STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

AGAINST CHILDREN IN SOUTH ASIA

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Cover Photo:
Bangladesh, Jamalpur: Children and other community members watching an anti-child marriage drama performed by members of an Adolescent Club.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AWON	Action Works Nepal
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMAGES	International Men and Gender Equality Survey
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
P4P	Partners for Prevention
RMG	Ready-Made Garment
SAIEVAC	South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children
SC	Scheduled Caste
ST	Scheduled Tribe
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WCD	Women and Child Desk
WCSC	Women and Children Service Centre
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the 2006 UN Global Study on Violence against Children, scholars, practitioners and programme implementers have made strong efforts to understand violence against children using an inter-disciplinary lens. What is emerging now is a gap in knowledge on the determinants of the risk factors underlying violence – that is, the invisible and indirect factors that in the global literature are known as 'structural violence'. This review was carried out to describe the state of research on structural violence and its relationship with interpersonal violence.

Structural violence is understood as patterns of differences within large-scale social structures – differences of power, wealth, privilege, education and health – that are unjust and unequal. This form of violence also occurs in a society if institutions and policies are designed in a way that creates barriers or inequitable access to a range of goods and services for some people but not others. Overall, as a result of structural violence, people experience extreme social oppression and, consequently, erosion of human dignity and of all associated dimensions, including confidence, overall well-being and security.

KEY FINDINGS

The literature indicates that there are five types of structural violence prevalent across the South Asia region that underlie all forms of interpersonal violence reviewed. These can be understood through a socio-cultural, economic systems, and fragile institutions lens.

Gender-based structural violence

- Structural violence owing to gender reveals itself through unequal hierarchies between men and women, characteristic of patriarchal societies. Using a socio-cultural lens, norms around an 'ideal' girl or boy, maintaining family honour, kinship rules, socialization of discriminatory norms, devaluing of girls and women and acceptability of violence all play a role in creating conditions that increase the chances of children facing interpersonal violence.
- Inequality, discrimination, exploitation and forced choice are themes that permeate children and adolescents' lives. Inequality manifests in violence such as child marriage, domestic violence and honour-based killings, since girls are defined by their relationships to the men in their lives and unequally bear the burden of upholding the family's honour. Boys face inequality since their experiences of abuse are often dismissed and considered less traumatic than girl's.
- For all children, modelling of gender-typed behaviours at home reinforces the cycle of discriminatory norms. Girls and boys who see household chores as gender-segregated are also expected to follow the pattern that adults do: girls spend more time in unpaid labour at home than boys, who spend more time in paid labour.

- Using an economics lens, gender-based structural violence manifests as son preference and dowry-related violence, given that the economic 'worth' of a girl is tied to how much dowry she brings whereas the 'worth' of a boy is tied to how much dowry can be demanded. Additionally, lack of employment opportunities, intersecting with social norms that restrict girls' movement and freedom, ensures financial independence remains unattainable for most girls, often paving the way either to marriage or to dangerous work such as domestic servitude or the sex trade. Moreover, socio-cultural and economic systems overlap such that the systemic devaluing of girls and women as individuals with their own rights creates a context where women are seen as commodities. Owning women and their bodies is crucial to having control over honour.
- Fragile institutions further place children at risk, with girls and women facing severe sexual abuse during times of conflict. Boys often experience pressure to seek work, given the high chance of fathers being absent owing to war-related death or injury.

Age-based structural violence
- Socio-culturally, age-based structural violence in the region is a result of cultural definitions of what it means to be a child and of what it means to be a parent. Often, justification for child maltreatment (i.e. physical and emotional abuse) stems from the perceived role of a parent as a disciplinarian and the need for children to learn culturally defined 'correct' ways to behave. Perpetrators of sexual violence against children believe children are unable to resist, more easily deceived, less likely to report abuse and more willing to go along with abuse than adults.

- While economic necessities often dictate interpersonal forms of violence such as child labour, cultural expectations around the importance of contributing to household income, as well as the belief that children are easily exploitable, ensure children face something known as 'forced choice' – that is, a choice limited to two alternatives, an 'either/or' choice, with those who have more power favoured in any setting. In Sri Lanka, heavy migration to the Middle East has led to an increase in demand for domestic servants, with children increasingly sought out as they are willing to work for less money and have fewer demands (related to lodgings, amount of food, etc.).
- In fragile settings, age-based structural violence can manifest in recruitment of child soldiers, as children are thought to less likely to be searched or questioned by authorities because of a belief that they are unlikely to engage in militaristic activities.

Socio-economic-based structural violence
- The economic burden of being in poverty increases the likelihood of child marriage, domestic violence, child labour, child maltreatment, trafficking and children living on the street. For those in poor socio-economic contexts, decisions related to marriage, schooling and economic participation present as competing alternatives that carry significant opportunity costs. In other words, in South Asia, marriage is often perceived to be an optimal and sometimes the only economic choice for young girls and their families. Since daughters are considered an economic burden on the family, child marriage allows families to reduce their expense of rearing the daughter. Female infanticide may be a pre-emptive step to protect

parents from financial pressures. The interlocking factors of gender-based structural violence and socio-economic-based structural violence are further revealed in dowry-related violence. Dowry is a way of ensuring the bride's family remains inferior to the groom's family.

- Structural violence also reveals itself in the way children in poorer socio-economic conditions face pressures and challenging life circumstances, unlike their peers who live in wealthier circumstances. With rapid urbanization, families have been systematically displaced to towns and cities, giving rise to more children living or working on the street. Once on the street, these children's vulnerability is heightened.

- Another form of socio-economic structural violence is classism, especially in schools, where it underlies bullying and discrimination. Classism is prejudice or discrimination against a group of people owing to their socio-economic background. In Bhutan, both peers and teachers tease children for their physical appearance, skin colour, living with a single parent, having no birth registration or being an orphan.

Caste-based structural violence

- Discrimination, rooted in notions of purity and pollution, is at the core of how caste-based structural violence operates, and the religious underpinnings of the caste system are central to how caste-based discrimination operates. Since caste is understood as an ideological framework to segregate people into groups, caste-related discrimination is paralleled in discrimination against ethnic groups, indigenous populations and religious groups across the region.

- For child marriage, the requirement of within-caste marriage is fundamental

to deciding at what age marriage should take place. Coupled with dowry, this relationship becomes even more complicated in the case of out-migration, which influences the 'pool' of people within one's caste left behind to marry, such as is the case in India and Nepal.

- Economic systems also play a role in the way caste hierarchies function, particularly with respect to child labour. Inherent in the hierarchies of the original caste system was the notion that those in the lower castes would undertake menial labour (and other occupations that occupy a low status). Socially regulated wages and social rules that determine who is blocked based on physical appearance, gender, caste and age lead to an inability to break the cycle of discrimination. It is thus not surprising that children who belong to lower castes are also more likely to take on menial jobs.

Fragile institutions-based structural violence

- Inequality, exploitation and forced choice are central themes in how structural violence based on fragile contexts reveals itself. In the present day, for most countries (e.g. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka), conflict has led to conditions of oppression, fear, inequality and deprivation. Violence against girls (child marriage, domestic abuse, restriction on mobility) is heightened in times of conflict. Insecurity that comes with political instability and armed conflict is cited as a reason for marrying girls early.

- Socio-economic contexts and gender intertwine to force vulnerable and desperate families to 'sell' their daughters or offer them to military personnel in order to survive. Moreover, refugee women and girls are at very high risk

of rape and sexual assault, as several reports on the refugee crisis globally and in South Asia show. Acceptability of violence takes on new forms in armed conflict settings, where adults' threshold for violence may become recalibrated to their surroundings, giving rise to more frequent violence against children.

Institutional response to structural violence

- From a prevention standpoint, programming is not using the terminology of structural violence, though some work is aimed at changing social norms, especially with respect to gender. There is also a focus on reducing barriers to opportunities for those from disadvantaged and poor households. Fewer efforts are directed towards addressing hierarchical relations resulting from age, though some programmes on child maltreatment include parent education as a core strategy. There are also strong efforts to improve education access for girls, children in poverty and children in conflict settings.

- At the institutional level, laws and policies can discriminate against those who are most marginalized. Girls and women are seen in a victim role, minimum age laws related to child marriage and child labour are inconsistent in the region and juvenile laws often carry harsh sentences that are at odds with the ages at which the crime is committed. An added challenge is that, in several countries, exceptions to laws are based on religious or cultural grounds that make it complicated to uphold protection laws equally for all children. Another form of discrimination is evident when children's rights are subsumed under a larger framework of human rights. For example, most international

and regional standards on trafficking in human beings focus on adults, with child trafficking as a sub-issue. The challenge with excluding children explicitly is that structural violence may have different impacts on children than on adults.

CONCLUSIONS

Inter-sectionality is central to how structural violence operates, since marginalized populations (e.g. girls in poverty, women from lower castes, children with disabilities, children in fragile contexts) are considerably more vulnerable than their peers. Thus, it is important to take a holistic approach that targets all types of structural violence. Additionally, the review indicates that underlying interpersonal violence are various types of structural violence. Studies suggest that, to understand why interpersonal violence occurs and persists, it is necessary to unpack the values attached to various structures in society. In other words, the meaning and value given to gender, age, socio-economic context, caste/ethnicity and situations of fragility create conditions where direct forms of violence thrive. Finally, the review finds that the influence of patriarchy cuts across all forms of violence, suggesting targeting patriarchal norms should be a core strategy for social change. Not only does the patriarchy harm girls from birth, but also norms of masculinity and femininity and gender roles defined by the patriarchy affect boys negatively.

FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON EVIDENCE GAPS

- Future work needs to pay attention to structural violence in more depth across all eight countries, especially age-based

structural violence. Moreover, there is uneven data availability across the region, with Maldives standing out as having almost no data on structural violence.

- In terms of interpersonal violence, studies on the structural factors underlying violence need to pay more attention to children with disabilities, street children and juvenile offenders.

- There is also a strong need to shift attention towards emerging forms of violence, such as increasing digitalization and increasing political and religious polarization.

- The role of the media needs further attention, as it can perpetuate or dismantle structural violence. India's film industry has recently made attempts to address topics like son preference (e.g. in *Dangal*), women's mobility and freedoms (e.g. in *Pink* and *Lipstick under my Burkha*) and stigma around people with disability (e.g. in *Margarita with a Straw*, *Barfi* and *Taare Zameen Par*). What is unknown is the extent to which films (and other media) play a role in changing ingrained attitudes and whether inclusion of barrier-breaking

media in programmatic strategies can be a way forward, given the strong affection Bollywood commands in the region.

- The continued conversation on how the patriarchy affects girls and boys needs to be strengthened. Pressure on boys and men to be masculine is a structural driver of many forms of interpersonal violence against women, which suggests programming on violence against women and girls needs to emphasize the engagement of men and boys.

- Programming efforts in South Asia need to start using the term 'structural violence' so that the concept becomes more mainstream. There is also a need to include a focus on ageism- and adultism-based structural violence in programming with children and adolescents.

- Institutional response to structural violence remains hindered due to laws that are inherently discriminatory. Continued research on structural violence against children will be essential to improve protection for all children and adolescents.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OBJECTIVE AND AIMS

The main objective of this desk review is to look at structural violence against children and adolescents in South Asia as well as institutional responses in the region.

There have been some important and ground-breaking global efforts to address violence against children and adolescents, such as the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children. Stemming from decades of research on violence against children, the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Campaign for Violence Prevention has put forth a typology of violence that categorizes it into three sub-types according to the victim–perpetrator relationship: self-directed violence; interpersonal violence; and collective violence.

Common across studies on violence against children is a focus on describing its visible and direct nature, especially on risk factors. It is now evident that there is a gap in our knowledge of the determinants of these risk factors – that is, the invisible and indirect factors underlying direct violence. In the global literature, this indirect form of violence is known as 'structural violence'.

Bangladesh, Jamalpur: Sabina, aged 15, had her marriage stopped by local authorities, after a call to the child help line.
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In order to be able to understand violence against children holistically, it is crucial to pay attention to structural violence as an important component underlying all forms of violence, particularly interpersonal violence.

Thus, this review is a first step towards synthesizing material on structural violence and its relationship with interpersonal violence in South Asia.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

A rapid literature review was conducted between May and August 2017. The main research questions guiding this review were as follows:

1. What is the nature of structural violence against children and adolescents in South Asia?

2. What are the intersections between the various types of interpersonal violence and structural violence?

3. What are the institutional responses (including government, non-government) to structural violence against children and adolescents in South Asia?

The first step was to develop a clear search protocol (see Annex). This identified inclusion/exclusion criteria, databases to search and combinations of search strings using keywords to retrieve articles. To collect data sources, searches were

conducted in the databases using the search strings of keywords. The 'cited by' and 'related articles' functions were utilised to expand the search. For peer-reviewed journal articles, a search was also conducted in journals that are country- and region-specific. Sources for review included peer-reviewed journal articles and books, policy documentation from government and international agencies, accepted Masters and PhD theses and quality grey literature (including non-governmental organization (NGO) reports and evaluations).

Despite efforts to be systematic in collecting resources, several caveats remain. First, given the large scope of this review, the search was not exhaustive, and the content aims to provide breadth over depth. Additionally, it was not possible to access articles/books in local languages that could have added further nuance to the findings. It was also not possible to conduct a full legal and policy review in the short timeframe.

Nevertheless, the review provides an overview of key issues concerning structural violence against children in South Asia. The next section lays out the conceptual framework for this review. Section 3 looks at the nature of structural violence and its relationship to interpersonal violence. Section 4 discusses institutional responses to structural violence and section 5 concludes, identifying evidence gaps that have emerged from the review.

2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 WHAT IS STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE?

Since the 1960s, structural violence has been defined and understood in a variety of ways across different contexts and disciplines. While various definitions exist (Brock-Utne, 1989; Farmer, 2004; Galtung, 1969; Montesanti and Thurston, 2015; Winter and Leighton, 2001), certain core elements of structural violence recur:

- A complex interplay of economic, political and social factors embedded in the way society is organized. This results in inequality for, or exploitation of, certain groups of people, which creates unequal life chances for them.
- Inequality as a manifestation of unequal power dynamics inherent in the 'structures' of society (e.g. unequal access to resources between children in poverty and children from wealthy backgrounds). Structures themselves are not neutral and can be understood as a pattern of collective social action that has achieved a degree of permanence.
- Reinforcement and maintenance of structural violence via intergenerational acceptance of traditions and social norms (e.g. gender socialization of children by their parents/relatives).

Afghanistan, Kabul: Boy who lives in a camp for internally displaced people. They are originally from Helmand Province, but were forced to leave because of ongoing fighting.
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- Invisibility of structural violence, particularly as it is normalized by institutions (both government and private) and regular experience, which makes it difficult to capture and measure the phenomenon.

'Structural violence' can therefore be understood as patterns of differences within large-scale social structures – differences of power, wealth, privilege, education and health – that are unjust and unequal. It can also occur in a society if institutions and policies are designed in such a way that they create barriers or inequitable access to a range of goods and services for some people and not for others. Thus, structural violence operates in daily life as some people having a lack of adequate food, housing, health, safe working conditions, education, economic security, clothing and family relationships. Indeed, Farmer (2005) asserts that structural violence is 'not the result of accident or a *force majeure*; [it is] the consequence, direct or indirect, of human agency' (p. 28). Ho (2007) theorizes that this human agency is constrained as a result of structures that reflect an unequal distribution of power.

While outcomes of structural violence are, at the extreme, unavoidable death (Galtung and Höivik, 1971), they can also include psychological distress, lack of social mobility and unequal life chances in education and health (Farmer, 2004, 2005). Overall, as a result of structural violence, people experience extreme social oppression and, consequently, an erosion of human dignity and all associated dimensions, including of confidence, security and overall well-being.

The relationship between structural violence and interpersonal violence is complex, and it is theorized that the former underlies

the latter. While both lead to suffering and death, Winter and Leighton (2001) argue that, with structural violence, the detrimental impact is 'slower, subtler, more common, and more difficult to repair' (p. 99).

Globally, various forms of structural violence have been documented, but with a bias toward understanding structural violence and its resulting health inequities (e.g. Farmer, 2004), although recently the role of structural violence in gender-based violence has begun to gain traction (e.g. Montesanti, 2015). There are few examples of studies on structural violence in the South Asian region (exceptions are Solotaroff and Pande, 2014; Basnyat, 2015).

Scholarly work reports that structural violence can be expressed through globally cross-cutting lenses such as sexism, ageism, adultism, classism, racism and nationalism. In other words, structural violence is expressed through '-isms', whose purpose is to maintain control and power for certain groups of people. In South Asia, regional specific forms of structural violence also include casteism, where applicable. The pathway through which structural violence reveals itself is *inequities*, which lead to exploitation, discrimination and forced choice.

2.2 SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

Structural violence against children does not stem from a single factor but is instead rooted in an interplay of factors that are nested within each other and that interact with each other at different levels. This conceptualization is based on the 'ecological framework' theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979),

which has been used in various disciplines and adapted for various purposes, including the social-ecological model.

This literature review draws on this social-ecological model, which posits that violence is a result of factors operating at several levels – individual, household, community, macro and structural – all of which are embedded in a chrono level (see Figure 1). This multilevel approach, including the inter-linkages between the different levels, was also found in a recent study in South Asia (Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan) to be a useful way of conceptualizing intimate partner violence (IPV), with IPV resulting from intersecting factors across all levels of the social-ecological framework (Samuels et al., 2017). It is important to note that these levels are all bidirectional and influence each other (ibid.).

According to a United Nations multi-country study on the drivers of violence (Maternowska et al., forthcoming), the field of violence has not fully examined how larger structural factors are playing a role at all levels of the ecological model and how this understanding can be used to protect children from violence. Instead, too often, macro-level factors and structural factors are clubbed together, which makes it difficult to trace the effects of structural factors on macro-level factors themselves (Maternowska, pers. comm., 21 June 2017). Drawing on the work of Maternowska et al. (forthcoming), this review approaches the ecological model by turning it 'inside out' and focusing on the outer layers to understand violence against children.

- The **structural level** – that is, the outermost level – can be understood as the contexts that make violence more likely to occur (Maternowska et al., forthcoming). These can include casteism, classism, sexism, ageism, etc. Inherent in these contexts are themes of inequality, discrimination and exploitation.
- Next, the **macro level** includes societal factors such as media influences, technological consequences, policy/laws, inflation and other socio-cultural factors.
- This is followed by the **community level**, which consists of service providers, religious/community leaders and infrastructure access, availability and quality.
- Following this is the **household level**, including parents, siblings, marital family members and romantic partners/spouses), who shape an individual's behaviours, attitudes and trajectories.
- Finally, the **individual level** conceptualizes factors such as biology (e.g. sex of the child) and childhood legacies for children and adolescents that shape their well-being.

The bi-directional nature of the levels of the socio-ecological model is complex and requires a nuanced understanding. The arrows in the model indicate that each level influences each other in dynamic ways. The dotted arrow indicates that the relationship between structural violence and the other levels in the model are bi-directional *but* this depends on the type of factors within the level. In other words, structural violence should be thought of as both an endogenous and an exogenous factor. For instance, structural factors such as sexism and racism

can be attributed to social norms at macro level; inflation and changing economies; and/or religious leaders advocating social norms at community level. Similarly, structural violence resulting from armed conflict that increases the likelihood of ageism and sexism can be an outcome of macro-level factors such as conflict/war and fragile institutions. However, factors such as migration are both a result of structural violence (such as poverty and situations of fragility) and contexts where further structural violence occurs (such as sexism and ageism). It is in the interaction of these levels that entry points for programmatic change are possible.

FIGURE 1 UNDERSTANDING STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE USING A SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Structural Violence

Macro Level

Community Level

Household Level

Grandparents

Individual Level
Personal history and individual factors

Siblings

Parents

Medical, justice, legal service providers

Significant other (spouse or boy/girlfriend)

Inflation

Social Norms

Migration

Religious Leaders

Marital family

Policy/laws

Infrastructure

Technology

conflict/war

Media

Climate conditions

Racism

Casteism

Poverty

Situations of fragility

Ageism

Sexism

Classism

Adultism

Heterosexism

Nationalism

Chrono system: Socio-historical conditions and time

3 STRUCTURES ARE NOT NEUTRAL: 'UNPACKING' STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE IN SOUTH ASIA

Here, the review discusses the nature of structural violence against children and adolescents as categorized by socio-cultural systems, economic systems and fragile institutions. Within each category, it describes structural violence resulting from gender, age, socio-economic context, caste, ethnicity and armed conflict. The decision was made to focus on these structures based on the data available and the definition of structural violence in section 2.1.

It is important to note that structural violence via gender, age, socio-economic context, caste/ethnicity and situation of fragility entail considerable overlap.

Nepal, Rajpur Fardhuwa: Nasima, aged 17, is an adolescent peer educator. She poses with her 60-year-old mother, Safatun.
© UNICEF/South Asia 2016/Bronstein

Indeed, it is the intersections of the various structures that make structural violence so complex and difficult to address. The attempt below highlights how each structure creates a context for violence but also the ways in which these structures overlie each other to produce contexts that make children and adolescents the most vulnerable to direct violence.

