



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**United States Agency for International Development
Evaluation of Implementation of the United States Strategy to
Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence Globally:
August 2012 through July 2015**



Cover Photo: In Northern Uganda, USAID's Gender Roles, Equality and Transformation (GREAT) project promotes gender-equitable attitudes and behaviors among 10-19 year old adolescents and their communities, with the goal of reducing gender-based violence and improving sexual and reproductive health in post-conflict communities. The GREAT Project includes intervention activities such as a radio serial drama, a toolkit that includes tailored discussion guides, activity cards, and games to help pre-existing groups of married and unmarried adolescents understand and challenge gender norms, and increase understanding of sexual and reproductive health issues. The project also implements training for Village Health Workers to improve sexual and reproductive health services. *Photo Credit: Sophie Savage, Institute for Reproductive Health.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Although statistics on the prevalence of violence vary, the scale is tremendous, the scope is vast, and the consequences for individuals, families, communities, and countries are devastating” (GBV Strategy: p. 7).

Under the leadership of President Obama, the United States has put gender equality and the advancement of women and girls at the forefront of the three pillars of U.S. foreign policy—diplomacy, development, and defense. This is embodied in the President’s National Security Strategy, the Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development, and the 2010 and 2015 U.S. Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Reviews. Empowerment of women and girls is critical to USAID’s core mission of ending extreme poverty and promoting resilient, democratic societies while advancing our security and prosperity. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence is a cornerstone of the Administration’s commitment to advancing gender equality.

Since the 2012 publication of the *United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence Globally (GBV Strategy)*, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has made great strides under all four strategy objectives. Under Objective 1: *Coordination*, USAID is engaging its operating units and providing collaborative leadership with other U.S. Government agencies and external partners. Under Objective 2: *Integration*, USAID has institutionalized efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV) into policies and procedures while building capacity and linking GBV efforts to an increasingly diverse set of sectors and programming activities. Under Objective 3: *Research*, USAID investments are increasing the evidence base for understanding the global problem and effectiveness of interventions, helping us focus our efforts for maximum impact. Finally, under Objective 4: *Programming*, USAID is expanding efforts in all regions and using targeted investment to prioritize GBV prevention and other innovations.

USAID’s aspiration is simple: to maximize the impact of the Agency’s efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based violence by addressing the root causes of violence, improving prevention and protection services, responding to the education, health and economic needs of those affected by gender-based violence, and supporting legal frameworks that mitigate gender-based violence. Over the past three years, USAID has reached more than five million survivors of gender-based violence with potentially life-saving services.¹

1. Based on USAID performance report, run July 13, 2015, aggregate of standard indicator, GNDR-6, “Number of people reached by a USG funded intervention providing GBV services (e.g., health, legal, psychosocial counseling, shelters, hotlines, other).” Note that because this figure is an aggregate of a standard performance indicator measured across programs and years, it is possible that a survivor accessing multiple program services, or accessing services in multiple years, could be counted more than once. Nevertheless, the indicator provides a good sense of the magnitude and scope of USAID GBV programming.

Progress and Accomplishments

Objective I: To increase coordination of gender-based violence prevention and response efforts among United States Government agencies and with other stakeholders

USAID recognizes that to meet the overarching goal of the *United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence Globally* to marshal the United States' expertise and capacity to address this global pandemic, United States Government agencies and stakeholders must work together in effective, efficient, and coordinated ways. Over the past three years, USAID has made significant progress in improving interagency and intra-agency coordination on efforts to address gender-based violence, and has increased collaboration with key stakeholders, both in Washington, D.C. and abroad. Along with the Department of State, USAID has worked to establish new coordination mechanisms, providing leadership to three interagency committees focused on addressing gender-based violence; while internally, USAID has reinvigorated its Gender-based Violence Working Group and developed improved platforms for information sharing. Collaborations and partnerships with international organizations, host governments, and civil society organizations are a high priority at both headquarters and missions.

Key Accomplishments

- Together with the Department of State, USAID has increased interagency coordination by establishing and providing leadership for three Interagency Gender-based Violence Committees: Mapping and Pilot Country Approach; Monitoring and Evaluation; and Research and Best Practices.
- USAID has reinvigorated its internal GBV Working Group and communicates to a listserv of more than 180 internal stakeholders.
- Forty-eight percent of respondents report that their mission or office participates in an interagency group on GBV, based on a June 2015 survey of USAID staff.²
- From January 2014 to June 2015, the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment raised awareness about gender-based violence at more than 200 stakeholder events, including public speeches, international panels, meetings with bilateral and international organizations, and civil society groups.
- Addressing GBV has been championed in multiple venues by leaders from around the Agency; for example, two principals from the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance attended the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict in June 2014.

