

# Social design and regenerative theories: a possible intersection to address gender-based violence

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The social design focuses on applying methodologies to tackle complex societal problems. However, with evolving critical thinking on design's role in social change, social design has been challenged to find other forms to intervene in society. With a whole intervention perspective, regenerative theories, besides related to human and non-human dynamics work, bear the potential to develop new applications to deal with social challenges. This article explores a theoretical approach to possible contributions of social design and regenerative theories applied to the gender-based violence (GBV) system and its relevance for social innovation. Despite efforts to end violence against women, there is a long road to deconstructing inequalities and social and cultural structures that still support and maintain the phenomenon. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, violence against women, mainly domestic and intimate partner violence, gained the stage and status of another "pandemic". Although few, there are some contributions from Social Design to gender-based violence issues, in particular in developing technological products and designing public policies. The regenerative approach elaborates on social action, and cohesion creates new perspectives for designing new ways to intervene in gender-based violence issues. Hence, these principles can contribute to developing interconnections and networks and resignification of social roles, including design roles for tackling complex societal issues. Therefore, the scope of research for social design, including regenerative theories, includes further investigations that can explore case analysis and the creation of models or frameworks.

**Keywords:** *regenerative theories; social cohesion; social innovation; collective action; gender-based violence*

## 1 Introduction

The social design proposes an intervention away from the original statement of designing products and services to meet market needs, a transformation status for a more holistic interference (Joore & Brezet, 2015). This social practice design, proposed by Margolin and Margolin (2002), aims to satisfy human needs, especially those of marginalised groups. Social workers' practices inspired those authors' theories, influenced by ecology theories. Therefore, it understands the multiple elements



that interact with the social issue and the various domains, including psychological, sociological, social or cultural fields.

However, a relevant discussion around design and oppression has occurred in contemporary studies. To Amstel et al. (2022), design discipline plays a central role in maintaining cultural structures where the prevalence of oppression starts with users and the 'userfication' is the act of subjugation among people. Additionally, to Smith and Iversen (2018), participatory methodologies are shifting dimensions to a more complex and long-term capacity to support social change (Smith & Iversen, 2018).

This reflection and a call to action have been propelling the intersection of new domains into the design field, such as the regenerative theories to encompass social and environmental changes (Mang & Reed, 2012a; Wahl, 2016a; Souza et al., 2019; Camrass, 2020). This intersection between social design, regenerative theories and system thinking, which is the basis of both approaches, becomes a relevant sphere of exploration in complex social issues, which we seek to speculate in the context of gender-based violence once the United Nations itself proposes a systemic approach to its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals and address policies (Ramos et al., 2019; Weitz et al., 2019).

According to an estimate from the United Nations, one-quarter of women worldwide suffer some violence in their relationships<sup>1</sup>. The numbers are exceptionally high among those aged 15-49 years, representing 30% of women worldwide experiencing some form of oppression in their life journeys. This condition impacts the development of their potential and affects women physically and psychologically (Linz et al., 1988; Larsen et al., 2016). Not to mention that almost 40% of femicide is committed concerning intimacy<sup>2</sup>. Patriarchal culture and male-dominated narratives reinforce stereotypical behaviour and constitute the basis for maintaining mechanisms of violence. Traditional role models of men and women guarantee the status of oppression among those historically oppressed (Sunstein, 1996).

Violence against women and girls is a violation of human rights and its scale reached alarming proportions since the pandemic, where efforts to mitigate the impacts of gender-based violence have been diverse and often coming from legislation to social movements (UN Women, 2020). However, most of the mechanisms we know are ineffective against gender-based discrimination and other obstacles to gender equity (Buttell & Ferreira, 2020). Rather than working as dynamic synergies, stakeholders in this system tend to act as autonomous parts, following regiments and compromises settled by governmental entities who are responsible for implementing policies with a siloed mindset (Napoli, Procentese, Carnevale, Esposito, & Arcidiacono, 2019).

In many countries, different mechanisms, policies and implementations have contributed to raise awareness on the topic and prevent further violence through laws that protect victims. Since every country has its own cultural, historical and sociological context, it is hard to say there's a "winning formula" to decrease gender-based violence. However, there is always a way to make life better, as

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Women. Infographic. Retrieved July 31 from <https://interactive.unwomen.org/multimedia/infographic/violenceagainstwomen/en/index.html#closing-1>

<sup>2</sup> United Nations. 2020, 9 March. Violence Against Women. Retrieved March, 18<sup>th</sup> from <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>

inspired by Václav Havel (1985): "A better system will not automatically ensure a better life. The opposite is true: only by creating a better life can a better system be developed" (Wahl, 2016a, p. 22).

