UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

2021 Call for Proposals

Call Opens: 25 November 2021
Deadline for Submissions: 6 January 2022

Online Application System: https://grants.untf.unwomen.org

The UN Trust Fund is seeking proposals for civil society-led, demand-driven initiatives to end violence against marginalized women and girls and those experiencing intersecting forms of discrimination. We will prioritize applications that employ an intersectional approach and adopt the principle of leaving no one behind in working with the most marginalized women and girls (including, but not limited to, indigenous women and girls, minority ethnic women and girls, LBTIQ+ people, women and girls with disabilities, older women, women and girls internally displaced (IDPs) and refugees, and women and girl survivors of violence).

The UN Trust Fund prioritizes applications from women’s rights organizations and local civil society organizations led by and for marginalized women and girls; organizations that are the driving force of the ending violence against women and girls agenda in their communities and those at the forefront of reaching at-risk women and girls and survivors of violence are invited to apply for a grant.
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## ANNEXES

- **Annex 1:** Eligibility Checklist
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1. About the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

The United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) is a global multi-lateral mechanism supporting national efforts to end one of the most widespread human rights violations in the world. Established in 1996 by UN General Assembly Resolution 50/166, the UN Trust Fund is administered by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) on behalf of the United Nations system. For the past 25 years, we have partnered with and supported critical actors in pursuing the ending violence against women and girls (VAW/G) agenda, such as women’s rights organizations, youth groups, indigenous communities, faith-based and traditional leaders, human rights organizations and the media. To date, we have supported 609 initiatives in 140 countries and territories for a total of US$ 198 million. For more information on the UN Trust Fund, its history, partners and initiatives funded, visit our website.2

2. Guiding Framework

This Call for Proposal is guided by the UN Trust Fund’s Strategic Plan 2021-25 and its vision of “a world of global solidarity in which all women and girls live free from all forms of violence and enjoy and exercise their human rights”.3 This vision is aligned with international human rights standards, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs) and international humanitarian principles and standards, of which gender equality and the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls is an integral part.

The aim of the UN Trust Fund, over the next five years, is to “ensure that more women and girls, especially the most marginalized and those experiencing intersecting forms of discrimination, can exercise their human right to live a life free of all forms of violence”4 through initiatives that:

- Improve prevention of VAW/G through changes in behaviours, practices and attitudes
- Improve access for women and girls to essential, specialist, safe and adequate multisectoral services.
- Increase effectiveness of legislation, policies, national action plans and accountability systems to prevent and end VAW/G

In pursuit of these outcomes, the UN Trust Fund’s mission is to “enable Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), especially Women’s Rights Organizations (WROs) and those that represent the most marginalized groups, to play a central role in delivering survivor-centered and demand-driven initiatives and to support their programmes to achieve sustainable impact on ending violence against women and girls (EVAW/G) in a manner that contributes to global solidarity, partnerships, and inclusive feminist movements”.5

This mission is integral to Outcome 5 of the new UN Women Strategic Plan 2022-2025, towards which the UN Trust Fund contributes, that commits the Entity to support civil society and women’s organizations through the provision of dedicated, flexible funding.6 The strength of CSOs, especially WROs – and feminist movements as a whole – is a key factor in driving positive change to end VAW/G. This essential leadership role of CSOs has been recognized time and again at the highest levels of the UN system, with the UN Secretary-General noting CSOs,

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2 https://untf.unwomen.org/en
4 Id at pg.40.
5 Id at pg.9.
and especially WROs, in the Beijing Platform for Action Review (2020) as key actors in advancing gender equality and ending VAW/G and called on Member States to support this role, including through funding.7

3. The Context

The UN Trust Fund’s Strategic Plan 2021-2025 provides the overarching context for this Call for Proposals, including problem and trends analysis on violence against women and girls (VAW/G). Globally, even before the COVID-19 pandemic began, an estimated 736 million women—almost one in three—had been subjected to intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both at least once in their life (30 per cent of women aged 15 and older).8 The COVID-19 pandemic not only exposed the lack of preparedness of countries to respond to and deal with existing, ongoing and persistent VAW/G, it has also led to a significant rise of this already prevalent human rights violation.

