

FUNDING ETHICALLY

BETTER FUNDING FOR
VIOLENCE AGAINST
WOMEN AND VIOLENCE
AGAINST CHILDREN
RESEARCH IN LOWER
AND MIDDLE-INCOME
COUNTRIES

JANUARY 2022



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I BACKGROUND

The Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) has, over the last 12 months, been involved in several processes on the issue of increased and better funding for research on violence against women in all their diversity and violence against all children in low and middle-income countries (LMICs). For SVRI, ‘better’ funding for research is funding that is grounded in feminist principles, acknowledges, and addresses power dynamics, involves honest, transformative relationships between donors and grantees and creates accessible and equitable processes that support priority-driven and impactful research in LMICs conducted by LMIC researchers.

Throughout 2020 the SVRI and the Equality Institute co-facilitated a participatory process that culminated in the creation of the [Global Shared Research Agenda](#) (GSRA). The GSRA is a tool to support advocacy for increased and enhanced resources to be put towards building the knowledge base and addressing key research gaps in the field of violence against women (VAW). Simultaneous work is being carried out to identify how much funding globally is spent on research on VAW and by whom and analyse key issues with existing funding mechanisms. These two pieces of work deal with what needs to be funded and *where* the money is for this.¹ We hope this guidance note for funders on ethical and coordinated funding for research on VAW and violence against children (VAC) in LMICs will be a contribution to advocacy on how resources need to be allocated.

These efforts will support the work of the VAW Prevention Accelerator - a global initiative underway to develop a [shared advocacy agenda](#) to raise funds for violence against women prevention efforts. The SVRI is also working with the Equality Insights Lab to develop practical, evidence-based guidance and tools on conducting ethical and effective intimate partner violence (IPV) [prevention programme adaptations](#).

Together these efforts will provide a toolkit for the field to advocate for increased and enhanced funding for VAW and VAC research in LMICs - leading to less duplication, better value for money, contextually relevant research, policy and practice that is evidence informed, and research that is conceptualised and led by researchers in LMICs – building a more equitable and sustainable field to end VAW and VAC.

1 The tracking funding report will be launched early in 2022.

WHERE IS THE FUNDING FOR RESEARCH ON VAW/VAC?

Preliminary findings from the tracking funding process show that:

- Less than one percent of total Official Development Assistance (ODA), globally, goes to violence against women and girls research or programming, with even less (0.05% of total ODA) spent on research to understand what works and what doesn't.
- Even when national policies support evidence-based programming, this does not translate into allocating funding for research.
- Research is often a component of larger multi-component GBV projects, and it is challenging for grant recipients to separate research costs as a sub-component of a programme or as a cross-cutting issue across programmes.
- Funding for research is often fragmented, project-based, short term and donor driven.
- Knowledge production is often not linked to action.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE FUNDED?

“For too long research agendas have been set by too few, often the loudest, most senior in the room.”²

The GSRA was developed over more than two years, through a process of facilitated, research-informed dialogues and discussion, drawing on the wisdom of the crowd. For the first time, the voices of practitioners and activists sat centred and equal, alongside academics and other specialists, in co-creating research priorities for the next five years for fair, effective and relevant research on violence against women in LMICs.

TOP FIVE QUESTIONS, IN ORDER OF OVERALL RANKING.

The results showed that **intervention research** is viewed by the field as the most needed at this point.

1. What types of interventions can effectively prevent multiple forms of violence, and why?
2. What types of interventions are most effective for preventing intimate partner violence (IPV) (including 'honour'-based violence) against women facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination including age, poverty, disability, ethnicity, race, and sexuality?
3. How are new feminist social movements (e.g., Me Too, Ni una menos) and meninist social movements (Men's Rights Activists (MRAs), Incels, etc) positively or negatively influencing individual, social and policy perspectives related to the experience and perpetration of violence?
4. What interventions work to prevent sexual harassment in institutional settings (in-person or online), including in the workplace and educational settings, and why?
5. What are the impacts (including disability-related impacts) of under-researched forms of IPV on women and girls, including emotional and economic IPV, revenge porn and 'honour'-based violence?

The GSRA can guide funders, researchers, practitioners, and policy makers with research planning and fundraising. A key recommendation arising from the process is that the GSRA should be used as a tool to advocate for increased and enhanced research funding that addresses critical research gaps in the field.

II SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF CURRENT GUIDANCE

When it comes to resources for VAW and VAC research, funding remains highly concentrated in high income countries (HICs). Whilst HIC and LMIC research partnerships are widely acknowledged to play a critical role in allowing researchers to develop capacity, work with new collaborators, gain access to resources and equipment, and conduct mutually beneficial research, more work needs to be done on how to make these partnerships equitable.³ In addition, more resources need to be allocated towards building partnerships in LMICS between [researchers and activists in LMICs](#) so that LMIC based researchers gather and analyse their own data and develop locally relevant, contextually appropriate VAW and VAC response and prevention programmes. Further attention is also needed on issues such as:

- Co-creation of research questions in partnership with policymakers, practitioners, and activists to ensure that research that is funded has potential for genuine up take, use and impact.
- Widening the discussion around ethics to include, for example, ongoing monitoring/ safeguarding after ethics approval, reporting of adverse events and the safety and well-being of researchers during and after research.
- ‘Funding smart’: funding research that is priority based (guided by the GSRA) and builds on existing knowledge.
- Challenging who defines what is ‘legitimate’ knowledge and honouring the role of practice-based knowledge within the hierarchy of research.
- Consideration of equity in terms of:
 - Who is being funded?
 - Which communities are being left out?
 - Gaps related to intersectionality
 - Who is being published?
 - Who is being reached with research findings? How are we accounting for data equity?

Whilst guidance that is relevant to these issues does exist, funders may not have access to all the information they need to account for the specific complexities of funding research on VAW and VAC and be grounded in feminist approaches. We hope that this guidance note will help build better funding processes that recognize and deal with power imbalances between funders and their recipients by:

- Illuminating core principles related to what ‘better funding’ means based on widespread inputs from the field.
- Reframing funders as collaborative and equitable partners in building evidence for improved responses and prevention of VAW and VAC in LMICs.
- Acting as a practical guide for funders providing specific steps that can be taken to convert principles into practice.
- Advocating for the uptake and use of several excellent resources that can assist with thinking about different approaches for funding.

HOW WAS THIS GUIDANCE DEVELOPED?

Multiple, complementary methods were used to create this guidance note. We reviewed a range of resources and materials and consulted with funders, activists, practitioners and researchers from Africa, Asia, North America, Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe. The guidance was developed over several months using a multi-step process which included:

- a) Scoping review of the available literature:** A scoping review of existing guidance related to equitable and ethical research partnerships was conducted to highlight key issues and ensure that we did not duplicate work that already exists in the field.
- b) Consultative processes with key stakeholders:** Seven focus group discussions (including two in Spanish) were conducted with stakeholders including funders, researchers, and practitioners working in the field of VAW and VAC research. The main objectives of these discussions were:
 - To understand perspectives of funders on challenges, gaps and needs in the field of funding research/programming on VAW and VAC in LMICs.
 - To ensure that the perspectives of researchers and practitioners from LMICs on funding VAW and VAC research in LMICs were understood, shared and incorporated into the guidance.
- c) Online Survey:** Based on findings from the FGDs and identification of key themes, an online survey tool was created. This remained on Survey Monkey for the month of September 2021. The survey was widely disseminated through the SVRI Update (SVRI's weekly newsletter) as well as to regional networks, and regular reminders went out in the Update and on SVRI's social media channels. The survey was available in French, Spanish and English and was completed by 75 participants. More than 70 percent of the respondents worked in local or national organisations headquartered in LMICs. Figure I below provides a regional overview of where our respondents were based.