Regenerative models are well known to "facilitate relationships between diverse agents in the system and enable conditions for the restoration and regeneration of healthy ecosystem functions" (Wahl, 2016b, p. 120). From this perspective, several questions can be posed. Can gender-based violence issues be addressed from social design and regenerative theory perspectives? If yes, can this theory be applied to social innovation to stimulate relevant changes in this system? Could it propel new ways for deconstructing current narratives of male dominance?

Through a system perspective in social innovation, this article explores a possible application of regenerative theories to contribute to the design field for social change. As Buckley (2020) states: "design is a vital part of everyday life that has shaped our public personas and individual identities; it proposes that thinking about the innumerable ways in which design is produced, where it is produced, and by and for whom it is produced has the potential to prompt a changed understanding of design" (2020, p. 19).

This working paper proposes a theoretical investigation of possible contributions of social design and a regenerative approach to deconstructing the centralised theme of violence by flourishing new perspectives into the gender-based violence spectrum. This centrality refers to solutions created by the government, excluding civil society actors from responsibility and participation (OECD, 2021; Tomaszewski, 2018). However, there is an awakening in civic participation in social change, developed and improved by digital access and the urgency of societal transformations (Goodman et al., 2017; Machado et al., 2021; Jiménez & Rodriguez, 2022).

As an exploratory proposal, this paper is divided into an overview of a theoretical scenario in social design and regenerative theories and a context of social challenges in gender-based violence issues. Firstly, it discusses theoretical frameworks in social design and regenerative perspectives to understand central elements related to these propositions. Secondly, it brings relevant information about gender-based violence structures, actors and approaches and their current status. Thirdly, it exposes relevant components to open further debates around regenerative theories, where design can intervene in GBV systems.

## **2 Methodological Approach**

This research collects relevant resources from articles and bibliographies to construct an overview of the theme (Webster & Watson, 2002) and possible applications of social design, regenerative theories, and its intersections in gender-based violence. The bridge from ecology to social innovation is the basilar work focused in this paper (Heise, 1998; Wahl, 2016a; Boehnert, 2019), and this article seeks to produce a review of the literature (Plock, 2016) around these subjects barely addressed by design. A narrative literature review is a valuable theory-building technique that can generate hypotheses (Baumeister & Leary, 1997). As a primary objective, this paper aims to present a theory conceptualisation (Snyder, 2019) and introduce a relevant contribution of design in social fields (Mortati & Villari, 2014; Manzini, 2017; Ventura & Bichardb, 2017; Ceschin et al., 2019).

As design shares humanist fields with other areas of research (Sloane, 2019), this exploratory work brings references from sociology (Heise, 1998; Peretz & Vidmar, 2021), psychology (Linz et al., 1988;

Walker, 1999) and anthropology (Bernard, 1940; Hyman, 1953; Ventura & Bichardb, 2017) to enrich the multi-layer field which is gender-based violence. Finally, the second goal is to construct possible intersections between these themes to develop a sustainable approach to support future studies in this field.

### **3 Social design: the design of reciprocity**

Social design is dedicated to applying methodologies to tackle complex societal problems, using human-centred methods and the social entrepreneurial sphere (Ceschin et al., 2019; Murray et al., 2010). However, with an evolving critical thinking on the centrality of design as an oppressive model, social design has been challenged to find other forms of inclusive and pluriversal<sup>3</sup> ways to intervene in society (Amstel et al., 2022; Costanza-Chock, 2018; Design et al., 2020).

Although design increases its role in the public sphere, its uses are still subtle in issues concerning gender-based violence, where we can find projects that focus on creating 'toolkits' and 'blueprints' for actors in the field<sup>4,5</sup>. It is relatively new for design to approach GBV systems (Fiadeiro et al., 2023). Despite few, there are some contributions from Social Design to gender-based violence issues, mainly concerning the development of technological products and the design of public policies (Carne et al., 2019; World et al., 2021). Some of the most relevant academic and empirical contributions in this context are known by introducing anthropology and sociology in their proposals for a transtheoretical approach (Popa-Nedelcu et al., 2019).

Through more effective public design policies using the contribution and participation of society, social design has helped to redesign social systems and create tools to generate innovation, including for citizens and communities, perfecting their models and developing more resilient alternatives (Murray et al., 2010). Mortati and Villari refer that "the most interesting contributions design can make to current challenges, that is by participating to reshaping big issues like the transformation of transport systems, sustainability, governments, finance, communication, healthcare, and so on"(Mortati & Villari, 2014, p.80). In this context, design enabled its contribution by including people in participative and collaborative processes (Manzini, 2015). However, the emergence of new paradigms requires the creation of more active approaches with various actors in society (Irwin, 2015) to promote greater contributions to social interactions and relationships and strengthen human capacities at collective levels, which are increasingly essential for maintaining the future.

