



OVERVIEW

- Gender-based violence is a fundamental human rights violation
- Addressing gender-based violence is a key step to achieving several MDGs such as maternal health and HIV/AIDS
- Ending gender-based violence is increasingly a policy concern globally and companies have an opportunity to align with local governments to enforce these policies
- Sexual violence against girls (and boys) is more prevalent than previously understood
- Opportunities and new programs exist for business to support effective action

PART I: WHY WE NEED TO ADDRESS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

STATE OF THE PROBLEM

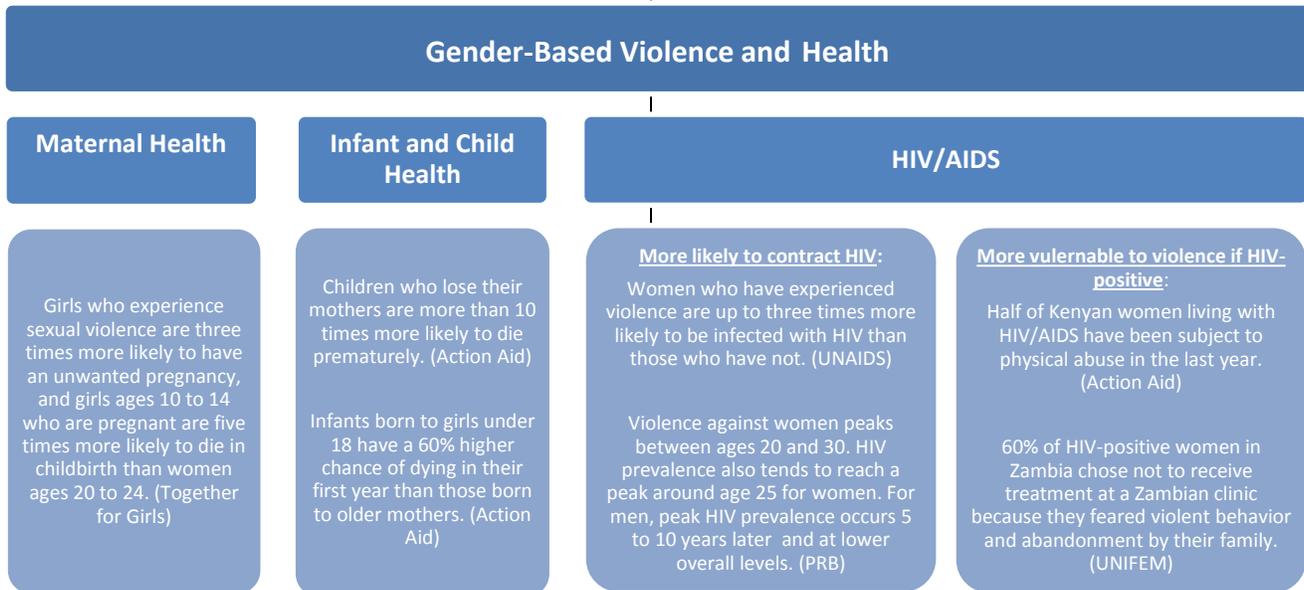
International development strategy increasingly adds a gender lens to the state of the world's problems, which recognizes women as key levers of change. Unfortunately, violence against women and girls severely hinders development by usurping victims' ability to leverage their potential effectively. More importantly, violence against women and girls is a fundamental violation of human rights. Taking steps to end this crime at all levels where we can make a difference—government, private sector, civil society—is simply the right thing to do.

