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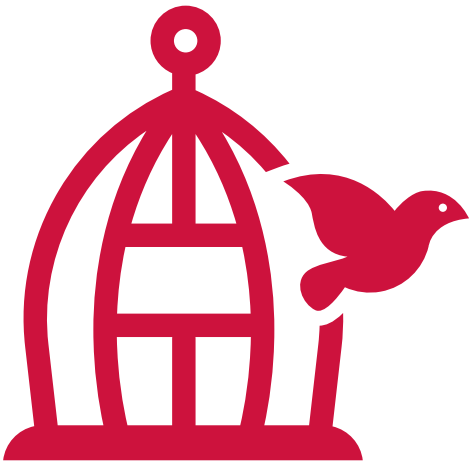


EVALUATION OF THE WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP PORTFOLIO:

Gender-Based Violence

The **Women's Leadership Portfolio** (WLP) advances USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy and related U.S. strategies to reduce **gender-based violence** (GBV) and increase women's participation in peace and security. Activities under the WLP are funded by the Women's Leadership Directive, allocated annually by the U.S. Congress. USAID contracted a performance evaluation to better understand the WLP's characteristics, achievements, and challenges.

WLP Characteristics

This evaluation divided the WLP into four sub-portfolios: GBV, Partnerships, Women's Leadership, and Women, Peace, and Security (WPS). The Women's Leadership Directive funds were transferred to missions and USAID/Washington operating units through solicitations and other funding requests. The Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and WPS fund managers from Washington provided in-depth guidance to missions and other USAID offices.

WLP GBV Funding Priorities

WLP set three GBV funding priorities, addressing the goals of the U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to GBV Globally and the Women, Peace, and Security National Action Plan:

Integrating GBV into sectoral activities

Scaling up innovative and effective GBV prevention and response

Protecting women and girls in crisis and conflict situations

Overview of Evaluated WLP Activities to Address GBV

The evaluation looked at GBV activities across the WLP including:

GBV | Partnerships | Women's Leadership | WPS

GBV activities were integrated in four sectors:

DRG | EDUCATION | HEALTH | PEACE & SECURITY

17 of 45 WLP activities (38%) addressed GBV prevention and response (4 of which were in conflict situations), covering **18 countries** and a regional activity in the Middle East.

Key interventions contributed to results in GBV activities:

- Training and capacity development
- Awareness raising and media campaigns
- Institutional strengthening
- Policy, legal, and regulatory change

EVALUATION METHODS

Selected a sample of 45 WLP activities funded 2009 – 2014

Quantitative and qualitative analysis of:

1,000+ *USAID and implementing partner activity documents*

82 *telephone interviews with USAID and implementing partner staff*

65 *interviews in 6 countries with local beneficiaries*

25 *field interviews in 6 countries with local implementing partners*

This Briefing Note was produced for review by USAID and was prepared by Management Systems International, A Tetra Tech Company, for the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project. The performance evaluation of the Women's Leadership Portfolio is available at https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TNBB.pdf.

Reformed female genital mutilation/cutting practitioners engaged in ending GBV *(Peace Initiative Kenya)*

Credit: International Rescue Committee

Achievements in Preventing and Responding to GBV

The evaluated GBV activities achieved results that contributed to strengthening local systems and transforming gender norms. **Fourteen of the 17 GBV activities** (82%) included interventions to strengthen country systems to prevent and respond to GBV. These include improved GBV services and awareness raising, transformed parenting behaviors, strengthened institutional capacities, enhanced laws, policies, and procedures, and changed gender norms.

Improved GBV Services & Awareness Raising

Through 13 activities, GBV services were improved and public awareness of GBV and available services were raised. These activities achieved results such as:

Trained 97 community-based paralegals to identify and report GBV cases; established a 24-hour helpline for GBV victims; and prevented GBV through community- and school-based mobilization, reaching more 98,634 children and 37,784 adults.

Communities have since embraced each other and are living peacefully without conflicts, victims of GBV are being attended to promptly, men have come out to speak about themselves being more vulnerable to GBV and are being counseled.

– Beneficiary

When you create these groups of young fathers, and you see your neighbor also bathing their child or helping their wife wash their clothes, they're kind of holding each other accountable… you're also supporting positive behavior and role-modeling.

– Implementing partner

Transformed Parenting Behaviors

One activity in Uganda replicated an innovative and effective model of transforming parenting behaviors and facilitated dialogue between couples on practicing non-violent behaviors in households.

Strengthened Institutional Capabilities

Three activities **integrated GBV services** in national sectoral institutions in education, health, and governance. These activities achieved results such as:

Strengthened a GBV service providers' network through court users' committees and integrated GBV prevention into a Ministry of Education curriculum.

Enhanced Laws, Policies, and Procedures

Four activities strengthened GBV oversight and coordination by national authorities. These activities achieved results such as:

Improved referral systems; enhanced coordination among referral system stakeholders; 256 referral system staff trained in GBV response issues; and improved training for fact-finding or investigation of sexual and GBV crimes.

