

Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence



Objective: Harness Geneva’s multilateral fora and enhance opportunities to promote strategic action in each sector to prevent and respond to gender-based violence against women and girls.

“Sexual violence destroys lives. It fuels conflict, forces people to flee their homes, and is often perpetrated alongside other human rights abuses, including forced marriage, sexual slavery, and human trafficking.” – U.S. Secretary Of State John Kerry

Key Facts¹

- Recent figures indicate that 35% of women worldwide have experienced either intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime.
- Worldwide, 50 percent of victims of sexual violence are 15 years old or younger.
- Sexual violence is often used as a tactic of war during conflicts and per the Rome Statute is considered a crime against humanity.
- 2 out of 3 respondents, in a 2014 groundbreaking study about violence in scientific labs, had been subjected to sexual harassment and violence – mostly by their advisors.
- Worldwide, more than 700 million women alive today were married as children.
- More than 133 million girls and women have experienced some form of female genital mutilation (FGM).

Where We Are

Targeted efforts have produced considerable progress over the past ten years in the international community’s ability to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV), particularly in emergency situations. Despite increasing awareness and an existing set of global policies, violence against women and girls continues to be a global epidemic that represents a public health concern for every country. Additionally, there is insufficient attention focused on how sexual violence pushes women out of their chosen fields, particularly in the sciences and the tech industry. Only when women and girls are safe from violence will they be able to pursue **The Future She Deserves**.

What We Need...

is Geneva’s collective recognition that ending violence against women is everyone’s responsibility, not just the gender experts. All actors in all sectors must proactively address GBV in their own activities. We need a better understanding of how women and girls can be protected through the work of different sectors, notably health, livelihoods, water and sanitation, camp management, and food security.

¹ Statistics collected by UN Women, UNFPA and World Health Organization.

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How We'll Do It

Geneva offers a unique platform to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. Together, we can deliver targeted interventions at Geneva-based international meetings and expand research and programs to actively integrate prevention and response to gender-based violence across all sectors. Collectively, member states, international organizations, civil society, and experts can influence how United Nations agencies and others ensure that women and girls are enabled to safely live their lives. First steps should include:

1. Support the launch of the updated GBV guidelines in emergency situations which are being finalized by the Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR)²;
2. Support the rollout of the GBV humanitarian guidelines through targeted meetings with clusters during Geneva annual meetings and through Geneva based cluster leads;
3. Work with and through the Global Cluster Coordinator Group to ensure the issue of protection of women and girls is mainstreamed into all planning at the field level; and
4. Work with and through the Core Group of Missions supporting the 2014 World Health Assembly resolution to ensure a strong, technically sound Global Action Plan in 2016.

Potential Outcomes and Activities

Through the Global Cluster Coordinators Group there is a combined call for the issue of women and girls to be addressed in targeted Humanitarian Strategic Response Plans and for Humanitarian Country Teams and Coordinators in targeted countries to have an overarching protection strategy in place.

In partnership with the Global Community Engagement Resilience Fund (GCERF) and the Geneva Center for Security Policy (GCSP) the U.S. Mission will cohost a roundtable discussion with states, civil society, UN agencies, and experts, on the roles women and girls play in countering violent extremism.

Through the WHO Global Action Plan development process, stimulate national level conversations, including more countries developing national action plans, about the health systems role in addressing violence, in particular against women and girls, and against children.

The U.S. Mission in partnership with “Women@TheTable” will host a salon where participants will explore through interactive catalytic questioning, in line with the June Human Rights Council focus on Women, new ways forward for more girls, more women, and more strong voices to protect women against violence.

****We want your insights to other opportunities and your help in addressing them!**

² The GBV AoR is the global level forum for coordinating prevention and response to GBV in humanitarian settings. The guidelines have been specifically tailored to speak to how each sector should contribute to the protection of women and girls in their everyday activities.