Online discussion invitation:
What role can FBOs play in the prevention and response to sexual and intimate partner violence?

Faith Based Organisations (FBOs) have a unique reach across the African continent and other developing countries. Such organisations are found in all communities and provide a substantial portion of health and social care in low-resource settings. FBOs have potential to be constructive role-players in strengthening responses, and building prevention programmes for sexual and intimate partner violence. There are instances where FBOs are providing services for survivors of violence and acting as agents of change to promote gender equity.

Although FBOs are potentially powerful agents of change and may serve as bridges into communities for VAW responses and prevention initiatives, they do not always respond supportively to survivors of sexual violence. Reports of child sexual abuse and violence perpetrated by religious leaders are increasingly making their way into the public domain. Whilst, accounts of religious leaders blaming women for their rape, or of “sweeping it under the rug” are not uncommon.

Considering these different issues, we would like to invite all faiths to participate in an online discussion, on the role of FBOs in the prevention and response to sexual and intimate partner violence. We would like you to engage with us to discuss opportunities and challenges of engaging with FBOs on gender equality and violence against women, lessons learned and best practices of FBOs in the prevention and response to sexual and intimate partner violence. This discussion will inform the development of a briefing paper and articles on the issue.

The discussion will be moderated by Veena O’Sullivan and Prabu Deepan from Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities (JLI F&LC), with the support of Elizabeth Dartnall and Lizle Loots at the SVRI.

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3 Trócaire and Raising Voices. (2013). Through the voice of faith: Learnings to inspire domestic violence prevention through faith institutions.
Please help us by answering the following four questions:

- What is the role of FBOs in the prevention and response to sexual and intimate partner violence?

- Please outline some of the challenges and opportunities of engaging with faith institutions in this field.

- Can you identify and describe promising practices or interventions of FBOs in the areas of intimate partner and sexual violence prevention and responses?

- What has been the impact of these interventions, and lessons learned from working with faith-based organisations in the prevention and response to sexual and intimate partner violence.

To access the SVRI online discussion, please register online at: [http://www.svri.org/forums/](http://www.svri.org/forums/) (free of charge). Please do not hesitate to contact us with any queries at: svri@mrc.ac.za

We look forward to hearing from you!