Though structural violence against children is problematic in and of itself, it is also dangerous because it frequently leads to interpersonal violence against children. According to the WHO World Report on Violence and Health (Krug et al., 2002),

"Interpersonal violence refers to violence between individuals, and is subdivided into family and intimate partner violence and community violence. The former category includes child maltreatment; intimate partner violence; and elder abuse, while the latter is broken down into acquaintance and stranger violence and includes youth violence; assault by strangers; violence related to property crimes; and violence in workplaces and other institutions." (p. 6)

For each type of structural violence, drawing on the literature available, the discussion below focuses on its relationship with interpersonal violence – in other words, how invisible and indirect violence translates into the visible and direct violence that children and adolescents experience. The various types of interpersonal violence this review covers include female infanticide/son preference; child marriage; domestic violence; honour-based killings; physical, emotional and sexual abuse at home and in schools; child labour; violence against children with a disability; violence against children living on the street; and

juvenile offenders. While the literature covers several other types of violence (e.g. female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C)), the decision to focus on these forms of interpersonal violence was made to ensure sufficient attention is given to unique forms of culture-specific violence against children and adolescents in the South Asia region (e.g. *bachabazi* in Afghanistan, *chhaupadi* in Nepal).

3.1 SOCIO-CULTURAL SYSTEMS

Drawing on the socio-ecological model, factors at the macro level such as social norms (which are situated in historical systems at the chrono level) underlie structural violence. The literature repeatedly and consistently shows, for instance, that social norms play an influential role in what people think and how people act (Marcus and Harper, 2014; Vaitla et al., 2017). The central premise of social norms work is that, 'when people follow social norms, they are motivated by their belief that others expect them to act in accordance with the norm. Without that belief, many would not find it in their interest to act as the norm requires' (Bicchieri's theory on social norms, 2006, cited in Hausman, 2008, p. 851).

In other words, structural inequalities manifest in interpersonal violence when they are ingrained in the fabric of day-to-day life as social norms and societal expectations and, thus, are acted on by individuals and institutions. The literature uses a socio-cultural lens to explain much of how structural violence is conceptualized. Kabeer et al. (2011) suggest it is important to remember the 'sheer historical weight of norms and traditions' (p. 12) in girls' (and boys') lived experiences.

Across the literature reviewed, the gendered component of direct violence against children and adolescents was a unifying pattern. Some termed the gendered nature of direct violence 'causes', 'determinants' or 'drivers'; others pointed to differences in prevalence rates of violence against girls and boys. The consistent thread, however, was that interpersonal violence in South Asia needs to be understood in the context of sexism or unequal gender relations.

Another type of cross-cutting structural violence in the literature is that of inequalities between adults and children. The roots of structural violence against children based on age are to be found in the power imbalances between adults and children and the need for the hierarchies that are characteristic of an organized society. The value placed on adults as knowledgeable over and above children has created a system whereby children's rights are overlooked, and many times violated, given that adults are the care-takers, service providers, policy- and law-makers and justice givers in the first place (Bell, 1995).

Moreover, children and adolescents are often discriminated against simply because of their age group. For example, policy- and law-makers may not prioritize the needs of children and adolescents, given that in most countries the latter do not have the ability to vote until they reach 18 years of age. Age-based structural violence can therefore take place via two mechanisms: adultism and ageism. Both of these have been present conceptually for decades but the literature examining them with respect to violence against children and adolescents is limited (Buhler-Niederberger, 2010), and even more scarce in South Asia.

Adultism, stemming from inequality between people, is understood as the tendency to view children as inferior and as subordinate in virtues and skills compared with adults (Flasher, 1978). It is systematic discrimination against children and young people based on the premise that 'adults know what is in the best interests of youth and are thus entitled to act upon them without their agreement' (Ceaser, 2014, p. 169). Since, adultism is often understood as normal age relations, it is often an overlooked '-ism'. It may reveal itself in day-to-day life through parents over-protecting children and adolescents and placing rules and restrictions on them (Flasher, 1978).

Ageism has historically been understood as discrimination against the elderly (by the young), even though, when Butler (1969, p. 243) first conceptualized it, it was defined simply as 'prejudice by one age group towards other age groups'. Recently, scholars working on ageism have begun to explore the ways in which young people may be systematically discriminated against (see North and Fiske, 2012, for a review). This review understands ageism as a form of discrimination against children on the basis of their age.

Finally, using a socio-cultural lens, a context-specific form of structural violence that emerged was casteism. The caste system in the South Asian region (with caste a formally recognized system in India and Nepal) is an ideological schema that has been used for centuries to place groups of people on a hierarchy (Silva and Hettihewage, 2001; Deshpande, 2005; Pradhan and Shrestha, 2005; Kar, 2007). The traditional caste system has undergone many changes but its origins lie in the *varna* system that places Brahmins (priests and teachers) highest, followed by Kshatriyas (warriors

and rulers), Vaisyas (farmers, merchants and artisans) and Sudras (labourers), with Harijans or Dalits, known as 'untouchables', outside the system altogether (Rao, 2010). In Nepal, derogatory terms are commonly used against groups of people, such as *paninachalne* (water-polluting) and *achchoot* (untouchables) (ibid.). It is argued that, while the origins of the caste system are religious Hindu texts, it is more of a socio-economic schema, with its origins stemming from surplus agrarian production (Klass, 1980, cited in Jodhka and Shah, 2010, p. 100). Thus, the caste system should be looked as a form of social stratification in the region (Deshpande, 2005).

The focus on caste as defined traditionally has created a bias in the literature towards India and Nepal. However, the porous nature of the subcontinent has ensured that the small Hindu populations in Bangladesh and Pakistan also continue to uphold caste-based hierarchies. For example, in Pakistan, caste-based identities are visible and caste-related discrimination against Hindu Dalits is quite rampant; in Bangladesh, Hindu Dalits are clubbed under the category of Harijans and Muslim Dalits are often classified as *arzals* (Jodhka and Shah, 2010). These groups have to deal with being a minority in their country in addition to occupying a lower status within their own community.

Much like the structure of gender, caste- and ethnicity-based structural violence function through inequality and, consequentially, discrimination. Prejudice and inequalities experienced as a result of casteism/ethnic discrimination often become more visible since they apply also to men, who in patriarchal contexts traditionally hold power. Their voices of dissent are heard at institutional and community levels more so than women's

when the latter are raised alone. Women and girls thus have to go through a double layer of structural discrimination against them; men's position of superiority means their experiences are more visible.

Discrimination is at the core of how caste-based structural violence operates, and the religious underpinnings of the caste system are central to how caste-based discrimination operates. Discrimination against caste and ethnic groups is situated in notions of purity and pollution (Jodhka and Shah, 2010). The Hindu caste system places Brahmins at the top since it is believed they are closest to god. Additionally, in both Buddhism and Hinduism, the concept of *karma* helps explain why discrimination persists. Schuelka (2013) argues that karma is viewed as a cause and effect phenomenon – that is, good or bad deeds in past lives lead to one's status and circumstance in this life. Moreover, beliefs about purity and reincarnation posit that touching an untouchable will lower one's status in the next life (Standing, 2007, cited in Rao, 2010, p. 101). In this way, a belief in the theory of reincarnation can be used to explain away the responsibility of one's caste, disability, gender or socio-economic condition.

Since caste is understood as an ideological framework that is meant to segregate people into groups, caste-related discrimination is paralleled in discrimination against ethnic groups, indigenous populations and religious groups across the region. For instance, Jodhka and Shah (2010) note that Muslim communities in Pakistan have evolved their own systems of hierarchical relations, where some are considered more equal than others (e.g. Arab vs. non-Arab known as *ajami*; hierarchies among Arabs based on descendants; a *qazi*

(a Muslim judge) or a *faqih* (a Muslim jurist theologian) ranking higher than a merchant, who is higher than a trader). In Sri Lanka, though caste groupings are taboo, ethnic groups face similar forms of discrimination and exclusion (Silva et al., 2008).

3.1.1 Norms around the 'ideal' girl and the 'ideal' boy

If you are a woman in South Asia, chances are that you've been told how to be one.

(Singh, 2015)

The notion of a 'good' girl/woman and 'good' boy/man emerges as a critical explanation of the inequality between genders in this region. Several authors have documented the values attached to 'good' (e.g. Goel, 2005; Kabeer et al., 2011; Ghimrie et al., 2015; Homan, 2016). Good girls/women are expected to be subordinate, passive and self-sacrificing (Goel, 2005). They are obedient and respectful; take care of the home, children and in-laws; do not complain; maintain the family's honour; do not engage in extra- or pre-martial sexual relations; and do not converse with members of the opposite sex (Solotaroff and Pande, 2014; Gupta and Samuels, 2017).

Scholars suggest that, over time, one of the factors contributing to the construction of the ideal girl and woman has been the misinterpretation of religion. For example, the Hindu saga, the *Ramayana*, plays an important role in the construction of gender in Hindu populations. Goel (2005) notes that, in India, the feminine ideal is driven

by the depiction of Sita – the ideal Indian wife in the *Ramayana*. Unfortunately, while the *Ramayana* lays out the duties of an ideal husband, ideal wife, ideal mother and ideal brother, it is only women who are required to uphold these values. In Muslim-majority countries, meanwhile, the ideal woman stems from interpretations of Islam (UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014). The ideal Muslim woman adheres to teachings of Allah, which include being obedient to male figures in their life.

Fear of deviation from the historically constructed ideal girl/daughter/wife/sister/daughter-in-law/mother model has been found to underlie forms of direct violence such as child marriage, while actual deviation is met with severe consequences, such as domestic violence against girls. For instance, in Nepal, tightly prescribed gender norms around an ideal girl (wherein marriage is essential) mean a girl must earn her good girl title by following the rules set by her family and society (Homan, 2016). Similarly, in Afghanistan, a virtuous woman is one who unquestioningly complies with the rules set by society for being virtuous (Kabeer et al., 2011).

Evidence on the acceptability of domestic violence indicates the degree to which these notions are ingrained. In a recent study of IPV by male perpetrators in Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan, the reasons men provided as underlying violence include not taking care of the house, children and/ or in-laws; wearing clothing considered inappropriate, including not covering the head; not having food ready when husbands get home from work; not having the bed ready when husbands want to sleep; talking back to husbands; going outside the home without permission and being suspected of talking to other men; non-observance

of purdah (in Bangladesh and Pakistan); and refusing sex with husbands (Samuels et al., 2017). In a qualitative study of 200 households in Morang district in Nepal, Pandey and Shrestha (2014) found that the reasons underlying physical assault were disobedience; not giving birth to a son; dowry-related issues; suspicion of extra marital affairs; and voicing concern over a husband's alcohol habits. Similar findings have emerged from Bhutan (UNICEF Bhutan, 2012), India (Niaz and Hassan, 2006), Maldives (Solotaraff and Pande, 2014), Nepal (ICRW, 2012), Sri Lanka (Jayasuriya et al., 2011; de Mel et al., 2013).

Children and adolescents clearly internalize notions of 'good' and 'bad'. Jejeebhoy et al. (2013) conducted discussions with unmarried adolescents in rural Bihar in India and found a girlfriend was understood to be 'the possession of her boyfriend and deserving of violence perpetrated by the boyfriend if she misbehaves in his opinion' (p. 23). Girls who face violence at the hands of their boyfriends are considered bad girls who must have defied community norms, and are assumed to have had a physical relationship with their boyfriend. Similarly, in Bhutan, for children buy into the idea that, if they self-regulate and act in accordance with what is defined as a good boy/girl, they will be able to escape violence at home by parents and in school by teachers. This means learning the meaning of 'good' from adults, who give advice on what is prescribed as the 'correct' way to be. This reinforces the cycle of adultism.

Norms of masculinity also play a role in shaping violence against adolescent girls in the domestic sphere. In Nepal, for instance, in a recent study in the Kathmandu Valley and the Terai,

respondents believed that height, physical strength, a muscular body, bread-winning capacity, aggression and fertility were important masculine traits (UNDP, 2014b). Similarly, de Mel et al. (2013) found in Sri Lanka that 58 and 57 per cent of men (out of 13,000) believed, respectively, that 'it is manly to defend the honour of your family even by violent means' and that 'to be a man you need to be tough'.

In both of these studies, women tended to hold values associated with masculinity more strongly than men did. For instance, in the Terai in Nepal, 86 per cent of women agreed at least partially that men were naturally aggressive. This is not surprising, given that girls and women are socialized from birth to internalize the idea that they are inferior to men. Kabeer et al. (2011) suggest inequality filters down to girls' lives by operating at the cognitive, social and material levels, each time reinforcing social norms, values and practices of female subordination.

3.1.2 Maintaining honour and *ijjat/izzat*
A closely related concept to that of the 'ideal' girl/boy is that of honour, or *ijjat/izzat*, which is used as a tool to justify punishing those who stray from the 'ideal' rules and roles (UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014; Homan, 2016). In many countries in South Asia, such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, it is often during early adolescence that notions of *ijjat/izzat* come to the forefront. Honour-based violence is motivated by a desire to preserve family or community prestige (see Box 1 on media reporting on honour-based violence). While in its extreme form it includes killing, honour-based violence also includes acid attacks, mutilation and the deprivation of freedom and education (Gill, 2006). *Ijjat/izzat*

BOX 1. ANALYSIS OF MEDIA AND HONOUR-BASED VIOLENCE: CASE STUDY FROM PAKISTAN

Jabeen (2014) conducted an analysis of articles from English- and Urdu-language newspapers on violence against children and adolescents in Pakistan between 1990 and 2010. She found several cases of young girls being killed by father, brothers or uncles on suspicion of having a boyfriend, with newspapers using the language of 'family honour' to explain the story. Incidents of stove-burning for girls aged 10–16 years were also reported – though most of these were considered accidents. Her analysis revealed that more girls than boys were victims of karo kari (honour killing) (17) but only the English-language newspaper reported on these cases. The Urdu-language newspapers suggested these killings were ordinary in nature and frequently reported the stories out of context. Moreover, when, in September 2008, Senator Israrullah Zehri from Baluchistan province defended the murder of five girls by male tribesmen by evoking tradition and morality as reasons, none of the Urdu-language newspapers commented. This reveals a fear of backlash that may come from speaking against those who hold the power in a patriarchal society. It also demonstrates the role the media can play in reinforcing both socio-economic and gender inequality, especially given that disadvantaged populations are more likely to read the Urdu-language newspaper.

also includes notions of respect, status, morality, chastity, shame, reputation and *ghairat* (social prestige) (Slugget and Frederic, 2003; Shaikh et al., 2010; Lari, 2011; Jabeen, 2014; UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014; Homan, 2016).

This review finds that women are the flag-bearers for a family's honour, while the rules are different for men (World Bank, 2005). In other words, the burden of the honour of a family lies on the girl's shoulders, and non-conformity results in social penalties. Honour-based violence occurs mostly at the hands of men, although women also uphold rigid constructions of gender norms, as mentioned above. Transgressions are punished, under the justification of protecting the family honour.

Though what is dishonourable may vary between and within countries, it is society

that decides on the definition (UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014). This dependence on an external locus of validation for honour suggests honour can be 'lost' and subsequently regained. Often, it is in the nexus of regaining one's honour that violence ensues. For instance, in Pakistan, in a study of over 630 men and women, 57 per cent of participants believed it was justifiable to kill one's wife to save one's honour, most commonly for having an extra-marital affair (Shaikh et al., 2010). In this case, honour-based violence is a reflection of the society's need to control a woman's sexuality, whether an act is suspected, potential or actual.

In this rigid patriarchal setting, when girls and women act on their own agency, boys and men react violently. Acid attacks against girls and women are deeply rooted in men protecting their own honour. Reasons

cited for such attacks range from women rejecting proposals to property disputes (Ahmad, 2011; Kalantry and Kestanbaum, 2011). According to the 226th report of the Law Commission of India, 'attacks are used as a weapon to silence and control women by destroying what is constructed as the primary constituent of her identity' (cited in Ahmad, 2011, p. 59). The Acid Survivors Foundation in Bangladesh estimates that over 60 per cent of acid attack victims are girls and women, with women aged 19–35 at most risk (ASF, 2014).

> According to Hindi Dharamasutras,
> ## 'The father should give away his daughter while she is still nagnika (naked) through fear of her attaining puberty.'

Kapadia (1966), cited in Sheela and Audinarayana (2003, p. 498).

The overlap between the ideal girl model and the need to protect the family's honour is found in cultural rules that place a high value on pre-marital chastity for girls (see box). This may be a reason for girls' betrothal and marriage at a young age: to protect their virtue and the family's *ijjat/izzat* (Sah, 2008; UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014; Sharma, 2015). Fear of the consequences of delayed marriage ensures girls are married early, before they can engage in any pre-marital sexual activity that may bring shame to the family. Structural violence therefore functions via forced choice.

Though most child marriages are forced, a more recent, rising, phenomenon is that of 'love' marriages (Samuels and Ghimire, forthcoming). These are marriages that

are mostly considered consensual and by the choice of the individuals. While this form of marriage does allow for girls' agency, it is still shrouded in elements of the patriarchy that constrain full freedom of choice. For instance, in seven districts in Sri Lanka, Goonesekere and Amarasuriya (2013) found co-habitation was consensual among couples who were in a relationship from before. However, it was considered marriage (even though it needed to be legalized), and often family pressure had forced the couple to co-habit once the status of the relationship had become public. This indicates that family honour remains at stake even when girls choose their own partner, and is suggestive of the ways in which power dynamics between parents and children function.

In another study, Grover (2009) examined differences between arranged marriages and love marriages in New Delhi, India, and found that, while both types of marriages placed women equally at risk of abuse, a woman in a love marriage was expected to take on more accountability and responsibility for any conflict in the marriage, given that the partner was her choice.

The notions of honour and chastity that are central to understanding child marriage also pave the way for another form of forced choice violence – that is, controlling girls' freedom and movement (Jejeebhoy et al., 2013). Fear of losing girls' virtue leads families to 'protect' them (especially once they reach puberty) by keeping them at home. In Afghanistan, distance to schools is a strong factor driving child marriage because parents are fearful of sending their daughters to schools that are far away, lest they face sexual activity (willingly or unwillingly) on the way (UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014).

The need to protect girls and subsequently the family's honour often translates into discriminatory detention practices. Girls are discriminated against for 'moral crimes' – that is, acts that defy the traditional patriarchal norms mentioned in previous sections. In Afghanistan, more than 600 women and girls were detained for moral crimes that included running away (leaving home without permission), *zina* (extramarital sex) or 'attempts to commit *zina*' (UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014). Though the charges were weak, this again reinforces the notion that transgressions from cultural norms should be punished and are worthy of some penalty. Khair (2004) suggests girls in Bangladesh are frequently detained in 'safe' custody after being 'rescued' from traffickers or brothels, only to face sexual harassment and violence in this safe custody.

Moreover, studies have consistently shown that, when in juvenile custody, children and adolescents are at risk of torture, sexual and physical abuse and ill-treatment, as found in Afghanistan, Nepal and Pakistan (Ali and Shah, 2011; Advocacy Forum-Nepal, 2013). In 2013 in Afghanistan, for instance, out of 105 children, 8 had experienced torture and ill-treatment (UNAMA, 2013, cited in UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014, p. 44). Similarly, Advocacy Forum-Nepal (2013) finds that juveniles are at high risk of torture in police detention facilities. In 2012, 35 per cent of 930 juveniles reported some form of torture or ill-treatment, compared with 22 per cent of *all* detainees during the same period.

What this suggests is that the police and authorities specifically ill-treat juveniles more than adults. Advocacy Forum-Nepal states that its finding 'is in line with the finding of the United Nations Committee Against Torture, which found that juveniles in custody remain particularly vulnerable

to torture in Nepal' (p. 35). There were age differences too: 67 per cent of 12 year olds, 60 per cent of 10 year olds, 50 per cent of 11 year olds and 50 per cent of 14 year olds reported torture. Though there is no research into why juveniles in prisons or detention may be more at risk, it is plausible that the reasons that underlie age-related vulnerability (i.e. less resistant to abuse, more easily exploited) to sexual abuse and exploitation are at play here as well (see section 3.1.8).

The overlap between economic systems (see section 3.2) and socio-cultural systems is evident across several studies (e.g. Winthrop and Kirk, 2008; UNICEF Bhutan, 2012). Many note that girls' limited worth in society and the greater number of push and pull factors that make women's employment more limited and less lucrative contribute towards reducing girls' ability to gain an education and confine them to a domestic role as soon as they reach puberty. For instance, in Bhutan, national survey data show that women aged 15–19 years who bear children early are also those with no formal education. This is also the case in Bangladesh and Nepal, where despite workforce opportunities being available, girls are less likely to be allowed to work outside the home (Bajracharya and Amin, 2012). Indeed, in Nepal, for example, unpaid labour for girls remains high and girl's decision-making remains low.

Moreover, values attached to an ideal girl/woman and one's honour become intertwined in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, where young girls' freedom is further curtailed by them being forced to adhere to purdah norms. Kabeer et al. (2011) note that 'the institution of purdah curtails women's mobility in the public domain and confines them to roles and responsibilities that can be carried out in the domestic sphere. They are only supposed

to move about in the public domain with a male guardian' (p. 8). It is important to note that there are within-country variations, whereby the strictness of the purdah may vary; however, the value of the good girl and woman who complies with (or is forced into) purdah norms is consistent across the region.

This lack of freedom, the necessity of marriage and the restriction on movement create an unequal context, which has implications for girls' potential to fulfil their capacities. Box 2 shows other ways in which adolescent girls' bodies are controlled.

