



WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM EVALUATIONS OF PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE UN TRUST FUND TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN?

A meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN Trust Fund grantees
between 2015 and 2019

Dr. Monica Biradavolu / Radhika Viswanathan / Lisa Bochey

AUGUST 2020

Acknowledgements

This report was written in close consultation with the UN Trust Fund's monitoring and evaluation team: Gemma Wood, Shruti Majumdar and Daniele Elizaire. We are very grateful for their continuous guidance and input at all stages. The authors would also like to sincerely thank the entire UN Trust Fund team, which generously gave time to provide comments and review the various drafts of the reports. Finally, this report would not have been possible without the many organizations across the world who work tirelessly to end violence against women.

Disclaimer

This meta-analysis represents work conducted by independent evaluators. The analysis presented reflects the opinions of the authors (excluding those areas co-created with select UN Trust Fund staff) and therefore may not necessarily represent the opinions of the UN Trust Fund, its grantees or partners.

About the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Girls

The United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) is the only global grant-making mechanism exclusively dedicated to eradicating all forms of violence against women and girls. In the 24 years of its existence, it has supported 572 organizations, investing in innovative and evidence-based civil society-led solutions and life-changing initiatives. The projects it has funded focus on preventing violence, implementing laws and policies to address and eliminate violence against women and girls, and improving access to essential services for survivors. The UN Trust Fund is managed by UN Women on behalf of the UN system and involves UN bodies and organs, civil society organizations and experts on ending violence against women in its decision making processes through its Programme Advisory Committee (PAC).

Meta-Evaluation Team

Monica Biradavolu, Team Leader and Senior Evaluator
Radhika Viswanathan, Evaluator
Lisa Bochey, Evaluator

Evaluation Management

UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women
Chief: Aldijana Sisic

Meta-evaluation Task Managers

Gemma Wood, Senior Task Manager
Shruti Majumdar, Task Manager
Daniele Elizaire, Task Manager

Contents

LIST OF TABLES, GRAPHS AND ACRONYMS	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
1. INTRODUCTION	11
2. BACKGROUND	11
3. PURPOSE	11
4. OBJECTIVES	12
5. SCOPE	12
5.1 Spread of reports across regions and cycles	13
5.2 Settings	13
6. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY	15
7. RESEARCH QUESTIONS	16
8. TEAM	18
9. LIMITATIONS	18
10. FINDINGS	19
Question 1: What are the learnings from the UN Trust Fund project evaluations on effectiveness?	19
A. Project Effectiveness at the Individual Level	21
A1. Project Effectiveness at the Individual Level: Prevention of Violence	21
A2. Effectiveness at the Individual Level: Improving Service Delivery for Survivors of Violence	24
A3. Project Effectiveness at the Individual Level: Strengthening Institutional Responses to end VAW/G	26
Project Effectiveness at the Individual Level: Strategies to Overcome Challenges	27
B. Project Effectiveness at the Community Level	28
Project Effectiveness at the Community Level: Promising Strategies	28
Project Effectiveness at the Community Level : Strategies to Overcome the Challenges	30
C. Project Effectiveness at the Structural Level	32
Project Effectiveness at the Structural Level: Promising Strategies	32
Recap of Evidence on Project Effectiveness	32
Question 2: What are we learning from the UN Trust Fund project evaluations on impact?	33
Intended Impacts	33
Unintended Impacts	36
Recap of Evidence on Project Impacts	37
Question 3: What are we learning from the UN Trust Fund projects on sustainability?	37
Financial sustainability of project results	38

Sustainability of results through institutional mechanisms	38
Sustainability of project results through intangible means	38
Recap of Evidence on Sustainability	38
11.CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	40
REFERENCES	47
ANNEX A: Project Reports	49
ANNEX B: Notes On Settings	52
ANNEX C: Full List Of Recommendations	55

List of Tables and Graphs

Table 5.1: GERAAS ratings of reports selected for the meta-analysis

Table 5.2: Breakdown of selected reports by region and cycle

Table 5.3: Distribution of projects by setting

Chart 7.1: Research questions

Figure 11.1: Example from the United Republic of Tanzania

List of Boxes

Box 1: The UN Trust Fund's approach to grant-making

Box 2: A multi-level project from the United Republic of Tanzania

Box 3: Note on Measuring the Reduction in Women's Experience (or Men's Perpetration) of Violence

Acronyms

CSO Civil society organization

EVAW/G Ending violence against women and girls

FGM Female genital mutilation

GBV Gender-based violence

GERAAS Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System

IEC Information, education and communication

M&E Monitoring and evaluation

SGBV Sexual and gender-based violence

UNEG United Nations Evaluation Group

UNTF UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

VAW/G Violence against women and girls

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) is a global multilateral grant-making mechanism supporting national efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls. Established in 1996 by UN General Assembly resolution 50/166, the UN Trust Fund provides grants to develop innovative models and interventions in the area of ending violence against women and girls. It is administered by UN Women on behalf of the UN system. Since its establishment, the UN Trust Fund has awarded USD 175 million to 572 initiatives in 140 countries and territories. In 2019, it managed 137 projects in 70 countries and territories.

In 2015, the UN Trust Fund developed a five-year (2015-2020) Strategic Plan,¹ which identified three interconnected pillars of work:

- Grant-giving to initiatives to end violence against women and girls;
- Building a global evidence hub on ending violence against women and girls based on the evaluated results of UN Trust Fund grantees; and
- Advocating for global giving for work on ending violence against women and girls.

Scope, Objective and Purpose

The meta-analysis is based on evidence from 30 evaluation reports commissioned by UN Trust Fund grantees at the end of their projects. The reports are a subset of a total of 79 evaluation reports determined to be of high quality through a meta-evaluation exercise, and cover projects implemented between 2015 and 2019. This meta-analysis aims to extract evidence of what works and what doesn't work in ending violence against women and girls (EVAW/G) to contribute to knowledge generation and dissemination. It is a step towards developing an evidence and learning hub with quality-assured material and credible data from existing projects that can inform people and organizations working on EVAW/G.

The range of projects supported by the UN Trust Fund offers an opportunity to delve deep and examine the different ways in which projects were designed and their impacts on reducing violence. The reduction of violence is determined by a complex mix of factors, including the voice and agency

of survivors, the extent of participation and dialogue within communities, the level of understanding of how behaviours change and norms shift, and knowledge around how to design services to work better for the communities they serve. A deeper understanding of what works as well as what doesn't will be useful for future project design or management for the UN Trust Fund as well as others working in the field of EVAW/G. Therefore, the intended audience for this report are donors such as the UN Trust Fund, civil society organizations (CSOs) and practitioners that implement programmes to end violence against women and girls as well as researchers interested in furthering the field.

The first objective of the meta-analysis was to ask: **What are we learning from evaluation findings on ending violence against women?** How are projects designed to be effective at reducing violence? What can we learn from the different strategies designed to make the projects effective, and at what levels is change being affected? To this end, the meta-analysis used an ecological framework to assess strategies for reducing violence at three critical levels: the individual, community and structural levels.

Secondly, **What are we learning about the characteristics that determine the effectiveness, sustainability and impact of UN Trust Fund projects?** The meta-analysis interrogated promising strategies, challenges faced and mitigating actions that contribute to achieving impact, effectiveness and sustainability in ending violence against women and girls.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This meta-analysis found that UN Trust Fund projects, by virtue of the demand-driven and competitive nature of grant-making, constitute a unique dataset representing a diversity of civil society programmes working to end violence against women and girls. Taken together, data from the projects constitute a valuable resource both for those interested in advancing knowledge in the field of EVAW/G and for practitioners to learn from other on-the-ground experiences. The analysis developed a series of key conclusions and recommendations. More details follow in this report, including implications for the UN Trust Fund.

¹ Available from <https://untf.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/09/un-trust-fund-strategic-plan-2015-2020>.

Effectiveness

Conclusion 1: UN Trust Fund projects, regardless of the form of violence they address or their setting, effectively promote positive attitudes and beliefs. They raise awareness on EAW/G at the individual level and provide important lessons on how to translate that awareness into action.

This analysis takes a unique approach by tracing the journey from a shift in attitudes, beliefs and norms towards action, shedding light both on the opportunities and constraints to individual action when it comes to EAW/G projects. The analysis finds that UN Trust Fund projects that have the following design elements are more likely to be effective in reaching their action-oriented goals of preventing or ending VAW/G at the individual level. They bring context awareness into project design; involve women, girls and communities to co-create training materials; provide needs-oriented and tailored trainings to service providers; involve stakeholders in an intentional and targeted manner; and proactively identify last-mile barriers to action (material or normative) and work to reduce them. On the flipside, projects that conduct one-off and stand-alone training sessions and campaigns, or work with an homogenized script for all stakeholders may increase individual awareness and shift attitudes in the short run, but are less likely to inspire behavioural change and sustain learnings. Projects that have taken a cascading approach (training of trainers) instead of one-off trainings are more likely to be effective in generating action at the individual level, especially when working with mobile or remote populations that cannot be reached multiple times.

Recommendation 1: Trainings and awareness sessions promoting gender equitable attitudes at the individual level are the cornerstone of EAW/G programming, but in order to be effective in bringing change, they must be designed or adapted from the ground up, with clear calls to action and behaviour change.

Conclusion 2: UN Trust Fund projects have adopted various effective strategies to shift harmful social norms related to VAW/G, but some deep-seated norms remain hard to shift within three years.

For those working on the removal of a harmful or “sticky” norm, collective action becomes of paramount importance. UN Trust Fund projects have adopted various strategies to overcome this challenge – including, but not limited to, community mobilization and activism approaches; establishment of a new, positive norm; or alternative visions and pathways for relationships. The analysis also points to

the risks of working on sticky norms, such as when EAW/G messaging or trainings do not resonate with the community or when community members do not want to incur the negative sanctions involved in transgression of the norm. This can push the norm underground rather than eradicating it. In addition, the question of resonance/dissonance of values and messaging between front-line project workers and communities comes up frequently in evaluations. Some projects have effectively accounted for this through open and continuous discussion and outreach within organizations.

Recommendation 2: Social norms change on EAW/G is essential to bringing change at scale, but must account for significant time and skills, and intensive community engagement.

Conclusion 3: UN Trust Fund projects that anticipate barriers to action throughout the life cycle of a project have been effective in inducing collective action for EAW/G.

Projects have been effective in moving the needle from awareness to inducing collective action when they have: a) sought early buy-in with community stakeholders, often by way of a pre-implementation advocacy plan; b) gone beyond “consultations” to participatory involvement of both primary and secondary beneficiaries in project decisions; and c) created and tapped into networks and safe spaces to mobilize and disseminate information within communities, especially when gatherings are either difficult or forbidden. Projects that do not treat the community or specific groups within the community as a monolith (e.g. youth) and consider subgroup variations (e.g. youth who are refugees versus youth who are internally displaced people) are more likely to succeed in inspiring collective action.

Recommendation 3: Similar to inducing action at the individual level, awareness-raising at the community level should have clear calls for collective action, and work on reducing barriers to it before, during and after project implementation.

Conclusion 4: UN Trust Fund projects are effective in working with key secondary beneficiaries to improve service delivery and strengthen institutional responses when strategies for engagement with service providers and policymakers are well planned, focused and meaningful.

Projects that take a holistic approach to ending VAW/G match the funding priorities of the UN Trust Fund. The inclusion of secondary beneficiaries is a lynchpin of intervention strategies. Projects work with a large range of secondary beneficiaries, including in health care, government, legal

services, workplace and educational settings, and religious and other traditional institutions. Engagement with them has been particularly fruitful in improving service delivery and strengthening institutional responses to survivors of violence when projects: a) carefully considered the number of secondary beneficiaries to include, given the time and resources available; b) carefully vetted whether the secondary beneficiary had the capacity for uptake of the project's intended activities; and c) made training and other activities focused, practical and meaningful to service providers and policymakers.

The one specific service that survivors consistently found beneficial was psychosocial counselling. This highlights the importance of mental health interventions.

Recommendation 4: Projects must carefully design, manage and plan the terms of engagement with service providers and policymakers so that the “ask” is meaningful, practical and feasible for both the implementer and the secondary beneficiary.

Conclusion 5: UN Trust Fund projects that anticipate the challenges that women may face in asserting their independence, and find ways to mitigate these, have been effective in reducing VAW/G.

UN Trust Fund projects recognize that equipping women to address the violence in their lives takes time. Project evaluations highlighted the need to be aware of the possible burden women may feel as “agents of change” as they bear the responsibility of taking action within their communities. A range of promising strategies help alleviate this burden, such as: a) providing support networks outside their families; b) offering alternate pathways to develop their independence away from their abusive relationships; and c) creating an enabling environment for women to assert themselves.

Across projects, women have responded positively to interventions that have created safe spaces for friendships and mutual support groups for women. Successful interventions have also recognized that certain structural conditions of survivors' lives prevent their ability to take action. To address this, strategies range from establishing shelters for independent living to empowering women economically so they can live free of their abusive partners. Projects that publicly appreciate the contributions of project beneficiaries and women activists in the public space help in creating an enabling environment for these women.

An unintended impact of giving survivors of violence an opportunity to become agents of change can be an increasing feeling of insecurity among men and boys. Projects that anticipated this challenge and included men and boys as allies in bringing about social change were able to prevent their efforts from being viewed as a zero-sum game, where women come out as winners at the expense of men.

Recommendation 5a: While investing in strategies to help women become changemakers, projects should also consider mechanisms and strategies for sustained support to alleviate the burden that women might feel for being the primary agents of change.

Recommendation 5b: Projects that use economic empowerment strategies must ensure that women are able to sustain their activities beyond the life cycle of the intervention.

Impact

Conclusion 6: Almost half the projects in the sample have measured impacts and observed reductions in men's perpetration of or women's experience of VAW/G, but each evaluation has measured it differently, which points to the challenges of measuring VAW/G goals within short time frames and with restricted resources. Critically, however, UN Trust Fund projects have led to significant impacts on precursors such as self-efficacy and self-identity, and have had unintended consequences, both positive and negative. This shows the cascading effects of project activities well beyond the stated overall project goals.

On impact, the meta-analysis grappled with the following question: How best can evaluators assess whether intervention activities have had an impact on EAW/G? This challenge is examined in more depth in Section 11 of this report, but in short, the meta-analysis uncovered two measures that evaluators typically use to measure changes: improvements in survivors' self-identity and self-efficacy.

An increase in positive self-identity is particularly critical for certain subgroups of women with whom projects work, such as female sex workers, transgender and lesbian women, and indigenous women. These groups are marginalized from mainstream society, stigmatized for their identities and made to feel powerless against perpetrators of violence. Improving the self-identity of communities of marginalized women is an important first step towards reducing violence. There is also strong evidence that projects have improved self-efficacy among their beneficiaries, inducing a change where survivors feel more confident and in control of their surroundings.

The evaluation reports document interesting and important findings on unintended consequences of project activities, both positive and negative, which show the cascading effects of project activities well beyond the stated goals.

What the evidence base misses are measures of collective identity and collective efficacy. Given the centrality of mobilization efforts and network formation in intervention activities and as proven promising strategies, this is a missed opportunity for better understanding how projects are inducing social and not just individual change. Additionally, following from Conclusions 1 and 3 above, it would also be useful to measure collective action to specify the extent to which improved awareness, knowledge and skills are translating into actions.

Recommendation 6: Expand the scope of the data set, and the types of data, measures and themes in future evaluations, analyses and studies to take advantage of the full range and scope of UN Trust Fund projects.

Sustainability

Conclusion 7: While the project cycles may be limited, and finding channels for financial sustainability may be difficult, projects can still find pathways to continue their work even after UN Trust Fund support ends.

One of the primary challenges for UN Trust Fund grantees is the sustainability of their work after the project ends. It is a tall order for grantees to rely on an exit strategy that involves securing fresh funding to sustain work on EVAW/G. Only 2 out of 30 projects were financially sustainable at the time of the end-of-project evaluation, according to the evaluator. This is not altogether surprising, considering that projects are funded for two or three years, and such a short timeframe does not allow for applying for new grants while still implementing activities from the current one. The UN Trust Fund projects are ambitious, with a high intensity and pace of activities, and it must be difficult to fundraise within short funding cycles.

Yet projects have been effective in sustaining results when they have been open to different forms of sustainability that go beyond a linear pathway (e.g. one that focuses only on scaling up). Some projects found institutional mechanisms for sustaining project results. Their exit strategies held the promise of ensuring that the project's approaches, ideas and principles did not end when the funding cycle concluded. Projects institutionalized the key concepts of EVAW/G by: a) embedding project-created materials and messages into the existing curricula of academies that train critical service providers (such as police and social workers); b) creating manuals, guidelines and policies for future use by institutions and community groups; and c) investing in new institutional systems (such as by establishing centres for survivors of violence as a proof-of-concept).

Finally, there is a critical “intangible” way to achieve sustainability. Project beneficiaries often used the amorphous word “ownership” to describe how they had experienced the project. This meant they would never “unlearn” the key lessons that the project had imparted to them. It highlights a conclusion mentioned earlier – the importance of the participatory involvement of beneficiaries in project decisions, which is the mechanism through which “ownership” is inculcated.

Recommendation 7: CSOs should look at different forms of sustainability, over and beyond the scale-up of the project, by institutionalizing project results, investing in networks and building ecosystems.

Implications for the UN Trust Fund: The above conclusions and recommendations have a number of implications for the UN Trust Fund as a grant-maker and organization dedicated to capacity development and knowledge-sharing across grantees. These implications are set out in more depth in Section 11. For example, on funding and project length, the UN Trust Fund will want to consider whether to extend the minimum project length beyond three years; whether to allow more flexibility in issuing no-cost extensions to projects; and whether to provide more flexibility in funding through contingency budgets to help grantees “go the last mile” in EVAW/G interventions and ensure sustainability. The UN Trust Fund may wish to revisit guidance for both applicants and grantees to ensure projects are manageable for CSO size and experience rather than being too aspirational; to provide more guidance on how to devise strategies for subgroups within beneficiary groups, in order to reach the most marginalized; and to effectively engage service providers and policymakers in a sustainable manner.

Furthermore, since this meta-analysis is limited to end-of-project evaluation reports, future work should expand the scope to incorporate other types of project data, such as periodic monitoring reports. The 30 projects considered in this meta-analysis are only a small subset of the total number of projects funded by the UN Trust Fund. For perspective, in 2019 alone, the UN Trust Fund funded and managed 137 projects. Widening the data pool will enable a more thorough understanding of a number of questions and themes that are useful and relevant to ending VAW/G.

