

Filling In The Picture

Research Priorities on Violence Against
Women in the Asia and Pacific Region



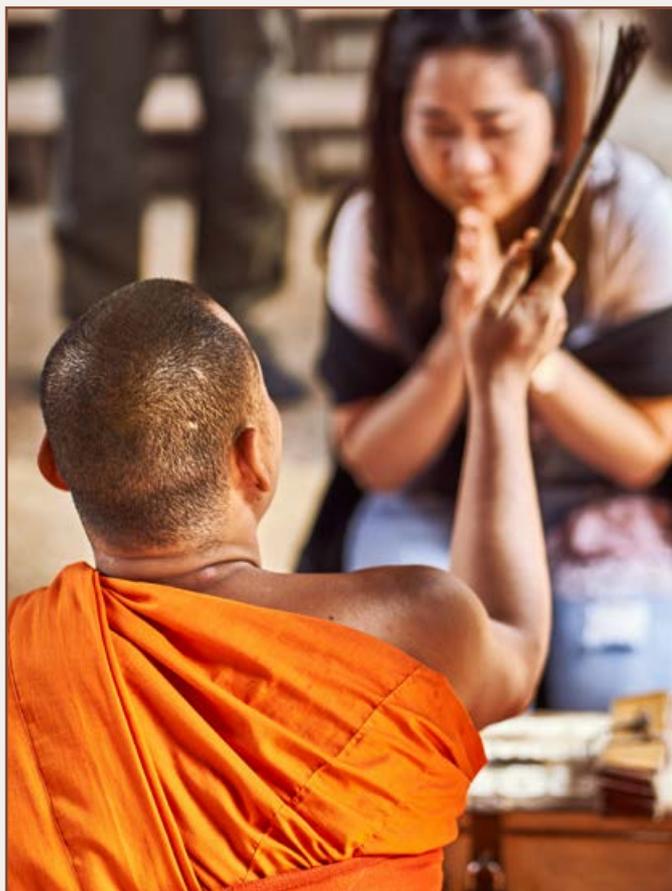
THE EQUALITY
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Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge First Nations people on whose lands *Filling in the Picture* was developed, and acknowledge their ongoing connection to land, sea and waterways. We acknowledge their Elders, past and present, and the ongoing leadership of First Nations people. We acknowledge that colonisation is ongoing, and that many of us, as non-Indigenous people, continue to benefit from systems that perpetuate discrimination and disadvantage. We commit ourselves to dismantling these systems, and building a better future in genuine partnership with First Nations people.

The development of *Filling in the Picture* would not have been possible without generous contributions from policy experts, practitioners and advocates in the Asia and Pacific region, who completed the priority setting survey and took part in focus group discussions. Thank you also to those who supported dissemination of the priority setting survey, including UN Women country offices in the region. We also acknowledge our funding partner, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, as well as the work of the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI), with whom the GSRA was developed and who are leading similar regional adaptations.

We would also like to acknowledge the GSRA Adaptation Advisory Group who co-created this research agenda with The Equality Institute.



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A Note On Language

This report uses the term 'violence against women' (VAW) as defined in the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women: "The term violence against women means any act of gender-based violence (GBV) that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life."

When this report uses the terms 'woman/women' or 'man/men', it refers to female or male-identifying people, including transwomen and transmen. This report also acknowledges those people who exist outside the gender binary, and seeks to use inclusive language that reflects the experiences of non-binary and gender diverse people.

We acknowledge that there is debate as to the most appropriate terminology to describe gendered patterns of violence. This report uses the term 'violence against women' to acknowledge that the forms of violence Filling in the Picture seeks to address are mostly perpetrated by men against women. However, it also recognises the limitations with this term and acknowledges the violence experienced by LGBTQIA+ communities in the region stemming from cisgenderism, heteronormativity and cisheterosexism.

Introduction – Bringing a regional lens to the Global Shared Research Agenda

The Global Shared Research Agenda (GSRA) for research on violence against women (VAW) in low-and middle-income countries (LMICs) was developed in 2021 by The Equality Institute (EQI) and the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI), with support from the Wellspring Philanthropic Fund.

The GSRA is a resource to support researchers, funding providers, policymakers, advocates and practitioners to strengthen our understanding of VAW. It aims to ensure that the research undertaken is both priority-driven and carried out in such a way that it provides a sound practical and empirical basis for programmes, policy and advocacy on VAW.

The GSRA provides us with a powerful research planning, monitoring and advocacy tool at a global level. However, we also know that each region has its own distinct context, strengths and research gaps in relation to understanding VAW.

Filling in the Picture highlights the power of collaboration between researchers, activists, practitioners, policymakers and funders in the region, to pinpoint evidence gaps and identify strategic ways to deepen our knowledge and evidence to prevent VAW.

Risk factors for VAW are constantly evolving with the impacts of climate change, political instability, the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis. There is also great variation in experiences of VAW within countries, particularly between urban and rural communities. The changing political situation is creating new categories of vulnerable groups including women political dissenters, women human rights defenders and student protestors.¹ Research on VAW remains a continuous challenge.

Therefore, as an extension to the GSRA, various regional priority setting exercises are taking place to ensure the relevance, appropriateness and applicability of research priorities to different and evolving regional contexts.²

This adaptation aims to build on the GSRA to produce an agenda that reflects the priorities and needs of Asia and the Pacific. It draws on the knowledge of policy experts, researchers, practitioners and advocates in Asia and the Pacific to bring a regional lens to the research priorities identified in the GSRA.

¹See, for example, [UN Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders](#), A/HRC/40/60, 10 January 2019.

²An adaptation was created in the [Latin American and Caribbean region](#) in 2021–22, supported by SVRI.



How was the GSRA created?

The GSRA was developed through an adaptation of the Child Health and Nutrition Research Initiative (CHNRI) method – a 6-step highly participatory and iterative process, with many opportunities for feedback and input from the different governance and Advisory Group members. This included a global priority setting exercise to identify major gaps and questions that need to be addressed to make progress towards eliminating VAW.

From this process, 4 research domains and 10 priority research questions per domain were identified. You can read more about the GSRA process [here](#) or download a [copy of the GSRA](#).



Filling in the Picture – Asia & Pacific Region

FILLING IN THE PICTURE: RESEARCH PRIORITIES ON VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN IN THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION

Research Domains

Respondents in the Asia and Pacific region considered each of the GSRA research domains and ranked them in order of importance for the region.

The top ranking domains were Domain 3 (research focused on improving existing interventions) and Domain 1 (research to understand VAW in its multiple forms).

This suggests a focus on understanding the current context in the region and improving existing actions before investing in research on new interventions and approaches. This may reflect concerns about the limited understanding of VAW in its multiple forms in the region. Views as to priorities in the Asia and Pacific region are also likely to be affected by emerging evidence globally.

Overall Ranking for Asia and Pacific Region:



Ranking 1: Improving existing interventions (Domain 3) –

including scale-up research, costing research, intervention science, process research, and other forms of research that generate innovative solutions to improve existing interventions making them more deliverable, affordable or sustainable, including research aimed at understanding the impact of policies and laws on VAW.



Ranking 2: Research to understand VAW in its multiple forms (Domain 1) –

including prevalence of different types of VAW, risk and protective factors for VAW experience and perpetration, and the causes and consequences of VAW, including health and psychosocial consequences.



Ranking 3: Intervention research (Domain 2) –

including research on violence prevention and response interventions, and various types of evaluations of interventions, including process, formative and impact evaluations.



Ranking 4: Methodological and measurement gaps (Domain 4) –

including new and innovative ways to measure VAW, hierarchies of knowledge, practice-based learning, sticky ethical issues, and monitoring and evaluation of interventions.

Insights

The overall top-ranked domain was not reflected by all types of respondents. For example, respondents in the Pacific region and respondents in Asia had a different top ranked domain.

