

# **WITHIN OUR REACH**

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**Solutions to  
End Violence  
Against Women  
and Girls**



MILLIONS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS ALL OVER THE WORLD ARE LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF VIOLENCE. ACCORDING TO THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, ONE IN THREE WOMEN WORLDWIDE WILL EXPERIENCE EITHER PHYSICAL VIOLENCE BY HER PARTNER OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE BY A NON-PARTNER IN HER LIFETIME. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THESE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES AFFECT EVERY LEVEL OF EVERY SOCIETY. THIS CAN AND MUST CHANGE. BUT HOW?



THE SOLUTIONS TO THIS GLOBAL PANDEMIC ARE EMERGING IN EVERY PART OF THE WORLD AS PEOPLE TAKE ACTION TO BRING A FUTURE WITHOUT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS EVER CLOSER. THE UNITED NATIONS TRUST FUND TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (UN TRUST FUND) WORKS TO SUPPORT SUCH INITIATIVES. FOR MORE THAN 17 YEARS, THE UN TRUST FUND HAS WORKED WITH DIVERSE GROUPS OF PARTNERS TO SHOW THAT REAL AND LASTING CHANGE IS POSSIBLE. WITH TARGETED SUPPORT FROM THE UN TRUST FUND, WOMEN AND GIRLS, MEN AND BOYS, ARE CHALLENGING THE ENTRENCHED ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS THAT UNDERPIN VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN. TOGETHER, WE ARE STRIVING TO MAKE THE COMMITMENTS OF GOVERNMENTS TO END THIS VIOLENCE A REALITY FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS EVERYWHERE.

## A TRACK RECORD OF SUCCESS

The UN Trust Fund supports innovative, pioneering and promising approaches to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls. Since its creation by the UN General Assembly in 1996, the UN Trust Fund has supported 368 initiatives in 132 countries and territories. It currently supports 78 initiatives in 71 countries and territories with grants totalling US\$56.8 million.

The UN Trust Fund's determined and consistent work has allowed it to build up a body of knowledge about the kind of solutions that will have real impact and the contexts in which they will be most effective. This is the evidence on which the UN Trust Fund draws to invest strategically in initiatives that make a significant contribution to ending all forms of violence against women and girls at the local, national, regional and cross-regional levels.

This track record of seeking and pursuing holistic approaches to end violence against women has, in turn, encouraged civil society organizations, governments and United Nations Country Teams to continue putting forward imaginative new proposals.

The UN Trust Fund cooperates closely with a large number of civil society organizations, governments and UN partners. It works to:

- 📍 Prevent violence against women and girls before it happens.
- 📍 Expand access to justice and support services for survivors.
- 📍 Make institutions more responsive to the needs of women and girls.
- 📍 Address the intersection between HIV/AIDS and violence against women and girls.
- 📍 Support initiatives that deliver critical services in conflict, post-conflict and transitional settings.
- 📍 Prevent and respond to violence against adolescent girls.
- 📍 Strengthen the capacity of grantees to implement effective programmes.
- 📍 Launch learning initiatives to generate and disseminate innovative and promising practices.

The vital work of the UN Trust Fund relies on voluntary contributions from UN Member States, not-for-profit organizations, foundations, the private sector and concerned individuals. The UN Trust Fund awards grants on an annual basis, through a process that is transparent, competitive and merit-based. All selected grantees are expected to work closely with the UN Trust Fund team to ensure high-quality monitoring and evaluation practices.

As our grantees show, with political will and adequate resources, a world without violence against women and girls could be just a generation away.

## AIMING FOR ZERO!

### THE CHALLENGE

Can violence against women and HIV/AIDS be tackled simultaneously? Is there an effective way to cut both down to zero?

