diverted to HIV/AIDS. Two quotes exemplify the responses received in this respect:

*Funding attention has been drawn to HIV/AIDS and children. GBV is seen as "normal" and its high prevalence is no longer problematised. For example, in the case of 16 days of activism, government officials only dedicated that period for raising awareness and mobilising people. Unlike the red ribbon, that is worn by the officials throughout the year. It also indicates a lack of seriousness in linking the two issues....*

*The moving of funders from one focal area to another is another problem, because the shift has now moved to HIV/AIDS and not actually realising that we have not moved anywhere as far as (gender based) violence is concerned.*

The impact of changing global policy on donors' agendas was also reported to have had an effect on the availability of funds to the GBV sector. For example, one informant cited poverty alleviation as a new focus area for funders, in line with the Millennium Development Goals, whereas the ready availability of funding for GBV in the latter part of the 1990s was related to the momentum for women's empowerment created by the Beijing Conference of 1995.

One informant characterised donor changes as a somewhat directionless, crisis-driven approach which did not take into account the long-term nature of the deep-rooted change that is necessary for sustainable alterations to the relationships between men and women, and thus a decrease in GBV. As one informant saw it:

*The broader constraints to funding are driven by the fact that the donor community needs to feel that they allocate resources to where they are needed and give special focus to areas that are in crisis or in transition. So it's simply about moving to the next country that needs assistance or to the next hot issues.*

Organisations had experienced continual shifts in **funding priorities of government** as well as of donors. One informant, on applying to the (provincial) Department of Health and Welfare for funding, was told that the organisation's application would need to focus on HIV/AIDS. On her return to submit this application for funding, she was told that the application would now need to focus on poverty alleviation. With regard to donors, the same informant reported that she initially received funding from Themba Lesizwe for counselling, but when she met with them subsequently, she was told that organisations were now expected to do training and workshops.

The **complexity of funding applications** was raised as a serious obstacle to participation in the sector for CBOs. While the need for CSOs to plan thoroughly and to demonstrate accountability through structured reporting mechanisms was appreciated by informants, the impact of strict reporting requirements was exacerbated by donors' remoteness from, and inaccessibility to, the smaller, less resourced organisations. An established NGO in Gauteng said:

*I think that we are in a better position than small NGOs in rural areas who do not have access to computers or the internet to find out who is funding. I think funders can completely ignore entire sectors of the community by developing impossible requirements or by not disseminating information in a right way. And it is easy, it is much easier to put an advert in the Mail & Guardian to say this is the call for proposals than it is try to access someone who does not speak English, can't afford the twelve rand for that newspaper, and is in the middle of a rural area doing fantastic work and really needs the funding.*

One informant called on donors to make the terms on the application forms more understandable and less intimidating to "people on the ground" by organising workshops to explain the procedure. As noted below, at least one funder has attempted this.

One informant suggested that SANGOCO should lobby government to make more funding accessible to smaller organisations.

Continually approaching new donors, raising the organisation's public profile, and demonstrating to funders that the organisation was legitimate and professional were identified as the most important **factors contributing to successful fundraising**. As one informant said, "as a fundraiser you need to be aggressive and walk the corridors and knock on the doors because the worst that can happen is for someone to say no".

In addition, it was said to be important to link up with the right funders, meet with them and persuade them to buy into your programme by explaining the links between the programme's objectives and donor agendas, rather than trying to force the organisation's activities into donor's preferred areas. The recommended approach was likened to advocacy work. Informants said that fundraising could be used as an opportunity to raise donor awareness about an issue and to make a clear case for support by linking the analysis of the issue to the specific interventions of the programme. In contrast, one informant noted that a programme formulated around donor priorities was very difficult to sell if the organisation's heart was not in it.

Developing a personal relationship with the donor in question was said to be key to the success of fundraising efforts. Identifying the person in the agency who would champion the cause and personally introducing oneself to her or him could make a significant difference to the success of a fundraising strategy. This relationship, it was said, must be developed by going beyond formalities. Bringing home the “personal face” of the organisation and the work it did was said to facilitate the funding relationship, as further explained in the following quote:

*Personal relationships do play a role because as soon as people can put a face to a name that has always been in their proposals, and if you can build up that close relationship with your funders, it always helps because they see you as part of their work then. The only problem is that they don't visit the smaller provinces very regularly. Also what we have found is that if you ask the people who have benefited from your projects to write to the funder and tell them what impact the project has made for them, that has also been perceived positively by funders.*

In terms of organisational capacity, the most important factor identified was the availability of skilled staff to write proposals and access donors. Organisational resources such as a telephone line, fax and internet, and sound organisational structures and accounting practices were also identified as important. An excellent fundraiser with a thorough knowledge of the work of the organisation and of funders, as well as a clear fundraising plan with an emphasis on sustainability, were mentioned. Finally, the importance of formulating a plan to transmit fundraising skills to other staff so as to ensure continuity was raised.

A good track record and a public profile were said to facilitate successful fundraising. This was considered by most informants to constitute a serious barrier for CBOs who were working quietly away “at community level” without a great deal of public exposure. In addition, some informants alluded to the tensions and discomfort of having to market themselves so as to appeal to funders.

*We do not do sexy work, ....we are not in the press.....we are not going to court with high profile cases... I think those things do make a difference and I think funders fund sexy stuff. And I love it when I come across a funder who says we want to see people's lives change, we don't need to see ourselves in the press.*

Donors tend to refer to those they fund as “partners”. While many informants reported that their **relationships with donors** were “healthy partnerships” which were supportive and egalitarian, as many informants said that while they had a professional relationship with donors, the level of communication was not optimal and the donor was uninvolved and distant. A few informants said that they considered their relationship with the donor to be a hierarchical one rather than a partnership.

Informants envisioned the ideal relationship with donors as one characterised by open and informal dialogue and mutual trust and respect. An egalitarian relationship in which CSO priorities are taken into account was contrasted with prevailing donor “prescriptiveness”. Requests for greater feedback from donors on projects and unsuccessful funding applications were common as was the request for more donor involvement and familiarity with the organisation and its projects and programmes.

Kellogs was identified as a donor that has played a significant role in facilitating the work of one of the organisations, by covering all costs for a two-year period and engaging in a “strong” relationship with the grantee. One informant said that the work of her organisation had been primarily facilitated by funding from NOVIB for administration and programme costs, with an

inbuilt escalation of 10% per annum, funded over 5 years. However, elsewhere NOVIB was criticised for having suddenly withdrawn funding from a prominent GBV organisation on the basis of an unsubstantiated “risk factor” associated with a change in organisational management. Ausaid was hailed as a funder who had most successfully facilitated the work of an organisation by providing start-up costs for Victim Empowerment Centres at 16 police stations. Other ways in which donors have significantly facilitated the work of the participating organisations include funding core costs, engaging in long term funding agreements, visiting projects regularly and engaging in open, trusting, informal and accessible relationships with participating organisations. Vodacom was given special mention in regard to the latter.

### **The impact of donor agendas on CSOs**

Respondents reported that donors – and foreign donors in particular – were increasingly requiring more stringent **monitoring and evaluation** in line with their demand for measurable outcomes. One organisation said that their donor now required an external evaluation of projects as a condition for funding. The skills and resources necessary to meet monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements were in short supply in many organisations and the additional paperwork often imposed an administrative burden on small organisations that might already be struggling to carry out their programmes. Further, one informant said that the objective of many of her organisation’s activities was to change attitudes, and that this was an outcome that was not easily measured against existing donor criteria. Respondents said they were required to submit more detailed reports than before and to submit them more often. In particular, corporate funders and one of the international NGOs were cited as having become more stringent in this regard.

Informants also observed that while funders expected more detailed and more frequent reporting, they rarely visited projects to gain a better understanding of the work that was being done. There was thus a feeling that the emphasis on reporting results reflected donor priorities rather than a real concern with the outcome of the work. Informants felt that donors often neglected to develop “hands on” relationships with their grantees, and thereby undermined the possibilities for dialogues that could facilitate more informed perspectives on “the realities on the ground”.

While most informants said that donors had not tried to **influence their mandate**, one felt that the prevalent attitude amongst donors that funding proposals should adhere to donors’ parameters constituted a prescriptiveness that influenced organisational mandates. She illustrated this by referring to the way in which organisations working on GBV had adjusted their programme areas in response to donors’ preference to fund HIV/AIDS projects. She asserted that a nuanced understanding of the relationship between GBV and HIV was required that took into account the need to work in a focussed way in each area. This perspective would provide a corrective to the facile linkages that were often made between the two issues and the resulting marginalisation of GBV work as scarce organisational resources were directed to HIV prevention programmes in the effort to attract funding.

The preference amongst some donors to **fund projects rather than organisations** had also had an impact on the way in which organisations worked. One informant described as follows how her organisation had become project-based because of their funding situation:

*Now instead of employing permanent staff we employ staff based on the funding that we have for a particular project. This change probably took place within the last year. We had to retrench a whole lot of staff because we did not have funding. And after that*

*retrenchment exercise which was about 5-6 months ago, we defined ourselves as a project-based organisation.*

Informants noted that when fewer permanent staff members were employed in an organisation, this affected its long-term sustainability and effectiveness. When institutional memory was held by only one or two individuals, the ability of the organisation to monitor and evaluate its work against its mission and objectives, reflect on successes and challenges in order to formulate best practices and strategise over the long term about how to communicate its key messages, was undermined. Sustainability was jeopardised because under these conditions the departure of one permanent staff member could threaten the organisation's core mission, if not its very survival. Further, in a project-based organisation, opportunities for mentoring others into leadership positions in the organisation were limited. Over the long term, an insufficient renewal of leadership at organisational level resulted in a gradual erosion of the sector as a whole, with serious implications for societal efforts to promote women's empowerment.

