



Study Guide UN Commission on Population and Development

“Resource Allocation: Challenges and obstacles countries face in allocating resources for GBV prevention including competing priorities and budget constraints.”

Tashkent International Model United Nations 2023

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Tashkent 2023

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Introduction

Gender-based violence (GBV) stands as a pervasive and deeply ingrained global challenge, significantly impacting individuals across the spectrum of gender and age, with a disproportionate burden often falling upon women and girls. The manifestations of GBV encompass a distressing array of abusive behaviors, spanning from physical and sexual aggression to emotional, economic, and psychological subjugation, manipulation, and control. GBV knows no boundaries, infiltrating the most intimate of spaces, such as homes and relationships, to public arenas like workplaces, schools, and communities, manifesting in forms as varied as intimate partner violence, human trafficking, and sexual harassment.

Understanding GBV necessitates a multifaceted approach, requiring coordinated efforts among governments, civil society, and international organizations. While commendable progress has been made in enhancing awareness and implementing strategies for prevention and response, the complexities of GBV persist, demanding ongoing dedication to address this deeply ingrained societal issue.

History

The number of the factors served as the main trigger of insufficient resource allocation for GBV prevention. The lack of awareness, social stigma and inadequate legal frameworks were the main factors contributing to this issue. The Governments may have faced with challenges in its allocation. For example, it may have been difficult to decide which sector is more important for funding, because there were several of them, such as healthcare, education, infrastructure and poverty sectors. To keep the balance may have been an uphill task for policymakers.

In 2016, the purpose code of ending violence against women and girl was created as a part of the ongoing Development Co-operation Gender Equality Perspectives¹. Approximately one-third

of the world women overcome gender-based violence. As the World Health Organization states this number increases significantly, if it is looked deeply into different regions of low-income countries. According to OCHA financial tracking service, only 0,12% was allocated for GBV prevention from 2016 to 2018. In 2019, the budget which was equal to \$76 million was funded by the EU to end the VAWG and this was the largest amount of money funded by the European Union. Most of the budget for the GBV prevention was received by the African region which was in the top second place of the list, the first of which was Myanmar receiving \$13 million¹.

In May 25, 2023, The White house introduced the action plan for GBV prevention, in order to address sexual violence and improve the safety and the health of those who are more vulnerable to different kinds of harassments². This plan includes in 7 main pillars: prevention, support, healing, safety and, well-being, economic security and housing stability, online safety, legal systems, emergency preparedness and crisis response, research and data. After this approach, The justice Department's Office on violence against women (OVW) has allocated about \$480 million to the address the issues like domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault ². In addition to this, in the summer of 2023, the agency Community Compass Technical Assistance and Capacity Building program was expected to help to fund VAWA by \$5 million². According to UN Women (2021), in order to reach the aim of the advanced gender equality worldwide approximately \$40 billion is needed. This long-term sector of the SDG is expecting to eliminate VAWG by 2030².

¹ OECD, 'Development finance towards the elimination of gender based violence' (2021)
<https://www.oecd.org/development/gender-development/development-finance-elimination-gender-based-violence.pdf>

² The White House, 'U.S national plan to end gender-Based violence: strategies for action'(2023)
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/National-Plan-to-End-GBV.pdf>

Causes

The main causes of the GBV involves in social, political and cultural factors. The laws or the norms accepted in many societies usually disrespect the rights of females or underestimate their value, according to cultural beliefs⁵. Most of the stereotypes formed in people's mindset support the violence against women. It is believed that men tend to be aggressive and take the dominant role almost in all societies. On the other hand, women are dependent on men considering them as their defenders and allowing them to directly abuse. Thus, girls are at higher risk to be affected negatively by thus trend.

Moreover, violence may have a significant influence on the families. In other words, it may have a harmful effect on physical or psychological state of the victim, which may result in death later on. From health perspective, violence is a major problem which may lead to increased death rate globally. The Australian National health and Well-being Survey identified 4 types of violence which commonly experienced by women³. These are intimate partner violence, rape and stalking which are included in the list of the GBV. 17% of American women were found to be a victim of the rape which is slightly more from one-fifth of those who had to deal with stalking³. The evidence supports that the outcomes are terrible, because women who have experienced at least one type of the GBV tend to acquire the rest types of them. Although the results of the interviews showed that many of those women were diagnosed with mental disorders, there is no correlation with the severity of the mental disorder with the type of the GBV.

Furthermore, girls who were a victim of the rape or sexual assault, with high probability may suffer from unwanted pregnancies or the infections, such as HIV, transmitted from the opposite gender during the contact. As German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

³ Susan Rees, PhD; Derrick Silove, MD; Tien Chey, MAppStat; et al, ' Lifetime Prevalence of Gender-Based Violence in Women and the Relationship With Mental Disorders and Psychosocial Function' (2011)

explains, Zambia, one of the countries in Africa, has the highest rate of those infected with HIV4. Although the child marriage there has declined, the violence against girls and women remains hidden. The government of Zambia is taking the measures to educate the young people since their early ages, the parents and the health care sectors are feeling caution about this measure⁴.

