

**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
AND
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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ABSTRACT

Violence against women is increasingly recognized not just as social, but also as health, legal, economic and development issue. This paper examines the links between violence against women and international development contributing to the growing momentum in the field. Studies from around the world demonstrate that the prevalence of different forms of gender-based violence is higher in developing countries. High human and socio-economic costs of gender-based violence stall growth and development by undermining human capital, reducing productivity and diverting scarce resources from productive spending. Violence against women also undermines other development efforts aimed at strengthening gender equality, eradicating poverty, ensuring access to education and improving health. Addressing this problem is a major challenge, as it requires multi-level cooperation between various stakeholders, as well as tackling social beliefs and attitudes at the grassroots level. This paper also reviews the response from various sectors and some of the promising initiatives.

Keywords: international development; violence against women; gender-based violence; women's rights; gender equality

In this century the biggest struggle is against terror. Do they know women in developing countries live in terror every day of their lives? We are violated daily going to school, going to market, going to fetch water, working in the field. We live in terror. We live in terror.

Bogaletch Gebre, Executive Director, Kembatta Mentti-Gezizima Tope, Ethiopia – From a speech at Gender Justice Summit (June 18-20, 2010 - Toronto, Canada)

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INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the links between violence against women and development, as well as some of the current responses to this issue. It argues that violence against women is a development issue, as it carries high human and socio-economic costs that stall growth and development by undermining human capital, reducing productivity and diverting scarce resource from productive spending. Violence against women also undermines other development efforts aimed at strengthening gender equality, eradicating poverty, ensuring access to education and improving health.

Violence against women exists in every society in multitude of forms and affects half of the worlds' population, and yet, this is a relatively new research area outside women's studies. Gender-based violence has been acknowledged as a social problem for a long time, but until few decades ago it was considered to be primarily a private matter virtually impenetrable for study and research, and carrying little significance for such fields as economics, political science or international studies. As more research becomes available, it is increasingly evident that violence against women has major affects not only on individuals, but also on various dimensions of social, cultural, economic and even political life of the whole communities and societies, and hence bears significance for international development. Women's movements have been instrumental in placing the issue on national and international agendas, and since 1990s a

growing number of non-governmental organizations, civil society groups and multilateral agencies have been calling on governments and aid donors to make ending violence against women and girls a development priority. By examining the relation between gender-based violence and international development this paper contributes to the growing momentum for this issue.

This paper is divided in three chapters. First chapter examines the definition, forms, causes, scope and prevalence of violence against women. Second chapter looks at the impact of such violence on individuals and societies. It reviews some of the major studies undertaken to date that examine human and socio-economic costs of gender-based violence, and looks at the different ways in which violence against women undermines key priority areas in development as set out in the Millennium Development Goals. Last chapter examines the responses to violence against women by different development sectors. It demonstrates that most intervention and prevention efforts involve some level of cooperation between various stakeholders, as it is widely recognized that the solutions to this complex problem require a holistic approach. However, more research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of prevention initiatives that hold the potential to reduce violence against women.

1: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

This chapter begins by defining violence against women and classifying its various types and forms. It demonstrates the difficulty of conceptualizing this phenomenon that is rooted in social relations but has multiple manifestations on different levels. The chapter then proceeds to explore the causes of gender-based violence and commonly identified risk factors. It uses the “ecological approach” to explore the relation between those numerous factors. The following section of the chapter deals with scope and prevalence of the problem by reviewing existing studies on the subject. The last section of the chapter looks at violence against women in the context of the developing world.

1.1 Definition

There is no universally accepted definition of violence against women (Heise, Pitanguy & Germain, 1994; UNICEF, 2000). The definition that is most widely used is the one adopted by the United Nations: “Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life” (UN General Assembly A/RES/48/104, 1993, article 1). It highlights the fact that violence against women is gender-based, and thus rooted

in unequal power relations between men and women.¹ Gender-based violence against women is defined as “violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman, or violence that affects women disproportionately” (UN General Assembly A/61/122/Add.1, 2006, p. 15). The broadness of this definition of violence against women is both its strength and its weakness: it is descriptive and encompasses different forms of violence, but it also makes it difficult to operationalize the issue for research and policy (Heise et al., 1994).

In accordance with this definition, gender-based discrimination on the level of the state, such as inequitable access to health and education, discriminatory laws, and lack of services for helping the victims and prosecuting the perpetrators, can be all seen as structural violence against women (UNICEF, 2000). While such discrimination is a violation of women’s rights as human rights, conceptually it makes the definition of violence against women too broad, as it is hard to establish which degree of discrimination constitutes violence, and the presence of the intent (Heise et al., 1994). It also makes separating gender-based violence from other gender-related issues in development highly problematic. A more refined definition was presented in the World Bank’s report on the issue (Heise et al., 1994), which defines violence against women as “any act of verbal or physical force, coercion, or life-threatening deprivation, directed at an individual woman or girl, that causes physical or psychological harm,

¹ While it is important to remember that men and trans gendered individuals also suffer from gender-based violence, the overwhelming majority of victims are women. For this reason the term “gender-based violence” is commonly used to refer to violence against women exclusively throughout the literature on the topic and for the purposes of this paper.

humiliation or arbitrary deprivation of liberty and that perpetuates female subordination” (p. 47). The strength of this definition is in its focus on individuals that helps to distinguish individual acts of omission and gender-based discrimination (i.e. prohibiting a girl to attend school) from institutionally perpetuated gender inequality (i.e. lack of investment in schooling opportunities for girls as opposed to those for boys). It also captures the intent of the perpetrator to retain control and power over a woman, which lies at the core of gender-based violence. This definition is used as a working one for the purposes of this paper.

1.2 Understanding Violence against Women

Violence against women exists in a multitude of forms. It can be perpetrated by the states and institutions (i.e. forced sterilization), or by individuals. Interpersonal violence can be broken into family or/and intimate partner violence that can range from verbal and psychological abuse to battering and marital rape; and community violence, which usually takes place outside home between unrelated individuals who may or may not know each other. Community violence includes harassment, sexual abuse, trafficking and forced prostitution, among other forms (Krug et al., 2002; WHO, 2008). Some of the culturally specific forms include female genital mutilations, “acid throwing”, and “honour killings”, among others. While gender-based violence can manifest itself differently in specific cultural contexts and take different forms, at the most fundamental level its root cause lies in unequal power relations between men and women that still characterize most societies today (UN General Assembly

A/61/122/Add.1, 2006). As such, violence against women is the extreme manifestation of gender inequality. On the individual level, a number of interacting factors determine why a specific individual, in the majority of cases a man, chooses to use violence against a woman in any given situation. The so-called “ecological model” is widely used for understanding the causes of violence, as it captures personal, situational and socio-cultural factors that lead to abuse in an interconnected and holistic manner (Heise, 1998).