Like violence against women, HIV/AIDS is a global pandemic. According to UNAIDS, women are at greater risk of contracting HIV because of gender inequalities, harmful social gender norms and a greater physiological susceptibility to the virus. Intimate partner violence also increases the risk: women who experience such violence are 50 per cent more likely to be living with HIV/AIDS. Despite this clear evidence of a link, women's civil society organizations working to prevent HIV/AIDS and violence against women continue to suffer from chronic underfunding and existing initiatives have tended not to engage adequately with men and boys.

### THE IDEA

The UN Trust Fund launched two global learning initiatives in 2005 and 2011 focusing on innovative strategies that address the links between violence against women and HIV/AIDS. The initiatives allow grantees working on these issues to generate and share knowledge and stimulate action to tackle both problems.



Gender-based violence against people living with HIV/AIDS is rampant in southern Malawi and one grantee, the Coalition of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (COWLHA), is tackling these abuses head on. This grass-roots women's organization is using the successful Stepping Stones training and communication methodology to prevent intimate partner violence. COWLHA's participatory strategy centres on building knowledge of gender-based violence, HIV risk awareness and communication skills among communities. These activities, which are led by community members and adapted to meet the specific needs of each community, are helping to shape an environment that encourages the promotion of women's rights.

### THE RESULTS

In partnership with the communities and with funding from the UN Trust Fund, COWLHA has established teams of full-time facilitators. Each team is made up of a couple that has been trained in the Stepping Stones methodology. The team leads a series of workshops where participants discuss harmful ideas about masculinity and femininity and build positive alternatives. Some 3,000 women living with HIV/AIDS, 311 survivors of intimate partner violence and more than 12,000 men and 28,000 women in 144 communities participated in COWLHA's activities in 2012 and 2013.

The strategy has resulted in men using condoms more and in fewer men having concurrent sexual partners, both of which lessen the risk of contracting and spreading HIV/AIDS. Women have reported that they are more able to negotiate sexual practices and couples report that they are communicating better. They have also said that the use of physical and emotional violence to settle conflict has decreased. In addition, village chiefs have banned harmful practices such as "sexual cleansing", whereby a woman whose husband has died has unprotected sexual relations with a man appointed by the community.

This initiative shows that, when owned by communities and carried out by local women and men, sustained activities can decrease the social acceptability of violence against women and of discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS.



### WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Watch COWLHA's short documentary *Seeking Safety: Stepping Stones in Malawi* at <http://vimeo.com/69251113>

## SOAP OPERAS THAT TRANSFORM LIVES

### THE CHALLENGE

Media messages can reinforce the status quo, but they can also help transform discriminatory and harmful attitudes related to gender. How can the mass media help ensure that violence against women and girls is not tolerated or seen as inevitable?

Building a society that embraces and encourages gender equality is a complex process and the mass media has an important role to play. Television, films, radio broadcasts, blogs, videos, newspapers and magazines all affect the way in which society views gender norms. They can, and often do, normalize violence against women and reinforce gender stereotypes. However, they also have the power to challenge prevailing norms that encourage violence against women and girls.

### THE IDEA

Civil society organizations around the world are increasingly turning to education through entertainment (“edutainment”) as a strategy for effecting social change, combining mass communication with targeted, locally specific content and activities. The UN Trust Fund believes that this powerful tool can be harnessed to prevent violence against women and girls.

With support from the UN Trust Fund, Puntos de Encuentro, an award-winning civil society organization based in Nicaragua and a pioneer in edutainment, tapped into the popularity of soap operas to address key issues affecting young women in Nicaragua. With an all-female crew, they produced the family drama *Contra corriente* (Turning the Tide), which was broadcast on commercial television. The show was developed and validated in partnership with women’s organizations around the country. At the centre of *Contra corriente* is a young heroine, Jessica, who is in danger of falling into the hands of a sex trafficking ring. Through its portrayal of Jessica’s experiences, along with those of her friends and family, the soap opera encourages viewers to speak out against gender discrimination and all forms of violence against women and girls.



### WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Watch the trailer for Puntos de Encuentro’s documentary *En la cama, en la casa y en la calle* (In Bed, at Home and in the Streets) at <http://vimeo.com/69752539>

The impact of the show was reinforced by participatory activities in schools designed to break the silence and engage girls and boys as agents of change.