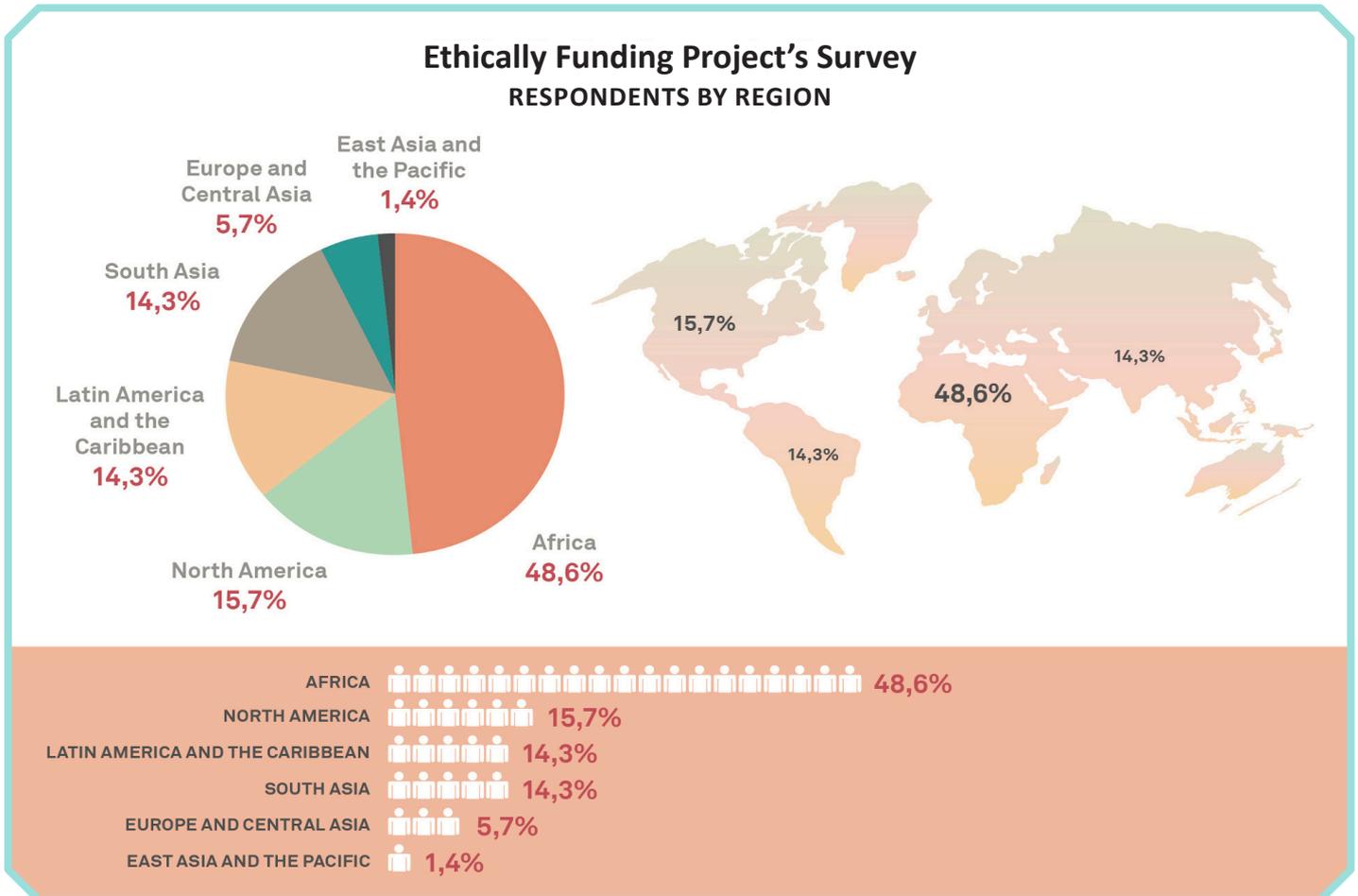


Figure I: Online survey regional overview of respondents

d) Data analysis: Analysis of key themes from the scoping review, the FGDs as well as responses from the online surveys, enabled us to get a clear idea of fundamental principles that should guide ethical funding processes.

e) Oversight and strategic guidance: The project was overseen by an expert advisory group who met regularly throughout the process and provided strategic guidance and peer review to ensure the relevance and utility of the guidance.

III SCOPING REVIEW: AN OVERVIEW

“By focusing on equitable funding for partnerships, we are able to centre equity at the start of a project, giving equal opportunities in both space and time for a diverse set of people with different capabilities to succeed.”⁴

It is widely recognised that in the context of research partnerships wherein researchers and academics from high income country (HIC) universities, development NGOs or policy think tanks are implementing research programmes in LMICs and working with local practitioners and researchers, equity within the partnerships needs to be established early and funders need to be involved. The scoping review highlighted several key challenges related to research partnerships and what an equitable partnership should look like. Indeed, “there is acknowledgement that North-South relationships need to be reciprocal, but how this might play out in the realities of conducting fieldwork in complex contexts remains unclear.”⁵

The review found that there is a plethora of existing guidance related to creating equitable research partnerships between HIC and LMIC researchers. A considerable amount of this literature is directed at funders and explicitly considers their role in developing equitable partnerships as well as detailing general ethical guidelines that relate to the life cycle of research projects. These documents include:

- Ethical guidance that must be accounted for by staff of funding organisations and contractors based around the project planning and implementation cycle. These documents provide questions for consideration and checklists as well as examples of dilemmas and case studies.⁶
- Ethical ‘toolkits’ directed at researchers illustrating considerations that emerge at each stage of a research journey and presenting specific questions as well as possible answers/solutions at each stage.⁷
- Principles to guide different research stakeholders in reflecting on what is needed to make research partnerships fair and equitable.⁸

4 Funding Institutions Perpetuate Inequitable Global Health Partnerships: Here Are Three Ways to Stop That @ <https://skoll.org/2021/04/22/funding-institutions-perpetuate-inequitable-global-health-partnerships-here-are-three-ways-to-stop-that/>

5 Bradley, T. with Crawford, S. and Lloyd-Laney, M. (2020), ‘Thematic Paper 1: Research – Mapping the Complexities and Challenges of Researching Violence Against Women and Girls in Developing Contexts’, DFID’s What Works to Prevent VAWG Programme, IMC Worldwide: Surrey.

6 For instance: DFID ethical guidance for research, evaluation and monitoring activities May 2019 <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government> and UK research funders: Resource materials to support fair and equitable research partnerships. <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/Research-funders-fair-equitable-partnerships-Sept-18.pdf>

7 Ethical Action in Global Research: A Toolkit. University of Edinburgh. 2019.

8 Christian Aid. UK Research Funders Resource Materials to Support Fair and Equitable Research Partnerships. 2018; and Bruno Stöckli, Urs Wiesmann, Jon-Andri Lys, 2018: A Guide for Transboundary Research Partnerships: 11 Principles, 3rd edition (1st edition 2012), Bern, Switzerland. Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE)



Whilst much of the literature focuses on the health, economic and science sectors, the principles highlighted are common to all research partnerships. These include the need for transparency, accountability to communities, building mutual trust and respect, shared ownership over the research agenda, process and products, interaction with all stakeholders and the importance of research uptake and equitable practices relating to authorship, budgeting and publication of studies and results.⁹

Also relevant to the purposes of this guidance were resources related to feminist research ethics which highlight the importance of research practices in the VAW field being informed by feminist praxis. In addition, useful insights for funders are available in resources relating to financing gender equality and women’s rights work including VAW. Mama Cash and the Association for Women’s Rights (AWID) work on the issue of direct funding to women’s movements illuminates systematic and institutional barriers that hold funders back in directly funding feminist movements in the Global South.¹⁰ Although this is a different context to funding research, many of the ‘stumbling blocks’ that they identify are common challenges that various funders face and that were also highlighted during the consultative processes. These are illustrated in figure II below.