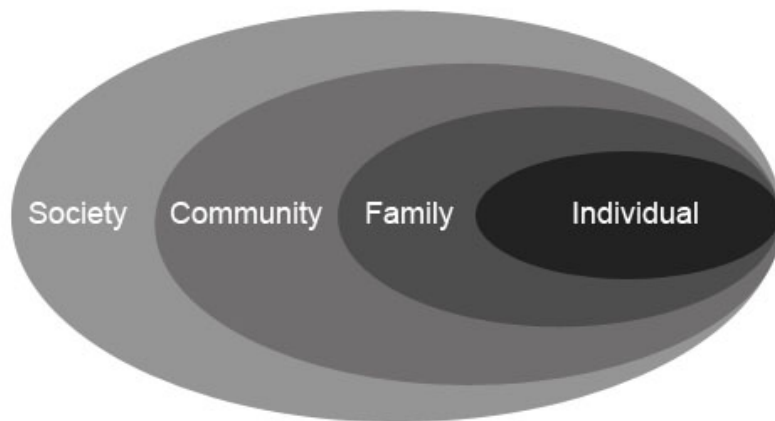


Figure 1. “Ecological model” of violence against women.²

The most common factors identified through cross-cultural studies include: rigid gender roles, social isolation of women, poverty, level of education (both for men and women), age, drug and alcohol use, experiencing or witnessing abuse as a child, and male control of wealth (Morrison and Orlando, 1999; Moleneux & Razavi, 2002; Momsen, 2010). All of those factors can be placed on different

² Adapted from Heise, L. (1998). Violence against women: An integrated ecological framework. *Violence Against Women* 4(3), 262–290.

levels of the “ecological model”. In addition, violence against women is often cyclical in its nature, following women through different stages of their life in various forms, often starting before a girl child is even born and into old age (Heise et al., 1994).

1.3 Prevalence and Scope

It is virtually impossible to estimate the real extent of violence against women due to its multiple forms and underreporting, even for those types that are more recognizable. Victims are silenced by fear of further violence, often find themselves blamed for being abused, and face community repercussions if they try to bring this widely believed “private” matter into the open, even by simply seeking help (Heise et al., 1994). Existing prevalence estimates differ because of the types of violence they measure, data collection and analysis methodology, studied populations, definitions of the types of perpetrators and time periods to which the studies refer to (Heise et al., 1994; UNICEF, 2000; Morrison & Orlando, 2004).

The prevalence and scope of physical and sexual violence against women is perhaps most well researched. Several large-scale studies were undertaken in the attempt to capture the numbers of women affected by this type of violence in different countries. The estimates suggest that globally on average one in three women between the ages of 15 and 44 experience physical and sexual violence from an intimate partner (UNFPA, UNIFEM & OSAGI, 2005). One in five women will be a victim of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime (Heise, Ellsberg & Gottemoeller, 1999). A review of 50 population-based studies from 36 countries

published in 1999 demonstrated that between 10 and 60% of married or partnered women reported to have experienced at least one incident of physical violence from an intimate partner (Heise et al., 1999). Those statistics prove that gender-based violence is a global problem, but also reflect a great diversity of the levels of violence against women in different countries, and often regions. In South Asia at least one in two women experience intimate partner violence (Parpart, Connelly & Barriteau, 2009), and in the Democratic Republic of Congo as much as 33% of all women have been raped in the course of the on-going conflict by both military and the civilians, reaching up to 80% in certain areas (Harvard Humanitarian Initiative and Oxfam International, 2010). Various social factors such as age, race, class and ethnicity can also lead to intra-country differences that make certain groups of women more vulnerable than others. In Canada, for example, 21% of Aboriginal women reported physical or/and sexual violence from their intimate partners between during the five-year period before 2004 study, as compared to 7% non-Aboriginal women (Brzozowski, Taylor-Butts & Johnson, 2006).

A large cross-country study conducted by the World Health Organization (2005) looked at ten countries³ representing diverse cultural settings and different levels of income, and found a significant variation in the prevalence of violence against women across the sample. The lowest prevalence of physical or/and sexual violence among the sample (15%) was reported in Japan, while the highest levels were reported in the rural areas of Ethiopia (71%), Peru (69%)

³ Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, Japan, Namibia, Peru, Samoa, Serbia and Montenegro, Thailand, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

and Bangladesh (62%) (WHO, 2005). These findings suggest that violence against women is more widespread in developing countries. This fact will be discussed further in the next section of the chapter.

The scope of some of the culturally specific forms of violence is hard to estimate, but even partial data suggests high prevalence. So-called “honour killings”, for instance, are widespread in parts of Asia, and eastern Mediterranean. In 2003 there were 53 of such killings in just one tribe in Iran, all of them under the age of twenty (Greiff, 2010, p. 14). The problem is so widespread in Pakistan that a special Honour Killings Bill was passed into law in 2005. Female genital mutilation is another culturally specific form of violence that is prevalent in many countries. This life-threatening and extremely harmful practice that leaves long-lasting psychological and physical damage is widely practiced in Africa, parts of Asia and the Middle East, as well as in immigrant communities across North America, Australia, and Europe (Heise et., 1994; UNICEF, 2000). It is estimated that nearly 130 million women have undergone this procedure worldwide, and despite its illegal status in most countries at least 2 million girls continue undergoing female genital mutilation every year (WHO, 2005; UNICEF, 2000).

In some parts of the world the magnitude of gender-based violence can be observed on the level of the demographic trends through skewed sex ratios. It has been estimated that millions of women are “missing” from the populations across South Asia, North Africa, the Middle East and China due to various forms of gender-based discrimination and violence, including sex-selective abortions,

infanticide, and differential access to food and medical care (Chatterjee, 1990; Sen, 1991; UNICEF, 2000). According to the latest United Nations Development Programme report from Asia Pacific region (2010), China and India have about 42.6 “missing” million women each (p. 34). In China it is explained by the combination of cultural preference for sons who are traditionally responsible for taking care of parents in their old age, and the one-child state policy (Heise et al., 1994). In India the commercialization of dowry, among other reasons, makes having female children a heavy financial burden (Chatterjee, 1990). In both countries the wide availability of ultrasound machines that help to determine the sex of the foetus exacerbates the problem by leading to an increased number of sex-selective abortions, resulting in a number of female births that is lower than biologically predetermined (UNDP, 2010).