To design for social change, we must have a prevalence of integration between multiple and complex system parts, as Jones (2017) mentioned when discussing differences between design as an

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<sup>3</sup> The term pluriversal was coined by Arturo Escobar (2011), to designate the multiple voices capable to proposes a real transition discourse inspired by nature and ancestral wisdom that avoid the common division between nature and culture, individual and community.

<sup>4</sup> How to Design Projects to End Violence Against Women. Australian Aid. UN Women. 2015.

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/7/ap-desiging-projects-to-end-violence-against-women>

<sup>5</sup> Goodman, L.A. et al. (2017). Power through partnerships: A CBPR toolkit for domestic violence researchers. National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, Harrisburg, PA. Available at <https://cbprtoolkit.org/>; retrieved 02 February 2023.

experience/service and systemic design (P. Jones, 2017). The former cannot see and intervene as a whole, while the latter, by integrating systems thinking and its methods, brings human-centred design to complex and transformative impacts (Yu & Sangiorgi, 2018). However, amplifying design roles in societal issues demands a critical and moral consciousness to minimise oppressive outcomes (Amstel et al., 2022; Martins, 2014; Sloane, 2019). Thus, the sensitive themes of design intervention have been gaining evidence and demand a new focus on the subjectivity of making (Boehnert, 2019; Nold, 2021).

Recently, Cheryl Heller presented a broad representation of what Social Design can do and its impacts, contributing to an amplified view of the action component in this field (Heller, 2018). Despite social design being infused with social innovation, Prichard (2018, p.2) defines it as "the design of the invisible dynamics and relationships that affect society and the future. It creates new social conditions intended to increase human agency, creativity, equity, resilience, and our connection to nature".

Since 2007 Social Design was added as a lexicon word (Papanek, 1973), researchers and practitioners have been working to define and differentiate it from what design already does. It combines intangible subtle aspects and relational uses (Anheier et al., 2019), combined with creativity and purpose capable of affecting many more than just a specific group. On the other hand, even when it produces tangible answers, it is not easy to identify its whole impact or collect total pieces of evidence because social design articulates many layers of structures on personal and institutional levels in this system perspective (Manzini, 2016; Mulgan et al., 2008).

This subjectivity relies on intersecting with other pluriversal views of life and its dynamics (Escobar, 2015). According to Wahl, "Policies must encourage and enable citizens to engage in the redesign of their community fabric. A sense of place and sense of community as nourished through participation in these collective visioning processes" (Wahl, 2016b, p. 180). The exercise of envisioning futures is well-known by design. It stimulates the construction of new narratives as well as the activation of commonality, a subject discussed by Manzini in his project Culture of Resilience, where the design approach builds multiple visions for a resilient culture through new values, beliefs, ideas and projects (Manzini et al., 2015).

#### **4 Regenerative: from theories to possibilities**

Discussions on sustainability started around the '70s, including topics on social justice and inclusion at many levels (Espinosa et al., 2008). However, some epistemological uses of the term sustainable do not answer actual needs. In other words, sustainability needs to be considered more to ensure human and planet maintenance (Gibbons, 2020b). Inequalities are also questioned by scholars and practitioners in the current Anthropocene era, with particular attention dedicated to its impacts on social-ecological systems (Mang & Reed, 2012b). In this perspective, regenerative theories and culture propose resignifying current hegemonic narratives to propel new approaches in life systems (Du Plessis, 2012; Kadar & Kadar, 2020).

The writer, journalist, philosopher and indigenous movement leader of the Krenak ethnicity Ailton Krenak defends that the way sustainability deals today is a vanity cause (Krenak, 2020). In his opinion, sustainability has been perceived as a myth by many people and organisations that makes consumers believe in sustainable productivity (Krenak, 2020). However, even if people cannot go back in time and

undo their footprints, or even if an ordinary person cannot change the world, we must be aware and conscious of our relevance and importance in our social system (Du Plessis & Brandon, 2015).

Systems engaging in a process of self-creation and self-generation, when the relationships between its participants are balanced and synergic, which Maturana and Varela characterises as ‘autopoiesis’ (Maturana & Varela, 1996). However, the act of coupling is a natural cognitive process, a basic biological fundament of existence. In this process of consciousness, one can develop the capability of interbeing – a collective perspective that overlaps social construction norms, that when in practice promotes self-reflection and consciousness among the narratives that separates people from conviviality and communion (Wahl, 2016a).

Regenerative theories compound a more holistic approach based on ecology theories that understand the whole as a living system and full of interactions (Design Council & People, 2020). In this context, ecology, quantum science, systems theory, and ancestral wisdom is fuel to design new perspectives for human and non-human lives (Du Plessis, 2012). The integration of diverse areas of these domains enables regenerative development evolve its capabilities to answer social-ecological issues, allowing the world to thrive (Mang & Reed, 2012a).