Top ranked domain by type of respondent:

Respondents from Asia

Domain 3: Improving existing interventions

Respondents from the Pacific

Domain 1: Research to understand VAW in its multiple forms

Researchers

Domain 2: Intervention research

Practitioners

Domain 1: Research to understand VAW in its multiple forms

Respondents from historically marginalised groups

Domain 1: Research to understand VAW in its multiple forms

Respondents who identified as being part of a historically marginalised group or worked with historically marginalised groups ranked Domain 1 above Domain 3. This suggests those with lived experience of intersectional violence identify the need for further investment and prioritisation in understanding this lived experience. It may also highlight the necessity of understanding the complexity of intersecting forms of violence, such as how intimate partner violence (IPV) is compounded by other forms of violence, yet may be deprioritised in the context of public violence against historically marginalised people.

Notably, focus group participants from an activist organisation in Indonesia also identified Domain 1 as the most important domain, describing the profound impacts of climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and artificial intelligence (AI) on the emergence of new forms of violence in the region, which need to be researched and understood in the Asia and Pacific context.

“Each [location] has its own nuances and to truly understand the scope of GBV, it is critical that the particularities of each country and within it, different communities are looked at intensely. Often some forms of violence are not visible at all and would require a lot of probing.”

Female survey respondent,
independent consultant, South Asia

“...What’s almost always at the fore of VAW programming...is how interventions can work in a given context. Moreso, in a given context, can you create a domino effect from understanding VAW to introducing interventions, to improving interventions and then identifying gaps.”

Advisory Group member, Pacific

“[We need] better evidence and understanding about responding to and preventing VAW in ways that crosses sectors/disciplines/thematic areas.”

Female survey respondent, bilateral/
multilateral/UN agency, Southeast Asia

“Should we prioritise issues affecting current populations or adopt a more longtermist approach in which we pursue greater understanding of trends in VAW and distribute greater resources to those forms of VAW that are expected to cause the greatest suffering over the long term (if not at present)?”

Male survey respondent,
university, Southeast Asia

Cross-cutting priorities

Throughout the priority setting survey, respondents had space to share research priorities and additional questions relevant to the Asia and Pacific region, which went beyond the GSRA. Analysis of these open-text responses revealed 3 priority themes:



Context: Analysis to understand the context-specific elements of violence against women and girls (VAWG) across the region and how research should be adapted to the local context.

Intersectionality: Intersectional research including examining VAWG within specific marginalised communities.

Linking research, policy and practice: Analysis and tool development to connect evidence, programming, advocacy and policymaking.

These are explored further within each domain, and examples of proposed research questions are included in Annex 2.

Research Questions

The GSRA contained 41 research questions, arranged by domain. Respondents of the priority setting survey ranked these questions in order of importance to the Asia and Pacific region. The top 5 questions overall, across all domains, are presented on the next page.



The highest ranked question was: What are some best practices for ensuring agility and adaptability of VAWG interventions, especially those working with marginalised women and girls or operating in complex contexts?

There is a strong focus in the top 5 questions on understanding the effectiveness of interventions, particularly in responding to multiple forms of violence or populations with multiple forms of intersecting discrimination. There is also an emphasis on how best to leverage and adapt existing interventions and programmes to maximise impact. No research questions from Domain 1 were ranked in the top 5.

Interestingly, while the top 5 research questions contain 2 of the research questions ranked 1st and 2nd in the GSRA, the remainder of the questions were not ranked as highly in the GSRA. In fact, the top research question overall in the Asia and Pacific region was ranked only 20th in the GSRA.

This underlines the need for localisation and adaptation of global frameworks to better respond to the specificities of different contexts.

The 2 questions with the largest ranking difference from the GSRA relate to adaptability of interventions. This suggests a focus in the Asia and Pacific region on using research to maximise the impact of current interventions, which may not be as significant for other regions.

Top 5 Research Questions Across All Domains³:

1. What are some best practices for ensuring agility and adaptability of VAWG interventions, especially those working with marginalised women and girls or operating in complex contexts (Domain 3)? (Ranked 20th in GSRA)
2. What types of interventions can effectively prevent multiple forms of violence, and why (Domain 2)? (Ranked 1st in GSRA)
3. How can large-scale sector programmes be adapted to optimise their impact on violence prevention and response, particularly education, health, economic development, infrastructure and social protection programmes (Domain 3)? (Ranked 18th in GSRA)
4. What methods can be used to measure the intersection and pathways between different types of violence, including polyvictimisation and intersections between VAW and violence against children (VAC) (Domain 4)? (Ranked 12th in GSRA)
5. What types of interventions are most effective for preventing IPV (including 'honour'-based violence) against women facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination (including age, poverty, disability, ethnicity, race, sexuality, etc.) (Domain 2)? (Ranked 2nd in GSRA)

³The top 5 research questions across all domains are based on the ranking score provided by the Alchemer survey tool. The score is a weighted calculation.

"The research questions should take a bottom-up approach and should be developed from the local context."

Male survey respondent,
NGO, South Asia

"The LGBTQIA+ questions proposed feel a bit like retrofitting cis-hetero VAW questions. Questions which are coming directly from a group of LGBTQIA+ researchers and activists in the region may have an entirely different focus..."

Female respondent, independent consultant, North America with work focused on South and Southeast Asia

Research Questions: Ranked by Domain

The priority setting survey invited respondents to rank the GSRA research questions within each domain, in order of which were most important for the Asia and Pacific region.

This section sets out the top 5 questions for each domain and notes the overall ranking for the region, out of all 41 questions, as well as the GSRA overall rank. The ranked list of all questions is included in Annex 1.

Research questions prioritised by historically marginalised groups

The voices of people from historically marginalised and highly vulnerable groups are seldom heard in research agendas, except as subjects. Filling in the Picture seeks to represent the voices of different groups.

These are additional questions that were identified in the top 5 priority questions for each domain by respondents from historically marginalised groups. These are otherwise missing from the overall top 5 ranked questions for each domain.

- What are the causes and drivers of violence against LGBTQIA+ women (Domain 1)?
- How do conflict and fragility exacerbate the multiple forms of violence experienced by women and girls (Domain 1)?
- What types of interventions are effective in preventing IPV and other forms of violence against LGBTQIA+ people (Domain 2)?
- What kinds of faith-based or community-led VAWG prevention interventions can be adapted to different faiths, communities and regions effectively (Domain 3)?