Taken together, data from UN Trust Fund projects constitute a valuable resource both for those interested in advancing knowledge in the field of EVAW/G and for practitioners to learn from other on-the-ground experiences. This report recommends that the UN Trust Fund seeks partners to continue to mine this data, including to look at projects across settings or by specific themes (such as work with men and boys, on economic empowerment or on ending harmful practices such as female genital mutilation, *chhaupadi* or child marriage). Future analyses should involve grantees in learning and co-creation of conclusions and recommendations to make the findings most relevant to practitioners in the EVAW/G field.



Out of School girls attended remedial classes for Arabic, English and Math and life skills sessions (Jordan). © War Child Canada/Mina Al Hashimi.

1. INTRODUCTION

The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) is a global multilateral grant-making mechanism supporting national efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls. Established in 1996 by UN General Assembly resolution 50/166,² the UN Trust Fund provides grants to develop innovative models and interventions for ending violence against women and girls (EVAW/G). It is administered by UN Women on behalf of the UN system.

Prior to 2017, the UN Trust Fund awarded grants to a range of government, non-governmental, advocacy and media organizations. Since 2017, as per the decision of its Global Programme Advisory Committee, the UN Trust Fund exclusively awards grants to civil society organizations (CSOs). These grantees in turn work with diverse actors from women's, men's, adolescents' and youth groups; indigenous communities; religious and traditional leaders; human rights organizations; and the media. Since 1996, the UN Trust Fund has awarded USD 175 million to 572 initiatives in 140 countries and territories. In 2019, it managed 137 projects aimed at preventing and addressing violence against women and girls in 70 countries and territories.

2. BACKGROUND

In 2015, the UN Trust Fund developed a five-year Strategic Plan (2015-2020)³ with three interconnected pillars of work. They are:

- Grant-giving to initiatives to end violence against women and girls;
- Building a global evidence hub on ending violence against women and girls based on the evaluated results of UN Trust Fund grantees; and
- Advocating for global giving for work on ending violence against women and girls.

In 2016, towards initiating the evidence hub, the UN Trust Fund commissioned a meta-evaluation of 77 independent and external evaluations of grants produced between 2010 and 2016 against the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation.⁴ The independent consultant who carried out the meta-evaluation also conducted a meta-analysis of the findings from a sample of 23 reports

rated as satisfactory and above in quality. As a result of the findings and recommendations of the 2016 meta-evaluation and meta-analysis reports, the UN Trust Fund reviewed evaluation procedures and guidelines, among other actions to improve its evaluation practice and support learning throughout the life cycle of the projects it funds. A selection of project evaluations is now being uploaded onto the public website to disseminate the findings among practitioners and partners.

This evaluation library⁵ is the start of a larger endeavour within the UN Trust Fund to build an evidence and learning hub by 2020 that harnesses the depth of knowledge and lessons learned through the work of its grantees, and contributes to the evidence base on ending violence against women and girls. To advance this effort, the UN Trust Fund commissioned a second meta-evaluation and meta-analysis to capture the quality of evaluations completed between 2015 and 2019. A meta-evaluation report has already been finished. A sample of 30 reports rated satisfactory and above in the meta-evaluation were included in this meta-analysis.

3. PURPOSE

The meta-analysis report sits within the context of the meta-evaluation report. The meta-evaluation had three objectives. First, it sought to assess the quality of final external evaluations submitted to the UN Trust Fund between 2015 and 2019 (evaluation Cycles 16 to 20), which were either commissioned by grantees or co-managed in collaboration with grantees in the case of small grants. A second objective of the meta-evaluation exercise was to allow a trend analysis to examine changes in the quality and credibility of these evaluations. Finally, the meta-evaluation sought to develop constructive lessons for future systemic strengthening of evaluations.

The meta-analysis serves a different purpose. It will use project evaluations to extract evidence of what works and what doesn't work in the field of EVAW/G for knowledge generation and dissemination. These objectives will be met using a subset of evaluation reports that have been assessed (through the meta-evaluation) as having a high degree of quality. In this way, the meta-analysis will be the next step towards developing an evidence and learning hub with quality-assured material and credible data from existing projects.

2 Available from <https://undocs.org/A/RES/50/166>.

3 Available from <http://www.uneval.org/documentguidance-documents>

4 Available from www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914.

5 Available from <https://unf.unwomen.org/en/learning-hub>.

4. OBJECTIVES

The range of projects supported by the UN Trust Fund offers an opportunity to delve deep and examine the different ways in which projects were designed, and their impacts on reducing violence. Violence reduction is determined by a complex mix of factors, including the voice and agency of survivors, the extent of participation and dialogue within communities, the level of understanding of how behaviours change and norms shift, and knowledge around how to design services to work better for the communities they serve. A deeper understanding of what works as well as what doesn't will be useful for future project design and management for the UN Trust Fund as well as others working on EVAW/G. Therefore, the intended audience for this report includes donors such as the UN Trust Fund, CSOs/practitioners that implement EVAW/G programmes as well as researchers interested in furthering work on the issue.

The first objective of the meta-analysis is therefore to ask: What are we learning from evaluation findings on ending violence against women? How are projects designed to be effective at reducing violence? What can we learn from the different strategies designed to make the projects effective, and at what levels is change being affected? To this end, the meta-analysis used an ecological framework⁶ to assess the strategies for reducing violence at three critical levels: the individual, community and structural levels.

Secondly, What are we learning about the characteristics that determine the effectiveness, sustainability and impact of UN Trust Fund projects? The meta-analysis interrogated the promising strategies, challenges faced and mitigating actions that contribute to achieving impact, effectiveness and sustainability in ending violence against women and girls.

5. SCOPE

The sample consists of 30 high-quality end-of-project evaluation reports from UN Trust Fund projects from Cycles 16 to 20. Projects funded by the UN Trust Fund are implemented and owned by CSOs. The UN Trust Fund provides advice on project design, monitoring and evaluation, but the grant-making mechanism does not co-implement the project. Limited advice on project design and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is provided at the project start-up (during a capacity development workshop and/or online training

course) and periodically during implementation, on request. Final project evaluations are a mandatory requirement and must follow UN Trust Fund guidelines (based on standard UNEG guidance). But these are planned, managed and organized by the CSO grantees, with quality assurance and technical support from the UN Trust Fund Secretariat as required. Evaluators are typically national consultants hired by the grantee according to a review and selection process it manages; the UN Trust Fund Secretariat does not get involved in evaluator selection, aside from providing some guidance on terms of reference, and recommended skills and qualifications.

The 30 evaluation reports selected for this analysis belong to a larger set of 79 reports selected for the meta-evaluation. The meta-evaluation was intended to assess the quality of evaluations to improve the UN Trust Fund Secretariat's support and guidance on evaluation. The quality review **does not assess the success of projects**. Therefore the 30 reports selected do not represent the "best" projects but rather the reports with the most reliable evidence.

For the meta-evaluation, each of the 79 reports was scored using the UN Women GERAAS⁷ evaluation quality assessment matrix. The score is based on eight parameters. Three parameters were used to select the highest quality reports for the meta-analysis:

- The disaggregated score on the methodology section;
- The disaggregated score on the findings section; and
- The overall score of the report.

Selected reports scored at least one "very good" rating on their overall methodology or findings score. This resulted in a total of 30 reports in the following five combinations (Table 5.1):

- Reports that received a "very good" on all three scores (overall GERAAS, methodology and findings) (8 reports)
- Reports that received a "very good" on overall GERAAS and findings scores, and a "good" on the methodology score (2 reports)
- Reports that received a "very good" on methodology and findings scores, and a "good" on the overall GERAAS score (9 reports)

6 For more on the ecological framework, see <https://www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/ecology/en/>

7 GERAAS stands for Global Evaluation Report Assessment and Analysis. It is a tool aligned with UN Women's Independent Evaluation Service practice and UNEG quality standards.



Young school girls during girls camp session where they attended training about their rights and harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, beading and child marriages (Kenya). International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR)/ Chrispin Mwatate.

- Reports that received a “very good” on the findings score, and a “good” on overall GERAAS and methodology scores (5 reports)
- Reports that received a “very good” on the methodology score, and a “good” on overall GERAAS and findings scores (6 reports).

The final number of reports per scoring criteria is below:

TABLE 5.1
GERAAS ratings of reports selected for the meta-analysis

Overall	Methodology	Findings	Reports
Very good	Very good	Very good	8
Very good	Good	Very good	2
Good	Very good	Very good	9
Good	Good	Very good	5
Good	Very good	Good	6
Total			30

5.1 Spread of reports across regions and cycles

Of the 30 reports, 21 were in English, 7 in Spanish and 2 in French. The reports were spread across grant cycles and regions (Table 5.2). The share of reports included in the meta-analysis go up across successive cycles, albeit with a slight dip for Cycle 18. Nearly all reports from Cycle 20 (8 out of 9) were included in the meta-analysis.

5.2 Settings

It is useful to examine the different settings for UN Trust Fund projects. **The majority of projects in this sample work in a multiplicity of settings. Fewer projects were designed with a primary setting in mind.** As seen in Table 5.3, the largest number of projects (19 out of 30 reports, or 63 per cent) worked with community groups. The other significant settings were legal/law enforcement (courts, police stations in 9 reports, or 30 per cent); health-care settings (clinics, hospitals in 7 reports, or 23 per cent); educational settings (schools in 5 reports, or 17 per cent); governmental units (ministries, district administrations in 3 reports or 10 per cent), shelters, community centres and religious institutions (3 reports each or 10 per cent each); refugee and internally displaced people (IDP) settlements (2 reports, or 7 per cent) and commercial establishments (1 report, or 3 per cent). **Since projects worked in multiple settings, a single project could have been coded under different settings.**

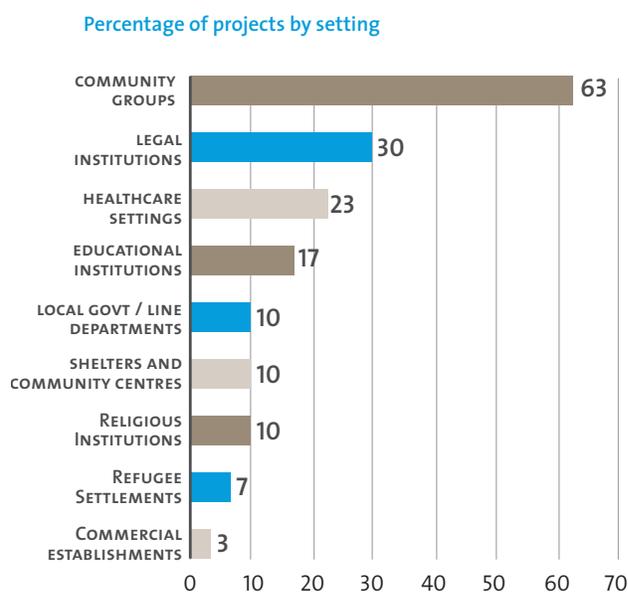
TABLE 5.2
Breakdown of selected reports by region and cycle

Region	Number of reports by region/total reports by region	Cycle	Number of reports by cycle/total reports by cycle
Americas and the Caribbean	7/16 (44%)	Cycle 16	0 ⁸
Africa	9/17 (53%)	Cycle 17	5/16 (31%)
Europe and Central Asia	5/15 (33%)	Cycle 18	4/20(25%)
Asia and the Pacific	7/22 (32%)	Cycle 19	13/29 (45%)
Arab States and North Africa	2/9 (22%)	Cycle 20	8/9 (89%)
Total	30	Total	30

A breakdown of the 30 reports by cycle, region and GERAAS ranking on all three parameters is included in Annex A.

It is beyond the scope of this meta-analysis to explore evidence of what works and what does not in each setting. The UN Trust Fund portfolio includes many more projects working in the settings in Table 5.3, but these projects did not have evaluations in the sample included. It would therefore be impossible to draw conclusions on the settings that are underrepresented. This could be a useful entry point for future meta-analysis and studies of lessons learned from the work of UN Trust Fund grantees. Having said that, noting the large number of projects in community group settings, conclusions could be drawn on the relevance of the findings to work at the community level. Furthermore, this finding supports the conclusions of the first meta-analysis in 2016, which found that the UN Trust Fund disproportionately funded projects at community level, despite applications also being open to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working at national and subnational levels.

TABLE 5.3
Distribution of projects by setting



8 There were no reports from Cycle 16 because this cycle was an anomaly. There were 12 reports in Cycle 16, and the project duration was three years from November 2012, January 2013 or February 2013. Seven projects submitted evaluation reports on time and these were included in the 2016 meta-evaluation. The remaining five were submitted to the UN Trust Fund up to one year later than expected (with some not being received until January 2017). The late reports suffered from a misunderstanding in project management requirements, a lack of management by the grantee organization or delays in project implementation overall. It seems reasonable to assume that if the grantee was unable to manage the project well, it is also likely that the evaluation process and the evaluators were not managed well. As a result, the scores on reports from Cycle 16 in this meta-evaluation are low compared to those included in the earlier meta-evaluation.

6. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The overarching goal of the meta-analysis was to extract promising strategies on project effectiveness, impact and potential pathways for sustaining project results.

The meta-analysis included four stages: 1) identification of entry points and research domains; 2) the creation of a database with associated codes for each domain of interest; 3) data extraction and analysis of themes with contrasting examples; and 4) co-creation of a set of conclusions and accompanying recommendations. We describe each stage below and highlight how UN Trust Fund stakeholders were engaged to help refine the research questions and co-produce the key conclusions and recommendations.

Identifying entry points and research domains for the meta-analysis

UN Trust Fund projects are very diverse across a number of metrics – their geographic spread, the range of VAW issues covered, the types of settings (health care, legal, educational, etc.), the variety of community groups engaged and the diversity of strategies (e.g. from offering legal aid to setting up shelters to providing health-care services). This diversity is no doubt due to the demand-driven, competitive nature of the UN Trust Fund’s annual Call for Proposals, which is open to applications from NGOs/CSOs globally, working at national, subnational and community levels, and tackling all forms of VAW/G.

BOX 1

The UN Trust Fund’s approach to grant-making

UN Trust Fund applicants are reviewed against an appraisal scoring system weighted towards funding multidimensional projects with an holistic approach that can effect change at multiple levels of the ecological model. The assumption – based on existing evidence in the field of EVAW/G – is that this leads to greater impact. At the project start-up phase, grantees are encouraged to review their theory of change and cross-check plans against the ecological model to ensure there are no gaps and/or to understand where partners or other stakeholders can influence risks and opportunities. This has resulted in very few projects being stand-alone interventions focused on only one level of the model. The pros and cons of this approach could be worth exploring, as reflected in the conclusions and recommendations of this report.

There were some important commonalities across projects. All projects were typically implemented for either two or three years, except for four projects that had received a second grant from the UN Trust Fund under a “by invitation only” funding window, based on the promise of scale-up and replication of the first grant’s results. Four projects therefore benefited from two funding cycles of two or three years each – a total of four to six years.⁹ The majority of grantees worked across multiple settings and with multiple community groups. And, with regard to the UN Trust Fund’s results areas – prevention of violence, improving service delivery and strengthening institutional responses – the majority of projects implemented work across two, if not all three of these areas (applicants are welcome to select one or more of the focus areas, and are actively encouraged to submit multidimensional project proposals, under the assumption that this should lead to more holistic projects).

Such range and diversity within the grantee portfolio presented both opportunities and challenges for the meta-analysis. The opportunity is in the breadth of information and evidence on promising strategies and key challenges that can be extracted from the evaluation reports, which is useful both for those interested in advancing knowledge in the field of EVAW/G and for practitioners to learn from other on-the-ground experiences. The main challenge is in how to find entry points for analysis when the data set is so diverse. Should the analysis focus on settings? Should it focus on an ecological model¹⁰ at different levels such as individual, community and structural, while also recognizing that most projects cover at least two, if not all three, levels, and that data within any given evaluation report will cover all levels? Should the analysis focus on results areas, again recognizing that the majority of projects cover at least two, if not all three results areas, and that the data within any given evaluation report could potentially cover all three results areas?

The researchers, together with the UN Trust Fund, determined that the best approach was to first focus on the three key research domains, and to examine the evidence on project

9 Under the “by invitation only” category of its Call for Proposals, which began in 2016, the UN Trust Fund has awarded nine grants to CSOs that it was already supporting where projects showed promise for scale-up or knowledge generation. Four of these received final project evaluations for the second grant period that are included in this meta-analysis. A fifth project in this meta-analysis received its first final evaluation and was subsequently approved for a second grant in Cycle 21.

10 See www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/ecology/en/

effectiveness, impact and sustainability of results. Within effectiveness, which was the main evidence base in evaluation reports, we made two data “cuts”. The first was to analyse changes sought by projects at the individual, community and structural levels. Within the domain of individual change, we further cut the data by the three results areas – prevention, service delivery and institutional responses. The specific questions under each are detailed in Section 7.

Creation of a database and codes

The research team created an Excel database, in which every evaluation report had its own sheet. Every report was coded on effectiveness, impact and sustainability. For effectiveness, the codes included the three results areas – prevention, service delivery and institutional responses. Some data were entered through dropdown boxes with set choices; other data required more detailed notetaking. There were separate codes (separate tabs in the database) for violence reduction, intergroup variation, and intended and unintended impacts.

Coding and analysis

After the 30 evaluation reports were coded, all data were extracted into a master Excel sheet. The data on key research domains – effectiveness, impact and sustainability – was separated by tabs in the master sheet. Within each tab, data on the set responses were collated, and the notes from each evaluation report were entered into successive rows.

For the analysis, the set choices provided broad trends whereas the notes were read thoroughly to identify common strategies, promising strategies and key challenges. The analysis especially relied on identifying contrasting examples – the same strategy that yielded different results, or the same population (e.g. refugees) but different strategies with different results, or the same settings (e.g. shelters) and the similarities and differences in strategies and outcomes.

Co-creation of conclusions and recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations were derived through an iterative process of co-production with key stakeholders. First, the independent research team developed a full list of recommendations based both on the findings of the meta-analysis and those that were part of the recommendations sections of the 30 evaluation reports. This list was presented to the UN Trust Fund. Following discussion and feedback, conclusions that flowed logically from the findings were written up. The conclusions then led to the crafting of recommendations, separating those aimed at projects and those with implications for the UN Trust Fund.