Regenerative culture is a model-based created by Reed (2007) named ‘Whole-system thinking’ and ‘living-system thinking’ (Figure 1), which perceives sustainability as an interconnection between mass-market, society, ecology, geology, and nature as both co-participants and co-actors. Moreover, this act of understanding our placeness helps humanity understand its roles in this system of mutuality (J. Smith, 2009). For Reed (2007), creating regenerative systems in a technical, ecological, economic and social way is not efficient if there is no self-reflection of our roles, impacts, and contributions in our relationships with each other and as a whole (Reed, 2007). Its model was used to develop a restorative proposal for regenerative design proposed by Daniel Wahl (2006).

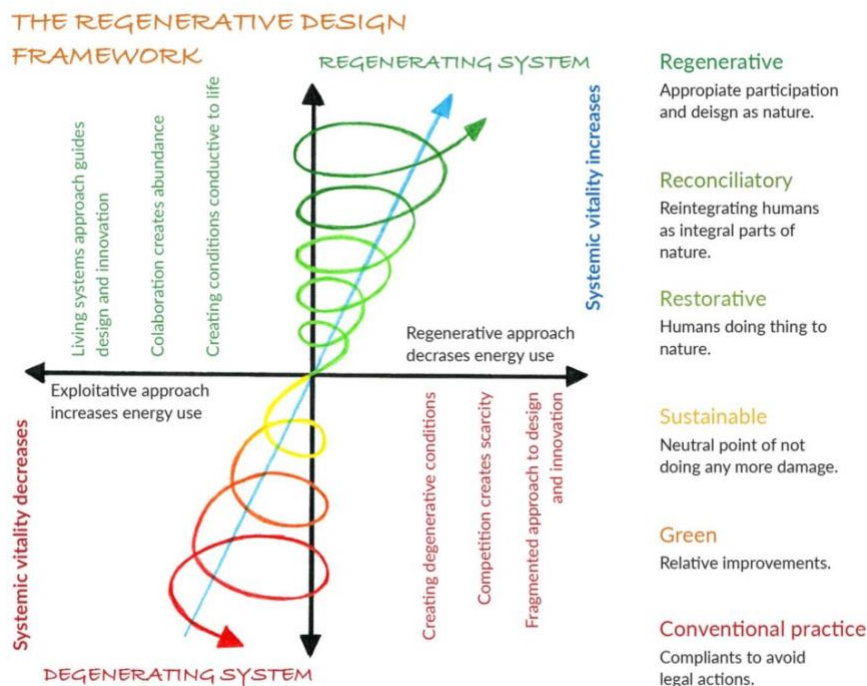


Figure 1. The Regenerative Design Framework adapted from Reed, 2006 (Wahl, 2016, p.24)

According to Capra (2007), many global challenges reflect a crisis of perception. From his perspective, the individualist and competitive humanity worldview affects consciousness perception (Capra, 2007). Wilber (2007) enforced the viewpoint around his integral theory, which maps four dimensions of action, from the interior (I) to the exterior (IT) and from the collective interior (WE) to the collective exterior (ITS). These quadrants were adapted to a new integral proposal to approach regenerative culture, as seen in Figure 2 (Wahl, 2016a).

