



Kosovo youths using computers at a youth resource hub. Lundrim Aliu / World Bank

TECHNOLOGY AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Technologies are converging in new ways to change how we live, work and organize. In some cases, attempts are being made to use technology to make women's access to services safer, reducing the risk of sexual harassment, a form of gender-based violence (GBV). It can be used to ensure easier, more comprehensive access to information and services, including for survivors of violence. However, technology can also be used to facilitate and expand the reach of GBV. Perpetrators can use technology to monitor, harass, threaten, intimidate, impersonate, and stalk victims.

Several research interventions funded by the [Development Marketplace: Innovations to Address GBV](#) show promise at using technology both to address GBV, and to respond to technology-facilitated GBV.

DEFINING AND MEASURING TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED GBV

RESULTS

The [International Center for Research on Women \(ICRW\)](#) developed a definition [DJA] and framework for understanding technology-facilitated GBV – a crucial step in preventing it and supporting those who experience it:

“Technology-facilitated GBV is action by one or more people that harms others based on their sexual or gender identity or by enforcing harmful gender norms. This action is carried out using the internet and/or mobile technology and includes stalking, bullying, sexual harassment, defamation, hate speech and exploitation.”

The ICRW undertook research in Uganda and India to create a theoretical starting point to inform emerging programs and policies that seek to prevent and respond to technology-facilitated GBV in lower and middle-income countries, where the rapid expansion of mobile and internet connectivity has taken place and little research has been conducted. In addition to the definition and framework, this work led to a

draft set of quantitative measures that can be further validated and used to collect critical data on this important and emerging issue.

DIGITAL STORY-TELLING AND PODCASTING

RESULTS

A multi-disciplinary team of physicians, academics, practitioners and journalists from [Fondation Hironnelle, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Addis Ababa University School of Public Health](#) and [Women and Health Alliance International Ethiopia](#) explored using podcasts to prevent intimate partner violence among Somali refugees in Dollo Ado, Ethiopia.

The researchers created a

podcaster training curriculum, and recruited refugees in Bokolmanyo refugee camp for training in podcasting. Podcasts were recorded around the camp with participating community members, and edited together in Somali to create a final series of 16 episodes called *Unite for a Better Life*. The podcasts focus on underlying factors the refugees identified that contribute to intimate partner violence in this setting, including gender norms, healthy and unhealthy relationships, and give people practical advice on how to build healthy relationships based on, for example, effective listening skills, or handling conflict in a healthy way.

USING TECHNOLOGY TO MAKE PUBLIC TRANSPORT SAFER

RESULTS

The [Urban Institute](#) and the [Information Technology University Punjab](#) formed a partnership to map hotspots where transport users have experienced violence or harassment, or felt unsafe in Lahore. They used a custom-built smartphone application to explore how variations in transport operations, vehicle facilities, transit station design and urban land-use affect citizens' perceptions of safety. They found that the extent and form of this problem is not fully recognized and seldom discussed in public forums, likely due to social taboos associated with sexual harassment, and that despite major public investments

in overhauling Lahore's transport system, lack of interoperability between transport options, poor information on and adherence to schedules on traditional routes and unmarked pickup and drop-off locations increases women's vulnerability. Building on this, they intend to undertake rigorous impact evaluations of the most promising interventions emerging from Lahore's revitalized transit system.

SURVIVOR-CENTERED APPROACH TO FORENSIC MEDICAL EXAMINATION

WORK IN PROGRESS

MediCapt is a mobile application created by [Physicians for Human Rights](#) that clinicians in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Kenya use to collect, document, and preserve forensic medical evidence to support prosecutions of sexual violence crimes. Physicians for Human Rights is undertaking a preliminary study of MediCapt, to help close a gap in evidence about the use of mobile health technology for collecting quality evidence and its role in a survivor-centered approach to forensic medical examination of sexual violence.

PREVENTING TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

WORK IN PROGRESS

ZonaSegura is a trauma-informed, youth-centered innovative research

study and mobile solution to address teen dating violence in Honduras. Led by YTH in partnership with the Public Health Institute's [GOJoven International Program](#) and [GOJoven Honduras](#), this aims to study the impact of a mobile app and WhatsApp messaging campaign. These aim to reduce dating violence through providing prevention information, healthy relationship education, and linkages to teen dating violence services and resources. ZonaSegura leverages the high rates of mobile phone usage among young women and girls in Honduras. ZonaSegura is intended as a private and confidential digital platform linking youth to services and gamified educational content, allowing them the ability to contact trusted friends and family when they need support, and is created using youth-centered design, a methodology empowering young people to take active steps in addressing the biggest challenges in their lives. ■

Development Marketplace: Innovations to Address Gender-Based Violence funds ground-breaking GBV research in low- and middle-income countries across the globe. It is a partnership between the [World Bank Group](#) and the [Sexual Violence Research Initiative](#). Over four years, the partnership has funded research projects in 28 countries.