



With an End in Sight

Strategies from the
UNIFEM Trust Fund
to Eliminate Violence
Against Women



United Nations
Development
Fund for Women

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UNIFEM is the women's fund at the United Nations. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies that promote women's human rights, political participation and economic security. UNIFEM works in partnership with UN organizations, governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and networks to promote gender equality. It links women's issues and concerns to national, regional and global agendas, by fostering collaboration and providing technical expertise on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment strategies.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent the views of UNIFEM, the United Nations or any of its affiliated organizations.

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Preface: With an End in Sight

At a press conference announcing UNIFEM's work to combat the problem of violence against women around the world, a journalist asked me: "Do you really believe that a problem as common and as widespread as violence against women can be brought to an end?" My response to this is a definite, "Yes." Women everywhere have come together and committed themselves to creating a safer, more humane future for generations to come. I have witnessed heroism at work, the extraordinary efforts being made to halt the epidemic of violence against women.

With an End in Sight recounts some of these inspiring efforts. It shows how groups of women and men, old and young, in every region, are taking action, using innovative strategies and approaches. The stories compiled in this book are neither incidental nor isolated. Instead, they represent the small steps and little pushes that create the powerful momentum for change.

UNIFEM is proud of its role in supporting, and even igniting, this momentum. Over the past 25 years UNIFEM has sought to facilitate the inclusion of women's voices and concerns into the halls of the United Nations. UNIFEM identified the elimination of violence against women as a priority as early as 1992. But it was following the Fourth World Conference on Women, in 1995, that this issue became an organization-wide commitment, involving all UNIFEM offices in activities at all levels, from local communities to national, regional and global arenas.

In 1996, at the request of the UN General Assembly, UNIFEM established a Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women, the first global mechanism devoted exclusively to providing resources and expanding visibility on this issue. The creation of the Trust Fund coincided with a major UNIFEM advocacy effort to set in motion a series of UN Inter-Agency Regional Campaigns on ending violence against women. Launched in Latin America and the Caribbean, the campaigns were replicated in Africa and the Asia and Pacific regions. They worked to create a favourable environment for breaking the silence on gender-based violence, for engaging men in ending this violence, for initiating changes in policies and legislation, and for providing protection, services, and justice where violence has occurred.

The Regional Campaigns brought together not only a wide range of UN agencies, but also an unprecedented number of new stakeholders, including local governments, legal and law enforcement agencies, health and educational institutions, along with civil society, the private sector and the media. The entire UN system rallied to recognize gender-based violence as a cross-cutting issue, one that must be reflected in the design and implementation of all policies and programmes that make up its agenda for peace, development and equality in the 21st century. The Trust Fund became a critical tool for following up on the work of the campaigns and a catalyst for UN country programming.

In 1998, with a generous grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, UNIFEM established a Learning Component devoted to extracting lessons and good practices from Trust Fund initiatives. *With an End in Sight* features selected findings of this component,

which has helped transform the Trust Fund from simply a funding mechanism to an instrument for generating new knowledge, to be harvested and disseminated worldwide.

UNIFEM's advocacy strategy was further boosted through a number of innovative multi-media and communication efforts to showcase strategies for change. To mark the 50th Anniversary of the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights, in 1998 UNIFEM organized a photo exhibit at the United Nations that contrasted a "wall of shame," focusing on women's plight and suffering, with a "wall of hope" showcasing initiatives to end violence against women. In 1999, we spearheaded a landmark Global Videoconference that linked five sites around the world to the UN General Assembly. In the presence of the UN Secretary-General, Member State representatives, heads of UN agencies and audiences worldwide, women survivors of violence joined activists from around the world to highlight work that shows that ending gender-based violence can become a reality, with increased support and through sustained action.

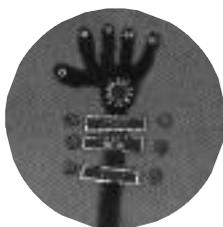
The Global Videoconference was unique in that, as part of its preparation, it stimulated a vibrant global conversation using new communication technologies. The <end-violence> electronic working group, launched by UNIFEM in partnership with the Education and Development Centre and the World Bank, brought together more than 2,000 people from over 90 countries to engage in dialogue and exchange ideas and experiences on how to end gender-based violence. The discussion brought the voices of experts and advocates into the arena of multilateral policy-making, and at the same time offered unprecedented opportunities to explore strategies for change that transcend geographic and cultural boundaries.