Honour also plays a role in other forms of direct violence, such as physical and emotional abuse against children and adolescents. While parents discipline their children for a variety of reasons, gender-

BOX 2. *CHHAUPADI* AND *GOTH PRATHA* IN NEPAL: VALUE OF PURITY AND CLEANLINESS AS STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

Chhaupadi **is a practice in Nepal whereby girls who are menstruating are isolated from the rest of the community. A *chhaupadi* is a hut where the girl is forced to stay for the full duration of the menstruation. Menstruating girls are not allowed to bathe or use any of the water sources that the villagers use, and inevitably miss school. This practice also takes place with women who have just given birth, in this case known as *goth pratha*. For a week post-delivery, the woman is left to cook and clean for herself and is denied nutritious food. The roots of this practice can be found in Hindu traditions that place a taboo on menstruation and consider menstruating women 'impure'. The menstruation blood is considered to be a sin thrown out by Brahama (the creator), as it is thought that women contain sin within themselves. Thus, during menarche and childbirth, women are considered polluted and impure (Shah, 2004).**

A combination of both discrimination and forced choice, this practice is linked to the need to control women's bodies that defines much of how a patriarchal society functions. Moreover, the lower status of women ensures they have no voice in the matter. Indeed, the Hindu text, the *Manusmriti*, states that women are lower in status than the untouchable caste, the Sudras. Notions of purity that determine caste-based discrimination underlie this tradition for girls as well. *Chhaupadi* is pervasive in Darchula, Baitadi, Dadeldhura, Kanchanpur, Bajhang, Bajura, Doti, Achham and Kailali districts of the country's Far-Western Region and Kalikot, Dailekh, Humla and Jumla districts of the Mid-Western Region.

Despite being outlawed in 2005, this practice has continued. Banished girls are extremely vulnerable to animal attacks, sexual attacks and severe weather conditions. There have been several cases of adolescent girls dying during *chhaupadi*, with the most recent one in June 2017, when a 19-year-old girl from Nepal's Dailekh district died from a snake bite. On 9 August 2017, Nepal's Parliament criminalized the practice, with the law stipulating up to 3 months in jail and a Rs. 2,000 fine against those who force women to follow the custom.

Sources: ICRW (2014); Lamsal (2017); Pokharel (2017).

based structural violence functions as a result of a desire to maintain the home's honour and *ijjat.* In Pakistan (Holden and Ashraf, 2016) and Afghanistan (UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014), boys and girls are socialized into household chores from an early age. Often, when they are unable to perform the chores assigned to them, they are punished. This is especially true for girls, who are assigned to learn and perform domestic tasks that have a bearing on their marriageability in the future. Moreover, the father is considered the head of the household and is responsible for being the primary provider – a role that gives him the authority to punish children if they are not behaving according to his expectations.

3.1.3 Kinship rules
The literature reveals that, in South Asia, strong kinship rules may be exploited and used as a medium through which violence occurs. Kinship rules in the region reflect a pattern of hierarchies, defined by age and gender. In other words, hierarchies exist such that fathers are placed at the head of the household, followed by mothers and then children. Men (i.e. husbands and fathers) hold the economic power and decision-making power. Kinship rules emphasize narrowing the distance between those of the same kin and, therefore, in some countries, joint families (or living together with extended family members) are common (e.g. India, Nepal, Pakistan). Hierarchies also exist between families, whereby a bride's family is inferior to a groom's family, creating a context where the bride is expected to move into her husband's home, take on her husband's family name and ensure the children also take on the husband's name. In Afghanistan, this practice is taken further: a father can give his daughter-in-law a new

first name. In Afghanistan and Pakistan, family systems are also characterized as endogamous, with parallel and cross-cousin marriages preferred. Therefore, the family system in South Asia is characterized as patriarchal, such that authority is vested in male elders; patrilineal, whereby inheritance is through the male line; and patrilocal, where a girl moves to her husband's place of residence on marriage (Kabeer et al., 2011; Solotaroff and Pande, 2014).

Kabeer et al., (2011) and UNICEF Afghanistan (2014) find that Afghani women are defined by their roles as wives and mothers and this is central to their identity. For instance, Kabeer et al. provide evidence of the powerful ways in which social norms work: they found Afghani women had internalized social norms around women's status vis-à-vis the men in their lives and consequentially defined their own womanhood as being compliant to their husbands, who in turn would protect them, provide for them and represent them. Since girls and women's values are tied to their relationships with the men in their lives, kinship networks are one underlying reason for child marriage.

Historically, kinship ties have been thought to be central for survival – from needing more people to ensure protection from outside predators, to kings of small kingdoms forming alliances that strengthen military capacity. Though marriage is between two individuals, in South Asia it is also between two families, thereby creating a new kinship and network (Caldwell, 2005; Ali et al., 2017) as a way to strengthen their economic position. The role of marriage in building a family's social and economic status ensures it remains a central component of an individual's life.

Indeed, in Hinduism, marriage is considered as performing dharma – that is, one's duty to continue one's lineage (Sheela and Audinarayana, 2003).

For children, an added layer of age-related cultural norms and kinship hierarchies dictates that they cannot refute parents' decisions. Moreover, given the deep-seated gender inequality in the region, young women are only rarely likely to be able to control their own marriage decisions (Bajracharya and Amin, 2012). These factors interlock to create a context where girls lack agency and experience something known as 'double powerlessness' (Dasgupta, 1996), which is the overlay of gender and age to strip girls of their rights and agency. In this way, both sexism and adultism play a role in ensuring the status quo on child marriage is maintained.

Kinship hierarchies that expect children to obey their parents and elders also play a role in ensuring children and adolescents are relied upon for household needs. For instance, in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, a rite of passage to adulthood consists of engaging in some form of labour (Upadhyaya, 2004; AIHRC, 2006; Hall, 2016; Zakar, 2016). Contributing to household income in Afghanistan, for instance, is considered one's duty as one grows up (see section 3.2.6). The age at which children are considered mature and ready to take on adult responsibilities varies from region to region (see Box 3). In Afghanistan and Pakistan, for instance, young people aged 14–18 years are considered to be adults, and are often expected to fulfil the same roles as adults in protecting the home, community and family honour (Slugget and Fredric, 2003). However, despite cultural expectations, no child willingly wants to

spend his/her childhood in labour. This may explain why Hyder and Malik (2007) in their systematic review find that more than half of the children across the studies they reviewed felt 'pushed' into work, with little to no agency to refuse.

Another form of violence that relies on kinship responsibilities is bonded labour. Upadhyaya (2004) notes that bonded labour in India and Pakistan is another prime example of how caste-based inequalities function. Bonded labour finds its origins in colonial political economies (Majumdar, 2004), and bonded labourers may be agricultural labourers, or share-croppers, who are indebted to landowners and are forced to work (Jayaraj and Subramanian, 2002). Out of the 180–220 million Dalits in India, 40 million are essentially doing slave labour because they must work off the debts of their ancestors (Ninian, 2008, cited in Rao, 2010, p. 100). With land-owners more likely to be of high caste, the labourers are mostly Dalits.

Bonded labour ensures lower-caste families remain in debt – the filial duties of children to families and parents create an inter-generational passing-down of debt. Even if families free themselves, they are relegated to jobs that offer little income and no respect. In India, Nepal and Pakistan, bonded labourers often involve the entire family in labour in order to pay off the debt, though within-country variations exist (Upadhyaya, 2004). For instance, in Karnataka, only males and boys work as *jeeta*, the Kannada word for bonded labourers. In the fishing, carpeting and tobacco industries, parents sell of their children to pay off debts, with almost no transparency as to how much debt they have worked off (ibid.).

BOX 3. CULTURAL VARIATIONS IN MARKERS FOR TRANSITIONING TO ADULTHOOD

One important assumption underlying adultism is the cultural variation in the social construction of 'childhood'. In other words, how do markers of what constitute a child vs. an adolescent vs. an adult differ across countries? There are several debates around the importance of universalizing child rights vs. ensuring that the diversity of cultural, economic and political contexts where children grow up are taken into consideration (Pattnaik, 2006; Dorji, 2015). Clearly, countries view transition into adulthood at varying ages. For example, in Bhutan, the National Youth Policy defines 'youth' as between 13 and 24 years of age (Child Frontiers, 2013), even though international standards do not consider 13–18 year olds as 'youth'. Similarly, in Afghanistan, UNICEF Afghanistan (2014) shows that Afghani culture views five stages between birth and adulthood: *razi*, from birth until 2.5 years, when the child is breastfed and is cared for by the parents; *ghairmomaiez*, from 2.5 to 5 years, considered the core years of childhood, when a child is not expected to know right or wrong and simply develops; *momaiez*, from 5 to 10 years, when a child learns 'right from wrong'; *mahareq*, from 10 to 16 years, when the child transitions to an adult, both physically and mentally; and *balogh/baregh*, which ranges from 13-18 years, when the child is considered an adult. What this suggests is that cultural interpretations of age are distinct from international standards in which often a child is defined as 0–18 years and an adolescent as 10–19 years. International standards are needed to understand and effectively protect children from structural violence owing to age, but it remains important to recognize and incorporate cultural-specific constructions of stages of child development in programming work.

3.1.4 Devaluing girls and women

As noted, inequality between sexes is at the root of gender-based structural violence. Studies show that subordination and the devaluing of girls and women leads to discrimination against girls even before they are born. This manifests as female infanticide, which has been a huge challenge in South Asia (e.g. Dasgupta et al., 2003; Retherford and Roy 2004; Jayaraman et al., 2009; Fuse, 2010; Self and Grabowski, 2012; ICRW, 2014).

Scholars find that female infanticide is a result of a strong son preference in the region. Though there are differences between countries in the extent to which son preference exists, Kabeer et al. (2014) note that the countries with skewed sex ratios 'share certain common features in the organization of family and kinship systems: a patriarchal authority structure; patrilineal descent and inheritance; strict controls over women's mobility in the public domain, resulting in extremely low rates of women's labor force participation; and patrilocal residence patterns, so that a daughter is required to live with her husband and his kin after marriage' (p. 139).

Studies suggest the structural root of son preference is discrimination against girls, given that sons hold a higher status in society (upheld, for instance, by allowing only sons to perform certain religious ceremonies) and bring more economic support to their family (through labour, dowry and land rights). Son

preference often translates into a lifecycle of discrimination against girls, in nutrition, schooling and health care. For instance, in India, girls are often breastfed for a shorter time than boys (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2005). The cyclical nature of discrimination against girls plays out such that the same women who were discriminated against as children feel more pressured than men to produce sons as they grow older, since women's status in the household is elevated only after they give birth to sons (Moghadam, 2002; Ghimire et al., 2015). In Sri Lanka, a study found that 25 per cent of men vs. 42 per cent of women agreed with the statement 'A real man produces a male child' (de Mel et al., 2013).

Kabeer et al. (2014) found that in the 1990s son preference was weakening in several countries in South Asia, such as Nepal. However, in India, particularly in the north of the country, son preference (as measured by sex ratios at birth) continued to rise, owing to a combination of economic and socio-cultural factors that reinforce inequality between daughters and sons. These include family and kinship systems that prioritize within-caste but outside lineage and village marriage; the 'universal necessity' (ibid., p. 143) of marriage; the high value placed on dowry; the practice of hypergamy, which ensures the bride's family is lower in status and economic wealth than the groom's family; and the centrality of sons in inheritance and descent.

Discrimination against girls was also found in a study of Nepalese daughters vs. daughters-in-law: Pandey and Shrestha (2014) found mothers-in-law discriminated against daughters-in-law in terms of movement, food intake and clothing, instead favouring their daughters. Thus, even within the same sex, hierarchies are created once a daughter is married into a marital family.

A combination of all the factors mentioned above leads to the emotion and practice of 'daughter aversion' (Borooah and Iyer, 2004, cited in Kabeer et al., 2014, p. 143; also see section 3.2.1 on son preference). This aversion reinforces discriminatory attitudes towards girls (daughters) and reveals as son preference attitudes. One study in India found that almost all families expressed a desire for one son or two sons, or two sons and a daughter; none wanted or had only daughters (John et al., 2008, cited in Kabeer et al., 2014, p. 143).

An added layer of discrimination against girls and women occurs for girls and women in lower-caste groupings. The *devadasi* system in India and the *deuki* system in Nepal are examples of double forms of structural violence: discrimination by gender and by caste. These practices seek to legitimize prostitution of lower-caste girls through religious justification. For instance, *deuki* involves giving up a daughter in the service of god in order to bring good luck to the family. This practice takes place among the high Chhetri caste but involves 'buying' a girl from a poor family (who could be of high or low caste) and offering her in service of god, which inevitably involves sexual abuse (ICRW, 2014). Jodhka and Shah (2010) note that sexual abuse of Dalit women who work in farms by their higher-caste master is frequently reported.

The structural roots of sexual exploitation of girls and women lie in patriarchal beliefs that position male sexual needs as the utmost priority, while at the same time positioning women as obliged to fulfil men's needs. The changing language from the word 'prostitute' to 'sex worker', 'entertainer', 'guest relations officer' or 'cultural dancer' (Huda, 2006) is reflective of the position of women vis-à-vis men.

'Published instances of trafficking of children, boys, girls, men and women by very close relatives would indicate that under extremely unfavourable structural conditions, trafficking may take on a variety of shades between being forced and overpowered on the one hand and complicit on the other.'

Cheema (2014, p. 88).

Various studies have cited demand by men and supply by women as the structural reason why trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation are extremely common in South Asia (Cheema, 2014; Basnyat, 2015). On the demand side, Harriss-White (2005) suggests men who buy sex do so to exercise their masculinity and power over someone vulnerable. On the supply side, a combination of systemic discrimination, such as reduced opportunities for education and employment, and the absence of inheritance rights to agricultural land or property makes women's futures uncertain. Thus, forced choice applies even to those who may *choose* to go into the sex trade industry (see box). Structural factors of poverty, gender and other scarcities and unequal rights interlock and increase the likelihood of girls and woman being 'forced into becoming complicit' in their own journey into prostitution or other forms of trafficking (Cheema, 2014, p. 88).

Most girls remain stuck in the cycle of abuse because of overt coercion, physical abuse, emotional blackmail, economic deprivation, social isolation and death threats (Niaz and Hassan, 2006). Even if they do escape, they are unable to go home, given the stigma, discrimination and rejection attached to individuals who sell sex. This is known as 'enacted stigma' (Benoit et al., 2005, cited in Basnyat, 2015, p. 3) and, functioning through discrimination, it is a continuation of violence, since it implies social unacceptability for acts that the individual is not personally responsible for. Sex work in Nepal is viewed as a degrading act and subsequently places sex workers on the lowest rung of the social hierarchy (Basnyat, 2015), further stripping girls of their dignity and rights as children and individuals.

In addition to violence against girls, the devaluing of women and girl creates a context where girls are particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of child labour, as a) they are more likely than boys to be engaged in unpaid work; b) they are more likely to work longer hours in both paid and unpaid work; and c) in paid work, they are more likely to be in the worst and most dangerous forms of labour (ILO, 2009, cited in Khan and Lyon, 2015, p. 22; see also Guarcello et al., 2014, Hall, 2016).

Even when working in paying industries, girls are much more likely to be employed as domestic workers (Gamlin et al., 2013) or in service industries or manufacturing (such as the ready-made garment (RMG) sector in Bangladesh), while boys work in retail or wholesale industries (Hou, 2009). In the RMG sector, females are generally assigned jobs that are considered 'lower' and are monotonous (Begum et al., 2010). In terms of domestic work, Gamlin et al. (2013)

studied over 500 child domestic workers in India and found that 89 per cent were female with a mean age of 14 years. They reported working 7 days a week, and 95 per cent of them worked 10–12 hours a day. It is unclear whether child domestic work is 'safer' than other forms of paid labour: some studies in Tanzania show that child domestic workers have a better education and are safer while others show that, with no regulation in place for work in a private home, child domestic workers may be more at risk of physical, sexual and emotional abuse (ibid.).

Female migrant workers are frequently confined to low-skilled jobs in domestic and care work, hotel and catering services, the entertainment and sex industry, agriculture and factory assembly lines, all of which are less regulated and have lower wages (Piper, 2003; Huda, 2006; Lopez-Ekra et al., 2011). Moreover, female migrants send a bigger proportion of their income home as remittances than men do, although they are less likely to make as much money as men. One study in 2007 indicated that men were likely to stop sending remittances over time while female migrants sent remittances over longer periods (Lopez-Ekra et al., 2011). Moreover, when female migrants send money home, their remittances are somewhat likely to be misused by men to whom the remittances are sent (particularly as compared with remittances sent by males and received by females) (ibid.). Additionally, studies found that, in Sri Lanka, when women migrated, husbands were unlikely to take over household responsibilities, often relegating this work to other female children of the house (Jayaweera and Dias, 2009; Senaratna, 2012).

3.1.5 Understandings of parenting
Structural violence in the form of sexism and adultism also reveals itself through what is considered 'good' parenting in any culture. Parents are motivated not only by the society's norms to maintain their family honour, but also by the belief that they are 'protecting' their child by choosing their partner for them and by marrying them early (UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014). In Sri Lanka, Caldwell (2005) found that adults support and justify child marriage because young people are not expected to be independent and parents are supposed to be responsible for children's well-being and future. And yet adultism produces a context where there are blurred lines as to when children are expected to be independent and ready for certain types of activities (e.g. child labour) vs. others (e.g. marriage).

In the increasing phenomenon of 'love marriages', parents' insecurity of losing their power over children's lives is apparent in, for instance, India, where, despite allowing girls to choose their partners, 'the majority of the residents do not consider the freedom to choose marital partners a legitimate right or aspiration. In the view of most residents [in Delhi], love marriages should be discouraged since they challenge endogamous norms and parental matchmaking practices that form the legitimate framework for marriage' (Grover, 2009, p. 30).

Adultism also underlies child maltreatment. One of the most common ways in which adults exert their power over children is by 'correcting' them through physical or emotional violence that parents label 'discipline' (Malik et al., 2006, cited in Zakar, 2016, p. 8; de Silva, 2012;). Adultism ensures parents and teachers feel it is their responsibility to steer children and adolescents into a direction that is normalized by society as the right behaviour (Deb, 2004). The assumption underlying

parental violence is that the child must have done something wrong. It should be noted that, in some cases, parents do feel violence is wrong, but they also feel it is unavoidable, given that parenting involves training children for the future (de Silva, 2012; Holden and Ashraf, 2016; NCWC, 2016).

In Bhutan, for example, qualitative findings reveal that both adults and children agree that only 'light' beating (vs. severe beating) is acceptable (NCWC, 2016). In Afghanistan, parents (and teachers) call this *tarbia* ('upbringing'). Several authors talk about the importance of *tarbia*, which can be understood as a family's 'honour' that defines rules on what behaviours are considered 'good' or 'bad' (UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014). Closely related to the notion of a good girl, *tarbia* sits at the intersection of adultism and sexism to control children's lives and justify parents' decisions. It is rooted in Islamic teachings and hadiths, and all adults in children's lives are expected to teach it to children (Kirk and Winthrop, 2008; UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014). Holden and Ashraf (2016), for example, note that the Qu'ran describes the transactional role between parents and children and suggests parents are responsible for raising their children to be good, moral beings: 'Order your sons to pray when they are seven, and spank them if they do not pray when they are ten' (p. 64). This suggests there is acceptance of spanking but only after the age of 10 (presumably when boys begin to experience puberty). Thus, violence is used as a means to transfer knowledge and facilitate learning (de Silva, 2012; Holden and Ashraf, 2016).

Ingrained in the South Indian diaspora is a strong and historical tradition of conformity and respect for adults and parents. Yet,

as some children grow older, they learn to resist violence and fight back. Their physical and mental ability to push back against adults' abuse is one reason why younger aged children may experience more violence than older children (e.g. Portela and Pells, 2015). Zakar's (2016) study with 984 children in Pakistan found that younger children (5–8 years) experienced more psychological violence (92 per cent vs. 85 and 80 per cent) and more physical violence (80 per cent vs. 78 and 69 per cent) than those in the 9–10 and 11–12 age group. Similarly, in Bhutan, males younger than 13 years and those who lived in rural areas reported the highest level of violence (NCWC, 2016). Interestingly, this may not be the case for sexual abuse, where children of all age groups are equally susceptible to violence.

Ceaser (2014) states that, when adults use over-protection as a form of control, children and adolescents may resist, to 'counteract adultism' (p. 169). This can manifest as children getting angry and running away from home. Physical abuse is one of the major reasons children cite for running away (Tufail, 2005). Children living on the street are at increased risk of exploitation and abuse, as they are less likely to have any family support. Indeed, their circumstances and experiences (particularly for those who live without any parents or guardians) are extremely dangerous: they are exposed to a variety of abuses, including endemic poverty, domestic and/or sexual abuse and other violence, hazardous working conditions, exploitative labour, substance abuse, conflict with the law and juvenile justice and the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

In a study of 120 street children in Pakistan, Tufail (2005) found that 98 per cent were male – suggesting girls are more likely to be

'protected' from reasons that underlie why children end up on the street. In a study by Childreach Nepal (2013), most children on the street had run away because of ill-treatment or physical abuse at home. Though studies do not offer any glimpse into why such gendered differences may exist, it is plausible that the option to run away is less likely a possibility for girls, who have internalized that they *need* protection. On the other hand, it is possible that boys who run away are blinded by the social norms that they can and should be independent and can take care of themselves. Additionally, it may be more difficult for boys to accept violence against them, given that the culture normally positions boys as the aggressors.

Child beggars are often controlled by the street mafia, who 'pay' them by offering a meal or protection in exchange for them begging on the street (de Silva, 2012). The 2007 Global Study on Violence Against Street Children indicates that younger children on the street may be offered more 'protection' but may also be prone to more violence, given their weakness (de Benitez, 2007). Discrimination against street children is widespread, with much of the population viewing them as criminals and having a negative attitude towards them. Tufail (2005) and de Benitez (2007) note that ethnic differences stigmatize some children on the street more than others. In Pakistan, in the group of street children, the most vulnerable, marginalized and ignored are the gypsy children who live outside mainstream urban society in temporary housing (tents, mud houses), with or without extended family networks (Tufail, 2005).

Norms around how parents should deal with sexual abuse of boys and girls are also revealing of how adultism functions

in the region. Gendered analysis of sexual abuse reveals that boys generally report more instances of sexual violence than do unmarried girls (e.g. Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2007).

