

LEARNING FROM PRACTICE: PREVENTION SERIES

ADOLESCENT-FOCUSED APPROACHES TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

LESSONS FROM CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS FUNDED
BY THE UN TRUST FUND TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Ninth graders in Mongolia participate in a training on prevention of and protection from gender-based violence. Credit: Odmaa B./NFFCK (Kyrgyzstan)

Adolescent girls experience much of the same violence directed towards younger children, such as corporal punishment and sexual abuse by family members or caregivers, but they also face other forms of violence, such as early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation and cutting, and other harmful traditional practices. Although adolescence is a time of heightened vulnerability to certain forms of violence for girls, it is also a promising entry point for early efforts to prevent violence against women and girls (VAW/G).

This paper, part of the Learning from Practice: Prevention Series, summarizes the experiences of 10 UN Trust Fund-supported organizations in Cameroon, El Salvador, Mongolia, Nepal, Serbia, South Africa, State of Palestine, Tanzania, Ukraine and Viet Nam who highlighted some best practices, challenges and lessons learned to prevent VAW/G in various settings.

Key lessons learned include:

1. Gender-transformative and adolescent-focused programming

Multilevel and gender-transformative change requires partnership and solidarity across multiple types of organizations with different mandates but with the common goal of eradicating VAW/G; this can help find the most meaningful and sustainable strategies. For instance, in **Nepal**, Restless Development trained adolescent girls, community leaders and traditional healers, as well as local civil society organizations (CSOs), especially women's rights and youth organizations, to initiate campaigns at village and district levels in far- and mid-western Nepal to advocate for the abolition of *chhaupadi*, a harmful traditional practice linked to menstruation.

2. Designing prevention programmes in environments lacking adolescent-friendly services

Designing prevention programmes to ensure the participation of adolescents requires developing a unified model for supporting young survivors of violence. In addition, projects were successful when young activists were provided space to have their voices heard, were given a seat at the table when decisions were being made and were able to work in partnership with other CSOs to create an enabling environment for adolescent-friendly services.

In **South Africa**, for example, through engaging adolescents through soccer, Grassroot Soccer provided adolescents with information on preventing VAW/G as well as access to HIV testing services, through their work on a twin-track approach. By decentralizing the provision of services from traditional health facilities, which often lack youth-friendly services, Grassroot Soccer provided services in a more approachable environment.

Key recommendations from practitioners include:

- Increase investment in research in collaboration with practitioners on designing prevention programmes that work with adolescents.
- Consider multiple entry points for engaging adolescents based on the form of violence being addressed while recognizing the continuum of violence.
- Foster partnerships and fund collaborative work between different types of VAW/G prevention organizations with the goal of reducing violence against girls.

For the full set of conclusions and recommendations, please read the paper through the QR code below:



About the Prevention Series

As part of its commitment to elevating practice-based knowledge, the UN Trust Fund commissioned a prevention series of 10 papers on “Learning from Practice”, produced in collaboration with almost 100 grantees and external researchers. Each paper in the series draws on the monitoring and evaluation reports of 10 civil society organizations that are implementing prevention projects funded by the UN Trust Fund in different countries and contexts. The findings identified 10 key pathways to prevent violence against women and girls. Each theme is explored in conversations with 10 grantees, resulting in one detailed report per theme.

Scan the QR code below to listen to a podcast about this topic.



About the UN Trust Fund

The UN Trust Fund, managed by UN Women on behalf of the UN system, remains the only global, multilateral grant-giving mechanism exclusively dedicated to supporting efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls. Since its establishment in 1996 by UN General Assembly [resolution 50/166](#), the UN Trust Fund has awarded USD 215 million to 646 initiatives in 140 countries and territories. Focusing on preventing violence, implementing laws and policies, and improving access to vital services for survivors, the UN Trust Fund invests in life-changing initiatives for millions of women and girls around the world.

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