Figure II: Stumbling Blocks for funders

In addition, AWID and Mama Cash suggest a series of ‘building blocks’ or ways forward, based on nine different case studies through which they have identified a series of funding modalities that worked to facilitate direct resourcing of women’s rights organisations and movements. Again, although the context is different, there are valuable lessons here about flexibility, accessibility and innovation that are very relevant to the principles upon which this guidance is built.

Useful Resources

[Moving More Money to the Drivers of Change: How Bilateral and Multilateral Funders Can Resource Feminist Movements](#) (Mama Cash and AWID, 2020)

[Applying a Feminist Lens to Grantmaking for Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls:](#) (COFEM, 2021)

9 Bruno Stöckli, Urs Wiesmann, Jon-Andri Lys, 2018: A Guide for Transboundary Research Partnerships: 11 Principles, 3rd edition (1st edition 2012), Bern, Switzerland. Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE)

10 Lever, E., Miller, K. and Staszewska, K. (2020). Moving More Money to the Drivers of Change: How Bilateral and Multilateral Funders Can Resource Feminist Movements. AWID and Mama Cash with support from the Count Me In! Consortium. **9**

IV Feminist approach to research

Based on learnings from the SVRI's own [research grant making](#) program that is imbued with feminist principles, a core value for the current guidance is that **tenets of a feminist approach** must be grounded into the establishment of a grant-making programme, the selection processes, partnership between the grant maker and grantee partner and the research itself. It is important that VAW/VAC research be informed by feminist praxis so that the research process:

- **Centralises the experiences and voices of research participants**, thereby ensuring that programming on violence is based on lived experiences, desires and priorities of women and children.
- **Forefronts discussions around complex and unequal power relations** (funders, researchers, practitioners, and activists) and the complexities therein and this empowers research participants as co-producers of knowledge.¹¹
- **Highlights the need to use creative ways and alternative methodologies** and approaches that are designed to include the most vulnerable and least visible communities.

Figure III summarises key principles that SVRI believes should be given critical consideration **when donors are assessing proposals and their value to the field.**

IN PRACTICE- FEMINIST RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE:

Centralises the leadership of women and girls and the privileging of their knowledge and experiences and ensures that these are central to research design, implementation, analysis, and dissemination, and that the research is undertaken ethically.

Recognises intersectionality and multiple forms of oppression and applies this understanding to examining how this impacts exposure to and experience of violence for different communities, for instance LBTIQ + women, women living with HIV or women with disabilities.

Challenges dominant 'positivist' frameworks and traditional methodology and understands the research process as embedded in and shaped by the social world. This means that the research is non-extractive and research participants are recognised as experts and co-producers of knowledge.

Acknowledges power dynamics in every research process and considers and addresses this at different levels between researchers and research participants but also between researchers and their counterparts, who could include practitioners, data collectors and others essential to the successful completion of a study.

Strives for bettering the way research is done and social transformation - findings and recommendations resulting from feminist research should contribute to change as well as engage with and disrupt dominant discourse.

Understands that the communities wherein the research is conducted, and the broader community of practitioners should benefit from the research and have equitable access to the products of the research process.

Figure III: Feminist research in practice

¹¹ Loksee Leung, Stephanie Miedema, Xian Warner, Sarah Homan & Emma Fulu (2019) Making feminism count: integrating feminist research principles in large-scale quantitative research on violence against women and girls, Gender & Development, 27:3, 427-447, DOI: [10.1080/13552074.2019.1668142](https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2019.1668142)

“From an ethics perspective better funding means ensuring that there is a clear plan on how the research will ensure women’s and children’s voice in all aspects of the design and implementation along with a clear plan from the beginning of the process on how results are going to be used to improve the lives of women and children.” (FGD, funders)

Useful Resources

[Feminist approaches to building knowledge and evidence on GBV. COFEM.](#) ¹²

[Making feminism count: integrating feminist research principles in large-scale quantitative research on violence against women and girls.](#) ¹³

[Researching women’s leadership in Asia and the Pacific- reflections on feminist research approaches in design and practice.](#) ¹⁴

V PRINCIPLES FOR ETHICAL FUNDING

This section of the guidance outlines four key principles that were highlighted through the consultative processes as being central to ethical funding for VAW and VAC research in LMICs.

- a) Decolonising knowledge and methods of learning
- b) Creating equity in research partnership
- c) Ensuring funding is flexible, adaptive, and long term
- d) Transforming the funder-grantee relationship

a. DECOLONISING KNOWLEDGE AND METHODS OF LEARNING

“We need to challenge what is seen as valuable knowledge and valuable methodologies- otherwise we are just reinforcing the system that is creating the problems we are trying to solve. How knowledge is created and transferred, for instance, between indigenous populations and what is knowledge needs to be challenged.” (FGD with Funders, July 1, 2021)

Decolonising knowledge as a principle applies to rethinking the questions of what constitutes evidence and expertise, how knowledge is created, whose voices are heard, and whose data counts. Data and evidence generated through specific methodologies deemed as scientific and rigorous by large donors (based in HICs) has dominated the ‘hierarchy of evidence’ regardless of

12 Coalition of Feminists for Social Change (COFEM), Feminist approaches to building knowledge and evidence on GBV, Feminist Pocketbook Tip Sheet 5, 2018

13 Loksee Leung, Stephanie Miedema, Xian Warner, Sarah Homan & Emma Fulu (2019) Making feminism count: integrating feminist research principles in large-scale quantitative research on violence against women and girls, Gender & Development, 27:3, 427-447, DOI: 10.1080/13552074.2019.1668142

14 Alejandra Pineda & Sophie Purdue (2019) Researching women’s leadership in Asia and the Pacific – reflections on feminist research approaches in design and in practice, Gender & Development, 27:3, 449-465, DOI: 10.1080/13552074.2019.1664039

whether other methodologies - locally and contextually grounded - would better serve the research being done. Whilst this evidence has been immensely valuable to the field, it has meant that *“there has been little funding available to support local organisations, activists and movements to document and synthesise other forms of knowledge and learning, especially those that are practice-*

*based, narrative, indigenous or locally produced.”*¹⁵ Practice based knowledge (PBK) refers to the practical knowledge and skills gained through hands-on action in the communities and contexts where practitioners and activists work.¹⁶

“Donors need to fund research that meets real needs and does not arise from contexts that are far from reality. Decolonize the approaches of this type of generation of knowledge and practices. Stop seeing low- and middle-income countries as “laboratories” for the production of knowledge. Become true allies and impact people to counter the neoliberal colonial system” (Respondent, Online survey (Spanish) September

based, narrative, indigenous or locally produced.”¹⁵ Practice based knowledge (PBK) refers to the practical knowledge and skills gained through hands-on action in the communities and contexts where practitioners and activists work.¹⁶

PBK matters for research on VAW and VAC because this type of knowledge can help to understand the nuances of why certain programmes work or don’t work by accessing and paying attention to how strategies are playing out on the ground and accounting for shifting power relations, behaviours, and norms. It helps in explaining how change happens, not just measuring if it happens or not. Real time monitoring of the impact of programmes also reduces the risk of researchers finding out if interventions are harmful only at the end of a study.

Stakeholders in the consultations widely agreed that:

- All forms of knowledge are important to consider for research on VAW and VAC.
- VAW and VAC programmes are better if they are firmly rooted in a deep understanding of the local context and supported by community thought leaders and influencers.
- PBK can improve our understanding of the social norms that exist and sustain VAW and VAC and help refine existing theories and programmes.
- Innovations and experiences from practitioners can provide relevant and timely practice-based insights. PBK can both complement and at times outpace research.
- PBK can challenge the way academics think about the world, the way we produce and share knowledge, and what the world counts as “legitimate” knowledge
- Understanding how PBK fits into the evidence ecosystem could be a critical gap for funders when they are assessing research proposals and considering different research methodologies.