However, several authors caution that under-reporting of girls' sexual abuse is an important factor in these gender differences (Hyder and Malik, 2007; Senaratna, 2015). Girls are thought to be 'safe' at home (de Zoysa, 2002), and therefore less likely to be victims of sexual abuse, even though studies have consistently found that the abuser is generally someone the child knows. Moreover, values placed on girls' virginity stop parents from making any incident of abuse public (Slugget and Frederic, 2003; Perera et al., 2009).

There is also evidence that non-penetrative acts are less likely to be reported (Slugget and Frederic, 2003; Perera et al., 2009). The belief that such acts may not be as harmful as penetrative acts is one of the biggest factors in the gross under-representation of sexual abuse estimates. This is reflective of a hierarchy that psychosocial trauma is less distressing and damaging than physical trauma, despite international organizations consistently including psychological abuse in their definition of violence.

Finally, norms around the family mean conversation about 'sexual' topics is not permitted, which also reduces the space for children themselves to report any abuse. *Tarbia*, which teaches children in Afghanistan and Pakistan to respect and listen to elders, also makes them feel they are not being wronged. Meanwhile, even when children report abuse, they may not be believed. Moreover, though it is clear that sexual abuse affects girls and boys differently, perceptions prevail that boys

are less psychologically affected, further reinforcing norms of masculinity and reducing the likelihood that abuse will be reported (Slugget and Frederic, 2003). The severe stigmatization of homosexuality acts as another deterrent for boys in reporting abuse.

3.1.6 Socialization of discriminatory norms

One of the mechanisms used to maintain structural violence over time and across generations is socialization by parents, teachers, peers etc. For instance, the literature shows that children of minority ethnic groups and those in 'lower' castes experience discrimination in schools. In India, Morrow and Singh (2016) examined Young Lives data and found that 62 per cent of 'backward caste' children, 61 per cent of 'scheduled caste' children and 59 per cent of 'other caste' children reported violence by teachers.[1] UNICEF's 2016 report on violence in educational settings in South Asia had similar findings: on the whole, children from lower castes are more likely to face violence, especially at the hands of a teacher who belongs to a higher caste. Much like school-related violence against children from poor families, the belief is that children from lower castes are less intelligent and willing to work. Citing an UNICEF 2009 report, the 2016 report finds that Dalit and Adivasi girls in India are most vulnerable to bullying (p. 22). Similarly, in Bangladesh and Pakistan, Hindu minority children from the Dalit caste are made to sit in the back by teachers, called derogatory names and excluded from playing with children of other castes and backgrounds

(Jodhka and Shah, 2010). Much like gender socialization, discrimination by peers is reflective of learning and socialization by parents and teachers.

Several studies in Pakistan look at the role of the national curriculum and textbooks in strengthening national identity and further creating separation from the 'other', defined by ethnic, caste or religious grouping. For instance, Durrani and Dunne (2010) analysed the Grade V textbooks and their subsequent impact on children and found children's national and religious identity was tied together – that is, they were Pakistani and Muslim. Thus, by default, anyone who is not Muslim becomes the 'other'. Such school-level influences clearly transfer into children and adolescents' construction of religious, caste and ethnic identities.

In the 2016 UNICEF review of violence against children in school settings, norms of masculinity are shown to become rigid as early as Grade 5, and digressions from such norms means physical or verbal abuse from peers. Violence experienced in school by peers serves to solidify and reinforce stereotypical norms of masculinity and femininity. For instance, the UNICEF review cites several studies that highlight bullying against children who either are sexual minorities (Singh et al., 2015, cited in UNICEF, 2016, p. 24) or dress in a way that does not conform to their own sex (Bondyopadhyay et al., 2005, cited in UNICEF, 2016, p. 20). Moreover, male peers evoke more fear (in both males and females) than female peers do, as found in Bhutan (NCWC, 2016). The superiority of being male, along with associated masculinities such as being aggressive, clearly filters down from the structural to the school level.

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[1]   The contemporary stratification system in India consists of over 3,000 *jatis* that have emerged from the original caste system. The labels of 'backward caste', 'scheduled caste' and 'other caste' are a form of grouping of the *jatis* (Deshpande, 2005).

Similarly, though both boys and girls are heavily involved in unpaid household work, gender norms dictate that domestic work is disproportionately a girls' responsibility. Khan and Lyon (2015), in their multi-country study, found that, among children aged 7–17 years, girls are more likely to perform unpaid family work than boys in India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. In Bhutan, this is not the case until children are 15 years of age. In Afghanistan, girls provide a 'free' labour force in families (AIHRC, 2006). Girls have been shown to spend almost twice as much time on household chores as boys (ICF international, 2008). This suggests there is a need to differentiate by gender the minimum standards that define the number of hours spent on unpaid household tasks as labour (Guarcello et al., 2014).

A study conducted with 200 children in Afghanistan found that household chores included: fetching water or wood, cleaning the house and utensils, washing clothes, shopping, cooking, caring for children, minor household repairs and caring for the elderly, in order of importance (ICF International, 2008). When the data were further disaggregated by who performed each task, the top three tasks for boys were fetching water or wood, shopping and minor household repairs; for girls they were cleaning, washing clothes and cooking. This shows a clear pattern of socialization of gender stereotypes and that attitudes learnt at this age translate into a continued pattern of gender inequality. A recent Global State of the World's Fathers report, for instance, shows that, in South Asia, men have internalized the gendered component of domestic roles and are less likely to participate in child-rearing and household tasks (Levtov et al., 2015).

It is not surprising that, in a strict patriarchal region like South Asia, child labour is forced on children and is also gendered. A report from an International Labour Organization (ILO) study in 2015 (Khan and Lyon, 2015) found the more boys are reported in employment in Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka, while more girls are in employment in Bhutan, Maldives and Pakistan. Moreover, there are age differences in the type of labour and industry in which children are involved, with older boys more likely to be employed in paid labour than younger boys or girls. The study found that, for children in the 7–14 age group, more boys than girls are reported in employment in Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka and more girls than boys in Bhutan, Maldives and Pakistan. This indicates that age and gender often combine to have a double structural effect on child labour.

In terms of other industries, the ILO study finds that, in India, the share of girls in agriculture is much larger than that of boys; in Bangladesh, the share of boys is much higher in agriculture (Khan and Lyon, 2015). In Afghanistan, Hall et al. (2016) conducted a study on carpet-weaving and found that, although both boys and girls wove, girls tended to weave longer hours than boys, started weaving at younger age and kept weaving longer into their teenage years. For girls, weaving is a lifetime occupation and, given its cultural importance, an importance prerequisite for girls to improve their marriage prospects.

3.1.7 Acceptability of violence
Inequality is often maintained via acceptance of violence. For domestic violence, Jewkes (2002) theorizes that gender-inequitable societies are most likely to normalize violence against women. This

review found several studies that pointed to high acceptability of domestic violence in the South Asian region (e.g. UNICEF Bhutan, 2012). For instance, in Bangladesh, secondary data analysis of population-based surveys found a high level of acceptance of violence in the country (e.g. Rashid et al., 2014). Data from Pakistan's 2012 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2012 indicate that, among men, rates of justification for wife-beating range from 73.5 per cent in Khyber Paktunkhwa to 36.3 per cent in Punjab (NIPS and ICF International, 2013). In Nepal, Dalal et al. (2014) found that, in the 2006 DHS, 28 per cent of 939 male respondents aged 15–19 supported wife-beating. Logistic regression shows those boys who believe a husband has a right to get angry with his wife are more likely to support wife-beating compared with those who do not support this notion.

Often, women themselves are the enforcers of norms that perpetuate domestic violence: estimates of acceptability of violence in the region range from 29 per cent among Nepalese women to 57 per cent among Indian women (Rani and Bonu, 2009, cited in Naved et al., 2011, p. 2s). The internalization of sexism by women is well documented: in an analysis of 52 developing countries, one in three women agreed wife-beating was justified if a woman went out without permission (Klugman et al., 2014). Indeed, the cyclical nature of domestic violence from mothers- and sisters-in-law in South Asia indicates that often it is the female members of the marital family who instigate violence against girls and women, despite having experienced violence themselves (Karmaliani et al., 2017). Though there are few studies that disentangle domestic violence by wider family members and domestic violence by husbands, feminist

views suggest that, as a mother of a son, a woman gains 'power' and can act as a 'proxy' man while perpetuating violence and exercising control over their daughter-in-law (Menon, 2004).

Acceptability of violence also plays a role in perpetuating child maltreatment. Parents and teachers justify and validate using violence for other reasons than *tarbia*. Adults justify violence by evoking societies' approval of disciplining children and 'the hierarchical structure of the Indian family' (Segal, 1995, cited in Charak and Koot, 2015, p. 57). The transfer of rules, knowledge and learning through violent means is also validated through inter-generational violence: parents turn to their own upbringing to justify their violence in Sri Lanka (de Silva, 2012) and Pakistan (Malik, 2010). In Bhutan, school counsellors report that teachers often get frustrated by children's inability to understand the lesson (NCWC, 2016). In Sri Lanka's Batticaloa, Colombo, Polonnaruwa and Galle districts, de Silva (2012) also finds that school violence by teachers socializes and validates physical punishment at home.

Discrimination is also solidified when acceptance of violence against ethnic minorities and lower-caste populations becomes the dominant discourse. In India, views against reservations for lower-caste adolescents and youth in universities and jobs are rampant. Similarly, in Pakistan, there was widespread support of the killings of Taseer and Bhatti in 2011 for defending a Christian woman who faced blasphemy charges (Gregory, 2012). These incidents legitimize the dominant narrative that favours the majority group and, in some cases, give rise to deathly attacks against vulnerable groups. In Pakistan, terrorists attacked two churches in Youhanabad in

2015 and in 2016 a park where children were playing, with the intention of 'targeting Christians' (Ali, 2016).

3.1.8 Ease of exploitation of children

One of the norms that emerged as underlying structural violence is the belief that it is easy to exploit children and adolescents. For example, ageism functions in several ways as a driving force of both sexual abuse and sexual exploitation in the region (see box). Perpetrators of sexual violence against children believe children are unable to resist, more easily deceived, less likely to report the abuse and more willing to go along with it than adults. This is reported across a number of studies in all countries (Deb, 2005; Childreach Nepal, 2013; Slugget and Frederic, 2003; Chandraratne, n.d.), though data were not available in Maldives.

Sexual abuse of both girls and boys stems from discriminatory values against each gender. For instance, cultural forms of child sexual abuse suggest children are desired and considered 'better' as victims. Girls, for instance, are thought to be more vulnerable because of their comparatively timid and submissive nature (Senaratna, 2015). This is also the reason girls are more likely to be perceived as 'willing' in the abuse (Slugget and Frederic, 2003; Goonesekere and Amarasuriya, 2013;). Older girls are thought to be promiscuous and, as a result, either at fault for the sexual abuse or a consensual party (Jejeebhoy et al., 2013). In Bangladesh, they are considered spoiled or *noshto meye* ('bad/rotten'). In several instances, they are married to the abuser, so as to legitimize the abuse and avoid shame. The idea that girls are complicit in their abuse is tied to the fact that those who go to shelters after being abused are considered 'bad' (Slugget and Frederic, 2003).

Jabeen (2014) found that, in Pakistan, in an analysis of newspapers and media from 1990–2010, even though males and females both were victims of sexual assault, younger victims were referred to as 'innocent' and 'minor' and the crime was called 'sexual assault'; older victims were called 'young women' and the crime was called 'rape'. Interestingly, these older victims were only 13–16 years old.

And yet older children are more at risk, as they have more freedom to move around and thus more chances of contact with perpetrators and abductors in the community (Perera et al., 2009). For boys, who generally have more freedom of movement, trends in South Asia suggest 'man-to-boy' sexuality is widespread (Slugget and Frederic, 2003; de Silva, 2010). This abuse becomes legitimized because the limited interaction allowed between the two genders creates a context where man-to-boy sexual abuse is more likely to occur. Norms of masculinity place a high value on men's release of sexual desire. For instance, Khan (2000) explains that older, rich men seek out 'attractive beardless' youth for their sexual pleasure.

This practice takes place in Pakistan, as *balkey* or *ashnas*, and in Afghanistan, as *bacha bazi*. Young boys are kept as slaves for sexual gratification and add prestige to an older man's status. These boys, usually kidnapped, are chosen as they are 'good-looking' and subsequently shown off to others as entertainment. This way, sexual abuse against boys is feminized, visible and legitimized.

Another form of violence where inequality persists is child labour. Ageism also functions via inequality: children are paid less and can be abused and exploited more easily (AIHRC, 2006; Hall, 2016). De Silva (2009) reviews the literature in Sri Lanka and finds children are increasingly being sought out for domestic service, thanks to the increased numbers of women migrating to the Middle East. The opening-up of demand, combined with the fact that children are willing to work for less money and have fewer demands (in terms of lodgings, amount of food etc.), are increasing the number of children entering domestic service in the country.

Inequality where one group is thought to be more easily exploited than another extends to trafficking of ethnic minority groups, since they are assumed to be more exploitable and less worthy of protection than others (Terre des Hommes, 2004; Huda, 2006). Studies show that India's Adivasi communities are sought out for domestic service (Childreach Nepal, 2013). Similarly, stereotypes create discrimination against Nepalese girls who are sought out and trafficked to India. Huda (2006) notes that there is a belief that Nepalese girls are more willing to have sex and, hence, there are over 100,000 of them working in Indian brothels.

3.2 ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

And she had learned from experience that Need was a warehouse that could accommodate a considerable amount of cruelty.
(Roy, 2017, p. 10).

Drawing on the socio-ecological model, 'economic systems' contains factors from the macro, community, household and individual level. Figure 1 in section 2, the conceptual framework, considers factors such as inflation, globalization, household income, education and residence status as part of the economic system. These factors create conditions and thus can be conceptualized as sources of economic inequality. This review uses the term 'socio-economic contexts' to encompass all these varying factors and to describe both the social and economic components of structural violence. 'Social' includes networks as well as relationship to resources, whereas 'economic' refers to income. Use of the word 'context' is also deliberate, as it encompasses the dynamism that is reflective of the current South Asian economies – that is, changing economies, digitalization and urbanization. Moreover, 'context' ensures components such as goods and services are captured adequately.

Amartya Sen (1999) posits that living in poor socio-economic contexts should be understood as an inability to fulfil basic human rights owing to systemic and multiple opportunities and basic freedoms that are missed out (or denied) as a result of economic deprivations. Ho (2007) discusses

this further and explains that 'poverty creates conditions where the actual ability to meet one's fundamental human needs are obstructed. There are clear indicators that poverty effectively constitutes the violence that creates the disparity between actual and possible abilities to meet fundamental human needs' (p. 5). Living in poverty leads to experiences of unequal status in the community, unequal access to services and goods and unequal mobility, power, privilege and positions. In other words, the root of structural violence owing to poverty is inequality and discrimination, and a resulting lack of agency to pursue opportunities.

Part of understanding socio-economic contexts lies in recognizing the fast-paced economic development in the region and its consequences. Ho (2007) argues that economic globalization is a form of structural violence since, with economic transformation, those in poverty are often marginalized from the global economy and do not benefit from it. Moreover, changing economic structures increase visibility between wealthy and poor, which either

makes lack of agency evident to those who are marginalized or forces people to take action to improve their economic situation. In other words, rising aspirations and increasing exposure to mass media lure young people to cities, placing them at risk of child labour and sexual exploitation (discussed below).

3.2.1 Son preference

Research indicates that, starting from birth, structural violence against children overlays with socio-cultural systems and occurs because of socio-economic contexts. For example, son preference, and consequentially female foeticide, leads to 'daughter aversion', (see section 3.1.4) which is rooted in constrained socio-economic contexts. According to Kabeer et al. (2014), at household level, 'in a context where marriage was a social compulsion, especially for women, daughter aversion reflected the increasing investment of time and money that parents had to make to ensure the best possible marriage for daughters. It has also increased because of the need to invest in daughters' education

BOX 4. BANGLADESH'S SEX-SELECTED ABORTION RATES

Interestingly, Bangladesh's sex-selected abortion level has not increased and has remained steady. The country's growing economy and the changing value on women's labour participation is an important case study in this regard. Kabeer et al. (2014) find that, starting in the 1990s, there was an increase in economic growth, which was paralleled by a slow rise in women's labor force participation, from 4 per cent in 1974 to 36 per cent in 2010. This has improved the value of daughters as income-earners and thus created a context where son preference is not resulting in a female infanticide rate as high as in neighbouring countries. Solotaroff and Pande (2014) provide an analysis of Bangladesh's approach to reducing female infanticide and find that, by addressing all levels of the socio-ecological model and incorporating a multi-sectoral approach with a specific gender focus, the country has been able to achieve great success in reducing female infanticide.

to increase marriageability' (p. 142). This suggests that poor socio-economic contexts and gender combine to create unattainable standards for girls' marriages. At the same time, at community and macro level, though changing economies have created a growing need to source jobs outside the agrarian market, given land scarcity, girls and women's paid work outside the family remains a challenge (Mazumdar and Neetha, 2011, cited in Kabeer et al., 2014, p. 143). These factors interlock to ensure families in poor socio-economic conditions are unable to resist structural forces that perpetuate son preference. Indeed, in countries with growing economies and increased women's labour participation, sex-selected abortions are decreasing in frequency (Box 4).

3.2.2 Child marriage

Living in challenging socio-economic contexts also increases the likelihood of child marriage. Studies do suggest this takes place across economic groupings, suggesting it is the perceived or predicted economic situation that may influence the probability of child marriage (UNICEF Afghanistan, forthcoming). Nevertheless, findings across all countries suggest those in poverty are more likely than those who are not in poverty to marry their daughters early. The differences across socio-economic contexts are revealed in rural vs. urban differences in child marriage rates. Across the region, those in the poorest quintile are more likely to experience child marriage than those in the richer quintiles (UNICEF, 2014).

Structural violence owing to socio-economic conditions is reflected in the fact that those living in poverty often have no other choice but to marry their daughter, given economic needs and burdens. For those in poor contexts, decisions related to marriage, schooling and economic participation represent competing alternatives that carry significant opportunity costs. In other words, in South Asia, marriage is often perceived as an optimal and sometimes the only economic choice for young girls and for their families. Since a daughter is considered an economic burden on the family, child marriage makes it possible to reduce the expense of rearing her. In fact, parents of daughters are likely to delay or deny marriage if the groom's family has fewer land-holdings than the bride's (Caldwell, 2005), suggesting economic conditions drive much of child marriage decisions.

The within-caste marriage requirement ensures that marriage takes place early, so as to find eligible grooms within one's caste. Since the realities of caste-based inequalities are reflected in the socio-economic differences between castes, all forms of direct violence face the compounded effects of poverty and caste-based structural violence (Sheela and Audinarayana, 2003; Majumdar, 2004). Ethnic and religious groups show similar child marriage patterns: in Nepal the average age at marriage of Brahmins is 13.5 years, Muslims 14 years and Tharu (ethnic group) 15 years (Choe et al., 2005, cited in Sah, 2008, p. 210).

Majumdar (2004) claims the restrictions of within-caste marriage, in addition to the need for social respectability, reflected in the dowry, are a central reason for increasing son preference, despite legal efforts that aim to reduce female infanticide. She argues that female infanticide is a pre-emptive step families take to protect themselves from financial pressures. The relationship between the requirements of within-caste marriage and the dowry becomes even more complicated in the case of out-migration, which influences the 'pool' of people within

one's caste left behind to marry. Sah (2008) discusses the challenge of Indian families in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh who want their daughters to marry Nepalese boys to reduce their dowry and their sons to marry Indian daughters to increase their dowry. Nepalese families in the Terai also want their daughters to marry Nepalese boys and their sons to marry Indian girls. This is driven primarily by the fact that the dowry in Nepal is lower given the value of the Indian vs. the Nepalese rupee.

Additionally, age and socio-economic conditions overlap: as girls grow older, dowry demand increases, which motivates families to marry their daughters early (Mensch et al., 2005). In Nepal, Sah (2008) argues that, as girls grow older and more educated, their demand for an educated boy also goes up, which in turn increases the dowry the bride's family has to pay (for a more educated groom). UNICEF Afghanistan (2014; forthcoming) note that, in Afghanistan, traditions such as bride price (money given to the bride's family) provide economic relief to families in poverty. Additionally, to avoid paying dowry, families practise *baad* and *badal*, whereby they exchange the girl between families, preventing high costs. This has evolved into a way of coping with debt (both monetary and conflict debt). Conflict debt also occurs in a murder, for instance: under the code of Pashtunwali in Afghanistan, the family of the murderer may offer their daughter to the family of the victim to settle the debt.

This suggests, similarly to what Bajracharya and Amin (2010) conclude, that, over and above demographic factors such as ethnicity, residence status and education, household economic decisions play a strong role in child marriage trends. It should be noted that economic decisions underlying

'Parental support is still important, but increasingly parents see little advantage in early arranged marriage and considerable costs. Arranged marriage was the more logical marriage when the local economy was largely agrarian, because family attributes were more important to the marriage than individual attributes, but this has changed as agriculture has declined in importance and individual ones have become more important. Now it is increasingly in the interests of those involved to wait not only for the young to be educated but for potential partners to mature and gain the desired attributes. In the case of men this means qualifications and a good job, preferably a permanent one in the formal sector. For women, it can mean qualifications and a job, but it also means a broader maturity associated with being "a good mother"'

Caldwell (2005, p. 11).

child marriage can also be protective, as noted in Sri Lanka, among the Sinhalese. Caldwell (2005) explains that economic stagnation has led to a desire for the newly married couple to be economically independent, hence an increase in the age of marriage, see box.