1.4 Violence against Women in Developing Countries

As was mentioned in the previous section, there is evidence that violence against women is more prevalent in developing and poor countries (WHO, 2005). This phenomenon warrants further explanation. First of all, gender-based violence is higher in societies where the overall levels of interpersonal and structural violence are high due to a prolonged civil conflict, as is the case with Guatemala (Morrison & Biehl, 1999). Secondly, violence against women is the expression of gender inequality, and researchers have found a strong correlation between the latter and the levels of economic development (Forsythe, Korzeniewicz & Durrant, 2000; Inglehart & Norris, 2003; UNDP, 2010). However, this is not a causal relation, as demonstrated by those countries that have

achieved high levels of development, such as Saudi Arabia, but where gender inequality remains high, and many of women's rights are not recognized.

Researches tend to agree that while economic growth opens more opportunities for women and changes social attitudes and values in the long run, this process is not automatic and needs to be supported by institutional changes through policy and legal reforms (World Bank, 2000; UNDP, 2010). Inglehart and Norris (2003) studied long-term change in societal values around the world, and concluded that "the broad direction of value change is predictable, although the pace is conditioned by the cultural legacy and institutional structures of any given society" (p. 10). Cross-cultural studies also have demonstrated that it is the form of social organization rather than the levels of development and income that determine the prevalence and severity of violence against women (Heise et al., 1994). However, as was previously mentioned, the level of income is identified as one of the risk factors associated with violence against women. It is known that poor women are exposed to greater risks of sexual violence from strangers, as well as different forms of intimate partner violence (UNICEF, 2000). It is explained by a combination of such factors as generally unsafe living and working conditions, economic vulnerability, and their partners' frustration steaming from the inability to provide for the family. It is also possible that poverty acts as a trigger or magnifier of existing conflicts (Morrison & Biehl, 1999). While the relation between all of those factors and how they interact is not clear, social environment might still be the underlying reason, and "it is probable that poverty

acts as ‘marker’ for a variety of social conditions that combine to increase the risk faced by women” (Krug et al., 2002, p. 99).

Another reason why developing countries experience higher levels of gender-based violence is ascribed to globalization. Violence is used as mechanism of control and enforcement of traditional gender roles based on unequal power relations. In the context of rapidly changing economic, social and cultural realities, women in developing countries often fall victims to communal and individual resistance to change. The rising fundamentalist and right-wing movements that oppose the forces of cultural and economic globalization often seek to preserve traditional way of living by controlling women’s bodies, their mobility and sexuality (Harcourt, 2009)⁴. One of the most startling example is the Taliban regime in Afghanistan that imposes strict regulations on all aspects of women’s lives in the name of religious purity (Inglehart & Norris, 2003). On the individual level male backlash against their female intimate partners and family members can be provoked by changing cultural and economic patterns that threaten traditional male authority and power in the household (Momsen, 2010). This individual response is often sanctioned by the community that provides impunity for perpetrators, and ostracizes the victim for bringing dishonour on her family by transgressing established gender norms. Studies have demonstrated that entering the workforce and assuming non-traditional gender roles increases

⁴ Fuelled by ethnic nationalism and religious fundamentalism, women often also choose to condone and participate in male violence against other women, as was the case in well-documented anti-Muslim riots in the Indian state of Gujarat in 2002 and the Maoist insurgency in Nepal (Harcourt, 2009).

the risk of partner violence for women (Krug et al., 2002). All these factors explain the high prevalence of violence against women in developing countries.

This chapter explored what constitutes violence against women, its forms, causes, global magnitude, and discussed the context of developing countries. Despite the challenges of defining gender-based violence and estimating its actual prevalence, researchers agree that different types and forms of gender-based violence affect the overwhelming majority of women worldwide, particularly in developing countries. Next chapter explores the impact of violence against women on individuals, societies and the process of development.

2: THE IMPACT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ON DEVELOPMENT

This chapter establishes the relation between gender-based violence and development through human and socio-economic costs of such violence, and its negative effects on the development process and outcomes. The first section of this chapter looks at the impact of gender-based violence on women, their children, whole families, communities and societies. It reviews some of the studies that estimate the various costs of domestic and other forms of violence, and discusses the overall methodology of such estimates. The following section presents the evidence of how gender-based violence and its effects undermine a range of development efforts aimed at improving health, education and alleviating poverty. The chapter concludes that violence against women undermines development, and therefore warrants attention from the international development community.

2.1 The Impact of Violence against Women on Individuals

Any form of violence carries the destructive potential to start a chain of negative effects that harm one's physical and mental health, affect social relations, and undermine individual's ability to participate in the life of the society, earn a living and contribute to the life of the community (Krug et al., 2002). According to the technical update on the effects of gender-based violence on

reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prepared for US agency for International Development (USAID),

Previous studies found that violence against women increases their risk of fatal (homicide, suicide, maternal deaths, AIDS-related deaths) and non-fatal (physical and mental, high-risk health behaviors, reproductive health) outcomes. They also confirmed that there are health risk factors associated with GBV [gender-based violence] since abused women tend to exhibit more physical symptoms, reduced physical functioning, worse subjective health, more lifetime diagnoses, and higher health care utilization. (USAID, 2002, p. 8)

In addition to causing a range of diagnosed health problems, physical and sexual abuse have been linked to a range of “functional disorders” that frequently have no identifiable cause, such as irritable bowel syndrome, fibromyalgia, gastrointestinal disorders and chronic pain syndromes (Krug et al., 2002).

Psychological abuse is the most under-reported and hard to estimate, and yet, “victim-survivors report that ongoing psychological violence – emotional torture and living under terror – is often more unbearable than the physical brutality, with mental stress leading to a high incidence of suicide and suicide attempts” (UNICEF, 2000, p. 4). As the result, women and girls who experience violence perform worse in school, have lower chances of obtaining and holding gainful employment, and exhibit lower productivity, all of which undermines their human capital and ability to make a living, while also making them more vulnerable to poverty (WB, 1993; UNDP, 1995; Krug et al., 2002). Due to women’s reproductive role in the society, the multiplier effects of such violence are even greater, as they affect not only women’s health and her productivity, but also those of the whole household (Chatterjee, 1990).