In addition to the impact of COVID-19, the global context of humanitarian crises, including climate-related disasters and violent conflicts, are affecting more people than ever before, with a disproportionate impact on women and girls. In humanitarian situations, for example, the resulting instability creates conditions which perpetuate VAW/G, which is often compounded by additional barriers to justice and essential services for women and girls. A rapid gender analysis conducted following the 2021 earthquake in Haiti, for example, found that 66% of women’s and human rights organizations and 25% of individuals interviewed noted that general insecurity had increased in different ways, notably as shown by cases of gender-based violence which they knew of in their communities.9

Evidence shows that the most marginalized women and girls, including women with disabilities, refugees and indigenous women amongst others, are at disproportionate risk from violence and face greater barriers in accessing services and justice. In addition, as global and regional crises can lead to extremely localized and complex impacts, it becomes vital to deliver a local, community-driven response.

Lessons learned by the UN Trust Fund reaffirm that local and community organizations at the frontline of response have been adaptable and resilient to rapidly changing and/or complex contexts, to maintain services for women and girls and keep EVAW/G high on the agenda.10 In a recent open letter to Civil Society organizations, UN Women’s Executive Director has further committed to “continue cultivating partnerships with organizations and groups of women who are often left behind”, “to advocate for the recognition of women’s rights organizations and women human rights defenders”, and to “continue to call for the increase of sustainable and flexible funding for women’s rights organizations and broader feminist civil society”.11

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7 António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, Shared Responsibility, Global Solidarity: Responding to the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 (2020)
10 G. Wood and S. Majumdar, 2020, COVID-19 and the impact on civil society organizations working to end violence against women and girls: through the lens of CSOs funded by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women – six months after the global pandemic was declared, New York: UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, September 2020.
11 Sima Bahous, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women, Letter from New UN Women Executive Director to Civil Society (2021)
4. The Call for Proposals

In this context, the UN Trust Fund welcomes proposals:

1. Submitted by organizations with proven expertise in ending violence against women and girls (VAW/G)
2. Conceptualized, developed and fully implemented by CSOs, in line with their assessments of the particular needs of their countries or communities and aligned to one or more of the UN Trust Fund’s three outcome areas
3. Focused on marginalized women and girls, and those experiencing intersecting forms of discrimination
4. Guided by the UN Trust Fund’s values and principles, with special attention to:
   a. adopting an intersectional approach and in line with the “leave no one behind” principle
   b. organizational resilience and sustainability in a rapidly changing and complex environment

4.1 Organizations with proven EVAW/G expertise

The UN Trust Fund only accept applications from organizations with specialized knowledge, expertise, and a track record of working on women’s rights and prevention and/or elimination of violence against women and girls.

For this Call, we will prioritize applications from the following types of organizations:

a. Women’s rights organizations (WROs), in full recognition of their being the driving force of the ending violence against women agenda and feminist movements, as well as being at the forefront of EVAW/G work, directly reaching women and girls survivors.

b. CSOs/WROs led by and for marginalized women and girls (e.g. constituent-led), that have specialized knowledge, expertise and a proven track record of working with women and girls facing or at risk of violence. Girl-led and girl-centered organizations are particularly encouraged to apply.

c. CSOs/WROs with local or community-level reach that are best-placed to meet the needs of women and girls in their contexts, including through collaboration and equitable partnerships. Applications from organizations that are not local (but meet other criteria) are still welcome if the proposal includes an equitable partnership with, for example, local women’s rights organizations or constituent led groups for greater impact or community reach. The proposal must demonstrate how the partnership will ensure an equitable power balance that empowers community/locally based CSOs/WROs.

We require supporting documents (constitutions, by-laws, organigrammes) as part of the application to help determine whether an organization is a women’s rights and/or a women-led organization.

To be considered a “women’s rights organization”, the organization must demonstrate that its core work is in the field of women’s rights, gender equality, the elimination of violence against women, and sexual and gender-based violence. The organization’s official mission and vision statements must reflect its commitment to pursuing gender equality and empowering women and girls.