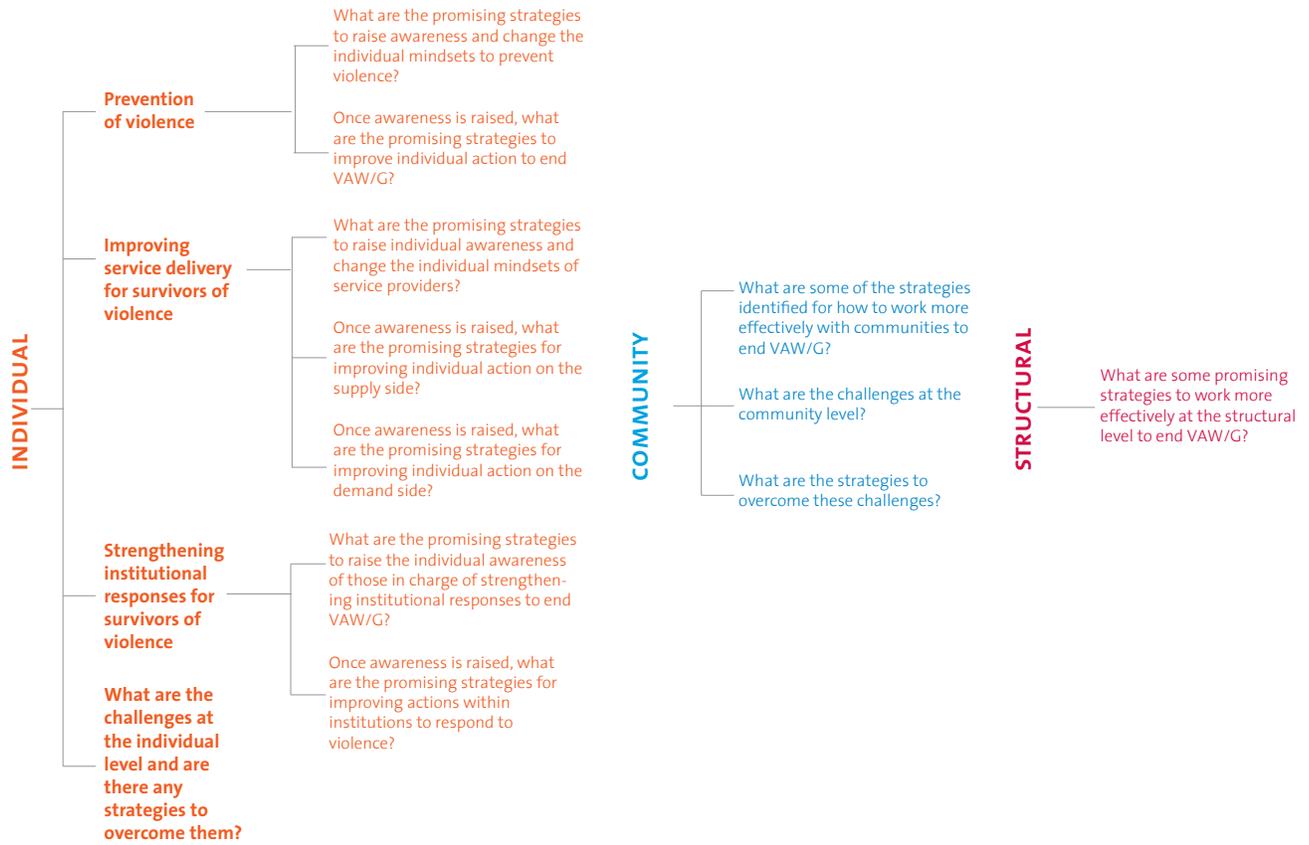
7. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions focused on three main domains: *the effectiveness* of the project, *the impact* of the project, and its *potential for sustainability*. Under each domain, we examined evidence on pathways to change that projects demonstrated (activity-, output- and outcome-level changes evaluated in the reports). This developed an understanding of the processes of change. For example, what are the pathways from individual awareness to action? What processes can improve the efficacy of service providers? For each of the three domains, we used a number of questions (Chart 7.1).

We applied an ecological framework to assess the strategies for reducing violence at three levels: the individual (including relationships), community and structural levels.

CHART 7.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research questions on effectiveness



Research questions on impact and sustainability



8. TEAM

A three-person team conducted the meta-evaluation. The team was led by Dr. Monica Biradavolu and supported by Radhika Viswanathan and Lisa Bochey. Dr. Biradavolu is the CEO and founder of QualAnalytics. She holds a PhD in sociology from Duke University and has held academic appointments at Yale, Duke and American University. She has extensive experience in studying and evaluating development interventions in HIV/AIDS and sexual health, migration and refugee studies, and public health and nutrition. Radhika Viswanathan is a development researcher with experience in mixed methods research and evaluation, and brings experience in local governance, gender, environment, water and sanitation, and qualitative data analysis. Lisa Bochey holds a master's degree in international development from American University. She has experience conducting research and programme evaluations in international education and public health.

9. LIMITATIONS

The meta-analysis relies on evaluation reports that are of high quality as determined by the meta-evaluation exercise. While this is a sound strategy methodologically, it is possible that the analysis is missing successful implementation practices that could not be captured because those projects did not produce high-quality evaluation reports. Further, given the available time and resources, the analysis only relies on a single document on every project, the end-of-project evaluation report (and not, for example, on the project's own monitoring data). A recommendation for future analysis would be to include the project's monitoring data and final reports, which could provide much more depth

to the lessons learned and important practitioner-based knowledge.

Since these evaluation reports are primarily written for those already familiar with project activities (either the implementing CSOs or the UN Trust Fund), the reports sometimes did not include details that could have helped add specificity and depth to the analysis (e.g. the reports sometimes lacked sufficient descriptions of project activities). The reports also had a lot of repetition while answering evaluation questions, and as mentioned in the meta-evaluation report, there was a lack of a narrative thread that allowed the reader to arrive at clear conclusions on what worked and what did not. The meta-analysis research team was able to mitigate some of the readability challenge because they had already read these reports for the meta-evaluation exercise, and knew the data set and its limitations ahead of time.

Another limitation is that UN Trust Fund projects cover a diverse range of settings. A fuller analysis by setting could not be conducted, however, because the meta-analysis exercise covers only a small subset of the total number of projects.

Finally, a multiperson coding team makes it challenging to ensure reliability across coders. The evaluation team took the following steps to minimize intercoder disagreements. First, the team coded the same evaluation report to discuss differences and reach agreement. Second, team members discussed codes that were confounding, thereby resolving disagreements and increasing agreement. Finally, the database allowed coders to add comments explaining their coding choices. Despite steps taken to mitigate these challenges, a certain level of subjectivity could not be avoided.



Women group who met for their regular meetings just before going out to fish in Solo Town in the Grand Gedeh County of Liberia. © Episcopal Relief & Development/Ernest Cajuste.

10. FINDINGS

The findings section covers learning from the meta-analysis on project effectiveness, impact (both intended and unintended) and the sustainability of results.

Question 1: What are the learnings from the UN Trust Fund project evaluations on effectiveness?

We consider evidence on project effectiveness across three levels at which projects intervene to induce change: individual, community and structural. By *individual*, we refer to project strategies that aim for changes in individual awareness, knowledge and attitudes as well as changes sought in individuals' actions,¹¹ including in

their relationship with others. By *community*, we refer to any evidence on strategies used by projects to ensure successful implementation with community groups. For example, in school-based projects, there can be several potential "communities", such as of female students, male students, parents, teachers and school principals, or communities around schools. By *structural*, we refer to intervention strategies that aim to alter conditions in the broader environment (legal, political, cultural, etc.) that, in turn, impact individual behaviours.

The distinction between individual,¹² community and structural is an analytical separation for the purpose of a deeper understanding of strategies. In reality, all UN Trust Fund projects, at a minimum, work at two levels. Several operate at all three levels, potentially due to the UN Trust Fund encouraging applicants to work at more than one level. See Box 2 for an example.

11 We use the term "action" to refer to the ability of an individual to achieve an intended aim or purpose. We understand that the scholarly literature distinguishes between "action", "agency", "empowerment", etc., and there is great merit in the nuanced understanding that these terms connote. For this report, we use the term "action" because it encompasses a wide range of intervention activities and intended outcomes.

12 We include the level of "relationship" under "individual". This is because the data set of 30 reports does not include many projects that explicitly take a "relationship" approach.

Box 2**A multi-level project from the United Republic of Tanzania**

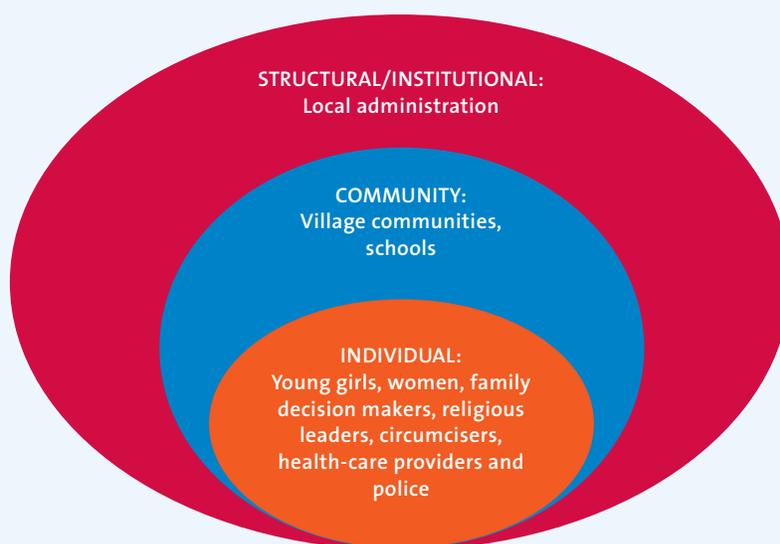
The goal of a project from the United Republic of Tanzania was to move young girls and women in the Serengeti district away from female genital mutilation (FGM), and to empower them to enjoy greater legal and social rights.

- At the individual level, the project worked with those who would have opted for the practice (girls and women undergoing FGM, and the decision makers in their families) to enable them to choose an alternate rite of passage. It also worked with social influencers in communities (religious leaders), and with individuals who derived an income from the practice (traditional circumcisers), for whom the project tried to find new sources of income. The project also included service providers such as the

local police and health-care providers, and trained and sensitized them on working with victims of sexual violence.

- At the community level, the project engaged local communities in alternate rites of passage, such as public functions where young girls were felicitated.
- At the structural level, the project worked with the district administration, attuning them to gender-based budgeting so that formal allocations could be made to support and institutionalize local initiatives to tackle sexual and gender-based violence.

The figure below illustrates the three levels.



On the following pages, Section A covers findings on project effectiveness at the *individual* level, section B at the *community* level and section C at the *structural* level.

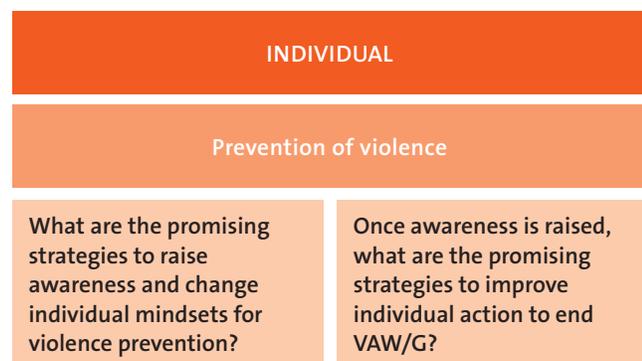
A. Project Effectiveness at the Individual Level

To change individual levels of awareness, knowledge and attitudes, projects typically conduct training sessions, run public campaigns (e.g. through radio advertisements, events in public places, social media messaging, etc.) or generate and distribute information, education and communication (IEC) materials. Projects also disseminate information by mobilizing communities and providing safe spaces for the exchange of ideas on attitudes and behaviours related to VAW/G.

We examined the effectiveness of such strategies across the UN Trust Fund’s three results areas: prevention of violence, improving service delivery and strengthening institutional responses. For each results area, we first considered the evidence on the effectiveness of such activities. Next, we identified promising strategies employed by projects to ensure that their efforts are successful. And finally, we looked at the challenges inherent in these strategies and highlighted examples of how projects worked to overcome them.

Section A1 considers project effectiveness at the individual level on violence prevention?, Section A2 on service delivery and Section A3 on strengthening institutional responses.

A1. Project Effectiveness at the Individual Level: Prevention of Violence



Projects aim to improve awareness, increase knowledge and shift attitudes at the individual level as a first step in violence prevention. Data across projects (on a range of VAW issues) show that such initiatives lead to positive changes in the lives

of women and girls. The following three examples are typical activities conducted by projects to work at the individual level to raise awareness and knowledge.

Project	VAW prevention entry point	Project activity	Project outcome
Viet Nam, Cycle 17	Gender norms in schools on differing social expectations for boys and girls	Training sessions with male and female teachers	Scores on the GEM (gender equitable men) scale rose from 60 per cent when the project started in 2014 to 94 per cent by the project’s end in 2016.
Guatemala, Cycle 18	Sexual and reproductive rights	Training sessions with female sex workers	After receiving training on their rights, 60 per cent of female sex workers were able to name at least one of their sexual and reproductive health rights, compared to just 30 per cent at the baseline.
Cambodia, Cycle 19	Awareness on transitional justice outreach for women survivors	The project developed a wide range of print material (brochures, flyers, newsletters and posters), video productions and radio shows as well as a collection of “good practice” examples	Widespread improved awareness among government officials and community actors to better serve victims of VAW and ensure that crimes are reported.

What are the promising strategies to raise individual awareness and change individual mindsets to prevent violence?

Two promising strategies that projects have used to raise individual levels of awareness and change individual mindsets to prevent violence are to: a) involve beneficiaries in developing training materials, and b) develop materials that focus on the underlying sociocultural context that affects ending VAW/G.

Involvement of beneficiaries in developing training materials

Training materials must be relevant to the trainees' sociocultural context, speak to concerns specific to the beneficiary populations, and provide pathways of change that are meaningful, practical and feasible to implement. This might seem obvious, but it is worth emphasizing in order to avoid obvious pitfalls. Contrasting examples show that context-relevant materials can be transformative, and materials devoid of specificity can result in a lack of learning.

In Liberia, in Cycle 18, the project worked to make faith leaders agents of change in spreading messages against VAW/G among congregants. A core feature of the training programme for faith leaders was the development of a toolkit through a participatory approach bringing together priests and imams. The toolkit reused and reframed scriptures and holy texts in new ways to convey more gender-equitable messaging, emphasizing respect, responsibility and dignity. As a result, faith leaders trained in the new messaging reported that they spoke out more against VAW/G to their congregants, and importantly, congregants reported that they heard their faith leaders and believed they were actively working to end VAW/G.

Contrast this to a project from Cycle 18 in Thailand. According to the evidence collected by the evaluator, the project created a curriculum that was not relevant to the lives of the intended beneficiaries – lesbian and transgender women. The topics touched upon issues that were too far removed from the beneficiaries' everyday reality, such as global human rights and advocacy, and the trainers sometimes ended up stigmatizing participants they sought to help. Below are quotes from the evaluation report:

“People in the community thought that the training course was not interesting and not important because they did not understand the core issues.... It only touched on the surface.”

“I got confused when I saw a male model in the training course. I asked them [implementing organization] why they brought a male model into this training course. They said that the male models would draw the attention of the participants. I disagreed with that idea. I think the organizers already stigmatize *katoey* that they like men. More importantly, the participants did not pay attention to the training course because they were distracted. The male model spent some time teasing participants. I think it is not worth bringing the model into the training course. It's like trying to satisfy the organizer's needs.”

Use of materials to focus on the underlying sociocultural context

Project implementers recognize that they are attempting to shift norms that are deeply rooted within the sociocultural fabric of societies. Training materials should deconstruct and explain to participants how men and women are conditioned, from a young age, to accept a belief system that perpetuates gender inequities and the potential for VAW/G in various aspects of life. Using examples and messages that are specific to the country or province where the intervention is taking place will prove even more effective. This insight was reported in the evaluation report of a project from South Africa, in Cycle 17.

The project worked with teenagers (girls and boys) to change their attitudes on VAW/G while living in a hypermasculine and patriarchal context. The evaluator opined that the training materials should have focused more sharply on how boys and girls are socialized differently, and suggested that a process of gendered socialization be a critical element of the training. By doing so, girls can learn how notions of masculinity are formed among boys, and having understood this, they can better challenge these behaviours, including VAW/G. Likewise, if boys understand how girls are socialized, they would better understand why they behave in certain ways (e.g. being submissive). Such insights would help both

groups reflect on gender equity and VAW/G, and allow a change in attitudes.

Once awareness is raised, what are promising strategies for improving individual actions to prevent violence?

Raising awareness and changing attitudes are important goals, but they are not sufficient in inducing change. Recognizing the gap between awareness and action, some projects worked to increase individuals' ability to act by providing alternative pathways and choices to beneficiaries. Moving from awareness-oriented goals to action-oriented goals induced behaviour change in project participants.

Alternative pathways/choices to induce behaviour change to prevent violence

Projects took different approaches to providing alternative pathways to prevent VAW/G, as shown in four examples below. The first example is from interventions that focused on economic empowerment for violence survivors. These interventions recognized that women needed an alternative to their financial dependence on their abusive partners. The second example considered the impact of interventions on two beneficiary groups most impacted by project activities and planned alternatives for both. Example three is on an intervention that provided alternative visions for what an intimate relationship should be. Example four is on an intervention that took the most critical element in the beneficiary group's toolkit and reworked the messaging without straying from the toolkit's central tenets.

Example 1: Economic empowerment interventions to prevent violence

The project from Azerbaijan, in Cycle 19, recognized that economic empowerment was an important strategy for boosting survivors' poor self-esteem and self-confidence, and for promoting their financial independence. To this end, the project conducted vocational trainings (on business development, financial literacy, and computer and managerial skills) and provided career advice services. The trained beneficiaries were also provided with small grants for women-led community initiatives. While the project had important successes, there were significant challenges, particularly for long-term sustainability. In the interest of future learnings, we present below both what worked and what did not.

WHAT WORKED

- Over two years, 103 women beneficiaries took part in the economic empowerment trainings, and 30 women established businesses of their own, such as a small

beauty salon, a small pastry shop, a tailoring business and a small chicken broiler service.

- Economic empowerment was a source of motivation and encouragement for the women "who have always been dependent on their fathers, brothers, husbands or other male relatives". [Evaluation report, Azerbaijan, Cycle 19].