2.2 The Impact of Violence against Women on Societies

Two strands of research have been trying to assess the impact of violence against women on societal level. One strand is focusing on health outcomes related to reproductive, mental and physical health of both women and their children affected by interpersonal violence (Krug et al., 2002; WHO, 2005; WHO, 2008), while the other strand attempts to estimate socio-economic costs (WB, 1993; Morrison & Orlando, 2004; Bott, Morrison and Ellsberg, 2005). Those two approaches look at medical and non-medical costs by using various measures that make the issue comparable to others either in terms of monetary value or other parameters. Framing violence against women as an economic issue can be dangerous, as by becoming part of the efficiency calculations it obliterates the human costs and the experiences of victims. However, monetary estimates are also necessary, especially in the context of developing countries, if one hopes to secure funding for interventions among other competing issues, develop financially viable policy approaches or to evaluate the effectiveness of programs.

Studies estimating national direct and indirect societal costs have been conducted for a number of developed countries, such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and are used to inform government spending (Morrison & Orlando, 2004; Brzozowski et al., 2006). Less research have been done in developing countries, especially outside the health sector, which is currently best researched due to the efforts of the World Health Organization. Understandably enough, for many developing countries direct costs are relatively low due to the limited provision of required services, and hence is a poor indicator of the actual

societal costs (Morrison & Orlando, 2004; Bott et al., 2005). In addition, as was previously mentioned, many factors can prevent women from seeking help and reporting the incidents in the first place.

Indirect non-medical costs refer to lost opportunities and resources as the result of violence. Those costs can be tangible, such as lost income or foregone years of education as the result of disability, or intangible, such as the reduced quality of life. Morrison and Orlando (1999) conducted a study in Chile and Nicaragua looking at the loss in earnings among women experiencing domestic violence. They found that 40% of 310 women sampled in Santiago and 52% of 378 women sampled in Managua experienced incidents of sexual, physical or/and psychological violence from their partners. The researchers collected data on the loss in earnings among the victims of violence, while controlling for other variables, and scaled up those findings to the country level. This led to the estimation that in Nicaragua lost wages due to family violence amounted to 1.6% of GDP, while in Chile it amounted to 2.2% (Morrison & Orlando, 1999). Those estimates do not include multiplier effects to each dollar lost that lead to further decline in GDP.

Non-monetary impact of violence against women is most commonly calculated in disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) that quantify the number of lost healthy years due to disability or premature morbidity. They are useful for comparing the burden of disease among different public health issues. The World Bank estimated that in developing countries between 5 and 16% of healthy years are lost to women of reproductive age due to domestic violence (WB, 1993). This

number is higher for industrialized countries, up to one in five DALYs, because the overall burden of disease is smaller compared to developing countries. Worldwide, Heise et al. (1994) study found that more than nine million DALYs are lost each year as a result of rape and family violence worldwide, more than from all types of cancer and more than twice that lost by women in motor vehicle accidents. A study conducted in the Mexico City placed rape and family violence as the third most important cause of DALYs lost for all women, and first for women from 5 to 45 years of age (Lozano, 1999).

2.3 The Impact of Violence against Women on Development Priority Areas

Previous sections of this chapter demonstrated that violence against women places heavy burden on individuals, their families and whole societies. This section looks at the impact of gender-based violence on development priority areas as set out by the Millennium Development Goals.

2.3.1 Millennium Development Goals Framework

After a series of international summits held by the United Nations in the 1990s, both developing and developed countries agreed on the key development areas that became known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). What differs MDGs from previous commitments is that it is the first global consensus on priority development areas and the targets for their measurement (UNFPA et al., 2005). Although most of the MDGs are not likely to be achieved by 2015 as was set out, they are useful in demonstrating why gender-based violence matters for development. The MDGs include eight development priorities: poverty and

hunger, primary education, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health, HIV/AIDS and other serious diseases, environmental sustainability, and global partnerships for development. Gender analysis of all of those issues suggests that promoting gender equality supports the achievement of all of those goals (UNFPA et al., 2005), but the first six goals have particularly strong links to gender-based violence.

2.3.2 Gender Equality

Recent studies from the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank have argued that promoting gender equality is beneficial for economic growth and all types of development (UNDP, 1995; WB, 2000; WB, 2005; UNDP, 2010). Violence against women and gender inequality share a complex relationship: violence is the expression of inequality, as well as the mechanism of perpetuating it. Therefore, any action supporting equality is potentially threatened by violent backlash if those who benefit from previously established status quo feel threatened.

The fight for gender justice and women's rights has been historically waged by national and international women's movements that are now often supported by various development actors, such as the UN and NGOs. They managed to achieve the removal of many of the structural barriers preventing women from participating in formal employment, owning property, receiving education and receiving legal protection from violence in different countries. However, domestic violence often prevents women from benefiting from those opportunities, and participating in the development initiatives. A study conducted

by UNIFEM in Mexico found that the threat of violence was a major reason why women stopped participating in development projects (Heise et al., 1994, p.24). In other cases men use force to divert the benefits of development projects from women (i.e. income or opportunities), and yet, according to the World Bank, development assistance is more effective where women are involved (WB, 2000a, p. 3).

Empowerment for women is often perceived as disempowerment for men. Empowerment is a contested concept and different organizations have varying understandings of it⁵, but as a strategy it is widely employed to operationalize women's rights among women and girls. The core of the concept lies in helping to gain control over one's life by building capacity and supporting individual agency (Luttrell & Quiroz, 2009). According to United Nations guidelines on women's empowerment, it includes five components:

Women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside home; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally. (UNFPA; para 4)

It is a process as much as the outcome, and can include economic, human and social, political and cultural dimensions; one or another aspect of it can be found in most development programs targeting women and girls today. However, women's empowerment creates a risk of violent backlash from their male partners, who often feel threatened by the changing social and economic status

⁵ Luttrell & Quiroz (2009) offer an extensive discussion of various definitions and operationalizations of empowerment employed by different agencies.

of women. Violence becomes the means of preserving control and previously established power relations in the household. Studies have shown that “the relationship between empowerment and at least physical violence is an inverted U-shape - with greater empowerment conferring greater risk up to a certain level, beyond which it starts to become protective” (Krug et al., 2002, p. 158).

Naturally, when women do not fear violence in response to gaining control over their lives, they are more likely to exercise their rights and fully participate in the life of their communities.