The emphasis from some donors on the need for CSOs to work in **partnership with government** also came under scrutiny. Most informants said that they had not adjusted their working methods in the past five years in response to this requirement from donors. However, a diversity of opinion on this matter was reflected in responses from organisations. One informant dismissed out of hand a working partnership with government on the grounds that this would conflict with her organisation's watchdog role. Another said that some donors stipulated that the organisation's programmes must be aligned with government policy frameworks. Yet another said that the dynamics of the "creative tensions relationship" her organisation had with government militated against sycophancy. Yet this same organisation was also keenly aware that as long as it occupied this position, sole dependence on government funding was untenable:

*We have always maintained what we call a creative tensions relationship with government. We work with them on several projects but we also challenge them on service delivery... I don't think that we have changed that relationship for the sake of funding.... (But our position may risk securing funding from government which is) why we try to move from being dependent on government funding.*

Sometimes the problems resulting from poor **accessibility of government funding** were compounded by the fear that funding received from government might be withdrawn as a result of advocacy work. A case in point was one organisation's reported self-imposed censorship, for fear of losing funding from government. As a result, the organisation did not advocate for the provision of anti-retrovirals prior to the roll-out despite the fact that a large proportion of the organisation's clientele was HIV positive.

Difficulty in accessing funds from government and the expectation from donors that government should be providing funds for service provision was said to create a "catch 22" for organisations in the sector. One respondent told her organisation's story as follows:

*And then our proposal to Social Development, I am worried about that, because we never received any funding from them. And the other donors are so surprised that we don't receive any funding from them. We have a good relationship with them, but in terms of financials, we don't receive any funding from them. The government is a vast body itself, so we thought that the relevant development for GBV is Social Development, because the work we are doing is related to social services, so we approached them about eight months ago. Then what they did was, they came down*

*three months later, sat down with us and said that everything was fine. But then I phoned them and they said that you must wait for a response from the seniors. But we have still not received a response from them.*

Another informant told a similar story. She said that while the process of applying for funding from the Department of Health had not been difficult, they had had to wait six months after submitting the application for a response.

The following anecdote illustrates the difficulties in accessing money from government which arise from the lack of a clearly coordinated approach to GBV across departments and agencies.

*We started experiencing difficulties in 2003 when the initial donor monies were drying up and the Department of Justice had promised to fund us for R2 million. However, they later informed us that there would not be any funds available for us. This is apparently because GBV does not form part of their mainstream programmes but receives funding on an ad hoc basis. Thus, we would not be on a list of priorities when the money was used up for that financial year. There was an indication from the national Department of Social Services to fund but in the end they informed us they could not accommodate us because our project did not have a national focus but that we should approach Gauteng. Justice came back with a once-off payment so we did not have to close down as suggested by our Board. Thus it is a real struggle. None of the government departments are willing to take responsibility unlike for the HIV/AIDS programme. However, government pays lip-service by saying how important the services are that we carry out when we have informed them of the possible closing down.*

Informants reported that **networking with other organisations** in the field was an activity clearly favoured by funders and for which money was relatively easy to access. One informant said that her organisation was planning to adjust its working methods according to the new emphasis on networking, by engaging with the question of how they can “empower local organisations”. Other informants experienced this emphasis as an imposition from donors who were seen as not having sufficient insight into the existing dynamics around issues of identity and ownership of projects and competition for funding in the sector, thereby undermining the organic evolution of diverse relationships between organisations. Three quotes illustrate the responses in this respect.

*We have always been working with others. So that has always been our working model, but now it must be THE working model.*

*There is a lot of competition in the field, because of the fight for resources, and impositions (on organisations to network with one another) tend to make people apprehensive. I think funders, [instead of imposing networking as a requirement] should rather assist in creating a standard to access information [and tap into relevant networks] because people do not generally acknowledge other organisations in the field.*

*If you are working in the same area, there is always the issue of a struggle for funds, and that is an obstacle for people to work together, and that means that we are not as strong as a sector as we could be.*



The final quote illustrates that many informants recognised the benefits of networking, but nevertheless faced conflicting pressures in this respect. At least one informant appreciated the pressure received from a donor to network with other organisations in the field. She spoke of the benefits they had experienced through teaming up with other organisations in the sector, after being persistently encouraged by Themba Lesizwe to do so.

### **CSO influence on donors**

On the whole, informants were not hopeful that CSOs could influence donor agendas, priorities and policies. This perhaps reflected a general feeling of disempowerment in relation to funders and an absence of dialogue between CSOs and donors. While one informant acknowledged that the Foundation for Human Rights had an annual conference at which they determined their work plan in collaboration with CSOs, she remarked that as far as she knew, organisations from the GBV sector had never been invited.

An informant from a large NGO felt that because her organisation was national it had enough clout to influence funders. In contrast, an informant from a rural CBO said that there were few opportunities for CBOs outside urban areas to meet with donors and share views, let alone influence donor agendas. It was suggested that organisations in the sector approach donors as a “consortium” and use this collective power to raise awareness about the urgency of tackling spiralling gender based violence.

Many informants suggested having a forum for dialogue with donors. As one explained:

*We need to begin to have donor support sessions to meet and get a feeling of what is going on. There are donors who have their ears on the ground but many of them do not. Without a doubt, there has been a tendency to shift focus away from GBV, HIV being now the biggest funding focus. But GBV still remains a burning issue. What we need to do is to start asking why are you giving money out? Are you assessing what the real needs are on the ground?*

The strong call was made by CSOs working in GBV for donors to engage more meaningfully with their grantees. The need for donors to dialogue with organisations and visit projects in order to understand “the needs on the ground” was particularly emphasised. Informants contrasted what they were asking for with what is experienced as prevailing donor prescriptiveness and inflexibility:

*Allow more flexibility, understand the key important social relationships and improve your relationship with CBOs. And don't ask civil society to get actively involved with something if you are hearing from civil society that it [for example “terrorism”] is actually not a big problem on the ground right now.*

Closely linked to the perception that donors were “out of touch” was the frustration of having to contend with complicated application forms. Donors were requested to simplify and standardise their application procedures, to make more long-term funding available and to demand reasonable forms of accountability. A request was also made by two interviewees for donors to play a mentoring role by providing input on how organisations could work with maximum impact and manage themselves more effectively. This last request demonstrated that donors were perceived as having expertise that was valuable to organisations. However, CSOs wanted to feel that they were engaged in consultation, as equals, in contrast to feeling at the mercy of inflexible and bureaucratic donor agendas.

## **The view from donors**

Between September 2005 and May 2006, in-depth interviews were conducted with a selection of donors using a pre-set interview schedule. The selection was purposive rather than random, and the sample is thus not totally representative of all donors active in South Africa. In particular, several of the donors had provided funding to CSVR, many for the organisation's gender programme. Others were identified from among members of the Donor Network on Women. These donors are thus probably more aware of, and sympathetic to, gender issues and gender-based violence than the average donor in South Africa.

### **Background of donor organisations and interviewees**

The responses from twelve donor organisations were analysed. Of these twelve, five were embassies or foreign bilateral development cooperation agencies, one was an organisation funded by several developed Western countries (referred to as the 'multilateral' in this report), two were foreign foundations, two were international NGOs (one of them recently 'converted' from a charity into a rights-based organisation), and two were South African corporate responsibility foundations. One of the foreign foundations was, like the local corporate funds, linked to a corporation, and dependent on the level of profits generated each year. One of the international NGOs and one of the foreign foundations were each funded by the relevant foreign governments and thus subject to ministerial conditions. One of the South African corporate foundations was linked to a parastatal. The other local corporate foundation handled social responsibility funds from several corporations active in the same industry.

The interviewees were generally well placed to respond to the questions asked. The most common designation was 'programme officer', with this individual being responsible for the programme that included gender-based violence. Other titles included 'senior project officer', 'senior manager', 'senior investment practitioner', 'advocacy and lobbying officer' and 'deputy section head'. The deputy section head was also the gender coordinator for the agency in question. The programmes or projects for which interviewees were responsible ranged from gender, through criminal justice, to 'women, youth and children'. Most interviewees were full-time employees. However, in one case the person was a part-time consultant hired to work with partners (i.e. beneficiaries of the donor) as the programme coordinator was based in the 'mother' country. At least one of the offices (and thus officers) was responsible for the Southern African region rather than only for South Africa.

The time that informants had been in their current positions ranged from a few months to eight years. One of the people who had been in the position for only a few months had, however, been with the agency for three years, and had occupied the current position since it was created. The other informant who had occupied her post only for a few months was also in a newly-established post. Eight of the informants had been in their current positions for three years or longer.

The official development cooperation agencies generally started providing funding to South Africa before 1994. However, with the end of apartheid, the status and form of the funding often changed. Firstly, money began flowing to government whereas before it had gone only to anti-apartheid agencies. Secondly, the agencies generally developed a formal development cooperation agreement with the new South African government.

One of the international NGOs had provided funding in South Africa since the 1980s. In contrast, two international foundations and another international NGO only started funding from 1993, just before the first democratic elections. One of the local corporate responsibility funds and the multi-donor development agency were established in the second half of the 1990s, while no date of establishment was given for the other local corporate responsibility fund.

