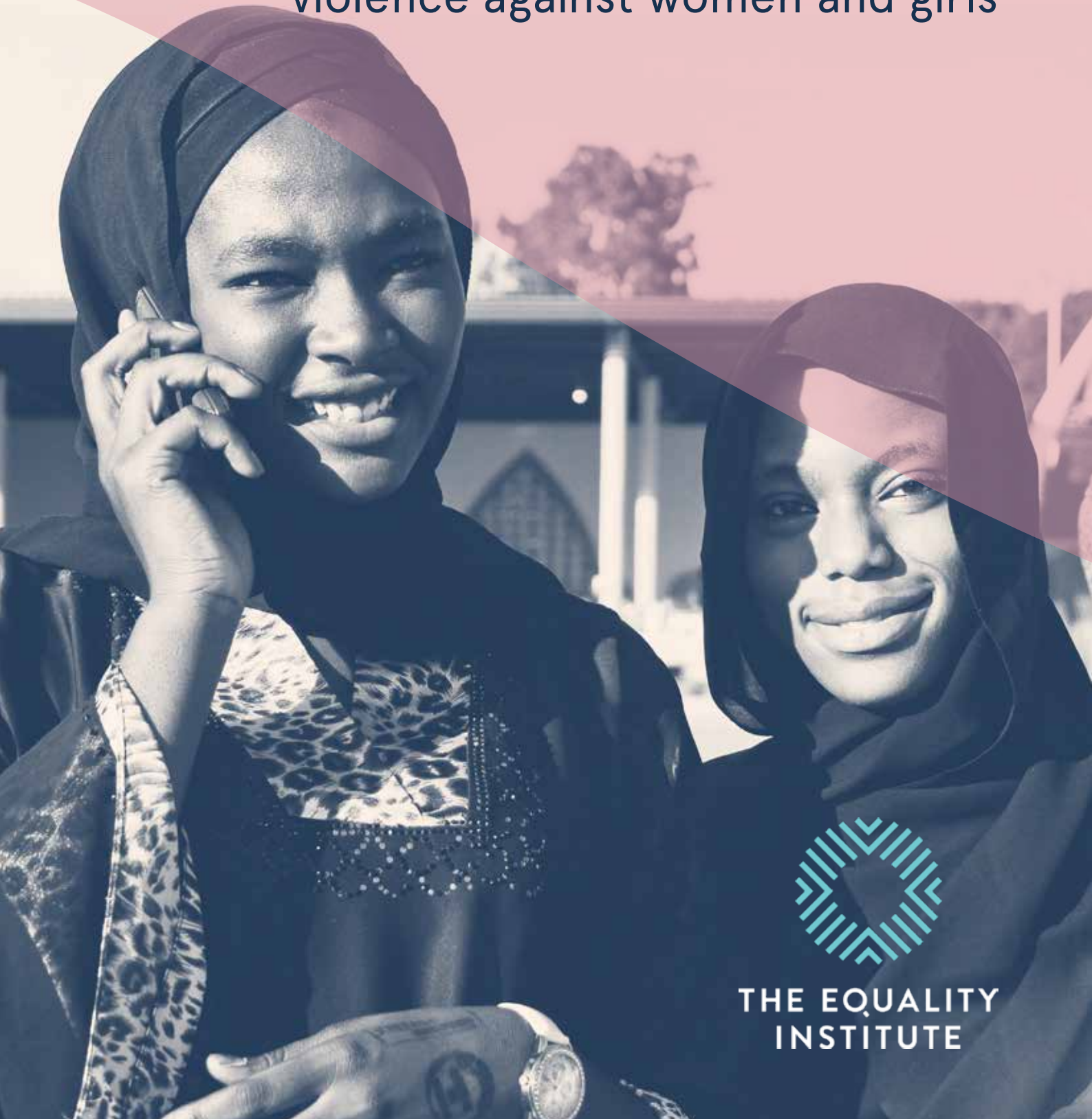


APRIL 2019

Global scoping of advocacy and funding for the prevention of violence against women and girls



THE EQUALITY
INSTITUTE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT US

Page 33

CHAPTER ONE

Page 4

Introduction

BACKGROUND

WHAT IS THIS PAPER AND WHO IS IT FOR?

METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER TWO

Page 8

Funding

INVESTMENT IN PREVENTION REMAINS LIMITED COMPARED TO INVESTMENT IN OTHER DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

WHILE FUNDING HAS INCREASED, IT IS OFTEN POOR QUALITY, SHORT-TERM AND SPORADIC

WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS ARE SIGNIFICANTLY UNDER-RESOURCED

WHO ARE THE KEY FUNDERS PROVIDING SUPPORT TO PREVENTION PROGRAMMING?

CHAPTER THREE

Page 20

Advocacy

THERE IS A RELATIVE LACK OF ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNING ON VAWG PREVENTION

ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNING ON VAWG REMAINS OVERLY SIMPLISTIC

PROMISING PREVENTION ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNS ARE MULTI-LEVEL

DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE VAWG PREVENTION FIELD REMAIN DISCONNECTED

THE PREVENTION FIELD REMAINS SILOED AND SHOULD CONNECT WITH ADJACENT FIELDS

CHAPTER FOUR

Page 28

Opportunities and recommendations

UNDERSTANDING VAWG PREVENTION THROUGH THE SHIFFMAN AND SMITH FRAMEWORK

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDING

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADVOCACY

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

BACKGROUND

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) has historically been silenced, overlooked or condoned. However, after decades of advocacy and programming by women's movements and feminist activists, violence against women and girls is now widely recognised as a fundamental violation of human rights, and a serious development and public health issue. This has resulted in increasing financial investments and several conventions, policies and frameworks to address violence against women and girls, including through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Intimate partner violence against women has been calculated to cost the world economy more than USD \$8 trillion a year: USD \$5.8 billion in 2003 in the United States¹; GBP £22.9 billion in 2004 in England² and Wales, and R 28.4 billion in South Africa³.

While the scale of VAWG is immense, there is increasing evidence that rates of violence can be reduced within programmatic timeframes, and several key elements to effective prevention programming have been identified. Despite this progress, funding for violence prevention is inadequate and effective advocacy at the global level remains limited.