2. The staff survey was conducted by email to gender-related listservs and yielded a convenience sample (n=93) of USAID GBV internal stakeholders that was both geographically and functionally diverse.

Objective 2: To enhance integration of gender-based violence prevention and response efforts into existing United States Government work

Since 2012, USAID has made great strides integrating gender-based violence prevention and response into policies and strategies (see Figure 1, page xi), deepening integration more fully into the work of individual sectors while extending efforts across multiple sectors. USAID has developed new resources and training to support this programmatic integration. Missions are increasingly integrating GBV efforts into three or four sectors.³ This is a promising trend as a growing evidence base suggests that the greatest promise lies in multi-sectoral, multi-component interventions.⁴

Key Accomplishments

Integration into Policy:

- USAID institutionalized commitment to reducing GBV through the USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy and its accompanying implementation guidance, Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapter 205, Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle.
- USAID published *Ending Child Marriage and Meeting the Needs of Married Children: The USAID Vision for Action in 2012*.
- In 2012, the U.S. Government launched the Action Plan for Children in Adversity which has three principal objectives to promote greater U.S. Government coherence and accountability for whole-of-government assistance to vulnerable children. The third objective is to reduce the percentage of girls and boys exposed to violence and exploitation.
- USAID's research and advocacy to advance quality, respectful care laid the foundation for the World Health Organization's policy statement: "The prevention and elimination of disrespect and abuse during facility-based childbirth."⁵ USAID continues to elevate this global issue through the Maternal Vision for Action⁶ and through country-level programming actions in Tanzania and Kenya. Disrespect and abuse is not only a violation of women's basic rights, it is also a deterrent to using life-saving health services.

3. In 2015, USAID conducted a content analysis of narrative performance reports from its operating units to map GBV efforts globally. The sector information presented in this report stems from this analysis.

4. Ellsberg, Mary, D. Arrango, M. Morton, F. Gennari, S. Kiplesund, M Contreras, and C. Watts, 2014. "Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls: What Does the Evidence Say?" *The Lancet*, Vol. 385, April 18, 2015.

5. http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/maternal_perinatal/statement-childbirth/en/

6. <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/maternal-and-child-health/maternal-health-vision-action>

Resources and Capacity Building for Integration:

- Over the past three years, USAID developed a library of toolkits for integrating GBV prevention and response efforts focusing on topics identified by the GBV Working Group including monitoring and evaluation, economic growth, rule of law, education, and energy and infrastructure projects, as well as a child, early and forced marriage (CEFM) resource guide.
- USAID's Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment piloted a new week-long training: Integrating GBV Prevention and Response Across Sectors which includes an online component and sector modules that can be tailored for different audiences.
- Over the past three years, USAID, in collaboration with PEPFAR and Together for Girls, developed considerations for The Clinical Management of Children and Adolescents who have Experienced Sexual Violence and supported the World Health Organization (WHO) in development of Violence against Children guidelines and training curricula for the WHO Violence Against Women Guidelines.

Integration Within and Across Sectors:

- The vast majority of missions addressing GBV are working in more than one sector, most combining work in health and human rights or rule of law.
- USAID's interventions in additional sectors are on the rise, with an increased number of missions addressing GBV through education, economic growth, and infrastructure efforts in Fiscal Year 2014. USAID's efforts to integrate a GBV-informed approach into these additional sectors are especially important given research suggesting multi-component efforts may be most effective.



Participants in a workshop on Human Rights and Gender-Based Violence in the HIV and AIDS sector conducted in Siem Reap Province, Cambodia. The workshop brought together a diverse group of participants including government and local leaders, health service providers, civil society organizations, and community members. Photo credit: Mr. Phornng Chanthorn, KHANA

Objective 3: To improve collection, analysis, and use of data and research to enhance GBV prevention and response efforts

Through capacity building, investing in research, and engaging in partnerships to close gaps in data and build the evidence base, USAID is making progress in improving collection and analysis of data to enhance GBV prevention and response efforts. Through internal coordination within the Agency and outreach to the academic and implementing partner communities, USAID is sharing promising practices, lessons learned, and research to improve our collective ability to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

Key Accomplishments

Capacity-building:

- USAID developed a comprehensive toolkit to promote ethical and safe research and data collection: Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Gender-based Violence Interventions Along the Relief to Development Continuum.