Among women aged between 15 and 44, **acts of violence cause more death and disability than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents and war combined.** Many of these acts are acts of sexual violence (ActionAid). Staggering numbers like these should motivate global development players to take action. In the past decade, multi-national and country-level organizations have started gathering data on sexual

violence against women and girls, in the hope of motivating more action on the issue. Results of a 20-year multi-country study conducted by WHO found that the first sexual experience for many women was reported as forced, ranging from 24 percent in rural Peru to 40 percent in South Africa. Consider some of these country-level statistics:

- In South Africa, **a woman is killed every 6 hours by an intimate partner** (UNIFEM)
- In Sao Paulo, Brazil, **a woman is assaulted every 15 seconds** (UNIFEM)
- In Tanzania, nearly **28 percent of females reported at least one experience of sexual violence prior to the age of 18.** Of these women, 1 out of 5 sought services, and only 1 out of 8 received services (Together for Girls)

COSTS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



Such health costs span across 3 MDGs—Child Health (MDG 4), Maternal Health (MDG 5) and Combat HIV/AIDS (MDG 6). These extreme health costs touch only the surface of the plight faced by female victims of gender-based violence. In addition to extensive mental health ramifications, **the experience of sexual violence is life-altering**, challenging women’s and girls’ ability to thrive.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND THE COST TO THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

- The lifetime opportunity cost related to adolescent pregnancy, a potential direct consequence of sexual violence against girls, can reach up to 30 percent of annual GDP in some countries. (World Bank)
- In Brazil, if teenage girls were able to delay pregnancy until their early twenties, its economy would be **\$3.5 billion more productive**. In India, this number jumps to **\$7.7 billion**. (World Bank)
- Every year, **60 million girls are sexually assaulted at or on their way to school**. (Action Aid) Sexual violence against girls is a key cause of school dropout, a hindrance to MDG 2 and a precursor of lower wages and future opportunities. Dropping out of secondary school can also result in a **lifetime opportunity cost of up to 68 percent of GDP** (in Burundi). (World Bank)

- **Up to 2 percent of GDP is lost annually** in some developing countries due to the social costs (teenage pregnancies, unemployment, increased health risks) of dropping out of school. (World Bank)

ISSUES UNDERLYING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

(1) Attitudes about gender

Unbalanced gender norms in one’s society make it difficult for women to thrive. An eye-opening study by the Together for Girls partnership in Tanzania revealed that approximately **60 percent of females and more than 50 percent of males aged 13 to 24 years believe it is acceptable for a husband to beat his wife under certain circumstances**. Attitudes condoning violence must be addressed among males and females as a root cause of gender inequity and gender-based violence. Doing so enhances the success of other interventions aimed at lifting women.

For example, one study conducted in southern India examined the association between economic aspects of gender-based power, namely spousal employment status, and physical domestic violence. **Results showed that women who were unemployed at one visit and had begun employment by the next visit had an 80 percent higher chance of violence at home, as compared to women who maintained their unemployment status**. (RTI) This underscores the

need for holistic programming to ensure changes promoted are supported, and not undermined, by other stakeholders in women's lives.

Relationship power inequity increases incidence of intimate partner violence, and therefore plays a role in HIV contraction. A Lancet article revealed **how relationship power inequity in South Africa increases the risk of HIV infection in young women**. 51 of 325 women with low relationship power equity at baseline acquired HIV (8.5 per 100 person-years) compared with 73 of 704 women with medium or high relationship power equity (5.5 per 100 person-years). (Rachel Jewkes)

(2) Relationships with older men

Emerging evidence from South Africa suggests that young women (16-23 years old) who have partners who are three or more years older than them are 1.5 times more likely to experience violence and 1.6 times more likely to be HIV-positive than women of the same age whose partners are in their peer group. (UNAIDS and WHO) Women who engage in relationships with older men often rely on the man for economic support, which increases the power inequity in a relationship. Improving economic opportunities for women can help reduce this dependency on older men, thereby balancing power inequities and related health and safety vulnerabilities.

(3) Influence of drugs and alcohol

In one study, 13.5 percent of females who experienced childhood sexual abuse said the perpetrator was drunk or under the influence of drugs. This number is likely significantly underestimated as it may be difficult for young girls to discern intoxication. (Together for Girls)

(4) Service access and utilization

In addition to the initial problem of violence against women and girls, a secondary problem exists in healthcare and policy infrastructures to effectively support victims. However, even when services, though inadequate, may exist, victims rarely take advantage of them. In Tanzania, of the nearly 28 percent of females who reported at least one experience of sexual violence prior to the age of 18, 1 out of every 5 sought services and only 1 out of 8 females received services. This means that **nearly 88 percent of victims did not receive services**.