DESPITE PROGRESS IN RECENT YEARS, FUNDING FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION IS INADEQUATE AND EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL REMAINS LIMITED.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2003. 'Costs of Intimate Partner Violence against Women in the United States'. Atlanta: CDC, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.

² Walby, S. 2004. 'The Cost of Domestic Violence'. London: Department of Trade and Industry.

³ Bonomi, Amy E., Melissa L. Anderson, Frederick P. Rivara, and Robert S. Thompson. 2009. 'Health Care Utilization and Costs Associated with Physical and Nonphysical only Intimate Partner Violence'. *Health Services Research* 44 (3): 1052-67.

WHAT IS THIS PAPER AND WHO IS IT FOR?

The paper presents findings from a global scoping of funding and advocacy within the VAWG prevention⁴ field. The paper:

- provides an overview of funding patterns for VAWG prevention programming over the past five years including current donors and the estimated size of their investments,
- provides an overview of lessons learned, opportunities and gaps in the advocacy space on VAWG prevention, and
- identifies strategic advocacy opportunities and programming related to VAWG prevention, particularly for policy-makers and donors.

METHODOLOGY

The scoping was conducted between February and May 2018 and included:

- desk-based reviews of current advocacy campaigns and organisations, and of donor funding patterns, and
- 24 semi-structured key informant interviews with stakeholders from the global VAWG prevention field, including those working in advocacy and campaigning, donors and private foundations, practitioners and thought leaders.

⁴ For the purposes of this review, prevention is understood as any activity or initiative that aims to reduce rates of violence against women and girls at the population level, or stop violence before it starts.

CHAPTER TWO

Funding

INVESTMENT IN PREVENTION REMAINS LIMITED COMPARED TO INVESTMENT IN OTHER DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

The review aimed to identify key funding organisations providing support for VAWG prevention over the past five years, to estimate the size of their investments, and identify emerging donor trends. A summary of identified global funding on VAWG prevention is included in Table 1.

Overall, there has been increased investment in preventing VAWG, including from the European Union's "Spotlight Initiative"⁵, and substantial investment by Department for International Development (DFID), Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) philanthropic fund, women's funds and private donors.

IT IS ESTIMATED THAT INVESTMENT IN PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS HAS TOTALLED APPROXIMATELY USD 2.042 BILLION, WHICH IS LESS THAN 0.2% OF ANNUAL OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.

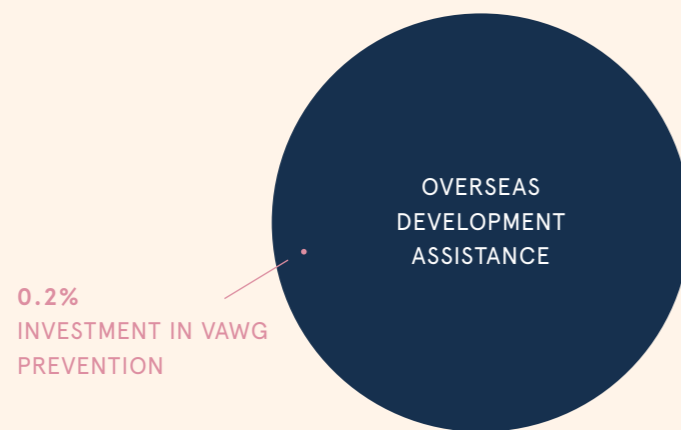


FIGURE ONE: Investment in VAWG prevention as a percentage of ODA

⁵ A partnership between the European Union (EU) and the UN system with an initial investment of EUR 500 million over the next five years.

Based on available information, it is estimated that investment in prevention of violence against women in the past five years as totalled approximately USD 2.042 billion. That averages approximately \$408 million per year. It should be noted that this includes funding for initiatives with broader scopes than just prevention.

In contrast, in 2017, net Official Development Assistance (ODA) by Members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) alone, stood at USD 146.6 billion per year. Support to programmes dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment as their principal objective remains consistently below USD 5 billion per year. In 2015–2016, dedicated gender equality programming amounted to USD 4.6 billion per year, representing only 4% of DAC members' total bilateral allocable aid.⁶ By these measures, investment in the prevention of VAWG can be estimated to be significantly less than 0.2% of international development assistance.⁷