### **Donors' priority areas**

Priority areas of the agencies in the current funding cycle were reported as follows:

- Human rights, with particular focus on gender rights;
- HIV/AIDS (with particular focus on GBV and gender equity), rural, governance, and regional programmes;
- Empowerment of marginalised groups, amongst which women might be included;
- Main regional foci are health, governance, democracy and poverty, with the main focus in South Africa on governance;
- Justice, including both transformation of the criminal justice system and social crime prevention; media, with a focus on ICTs, freedom of expression and community radio; and governance, spanning access to justice and civic participation;
- Environment, democracy and media, and gender (with focus on economic justice and violence against women);
- Capacity building, HIV/AIDS and education;
- HIV/AIDS, education, good governance, South Africa's role in Africa;
- HIV/AIDS, skills development, environment, governance (access to justice, anti-corruption, and local government capacity building), and partnerships between black South African companies and the country's companies;
- Land and resource rights, youth participation, democracy, and gender-based violence;
- Human rights awareness and education, capacity building and networking, access to justice, and public institutions (Chapter 9 institutions); and
- shelters for abused women; primary health care training; and building of schools for which the Department of Education pays the operational costs.

Most agencies described their focus areas in relatively general terms, indicating 'issues of concern' to that agency. As noted above, gender is over-represented amongst this sample as a result of the way in which informants were selected. It is also possible that, within the gender focus, gender-based violence is over-represented. HIV/AIDS (in general, rather than necessarily with a gender focus) is the most common focus reported apart from gender. An informant from a local corporate fund explained that "HIV/AIDS was not a decision – that is just what happened so the fund reacted to the enormous amounts of appeals which have come in."

Governance also ranks high amongst chosen focus areas. The focus on governance was explained by one donor as arising out of the recognition by donors and regional organisations, such as the African Union, that development would not happen in a meaningful way without better accountability systems. Another informant explained the focus as reflecting South Africa's relative wealth when compared to other countries in the region.

Overall, there seems to have been some shift in recent years to a regional approach, perhaps as South Africa's transition to democracy becomes less distant and there is thus less justification for a special emphasis on South Africa. At the same time, aid is not determined only by the level of need, but also by political and economic considerations, on which South Africa generally 'punches above its weight'.

Most agencies reported limited changes in the priorities over time. At least two, however, reported significant changes since the previous funding cycle. One identified the change as reflecting the realisation that the agency had shifted too much to supporting government, thus neglecting civil society. By the early 2000s, this agency and others were feeling that the political system and legislation were in place, hence it was now time to focus on delivery, and that civil society had a role to play in seeing this happened. Although most other informants did not report a shift in priorities, some others also described a similar recent realisation of the importance of civil society. This was probably strongest among those providing support in respect of HIV/AIDS, and could reflect the relative lack of government commitment in this area compared to some other issues.

Informants were asked **how their priorities were decided upon**. Virtually all described a process that involved both local and head office input, with varying levels of input and decision-making power of the two parties. Some also described a role for partners and for civil society. One or two of the informants from bilateral agencies explained that there were annual meetings between the agency and South African government which contributed, together with other processes, to the direction taken by the agency. One of the national corporate funds also said that their priorities were aligned with those of government. In contrast, one of the foundations said that, unlike the bilateral donors, they were more influenced by civil society concerns than by government priorities in determining their focus. Similarly, one of the international NGOs emphasised the role that partners (those they funded) played in determining their direction. The informant explained that they held an annual general meeting with all partners where they reviewed what they were doing and came up with new ideas. This was, however, done within the framework of the overall global strategic plan of the agency.

In most cases strategy was set for a period of several years. However, many agencies had annual processes within this period for South Africa or the region where smaller changes in approach might be instituted. Consequently, most of the agencies, and especially the bilaterals, tend to have multi-year funding frameworks with associated priorities. In contrast, one of the international corporate foundations said that they conducted an annual review based on availability of funds. Funds can be affected both by overall profitability of the company funding the foundation and perceived relative need for funding in other countries.

While there were general trends, the specifics differed between cases, as illustrated by the detailed response provided by one of the bilateral agencies. In this case the informant said that the overall priority areas of HIV/AIDS and education had been identified several years previously and were likely to remain the priorities. The areas were identified in discussions between the embassy and headquarters. While there was no formal process for civil society to give input, the decisions were informed by an evaluation of the former programme carried out jointly by government and the embassy. The informant said that alignment with South African government priorities was important, but less of an influence than in some other countries given that donor funds made up so small a proportion of the total government budget. She felt this gave donors more leeway to identify their own niche where they felt they could add value.

Overall, two trends stand out in informants' responses to this question. In the case of bilaterals in particular, priorities are determined in alignment with those of government, either through a process of consultation or by reference to government policy. At least one local corporate funder also determined priorities in this way, in order to meet the requirements of the relevant sectoral charter relating to corporate social responsibility. The second trend involves a process of consultation with civil society in which priorities are determined through dialogue with and feedback from funding partners and other NGOs. In some cases, this was an indirect process informed by the number and content of funding proposals received from CSOs, in other cases it occurred through consultation with civil society at annual review meetings. A

number of informants reported that their organisations employed a combination of strategy, consulting with both the South African government and civil society.

### **Donor decision-making**

Informants were asked how their **key funding priorities in respect of gender** had been determined. At least two informants said that empirical facts and figures relating to GBV in South Africa had informed the choice of direction. The representative of one of the bilateral agencies said that gender violence had been a priority for this agency for at least six years, and was identified during a review of a bigger programme as a key issue. In particular, the informant said that during this review, government identified the need for civil society to play a role in respect of this issue. Similarly, one of the international foundations said that their focus on gender-based violence was historical, as one of the three foundations which came together in 1995 to form the current foundation had ‘women’s projects’ as its main focus. At that time increasing evidence was also emerging within South Africa of the seriousness of gender-based violence. In addition, new policies and laws were being formulated. There was thus consensus from both government and civil society as to the importance of the issue.

In at least two cases the presence in the agency of a “champion” for women’s empowerment had influenced the agency’s prioritisation of GBV. For example, the representative of an international NGO said that the fact that they were based in a country “at the forefront of the women’s movement” and that their general secretary and the head of the development unit were women meant that issues such as GBV were “close to their hearts” when they read about them in developing countries.

Informants were also asked what **factors influenced the decision-making** on funding over the past five years.

The representative of an international foundation could think only of HIV/AIDS. She said, however, that it was precisely because so many other donors were focusing on this issue that her agency had avoided it. In terms of the broader donor environment, she noted that money flows to the Middle East and Eastern Europe had been to the relative disadvantage of Africa.

The informant from one of the local corporate funds also saw HIV/AIDS as a major factor in shaping decision-making. Another important factor was civil society, to the extent that trends in that sector influenced the type of proposals that they received. Government was a further factor, for example through the relevant sectoral charter which states that companies must spend a certain amount of money in the areas in which they operate. This last factor changed the decision-making from a purely charitable concern to a business issue. Finally, the fact that they had to report back to shareholders meant that they would only fund “safe” projects, rather than activities such as advocacy, lobbying, publications and videos. They also did not fund conferences.

The representative of a bilateral said that the initiative to revise the priorities several years previously had come from their new Minister for Development Cooperation after a change in government. At a broader level, this informant felt that the Millennium Development Goals and associated summit had influenced priorities. However, South Africa remained a “special case” for this country because of historical ties. There was thus more possibility of adapting global imperatives.

Another informant felt that global trends had shaped how the agency thought about democracy, and that the focus had shifted from looking at South Africa alone, to looking at South Africa within the region. This had resulted in more collaboration with other offices of the agency located elsewhere in Africa. A second influential factor was the availability of money. A final local factor was developments within particular areas of work. To illustrate this he said that while the agency would like to work on a particular named

institution, they were aware that government was planning to replace the person in charge and felt it was not useful to intervene until the new person was in place.

Informants were also prompted to think about **influences in the donor community** more generally.

The informant from an international foundation did not feel able to comment on trends and influences in the broader donor environment because, he said, donors did not generally share their strategies openly beyond the limited information available on their websites. This general tendency - a lack of communication - was exacerbated in the case of bilateral funders, given that they were funded by government and their “agendas... shaped from Washington or whatever”, with all the attendant lack of disclosure. As an example of the lack of openness, he referred to a major bilateral donor that had reportedly shifted money destined for aid to support the Iraq war. The informant noted that the Donor Network on Women was an exception in respect of communication, in that it worked well “even though not all the issues are always on the table”.

A representative of an international NGO said that it had been “frightening” for him to discover, after joining the organisation, to what extent decisions were funded by macro-political determinants. He felt, in particular, that this had influenced the massive flow of money from NGOs into government programmes. His conclusion was that NGOs had to find ways of influencing government to fund them, although he acknowledged that this would come with (sometimes unstipulated) conditions.

### **Gender and policy formulation**

Donor agencies were asked about their approach to **funding gender-related activities**, or alternatively, their approach to **gender mainstreaming**. Donors were also asked to talk about how their approach to gender funding had been determined and, where there was a policy in place, how this policy had been formulated.

The informants interviewed from local corporate funds had very little to say about their organisations’ approach to funding gender-related activities. The first said that her agency had no guidelines regarding gender funding, but that she was keen to introduce them. The second also said that they had no policy, but that they gave preferential treatment to women when contracting service providers. She estimated that 99% of the service providers contracted at that time were women.

The consultant to an international NGO reported that the agency’s policy was being redrafted. The informant said, however, that she questioned the limited scope of the consultation and the fact that “all the decisions are made (at head office)”. She then glanced through the draft framework during the interview and said she felt that there was possibly now less emphasis on gender as it was not explicitly mentioned in the framework. She predicted that this would be challenged by people in the region.