3.2.3 Dowry-related violence

Dowry also contributes to violence against women, particularly in rural settings. Dowry is now being practised even in communities where it was not traditionally. The National Crime Records Bureau in India found in 2015 that there were more than 7,500 women dowry-related deaths. Dowry-related violence could be way to extort more dowry or simply a way to express dissatisfaction with the amount paid. Evidence of dowry-related violence shows dowry demands are higher in rural than in urban settings (e.g. Naved and Persson, 2010 for Bangladesh), though it is possible that in urban settings and in higher-income families dowry is paid without it being labelled 'dowry'. In rural settings, dowry demands, which are inevitably very high, can be devastating for families that are already impoverished. Indeed, absence of a dowry demand lowers the likelihood of physical wife abuse, as found in Bangladesh (Suran et al., 2004; Naved and Persson, 2010). Moreover, in some contexts, dowry is found to be protective (e.g. in Tamil Nadu, India, and in Muslim communities in Matlab, Bangladesh), though Solotaroff and Pande (2014) caution that this is not the pattern across the region.

Dowry-related violence is very much an outcome of gender-based structural violence and socio-economic contexts. The gendered and economic component of dowry is 'a kind of premortem inheritance of the daughter who had to leave her natal family to join another' (Majumdar, 2004, p. 3). Dowry is a form of ensuring the bride's family remains inferior to the groom's family. Though in its purest form it was meant to support the girl after marriage as a source of income solely for her needs, it has evolved into a way to solidify inequalities. 'The system of dowry is not unique to South Asia, but the transformations in the meaning and forms of dowry in South Asia over the past several decades have triggered a form of violence that is unique to the region – namely, dowry-related violence that often results in a young married woman's death' (Solotaroff and Pande, 2014, pp. 47–48).

One explanation of the changing meaning of dowry comes from Majumdar's discussion of the erosion of bride price (money given to bride's family) over time. Majumdar (2004) notes that 'feminist histories of labour in India traced the evolution of dowry and the corresponding erosion of brideprice to women's increasing marginalization from the cash economy' (p. 4). In its most traditional sense, the practice of bride price sought to ensure the natal family was compensated for the loss of income that would occur when a woman got married. However, as urbanization increased, women's roles became more segregated to the domestic sphere, and this led to a devaluing of their participation in labour. Hence, bride price no longer held value. In its current conceptualization, the 'worth' of a girl is tied to how much dowry she brings, whereas the 'worth' of a boy is tied to how much dowry can be demanded (Majumdar, 2004).

3.2.4 Domestic violence

As noted already, the inequality experienced by those in poor socio-economic contexts often exacerbates gender-based structural violence. This is also true for domestic violence, which researchers explain through

theories on violence and stress (Jewkes, 2002; Barker et al., 2011, 2013). In the multi-country International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES), which includes India, between 34 and 88 per cent of men reported having experienced work-related stress (Barker et al., 2011). Intersecting with socio-cultural factors of norms of masculinity, men experienced stress as a result of the high burden of being the provider for the family and, thus, not being able to make ends meet, not having enough income or work and not succeeding in the role of provider. Men who reported experiencing economic or work-related stress were also more likely to report previous arrests, higher use of alcohol and use of violence against women.

While all families are consumed by survival needs (such as for food, to provide a future for their children and in general to make ends meet), those in challenging socio-economic contexts are less likely to be able to access resources that can alleviate stress. Additionally, though men in poverty have power in their own household, they are marginalized and left out of 'traditional power structures' outside the home setting. When men experience this lack of power in the wider society, their frustration manifests in violent behaviours that give them power over others (Gelles, 1987; Jewkes, 2002; Barker, 2005). In other words, violence and poverty are mediated via notions of masculine identity.

Given that poverty and education levels are inextricably linked, several studies have also attempted to examine how education levels and domestic violence are related. The regional picture that emerges is complex (Gupta and Samuels, 2017). Although poverty and low education have been thought to be predictors of violence, several

studies have also produced mixed results (e.g. Barker et al., 2011). In India, almost 80 per cent of men in the IMAGES study had studied at least up to secondary school; in Brazil, only 43.7 per cent had. Despite these differences in education, Brazilian men consistently had more gender-equitable attitudes than Indian men, and Indian men were the most accepting of violence against women.

Other studies in South Asia have shown that income, male unemployment, women's educational attainment, men's educational attainment, male–female education level disparity and male–female financial disparity are not necessarily positively associated with domestic violence (Ackerson and Subramanian, 2008; Jayatilleke et al., 2010; Nanda et al., 2015). For example, in Bangladesh, education (for both men and women) has been shown to be protective against domestic violence (Bates et al., 2004; Koenig et al., 2004; Johnson and Das, 2009; Sambisa et al., 2010), albeit with some caveats. For women, Bates et al. (2004) found that having at least six years of education was protective. Koenig et al. (2004) found that any level of primary school attendance was protective. For men in urban areas being educated beyond Grade 6 and for men in rural areas being educated beyond Grade 10 had a protective effect, whereby they were less likely to inflict violence (Naved and Persson, 2005).

3.2.5 Physical, emotional, and sexual violence

There is inconclusive evidence on whether socio-economic contexts act as a source of structural violence that is manifested as physical, emotional and sexual violence at home and in schools. For instance, Saha et al. (2014) in India found that violence by parents was prevalent in high- and low-

income groups rather than middle-income groups (defined by how much income the family earned monthly). Similarly, Deb and Modak (2010) found children from high-income families reported more physical violence and children from low-income families more psychological violence, though sexual violence was equally prevalent across all groups.

However, the Young Lives study in India found wealth was not a factor by which violence from parents varied (Morrow and Singh, 2016). In other words, all children across the socio-economic spectrum experienced violence at home. This was also the case in Pakistan, though violence occurred more in families with a greater number of children (Malik, 2010). On the other hand, in Sri Lanka, de Silva (2012) found physical violence was highest in Galle district (rural and poor) and lowest in Colombo (urban, capital city). Evidence points to variation in the living conditions of families and children in urban settings, with studies suggesting children who live in slums in urban settings may be more at risk of various forms of interpersonal violence than their rural peers, owing to forced evictions, informal and inadequate living conditions and over-crowding of services like water and sanitation (Gupte, 2013).

The national survey report in Bhutan offers some insight into occurrence of violence in homes that deal with poverty (NCWC, 2016). Much like its findings on domestic violence, the report speculates that parents in poverty deal with multiple stresses, with few to no avenues through which they can release their stress. This stress may manifest itself as physical or psychological violence against children. Moreover, in Bhutan, parents often work multiple jobs or

long hours, leaving children alone for most of the day. While this constitutes neglect, it is often unintentional and a result of structural constraints.

While at home it is the socio-economic context that creates a background to violence, in schools it is a form of structural violence – that is, classism – that underlies bullying and discrimination. Classism is prejudice against a group of people owing to their socio-economic background. Studies in the region show that school-related bullying is a prime example of classism (Portela and Pells, 2015). For instance, in Bhutan, 'ragging' (teasing) by boys and girls is fairly common (NCWC, 2016). Both peers and teachers tease children for their physical appearance, skin colour, living with a single parent, having no birth registration or being an orphan. According to the national survey report, 'down-looking' is a specific type of teasing where children are bullied for wearing torn clothes or for their lack of food (ibid.). This form of bullying is not specific to peers. Girls and boys 'spoke about their teachers' social expectations and their teachers' failure to understand the socio-economic context in which students live and how this shapes their behaviour. This was especially relevant for children from poor families who often underperform in their studies or come late to school because of responsibilities at home' (ibid., p. 39). Similar findings emerged from the Young Lives data in India (Morrow and Singh, 2016). Additionally, in India, UNICEF's 2016 report on violence against children in educational settings cites studies that found teachers discriminated against children from poor families, believing they were 'slow learners' or had little intelligence (WIZMIN, 2014, cited in UNICEF, 2016, p. 23).

There are differences in the types of violence experienced by children across different socio-economic strata. For example, in Pakistan, Jabeen's (2014) analysis of the media and newspapers suggests that, though sexual abuse cases tend to be more prevalent in lower-middle- or working-class and poor areas, in both urban and rural settings, kidnapping, especially kidnapping for ransom, is more likely to be an urban and middle- to upper-class phenomenon, with children from established trading and industrialist families more likely to be kidnapped. A form of violence that is pervasive across the socio-economic spectrum is violence as a result of increased use of information and communication technology (ICT) (see Box 5).

3.2.6 Child labour

The relationship between poor socio-economic context and child labour is one that has been strongly established in both international and South Asian, literature (AIHRC, 2006; UNICEF, 2007; Nafees et al., 2012; Kashif and Hussain 2013). Systematic reviews in the region (Hyder and Malik, 2007), multi-country comparisons (Guarcello et al., 2014; Khan and Lyon, 2015) and qualitative research (NCWC, 2016) all find a link between living in poverty and a higher propensity for children to engage in paid and unpaid labour. The economic challenges to basic survival mean all children in the household need to contribute towards income generation or household chores. In poor socio-economic conditions, any external shock (drought, parent falling sick,

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BOX 5. ICT USE AS A MEDIUM FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

There is evidence that, in this new digital world, technology is paving the way for new forms of violence (Samuels et al., 2017). There is increasing use of technology to market women and children for prostitution, bride trade, pornography and other slave-like practices via the Internet. For instance, UNICEF's 2016 report on violence in education settings finds that, in Maldives, 'revenge porn' is a growing phenomenon. Girls who pose or agree to be taped are trapped into giving sexual favours to avoid having the video or picture made public. Evidence from a recent report on IPV finds that the 'growing sexual frustration' of being able to access porn easily is related to sexual violence against girls (Samuels et al., 2017, p. 13). Cyber-bullying is becoming very common and children face an ever-growing option of social media that can be used to manipulate, exploit and abuse them (UNICEF, 2016). A growing number of children have access to cell phones, which can easily provide a location via GPS to paedophiles and abductors. Girls are disproportionately targeted because of the power boys and men think they have over them. This sense of entitlement and privilege, coupled with the anonymity that the Internet provides, is dangerous. Additionally, protections against cyber-violence are in their nascent stage, meaning victims of technology-related violence are left defenceless.

migration, war) increases the chances of a child entering the labour force, since there is no monetary cushion and savings for the family to fall back on to sustain a pre-shock standard of living (Hou, 2009). In some cases, families depend heavily on the income a child brings to meet their financial needs. For instance, Hall (2016), on child labour in carpet-weaving in Afghanistan, found 33 per cent of weaving households interviewed in Kabul and 35 per cent in Herat said at least 50 per cent of their income came from children under the age of 18.

This suggests families from poor socio-economic contexts are more likely than wealthier households to have children who engage in child labour. This inequality between social classes, whereby some children are needed to engage in income generation, is a form of structural violence. Indeed, rural and urban differences point to more child labourers in rural areas, as cities are more likely to have higher-income households. Khan and Lyon (2015) found that, in seven countries in South Asia (except Maldives), 7–14-year-old rural children were more likely to be in employment than their urban peers. In all eight countries, by the time children are 15–17 years old, a higher proportion of children from rural areas are employed. Rural children aged 7–14 years are twice as likely to be in employment as urban children in Nepal and Sri Lanka.

There is also inequality in the type of work rural vs. urban children engage in. In rural areas, in most of the countries in the region, children (mainly girls) are more likely to engage in agricultural activities and become 'family helpers' without getting paid; in urban areas, children are more likely to find opportunities to get paid

work (Hou, 2009). This is because rural working children are heavily concentrated in agriculture and family work (also see UNICEF, 2007). However, Hou (2009) notes that the association between poverty and child labour may be not linear but more an inverted U-shape, given that those in the not-so-poor households with land or productive assets are more likely to use their own children as child labour. This suggests, and reinforces the fact, that children are more easily and more likely to be deprived of their rights, no matter how necessary it is to bring in income.

The link between income and child labour is not surprising. Wealthier households are typically less in need of their children's productivity or wages. Additionally, for wealthier households the opportunity cost of schooling is low. Winter and Leighton (1999) state that unequal access to education is one form of structural violence. In the case of rural vs. urban children, rural children are less likely to be able to attend school, given the strong negative association between child labour and education. For instance, Guarcello et al. (2014) found rural out-of-school children were at much greater risk of child labour than their urban peers in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. With poorer infrastructure in rural schools, a curriculum incompatible with seasonal agricultural demands, gender norms working against girls' attendance, the uncertainty of employment after getting an education and the lack of teachers (female teachers in some areas), for children in poverty the path to child labour instead of gaining an education is defined. In Afghanistan, families of child weavers chose 'distance to school' as a major reason why their children engaged in labour instead of attending school (Hall, 2016).

Rooted in discrimination, child labour by itself is a form of ageism. Several studies discuss how and the specific reasons why children are forced into labour. For instance, Childreach Nepal (2013) finds Nepalese boys are forced into working in mines 'because they are the only ones able to maneuver within the mines because of their small size' (p. 4). Child weavers in Afghanistan are chosen to work because of the advantages to adults they bring as children: 'children weave carpets with more delicacy and speed, because their fingers are more flexible' and 'there should be a low level of light in order to maintain the quality of carpets. Children can work better than adults in dim places' (AIHRC, 2006, p. 12). Hall (2016), in a study on carpet-weaving, found children were at risk of child labour simply because of their physical attributes as children.

Children's involvement in labour changes depending on their age. Younger children are more likely to be engaged in family work. Khan and Lyon (2015) found the majority of working 7–14 year olds in Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka were engaged in family work (in Pakistan it was 10–14 year olds in family work). In Bangladesh, younger children are in all types of work (paid, unpaid and family work). In Maldives, younger children are mostly in unpaid work outside the family. However, in all countries, children in employment move out of family work as they grow older. For instance, for 7 year olds, involvement in employment is below 4 per cent in all South Asian countries except Bhutan. By the time children turn 17, at least 20 per cent are employed in paid work. Given that being in education does not bring in any income in the immediate term, it is not surprising older children are highly likely to be out of school and to go into paid work.

Within economic systems, it is important to consider the ways in which migration is a source of structural violence – one that creates conditions for violence against children to occur. Increasing economic development leads to a desire among families to break out of their cycle of poverty, making them more receptive to 'opportunities' abroad (Gamburd, 2008). Senaratna (2015) finds that disruption in the family unit leaves children more vulnerable to sexual abuse, since their protection from parents is presumably absent. For example, children left behind are often victims of sexual abuse by the extended family members with whom they live, which makes prosecuting and reporting the case challenging (NCWC, 2016).

Additionally, a discussion paper on families of father migrants in Nepal finds that, on average, migration of fathers is associated with an 8-percentage point increase in physical punishment at home, though this risk applies in particular to households without any male adult present (UNICEF Nepal, 2015). This is also more likely to be the case in homes with highly educated mothers who are without the father's support. In other words, changing economies that give rise to migration are a source of structural violence, manifested through various types of direct violence (ibid.).

Being in poverty often compels families (especially girls) into dangerous industries (Cheema, 2014). Deb (2005) notes that families in poverty send their daughters to work in urban areas as soon as they reach puberty, without any assurance of their safety. The pressure of providing for the family, and in some cases close relatives (Hameed, 2017), makes it hard for girls to seek alternative opportunities. Studies also find increased migration has led to increased

demand for cheap labour (Lopez-Ekra et al., 2011). Meanwhile, the cyclical nature of internal (and external) migration, the absence of a household member to migration and the uncertainty of receiving remittances combine to ensure family members left behind also seek out some form of employment. In the case of a parent migrating, the likelihood of the elder child also becoming employed is high, though this is more the case for boys since daughters are more likely to take on household responsibilities if the migrant is a mother (Piper, 2003).

3.2.7 Trafficking

Another way in which economic systems represent a layer that facilitates structural violence is noted in instances of trafficking,

though the discourse in the region suggests there exists a mix of smuggling, child labour and trafficking. Girls, women and boys are trafficked across the region as well into the Middle East (Huda, 2006; ICF International, 2008; UNICEF, 2007; Childreach Nepal, 2013). In addition to the kinds of trafficking across the region mentioned in the box, there is evidence of within-country trafficking of Bhutanese girls (NCWC, 2016). In India, home-based sex workers are very common; they tend to be younger and longer in the sex trade than those in brothels (Hennink and Cunningham, 2011). Women who are trafficked face severe exploitation and abuses partly because of social exclusion and their low status in society (Hameed, 2017).

Women and children (both boys and girls) are trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation, involuntary domestic servitude and debt bondage (Huda, 2006), and more recently for menial and unskilled jobs (Childreach Nepal, 2013; Cheema, 2014). Boys are at risk of trafficking into domestic servitude and labour. In Bangladesh, smuggling across borders for work is a common rite of passage, tied to a display of masculinity and marriageability; boys then discover that they are being trafficked and are in exploitative working conditions.

Sex trafficking occurs mostly in the context of prostitution and thus involves mostly women and girls. For instance, the 2012 Global Report in Trafficking notes that children constitute 36 per cent of all Nepalese trafficking victims, with girls at 33 per cent and boys at 3 per cent (UNODC 2012, cited in Childreach Nepal, 2013, p. 3). The demand for 'cheap' sex makes women and girls from poor backgrounds extremely vulnerable (Huda, 2006). Cheema (2014) notes that, in South Asia, buyers of cheap

> Afghanistan, India, Nepal and Pakistan are all source, transit and destination countries for female trafficking. Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are primarily source countries and less destination countries. Bhutan and Maldives are destination countries for forced labour and sex trafficking and source countries for children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking within the country.

US Department of State (2016).

sex are primarily urban workers, many of them seasonal or temporary migrants, who go through cycles of employment and unemployment. The insecurity of employment and the lack of family and kinship all contribute to men's need to express sexual prowess through their little earned income, where they feel powerful and in control. Huda (2006) notes that it is the submissive woman who is most desired in such cases. Women who have low literacy and limited knowledge of the law are thus prime targets for sexual slavery.

Moreover, socio-cultural and economic systems overlap such that the systemic devaluing of girls and women as individuals with their own rights has created a context where women are seen as commodities in an economic world (Cheema, 2014). Owning women and their bodies is seen as crucial to having control over one's own honour. Lari (2011) suggests that, if women exercise any sexual freedom, they will challenge the social order and undermine men's ownership over their body. Thus, those men who can control a woman's sexual activity can earn respect of other men and is a strong driver for violence against girls and women.

The notion that women can be 'owned' stems from the linking of wealth to a girl/woman in the first place. Wealth is linked to girls across the region – when a girl is made to marry within a family in order to keep property safe; when dowry is paid in her name; or when practices such as *badal* (compensation) or *khoon baha* (blood money) in Afghanistan and Pakistan are followed, with the girl exchanged through negotiations to end disputes (Lari, 2011). Huda (2006) notes that, in South Asia, internal trafficking of girls is often the result of dispute- or debt-settling, as are forced

marriage and labour and sexual exploitation. When women and girls' bodies are given 'value', it is not surprising they are looked at only as commodities.

Commodification also occurs when girls are sold into forced marriage and prostitution. Firmo-Fontan (2004) notes that there is considerable overlap between child marriage and sexual exploitation: when parents 'sell' their daughter to a buyer on the pretext of early marriage, the cycle of being bought/sold often continues until the girl is forced into sexual acts with clients. Additionally, despite their commodification, girls' payments are often determined and in the hands of brokers, who are mostly men, who often do not give them the money they are owed. For instance, in Nepal, girls trafficked for prostitution into Tibet are first given time to adjust to the new setting. They are directed as to how they must conduct themselves and what they should wear, then are convinced they need to work to pay off their family's debt. Once they start working, brothel owners often take 90–95 per cent of their earnings (Childreach Nepal, 2013).

As discussed, our review indicates that being in disadvantaged socio-economic conditions places children at a higher risk of all forms of violence, when it is they who are already more vulnerable to exploitation. For instance, poverty at home is cited as one of the main reasons for children running away from home (Mitra and Deb, 2004; Nafees et al., 2012). In a study of 503 children aged 10–24 years living or working on the street in Pakistan, the Azad Foundation found that reasons commonly mentioned for leaving home included poverty, peers'/friends' influence and violence, behaviour of the parents and drug addiction (Nafees et al., 2012).

Structural violence reveals itself in the way in which children in poorer socio-economic conditions may face pressures and challenging life circumstances unlike their peers who live in wealthier circumstances. With rapid urbanization, for instance, Tufail (2005) argues, families have been systematically displaced to towns and cities, giving rise to more children living or working on the street. Once on the street, these children's vulnerability increases. Plan India and Consortium for Street Children (2016) present findings from interviews with street children in India that show that life on the street for children is made more difficult by high levels of poverty manifested as severe shortages related to food, clothing, shelter, education, nutrition and health.

Economic systems also play a role in the way caste hierarchies function, particularly with respect to child labour. Inherent in the hierarchies of the original caste system is the notion that those in lower castes will undertake menial labour (and other occupations that occupy a low status) (Terre des Hommes, 2004; Rao, 2010). This is primarily how caste-based discrimination has functioned in day-to-day life. Jobs considered 'unfit' for people of higher caste are done by those of lower caste or in minorities, in particular given that their access to other opportunities is limited and often non-existent (Upadhyaya, 2004).

How does caste-based exclusion in labour occur? Harriss-White (2005) suggests there are socially regulated wages and social rules that determine who is blocked based on physical appearance, gender, caste and age. This will lead to an inability to break the cycle of discrimination. It is thus not surprising that children who belong to lower castes are also more likely to take on menial jobs. For instance, in Pakistan,

common jobs taken on by Hindu Dalits are *mochi (shoe maker)*, *pather* (brick maker) and *bhangi* (sweeper). In Bangladesh, typical jobs for those who are *harijan* are "sweepers (harijan), barber, washer, dyer, blacksmith, cobbler (*mochi*), oil-presser, boatmen (*mazi*), weavers, hunters, sawyers, butcher (*kasai*), gardener (*mali*), tailor (*darji*), quake for circumcision (*hajam*), and drum beater (*dholak*)". Jodha and Shah (2010) note that the cleaning of streets and latrines, dealing with dead animals and casual and bonded labour on land are almost everywhere identified with Dalit communities.