All in all, if not enough money is allocated for the GBV prevention the outcomes may be harsh. For instance, this may lead to the livelihood lose and the gender inequality in society at a high level. Women, who are the breadwinners in household, after experiencing violence, may lose the work productivity which in turn leads to limitation of the food productivity. On the other hand, the probability of being absent at workplace may rise, negatively contributing to the amount of the wage they get⁵.

The Problem

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a widespread and deeply concerning issue that affects people all around the world. It includes various forms of violence like physical, sexual, emotional, and economic harm, mainly targeting women and marginalized groups. Solving GBV is essential for respecting human rights and achieving fairness and equality.

The central issue we're addressing centers on the challenges countries face when allocating resources for GBV prevention. Specifically, the obstacles related to competing priorities and budget constraints pose a significant problem at the country level.

⁴ German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), 'Strengthening Girls' Rights! Reproductive Health and HIV prevention for young women and girls in Zambia II' (2023)

⁵ . Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence, 'Effective Responses to Gender Based Violence: MDG 1 (Poverty and Hunger) and GBV' <https://www.gbv.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Learning-Brief-5.pdf>

One of the critical challenges in allocating resources for Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention is budget constraints, and these constraints can have significant consequences, particularly for vulnerable groups. This issue is exemplified by observations made in South Africa.⁶

In 2011, Major General Susan Pienaar, Head of the Crime Protection Unit at the South African Police Service (SAPS), highlighted significant challenges in providing assistance to people with disabilities at police stations. These challenges included the fact that many police officials lacked the capacity to perform sign language. In 2012, an allocation of R80 million was made for the development of ramps in existing courts.

These real-world examples underscore how budget constraints can further isolate vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, from accessing essential services and support. The impact of limited funding extends beyond GBV prevention and can lead to unequal access to justice and assistance, hindering progress towards gender equality and social justice.

The budget constraints experienced in addressing GBV pose challenges for vulnerable groups and necessitate a comprehensive approach to secure sufficient funding for the prevention and response efforts to ensure inclusivity and equity.

In Thailand⁷, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and, in particular, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) remain significant concerns. The main challenge highlighted in this context is the lack of comprehensive data, which hampers effective GBV prevention and mitigation.

⁶ J Thorpe, 'Women's Roundtable: Accelerating Women's Empowerment and Development, through Engendering the National Development Plan and Financing for Gender Equality' (South African Parliament 2015) <https://static.pmg.org.za/150901roundtable.pdf>

⁷ Phetlam J, 'Spinning in the Void: The Data Black Hole of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Thailand | Heinrich Böll Foundation | Southeast Asia Regional Office' (Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung 20 October 2022) <https://th.boell.org/en/2022/10/20/sexual-and-gender-violence-thailand>

This data deficiency disproportionately impacts marginalized groups, including women inmates, women with disabilities, women from diaspora communities, and transgender and queer women. Their experiences and vulnerabilities often remain unaccounted for.

Past UN Actions

The United Nations (UN) is deeply committed to actively addressing the critical and pressing issue of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). This commitment is exemplified through various initiatives, one of which revolves around funding to combat GBV, particularly in the face of budget constraints.

According to a report by UN Women⁸, the UN's proactive stance in combating GBV is exemplified through its engagement with the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund), which was established in 1996 via the adoption of resolution 50/166 by the UN General Assembly. This fund has emerged as a cornerstone in the UN's efforts to address GBV systematically, reduce its prevalence, and ultimately work towards its elimination.

Since its inception, the UN Trust Fund has made substantial contributions, totaling USD 215 million, to support 646 initiatives spanning 140 countries and territories. In the year 2022, this initiative collaborated with 186 civil society organizations (CSOs) operating across 70 countries and territories, providing essential grants amounting to USD 87.8 million. A significant portion, approximately 62.4%, of these grants were channeled to women's rights organizations (WROs).

This exemplifies the UN's enduring commitment to combating GBV and supporting grassroots initiatives and organizations dedicated to addressing this critical issue. The UN continues

⁸ 'UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women' (UN Women) <https://www.unwomen.org/en/trust-funds/un-trust-fund-to-end-violence-against-women>

to actively collaborate with partners globally, resolutely pursuing a world free from violence against women and girls, even in the face of budget constraints.

Continuing our exploration of the actions undertaken by the United Nations to address gender-based violence (GBV), it is crucial to emphasize the significance of data collection in this endeavor. Data plays a pivotal role in understanding and combating GBV effectively.

In the context of addressing gender-based violence, the United Nations Human Rights Office⁹ has been actively engaged in advocating for comprehensive data collection. They have recognized the importance of data as a tool to expose the hidden realities of GBV and to guide evidence-based policymaking. By prioritizing data collection, the United Nations Human Rights Office contributes to the larger UN effort to combat GBV, particularly in the context of older women.