Domain 1: Research to understand VAW in its multiple forms

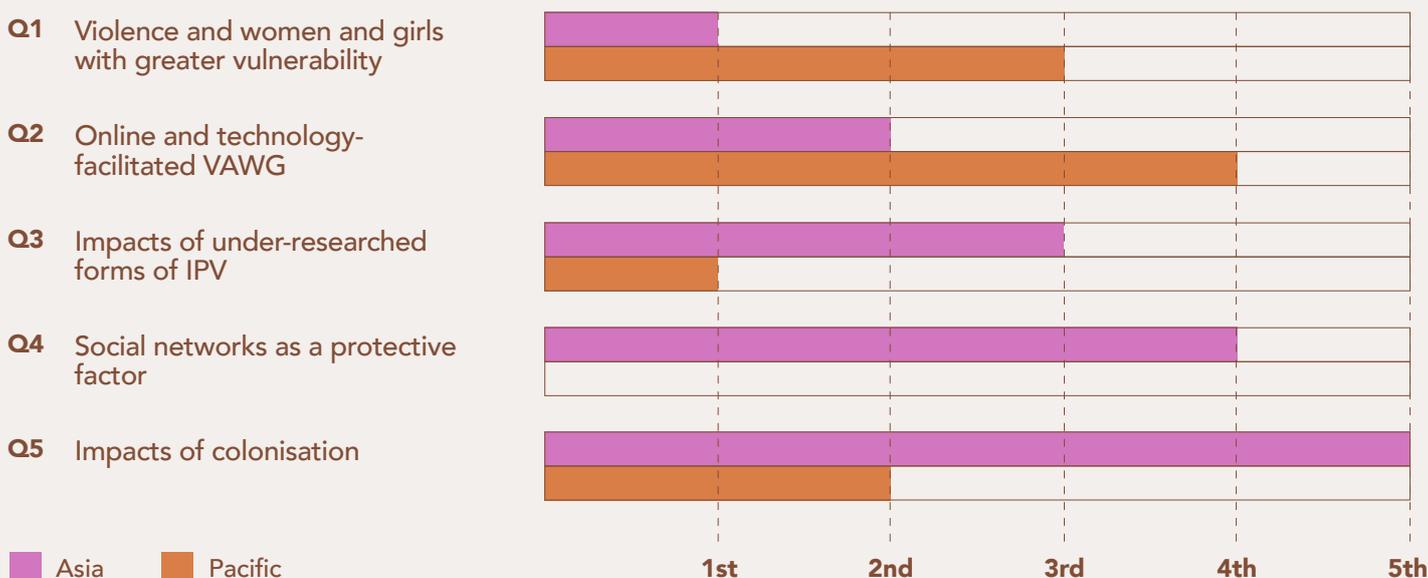
Rank Within Domain	Overall Rank	Top 5 Research Questions	GSRA Overall Rank
1	9	How do different forms of violence cluster in women and girls with greater vulnerability and what are the characteristics to detect those vulnerable women and girls?	30
2	10	What is the prevalence of different forms of online and technology-facilitated VAWG, and what are the risk and protective factors for experience and perpetration of these types of violence?	37
3	11	What are the impacts (including disability-related impacts) of under-researched forms of IPV on women and girls, including emotional and economic IPV, revenge porn and 'honour'-based violence?	5
4	15	How do social networks act as a protective factor for VAWG?	41
5	17	What are the cultural, psychological and economic impacts of colonisation on indigenous men and women, and how do these impacts influence their behaviours and experiences in respect to VAW?	7

Insights:

The top 2 questions in this domain also ranked in the top ten questions overall. Interestingly, the questions ranked 1st, 2nd and 4th here were not ranked as highly in the GSRA. In fact, the question relating to social networks (ranked 4th) was the lowest scoring question in the GSRA. This may reflect research gaps in these areas in Asia and the Pacific that are not as significant in other regions.

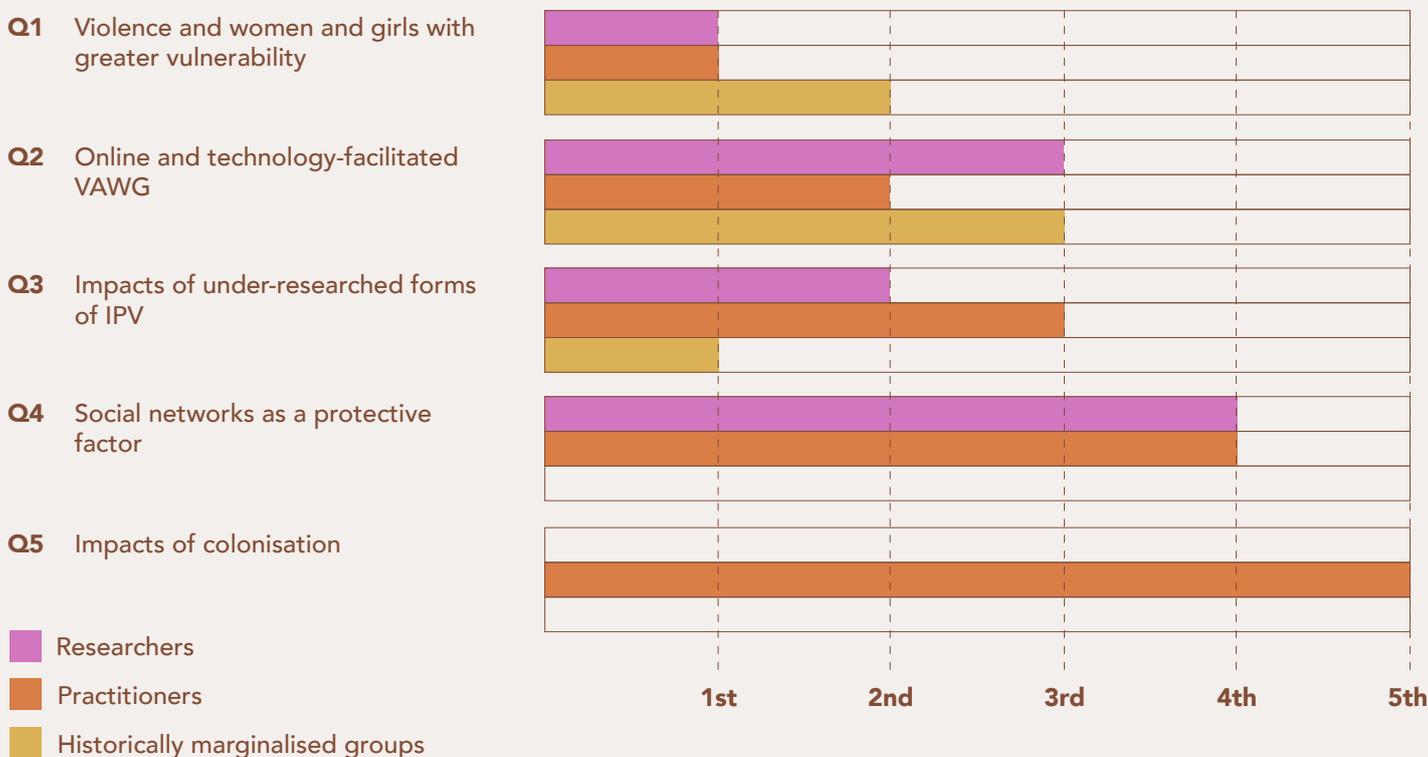
Across respondent characteristics, there was consistency in the inclusion of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd research questions in the top 5 research questions (at various rankings).

Domain 1 – Ranking the Top 5 Questions by Sub-region



Question 5 was ranked more highly by respondents in the Pacific than other respondents. Respondents in the Pacific also did not include question 4 in their top 5.

Domain 1 – Ranking by Respondent Characteristic



Respondents from historically marginalised groups prioritised question 3 and researchers also ranked question 3 more highly than question 2. Neither researchers nor respondents from historically marginalised groups included question 5 in their top 5.

“Cultural networks are not just protective, but can also be sources of oppression and violence.”

Female respondent, South Asia, consultant/CBO, activist organisation

“[We need to understand] changing social and political contexts, and how they influence the cartography of violence.”

Female respondent, South Asia, activist organisation/network

Domain 1: What’s missing?

For each domain, respondents were asked if there were any research questions relating to that domain, which had not been included but that were significant for the Asia and Pacific region. A list of suggested research questions is included in Annex 2.

A number of respondents suggested a research focus was needed on particular forms of violence including femicide, child marriage, economic violence and online sexual violence/digital sex crimes. It was suggested more information is needed about the prevalence and risk factors for these forms of violence in the region. A respondent also identified the need for a focus on how forms of violence intersect and occur alongside each other.

In addition, a need for research on violence affecting particular population groups was identified, with a number of respondents indicating a focus was needed on the experiences of migrant women, as well as gender-diverse and LGBTQIA+ people in the Asia and Pacific region.

Other new areas suggested for exploration included understanding forms of resistance, the linkages between sexuality and VAW, and the shared levers between cis-women’s movements and more inclusive LGBTQIA+ movements for eliminating gendered violence. The importance of data (or lack of) at regional, national and local levels to understand gaps in knowledge was also identified.

Respondents also highlighted the importance of context, particularly comparative analysis of region-based socio-cultural and religious (both positive or not) effects on VAW, as well as risk factors for VAW in religious institutional settings.