Data Analysis for Strategic Decision-making:

- Through a data-driven, collaborative process, USAID identified 36 priority countries in order to focus its resources for addressing gender-based violence.
- USAID piloted a new analysis of existing data using content analysis of GBV Key Issue narratives from performance reporting to map existing GBV work.



USAID has developed a library of resources, including the Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Gender-based Violence Interventions Along the Relief to Development Continuum. The toolkit builds on USAID's standard M&E guidance as well as promising global practices, and offers a framework defined by guiding principles and includes core approaches and practical step for the M&E of GBV along the relief to development continuum.

Investments in Research:

- USAID continues to fund ground-breaking research on gender-based violence in health, humanitarian assistance, and human rights programs, providing thought leadership to the global development community.
- In FY 2014, USAID's Africa Regional Program launched the Opportunities for Achievement and Safety in Schools (OASIS) program, to conduct and disseminate research investigating the link between non-violent schools and learning.
- Through an analysis of gaps in evidence, USAID's Gender-based Violence Working Group commissioned and published several research reports on GBV topics: The Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative: Lessons Learned and Implications for Gender-Based Violence Programming in Sub-Saharan Africa; Working with Men and Boys to End Violence Against Women and Girls; and Scaling Up Interventions to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence.
- Increasingly, USAID missions are sponsoring important research in local contexts; the number of missions sponsoring GBV-related research activities has doubled (from seven to fifteen missions) between FY 2013 and 2014.



USAID GBV incentive funds supported the development of GBV content on the popular Mxit App, reaching young people with information and resources related to GBV and helping them find the closest Thuthuzela Care Centers which provide one-stop services to victim/survivors throughout South Africa.

Objective 4: To enhance or expand U.S. Government programming that addresses GBV

USAID's efforts to build capacity and integrate GBV efforts in existing work have resulted in expanded programming across the Agency, reaching more than five million⁷ survivors over the past three years in an increasing number of countries, across every region where the Agency works. USAID is enhancing its efforts to prevent and respond to GBV through targeted interventions via the GBV Incentive Funds, putting special emphasis on innovations in key areas such as GBV prevention; technology; and child, early and forced marriage. Through increasing GBV activity across all regions and targeted activities in GBV Incentive Funds projects, USAID is expanding and enhancing its efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

Key Accomplishments

Expanding Programming:

- From FY 2013 to FY 2014, the number of missions addressing GBV increased 26 percent (from 35 to 44 countries⁸).
- USAID is addressing GBV in an increasing number of countries and in every region where the Agency works.
- Over the past three years, USAID reached more than five million survivors of gender-based violence with vital, sometimes life-saving services.
- In 2013 and 2014, USAID's social media campaign for the annual 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence, a global campaign to raise awareness and encourage activism to address GBV, ranked #2 of all participants in this campaign on Google Analytics, raising awareness about the issues and USAID efforts to address GBV.

Enhancing Programming:

- Since FY 2012, USAID has awarded more than \$17 million through its GBV Incentive Funds program to support projects in 15 countries.
- GBV Incentive Funds are supporting projects addressing specific areas of interest, including child, early and forced marriage; female genital mutilation/cutting; technology innovations; sexual violence; sexual harassment; working with men and boys; and services to people with disabilities.
- USAID is enhancing programming through attention to the prevalence and increased risk of GBV to women and girls with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) populations.

⁷. See footnote 1.

⁸. Throughout the report, references to missions can be understood to refer to bilateral missions along with non-mission countries, unless otherwise stated. Although not included in this country-level count, regional missions are also increasingly engaging in efforts to prevent and respond to GBV.

Challenges

Information on challenges faced by USAID staff implementing the GBV Strategy was gathered in two ways. In June 2015, the Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment conducted a staff survey of internal stakeholders that included several questions that elicited information about challenges. In addition, in performance report narratives,⁹ about half of missions described challenges in implementation. Both internal and external challenges are outlined below.

Limited Resources. A USAID staff survey of internal stakeholders identified the level of institutional capacity as a significant barrier, with mission interest exceeding their capacity to do the work. Turnover and lack of institutional memory can also be a challenge. Survey respondents identified a lack of resources, including funding and sufficient staff time, as an issue.