Another of the international NGOs said that, because they believed in partnership, they would not attach gender-related or other conditions to a grant but rather try to persuade the partner as to what they believed was right and then provide support for the necessary change. This informant felt that most of their organisations were in line with their gender policy. In fact, three of their four partners were working on gender-based violence.

One of the foreign foundations did not have an explicit gender strategy although the informant felt that there was a relatively strong focus on gender in their programme. He estimated that as much as three-quarters of the budget of one of their main programmes might be allocated to addressing women’s and children’s issues, with about half allocated towards addressing GBV.

A representative of another bilateral felt that promoting gender equality with government was not a priority as commitment already existed. Instead, she advocated for a focus at “grassroots level, where there is a lot of cultural resistance to gender issues”. She said that they had supported this focus in the past, and their current single programme, which focused on customary law and traditional leaders, was also informed by this assessment. When the agency had a more established gender programme, GBV and advocacy had been the two main issues. She attributed the dropping of these issues to the departure of their gender expert and a resultant lack of capacity in the agency on this issue.

The representative of one of the agencies said that they had gender funds in other countries, but not in South Africa. The informant thought such a fund was probably not considered necessary because South Africa had both gender-responsive legislation and relatively high levels of government commitment to gender equity. However, she noted that those who took this decision might not have considered GBV in particular. This agency previously employed a gender advisor. This person was no longer in place but the agency was planning to contract someone to assist their partners in the HIV programme in mainstreaming gender.

The representative of a GBV-targeted bilateral fund reported that there was uncertainty as to whether the targeted fund would continue. She said that their Foreign Ministry had instituted a complete review of their aid programme, which would obviously influence what was done in South Africa. Once this process was finalised, they would need to assess whether there was scope for a gender-based violence programme. Local people would, however, comment on this when making their input into the global process. A decision on the gender-based violence programme would also draw on a planned review of the current programme based on interviews with civil society organisations.

The multilateral foundation reported a marked shift in respect of funding activities, attributed to a change in leadership which saw a gender advocate come in as head. The informant substantiated their commitment to this area by giving figures in respect of the number of organisations funded and money allocated to gender. For the 16 days of activism, in particular, she reported that they had funded over 100 organisations.

Another agency reported that until a few years ago, gender was one of the priorities, but this and other priorities had changed radically. When the gender focus existed, the person responsible spent approximately half of her time on this work and 5-10 projects were funded. At the time of the interview, because of the gender coordinator’s interest in the area, the agency was funding a single gender project that was seen as playing a ‘strategic’ role and that could relatively easily be mainstreamed into other work.

A third agency said that their HIV/AIDS support, which was provided through UNICEF, was seen as a gender-related activity because of the focus on women and children and, in particular, women exposed to violence. The governance programme also provided support to victim empowerment through a rural NGO, but this support was being phased out at the time of the interview on the argument that these services should be provided by government.

### **Gender mainstreaming**

All of the bilateral agencies that participated in the research favoured funding activities that were considered to represent **gender mainstreaming**. While most organisations did not report major shifts in their approach over recent years, one of the bilaterals felt that their shift from funding of women’s projects to gender mainstreaming mirrored what had happened more generally among donors (or at least bilateral ones). This informant was a strong supporter of gender mainstreaming, arguing that having separate women’s projects made it easier “for men to take a distance”.

The representative of another agency suggested there was a link between the current trend to refer to the abuse of women as “gender-based violence” and the donor focus on gender mainstreaming over separate women’s programmes. She noted that while donors used the term “gender-based violence”, “the bottom line” was violence against women. She felt that while they and other donors tried to ensure that gender was mainstreamed in all programmes, often gender and women’s issues got “lost” in the bigger programmes. While supporting gender mainstreaming, she felt it would take a long time before it was a reality. It would thus be “tragic”, she said, if funds exclusively targeted to gender, and GBV in particular, were no longer available.

One of the bilaterals had a global policy on mainstreaming that informed all country programmes. The informant had heard that a local policy had also been drafted “but it never really went anywhere”. However, while the global mainstreaming policy had been in place for about ten years, the agency had until recently continued to fund local gender-specific programmes. The informant surmised that this had happened because of the presence of a gender advisor. In talking about the challenges of mainstreaming, the informant noted that the fact that the previous gender advisor’s background was in gender rather than development, meant that she was unable to provide practical support in respect of partners’ projects. The agency was therefore trying to recruit someone with both sectoral and gender expertise as previously there was strong gender awareness, but the agency might not always have been effective in “implementing that awareness”.

One of the smaller bilaterals said that they were relatively informal in terms of policy. Gender mainstreaming was the basis of their approach, and this was understood as meaning that the communities that were the “target audience” of their programmes would mostly be women. The guidelines focused on marginalised groups rather than gender specifically, with women as one of the potentially marginalised groups. The informant expressed concern that gender should not be “taken out of context” and that “focusing exclusively on gender is [not] the most efficient way of empowering people”.

Another of the bilateral agencies that had gender mainstreaming as the overall approach felt that they were doing relatively well in taking gender on board. This was achieved, amongst other things, by discussing issues in meetings where most staff were present. Gender was also one of the aspects investigated when funding for a project was first negotiated.

The representative of yet another bilateral said that their policy provided for mainstreaming alongside funding of support to activities directed at women. In practice, they did not have enough money for the latter category so instead addressed gender through other programmes. To encourage this, they have engaged a consultant to discuss with the recipient organisations how gender would be dealt with when entering into new agreements.

These responses from donor organisations reflect a number of challenges in the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. These include the requisite conceptual clarity regarding mainstreaming, commitment at the highest levels and the dedication of resources that translate into appropriate policy formulation, budget allocation and the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of gender-equity outcomes. The shift to gender mainstreaming appears to have taken place predominantly amongst bilateral donors. Where this shift had occurred, it is not clear whether the commitment was sufficiently reflected in their budgets, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

### **Gender and budget**

Representatives were asked what proportions of their annual budgets were allocated to civil society and to government, respectively. Many of the donors only provided funding to civil society organisations. These included the two South African corporate responsibility funds, the international NGOs and the foreign



foundations. In addition, the multilateral fund said that all their money went to civil society, apart from R1m allocated for public institutions. Further, the interviewee said that when funding public institutions, no funding was provided in respect of operating costs such as salaries and administration, whereas these costs might be covered for a civil society programme. This fund formed part, however, of a larger agreement with government, whereby 25% of the total allocations by the parties making up the multilateral went to civil society.

A representative from one of the bilaterals said that, despite their status as a bilateral, most of their money went to civil society. This approach was adopted as the agency was one of the smaller bilaterals and thus felt it would have limited impact when funding government. Within the HIV/AIDS programme, about a fifth went to government as they were hoping to strengthen the Department of Health's NGO Unit so that it could provide more funding to NGOs. The representative noted, however, that "nothing much had come of" this initiative thus far. In the course of two months, the bilateral had itself approved R2,7m worth of funding in respect of nine HIV/AIDS projects. This area was reported to be the "biggest area of growth" and the agency was trying to ensure that most of the programmes were gender-related. At least one of the funded organisations focused specifically on gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS.

There was no common approach to the CSO/government budget split amongst the bilaterals. The smaller bilaterals said they channelled most of their funds to civil society as the relatively small size of their budgets would have limited impact on government. In one case, this marked a significant shift from the position five years previously when most of the money would have gone to government. Where this agency provided support to government, it was primarily in respect of capacity building and technical assistance, and this assistance was no longer provided to the same extent as previously as it was seen to have "served its purpose". The support for civil society was justified on the basis of South Africa having relatively good policy and legislation in place, but still having weaknesses in terms of implementation. The agency felt that a strong civil society could help in addressing these weaknesses.

Two other bilaterals reported that the majority of their funding was now going to government and in both cases this represented the diversion of funds from civil society after 1994.

In terms of the international NGOs, one of them said that they now had much less funding than before, as they previously received a significant amount from the relevant foreign government, but since about three years previously the money was channelled mostly into multilateral support. The intention was that NGOs should be able to access at least part of the money channelled to government. This had, however, not happened. As a result of the decrease in funds, the agency had to downscale its funding to gender programmes. Some partners had been dropped and the local office had closed.

In addition to the split between government and civil society, informants were asked for an estimate of **how much of their budget had been allocated for gender** by their agency. Most of the informants did not have these figures at hand and instead, made estimates.

One of the international foundations had a specific budget for gender which made up the largest part of their funding. In 2004, the budget was €112 000. This budget had remained the same over recent years with the intention that more of it should go to other countries in the region. At the time of the interview, more than half of the funds were being spent in South Africa.

The multilateral fund had a separate budget category for the 16 days of activism in addition to breakdowns within each of the other four programme areas. Within these other programme areas, however, they could not specify a definite figure allocated to gender. The informant said that the amount allocated to gender-

related activities had probably increased since 2000, but changes in funding and accounting procedures made comparisons very difficult.

Others who had specific budgets included:

- An international NGO which in 2004 had a fund for this purpose totalling R1 500 000. The informant noted that the “need is huge and the funds are so little”.
- A bilateral which allocated a total of R50m over a period of six years.

Some agencies did not have a specific budget, but were nevertheless able to estimate the amount allocated in respect of gender-related activities. These included:

- An international foundation that estimated that R2,5-3m of their R9m grant money was spent on gender;
- A bilateral that estimated that on average across all programmes, between 5 and 10% of funds was probably allocated to gender. This ranged, however, from 100% in respect of money channelled through a UNICEF project to a much lower percentage in respect of an environment programme;
- An international NGO whose representative was fairly confident that funding in respect of gender-related issues – and GBV violence in particular – would have increased by more than 20% over the last ten years, but could not give an estimate in absolute terms.