To be considered a “women-led organization”, the organization must demonstrate that it is governed and led by women. This requires evidence that a minimum of 51 per cent of leadership positions across various decision-making levels, including in management, senior management and board levels are held by women.

To be considered a “constituent-led organization” the organization must demonstrate that it is led by members of the group it represents and/or sets priorities driven by its constituents’ lived experiences and based on a strong
understanding of their needs. For example, disabled persons organizations\(^\text{12}\), organizations of indigenous women, associations for lesbian, bisexual and transwomen, etc. To be considered a “constituent-led organization” it must be representative, meaning that the “constituent” group must constitute a majority of the overall staff, board, and volunteers in all levels of the organization (51% as a guide).

4.2 Projects conceptualized, developed and fully implemented by CSOs

The UN Trust Fund is committed to demand-driven grant-giving which means proposals are welcome for projects that are conceptualized, developed, and fully implemented by CSOs in accordance with their own assessment of the particular needs of their countries and communities, taking into account national priorities. A demand-driven approach is also in line with the UN principles of supporting national ownership and in the spirit of the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action commitments on aid effectiveness. As described under UN Women’s EVAW programming principles (see Section 8), demand-driven also implies that project design employs culturally and contextually relevant entry points, informed by, for example, community and relevant needs assessments. Proposals are therefore expected to include a thorough needs analysis of the most marginalized women and girls, or those experiencing intersecting forms of violence, preferably informed and/or led by the constituents themselves.

Under this broad framework, the UN Trust Fund welcomes proposals for initiatives that contribute to one or more of its three strategic outcome areas (see Section 2 above). Specific intervention types have deliberately not been listed to allow proposals to be truly demand driven. However, UN Women’s EVAW/G Programming Principles have been listed in Section 8 along with useful resources in Section 12. Applicants should also be guided by global research and available evidence as well as practice-based knowledge and ensure that applications are backed up with a justification based on these insights and evidence.

4.3 Focused on marginalized women and girls and those experiencing intersecting forms of discrimination

Proposals should be focused on particularly marginalized women and girls and those experiencing intersecting forms of discrimination, in the targeted context or community. For example, women and girl survivors of violence, women and girls with disabilities, women and girl IDPs and refugees, women and girls living with HIV and/or AIDS, indigenous women and girls, minority ethnic women and girls, lesbians, bisexual and transgender women and girls, women and girls experiencing racial discrimination and/or injustice, women human rights defenders / gender advocates and/or women and girls in the lowest-income groups. This list is not exhaustive, and the focus of proposal should ideally be determined by context, community and needs analysis. We welcome proposals which take an intersectional approach, taking into account the ways in which intersecting identities can lead to increased risks and compound vulnerabilities.

4.4 Guided by the UN Trust Fund’s values and principles

The UN Trust Fund operates under the UN Programming Principles, centered on the principle to leave no one behind, as well as UN Women’s EVAW programming principles on EVAW/G\(^\text{13}\). The full set of core values and principles can be found in the UN Trust Fund’s Strategic Plan, pages 35-37. In consideration of the primary focus

\(^{12}\) As an example, Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO) can be defined as “an organization of persons with disabilities, that is a representative organization where persons with disabilities constitute a majority of the overall staff, board, and volunteers in all levels of the organization. It includes organizations of relatives of persons with disabilities (only those representing groups without legal capacity to form organizations, such as children with disabilities and persons with intellectual disabilities) where a primary aim of these organizations is empowerment and the growth of self-advocacy of persons with disabilities” (Disability Rights Fund, https://disabilityrightsfund.org/faq/what-is-a-dpo/)

of this Call for Proposals (on the most marginalized women and girls) applicants are asked to pay specific attention to:

- **Adopting an intersectional approach** to designing interventions to end VAW/G\(^\text{14}\)
- **Ensuring organizational resilience and sustainability** in a rapidly changing and complex environment\(^\text{15}\)