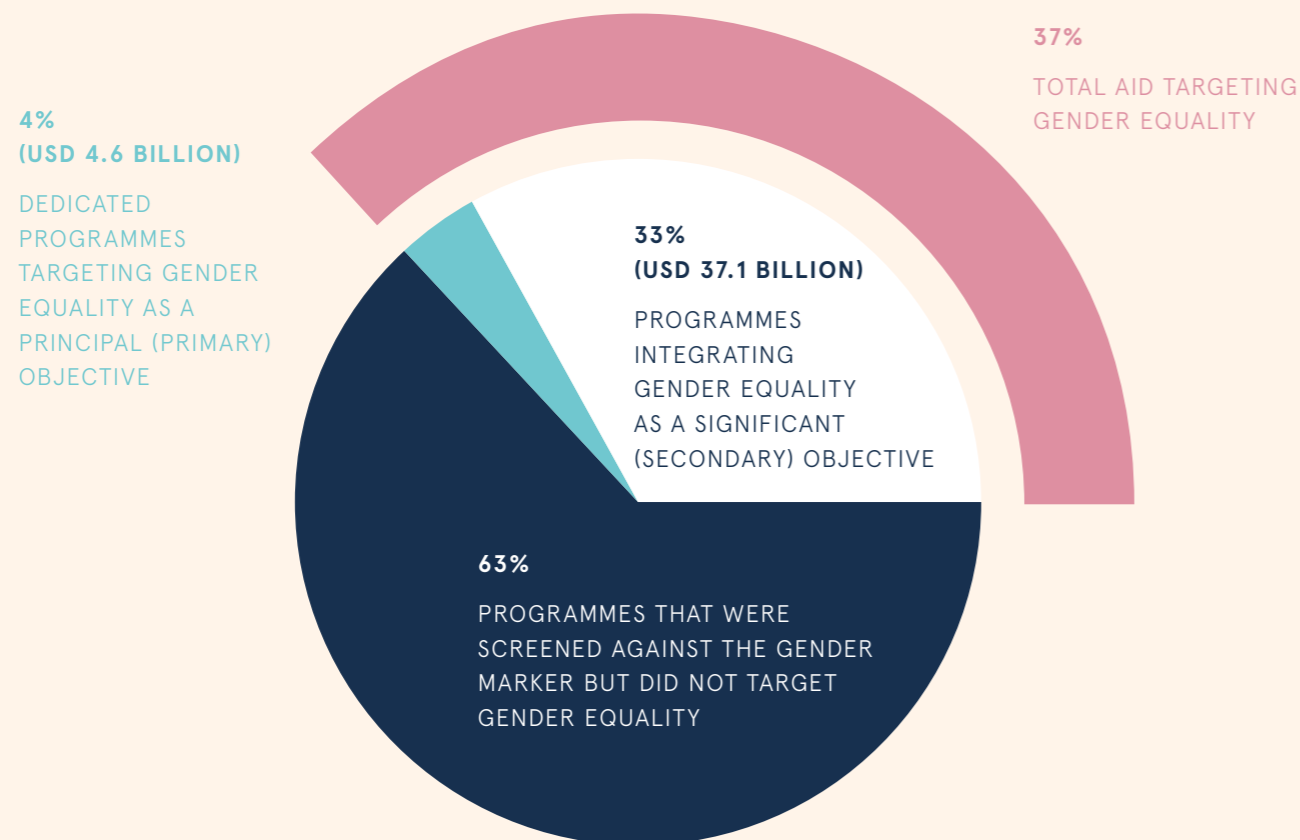


FIGURE TWO: Gender equality focus of bilateral allocable aid, 2015–2016⁸

⁶ Aid to gender equality and women's empowerment An Overview. OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality. <https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/Aid-to-gender-overview-2018.pdf>

⁷ During the Women Deliver 2019 Conference, VOICE and International Rescue Committee released the preliminary findings from new research, which confirms that allocations for VAWG funding still account for a minuscule proportion – just 0.12% – of total humanitarian funding. The early research also suggests that two thirds of funding requests for VAWG in emergencies are not being met, and that relative to what is needed, even these requests are very small.

⁸ Aid to gender equality and women's empowerment: An Overview. OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality. <https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/Aid-to-gender-overview-2018.pdf>

WHILE FUNDING HAS INCREASED, IT IS OFTEN POOR QUALITY, SHORT-TERM AND SPORADIC

The influx of money into the VAWG prevention field has attracted new actors including large, global consulting firms, corporate bodies, INGOs and inter-governmental networks with limited experience in gender or violence-related programming. Interviewees observed money going towards problematic VAWG work where organisations will “have a go” at prevention if it means they can receive money, despite a lack of knowledge, skills or experience. One interviewee commented that “you can’t just start a legal aid intervention if you have no training as a lawyer, but people can just have a go at this work without properly developing the concept” and without rooting the work in feminist politics. This has, in some cases, resulted in unethical and unsafe programming where donors and implementing organisations lack a strong understanding of the key principles and elements of safe and successful VAWG prevention work. This can also result in more simplistic, rather than transformative, programming such as a focus on awareness raising. Much of the programming that is still being carried out is not evidence-based despite the fact that we now have evidence about what works and does not work.

The majority of funding for VAWG prevention also remains limited to short-term timeframes. Even where funding is for three to four years, this does not support long-term change and sustainability of prevention initiatives. This can also result in more simplistic programming, such as a focus on awareness raising, rather than something transformative. Preventing VAWG requires inter-generational commitment to change, and without that commitment and investment in sustained transformation, current project-based approaches to funding can only initiate sporadic, short-term changes. This arguably does not represent efficiency, ethical spending or value-for-money where donors continue to invest in problematic approaches and will not prevent violence long-term.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS ARE SIGNIFICANTLY UNDER-RESOURCED

The evidence demonstrates that preventing VAWG requires long-term transformative programming that challenges the gender inequalities and harmful norms that perpetuate violence. Women's movements and organisations play a vital role in policy and legal changes to promote gender equality. Nevertheless, shifts in the aid industry have resulted in a withdrawal of funding for women's organisations and those promoting such social change. Channelling money through international NGOs and technical research institutions has often meant a withdrawal of financial support for WROs and closing space for grassroots civil society. At national levels, government ministries responsible for women's rights and VAWG are often the ones with the smallest budgets and organisations working on the women's issues are expected to achieve significant changes with limited funding.

On the other hand, where funding is available, some national and grassroots WROs have internal challenges or weaknesses in terms of their absorptive capacity for larger grants. Furthermore, some WROs lack the technical capacity at present to produce high-quality applications for funding mechanisms, and/or implement transformative programming.

Furthermore, it is challenging for donor agencies to identify and reach small, often informal groups who may possess strong understandings of their local context, and where small sums of money could potentially have a large impact. Reporting requirements for some donors can be overly burdensome, leading to WROs putting their energy towards that work rather than towards transformative and collective actions. Most funding opportunities are also highly competitive, and this environment is antithetical to feminist movement building where actors are struggling against one another for scarce resources, fueling competition rather than collaboration.

SHIFTS IN THE AID INDUSTRY HAVE RESULTED A WITHDRAWAL OF FUNDING OF WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS AND THOSE PROMOTING SUCH SOCIAL CHANGE.

In 2011, the Association for Women in Development (AWID) estimated that the combined resources for the 740 independent women's organisations that participated in their global survey was only \$106 million, and the median annual income was USD 20,000.⁹ 59% of organisations surveyed reported GBV/VAWG as being a priority issue and on average 27% of donor funding was dedicated to this issue. A 2012 study by The Foundation Center found that two percent of all human rights-related global giving by private foundations was allocated to ending VAWG. These findings align closely to those of the current review, indicating that there has not been considerable change to these issues over the past ten years.

