Terms of Reference:

Review of Quasi-Experimental Evaluation Designs for Child Sexual Violence Prevention Interventions

1. Background

Child sexual violence (CSV) remains a significant global challenge, yet the evidence base for effective prevention interventions remains limited, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). While randomised controlled trials (RCTs) are often considered the gold standard for evaluation, they are not always feasible, affordable, or ethical in many settings where CSV prevention programmes operate.

There is growing recognition that quasi-experimental designs can provide rigorous and policy-relevant evidence and in some contexts, they can be the more appropriate choice. Depending on the question and the setting, they can be more ethical, quicker to field, or feasible where randomisation is not possible or not justified. They are not, however, always cheaper. Several of these designs depend on good baseline, time-series or administrative data and can be demanding to do well. What the CSV field currently lacks is practical guidance on which alternative evaluation approaches are most appropriate for different intervention types and implementation settings.

As part of its broader programme of work to strengthen child sexual violence research and outcome measurement, SVRI seeks to commission a review of quasi-experimental evaluation designs applicable to CSV prevention interventions.

2. Purpose of the Assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to review and synthesise evidence on quasi-experimental evaluation approaches for CSV prevention interventions and to provide practical guidance for researchers, practitioners, and funders. The question we are trying to answer is what study designs can we use when we cannot run an RCT.

The review should:

- Identify evaluation designs currently used in CSV prevention research
- Identify quasi-experimental designs that show promise in CSV, violence prevention, or allied areas of practice
- Assess the methodological strengths and limitations of different approaches
- Consider feasibility, affordability, ethical considerations, and implementation challenges in LMIC settings
- Develop practical recommendations on selecting appropriate evaluation designs for different intervention contexts with suggestions for research design for CSV intervention research
- Strengthen the field's ability to evaluate CSV prevention rigorously where individuals or groups cannot be randomly assigned to the intervention.

3. Scope of Work

The consultant(s) will undertake the following:

Evidence Review

Conduct a review of peer-reviewed and grey literature on quasi-experimental evaluation designs relevant to CSV prevention and related violence prevention interventions.

The review should consider:

- Matched comparison designs including propensity score matching
- Controlled before-after studies
- Interrupted time series
- Regression discontinuity

- Difference-in-differences
- Instrumental variables
- Natural experiments, including those exploited through regression discontinuity or difference-in-differences
- Hybrid and mixed-method evaluation approaches
- Other innovative and pragmatic evaluation designs.

Critical Assessment

Assess:

- Methodological rigour
- Internal and external validity
- Ethical considerations
- Feasibility in LMIC settings
- Resource and cost implications
- Data requirements and the availability of suitable data on CSV and LMIC contexts.
- Can the design can surface differential effects across subgroups rather than only an average effect – sample size / power
- Suitability for different intervention types
- Opportunities for integrating outcome measurement approaches.

Study designs that do not seek to construct a counterfactual, such as purely descriptive or qualitative-only evaluations, are outside the scope of this review.

Guidance for the Field

Based on the evidence review, develop practical guidance and recommendations in the report for:

- Selecting evaluation designs for CSV interventions
- Balancing rigour with feasibility
- Strengthening causal inference
- Integrating behavioural and longer-term outcomes
- Building affordable evaluation strategies for resource-constrained settings.

Stakeholder Engagement and Knowledge Sharing

The consultant(s) may be expected to participate in selected consultation meetings with SVRI and relevant partners during the review process. Findings from the review may inform collaborative efforts toward strengthening CSV measurement.

4. Deliverables

The consultant(s) will be expected to deliver:

1. **Inception Paper**
   Including detailed methodology, review approach, proposed work plan and timeline.

2. **Draft Evidence Review**
   A draft paper (approximately 15-20 pages excluding annexes) including:

   - Executive summary
   - Methodology
   - Findings from the evidence review; providing an analysis of quasi experimental research designs and gaps
   - Recommendations and guidance for the field
   - Relevant annexes

3. **Practical Guidance**

   Develop recommendations for:

   - Selecting evaluation designs for CSV interventions
   - Balancing rigour with feasibility
   - Strengthening causal inference
   - Integrating behavioural and longer-term outcomes
   - Developing affordable evaluation strategies for resource-constrained settings.

4. **Final Evidence Review**
   Incorporating feedback from SVRI, consultation with the field, and selected reviewers.
5. **Research Briefs**
   Two to three short, accessible research briefs translating key findings into practical guidance for researchers, practitioners, and funders.
6. **Presentation Slide Deck**
   A concise presentation summarising key findings, gaps, and recommendations.

5. Timeframe

The assignment is expected to commence in September 2026 and be completed by April 2027. A detailed workplan and timeline will be agreed upon during the inception phase.

6. Qualifications and Experience

The ideal consultant(s) or team will have:

- Advanced degree in public health, social sciences, evaluation, or a related field
- Expertise in evaluation methodology
- Experience conducting systematic or methodological reviews
- Experience in violence prevention, child protection, or public health research
- Familiarity with LMIC contexts
- Strong analytical and writing skills
- Experience translating technical evidence into accessible products.

Partnerships or collaborations involving LMIC-based researchers or institutions are strongly encouraged.

7. Management and Oversight

The consultant(s) will work closely with the SVRI's Research Director, Child Sexual Violence Researcher and Executive Director. Regular check-ins will be scheduled throughout the assignment to review progress, provide technical guidance, and support alignment with broader SVRI CSV measurement initiatives.

8. Application Process

Interested consultants or firms should submit:

- A brief proposal (maximum 5 pages) outlining:
    - Understanding of the assignment
    - Proposed methodology and approach including inclusion and exclusion criteria for review
    - Relevant expertise and experience
    - Proposed timeline and budget
- CV(s) of lead consultant(s) and key team members
- At least two relevant work samples (e.g., systematic review, methodological paper, or evidence synthesis)
- A brief description of any LMIC partnerships or collaborations involved in the proposed work if applicant is based in an HIC

Applications should be submitted by **14 August 2026**, to svri@svri.org with the subject line: **Application – Quasi Experimental Research Designs Evidence Review**

Diversity Statement

SVRI is committed to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and diverse research environment. We strongly encourage applications from individuals and organisations based in LMICs and from historically underrepresented groups. We value collaborative, ethical, and contextually grounded

approaches to knowledge production and prioritise psychological safety and wellbeing in our partnerships and ways of working. Successful applicants will be required to sign the SVRI Code of Conduct and any other relevant documentation as part of the onboarding process.