In the court system, while many women do not report incidences of violence, even those who do may not get very far. For example, in Kenya, of the gender violence cases that were reported to police in 2010, which is only a fraction of the total cases, **fewer than 15 percent made it to court**. If gender-based violence remains a low priority for security and governmental officials, women will never be incentivized to report incidences.

PART II: HOW TO STOP GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

WHAT'S BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AND REMAINING NEEDS

POLICY: Promising New Legislative Interventions

Following suit of the multi-national and country-level data collection on gender-based violence, organizations such as the UN as well as national governments and organizations are beginning to roll out policies addressing the issue, which will primarily serve to fill the holes in service access and utilization. In 2010, The United States Congress passed the International Violence Against Women Act (I-VAWA) that would, for the first time, make the

epidemic of violence against women worldwide a priority of the United States government and integrate prevention strategies across foreign policy and assistance programs. If implemented properly, I-VAWA and similar policies globally have the potential to cut the roots of gender-based violence. Without careful and thorough enforcement, however, policies alone cannot create long-term sustainable change.

United Nations

“[Unite to End Violence Against Women](#)” is the UN Secretary General’s initiative to join forces with individuals, civil society and governments to put an end to violence against women in all its forms. UN Women’s “[Say NO to Violence against Women](#)” supports the UNiTE campaign through its social mobilization efforts.

UN Women, in conjunction with the **Caribbean Ombudsmen Association** and local police and service providers, developed a **protocol for protecting survivors of gender-based violence**, which will be piloted in four Caribbean countries beginning in early 2012. The protocol calls for strengthening cooperation between offices of the ombudsmen, victim support services and the police in responding to reports of gender-based violence. The protocol specifically addresses the need to expand access to services, and to promote awareness of victims’ needs and the laws that uphold their rights.

The UN recently issued a handbook for sub-Saharan African countries including Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The initiative aims to support law enforcement and national criminal justice systems in their efforts to tackle violence against women and girls. The

handbook is designed for first-responders, such as the police, and helps to define violence against women and provides intervention guidance based on relevant societal norms and standards. The handbook also emphasizes the sensitivity required to investigate acts of violence against women.

Country-level

The government of **Costa Rica** has implemented a National Plan of Action regarding violence against women, and in 2009, **Guatemala** hosted the Latin American launch of the UN campaign, “Unite to End Violence Against Women,” with satellite activities in **Venezuela, Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador**.

The **Zambian** parliament passed the Anti Gender-Based Violence Act in response to a long-standing recommendation to enact legislation that specifically addresses gender-based violence, which was later signed by President Rupiah Banda in April 2011. The following map details country-level legislative action on violence against women from 1984-2008. As evidenced by the map, Latin America and Caribbean countries have taken the lead in promoting and passing legislation to end violence against women.