Domain 2: Intervention Research

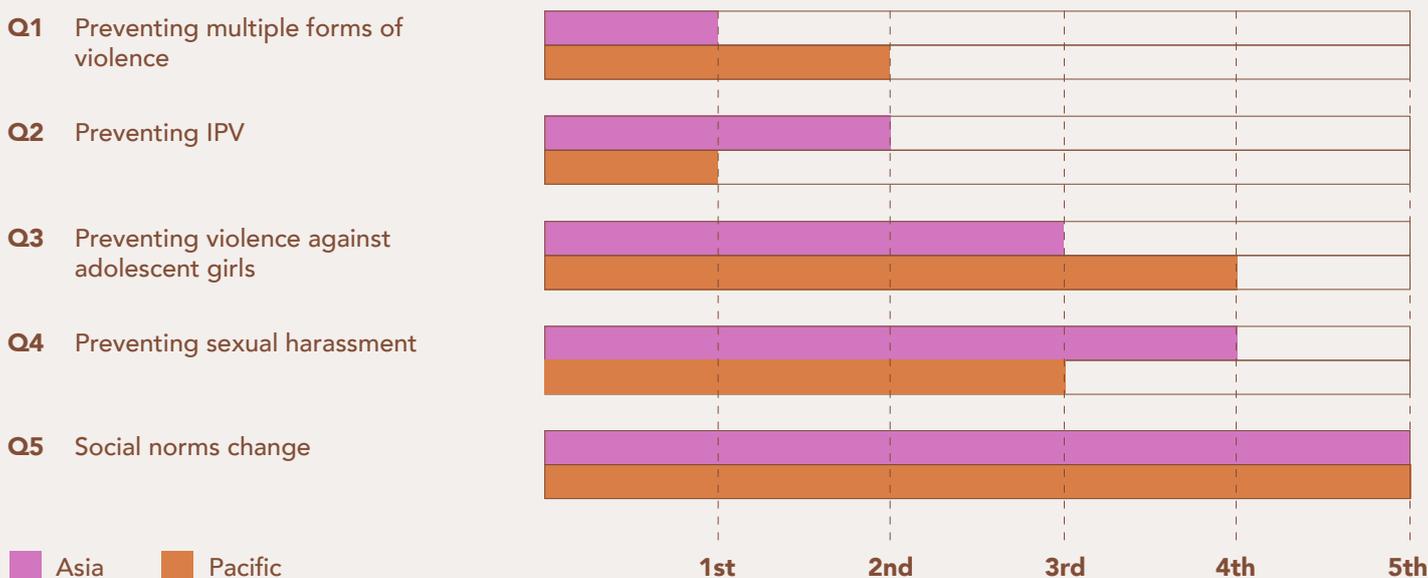
Rank Within Domain	Overall Rank	Top 5 Research Questions	GSRA Overall Rank
1	2	What types of interventions can effectively prevent multiple forms of violence, and why?	1
2	5	What types of interventions are most effective for preventing IPV (including 'honour'-based violence) against women facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination (including age, poverty, disability, ethnicity, race, sexuality, etc.)?	2
3	13	What interventions or elements of interventions are most effective at preventing violence against adolescent girls, and why?	9
4	17	What interventions work to prevent sexual harassment in institutional settings (in-person or online), including in the work place and educational settings, and why?	4
5	27	What is the level of intensity needed for social norms change interventions to have sustained impact at the community level, including effectively challenging norms that focus on victim behaviour rather than on the perpetration/choice to use violence?	6

Insights:

The top 2 questions in this domain also ranked in the top 10 questions overall. This was also reflected in the overall rankings in the GSRA. All the questions identified in the top 5 for this domain in the region were in the top 10 questions overall for the GSRA. Intervention research therefore emerges as a priority area for research at both the global and regional level.

Across respondents in Asia and the Pacific, there was consistency in the inclusion of these research questions in the top 5 (at various rankings).

Domain 2 – Ranking the Top 5 Questions by Sub-region



Domain 2 – Ranking by Respondent Characteristics



There was also, for the most part, consistency in this top 5 according to other respondent characteristics. All respondent groups included question 1 in the top 3. Researchers did not include question 4 in their top 5. Practitioners and respondents from historically marginalised groups did not include question 5 in their top 5, although this question was ranked 4th by researchers.

Other priority research questions:

Which interventions are most effective at addressing shared risk factors for VAW and VAC in the family environment, leading to a reduction in both types of violence?

Respondents from a university or educational institution included this research question in their top 5.

What types of interventions are effective in preventing IPV and other forms of violence against LGBTQIA+ people?

Respondents who identified as being part of a historically marginalised group included this question in their top 5. However, overall, this question was ranked 10th in this domain.

Domain 2: What's missing?

Respondents indicated there was a need for a better understanding of the linkages and opportunities for collaboration and shared learning between interventions such as cross-border cooperation, overlaps between sexual violence, IPV and terrorism, and between trafficking and VAW. In addition, a need for research on the relationship between prevention and response within effective interventions was highlighted, including assessing the effectiveness of models such as the One Stop Crisis Centres.

Respondents also emphasised the importance of context including further understanding of the success of different interventions to respond to targeted violence, and to support victims of violence in a criminalised context such as refugees, undocumented migrants and sex workers. Strategies specifically focused on entrenched honour and purity norms rooted in religion or justified by violent masculinity, particularly in contexts marked by insecurity, were also identified as a gap.

There was also an emphasis by survey respondents and focus group participants on the role of research in understanding effective policy responses by the state including factors that assist or hinder policymakers from supporting effective prevention measures, the role of international and regional laws and standards, and the role of NGOs.

"I think there needs to be greater understanding of social norms in context though. The Pacific is different, interventions built for Africa or Asia context are not always appropriate for adaptation."

Female survey respondent,
independent consultant, Pacific



Domain 3: Improving Existing Interventions

Rank Within Domain	Overall Rank	Top 5 Research Questions	GSRA Overall Rank
1	1	What are some best practices for ensuring agility and adaptability of VAWG interventions, especially those working with marginalised women and girls or operating in complex contexts?	20
2	3	How can large-scale sector programmes be adapted to optimise their impact on violence prevention and response, particularly education, health, economic development, infrastructure and social protection programmes?	18
3	6	How can social movements and feminist activism contribute to preventing and responding to VAWG at scale?	19
4	8	What alternative modalities (besides in-person programming) are effective in VAWG prevention at scale?	17
5	14	What types of interventions are most effective in facilitating gender transformative change in men and women at scale?	33

Insights:

Of the top 5 research questions for this domain, 4 questions are ranked in the top 10 research questions overall. This demonstrates a strong preference for research related to this domain in the region. Interestingly, these questions did not rank as highly in the GSRA overall rankings, and Domain 3 ranked most poorly overall in the GSRA results.

Across respondent characteristics, there was largely consistency in the inclusion of the top 4 research questions in the top 5. However, there were some variations, particularly with the 5th ranked question.

Domain 3 – Ranking the Top 5 Questions by Sub-region



Question 5 on gender transformative change was not included in the top 5 by either sub-region.

Domain 3 – Ranking by Respondent Characteristics



Researchers prioritised question 2, while practitioners did not rank this as highly. Both practitioners and respondents from historically marginalised groups ranked question 1 the highest.

Other priority research questions:

What kinds of faith-based or community-led VAWG prevention interventions can be adapted to different faiths, communities and regions effectively?

Respondents who identified as being part of a historically marginalised group included this question in their top 5. This question was ranked 8th overall in this domain.

Domain 3: What's missing?

Respondents highlighted the need for research focused on improving police and justice response, and to translate best practice learnings into programming. Research was also seen as playing a role in encouraging cross-learning between local organisations and governments, as well as strengthening and supporting the work of local women's organisations and movement building in the region. The need for greater understanding of vicarious trauma and burnout among civil society organisation (CSO) staff was also identified as a gap.

Perceptions research to understand current attitudes towards gender equality and the willingness of men, women and young people to change their behaviour was also emphasised, together with effective tools for improving interventions on violence against women with disability.