“An intersectional approach to violence against women and girls [VAW/G] includes a consideration of where gender intersects with other inequalities/oppressions (sexuality, gender identity, ethnicity, indigeneity, immigration status, disability, poverty, illiteracy) to produce unique experiences of violence. By understanding the different ways in which violence is perpetrated and experienced, an intersectional lens can help organizations develop appropriate context-specific responses when addressing VAW/G.”\(^\text{16}\)

Putting an intersectional approach into practice means going beyond analysis to disrupt the structures, systems and power relations that create and reinforce the inequalities that maintain women’s and girls’ compounded vulnerabilities to violence (e.g. transforming social norms, addressing discriminatory structures). It requires transforming underlying socio-structural systems to address root causes that currently make some women and girls more vulnerable to violence.\(^\text{17}\)

**Ensuring organizational resilience and sustainability in a rapidly changing and complex environment is crucial in order to ensure sustained transformational change and facilitate quick adaptation and recovery from challenging situations.** Strengthening resilience could include for example, ongoing monitoring and risk assessment, developing risk mitigation plans and contingency measures factored into project design, adaptative and flexible programming methodologies (i.e. moving online, alternative arrangements for access and inclusivity in crisis situations), integration of measures to prevent backlash and resistance, partnerships with other CSOs/WROs to maintain community reach even through crises, measures to ensure sustainability of project results, and enhanced efforts to ensure organizational capacity.

Questions in the application form will guide organizations in how to address the above.

\(^{14}\) See UN Trust Fund’s Strategic Plan 2021-2025 at pg. 36.

\(^{15}\) Id. at pg. 37.


5. **Eligibility Criteria**

Priority organizations that meet the following criteria are eligible to apply:

5.1 **Country coverage**

The applicant must implement a project in only one of the countries and/or territories listed in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Assistance Committee’s (OECD DAC) list of official development assistance (ODA) recipients.18 *(See last page for full list of eligible countries and territories).*

5.2 **Legal status and registration**

The applicant must be a legally registered entity. Either the main applicant or at least one of its co-implementing partner(s) must be legally registered in the country or territory of project implementation. We require that legal registration documents be submitted with the application.

5.3 **Demonstrated capacity for operational, financial and human resource management**

**Operational and human resources:** The applicant must have the necessary operational and human resources to manage the proposed project. A clear project control framework should be defined once implementation starts.

**Certified Financial Statements and Organizational Audit Reports:** The applicant must submit certified financial statements19 and organizational audit reports20 for three fiscal years (including 2018, 2019 and 2020).

**Partnership and accountability arrangements:** Organizations can only apply once under this Call for Proposals, either as the main applicant organization or as a co-implementing partner.

- An application should include no more than three co-implementing partners that will receive a portion of the requested funding.
- In all cases, the applicant organization will be accountable for managing the grant award in its entirety.
- If applicable, the applicant organization will also be responsible for ensuring that its co-implementing partners fully understand and comply with all the requirements and obligations of the grant process.
- If awarded a grant, the applicant organization will also be responsible and liable for its co-implementing partner’s performance and results delivery.
- We highly encourage the use of Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) among all partners to define roles, responsibilities, deliverables and lines of accountability.

5.4 **Previous and existing UN Trust Fund grant recipients**21

Organizations that have received a grant are eligible only if their grant has been programmatically and operationally closed by March 2022.

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18 The UN Trust Fund follows the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/DCD-DAC list of countries available at http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/daclist.htm

19 A certified financial statement is one that has been reviewed, approved and signed by the person authorized to sign financial documents for the organization. This can be someone from within the organization or an outside firm.

20 An audit report is one that has been issued by a certified, independent auditor. In addition to external auditors, organizations can also employ internal auditors.