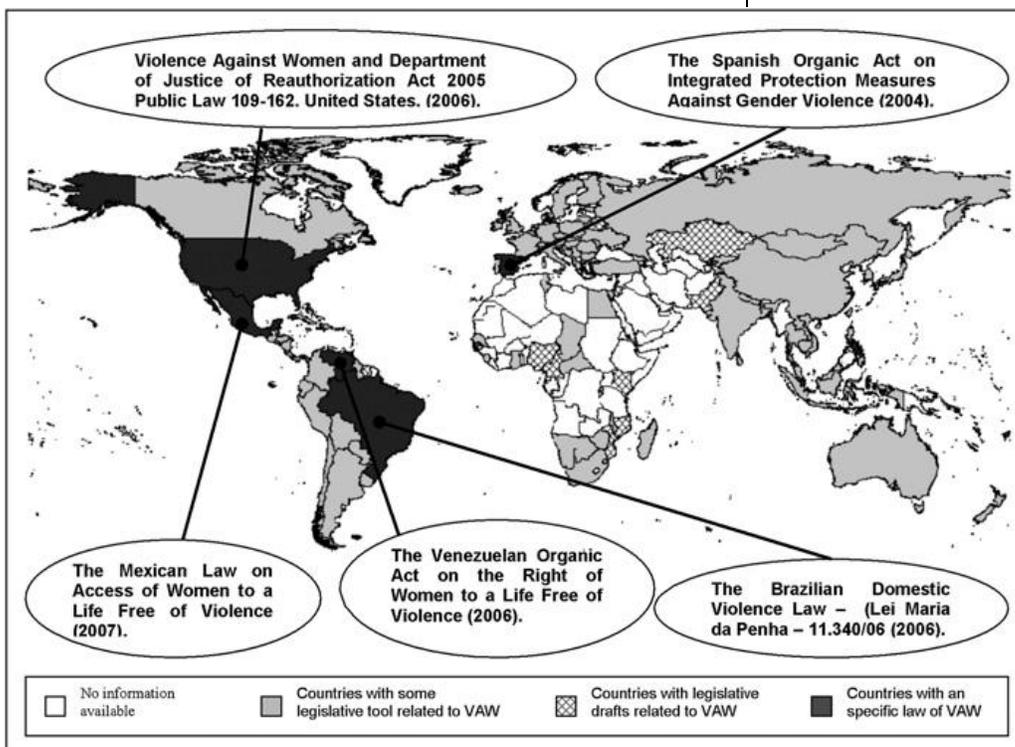


Figure 1 Map of the legislative tools on violence against women in the world (1984-2008).

Sources: International Digest of Health Legislation (IDHL) online database, the Annual Review of Population Law database on law and population, Queen Sofia Center, the Stop Violence against Women website (STOPVAW) and the UN Secretary-General’s database on Violence against Women.

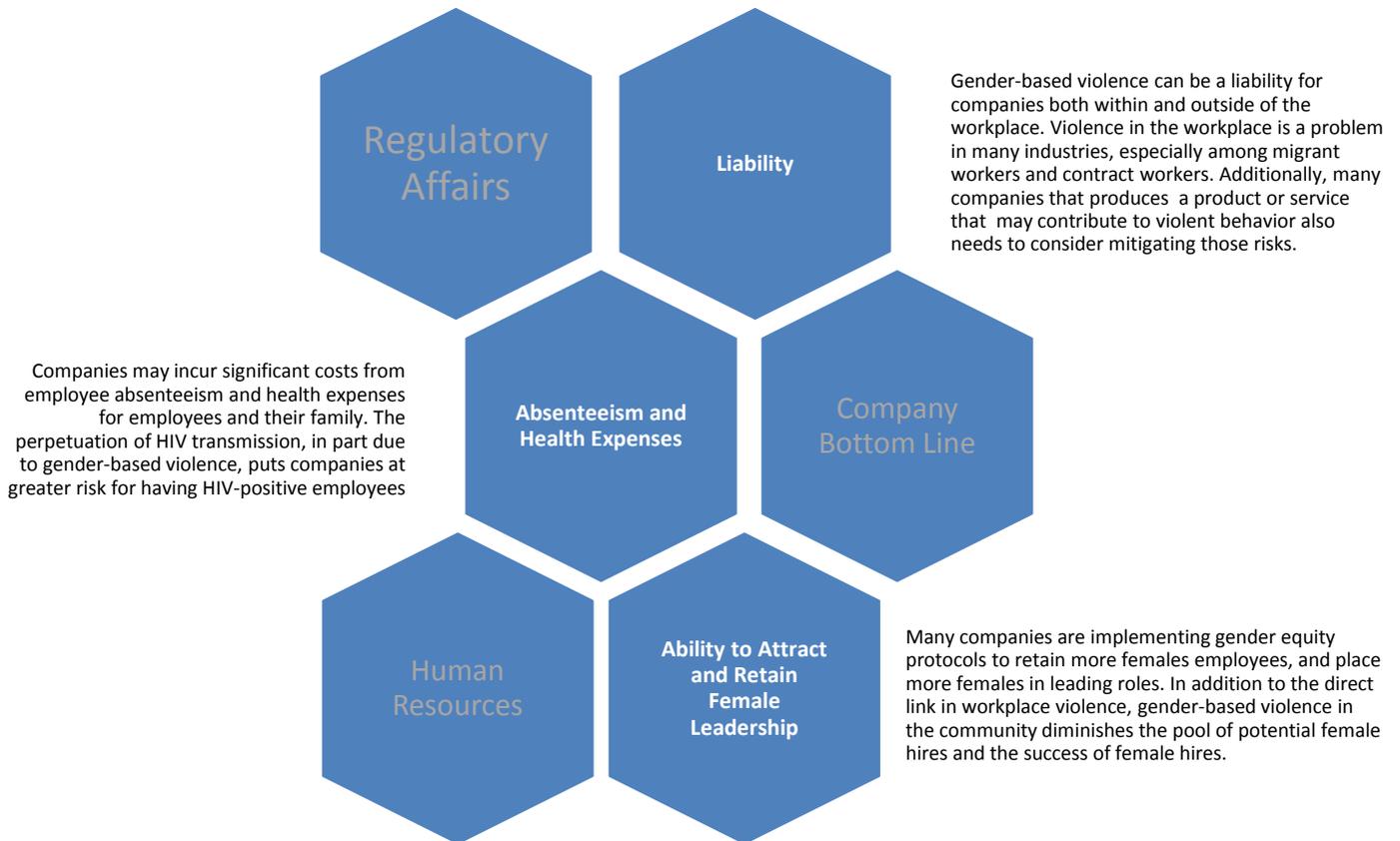
Source: Carmen Vives-Cases, et al. *Mapping violence against women laws in the world: an overview of state commitments.* Journal of Epidemiology and Community