Understanding the effectiveness of policy and legal interventions was stressed as a neglected area of research, such as research methods to evaluate the value, contributions and outcomes of legislation and policies for women.

The need for research focused on costing VAW interventions so that they can be adequately resourced at national levels was highlighted. Focus group participants also discussed the importance of understanding more about mechanisms to facilitate a relationship between activists and scholars/academia to combine their skills and knowledge in researching VAW.

The importance of context was also emphasised, as well as the need for interventions that centre Asia and the Pacific rather than just adapting from other contexts.

"The need for better and more research in this area is endless. Weak police and justice response is an ongoing concern, and greater evidence to highlight areas of potential growth and gender transformative approaches is needed."

Female respondent, bilateral/
multilateral/UN agency, Southeast Asia



Domain 4: Methodological and Measurement Gaps

Rank Within Domain	Overall Rank	Top 5 Research Questions	GSRA Overall Rank
1	4	What methods can be used to measure the intersection and pathways between different types of violence, including polyvictimisation and intersections between VAW and VAC?	12
2	7	What research methodologies are most appropriate to measure social norms change in violence prevention interventions?	14
3	12	How to conduct effective, ethical and inclusive research on VAWG using online/virtual/remote methods (including social media) and how should these be adapted to reach marginalised populations?	13
4	19	What are the best methodologies to measure the long-term impacts of violence prevention interventions, including reduction in VAWG and other intended and unintended outcomes?	32
5(a)	22	What are examples of good practice in addressing recognised ethical challenges of undertaking VAWG research in resource-poor settings and/or with marginalised communities?	22
5(b)	22	Which analytical approaches (both quantitative and qualitative) are most appropriate for advancing an intersectional approach to research on VAWG?	34

Insights:

Of the top 5 research questions for this domain, 2 are also ranked in the top 10 research questions overall. The top 3 questions also ranked in the top 15 in the GSRA rankings.

Across respondent characteristics, there were some interesting variations in rankings of the 5 questions.

Domain 4 – Ranking the Top 5 Questions by Sub-region



Respondents in the Pacific ranked question 5a 3rd, while respondents in Asia ranked this question outside the top 5 (7th). Respondents in the Pacific prioritised question 3 and placed less emphasis on question 2, whereas this was ranked the highest by respondents in Asia.

Domain 4 – Ranking by Respondent Characteristics



Question 5a on research in resource-poor settings/with marginalised communities was not in the top 5 of researchers and practitioners, but it was prioritised by respondents from historically marginalised groups.

Domain 4: What's missing?

A number of respondents suggested a focus was needed on how data is currently used for advocacy and decision-making, and how data can more effectively support decision-makers to take effective measures to prevent and respond to VAW in the local context. There was also an emphasis on the need for research to improve the effectiveness of data collection to understand VAW and the transparency of data collected by public authorities. A respondent highlighted the importance of connecting Domain 1 (forms of violence) and Domain 3 (what is counted and how).

Respondents also emphasised the need for a greater focus on research ethics, including the risks associated with applying research findings across contexts, the importance of confidentiality in small Pacific communities, and methods that are attentive to cultural taboos in the region such as premarital sex for adolescent girls.

The need for tools to support learning and best practice approaches was also identified as a gap, such as simplified, practical and feasible learning; monitoring and evaluation tools to document learning; and practice from local interventions in low resource-settings. Greater support for participatory action research including translation costs and the promotion of this form of research as preferred practice was also emphasised.

"I think VAWC research in the Pacific can be improved by focusing more on ethics – just remember that everyone knows everyone in the Pacific. Confidentiality matters and practitioners need to feel they are valued."

Female survey respondent,
independent consultant, Pacific

Creating Filling in the Picture

Filling in the Picture was co-created through a participatory process. First, an Advisory Group was formed to oversee and guide its creation. The Advisory Group membership represents diverse countries in the region, and also comes from academic, practitioner and activist backgrounds.

The Advisory Group was initially established through the networks involved in the development of the GSRA. Individuals or representatives of organisations with the following domains and areas of expertise were therefore approached to make up the group:

- research, academic or practitioner experts with specific expertise in diverse forms of VAW;
- research, academic or practitioner experts with specific expertise in diverse and historically marginalised groups (e.g. LGBTQIA+, women and girls with disabilities, youth and adolescent girls, indigenous women and girls);
- research, academic or practitioner experts in the Asia and Pacific region; and
- policymakers, including from multilateral organisations, practitioners and donors in the Asia and Pacific region.

Advisory Group members could also suggest others in their network who met the criteria and could serve as members.

Once established, the Advisory Group was sent the GSRA to review and provide feedback. A meeting was then held to discuss next steps and decide on a process for adapting the GSRA moving forward. The Advisory Group decided that a survey would be sent out and would be followed by focus groups and a validation process so that the Advisory Group could provide direct feedback on the findings.

For a 6-week period in January–February 2023, a survey was open to individuals working on VAW in the Asia and Pacific region. The survey contained 21 questions and was disseminated widely through networks in the region. The survey was translated into Bahasa, Mandarin and Thai. In total, 85 complete responses were received.

Process for developing Filling in the Picture



The survey was a priority setting exercise designed to build on the GSRA. Respondents were asked to rank GSRA research domains and the research questions for each domain in order of their importance for the region. In addition, open-ended questions provided space to identify issues and gaps specific to the Asia and Pacific context.

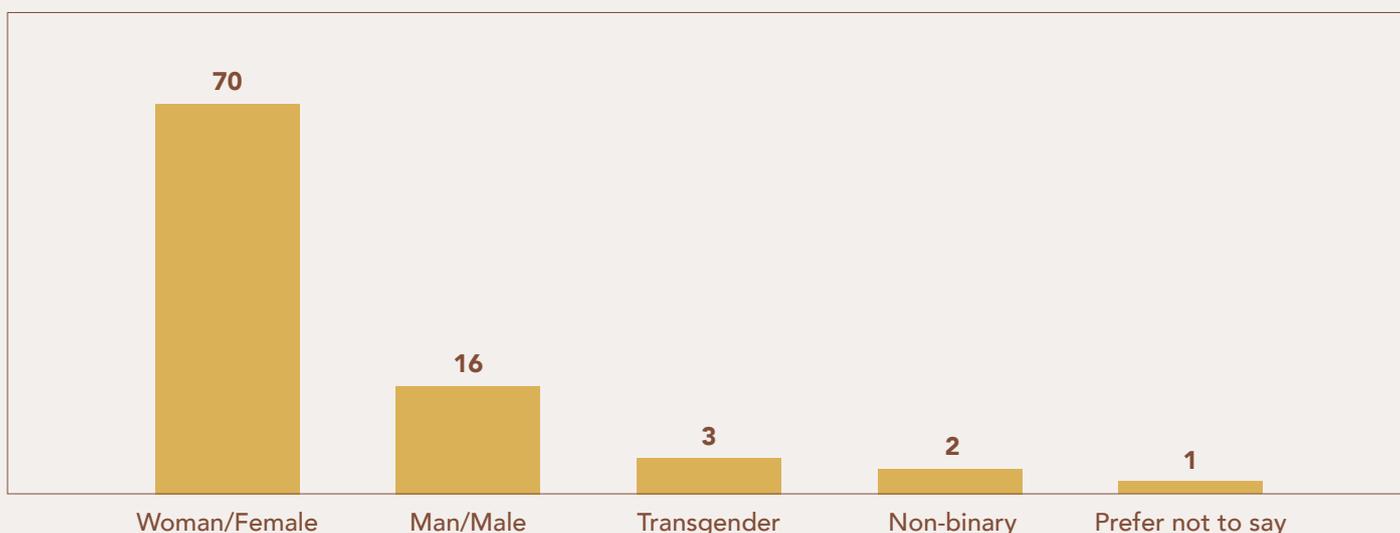
Based on feedback from the GSRA process, this survey was designed to be less complex than the GSRA survey process, using ranking rather than applying criteria to each question.

