



What Works to Prevent Violence Impact at Scale Programme

Funding Window 2 Open Call Request for Concept Notes for
Innovation Grants

September 2024



Overview

Building on the success of its predecessor which showed that violence against women and girls (VAWG) is preventable, What Works II is a seven-year UK aid funded programme to test and scale up of evidence-based, practice-informed violence prevention approaches. Contributing towards the elimination of VAWG, What Works II seeks to achieve a measurable reduction in VAWG in development and humanitarian contexts, including for the most marginalised women and girls in all their diversities. The What Works II Programme seeks to expand the global knowledge and evidence base on what works to prevent VAWG and how to achieve this at scale through support for innovation, research and evaluation. It also aims to support women's rights organisations (WROs) as essential actors in VAWG prevention ecosystem and improve access to funding to uphold the rights, agency and voices of women and girls in all their diversities. The What Works II Programme is delivered by joint consortia: Implementation Consortium and the Research Consortium.

The What Works II Programme has awarded scale and innovation grants in the first funding window and is now expanding the portfolio under the second funding window.

What is Prevention?

The What Works: Impact at Scale programme focuses on primary prevention of violence against women, girls in all their diversities. Primary prevention aims to stop violence before it starts. In public health, interventions are often categorised as primary, secondary or tertiary prevention. All three types of prevention are important, and often work in combination. Although What Works: Impact at Scale focuses on learning about and scaling primary prevention, we recognize that addressing violence is a continuum that occurs along the primary, secondary and tertiary prevention levels and support working across all levels. What Works aims to prevent violence through multiple pathways: by preventing violence before it occurs, particularly among children and youth, as well as preventing the re-occurrence of violence after it has started. We aim to prevent violence not only among those who participate in direct interventions such as couples or parenting programmes, but also to achieve a reduction in violence at a **population** level, by transforming community norms and practices around gender and violence.



What are Innovation grants? Innovation grant information and criteria

What Works II defines Innovation as:

The development and implementation of new or existing ideas with the transformative ability to contribute impact with potential for future scaling.

We are interested in testing innovative approaches and developing promising collaborations to take VAWG prevention work in new directions. Innovation grants are intended to support the development and implementation of projects designed to achieve one or more of the following goals:

- Design and test ways to prevent forms of violence that have been under-researched (such as conflict-related sexual violence, technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV), violence in climate-related or humanitarian emergencies).
- Testing different delivery platforms or modalities such as media and technology etc.
- Testing new partnerships e.g. between a digital rights organisation and a women's right organisations (WROs).
- Develop approaches to address violence in populations or settings where little experience exists (for example, refugees, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, or LBT populations.)

In funding Window 2, What Works II will award innovation grants of up to GBP 500,000 to organisations or consortia led by WROs in the Global South, for up to 3 years, that are designed to achieve a measurable reduction in VAWG in humanitarian or development contexts. In

partnership with grantee-partners, members of the Research Consortium, will design and carry out a rigorous evaluation to test the effectiveness of the intervention.

What do we intend to fund for Innovation grants?

We are seeking proposals that focus on the following priority areas:

- 1. Prevention of VAWG in fragile and conflict affected settings (FCAS)** with a particular focus on countries experiencing protracted crisis. We particularly encourage applications from the MENA region as well as others that have been in protracted crisis.

Protracted crisis proposed definition: Protracted crisis refers to situations where there is an ongoing or persistent threat, vulnerability, or risk of GBV that persists over an extended period. This includes humanitarian emergencies such as conflicts, natural disasters, or displacement scenarios (internal and refugee) where individuals, particularly women and girls in all their diversities, face heightened risks of various forms of violence including sexual violence, intimate partner violence, trafficking, and exploitation.

Examples of potential interventions in this priority areas include:

- Projects using technology/remote interventions to prevent VAWG in conflict/humanitarian situations.
- Intergenerational efforts that promote working with marginalised groups including adolescent girls and older women in conflict/humanitarian settings to prevent VAWG
- Projects that seek to reduce sexual abuse, exploitation, and harassment (SEAH) by humanitarian actors and/or to prevent violence and backlash towards humanitarian workers and GBV responders.
- Projects that integrate VAWG prevention and response in all stages of humanitarian programming (pre-disaster, during disaster and post disaster) through multi sectoral approaches that include health, education and protection and to strengthen early warning systems to assess and respond to risks of violence against women and girls

- 2. Technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV)** is one of the emerging forms of VAWG and terminology, definitions and measures are still evolving with terms like cyber violence, cyber aggression, digital abuse and online victimization used interchangeably. SVRI and ICRW define TFGBV as follows:

Technology-facilitated GBV is action by one or more people that harms others based on their sexual or gender identity or by enforcing harmful gender norms. This action is carried out using the internet and/or mobile technology and includes stalking, bullying, sexual harassment, defamation, hate speech and exploitation.