### THE RESULTS

*Contra corriente* has reached millions of viewers in the six countries where it has been shown: Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. It has successfully captured young people’s experiences and perspectives, encouraging a realization that individual problems are often in reality societal issues that demand everyone’s attention. Showings of the soap opera have been used to spark open and safe discussions on sex trafficking and exploitation among thousands of school-age girls and boys. Participants in these discussions reported that they were better able to identify risks of sexual exploitation and ways to prevent it after taking part in the initiative.

Puntos de Encuentro is currently one of the partners of a new UN Trust Fund initiative called Pop-Culture with a Purpose, led by Oxfam Novib. This initiative is designing anti-violence media campaigns to challenge social norms that perpetuate violence in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Egypt, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan and Viet Nam.



# THE POWER OF TESTIMONY

## THE CHALLENGE

In conflict, post-conflict and transitional settings, getting access to justice and to psychosocial, health-care and legal services is a challenge. How can truth-telling, justice and rehabilitation be advanced in this context?

Most of those who commit acts of gender-based violence in conflict-related situations are not brought to justice. Several factors contribute to perpetuating impunity for abusers, including weakened social and community bonds, the inability to enforce legal sanctions and the erosion of response mechanisms. Once widespread violence ceases, survivors, particularly those who experienced sexual violence, are often reluctant to speak up because of fear that their abusers will retaliate or that their own communities will ostracize them. This makes it difficult to assess the scale of the problem and ensure redress for survivors.

## THE IDEA

The UN Trust Fund established a three-year global learning initiative in 2012 that will generate vital knowledge on how to prevent and respond effectively to violence against women and girls in conflict, post-conflict and transitional situations.



In Cambodia, gender-based crimes perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge regime remained invisible for decades and data on the incidence of sexual violence, including forced marriage, is still unavailable. The UN Trust Fund is supporting the Victims Support Section (VSS) of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, the body responsible for documenting and prosecuting human rights violations under the Khmer Rouge. The VSS focuses on empowering survivors to speak out and participate in trials.

Prosecution is only one aspect of achieving justice. Non-judicial processes and mechanisms, including material and symbolic reparations, are also needed. This is why the VSS has also prioritized creating safe spaces for truth-telling and rehabilitation to help survivors be heard and claim their rights.

## THE RESULTS

With UN Trust Fund support, the VSS was able to create the first online information platform to help break the silence surrounding gender-based violence under the Khmer Rouge. The platform is used to disseminate research and data gathered by the VSS and its partners and has become a valuable resource for the Government of Cambodia, researchers and civil society groups worldwide.

The VSS has also co-sponsored two Women's Hearings. These are non-judicial spaces in which survivors of gender-based violence can testify publicly and advocate collectively for justice. They provide survivors with symbolic redress and establish a historical record that can assist investigations and potential prosecutions. The second Women's Hearing took place in September 2013 and focused on raising awareness among the post-Khmer Rouge generation. More than 400 young people listened to four survivors of gender-based violence speak about their experiences. At the end of the hearing, a panel of university students recommended that forced marriage be addressed as a distinct gender-based crime in cases under investigation by the Extraordinary Chambers.

In addition, the VSS is fostering dialogue on gender-based crimes through a series of national radio programmes, community forums, support groups and interactive theatre. Through these initiatives, many communities are learning for the first time about the lasting impact of gender-based violence under the Khmer Rouge, paving the way for ensuring justice and non-repetition.



## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Watch Women's Hearings 2012, a short film by Sopheak Sao, at <http://youtu.be/urURTF-S2qY> and visit the VSS online information platform on gender-based violence under the Khmer Rouge at <http://gbvkr.org/>

## CHANGE IS POSSIBLE!

### THE CHALLENGE

Communities are where most social norms, attitudes and behaviours take shape. How can smaller, community-based organizations get access to expertise that will help them bring about the changes needed to make violence against women and girls a thing of the past?