3.2.8 Children with disabilities
Though the literature on the structural inequalities facing children with disabilities is limited, Ho (2007) argues that a person with a disability 'may require more or a different set of primary goods to have the same capabilities as an able-bodied person' (p. 8). These capabilities include basic freedoms such as education and health. Structural violence operates against children with disability given their higher need for resources and goods but unequal access to such resources. In terms of education, for instance, Lamichhane and Kawakatsu (2015) examined Bangladesh's 2010 Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2010 and found that, in a sample of 355 children with disabilities aged 6–10 and 11–18 years, there was a positive correlation between total monthly expenditure and school attendance. They argue that families that have children with a disability and that are in poor socio-economic contexts are unlikely to send children to school since their limited monetary resources are already spent on children without disabilities. This is compounded by discriminatory attitudes against children with disabilities in schools and communities. Qualitative analysis in

Bhutan generated similar findings: parents of children with disabilities experience disability as a financial burden, especially since such children cannot help with unpaid or paid work (NCWC, 2016). Often, these children are at risk of physical and emotional abuse as a result. Poverty and its role in the lack of leisure time also make it challenging for parents to devote the additional time needed to educate special needs children (e.g. teaching Braille).

3.3 FRAGILE INSTITUTIONS

As a sub-continent, South Asia has undergone centuries of conflict, colonization, division and reformation, and faced natural disasters as a result of climatic volatility.[2] Though conflict in South Asia is termed 'intra-state', Boyden et al. (2002) argue that this term does not capture the transnational component of conflict in this region. Inequality, exploitation and forced choice are central themes in terms of how structural violence arising from fragile contexts reveals itself. In the present day, for most countries (e.g. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka), within-country conflict has led to conditions of oppression, fear, inequality and deprivation.

For the purposes of this review, fragile institutions are understood as situations where there is armed conflict and extreme oppression owing to political and religious propaganda. With conflict (either full-blown war or political fragility) come threats to

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[2] The 2004 tsunami in the region, the 2015 Nepal earthquake and regular drought are just some examples of the climatic fragility South Asia faces. While this is an important enhancer of violence against children and adolescents, it is beyond the scope of this review.

security and a weakening of resources that may already be limited. Mass displacement and consequentially separations within the family are inevitable outcomes. Women and children and those in poverty are most severely affected, for the reasons mentioned in previous sections and because the enforcement of state and law protections against them is weakest (Boyden et al., 2002).

Winter et al. (2001) argue that patriarchal values drive excessive militarism. Exploiting notions of hyper-masculinity, conflict and war leads societies to make soldiering a male rite of passage and proof of manhood. Moreover, religious or ethnic fundamentalism underlying conflict evokes notions of honour plus self-sacrifice as the ultimate test of masculinity. Fragile contexts essentially heighten structural violence that results from gender, age, socio-economic contexts and caste/ethnic discrimination. Solotaroff and Pande (2014) find that, during recent conflicts in Bangladesh (1971 war of independence), Sri Lanka (1983–2009 civil war) and Afghanistan and Pakistan, sexual and physical violence against women and girls were heightened.

3.3.1 Violence against girls and women
Violence against girls (child marriage, domestic abuse, restrictions on mobility) is heightened in times of conflict. Insecurity that comes with political instability and armed conflict is cited as a reason for marrying girls early. For example, UNICEF 2014 finds that fear of parents dying before they can marry off their children or see grandchildren is a strong driver of early marriage. Security concerns also underlie early marriage in conflict settings. Crumbling school infrastructure, coupled with threats to safety and distance to schools, reduces the already minimal chances girls have of gaining an education. For instance, in Afghanistan,

over 700 women revealed that school girls were routinely abducted to become brides for militant soldiers (UN Women, 2013). In Afghanistan in 2015, 92 children were abducted; in India in April 2015, Maoists reportedly abducted five girls aged between 10 and 13 years from West Bengal (Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, 2015).

Additionally, refugee girls are often married early in order to avoid stigma attached with rape and sexual abuse, which are rampant in camps (e.g. Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh; UNHCR, 2007). Resettlement of refugees by the state also brings economic insecurity, paving the way for child marriage, some arranged by the parents and some arranged by youth themselves who are in love (e.g. Bhutanese refugees in Nepal; Greik, 2013). Young girls in Nepal (Tol et al., 2010) and Afghanistan (UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014) may also be married early in order to avoid recruitment in armed conflict.

It is suggested that, 'by simply living in occupied areas (particularly conflict zones), women can be regarded as under custody by the armed forces and are at higher risk of abuse' (ACHR, 2007, cited in Solotaroff and Pande, 2014, p. 85). Research has consistently indicated that trafficking of women and children becomes elevated during times of armed conflict as law and order breaks down. Socio-economic contexts and gender intertwine to force vulnerable and desperate families to 'sell' their daughter or offer them to military personnel in order to survive. Moreover, refugee women and girls are at very high risk of rape and sexual assault, as shown in several reports on the refugee crisis globally and in South Asia (Huda, 2006).

It has been argued that, in the present day, sexual assault is not just a by-product of lawlessness, but has become a tool of terror used to humiliate, intimidate and exert power. Inequality and hyper-masculinity are central to understanding why sexual violence is used as a weapon of war. The military is known for its strict hierarchies, thereby creating a system that will foster inequality among the ranks. The patriarchy ensures men are given power and feel superior to women but not other men, unless they are in a position of power. We could speculate that, within the military structure, men who feel disempowered want to reclaim their power. Since women are *supposed* to be subordinate, men resort to sexual assault to feel in control and powerful again. Hyper-masculinity reveals itself in the brutal act of sexual violence itself. Additionally, conflict periods give men licence to exert their power over other men on the opposing side: raping another man's wife or daughter is often the ultimate loss of honour for that man when women and girls are thought of as 'belonging to' the man in the first place.

Studies suggest that, in situations of political instability and likely emergency legislation, there is an increase in the occurrence of 'children being detained, frequently without charge, and interrogations, commonly without the presence of a legal representative and/or parent' (Boyden, 2002, p. 48). Authorities in charge of protection have limited accountability owing to the unstable political context, which means children and adolescents are the easiest targets of rights violations.

There is also evidence that, with an increased number of refugees, as a direct outcome of armed conflict and social and political unrest, the number of street children will increase. For example, in Pakistan, it is

reported that 70 per cent of street children in the eastern cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad are of Afghan origin (Ali et al., 2004, cited in Khan and Hesketh, 2010, p. 655). The number of children who have special needs also increases, given the higher likelihood of physical injuries and poor nutrition in war-affected regions.

3.3.2 Physical, emotional, and sexual abuse at home and in schools

The risk of physical, emotional and sexual abuse at home and in schools is heightened in situations of political fragility or armed conflict (Slugget and Frederic, 2003; Panter-Brick et al., 2011; Charak and Koot, 2015), though there are mixed results across the region. In Sri Lanka, Sriskandarajah et al., (2015) studied 359 parent–child dyads in the north of the country, an area that has been heavily affected by war and natural disasters like tsunamis. They found that 'mass trauma', defined as exposure to war/conflict and tsunamis, had a greater impact than family violence on a child's overall health. In India, Charak and Koot (2015) studied child maltreatment among 702 adolescents aged 13–17 years in the state of Jammu, which is considered a conflict zone given its proximity to Kashmir. They found that six out of seven adolescents reported multiple maltreatment experiences, with severity ranging from minimal to moderate severity. On the other hand, Panter-Brick et al. (2011) found in Afghanistan that family violence predicted mental health problems (not including post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms) in a sample of children who had shown resilience to various socio-economic and war-related stressors.

There are a few explanations as to why children living in conflict-affected regions are likely to face more physical, emotional and sexual abuse. First, Slugget and

Frederic (2003) note that witnessing cruel and violent behaviours in the larger society consistently normalizes and increases tolerance for violence. As such, adults' threshold for violence may become recalibrated to their surroundings, giving rise to more frequent violence against children. Second, Sriskandarajah et al. (2015) suggest the stress load caused by trauma exposure may reduce the ability of adults to cope and react healthily to children, leading 'families to develop a more violent interaction' (p. 262). UNICEF Afghanistan (2014) finds that, despite it being illegal, teachers and students-in-charge are allowed to use physical punishment as they see fit, further normalizing violence in conflict-affected contexts. Thus, it is not surprising that conflict and instability increase the likelihood of physical, emotional and sexual abuse at home in schools.

Political, religious and armed conflict also has devastating effects on schools, often destroying school infrastructure and posing a threat for children attending (Skovdal et al., 2014). According to UNICEF (2016), 'violence is manifested as direct attacks on schools, teachers and students, military use of schools as barracks or bases for military operations, damage or closure of schools, and abduction of school children for military service' (p. 25). Though Afghanistan and Pakistan have experienced the highest number of attacks on schools (ibid.), Maoists in Nepal have also systematically targeted educational institutions (ACHR, 2006).

Moreover, with religious extremism on the rise globally and in the region (see Box 6), religious educational centres play an important role. Lys (2015) finds that while the research on corporal punishment in these establishments is inconclusive, given the sensitive nature of the issue, a few studies

BOX 6. NATIONALISM AS AN EMERGING FORM OF VIOLENCE

Boyden et al. (2002) note that nation-building and armed conflict have historically been imbedded in the sub-continent, with Bangladesh, India and Pakistan all building a national identity at the expense of ethnic minorities. With nationalism in its extreme form on the rise and political instability a common feature of the current democracy, the emerging threat to children and adolescents is the rise of polarized contexts where nationalism is quickly becoming a justification for the use of violence against children. Rooted in national and religious identities, this form of violence is increasingly becoming politicized. For example, in May 2017, a 17-year-old Muslim boy was stabbed to death in a train in India in an argument after he was called 'anti-national' (Bhardwaj, 2017). Incidents of 'lynching' Muslims over slaughtering cows, which Hindus worship, are becoming common news in India. Similarly, in Bangladesh, since 2014, secular bloggers who use social media to voice dissent over Islamic radicalism have been 'hacked' to death by religious extremists (Hammadi and Ghani, 2016). In both situations, the government response has been limited, with justice against the perpetrators slow; this has further perpetuated and validated this form of violence.

Violence due to nation-building is often as a result of inadequate laws that lead individuals towards statelessness and lack of citizenship (UNOHCHR, 2017). The resulting displacement of children and families is itself dangerous, with discrimination being prevalent across country borders (e.g., Rohingyas in Bangladesh and India). Once re-settled into other countries, displaced families face challenging daily experiences and may continue to experience insecurity due to possible deportation rulings (e.g., petition filed in Supreme Court to deport Rohingya refugees, HRLN, 2017).

show that violence in religious schools is at a similarly high level to what it is in other non-religious schools. For instance, in Bangladesh, Islam and Akhter (2016) cite a survey conducted by UNICEF and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs in 2008 and report that 90 per cent of children (9–18 years) in madrassas experience physical punishment.

3.3.3 Child labour

In conflict-affected settings, the probability of child labour is further exacerbated given that conflict inevitably changes family structures. In a region where most heads of households and main bread-winners are male, losing fathers or husbands in conflict (to death or injury, or if they are away fighting) often places the responsibility for providing for the family on children. There is a strongly gendered component in this, since, in India (Kashmir and Punjab), Pakistan (Sindh province) and Sri Lanka, religious restrictions and social stigma limit the coping abilities of widows, who are not allowed to work outside the home or to talk to other men. Moreover, if a widow's husband was a militant, the added stigma of this increases the chances of the household having to depend on children for income (Boyden et al., 2002). In such situations, it is boys who are more likely to work in

public settings, given the security threats in fragile conditions and the need to protect girls. In Afghanistan, UNICEF (2007) notes that the young 'men' who provide for the family are expected (often without choice) to do anything that will bring in an income and subsistence to their home. Additionally, hazardous work takes on new meaning in conflict settings where landmines and unexploded ordnance still abound (e.g. in Afghanistan), given the high possibility of injury for children and adolescents who are outside the home to work.

3.3.4 Child soldiers
An important form of dangerous child 'labour' in armed conflict is the recruitment of children to work as soldiers. The Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions (1977), Article 4, under Fundamental Guarantees, states '(c) Children who have not attained the age of 15 years shall neither be recruited in the armed forces or groups nor allowed to take part in hostilities.' Despite this, evidence suggests children have been recruited in Afghanistan (UNICEF, 2007; Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, 2015), India (Child Soldiers International and HAQ CRC, 2016), Nepal (Ogura, 2004) and Sri Lanka (Harendra de Silva, 2013).

Recruitment does not always involve force. Often, institutions that are run/supported by military groups are training grounds that corrupt children's 'worldviews' (Singh et al., 2006). For instance, in Sri Lanka, Harendra de Silva (2013) finds that, during the time of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) conflict, children in LTTE schools and orphanages were moulded and trained in a military environment and 'children were taught to sing songs with god-like veneration of the leader and his

vision' (p. 276). It is thus clear that child agency in armed conflict is complex, and debates have concluded that it is important to understand what structural factors exist that create conditions for children to be 'forced to choose' to enlist (Pande, 2015). Additionally, in armed conflict settings, children are often restricted from acting independently and are highly influenced by/under the control of the adults around them, but there is also evidence of resilience and coping (Boyden and Berry, 2004). Pande (2015) calls for more research on children's responses to armed conflict that go beyond a victimhood narrative, so as to enhance programmatic responses and strategies.

Socio-cultural structural violence overlaps with fragile institutions to produce conditions for child recruitment into conflict. First, gender plays a role. In Sri Lanka, the LTTE recruited girls to a notably greater extent than boys as 'Black Tigers' for use in suicide bombings, possibly because they were better able to pass into high-security areas without arousing suspicion (Boyden et al., 2002). The belief that girls are more protected and less likely to engage in 'aggressive' behaviours is also likely to underlie girls' recruitment for such operations – although children in general are often less likely to be searched or questioned by authorities because of the belief that they are unlikely to engage in something militaristic.

Another component of gender that strongly drives child recruitment is that of hero worship and martyrdom, which is frequently used as a strategy to get child solider volunteers (Harendra de Silva, 2013). Rooted in machoism, the history of hero worship can be traced back to religious traditions that immortalize the dead and notions of honour and patriotism. In ancient

Tamil Nadu in India, where death as a result of war/conflict was rewarded with land, these notions were reinforced (ibid.).

Age-based structural factors driving child recruitment include ageism: Harendra de Silva (2013) and Boyden and Berry (2004) note that children's idealism and their lack of comprehension of death make it easy to manipulate them into becoming soldiers. Indeed, in 1991, children were used in mass frontal attacks, such as the one on the Elephant Pass army camp in Sri Lanka. In India, there is evidence to suggest children as young as 6 years are forcibly recruited into armed opposition groups by Naxalites (Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, 2015).

There is also evidence that socio-economic hardship plays a role in child recruitment. For children living in poverty who have limited access to education and poor prospects of employment, joining powerful military groups that reward them with food and other rations may be the only option left (Tol et al., 2010; Harendra de Silva, 2013).

In terms of caste and ethnicity, militant groups capitalize on the suppression of families and children in lower-caste or marginalized ethnic groups. Lower-caste or marginalized ethnic group youths attempt to escape this oppressive system by joining the militant movement (Tol et al., 2010).

3.4 IMPACT OF STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE ON PSYCHO-SOCIAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

The above discussion shows that structural violence reveals itself through themes of inequality, discrimination, ageism, adultism, poverty, classism, casteism and forced choice, and manifests in several types of direct violence against boys and girls. The literature also indicates that direct violence against children and adolescents is linked with a variety of psycho-social challenges. For instance, domestic violence is associated with a range of adverse physical, mental and sexual and reproductive problems for its victims (Abramsky et al., 2011; WHO, 2013). Evidence across multiple studies finds that those experiencing domestic violence are significantly more likely to experience serious health (physical and mental) problems than those who have not experienced such violence in Bangladesh (Azziz-Baumgartner et al., 2014; Ziaei et al., 2016), Bhutan (UNICEF Bhutan, 2012), India (Niaz and Hassan, 2006; Vachher and Sharma, 2010), Maldives (Fulu, 2007), Nepal (Puri et al., 2011; Childreach Nepal, 2013; Mishra et al., 2013), Pakistan (Rabbani et al., 2008; Ayub et al., 2009; Haqqi and Faizi, 2010; Ali et al., 2013) and Sri Lanka (Perera et al., 2011).

Physical, emotional and sexual abuse of children and adolescents has also been shown to have negative links in the region to a variety of psycho-social problems, such as low self-esteem, guilt, confusion, depression and fear (Slugget and Frederic, 2003; Deb, 2005; Malik, 2010; Bakker, 2011; Charak and Koot 2015; NCWC, 2016; Zakar, 2016). Similarly, studies on domestic violence and war/and conflict have consistently found that children who witness or experience violence as children are more likely to normalize it (Boyden et al., 2002; Mishra et al., 2010; Deb et al., 2016), to grow up as abusers (Naved et al., 2011; Jejeebhoy et al., 2013; Fleming et al., 2015; Nanda et al., 2015) and to report poorer mental health (Panter-Brick et al., 2011),

given that adolescence is the time when patterns of behaviour that predict future behaviours are formed (Samuels and Jones, 2015). Witnessing abuse has consistently emerged as one of the strongest drivers of domestic violence, as found in several studies globally (Barker et al., 2013), in South Asia (Naved et al., 2011; Nanda et al., 2015), in systematic reviews (Gil-Gonzalez et al., 2008) and in meta-analysis (Jespersen et al., 2009). Thus, sexism and its consequences are maintained and passed on to the next generation.

There is also evidence that child labour is linked to poor psycho-social health. For example, Hall et al. (2016) found that child weavers in Afghanistan, especially girls, reported symptoms in line with mental health issues, such as difficulty sleeping, problems concentrating, restlessness, being sad, lonely, angry, fearful or anxious, lacking an appetite and being forgetful.

Being at the receiving end of violence in any form is distressing but the helplessness of being in a never-ending cycle of violence is likely a compounding factor in the psycho-social health of child and adolescents who face inequality, discrimination, exploitation and lack of agency in many aspects of their lives. For instance, facing gender discrimination by itself is linked to poor mental health. In a study with over 2,000 10–19-year-old adolescents in India, Pillai et al. (2008) found gender discrimination as measured by occurrence of either being treated differently (e.g. compared with a sibling of the opposite gender) or being restricted from certain activities by parents because of one's gender was associated with anxiety, depression, behavioural problems and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder – with urban adolescents and girls more likely to report this link.

The internalization of social norms expected of children and adolescents is a major driver of the way structural violence operates. Kabeer et al. (2011) found the Afghani women they interviewed had struggled to meet the expectations of ideal wife, mother, daughter and daughter-in-law but had to 'put up with their situation regardless of how they felt. The weight of tradition, the internalisation of inferiority, the fear of losing their children, of being sent back in shame to their parents' home, of being expelled from family and community combined with pressures, often backed by physical violence, from dominant members of the family and the wider religious community' (p. 28) left them alone and with no choice. This self-sacrificing attitude coupled with loneliness and an inability to share and seek help, given society's taboos and stigmas, is without a doubt a contributor to poor psycho-social health.

4 INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE TO STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

This section presents a brief overview of current national and sub-national laws, policies, services and programmes, taking note of how they respond to structural violence arising as a result of gender, age, socio-economic context, caste/ethnicity and situations of fragility.

4.1 PREVENTION

There are numerous preventative programmes in place to address violence against children and adolescents, particularly as increasing numbers of international and national actors have focused their attention on structural issues (mainly gender, socio-economic inequalities and armed conflict related inequalities) in the region. For instance, Kabeer et al. (2011) note that there is a strong emphasis on gender mainstreaming in donor-funded programmes and projects in Afghanistan.

As noted in the previous section, the socio-cultural underpinnings of structural

India, Gujarat, Pruthvi Rajghar village: Naval, aged 17, had her marriage stopped by caste leaders who took a stand against child marriage in this rural area.
© UNICEF/South Asia 2016/Bronstein

violence stem from discriminatory social norms related to gender, age and caste. While programming to address structural violence in South Asia does not use structural violence terminology, several programmes do in fact focus on changing the social norms that underlie such violence. For instance, Solotaroff and Pande (2014) conducted a mapping of interventions in South Asia focused on violence against girls and found that changing social norms was a core component of many programmes in the region. Strategies in this regard involve a range of activities, including engaging men and boys and community gate-keepers (e.g. Awaaz Do in India, supported by Oxfam India; Mohanty, 2017).

A good practice programming example is the case of engaging men to change the customs of *chhaupadi* in Nepal. Action Works Nepal (AWON), a Kathmandu-based NGO, has a strategy whereby a man is judged to be a 'positive motivator' by at least 10 community members (Lamsal, 2017). These 'role model men' become part of advocacy groups interfacing with local leaders and government functionaries and also are encouraged to become involved in domestic work at home. The underlying assumption is that role model men will have the ability to mould other men, given that power dynamics between sexes legitimize knowledge and information from men more than from women. AWON has 20 role model men in Jumla, Nepal, and 4 villages have been declared *chhaupadi*-free by the community.