WHAT DIDN'T WORK

- Interviews with the women and the shelter staff showed that the women were not equipped with the necessary capacities for running businesses.
- The trainings were not tailored to the needs of women victims of violence.
- Women were not able to reconcile the challenges of childcare and work.
- There were no mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of businesses:
 - There was no transparency in the selection process for small grants. There was a lack of documented evidence on how and why some women were selected, and whether there was any vetting of their potential to run businesses.
 - There was a lack of relevant business mentoring for the women.
 - Poor consideration of the aspects of business initiatives run by the women contributed to retaliatory violence.¹³
- One shelter staff person noted:

"While the intervention logic used by the project is good given the intent, we need to be more realistic. You cannot expect an uneducated, unskilled mother of three children to be able to run a business, deal with the tax systems, ensure proper financial management. It would be very helpful if similar projects aim at trying to provide these women with specific skills and make sure that there are linkages established between the projects and employment markets where their services could be effectively offered."

¹³ The evaluation report did not provide details on whether there was evidence of retaliation or explain what the specific concerns were. Since backlash is an important consideration for EVAW/G projects, however, we include it here.

The example above offers a very promising strategy – that of economic empowerment for violence survivors. It also reveals the considerable challenges in implementing such projects.

Example 2: Alternative job options and rites of passage to make prevention strategies work

Projects proved effective when they considered the impact of intervention activities on all beneficiaries. For example, a project seeking to change traditional practices must consider who is negatively impacted by any change to the existing system, in what ways, and plan accordingly. An important example comes from the project in the United Republic of Tanzania, in Cycle 19, which worked to end female genital mutilation (FGM). The project provided alternative pathways to two groups of intended beneficiaries – circumcisers who would lose income if the practice ended, and the girls for whom FGM was a rite of passage.

- Alternative job options for circumcisers

As one circumciser noted:

“I have a family to take care of, with five children, two of whom are in secondary school and three in primary school. My main source of income was FGM, and last year I could not carry out the practice and had to temporarily move away.... But at the moment I am really in need of money. I don’t even have money to buy my children some exercise books.”

Recognizing the situation, the project worked with circumcisers to find alternative sources of income. A local partner organization reported that “some of the former circumcisers have formed a socioeconomic group, engaging in savings and credit schemes”. One woman handed over her tools [to the grantee] and received a sewing machine in return. The results were mixed, however; not all circumcisers were able to find alternative income sources.

This example highlights that the project, attuned to the economic impact on circumcisers, put plans in place to help with income loss. But the mix of experiences shows that projects need to engage even more deeply to generate alternative sources of livelihoods, and work with partners and stakeholders to ensure that no one is left suffering economically.

- Alternatives rites of passage for young women

According to the evaluator, this project was successful in introducing alternative rites of passage and has helped girls

avoid FGM. Out of a target of 1,500 girls, in the final year of the project (2018), 359 girls participated in such rites (23.9 per cent)¹⁴.

Example 3: Alternative visions for intimate relationships

The project from South Africa, in Cycle 17, made adolescents reflect and consider alternative visions for intimate partnerships, with the intent that girls would act differently and choose more equitable relationships in the future.

Example 4: Alternative messages derived from existing scriptures

Another example of a project providing alternative choices comes from the faith leaders’ project in Liberia, in Cycle 18. The project raised awareness among leaders on the prevalence of VAW, its deleterious consequences, and the role of the clergy in tackling it. It also provided the leaders with alternative messages, while remaining grounded in scriptures and holy texts. The trained faith leaders were comfortable knowing that the alternative messages aligned with the central tenets of their beliefs. The project thus removed barriers to behaviour change, and leaders felt comfortable speaking to congregants against VAW/G.

A2. Effectiveness at the Individual Level: Improving Service Delivery for Survivors of Violence



To improve service delivery, projects worked on individual-level change both on the supply and demand sides. The evidence shows that on the supply side, trainings given to

¹⁴ It is unclear from the evaluation report whether the remaining 73 per cent of girls participated in the alternative rites of passage, or if they did not, why they chose not to. Despite the relatively low number, we still refer to this alternative pathway, with the recognition that given the short timeline of project implementation, the project at least was able to begin the process, in hopes that it would accelerate in the future.

service providers can improve service delivery for survivors of violence, with the caveat that the type of training matters, a point for further discussion under the section on promising strategies.

Serbia, in Cycle 19, is an example of how training service providers in the health sector improved outcomes. The project worked to improve institutional responses and psychosocial support for survivors of sexual violence. After receiving training on the types of violence, current laws and how to respond to victims, there was marked improvement in record-keeping on gender-based violence among health-care workers. Similarly, the project in the United Republic of Tanzania, in Cycle 19, that worked to end FGM improved service delivery by training health-care workers on counselling, health complications of the practice and home care of complications. The majority (77.4 per cent) of beneficiaries reported both an increase in FGM-related services, and an improvement in the efficiency with which services were provided. The service providers also reported being better equipped to interact with women professionally, with more skills to ensure confidentiality and show respect.

Conversely, on the demand side, providing information on available services for survivors of violence improves awareness and utilization. For example, the project from Cycle 18 in El Salvador sought to ensure that women experience a better response to VAW as a result of strengthened institutions, and the ability of CSOs to demand accountability from the Government to implement existing laws. After receiving training on the law and available services, there was an increase in women who learned about and used available services.

What are the promising strategies to raise individual awareness and change the individual mindsets of service providers supporting survivors of violence?

Projects have used three promising strategies to raise awareness and change the mindsets of service providers supporting survivors of violence: a) provide specialized training that improves job performance; b) ensure targeted involvement of service providers in project activities; and c) choose service provider partners carefully.

Specialized training to service providers supporting survivors of violence that improves work performance

Beneficiaries reported an improvement in services when service providers received training that was oriented to their work needs and helped them with job performance. This was especially true for professional groups such as health-care workers, police and lawyers/judges. When trained

professionals report high levels of satisfaction with training geared to their needs, job performance improves.

For example, the project from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in Cycle 19, trained health-care workers on the nature and scope of forensic exams of victims of violence. Post-intervention, the exams started to include information to assist survivors in corroborating testimony as well as a more thorough reporting of evidence. Health-care professionals also showed behavioural changes in how they maintained patient privacy and confidentiality, and providers reported increased confidence in examining child sexual assault cases as a result of the paediatric training.

Another example comes from Malawi, in Cycle 20. The project trained criminal justice stakeholders on investigating, prosecuting, adjudicating and sentencing sexual violence perpetrators. As a result, trained judges, magistrates and prosecutors demonstrated confidence in dealing with sexual violence-related laws, and had increased awareness of the importance of being gender sensitive.

Targeted involvement of service providers

Projects generally include a number of stakeholders as secondary beneficiaries, recognizing that tackling VAW issues must necessarily involve not only women and girls, but also persons and institutions in their legal, political and social environment. Sometimes projects are spread too thin, however, diluting the participation of secondary beneficiaries. To be effective, projects must ensure targeted involvement of secondary beneficiaries.

We use examples of interventions where the police were secondary beneficiaries to understand why an engagement was successful in some cases and not in others. The evaluator of a Cycle 19 project in the United Republic of Tanzania found that providing training and creating gender desks in local police stations improved service delivery. Specialized training likely proved critical. A contrasting case comes from Cambodia, in Cycle 17, where police were also trained. The project's main focus was on workplace settings, however; the police and commune leaders were stakeholders, but only secondarily.

The level of involvement may explain the difference. In one case, the project was engaged in a direct manner, empowering police personnel at gender desks in local police stations, and equipping them with materials relevant to their work. In the second case, the project concentrated on workplace settings and focused its attention on female employees, human resources managers and establishment owners. The police were not in the most immediate circle of

beneficiaries. With diverted attention, the project was not as successful in their engagement.

Careful vetting of service providers providing support to survivors of violence

Service providers can face challenges outside the control of the project, but that nevertheless influence effectiveness. Before beginning, projects must carefully consider the capacity of service providers to participate. For example, the project in Serbia, Cycle 20, worked with staff of safe houses in two different towns. In one town, the service providers were well trained and well organized. In the second town, the project was not judicious in vetting. The problems encountered in less than ideal staff capacity went beyond the control of the project. The staff comprised temporary workers who had 12-hour shifts and only one day off. As a result, the staff changed three times during the intervention. Not surprisingly, the project was far less effective in achieving results in the second town. This situation could have been avoided if the capacity of service providers had been taken into account from the start.

Once awareness is raised, what are the promising strategies for improving individual action on the supply side?

Raising awareness and knowledge of service providers is effective, but not sufficient. Projects were more effective when they addressed barriers to individual action, on the demand side among service providers and on the supply side among beneficiaries.

Material support to service providers to provide assistance to survivors

Even if service providers have the required awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes, they may still be hampered in providing effective VAW services because they lack resources. Some projects sought to tackle this issue by providing service providers with the resources they need. For example, in the United Republic of Tanzania, Cycle 19, gender desks at police stations were provided with computers and CDs. Similarly, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cycle 19, medical supplies (such as rape kits) were given to health-care providers. The UN Trust Fund has specific rules in regard to the purchase of assets, however, which may prevent funding of equipment.

Once awareness is raised, what are the promising strategies for improving individual action on the demand side?

Accompany victims of violence to courts

On the demand side, even if women and girls are aware of available services and want to access them, other factors (such as a lack of travel money or social support) might hamper their ability to take action and access services. To tackle this issue, project staff in Colombia, in Cycle 20, not only trained beneficiaries on the laws and their rights, but also accompanied victims of violence to courts, thereby reducing the last-mile barrier to the ability of women and girls to access justice.

A3. Project Effectiveness at the Individual Level: Strengthening Institutional Responses to end VAW/G

INDIVIDUAL	
Strengthening Institutional Responses	
What are the promising strategies to raise the individual awareness of those in charge of strengthening institutional responses to end VAW/G?	Once awareness is raised, what are the promising strategies for improving actions within institutions to respond to violence?

The evidence is strong that when individuals in charge of developing or implementing laws, policies and guidelines are given information through training sessions or campaigns, awareness goes up, more resources are channelled to VAW-related issues, and there is better compliance with existing laws.

In a project in Guatemala, Cycle 20, the activities included six public communications campaigns with the goal of providing information and awareness to public servants responsible for the application of the law against femicide and other forms of violence against women. As a result, the grantee was able to influence public servants to channel resources towards EAW/G. A project in Cambodia, Cycle 17, set out to reduce workplace sexual harassment. When human resource managers were trained on international and national labour laws and standards, employers were more likely to ensure compliance with workplace labour laws.

In Kenya, Cycle 19, the project sought to improve women's access to legal protection in cases of violence. There was an improvement in law enforcement after police staff at Gender

Response Desks within police stations were trained on VAW laws and procedures. This led to women feeling that there was better handling of VAW cases (improved investigations), and a feeling of confidence in reporting perpetrators. A significantly larger percentage of women between baseline and endline reported that suspects were taken to police stations (from 9 per cent to 61 per cent) and that suspects were arrested (from 19 per cent to 55 per cent).

What are the promising strategies to raise the individual awareness of those in charge of strengthening institutional responses to end VAW/G?

Training for decision makers that raises awareness of VAW/G but is also policy relevant

Decision makers are compelled to make choices on a host of competing issues and priorities. Projects that seek change at the institutional level on issues related to VAW/G can: a) lay the groundwork by conducting a needs assessment that is context-specific with clear links to policy results; b) train decision makers with information from the needs assessment so that the information is directly relevant to their work; and (c) use the training to more broadly raise issues on VAW/G, including on budgeting. The example below highlights how a project was able to influence change in district-level budgeting on VAW/G.

The project in the United Republic of Tanzania from Cycle 19 conducted two interrelated activities with decision makers. First, the grantee facilitated a VAW/G and FGM needs assessment for budgeting purposes. This was then presented to government authorities at the district level. The grantee trained district officials on gender-based budgeting and laws related to VAW/G. In the first two years of the project, no allocations were made for gender-based budgeting, but were made in the third year.

Once awareness is raised, what are the promising strategies for improving actions within institutions to respond to violence?

An institutional wheel relies on a number of spokes to turn. While it might be beyond the scope of CSOs to change large institutions as a whole, they can assist in defining and removing specific bottlenecks so an institutional system can work as intended.

Identification of bottlenecks and working to remove them

A project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo identified improper record-keeping and poor documentation in the medical and legal system as serious obstacles to violence

survivors seeking justice. The project worked successfully to improve medical and forensic record-keeping, as well as legal documentation of crimes against women. By focusing on a critical bottleneck, the project strengthened systems and processes at the institutional level. With better documentation, survivors' ability to pursue justice improved significantly.

Project Effectiveness at the Individual Level: Strategies to Overcome Challenges

INDIVIDUAL

What are the challenges at the individual level, and what are the strategies to overcome them?

Some challenges were common to projects regardless of the region, cycle or project goals. The first is the challenge of sustaining learning from one-off training sessions and campaigns. A second is the lack of action despite changes in awareness and knowledge.

Challenge: Projects conduct one-off training sessions and campaigns

Conducting one-off training sessions and campaigns does not work because primary beneficiaries are often not stable populations (refugees, clients of sex workers, etc.). So how can learning be sustained?

Strategies to overcome the challenge

Pathways towards sustainability involve using different models: training-of-trainers, institutionalizing a training module and working with pre-existing networks. Examples of each strategy feature in the findings reported under Question 3 on sustainability.

Challenge: Awareness goes up, but the project does not work to increase the ability of individuals to take action

An example will illustrate the challenge when projects work to improve awareness, but do not tackle the larger issue of barriers to individual action. The project in Tunisia worked with young men from two different neighbourhoods. In the first group, after five awareness sessions on gender and rejecting violence against women, the young men put on a small play on the subject. They told the staff that after the sessions they had a much better sense of self and were more attuned to favouring dialogue over violence. Conscious of the

consequences of violence, they said they would not hesitate to intervene in a conflict.

The young men from the other group came from a poorer neighbourhood. They were a mix of students, seasonal/part-time workers and unemployed youth, and their primary concerns were shelter, clothing and food. After the training, they were able to discuss and share different points of view on the sessions. They were very appreciative of the fact that the educators were interested in working with them with no ulterior motive, since they were used to being brought into dialogue by political associations only during election time. Through the project, they were able to acquire knowledge on gender and question their beliefs, but, critically, they did not feel that they were capable of taking action. Unlike the first group, they felt incapable of counselling their peers against violence.

Strategies to overcome the challenge

This example affirms that “one size does not fit all”. Projects can anticipate and plan for subgroup variation even within the same population (young men) and devise different modalities for subpopulations, e.g. different curricula, messages, training methods and number of training sessions. They can put more emphasis on feasible and practical actions given the constraints, and involve the beneficiary community in designing an effective strategy with messages that will resonate, among other options.

B. Project Effectiveness at the Community Level

COMMUNITY

What are some of the strategies identified for how to work more effectively with communities to end VAW/G?

This section presents evidence on strategies used by projects to ensure successful implementation with community groups. It considers challenges faced in working with/within communities, and the strategies used, or that evaluations have recommended, to overcome the challenges.

Project Effectiveness at the Community Level: Promising Strategies

What are some promising strategies identified in project evaluations for how to work more effectively with communities to end VAW/G?

We identified seven promising strategies for working with communities to end VAW/G: a) early buy-in with stakeholders; b) participation of beneficiaries in project decisions; c) involvement of partners who have legitimacy and authority in the community; d) creation of networks and spaces to mobilize and disseminate information naturally, especially when gatherings are either difficult or forbidden; e) using counselling as an important strategy to work with communities affected by violence; and f) involving men and boys.

Early buy-in of important community stakeholders

The contrasting examples below highlight the importance of securing buy-in at the early stages of the intervention to ensure smooth implementation.

In Nigeria, Cycle 20, a project focused on the prevention of sexual violence against children, and the provision of support and care for victims using a programme of awareness-raising and training in schools and communities in Abuja. The project conducted “pre-implementation” advocacy to inform and induct school staff, and build consensus on the project’s focus, which meant project activities were undertaken with enthusiasm. By contrast, there was no buy-in for the school-based project in South Africa in Cycle 17 that focused on developing life skills and preventing VAW/G through soccer clubs. Coaches complained that it was difficult to convince schoolgirls to join the clubs, and that they had to “hustle” to get students to sign up. Similarly, in Bangladesh, there were delays in starting a school-based project because parents were not initially included. But the second year saw success because parents became interested and started championing the programme.

Participation of primary beneficiaries in project decisions

Consulting with primary beneficiaries on project decisions is a worthwhile strategy as highlighted in the following example. A project from Cycle 17 worked in two countries with similar population profiles: Afghan refugees in Tajikistan and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Afghanistan. In both countries, the goal was to improve protection mechanisms and legal aid services to respond to VAW. Each country worked with a different implementing partner.

The implementer in Afghanistan successfully recruited IDP women as community outreach workers. By contrast, the Tajikistan implementer decided, without consulting with the community, that this strategy would not work because the women would refuse to step out given cultural norms that restrict women's mobility. Since the target population was the same in both countries and would face very similar constraints, it is clear that the Tajikistan implementer should have consulted with the women, rather than unilaterally deciding on their behalf.

Involvement of partners who have legitimacy and authority in the community

The faith leaders' project from Liberia, Cycle 18, worked at the provincial level, where faith institutions have an especially strong influence in people's everyday lives. Tapping into institutions that have legitimacy and authority in the community helped in the project's success.

Creation of networks and spaces to mobilize and disseminate information naturally, especially when gatherings are either difficult or forbidden.

Several projects created networks that enabled the formation of a safe space where beneficiaries – especially survivors of violence – could exchange views, form friendships and support each other. The formation of networks was a part of project activities in Afghanistan, Cycle 17, Cambodia, Cycle 17, Cambodia, Cycle 19, Chile, Cycle 20, Colombia, Cycle 20, Guatemala, Cycle 18, Jordan, Cycle 20, Liberia, Cycle 18, Tunisia, Cycle 19, and Turkey, Cycle 19.

A closer look at one of the projects shows how this strategy worked. A core activity of the project in Jordan, Cycle 20, was to conduct classes for women and girls at a centre and use the sessions to improve awareness on VAW, women's rights and available services. The centre became a safe space for kinship, sharing and psychosocial support, overcoming a typical barrier in highly patriarchal societies where movement for women is severely restricted and there are typically few spaces for them to meet their peers. The evidence is similar for school-going girls with whom the project worked. The evaluation identified outcomes that were "unexpected", i.e., not formally identified as outcomes at the beginning of the project:

- The positive impact of socialization for women – the project created a space for women to meet, which they would not normally have done.

- The space allowed the creation of female support networks that grew from conversations and friendships.
- The networks allowed women to increase their ability to cope with everyday challenges within the home. They were better able to deal with instances of violence and friction with their children.
- Women repeatedly brought up the Arabic word for powerful – *qawiun* – to describe their feelings of empowerment.

In the project in Guatemala, Cycle 18, hidden populations such as female sex workers found an opportunity to form networks of mutual support.