This also enabled respondents to concentrate on the questions in a single survey rather than on the more time-consuming process of applying criteria through multiple surveys. As much as possible, response rates were monitored so that specific geographical gaps could be targeted during the process.

Advisory Group members were also invited to conduct focus groups with their networks to discuss the survey results. A focus group discussion was held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Advisory Group members reviewed the survey findings and provided individual feedback on the development of Filling in the Picture.

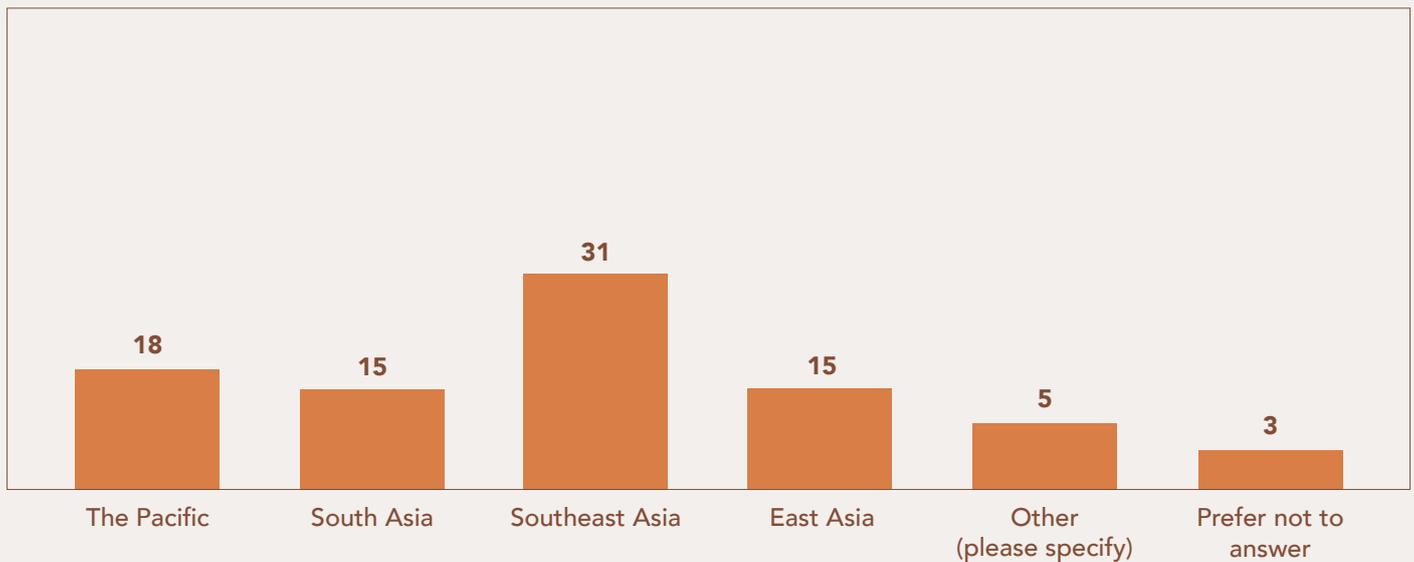
Who participated in the survey? 85 Respondents took part⁴

Gender identity: A large proportion of respondents identified as female.

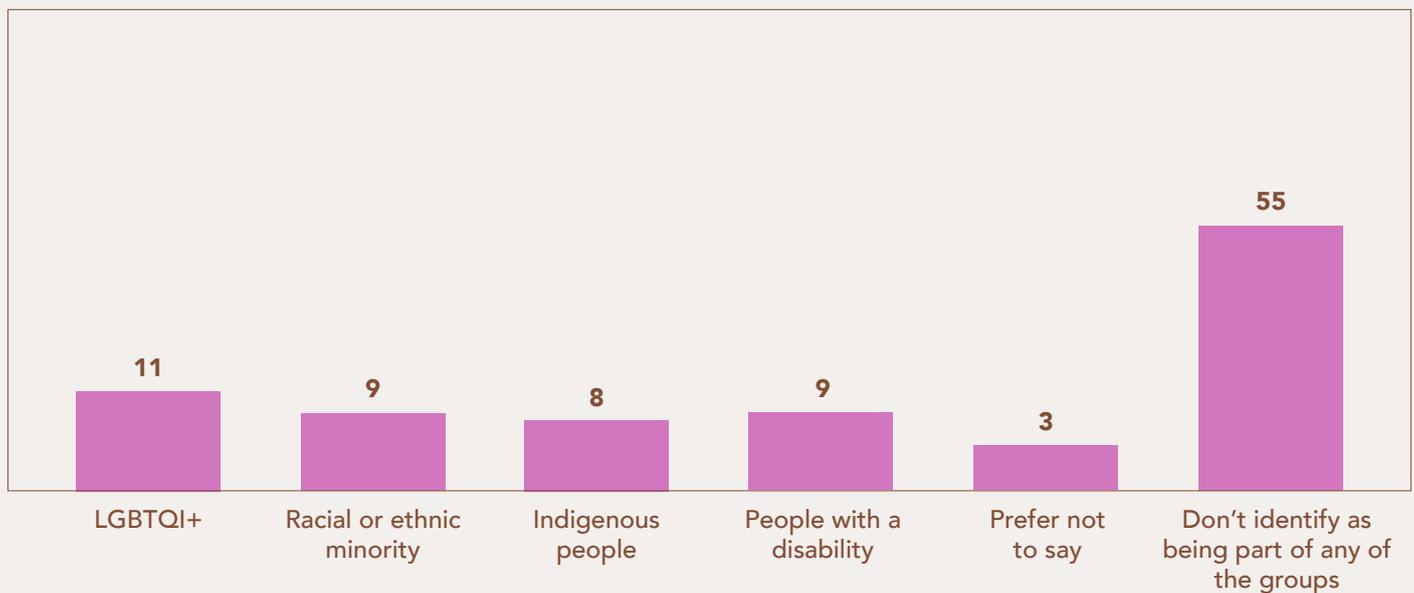


⁴85 surveys were completed. Responses to each question may number more than 85 as respondents could select more than one response for most questions.

Region where respondents are based: The highest representation was from Southeast Asia. However, the Pacific, South Asia and East Asia were also well represented.