Challenging power relations that reinforce inequality is an essential part of generating processes of change. Experience has shown that in order to be effective in addressing violence against women and girls, this transformation needs to happen at the individual, relationship and community level. Creating safe spaces for critical reflection, dialogue and engagement is vital and grass-roots organizations are best equipped to provide these and to address the problems of their communities. However, many do not have the institutional or technical capacity or the resources needed.

### THE IDEA

UN Trust Fund support helped Raising Voices, an internationally recognized Uganda-based organization, and Uganda's Centre for Domestic Violence Prevention provide technical assistance and mentoring to 13 grass-roots organizations not only in Uganda, but also in Botswana, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania. The initiative expanded the use of a successful violence prevention approach developed by Raising Voices called SASA! (the Kiswahili for "Now!"). SASA! is a community-based programme that aims to prevent violence and the spread of HIV by challenging power imbalances between women and men. It uses a series of activities that support community members through different stages of behaviour change, from awareness of the issues, to support for women and men in creating change, to action against violence.

### THE RESULTS

The partnership with Raising Voices gave the grass-roots organizations the vital tools they needed to adapt and roll out



#### WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Want to learn more?  
Watch Raising Voices  
films at [http://  
raisingvoices.org/  
resources/#film](http://raisingvoices.org/resources/#film)

SASA! in their communities. Activists, both women and men, acknowledged that their own attitudes and behaviours towards gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS were positively transformed by the partnership.

An independent evaluation by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine compared four of the communities in Uganda where SASA! was used with four similar communities where it was not. This showed how systematic and sustained support for community-based interventions over a three-year period helped to bring about a significant reduction in the social acceptability of intimate partner violence, in levels of physical violence and in the prevalence of concurrent sexual partners among men. In communities where the programme was implemented, 76 per cent of women and men believed that physical violence against a partner was not acceptable; the corresponding figure in the control communities was 26 per cent. Other attitudes and behaviours also underwent significant change. In communities where SASA! was implemented, 28 per cent more women and men considered that it was acceptable for a woman to refuse sex, levels of intimate partner violence against women were 52 per cent lower and 27 per cent of men reported having multiple concurrent sexual partners, compared with 45 per cent in the control communities.



# WOMEN RECLAIMING THE CITY

## THE CHALLENGE

More and more people around the world are living in cities. How can women ensure that they are able to enjoy public spaces and participate in urban planning and decision-making?

People move to cities for a wide range of reasons. For many the hope of a better livelihood and a better future for themselves and their families is a major factor. However, gender-based violence prevents many women and girls from taking full advantage of the opportunities offered by cities in terms of employment, education, social and political participation, and health and other public services.

## THE IDEA

The Gender Inclusive Cities Programme (GICP) is a pioneering knowledge-creation initiative that has benefited from UN Trust Fund support. The GICP's "right to the city" approach is based on treating



women as experts on their own safety, building partnerships and women's empowerment. Coordinated by Women in Cities International, the GICP was used by four partner organizations working in different cities to investigate and address the problem of gender exclusion in public spaces. This was the first ever cross-regional programme targeting women's safety and inclusion in public spaces. The four partner organizations – the Information Centre of the Independent Women's Forum in Petrozavodsk, Russia; the International Centre and Network for Information on Crime in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; Jagori in Delhi, India; and the Exchange and Services Centre in Rosario, Argentina – focused on learning about women's perspectives on and experiences of sexual harassment and sexual assault.

## THE RESULTS

Using street surveys, focus group discussions, Geographic Information Systems-based public space mapping and women's safety audits, the GICP was able to obtain comprehensive, reliable and context-specific information about gender inclusion and exclusion in public spaces.

More than 40 per cent of the women surveyed who felt able to speak about their experiences in the previous year said that they had been subjected to non-physical verbal or visual harassment and more than 14 per cent said they had been stalked or physically attacked. The majority of women said they had not reported the incidents, but had instead imposed restrictions on their own behaviour, for example not going out alone at night. Most of the cases of harassment happened on public transport or in the street.

