

UN Framework for Prevention of Violence Against Women: Evidence-based tool for policy-makers

Department of Reproductive Health and Research



**World Health
Organization**



Key Messages

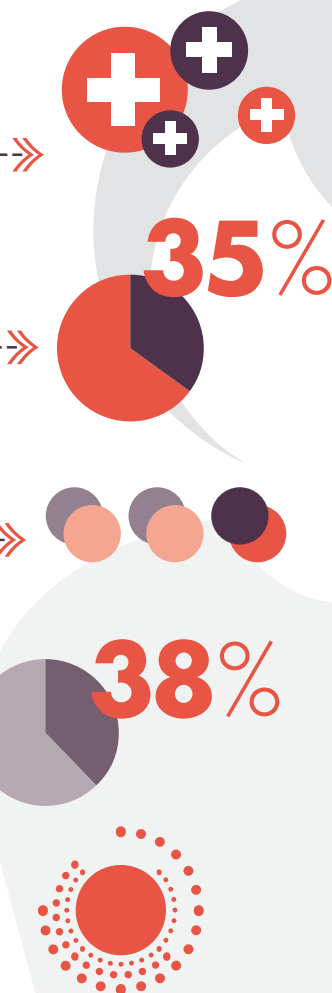
Violence against women (VAW), which is rooted in gender inequality, is a major **public health problem** and a violation of women's **human rights**.

1 in 3 (35%) women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence.

Most of this violence is **intimate partner violence**. Worldwide, almost one third (30%) of women who have been in a relationship report that they have experienced some form of physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner in their lifetime.

Globally, as many as **38%** of murders of women are committed by a male intimate partner.

Violence negatively affects women's physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health.



Factors associated with increased risk of **perpetration of violence** include low education, child maltreatment or exposure to violence in the family, harmful use of alcohol, attitudes accepting of violence and gender inequality.

Factors associated with increased risk of **experiencing intimate partner and sexual violence** include low education, exposure to violence during childhood, unequal power in intimate relationships, attitudes and norms accepting violence and gender inequality.

In high-income settings there is evidence that **home visiting** and **health worker outreach** and **victim advocacy** interventions are promising in reducing intimate partner violence.

In low-income settings, strategies to increase women's **economic and social empowerment**, and community mobilization to promote gender equitable norms and relationships are promising in reducing intimate partner violence.

Situations of **humanitarian emergencies** may exacerbate existing violence and lead to additional forms of violence against women.



Risk & Protective Factors

Risk Factors

Gender discriminatory laws related to property ownership, marriage, divorce and child custody

Low levels of women's employment

Lack of political will to enforce laws on VAW

Absence of laws prohibiting VAW

Harmful gender norms that uphold male privilege

High levels of poverty and unemployment

High rates of violence and crime

Availability of drugs, alcohol and weapons

High levels of inequality in relationships/ male-controlled relationships

Multiple sexual relationships by partner

Alcohol misuse by partner

Childhood experience of violence and/ or exposure to violence between parents

Mental disorders

SOCIETAL

COMMUNITY

INTERPERSONAL

INDIVIDUAL

SOCIETAL

Existence and enforcement of laws that:

- promote gender equality
- promote women's access to formal employment
- criminalize all forms of VAW

COMMUNITY

Norms that support non-violence and gender equitable relationships

INTERPERSONAL

Gender equality in intimate relationships is more prevalent

INDIVIDUAL

High levels of education for women and men

Both men and women hold gender equitable attitudes

Protective Factors*

**Typically a protective factor will be the converse of risk factors*

Sources:

- Heise L, 2011: *What works to prevent violence against women*
- WHO, LSHTM, 2010: *Preventing Intimate partner violence and sexual violence: generating evidence and taking action*

7 Strategies to
Prevent Violence
Against Women

Childhood Violence Prevention

Policies and Laws

Empower Women

Reduce Poverty

Safe Environments

Ensure Services

Transform Social & Gender Norms

R E S P E C T

Reduce Poverty

Economic empowerment/cash transfers/income supplement programmes (conflicting, LMIC) (No evidence, HIC)



Empower Women

Economic empowerment + gender empowerment training (promising, LMIC) (No evidence, HIC)



Empowerment training for women and girls including life skills, safe spaces, mentoring (Insufficient HIC, Promising LMIC)



Secondary education for girls

EXAMPLE

The *IMAGE project* (Intervention with Microfinance for Aids and Gender Equity) in South Africa empowers women through microfinance together with training on violence and community mobilization activities. Studies show it reduced domestic violence by 50% in intervention group over a period of two years. [Add costing info.](#)

Safe Environments

Bystander interventions (Conflicting, HIC)



Infrastructure and transport (Insufficient evidence HIC) (Insufficient LMIC)



Policies and Laws

Laws criminalizing VAW

National/sub-national action plans/policies on violence against women and gender equality

Marriage, Divorce and Custody, Inheritance laws that guarantee equality for women

Justice and law-enforcement interventions (e.g. specialized courts, alternative & restorative justice - conflicting, insufficient evidence, mandatory reporting and arrest for DV) Ineffective (HIC), No evidence (LMIC)



EXAMPLE

Australia's *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010 – 2022* focuses on the two main types of violent crimes that have a major impact on women in Australia—domestic and family violence and sexual assault. The National Plan focuses on stopping violence before it happens in the first place, supporting women who have experienced violence, stopping men from committing violence, and building the evidence base to learn more about 'what works' in reducing domestic and family violence and sexual assault.