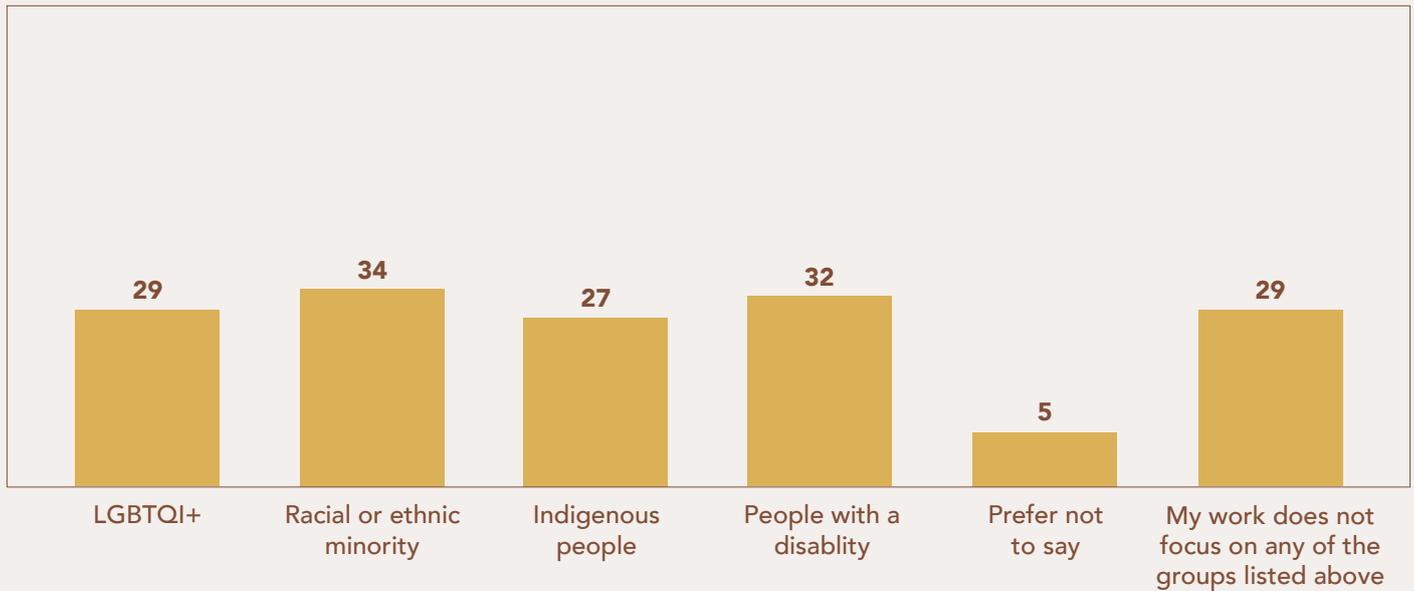


Respondents identifying as part of a historically marginalised group: over 30% of respondents indicated they identified as being part of a historically marginalised group.⁵

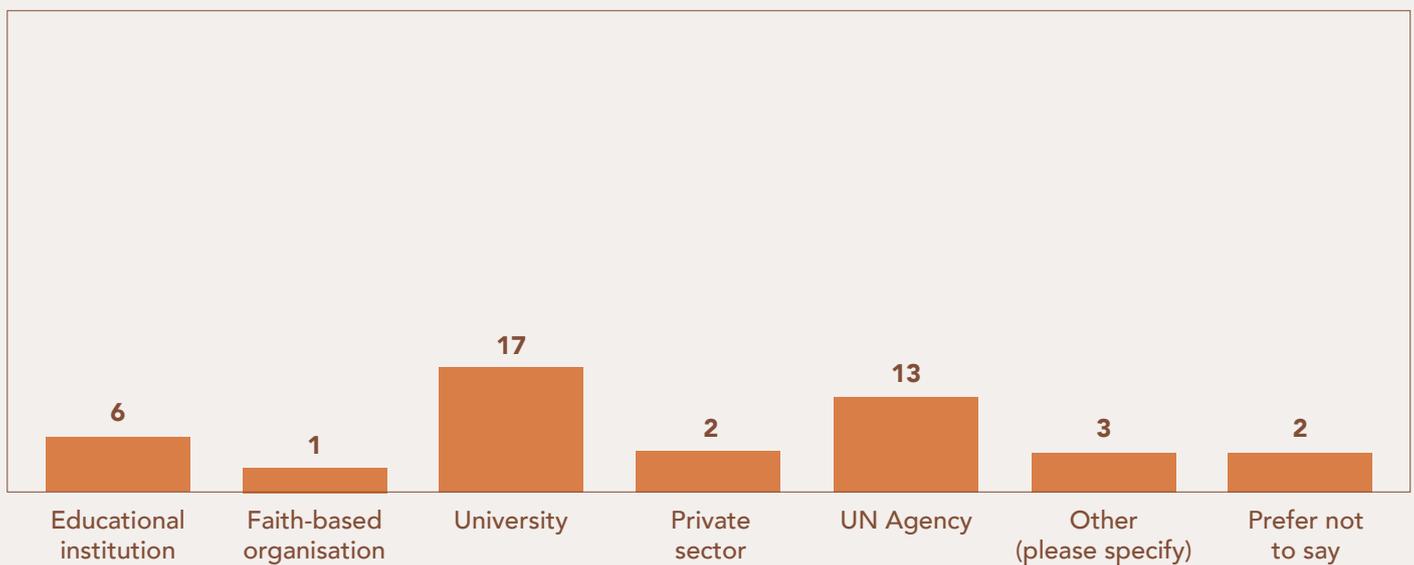
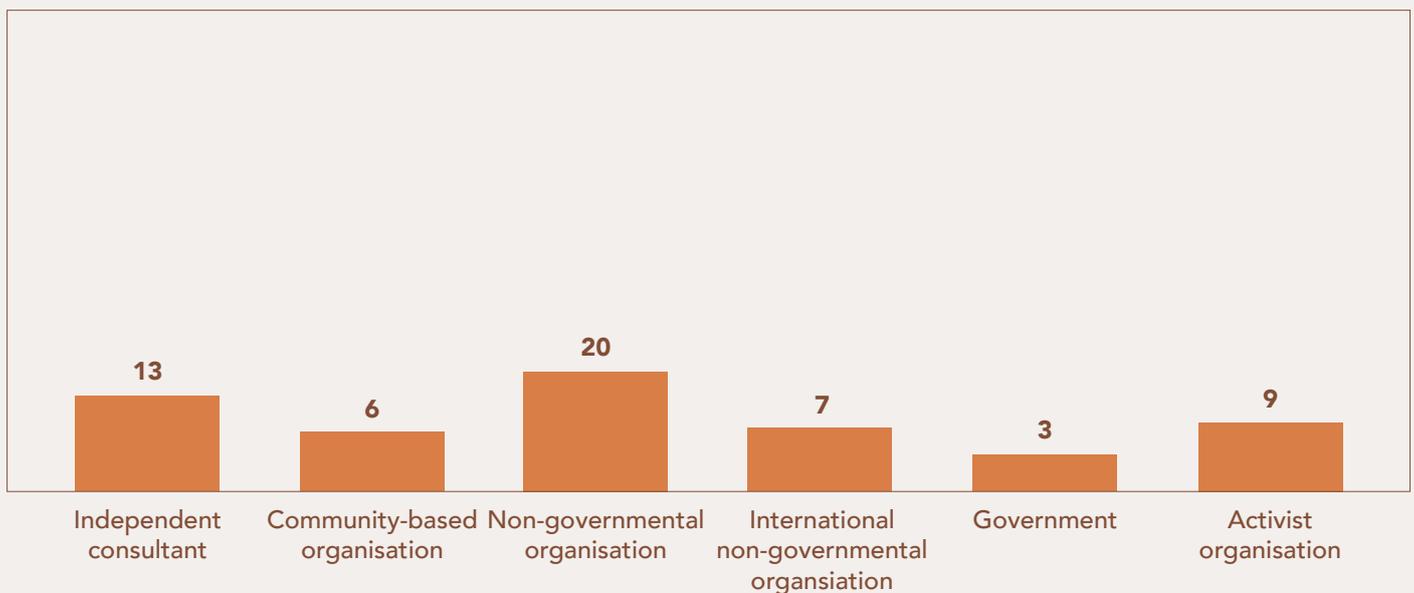


⁵This is calculated on the basis that 55 respondents indicated they did not identify as part of any of the groups and a further 3 respondents preferred not to respond. 27 respondents therefore indicated they identified as being part of one or more historically marginalised groups (32%).

Respondents' work primarily focuses on any of the following historically marginalised groups.



Current role / organisation type: There was representation across practitioners, activists and researchers.



Learnings

A key learning from the GSRA is that the process is as important as the methodology. Filling in the Picture sought to build on this understanding and engage with as diverse a range of stakeholders as possible, utilising the networks and expertise of Advisory Group members. However as with any process of this nature, there were limitations:

COMPLEXITY:

Although this priority setting survey was simplified and designed to be less time intensive and complex than the GSRA survey, there were still a large number of research questions to consider, and the ranking process did take time. This time commitment is likely to have impacted on the response rate.

RESPONSE RATE:

There were 85 responses across the region. This is a relatively small sample. However, given there were only 25 responses from Asia and the Pacific (a large proportion of which came from Australia) in the GSRA survey process, we are happy with the response rate, particularly given the representation from different sub-regions across Asia and the Pacific (see below).