The What Works II Programme is keen to support building the field of TFGBV through supporting a portfolio of grants that will enable the Programme to contribute to generating evidence of what works to prevent TFGBV. Examples of potential interventions in this priority areas include:

- Interventions seeking to prevent different forms of TFGBV
- Interventions seeking to shift attitudes and behaviours of perpetrators of TFGBV, including those in the high-risk categories for perpetration
- Projects exploring the intersection between online and offline VAWG and how to prevent it
- Projects seeking to increase the digital media literacy of women and girls and to build their capacity and that of the broader online community to address and respond to TFGBV.
- Projects seeking to establish safe and secure online spaces for women and girls to report and prevent online abuse and exploitation

3. Addressing VAWG prevention in Climate Change. Based on the recognition of the nexus between VAWG and climate change, the What Works II Programme will prioritize finding and funding grants that aim to prevent and reduce the risk of VAWG in climate change interventions.

The climate crisis is one of the greatest challenges of our time, threatening economic, environmental, and social security, particularly in the Global South, where these impacts are felt strongest. Women, girls, and gender-diverse people experience the impacts of climate change differently in terms of their safety and security, in part because climate change exacerbates the conditions that allow perpetrators to commit VAWG with impunity. Addressing VAWG through climate change projects is key to ensuring that deeply entrenched social norms that often perpetuate VAWG are addressed alongside climate change related risks to support whole communities to stay safe and resilient in the face of climate change, do no harm and leave no one behind.

We encourage applications with a focus on VAWG prevention in climate change contexts including but not limited to:

- Efforts to prevent VAWG against climate change activists and environmental human rights defenders (EHRDs), raising the alarm on climate change.

- Mainstreaming VAWG prevention into projects supporting a Just Transition¹ to a low carbon economy, such as climate-friendly infrastructure and agriculture projects.
- Mainstreaming VAWG prevention into climate adaptation and resilience programmes such as reforestation efforts and livelihoods programmes.
- Mainstreaming VAWG prevention into climate change-induced disaster preparedness and response, including through anticipatory action.

Based on the disability commitments made at the start of the What Works II Programme, we will continue to pursue the commitment to supporting the leadership of **women with disability-led organisations** through the innovation grants that will be awarded in Window 2, with priority given to these organisations submitting proposals on the above thematic areas.

Successful applicants will be invited to collaborate with the What Works II technical advisors and a team of researchers in ‘learning partnerships’ to co-design a full proposal that refines the project's Theory of Change, the research questions that the project aims to answer, and the activities and scope of the intervention. This will be an interactive process of adaptation to ensure the intervention is addressing a knowledge gap regarding what works to prevent VAWG. The evaluation of the project will be conducted by an external team of researchers with specific knowledge of the country context and intervention. However, grantees will be responsible for collecting specific monitoring information to complement the evaluation which will be agreed upon with the research team during the co-design process. The costs to conduct the intervention and monitoring activities will be covered by the Implementation Consortium and included in the grant, while the costs of the evaluation of the intervention will be covered separately by the Research Consortium.

Who do we intend to fund?

What Works II aims to award innovation grants to **southern-based, women-led, women’s rights organisations** with expertise and a track record of working in the field of VAWG prevention. This includes women’s peacebuilding organisations, women-led disabled people’s organisations, LBT organisations, organisations working at the intersection of VAWG prevention and climate change and organisations exploring partnerships to address TFGBV. We recognize that some of the innovations may not necessarily have been developed by WROs and in such instances, we are specifically seeking new ways of partnering and collaboration as outlined below.

¹ A just transition is broadly defined as ensuring that no one is left behind or pushed behind in the transition to low-carbon and environmentally sustainable economies and societies, can enable more ambitious climate action and provide an impetus to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals. See:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/CDP-excerpt-2023-1.pdf>

We are looking to fund:

- New partnerships that bring together unique collaborations, for example, technology organisations or climate change organisations, in partnership with WROs;
- Ideas/approaches to prevent VAWG that have not previously been implemented and/or evaluated;
- Existing ideas/approaches that are being adapted for new populations or geographies;
- Approaches that test different combinations, intensities or duration of approaches to further reduce levels of VAWG and get us closer to 'zero' prevalence;
- Adaptations of existing methodologies (particularly for humanitarian contexts) from other sectors for VAWG prevention;
- New or adapted prevention delivery modalities and/or different combinations, e.g., moving from community mobilization to implementing prevention through digital spaces/online platforms, or through sector platforms;
- Approaches that have strong potential to go to scale if proven effective;
- Approaches where there are existing or potential partnerships with government, especially at the local level;
- Approaches that are intersectional, centre the voices of marginalised groups including women and girls, and build their voice and agency.

Eligibility criteria for What Works II innovation grants

- Applicants are national or local level **women-led WROs** from the **Global South**, who may choose to partner in consortia with other organisations (e.g., NGOs and SMEs). For the TFGBV interventions, applicants can be led by actors from the digital rights or technology sector working in partnership with women-led WROs.
- What Works II defines women-led, WROs to be organisations that:
 - Have a deliberate mandate to protect and promote the rights of women and girls;
 - Have majority women at every level, including at the board level and across all decision-making levels; and
 - Centre women and girls in all their diversities.
- Applicants demonstrate that their core work is in the field of VAWG prevention, women's rights, gender equality, conflict, and digital/technology sectors.
- Applicants are willing to participate in the co-design of implementation and research evaluation in collaboration with the What Works II Implementation and Research Consortia.
- Applicants are located within the three FCDO priority regions: Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.
- International NGOs (INGOs) are eligible as part of a consortia led by WROs.
- Funding organisations are not eligible, for example a women's fund.
- UN entities and other multilaterals are not eligible.
- Organisations are only eligible to apply for one What Works II grant in each funding window.