2.3.3 Poverty

It has been estimated that more than 70% percent of the world’s poorest are women (UNDP, 1995). While those numbers are being questioned (Chant, 2008), particularly because they address only economic dimension of poverty, the more holistic approach suggests that widespread gender inequality and violations of women’s rights, including violence against women, makes women more vulnerable to both transient and persistent poverty due to lower human capital and lack of access to assets and resources (Cagatay, 1998). As was demonstrated in the previous sections, gender-based violence affects women’s human capital through health and education, undermines their productivity and can be used by their partners to prevent them from gaining paid employment in the first place. The children of women who experience violence are also at risk of diminished future opportunities due to the multiplier effects of family violence. Since poverty is also a risk factor of violence, it traps millions of women and girls in a vicious circle.

2.3.4 Education

There is strong evidence that female education (especially at secondary and higher levels) is one of the best known tools for empowering women and girls that increases their bargaining power within the household, reduces the risk of HIV/AIDS and other preventable diseases, and helps them to get out of poverty (UN Millennium Project, 2005; WB, 2000). Purposeful denial of educational opportunities to girls is a violation of their human rights and as such a form of violence. However, sexual violence and the risk of thereof often keeps them out of school in the first place. The impact of gender-based violence on educational outcomes is poorly researched, but studies from sub-Saharan Africa and across South Asia showed that girls are routinely sexually harassed by male students, teachers and school staff, and are often coerced into sexual relations with teachers in exchange for good grades (Krug et al., 2002, p. 155). Girls are also vulnerable to sexual violence while travelling to school, especially if the distances are large. Studies have shown that parents' fears about their daughters' safety is one of the main reasons for withholding girls from school (Bott et al., 2005; ActionAid, 2010). Another impact of gender-based violence on education is the well-recorded fact that children who witness abuse at home perform poorly at school and drop out more often, which limits their potential for future employment and wages (Morrison & Biehl, 1999; UNICEF, 2000).

2.3.5 Health

Gender-based violence makes women more vulnerable to the risk of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STIs). There are multiple

links between gender inequality and women's overall ill health, including HIV/AIDS and other preventable diseases (Ehrhardt, 2009; UNICEF, 2000; Krug et al., 2002). Discrimination against girls in family food distribution, access to health care services, and lack of education all contribute to higher risk of getting infected (Ehrhardt, 2009). Sexual and physical violence in particular seems to be a major risk factor for STIs, especially for younger women. In their study of gender factors in African population research Dodoo and Frost (2008) state that "women's inability to protect themselves from sexual risk is effectively a death sentence and contributes in no small way to the raging epidemic of HIV on the continent" (p. 443). Another study carried out among 1366 South African women found that those women who experienced physical, sexual and psychological abuse at home were 48% more likely to be infected (Dunkle et al., 2004). It is associated with women's lack of bargaining power in sexual relationships, which prevents them from negotiating condom use or refusing sex, often due to the fear of intimate partner violence (Dodoo and Frost, 2008; Ehrhardt, 2009). Forced intercourse is also one of the major biological risk factors. Being infected also increases the risk of experiencing violence from male partners; a study from Tanzania showed that HIV-positive women are twice as likely to be attacked by their intimate partners as HIV-negative women (Maman, 2002). Consequently, the fear of violence prevents women from accessing testing and treatment. Male use of violence against women also increases men's risk of contracting HIV infection, as it exposes them to multiple partners (Ehrhardt, 2009). Sexual violence during and after conflicts also facilitates further spread of HIV/AIDS.

Maternal and child health are also affected by gender-based violence. Physical and sexual violence often leads to a range of gynaecological problems that affect women's overall and reproductive health, undermines women's contraceptive use and sexual autonomy, and can cause unwanted pregnancies (Heise et al., 1994; WHO, 2005; Heise & Ellsberg, 2001). Violence against women also leads to adverse pregnancy outcomes, such as premature labour, miscarriage, and low birth weight, the latter being a major cause of infant death in developing countries (Krug et al., 2002). A study from Nicaragua found that sexual and physical violence experienced by mothers from their intimate partners increased the risk of infant mortality among children under 5 almost eight-fold (Heise & Ellsberg, 2001, p. 49). Region-wide, one third of child deaths can be attributed to violence against their mothers (Asling-Monemi et al., 2000 cited in Heise & Ellsberg, 2001, p. 49). Those findings suggest that women with violent partners are less able to maintain their children's health due to a number of factors that warrant further research. Children who witness abuse at home are at risk of violence themselves (Heise et al., 1994). They can develop a whole range of emotional and behavioural problems, and often exhibit the many of the same disturbances as the children who were abused themselves (Krug et al., 2002, p. 103). For boys it also often means becoming abusers themselves, thus perpetuating intergenerational cycle of violence. Fear of violence can affect child health as well, as according to the study conducted by UNDP among Ethiopian women living in a refugee camp, women reduced the number of meals for their children because they feared to be sexually assaulted while collecting wood

(LaPin, 1992 cited in Heise et al., 1994, p. 25). Those effects of violence on the health of various populations are rarely recognized.

This chapter explored the ways in which violence against women undermines development and growth. Large socio-economic costs of gender-economic violence divert scarce resources away from productive spending, while the effects of violence also undermine key development efforts in promoting gender equality, poverty eradication, improving access to education for girls, fighting HIV/AIDS and improving maternal and child health. Other areas of development affected by violence against women include governance, security, peace and reconstruction, as well as environmental sustainability. Although addressing those issues is beyond the scope of this paper, there is a growing body of research demonstrating a significant impact of gender-based violence on those areas. In this context, addressing violence against women is imperative for the success of many other development efforts. Next chapter looks at some of the current responses in the field.

3: ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

This chapter reviews various responses that emerged to violence against women in the context of international development. First section provides an overview of the way in which the issue of gender-based violence was raised by women's movements and supported by the United Nations, which resulted in placing it on the international development agenda in the 1990s. The following sections look at the various sector-based responses and community mobilization initiatives.

3.1 Raising the Issue

Women's movements around the world have been pushing for the international recognition of the issue of women's rights and violence against women for decades. In developing countries in particular, they had a strong impact on both development and human rights within the framework of global social justice for both women and men (Molyneux & Razavi, 2002). The discourses of human rights and international development have been evolving alongside each other, and started to converge officially in the 1980s when development thinking shifted from focusing primarily on economic growth to a more comprehensive process of human development, defined as enhancing human capabilities, and thus linked to human rights (Andreassen & Marks, 2006).

