



**UNITED NATIONS
TRUST FUND TO
END VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN**



**THE UN TRUST FUND
TO END VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN
WORKS TO CREATE
A JUST WORLD
WHERE WOMEN AND
GIRLS ARE SAFE AND
FREE, ABLE TO LEAD
REWARDING LIVES
OF DIGNITY AND
EQUALITY.**



A BETTER TOMORROW

Today, violence against women is a fact of life in communities and countries across the world. It transcends the bounds of geography, race, culture, class and religion. It ranges from intimate partner violence to the use of rape as a weapon of war, from sexual harassment in public spaces to harmful practices like child marriage. It affects up to seven in every ten women at some point in their lives. By eroding women's health, spirit, agency and productivity, violence robs women of their basic rights and deprives countries the creativity and contributions of half their people.

But tomorrow can be different. Societies change, sometimes very fast. Behaviors, norms and institutions that are commonplace and unremarkable in the eyes of one generation can be rejected by the next. Grave human rights abuses that once enjoyed widespread support—slavery, foot binding, and apartheid, to name just a few—are today not only illegal, but also condemned by nearly everyone. Thanks to the individual and collective efforts of hundreds of thousands of women and men, laws and attitudes changed dramatically. What was once acceptable became unacceptable.

What will it take to make violence against women unacceptable? For fifteen years, the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women has supported innovative, effective initiatives designed to transform the ways in which people think and act. Turn the page to learn more about what the UN Trust Fund's partners are doing – and how you can help.

A FUND WHOSE TIME HAS COME

Throughout recorded history, violence against women has been ignored, excused or accepted as a seemingly intractable part of the human condition. In the 1990s, however, momentum began to build around the idea that women's rights were human rights, thanks in large part to the tireless efforts of women's organizations around the world.

The 1993 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women was a landmark acknowledgement that violence against women is a human rights violation no matter where it occurs. The right of women to a life free of physical, sexual and psychological violence was reinforced through a series of global conferences in the 1990s and the Millennium Summit in 2000. Research demonstrated that violence against women and girls was hampering progress toward the Millennium Development Goals. With successive UN General Assembly Resolutions, and the UN Secretary-General's global campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women 2008-2015, the issue fully emerged from the shadows, demanding the attention and action of all who care about freedom and development.

The UN Trust Fund, established in 1996, embodies this heartening awakening of global consciousness. A gauge of the international community's commitment to making good on its promises to end violence against women and girls, the UN Trust Fund brings synergy and coherence to the United Nations' work in this critical field.

The Fund also helps to meet the vast reservoir of demand for funding. It awards grants that range from \$100,000 to \$1 million to organizations in developing and transition countries. These grants are awarded annually in an open, transparent and highly competitive process. **Between 1996 and 2011, the UN Trust Fund delivered almost \$80 million to over 330 innovative, strategic and effective programmes in 127 countries.**

Despite its reach, demand far outstrips the UN Trust Fund's resources. In recent years, it has been able to support less than 3 percent of the proposals received. In 2011 alone, it received over 2,500 proposals, with \$1.2 billion in requested funding—but was able to support only 22 of them in 34 countries. The surge in advocacy and political commitment around this issue is paying off: growing numbers of organizations have made ending violence against women and girls a central part of their missions. What is needed now is a commensurate surge in resources to address this global pandemic.



EQUALITY

PREVENTING VIOLENCE BY CHANGING SOCIAL NORMS

Social norms in much of the world lead people to turn a blind eye toward violence against women and girls. In some cases, women are even thought to “ask for” violence by dressing in a certain way, by encouraging (or spurning) a suitor, by disagreeing with a father or a husband, or by being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Violence is sometimes viewed as necessary. For instance, in communities where female genital mutilation is practiced, parents may fear that their daughter, if uncut, would never find a husband, economic security or a place in society. Changing the beliefs that make violence seem normal, justified and even at times desirable requires social mobilization, education and advocacy. Ending the silence around violence, engaging men and boys and partnering with traditional leaders are particularly important.

WITH SUPPORT FROM THE UN TRUST FUND:

In **GUATEMALA**, adolescent girls in fourteen Mayan communities mapped their neighborhoods using GPS technology. By plotting every household, building and route, the girls created maps that showed where they felt safe and where they felt at risk. The project, implemented by the Population Council and the Office for the Defense of Indigenous Women, made young women and their safety concerns visible for the first time. The mapping exercise helped catalyze community-wide discussion about the prevalence of violence against women and girls, the reasons young men commit violent acts and ways the community could come together to prevent violence.

In **ETHIOPIA**, Action Aid effectively addressed harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation (FGM), early and forced marriage, polygamy and wife inheritance. The project supported community-level watch groups; over 500 women were part of these groups, and they reached some 30,000 community members. The groups keep a watchful eye on baby girls to make sure that FGM did not occur and monitored the age at which girls were married. Their partners in this effort were a cadre of religious and traditional leaders educated on the health risks of FGM and early marriage. The leaders were instrumental in reducing the number of child marriages by requiring proof that young women who appeared before them to get married were at least 18 years old.



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