The representative of one of the corporate funds said that she thought the amount of money allocated to gender-related activities had probably increased in recent years. She attributed this to her personal interest in the issue, her encouragement to organisations to submit proposals, and her support for these proposals once submitted. She also felt that HIV/AIDS might also have “forced gender issues to the fore a lot more than previously”.

One of the international foundations had observed a decrease in the amount of money allocated for gender, and attributed this to deterioration in the quality of proposals received, as well as a closing down of some organisations. In the most recent round of proposals the representative of this foundation said he had not received a single gender-related proposal whereas previously he had received six or seven in each round. However, he observed that the deterioration in quality of proposals was probably not specific to gender.

The bilateral that reported the strongest shift in favour of gender mainstreaming said that even when they funded gender-specific projects, there had not been a specific budget for gender. She estimated that perhaps 5% of the budget would have been allocated to gender-specific programmes at that time, but said the amount depended on the number and quality of proposals received. Further, even at that time, they were clear that gender should not become the “main sector within our programme”. At the time of the interview this agency was supporting a single gender project that it sees as strategic in terms of mainstreaming to the tune of about R5,5m over three years. The informant estimated that the amount allocated to gender-related activities would have decreased by more than 15% over the last ten years.

One of the corporate funds said that while they did not have a specific budget for gender, their information system could report which areas were being supported. However, only one of the foundations which they managed had a category on women and none had a category on gender. In addition to the monitoring system, staff write a report for all projects evaluated and, in doing so, have to specify a sector and sub-sector. Again, however, there was generally no separate category for women or gender. Instead it was classified under a broad category of ‘welfare’.

A representative of one of the international NGOs said that the bilateral agency that funded them had provided them with a tool to monitor how much they spent on gender. He was, however, not able to give an

estimate. He reported that the tool also captured issues such as staff composition of the organisation. The aspect that focused on composition captured levels, and thus reflected gender balance (or otherwise), in respect of participation in decision-making.

One of the other bilaterals did not have any mechanisms to track money going to different sectors. The informant said that she would oppose the introduction of such a mechanism as unnecessary bureaucracy. Another bilateral had an information system but said that this could not easily produce information as to how much was spent on gender.

Of the six respondents who compared their present budgets for gender to those of five years ago, one reported that the money allocated to gender had remained roughly the same, two estimated that this amount had decreased and three estimated that this amount had increased. With the exception of four of the donor organisations participating in this research, donors had not formulated a specific budget for gender-related activities. Although several informants reported that their organisations had information systems that tracked the amount of money being spent per sector, only one reported that this systems could track the amount of money being spent on gender.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Regardless of whether they adopted mainstreaming or some other approach, informants were asked what **mechanisms they had for monitoring and evaluation of gender equality outcomes**. A foundation was one of the few to answer the question focusing on gender in particular. The representative in question said that they commissioned gender specialists to assess the impact of the projects they funded on the basis of project reports. In addition, the project officers, including one with specific responsibility for gender, monitored projects through attending project meetings and some monitoring visits of particular projects felt to be “at risk”. In some cases project officers assisted service delivery organisations to look beyond simple delivery as to how they might take up a rights-based approach.

The bilateral that previously had a gender advisor said monitoring and evaluation had been among this person’s tasks. A targeted fund had commissioned an external evaluation of their programme several years previously. The evaluation was undertaken by a team that combined foreign and local expertise. A further evaluation was planned for the near future. This evaluation would influence the future direction of the programme as there was general consensus that a South African-specific programme could no longer be justified given the agencies’ overall move towards regional activities.

Most other responses suggested that agencies did not distinguish monitoring and evaluation of gender equality outcomes from other monitoring and evaluation. So, for example, informants said that they monitored through visits, progress reports, and keeping in contact with partners and independent evaluators.

An international NGO said that they had four “mandatory” monitoring mechanisms. The first involved at least four visits to each project every year. In practice, it was common to visit as many as eight times. The second involved going to the field to meet beneficiaries and observe outreach projects. The third involved commissioning of external consultants to conduct an assessment evaluation at the end of the funding period. Finally, the agency encouraged organisations to conduct internal evaluations.

A representative of an international NGO said that while they might be less strict than bilateral or corporate agencies, there were still very stringent procedures and monitoring. She suggested that in some respects they were probably more diligent about follow-up than the bilateral donors as they cared more about the results.

Several informants – including representatives of a local corporate fund and a foreign foundation – said that they depended largely on partners to do the monitoring and evaluation. The foreign foundation said that it had developed a social indicators toolkit to assist partners in doing this.

Two donors had mechanisms in place for monitoring and evaluating gender-equity outcomes while others did not differentiate this from other monitoring and evaluation. Several expected their partners to do the gender-equity monitoring and evaluation, while several other donors acknowledged weaknesses in their monitoring and evaluation to date. The representative of a foreign foundation said that in attempting to address previous weaknesses, they were trying to re-introduce elements of the log-frame approach, although they were also wary of its rigidity. The representative of the multilateral agency said that they did not yet have a monitoring and evaluation tool but were planning to develop one that would focus on all human rights, including gender. The representative of a local corporate fund implicitly acknowledged weak present monitoring by reporting that they were planning a shift towards a programme approach that would entail a more hands-on approach “as opposed to: ‘Here’s the money. Bye!’”

### **Gender and implementation**

As noted above, interviewees were asked what their agencies’ **key funding priorities were in relation to gender**, and if GBV was mentioned, what issues and activities specific to GBV were being funded. While responses to these questions have been presented under the section “Gender and policy formulation”, the debate about funding service provision and the core costs of GBV CSOs is presented here.

Most of the representatives interviewed reported that their agencies did not fund **service delivery**. Service delivery refers primarily to activities such as counselling and the running costs of shelters for abused women and their children. Three major reasons were provided to justify this approach: firstly, that service provision is the responsibility of government, secondly, that the funding of service delivery is not sustainable and lastly, that the provision of services has minimal impact on long-term and fundamental social change.

In terms of the first argument, donors often acknowledged government shortcomings in providing these services. Nevertheless, these representatives maintained that government’s inability to utilise its resources effectively could not justify donors stepping in to fill the gap. In this respect, one of the international NGOs said that while they would not fund service delivery that should be done by government, they would, however, fund a programme of action that would influence government to provide services. However, in another instance, service provision by CSOs in the sector was seen as providing a rationale for donor support. For example, a bilateral, in providing a reason for funding civil society organisations, noted that they played a service provider role. However, he said that the agency would not support “plain” service organisations, but rather those that would somehow contribute to longer-term delivery by government.

On the second argument, sustainability, the informant of an international foundation, noting that there had been a significant decrease in the number of funding applications from GBV organisations over the past few years, surmised this to be a result of the foundation’s decision to no longer fund service delivery. He justified this position by pointing out that available funds are determined on an annual basis, thus precluding the foundation’s ability to commit to ongoing support. In other instances concerns about funding service delivery were not dictated only by financial imperatives, but also reflected an attempt to build the capacity of government and CSOs to implement gender-related policy effectively. For example, a representative of a GBV-targeted bilateral fund said that over time the agency had moved away from pure service delivery to projects focused more on training and capacity building. This shift recognised that South Africa had relatively good policies and legislation in place, but that enforcement was often lacking.

It was therefore an attempt to have longer-term impact, rather than providing ongoing funds for services that government itself should be funding.

Advocacy, lobbying, policy formulation and research were cited by many informants as activities that were more likely to receive funding than service delivery. These activities were seen as potentially more likely to have a positive long-term, sustainable impact on GBV as counselling and the provision of shelters. In this respect the representative of an international foundation said that as the agency had prioritised the promotion of human rights, the decision not to fund service delivery projects was rationalised on the basis of their perceived limitation in promoting fundamental and long-lasting changes to women's exercise of their rights. However, a nuanced understanding of this issue was offered by the representative of a GBV-targeted bilateral fund. She acknowledged that it was often difficult to differentiate clearly between service delivery and policy and advocacy. In rural areas, in particular, she felt that service delivery acted to raise awareness of the need for services and thus performed an awareness raising and advocacy role.

Four donor organisations differed from the general trend of avoiding funding of service delivery. In two instances this was due to a particular understanding of the role of counselling and shelters as important phases in the empowerment of women against potentially life-threatening abuse. In the third instance, the decision to fund service provision was motivated by a more traditional "welfarist" notion of philanthropy. With regards to the former, the representative of a bilateral said that they did not prioritise between advocacy, service delivery, and capacity building in the GBV sector. He noted that while in his home country services were generally delivered by government, in other countries there could be other models, for example where an NGO provided but with some (unspecified) involvement of government.

The representative of the multilateral fund said that GBV was probably the only area in which they funded service providers, even where the organisations concerned did not have an advocacy and lobbying function. In other areas they would only fund organisations that could show they contributed to policy change in some way. The reason for continuing to fund service delivery in respect of GBV was the limited availability of other funding for this work. The funds available to support the 16 days of activism had also had no conditions attached, thus providing some leeway in how they were used. The agency ensured, however, in their "due diligence" exercises, that the objectives of the organisations were about empowerment of women, for example through education and legal advice.

Traditional "welfarist" notions of philanthropy were advanced by the two local corporate funds as their reason for funding service provision. In addition, the representative of one said that there had been some shift in their funding in that whereas earlier the focus was only on shelters, they now included support for counselling and capacity building. She attributed the shift to her own influence and that of her predecessor.

Most organisations said that they did not fund **core costs** but would cover salary and other overhead costs associated with the project they were funding. Several said that they actively encouraged applicants to include such costs in their budget. One of the few agencies that said that they funded core costs said that they funded only the costs associated with the project. They thus seem to have a similar approach to most of the other organisations. Where organisations said that they would cover salary and other overhead costs in this way, they generally had a maximum or suggested percentage that this should constitute of the total budget. This ranged from a low of 7% to a high of 20% for salaries and 20% for administration.

