

Gender-Based Violence: Research and Programs Around the World



RTI International has conducted research and led programs to understand, prevent and respond to gender-based violence in the United States, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. Working on behalf of U.S. agencies and other clients, we design, implement, and evaluate interventions. By collaborating closely with governments and NGOs and developing public-private partnerships, we strive to build capacity and ensure programs and results are sustainable.

RTI takes a multisectoral approach to GBV interventions, bringing together experts and resources in public health, education, justice, and governance to develop comprehensive programs that are culturally congruent.

Our community-based programs serve as models for effective local programming and have potential for worldwide impact on GBV. We have developed a programming guide for the World Health Organization to assist the efforts of international health policy makers and program managers in addressing the intersection of the dual epidemics of violence against women and HIV/AIDS.

As shown below, our recent projects focus on men, women, and couples in numerous regions and address a wide range of intersecting factors that influence gender-based violence.

Africa

South Africa—Women, HIV, Sexual Risk, and Violence

RTI has implemented multiple projects in South Africa funded by the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) that focused on women and violence.

Under one recent effort, we assisted the Sexual Offences and Community Affairs Unit, housed within the National Prosecuting Authority, in scaling up the Thuthuzela Care Centers for rape victims. Our role included leading a gap analysis, establishing 30 and refurbishing 10 care centers, and improving the care and treatment of rape survivors. We also helped develop a sustainable system for managing the centers and disseminated—regionally and internationally—best practices and lessons learned on management of sexual and gender-based violence.

Under a series of projects funded by NIH, RTI led numerous multiyear, community-based, randomized trials to study the efficacy of interventions designed to reduce sexual risk behaviors, substance use, and violence among various at-risk groups, including female and male substance abusers, sex workers, and couples. Our intervention—the Women's Health CoOp—has proven to effectively reduce sexual risk behavior, substance use, and victimization. It was cited as a successful prevention intervention in the 2009 USAID compendium report *Integrating Multiple Gender Strategies to Improve HIV and AIDS Interventions: A Compendium of Programs in Africa*.



South Africa, Ethiopia, and Rwanda—Gender-Based Violence and Service Delivery

RTI conducted a cross-country analysis of accountability issues in the delivery of services for victims of sexual and gender-based violence. The study identified mechanisms that ensure accountability and transparency among stakeholders in health, justice, security, and psychosocial sectors to improve the quality of service delivery. Results are intended to serve as a guide to countries, cities, or other entities planning to implement multi-sectoral gender-based violence programming.

Zimbabwe—Gender Challenge Initiative

In partnership with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, RTI is working to explore and address health inequities and improve access to services that help prevent gender-based violence, especially among vulnerable populations. To strengthen the capacity of local organizations, we are providing technical assistance and training to improve the uptake, implementation, and translation of research findings into practice.

India and the Middle East

India—Gender-Based Violence and Health Care

RTI research and programs in India focus on the relationship among gender-based violence, health outcomes, and health care. We conducted a randomized controlled trial, funded by the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, to examine the feasibility, safety, and potential effectiveness of Dil Mil (Hearts Together). This antenatal care-based intervention aims to empower daughters- and mothers-in-law with the knowledge, skills, and social support necessary to mitigate gender-based violence and related adverse health outcomes among women and children.

Through a local collaboration, we are also evaluating the effectiveness of an intervention to build capacity of primary health care providers in the city of Bengaluru to promote women's sexual and reproductive health and rights and specifically to respond to gender-based violence.



Nepal—Developing a Strategy for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

As part of a comprehensive health sector reform effort, RTI assisted the Government of Nepal in designing and implementing policy and reform programs to expand access and increase the use of essential health care services, particularly by underserved populations. One aspect of this work was to develop a strategy for gender equality and social inclusion—which was adopted and implemented by the government—that called for community and family counseling on gender-based violence and social violence that affects the mental and physical health of men and women.

Iraq—The Role of Policy and Media in Preventing Violence and Discrimination Against Women

As part of a USAID-funded effort to improve local governance in Iraq, RTI collaborated with the Sulaymaniyah Provincial Council Women's Committee to hold a conference on the roles of community and the state to prevent honor killing.

The conference brought together government, civil society organizations, religious entities, academic institutions, and media outlets to raise awareness and identify ways to stop violence, abuse, and discrimination against women in the region. Major recommendations focused on reforming the Iraqi Penal Code, empowering and encouraging the media and religious institutions to raise awareness of honor killing and women's rights, and providing health education in schools.

Latin America

Guatemala—Violence Prevention

Funded by USAID, RTI is leading efforts to build national and local awareness of the causes of violence and crime—particularly violence against women. The project seeks to promote violence prevention through a community-led approach, ensuring local ownership and sustainability.

Our approach is grounded in strategic alliances among at-risk populations, civil society organizations, private-sector companies, and national and local government. The program seeks to increase community resilience against violence, implements sustainable interventions for at-risk populations, and supports community-based policing and crime prevention activities.

El Salvador—Crime and Violence Prevention

RTI led a USAID-funded project to provide municipal-led community-based violence prevention programs and help the Government of El Salvador establish policies and monitor standardized indicators of crime and violence. The project piloted the use of cell phones to improve real-time collection and sharing of information and worked with the Organization of Salvadoran Women for Peace to conduct workshops on gender-based violence and expand monitoring to include familiar violence incidents.

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