

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN EMERGENCIES RESEARCH INITIATIVES

PREVENTION • RESPONSE • RISK MITIGATION

For over a decade, UNICEF has demonstrated its leadership in the gender-based violence in emergencies (GBViE) field. One key element of the Agency's

commitment to the broader GBViE community of practice has been building the evidence base on GBViE. This brief highlights some of UNICEF's major research initiatives.

Communities Care: Transforming Lives and Preventing Violence

The *Communities Care* program – UNICEF's flagship programme on primary prevention of GBV – is a community-based model aimed at shifting the harmful social norms that perpetuate GBV. The goal of *Communities Care* is to cultivate healthier, safer

environments for girls and women by working with communities to (1) improve access to care and support for survivors of GBV and (2) transform harmful social norms that promote violence against girls and women into norms that promote dignity, equality and non-violence.

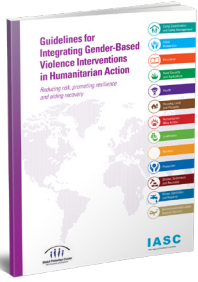


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Evaluation findings from the pilot rollouts of *Communities Care* in Somalia and South Sudan are promising. In Somalia, the evaluation results indicated positive change in both harmful social norms and confidence in GBV service sectors. For example, evaluators recorded a 14% reduction in respondents agreeing that it is appropriate for a man to use violence against his wife in order to discipline her; a 22% reduction in respondents replying that a woman or girl should avoid reporting rape in order to protect her family's honour. Evaluators also noted an increase in confidence in GBV service providers- particularly in police and justice sectors, towards whom respondents reported an increase of 13% and 12%, respectively.

The initial pilots of *Communities Care* illustrated that, even in conflict affected contexts, there are potential entry points for community-based interventions to target gender inequality and other harmful social norms. UNICEF is now looking to adapt and expand *Communities Care* to additional emergency-affected contexts.

Measuring the effectiveness of GBV risk mitigation



In humanitarian emergencies, GBV risk mitigation seeks to ensure services do not cause harm and that they are responsive and sensitive to the diversity of needs, capacities and abilities among affected communities, especially women and girls. In September 2015, the *Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action* ('GBV Guidelines') and accompanying Implementation Plan were launched as the first global guidance for all humanitarian actors and sectors on GBV risk mitigation.

To further advance this workstream, UNICEF and the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative are undertaking research to build the knowledge and evidence-base to

better measure the outcomes and effects of GBV risk mitigation interventions in other humanitarian sectors. The project will assess current good and promising practice, identify safe and ethical parameters for measuring the effectiveness of risk mitigation interventions and develop a concise and cohesive tool.

Grounded in accountability to communities affected by crisis, especially women and girls, and practitioners delivering services in emergencies, the research will:

- Explore pathways and linkages between GBV risks and other priority outcomes in emergencies;
- Identify how to monitor and measure GBV risks and mitigation interventions; and
- Utilize GBV risk mitigation as an entry point to strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems more broadly.

Transforming Households: Reducing Incidence of Violence in Emergencies (THRIVE)

Launched in 2016, THRIVE aims to build an evidence base on drivers of household violence in emergencies, effective strategies for addressing household violence, and new approaches to preventing this violence. There is an urgent need for programmes that reduce violence in the home during emergencies, including intimate partner violence; emotional, physical and sexual abuse; and child maltreatment and neglect. However, work on violence against children (VAC) and violence against women (VAW) in emergencies can sometimes get fragmented across GBV and child protection sectors. The THRIVE project is

co-led by UNICEF and the Child Protection in Crisis (CPC) Learning Network at Columbia University with UNICEF-Innocenti providing guidance and learning from their *Multi-Country Study on the Drivers of Violence Affecting Children* project. With a geographic focus in Colombia and Haiti, THRIVE has completed a systematic literature review and landscaping and formative qualitative research identifying local drivers and social norms affecting household violence. The project is currently undertaking the final stage of implementing interventions and applying a monitoring and evaluation framework.

Innovative research on GBViE costing, economics and finance

In partnership with Washington University, UNICEF has recently launched a new research project on costing of GBV in emergencies. Currently, the researchers are conducting a feasibility assessment regarding two forms of costing research – one related to costing of GBViE programmatic interventions and one on the cost of inaction on GBV. In parallel, UNICEF has entered a partnership with the Criterion Institute to explore potential entry points for utilizing finance as a tool for

addressing GBV. Both workstreams are at the very initial stages; however, they hold exciting potential for advancing the GBViE field in a new direction.

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