



What Works To Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls In Conflict and Emergencies

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Violence against Women and Girls in Conflicts and Emergencies

Times of war, internal strife, and natural disasters intensify the risks that women and girls face from violence. Flight, upheaval and on-going displacement lead to escalating violence against women and girls (VAWG) during armed conflict and humanitarian crises.

There is growing recognition of both the scale and many forms of violence experienced by women and girls in conflict and emergencies, as well as of the life-saving nature of programmes that respond to it. However, a lack of understanding of the key drivers as well as a lack of evidence about which programmes are most effective in preventing and responding to this violence are holding donors, multilaterals and NGOs back from effectively mitigating, reducing, and preventing VAWG in emergencies.

In May 2014, a group of NGOs and research institutions, led by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), launched a research initiative: ***What Works to Prevent Violence against Women and Girls in Conflict and Humanitarian Emergencies***. Funded by the Department for International Development (DFID), this research initiative is one of three components of a comprehensive programme that includes research, capacity building and advocacy to inform and strengthen policy and practice to end VAWG in conflict and emergencies.

The Consortium

The International Rescue Committee, the Global Women's Institute (GWI) at The George Washington University, and CARE International are the consortium partners. We share a vision whereby women and girls, with their communities, work to create a world where they are valued and live free from violence, and can exercise their rights to promote their own safety, equality and voice. IRC, GWI and CARE are committed to promoting research that strengthens deep understanding of what works to prevent and respond to VAWG in crises.

The consortium will also partner with a range of research institutions to deliver the research, including Africa Population and Health Research Centre, Forcer Consulting, Johns Hopkins University and London School of Tropical Hygiene and Medicine.

Our Project

Five research projects in five crisis-affected countries will produce new knowledge around the prevalence, drivers and causes of VAWG, and the social and structural factors that sustain this violence. The research will support the development of evidence-based and effective programmes to prevent and respond to the multiple levels of violence that women and girls experience in these settings.

We will conduct a population based survey on prevalence, forms and patterns of VAWG in South Sudan; an evaluation of the effectiveness of individual comprehensive case management in Dadaab, Kenya; we will look at approaches to VAWG emergency programming in two prospective emergencies; build on existing studies to evaluate the long term effects of Village Savings & Loans Associations (VSLAs) on outcomes for survivors of sexual violence in the DRC; and carry out a comparative study exploring the intersection of VAWG and state/peace building in South Sudan, DRC, Nepal and Yemen (all countries and studies will be confirmed within the project's inception phase).

The research studies will answer the following overarching questions:

- What are the drivers and causes of VAWG in conflict and emergency contexts?
- What are the forms, trends and prevalence of VAWG in conflict and emergency settings?
- What programmes are most effective for preventing and responding to VAWG in emergency contexts?
- How does VAWG contribute to broader dynamics of conflict and fragility?

In addition to creating new knowledge, the project will develop tools and methodologies to effectively conduct rigorous and ethical research on VAWG in conflicts and emergencies. Using these innovative tools, the partners will work with a network of Southern NGOs and research institutions to build the capacity of researchers, programme staff and activists to safely, ethically and rigorously carry out research on VAWG in these contexts.

A multi-year plan for dissemination and advocacy will deliver a range of widely available research and policy outputs. Along with international level advocacy, Southern policy makers, civil society actors and local activists will be supported with the data needed to promote policy change and develop programmes that effectively respond to, reduce and prevent VAWG in conflict and crises.



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