By contrast, the absence of a network was felt by soccer coaches in the project in South Africa. The project recruited coaches to form clubs with adolescent girls and use soccer games as opportunities to discuss issues of gender rights, sexual rights, VAW, etc: The project did not create a space where the coaches could share their experiences, however. It is important not only for primary beneficiaries to network and share spaces, but other project participants as well.

Counselling communities affected by violence

Projects working across beneficiary groups and VAW issues employed psychosocial counselling as a key pillar in their intervention efforts with significant success. A school-based counselling mechanism established in Viet Nam (Cycle 17) was very effective in alleviating difficulties and distress among students who experienced physical and emotional bullying. Three out of four students who received counselling expressed satisfaction with the service. The city's department of education has indicated an interest in scaling it up. Psychosocial counselling proved to be a critical source of support for refugee women in Tajikistan (Cycle 17) and Jordan (Cycle 20). Offering psychosocial counselling to victims of violence was a key achievement of a project in Serbia (Cycle 19). In focus group discussions, women survivors reported that this responded to their needs very well. The evaluators strongly recommended the continuation of these services.

These examples point to two critical issues. One, a wide range of affected groups (students affected by bullying, refugee women experiencing VAW, women seeking shelter from domestic violence) report that psychosocial counselling was very helpful. This underscores the importance of improving the mental health of affected populations. Second, while some projects treat counselling as a specialized service with

specialized skills (most notably, projects that work in shelters for survivors of VAW), others train existing staff to become counsellors. In school-based projects, for example, a teacher already on staff is given training to become a counsellor. As beneficiaries become more comfortable with counselling and bring more complex issues to the counselling sessions, however, projects should have trained and certified counsellors, and not expect that one-off trainings for existing staff will be sufficient in the long run.

Involving men and boys

Several projects included men and boys as project stakeholders, with the important recognition that there can be no end to VAW/G without including them as active allies. The evidence shows that their involvement yields promising results. For example, a school-based project in Viet Nam worked with both male and female teachers to shift gender norms on social expectations for boys and girls, as well as with schoolboys and schoolgirls to change the discourse on masculinity. There was an increase in GEM (gender equitable men) attitudinal scores among all teachers, from 62 per cent at baseline to 94 per cent at endline. Male teachers continued to lag behind female teachers, however. This shows that a) men and boys are amenable to changing attitudes when provided with VAW-related knowledge and information, and b) in line with the earlier observation that “no one size fits all”, men and boys should be considered important subgroups for whom different strategies need to be applied, since gender norms generally shift more slowly among them compared to women and girls.

The importance of subgroup variation is further highlighted through another example. It is not only important to consider girls differently from boys, but it also matters whether boys are part of coeducational institutions or boys-only schools. For example, in a school-based project in Bangladesh in Cycle 17, schoolboys in the rural area of the intervention (Netrakona district) were more knowledgeable on gender-related issues than the urban pupils of a school in Dhaka where boys and girls were taught in separate shifts. In the coeducational space, there were more opportunities for students to discuss how to end VAW/G.

Project Effectiveness at the Community Level: Strategies to Overcome the Challenges

COMMUNITY	
What are the challenges at the community level?	What are the strategies to overcome these challenges?

Challenge: Persistence of unequal gender norms

Even after project trainings, some gender norms are hard to shift, as exemplified in two examples.

A project in Viet Nam, Cycle 17, worked to promote safer workplaces for women in garment factories and hospitality/tourism. Women in both industries identified male supervisors touching female workers as sexual harassment. Only hospitality/tourism workers thought it was wrong when male customers misbehaved, however; garment factory workers thought that “this was part of the job in that type of setting”.

Another example comes from the project in Armenia, Cycle 19. The evaluators found a significant difference between trained female and male police officers throughout the group discussion sessions. Women were more gender sensitive in their comments about domestic violence cases and more understanding about the needs of women going through domestic violence. Most male police officers expressed harsh attitudes towards both victims and abusers, and advocated tougher methods for dealing with abusers.

Strategies to overcome the challenge

In Viet Nam, the female employees in garment factories were either not trained on or not convinced about messages on sexual harassment related to the hospitality/tourism industry. In the Armenian case, male police officers were not convinced in the same way as female police officers on issues around domestic violence. Both examples highlight the need to understand that “no one size fits all”. It is important to differentiate between beneficiary groups, understand deeply ingrained beliefs and devise messages that tackle the issue head-on and resonate with participants in a culturally sensitive manner.

An example comes from how a trainer in a project in Afghanistan convinced male participants of the importance of allowing daughters to go to school. The trainer asked a participant whether he would allow his wife and daughter to

be seen by a male doctor. When the participant said no, the trainer asked, “If people like you do not send your daughter to school, then how would there be enough female doctors to see your wife and daughters as patients?”

By using an example from the participant’s own life, the trainer in Afghanistan developed a context-sensitive message. Practitioners on the ground constantly create appropriate messages, but often, such practices are not documented. Projects and evaluations should strive to keep note of such messages so that there is cross-project learning.

Challenge: Risk of harmful practices going underground

In the project in the United Republic of Tanzania from Cycle 19 that worked to abolish FGM, certain traditional leaders and families did not support the programme. As a result, in some pockets, FGM was conducted in secret and at night.

Strategies to overcome the challenge

Social change never happens in a straight line. There is a constant tug and pull. Successful projects learn to anticipate the challenges and the backlash, and should have effective risk mitigation strategies in their designs.

Challenge: Projects have little influence in areas outside their area of intervention

Projects cannot control what happens outside their intervention areas. In the United Republic of Tanzania, Cycle 19, an anti-FGM project was implemented in Serengeti District. This district was proactive in protecting girls from FGM. The police and the legal system enforced relevant laws, health-care professionals worked closely with the community, and families feared social sanctions if they continued with the practice. The impact of the intervention, however, was adversely affected by the fact that the practice was still openly carried out in neighbouring districts (Tarime, Rorya, and parts of Bunda and Butiama districts). A number of families maintained the practice by crossing over to these districts. At the end of the project in 2018, while FGM levels had dropped, 5,621 girls were still registered as cut, and 41.1 per cent had undergone the practice in the neighbouring Tarime district. Project beneficiaries were aware of this issue; a questionnaire found that 80 per cent of respondents said they would like the project to be extended to the Tarime and Bunda districts because they remain “critically challenging in ending FGM”. One of the project recommendations was to extend the scope of the work to these contiguous districts. This example highlights some of the challenges in identifying the appropriate unit of intervention. In this case,

while the unit was the district, participants were influenced by practices in other districts.

Strategies to overcome the challenge

A promising strategy comes from recommendations by evaluators of the project in the United Republic of Tanzania. They suggested that CSOs could extend their influence by networking and communicating with groups working in neighbouring districts. The formation of a local CSO network could be an effective strategy for working with local communities and government stakeholders to broaden impact in the region.

Challenge: Misalignment of values

The project staff in Turkey from Cycle 19 were seen as too secular. Participants told CSO staff to “not change their conservatism”. In Tunisia, Cycle 19, a misalignment of values with peer-educators led to delays. Differences emerged between staff/trainers and peer educators during trainings on social norms. One of the sessions focused on masculinity and questioned male privilege. Resistance from two peer educators forced the NGO to reassess whether their values were in line with those of the project. In the end, one peer educator was asked to leave, which resulted in some discord and low motivation among remaining peer educators.

Strategies to overcome the challenge

The evaluators of the project in Turkey included a useful and promising recommendation to overcome a (real or perceived) misalignment of values between project staff and beneficiaries: working with feminist Muslim organizations. In a similar vein, the project in Afghanistan and Tajikistan used Islamic principles in their training sessions in order to align the values of the participants with the messages imparted during the training sessions. Consistent outreach can also yield successful results. Parents in Bangladesh did not approve of girls joining a grantee’s martial arts programme, but after the project invested time, patience and effort into outreach, the parents not only yielded, but some became champions of the programme.

Challenge: Community leaders may be effective as trainers, but not in administrative tasks

Women community leaders in Tunisia were very effective at conducting awareness sessions. Many struggled with documentation, however, such as writing emails, reading documents and adhering to procedural requirements to send in worksheets and reports on time. They had difficulties managing logistics.

Strategies to overcome the challenge

Anticipate the problem and ensure that other personnel can carry out administrative tasks.

C. Project Effectiveness at the Structural Level

STRUCTURAL

What are some promising strategies to work more effectively at the structural level to end VAW/G?

This section presents evidence on strategies used by projects to ensure successful implementation at the structural level, i.e., within the broader legal, political or social environment relevant to VAW/G.

Project Effectiveness at the Structural Level: Promising Strategies

What are some promising strategies identified in project evaluations to work more effectively at the structural level to end VAW/G?

Three promising strategies comprise: a) creation of guidelines and policies; b) working in coordination with government departments to ensure their future stake in the project; and c) setting up specialized centres.

Creation of guidelines and policies

Several projects created guidelines and policies that work to bring change within the broader institutional and legal environment. For example, the project in Malawi, Cycle 20, found that female judges are more sympathetic to VAW survivors compared to male judges. The project created guidelines that can be applied uniformly across cases, regardless of the gender of the justices. The project in Cambodia drafted guidelines for commune leaders on good practices for responding to VAW at the commune level. The project in Ecuador, Cycle 19, created guidelines on accessing justice and rights that include a map of services and institutional actors, and identify coordination problems.

Coordination with departments and ministries to ensure that government officials have a stake in the project

The school-based project in Viet Nam, Cycle 17, worked closely with the Department of Education and Training,

which is ready to scale up some project activities in other schools.

Setting up specialized centres

The Center for Victims of Sexual Violence in Serbia, Cycle 19, was set up within health-care settings. Women not only received services from health-care providers trained and sensitized to the issue of VAW, but also received psychosocial counselling. No such centre existed for women. Introducing it into the community was a successful structural intervention.

Recap of Evidence on Project Effectiveness

Evidence from 30 evaluation reports suggests that projects are making strides in inducing change at the individual, community and structural levels through trainings, campaigns, IEC materials and mobilization. Several promising strategies are evident at all three levels of change.

At the individual level, we identified strategies for all three results area. For the prevention of violence, projects yielded good results in raising awareness when they involved beneficiaries in curriculum development, and when materials covered deep-seated socialization processes that lead to inequitable gender norms. To turn awareness into action to end VAW/G, projects showed improved results in desired outcomes when they provided alternative pathways and choices to beneficiaries.

For improving service delivery for survivors of violence, projects have seen positive results when they provided specialized training to service providers that improves job performance, ensured targeted involvement of service providers and selected service provider partners carefully. Service providers also increased their ability to act to end VAW/G when projects provided them with material support. On the demand side, use of services improved when projects worked with survivors of violence to break last-mile barriers, such as having no money or social support to go to court to file cases against perpetrators.

Finally, to strengthen institutional responses to end VAW/G, projects were successful when decision makers found materials were directly relevant to policymaking and specific to the local populations they serve. Projects improved the effectiveness of institutional responses to ending VAW/G when they identified bottlenecks within the system and designed solutions.

The main challenges were also discussed. The first is to ensure the sustainability of one-off training sessions and

campaigns, especially for populations that are mobile, such as refugees or female sex workers. Another challenge is when projects focus on raising awareness but do not design activities to improve agency.

At the community level, there were several promising strategies. First, projects were better able to implement prevention activities when the project design included early buy-in with important stakeholders in the community. Second, consulting beneficiaries in key project decisions was crucial for successful implementation of prevention activities, with downstream implications for the sustainability of project results. Third, involving stakeholders with legitimacy and authority in the community yielded greater enthusiasm for project activities. Fourth, creating networks and safe spaces within which members can share and disseminate information and ideas naturally, especially in circumstances where such gatherings are difficult or forbidden, can be an important pathway to ending VAW/G. Fifth, beneficiaries appreciated projects that included psychosocial counselling for communities affected by violence. Finally, involving men and boys as stakeholders and active allies in project activities was a crucial component of several projects.

Among the main challenges, five stood out: the persistence of unequal gender norms, the risk that some activities may go underground, the inability of projects to control practices in neighbouring areas that affect project activities, a misalignment of values between front-line workers and project participants, and community leaders who are effective as trainers but not in completing (important) administrative tasks.

At the structural level, key promising strategies include the creation of guidelines and policies, working in coordination with government departments to ensure their future stake in a given project and setting up specialized centres for victims of violence.

Question 2: What are we learning from the UN Trust Fund project evaluations on impact?

This section covers both intended and unintended impacts of the UN Trust projects. It first considers three intended impacts: a) an increase in self-identity among survivors of violence, b) an increase in self-efficacy among survivors of violence and c) a reduction in violence.

Intended Impacts

INTENDED IMPACTS		
Increase in self-identity	Increase in self-efficacy	Reduction in violence

Increase in self-identity

A consistent finding across projects was an increase in self-identity among project participants, especially (but not only) among survivors from marginalized communities. By self-identity, we mean the recognition of one's potential and qualities as an individual, especially in relation to the social context. For beneficiaries from marginalized communities, improving self-identity is a very important step towards fighting societal stigma and feeling empowered. The following quotes describe positive outcomes for beneficiaries.

“I learned how to live freely, more confidently and free of stigmatization.”

A lesbian woman, age 20, Thailand, Cycle 18

“It [the project] helped me be conscious of the stereotypes of discrimination that exist about indigenous women.”

Colombia, Cycle 20

Improvements in self-efficacy

Participants not only improved their self-identity, but also their self-efficacy. The American Psychology Association defines self-efficacy as referring “to an individual's belief in his or her capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments. Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behavior, and social environment”. Primary beneficiaries expressed greater confidence in their abilities and greater control over their environment.¹⁵

“For me, the process of being a facilitator and coordinator changed my life because I realized the capabilities I have.”

Guatemala, Cycle 18

¹⁵ www.apa.org/pi/aids/resources/education/self-efficacy

Through participation in intervention activities, survivors learned how to wrest control from their abusive partners and take charge of their thoughts and actions. The same behaviours from the partners were now framed differently, leading to an enhanced sense of control and well-being.

“When I got divorced, I was dependent on his alimony. Now, I am in the phase when that same alimony does not mean much to me and he can’t blackmail me.”

Serbia, Cycle 20

Secondary beneficiaries also expressed an increase in self-efficacy. For example, in the project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cycle 19, medical professionals who were trained on proper documentation of cases of sexual violence said that they felt more confident testifying in court.

An improvement in self-identity and self-efficacy are very significant because the starting point for most UN Trust Fund grantees is to help beneficiaries recognize their own potential to escape or prevent violence. Across projects, beneficiaries describe how prior to the intervention, they felt little confidence or sense of control over their lives. To break down barriers within the self is to break down future barriers to action, a process critical to change.

Reduction in violence

In considering impacts on violence reduction, there is a caveat. Compared to data on the impacts on self-worth, self-efficacy and empowerment in general, which were common across all reports, only 14 out of 30 evaluation reports (53 per cent) had data on violence reduction. A few had “direct” data such as reports with changes between baseline and endline data on self-reported perceptions of violence among beneficiaries, or administrative data (e.g. police records) that showed a reduction in incidents reported over time. For example, the project in Malawi, Cycle 20, used national police records to show a reduction in incidents of sexual violence in the four districts where it took place.

Other evaluators made the case that even though distal, demonstrating improved knowledge and attitudes is a path towards the eventual reduction of violence. The two quotes below from Guatemala, Cycle 20, make the link effectively.

“Violence will not be reduced unless women are aware that violence is a violation of their human rights and their right to live a life free of violence.

Although we are not able to talk about reduction of violence, we are able to talk about more women denouncing violence, more visibility of the subject of violence against women, and the investigation of cases of violence against women.”

Interview with project staff, Guatemala, Cycle 20

Project personnel and evaluators also argued that improved service delivery is a necessary step in violence reduction. For example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cycle 19, data showed improved medical and legal documentation of crimes against women. As explained by project staff, better documentation “reflects changes that directly impact a survivor’s ability to pursue justice (a key step in ending violence against women)”.

When endline data show an increase in self-reported incidents of violence among beneficiaries, this may actually be because of the intervention’s success, not failure. In Afghanistan, for example, incidents of violence went up by the end of the project. Since the intervention had trained women on their rights and made them aware of the different types of violence, it is entirely possible that by the end, women had become more vocal about their experiences, which then showed up in the data as increased incidents of violence.

BOX 3**Note on Measuring the Reduction in Women's Experience of (or Men's Perpetration) of Violence**

On a methodological note, 14 out of 30 reports provided evidence on reductions in women's experience of violence. Evaluators used a range of methodological approaches. One was to note a change in self-reported incidents of violence or perceptions of violence between baseline and endline. Self-reported measures are problematic, however, and it is difficult to interpret data using such measures. Some evaluators effectively used process measures rather than relying solely on outcome measures. They applied qualitative data in explaining the results of the quantitative data or eschewed outcome measures altogether to show the process of change. The use of control sites could be an effective way of overcoming the challenges of self-reported data, but this strategy was not employed usefully by any evaluator. The best evaluations drew on multiple data sources and triangulated data to provide a nuanced understanding of violence reduction.

In general, evaluators and project implementers should be cautious in using violence reduction alone as a metric to assess an intervention's effectiveness. As demonstrated in this report, several intermediate outcomes and preconditions for violence reduction are equally important for understanding effectiveness and the potential for impact. In addition, some evaluators (e.g. Chile in Cycle 20) make a valid point by questioning whether the project goal of violence reduction is too ambitious to be evaluated. They argue that ending violence against women and girls requires a cultural transformation and an intervention lasting two to three years should be evaluated on more modest goals.

In a report from Cambodia, Cycle 19, the quantitative evidence showed that the outputs targeting women and men in the community did not result in significant behaviour or attitudinal change. For example, 70 per cent of female primary beneficiaries continued to believe that men were justified in punishing them. Although 80 per cent of women and 70 per cent of men in the targeted communes were exposed to IEC materials, only 13 per cent of the women and 30 per cent of the men said they reported instances of violence.

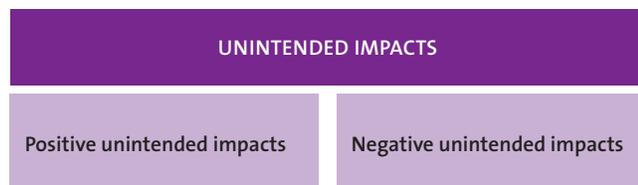
Overall, the evidence pointed towards little or no attitudinal change resulting from the activities. One could conclude from just the quantitative evidence that the project had not achieved its intended objectives. The qualitative evidence provided more nuance, however. Focus groups conducted among women at the end of the project brought out the fact that they were more open to talking about their lives and experiences. At the baseline, women seemed to rely on external actors to intervene in domestic violence cases, such as NGOs, police and village authorities. The endline discussions brought out that women were relying more on each other. They had developed female informal networks to provide support on addressing domestic violence. Women expressed their appreciation of these female networks as well as female village representatives.