Selection criteria for What Works II Innovation grants

We are seeking concept notes for innovations in VAWG prevention. This could include interventions that are innovative for: the VAWG prevention field; the region the intervention is proposed to be implemented in; in terms of the strategy being proposed; or all three of the above.

We are looking for concept notes that demonstrate:

- Locally led solutions that centre women and girls in all their diversities;
- Potential for a clear pathway to scale either by reach or proportion of population covered;
- Proven experience of working adaptively and taking a continuous learning approach;
- Intervention design incorporates flexibility and adaptability to change;
- Interventions that address gender inequalities and remove structural barriers such as unequal gender roles (i.e. gender transformative components);
- Organisational capacity to deliver the intervention and manage disbursed funds;
- Key research/learning questions and challenges that the VAWG prevention field is facing that the project aims to answer through evidence generation;
- Contribution to the VAWG evidence base in line with the SVRI global shared research agenda.
- Demonstrated local and national knowledge and networks for influencing change.

We would like to see the following included in the concept notes:

- Explanation of the innovation and why and how it is innovative;
- The key problems/questions the project intervention seeks to address and how they plan to address it (through which activities);
- How the project can use contextual opportunities to influence sustained change.

Testing of technological and digital solutions may be included as part of the approach. Proposals may also consider how they will test what different combinations, intensities or duration of approaches might further reduce levels of VAWG and advance the prevention field.

Geographical Scope

We are looking to fund projects based in the **Middle East and North Africa, Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa**. We particularly welcome applications from the **Middle East and North Africa and projects/interventions located in fragile and conflict affected states (FCAS)** that are in a situation of protracted crises.

Types of violence

The primary focus for funding is **intimate partner violence (IPV), non-partner sexual violence, including sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH) in conflict and emergency settings, and TFGBV**. We also encourage proposals that seek to **address the intersection of violence against women and violence against children, including violence against adolescent girls, and those focused on violence in and around schools, workplaces, and public spaces**. We particularly encourage proposals that seek to impact on more than one type of violence, recognising that these often co-occur.

Language

Concept notes must be submitted in English.

Grant Funding

Grant amount is GBP 500,000 for a duration of up to 3 years for inception phase and implementation activities with a clear start and end date. Grant funds are project support and not core support, although What Works II understands the need and can cover some staffing and other core costs as part of the project implementation in line with the FCDO eligible expenditure guidance².

Grant funds will be awarded through an Accountable Grant Arrangement (AGA). The AGA will be signed by IRC as the Fund Manager acting on behalf of FCDO. During the final stages in the application process and prior to signing the grant agreement, IRC will conduct a comprehensive due diligence assessment on the lead applicant to identify any development needs and assign actions to mitigate against the risk to the FCDO funding. This is a collaborative review and analysis of the selected applicant's organisational, programmatic, financial, and operational capacity to implement the proposed project.

Application Process

A two-stage application process will be used to open the process to a diverse pool while lessening the burden on applicants by keeping the first submission to a concept note.

The first stage is an online concept note that requests basic FCDO eligibility information including confirmation that the lead applicant is a women-led WRO based in the Global South. The concept note should provide a brief narrative including what the innovation is, geographic scope, type of violence, settings, the aim and outcomes of the intervention and activities to be undertaken; technical expertise in the field of ending VAWG; and organisational capacity in project and finance management and provide an indicative budget.

² Please see FCDO eligible expenditure guidance included in the budget template of the concept note full RFP package

The What Works II team will select a small number of organisations from review of the concept notes and recommend to FCDO for approval to invite them to submit a full proposal. The What Works II team and research team will work in a collaborative way to virtually co-design the full proposal with the applicants. The WW2 Research Consortium will work with the grantees at this stage to develop an evaluation approach using appropriate methods to address the learning objectives of the grant. Following approval from FCDO on the full proposal package, including the evaluation design, the selected applicants will be offered a provisional award of innovation grant funding, subject to satisfactory completion of a due diligence assessment. If approved, grant funds would be available for a project start in late 2025.

Next Steps

Please read the concept note application guidance package alongside this request for concept notes. Completed online concept notes [via this link](#) to be submitted by 23.59 GMT on 06 December 2024.

Webinar sessions providing information on emerging evidence on VAWG prevention programming, FCDO priorities, and grant management and compliance will take place in November 2024. Further information will be announced on the What Works II website <https://ww2preventvawg.org/> and X @WW2PreventVAWG.

Questions regarding the concept note application can be submitted via email to:
[**WW2.info@rescue.org**](mailto:WW2.info@rescue.org)