The representative of one of the bilaterals said that the decision as to whether to continue a dedicated gender fund was related to the issue of funding core costs. She said that if there was an ongoing fund, they would be looking for "distinctive projects that have a start and a finish" rather than simply funding operational costs of organisations. She explained that while she recognised the difficulties NGOs found in sourcing operational costs, bilateral agencies needed to be able to report back to their own parliaments

about the specific outcomes to which they had contributed. Within this framework, however, the agency would be open in terms of the type of activities funded. Research might be included in this, but would not constitute the bulk of funding because of the difficulty of measuring the impact of research. Thus to be funded, a research project would normally need to include activities beyond the research. The agency would also not fund projects that were primarily “welfare-oriented”, in which category she included shelters and counselling. They also would not fund major capital costs or infrastructure such as buildings or vehicles.

One of the local corporate funders gave as their reason for not providing core costs the need to avoid dependency. The informant said that they would consider core costs if the organisation was receiving a substantial subsidy from government.

One of the international NGOs was one of the few exceptions in respect of core costs. The informant said that they saw themselves as funding organisations rather than projects. Organisations were required to submit a four-year programme without budget items and then every year to submit the budget for that year, indicating their priorities. The funder then decided which parts of the budget they could fund. In some cases this might include the salary of a director or office rental. The informant said that when he described their policy to the Donor Network for Women, other informants seemed surprised. He was, however, confident that their approach was correct if one wanted organisations to function effectively.

Informants were also asked whether they aimed to fund a **few long-term projects or many shorter-term projects**. One of the local corporate funds that supported shelters said that their strategy had been to fund fewer long-term projects rather than many smaller ones so as to build sustainability. A bilateral said that they had a combination of short- and longer-term projects but the latter were limited by their funding cycle. A local corporate fund had in the past funded many short-term projects, but was likely to shift towards making more large grants so as “to make a more meaningful contribution”. A bilateral had chosen to focus on funding a smaller number of projects over a long-term. This strategy was chosen, among others, to relieve the workload involved in processing applications. At least one other informant also noted an avoidance of small grants given the resultant imbalance between agency workload and money channelled to projects.

An international foundation was, at the time of the interview, funding 18 projects in the region, of which three were long-term partners who received core support. Funding of long-term partners was soon to come to an end, in preference for project-based funding. The decision to avoid long-term projects was partly fuelled by concerns at the international level about getting into labour law difficulties in respect of project employees. A further concern related to the effectiveness of the GBV sector where funding had sometimes happened without outcomes being specified. Related to this were concerns about the sustainability of some of the organisations they funded, which were perceived as having become totally reliant on them. Finally, the new strategy was seen to give more “freedom” to the agency in its decisions.

While there was wide variety in **funding periods**, a one-year funding period was the most common. However, some who reported that this was the norm for their agency said that grants were sometimes given for longer periods. One explained that this could happen if applications were received early in the funding cycle.

Exceptions to the general rule included a bilateral that funded for any period between one and three years, an international foundation which said that the maximum period was three years but that the majority of grants were for six to twelve months, a bilateral that generally gave grants for 3-4 years, and a bilateral that gave first contracts of 12-18 months duration, with longer contracts of three years for organisations that had been funded for some time. In practice, these latter contracts are reportedly often extended to four

years. A local corporate fund had, until 2003, provided funding for a single year. At that point it was changed to a minimum of three years, with an annual review of impact. One of the international NGOs had a funding period of three to four years. However, if a problem such as mismanagement was discovered during the first year, funding would end. This had happened in one or two cases. The longer period was justified on the basis that “we can’t make a difference in one year”. Further, the agency wanted to develop an open relationship with their partners in which they could “openly share challenges”.

One of the local corporate funds reported that since 2004, the grants had been for a maximum of twelve months, although these could be renewed if the organisation re-applied. Longer grants were stopped after the dollar-rand exchange rate deteriorated, with a consequent decrease in the amount of funds available as they are dependent on company profits. The informant was writing a policy paper at the time of the interview arguing for a relaxation of this policy in order to assist organisations to plan better. Such policy papers are written as the need for discussion of particular issues and trends arises.

### **Grant approval**

Informants were asked to indicate the **size of their smallest and largest GBV-related grants** over the past two years. The responses are difficult to compare because they were expressed in different currencies and also sometimes referred to different periods. Estimates provided were as follows:

- Bilateral: Average R300 000
- Bilateral: R150 000 to R2m, with average of R250 000
- Bilateral: Maximum of R2-3m.
- Bilateral: R500 000 to R4-5m, with average of R1,5m-R3m.
- International foundation: R120 000 to R1m, with average of R300 000
- International foundation: €8 000 to €100 000, with an average of around €50 000.
- International NGO: R100 000 to R270 000, with an average of R220 000.
- International NGO: C\$1 000 to C\$40 000, with average of C\$25-35 000
- Local corporate fund; R16 000 to R250 000, with average of R100 000

There seems to be no clear pattern between the different categories of funders. While grants of two to three hundred thousand rand seem the most common, some grants are substantially larger while a few are much smaller.

In terms of **application routes**, some organisations issued formal calls for proposals, others did not issue a formal call but specified an annual application date, while a few accepted applications at any time of the year. In all cases, there were formal procedures for assessing and approving applications. In one case a bilateral said that once applications were in, they employed a local consultancy to do the first sifting through the applications before they were assessed by a panel composed of a mix of internal and external people.

The two local corporate foundations were among those which said that they accepted applications throughout the year. Both said that it would take approximately two months from date of application for the grant to be either approved or rejected. In the one case, if the project met the organisation’s criteria, it would be presented by the manager to a sponsorship forum composed of the five portfolio managers. Sometimes staff might also visit the project. In the other case, grants of up to R60 000 were approved in-house, with final approval from the chief executive officer who was also a member of the board. Grants for larger amounts went to the quarterly board meeting where they were presented by the social investment practitioners.

Some organisations had application forms which applicants were required to use, while others gave more freedom to applicants in choosing their application format. One of the foreign foundations did not require

that organisations use a specified format, but did have a “gender-oriented programme planning tool”, similar to a log-frame, which organisations could use if they chose to.

When asked what **criteria were used in assessing applications**, most stressed the need for a clear concept that fitted in with their own strategy, as well as the ability of the applicant organisation to manage finances. Some stressed sustainability and organisational stability. One bilateral said that while a solid organisational history was generally required, new organisations could also be funded, but with relatively small amounts as a test of whether further funding could be considered. At least one organisation reported a formal scoring system for assessing applications.

An international foundation said that conditions and accountability requirements had become more rigorous since the apartheid years: “We cannot fund just anything that happens to come our way, which is what happened in the past basically”. There had to be “logic” to the project, and there should be no duplication of initiatives and, in particular, no duplication of what government should be doing.

A few organisations spoke about the tension between funding larger, more established organisations and those that were smaller and less sophisticated. The representative of an international NGO which received its funding through the relevant foreign government said that the requirements laid down by the Ministry of Cooperation made it very difficult for CBOs to conform to all the procedures. As a result, most of their partners were NGOs in urban areas. Within this limitation, the foundation attempted to fund innovative “and so-called risky” projects that went beyond service delivery. Another international NGO said that, unlike other funders, they avoided “smart and established” organisations. Similarly, one of the smaller bilateral funds shied away from “urban high-profile organisations” and focused instead on those that would not usually attract donor money. In contrast, the representative of the multilateral fund said that the change in procedures had made it more difficult for less sophisticated organisations to apply successfully. The fact that the agency now had to put out public calls had increased the partnership base, but also generally worked against the interests of struggling “survivalist” organisations with poor English and presentation skills. The informant said that the change in procedures was introduced after the discovery of significant corruption at international level.

The majority of organisations required two **reports**, one in the middle of the funding proposal and one at the end. As one year was the most common period of funding, this translated for the most part into six-monthly reports. Several informants stressed the need for reporting to match what had been described in the proposal as planned activities. Some specified the need for indicators of impact and outcome. However one of the bilaterals said that they would not exclude an organisation because it lacked the ability to use targets and indicator. An international foundation said that their two-page contracts specified the format for reporting.

### **Stakeholder relations**

When asked whether they required their partners to have a particular **relationship with government**, almost all informants responded that it depended on the nature of the project. Thus, for example, if the project aimed to build the capacity of government in the area of service delivery, a good relationship would be essential. In the case of an advocacy project, in contrast, organisations would not be penalised for having an antagonistic relationship. One donor said that their only requirement in respect of partners’ relationship to government was that the organisations did not behave like opposition parties: “Where they disagree with government, this must be on the basis of development, not on reducing the votes of the ruling party.”

One exception to the general pattern was an international foundation that said it encouraged “constructive interaction” on the basis that impact would be compromised if organisations were too distant from



government. This funder adopted this position despite the inclusion of advocacy among the activities it funded. The funder thus seemed to differ from other donor informants who felt that an advocacy role warranted some distance.

A second exception was one of the local corporate donors where the informant said that it was important to them that grantees were in line with what government was doing. If an organisation networked with, or received subsidies from, government they saw this as a good sign. However, they were aware of the difficulties experienced by organisations in obtaining subsidies and therefore did not specify this as a precondition. In this respect, the other corporate donor noted that Gauteng had reduced the subsidy money available to NGOs providing services on their behalf while, in her opinion, these organisations were often doing the job better than government despite their limited resources. The first donor added that even though they looked for alignment with government, they were very wary of doing government's work for it and "paying government's bills".