The United Nations played a special role in facilitating the process of promoting the issue of gender in development since the 1970s. It held a series of world conferences to mark the Decade on Women: in Mexico in 1975, in Copenhagen in 1980, and in Nairobi in 1985. It also played a pivotal role in placing the global development agenda within the framework of human rights in general by organizing a series of international summits through 1990s. Working with women's movements, other representatives of the civil society and the governments, it paved the way for rights-based approaches to development within the United Nations system itself, as well as outside of it. The UN Conference on Human Rights held in 1993 re-affirmed women's rights as human rights, recognizing that women's rights, just as women around the world themselves, are marginalized both within the international human rights system, and national legal structures. The same year the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of violence against women, which became the first international human rights instrument addressing violence against women exclusively. It was followed by the appointment of the first UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women to the Commission on Human Rights in 1994.

The conferences of the 1990s demonstrated the importance of strengthening women's rights for development, and marked gender-based violence as one of the key obstacles to achieving gender equality on the highest level. At the UN Fourth Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 the representatives of the women's movements from around the world produced the

Platform for Action, which was signed by virtually all states that brought women's rights to the centre-stage of international development. The Plan included the elimination of all forms of violence against women as one of the twelve strategic objectives, and produced a number of concrete recommendations for their implementation. This important event set the agenda for decades to come, and forced new actors such as the international financial institutions to address gender inequality and its impact on the development process. Most states and international development agencies have embraced gender agenda in one way or another. Many of the responses covered in the following sections came out of the Beijing Action Plan and the commitments made to it.

The broad classification of responses to violence against women includes the creation and implementation of international and national legal instruments, improving justice and health system responses, and implementing educational initiatives that aim to raise awareness and to challenge existing cultural norms and practices. More indirect responses include efforts to strengthen gender equality through economic and social empowerment. The following section covers the responses to gender-based violence in legal, economic, health and education sectors on international and national levels.

3.2 Sector-Based Responses

3.2.1 Legal Sector

A number of international human rights instruments have been developed in the last thirty years that forced many governments to revise their criminal and

civil legislation in relation to gender-based violence. The Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) adopted by the UN in 1979 became the first international instrument of this kind. It re-affirmed women's rights as human rights and legally binds the signing nations to remove discriminatory laws and promote gender equality. Although the Convention does not explicitly mention violence against women, a recommendation was added in 1992 that countries party to it are under an obligation to eliminate violence against women. Often described as the international bill of rights for women, CEDAW has been effectively used to provide education, health care services and legal protection against violence to women and girls. 186 nations ratified this declaration to date, with an exception of six countries - Iran, Somalia, Sudan, Nauru, Palau, Tonga and the United States⁶. It must be noted, however, that many countries ratified the Declaration with provisions and many failed to implement it. In 1993 the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, which for the first time clearly defined the issue and became the first human rights instrument addressing violence against women specifically.

In the criminal justice field, sexual violence against women and girls is covered in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court under crimes against humanity (UN General Assembly, 1998, A/CONF. 183/9). The only regional instrument that addresses violence against women specifically is the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of

⁶ Current US Obama administration strongly supports the ratification of CEDAW and identified it as one of the key five priority international treaties.

Violence Against Women, which was adopted by the Organization of American States in 1994. It includes different forms of violence and requires its signatories to report on their progress in protecting the victims, prosecuting perpetrators and undertaking other actions to eliminate violence against women (Organization of American States, 1994).

National legal reforms are underway in many countries: 89 out of 191 states reviewed had some form of legislative response to domestic violence as of 2006 (UN General Assembly, 2006, A/61/122/Add.1). However, even in those states that have legislations addressing violence against women, be it marital rape or female genital mutilation, many of those provisions remain on paper due to poorly functioning justice systems. Many laws that support gender equality and prescribe punishment for the perpetrators are often met with resistance from the justice personnel as well as the larger community, while women face multiple barriers in accessing legal services and protection even when it is available (Bott et al., 2005). In the regions where customary law remains prevalent both international and national legal instruments are of little use to the women experiencing violence and seeking justice (Harcourt, 2009). However, some of the traditional justice practices have proven to be successful in dealing with violence against women in an effective and sensitive manner (Bott et al., 2005).

3.2.2 Economic Sector

Low socio-economic status of women is related to the low value of their reproductive work; obtaining paid work often increases women's bargaining power in the family and can reduce the risk of domestic violence (Heise et al.,

1994). Control of resources, especially land for poor women, and access to assets, is known to reduce the risk of violence against women (UNDP, 2008). Economic independence also gives women an option to leave abusive relationships. As a strategy, economic empowerment focuses on ensuring that women have the skills, capabilities, resources and access to incomes and livelihoods (WB, 2000; WB, 2006). Whether through microfinance, income generating projects or removing structural obstacles to participating in markets, economic empowerment is widely used by various actors in the field of international development. What follows below is a short overview of the response from two major financial institutions – the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The World Bank has committed to work on reducing gender disparities and helping women to participate in the economic development of their countries (WB, 2000a). It mainstreamed gender through its programs, and in 2006 adopted a four year Gender Action Plan that outlines the framework to guide its work in promoting women's economic empowerment and making markets work for women (WB, 2006). Targeted markets are product, financial, land and labour chosen because of their potential to rapidly increase women's productivity, and subsequently, incomes (WB, 2006, p. 4). The Plan identifies policy and agency level measures to be introduced through existing programs and partnerships in order to achieve measurable outcomes. The actions include engendering operations and technical assistance in economic sectors, implementing results-based initiatives, improve research and statistics, and to undertake a targeted

communications campaign to promote the Plan among partners and improve the outcomes. In terms of addressing gender-based violence in its operational work, the World Bank identified the following actions:

- Integrate gender issues into legal and judicial reform work to include GBV [gender-based violence] issues;
- Mainstream GBV into existing programs, particularly in health and education;
- Focus on local capacity building;
- Provide programs that address gender norms. (WB, 2004, p. 19)

In its advisory and analytical role, the World Bank has committed to address the issue of gender-based violence in the country gender assessments and assistance strategies, while continuing to collect evidence and evaluating interventions.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) was not left behind in acknowledging the role of promoting gender equality for economic growth and poverty reduction. Its June 2007 issue of Finance and Development was entirely dedicated to economic power of women, featuring a number of articles, including making a business case for investing in gender equality (Buvinic & King, 2007). The main solution has been primarily focused on calls for more responsive gender budgeting that involves systematic analysis of budget programs. Combating gender-based violence is mentioned in country poverty reduction and growth strategy papers for Liberia, Cape Verde, Cambodia, Malawi, Pakistan and others. However, no agency-wide policy to promote gender equality within IMF and its programs, or to address gender-based violence specifically, has been adopted.