Today there is global consensus on the need to end violence against women. The UN Declaration on Violence Against Women (1993) cites violence as "one of the crucial mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men." All of the major UN world conferences of the 1990s, as well as their five-year reviews, have included recommendations on ending violence against women. In 1999, the UN General Assembly declared 25 November as the International Day for the Eradication of Violence Against Women.

Gender-based violence knows no colour and nationality. It devastates lives and fractures communities, impeding development in every nation. In every country, the well-being, promise and gifts of millions of women and girls are destroyed by violence. To understand the causes of this destructive violence and how to eradicate it, we must view gender-based violence not only in terms of individuals, but in terms of relationships, within the context of families, communities and institutions. To work together to end it, we must understand that it can be stopped.

As UNIFEM reaffirms its commitment to continue this critical work, we pay tribute to the women around the world whose commitment and courage to organize and to lobby for change remains an endless source of inspiration and a guide for our own efforts on their behalf. What we all want is a world free of violence—where shame and silences break into joyful melodies, where women and men gain the power and the courage to live their lives to their full potential. Into such a world, I pray, let the 21st century awake.

Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director, UNIFEM



Introduction: Planting Seeds of Change

Roxanna Carrillo

Around the world, activists have broken much of the silence surrounding gender-based violence and forged commitments to end it. Yet, no nation can claim that the female half of its population is safe and free. Gender-based violence, whether it occurs on the streets or in homes, affects women of every nation, belief, class, race and ethnic group. It is perpetrated by men, silenced by custom, institutionalized in laws and state systems, and passed from one generation to the next.

In the early 1990s, violence against women was still a taboo issue for many, including most governments. A few would not even admit that it took place within their borders, let alone acknowledge responsibility for devising policies or allocating funds for the programmes and services to address it. One problem was a lack of data. National statistics that could illuminate the extent of the problem were not generally available due to the absence of large and representative surveys. Neither newly adopted legislation in a handful of countries nor the increasing demands for special services to attend victims of violence had persuaded government officials that this was a relevant issue for development, one that transcended national boundaries.

Meanwhile, UNIFEM was hearing increasingly from its regional offices about the problems in women's domestic life that were hindering their participation in the economic, social and political life of their communities. In 1991, I was asked to prepare a policy paper for UNIFEM explaining why an organization working on women and development needed to address violence against women as a development issue. As I took up this task, the voices of the women I had worked with in Peru and had met from around the world echoed in what I was seeing: violence against women is central to any attempt at bringing about social development and human rights for women.

The resulting publication, *Battered Dreams: Violence Against Women as an Obstacle to Development* (UNIFEM 1992), signaled UNIFEM's new commitment to supporting work in this field. It was launched at a time of growing concern about the need for procedures to address violence against women within UN structures. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted in 1979, had failed to name violence against women as an issue. Its exclusion from a major women's human rights treaty, designed to address all forms of discrimination that prevent women from achieving full equality with men, demonstrated the invisibility of the issue. *Battered Dreams* announced UNIFEM's determination to work together with the global women's movement to change this situation. *With an End in Sight* reaffirms and advances that commitment, capturing essential lessons and proposing strategies to help guide the efforts of those working to eliminate gender-based violence. The voices in this book bear a striking similarity to those that informed this work ten years ago.

Facts about Gender-Based Violence Worldwide

- Among women aged 15-44 worldwide, gender-based violence accounts for more death and ill-health than cancer, traffic injuries and malaria put together (World Bank 1993).
- Each year 2 million girls between ages 5 and 15 are introduced into the commercial sex market (UNFPA 2000).
- Approximately 60 million women, mostly in Asia, are “missing” - killed by infanticide, selective abortion, deliberate under-nutrition or lack of access to health care (Panos 1998; UNFPA 2000).
- Based on recent studies, more than 130 million girls and women, mostly in Africa, have undergone female genital mutilation and an estimated 2 million girls are at risk for undergoing the procedure each year (WHO 1998).
- Between 20,000 and 50,000 women and girls were raped in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the war in the Balkans (The Monee Project/UNICEF 1996) and more than 15,000 women and girls were raped in one year in Rwanda (UNICEF 2000b).
- In Canada, the costs of domestic violence amount to \$1.6 billion per year, including medical care and lost productivity. Estimates in the United States place this figure between \$10 and \$67 billion (cited in Hayward 2000).
- In 9 Latin American countries, a rapist who marries his victim stays out of jail (Chiarotti 2000).
- Studies in Sub-Saharan Africa indicate that adolescent girls are five to six times more likely to be HIV positive than are boys the same age, since girls are mostly infected not by boys their own age, but by older men (UNICEF 2000b).
- A 1998 study found that in the United States 1 out of every 6 women has experienced an attempted or completed rape. Of these women, 22 per cent were under 12 years old and 32 per cent were aged 12-17 at the time of the crime (Tjaden and Thoennes 1998).
- Studies suggest that one-fourth to one-third of the 170 million women and girls currently living in the European Union are subjected to male violence (Logar 2000).