The field needs to invest into PBK with more resources devoted to systematic data collection with good research tools, researcher and practitioner collaborations and established guidelines for these partnerships, as well as more publications and journals dedicated to understanding and developing this work.

15 Prevention Collaborative. Elevating Practice Based Knowledge to Improve Prevention Programming: A Prevention Collaborative Paper.

16 Prevention Collaborative. Learning from Practice. 2019.

CASE STUDY: The Action Linking Initiatives on Violence Against Women and HIV Everywhere (ALIV[H]E) Framework

“This approach provides ways for women to be equal and active agents in the research process, gathering data about our own experiences, on our own terms.”

In Botswana, this framework was used to explore the intersections between VAW and disability. By involving women with disabilities in the project, it set a benchmark as the first project in Botswana that enabled women with disabilities “to lead research and advocacy on issues concerning their own lives.”

What did they achieve:

- They were able to capture data on contextual factors driving violence towards women and girls with disabilities
- Having people with disabilities on the research team meant that service providers realised how inaccessible their services were, leading to spontaneous changes
- The team was able to influence the development of a new disability policy, strategy and law
- An important discourse was initiated about universal access

(ALIV[H]E in Action: Case Studies)

INCORPORATE PARTICIPATORY AND MIXED RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

This is directly linked to the discussions around whose knowledge counts and how data is collected. As mentioned above, feminist approaches to research on violence emphasise methods of creative and participatory research¹⁷ to ensure that women’s and girl’s voices are not marginalised and that “programming and policies are based on the realities of women and girls’ experiences.”¹⁸

Feminist research rejects the contention that that there is only one type of methodology that can gather scientifically sound information. Whilst qualitative investigation and subjective methodologies are central to feminist research practice, feminist researchers are also showing that “health-based quantitative approaches based on collecting and analysing data and feminist approaches that prioritise generating knowledge and situating women’s experiences within a wide structural analysis are not mutually exclusive.”¹⁹

17 For example, Alejandra Pineda & Sophie Purdue (2019) Researching women’s leadership in Asia and the Pacific – reflections on feminist research approaches in design and in practice, *Gender & Development*, 27:3, 449-465, DOI: [10.1080/13552074.2019.1664039](https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2019.1664039); and Michelle Lokot (2019) The space between us: feminist values and humanitarian power dynamics in research with refugees, *Gender & Development*, 27:3, 467-

18 Coalition of Feminists for Social Change (COFEM), *Feminist approaches to building knowledge and evidence on GBV*, Feminist Pocketbook Tip Sheet 5, 2018.

19 Loksee Leung, Stephanie Miedema, Xian Warner, Sarah Homan & Emma Fulu (2019) Making feminism count: integrating feminist research principles in large-scale quantitative research on violence against women and girls, *Gender & Development*, 27:3, 427-447, DOI: [10.1080/13552074.2019.1668142](https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2019.1668142)

FEMINIST RESEARCHERS USE MANY DIFFERENT METHODS:

Action/participatory research • Comparative case studies • Content analysis • Ethnography • Experiential • Experimental • Focus group discussions • Geographic information systems (GIS) • Institutional ethnography • Meta-analysis • Multisite research • Needs assessments • Oral history/life history • Participant observation • Survey (Source: COFEM, 2018)

These methodologies, when implemented in feminist ways, position women as partners in the research process and it is important that donors recognise, understand, and encourage the use of these where relevant. This may involve additional planning for “adequate time and costs to conduct feminist-oriented research, including resources to build capacity of local stakeholders in the research process.”²⁰

When reflecting on these methodologies it is also important to consider who can be a researcher and what sort of institutional blockages there are for young researchers from LMICs. Questions to consider are, who can be part of a research team, what qualifications are being asked for and who is being left out?²¹ This is particularly relevant for research with marginalised communities of women and girls wherein peer research may be the best way to ensure research agendas are truly responsive to priorities identified through lived experience.²²

Understanding how PBK and different participatory (including peer led) research methodologies contribute to the evidence base around VAW/VAC is a critical step for funders working in this area and illuminates issues of exclusion and intersectionality and lack of representation of specific groups of women in research studies.

*“We work with women living with HIV using participatory research methods which aims to try to change the existing hierarchies of evidence. RCT’s and gold standards are fine but there is another type of evidence that is just as important and really needs to happen and be recognised as valid and be funded.”
(FGD, Practitioners)*

CASE STUDY: SVRI Grantee: Making sense of child marriage among Syrian refugees in Lebanon

The research team for this study aimed to reduce the rates of child marriage among Syrian refugees by using Cognitive Edge’s *SenseMaker*, an innovative mixed quantitative/qualitative data collection tool along with a participatory approach to assist communities in the self-identification of acceptable, feasible and sustain-able interventions that will facilitate change being enacted within communities. This involved the collecting of a total of 1,422 self-interpreted stories about the experiences of Syrian girls in Lebanon, collected over a seven-week period from 1,346 unique individuals representing a variety of different participant groups.

Using a mixed-methods approach allowed for new insight into child marriage in this context and self-interpretation by participants minimized inherent researcher biases. The study identified gendered differences in perceptions about underlying contributing factors to child marriage in humanitarian settings which have important implications for future programming and policies.

20 Coalition of Feminists for Social Change (COFEM), Feminist approaches to building knowledge and evidence on GBV, Feminist Pocketbook Tip Sheet 5, 2018.

21 FGD with researchers. July 13, 2021.

22 The WHAVE Podcast Paper 3. Equal partners: recognising the expertise of women living with HIV.

Useful Resources

[Learning from Practice: Lessons on preventing violence from civil society organizations funded by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women:](#)

To disseminate the knowledge and learning from civil society and women's rights organisations, the UN Trust Fund worked with grantee organizations and researchers to create a series of briefings on preventing violence against women.

[Learning from Practice: Approaches to Capture and Apply Practice-Based Knowledge.](#)²³

This brief provides reflections and practical tips for practitioners and activists on how to collect, document, analyse, share, and apply practice-based knowledge to programming to prevent VAW and VAC.

[Shifting Power and Resources through Participatory Grantmaking](#) (Grantcraft)

Created with input from a number of participatory grantmakers, this guide shares challenges, lessons learned, and best practices for engaging in inclusive grantmaking.

[Prevention collaborative website:](#) Repository of materials on PBK including useful learning tools papers and webinars.

b. CREATING EQUITY IN RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

When talking about equity in research partnerships, participants involved in the process of developing these guidelines highlighted how equity can be talked about from multiple perspectives including localisation; diversity and inclusion; and research translation and dissemination.

EQUITY AND LOCALISATION

"We must put our money where our mouth is – [it] is all good to talk about decolonizing knowledge but without sufficient resources to conduct ethical research on VAW and VAC in LMICs, the power of dictating research agendas, of deciding which research is valid, of which language is used to publish; of whose names go in academic publications will remain where it still is – in the North. Research is not a luxury; it is a need for accountable and effective programming to end VAW & VAC..." (Angelica Pino, [SVRI Blog](#))

The importance of drawing on local knowledge at the beginning of the design phase of a research project as well as during analysis of the data was highlighted in studies that we found during the scoping review, as well as during the consultations. It is well understood that the absence of this could lead to inaccuracies in analysis and interpretation of data, as well as detrimental implications for practitioners when making programme recommendations a critical part of research uptake considerations.²⁴ Locally led research is likely to demonstrate a more nuanced understanding of local need, socio-political-cultural contexts as well as other key factors that influence VAW and VAC approaches to prevention and response. However,

²³ Palm S. and Clowes, A. (2019) Learning from Practice: Approaches to Capture and Apply Practice-Based Knowledge. The Prevention Collaborative.