3.2.3 Health Sector

The World Health Organization spearheaded the response to violence against in the health sector, where it was considered to be a social rather than health issue for a long time (WHO, 2005). Its extensive research on the impact and costs of interpersonal gender-based violence resulted in widespread recognition of violence against women as a public health issue, and helped to mobilize political and financial support for measures to address it. In terms of intervention, WHO's focus is on capacity building of national healthcare systems so that they can provide adequate care to the victims of abuse, and to improve access to care (Krug et al., 2002). This includes training medical personnel to recognize the signs of violence and treat victims with respect and without further discrimination. As for prevention, the health model identifies three levels: primary, secondary and tertiary. Primary prevention seeks to prevent incidence of violence from occurring through community awareness-raising, while secondary and tertiary prevention is combined with immediate and long-term intervention through service provision and seeks to prevent violence from reoccurring. After publishing its influential Health and Violence report (Krug et al. 2002), WHO launched the Global Campaign for Violence Prevention as way of building the platform for the implementation of recommendations of the report. The latest evaluation of the campaign records the success of the first five years in establishing a normative framework for violence prevention and running a number of programmes around the world, but calls on scaling up those efforts to country-wide levels (WHO, 2007). One of the findings of the report is the results of the internal study of some 600 violence prevention programmes in seven

countries⁷, which found that few of them were systematically designed and/or rigorously evaluated (WHO, 2007, p. 21). This is a common challenge for many prevention efforts, as will be demonstrated in other sections of this chapter.

3.2.4 Education Sector

Education plays an important role in preventing violence against women both directly and indirectly. There is evidence that high levels of education can reduce women's vulnerability to violence, however, this relationship is not linear (Bott et al., 2005). Thus, increasing the level of education for men and women is an indirect response to violence, along with a range of other issues. In a more direct way, schools can play an active role in violence prevention. School staff can be involved in detecting and responding to family abuse, while curriculum can include the promotion of gender equality and healthy gender relations, but at the moment it remains a distant goal for most countries. While the concern for HIV/AIDS made reproductive health education part of many schools' programs, as was previously discussed, schools themselves are not safe environments for women and girls, and discrimination and harassment is often condoned and perpetuated by the school systems and staff (Krug et al., 2002; UNICEF, 2002). In this context, large-scale popular education campaigns seem to be a more effective vehicle of education not just for school age children, but also for the adults.

Social campaigning is a non-traditional but widely used educational tool used to raise public awareness about the issue of violence against women.

⁷ Brazil, India, Jamaica, Jordan, Mozambique, South Africa and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Whether national, regional or international, such campaigns vary in their scale, funding sources, messages and organizational structures. The tools they employ range from printing and distributing informational booklets and posters to producing TV series, organizing public events, and delivering community workshops (Michau, 2007). National campaigns are often led by local women's movements and supported by NGOs and other civil society groups, whereas international ones are usually more top down, often funded by large donor or development agencies and implemented by NGOs. Examples of different campaigns will be presented further in this chapter.

3.3 Mutli-Sector Responses

Violence against women is a legal, health, economic and social issue that spans across many sectors, and hence it requires a holistic approach in dealing with it. There is a strong consensus among international development actors on the necessity of diverse partnerships and cooperation capable of utilizing both strategic and practical approaches that would challenge gender inequality as the underlying cause of violence while providing much needed services to the victims. What seems to be the current challenge is developing the mechanisms for the integration of this issue into existing networks and programs. Few examples of coordinated and multi-level responses are presented in the section.

3.3.1 Say NO – UNiTE to End Violence against Women

One of the examples of multi-level and multi-sector initiative is United Nation's Secretary-General's campaign Say NO – UNiTE to End Violence

against Women, which was launched in November of 2008 by Ban Ki-moon. It is administered by the United Nation's Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) as a multi-year campaign that unites civil society actors, multilateral agencies, governments, media and individuals to eliminate all forms of violence against women. In its first phase it put out a call to make ending violence against women a global priority and collected more than five million signatures in its support (UNDPI, 2009). Since then the campaign is building on that momentum by supporting advocacy and other actions on all levels, including coordination of work among UN agencies, and collecting donations for the multi-lateral UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women. The Trust funds national and local programmes. The campaign is informed by the Framework for Action, that outlines an overall "umbrella" model of cooperation between various stakeholders and initiatives existing at global, regional, national and local levels, and sets out five key outcomes to be achieved in all countries by 2015. Those outcomes are:

- Adoption and enforcement of national laws to address and punish all forms of violence against women and girls, in line with international human rights standards.
- Adoption and implementation of multi-sectoral national plans of action that emphasize prevention and are adequately resourced.
- Establishment of data collection and analysis systems, on the prevalence of various forms of violence against women and girls.
- Establishment of national and/or local campaigns and the engagement of a diverse range of civil society actors in preventing violence and in supporting women and girls who have been abused.
- Systematic efforts to address sexual violence in conflict situations and to protect women and girls from rape as a tactic of war, and the full implementation of related laws and policies. (UNDPI, 2009, p. 1)

This campaign can be seen as the culmination of UN's efforts that brings a new level of coordination and support. It remains to be seen whether it will achieve all

of its goals, but so far it has been successful in generating support on all levels: millions of individuals signed up to the campaign, as well as 69 heads and ministers of the governments, and 600 parliamentarians. It is being matched by the internal effort of mobilizing resources through the creation of a new agency in July of this year – UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, also known as UN Women.

3.3.2 IMAGE

Another example of a multi-sectoral initiative but on a much smaller scale is a trial project in rural South Africa called Intervention with Microfinance for AIDS and Gender Equity (IMAGE). Although gender equality is enshrined in South Africa's constitution, traditional cultural norms and widespread poverty seem to be underlining the current epidemic of gender-based violence in the country (Kim et al., 2007). The project combines a microfinance-based poverty alleviation program with training on HIV, gender norms, sexuality and domestic violence to improve economic well-being, empower women, and to reduce intimate partner violence. A randomized-cluster evaluation found that over 2 years the risk of physical or sexual intimate partner violence was reduced by more than half within the group which was attributed to, along with a number of other positive results, such as greater bargaining power within household, increased peer support (Kim et al., 2002). What this study suggests also supports other research undertaken in South Asia where community involvement was found to be the key to reducing domestic violence, as it is crucial for creating

a receptive environment for other programs that target particular groups, including women (Michau, 2007).