At the beginning of the project, awareness of services was limited to dealing with the complaints of their husbands and alcoholism, or instances of physical abuse. They were not aware that services extended to legal aid. By the end of the project, women were more articulate. They recognized the Commune Committees for Women and Children as the primary points of contact for women victims of violence, and knew about the range of services available to them, including counselling, conflict resolution, mediation and legal aid.

At the same time, women and men expressed limitations in talking about and dealing with domestic violence. Shame, stigma and orthodox notions of family and respectability made it hard for men and women to take up formal avenues of recourse. Women also expressed a sense of being burdened as the sole agents of change; halfway through, the programme was successfully amended to include male perpetrators of violence.

The example shows that data from different sources are useful to understand the full scope of a project's effectiveness. The qualitative data illuminated the nature of the change that had transpired in the women's lives, and how the project adapted to needs through a mid-course correction.

Unintended Impacts



There were also unintended impacts of interventions, both positive and negative.

Positive unintended impacts

Spillover effects for grantees: greater visibility as technical experts on VAW

The projects have provided visibility to UN Trust Fund grantees, some of whom came to be seen as technical experts on VAW. Grantees gained seats at tables in various fora where VAW is discussed. For example, the CSO in Armenia was selected from among other NGOs to develop police mechanisms and protocols to implement domestic violence laws. Formal support to projects has increased in some cases. For example, specialized clinics for female sex workers were set up in Guatemala.

Spillover effects for beneficiaries: greater visibility in decision-making

Project beneficiaries, especially those involved in project activities, become more visible in decision-making spaces. For example, in El Salvador, Cycle 18, women from the project began to be seen as spokespeople for their local governments. In Ecuador, Cycle 19, gender advocates from the project were elected to public office. In Armenia, Cycle 19, the NGO was asked to develop mechanisms for the police to implement the law on domestic violence.

Spillover effects for the legal system: greater trust and increased use of national laws

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, survivors began to trust the legal system more when they saw that it was helping women like them. In Afghanistan, some project beneficiaries (refugee women) were trained as outreach workers, with part of the training covering national laws on VAW. Women would come to the outreach workers if they experienced domestic violence, but preferred mediation rather than formal complaints against their perpetrators. The outreach workers initially mediated based on local traditional

norms and practices, but after some time, started to use their knowledge on the laws much more.

Spillover effects for police: uptake of project activities

In Bangladesh, after the project introduced a programme inducting schoolgirls in a martial arts training programme, the office of the Superintendent of Police in Netrokona organized a similar martial arts training for its own staff.

Spillover effects within government institutions: greater coordination to support violence survivors

In Cambodia, after workers began to feel more valued by their supervisors, there was a better work environment and greater coordination to support victims of violence.

Improved social effects for children: improved school enrolment and reduction in child marriage

In Guatemala, the project helped undocumented sex workers receive formal residency papers. As a result, their children could enrol in school. In Bangladesh, an increase in school attendance reduced child marriage.

Spillover peer effects: improved trust and solidarity

As a result of the project mobilizing survivors in Azerbaijan, there was increased trust among them, and greater solidarity between women who had experienced violence and abuse, and those who had not. In Liberia, a programme to promote faith leaders to speak out against VAW/G resulted in better relations between priests and imams.

Unintended negative impacts

Negative impacts of “certifications”

Training and certification can be seen as a culmination or as having attained the required levels of gender sensitivity. Consequently, gender equality becomes an “end point” rather than a continuous process of engagement. In Turkey, Cycle 19, fathers misinterpreted the certificates they received as proof of achieving a “model father status”. In some cases, the fathers used the certificates against their wives in divorce cases.

Insecurity among communities

A school-based project in Bangladesh reported that there was an increase in insecurity among boys as girls gained confidence. Sometimes this confidence generated misunderstandings and led to physical violence. In one instance, boys complained of being assaulted by girls. A boy reported:

“One day I was passing through the classroom. I saw some girls of my class verbally abusing one of my friends. They were using slang language to harass him. I went forward and asked them to stop that. They became angry and asked me to leave the place. When I refused to do so, a girl started beating me. As they were five and I am not physically strong enough, it was difficult for me to escape. As I am a boy and it is an issue of my prestige, I did not report to my teachers, school managing committee or to my parents.”

Bangladesh, Cycle 17

In a project in El Salvador, women faced increased threats of violence for calling the police. Women survivors who participated in projects in Azerbaijan, Guatemala and Cambodia faced a backlash in their communities for taking on the “sacred” institution of the family. In Kenya, girls feared being disowned by their families for taking anti-VAW steps. And finally, in Cambodia, women said that they bore the burden of being the sole agents of change.

Use of metrics

Reporting can be artificially low when villages are incentivized to have low incidences of domestic violence, as happened in the project in Cambodia, Cycle 19.

Recap of Evidence on Project Impacts

The evidence on intended impacts shows strong positive improvement among primary beneficiaries on two important metrics that are critically important steps, and perhaps first steps, in ending VAW/G. A consistent finding across projects is that interventions improve both self-identity and self-efficacy among women and girls. Improvement in self-identity is particularly important among marginalized communities such as indigenous women and female sex workers, because their marginalized identity is itself a barrier to recognizing violations of their rights and seeking justice. An accompanying first step is an improvement in self-efficacy. Having greater control over one’s life, whether through changed perceptions of one’s circumstances or more objective changes (e.g. becoming financially independent from an abusive partner), is also key to preventing and ending violence.

Overall, the evidence was less robust on reductions in the incidence of violence, though some evaluators found changes between baseline and endline data on self-reported perceptions or incidents. Others used administrative data to show a downward trend.

Projects had several unintended impacts, both positive and negative. The positive impacts were improved visibility for grantees and beneficiaries, overall increased confidence in the legal system in the larger community, greater application of national laws, uptake of project activities by government officials, greater coordination among government officials, an uptick in school enrolment among children of primary beneficiaries, lower rates of child marriage, greater peer support among leaders of different faiths and greater understanding of domestic violence among women who had not experienced it themselves. Negative effects included the use in divorce cases of certifications given to fathers for equal parenting, backlash against women who challenged their abusers, and women’s sense of the burden of constantly being agents of change.

Question 3: What are we learning from the UN Trust Fund projects on sustainability?



This section focuses on the sustainability of project results. Several evaluators pointed out that an evaluation conducted at the end of two to three years of project activities is not sufficient to examine whether intervention results have been sustained. Due to specific UN Trust Fund financial rules, the evaluation must be conducted and paid for ideally within two months of project closure. With that in mind, we consider the extent to which projects were able to demonstrate sustainability. We first highlight those project results able to secure funding to continue activities or extend them to new areas. We then consider project results sustained through institutional mechanisms, such as where project approaches or processes were adopted by different stakeholders. And finally, we focus on the intangible ways in which project results have been sustained.

Financial sustainability of project results

Some projects conducted their intervention activities through robust networks, such as Liberia, Cycle 18, and Turkey, Cycle 19. In both cases, the networks predated the UN Trust Fund-supported projects, and could be leveraged to secure new funding sources. In Turkey, new funding was received to support fathers' networks. In Liberia, the interfaith coalition received fresh grants to establish more faith-based coalitions in new counties. With continued financial support, intervention activities could be sustained and scaled up.

Sustainability of results through institutional mechanisms

Some projects devised ways of overcoming the challenge of one-off trainings, such as through training modules that could be embedded within existing curricula. For example, in Armenia, a training module created by the project is now part of the curricula of both the police academy and social work students. Some projects used a training-of-trainers method that can be replicated, thereby sustaining project results among new beneficiaries. In Malawi, a training-of-training module can be cascaded into new provinces.

Several projects crafted useful policy documents and manuals that institutions can continue to use. For example, the project in Bangladesh developed policy guidelines against sexual harassment in schools. The project in Cambodia devised a policy against sexual harassment in workplaces. The project in Serbia developed an entire manual on how to set up a centre for victims of sexual violence. Even if a project and its results can be sustained immediately at the end of the grant, it is important to leave behind documentation, as this can have immense value in the future.

Other ways to sustain results include developing a successful prototype, as was done with the creation of centres for victims of sexual violence in Serbia. Similarly, the project in Azerbaijan achieved institutional approval and recognition of its successful model for shelters for victims of violence. Government stakeholders were sensitized to the model, and it was discussed in Parliament. This indicates a shift in attitudes to VAW among government stakeholders, but more work needs to be done.

Several projects created community groups. The project in Liberia ensured sustainability because the community group was also a savings group incentivized to meet even after the project ends.

Sustainability of project results through intangible means

When communities feel "ownership" of project approaches or results, sustained use is more likely. For example, several participants in workshops to create the VAW toolkit for faith leaders in Liberia expressed ownership of the "product". They were co-creators and would continue to use it. Other beneficiaries said that they were empowered by trainings, and because their mindsets had been changed, the project results would live with them forever.

"I have promised myself that I will continue applying the things I learned in the school because they are serving me well and helping me in my life."

Colombia, Cycle 20

Recap of Evidence on Sustainability

One path to financial sustainability (measured by the ability to secure new funding) is through the creation of networks of beneficiaries. In two projects, networks were able to obtain fresh grants to continue their work. Projects also sustained results by institutionalizing project efforts, such as by ensuring that a training curricula was embedded within curricula for police or social workers, creating policy documents (e.g. policies against workplace harassment or sexual harassment) or implementing a prototype demonstrating the value of intervention strategies. Increased ownership of project approaches also leads to sustainability. Since the strategies have value for project participants, they will be used over and over again.



Graduation ceremony of fathers in the Odunpazari district of Eskisehir who completed "Father Support Program" (Turkey). © Mother Child Education Foundation (AÇEV)/Samettin Nesipogly.

11. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

UN Trust Fund projects, by virtue of the demand-driven and competitive nature of grant-making, constitute a unique dataset representing a diversity of civil society programmes working to end violence against women and girls. The geographic spread, the types of settings, the variety of community groups engaged, and the diversity of approaches offer a breadth of evidence on promising strategies, and the key opportunities and challenges of working in this field. This evidence, taken together, constitutes a valuable resource both for those interested in advancing knowledge in the field of EVAW/G and for practitioners to learn from the experiences of others on-the-ground.

This meta-analysis draws out key promising strategies on the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of projects by taking a systematic deep dive into 30 high-quality evaluation reports produced by UN Trust Fund grantees and CSOs. Below are some of the key conclusions and recommendations developed through this independent analysis:

Effectiveness

Conclusion 1: UN Trust Fund projects, regardless of the form of violence they address or their setting, effectively promote positive attitudes and beliefs. They raise awareness on EVAW/G at the individual level and provide important lessons on how to translate that awareness into action.

This analysis takes a unique approach by tracing the journey from a shift in attitudes, beliefs and norms towards action, shedding light both on the opportunities and constraints to individual action when it comes to EVAW/G projects. The analysis finds that UN Trust Fund projects that have the following design elements are more likely to be effective in reaching their action-oriented goals of preventing or ending VAW/G at the individual level. They bring context awareness into project design; involve women, girls and communities to co-create training materials; provide needs-oriented and tailored trainings to service providers; involve stakeholders in an intentional and targeted manner; and proactively identify last-mile barriers to action (material or normative) and work to reduce them. On the flipside, projects that conduct one-off and stand-alone training sessions and campaigns, or work with a homogenized script for all stakeholders may increase individual awareness and shift attitudes in the short run, but are less likely to inspire behavioural change and sustain learnings. Projects that have taken a cascading approach (training of trainers) instead of one-off trainings

are more likely to be effective in generating action at the individual level, especially when working with mobile or remote populations that cannot be reached multiple times.

Recommendation 1: Trainings and awareness sessions promoting gender equitable attitudes at the individual level are the cornerstone of EVAW/G programming, but in order to be effective in bringing change, they must be designed or adapted from the ground up, with clear calls to action and behaviour change.

Projects can achieve this by:

- Involving potential project beneficiaries early on, i.e., during the **project start-up**, so that strategies, materials and messages are relevant to the trainees' sociocultural context and speak to the concerns specific to beneficiary populations.
- Moving from awareness-oriented goals towards action-oriented goals in the **theory of change**, and providing pathways of change that are meaningful, practical and feasible to implement.
- Ensuring that as a **project strategy**, awareness-raising goes beyond a one-off training or campaign, and that it fits into a longer-term strategy for continuous or cascading engagement with stakeholders in order to motivate action.
- Considering upfront the potential risks of intervention activities (e.g. of inadvertent stigmatization of survivors) and drawing up **risk mitigation** strategies.
- Using messages that are locally specific and to which participants can immediately relate; documenting what worked and what did not in creating appropriate messaging should be part of **project monitoring, evaluation and learning**.
- Accounting for removal of last-mile barriers to action within **project budgets** (e.g. time, skills, transport or resources), because awareness may increase but the *ability* to act may be constrained by other factors.

Implications for the UNTF: a) review the risk section of proposals to ensure it allows for a thorough analysis of programmatic risks and mitigation tactics; b) include more guidance/training on risk mitigation/management in the training and grantee handbook (currently there is no dedicated section on risk management); c) provide examples of action-oriented results (shift in help-seeking behaviours, etc.); d) encourage projects to document front-line

adaptations and messaging; and e) advocate for contingency budgets for all projects in order to address last-mile barriers, but especially projects with marginalized groups.

Conclusion 2: UN Trust Fund projects have adopted various effective strategies to shift harmful social norms related to VAW/G, but some deep-seated norms remain hard to shift within three years.

For those working on the removal of a harmful or “sticky” norm, collective action becomes of paramount importance. UN Trust Fund projects have adopted various strategies to overcome this challenge – including, but not limited to, community mobilization and activism approaches; establishment of a new, positive norm; or alternative visions and pathways for relationships. The analysis also points to the risks of working on sticky norms, such as when EVAW/G messaging or trainings do not resonate with the community or when community members do not want to incur the negative sanctions involved in transgression of the norm. This can push the norm underground rather than eradicating it. In addition, the question of resonance/dissonance of values and messaging between front-line project workers and communities comes up frequently in evaluations. Some projects have effectively accounted for this through open and continuous discussion and outreach within organizations.

Recommendation 2: Social norms change on EVAW/G is essential to bringing change at scale, but must account for significant time and skills, and intensive community engagement.

Projects can achieve this by:

- Considering a short literature review of norms change in VAW/G programmes in similar contexts as part of the **project start-up**. Especially for organizations engaging in norms change programming and measurement for the first time, such a step can help avoid common pitfalls.
- Ensuring alignment between norms and values held by front-line workers, and the norms and values they are meant to champion within communities, through critical self-reflection as part of **project start-up**.
- Working with communities to gradually unpack the deep-seated nature of harmful social norms, and identifying opportunities and barriers to action together as a first step in the **project strategy**. Subsequently, design or adapt materials and trainings to work together with participants on how men and women are conditioned, from a young age, to accept a belief

system that perpetuates gender inequities throughout the life cycle.

- Promoting positive norms, alternative visions and pathways of relationships as an explicit part of the **project strategy**.
- Considering upfront the inadvertent risks of social norm change, e.g. the risks of being pushed underground, and accounting for these within **risk mitigation** strategies.

Implications for the UNTF: a) consider providing funding for longer projects – at least four years, in recognition of the time needed for social norms change; b) review the policy on no-cost extensions for projects to allow more flexibility when justified; c) err on the side of what seems manageable for the size/experience of a CSO, rather than being too aspirational (e.g. revise guidance on the design of project goals); and d) create links with tried and tested norm change interventions or networks such as the Community for Understanding Scale Up.¹⁶

Conclusion 3: UN Trust Fund projects that anticipate barriers to action throughout the life cycle of a project have been effective in inducing collective action for EVAW/G.

Projects have been effective in moving the needle from awareness to inducing collective action when they have: a) sought early buy-in with community stakeholders, often by way of a pre-implementation advocacy plan, b) gone beyond “consultations” to participatory involvement of both primary and secondary beneficiaries in project decisions, and c) created and tapped into networks and safe spaces to mobilize and disseminate information within communities, especially when gatherings are either difficult or forbidden. Projects that do not treat the community or specific groups within the community as a monolith (e.g. youth) and consider subgroup variations (e.g. youth who are refugees versus youth who are internally displaced people) are more likely to succeed in inspiring collective action.

Recommendation 3: Similar to inducing action at the individual level, awareness-raising at the community level should have clear calls for collective action, and work on reducing barriers to it before, during and after project implementation.

¹⁶ This is a working group of nine organizations working across Latin America, Africa, the Pacific, the Caribbean and South Asia with robust experience in scaling up social norm change methodologies in various contexts. <https://salamandertrust.net/project/cusp-community-for-understanding-scale-up-case-studies-stepping-stones/>

Projects can achieve this by:

- Anticipating and planning for subgroup variation, and devising different modalities for subgroups, e.g. different curricula, messaging and training methods during the **project start-up**.
- Planning pre-implementation advocacy as a **project strategy** within communities to build the groundwork for early buy-in and increase project acceptability, given the sensitive nature of EAW/G projects.
- Identifying and creating networks and spaces to mobilize and disseminate information, especially when gatherings are either difficult or forbidden, can work well as a **project strategy**.
- Considering upfront the inadvertent risks of collective action, e.g. of elite capture, or local politics or community backlash, and how these may impact project participation, and accounting for them within **risk mitigation** strategies.
- Within **sustainability** plans, defining clear calls to collective action for EAW/G that go beyond the lifetime of the project. Identifying champions to anchor the interventions can further enhance community ownership and sustainability.

Implications for the UNTF: a) take care to remind grantees to consider whether there is a need to focus on different strategies for subgroups within beneficiary categories, before expanding to completely new beneficiary types; b) ensure guidance on risk mitigation strategies has a section for projects to anticipate or account for barriers to action; c) provide examples in the guidance on promising strategies that projects have used to ensure that collective action goals are met (e.g. pre-implementation advocacy, participatory involvement of beneficiaries, creation of networks, being attuned to subgroup variation, etc.); and d) draw up guidance on exit strategies so that projects anticipate and plan intervention activities with an eye for how results may be sustained.

Conclusion 4: UN Trust Fund projects are effective in working with key secondary beneficiaries to improve service delivery and strengthen institutional responses when strategies for engagement with service providers and policymakers are well planned, focused and meaningful.