²⁴ Bradley, T. with Crawford, S. and Lloyd-Laney, M. (2020), 'Thematic Paper 1: Research – Mapping the Complexities and Challenges of Researching Violence Against Women and Girls in Developing Contexts', DFID's What Works to Prevent VAWG Programme, IMC Worldwide: Surrey.

“There needs to be a provision that focus will be placed on contextual realities- that way when people are placing their bids- they will then ensure that local researchers understanding of context will be part of the team.” (FGD, researchers)

researchers in the consultations as well as those participating in the tracking funding process²⁵ noted that the priorities of donors often dictated the research agenda, governing the decisions about what kind of research is supported.

Localisation is quite a broad ranging principle and stakeholders pointed out that this includes²⁶:

- Ensuring understanding of local country contexts in terms of infrastructure, mobility, technology, and security as well as relevance when planning for what issues are going to be funded.
- Supporting work incubated and led by LMIC researchers.
- Considering what local research landscapes look like and what it will take to support them to be resourced to deliver on the research.
- Involvement of local researchers and implementing partners from the beginning of the research process as co-producers of knowledge including in setting the research agenda, questions and methodology.
- Ensuring equity on issues such salaries / budgets, authorship, and data ownership including questions related to who will be involved with analysis and interpretation of the data and whether all partners review products before they are published or distributed.²⁷
- Directing funding to organisations based in LMICS and not through intermediaries.
- Ensuring stakeholder engagement including through regular communication and dissemination of research findings to affected communities.

“If we are going to move towards a more transparent social justice-based way of working- local organisations who might never get the chance to sit at the table- have to get that chance. They might be the ideal partner, but no one knows because of high barriers to entry. Both researchers and funders have an obligation to know landscape well enough to be cognisant of who isn’t sitting at the table.” (FGD, Practitioners, July 2021)

EQUITY IN TERMS OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Equity also means fostering diversity and inclusion. Stakeholders from the survey and the FGDs emphasised the importance of funding **knowledge gaps and of ensuring diversity and inclusion** when funding VAW/VAC research in LMICs. As discussed earlier, the GSRA can guide funders in identifying these gaps and indeed, researching violence against women facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination is one of the top five priorities.

25 Tracking Funding for VAW Research in Low- and Middle-Income Countries. <https://www.svri.org/tracking-funding-for-vaw-research>

26 Inputs from FGDs and online survey, July-September 2021.

27 Raising Voices and the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (2020). Learning Together: A Guide for Feminist Practice in Violence Against Women and Girls Research Collaborations. Kampala, Uganda and Pretoria, South Africa.

All too often marginalised groups of women and children are severely under-represented in research studies on violence. For example, studies show that women with disabilities are at least twice as likely as nondisabled women to be victims of rape, sexual abuse and intimate partner violence and all children with disabilities are at a higher risk for various forms of violence when compared to children without disabilities.²⁸ Yet, **only 3 percent of total human rights grants** tracked in the recently published *Advancing Human Rights: Update on Global Foundation Grantmaking* goes to people with disabilities. Much more research is needed on the prevalence of the violence among women and children with disabilities and on what communities want or need but these research processes need to be driven by the community themselves.

Therefore, **funding needs to be structured in a way** that centres the voices of women and children in research, for example, including and facilitating capacity development and payment for peer researchers²⁹ or **addressing accessibility**, for instance through accounting for braille documents or sign language interpreters³⁰ and/or providing accessible spaces for researchers or research participants with limited mobility. The issue of accessibility also includes making grant application procedures easier and more flexible with simpler formats and requirements, including making them available in multiple languages.

EQUITY IN RESEARCH AUTHORSHIP AND DISSEMINATION

A critical aspect of equity in research partnerships and meaningful involvement of all partners throughout the research process is the issue of authorship of research products. The **under-representation of LMIC researchers in authorship of research conducted in LMICs** has been acknowledged and discussed exhaustively, but very little change has been noted over time. A recent analysis of the nine highest impact medical and global health journals found that almost 30% of publications of primary research conducted in LMICs did not contain any local authors.³¹ Another analysis from publications in Africa showed “no change in the proportion of LMIC authors over a 10-year period.”³² This can mean that LMIC researchers are deprived of the opportunity to meaningfully build a body of work and is also relevant in terms of who gets the opportunity to attend international conferences and present and be acknowledged for the work. Research partners need to discuss the “value of co-authorship of knowledge products at the outset and negotiate fair visibility on authorship order on academic articles and popular products.”³³

28 Van der Heijden, I. and Dunkle, K. *What Works Evidence Review: Preventing violence against women and girls with disabilities in lower- and middle-income countries (LMICs)*. 2017.

29 Peer research is a participatory research method in which people with lived experience of the issues being studied take part in directing and conducting the research

30 Focus group discussion, Funders. (July 1, 2021)

31 B. Morton, A. Vercueil, R. Masekela, E. Heinz, L. Reimer, S. Saleh, C. Kalinga, M. Seekles, B. Biccard, J. Chakaya, S. Abimbola, A. Obasi, N. Oriyo. *Consensus statement on measures to promote equitable authorship in the publication of research from international partnerships*. 2021.

32 Ibid.

33 *Raising Voices and the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (2020). Learning Together: A Guide for Feminist Practice in Violence Against Women and Girls Research Collaborations*. Kampala, Uganda and Pretoria, South Africa.

EXAMPLE: Hearing from Women Living with HIV!

Women living with HIV and their organisations play a key role in generating and delivering evidence and research on what works for women and should play a prominent role as speakers and oral presenters of research at International AIDS Conferences. However even when women have been deeply involved in the research, if their name is not submitted on an abstract as a lead author or presenter, they will not be able to attend, since they are ineligible for partial or full scholarships.

In terms of opportunities to present work: AIDS 2018 saw only 1.8 percent of women presenters self-identified as living with HIV and only 9 percent of invited women speakers self-identified as living with HIV.

This means that conferences do not get to hear enough from those most affected by the issues and WLHIV who are working in the field are unable to meet, network and share information with others around the world on issues that significantly affect them.

Recommendations include:

- Ensure presentation guidelines acknowledge women living with HIV as presenters, researchers, and agents of change.
- Increase opportunities for women and transgender people living with HIV as oral presenters, supported by scholarships, acknowledging their central role in the generation of knowledge and evidence.

Source: Less talking about us and more hearing from us: Why so few women / trans people living with HIV as speakers, oral abstract co/authors, and abstract presenters at AIDS 2018?

The importance of dissemination of research findings and ensuring that communities (that have participated in and/or are affected by the research) have access to these was also highlighted in the consultations. Ethics considerations must specifically address the complexities herein namely, the conflict between the two “ethical imperatives” - safeguarding the respondent’s confidentiality and the need to disseminate research results. The WHO guidance³⁴ suggests that ways to address this would include: engaging in meaningful community partnerships with local advocacy and direct service groups from the outset who can act as members of an advisory committee to advise on study design, assist with interpretation of results and publicize the project’s findings; using diverse media to disseminate findings locally and nationally and making use of opportunities to infuse findings into existing policy and programming.

“I know that some people are very hesitant when researchers approach them for information, because it often feels like a very transactional and one-sided thing of “I’m going to take all of your lived experience and I’m then going to analyse that, and I’m going to pop off and get a PhD, and you’re never going to see me again.” (WHAIVE, Paper 3, peer Research

³⁴ World Health Organisation (WHO). Putting Women First. Ethical and safety recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence against women. 2001.