As demonstrated by the World Health Organization's findings in 2018, the lack of data on gender-based violence against older women poses a significant challenge. Less than 10 percent of eligible data on intimate partner violence includes women aged 50 and over. This data deficiency primarily stems from high-income countries, where GBV prevalence rates are relatively lower. Therefore, actions such as those taken by the United Nations Human Rights Office are crucial in promoting data collection and addressing this pervasive issue.

On World Elder Abuse Awareness Day in 2023, the call to action remains clear. States, UN agencies, statistical offices, media, and other stakeholders must collectively commit to ending violence against older individuals, with a specific emphasis on older women. The strengthening of data collection systems is essential to illuminate the realities of gender-based violence in old age. It is only through collective commitment and action that this issue can be effectively addressed.

⁹ Geneva, 'Human Rights Experts Call for Inclusive Data Collection to End Gender-Based Violence in Old Age' (United Nations 14 August 2023) <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/06/human-rights-experts-call-inclusive-data-collection-end-gender-based>

Solutions

Addressing the problems and obstacles that governments experience in allocating resources for GBV prevention, such as competing objectives and budget limits, necessitates a multidimensional strategy. The challenges of resource allocation for GBV prevention are undeniably complex, but with a concerted effort, a commitment to change, and a focus on collaboration, governments can work towards creating a safer and more equitable society. Here are the possible solutions that can mitigate this issue:

Advocacy for GBV Prevention:

- Awareness about the critical importance of GBV prevention can be raised through public awareness campaigns, educational initiatives, and media outreach.
- Support can be garnered from policymakers, community leaders, and the general public through advocacy campaigns.
- Comprehensive data collection and research can be invested in to gain a deeper understanding of the prevalence and impact of GBV. This data can be instrumental in making a compelling case for resource allocation.

Strategic Planning:

- A national strategy for GBV prevention can be formulated, delineating clear objectives, goals, and action plans.
- A dedicated budget category for GBV prevention can be created within government financial allocations.

Resource Reallocation:

- Current budgets can be scrutinized to identify areas where funds can be reallocated without compromising essential services.
- Opportunities for cost savings and increased efficiency in other government programs can be explored to free up resources for GBV prevention.
- Collaboration with private sector entities and foundations can be sought to secure additional funding for GBV prevention programs.

International Aid and Donor Support:

- Assistance and financial support can be sought from international organizations like the United Nations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and foreign governments.
- Collaborations with international donors can be fostered to implement GBV prevention programs.

Capacity Development:

- Investment in training and capacity building for law enforcement, healthcare professionals, and social workers can be made to enhance their responses to GBV cases.
- A pool of well-trained personnel capable of providing support and counseling to survivors can be cultivated.

Legal Reforms and Policy Adjustments:

- Laws and policies concerning GBV can be reviewed and revised to ensure their comprehensiveness, effectiveness, and adequate funding.
- Laws and regulations that hold GBV perpetrators accountable can be vigorously enforced.
- Cross-Sector Collaboration:

- Mechanisms for interagency coordination can be established to streamline GBV prevention efforts across various government departments.
- Collaboration between civil society organizations, government agencies, and law enforcement can be promoted.

Inclusive Programs:

- GBV prevention programs can be customized to meet the specific needs of marginalized and vulnerable populations.
- These programs can be ensured to be culturally sensitive and accessible to all communities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) remains a pervasive global challenge that disproportionately affects women and marginalized groups, requiring multifaceted efforts in resource allocation to address the obstacles of competing priorities and budget constraints. Governments, in collaboration with civil society and international organizations, must emphasize the importance of GBV prevention and advocate for increased awareness. This can be achieved through comprehensive data collection, strategic planning, and reallocation of resources from existing budgets, in addition to fostering public-private partnerships, international aid, and capacity development. Legal reforms, cross-sector collaboration, inclusive programs, economic and societal cost assessment, community engagement, and sustained commitment are essential components of a holistic strategy. With a focus on monitoring and evaluation, and by celebrating successes, governments can make significant strides towards a safer and more equitable society by addressing this deeply ingrained issue of GBV.

Links to research

Parker J, 'Water Shortages Have a History | Perspectives on History | AHA' (*www.historians.org* 26 September 2019) <<https://www.historians.org/research-and-publications/perspectives-on-history/september-2019/water-shortages-have-a-history-how-the-kenyan-colonial-state-mismanaged-a-resource-and-endangered-a-community>>

Solar Impulse, 'Solutions to Water Scarcity: How to Prevent Water Shortages?' (*Solarimpulse.com* 2018) <<https://solarimpulse.com/water-scarcity-solutions>>

Unicef, 'Critical Business Actions for Achieving a Water Secure World' (2021) <<https://www.unicef.org/media/133021/file/Critical%20Business%20Actions%20for%20Achieving%20a%20Water%20Secure%20World.pdf>>

United Nations, 'Water' (*United Nations* 2019) <<https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/water>>

World Vision, 'Global Water Crisis - Facts, FAQs, and How to Help | World Vision Australia' (*Worldvision.com.au* 2018) <<https://www.worldvision.com.au/global-water-crisis-facts>>