When it comes to young feminist organising the situation is even starker. In 2014, a report on the global state of young feminist organising published by FRIDA: The Young Feminist Fund and AWID reported that despite the fact that young feminist organisations are using innovative strategies to tackle some of the most pressing issues of our time (including violence against women), with some of the most vulnerable populations, they are strikingly under-resourced and their sustainability is in jeopardy. 91% of respondents ranked lack of financial resources as their top challenge. Half of survey respondents report 2014 incomes under \$5,000 and one quarter are working with incomes of under \$500 per year. About one third of surveyed organisations (30%) rely on a single source of income or none at all (14%).

⁹ Lawrence, S., Dobson, C. and Chun, M. 2013. Advancing human rights: The state of global foundation grantmaking. New York: The Foundation Center and the International Human Rights Funders Group.

Interviewees also noted that while WROs working on VAWG prevention have been struggling to survive, there is growing interest in work with men and boys. There is a perception that male decision-makers are more willing to listen to and work with male advocates, and to see men as beneficiaries of violence initiatives, rather than as allies or a core part of the issue. This is problematic when that work detracts from funding women-led initiatives, and erases or ignores the gendered patterns of men's violence against women. Some advocacy around working with men and boys aligns with key feminist messaging on preventing VAWG. However, other messaging is less transformative, and there is a lack of consistency and accountability in relation to the messaging on working with men and boys as a strategy for prevention. Further, the masculinities and working with men space would benefit from strong women's leadership to avoid reinforcing patriarchal structures or promoting male power within the women's rights movement.

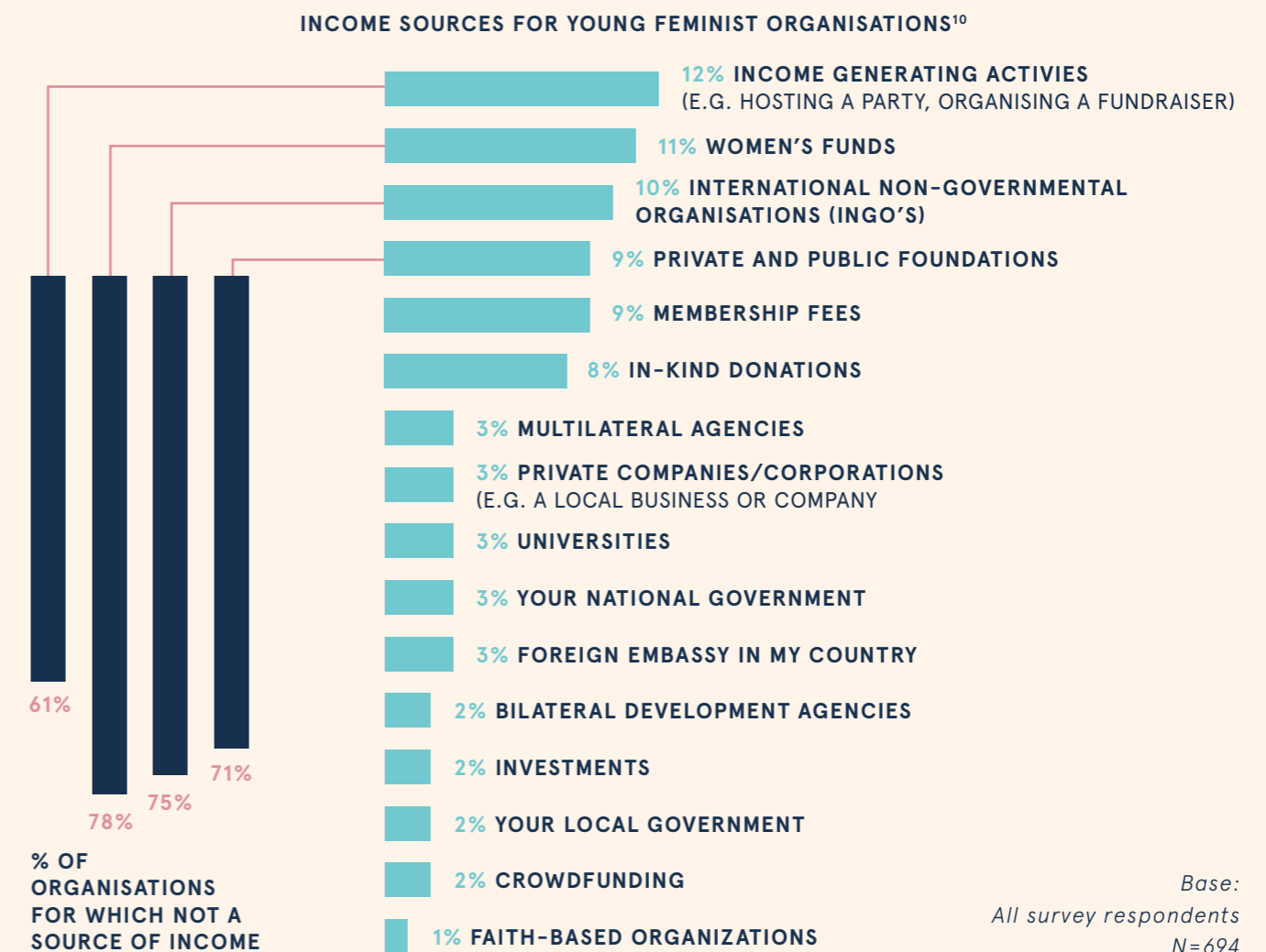


FIGURE THREE: Breakdown of total income reported across all groups surveyed

¹⁰ FRIDA: The Young Feminist Fund and AWID's Young Feminist Activism Program, 2014. The global state of young feminist organizing.

FUNDING CHALLENGES FACED BY YOUNG FEMINIST ORGANISATIONS¹¹



Multiple responses accepted
Base: All survey respondents N=694

FIGURE FOUR: Funding challenges faced by Young Feminist Organisations

¹¹ FRIDA: The Young Feminist Fund and AWID's Young Feminist Activism Program, 2014. The global state of young feminist organizing.

WHO ARE THE KEY FUNDERS PROVIDING SUPPORT TO PREVENTION PROGRAMMING?