“We need to be a lot more creative and thoughtful with how we want to share research, and not just use the formats we have always used. How could I do this differently to reach people? Ask research participants, how does the research story want to be told- how does the community that is involved think that it should be told?” (FGD with researchers, July 2021)

Another aspect of this is how research products are disseminated and the form this takes. From a data equity perspective, it is useful to consider in what form the information is being shared and whether it is appropriate and accessible for different groups of stakeholders. Too little time and funding is allocated for appropriate communication tools and studies have found that “policy briefings, media exposure, short practical guides or even the use of drama, visual arts and dance engaged their particular target audiences.”³⁵

Useful Resources

[3 Steps Towards Distributing Data Products Equitably \(WEALLCOUNT\)](#)

[How to Engage Non-academics with International Development Research](#)³⁶

[Learning Together: A Guide for Feminist practice in Violence against women and Girls Research Collaborations](#)³⁷

c. ENSURING FUNDING IS FLEXIBLE, ADAPTIVE, AND LONG TERM

It is widely acknowledged that better funding for addressing violence and supporting feminist movements and women’s rights organisations means longer term, flexible, and where possible unrestricted access to funds, including money for core costs and overheads that allows organisations to focus on their core work rather than on constant fundraising.

Whilst the above speaks directly to funding for organisations and movements, longer term funding is also needed specifically for research on VAW/VAC because it allows additional time for:³⁸

- Developing relationships and trust among research consortium members during the inception phase of a study.
- Ethical approval processes necessary at the start of a project.
- Testing questionnaires and making necessary changes and adaptations, so that the research tools are fine tuned to the context.
- Translation and dissemination of data in different forms (beyond the main research report).
- Secondary analysis of the research data which can be very valuable in terms of applying the data to different research questions and local contexts.

35 ESRC and UKAID. Partnerships, Planning and Policy Windows: How to Engage Non-academics with International Development Research. 2016.

36 Ibid.

37 Raising Voices and the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (2020). Learning Together: A Guide for Feminist Practice in Violence Against Women and Girls Research Collaborations. Kampala, Uganda and Pretoria, South Africa.

38 Focus group discussions with researchers (July 8, July 13, 2021)

Provision of longer-term funding for research supports continuous learning and enables researchers and practitioners to measure impact over time. It allows for innovation to truly take place and ensures space and freedom to experiment, document, innovate and learn from failures. In addition, for researchers and implementing partners in LMICs, flexibility within existing funding and programmatic arrangements is critical to allow partners to adapt their studies to the changing contexts and to extenuating circumstances that might arise. For instance, the ability and willingness of funders, researchers, and practitioners to be flexible and innovative has been tested to the extreme during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many research projects required funders to adapt quickly in terms of sustaining delays and supporting costs related to different methodological approaches, a new research protocol or safer implementation of services related to the research. The fact that many funders were able to adapt their requirements to changing situations hopefully indicates that lessons have been learned that will impact funders in ‘normal’ times as well.

PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE: flexibility is key to ensuring that work continues

According to an SVRI grantee from Peru, for whom COVID-19 derailed the work of the implementing partners and government offices with whom they worked: *“rethinking the intervention was a must. The SVRI was completely supportive of this idea. They gave us ideas on how to adapt the intervention, sent us relevant papers and documents, feedback on what we proposed and several comments that would make the adapted proposal more real. It helped us a lot knowing that SVRI want the project to finish well, [not just] on time.”* (SVRI Grantee, 2019)

Organisations at this time created useful guidance for the field on how to [conduct remote research on violence against women](#)³⁹ during the pandemic as well as on [remote data collection on violence against children](#) during COVID.

d. TRANSFORMING THE FUNDER-GRANTEE RELATIONSHIP

A recurring theme in the consultations was related to changing the nature of donor-grantee relationships. Both are very aware of the challenges inherent in shifting the dialogue in a way that addresses power and builds equity in philanthropic relationships. There is increasing knowledge about and advocacy for ‘trust-based philanthropy’, described as “an approach to giving that addresses the inherent power imbalances between funders, non-profits, and the communities they serve. At its core, trust-based philanthropy is about redistributing power—systemically, organizationally, and interpersonally—in service of a healthier and more equitable non-profit ecosystem.”⁴⁰

“Always assume that is hard to unlearn and interact in a relaxed, open, honest way, unlearning the relationship with who gives you money, and simultaneously questioning what it means to be the one who is giving the money and how you expect others to act when you do give them money.” (FGD, researchers, July 2021)

39 Namy, S. and Dartnall E. (2020). Knowledge Exchange: Pivoting to remote research on violence against women during COVID-19. The Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI), Pretoria: South Africa

40 Trust Based Philanthropy Project. Trust Based Philanthropy- An Overview. 2021.

Putting these ideas into practical action is related to some of what we have already addressed in this guide - for instance, promoting **more flexible, long term and adaptive grantmaking**. Another important aspect is about building relationships based on partnership and an understanding that **both parties have the same objective, that of really wanting the project to succeed**. For funders of research on VAW/VAC in LMICs this **in practice** can mean:

- Transparent and responsive communication in terms of decision-making processes and deadlines, as well as when problems arise.
- Simplification of processes/paperwork that focus only on what really needs to be known and eliminating jargon that could alienate or exclude groups.
- A proactive approach towards getting to know prospective grantees and diversifying networks.
- Offering support beyond money, including mentorship, promoting grantees work, helping grantees, expand their access to other funders, etc.

PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE: Affirmative support to encourage the work

An SVRI grantee from Brazil faced issues with creating a proposal that was in line with the requirements. SVRI were able to see the potential in the proposed work, and helped by contracting a consultant to amend the proposal and provide the technical support needed. As the grantee explained, *“the entire SVRI process was extremely open and accessible. Through all the conversations it was clear the focus was to ensure the utmost quality and comprehension from us. The SVRI did not measure its efforts in supporting us with intelligence and collaboration, they were flexible in adjusting the timeframe to our curve of understanding and adaptation process.”* (SVRI grantee, 2020)

Useful Resources

[Trust-Based Philanthropy: An Overview, 2021](#). Serving as an introduction to trust-based philanthropy, this overview walks one through the definition and six principles of the approach.

[Great Funder-Nonprofit Relationships. Exponent Philanthropy, 2018](#). Interactive toolkit designed to help funders build better relationships with grantees.

[BUILD: There’s no going back to the old ways of philanthropy. Ford Foundation, April 2021](#). Ford Foundation provides a case study on how they are practicing trust-based philanthropy through their Building Institutions and Networks (BUILD) program.

How can we meet funding Ecosystem Challenges?

According to the SVRI's tracking funding study, the funding required to adequately address VAW is available from multiple sources, including national government expenditure, bilateral aid, multilateral aid, international NGOs, and private foundations. The largest amount of funds emanates from foreign aid, tracked in the form of ODA. However, the funding for research on VAW remains disproportionately low and can be traced mainly to HICs and to specific donors.

Working in silos results in duplication of efforts: To maximise impact towards a central goal of reducing VAW and VAC, can funders pool resources, thinking and planning?

Could this include:

- Pooled technical resources for grantees such as templates for proposals, ethics review processes, etc?
- Collaboration on developing a 'funding pipeline' wherein there is a pathway in place for different phases including research uptake once a project is over?

Joint agreement on funding priorities: Can funders come together to discuss research needs and make sure that these are prioritised when planning funding allocations? The GSRA could contribute greatly to this.

Pooled and collective pots of funding: Consider different ways of funding different organisations, for example can funders pool resources with other funders "to unlock resources at scale, share risks, enhance sustainability, reduce management burdens, and expand the number of donors working in an area"⁴¹

Fund safety, well-being and collective care: Consider a 'holistic human security approach' which emphasises the integration of digital security, self-care and well-being practices to enable organisations and individuals to remain physically and emotionally healthy whilst continuing to do the work that they believe in.⁴²

Learning from the opposition: For instance, gender restrictive actors⁴³ are funded in a specific way that we can learn from: "flexibly, for long terms with block grants, gifts, and endowments, allowing them to develop long-term strategies to advance their worldview. The VAW and VAC fields need to fund similarly; long term, unrestricted funding focused on building institutional strength and resilience and creating "cross-issue, cross-national, and intersectional alliances with key groups in the development and humanitarian sectors."⁴⁴ Funders need to incorporate gender equality into different departments and across portfolios. Civil society needs to forge more partnerships, avoid competition, and create collective platforms to showcase organisations that might not otherwise have access to funding.