Gender-Based Violence: A Global Issue

The life-cycle of violence starts with sex-selective abortion and infanticide in countries where girls are valued less than boys or considered an economic burden. From infancy, girls may receive less food, less medical care and less education than their male siblings. From girlhood into adulthood, women continue to be at risk. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that one woman out of every five will be a victim of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime (WHO 1997a). Each year thousands of women and girls are trafficked into forced prostitution (Coomaraswamy 1999). Country-level studies estimate 20 to 50 per cent of women have experienced domestic violence, making it the most prevalent form of gender-based violence (UNICEF 2000a). Even elderly women increasingly suffer from neglect and abuse.

Physical and sexual violence are linked with psychological violence and economic disparities. Women abused by their husbands physically are most often terrorized psychologically, resulting in a loss of mental and emotional well-being as well as reduced capacity to earn an income. Women who are financially dependent on men, who control most of the economic resources, are often ill-equipped to break free of dependence. Limited access to education may also narrow their options. A subordinate position and lack of education, often combined with poverty, make women and girls more susceptible to sexual trafficking and prostitution.

In every society, gender-based violence is perpetuated through social and cultural norms and traditions, reinforcing male-dominated power structures. Women are taught from childhood that they are inferior to men and often to blame for the violence inflicted upon them. As wives or partners, they must hold the family together, at any cost. Women and men both learn to turn a blind eye to, or accept, gender-based violence. Trust Fund grantee Bandana Rana, in Nepal,

observes, "Violence like wife beating is considered a natural part of our society. Many don't even consider it a form of abuse."

Society defines roles for men as well as women, starting from an early age. Boys may be taunted for showing emotions and vulnerability. All too often, they are taught to resolve conflicts with their fists, and they are not permitted to shed tears. Expected to be breadwinners, men who are unable to provide for their families feel shamed, and take out their frustrations on those less powerful: their wives and children. Socialization reinforces early messages about men's power and control over women. As a result, if a woman crosses a man or fails to carry out what he perceives as her "duties," he might feel justified in abusing her. Men may be encouraged to exert violence in the name of family honour, and throughout history there are countless examples of rape and sexual violence as expressions of national or ethnic superiority.

Laws and legal procedures condone violence against women, allowing men to act with impunity. Family law in some countries upholds a man's "right" to discipline his wife. Rape is often treated as a crime of passion rather than a misogynist act. Agents of the state, from police to judges to health-care professionals, frequently see domestic violence as a private matter and believe that they have no responsibility to intervene. These attitudes reflect those of society at large. As a Supreme Court advocate in India observes, "Judges come from the same society as the abusers. They are the same men who would tell their daughter, don't report a rape because it would humiliate you and it would bring a bad name to your family."

Recently, governments and international organizations have begun to recognize the socio-economic costs of violence. While this helps highlight the problem for policy-makers, it should not obscure the fact that gender-based violence is a human rights issue. In examining the "costs" to society, we should not lose sight of the physical and psychological cost to the individual. Nor should we minimize the ways that violence robs women of freedom and liberty. Finally, we should not forget that gender-based violence and discrimination take more women's lives than any other human rights violation (Bunch and Reilly 1995). These facts are reason enough for governments to assist survivors and make it a priority to take steps to eradicate gender-based violence.

Women's Rights Are Human Rights

Although gender-based violence sometimes seems to be an insurmountable problem, women have led the way in defining and addressing it in all of its forms. Men have joined the fight for women's freedom as activists and as part of groups that denounce violence against women and promote gender equality and peace. Progress has been made at local, national, and global levels, especially in the last decade.