Most donors operating in this space do not clearly delineate funding for VAWG prevention as standalone work. Rather prevention is often included in broader initiatives on addressing VAWG, or very broadly within gender equality and women's rights programming. An exception to this is the Department for International Development's (DFID) Research and Innovation Fund flagship programme, *What Works to Prevent Violence against Women and Girls*, which is one of the only identified sources of funding explicitly for violence prevention. Several funders support gender equality work broadly but do not have a focus on VAWG or prevention work, such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation whose new Gender Equality Strategy centers on women's economic empowerment. Other funding supports WROs and feminist movement building, which may or may not include work on VAWG but is linked (explicitly or not) to violence prevention through the movement-building work.

BILATERAL FUNDERS

The majority of investment in the prevention of VAWG comes from bilateral funders, including Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. As mentioned above, DFID's What Works programme focuses explicitly on violence prevention and building the evidence base. Australian official development assistance (ODA) for ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG) has increased ten-fold from around \$4 million in 2007–08 to more than \$40 million in 2017–18. According to the OECD–DAC, this made Australia the most important donor for EVAWG in 2017, contributing nearly one third of the total funds reported for EVAWG programming globally.¹² Prevention is one of the pillars of Australia's strategy, however it is difficult to determine the exact amount invested in prevention specifically.

A key lesson from bilateral funding has been the catalytic role that long-term core funding to civil society organisations and women's rights organisations has played in providing in providing critical services, technical and political leadership on the prevention of VAWG. However, the gains made over recent years remain highly dependent on official development assistance funding.

UN TRUST FUND TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women (UN Trust Fund) is the largest grant-making agency for VAWG initiatives, which has disbursed approximately USD 128 million to 462 initiatives across 139 countries and territories since its inception in 1996. The UN Trust Fund's current strategic plan for 2015–2020 focuses on three outcome areas: essential services, prevention, and implementation of legislation, policies, and national action plans.¹³ At present, approximately 40% of the portfolio is primarily focused on prevention however most projects work across multiple outcome areas. Prevention activities that have been funded range from awareness raising and policy advocacy to education and curriculum development and other direct community mobilisation initiatives.

¹² OECD–DAD Network on Gender Equality. Aid to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. New York: 2018:1–12

¹³ UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women. 2015. Strategic Plan 2015–2020. New York: UN Trust Fund.

The UN Trust Fund emphasises support for WROs with around half of disbursements going to small organisations. The UN Trust Fund operates through a highly competitive grant-making mechanism that requires applications for up to USD 1 million, which are then subjected to multiple screening and review processes. This is an intensive process requiring technical applications of a high standard, and smaller organisations often require support for developing project plans and submitting via the online application system. For the most recent funding cycle, the UN Trust Fund received 1,301 applications for a total value requested of USD 528 million. This demand far outweighs the financial resources of the Fund, which in 2016 allocated USD 13 million. Added to this are countless organisations that are unable to produce an application of adequate technical quality, and these figures clearly illustrate the gap between supply and demand for resourcing on VAWG. Unlike other VAWG prevention grants, the UN Trust Fund does share high quality applications that were not successful with other interested donors and they are working to create a shareable database of organisations and applications to increase their opportunities for funding.

DEVELOPMENT BANKS

VAWG receives limited attention from global and regional development banks. A review of the Asian Development Bank's projects database found three hits for a search on 'violence', and none reflected spending on VAWG prevention. The same search on the African Development Bank Group's database identified one project on roads between Uganda and Kenya that includes an awareness raising component on gender-based violence (GBV), but not prevention. The World Bank Group and Inter-American Development Bank have provided significantly more investment in VAWG. While the World Bank Group have considerable programming on gender mainstreaming and women's economic empowerment, a search of the Bank's project database identified six projects over 2012-2017 including a GBV prevention component, totaling USD 195.8 million. The Inter-American Development Bank invested approximately USD 294.3 million between 2011-2016, however this is not limited to VAWG as it incorporates their broader gender equality and women's empowerment portfolio. While these are relatively significant investments for the field, these figures pale in comparison to development bank spending on other sectors and are indicative of the under-resourcing for VAWG.

THE SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE

Another key source of funding for the VAWG sector is the newly established Spotlight Initiative, a partnership between the European Union (EU) and the UN system with an initial investment of EUR 500 million over the next five years. This program is open to funding contributions from other sources. The Spotlight Initiative's theory of change was developed through consultations with civil society and UN agencies, and focuses on five specific manifestations of VAWG across five regions: femicide in Latin America, family violence in the Caribbean, domestic violence in the Pacific, trafficking in Asia, and harmful practices and sexual-gender-based violence in Africa.¹⁴ The program will be delivered at the national level through UN country offices, and will therefore inform much of the UN system's programming on VAWG, including on prevention.

¹⁴The European Union and the United Nations. 2017. Terms of Reference: 2017-2023.



TABLE ONE: Summary of estimated global funding on VAWG prevention (2012-2017)

ORGANISATION	ESTIMATED INVESTMENT	PERIOD	REGION(S)	PRIORITY AREAS
BILATERALS				
USAID, US Government	USD 17 million	2012-2015	Global South Asia-Pacific	GBV Incentive Fund – preventing and responding to GBV.
DFAT, Government of Australia	AUD 555 million	2008-2018	Asia-Pacific	VAWG programming – not limited to prevention.
DFID, UK Government	GBP 71.1 million	2013-2020	Global South	Research, innovation and evaluation for preventing VAWG (What Works). Support for specific VAWG initiatives including prevention components.
MULTILATERALS				
World Bank Group	USD 198.5 million	2012-2017	Global South	Six projects including components aimed at addressing GBV through a multisectoral focus, often not gender-specific and not focused on prevention.
Inter-American Development Bank	USD 294.3 million	2011-2016	LAC	Gender equality and women's empowerment programs – broader than VAWG and prevention.
PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS				
Wellspring Philanthropic Fund		2015-2018	Global South, East Africa	VAWG prevention research, advocacy and programming.
Oak Foundation	USD 20 million	Annually	Global	Advancing women's rights – not limited to VAWG and no standalone grants on prevention.
NoVo Foundation	USD 75-100 million		Global South, US	Primarily ending VAWG, but broader than prevention, strong focus on feminist movement building.