3.4 Community Mobilisation

Community mobilisation is an important component of many prevention and intervention programs. Research has shown that both men and women distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable levels of violence, and just and unjust reasons for abuse (Krug et al., 2002). Those culturally informed norms and beliefs are held by individuals, but reinforced by communities. Studies have found that violence against women is lower where community prohibits such acts and where there is some form of sanctions against the perpetrator and sanctuary for the victim (Krug et al., 2002). At the same time, there is often a rigid taxonomy of the justifiable and even recommended forms and levels of punitive violence against women for disobedience, refusing to have sex with a husband, or mishandling domestic chores. Such norms are socially and culturally constructed: “Even though most societies proscribe violence against women, the reality is that violations against women’s human rights are often sanctioned under the garb of cultural practices and norms, or through misinterpretation of religious tenets” (UNICEF, 2000, p. 2). Breaking through the static view of culture as clearly defined and bound by unchanging set of norms and practices is the challenge that only the representatives of the culture in question can legitimately undertake: “Prescriptions from outsiders rarely take root in the value system of a community, but community ownership can be fostered by engaging community members to take up the issue and become activists themselves” (Michau, 2007, p. 103). This

type of engagement is typically the domain of civil society groups and movements, and in the context of international development it often either supported or led by NGOs. What follows is an example of a public campaign that seeks to challenge and change beliefs and attitudes by mobilizing communities across South Asia.

3.4.1 We Can End All Violence against Women Campaign

In 2004 by Oxfam Great Britain initiated a six-year six-country campaign in South Asia called We Can End All Violence against Women (We Can for short). It was modelled on a much smaller project from Uganda led by a local NGO Raising Voices. Oxfam GB is one of the oldest, largest and well-known development NGOs. As for many organizations in the development community, the focus on gender issues and human rights for Oxfam GB came during the 1990s. The need to address gender-based violence in South Asia was dictated by the alarming situation in the region:

In South Asia, one in every two women experiences violence in her daily life. Social, cultural, political, economic, and legal factors in the region combine to leave women vulnerable to community-sanctioned violence. In a region affected by a high level of volatile human conflict, violence against women is viewed as just 'another form of violence'. There is no acceptance that violence against women is a serious human rights issue; that it impacts on women's socio-economic well-being, health, sexual and reproductive rights; and, significantly, that it reduces women's contribution to the gross domestic product. (Oxfam International, 2004, p. 3)

It became clear that "the process of equal development for women and men within a framework of human rights was not achievable without tackling the violence of the oppression of South Asian women" (Williams & Aldred, 2009, p.

8). The success of community mobilizing in Africa inspired Oxfam GB to replicate the model on a much larger scale in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

The goal of the We Can campaign in South Asia is to engage 50 million people across six countries by 2011, which would generate a critical mass sufficient to challenge and change social norms on a society-wide scale. The central concept is that of a Change Maker – an individual who commits to reflect on his or her own attitudes and beliefs, do not commit or tolerate violence against women in any form, and to speak to ten other people about it. It is achieved by working on all levels of society through a broad alliance of actors capable of mobilizing large number of people. The vision of the campaign lies in large-scale popular mobilization led by local organizations working together through regional alliances and loosely connected to the central coordinating body.

Qualitative evaluation of the first phase was undertaken in three Indian states: Jarkhand, Andra Pradesh and Rajasthan⁸. Reflective dialogue was used as a participatory tool to assess the change. The study found an increased recognition of the issue of violence against women in the context of gender equality among the respondents: 96% stated that they heard about or know of domestic violence as opposed to 69% at the beginning of the Phase 1. There was a 20% increase in recognition of the need for men to take responsibility in ending and preventing violence. In addition, 63.65% respondents reported changes in their beliefs on gender stereotypes and violence against women, and

⁸ The results of the evaluation are taken from the campaign's website <http://www.wecanendvaw.org> - accessed on July 11, 2010.

71% reported a change in terms of actions taken. While it is early to speak of the overall success of the campaign since raising awareness is only the first step in the process of change, the model does seem to be promising. Qualitative research demonstrates individual stories of change (Mehta & Gopalakrishnan, 2007), however, the scope of this process and its outcomes are unclear.

Oxfam GB provided the initial “push” for the campaign in terms of funding and technical assistance. However, it is currently in the process of gradually withdrawing its support so the regional alliances can operate independently and in a sustainable manner. Through Oxfam affiliates and partners, the We Can campaign has also spread to Kenya, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, and Indonesia, with more countries joining every year. This campaign was also replicated in developed countries, with British Columbia in Canada pioneering the campaign in the West in 2007 and the Netherlands following in 2009.

There has been a lot of progress in the last several decades in addressing violence against women on the structural level through international and national legislation, while also improving services for victims. Those interventions are being scaled up with such development actors as the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and the World Bank making gender-based violence a priority, and allocating considerable resources towards addressing it. Public campaigns that aim at raising awareness and educating about the issue of gender-based violence occupy a special place in the register of responses.

Changing attitudes and beliefs that support violence against women is necessary for the success and sustainability of any intervention, and is the core for all prevention work. Public campaigns take on this function and often act as the catalysts for civil society mobilization and community-based work, as well as serving as the platforms for cross-sectoral cooperation on the institutional level. However, the evaluation of prevention initiatives and social campaigns remains to be a challenge.

CONCLUSION

This paper demonstrated the importance of violence against women to the field of international development. It explicated the links between gender-based violence and development through its impact on individuals and societies. Violence against women limits individual capacities and contributes to ill health, which undermines the human and economic potential of the whole countries. It drains the resources from the developing countries, and affects key development initiatives to promote gender equality, eradicate poverty, increase access to education for girls and improve health. Violence and the threat of thereof also prevent women to participate and to benefit from the development process.

Ending violence against women as a part of the battle for gender equality is a global challenge. For many, this is the definitive challenge of the 21st century. Raising awareness about the issue and getting the recognition it deserves within the development sector is only the first step. The real test of the commitments made in the last few decades by various actors is whether this momentum can be sustained despite global shocks and changing priorities. The best practices in addressing violence against women show that the solutions lie in extensive cooperation between various stakeholders who need to work together to ensure adequate response and prevention of gender-based violence. Community ownership can be achieved by supporting local women's groups and through innovative campaigns and other local initiatives. This complex process of social

change requires political will and mobilisation of resources that can ensure continuing focus on combating violence against women as an inextricable part of strengthening gender equality, and improving the lives of women and whole societies in the developing world.

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