21 The UN Trust Fund strives for a balance between funding new partnerships and supporting former strong and successful partners. Previous organizations are welcome to apply with the understanding that the grant-giving process remains competitive and only a subset of former grantees may be successful for a grant award in any given year.
6. Ineligible Applicants

The following are **NOT eligible** to apply for a grant:

- Organizations proposing interventions in a country not listed in the OECD DAC list of ODA recipients
- Organizations proposing interventions in more than one country or territory
- Organizations whose work and mission/vision statement do not focus on nor explicitly mention gender equality and the elimination of violence against women and/or girls
- Organizations that do not have a legal status in the country or territory of implementation, and neither do any of its co-implementing partners
- Government agencies or institutions
- UN agencies or UN Country Teams
- Private individuals
- Private sector entities
- Organizations currently implementing a UN Trust Fund grant (unless it ends before March 2022)

7. Funding Parameters

We will fund all selected organizations for a **three-year period**. In doing so, we intend to ensure predictability of funding and technical assistance for organizations we select, and continuity of services for the women and girls they reach.

**We will award grants between US $50,000 and US $150,000 for small civil society organizations.** To be considered a “small organization”, the organization’s annual operational budget must have been lower than US$ 200,000 (on average) over the last three years.

**We will award grants between US $150,001 and US $1,000,000 for all other civil society organizations.**

Organizations should consider their own operational and absorptive capacity when submitting a funding request. In general, **an organization cannot request a grant amount more than thrice its annual organization budget** (using last 3-years average organizational budget). We will assess absorptive capacity against financial and audit reports as well as annual organization budget information submitted as part of the application.

See “Annex 3: Budget Summary” for more information on general categories of expenditure.

**Special budget considerations to support organizational resilience**

We recognize the need for civil society organizations working on addressing violence against women and girls, to ensure sustainability of their organizational functions that enables them to accomplish their mission and vision strategically, connect with key allies, and drive meaningful change within their communities.

Maintaining and building upon practices put in place over the past years, we will continue to support civil society by extending the following support to all organizations, irrespective of the grant amount requested: (1) **Providing general operating and other direct costs up to a maximum of 3% of direct activity costs**; (2) **Increasing and expanding the self and collective care budget line** to US$ 5,000 to support organizations in taking care of its staff members’ physical and mental health and well-being; (3) **Providing a contingency budget line** not exceeding 3% of direct project costs to enable organizations to address unforeseen requirements.

In addition, we will continue to provide **Core Funding to small organizations** requesting a small grant (less than US$ 150,000). This funding - up to a maximum of 7% of direct activity costs - is separate from and in addition to the standard 8% that organizations can currently request under Indirect costs.
8. **UN Women EVAW Programming Principles**

All proposals are expected to embody UN Women EVAW programming principles\(^{22}\) within project design as contextually relevant and feasible.

I. **Adopting a human rights-based approach** that places paramount priority on promoting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights of all women and girls. A human rights-based approach requires developing the capacities of ‘duty-bearers’ and ‘rights-holders’.

II. **Ensuring a survivor-centered and women’s empowerment approach** that integrates women’s and girls’ own experiences and inputs within all initiatives and strategies as an essential part of successful programming. A survivor-centered approach is fundamental to the protection and promotion of the human rights of women and girls affected, and to their empowerment.

III. **Operating under ethical guidelines** that ensure interventions and services prioritize, and guarantee women’s and girls’ rights to safety and security, confidentiality and privacy, expression of opinion and autonomy to make decisions.

IV. **Ensuring gender responsiveness and transformative approaches** that seek to create or strengthen equitable gender norms and dynamics for fundamental, lasting changes for women and girls.

V. **Employing culturally and contextually relevant entry points** through interventions that involve cultural, community, faith-based, youth and other leaders.

VI. **Addressing specific forms and settings of VAW/G through a clear understanding of specific contexts** in which violence takes place for effective programme design and implementation, with knowledge about specific forms, settings, and population groups affected.

VII. **Adopting an intersectional approach and focusing on groups most at risk of being left behind** especially excluded or disadvantaged women and girls (such as women and girls with disabilities, LBT, internally displaced and refugees, indigenous, older and members of ethnic minorities).

VIII. **Operating within a socio-ecological model of understanding violence** which aims to ensure that interventions consider and address the conditions across different levels (e.g. individual, family, community and society), which affect women and girls’ risks of experiencing violence.