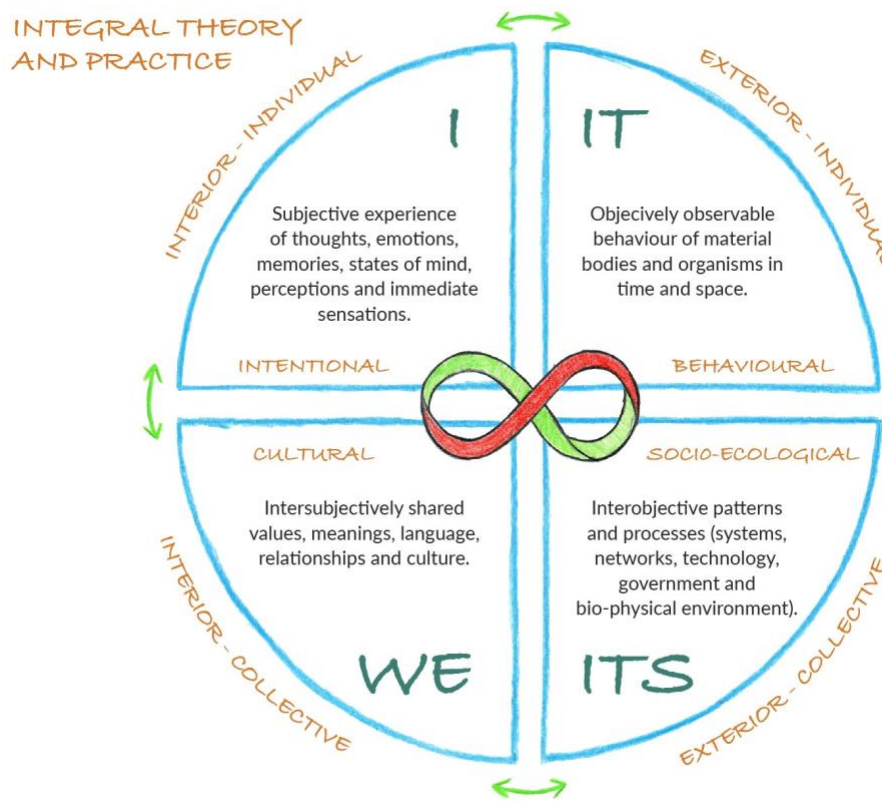


Figure 2. The Four Quadrant Framework of Integral Theory (Wahl, 2016, p.75)

Alongside the planetary emergency arises another narrative for increasing conscience and social action, where a sociocultural perspective is central to transforming news theories into actions (LaPointe, 1998). In his humanistic valuation of the human system, LaPointe(1998) highlights the collective aspects of being a system on its positive and negative factors that impacts Laitinen and Pessi's (2014) theoretical research in social action. On the one hand, the social system is seen as an enabler in solving societal problems, which correlates with Laitinen and Pessi's (2014) proposal elements of social action(Laitinen & Pessi, 2014). On the other, according to LaPointe (1998), a social system is also considered problematic and not pro-community, which weakens the altruistic proposal of humanitarian solidarity (Laitinen & Pessi, 2014).

This paradigm of shift behaviour in favour of a mutual benefit is also a shift in how people see interconnection and interdependence as a living flux (Capra, 2007) that will conduct the new approach to social and environmental actions. To Du Plessis (2012), "in this system, humans are seen as an integral part of nature and partners in the processes of co-creation and co-evolution instead of being merely users or clients of various ecosystem services (Du Plessis, 2012, p. 15)".

It is urgent to develop mechanisms to flourish conviviality among people and other living systems (Cipolla, 2009; Moulaert et al., 2010). Additionally, engaging people in social dynamics capable of dissolving harmful behaviours is an alternative to our lack of connection (Du Plessis, 2012; Du Plessis & Brandon, 2015). By understanding our systems' interconnections and dynamics, we can project new models to better approach social challenges such as gender-based violence (Fulu & Miedema, 2015; Thomas et al., 2020).

People commonly see the relationship with nature as a reflection of the use they give to nature and the impact this use provokes (Leitão, 2023). However, people do not see the environmental impacts as a reflection of how they interact with each other (human-to-human interactions), the displacement, the power dynamics, the despised, and the sense of ownership over others (Olsson et al., 2017).

Regenerative theories (Cole, 2012) invite researchers to analyse the shadows of duality and embrace potentialities that can help them achieve new social dynamics. Escobar (2011) gives us a deeper overview of what he calls 'Transitional discourses' or narratives. In this vision, the shifting paradigm is an invitation to abandon the dualistic narrative, reductionist and economic reality to give space to something he calls Pluriverse. In this perspective, new forms of diverse thinking and philosophies have space to shape reality, as the example of the Colombian constitution where the rights of Nature "represent an unprecedented 'biocentric turn', away from the anthropocentrism of modernity" (Escobar, 2011, p. 138).

Hence, design has evolved inspired by nature, developing products and solutions in many areas, from bio and eco-design to system regenerative communities (Cole, 2012; Wahl, 2016b). However, to create what Reed (Mang & Reed, 2012a) calls 'Whole-system thinking and 'living-systems thinking', one needs as many people as can be included and connected as a web of interbeing. Thus, a regenerative culture proposes to generate transformative innovations in the individual and collective spheres (Gibbons, 2020a).

To enable people to be part of this transformation, some authors frame the importance of redesigning the system to increase resilience (Oliver et al., 2013), straighten the connections and decrease consumption, and scale from the local to global amplitude in slow-moving cycles. These slow cycles of adaptive models for systemic transformation are known as Panarchy, which refers to 'wholes within the wholes' (Gunderson & Holling, 2002). From this perspective, innovations at a local scale can affect and influence at a regional and global scale and are more feasible to test and flourish if provided with the right source for resilience (Manzini & Menichinelli, 2021).

Hopkins (2009) states three elements are needed to promote community resilience: increased diversity, modularity and tightness of feedback. According to the author, these elements are central to engaging groups with planetary transformations based on grassroots individuals (Wahl, 2016b).