Collective call to action: More and better investments in evidence-based and program-informed policies and programs to prevent VAWG through the accelerator.

41 AWID & Mama Cash. Moving More Money to the Drivers of Change: How Bilateral and Multilateral Funders can Resource Feminist Movements. 2020.

42 The Holistic Security Manual. <https://holistic-security.tacticaltech.org/>

43 "Gender-restrictive groups and actors are organizations, politicians, researchers, and institutions that seek to establish a gender restrictive world order. A gender-restrictive order organizes economic, political, and social life through the imposition and enforcement of a restrictive and hierarchical vision of gender. It has two main and interdependent components: the naturalization of the gender binary, and the enforcement of gender-normativity" from Elevate Children Funders Group. Manufacturing Moral Panic: Weaponizing Children to Undermine Gender Justice and Human Rights'. 2021.

44 Elevate Children Funders Group. Manufacturing Moral Panic: Weaponizing Children to Undermine Gender Justice and Human Rights'. 2021.

VI Putting principles into practice

This section provides practical suggestions to bring the above principles to life. **This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of funder considerations for all funding proposals and in all contexts.** For instance, short notice calls which yield rapidly available, shorter-term funding might be important in acute humanitarian settings, but this is not advocated for in this guidance. However, resources relevant for different contexts are highlighted in section VII.

The points below derive directly from our analysis of the key principles most relevant to ethical funding that were illuminated in the scoping review and discussed with a wide range of stakeholders as having direct relevance to funding research on VAW and VAC in LMICS. In addition, our aim was to not duplicate but rather to highlight the wide range of resources that exist and that provide discussion and context around these issues. **Therefore, the considerations and points of action below are intended to be read alongside the useful references which are distributed through the text, as well as the consolidated list of useful resources in section VII.**

“Consult LMIC researchers in developing grant application procedures and ensure there is sufficient time to apply - they don't have the same capacity to produce large funding applications under difficult circumstances, demand less in terms of personal and institutional capacity and use different metrics to measure the capacity to do the work. If you keep funding the same people who already hold grants and have publications, how is it going to change anything in LMIC settings?” (Respondent from online survey, September 2021)

STEPS 1-3:

LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR THE RESEARCH JOURNEY

PROCESS STAGE

1. PRE-CALL

During this stage, key aspects include consideration of what the field, the existing literature and local communities identify are research priorities and developing a deep understanding of the local contexts within which the call must be disseminated.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Involving diverse voices and localised approach:

- Consult with multiple stakeholders including advisers from LMICs and non-academics to inform research priority setting.
The [GSRA](#) can play a critical role here.
- Conduct a situation analysis - ensure understanding of local contexts where you are planning to fund including:
 - potential threats to security (e.g. in conflict zones/political instability)
 - availability of infrastructure and communications technology
 - funding regulatory obstacles such as restrictions on organisations being able to receive foreign funds
- Plan the eligibility criteria for your grantmaking according to what is learned from the above processes. Does it consider the priorities of the people most impacted by the issues being addressed?

Thinking about flexible, adaptive, and long-term funding:

- Consider moving from funding intermediaries (where possible) and rather directly funding local partnerships and collaborations.

STEPS 1-3:

PROCESS STAGE

2. THE CALL

Key aspects include creating and reviewing the RFP bearing in mind issues related to increasing the diversity of the applicant pool and creating a process that is as fair and equitable as possible.

- Discuss funding timelines and consider longer, more flexible options – including necessary activities at the beginning and the end of a research journey. This would include a phase to develop an inception report as well as build relationships and come to agreements on research uptake. See step 4 below.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

REVIEW THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) CONSIDERING ISSUES SUCH AS:

Increasing the diversity of those that can apply:

- Construct the call in a way so that a diverse range of stakeholders / organisations can apply, with preference or significant weighting given to local organisations and researchers with in-depth knowledge of local realities.
- Consider an open call
- Ensure that eligibility criteria are clear and transparent including:
 - Who can apply?
 - Who should not apply?
 - On what basis have these decisions been made?
- Disseminate the call in multiple languages (depending on the local context / regional context) and allow grant applications to be submitted in different languages.
- Utilise appropriate technology such as screen readers and sign language interpreters for videos and webinars related to the call- so that applicants with audio and visual disabilities can access the information.

Including different approaches to research and hierarchies of knowledge:

- Address this explicitly by making sure the funding criteria provides flexibility for innovation in research design including research protocols that include mixed method approaches.

Ensuring that potential applicants understand the call:

- Use different mediums to explain the call and account for diverse audiences, for instance a short video, question and answer sessions or webinars (with translation).
- Define key terms that are relevant to the call.

Encouraging partnerships with non-academic stakeholders:

- Make collaboration a part of the application process. Ask for bids that include non-academic actors as partners and co-investigators so that these relationships are embedded from the start of the project lifecycle.
- Ask applicants to describe the relationships in the consortium and who is responsible for what to avoid research imperialism.
- Request applicants provide a research uptake plan in the proposal.

STEPS 1-3:

Ethics:

- Ask applicants to outline ethical issues that might arise during the research and address how they will respond to them to mitigate risk to research participants.
- Ensure that applicants are aware of the requirement for ethical review and stipulate where ethical review will be sought.
- Ask applicants to explain why the research is necessary and address whether the same information could be collected in a different way.

Accounting for time management:

- Value grantee partners time-think about the length of the application form/proposal required and what data is being asked for. Is the form asking only for information that is really needed?
- Where possible, provide between 60-90 days for the development of proposals in recognition that short notice calls can be detrimental for researchers and the research being funded.
- Consider a two-step process (depending on internal capacity) wherein a shorter outline of a proposal or concept note is submitted and reviewed before a full application is requested. This can lessen applicant burden.
- Online application forms may promote transparency and fairness -however this must be balanced against accessibility issues in terms of electricity and internet availability.

Communicating the review process:

- Make sure the call includes a description of the review process - this should be transparent to all stakeholders, with clear timelines and criteria and accessible language. Make sure non-negotiables are also clearly communicated.

PROCESS STAGE

3. THE APPLICATION

Key aspects here include promoting the values funders wish to include by asking that they be included in planning and budgets

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

ENSURE THAT SPECIFIC BUDGET LINE ITEMS REFLECT THE PRINCIPLES IN THIS GUIDE

Funders can set specific priorities, so that they are accounted for in proposals. For example, include budget items that address:

- Partnership development, capacity sharing and development activities.
- Self and collective care practices for grantee partners.
- Research uptake - provide framework for this and ensure that beneficiaries and community stakeholders are involved.

Communications support and dissemination of findings to community and other important stakeholders.

- Equitable allocation of salaries.
- Researcher safety/accounting for vicarious trauma including provision for:
 - Emotional support and workload management for researchers
 - Safe spaces to stay during the research process
 - Safety and security of field research teams
- Ethics approval processes and issues, e.g., setting up essential services (with local partners) in situations where services are constrained, if it would be unethical to carry out research without these in place.
- Organisational overheads

“Please ensure that funding, contracting, budgeting, planning processes all include a senior GBV research technical advisor involved in decision-making, otherwise funders often impose unrealistic, and therefore unsafe and unethical expectations for research priorities, scope, timeline and deliverables on research teams. Critically ensure longer timelines, and financial, technical, time, and space resources for preventing secondary trauma and stress management for GBV researchers.” (Response from Online survey, September 2021)

STEPS 4-5:

REVIEWING AND AWARDING THE GRANT

PROCESS STAGE

4. DUE DILIGENCE AND REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Key aspects during this stage are flexibility, negotiation and establishing a collaborative approach.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

Who is reviewing the applications?