One of the great successes of the global women's rights movement has been the international community's acceptance of gender-based violence as a human rights issue. In 1991, women's organizations launched the first 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence campaign, starting on 25 November, the anniversary of the 1960 assassination of the three Mirabal sisters in the Dominican Republic, and ending on 10 December, International Human Rights Day. The campaign focused on mobilizing women for the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, which put eliminating violence against women squarely on the human rights agenda. This conference brought about a pivotal shift in governments' perception of the gravity of the issue and their responsibility for addressing it. In December 1993, the UN General Assembly issued the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, affirming this international consensus.

The human rights perspective has brought gender-based violence out of its protective shell of culture and tradition and focused attention on state responsibility to work to eliminate it.

Radhika Coomaraswamy, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, notes that under international human right laws, states are “not only required not to commit human rights violations, but also to prevent and respond to human rights abuses” (UNICEF 2000a:10).

At the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, women pushed the agenda further, urging states to recognize the roots of gender-based violence as well as its impact on women and society. The Beijing Platform for Action stated: “Violence against women is a manifestation of the historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of women’s full advancement” (UN 1996, para. 118).

In June 2000, Beijing +5, a special session of the UN General Assembly to review implementation of the Beijing Platform, again made violence against women a priority concern. The Beijing +5 Outcomes Document reaffirmed governments’ commitment to work for the realization of women’s rights and fashioned recommendations to address aspects of violence against women that were not included in the 1995 Beijing Platform. It includes recommendations on so-called crimes of honour (the assassination of women accused of bringing dishonour to the family), on dowry-related violence and deaths, acid attacks, violence against widows and indigenous women, racially motivated violence, marital rape, and forced and early marriage. The final document appeals to governments to eliminate discriminatory legislation by 2005 and reaffirms governments’ commitments to adopt measures to end traditional or customary practices affecting women and girls.

It is a remarkable achievement that in less than a decade, the political climate surrounding the rights of women has shifted from refusing to admit that violence against women is a problem to an almost universal understanding that it is the ultimate expression of the subordinate status of women globally. If governments have fallen short in establishing time-bound targets, indicators and benchmarks for the elimination of gender-based violence as repeatedly demanded by women’s advocates, these repeated demands are themselves a reflection of how far women have come in affecting the global agenda and becoming true agents of change. This is only the beginning of a process that will continue to affect the outcomes of all major global debates, especially those regarding issues of peace, security, development, human rights and governance.

The UNIFEM Trust Fund: A Laboratory for Exploring New Solutions

Following the 1995 Beijing Conference, the UN General Assembly directed UNIFEM to increase its efforts towards the elimination of violence against women, working in collaboration with other partners in the UN system. In 1996, UNIFEM established the Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women, a funding mechanism designed to support innovative approaches to the problem of violence against women. With the creation of the Trust Fund, UNIFEM’s work to end gender-based violence grew from a separate programme area to an organization-wide commitment, incorporated into the programming in every regional office. Together with the UN Inter-Agency Campaigns, launched in each region, the Trust Fund represented a truly global approach to combating violence against women worldwide.

With the generous support of several governments and private foundations, the UNIFEM Trust Fund became a small grants laboratory for testing strategies and exploring successful approaches in the struggle to end violence against women. Small monies went a long way, with grants averaging \$50,000 each. Grant decisions are made by a UN Inter-Agency Group, bringing together representatives from as many as ten UN organizations to learn about and support innovative efforts to end gender-based violence.

Strategies used by projects supported by the Trust Fund range from awareness-raising campaigns and community-based activities on human rights education and legal literacy to training programmes directed at key government personnel, particularly law enforcement officials, members of the judiciary and health care agencies. While Trust Fund grants are relatively small in monetary terms, they are made in the belief that support to indigenous efforts to combat gender-based violence will yield insights and models which can be replicated and multiplied in other places and on a larger scale.

As the only small grant mechanism of its kind on gender-based violence in the UN system, the Trust Fund has supported 106 projects in over 66 countries.¹ As part of their organizational missions, many Trust Fund grantees provide services and counselling for individuals, both women survivors of violence and male perpetrators. Through raising awareness and working with women, men and children, these groups are helping build community commitment to end gender-based violence. Others are working with governments, drafting new legislation and delivering gender sensitization training for police, judges, health professionals and other public employees. Some grantees use research to expose the severity and scope of gender-based violence, and document all the parties directly and indirectly culpable for violence and the re-victimization of survivors. In most of these efforts, media and communications technologies play a critical role in increasing public understanding of the issues.