ORGANISATION	ESTIMATED INVESTMENT	PERIOD	REGION(S)	PRIORITY AREAS
PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS				
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	USD 2.1 million	2015-2019	India	Research on drivers of VAWG and approaches to ending VAWG with local government, health workers, self-help groups. Media-based initiatives to change knowledge, attitudes and practices on GBV.
GRANT-MAKING AND WOMEN'S FUNDS¹⁵				
UN Trust Fund to End VAW	USD 128 million	Since 1996, annually	Global South	Preventing VAWG, improving access to services, strengthening implementation of laws, policies and action plans.
EU-UN Spotlight Initiative	EUR 500 million	2017-2022	Global South	Addressing specific forms of VAWG in five regions, prevention is one component.
SVRI / World Bank	USD 4.2 million	2014-2018	Global South	Preventing GBV through innovation in low- and middle-income countries.
Global Fund for Women	USD 31.2 million	2013-2017	Global	Freedom from violence (including prevention, specifically sexual violence in conflict areas and domestic violence), economic and political empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and rights.

¹⁵ This money comes originally from private foundations and bilateral funders.

CHAPTER THREE

Advocacy

THERE IS A RELATIVE LACK OF ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNING ON VAWG PREVENTION

The review found that while there are many organisations and actors undertaking advocacy and campaigning work on VAWG, women's rights and gender equality, those focusing specifically on the prevention of VAWG are relatively limited. Most advocacy and campaigning on ending VAWG make reference to larger human rights and development frameworks by positioning the issue as fundamental to achieving women's rights in different contexts. Most now also make reference to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, one interviewee commented that for many smaller organisations in the South, referencing these broader frameworks is often a requirement for funding from multilaterals and the alignment may be strategic rather than organic. Whether this point is important in terms of the impact of the campaign would require further in-depth research.

Several interviewees commented that gaps are not found in advocating for laws and policies to address VAWG. While many countries have established, or are establishing, policies, legislation and national action plans on ending VAWG, the gap remains in implementation, enforcement and accountability. This is a barrier to ongoing feminist movement building for prevention and also fails to address cultural and legal impunity for perpetrators of VAWG.

PUBLIC ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGN INITIATIVES HAVE OFTEN RELIED ON RELATIVELY VAGUE MESSAGING ON VAWG, TARGETED AT A GENERAL OR UNDEFINED AUDIENCE.

ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNING ON VAWG REMAINS OVERLY SIMPLISTIC

Many public advocacy and campaign initiatives have often relied on relatively vague messaging on VAWG, targeted at a general or undefined audience. The focus has been on awareness raising of the prevalence of specific manifestations of VAWG, with some messaging related to impact and patterns of violence. Messaging remains general, abstract or limited, for example “stop violence against women” or “say no to violence”, and does not provide details on how the target audience can act to prevent violence. There remains an assumption among many in the VAWG space that awareness raising such as this constitutes prevention, despite growing evidence that these approaches do not reduce rates of violence, or transform the root causes of VAWG. This is problematic as awareness raising is often favoured by donors as something tangible however, in practice, it is resource-heavy and has a limited impact, if any, on ending VAWG and detracts much needed attention from best practice prevention strategies.

Interviewees discussed a need to shift the narrative away from awareness raising, to more clearly articulate what prevention is and what it entails, and what the common agenda for the VAWG field is. Some interviewees also commented that in some spaces or contexts, there is still a need for advocacy on the severity of VAWG as there continues to be denial from political leaders and the public that VAWG is a problem. This denial remains a key barrier to gaining adequate attention and investment in VAWG.

STRATEGIC ADVOCACY AROUND PREVENTION COULD BE STRENGTHENED TO DELIVER CLEAR CONSISTENT MESSAGING ABOUT THE ROOT CAUSES OF VIOLENCE AND WHAT WORKS TO PREVENT IT.

Direct policy advocacy – such as between women’s rights organisations and national government ministries, or with larger INGOs and the UN system – tends to utilise issues-based, detailed and strategic messaging. The more technical and detailed advocacy on VAWG prevention happens at higher levels and often behind closed doors during negotiations on national and international policies and initiatives, led by a small group of professional advocates rather than local or grassroots groups. Interviewees discussed common strategies and learnings on policy advocacy such as identifying leaders or influencers and establishing strong relationships with those individuals, identifying common goals to coalesce around, and leaving individual or organisational agendas “at the door” to achieve collective action on shared objectives for addressing VAWG.



THE MORE TECHNICAL AND DETAILED ADVOCACY ON VAWG PREVENTION HAPPENS AT HIGHER LEVELS AND OFTEN BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.

PROMISING PREVENTION ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNS ARE MULTI-LEVEL

The review identified some strong examples of public advocacy and campaigning on VAWG prevention, such as by Oxfam, Together for Girls, Move to End Violence, Safe Cities, GBV Prevention Network, and masculinities-focused organisations such as Promundo and networks such as MenEngage. These examples tend to have more nuanced messaging on prevention (e.g. what is best practice for prevention, and context-specific messaging on desired change), are connecting with other key players in the field, and several are evaluating their work and sharing their learnings. Much of this messaging is framed by intersectionality and aims to address multiple forms of inequality such as gender and race.

ADVOCACY EXAMPLE: OXFAM'S ENOUGH CAMPAIGN

The current global *Enough!* campaign, led by Oxfam country offices and partners (eventually in 30 countries) aims to prevent VAWG at multiple levels, while promoting South-South learning and leadership.¹⁶ Country offices have been responsible for designing, implementing and evaluating social norm change campaigns based on assessments of national context, capacity and partner resources. This is a strong model in that participating countries are combining more traditional campaign activities (e.g. posters, billboards, television) with other face-to-face or in-person activities over the three-year timeframe.¹⁷ At the same time, the campaign model works to increase national-level capacity for VAWG prevention work, including evaluation. The *Enough!* campaign builds on learnings from Oxfam's previous *We Can* campaign in South Asia, which mobilised change-makers to deliver community-level activities. Evaluation of the *We Can* campaign found that it was well-aligned with existing best practice for prevention and well-adapted to local contexts across the six South Asian countries, but also highlighted the challenges of evaluating campaign work.¹⁸

¹⁶ Mayne, R. 2017. The Worldwide Influencing Network in practice: Learning from the Enough Campaign. Great Britain: Oxfam.