A representative of a foreign foundation while scathing in her criticism of CSOs for not accessing funds from government for service delivery, felt, in contrast, that for monitoring work it was not appropriate for NGOs to be funded by government as this would reduce their independence. However, she noted that the South African government was much more open to donors supporting civil society monitoring activities, even when they were critical, compared to governments in other Southern African countries.

Virtually all informants said that they encouraged their partners to **network with other organisations** working in the same field. They said, among others, that this reduced the likelihood of duplication, and promoted information exchange and learning. One of the international NGOs said that they checked annually on new partnerships established by the organisations they funded. This informant understood the question as including networking with other donors, and encouraged this because they hoped to learn from these partnerships. He said, further, that they encouraged networking by sometimes providing tickets to international conferences beyond the agreed funds for the particular organisation.

The representative of the multilateral fund said that their new grant-making procedures had, as a requirement, that applicants must show some sort of partnership in the proposal. This could be with government, another organisation, or the community. This particular funder has, in particular, encouraged partnerships between NGOs and the Chapter Nine institutions.

Several of the funders referred at some point in the interview to the National Network on Violence Against Women. One said that they had funded the network at one point but it had been a "big disappointment" in terms of effectiveness. More generally, this funder was disturbed by the apparent competition, lack of cooperation and duplication in the sector. She did not, however, think this was specific to the GBV sector or even South Africa, but rather largely a reflection of competition over funding. She also thought that promoting women's voices might be particularly difficult in a society such as South Africa going through major transition, where people were for some time afraid to criticise the African National Congress. She saw some signs of hope that critical voices were emerging.

One informant acknowledged that smaller organisations might not have the time, resources or capacity to network much.

As indicated above, several informants interpreted the networking question more broadly to include networking with other donor organisations. A corporate donor suggested that SANGOCO should facilitate dialogue between organisations and donors interested in gender-based violence.

### **Donor relationships with GBV CSOs**

When asked what **challenges** they experienced in relation to funding of GBV, many informants spoke about the poor quality of proposals and reports they received. Several noted, in particular, that proposals from the less established and more rural organisations tended to be poor. One of the bilateral donors observed that most donors, being risk-averse, would find it difficult to fund such organisations. One of the bilaterals said that they had engaged consultants to provide training on writing proposals and provided some subsequent hand-holding for the less sophisticated organisations.

The representative of a corporate fund felt that poor proposal writing was not confined to gender-related proposals and organisations. She felt, however, that GBV needed to have even better motivation than some other issues because it was an “uncomfortable” subject – not a “feel-good” sector or one that was photographically pleasing.

The representative of a corporation foundation said that people sometimes claimed activities that they were not doing. Further, organisations also did not always have a clear concept of what they wanted to do. In addition, sometimes they did not have experience in managing funds. The representative of an international foundation said that the lack of coordination and duplication posed problems, and that they had organised talkshops to encourage information sharing.

The representative of an international NGO interpreted the question about challenges more broadly. He named three challenges – the dependency of many NGOs on the passion of one or two leaders, and the problems that resulted when they left the organisation; the “cultural wall” that work on GBV came up against in a situation where people’s poverty-related needs seemed more urgent; and the limited number of funders providing support in this area and resultant limited impact.

Informants were asked what **advice** they would give in respect of raising funds for GBV. The most common response was that applicants should ensure that their proposals contained a clear motivation and discussed expected impact. Impact must be measured by something more than how many people would be trained. Several emphasised that the idea should be original, interesting, or innovative. As one expressed it, NGOs must “find new strategies to get to the root of the problem”. This same funder suggested that the poor quality of many proposals might be partly due to laziness on the part of NGOs who found it easier to ask donors what they wanted the organisations to do. Finally, the representative of a bilateral said that there should be much more advocacy about increasing government accountability and provision in this area until gender-based violence became “a very political issue”.

## 4. Conclusions and recommendations

### **Gender and budget**

Indications from the CSO surveys were that there was substantially less funding for GBV work in 2005 than five years previously. While only six donors (of a total of twelve) gave estimates on changes to the amount of money they were spending on gender over the past five years, three estimated they were spending more money on gender in 2005, two of which were a result of the initiative of particular individuals. Further, only four informants reported that their organisations had a specific budget for gender, and only two donor organisations could track the amount of money being spent on gender. Taking into consideration the fact that the donor sample over-represented funders of GBV work, the picture in the broader donor community is certain to look bleaker.

GBV CSOs reported that they experience funding insecurity. Given that the agendas of bilateral and other foreign funders may be more influenced by the vagaries of macro politics, GBV CSOs may benefit from attracting local corporate funding as this may be more sustainable. There are indications from the CSOs surveyed that local corporate support increased over the period 2000-2005. Current trends in the development of corporate governance and corporate social responsibility may provide a favourable environment for GBV CSOs to promote their programmes.

Some donors justified the decline in funding of gender on the basis that the South African government has strong gender-responsive legislation in place. However, GBV CSOs were at pains to point out that legislation has not adequately translated into implementation, particularly regarding gender-based violence, and that donor resources are essential in the effort to build communities in which women enjoy the full exercise of their citizenship and constitutional rights. CSOs should continue lobbying donors about the on-going need for funding in this regard.

### **Gender and policy**

While gender-mainstreaming was the preferred approach among many donors, it appeared to be significantly hampered by conceptual confusion, insufficient commitment and allocation of resources and weak monitoring and evaluation of gender equity targets. As a result, donors were, generally speaking, unable to demonstrate meaningfully how mainstreaming was benefiting women or contributing to gender equity. In addition, where there was no gender policy in place, proposals from the gender sector may instead be evaluated on the basis of subjective criteria, according to their “appeal factor”, rather than on their potential to contribute to well-defined gender-equity objectives arising out of policy. In order to engage meaningfully with the question of gender equity, donors need to evaluate their gender mainstreaming programmes and continue to formulate sound gender policies in consultation with the sector.

Where donors were funding gender-related activities, this seemed to be greatly facilitated by the presence of a “champion” within the funding agency. The down-side of this was that on more than one occasion donor gender programmes had come to an end with the departure of the gender advisor. This finding emphasises the need to educate donors on the increasing recognition by diverse sectors of South African society that GBV is a significant issue for which sustained donor commitment is essential.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Interviews with donors revealed no clear picture as to the extent and utility of monitoring and evaluation in relation to gender-equity outcomes. Many informants acknowledged weak

monitoring and evaluation to date and few distinguished the monitoring and evaluation of gender equity targets from general project monitoring and evaluation.

Other responses to this question spoke to issues of donor relationships with CSOs, particularly the extent and quality of consultation with the sector. CSOs complained about increasing donor requirements for more stringent monitoring and evaluation of projects and the complexities and limitations of using donor defined frameworks for reporting outcomes, while pointing to unsatisfactory relationships with some donors who were experienced as inaccessible and uninvolved, yet also prescriptive. While monitoring and evaluation is important, smaller and rural CSOs who have limited resources and skills may be disadvantaged if donors require internal monitoring and evaluation. Increased donor involvement in projects may provide opportunities for monitoring and evaluating projects and in some cases provides increased visibility of indicators of impact and outcomes. More time should therefore be allocated for project visits as these have the potential to be mutual learning processes.

### **Partnerships with government and funding for services**

Many of the participating donors expressed a reluctance to fund service delivery, as they felt they should “not be paying government’s bills” and maintained that GBV CSOs should receive funding from government to pay for activities such as counselling, shelter provision, medical treatment of raped and abused women and clerk of the court functions. However, CSOs provided a number of anecdotes to illustrate their difficulties in accessing government funding. In this regard, CSOs recommended that SANGOCO lobby government to make funding more accessible.

Although there was a general reluctance to fund service delivery, some donors indicated a greater willingness to do so in the field of GBV than in other sectors, in recognition of the fact that funding for GBV sector services was difficult to come by. The reasons that the sector is under funded by donors appear to be complex and varied, but indications from CSOs were that the analysis, strategies and objectives of the sector are poorly understood by many donors. The first area of contention concerns the perception by some donors that many of the activities for which GBV CSOs request funding are “plain service delivery” and therefore “welfarist” in that they are not rights-based, do not perform an advocacy or awareness-raising role and therefore do not contribute in a meaningful or sustainable way to the fundamental restructuring of social relations in order to impact on levels of gender-violence. However, some CSOs said that because donor-defined reporting frameworks constructed the measurement of outcomes in a manner that could not capture less tangible dimensions of change such as changes in attitude and the facilitation of personal empowerment, the role and value of a service such as counselling that aimed to meet these objectives, was not fully recognised or understood by donors. That donors favoured activities such as networking, policy formulation, training and capacity building in the sector, to the detriment of funding counselling and shelters, is indicative in this regard.

Many donors also reported favouring activities such as advocacy and lobbying. While gender practitioners working in the GBV sector are in many instances promoting an analysis of GBV as rooted in questions of ideology, culture and identity, donors may, on the other hand, think about GBV strategy only in terms of policy and legislation or bureaucratic issues. There was little recognition amongst donors that the counselling relationship can also be a form of advocacy, and that its power lies in its potential to influence cultural practices, at the level of the hearts and minds of those survivors and perpetrators of gender-based violence who are engaged in counselling relationships.

