

What Works to Prevent Violence Phase 2: Impact at Scale



Background

Gender-based violence (GBV)¹ is an urgent and pervasive global public health crisis that is deeply rooted in gender inequality. It encompasses a wide range of human rights violations, disproportionately affecting women and girls and individuals of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC).

One in three women and girls globally report experiencing sexual or physical violence in their lifetime, a figure that has remained constant over the past decade.² Global studies also reveal high rates of violence against LGBTQI+ people (56% in Southern and Eastern Africa).³

GBV extends beyond homes across diverse environments, including schools, public spaces, workplaces and digital platforms. For example, a survey in 18 countries found that 60% of women and 67% of transgender and gender-diverse people have experienced technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV).⁴ The prevalence, severity and systematic nature of GBV make it a critical issue for global action.

However, GBV is preventable. Recent years have seen the emergence of innovative initiatives and a robust commitment to evidence-based policymaking.

The UK-funded flagship global research program, [What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls](#) program (2013-2020), tested primary prevention approaches in Africa and Asia. Many of these rigorously evaluated projects halved violence in three years.

Building on the success of Phase 1, [What Works to Prevent Violence: Impact at Scale](#) (2021-2028) explores how to **scale** existing interventions that have evidence that they are effective, **mainstream** violence prevention into different sectors, including health and education systems, as well as further design, refine and implement **innovations** in new or existing areas that have potential for future scaling. The primary focus is on primary prevention of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence, although some of the grants also address other forms of violence in schools, workplaces and online.

A new partnership to prevent gender-based violence

In a significant transatlantic collaboration, the **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** contributed \$3.3 million to the **UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)** for the **What Works to Prevent Violence: Impact at Scale** program.

USAID's investment will contribute to filling critical gaps in the global evidence base by supporting local women-led and LGBTQI+-led organizations to pilot and evaluate effective approaches to prevent violence, with a focus on LGBTQI+ people. It will also generate new research on the interplay between mental health and GBV.

Goal and objectives

Through a combination of funding grants and research, the overall goal of the USAID and FCDO partnership is to increase the evidence base for effective GBV prevention interventions in development contexts.

USAID will contribute to this goal through two workstreams:

- **Research on interplay between mental health and GBV:** The funds will support a synthesis of the evidence base on the bidirectional links between mental health and GBV, as well as the approaches that have been used. Drawing on global evidence, interviews and focus groups in two focus countries, the report will identify evidence gaps and promising practices. The report and accompanying policy brief will be widely shared with a diverse range of funders to influence policy, practice, and future investments in GBV.
- **Grants to locally-led and LGBTQI+-led organizations to design and test approaches to prevent GBV:** The additional investment will support grants that aim to end violence against LBT women. The grants will design, refine, and implement new approaches that build on the evidence from **What Works' report on Ending Violence against LGBTQI People**. Each grantee will embark on a learning journey that aims to strengthen their long-term capability and capacity to deliver GBV prevention approaches. The innovation grants will also be paired with a USAID-funded evaluation to better understand what is working and why.

The objectives of these two activities are to reduce GBV, both directly in the two innovation grantee communities and indirectly through:

- **Strengthened capacity of LGBTQI+ organizations** in the Global South to use evidence to design, implement, and evaluate effective violence prevention strategies
- **An expanded global base of knowledge and evidence** on prevention strategies that work across development contexts relating to GBV and mental health, including violence against LBQ individuals.

For more information on the What Works to Prevent Violence: Impact at Scale program, please visit the website: <https://ww2preventvawg.org/>

Innovation grants

NIGERIA: Safe to Be Me



This project adapts a school-based approach to higher education settings in southeast Nigeria, combining a focus on women students and staff facing violence in the workplace, with supporting women's leadership in these institutions. It uses an inclusive approach, with a focus on preventing violence against young lesbian, bisexual and transgender students. The initiative is currently in the co-design stage, with potential activities including inclusive safeguarding policies, safe spaces for women students and staff, prevention education, community dialogues and campaigns in local markets. It will also establish independent GBV Reporting Centres in four universities. This innovative project will be implemented by two Nigerian organizations, Vision Spring Initiatives and CHEVS - both widely recognised for their expertise in addressing violence, especially targeted at young sexual minorities.

NEPAL: Advancing LBT Rights through Peacebuilding



This project aims to advance the rights and dignity of the lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LBT) community in Nepal, specifically focusing on survivors of violence, diverse women and girls, and women human rights defenders. The initial phase involves applied action research to inform and adapt the intervention approach. Research findings will also be instrumental in advocating for LBT rights at local and national levels. The subsequent phase will use innovative approaches such as games, arts, and drama to sensitise various stakeholders, including schools, colleges, health posts, local government agencies, youth groups, and women's groups. Alongside these activities, the project will offer psychosocial care and counselling to survivors of violence. Implemented by Nagarik Aawaz (a peacebuilding women's rights organization) and Mitini Nepal (an LBTQI+ organization), this innovation grant seeks to prevent violence, promote peace and increase the inclusion of the LBT community.

Endnotes

- 1 GBV has been defined in FCDO's International Girls and Women Strategy as "Gender-based violence (GBV) is pervasive and universal, rooted in structural gender inequalities everywhere. It includes intimate partner violence, sexual violence including conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), school-related GBV, child marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), online and offline GBV, modern slavery and trafficking, and sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment (SEAH) in the aid sector." In the U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally, it is defined as: "Gender-based Violence is any harmful threat or act directed at an individual or group based on actual or perceived sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, and/or lack of adherence to varying socially constructed norms around masculinity and femininity. Although individuals of all gender identities may experience gender-based violence, women, girls, and gender non-conforming individuals face a disproportionate risk of gender-based violence across every context due to their unequal status in society."
- 2 World Health Organization (2021). Violence against women prevalence estimates; World Health Organization (2023) Global and regional estimates of violence against women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence.
- 3 Müller, A., Daskilewicz, K., Kabwe, M. L., Mmolai-Chalmers, A., Morroni, C., Muparamoto, N., Muula, A. S., Odira, V. Zimba, M. and the Southern and Eastern African Research Collective for Health (SEARCH) (2021) Experience of and factors associated with violence against sexual and gender minorities in nine African countries: a cross-sectional study, BMC Public Health, 21:357.
- 4 Center for International Governance Innovation (2023) Supporting a Safer Internet: Global Survey of Gender Based Violence Online. Eighteen countries were included in the survey: Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, France, Germany, India, Jordan, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and the United States.

To find out more, please visit our website:

<https://ww2preventvawg.org/>

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