Ensure Services

Advocacy/empowerment counselling interventions to support access to services (promising HIC) (Insufficient, LMIC)



Woman-centered health and psychological support (Conflicting HIC) (Insufficient, LMIC).



One-stop crisis centres (No evidence/NA, HIC) (Insufficient evidence LMIC).



Shelters (Insufficient, HIC) (Insufficient LMIC)



Alcohol misuse prevention interventions (Insufficient evidence, LMIC and HIC)



Substance abuse and OH reduction

Perpetrator interventions (conflicting HIC) (Insufficient LMIC)



Women's police stations/units (No evidence/NA HIC) (Insufficient LMIC)



Screening in health services (Ineffective HIC) (No evidence, LMIC)



Sensitization and training of institutional personnel (Ineffective)



Hotlines (Insufficient evidence HIC and LMIC)



EXAMPLE

The *Community Advocacy Project* is an evidence-based program designed to help women survivors of intimate partner abuse regain control of their lives. The intervention was found to lower recurrence of violence and depression and improve quality of life and social support.

Childhood Violence Prevention

Home visitation & health worker outreach (Promising HIC) (Insufficient LMIC).



Parenting interventions (Insufficient evidence, LMIC)



Psychological support interventions for children who experience violence and who witness intimate partner violence (Promising, HIC) (Insufficient, LMIC)



Life skills / school-based curriculum/rape prevention training, dating violence (conflicting HIC, insufficient LMIC)



Whole School interventions (Insufficient evidence LMIC)



EXAMPLE

The *Nurse-Family Partnership* is an intervention to prevent child abuse and neglect which contributes to childhood injury. In the intervention's Memphis (Tennessee, United States) trial, there was a 28% relative reduction in all types of health care encounters for injuries and ingestions, and a 79% relative reduction in the number of days that children were hospitalized with injuries and ingestions during children's first two years.

Transfer Gender & Social Norms

Community mobilization (no evidence HIC) (Promising, LMIC)



Group education with men and boys to change attitudes and norms (Insufficient, HIC) (Conflicting LMIC)



Group-based workshops with women and men to promote changes in attitudes and norms (Insufficient HIC) (Promising, LMIC)



Awareness Campaigns/single component communications campaigns (Ineffective HIC and LMIC)



Social marketing or edutainment + Group education (Insufficient, HIC and LMIC)



EXAMPLE

Community Mobilizations: SASA! is a community intervention in Uganda that prevents violence against women by shifting the power balance between men and women in relationships. Studies show that in SASA! communities 76% of women and men believe physical violence against a partner is not acceptable while only 26% of women and men in control communities believe the same. [Add costing info.](#)

EXAMPLE

Group-based Workshops: In the two-year period following the implementation of *Stepping Stones* in South Africa with female and male participants aged 15–26 years, men experienced some reduction in violent and exploitative behaviour. Compared with the baseline, participants in the intervention were involved in fewer incidences of intimate partner violence, rape and transactional sex.

LMIC	HIC
Low and Middle Income Countries	High Income Countries

		promising
		insufficient
		conflicting
		ineffective /no evidence

Guiding principles for prevention

Do no harm.

1

Promote gender equality and women's human rights.

2

Take into account and address intersecting forms of discrimination that enhance vulnerability to violence.

3

Promote, support and support multi-sectoral coordination at the organizational, national and community levels and between sectors.

4

5

Support systems for monitoring and evaluating, building the evidence base and sharing lessons learned.

6

Support the development of tools, knowledge to support prevention.

7

Provide strong government leadership and adequate resources for violence prevention initiatives.

8

Build linkages between the response and prevention systems to ensure a comprehensive approach.

9

Empower and resource women's organizations at the community level.

Adapting and Scaling Up

1

Align the programme or intervention with national commitment (e.g. a national plan, policy, strategy) to end violence against women.



2

Build ownership for the programme or intervention among implementers and the community that will benefit from the programming, using participatory approaches.



3

Document and evaluate the adaptation and scale up as you go to learn and continually strengthen evidence-based programming.



4

Build a community of practice among implementers by collaborating with others implementing VAW interventions to strengthen capacities and knowledge sharing and learning at the local level.



5

Integrate prevention activities into existing government structures and sectoral programmes for long-term sustainability and scale.



6

Design the programme or intervention with "scale" in mind by planning for long term sustainability, costs and strategies for adaptation and replication.