Lack of Technical Expertise. Relatedly, staff report a lack of technical expertise in missions and limited technical expertise in headquarters. USAID created a Skills Matrix of GBV expertise in 2014, which was used to meet technical assistance needs. However, the need remains higher than capacity.

Data Gaps and Lack of Research. Data on GBV prevalence and incidence is still limited in many countries and settings, and there is a scarcity of rigorous evaluation research on what works to prevent and respond to GBV.

Integration Across Sectors. While USAID has made good progress integrating efforts to address GBV into sectors beyond health, human rights and rule of law, this effort can be challenging. USAID has developed toolkits and other resources to assist in this process, and training and technical assistance is needed to support this further.

Social Norms. Through the content analysis of GBV performance reporting narratives, missions who discussed challenges to GBV efforts identified social norms most often, including the following: acceptance of GBV as normal; belief that GBV is a private matter; and belief by both women and men that intimate partner violence is justified based on circumstances.

Culture of Impunity. The second most common challenge identified was lack of enforcement of existing laws. Cultural norms often impact enforcement, and even when reported, perpetrators are not held accountable.

9. See footnote 3.

Lack of Reporting. Many missions discussed the problem of lack of reporting. Survivors of GBV may not report the crime to authorities for a variety of reasons including fear, shame, stigma, and security.

Lack of Laws or Protocols. Although less commonly reported than social norms, enforcement, and reporting, the absence of legal frameworks for addressing many types of GBV remains an issue for some missions.

Next Steps and Recommendations

Overall, this three-year evaluation of USAID's implementation of the GBV Strategy shows the Agency's strong commitment to addressing this global problem. The following next steps are recommended to continue the momentum of the last three years and address challenges identified in this review.

Coordination

1. Work with interagency colleagues to reinvigorate participation on Interagency GBV Committees by recruiting for more extensive involvement from other agencies beyond USAID and the Department of State. Together with other agencies, support newly identified interagency GBV pilot countries with efforts to pilot holistic interventions and new forms of interagency collaboration in country.
2. Take steps to improve coordination between missions and headquarters, between missions and other U.S. Government agencies, and among in-country donors. Improved coordination can be used to share new research and best practices, and to increase technical capacity at missions.

Integration

3. Ensure GBV is integrated into new USAID policies and guidance, where relevant.
4. Develop an agency-wide GBV training strategy. Plan how to roll out the newly developed GBV workshop and online training to regional and bilateral missions, and how to bring tailored modules to sectoral conferences, events and trainings.
5. Continue to emphasize integration of inclusive development concerns in GBV projects, toolkits and resources, including the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community, people with disabilities, indigenous people, older adults, children, male survivors, and other marginalized groups. Recognizing the cyclical nature of violence, USAID should continue to integrate and coordinate GBV efforts with youth activities, and seek linkages to address violence against children.

Research

6. Continue to invest in research on GBV prevalence, with particular emphasis on research on marginalized populations, including the LGBTI community, people with disabilities, indigenous groups, male survivors, children, and older adults.
7. Incorporate a plan for rigorous research and evaluation efforts during the early design stage for formation of interventions. USAID should make long-term commitments to research and evaluation on GBV interventions.
8. Invest in communications and dissemination efforts to share research findings more effectively in real-time and over the long-term.

Expand and Enhance Programming

9. Seek opportunities to continue to expand programming into sectors by strategically developing additional sector-specific resources and by learning from recently developed toolkits and sharing best practices broadly.
10. Through GBV Incentive Funds, USAID should continue to emphasize promising interventions for prevention as well as rigorous monitoring and evaluation, and should seek out projects that could potentially be brought to scale.

USAID has engaged in the important work of preventing and responding to gender-based violence for more than two decades. In the three years since the launch of the U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence Globally, the Agency has both focused and expanded its efforts. USAID faces and continues to work through challenges, both internal and external, including the need for sufficient staff time and expertise as well as social norms that perpetuate gender-based violence. Going forward, it is critical that USAID continue to work together with other U.S. Government agencies, prioritizing research and capacity building along with programming for gender-based violence response and prevention. USAID remains committed to continuing this important work toward ensuring all women, girls, men and boys fully enjoy their human rights free from violence.



The Responsible, Engaged and Loving (REAL) Fathers Initiative aims to build positive partnerships and parenting practices among young fathers (aged 16-25) in post-conflict Northern Uganda. Pictured here is a gathering of REAL Fathers, their wives, and children in Atiak, Amuru. Photo credit: Sophie Savage, Institute for Reproductive Health at Georgetown University.

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