PART III: BUSINESS ACTIONS TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

THE BUSINESS CASE

How does gender-based violence affect business?

While addressing a human rights violation should be the imperative of all decision-makers in communities and around the world, there is also a strong business case to address gender-based violence. In addition to the concrete ways that gender-based violence influences businesses, such as through violence both in the workplace and by employees in the community, the larger-scale social norms that underlie gender-based violence undoubtedly limit a company's potential, as well as the market potential in a given geography.



WHAT CAN BUSINESS DO?

➤ Advocacy and Awareness

1. Promote campaigns and lend brand equity to end violence against women

Some companies supported the Chilean government-led media campaign, “Maricon, el que maltrata una mujer”: a man who mistreats a woman is less of a man.

2. Engage with policy and opinion leaders

GIZ developed an initiative spanning 2009-2013 in Peru, Brazil, Paraguay and Ecuador. One component was to **promote a corporate culture to combat violence by working directly with corporations.** Engaging in policy is a unique opportunity to create systematic and sustainable change, while also strengthening government ties and community affairs in the region.

➤ **Workplace and Employee Engagement**

Implement employee engagement programs that incorporate a gender lens, especially curricula that focus on male engagement such as [GBCHealth’s moMENTum](#)

Engaging men is critical to addressing gender norms and changing attitudes. Companies have a unique opportunity to do so, given their large populations of male employees. GBCHealth is making available the HIM Toolkit, a one-of-its kind male engagement curriculum tailored for the workplace, and has partnered with leading NGOs who can provide technical and implementation expertise to interested companies.

➤ **Community**

1. Fund NGO partners to implement and scale-up successful programs in local communities where your corporation operates

Example: The UN’s “Delivering as One” campaign, which is part of the UNiTE campaign, established the Isange One-Stop Center in Kigali, Rwanda. The campaign treated over 1,500 cases of gender-based violence at its Kigali center in its first year. Scaling programs such as these with implementing NGOs is one way corporations can make an impact in

specific geographies. Additionally, in Paraguay, a guide for journalists to report better on violence against women, called “Lentes Lilas” could be applied in various geographic settings. GBCHealth *Healthy Women, Healthy Economies* recently partnered with Thomson Reuters Foundation and the U.S. State Department Office of Global Women’s Issues to deliver a [journalist training](#) to 14 journalists across Africa on how to report better on the issues facing women, including violence.