Another approach is to create contexts where girls and women have more agency and power to make decisions on their own lives, through the provision of life skills. A holistic approach ensures that socio-cultural and economic systems are addressed simultaneously; in this regard, improving

employment opportunities is another integral way in which programmatic change is crucial for addressing socio-economic and gender-based structural violence. NGO efforts have produced some good practice examples, such as in Bangladesh, where girls are gaining awareness of their rights to refuse marriage and of pathways they can follow for protection once they do so. Recent media coverage in Bangladesh has shown that projects such as that put in place by UNICEF Bangladesh, implemented by CARE Bangladesh in collaboration with the central and local government, are having an impact in terms of young girls reporting their parents to the state through administrative officials or the judiciary, to prevent their marriage (*The Daily Sun*, 2017).

Similarly, the regional PREVENT Framework, developed by Partners for Prevention (P4P), serves as a comprehensive framework for action to prevent gender-based violence and includes, among other strategies, a focus on implementing community programmes and policies to improve women's employment opportunities and increase their influence in household decisions (P4P, 2012).

In their comprehensive mapping, Solotaroff and Pande (2014) identify the following best practices for interventions focused on the prevention of violence against women and girls:

- Expect backlash and prepare for it by building enough time into the programme to understand the communities' norms from the ground up.
- Prioritize evaluation of current and future interventions, particularly in the area of sexual and physical violence against girls (as against all children), sexual harassment, honour killings, trafficking and custodial violence.
- Engage men and boys for long-term change.

- Harness the power of campaigns and media to raise awareness and break taboos.
- Coordination between laws and institutions that enforce them is critical.
- Training that is intensive, repetitive and evaluated is needed.
- Engage gate-keepers who would be opposed to changing norms as allies.
- Engage bystanders and other household members.
- Intervene early to identify those at risk.
- Be sensitive to adolescent-specific needs and vulnerabilities.

Violence against girls programming aside, WHO's (2014) analysis of violence in South Asia (which does not include Pakistan and Sri Lanka) suggests the region has fewer large-scale preventative efforts regarding child maltreatment than other regions. A systematic review of interventions on positive parenting (which is linked to lower rates of abuse) in lower-middle-income countries found only one in South Asia (in Pakistan) (Knerr et al., 2013). However, although there is limited programming, NGOs are playing an important role in generating data on child abuse, providing mental health services for children who face violence and building awareness (e.g. Save the Children in Bangladesh; Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women in Bhutan; Sahil in Pakistan). These strategies are the first steps needed to address structural violence underlying child maltreatment, though there are very few to no efforts to include components on adultism and ageism in programmatic efforts. Recognizing the need for culturally specific definitions of positive parenting, in 2013 the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation's South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC) published a South Asian edition of the book *Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting*.

With respect to child labour, child trafficking and recruitment of child soldiers, several programmes (by government, NGOs and international NGOs) are being implemented in all eight countries (see Box 7 for good practice in India). An examination of the US Department of Labor's recommendations for programmes addressing child labour in South Asia[3] indicated that one of the major gaps is that in almost all countries there is a lack of national and provincial data on child labour and on the effectiveness of current programming. This makes it difficult to ascertain how child labour programmes are addressing structural violence.

However, a recent analysis of interventions on child labour in South Asia (Boateng, 2017) reveals that, at the international level, ILO, UNICEF and other organizations such as Save the Children, Terre des Hommes and Plan International lead the way. Save the Children, for instance, is working with authorities and civil society organizations to free children engaged in labour and to withdraw 50,000 child domestic workers by addressing parental expectations of child labour, tapping into both socio-economic and age-based structural violence. At the regional level are several organizations, including the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation, the South Asia Coordinating Group on Action against Violence against Children and the Global March Against Child Labour, to name a few. The activities of regional-level efforts are aimed predominantly at changing and improving legislation, providing technical assistance and legal or policy advocacy (ibid.).

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[3] https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/asia-pacific

BOX 7. GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE FROM INDIA: AN ANTI-TRAFFICKING NETWORK

To address the root causes of child and adult trafficking, the Indian government has undertaken an ambitious programme. Specialist anti-trafficking police units are deployed throughout the country, mandated to facilitate inter-agency coordination for victims. Additionally, a network (consisting of district collectors (administrators), superintendents of police departments, local police, the Women Development and Child Welfare Department, district rural development authorities, NGOs and community and youth groups) has been established to focus on social mobilization, paying particular attention to gender discrimination and related issues. Together, the units and the network monitor interventions, provide feedback and collect and analyse data related to trafficking. In December 2014, there were 225 units established across the country. The networks have high youth participation and focus on positive messages to sensitize police and judicial officials and to help establish livelihoods for victims. More than 20,000 police personnel have been trained on victim identification, implementation of the new legal framework and victim-centred investigations.

Sources: UNICEF (2008), UNODC (2013).

One way of addressing structural violence for child labourers or children in armed conflict lies in improving access to education. As noted in the previous section, unequal access to education intersects with gender and socio-economic forms of structural violence across several types of interpersonal violence. The 2016–2021 Regional Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of All Forms of Child Labour in South Asia put forth by SAIEVAC, for instance, proposes awareness-raising and capacity development of specific target groups; addressing poverty-related structural violence through legal and policy review of concerned states' social policy; and reviewing current status related to free and compulsory higher education. Similarly, Save the Children's work on improving outcomes for children in armed conflict is focused on tackling the misuse of educational institution infrastructure in Nepal and use of community-based schooling and alternate learning programmes in Afghanistan (Davies, 2012). As a result of these efforts, learning outcomes improved between 2008 and 2010 in both countries (ibid.).

4.2 RESPONSE

Strong governance and the enactment of laws and policies are crucial to reduce violence against children and adolescents. And yet limited attention is paid to the quality of government responses to structural violence – perhaps because structural violence itself is an emerging conceptualization in the social protection sector.

Given the large number of interpersonal violence types reviewed in the previous sections, it is not possible to conduct a thorough legal and policy review in all eight countries. However, below are some key points that emerged on the role of governance, laws, policies and justice and treatment services in reinforcing or reducing structural inequality and discrimination.

TABLE 1 AVAILABILITY OF LEGAL PROVISIONS AND POLICIES FOR CHILD PROTECTION IN SOUTH ASIA

	Afghanistan[a]	Bangladesh[a]	Bhutan[a]	India[a]	Maldives[a]	Nepal[a]	Pakistan[d]	Sri Lanka[d]
National action plans								
Child maltreatment	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IPV	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Sexual violence	✓[1]	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Child labour/trafficking[b]	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓[1]	✓
Laws								
Legal age of marriage (male/female)	18/16	No minimum[d]	18/18	21/18	18/18	20/20	16/18	18/18
Against child sexual abuse (statutory rape)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NA	✓
Ban on corporal punishment in all settings	✓[2]	✓[2]	✓	✓[2]	✗	✗	✓[2]	✓[2]
Against rape in marriage	✗	✗[d]	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
Against sexual violence without rape	NA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Against non-contact sexual violence	NA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NA
Against female infanticide[b]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Minimum age (work/hazardous work)[c]	15/18	14/18	13/18	No/14	16/18	14/16	No/14	14/18
Against child trafficking[c]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Providing for victim compensation	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Providing for victim legal representation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Notes: NA = Data not available, [1]sub-national, [2]either in school or at home, not both.
Sources: [a]WHO (2014); [b]Solotaroff and Pande (2014); [c]US Department of Labor country reports; [d]Various sources.

Table 1 presents data for all eight countries on legal provisions, compiled from the 2014 WHO Global Status Report on Violence Prevention, Solotaroff and Pande, 2014, and US Department of Labor's country reports[4] and various other sources such as national plans available online to reflect updated laws.

4.2.1 Laws and policies

Solotaroff and Pande (2014) note that laws and policies, and the bodies enforcing them, are crucial ways to facilitate change in the way structural violence operates. Studies find that, on the whole, the region has national plans and laws in place for protecting against interpersonal forms of violence. Moreover, recent amendments that aim to improve protection take into account the structural aspects of interpersonal violence. For example, a recent amendment to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act in India makes it an offence to coerce or force anyone from SCs and STs to beg; become involved in bonded labour; perform menial jobs such as disposing of/carrying human or animal carcasses or digging graves; or do manual scavenging. The Act also protects against any SC/ST girl/woman being linked to a deity, idol, object of worship, temple or other religious institution as a *devadasi*, or any other similar

4   https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/asia-pacific

practice. Similarly, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (2015), notes that, in May 2015, Afghanistan's government signed a Safe Schools Declaration, aimed at protecting education facilities from military use during conflict, though the report notes that the use of schools for military purposes continued. In 2016, the Pakistani senate passed a bill that criminalizes sexual assault against minors, child pornography, and trafficking (The Express Tribune, 2016).

Box 8 reviews Bhutan's child protection policy, which is considered a model in its inclusivity and holistic approach towards reducing violence against children.

Despite national plans and laws/policies, then, protection and response remain weak, particularly for children and adolescents. While a comprehensive legal analysis was not possible for this review, research consistently shows that implementation remains a major challenge in the region (HRW, 2015; UNICEF, 2016). When there is a lack of recognition of the ways in which children are differently affected by structural violence, protections for children can slip between the cracks of laws and policies.

For example, labour laws in Bangladesh often exclude the informal sectors where child labour is most prevalent (e.g. domestic work, street work and work on small agricultural farms with fewer than five employees). More importantly, without a minimum age for labour in India and Pakistan, a blind eye is turned to very young children becoming involved in unpaid or paid labour. Khan and Lyon (2015) find that

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BOX 8. GOOD PRACTICE OF AN *INCLUSIVE* CHILD PROTECTION ACT IN BHUTAN

Bhutan's Child Care and Protection Act 2011 is an example of an inclusive and comprehensive child protection plan (Child Frontiers, 2013).

Who: The Act focuses on all children (defined as being under 18 years), and in particular on children in conflict with the law and children in difficult circumstances, and offences perpetrated against children. It also addresses the role of different actors, including the central and local governments, justice services, education institutions, the media, communities and families, in both preventing and responding to child protection concerns.

Child protection issues covered: The Act includes detailed reference to assault and cruelty to a child, child battery, harsh or degrading correction or punishment, employment of a child for begging, serving alcoholic beverages to children, providing children with narcotic drugs, psychotropic or chemical substances, invasion of a child's privacy, engagement of a child for the commission of a crime, sale of children, child prostitution and pornography and trafficking of a child. For child protection issues not listed, the Act refers to the Penal Code for guidance, including the penalties involved. Child justice issues are given considerable attention.

children aged 15–17 years are likely to be engaged in hazardous work yet in most countries are above the minimum age law protections. Similar issues are noted with juvenile justice laws; the minimum age at which prosecution is permitted varies across countries, but children under 18 can be tried as adults (e.g. in India), depending on the type of offence.

Moreover, there is a long way to go before laws themselves that are discriminatory and perpetuate inequality are addressed and corrected. Solotaroff and Pande (2014) argue that, overall in the region, most laws and policies place women and girls in a victim role, reducing them to simply needing protection and, as a result, further curbing their movement and freedom (also noted in Huda, 2006). They also find that, although many countries have constitutional clauses on gender equality, many legal provisions discriminate against women and girls. For example, in Afghanistan, the Shiite Personal Status Law 2009 allows husbands to discontinue financial support to women who do not perform their sexual duties (ICG, 2013, cited in Solotaroff and Pande, 2014, p. 82). Rape and sexual violence is considered an offence only when it is in the public domain, with no laws against marital rape in Afghanistan, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Most recently, laws in place to protect women are facing dilution by government bodies. The Ministry of Women and Child Development in India wrote a letter to the National Commission for Women to open a window for men to register complaints of false cases against them in its online complaint system (Ashok, 2017). Additionally, under Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code, marital rape is only considered a civil offence if sex is forced with a wife who is less than 15 years of age. Recently,

however, pressure to criminalize marital rape was met with severe obstacles at both government and judicial levels (Nigam, 2015; Live Law, 2017). Providing such safeguards to men in an already unequal society will further downplay the severity of crimes, isolate women as liars and make laws ineffective.

Discriminatory laws hurt boys as well, since gender inequality rooted in patriarchal expectations of masculinity and femininity harms *both* boys and girls. The US Department of Labor's country report suggests the 2009 Elimination of Violence Against Women Act in Afghanistan does not protect males, even though *bacha bazi* against boys persists. Similar inequality is noted in services: even though shelters exist for trafficked female victims, none exists for trafficked male victims in India (UNODC, 2013) and Nepal (Baumann and Dharel, 2015).

Systematic institutional discrimination against boys and girls who identify as LGBT is also found in the region. For example, as of May 2017, under laws that prohibit 'unnatural offences' (e.g. sodomy) and 'indecent acts', homosexuality is criminalized in all countries in the region, except Nepal (Carrol and Mendoza, 2017). Not only is the law discriminatory against LGBT children and adults, but also there is discrimination against male homosexuality. For example, in India, under the Penal Code 1860, Section 377, 'the law is technically only applicable to men, though women are subject to it' (ibid., p. 124). Additionally, in 2015, more than 1,500 people were arrested under Section 377 of the Code, of whom 800 were minors, suggesting that age-related structural violence plays a strong role in discriminatory laws.

An added challenge is that, in several countries, exceptions based on religious or cultural grounds make it complicated to uphold protection laws equally for all children. For example, in India, the minimum age for marriage is 18 years except under Mohammedan Law; in Nepal, it is 18 years but with parental consent it is 16 years; in Maldives, with religious exceptions it is less than 18 years; and in Sri Lanka, it is 18 years but this does not apply for Muslims – with no minimum age for marriage in the Muslim Marriage and Divorce Act of 1951 (UNICEF and UNFPA, 2016). In Afghanistan, civil law states a minimum age of 18 years but marriage for girls is allowed at 15 years with a father's consent; additionally, the Shiite Personal Status Law allows marriage at 'puberty', while Shari'a Law sets no age limit (UNICEF Afghanistan, 2014).

The conflicting/parallel nature of these legal systems makes enforcement difficult, and harmful practices like child marriages are often validated and reinforced. Informal justice systems in Afghanistan also prioritize communal harmony over and above individual rights (Coburn and Dempsey, 2010). Moreover, Moghadam (2002) notes that, in Afghanistan, 'tribal feudalism' that ties Afghan patriarchy to nomadic pastoralism and settled agriculture and that situates women and children as belonging to males has created major barriers to the central state introducing and implementing 'modernising programmes' (cited in Kabeer et al., 2011, p. 9). For example, state initiatives during the 20th century to discourage excessive expenditure on bride price and ban the practice of polygamy resulted in tribal rebellion to government authority.

Another form of discrimination is evident when children's rights are subsumed under a larger framework of human rights. For instance, in Pakistan, Jabeen (2013) analyses the child protection policies and laws in Pakistan and finds that 'the most striking feature of these legislative reviews and compilations, which is important with regard to child protection conceptualisation, enactment and practice in Pakistan, is that neither the constitution nor any single law directly covers child protection issue ... The Constitution of Pakistan guarantees "every citizen, wherever he may be" (children are not mentioned separately) fundamental rights' (p. 162). UNICEF (2008) also notes that most international and regional standards on trafficking in human beings focus on adults, with child trafficking as a sub-issue.

The problem with explicitly excluding children is that structural violence may have different impacts on children to those it has on adults. For instance, as noted with age-related structural violence, adultism and ageism often intersect, which leave children voiceless, optionless and discriminated against. This is also often reflected in the legal and policy framework of the country: in Afghanistan for instance, use of children in pornography or distribution of pornographic material featuring children is not criminalized, whereas adult pornography is (US Department of Labor country reports).[5] Similarly with corporal punishment, several countries in the region (e.g. Pakistan) have codes and rules that confer significant discretion on parents or guardians, based on the notion that parent/guardians act in the best interest of the child (Holden and Ashraf, 2016).

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5   https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/asia-pacific

Existing evidence shows that, while justice system responses to juvenile offenders can be discriminatory by age, they remain somewhat inclusive regarding socio-economic background. In terms of age-based discrimination, UNICEF (2006) found that a 7-year-old child who committed petty theft could be sentenced to up to 11 years, whereas an adult would not be given a sentence that harsh for the same crime. Similarly, adolescents aged 16–18 years are subject to adult penalties (Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka), often face harsh punishment for a small crime (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka) and can be subject to life imprisonment (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka) or the death penalty (Bangladesh, Pakistan).

On the plus side, some countries have juvenile courts (Afghanistan, India, Maldives) and specialized children's magistrates (Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka), though these tend to hold proceedings in the same way as they do for adult courts (Ghimire, 2008; Advocacy Forum-Nepal, 2013). There is also a push to reduce the number of juveniles in prison. For example, Afghanistan, India and Sri Lanka are highly likely to place juvenile offenders under the supervision of a parent, probation officer or 'any fit person' that effectively results in their detention, while in Maldives children are likely to come under house arrest. Bhutan has launched a Child Justice Bench in 2017 that will attempt to keep children out of court and look for alternatives such as rehabilitation and reintegration (Lhamo, 2017).

In terms of socio-economic background, studies find that special sentencing that takes into account children's circumstances is required in all eight countries (e.g. through the Social Inquiry Report, a screening tool developed by UNICEF and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled in Afghanistan; UNICEF, 2013). However, courts do not consistently ensure that background reports are produced, and the capacity of probation officers to adequately assess children's backgrounds is weak.

According to Jabeen (2014), 'Judiciary, even at its best, cannot make up for what children suffer at the hands of police' (p. 130). Police responses often reflect larger societal patterns of discrimination and inequality, with more severe consequences for children. Police officers harass, extort and abuse rural villagers (Boyden et al., 2002), those who work in the commercial sex industry (Cheema, 2014; Hameed, 2017) and victims of sexual abuse (Senaratna, 2015; Ranasinghe et al., 2016). Across all countries, police are especially cruel to children who face additional vulnerabilities. Girls are especially at risk: studies indicate that police often lack gender sensitivity (Samuels et al., 2017); female victims face emotional and sexual harassment and often struggle with a lack of female officers in police stations (Karmaliani et al., 2017; Naved et al., 2017). Solotaroff and Pande (2014) state that inadequate training on gender issues is partly to blame for the discriminatory attitude against women survivors/victims in the region. The importance and effectiveness of having women and child desks is noted for Bangladesh (Samuels et al., 2017), Bhutan (NCWC, 2016), Nepal (Ghimire and Samuels, 2017) and Sri Lanka (Jayaweera et al., 2014), though these face several challenges (see Box 9).

4.2.2 Governance
One emerging theme across the region is a severe lack of participation in governance by the groups most affected by structural

BOX 9. WOMEN- AND CHILD-FRIENDLY DESKS IN BHUTAN, NEPAL AND SRI LANKA

The Royal Bhutan Police has established several child-friendly units (NCWC, 2016). As of 2016, this included a Women and Child Protection Division in Thimphu, three women and child protection units (in Thimphu, Phuentsholing and Paro) and women and child protection desks in eight police stations (Wangdue, Samdrup Jongkhar, Trashigang, Gelephu, Mongar, Tsirang, Trongsa and Samtse). In addition to current officers undergoing training on gender sensitivity, there is a push to include gender training in the police training curriculum. Children (mostly older boys) are seeking out the help of police in incidents of community fighting and sexual abuse (UNICEF Bhutan, 2016).

In Nepal, women and children service centres (WCSCs) have been established since 2010 across the 75 districts in the country and 7 sites in the Kathmandu Valley (Nepal Police, 2017). Of these, 40 districts have juvenile justice offices. The WCSCs are responsible for prevention, investigation, capacity-building for the police, crime data management and victim support. In 2013, more than 3,000 cases were reported to WCSCs, of which approximately 1,487 were resolved and 494 were taken to court (Nepal Police Crime Investigation Department, 2013). The project, which is funded by the Asian Development Bank, also developed two specialized training manuals on gender-responsive counselling and investigation skills. The project also reports increased trust between police and the community, and a common commitment to end violence against women and girls. However, the project's progress report for 2013 indicates that, while efforts have been made to have women-in-charge in WCSCs, recent transfers of officers have left some posts without female officers (ibid.).

In Sri Lanka, women and child desks (WCDs) are present in all divisional headquarter police stations. Women officers have significantly removed barriers to reporting. However, Jayaweera et al. (2014) found infrastructure constraints were a barrier to the privacy desired by both victims and women officers in WCDs. Moreover, the child friendliness of the WCDs was limited by the fact that they were mostly in small towns and had constraints in terms of access to furniture, telephones, modern IT equipment (only one main desk had access to a computer and voice recorders) and transport. Lastly, language constraints (lack of fluency in either Sinhalese or Tamil) created challenges in ensuring the WCDs were beneficial for all groups of people equally.

violence. Thus, women, ethnic minorities, people from lower castes and people with disabilities are under-represented in governments across all countries. Boyden et al. (2002) note that 'governments in South Asia are characterized by the hegemony of indigenous elites and the effective exclusion of large numbers of ethnic or religious minorities and members of the social underclass'.

In Nepal, for example, Tol et al. (2010) note that ethnic inequality is visible in the lack of ethnic diversity in the government. Dhakal (2014) and Paudel (2016) find that the majority of civil servants are Brahmin: in 2012, out of a total of 271,577 applicants, 39 per cent were from the Brahmin caste, 15 per cent were Chhetri, 5 per cent Magar, 4 per cent Newar and about 3 per cent Tharu (Terai indigenous caste).

Institutionalized elitism, manifested as a lack of equal participation of all citizens in government, propagates inequality and discrimination and is also a strong driver of conflict conditions. In Nepal, restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990 eventually led to the Maoist insurgency, with the conflict declared a 'people's war' as a result of persistent inequality among socio-economic and caste/ethnic groups. This was also the case in Sri Lanka, where the government did not safeguard Tamil minority interests (Harendra de Silva, 2013). The Naxalite movement in Bihar also stems from frustrations faced by the Dalit community, which experienced social exclusion even after joining government positions (Rao, 2010).