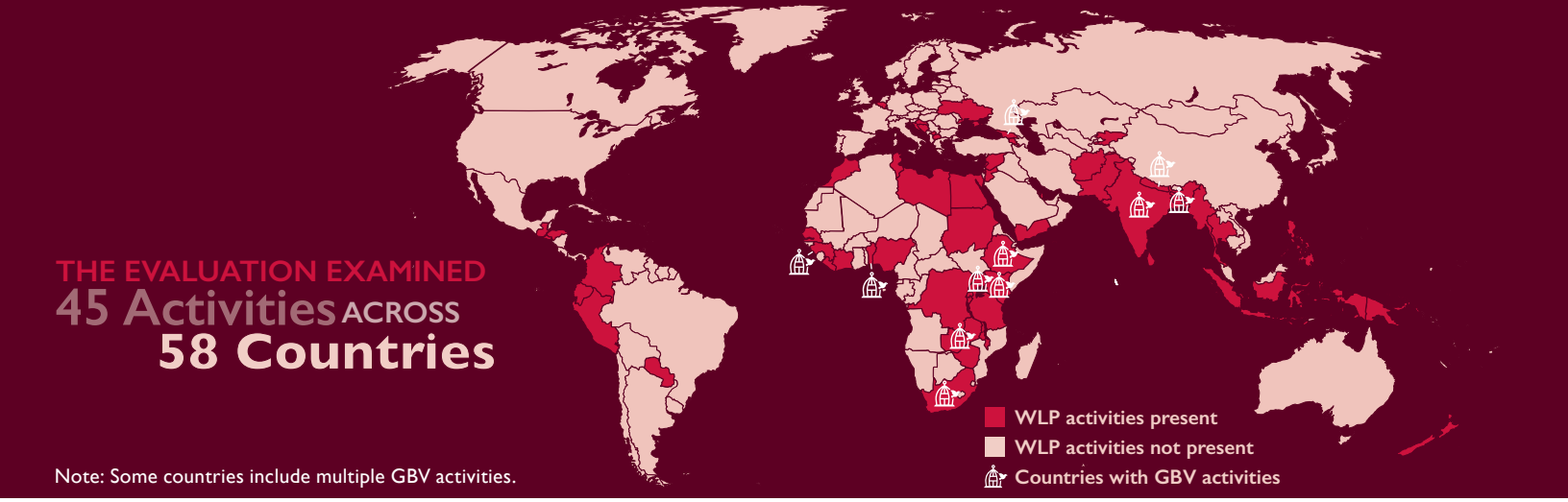
Changed Gender Norms

Three activities showed **men's transformed involvement** as champions of gender equality.

As a results of project activities, male and female participants demonstrated better knowledge of where to access GBV services and voiced changed attitudes aboout child marriage; and engaged more than 3,000 boys and girls in sports, breaking away from traditional segregated gender roles.

We saw significant drops in reports of intimate partner violence. We also saw some improvement in the marital relationship in terms of couple communication. We also found improvements in positive parenting practices, and increased child interactions.

– Implementing partner



Note: Some countries include multiple GBV activities.

Challenges and Lessons Learned in Addressing GBV

Sustainable progress in reducing GBV in all its forms requires long-term coordinated action by committed stakeholders in government, civil society, and the private sector. The WLP GBV activities implemented strategies for strengthening local systems and transforming social gender norms.

The most common challenge local partners and beneficiaries expressed was the relatively short time frame and limited resources for WLP activities to realize broad-based and sustainable changes in GBV attitudes and behaviors.

Partners and beneficiaries suggested extending GBV training to more community members and mobilizing resources to continue new GBV services well before activities end.

GBV activities in two countries found it challenging to integrate child, early, and forced marriage and female genital mutilation/ cutting activities.

A more careful assessment of target populations would improve selection and activity design.

GBV activities in two countries worked with strategic gender partners, but those partners' lack of USAID implementation experience proved challenging.

Investment in capacity development as a component of WLP activity would improve implementation and increase sustainability.

"Stop the Bus" Campaign in Zimbabwe, providing GBV information and services to community members *(Zimbabwe Vana Bantwana)*

Credit: World Education Inc.

Conclusions and Recommendations for GBV Programs

USAID's proactive efforts to use the WLP funds to increase effective gender programming by missions and local partners were largely successful. GBV activities improved national oversight of GBV prevention and response, strengthened service delivery, and achieved progress in transforming social gender norms to embrace gender equality and peace means of conflict resolution. Collaboration among Washington-based managers of GBV, WPS, and Partnerships sub-portfolios brought together different program models for addressing GBV, such as targeting service delivery, institutional oversight, and community engagement.

To build on the foundation of WLP programming and strengthen future GBV activities, USAID should:

WLP Recommendations	GBV Action Steps
Focus Women's Leadership Directive funds on fewer, larger, and longer-term activities to increase the scale and sustainability of their impacts.	Co-fund strategic GBV activities with WPS in crisis or conflict countries to strengthen key GBV institutions that provide oversight, coordinate services, and administer justice. Such activities would complement PEPFAR funded GBV activities.
Ensure that missions and other USAID operating units are able to communicate WLP programmatic goals and expectations to implementing partners of WLP activities, especially when the funds support subcomponents of larger activities.	Sustain involvement between Washington-based GBV teams with missions and partners to provide needed programming guidance, technical tools or resources, and feedback.
	Improve monitoring and management of child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting activities through increased communication and involvement.
Expand partnering with local gender institutions in the government, civil society and the private sector as direct partners and as intermediaries with communities to build local effectiveness and self-reliance.	Ensure that national counterparts share WLP GBV goals and integrate interventions into their ongoing programs and budgets.
	Assess capacity early in the activity and build technical and institutional capacity to manage activities over the longer term.
Continue collaboration among GBV and WPS managers to strengthen GBV activities.	Facilitate cross-learning from experiences with the different GBV program models, such as service delivery, institutional oversight, and community engagement.