In some cases, Trust Fund support went to initiatives that forged new partnerships between governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). For while governments keep coming up short on implementing the commitments made to women at the world conferences, NGOs have a knowledge and experience which governments can both benefit from and build upon in the pursuit of long-lasting solutions. The UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women has pointed out the need for a more cooperative relationship between governments and civil society, especially in the face of governments' lack of expertise in formulating and implementing programmes related to violence against women. The efforts also remind us that all state agents, particularly those connected to the judiciary, law enforcement and the criminal justice system need to be educated and sensitized about how they can better protect the rights of women.

With an End in Sight documents some of the groundbreaking work done by projects supported by the Trust Fund. For a testing laboratory to be effective and to explore the potential of the innovation carried out by the projects it supports, documentation of the experiences is critical. This book presents us with a mosaic of activities undertaken by people engaged in making change happen. It brings the voices of remarkable women leaders to life, uncovering the vast array of efforts that are taking place in many communities all over the world today to challenge age-old attitudes about gender-based violence.

The case studies in this book are a powerful reminder of the centrality of violence in women's everyday lives, showing how work on violence is at the core of any attempt to empower women and to advance women's roles in the development of their societies. The projects included here, and indeed the entire portfolio of initiatives supported by the Trust Fund, attest to the critical value of strategies pioneered by non-governmental organizations. These strategies seek to enhance community responsibility for violence against women and to develop a collective sense of outrage that sends a powerful message to both men and women that abusive behaviour will no longer be tolerated.

¹ The case studies analysed for this publication include 89 projects funded between 1997 and 1999. In July of 2000, an additional 17 projects were funded. See Annexes for a complete list of projects funded.

Using the experiences of the past to guide future efforts is a priority for UNIFEM's support for eliminating gender-based violence. Other UN bodies, including the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as a number of other international organizations are also working to analyse and present their insights on effective strategies. Distilling the lessons and observations from projects around the world requires time, resources and systems in place to follow the successes and pitfalls of interventions over time. As violence against women permeates every aspect of society, so must the efforts that try to eliminate it. Innovations, ideas and strategies create a ripple effect that is often difficult to trace, feeding into a larger pool of work towards ending gender-based violence that complicates efforts to identify specific results of particular interventions. From UNIFEM's efforts to trace these effects through Trust Fund projects, several points for the next steps in learning emerge.

In recent years there has been a call from the development and donor community to focus on results-based initiatives, to identify where resources and interventions can leverage the most change and lead to sustainable outcomes. Nevertheless, the success of using particular strategies to address gender-based violence is often difficult to quantify and may not accurately depict the overall achievements of the project.

While this problem may be common to many development projects, it is particularly acute with the issue of gender-based violence. Violence against women is difficult to quantify because of insufficient data, rendering numbers a relatively unreliable source of evidence that projects have made an impact. Moreover, even as indicators are developed, progress in ending gender-based violence cannot be measured by numbers alone. It is a societal problem that involves long-term changes in individual attitudes, community beliefs and institutional culture and norms. UNIFEM's initial insights from the Trust Fund suggest that any analysis that reflects on what strategies work best should be based in both results and process, seeking stories of individual transformations as well as numbers and data on those who have changed.

Most approaches to good practices and lessons learned structure analysis around similar types of violence (FGM, domestic violence, etc.) or on regional similarities. Common traits provide a context in which interventions can be compared and contrasted. Nevertheless, there is also much to learn by looking across regional and cultural boundaries and various forms of violence. Identifying the common characteristics and challenges among countries from different regions can provide for a richer comparison, allowing specific lessons to emerge. This is especially true when addressing a problem of such vast proportions as gender-based violence.

Learning from Trust Fund Projects

A review of the entire Trust Fund portfolio shows that most of the projects tend to fall under three broad goals: building community commitment, forging partnerships with the police and the judiciary, and developing public and institutional support through research and advocacy. The chapters that follow examine each of these broad goals through seven case studies. They include projects from all regions that fall within the Trust Fund's mandate – Africa; Asia/Pacific (including the Arab States); Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States; and Latin America and the Caribbean. Six of the projects were implemented by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and one by a consortium of national and local governmental institutions.