The fact that counselling is at the heart of GBV work is borne out by the finding that the vast majority of CSOs surveyed provided this service. At the same time, it is the activity for which funding was most difficult to find in comparison to the previous five years. The central role occupied by counselling in the GBV sector suggests that the primary work of the sector involves a burden of care that most fields of development do not share, with the exception of the mental health, child welfare and HIV/AIDS fields. In order to appreciate the integral role that counselling plays in the GBV sector and thus make funding available for this activity, donors need to be lobbied by CSOs about the value of counselling as a strategic activity, as opposed to merely “plain service delivery” and therefore the responsibility of government.

The donor preference for CSOs to have partnerships with government was treated with caution by those CSOs who were playing a “watchdog role” to government, particularly in the areas of criminal justice, the Sexual Offences Bill and other legislation, and the roll-out of ARVs. However, virtually all donors seemed sensitive to the fact that an organisation’s relationship with government needed to be informed by the roles it played. Thus, for example, donors maintained that a service delivery organisation or one wanting to give technical assistance to government would need to have a more collaborative relationship than one engaged in advocacy and monitoring. Given that some CSOs were engaged in advocacy as well as service provision, a “creative tensions relationship” was promoted as a viable alternative by one CSO, thus contrasting with Vetten and Khan’s (2002) argument that service delivery can happen to the detriment of advocacy and policy focus. Further research into the relationship between service delivery, advocacy and policy formulation in the sector may illuminate points of connection and departure between these respective areas.

### **Core costs, project-based funding and sustainability**

Donor reluctance to fund core costs such as salaries, administrative costs, rental and the purchase of office equipment was justified by some informants as an attempt to prevent dependency on a single funder by forcing CSOs to diversify their funding base. However, responses from CSOs revealed that these measures contributed to the very organisational instability and unsustainability that they were supposed to have prevented. In particular, a shortage of funds for salaries resulted in staff retrenchments and an increase in volunteerism, thus undermining long-term organisational stability and possibly contributing to the erosion of the sector as a whole. In some cases, donors had funded core costs in recognition that it is by funding these that strong organisations are developed. In this respect several CSOs remarked that it was those donors who had funded their core costs over periods of more than a year that had contributed most significantly in facilitating their work.

Where the reluctance to fund core costs was motivated by short funding cycles and donor preference for “freedom” in their relationships with their partners (and the findings suggest a possible trend toward shorter-term funding), this can be understood as a lack of commitment from some donors to support the substance of GBV work. This kind of funding can nevertheless be used effectively by CSOs in the sector by utilising it as part-funding for larger projects and programmes. However, more donors need to be made aware that meaningful work in the sector is by nature long-term and is therefore contingent on healthy funding of the operational costs of GBV organisations and funding cycles of at least three years.

### **Quality and complexity of fundraising proposals and reports**

Donors maintained that the poor quality of proposals they received from the sector contributed significantly to the low success rate of these funding applications. On the other hand, CSOs complained that application forms and procedures were complex and continually changed. Some donors held workshops or provided training on writing proposals. CSOs have requested that funders simplify and standardise their application forms and provide feedback on unsuccessful applications.

### **Internal CSO fundraising factors**

Resources and expertise must be allocated for fundraising and organisations must ensure that fundraising skills are spread from the Board to the rest of the staff. CSOs must pay attention to their public profiles by ensuring, for example that they showcase their image, accountability and track record on their web sites. Donors often visit such sites to assess which organisation is most likely to be more accountable and to deliver the best service for their money. CSOs must also demonstrate that their programmes are relevant and effective, and be prepared to challenge donors to think beyond standard notions of impact and outcomes, discuss with them developments in the GBV field and point out potential contradictions in their positions on service delivery, advocacy, government partnerships and the diversion of funds to HIV/AIDS. CSOs can enhance their relationships with donors by “bringing home the personal face of the organisation”, sharing success stories with their donors, acknowledging their contribution and providing them with opportunities for exposure. Established CSOs should attempt to partner with CBOs and transfer skills as this will benefit the strength and sustainability of the sector as a whole.

### **Donor priorities and decision-making**

Shifting donor priorities were cited by CSOs as particularly problematic. The diversion of funding to HIV/AIDS was the major concern of CSOs in this regard. CSOs raised concerns about the potential for work in both areas to be compromised by projects that attempted to integrate GBV with HIV/AIDS in an effort to attract funding. While CSOs recognised that there are clear links between the two, they also maintained that in order for projects to be effective, focussed work in each area was required. A recommendation was made that instead of forcing GBV programmes into donor’s HIV/AIDS agendas, CSOs need to motivate for separate GBV funding while clearly linking the objectives of GBV projects to the issue of HIV/AIDS.

Differing levels and degrees of consultation with civil society were evident in interviews with donors. Where consultation with civil society had occurred, the GBV CSOs interviewed in this study reported that their input had not been invited. In turn, donors pointed to the weaknesses of the sector, amongst which apparent competition, lack of cooperation, duplication and failure to demonstrate outcomes were cited. Previous bad experiences with the sector, particularly the failure of the National Network on Violence Against Women, seem also to have undermined the credibility of the sector and created perceptions in donors that it is disorganised and therefore high-risk.

There were some indications from donors however, that opportunities for consultation with the sector exist. GBV CSOs must also find opportunities to proactively engage with donors in order to influence donor decision-making. Given donor preferences for networking between GBV CSOs, these organisations could approach donors as a consortium in order to raise donor awareness about the urgency of funds for GBV work. Individual meetings with donors can also be used as opportunities for advocacy and to educate donors about GBV and convince them of the need for increased funding.

CSOs perceived donors to have become “bored” with the issue of GBV and while the reasons for under-funding of the sector are complex, this perception is possibly supported by the response from one donor who expressed disappointment in the failure of CSOs to come up with “innovative” projects. However, the call could also be understood as frustration that the large number of initiatives undertaken to date seems to have had little impact on overall levels of GBV in society. In light of these findings, CSOs are advised to appreciate that they face particular funding challenges that other sectors may not face, and to factor these in to their fundraising strategies. In

particular, a strong case is made for GBV CSOs to wield influence in donor decision-making by engaging proactively and collectively with donors.

Where donors look primarily to the South African government when determining their priority areas, GBV CSOs may exercise influence in this regard by building relationships with government and ensuring that the GBV agenda remains a government priority.

### **Dialogue with donors**

Further dialogue between donors and CSOs, particularly CBOs in the sector who are operating with limited resources in rural areas and impoverished urban locales, is needed. The Donor Network on Women is instrumental in this respect. Convening other fora for donor-CSO dialogue will provide further opportunities for engagement. Distributing research such as this to donor organisations will raise awareness of the difficulties and nuances in fundraising that face CSOs in the GBV sector in South Africa.

### **Acknowledgment of donor work**

Donors had a range of responses to many key issues. While the findings presented in this report attempted to capture this diversity, unhelpful donor practices have generally been highlighted more than the positive practices. However, CSOs also reported that their work has benefited from the assistance and support of donors. This benefit has been most pronounced when donors have funded core costs over periods of three years or more, have engaged in “hands on” relationships with grantees, have consulted with CSOs rather than prescribed to them, and have visited their partner’s projects regularly and provided feedback. Donor interviews indicated that a number of donors had provided this sort of support and assistance. While both the literature review and the interviews with CSOs raised concern about the challenges faced by smaller, rural and less sophisticated CBOs in raising funds, it was also clear that some donors had engaged with these challenges by consciously focussing their funding on the more marginalised organisations. In addition, those donors who were particularly effective in the sector demonstrated well formulated gender policy backed up by strong budgets and procedures for monitoring and evaluating gender equity outcomes.

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## 6. Informants

### Interviews with donors

Australian Agency for International Development, Amanda Gillet  
Canadian International Development Agency, Jayshree Pather  
Danish International Development Agency, Erik Naeraa-Nicolajsen  
Finnish Embassy, Jesse Laitinen  
Foundation for Human Rights, Bronwynne Pereira  
Heinrich Böll Stiftung/Foundation, Angelica Pino  
Netherlands Embassy, Smallan Broek  
Norwegian People's Aid, Madidimalo Chaamo  
Open Society Foundation, Renald Morris  
Oxfam Canada, Sheryl Stone  
Transnet Foundation, Theresa Moila  
Tshikululu Social Investments, Elinor Kern

### Interviews not analysed

Themba Lesizwe  
Development Cooperation Ireland  
Ford Foundation  
HIVOS.

### NGOs surveyed and interviewed

Agisanang Domestic Abuse Prevention and Training (ADAPT)  
Bethany (I)<sup>1</sup>  
Bienvenue Shelter (I)  
Child and Family Care Society, Johannesburg  
Childline and Family Centre, Port Elizabeth  
Family and Marriage Society of South Africa (FAMSA), Limpopo  
Family Life Centre FAMSA, Johannesburg (I)  
FAMSA Pretoria  
Haven of Hope (I)  
Ikhwekzi Women's Support Centre (I)  
Inter Trauma Nexus  
Islamic Careline (I)  
Lawyers for Human Rights (I)  
Leamogetswe Safety Home (I)  
LifeLine, West Rand  
LifeLine, Vaal Triangle  
LifeLine SA (I)  
Makotse Women's Club (I)  
Manger Care Centre (I)  
National Institute for Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation of Offenders (NICRO), Johannesburg (I)

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<sup>1</sup> (I) designates Interviewed

NICRO, Eastern Cape (I)  
NISAA Institute for Women's Development (I)  
People against Human Abuse  
Rape Crisis Centre, Port Elizabeth (I)  
Salvation Army Haven of Hope Crisis Centre  
Sexual Harassment Education Project  
Thohoyandou Victim Empowerment Organisation (I)  
Umtata Women's Support Centre (I)  
Usindiso Ministries (I)

**Surveys not analysed**

Levubu Victim Empowerment Programme  
Maintenance Legal Service  
WEVEP