¹⁷ Summaries of country-level campaigns can be viewed on the global campaign's website: www.sayenoughtoviolence.org.

¹⁸ Raab, M. 2011. The 'We Can' campaign in South Asia, 2004-2011: External evaluation report. New Delhi: Oxfam South Asia Regional Centre.

Other networks such as the Prevention Collaborative and the Coalition of Feminists for Social Change (COFEM) are also undertaking more sophisticated and specific advocacy to promote feminist-informed, best practice prevention. However, these networks are still in their formative years and therefore we cannot draw conclusions on their effectiveness as yet.

DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE VAWG PREVENTION FIELD REMAIN DISCONNECTED

Overall, there has been a lack of linkage between different parts of the violence prevention field (i.e. researchers and policy-makers, researchers and practitioners, international high-level advocates and grassroots activists). Logistical challenges such as lack of resources, geographic isolation, and language barriers have limited the ability of the VAWG prevention actors to coalesce, share knowledge and tools, and access evidence. These findings align with Raising Voices' comprehensive global review of the VAWG movement from 2015.¹⁹ There are promising examples of effective advocacy in some settings however these examples and lessons have not made their way organically into the international dialogue on VAWG prevention. Significant resources have been used to generate this evidence, however much of it remains inaccessible and under-utilised to many working on advocacy, policy-making and programming.

One reason is that most of this information is in English and circulates through academic journals and conferences. Many prevention practitioners, activists and policy-makers cannot engage with this content due to language barriers, logistical barriers to accessing research spaces, or do not "see themselves in the research" because it is primarily driven by, and for, Northern research institutions. For example, some interviewees commented that even within regional prevention and feminist networks such as the GBV Prevention Network in Africa, there is limited knowledge of the SASA! key findings on best practice for community mobilisation, due to inaccessible information or the data being seen as coming from a western academic institution. There is a need for available evidence on prevention to be more accessible and relevant to non-researchers, and for stronger practice-based evidence. These gaps are being addressed by networks such as the Prevention Collaborative and COFEM.

The violence prevention field continues to face challenges creating concrete *shared* messages and approaches and communicating those externally. As discussed above, key actors continue to speak with multiple, often conflicting, voices. The VAWG prevention field is an internally-politicised space with ongoing tensions over mandates. Recent experience has also shown that some INGOs do not "walk the talk" when it comes to modelling gender equality and positive gender norms within their organisations. These internal tensions and shortcomings are reinforced by scarce resources which can undermine the solidarity of the VAWG prevention movement.

¹⁹ Raising Voices. 2015. Violence against women and girls: Movement building in the Global South: Report from a Global Consultation with activists. Raising Voices is a non-profit organization based in Kampala, Uganda that works to prevent violence against women and children.

THE PREVENTION FIELD REMAINS SILOED AND SHOULD CONNECT WITH ADJACENT FIELDS

The prevention field remains somewhat isolated. In recent decades the issue of VAWG has been firmly established on international development and public health agendas. As a first response, the field emphasised the need for legislative reform and adequate and effective services for survivors. Following that, there has been increasing efforts to get prevention activities prioritised in their own right. However, in some cases this has led to an understanding of prevention as a distinct and separate field and siloed from response efforts.

It also reflects the emergence of 'development siloes' as a result of some donors' approaches to funding. While many working in the field understand the key connections between VAWG and related fields, such as sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), women's economic empowerment, and violence against children (VAC), these connections are not well-established in advocacy and programming spaces. There is a growing relationship between the VAWG and VAC fields, such as through the work of Together for Girls, and it will be important to build similar relationships with other sectors to promote a holistic approach to prevention.

There are key opportunities to advocate for more integrated approaches to addressing gender inequality across the development and humanitarian sectors. Actively working to address VAWG in adjacent fields, or incorporating a stronger awareness of the links with VAWG, such as in women's rights movement building, SRHR, women's economic empowerment, and violence against children, will reinforce and sustain change towards preventing VAWG. Moving towards a more integrated approach would achieve a number of strategic outcomes, including a more effective use of scarce funding and resources, avoiding duplication of program approaches and guidance materials, and collaboration that targets shared drivers and other intersections.

There is a lack of research and programming that effectively translates intersectional feminism into practice within the VAWG prevention field. There are considerable gaps for women and girls from particular marginalised groups, such as women with disabilities, with diverse gender identities and sexualities, or from migrant and refugee backgrounds. This is despite existing evidence on the impact of inequalities and discrimination on health and other outcomes.²⁰ Pursuing programming and advocacy approaches that promote inclusivity and actively work to address multiple forms of inequality and oppression will support stronger movement building.

²⁰ Krieger, N. 1999. *Embodying inequality: A review of concepts, measures, and methods for studying health consequences of discrimination*. *Social inequalities and health*. 29(2): 295–352.



CHAPTER FOUR

Opportunities and recommendations

UNDERSTANDING VAWG PREVENTION THROUGH THE SHIFFMAN AND SMITH FRAMEWORK

The Shiffman and Smith framework²¹ outlines four categories – actor power, ideas, political contexts and issue characteristics – that shape global political prioritisation of an issue, based on a review of global public health movements. Examining the VAWG prevention field through each of these four categories provides insight into key barriers that have, and continue to, inhibit the prioritisation of adequate investment in, and advocacy on, this global public health issue.