- Is there a diverse review panel including those with expertise in research on VAW and VAC, ethical considerations, policy making and understanding of local/regional context? This will help ensure that contextually relevant, ethically well-planned projects with feasible uptake plans get awarded.

Affirming approach

- Approach the project from the starting point of “what can we do to make this work”? Offer the necessary support to ensure its success.
- Can we invest more (time/support/resources) to make a promising project work?
- Recognise power imbalances between funder and grantee and actively work to address these.

Assisting with barriers and obstacles

- If there are ethical review board issues can the funder help with extra funding or technical support?
- Is there a pool of funding available for fine-tuning and ensuring that the planning of the research is supported?
- Are the non-negotiables in terms of what is expected of the grantee clear, and have they been well communicated?

STEPS 4-5:

PROCESS STAGE

5. POST AWARD: DEVELOPING A SHARED UNDERSTANDING

Key aspects during this stage are to ensure that a trusting relationship is built so that the research journey can be based on trust and open communication.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Developing a relationship

- Plan opportunities to meet with grantees
- Conduct a meet and greet round table that includes researchers as well as local implementing partners and use this to highlight roles, and responsibilities for the project.
- Develop a shared understanding of the key issues, current literature, ethical issues, research methods and tools etc
- Facilitate the development of agreements on co-authorship, publishing and sharing from the outset. Provide templates that partners can use to put these agreements into place.
- Emphasise a learning approach that focuses on whole-team reflection on their learning through the project, as opposed to senior researchers only conducting capacity strengthening.

Share and discuss guiding principles

- Use a guide/this guide to ensure that all parties share/understand fundamental principles underlying the approach

Encourage regular internal and external communication

- If feasible, designate a point person to coordinate communication between the various partners and to ask questions or discuss challenges that are arising.
- Emphasise open communication with grantees about changing needs through the life cycle of the project.
- Support knowledge exchange activities by offering extra funding pots for innovative communication activities that develop during the project's duration.

Fund collaboration and sharing

- Create linkages between grantees doing similar work, encourage communication and reduce duplication.
- Plan for resources to fund annual meetings designed to link organisations from different regions who can learn from one another.
- Widely share useful resources that are relevant to the project.

STEPS 6-7:

THE RESEARCH JOURNEY

PROCESS STAGE

6. IMPLEMENTATION

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Amplifying the work

- Plan funding for cohorts to attend relevant international events together to meet and learn from each other as well as to network with other donors and policy makers.
- Assist grantees to build on the legitimacy of being funded by facilitating access to other funders and sharing what you have learned with other funders.
- Share the work of grantees widely and amplify it to the field - for instance by asking them to speak on panels (in-person or online) or by disseminating and publicising their work, where relevant.
- Use the communication networks and resources available to you to link projects and people where relevant.
- Factor in funding for innovative non-academic dissemination outputs

Flexibility

- Know that things might not go according to plan – adjusting the plan, timelines and methodology might be necessary to ensure that a project can continue. Be open to these adjustments where possible.

Trust based partnership

- Promote and encourage new ways of working that are kinder for the environment as well as an opportunity to promote empathy and understanding. For instance, shift monitoring visits to virtual meetings and reduce the number of updates and reports required.
- Use reporting requirements or visits to emphasise the affirmative/ partnership approach - emphasise learning from the work and providing support for challenges faced.
- Provide ongoing support throughout the project for:
 - Communications.
 - Self and collective care.
 - Sharing and engaging with topical issues in the field both in grantees own countries and globally.

STEPS 6-7:

7. THE END OF THE PROJECT

Closing and continuity

- Consider 'transition funding' that would enable grantees to conduct advocacy based on their research findings (for specific projects).
- Continue to examine the resources and connections that could be made to enable new partnerships to emerge that can sustain and develop the research that has been done.
- Reinforce the linkages made throughout the project – especially considering future goals.
- Be flexible with end times and outcomes – they may change over time.
- Celebrate the end of each research project!

VII Consolidated resource list

Feminist approaches to Research/grant making

[Feminist approaches to building knowledge and evidence on GBV. COFEM.](#)

[Making feminism count: integrating feminist research principles in large-scale quantitative research on violence against women and girls.](#)

[Researching women's leadership in Asia and the Pacific- reflections on feminist research approaches in design and practice.](#)

[Moving More Money to the Drivers of Change: How Bilateral and Multilateral Funders Can Resource Feminist Movements](#) (Multiple case studies of different types of funding modalities used in nine bilateral and multilateral case studies)

[Applying a Feminist Lens to Grantmaking for Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls:](#) (COFEM, 2021)

Practice Based Knowledge and Participatory Grantmaking

[Learning from Practice: Lessons on preventing violence from civil society organizations funded by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women:](#) To disseminate the knowledge and learning from civil society and women' rights organisations, the UN Trust Fund worked with grantee organizations and researchers to create a series of briefings on preventing violence against women.

[Learning from Practice: Approaches to Capture and Apply Practice-Based Knowledge.](#)

This brief provides reflections and practical tips for practitioners and activists on how to collect, document, analyse, share, and apply practice-based knowledge to programming to prevent VAW and VAC.

[Shifting Power and Resources through Participatory Grantmaking](#)

Created with input from several participatory grant makers, this guide shares challenges, lessons learned, and best practices for engaging in inclusive grantmaking.

[Prevention collaborative website:](#) Repository of materials on PBK including useful learning tools papers and webinars.

Disseminating research products

[3 Steps Towards Distributing Data Products Equitably](#)

[How to Engage Non-academics with International Development Research](#)

[Learning Together: A Guide for Feminist practice in Violence against women and Girls Research Collaborations](#)⁴⁵

Donor-Grantee relationships

[Trust-Based Philanthropy: An Overview, 2021.](#) Serving as an introduction to trust-based philanthropy, this overview walks one through the definition and six principles of the approach.

[Great Funder-Nonprofit Relationships. Exponent Philanthropy, 2018.](#) Interactive toolkit designed to help funders build better relationships with grantees.

[BUILD: There's no going back to the old ways of philanthropy.](#) Ford Foundation, April 2021. Ford Foundation provides a case study on how they are practicing trust-based philanthropy through their Building Institutions and Networks (BUILD) program.

Equitable Partnerships

[Funding Institutions Perpetuate Inequitable Global Health Partnerships: Here Are Three Ways to Stop That.](#)

[UK research funders: Resource materials to support fair and equitable research partnerships.](#)

Holistic Security

[Making our movements sustainable: practicing holistic security every day](#)

Humanitarian settings

UNICEF and UKRI. 2021. "Defining the Agenda: Key Lessons for Funders and Commissioners of Ethical Research in Fragile and Conflict- Affected Contexts". 2021.

UNICEF and UKRI. 2021. "Ethical Research in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Contexts: Guidelines for Reviewers"

[Smith, J. & Blanchet, K. 2019. 'Research Methodologies in Humanitarian Crises'. Elrha: London](#)

Useful Tools

[WEALLCOUNT: Project for Equity in Data Science.](#) Resources on data equity including the training course. This includes specific tools for funders which they can use when considering equity in their partnerships, for instance the 'funder mapping' tool.

[Ethical Action in Global Research: A Toolkit. University of Edinburgh. 2019.](#) Considerations that emerge at each stage of a research journey and specific questions as well as possible answers/solutions at each stage.

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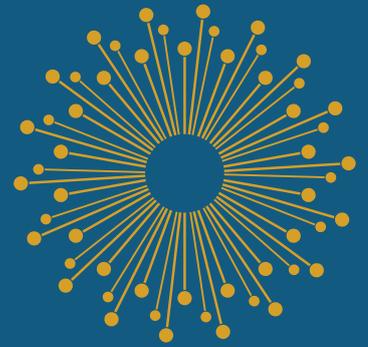
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