Projects that take a holistic approach to ending VAW/G match the funding priorities of the UN Trust Fund. The inclusion of secondary beneficiaries is a lynchpin of intervention

strategies. Projects work with a large range of secondary beneficiaries, including in health care, government, legal services, workplace and educational settings, and religious and other traditional institutions. Engagement with them has been particularly fruitful in improving service delivery and strengthening institutional responses to survivors of violence when projects: a) carefully considered the number of secondary beneficiaries to include, given the time and resources available; b) carefully vetted whether the secondary beneficiary had the capacity for uptake of the project's intended activities; and c) made training and other activities focused, practical and meaningful to service providers and policymakers.

Specifically, more detailed findings on point c) above show that secondary beneficiaries shifted attitudes towards VAW and took actions to aid survivors when project activities: improved providers' skills and job competencies, removed institutional bottlenecks, provided material resources to service providers, created useful policies and guidelines, and had a specific "ask" for policymakers.

The one specific service that survivors consistently found beneficial was psychosocial counselling. This highlights the importance of mental health interventions.

Recommendation 4: Projects must carefully design, manage, and plan the terms of engagement with service providers and policymakers so that the "ask" is meaningful, practical and feasible for both the implementer and the secondary beneficiary.

Projects can achieve this by:

- Including a vetting process for service providers to determine their capacity to participate fully in project activities during the **project start-up**.
- Carefully considering which (and how many) secondary beneficiaries to include as part of the **project strategy**, keeping in mind the available time and resources.
- Linking project activities to the specific needs of service providers as part of the **project strategy** of engaging service providers.
- Linking project activities to clearly defined policy goals, as part of the **project strategy** of engaging decision makers in government settings.
- Moving from awareness-oriented goals to action-oriented goals in the **theory of change**, and providing

pathways of change that are meaningful, practical and feasible to implement.

- Valuing improvements in the mental health of survivors, and investing in trained psychosocial counselling, as a part of the **project strategy**.
- Considering upfront the risks of a lack of engagement of service providers and decision makers within **risk mitigation** strategies.

Implications for the UNTF: a) review UN Trust Fund guidance on the design of projects to make sure that the preference for multisectoral and holistic projects does not lead to overambition; b) review the current guidance for grantees on project design and selection of beneficiaries to ensure project implementers do not spread themselves too thin; c) encourage grantees to vet the capacity of service providers before inclusion in the project; d) provide examples of action-oriented goals and activities with service providers and policymakers, and include these as part of the theory of change; and e) encourage projects to include professional psychosocial counselling in their intervention activities where referrals are not possible.

Conclusion 5: UN Trust Fund projects that anticipate the challenges that women may face in asserting their independence, and find ways to mitigate these, have been effective in reducing VAW/G.

UN Trust Fund projects recognize that equipping women to address the violence in their lives takes time. Project evaluations highlighted the need to be aware of the possible burden women may feel as “agents of change” as they bear the responsibility of taking action within their communities. A range of promising strategies help alleviate this burden, such as: a) providing support networks outside their families, b) offering alternate pathways to develop their independence away from their abusive relationships, and c) creating an enabling environment for women to assert themselves.

Across projects, women have responded positively to interventions that have created safe spaces for friendships and mutual support groups for women. These informal female networks establish an essential community-level support system for women, and are especially useful in highly patriarchal societies where women’s ability to move about freely is restricted, or when working with hidden and vulnerable subpopulations of women, such as sex workers. Such networks build on the principle of “strength

in numbers”. The collective can provide support when the individual burden of bearing change proves too heavy.

Successful interventions have also recognized that certain structural conditions of survivors’ lives prevent their ability to take action. In such cases, unless the conditions are changed, women might gain awareness and change attitudes, but remain unable to act on newfound ways of thinking. To address this, strategies range from establishing shelters for independent living to empowering women economically so they can live free of their abusive partners. Projects that publicly appreciate the contributions of project beneficiaries and women activists in the public space help in creating an enabling environment for these women.

An unintended impact of giving survivors of violence an opportunity to become agents of change can be an increasing feeling of insecurity among men and boys. Women survivors face violence or threats of violence for speaking up or seeking help. Young girls fear being disowned by their families for asserting their independence, while girls’ growing confidence can lead to misunderstanding with boys and even physical violence. Projects that anticipated this challenge and included men and boys as allies in bringing about social change were able to prevent their efforts from being viewed as a zero-sum game, where women come out as winners at the expense of men.

Recommendation 5a: While investing in strategies to help women become changemakers, projects should also consider mechanisms and strategies for sustained support to alleviate the burden that women might feel for being the primary agents of change.

Projects can achieve this by:

- Anticipating, at **project start-up**, the burden women may carry if they are the sole agents of change and finding mechanisms to alleviate the burden.
- Developing informal networks between women as an effective **project strategy** to build positive relationships and community-level support systems.
- Valuing the contributions of women in public, such as the knowledge and experience of women activists, as a **project strategy** to give them and their work increased legitimacy, create an enabling environment and mitigate against possible societal pushback.
- Considering the economic empowerment of women as a **project strategy** to address EAWV/G.

- Involving men and boys as a **project strategy** and considering them as allies in bringing about social change.

Recommendation 5b: Projects that use economic empowerment strategies must ensure that women are able to sustain their activities beyond the life cycle of the intervention.

Projects that focus on the economic empowerment of women can achieve this by:

- Carefully selecting women for economic empowerment programmes by mapping and weighing individual interests and ambitions against constraints at the **project start-up**.
- Ensuring that the selection process is transparent and available to everyone involved at the **project start-up**.
- Including a hands-on training component that covers the basic skills required to run a business (e.g. taxation and accounting, bookkeeping, sourcing, supply chain management, etc.) over and beyond economic education, as this can be a useful **project strategy** to equip women with all of the skills they need.
- Planning for a continued, if different, engagement with women after the project ends to ensure **sustainability**, such as through a light-touch handholding of women in the early stages of their business development. Business incubation is also valuable as it can help women sustain their businesses over time.

Implications for the UNTF: a) review the project design and risk section of proposals to ensure that attention is paid to alleviating the burden on women as the primary agents of change; b) provide examples of risk mitigation strategies such as forming networks and providing public recognition; c) encourage projects to include men and boys in project activities; d) encourage projects with economic empowerment goals to be realistic in selecting women who can create and sustain businesses; and e) encourage projects with economic empowerment goals to include components on basic “how-to’s” of running a business.

Impact

Conclusion 6: Almost half the projects in the sample have measured impacts and observed reductions in men’s perpetration of or women’s experience of VAW/G, but each evaluation has measured it differently, which points

to the challenges of measuring VAW/G goals within short time frames and with restricted resources. Critically, however, UN Trust Fund projects have led to significant impacts on precursors such as self-efficacy and self-identity, and have had unintended consequences, both positive and negative. This shows the cascading effects of project activities well beyond the stated overall project goals.

On impact, the meta-analysis grappled with the following question: How best can evaluators assess whether intervention activities have had an impact on EVAW/G? A few salient points emerged from the data: a) given the short implementation timeframe of the UN Trust Fund projects and the timing of the evaluation (which is expected to occur just as the project is about to close), evaluators made a convincing case that it is unrealistic to expect large shifts in violence reduction; b) if data reveal that violence has increased between baseline and endline, this might actually be a measure of the project’s success, since more women and girls have been empowered to report instances of violence; c) when evaluators provide evidence on violence reduction, they use measures that may not be the most reliable; and, finally, d) qualitative data with open-ended questions on processes may pick up on project impacts that close-ended questions on violence reduction in quantitative surveys miss. A reasonable conclusion from these points is that for the projects under consideration in this meta-analysis, it is appropriate to measure the project’s impact on the precursors to ending violence. The meta-analysis uncovered two measures that evaluators typically use to measure changes: improvements in survivors’ self-identity and self-efficacy.

An increase in positive self-identity is particularly critical for certain subgroups of women with whom projects work, such as female sex workers, transgender and lesbian women, and indigenous women. These groups are marginalized from mainstream society, stigmatized for their identities and made to feel powerless against perpetrators of violence. Improving the self-identity of communities of marginalized women is an important first step towards reducing violence. There is also strong evidence that projects have improved self-efficacy among their beneficiaries, inducing a change where survivors feel more confident and in control of their surroundings.

The evaluation reports document interesting and important findings on unintended consequences of project activities, both positive and negative, which show the cascading effects of project activities well beyond the stated goals.

What the evidence base misses are measures of *collective* identity and *collective* efficacy. Given the centrality of mobilization efforts and network formation in intervention activities and as proven promising strategies, this is a missed opportunity for better understanding how projects are inducing *social* and not just individual change. Additionally, following from Conclusions 1 and 3 above, it would also be useful to measure *collective action* to specify the extent to which improved awareness, knowledge and skills are translating into actions.

Since this meta-analysis is limited to the end-of-project evaluation reports, future work should expand their scope to incorporate other types of project data, e.g. periodic monitoring reports. Another limitation on understanding impact is that this meta-analysis only includes 30 projects, which is a small subset of the total number of projects funded by the UN Trust Fund. For perspective, in 2019 alone, the UN Trust Fund funded and managed 137 projects. Widening the data pool will enable a more thorough understanding of a number of questions and themes that are useful and relevant to ending VAW/G.

Recommendation 6: Expand the scope of the data set, and the types of data, measures and themes in future evaluations, analyses and studies to take advantage of the full range and scope of UN Trust Fund projects.

Projects can achieve this by:

- Ensuring a continuous M&E plan alongside the rollout of the intervention, as part of the **project start-up**.
- Co-creating measures with project evaluators that fully capture all aspects of the project's **theory of change** as part of **project monitoring, evaluation and learning**.
- Ensuring that evaluators include measures for both individual and social change, and separately capture changes in self-esteem/identity/efficacy/agency and collective identity/efficacy/action as part of **project monitoring, evaluation and learning**.
- Ensuring that unintended consequences are part of periodic **project monitoring** to allow for **mid-course correction** and **project monitoring, evaluation and learning**.

Implications for the UNTF: a) review the UN Trust Fund guidance on designing M&E plans for grantees to take these tips into account; b) recommend hiring evaluators at an earlier stage in the project cycle to design appropriate data collection measures; c) consider setting aside an impact

evaluation budget, and establishing agreements with some grantees to evaluate the project 6 to 12 months after it ends to properly evaluate sustainability and impact; d) for future analyses, include project reports and other project data, not just evaluations; e) for future analyses, look at projects across settings or by specific themes (such as work with men and boys, economic empowerment, or ending harmful practices such as FGM, *chhaupadi* or child marriage); f) for future analyses, involve grantees in learning and co-creation of conclusions and recommendations; and g) for future analyses, consolidate case studies/examples of what works/does not work by theme.

Sustainability

Conclusion 7: While the project cycles may be limited, and finding channels for financial sustainability may be difficult, projects can still find pathways to continue their work even after UN Trust Fund support ends.

One of the primary challenges for UN Trust Fund grantees is the sustainability of their work after the project ends. It is a tall order for grantees to rely on an exit strategy that involves securing fresh funding to sustain work on EAW/G. Only 2 out of 30 projects were financially sustainable at the time of the end-of-project evaluation, according to the evaluator. This is not altogether surprising, considering that projects are funded for two or three years, and such a short timeframe does not allow for applying for new grants while still implementing activities from the current one. The UN Trust Fund projects are ambitious, with a high intensity and pace of activities, and it must be difficult to fundraise within short funding cycles.

Yet projects have been effective in sustaining results when they have been open to different forms of sustainability that go beyond a linear pathway (e.g. one that focuses only on scaling up). Some projects found institutional mechanisms for sustaining project results. Their exit strategies held the promise of ensuring that the project's approaches, ideas and principles did not end when the funding cycle concluded. Projects institutionalized the key concepts of EAW/G by: a) embedding project-created materials and messages into the existing curricula of academies that train critical service providers (such as police and social workers); b) creating manuals, guidelines and policies for future use by institutions and community groups; and c) investing in new institutional systems (such as by establishing centres for survivors of violence as a proof-of-concept).

Finally, there is a critical “intangible” way to achieve sustainability. Project beneficiaries often used the amorphous word “ownership” to describe how they had experienced the project. This meant they would never “unlearn” the key lessons that the project had imparted to them. It highlights a conclusion mentioned earlier – the importance of the participatory involvement of beneficiaries in project decisions, which is the mechanism through which “ownership” is inculcated.

Analysis of the recommendation sections of the evaluation reports provided important insights into how CSOs can plan their exits without losing key learnings.¹⁷ Evaluators recommend that projects should share learning and knowledge through peer-level advocacy networks with other local CSOs. This is important because it links back to a finding under effectiveness, the challenge of neighbouring areas negatively influencing the project’s impacts. Even if a project cannot expand its reach, it is possible to disseminate the principles and approaches of its activities through CSOs working nearby.

Recommendation 7: CSOs should look at different forms of sustainability, over and beyond the scale-up of the project, by institutionalizing project results, investing in networks and building ecosystems.

CSOs can achieve this by:

- Including, as part of the **project strategy**, communicating with other CSOs in the surrounding area to increase the visibility of issues on VAW/G, and establish a more enabling environment for beneficiary communities.
- Investing in building networks or coalitions with other like-minded CSOs to ensure the **sustainability** of the project’s principles, ideas and approaches.
- Investing in institutionalizing project results as part of the overall **project strategy** at the beginning, so that **sustainability** is planned from the very start.
- Involving project beneficiaries in key project decisions, thereby enhancing a sense of ownership, which in turn, ensures **sustainability**.

- Finding pathways for institutionalizing project results and including these early on as part of the project’s **sustainability** plans.
- As part of a broader **sustainability strategy**, CSOs should constantly communicate on the milestones, updates, lessons and experiences from the project to other teams. Sharing knowledge with other teams can help embed ideas, possible strategies and mechanisms within other projects, and creates a space for intersectional dialogue on EVAW/G. It can cultivate an ethos of shared values within the organization.

Implications for the UNTF: a) consider providing funding for longer projects of at least four years, in recognition of the time needed to sustain project results and to account for start-up activities and pre-implementation advocacy; b) consider setting aside an impact evaluation budget, and establish agreements with some grantees to evaluate the project 6 to 12 months after it ends to properly evaluate sustainability and impact; c) encourage projects to develop an exit strategy at the beginning so that results can be sustained through institutional mechanisms, investment in networks and by building a stronger ecosystem; d) provide examples of institutional sustainability in guidance for grantees; e) encourage participatory involvement of beneficiaries in project decisions to enhance sustained ownership of project results; and f) continue with the “by invitation only” window.

¹⁷ Note that insights from the recommendations sections of the evaluation reports are not included in the evidence presented under the findings section in this meta-analysis. Suggestions by evaluators are not always evidence of promising strategies that projects actually implemented. Rather, they are often suggestions for what CSOs should do differently. Having said that, the authors of this meta-analysis do not want to lose these critical insights. They are thus included here.

REFERENCES

Foster, J. (2016). *Meta-analysis Report*. New York: UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women.

Heise, L. (1998). Violence against women: An integrated, ecological framework, *Violence against women* vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 262-290.

Jewkes, R., and others (2020). *Effective design and implementation elements in interventions to prevent violence against women and girls. What Works To Prevent VAWG? Global Programme Synthesis Product Series*. Pretoria: South African Medical Research Council.

UN Women (2018). *Reflections on Change. Meta-analysis: Findings and lessons from evaluations managed by UN Women in 2017*. New York: UN Women.

World Health Organization (2019). *RESPECT women: Preventing violence against women*. Geneva: WHO.



A Community Advocate facilitates an Adolescent Girls Program workshop on self-esteem in rural Patzún, Guatemala. © Women's Justice Initiative/Lisa Shannon.

ANNEX A: PROJECT REPORTS

Cycle	REGION	COUNTRY	LANGUAGE	REPORT NAME	CSO
17	Asia and the Pacific	Bangladesh	English	Safe School Safe Community	Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha
17	Asia and the Pacific	Viet Nam	English	The Gender-Responsive School Pilot Model Project	Plan International
17	Africa	South Africa	English	Skillz Stree Plus: A grassroots soccer initiative	Grassroots Soccer
17	Asia and the Pacific	Afghanistan, Tajikistan	English	Women's Empowerment in Afghanistan and Tajikistan for Displaced Persons through Legal Aid and Training to Combat Violence against Women	Danish Refugee Council
17	Asia and the Pacific	Cambodia	English	Safe Workplaces Safe Communities Project	Care International
18	Americas and the Caribbean	El Salvador	Spanish	Mejora de las condiciones de acceso a una vida libre de violencia de genero para las mujeres de El Salvador	ORMUSA – ACP
18	Asia and the Pacific	Thailand	English	The Empowerment and Capacity Building of Lesbian and Transgender Women to Mitigate Violence, Stigma and Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity	Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand
18	Africa	Liberia	English	Engaging Faith-based Organizations to Prevent Violence against Women and Girls and Increase Survivors' Access to Services in Liberia 2015-2017	Episcopal Relief & Development
18	Americas and the Caribbean	Guatemala	Spanish	Prevencion y Reduccion de la violencia sexual en MTS de Escuinta	Fundacio Sida I Societat
19	Africa	United Republic of Tanzania	English	Female Genital Mutilation Elimination Project	AMREF Health Africa
19	Asia and the Pacific	Cambodia	English	Enhancing Responses to Violence Against Women and Girls in Cambodia Project	World Hope International
19	Europe and Central Asia	Turkey	English	Fathers Are Here for Gender Equality	Mother Child Education Foundation
19	Africa	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya	English	Deepening and Expanding the Cross-Sector Network Response to Sexual Violence in the DRC and Kenya: A Project to Increase Justice for Women and Girls Survivors of Sexual Violence	Physicians for Human Rights

Cycle	REGION	COUNTRY	LANGUAGE	REPORT NAME	CSO
19	Africa	Kenya	English	Stop Violence against Women and Girls in Samburu, Marsabit and Isiolo Counties in Northern Kenya	International Institute of Rural Reconstruction
19	Asia and the Pacific	Cambodia	English	Promoting Gender Equality and Improving Access to Justice for Female Survivors and Victims of Gender-Based Violence Under the KR Regime	Victims Support Section of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia and the Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation Cambodia
19	Europe and Central Asia	Azerbaijan	English	Building Bridges of Life for the Women Survivors of Domestic Violence in Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan Young Lawyers' Confederation
19	Americas and the Caribbean	Ecuador	Spanish	Intervención Integral para garantizar el acceso de las mujeres víctimas de violencia de género al sistema de justicia	ACDemocracia
19	Europe and Central Asia	Serbia	English	Stop-Care-Cure A Stronger Institutional Response to Gender-Based Violence in Vojvodina	Provincial Secretariat for Healthcare in partnership with the Center for Support of Women – Kikinda
19	Africa	Kenya, Zambia	English	A Real Man Is (ARMI) Project in Kenya and Zambia	YMCA Africa Alliance
19	Arab States and North Africa	Tunisia	French	Evaluation finale du projet MANARA	Fondation CIDEAL, l'Association Femme et Citoyenneté
19	Americas and the Caribbean	Guatemala	Spanish	Erradicar la violencia contra la mujer y la niña y aumentar el acceso a la justicia para mujeres mayas rurales a través de intervenciones comunitarias basadas en la cultura	Women's Justice Initiative
19	Europe and Central Asia	Armenia	English	Creating a coordinated response mechanism to prevent and combat domestic violence in Armenia	Women's Support Center
20	Africa	Nigeria	English	Mobilizing communities to end sexual-based violence against girls in local district of Abuja Municipal Area Council, Nigeria	SOAR Sexual Offences Awareness & Victims Rehabilitation (SOAR) Initiative
20	Arab States and North Africa	Jordan	English	Safeguarding women and girls affected by the Syrian crisis in Jordan	War Child Canada