TABLE TWO: Examining the VAWG prevention field through the Shiffman and Smith framework

ELEMENT	FACTORS SHAPING POLITICAL PRIORITY	VAWG PREVENTION FIELD
ACTOR POWER <i>The strength of the actors involved in the initiative.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The degree of coalescence among the network of individuals and organisations that are centrally involved with the issue at the global level. • The presence of individuals capable of uniting the policy community and acknowledged as particularly strong champions for the cause. • The effectiveness of organisations or coordinating mechanisms with a mandate to lead the initiative. • The extent to which grassroots organisations have mobilised to press international and national political authorities to address the issue at the global level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a number of powerful, high-level actors involved in the prevention of VAWG, such as national governments, international development NGOs and United Nations agencies. However, there has been tension over mandates for preventing VAWG both between and within institutions which has impeded progress and uptake of the issue. • Until recently, the field has not coalesced around a common approach or messaging on preventing VAWG—beyond the need to end violence and that violence is preventable. • Mobilisation of civil society and policy-makers has been limited as those working on VAWG are often sidelined and devalued by patriarchal structures and systems. • Evidence on VAWG prevention has not been effectively communicated beyond a relatively small number of experts.

²¹ Shiffman, J. and Smith, S. 2007. Generation of political priority for global health initiatives: A framework and case study of maternal mortality. *The Lancet*. 370: 1370-79.

ELEMENT	FACTORS SHAPING POLITICAL PRIORITY	VAWG PREVENTION FIELD
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women’s rights organisations (WROs) working on prevention often do not have the resources to access evidence.
IDEAS <i>The power of the ideas they use to frame the issue.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal frame: the degree to which the policy community agrees on the definition, causes, and solutions, to the problem. External frame: public portrayals of the issue in ways that resonate with external audiences, especially the political leaders who control resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal politics have been a barrier to establishing common messages, while the reliance on high-tech evidence and language barriers have limited the dissemination and uptake of knowledge on effective prevention strategies. The field has struggled to establish and maintain the attention of national and international decision-makers, leading to ongoing and pervasive under-resourcing. VAWG is still perceived by some within policy spaces as a “woman’s issue”.
POLITICAL CONTEXTS <i>The nature of the political contexts in which they operate.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy windows: political moments when global conditions align favourably for an issue, presenting opportunities for advocates to influence decision-makers. Global governance structure: the degree to which norms and institutions operating in a sector provide a platform for effective collective action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current global moment offers unique opportunities for advocacy and action on VAWG prevention and feminist mobilisation. There is unprecedented investment in VAWG prevention and response through bilateral and multilateral agencies, private donors and philanthropic organisations. We are witnessing an increase in conservative political forces in many countries, which has been damaging for women’s rights. On the other hand, this conservative backlash has provided a common target for feminist advocates to coalesce around.
ISSUE CHARACTERISTICS <i>Characteristics of the issue itself that can increase attention and inspire action.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credible indicators: clear measures that show the severity of the problem and can be used to monitor progress. Severity: the size of the burden relative to other problems, as indicated by objective measures such as mortality levels. Effective interventions: the extent to which proposed means of addressing the problem are clearly explained, cost-effective, backed by scientific evidence, simple to implement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a strong body of evidence establishing the prevalence and severity of different forms of VAWG. Prevention requires long-term, coordinated investments in a number of initiatives, at different levels, that are both targeted and holistic. However, these initiatives have not always been attractive for governments or donors, resulting in sporadic, short-term projects that do not facilitate sustainable transformation of the root causes of VAWG.

The VAWG prevention field has grown considerably over the past 20 years. There is currently more funding, and more national and global policies and initiatives to address VAWG, and we also have multiple targets addressing VAWG in the SDGs that will continue to shape national and international actions over the coming decade. The SDGs are vital in that they demonstrate that sustainable, equitable development cannot be achieved without addressing VAWG in a holistic, coordinated and multisectoral way, and that reducing VAWG will contribute to the achievement of multiple development outcomes. This global moment presents a vital opportunity for the VAWG prevention field to establish strong connections with broader feminist and women’s rights movements in order to build the support base. There is also an opportunity to use that collective power and public attention to advocate for greater investment in evidence-based approaches to preventing VAWG, which can include women’s rights organisations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDING

There are opportunities for donors to come together to shape the VAWG prevention funding environment in a way that promotes best practice for prevention, solidarity of the women’s rights movement, and stability for WROs.

- Increase investment in VAWG prevention to meet the scale and scope of VAWG.
- Invest in and support WROs and women’s movements to push VAWG advocacy and to build linkages across geographies. The capacity of funders to quickly and strategically distribute support for activism and advocacy opportunities will be important for advancing the field and shifting the narrative on prevention, and to take advantage of the current global moment.
- Prioritise advocacy, convening and coordination between funders in the VAWG prevention field to share evidence on best practice, to ensure high quality funding as well as high quality programming. A set of guidelines on key principles for VAWG prevention could be useful to advocate for more effective spending that supports sustainability, scale-up and innovation.
- Consider establishing a funder network specifically on VAWG prevention that brings together private funds, bilaterals and multilaterals working in this space, through which to disseminate resources on funding best practice prevention and supporting a coordinated and holistic approach.
- Ensure donor investment is long-term and coordinated across multiple sectors.
- Develop a transparent, coordinated and streamlined way to share information on promising programs among grant-makers and funders.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADVOCACY

- Develop a collective and unified VAWG prevention advocacy agenda
 - a common voice, set of messages, and strategies for consolidating evidence – in order to more effectively influence policies, practice and funding.
- Connect VAWG prevention advocacy and campaigning with broader women's rights movements because work to build gender equality is implicitly aligned with more explicit VAWG work.
- Support integrated approaches to VAWG advocacy, policy-making and programming that recognises strategic opportunities to link this work with closely aligned fields, such as SRHR, violence against children, and women's economic empowerment.

ABOUT US

The Equality Institute

THE EQUALITY INSTITUTE IS A GLOBAL, FEMINIST RESEARCH AND CREATIVES AGENCY, DEDICATED TO THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS.

We conduct research, provide guidance on policies and programmes, and build creative ways to incite social change across the world.

We bring together the world's best gender experts and industry leaders from a range of fields, including research, humanitarian response, design, media and film, to build holistic solutions to the problem of violence against women and girls. We take a transformative approach to our work and our values of inclusivity, positivity, creativity and courage are embedded in everything we do.



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