Solotaroff and Pande (2014) find that women's political participation has increased in all South Asian countries but gender inequalities remain institutionalized, with women making up only 14.6 per cent of the civil service (Dhakal, 2014). Having limited numbers of women in leadership and in the political sphere means there is a lack of female role models for young girls to look up to; it can also be assumed that young girls' needs are more likely to be ignored when women are not involved in policy-making. Recently, in Sri Lanka, an open letter to the government from individuals and organizations expressed concern that, even though members of government and civil society had collaboratively drafted the initial 2016 National Human Rights Action Plan, the final draft of this had not been circulated for public comment (*Sri Lanka Brief*, 2017). As of March 2017, the Plan is still not available to the public, and there is worry that it will drop critical elements related to gender equality and women's rights. Restrictions on women's roles and mobility, and norms that the public sphere

is only for men, have an impact on women's public participation (Cheema, 2014; UNDP, 2014a). A report on women's political participation in the Asia-Pacific region finds that women's socio-economic background (and caste background) in the public space is protective of their leadership potential, given that women from disadvantaged circumstances are *forced* to develop skills that help them avigate and cope with challenges in their lives.

What also emerged from a brief reading of the literature was that the judicial system faces numerous challenges (e.g. coordination with other justice systems, reliance on experts on child protection when none exist, infrastructure needs, etc.), but in many of the countries in the region (e.g. Sri Lanka, see Goonesekere and Amarasuriya, 2013) it is one of the more effective institutions in terms of providing justice. Much of this is because the judiciary is a more powerful legislative branch than other justice systems. On the other hand, the literature suggests the power differentials between the police and citizens create an imbalance such that civilians are often at the mercy of the police, with corruption, the patriarchy and a lack of skilled personnel interlocking to provide inadequate support to victims of violence.

In addition, widespread corruption at all levels complicates the implementation of laws and policies (Samuels et al., 2017). The need for accountability in governance, especially at local levels, is thus central to ensuring implementation occurs in a timely and equitable manner. For instance, in India, the Ministry of Labour coordinates the response to bonded labour, while district- and sub-divisional-level vigilance committees provide advice to the courts on bonded labour issues (Silva and Joseph,

2012). There is a Supreme Court order in place that requires district vigilance committees to undertake surveys to identify and release those in bonded labour. However, the official report puts bonded labour numbers at zero, suggesting that poor implementation is pervasive (National Crime Records Bureau, 2014).

Poor governance ultimately leads to lack of trust between people and the government (Cheema, 2014). UNICEF Afghanistan (2014) finds that local governance draws on secular law and interpretations of Islam, making customary laws of tribal codes and customs the first point of formal protection. The report cites a 2005 Ministry of Justice report that finds that 90 per cent of Afghans turn to 'non-state legal systems due to lack of "trust and confidence" and the "physical absence and low capacity" of state legal institutions' (p. 38). Customary laws are often in conflict with international regulations, and highly likely to discriminate against women and children. For instance, men represent women in courts and adults represent children, as both women's and children's testimony is considered to hold less weight (ibid.). UNICEF Afghanistan (forthcoming) finds that *jigras*, which are traditional community courts, are governed by neither Islam nor the government's rules, and instead follow the code of Pashtunwali, which is focused on maintaining honour. The report indicates that *jigras* often allow and encourage practices of *baad and badal* (i.e. giving away a daughter to settle debts).

However, it is possible to create a bridge between citizenry and state, as in Nepal, where the government's Local Governance and Community Development Programme includes women and girls' groups, citizen forums and youth networks, which function as community governance mechanisms.

4.2.3 Health services

Much like for justice-related protection, access to quality health services is uneven as a result of the structural underpinnings of violence. Basnyat (2015) suggests 'structural violence conveys a message about who is entitled to health care and what a society emphasizes and expects regarding acceptable health behavior' (p.1). Several studies note that poverty and gender often perpetuate a state of ill-health, which is exacerbated in times of conflict and instability (Subramanian et al., 2007). Health inequities are apparent, for instance, in lower rates of health-seeking behaviour among those who are most oppressed or marginalized. This is particularly true for girls and women who face domestic violence and sexual abuse; help-seeking behaviour is generally low given that there is a culture of silence around disclosing domestic violence, which is considered a private matter (Surtees, 2003; Sahavagi et al., 2015). Moreover, adolescent brides are less likely to seek help, given social and age-related hierarchies (Hamal, 2010). This is also true for physical, emotional and sexual abuse at home and in schools, and for those who are in commercial sex: throughout the region, the topic is taboo and stigmatized, deterring victims from seeking help (Slugget and Frederic, 2003; Harendra de Silva, 2009; Basnyat, 2015; Hameed, 2017).

Several institutional factors drive norms around help-seeking behaviours. For instance, families in poverty are unlikely to have quality health care access, more likely to find the costs burdensome and more likely to deal with stigma around seeking mental health care or physical health care for sexual abuse (Nagai et al., 2007; Jayasinghe, 2010; Tol et al., 2010). For instance, despite development of the Basic Package of Health Services in Afghanistan, which, among other things,

aims to provide cost-effective services, Trani et al. (2010) found that, among 5,000 families in Afghanistan, disabled people and those from the poorest households faced higher out-of-pocket expenditures than those who were not disabled and those from richer quintiles. Moreover, only 18.5 per cent of female-headed households accessed health centres. Trani et al. suggested that distance to facilities, lack of female medical staff and cultural norms were reasons for inequitable access and the inequitable costs of health care.

This is also the case in Sri Lanka, where, despite good coverage of basic health services, Nagai et al. (2007) found that, after decades of civil unrest, the degree of health benefit was not equal between the northern provinces, where the main inhabitants are Tamil, and areas where the main inhabitants are Sinhalese. Poor road conditions and lack of transportation were the most commonly cited problems. Caste discrimination adds a layer to unequal access to quality health care. For example, Mukherjee et al. (2011) found that hospitalization expenditure had the most impoverishing impacts on backward caste households.

Conflict in the region has created also specifically targeted girls and women's healthcare needs. For example, in Afghanistan the Taliban have systematically created a fearful context where accessing quality health care is challenging. The Taliban issued several fatwas, threats and physical assaults against primary health care staff, specifically targeting the family planning component, in order to deter people from accessing health care (Din et al., 2012). Women health workers became key targets of the Taliban, who encouraged abuse, forced marriage, sexual harassment and even murder of women health workers as justified under the decree that women, particularly working women, in public spaces were indecent and should be punished. The culture of 'fear' around accessing health care continues in the present day: UNICEF Afghanistan (2014) found women and girls worried that accessing health care was a sign of showing solidarity with the government.

5 CONCLUSIONS

This desk review represents a first attempt at describing how structural violence in South Asia functions. Given its breadth, it is important that future work is focused on uncovering the nuances within countries and identifying more depth within forms of violence, so that programming responses can pay greater attention to each type of structural violence.

Though the literature on structural violence in South Asia is limited and varies across countries, some key take-away messages emerged.

The review found that inequality between genders, between adults and children, between social classes, between caste groups and between ethnic groups is a core component of how structural violence operates, since unequal power relations ensure hierarches are maintained. This is further reinforced since those at the top of hierarchies hold power in terms of social standing and decision-making (both household and political). The review found, for example, that parents often make decisions for children based on age hierarchies and the notion that parents are superior to

Afghanistan, Herat: Hasib, aged 12, works in an auto workshop. He used to go to school, but after he finished grade 3, his father told him to do something useful and start working. He said: "I loved going to school. I wish I could continue. May be I would have become a doctor. I have a younger sister and she goes to school. I would love to see her complete her education and fulfill her dreams."
UNICEF ROSA/Shehzad Noorani

children. Another important finding was that the 'requirements' to function in a social setting are honour, prestige and respect, which are afforded only to those in power, which makes them the gate-keepers and re-inforcers of inequality. Thus, social networks serve to validate unequal relations.

Discrimination is also one of the ways in which inequality is maintained. Discrimination against girls, against lower caste/ethnic group members and against those in poverty, for example, ensures they are allowed to hold only lower-status jobs. Thus the cycle of inequality continues, since there is limited opportunity for social mobility for these marginalized groups. Often, those who are most discriminated against are the ones who face forced choice. With limited and lower-status employment opportunities, women and girls are forced into commercial sex, for example. A combination of inequality, discrimination and forced choice makes it easy to exploit the marginalized population.

All this is heightened in times of armed conflict, with children experiencing a range of deprivations as a result of the fragile context. For example, the review found that armed conflict results in a high number of female widows, but discriminatory norms prevent these females from working. This in turn creates conditions where children, especially boys, are relied upon for household income generation, often in dangerous settings.

In conclusion, the review found structural violence was very common in the region. Inter-sectionality is central to how structural violence operates, since marginalized populations (e.g. girls in poverty, women from lower castes, children with disabilities, children in fragile contexts) are considerably more vulnerable than their peers. Thus, it is important to take a holistic approach that targets all types of structural violence.

Additionally, the review indicates that underlying interpersonal violence are various types of structural violence. Studies suggest that, to understand why interpersonal violence occurs and persists, it is necessary to unpack the values attached to various structures in society. In other words, the meaning and value given to gender, age, socio-economic context, caste/ethnicity and situations of fragility create conditions where direct forms of violence thrive.

Finally, the review found the influence of patriarchy cut across all forms of violence, suggesting targeting patriarchal norms should be a core strategy for social change. Not only does the patriarchy harm girls from birth, but also norms of masculinity and femininity and gender roles that are defined by the patriarchy have negative impacts on boys. For example, in the South Asian context, sexual abuse of boys is considered less traumatic and is often legitimized.

Despite strong programming in the region on interpersonal violence, strategies do not use structural violence terminology – although programming does focus on factors that support structural violence (such as social norms, being in poverty). In addition to strengthening existing gender-based and socio-economic context-based programming, there is a strong need for programming data on structural violence to help address adultism and ageism. The need to balance cultural interpretations of parenting/cultural definitions of when a child becomes an adult with international standards is of paramount importance. Thus, programming needs to ensure international and national values (around age and gender) are appropriately addressed.

Additionally, programming strategies need to tap into how inequality, discrimination, forced choice and exploitation function in the community. Recognizing that, even when children and adolescents willingly become part of dangerous conditions (e.g. commercial sex work, running way and ending up on the street, volunteering into armed conflict), they are in fact being *forced to become complicit* is an integral component of change-creating programming work. There is also a need to map and evaluate existing child maltreatment and child labour programmes in South Asia.

FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON EVIDENCE GAPS

- Future work needs to pay more in-depth attention to structural violence across all eight countries, especially age-based structural violence. Moreover, data available across the region are uneven, with Maldives standing out as having almost no data on structural violence.
- In terms of interpersonal violence, studies that are uncovering the structural factors underlying violence need to pay more attention to children with disability, street children and juvenile offenders.
- There is also a strong need to shift attention towards emerging forms of violence, such as increasing digitalization and increasing political and religious polarization.
- The role of the media needs further attention, as it can perpetuate or dismantle structural violence. India's film industry has made attempts recently to address topics like son preference (e.g. in *Dangal*), women's mobility and freedoms (e.g. in *Pink* and *Lipstick under my Burkha*) and stigma around people with disability (e.g. in *Margarita with a Straw*, *Barfi* and *Taare Zameen Par*). What is unknown is the extent to which films (and other media) play a role in changing ingrained attitudes and whether the inclusion of barrier-breaking media in programmatic strategies can be a way forward, given the strong affection Bollywood commands in the region.
- The continued conversation on how the patriarchy affects girls and boys needs to be strengthened. The pressure on boys and men to be masculine is a structural driver of many forms of interpersonal violence against women, suggesting that programming on violence against women and girls needs to emphasize the engagement of men and boys.
- Programming efforts in South Asia need to start using the term 'structural violence' so that the concept of structural violence becomes more mainstream. There is also a need to include a focus on ageism- and adultism-based structural violence in programming with children and adolescents.
- Institutional response to structural violence remains hindered due to laws that are inherently discriminatory. Continued research on structural violence against children will be essential to improve protection for all children and adolescents.

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METHODOLOGY

Annex

COLLECTING RESOURCES

Sources for the review included peer-reviewed journal articles and books, policy documentation from government and international agencies and quality grey literature (including NGO reports and evaluations). Quality was determined by means of several steps that are standard practice for assessing grey literature.

The decision to include a report/literature resulted from answers to the following questions, in addition to consideration of the paucity of research in this field before deciding to reject a report:

1. Is the report/literature from a reputable organization?
2. Does the report/literature have authors who are generally experts in the field or have produced work on this topic otherwise?
3. Has this report been cited by others (check through Google Scholar's 'cited by' function)?
4. Is the report/literature's methodology sound (i.e. data procedures are described clearly, data are collected in a systematic manner, sample size is adequate for type of analysis used)?
5. Is the report/literature's bibliography at a glance citing material that is line with the topic being explored?

SEARCH PARAMETERS

The search was guided through four tiers. The figure below represents a visual description of how the search strings were put together based on the research questions. Location was the most important search string, and thus at tier 1, to be included in all search strings. This is followed by tier 2 – evidence words to be included in a few of the search strings, depending on the search query. Tier 3 was to be included in fewer search strings, given that these are mainly interpersonal or direct violence words. Finally, tier 4 represented programming and institutional responses.

FOUR TIERS DESCRIBING STEPS TO BE FOLLOWED
IN SEARCHING FOR RESOURCES

(e.g. region- and country-specific: South Asia, followed by Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka)

**TIER 1
LOCATION**

(e.g. child marriage, intimate partner violence for adolescents, sexual abuse and exploitation, trafficking, child labourers, corporal punishment and child maltreatment, bullying, discrimination)

**TIER 2
STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE**

(e.g. inequality, discrimination, exploitation, power, heirarchy, patriarchy, deprviation, marginalisation, forced choice, poverty)

**TIER 3
DIRECT VIOLENCE**

**TIER 4
RESPONSES**

(e.g. health/sexual and reproductive health, security, justice, education, social protection)

LIST OF SEARCH STRINGS

Using different combinations of AND, OR and NOT using key words, resources were collected through databases. In the table below, after we searched for regional studies, we replaced the term 'South Asia' by each country for country-specific studies.

Violence	AND	Against	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	AND	South Asia
Violence	AND	Against	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	AND	South Asia
Violence	AND	Against	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	AND	South Asia
Violence	AND	Against	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	AND	South Asia
Violence	AND	Against	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	AND	South Asia
Violence	AND	Against	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	AND	South Asia
Violence	AND	Against	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	AND	South Asia
Violence	AND	Against	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	AND	South Asia
Power	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Sexuality	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Patriarchy	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Classism	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Racism	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Adultism	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Nationalism	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Heterosexism	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Ageism	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Casteism	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Discrimination	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Prejudice	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Inequality	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Unequal	AND	Life	AND	Chances	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Exploitation	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Stigma	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Deprivation	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Consumerism	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Globalization	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
War	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Disability	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
FGM/C	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Mental health	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults		
Juvenile	AND	Violence	AND	Adults	AND	South Asia		
Sexism	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	AND	South Asia		
Institutionalized	AND	Elitism	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	AND	South Asia
Oppression	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Exclusion	AND	Children	OR	Adolescents	OR	Adults	AND	South Asia
Child	AND	Marriage	AND	South Asia				
Early	AND	Marriage	AND	South Asia				
Child	AND	Bride	AND	South Asia				

Child	AND	Groom	AND	South Asia				
Intimate	AND	Partner	AND	Violence	AND	South Asia		
Domestic	AND	Violence	AND	South Asia				
Domestic	AND	Abuse	AND	South Asia				
Sexual	AND	Abuse	AND	Children	AND	South Asia		
Physical	AND	Violence	AND	Children	AND	South Asia		
Punishment	AND	Children	AND	South Asia				
Corporal	AND	Punishment	AND	South Asia				
Maltreatment	AND	Child	AND	South Asia				
Exploitation	AND	Children	AND	South Asia				
Trafficking	AND	Children	AND	South Asia				
Child	AND	Labour	AND	South Asia				
Domestic	AND	Work	AND	Children	AND	South Asia		
Child	AND	Work	AND	South Asia				
Bullying	AND	Child	AND	South Asia				
Discrimination	AND	Child	AND	South Asia				
School	AND	Violence	AND	South Asia				

DATABASES

The search for resources using the terms described above took place in the following databases, journals and websites that are most relevant to violence against children in South Asia.

Databases	
Google	SocInfo
Google Scholar (used 'cited by' function)	PsycInfo
JSTOR	PubMed
Scopus	IBSS
Journals	
Aggression and Violent Behavior	Journal of Child Sexual Abuse
Bangladesh Journal of Child Health	Journal of Development Effectiveness
Bangladesh Journal of Nutrition	Journal of Education and Research
Bangladesh Journal of Scientific Research	Journal of Family Violence
Bhutan Journal of Research & Development	Journal of Indian Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health
Bhutan Journal of Socio-Economic Studies	Journal of International Development
Birat Journal of Health Sciences	Journal of Interpersonal Violence
British Medical Journal	Journal of Nepal Paediatric Society
Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal	Journal of Partner Abuse
Child Abuse and Neglect	Journal of Public Health
Child Abuse Review	Journal of Social Work
Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health	Journal of the National Science Foundation of Sri Lanka
Child Development	Journal of Tropical Pediatrics
Child Maltreatment	Nepalese Journal of Qualitative Research Methods
Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review	Occasional Papers in Sociology and Anthropology

Development and Psychopathology	Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences
Development in Practice	Psychology of Violence
Dhaulagiri Journal of Sociology and Anthropology	Psychology Women's Quarterly
Economic and Political Weekly	Researcher: A Research Journal of Culture and Society
Economic Journal of Development Issues	Sex Roles
Economic Journal of Nepal	Socio-Economic Development Panorama
Gender and Development	South Asia Economic Journal
Health for All	Sri Lanka Journal of Advanced Social Studies
Himalayan Journal of Sociology and Anthropology	Sri Lanka Journal of Child Health
Indian Journal of Child Health	Sri Lanka Journal of Development Administration
Indian Journal of Gender Studies	Sri Lanka Journal of Humanities
Indian Journal of Human Development	Sri Lanka Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences
International Journal of Life Sciences	Sri Lanka Journal of Sexual Health and HIV Medicine
International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies	Sri Lanka Journal of Social Sciences
International Journal of Prevention and Treatment of Substance Use Disorders	The International Journal of Indian Psychology
International Journal of Scientific Research and Education	The Lancet
Journal for Adolescent Research	The Maldives National Journal of Research
Journal of Advanced Academic Research	The Social Science Journal
Journal of Afghanistan Studies	Trauma, Violence, and Abuse
Journal of Applied Economics	Violence against Women
Journal of Bhutan Studies Archives	Violence and Victims
Journal of Child & Adolescent Mental Health	Women's Studies International Forum
Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma	World Bank Research Working Paper Series
Websites	
3ie	JPAL
ActionAid	Know Violence in Childhood
Adolescent Girls Initiative	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
AWID	MenEngage
BetterEvaluation network	Odhikar
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	Oxfam
BRAC	Plan
Camfed	Population Council
CARE	Poverty Action Lab
Care Evaluation Database	Promundo
Centre for Bhutan Studies and GNH Research	SAIEVAC
Centre for Health and Social Justice India	Save the Children
Childline India	Sonke Gender Justice
Child Justice	STOPVAW
Coalition for Adolescent Girls	STRIVE
CREA India	UCL Institute of Global health
CREATE	UN Violence Study website
CRIN	UNAIDS
DFID	UNFPA
End Corporal Punishment	UNICEF
GSDRC	UNROSA
ICRW	UN Women
IDS	World Bank impact evaluations database
ILO	World Health Organization
IRC	Young Lives

APPRAISING AND SUMMARIZING COLLECTED RESOURCES

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

A rigorous appraisal technique was utilized to ensure articles were methodologically sound and relevant to research questions. Articles that did not meet these criteria were excluded.

Language	Is the study in English?	If yes, include
Publication type	Is the paper a systematic review?	If yes, include
	Is the paper a peer-reviewed journal article?	If yes, include
	Is the paper a report from INGOs, international organizations or local NGOs?	If yes, include
	Is the paper an accepted Master's thesis?	If yes, include
	Is the paper an opinion paper?	If yes, *store and include at later stage if needed*
	Is the paper an unpublished doctoral thesis?	Include if focused on violence against children in South Asia
	Is it a working paper?	If yes, include
Location	Is resource on South Asian population and its specific countries i.e. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka?	If yes, include
Population	Adolescents (0–19 years)	If yes, include
	Children (0–18 years)	If yes, include
	Adults	If yes, *include for search strings for themes of structural violence*
Design	Does the research design involve triangulation or comparison between comparable groups intervention?	If yes, include
	Does the paper utilize qualitative methods?	If yes, include
	Does the paper utilize quantitative methods?	If yes, include
	Does the paper utilize participatory methods?	If yes, include
	Does the paper utilize mixed methods?	If yes, include
Focus	Does the paper describe trends in the types of violence against children in South Asia and specific countries in the region?	If yes, include
	Does the paper discuss what factors contribute to against children?	If yes, include
	Does the paper focus on an intervention related to against children in South Asia?	If yes, include
Year	Is the study after 2000?	If yes, include

Summarizing and synthesizing resources

Once articles were collected and organized in a Dropbox folder, the final step consisted of summarizing them. For this step, a narrative synthesis approach was used, which involved an in-depth read of the studies and their similarities and differences. Themes and focus of the studies were identified and used to group them. A detailed outline was drawn up and, after feedback from UNICEF ROSA, a narrative was carefully built around the research questions and outline. Headings and sub-headings were populated with details. A reference group consisting of experts in the field of violence against children in South Asia was sent the methodology and literature review for inputs.