2. Consider public-private partnerships as the Foundation world is beginning to make violence against women a priority

The Novo Foundation [“Move to End Violence”](#)

➤ **Core Competence**

Leverage existing assets (i.e. security, medical devices and products, educational materials) to apply to ending gender-based violence

For specific ways your company can leverage its core competencies to end gender-based violence, please contact Laura Rosen at lrosen@gbchealth.org.

BENEFITS TO BUSINESS OF INVESTMENTS TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



CASE STUDY: TOGETHER FOR GIRLS PARTNERSHIP



In September 2009, Gary Cohen (Executive Vice President) and partner organizations including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Office of Violence Prevention, UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNIFEM (now UN Women), the Nduna Foundation and Grupo ABC launched a new partnership to address sexual violence against girls. [This initiative was announced by former President William J. Clinton](#) at the Annual Meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative in New York.

The partnership is now named Together for Girls and includes additional partners such as PEPFAR, U.S. State Department Office of Global Women’s Issues and five UN Agencies, led by UNICEF. Working with national governments and civil society,

Together for Girls operates under three primary pillars:

- (1) **Conduct national surveys and collect data** to inform government leaders, civil society and donors.
- (2) **Support coordinated program actions at the country level** with interventions tailored to address sexual violence focused on girls.
- (3) **Lead global advocacy and public awareness efforts** to draw attention to the problem and promote evidence-based solutions.

Sexual violence is universally condemned but occurs far more frequently than people realize. In 2002, 150 million girls and 73 million boys under 18 experienced forced sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual violence (Andrews G et al). Together for Girls focuses on girls, but engages men and boys as part of its response. The partnership recognizes that, although less common, boys also experience sexual violence with similar long-term consequences.

In the year since Together for Girls was launched, significant progress has been made in advancing its goals. The partnership has activities underway or planned in five countries – Swaziland, Tanzania, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Haiti – with plans to expand to additional countries in Africa, Asia and South America in the coming years. Together for Girls has fueled the development of national policy campaigns and reforms, including:

- Tanzania: A multi-sectoral task force has created a national plan to address violence against girls and boys
- Swaziland: Legal reforms have been instituted, and medical staff have been trained at the 10 biggest hospitals about how to deal with sexual violence victims

The Together for Girls partnership illustrates the power of multi-sectoral stakeholders to build on existing platforms in countries around the world. Together for Girls finds innovative, strategic and sustainable ways to end gender-based violence. In doing so, the partnership addresses a human rights violation, especially against women and girls, as well as a linchpin issue contributing to various health, social and economic problems inhibiting global development. For more information on how your company can get involved, contact Michele Moloney-Kitts at michele@togetherforgirls.org.



Healthy Women, Healthy Economies

This issue brief is produced by *Healthy Women, Healthy Economies* (HWHE), GBCHealth's platform for galvanizing and facilitating corporate action to improve the health, well-being, and opportunity of women and girls. Launched in 2011, HWHE is centered on 4 main pillars of impact: Health (especially maternal and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and PMTCT), Education, Economic Empowerment and Rights and Inclusion. HWHE helps member companies explore different types of interventions across these areas that the business community is uniquely equipped to advance, ranging from employee engagement and workplace programs, to technical education and materials, to awareness-building and advocacy. To learn more about *Healthy Women, Healthy Economies*, please contact Laura Rosen at Irosen@gbchealth.org.

About GBCHealth

GBCHealth is a global coalition of over 200 private sector companies and top NGOs leading the business fight for improved global health. GBCHealth supports members by developing comprehensive workplace policies; supporting community programs; leveraging core competencies; facilitating leadership and advocacy by business leaders; and brokering partnerships. GBCHealth also manages the private sector delegation to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, serving as an entry-point for corporate collaboration and engagement with the Fund and its recipients worldwide. GBCHealth has offices in New York, Johannesburg, Beijing, Nairobi and Moscow. For more information on GBCHealth, please visit www.gbchealth.org.

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