To analyse these projects, the authors drew on a variety of sources of information. During the winter and spring of 2000, one of the authors visited five of the seven countries and interviewed staff of the NGOs that implemented these projects, project participants, and

representatives from other NGOs and donor agencies. For countries not visited, they conducted interviews in New York, either in person or over the phone, as well as project reports and continued communication with project staff. They also carried out extensive background research on the economic, political and social context in each country.

The following three chapters present these seven case studies. Each begins with an overview of the project, followed by background on the type of violence the project addresses and how the project began. Each organization's strategy is broken down into distinct components to understand the reasons some worked and others did not. Each chapter ends with a brief discussion of the insights gained from strategies as they are applied. Similar strategies employed by other Trust Fund projects and UNIFEM's Inter-Agency Regional Campaigns have been summarized in boxes throughout the text.

Chapter 1 looks at strategies that focus on building community commitment from projects in Kenya, Nigeria and Honduras. The three projects worked towards establishing support networks and community-based mechanisms to change collective behavioural and cultural patterns that propagate violence against women. Chapter 2 examines strategies involved in building partnerships with police in Cambodia and the judiciaries in South Asia. Both aimed to sensitize key institutions to commit them to action and to hold them accountable for laws and systems that protect and support women. Chapter 3 covers strategies that use research both to document the problem and to demand state and public responsibility. The two projects from Bosnia-Herzegovina and West Bank and Gaza show how the research process itself, as well as the results it uncovers, can be used to advocate for change. The final chapter discusses insights from the case studies in a global context, highlighting interventions in multiple cultural, social and economic contexts and strategic approaches. Throughout, the role of dedicated and committed project leaders and their staff is highlighted, making clear the interdependence between investment in these initiatives and the vision and inspiration that activists bring to this work.

What Does It Take?

This is a good moment to pause and look back. At the end of a decade of remarkable achievements in this field, we remain troubled by the extent and pervasiveness of gender-based violence in women's lives. The human rights framework has provided us with a language of accountability and has raised serious questions about who must assume responsibility for acts of violence against women. This is particularly critical in cases of violations committed by private individuals where the parameters of the obligations of the state are more difficult to define. Based upon precedents in the application of international human rights standards to comparable situations, human rights experts have concluded that many states fail to act with due diligence to protect women from such acts. Women's human rights advocates insist that the development of preventive measures also falls within the obligations of the state.

In 1998 and 1999 UNIFEM facilitated the work of an online global community of advocates, policymakers and service providers engaged in dialogue about women's experiences and strategies on how to end gender-based violence (UNIFEM 1999). The discussion group helped pave the way for the UN Global Videoconference in 1999, which linked national and international policy-makers with women survivors of violence and activists everywhere in the world. There UNIFEM called for the official designation of 25 November, the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, as the International Day Against Violence Against Women, a day on which each year the world community would assess progress and commit itself to renewed efforts to end gender-based violence. The conference

stressed the need for additional resources as well as a self-monitoring mechanism to document progress made in preventing and eliminating violence against women.

From UNIFEM's work, including the regional campaigns, we have learned that eradicating violence against women requires a multiplicity of strategies that must be carried out by many actors. Governments, civil society organizations, the media and other institutions are all crucial to making a difference. Change also can be made by individuals standing up to confront abuse against women in everyday situations. By working on the improvement of data and statistics on gender-based violence, adopting special legislation that guarantees equal protection of the law and ensuring the enforcement of its provisions, governments put in place the building blocks of a system that can respond more effectively to gender-based violence. The allocation of resources, support to research and documentation on the root causes and consequences of gender-based violence, education and prevention programmes to support efforts to increase community responsibility, making information on women's rights readily available and creating respectful partnerships between governments and non-governmental organizations are also important steps.

Supporting Research and Documentation There is an urgent need for research and documentation on the causes and consequences of violence, its extent and significance. In-depth country and multi-country research initiatives should be undertaken with adequate methodologies that respect the security of the victims. Meaningful efforts to remedy the absence of reliable data on violence against women are long overdue. Policies cannot be formulated in a vacuum. The UN could play a leading role in bringing together experts to develop more accurate ways of collecting data and statistics to help determine the extent and prevalence of violence against women. Accurate data is necessary to estimate the cost of gender violence to society as well as to effectively measure what efforts lead to a reduction in such violence. Such data will help to quantify a vastly underestimated fact: violence against women is the most pervasive human rights violation in the world today.