Armed with this data, the four organizations were able to engage with women at the neighbourhood level to advocate for changes to policy and budget allocations. They also used the media to create a strong support base. In Dar es Salaam, neighbourhood watch groups were formed and in Rosario infrastructural changes, such as moving bus stops and improving signage, helped create safer public spaces. Jagori was invited by the Delhi Government to collaborate in developing a strategic framework on women's safety and in Petrozavodsk, the city's Chief Designer included women's safety as a category in a local public space design competition after attending a presentation by the GICP. Today, the Safe Cities Global Initiative includes two UN-Women flagship programmes and is engaging more than 80 partners worldwide.



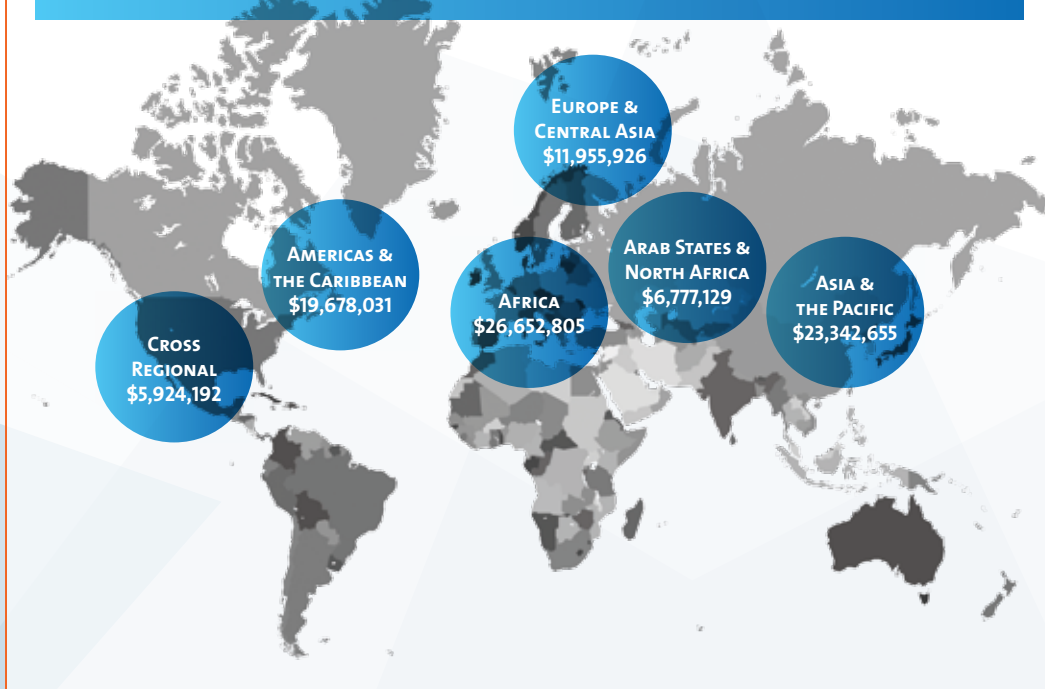
## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Visit <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/creating-safe-public-spaces>

## FUNDING TRENDS

For more than 17 years, the UN Trust Fund has worked non-stop to build a world without violence against women and girls, delivering over US\$94 million in grants. Despite the challenges posed by the global economic downturn and the subsequent decrease in the amount of funds received, the UN Trust Fund has, without fail, issued an annual Call for Proposals and continued to fund imaginative and effective initiatives addressing violence against women and girls.

### Grants awarded by the UN Trust Fund since 1997



There can be no doubting the very real changes that UN Trust Fund grantees are bringing about in the lives of women and girls. The challenge is to make sure funds keep pace with the needs on the ground and the very real potential for change. The UN Trust Fund is committed to reversing the trend of decreasing resources and it has set the bar high for 2014 – US\$15 million in grant-making funds.

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