IX. **Working in partnership with different stakeholders** such as government, donors, civil society and community-based groups, academic and research institutions; and importantly, women and girl survivors and women-led organizations.

X. **Drawing on existing evidence of “what works” (or does not),** to respond to and prevent violence against women and girls, drawn from formal evaluations and assessments, research and studies, expert consensus and recommendations, shared practitioner experiences and – importantly - the feedback of survivors, and women and girls at risk.

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9. **Application Process**

Applicants are expected to submit proposals online in the form of a **Concept Note**. The online **Concept Note application will be available from 25 November 2021 – 6 January 2022 at:** [https://grants.untf.unwomen.org/](https://grants.untf.unwomen.org/).

The **deadline for submission of the Concept Note is 6 January 2022, 11:59 pm New York Time (EDT).** We cannot consider Concept Notes received after the deadline.

Applications can be submitted in the following languages only: **English, French and Spanish. Only one application per organization will be accepted.** Multiple applications from the same organization (including national affiliates of the same INGO) or for the same proposal will be automatically disqualified.

Your online application must include all the following **required documents** to be considered complete.

- Legal Registration Documents
- Certified Financial Statements
- Supporting evidence that the organization is a women’s rights and/or women-led organization

All required documents should be uploaded through **the online application system only** (we cannot accept email or paper documents). **Please note that incomplete applications will be automatically disqualified.**

You must **plan for and set aside enough time to upload documents in the online application system.** Please note that the system may experience significant delays close to the submission deadline.

We will acknowledge receipt of a submitted online application through a confirmation e-mail. **Please contact us immediately if you do not receive the confirmation email.** In the event of technical problems with the online application, please contact the UN Trust Fund Secretariat (New York, USA) by email at untfgms@unwomen.org.

You will be informed of updates on the application process by email.

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**In line with UN Trust Fund operating procedures, and in order to safeguard the transparency of the Call for Proposals processes, all queries must be addressed to untfgms@unwomen.org. The UN Trust Fund Secretariat cannot accept or respond to any inquiry addressed directly or indirectly to our staff.**

Please note that due to the high volume of applications, we unfortunately cannot respond individually to those not selected for further consideration.

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10. **Selection Process**

We award grants through an open and competitive process. All proposals are assessed based on the overall quality and results-oriented nature of the proposed project. The appraisal process involves independent experts and UN Trust Fund’s selection committees at the global and regional levels that will follow common criteria for review and selection. The first round involves the submission of a Concept Note and only those successful in the first round are invited to submit a Full-fledged proposal. [Online support and guidance on how to complete the full-fledged proposal will be available for smaller organizations with less capacity but high potential that are selected in the first round.] A subset of final applicants will be considered for grants. Our Global inter-agency Programme Advisory Committee will make the final funding decisions.

Grant approvals and signing of donor agreements will take place by mid-2022. All successful grantees are expected to work closely with our Team to **incorporate full technical feedback and ensure high-quality standards of programme design** and **rigorous monitoring, reporting and evaluation plans.**
# 11. Eligible Countries and Territories

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<td>Guinea-Bissau</td>
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<td>Lesotho</td>
<td>Saint Lucia</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
12. Useful Resources

The following resources may be especially useful to consult when developing your proposal:


- **Learning from Practice: Lessons on preventing violence from civil society organizations funded by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women.** UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. 2021. [https://untf.unwomen.org/en/learning-hub/prevention-series](https://untf.unwomen.org/en/learning-hub/prevention-series)


- **Ethical and safety recommendations for intervention research on violence against women.** Building on lessons from the WHO publication *Putting women first: ethical and safety recommendations for research on domestic violence against women.* WHO. 2016. [https://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/intervention-research-vaw/en/](https://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/intervention-research-vaw/en/)

- **M&E and Results Based Management Terms.** The OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation available in English, French and Spanish. [http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf)


- **Resource & Support Hub.** Publications, documents and guidance notes related to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEAH) and safeguarding. [https://safeguardingsupporthub.org/](https://safeguardingsupporthub.org/) (searchable by language)

The following **COVID-19 specific** resources may also be especially useful when developing your proposal:


