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Never give up on a dream just because of the time it will take to accomplish it. The time will pass anyway.

Earl Nightingale

FOREWORD

I can hardly believe 2023 was SVRI’s 20th anniversary. Has it really been two decades since the we were first established? After being hosted by the World Health Organization and then the South African Medical Research Council, we found our independent wings in 2019. Now, we count over 10,000 members as part of the SVRI family and have distributed $10 million in grants to more than 100 grantees in 53 countries.

More than mind-boggling, it’s humbling.

And now, 2023, as though showing off for our anniversary, proved to be a year we made truly significant strides on thematic, partnership and operational levels. We are venturing bravely into areas notoriously difficult to research and programme such as GBV prevention; tackling new and emerging topics such as tech facilitated GBV; and finding our feet in the relationship between GBV and higher education institutions. We are thrilled about our new partnership with Co-Impact where, beginning in Sri Lanka, we are working alongside a multi-sectoral local team to co-develop a nationally led intervention on preventing IPV through the health system.

In 2023, thanks to the Oak Foundation, we began to refine our focus on child sexual violence (CSV). With the establishment of the Safe Futures Hub, a space for discussing and implementing solutions to CSV, we and our partners in this initiative are on the cusp of a much better understanding of CSV, as well as its relationship to VAW.

I won’t harp on the cliché that time flies, except to say that we are in Forum planning mode once more. Our 8th SVRI Forum, the biggest global gathering of minds committed to ending VAW and VAC, is set for October 2024 in Cape Town. We are grateful to the SVRI Leadership Council, SVRI members, and SVRI partners for their roles in shaping this forthcoming event.

A traditional 20th anniversary gift is china, epitomizing grace, durability, resistance, quality, and refinement. I’ll take it. When I reflect on these last 20 years, our incredible metamorphosis, the friends made along the way and the challenges faced and overcome, those words fit perfectly.

I want to appreciate each person and organisation that has supported us with any kind of resources, cheered us on or passed through our literal or digital doors in any capacity. You have helped make us what we are today. A thunderous Thank You to all our funding partners for your enduring faith and trust in us.

There is still time, and we still dream of a world free of violence for women and children everywhere. We are 20 now and we have a 20/20 vision of the future we want.

Elizabeth Dartnall
SVRI Executive Director
OUR YEAR IN HIGHLIGHTS

$932 000  
Funds available for SVRI grantmaking 2023/24

10 800  
SVRI members

9  
Grantees receiving the 2024 SVRI research grant

27 554  
Current LinkedIn followers

2 501  
Enrolment to date on our course – measuring violence against children

397  
Applications for the 2024 SVRI research grant

508  
Research questions gathered and consolidated for the Africa shared research agenda

1 182  
Abstract submissions made to SVRI Forum 2024

20  
Publications by SVRI and partners in 2023

20  
Years SVRI has been in existence

9 497  
Downloads of the SVRI podcast to date
WHO WE ARE

The SVRI is the world’s largest network disrupting these inequities and advancing research on violence against women and violence against children in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) by:

- Supporting evidence building in LMICs through research grants, and disseminating research, information, and tools.
- Strengthening capacity to ensure research is rigorous, ethical, answers a policy need, and strengthens VAW and VAC policy and programming.
- Creating platforms for researchers, practitioners, and funders to gather, debate, and share lessons.
- Influencing change by advocating for more and better funding for research.

As a result of our collective efforts, we aim to achieve a world free of violence against women, violence against children, and other forms of violence stemming from gender inequality.

Why Research matters!

Research is essential to ensure that:

- We create contextually relevant, evidence-based solutions to reduce violence against women and children.
- Presented solutions are effective in improving programmes and services and reducing levels of violence experienced by women and children.
- We don’t do harm through our programmes and interventions.
- Presented solutions can be cost effectively implemented with efficacy to scale.
GOAL 1: BUILDING EVIDENCE

KEY RESULT: AN INCREASE IN INNOVATIONS TESTED BY STRONG RESEARCH DESIGNS FOR IMPROVED VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN RESPONSE AND PREVENTION.

SVRI 2024 Research Grant

While the burden and experience of violence continue to be felt disproportionately in LMICs, this disparity is not reflected in funding patterns and distribution of resources for research. We are intent on changing this. The SVRI Research Grant is one of a handful of global, open call, grant making mechanisms for research and innovation on violence against women (VAW) and violence against children (VAC) in LMICs. Our current programme provides grants up to $150,000 USD over a 12–18-month period.

In early 2023, our open call for the 2024 SVRI research grant yielded a substantial 397 applications. After the first level review of the research proposals, 82 were shortlisted for a second-tier review. Of these, 18 proposals were shortlisted for the third level review committee. The manifestations of VAW and VAC are numerous, and we never fail to arrive at an eclectic crop of finely drawn proposals that are sound, thought-provoking, steeped in local questioning and reality, and address a gap in knowledge. Our expert review panel did not have an easy time whittling the shortlist down to seven awards.

The final seven grants awarded are from East Asia Pacific (Vietnam), Eastern and Central Europe (Armenia), Africa (Sierra Leone, Madagascar and Ethiopia), Middle East and North Africa (Egypt) and Latin America and the Caribbean (Mexico). The proposed research projects deal with a variety of dimensions of GBV ranging from working with perpetrators in Mexico, addressing violence against women in public spaces, to developing sound measures for child sexual abuse (CSA) in Armenia. We are also supporting an additional two grants specifically addressing Technology Facilitated Gender Based Violence (TFGBV).

TFGBV, an emerging issue, was the focus of much discussion at the 2022 SVRI Forum in Mexico and it is encouraging to see concrete efforts to understand it in more depth. We are so grateful to USAID, the UK government, and the What Works II Programme for channelling funds through the Global Women’s Institute (GWI) to support research in this thematic area. Of the TFGBV proposals received, we shortlisted 15. A separate review committee, comprising of SVRI and GWI, reviewed these proposals and eventually awarded the two grants to organisations from India and South Africa.

We continue to provide support to grantees from previous years. The nine winners of the 2023 SVRI Research Grant were congratulated in an online webinar in 2023. They introduced their planned projects which ranged from child sexual abuse in Jamaica, to Moroccan women’s experience of reproductive violence, to GBV within the transgender community in Indonesia, among others.

We regularly engage with our 2022 and 2021 grantees on monitoring the implementation rate of the projects, celebrating achievements and where possible, helping to tackle any obstacles on the ground that affect project activities and timelines.

No Research = No Story

We are encouraged to learn from our grantees that being a part of the SVRI grant recipient cohort contributes to strengthening their research capacity. They deepen their perspective on ‘feminist research’ through for example, greater understanding of the importance and tools of addressing ethics while conducting research. Research from our grantees is also contributing to furthering knowledge in the field; take for example, the research exposing exceptional vulnerability of migrant children journeying the western Balkan route. The study, ‘Surviving their journey’ brings into sharp focus the need for urgent, trauma informed responses from development agencies. Stories of vulnerability among young Ethiopian women, travelling from rural to urban settings in the hope of finding work and falling into the clutches of job brokers and market women, are truly harrowing. Without research, service providers and development agencies would never be aware of the risks these women are taking in an effort to improve their lives and seek the support and services they require.

New frontiers: Co-creating and working at scale with multisectoral local teams

One of the many highlights of 2023 was the confirmation of a new and incredibly exciting funding relationship with a philanthropic collaborative that brings together a range of global actors to help effect sustainable social and economic change in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. change in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

In 2023, we laid much of the groundwork for our project, Collaborative Evidence Building for Impact at Scale: From local to global, supported by Co-Impact and due to begin in earnest in 2024. This initiative will leverage our experience in building evidence for programming at the country level, while piloting a new method of grant making. Instead of open calls for proposals, we will be working alongside a multi-sectoral local team to co-develop the research focus area and related proposal. The inception phase saw us collaboratively developing a common agenda for change as well as a shared measurement system for the project.

To decide on an initial site for the project, we supported four country researchers to conduct a deep-dive context analysis on Senegal, Ghana, India, and Sri Lanka. Using the reports from each country, supplemented by further conversations with partners and colleagues, we decided on Sri Lanka as the selected country for the project. In December, we conducted our first scoping visit to Sri Lanka and met with several civil society organisations and government entities. This visit provided us with the fundamental groundwork upon which to build partnerships and consider strategic and sustainable directions for the project.
Chrysalis, a Sri Lankan NGO, will be the co-lead and core implementing partner on this project. In January 2024, we spent time with Chrysalis, government and other stakeholders outlining roles and responsibilities, establishing relationships and ways of working, and creating a road map for the months ahead. We look forward to this new and exciting chapter and the indelible contribution it will make to the VAW agenda in Sri Lanka and beyond.

Sharpening focus on CSV

2023 was the year we deliberately doubled our efforts to better understand and tackle child sexual violence (CSV). SVRI has a long history of work on CSV, driven by the recognition that despite its high prevalence, CSV remains one of the least understood and researched forms of interpersonal violence, with the evidence gaps on what works to prevent and respond to CSV remaining under-researched in LMICs. In recent years, through consultations and conducting a scoping exercise, we’ve come to better understand where we can best add value to building evidence to strengthen work on CSV in LMICs. We thank the Oak Foundation for their support in this work.

In September 2023, during the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) meeting, we launched the Safe Futures Hub which serves as an open space for accessing and implementing solutions to end CSV. In partnership with Together for Girls and We Protect Global Alliance, we are excited that Safe Futures was recognized as a 2023 Commitment to Action at the CGI, acknowledging the global scale and urgency of addressing CSV through multisectoral efforts.

“With digital connectivity increasing around the world, it is more important than ever to collaborate to ensure children can enjoy all the benefits and opportunities of the online world without fear of sexual violence.”
Iain Drennan, Executive Director, WeProtect Global Alliance.

Together for Girls, and WeProtect Global Alliance. SVRI Executive Director, Elizabeth Dartnall was elected Leadership Group Chair. The Leadership group met in London in February 2024 to assess progress and plan for the forthcoming year.

Our Hub symposium at the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) Congress in Edinburgh in September, titled “Survivor, Activist, and Practitioner Leadership in the Knowledge Landscape for Childhood Sexual Violence Solutions,” was successful. This panel discussion prominently featured practitioner and activist voices from various sectors and explored the intricate dynamics of knowledge within the context of CSV solutions. The discussions delved into the complex interplay between research and practice, highlighting the value of practice-based knowledge, survivor and activist leadership, and the challenges inherent in knowledge generation, production, and dissemination.

GBV Prevention

As a field, GBV prevention is relatively new. Across the globe there have been few interventions proven to transform social norms, promote gender equitable societies, and reduce violence, that have been sustainably taken to scale.

This is why, in November 2023, it was a pleasure to spend two days in discussion with the UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, Ford Foundation, and the Government of South Africa on Rethinking Pathways to Preventing Violence at Scale at Wilton Park in the UK.

Among the many highlights of those discussions were the dire levels of national resources allocated to tackling GBV and in particular, GBV prevention. As SVRI, we are keenly aware that the biggest evidence and funding gaps are found in LMICs. Together with partners such as Raising Voices and Prevention Collaborative, we will be building on the acknowledgments that emerged from Wilton Park such as identifying the primary gaps in the prevention ecosystem and the viability of resource mobilisation for GBV prevention.
Knowledge Sharing

We maintain a steady presence on social media and are particularly proud of the 104% increase in LinkedIn followers from March 2023 to January 2024. Naturally there have been fluctuations throughout the year and with the exception of Facebook, we’ve increased our followers on all the social media platforms. The SVRI YouTube channel has been a great portal for all our videos and we currently have 669 subscribers.

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<tr>
<th>SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS</th>
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<td>8,075</td>
<td>8,645</td>
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<td>8,318</td>
<td>8,188</td>
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SVRI Knowledge Platform

We have invested much time and energy in revisioning and strengthening the SVRI website into a knowledge hub - an innovative portal created to house our substantial number of resources and facilitate sharing of information between partners and stakeholders. The new website, available at www.svri.org, was launched to much acclaim in early 2024.

The SVRI blog page has proved to be a popular platform for our members to share and publish experiences related to programme success and/or failure, and discussions around how we can challenge hierarchies of knowledge. It is a safe space for sharing learnings on adapting and/or developing an intervention, and the nuts and bolts of taking interventions to scale. For example, is ethical review a barrier to research on violence against women and violence against children in low and middle-income countries?

GOAL 2: STRENGTHENING CAPACITY

KEY TARGET: AN INCREASE IN LMIC BASED RESEARCHERS LEADING RIGOROUS, IMPACTFUL, INNOVATIVE RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN LMICS.

Research on VAW and VAC remains a sensitive and dynamic field. We want to support researchers to conduct impactful research that meets the highest ethical and quality standards. This also helps them make the best use of all available resources in their work.

Bespoke training with grantees

Capacity building is an integral aspect of our grant programme and in June and July a series of five capacity strengthening workshops were convened for the 2023 grant winners. Topics such as grant management, ethics, and theory of change were covered. As familiar as these topics might be, training always presents important insights and reminders that serve to assist grantees in making the best and most strategic use of their grant. To ensure our training is pitched correctly and the correct skills are being enhanced, we design our training courses in collaboration with grantees.

Open, accessible capacity strengthening opportunities

Since COVID, the SVRI has been building a repository of online courses, some of which have been created through SVRI funding and by others in the field. The online course repository is available on our “Courses from the field” webpage. Key courses developed by SVRI and available free online include:

Pathways to Research Impact

Our Pathways to Research Impact course provides resources to support LMIC researchers in producing high-impact evidence that can influence policy and be translated into practice. By taking a systems approach, participants learn that research impact is not a linear process, but rather an iterative, trust building process that necessitates ongoing engagement with different actors at different times.
Self and collective care

Self-care has been integrated into nearly every aspect of SVRI’s internal culture and in its approach to working with grantees and donors. Our Dare to Care: Wellness, self and collective care for those working in the VAW and VAC fields course is implemented as a self-paced online course.

Data Equity

SVRI’s Foundations of Data Equity for VAWG Prevention Research course is designed to help researchers apply the Data Equity Framework, a seven-step approach to identifying, making, defending, and celebrating data process decisions. The Foundation of Data Equity Course facilitated by WeAllCount was held in March 2023 and was a great success, with 93 people registered. Once completed, it became clear there was an appetite for a subsequent, standalone online course. To publicise and introduce this course, 6 ‘lightning sessions’ were planned, and these were launched in January 2024. Each lightning session demonstrates how a specific topic relates to data equity and shares examples of how to apply the ideas to research on the prevention of violence against women and children.

Measuring VAC

Measuring Violence Against Children: From Concept to Action is a course that introduces the key evidence-based concepts and considerations for measuring VAC in LMICs within multi-aim research studies. It highlights valid and reliable VAC measurement instruments and strategies for cultural and contextual adaptations.

COURSE ENROLMENT SINCE INCEPTION:

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pathways to Research Impact course</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dare to Care: Wellness, self and collective care</td>
<td>1,451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations of Data Equity</td>
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Building capacity for CSV research

Through our engagements with our grantees, we identified the need to build CSV capacity for the field. To refine the exact nature of this capacity, we conducted a survey via the SVRI Update and social media platforms in September 2023. We received 234 responses from researchers, practitioners, service providers and programme implementers spread across 51 countries, most of whom (79%) were based in LMICs.

More than 50% of the survey respondents were interested in participatory research as their main topic of interest. This demonstrates the aspiration of CSV researchers and practitioners to involve children in their work in a more meaningful manner. Based on the results of this survey, we decided on Engaging Children, Adolescents, Survivors, and Communities in Child Sexual Violence Research through Participatory Approaches: Challenges and Opportunities as the topic for the CSV-themed pre-conference workshop at the upcoming SVRI Forum 2024.

Data from the survey also identified the need for an online CSV-themed course using participatory research methods while ensuring meaningful and ethical engagement of children, adolescents, survivors, and communities in child sexual violence research. This course will be developed in 2024.

SVRI Forum 2024: Capacity strengthening workshops

Conference workshops take place on the first day of the conference and have become a cherished tradition and invaluable capacity-building strategy at SVRI Forum. These workshops address needs identified in previous conference evaluations and guidance from the SVRI Leadership Council. Through this process, we ensure that workshops focus on the most relevant and pressing topics covered.

At Forum 2024, we will be setting a new Forum record by hosting 20 workshops. Workshop facilitators contribute their time and expertise on a pro bono basis, as part of their contribution to building the field. Deep gratitude to all conference workshop organisers for their generous sharing of expertise to continue building the field of research on VAW and VAC.

The SVRI: A learning organisation

As a learning organisation, we continue to foster a culture of continuous learning, promoting open communication and offering spaces for reflection and innovation. In the past year, the team continued to learn together during our weekly learning sessions – topics included: unpacking collective care at the SVRI; discussing the anti-gender movement and its implications for our work; understanding the developing field of social media law with guest speaker Emma Sadlier; exploring the ethics of online research; and learning more about Jamie Small’s experience with the U.S. National Plan to End GBV and her research on the intersections between law, crime, and gender. We used Slack for continuous communication and for sharing ideas and reflections. The team enrolled for the SVRI course on Pathways to Research Impact and the Priya Parker course on the Art of Gathering.
GOAL 3: PROMOTING PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

KEY TARGET: A COLLABORATIVE AND NURTURING FIELD WHERE KNOWLEDGE IS SHARED, AND PEOPLE COLLABORATE WITH AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER.

In early 2023, no sooner had we concluded reporting requirements on the 2022 SVRI Forum, we began preparations for the SVRI Forum 2024, scheduled for 21-25 October in Cape Town, South Africa. Although this will be our 8th Forum, the anticipation and excitement at the return of the biggest global forum on VAW and VAC, never wanes. Over the years it has burgeoned into a space where colleagues and friends meet to connect, share and learn under the umbrella of creating a world free of VAW and VAC.

Much of the foundational work that goes into making an event of this size a success, was initiated and/or completed during this reporting period. We are grateful to the SVRI Leadership Council, SVRI members, and SVRI partners for their roles in shaping this forthcoming event.

The themes of Forum 2024 have been decided. They reflect key findings and priorities that emerged from Forum 2022 and the Global Research Agenda Setting processes that have been a key part of our work.

The selected themes are:
- Understanding VAW and VAC in their multiple forms
- VAW and VAC prevention and response research and programmes
- Advancing the science: methods and measures
- Response and prevention programmes focussing on perpetration of VAW and VAC, and men who use violence
- Childhood sexual violence
- Integrating mental health, self-care and collective care in research and practice

During our submission window for Abstracts (September 2023 – January 2024) we received 1,179 submissions, an incredible testament to the level of interest in the Forum and the breadth and depth the event is likely to demonstrate. We received abstracts in English, Spanish and French.

Wellbeing, care, and collective care will once again feature prominently at Forum 2024. A dedicated service provider will take responsibility for wellness, ensuring activities, spaces, and services are available and accessible. As always, we make every effort to incorporate feedback from the last Forum and ensure it informs the upcoming programme.

We hosted a very successful SVRI Forum 2024 virtual launch in October. During December 2023 and January 2024, we also hosted the following regional Forum launches:
- CSOs Asia and Pacific, Abstract Submission Information Session - 13 December 2023
- Eastern Europe and Central Asia and Middle East and North Africa - 23 January 2024
- Latin America and the Caribbean - 23 January 2024
- Africa and Asia - 24 January 2024

Speakers
As already mentioned, there will be 20 workshops at the 2024 Forum, spaces that will offer delegates new and critical knowledge, fresh insights and innovative perspectives into research and practice on VAW and VAC and other forms of gender-based violence driven by inequality.

The highly popular participant driven events will again be available and very soon after opening the portal, we received many applications for these.

EXHIBITION STANDS
Applications for the exhibition stands are filling up and we are excited about the interactive, educational and lively component they always bring to the Forum.

Visit our Forum 2024 site here.

JOIN US
WWW.SVRIFORUM2024.ORG • FORUMS@SVRI.ORG

Keeping our community informed
Each week over 10,924 members receive the SVRI Update to keep them abreast of a roundup of resources on violence against women and violence against children.

The SVRI Help Desk is available to our members and the public more broadly, as a responsive platform for queries and information requests on matters related to research and evidence building on VAW and VAC globally. From March 2023 to February 2024, we received over 2,060 requests for assistance, including: materials and resources for inclusion into the SVRI Update; partnerships requests; information requests; contacts for colleagues in the field; and internship opportunities.

GOAL 4: INFLUENCING CHANGE

KEY TARGET: MORE RESOURCES MOBILISED AND USED EFFECTIVELY FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE IN LMICS.

Priority setting

Priority setting: African Shared Research Agenda

Since SVRI and The Equality Institute launched the Global Shared Research Agenda (GSRA) for research on VAW in 2021, we’ve been building on it to develop shared regional and topic-based agendas. In 2023, in collaboration with UN Women (through its Regional Offices in East and Southern Africa and West and Central Africa), we began work on the development of an African Shared Research Agenda (ASRA) intended to provide insight into the key research questions identified as priorities for ending GBV in Africa.

To develop the ASRA, we adapted a participatory priority setting process developed by the Child Health and Nutrition Research Initiative or CHNRI. The CHNRI model is based on the philosophy of ‘crowdsourcing’ which proposes that asking multiple people for their opinion on an issue will result in accurate predictions, surpassing the expert judgement of one individual. Our method challenges the old way of doing things, which for too long has seen research agendas set by people far removed from the communities whom the research is meant to serve.

To the ASRA, we adapted a participatory priority setting process developed by the Child Health and Nutrition Research Initiative or CHNRI. The CHNRI model is based on the philosophy of ‘crowdsourcing’ which proposes that asking multiple people for their opinion on an issue will result in accurate predictions, surpassing the expert judgement of one individual. Our method challenges the old way of doing things, which for too long has seen research agendas set by people far removed from the communities whom the research is meant to serve.
Our adaptation of CHNRI for the co-creation of the ASRA involved the following seven highly participatory steps through which we were able to engage hundreds of stakeholders from the region.

1. Scoping Review
2. Domains and Criteria
3. Generating Research Questions
4. Ranking and Scoring
5. Data Analysis
6. Making Meaning of the Data
7. Publication and Dissemination

The steps included a scoping review of the literature on Africa, through which we developed five domains that framed the entire process – these were (1) understanding GBV; (2) GBV response interventions; (3) GBV prevention interventions; (4) GBV prevention and response at scale; and (5) measures and methodologies. Research questions were then generated under each of these five domains and ranked by hundreds of regional stakeholders through a ranking survey. A series of online focus group discussions were also held with under-represented population groups to ensure that questions would reflect the nuances of lived experiences and that their voices were substantively heard in the process. The final result was 49 research questions identified as priorities for the region.

The report is now available here and we thrilled that the ASRA has been recognised and included as a welcome contribution to the Generation Equality Action Coalition on Gender Based Violence, a movement to engage a range of actors to take concerted action and unlock political will to deliver concrete change for women and girls worldwide.

Priority setting: Intersections of VAC and VAW

WHO, UNICEF and SVRI finalised work on Research Priorities for the Intersections of Violence against Children and Violence against Women. The report was shared during the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect Congress (ISPCAN) in Edinburgh in September 2023 and has been well received. A launch of the report will be held in 2024.

Priority setting: GBV and HEIs

We are thrilled to have also begun work on developing research priorities on GBV in higher education institutions (HEIs) in Africa and the Middle East. The work is generously funded by the International Development Research Centre and SVRI, in partnership with Stellenbosch University, is undertaking a consultative research priority-setting exercise to further guide evidence-building in the field. Through this work we will better understand the extent to which HEIs offer a productive entry point to GBV prevention in Africa and MENA. We hope this project will identify possibilities for linkages with wider prevention and response efforts.