New narratives must be generated to nurture regenerative cultures and to construct the epistemology and ontology for transitioning times (De Carli, 2016; Leitão, 2023). Thus, regenerative thinking and culture can inspire new approaches to social issues. To regenerate a GBV system, one can follow Amstel, Noel and Gonzatto's (2022) approach to confronting the 'user' as a group of historic unprivileged people as a formulation of oppression by designers (Amstel et al., 2022). The same happens during the re-victimisation process in domestic violence perpetrated by the authorities and other supportive instruments (Wheatcroft, Wagstaff, & Moran, 2009).



## 5 Gender-based Violence Context and System

Gender-based violence is a severe violation of human rights that takes place in several forms, broadly defined as 'violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately<sup>6</sup>'. It is a multilevel and structural phenomenon (Russo & Pirlott, 2006) that affects many layers of society, particularly affecting women and girls, with a significant focus on domestic violence, a kind of violence that victimises women indiscriminately, regardless of their countries' position in development indexes (OECD, 2021). The "pandemic" phenomenon pushed several governments and non-governmental entities to join forces to eradicate gender-based violence and create mechanisms against it (Buttelli & Ferreira, 2020; UN Women, 2020).

However, it is essential to consider the elements that construct these harmful structures. Inequalities among men and women are secular and have been reinforced by patriarchal structures (Pateman, 1988) and the prevalence of power dynamics supported by social institutions such as the Church, family and State (Goodman et al., 2017; Watts & Zimmerman, 2002). Several institutions, including criminal justice, health, academic, scientific, military, sports and religious domains, have reinforced patriarchal values and contributed to maintaining the status quo, intentionally or unintentionally, fostering gender-based violence and encouraging stigmatisation of voices that try to change the context (Russo & Pirlott, 2006, p. 183).

In addition, the patriarchal construction stresses the difference between men and women as a political tool to manage freedom and subjection, producing and reproducing segregation and oppression and validating male acts against women (Pateman, 1988). This complex structure represents a mental model that shapes society (Ellsberg & Heise, 2013) and its reactions to women's causes, validating, subjugating or supporting what should or not be female (Butler, 2017).

These structures are also responsible for validating male behaviour and settling what men should be, constructing and supporting a hegemonic male being, and emphasising privilege, power and control (Buiten & Naidoo, 2020). Hegemonic masculinity, a term coined by R.W. Connell (1987), is a set of practices that legitimise male dominance over females and invalidate other kinds of masculinities subordinating other men that do not fit the pattern of white-dominated, male, middle class and heterosexual (Breines, Connell, & Eide, 2000). This dominant masculinity shapes norms, interpersonal relations, gender occupation, access, aggression and violence (Breines et al., 2000).

Another relevant point in gender-based violence is the role of social construction in replacing and categorising the utility of men and women in a social context (Beauvoir, 1970). From that, gender norms rose, attributing to women the private sphere and caring roles and men the public space, related to power and control (Butler, 2017; Federici, 2013). This dichotomy is often a narrative confronted to establish new ways of approaching the patterns of victimisation (Buiten & Naidoo, 2020; Dobash & Dobash, 2015). It is also a narrative that shapes peoples' binary thinking and evaluations from a reductionist perspective, narrowing the alternatives to freedom (Inglehart, Ponarin, & Inglehart, 2017). It is present in products made according to a binary vision, including toys, playgrounds, and

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<sup>6</sup> Council of Europe Convention. (2011). Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Retrieved December 20, 2022 from <https://rm.coe.int/168008482e>

segregated professions, where men and women experience unequal accesses that stigmatise their human potential (Perez, 2020).

The Istanbul Convention (2011) lists the following dimensions to be considered in drawing public policies to counter gender-based violence: protection and support for victims, investigation, processing, procedural law and safety measures, prevention, and data collection. In recent decades, despite evolutions concerning legislation, host structures, and work with victims and perpetrators, little has been said about effective changes in social dynamics (Forum, 2023). However, the primary and secondary measures established to face violence are good examples of addressing GBV systems with greater civic participation (Lisboa & Pasinato, 2018; Michau, 2005).

Heise (1998) explored the relationship between the global process of evolution and development and the experiences of violence against women. Her theoretical model was well known for raising awareness of interconnected multidisciplinary factors that affect women (Heise, 2011). Thus, the same system that impacts our planetary condition damages human relationships, affecting minorities and fragile individuals on deep levels, particularly women (Sitaker, 2008; UN Women, 2022). Fulu and Miedema (2015) observed some of these consequences in a study conducted in Maldives and Cambodia, where they used an ecological model to frame women's experiences of gendered violence. According to the authors, "as globalisation affects the various levels of social organisation related to violence and gender, those who work to promote new gender norms, and those who resist this change, affect how masculinity and femininity come to be understood and enacted" (2015, p. 1443).