Reviewing Legislation As recommended in the Beijing +5 Outcomes Document, governments should embark on a review of discriminatory legislation and, where necessary, adopt new laws aimed at ending violence against women. Legal frameworks that articulate provisions to end impunity and establish remedies for survivors of acts of violence against women are indispensable. The criminalization of gender-based violence sends a strong message to society at large about the seriousness of these acts, and will also hopefully have a deterrent effect. However, criminal sanctions cannot be the only response to gender-based violence, particularly when racial and economic factors play a large part in how a crime is prosecuted and punished and in who has access to and/or can afford professional legal services. Legislation must be coupled with efforts to increase citizens' understanding about their rights and information campaigns aimed at disseminating the significance of such laws.

Allocating Resources Allocating greater national resources to combat gender-based violence is essential everywhere. For this to happen, however, both governments and society as a whole must be made aware of the way in which resources are currently allocated and their impact on different groups. One way in which this is being done is by undertaking analyses of national budgets according to the way they draw resources from, and allocate spending to, different parts of the population, including women. The growing interest in gender-sensitive national budgets, as demonstrated at the Beijing +5 review, affords governments with an opportunity to show their commitment to the eradication of violence and to provide specific allocations in support of programmes and services aimed at combating its various manifestations.

Providing Support Services No amount of education or legislation on gender-based violence can be effective if services to attend the different needs of survivors are not also put in place.

Many countries have begun experimenting with the establishment of one-stop crisis centres which provide the various services (e.g. health, counselling, legal) needed by victims of gender-based violence in a coordinated and cost-effective manner. However, a word of caution must be added to avoid centralization of these efforts in only one place. These services need to be affordable and within reach of women living in diverse communities and must be delivered in a manner that takes into account specific cultural sensitivities.

Creating Community Responsibility Efforts at building community responses to violence against women have a preventive effect and, in the long run, hold the most promise. Significant change will occur when communities see it as their responsibility to intervene in cases of violence against women and declare abusive behaviour towards women unacceptable in their midst. Human rights education and participatory, interactive initiatives that use arts and culture or sports as a means to reach out to younger generations can be effective in establishing a sense of community responsibility for violence against women. Many societies resort to indigenous mechanisms for intervening in domestic disputes, which should be valued and built upon when they are not predicated upon the subordination of women to men.

Changing Institutional Attitudes Changing how women are viewed by officials charged with responding to the needs of women who experience violence is an area of major concern for those working towards the elimination of violence. Training is one strategy that groups in all regions have found effective, by attempting to turn officials in positions of responsibility from being part of the problem to become part of the solution. Some training programmes have been initiated by governments, but most have been led by non-governmental organizations. Of particular interest are training activities directed to law enforcement agents, the judiciary, health-care providers, teachers, religious leaders and the media.

Changing Male Behaviour The last few years have witnessed the emergence of groups of men speaking out against violence directed to women. While this is a most welcome development, groups of men exploring issues of the relationship between male identity and the exercise of power and authority are still rare. The energy and commitment they exhibit must be directed toward ending the violence men, especially their peers, commit. Further, resources to work with men must never come through reducing the few resources available for programmes in support of women survivors.

Exploring New Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) The power of new information and communication technologies should be explored for their potential in reducing violence against women. As ICTs become more available they could be used to obtain information on model legislation, training modules, as well as to facilitate the exchange of experiences, data, resources, and so on. An interactive site with information resources and where strategies to address violence against women are shared could further advance these issues in national and international arenas.

Finally, it is clear that no issue unites women more across the many lines that can divide us than violence against women. It is an issue that strikes a chord with activists in all regions, as demonstrated by the hundreds of submissions received by the Trust Fund during its first three years of life (see Annexes). It is encouraging to observe that the energy of this movement against gender-based violence flows from the initiatives of grass-roots organizations everywhere, especially in the developing world. As we move to the next stages in the long fight against gender-based violence, we pause to celebrate the achievements of the women of this movement and to learn from their insights about what can be done successfully to end gender-based violence. Their struggle is a source of inspiration that fortifies our resolve and reminds us that this journey is fought with an end in sight.

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