Priority setting: Tech facilitated GBV

In response to recognising new and emerging forms of violence we have been working with partners-Association for Progressive Communications (APC), UN Women and the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse- and co-facilitating a priority setting process to build a research agenda for TGBV. As with other processes we began with a brief scoping review which provided an overview of the state of evidence and key gaps on the issue of TGBV. This helped us to select the key research domains within which research questions were classified. Between April and July 2023, the stewardship and advisory groups to the project as well as other invited stakeholders generated research questions under each domain. After successive phases of consolidation and review, these were disseminated via a survey translated into Russian, French, Spanish, Bahasa, Hindi, Arabic and Mandarin for ranking. In total, we received 569 responses, with respondents representing diverse sectors, communities, languages, and regions. Data analysis is ongoing to identify the top questions under each domain and highlight priority areas for research. Later in 2024, the agenda will be launched with a report that will be translated and widely disseminated in accessible formats, alongside global efforts to build consensus and encourage uptake within relevant sectors.

We also established community of practice (COP) on knowledge building and tech facilitated GBV with the hope that this group will be a space for key stakeholders, practitioners, and researchers in the field of TGBV to convene, grow connections, learn together and foster future collaborations. Over its first year, the Community of Practice on Tech-Facilitated GBV has grown to over 100 members, representing over 50 organizations worldwide. About 50% of these organizations are practitioners or consultancies working on TGBV, 25% are researchers, 20% are multilaterals and governments, 15% women’s rights organizations and under 5% funders.

Plenary meetings have demonstrated the richness of coming together to learn from guest speakers who generously share their work and experiences. We’ve hosted quarterly meetings with speakers from IT for Change (India), Aulas en Paz (Colombia), Equimundo (Latin America), and CHAYN (global), among others. Beyond these members have engaged in working groups and crowdsourcing activities to identify resources on TGBV (summary here) and develop an intervention catalogue. We’ve recently launched regional meetups to facilitate informal conversations among members, foster connections, and knowledge exchange.

Priority setting: CSV research

We are actively building on the lessons garnered from other agenda setting processes and are co-creating a CSV Research Priority Setting agenda in partnership with WeProtect Global Alliance, Together for Girls, the Safe Futures Hub and the Brave Movement. A survey was launched to generate research questions under five domains identified through a scoping review of CSV research in LMICs. We also initiated an extensive mapping exercise within the field of childhood sexual violence. To ensure intersectional and children’s voices are included in the process, research questions are also being identified via a series of focus group discussions with children, as well as interviews and focus group discussions with survivors, including survivors with disabilities, indigenous and LGBTQI populations. This collaborative and inclusive CSV research agenda setting process will guide the field towards building a priority-driven and cohesive evidence base that links more clearly with policy and practice.

All of these RPS exercises are important to the field. Shared research agendas act as a global public good, providing the international community with a set of research questions we can rally behind, ensuring that precious resources available for this work are being used to build evidence that answers the urgent questions. These are the answers we need for more effective programming, policies and interventions that reduce violence against women and children on the ground.

Promoting research uptake

We’ve been enjoying communicating information on VAW and VAC research in an engaging and creative manner, such as via the SVRI Podcast. During these conversations we find ourselves constantly inspired by the expertise and creativity that the field applies to how to do things better, not only in terms of doing great research but also in terms of who we are and how we treat each other within the field. In early 2023, we continued Season 2, focusing on varied issues including taking back power and control in research; improving the way we measure impact; technology facilitated GBV and collective care and kindness. We were also thrilled to launch Season 3 in January 2024, with a powerful podcast on creating just and inclusive systems for change. All podcasts can be found here.
To date, we’ve had a total of 9,497 downloads, with the majority (27%) based in USA, followed by UK (11%), Germany (6%), South Africa (6%) and Australia (4%). The top app for listening to the podcast is the Apple podcast (48.6%), followed by Spotify (28.8%).