The ecological model from Heise (1998) is the initial part of a complex understanding that our present days can contribute to unlocking this moment of transition. According to Heise's Ecological Model, to reach higher levels of social evolution, it will be necessary to find a way to awaken the social potential for social action that exists in each one (Heise, 1998). Additionally, gender-based violence calls for a transformational action towards social norms and behaviours, demanding research for new forms to propel social values and participation in the system (Ackoff, 1974; Bailey, 2022; Tracy et al., 2023).

As a systemic problem, gender-based violence has multiple actors and causal spheres (Murphy & Fanslow, 2012). It can differ in place, cultural and social dimensions, but, in several cases, its causal structures derive from social norms directly changing and influencing gender roles (Commission, 2017). In this GBV system, the solutions mainly address symptoms related to increasing numbers of domestic violence victims, responding with more shelters or hotline assistance (Tracy et al., 2023). In contrast, finding ways to support long-term solutions is more demanding and challenging (Murphy & Fanslow, 2012; United Nations, 1995).

However, a multilevel approach is applied by several countries attempting to create networks of partnerships (Enciso-Santocildes et al., 2020; Murphy & Fanslow, 2012). The system structure around GBV differs from country to country, but the most relevant actors are central elements of the intervention, as seen in Figure 3. This sociotechnical structure tries to fix or better answer the necessities of applied policies from legal, support, healthcare and other related fields. It exemplified the mapping using a framework to identify actors and their interactions to provide a visual instrument for decision-makers and further interventions (European Commission, 2017).

To better understand, the researchers use symbols to visualise interactions: Straight Line – represents a strong connection among actors, a form of exchange and partnership. Dotted line – represents a

form of interaction or communication that is not very strong, is informal and is not enforced by an agreement or a cultivated relationship. That here exemplifies a visualisation of a system's part related to public authorities, women's health services, and women's support system (European Commission, 2017).

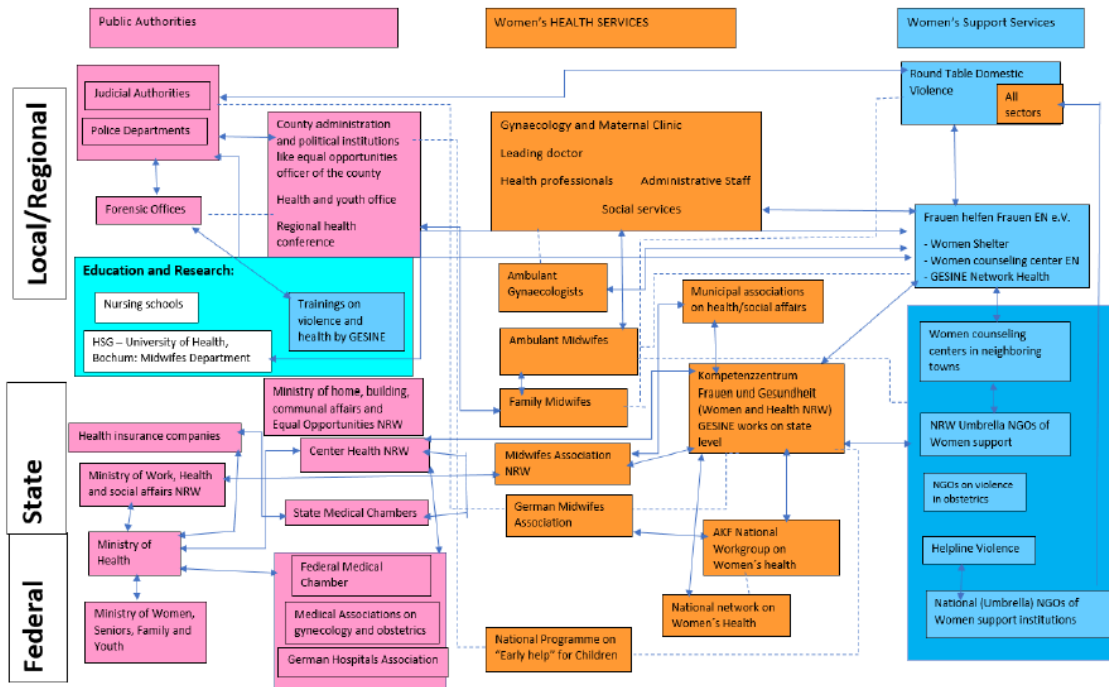


Figure 3. Germany Map Stakeholder in Multi-agency response for reporting of GBV (European Commission, 2017, p. 8)

## 6 Conclusion

Narratives erected throughout centuries separating humans and nature as two different forms of life and disconnecting them from factual purposes of existence are the same reinforcing the binary thinking and reductionist perspective regarding men and women (Demirel, 2019; Morin, 2011). A systemic approach was proposed to reframe human and nature dynamics to propel regenerative perspectives in many areas to restore connections between humans, non-humans and sociotechnical structures (Hauk, 2014). At the same time, regenerating bio perspectives requires societies to renew their values and social cohesion, deconstructing power dynamics and reframing our interactions and way of living (De Carli, 2016; Stark, 2018).