Cycle	REGION	COUNTRY	LANGUAGE	REPORT NAME	CSO
20	Africa	Mali	French	Rapport de l'évaluation du projet d'information et de sensibilisation contre la pratique des MGF/E et le mariage des enfants dans 30 villages du district sanitaire de Kayes	AMSOPT (Association Malienne pour le suivi et l'orientation des pratiques traditionnelles néfastes)
20	Americas and the Caribbean	Colombia	Spanish	Afro-Colombian women from the city of Buenaventura are empowered to eradicate the violence perpetrated against them, in both public and private spheres; a phenomenon often exacerbated in the context of peace talks and after a peace agreement has been reached	Fundación Mundubat
20	Europe and Central Asia	Serbia	English	SHE Empowerment Upscaling Project	Fund B92
20	Americas and the Caribbean	Guatemala	Spanish	Por una vida libre de violencia para las mujeres y niñas - For a life free of violence for women and girls	Grupo Guatemalteco de Mujeres
20	Africa	Malawi	English	Women Judges Lead in the Fight to Demand Justice and Accountability for Sexual Violence Survivors in Malawi	International Association of Women Judges
20	Americas and the Caribbean	Chile	Spanish	A mi me pasa, yo difundo y yo prevengo - It happens to me, I tell, I prevent	Corporación Humanas - Fondo Alquimia

ANNEX B: NOTES ON SETTINGS

Legal institutions

We identified 11 instances where legal institutions or institutions within justice systems were the focal points of intervention across nine projects. There were three types of legal institutions: local police stations, the police force and legal authorities (lawyers, judges, magistrates, police prosecutors, etc.). Strategies used in these settings ranged from training and capacity-building to improve the quality of services delivered to women and girls, to ensuring cases move through the justice system from the police station to the courts, to establishing new gender police desks and equipping existing ones with critical equipment (computers for training, IEC materials, etc.).

Health-care settings

Health care and spaces associated with health care were used in seven instances across projects. Hospitals, local health-care clinics and special health desks within community centres were often entry points into the community. We identified four subcategory settings: officials (in health departments and public health care), health-care workers/social workers, health and family planning clinics, and centres catering specifically to women and girls affected by sexual violence.

Some of these projects worked with existing units (such as health-care units within community centres, or health and family planning clinics) where they focused on building the capacities of staff to respond to cases of sexual and gender-based violence through training, certification and workshops. Other projects sought to improve services offered at these centres by improving documentation and establishing procedures to be followed (e.g. for medical-legal cases). In one case, new dedicated centres for victims of sexual violence were set up within health-care units.

Educational institutions

In four projects, local schools were the primary points of intervention. In a fifth project, the setting was soccer clubs set up within schools for young girls and boys.

Government

The Government – ministries, district-level units of ministries and district-level administrative units (district councils) – were points of intervention in three projects.

Shelters and community centres

Three projects used shelters and community centres. We categorized two types of centres: shelters and community centres. In some cases, the community centres and shelters were the same; in other projects there were special shelters for victims of sexual violence. Shelters and community centres offered a range of services from shelter and protection to legal aid, medical and psychosocial counselling, and economic training to help women support themselves independently.

Religious institutions

Faith and traditional leaders were included as stakeholders in a number of projects but were central to three projects.

Refugees and IDPs

Two projects worked with refugees and IDPs.

Commercial establishments

One project used commercial establishments, specifically garment factories and hospitality/tourism locales such as beer gardens, karaoke bars, etc.

Community groups

Community groups were by far the most common point of intervention. Sixty-three per cent (19 out of 30) of the projects used 14 types of community groups as their main entry points into the project. We identified 25 instances where community groups were the primary point of intervention in these 19 projects. The majority of these instances (13 out of 25) were subgroups of women and girls (six of them in total, from out-of-school girls to indigenous women, female soccer coaches, groups of vulnerable women, etc.). The remainder were mixed or male groups (such as groups of community leaders, or boys and men). A couple of “formal” groups were either institutional groups, such as of elected representatives of local committees, or groups of mothers and fathers targeted as part of a project.

TABLE 1: Primary entry points for intervention and their occurrences across projects

Primary entry point for intervention	Number of instances across projects	Projects	Note
Legal institutions	11	Afghanistan and Tajikistan (C17), Armenia (C19), Cambodia (C19), Democratic Republic of the Congo (C19), Kenya (C19), United Republic of Tanzania (C19), Tunisia (C19), Malawi (C20), Colombia (C20)	Several projects used legal institutions as their entry point. Strategies in this setting ranged from training and capacity-building to improve the quality of services delivered to women and girls, to ensuring cases move through the justice system from the police station to the courts, to establishing new gender police desks and equipping existing ones with critical equipment (computers for training, IEC materials).
Police	5		
Judges/magistrates/lawyers/other legal authorities	4		
Gender police desks within local police stations	2		
Health-care settings	7	Democratic Republic of the Congo (C19), Kenya (C19), Cambodia (C19), Tunisia (C19), Armenia (C19), United Republic of Tanzania (C19), Serbia (C19)	Activities within health-care settings were diverse. Some projects worked with existing units (such as health-care units within community centres, or health and family planning clinics) where they focused on building the capacities of staff to respond to cases of sexual and gender-based violence through training, certification and workshops. Other projects sought to improve services offered at these centres by improving the documentation and elaborating on the procedures to be followed (e.g. procedures for medical-legal cases). In one case, new dedicated centres to deal with violence were set up within health-care units.
State health care (city health departments, public health-sector officials)	3		
Health-care workers and social workers within community centres	2		
Health-care and family planning clinics	1		
Centres for victims of sexual violence	1		
Educational institutions	5	South Africa (C17), Bangladesh (C17), Viet Nam (C17), Kenya (C17), Nigeria (C20)	In four projects, the primary point of intervention was local schools. The fifth project was run through soccer clubs set up in schools.
Schools	5		
Government	3	Armenia (C19), Cambodia (C19b), United Republic of Tanzania (C19)	
Ministries of labour and social affairs	1		
District level offices for women's affairs	1		
District councils	1		
Shelters and community centres	3	Azerbaijan (C19), Tunisia (C19), Serbia (C20),	In some cases, the community centres and shelters were the same; in other projects there were special shelters for victims of violence. Shelters and community centres offered a range of services from shelter and protection, to legal aid, medical and psychosocial counselling, and economic training to help women support themselves independently.
Safehouses, centres for social welfare, shelters for women and girls affected by violence	2		
Community centres	1		

TABLE 1: Primary entry points for intervention and their occurrences across projects

TABLE 1: Primary entry points for intervention and their occurrences across projects			
Religious institutions	3		
Faith leaders such as imams and priests	1	Liberia (C18), United Republic of Tanzania (C19), Malawi (C20)	Faith and traditional leaders were often critical stakeholders in projects. They were the primary points of intervention in three projects.
Traditional leaders	2		
Refugee settlements	2		
Refugees (Afghans in Tajikistan, Syrians in Jordan)	2	Afghan-Tajik (C17), Jordan (C20)	
IDPs (in Afghanistan)	1		
Commercial establishments	1		
Workplaces – hospitality, tourism and garment factories	1	Cambodia (C17)	

TABLE 2: Community groups as entry points for intervention across the projects

Primary entry point for intervention	No. of instances across projects	Projects	Note
Community groups (female)	13	South Africa (C17), El Salvador (C18), Guatemala (C18), Liberia (C18), Thailand (C18), Cambodia (C19a), Cambodia (C19b), Guatemala (C19), Kenya (C19), Kenya-Zambia (C19), United Republic of Tanzania (C19), Turkey (C19), Chile (C20), Colombia (C20), Ecuador (C20), Guatemala (C20), Malawi (C20), Mali (C20), Nigeria (C20)	There were a range of informal (such as for indigenous women or out-of-school girls) and formal groups (e.g. elected members of local committees) across the projects. There were women's groups, mixed groups, and groups of men and boys.
Community groups of women	5		
Indigenous women and women from minority groups	3		
Vulnerable women (women living with HIV, LGBT, with disabilities, etc.)	2		
Out-of-school girls	1		
Female sex workers	1		
Female soccer coaches	1		
Other community groups	12		
Community and village leaders	4		
Circumcisers	2		
Local community or subdistrict women and child committees	1		
Groups of fathers and mothers	1		
Male clients of female sex workers	1		
Lay leaders and youth leaders	1		
Men and boys	1		
Family	1		

ANNEX C: FULL LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Training

- Involve beneficiaries in the development of training materials.
- Use training materials that help participants understand the social rootedness of deep-seated gender norms. Training materials should deconstruct and explain to participants how men and women are conditioned, from a young age, to accept a belief system that perpetuates gender inequities in various aspects of life.
- Training materials should use examples and messages that are locally specific and to which participants can immediately relate.
- The training process must be fully thought-out and ensure that there is no inadvertent stigmatization of participants.
- Training for service providers should be specialized and geared towards improving job performance.
- Training for decision makers must be based on a needs assessment that is local, specific and directly relevant for policy. Rather than having a generalized training on SGBV, the training could be much more focused, e.g. showcasing the results of a needs assessment derived from a population that the decision maker directly serves, using the results as a platform to raise the profile of SGBV issues, offering specialized training (say, on gender-based budgeting that decision makers will find new and useful), and making targeted recommendations that are relevant to policymaking.
- No-one-size-fits-all: Anticipate subgroup variation and devise strategies accordingly. Projects can anticipate and plan for such variation even within the same population (say, young men) and devise different modalities for subpopulations (young men from working-class neighbourhoods versus young men from more affluent neighborhoods). Projects can then think through different curricula, messages, training methods and number of training sessions. They can put more emphasis on actions that are feasible and practical given the constraints, and involve the beneficiary community in designing an effective strategy with messages that will resonate.
- Practitioners on the ground constantly create appropriate messages, but often such practices are not documented or collated. Projects and evaluations should strive to keep note of such messages so that there is cross-project learning.
- Trainings should not be “one-off” and should fit into a larger strategy for continuous engagement with stakeholders.

Risk mitigation

- Projects must consider the risks/harms that their activities might inadvertently cause and plan accordingly. They should build in a risk mitigation plan to ensure project effectiveness and sustainability. For example, involve stakeholders representing different organizations and subgroups to improve the content of the programme, anticipating that there might be a risk of perceived misalignment in values between “conservative” beneficiaries and progressive, secular project staff. Or, in programmes where there is a loss of income for some beneficiaries because of intended project outcomes, plan for alternative pathways of income generation.
- Projects should take into account accepted research on social norms to better understand the challenges that these will pose.

Careful consideration of the inclusion of secondary beneficiaries

- When implementing intervention activities with secondary beneficiaries, carefully consider the available resources (staff time, available budget, etc.) in order to avoid diluting the overall effort. It makes sense to develop a plan that tackles all beneficiaries that influence project goals, but not if the time and effort are wasted because the project is spread too thin. If a project is primarily working within a health-care setting, consider whether inclusion of police in project activities is feasible. Are the resources better spent on providing material resources or investing in more specialized training for the primary agents of change (the health-care workers) to ensure that awareness and action can both be improved for health workers, rather than adding on another group of secondary beneficiaries (e.g. the police)?

Careful vetting of service providers: weigh pros and cons, plan accordingly

- Service providers must be carefully vetted before being included in project activities. If a service provider is overstretched, ill-managed or unenthusiastic, scrutinize carefully whether the inclusion of such a provider would be a net gain or loss for the intervention. If the project wants to work with a shelter, but the shelter is poorly managed, underfunded and has an overworked staff, the project might still decide to work with the shelter because it is the only one providing any type of service to women experiencing VAW/G in a given area. The project might then decide to shift original plans to better take into account the realities on the ground. Rather than provide training to staff already working 12-hour shifts, the project might decide that it is better to provide the shelter with a computer and provide training on using a database that will reduce administrative time.

Keeping in mind project time horizons

- Donors could consider automatic extension windows for projects that have been affected by delays.
- Donors should consider the feasibility of proposals with multiple outcomes and engagement with multiple stakeholders.
- Projects seeking change at the institutional level should focus on what is doable since large changes are beyond the scope of small CSOs operating within strict time horizons. CSOs can identify institutional bottlenecks that cause inefficiencies. These do not aim to change the system but are designed to make the system work more smoothly. If improper legal and medical documentation is a stumbling block for violence survivors to press charges, for example, the CSO can help legal and medical service providers ensure better documentation.

Projects must not stop only at awareness-oriented goals; they must include action-oriented goals

- Projects should consider the “last-mile barriers” that beneficiaries face in changing behaviours. If sexual violence survivors do not have the resources

(time and/or money) to seek justice in courts, how can the project’s activities help? Could the project set aside staff time and a budget to accompany victims to court?

Projects should consider the provision of needed material resources to service providers (e.g. computers for a gender desk at a police station, rape kits for health-care workers, or complaints registers/hotlines at schools) as an important intervention activity to ensure that both awareness-oriented and action-oriented goals are met.

Projects working on economic empowerment

- Consider the full picture of a woman’s ability and resources to run a business.
- Ensure that the training targets needed skills to run businesses (e.g. on tax laws, bookkeeping, etc.).
- Make the selection process transparent.
- Have a sustainability plan after the project closes.

When working at the community level

- Conduct pre-implementation advocacy for early buy-in. The project in Bangladesh saw delays in the first year because parents were not included. But in the second year, as parents became interested, they started championing the programme.
- Identify champions to anchor the interventions, and where possible use community members as leaders and primary mediators.
- Include primary beneficiaries in project decisions.
- Involve stakeholders who have legitimacy and authority in communities.
- Create networks and spaces to mobilize and disseminate information naturally, especially when gatherings are either difficult or forbidden.
- Such spaces are not only important for primary beneficiaries but other stakeholders as well. The project using soccer coaches in schools to train young women on interpersonal relationships stumbled over the lack of space for coaches to come together and discuss strategies, experiences, etc.
- Work to improve the mental health of groups affected by violence (students in school distressed by bullying, women facing domestic violence, refugee women facing community violence, etc.). Importantly, consider psychosocial counselling as a service that requires specialized skill. Do not “save

resources” by training an existing staff person (e.g. a teacher) to take on this role.

- Ensure an alignment of values:
 - For instance, work with feminist Muslim organizations in situations where beneficiaries feel threatened by organizations deemed as bringing in secular values.
- Be clear on expectations when using community members as project staff (e.g. community members may be effective as trainers but not in completing administrative tasks; both are important, so projects must plan accordingly).
- Be conscious of local politics between groups and how they may affect the participation of stakeholders. For example, in the project that worked with schools in Bangladesh, there were tensions between teachers and elected representatives who sat on teaching boards.
- Involve men and boys as important allies to end VAW/G. Devise strategies that take into account that attitudes of men/boys might be harder to shift than those of women/girls.

When working with decision makers

- Have a specific ask and align project activities around that. For instance, advocate for increased budgeting for stopping GBV and train the district councils on gender budgeting.

On measuring impact

- Since improved service delivery is a necessary step towards ending VAW, evaluators can include measures to analyse changes in service delivery. Do the service providers maintain regular records that can be used to observe changes in use? Can interviews and focus groups dig deeper on the nature of the change, if any? Can evaluators ensure that data are collected on subpopulations within the beneficiary groups to understand for whom service delivery has improved (if at all) and for whom it has not?
- Evaluators can measure improvements in self-identity and self-efficacy separately by ensuring that questions address each. These can then be followed by questions on any actions taken (if respondents report an improvement in, say, self-efficacy). This will help understand barriers to

action despite improvements in confidence and a feeling of control.

- Donors should ensure that projects build in a continuous M&E plan alongside the roll-out of the intervention.

On sustainability

- Projects should ensure institutional sustainability of project results through strategies such as:
 - Creation of manuals that document the project’s approach and strategies;
 - Working with beneficiary institutions (e.g. schools, police academies, social work colleges, etc.) to incorporate training materials into their regular curricula;
 - Creating guidelines, such as on tackling workplace harassment or school-based harassment that can be used by those institutions; and
 - Implementing a prototype that can be replicated.
- Build peer-to-peer networks between grantees (e.g. with similar CSOs in the same region); the UNTF could play a role through communities of practice and networks across grantees. This could:
 - Improve the sustainability of interventions even after they end; and
 - Potentially help strengthen advocacy efforts, especially with the government.
- Projects should consider having an exit plan at the earliest stage (proposal stage or at the start of implementation). The UNTF should consider providing guidance on the design of exit plans and make plans compulsory for the project closure stage.
- When choosing community members to be on citizen committees, consider a process that elects members, as nominating members can affect the sustainability of committees after the project ends.
- Design for continued engagement with community groups (especially vulnerable or marginalized subgroups) after the project is over or when resources are low.

Women as agents of change

- Consider mechanisms to address the burden women can feel when it comes to dealing with

violence, particularly so that they do not bear the sole burden of action/responsibility.

- Wherever possible, increase the participation of women in community decision-making spaces.
- Consider valuing the contributions of women in public: e.g. valuing the knowledge and experience of women activists (such as through certification), which can give them additional legitimacy.
- Consider the economic empowerment of women as a strategy to address EVAW/G, with the caveats noted above on the design of these projects.

Communication

- Organizations should be encouraged to communicate more widely about their work: within their organizations, and between staff who are on the project and not; with the project's other stakeholders; with beneficiaries; and with other organizations in a given region. This helps improve the visibility of the issue of SGBV in the wider community.
- Ensure continuous channels of communication among all stakeholders in the "core implementation team", from grantee staff to volunteers, peer mediators, other partner organizations, the government, etc.



220 East 42nd Street New York,
NY 10017, USA
@UNTrustFundEVAW #UNTF
www.untf.unwomen.org