Ethical funding: influencing the donor landscape

We have lots to learn and lots to share about ethical funding practices. In 2023, we provided input to Ignite Philanthropy’s strategy development process as well as to the Men Engage Alliance donor meeting regarding evidence generation. We also wrote about the connection between collaboration in research and ethical funding practices for the International Philanthropic Association of South Africa. Our engagement during 2023 with organisations like Prevention Collaborative, Women Deliver and the UN Trust Fund to End VAW has opened strategic opportunities to influence donor practices.

We unapologetically call for the support of research centred in feminist principles that facilitates transformative relationships between donors and grantees and that drives impactful research in LMICs conducted by LMIC researchers.

Building the VAC and VAW field

We are grateful for the wealth of information and evidence within the SVRI team and wider family, and are always eager to share in an effort to service the field. In 2023, we’ve either contributed to or reviewed 15 papers/reports for journals, donor organisations or partners.

During this reporting period, we are proud of the over 20 publications (in several languages) produced by SVRI and partners. They will undoubtedly serve as rich resources that present sound analytical perspectives on VAW and VAC. They can be found on the SVRI publications page.

What would we have achieved without the fabulous SVRI team? Close to nothing really. The SVRI’s committed and passionate team has continued to achieve and we are moving closer to achieving our vision of a world free of violence against women and violence against children. Over the past year the team has grown through the onboarding of five full-time team members, three based in India, one in the United States and one in Kenya.

The wellbeing of our team is of paramount importance to us. To maintain a kind, caring and collaborative work environment we underwent a remuneration review and benchmarking exercise. This was to ensure the market-related remuneration of all team members as well as facilitate team discussions. The process led to policy updates relating to provisions on leave and travel, part of our commitment to institutionalise care and kindness.

Through the guidance and support of one of our donors, Sida, our internal controls were assessed. The recommendations from the review now serve as a blueprint for ensuring adequate controls for the organisation in its growth phase. This means as we grow, we are confident that our control environment can support us. During this period, we again received an unmodified audit opinion, giving reasonable assurance that our financial statements for the 2022/2023 financial are free from material misstatement whether due to fraud or error.
As we move into our last year of our strategy, our field building work will continue to focus on our four strategic areas - building evidence, strengthening capacity, promoting partnerships and influencing change. At the same time we have procured the assistance of a consultant team to help us create our new strategy.

We remain excited about all the research we have funded. Investments we have made in research are beginning to flourish, with multiple influential products coming out of these partnerships. We continue to be committed to amplifying and sharing study findings with field changing potential.

And in so doing, we will continue to invest time and resources on supporting our partners to share and disseminate new and innovative research in a variety of ways, to make sure the evidence reaches those with the power to use these findings. These efforts, coupled with greater investment in our internal communication and research uptake capacity, will help strengthen our research uptake efforts within our organisation, with our partners, and with the field more broadly.

Capacity sharing and strengthening remains a priority for 2024 and our new strategy. SVRI Forum 2024 will remain our focus for the year building on the lessons learned from the field and from the previous Forum. We will continue to influence change and advocate for more and better funding in the field building on our tracking funding, ethical funding guidance and priority setting work. And we will continue to explore more accessible ways to communicate, disseminate and amplify the work of our partners, as well as continuing to promote equity and inclusion through ensuring that researchers, practitioners and others from LMICs have equal access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making processes through our online offerings, knowledge exchanges and projects. Deepening our work on both VAC and child sexual violence across all our strategic pillars will continue.

Organisational resilience is a key priority for us – we will focus on sustainability and fundraising to ensure SVRI’s initiatives, projects, and programmes are designed with long-term sustainability in mind. Similarly, SVRI is also committed to sustainability of the field and is working in partnership with other field building organisations to envision an advocacy and resource mobilisation structure that will help create a healthy GBV prevention ecosystem.

We want to appreciate each person and organisation that has supported us with any type of resource, cheered us on or passed through our literal or digital doors in any capacity. You have helped make us what we are today.

We look forward to continuing our journey with all of you on advancing evidence for improved practices and the prevention of violence against women and violence against children in low- and middle-income countries.
Thank you to our long-term funders and partners for their ongoing and generous support and trust. Together we are building the knowledge needed to create a violence free world.

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