Renewing or converting power dynamics based on self-responsibility and cohesion can also benefit nature and positively impact human life (Escobar, 2015). On the one hand, in social system design, it is possible to construct a "collective model of enquiry for engaging stakeholders in the many activities of designing" (P. H. Jones, 2014, p. 7). On the other hand, efforts in critical thinking and making things tangible and morally responsible can prevent and enact people's solidarity (Bellini, 2021; Giubilini & Levy, 2018; Manzini, 2016).

However, undoubtedly it is from social design the capacity to rethink and redesign the collective and collaborative work (Morelli, 2011) with multiple stakeholders through participatory methodologies

(Thomas et al., 2020) and to recognise the interconnectedness of social issues and aims to address root causes, rather than merely treating symptoms (Adam et al., 2020).

The GBV system is a system by default, not a system by design. It can be designed better to leverage stocked synergies and stimulate the creation of new narratives and approaches to propel a positive emergence (Tracy et al., 2023). Social design can flourish social participation to address the complex social problem of gender-based violence (Costanza-Chock, 2018; Gold, Muthuri, & Reiner, 2018) and positive changes by recognising that many societal issues are interconnected and require multidimensional solutions beyond traditional approaches. Exploring new narratives of worldviews as regenerative cultures can stimulate transitions for non-linear and siloed thinking that shape the modern world (Leitão, 2023).

One example is the so-called "Australian Project", a partnership between Australia Aid and the United Nations, where design encourages action against violence against women and girls (UN Women, 2015). The project was developed in response to requests from stakeholders for practical, easy-to-use materials and resources for designing and implementing successful projects to end violence against women. The proposal resulted in a material that presents information, resources and practical activities where participants can analyse, design and implement answers to different questions (UN Women, 2015).

Another relevant project is a partnership between an independent researcher, an innovation private company, academia and New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse (Carne et al., 2019). The project uses system thinking to address intimate partner violence and child abuse by proposing a collective understanding of the current system and increasing peoples' experiences around leverage points (Meadows, 2008; Stroh, 2020). The results were the selection of a set of main points required for a systemic transformation: increasing the importance of government leadership; collaborative, sustained and integrated responses for a long-term impact; structure and processes necessary to engage people in new proposals; and measurements, monitoring and evaluations capable of propelling a purpose-driven action (Carne et al., 2019).

Therefore, the scope of research for social design, including regenerative theories, include further investigations that can explore case analysis, the creation of a model, frameworks, and so on. It demonstrates how a multifaceted approach can address GBV systems (Tracy et al., 2023), considering the specifics and relevant contexts that influence social systems.

Hence, to use regenerative perspectives in gender-based violence can flourish new approaches to counter a centralised and siloed approach. Starting from dissolving the dualistic form of seen and act (Banathy & Jenlink, 2005; Fals Borda, 2013; Nold, 2021) towards gender-based violence, moving away from the State as the sole responsible for answering these issues and generating debates around the narratives of power between the stakeholders and actor (Mohr, 2019). In this model, regenerative social design "facilitates relationships between diverse agents in the system and enables conditions for the restoration and regeneration of healthy ecosystem function" (Wahl, 2016a, p. 120).

If, on the one hand, it could resonate very utopic to think of a whole system acting for one common goal; on the other, eco-literacy supports individuals and collective groups to promote transformations, with results seen in small communities, neighbourhoods, or even an entire country, as in Colombia (Kania & Kramer, 2013; Capra, 2007). Moreover, a policy governance paradigm increases the need for

new dynamic and 'networked models' (Dunleavy, Margetts, Bastow, & Tinkler, 2006), opening possibilities for experimentation and participation of designers as facilitators sharing their tools and approaches. As Gustavsen said, innovation demands social responsibility, intimately related to effective governance and policies offered (Gustavsen, 2005).

Finally, as with every complex problem (Buchanan, 2019; Mainzer, 1996), it will need multiple efforts and alighted solutions to evolve its application. It will require as many areas as possible to be part of these possible transformations, including design, to promote synergies and alignments, where social design and regenerative theories can provide significant contributions (Gershenson, 2015; Joore & Brezet, 2015; R. C. Smith & Iversen, 2018).

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