
UNIFEM AT A GLANCE

Ending Violence Against Women

Fighting gender-based violence is a major concern for UNIFEM, because violence against women is a universal problem and one of the most widespread violations of human rights. One in three women will suffer some form of violence in her lifetime, becoming part of an epidemic that devastates lives, fractures communities and stalls development. Despite some progress on this issue over the past decade, its horrendous scale remains mostly unacknowledged. New dimensions include the global trafficking of women and girls.

UNIFEM Responds: Strategies That Make a Difference

UNIFEM works on several fronts to interrupt the cycle of violence against women, with an overall objective of linking violence to the source that feeds it: gender inequality. UNIFEM multiplies the power of its groundbreaking strategies through advocacy campaigns and close partnerships with governments, women's groups and other branches of the UN system.

Protective laws and national actions: In a number of countries, UNIFEM works with its partners on establishing legal frameworks to combat violence. Laws alone, however comprehensive they may be, must be followed by plans for specific national actions, which is why UNIFEM is active on this end as well.

Measuring the problem: UNIFEM has been at the forefront of supporting the collection of data and research on violence against women. Much of this information would otherwise not exist, making it impossible to understand the scope of the problem, or devise the means to stop it.

Prevention: Strategies to stop violence before it starts are essential, but lack resources and visibility. UNIFEM supports prevention initiatives from the local to the international level, including in conflict and post-conflict situations, where violence against women is prevalent and horrific.

Support for women's organizations: Women's organizations have developed some of the most creative and effective responses to violence, often in societies where the problem is otherwise largely ignored. UNIFEM helps draw attention and resources to these efforts, and brings the voices of activists together across countries and onto the international stage.

The Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women: Housed within UNIFEM, the Trust Fund offer grants to innovative projects to prevent violence that are run by community, national and regional organizations. With relatively modest sums, grantees have passed new laws, trained police, and involved men and boys in stopping violence. The Trust Fund also collects and shares information about effective strategies that can be replicated or implemented on a larger scale.

At Work Around the World

UNIFEM promotes women's empowerment, rights and gender equality globally, and through 15 sub-regional and two national offices that support programmes within and among individual countries.

Africa

In Somaliland, after UNIFEM distributed advocacy materials and held an intensive three-month judiciary training session, the House of Traditional Leaders countered traditional practice by condemning forced marriages for rape victims. A Trust Fund initiative in Uganda has worked with the police to set up special units for investigating cases of violence, coordinating with civic leaders and sensitizing communities. Regionally, Trust Fund support to FEMNET has led to the creation of a men's network to combat violence against women and promote gender equality.

Arab States

UNIFEM joined the UN Development Programme and the UN Population Fund to support a national strategy in Morocco to combat gender-based violence. It has resulted in changes to the penal code, with stronger provisions on domestic violence and rape. UN and bilateral donors also use the strategy to coordinate their anti-violence efforts in the country.

Asia and the Pacific

UNIFEM has helped establish trauma counselling centres along trafficking corridors in Bangladesh, India and Nepal, as well as anti-trafficking committees in villages that provide information on assistance. In Lao PDR, after the Trust Fund supported the Women's Union to compile compelling evidence of the extent of gender-based violence, the government asked the union to draft a domestic violence bill that was passed into law. Trust Fund grants in China have replicated pilot complaint stations and shelters across several provinces, and encouraged the government to set up a national group for coordinating efforts to protect women and children.

CEE/CIS

In the CIS, a UNIFEM-backed advocacy campaign has reached millions of people with messages about violence, and collected the region's first comparable data on violence in nine countries. In Latvia and Russia, UNIFEM has trained anti-trafficking experts, and devised a tool kit for preventing youth trafficking.

Latin America and the Caribbean

UNIFEM, the Pan American Health Organization and other partners have collaborated on a regional project that recommended key components of laws against gender-based violence as a basis for legal reforms. In Peru, UNIFEM's assistance to victims raped during the country's internal conflict included reaching out to men in affected communities to help them respond supportively to victims' emotional trauma.

Globally

A UNIFEM report, *Not a Minute More: Ending Violence Against Women*, provides an overview of women's efforts around the world to staunch domestic violence. Launched at the United Nations and distributed globally, it outlines the severity of the issue, and makes a compelling case for more resources and continued action.