

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Study Title: Breaking the Silence: Barriers to Recognition, Reporting, and Justice for GBV Against Women with Disabilities in Conflict-Affected Cameroon

Study Design: Qualitative phenomenological study using in-depth interviews.

Target Population: Women and girls with different forms of disability (visual, hearing, mobility, psychosocial) aged 15–55 years.

Purpose: To explore lived experiences of GBV, barriers to reporting, coping mechanisms, and justice access.

Section A. Introduction

At the start of each interview, the interviewers will introduce themselves and thank the participant for agreeing to participate. The study purpose will be explained in simple and accessible language, highlighting its focus on documenting the experiences of women with disabilities in relation to violence, safety, and justice to inform improved services and support. Participants will be assured of confidentiality, and the voluntary nature of their participation will be emphasized. They will be reminded of their right to withdraw at any time or to decline to answer any question without negative consequences. Information on psychosocial support and referral pathways will be provided in case of distress. To build rapport and ensure a safe interview environment, interviews will begin with non-sensitive questions (e.g., age, family situation, type of disability, daily life experiences), before progressing to more sensitive topics. These introductory steps will serve to establish trust, set a respectful tone, and prepare participants for the discussion of sensitive issues.

Warm-up questions:

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself (e.g., age, family situation, type of disability)?
2. How has daily life been for you in your community?

Section B. Core Domains & Questions

Main Question	Probes / Follow-up Prompts
1. What does “sexual violence” mean to you?	-What kinds of behaviours or actions do you think of? -Have you heard about sexual violence from others (family, radio, church, health workers)? -Do women with disabilities face it differently?
2. Have you experienced mistreatment or violence at home or in your community?	-By family, caregivers, or partner? -Can you describe neglect or isolation experiences? -How do people treat you because of your disability?

3. What are the reasons why women with disabilities may not report abuse?	-Have you been threatened not to talk? -How do you think family/community would react? -How does shame or embarrassment affect speaking out?
4. How do people respond when a woman with a disability talks about violence?	-Have you been blamed, laughed at, or not believed? -Are families sometimes pressured to keep abuse as a “family secret”? -What makes the community react this way?
5. Have there been times you were prevented from leaving the house or meeting others?	-Who restricted your movement, and why? -How did this affect your ability to get help? -Do you feel isolated from people who could support you?
6. What options do women with disabilities have when they want to report abuse?	-Do you know where to report? -Have you or others tried police or courts? What happened? -What challenges (cost, corruption, distance) exist?
7. When abuse happens, who do you turn to for help?	-Family, friends, church, health workers? -What help did you receive? -What support do you wish existed?
8. How has the conflict in this region affected your safety?	-Has insecurity or displacement made things worse? -How has conflict affected your ability to seek justice or services?

Is there anything else you would like to add that we haven’t asked about?

We sincerely thank you for taking the time to share your experiences and contribute to this study.

If you need further information or support, please call **+237675618761** or visit the **Gender-Based Violence and Child Protection Unit** at any CBCHS facility.