

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: PARTNERING TO RESPOND, ASSIST AND PROTECT



“Sexual violence destroys lives. It fuels conflict, forces people to flee their homes, and is often perpetrated alongside other human rights abuses, including forced marriage, sexual slavery, and human trafficking. It undermines reconciliation and traps survivors in conflict, poverty, and insecurity.”

- Secretary of State John Kerry

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a global pandemic that affects women, men, and children. GBV should be understood as violence directed at a person based on gender, gender identity, or perceived adherence to socially-defined norms of masculinity or femininity.

THE U.S. RESPONSE

Under the leadership of President Barack Obama, the United States has put gender equality and the advancement of women and girls at the forefront of U.S. foreign policy. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) is a cornerstone of the Administration’s commitment to advancing gender equality.

In recognition of this policy, and in coordination with other international GBV-related programs, the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor has launched the GBV Emergency Response and Protection Initiative. This Initiative fills a critical gap by providing urgent assistance to threatened individuals with rapid, targeted, short term support.

“...all women deserve the right to live free from fear.”

-President Barack Obama

FORMS OF GBV

The GBV Initiative aims to assist individuals facing harmful traditional practices such as early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation, “honor” based violence including threats of so-called “honor” killings, as well as other forms of GBV, such as female infanticide; child sexual abuse; sex trafficking and forced labor; sexual coercion and abuse; neglect; domestic/intimate partner violence, and elder abuse.

INITIATIVE OBJECTIVES

- **Urgent Assistance for Survivors**
The GBV Initiative addresses the immediate security needs of survivors of severe gender-based violence, and individuals under credible threat of imminent attack due to their gender or gender identity.

Individuals can receive assistance for up to six months or \$5,000. Assistance is intended to be one-time support. Funds can be used to address short-term emergency needs, such as payment for legal and medical bills, relocation, security, and dependent support.

- **Targeted Training and Advocacy**
The Initiative also supports integrated training for governments, the judiciary, and key elements of civil society in implementing laws that address GBV. These training sessions are funded by a partnership with the Avon Foundation.

The Initiative also supports targeted advocacy training for civil society groups working to address cultural attitudes and norms related to gender-based violence. These programs include engaging men and boys around GBV prevention.

- **Building and Coordinating a Global Network**
The Initiative will focus on and coordinate programs in 11 hub countries in the Middle East, Africa, South and Central Asia, and Latin America.

The Initiative’s network is managed by a consortium of non-governmental organizations led by Vital Voices Global Partnership. Consortium members include Promundo-US, the International Organization for Migration, and the American Bar Association’s Rule of Law Initiative.

INITIATIVE COMPONENTS

Emergency assistance to individuals who have little or no means of support and who are facing GBV or harmful traditional practices due to their gender.

Technical assistance for governments and civil society on implementing GBV laws and related grassroots prevention efforts.

International and regional network building and coordination.

For more information about the GBV Initiative including how to apply for assistance, contact DRL-GBV@state.gov.

To refer potential emergency cases, contact GBVresponse@gmail.com for review, vetting, and follow up.