REFLECTING DIVERSE VIEWS AND PERSPECTIVES:

The survey dissemination process utilised the networks of Advisory Group members in the region and aimed to get as wide and diverse a sample of respondents as possible. The characteristics of respondents reveal the survey did reach organisations at the community level, practitioners as well as academics, and respondents in both Asia and the Pacific.

For example, 7.1% of respondents worked at a CBO, 23.5% worked at an NGO and 10.6% were part of an activist organisation. Over a quarter (27.1%) of respondents worked at a university or education institution, while 15.3% were independent consultants. About a sixth (15.3%) of respondents worked at bilateral/multilateral or UN Agency. However, there was less representation from government (3.5%) and the private sector (2.4%).

There was also representation from different sub-regions across Asia and the Pacific. For example, 21.2% of respondents were based in the Pacific, 36.5% in Southeast Asia and 17.6% each from South Asia and East Asia. However, there were no survey responses from Central Asia and West Asia, meaning these sub-regions are not represented in Filling in the Picture.

The survey also reached respondents from marginalised groups in the region, with over 30% indicating they identified as being part of a marginalised group. For instance, 12.9% of respondent indicated they identified as LGBTQIA+, 10.6% as a racial or ethnic minority, 9.4% as indigenous people and 10.6% of respondents identified as having a disability.

The survey was translated into 3 languages – Bahasa, Thai and Mandarin. These languages were selected on the basis of advice from the Advisory Group. However, even with these language options, most respondents undertook the survey in English.⁶ This may have been due to issues with accessing the versions in different languages. This suggests the findings are skewed towards English-speaking stakeholders. Further, the online survey is better suited to urban settings where internet access and computer literacy tends to be higher. In remote areas, a paper-based survey is frequently the preferred approach. However, time and resources did not allow for this option.

AN ONGOING PROCESS:

Filling in the Picture will require ongoing adaptation as new research findings emerge. This means the process does not have an end that aligns with project time frames, but will require revisiting, reengaging and reprioritising based on identified needs at different points in time.

⁶There were 9 survey responses in Mandarin, 3 in Thai and 73 in English.

How to use *Filling in the Picture*?

Filling in the Picture is designed to:

- Assist with identifying evidence gaps in the region;
- Support research planning, fundraising, grant making and monitoring; and
- Provide a tool to advocate for prioritisation and investment in research areas that have been identified by practitioners, policymakers and researchers as having the greatest significance for the region.

“What stands out as a massive need is an expanded set of learning, monitoring and evaluation tools, approaches and practices – especially from interventions (in low-resource settings) – that allow for learning and analysis from local interventions.”

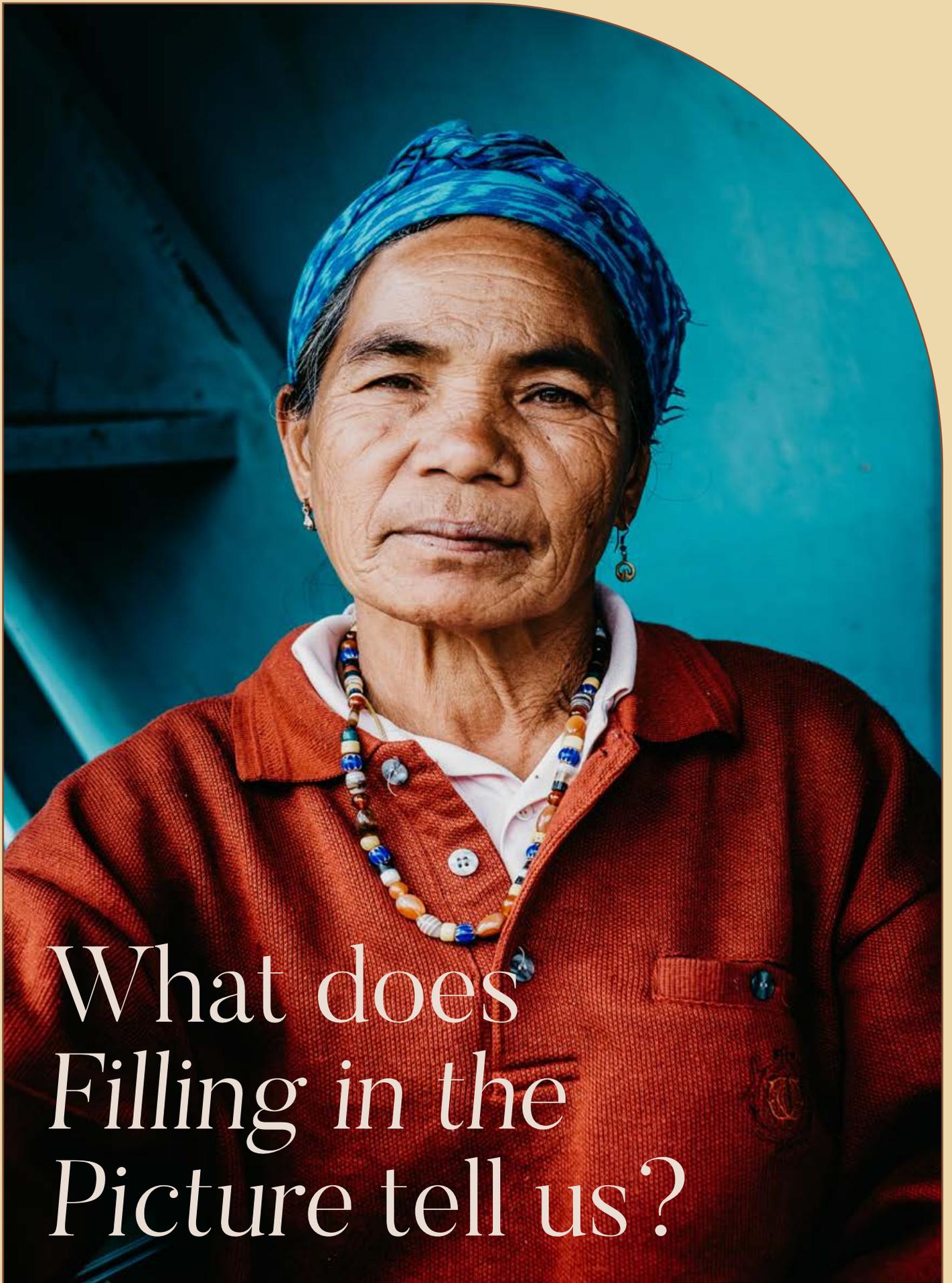
Female survey respondent, Southeast Asia, bilateral/multilateral/UN agency

“...[B]earing witness to what is happening is a powerful political act. We need a stream of information going out to movements, documenting and exposing what is happening and why, making larger connections and mobilising resistance by social movements other than feminist movements.”

Advisory Group member

And be used by:

- Researchers to drive research priorities and partnerships, to support funding applications, and to connect with practitioners, policymakers and those with lived experience to shape research directions;
- Practitioners to push for practical tools and resourcing to support evaluation and learning, partnerships between researchers and CBOs, and an emphasis on participatory action research;
- Funders to understand research priorities in the region and where research funding could be strategically directed; and
- Advocates to call for action on under-researched priorities, to support demands for action on the prevention of VAW by policymakers, funders and development actors, and to use research to connect and empower social movements and advocates in local communities.



What does
Filling in the
Picture tell us?

Filling in the Picture demonstrates that the Asia and Pacific region has research priorities and identified research gaps that are distinct from the GSRA.

Of the questions identified in the top 5 for this region, 3 were not ranked highly in the GSRA and the 2 questions with the largest ranking difference relate to adaptability of interventions. This suggests a focus in this region on using research to maximise the impact of current interventions, which may not be as significant for other regions.

CONTEXT MATTERS

Context-specific research was identified as a significant focus for the region, including responding to complex contexts. This includes:

- climate-induced migration (such as in Bangladesh, the PRC, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines and Vietnam);
- trafficking (with the Asia and Pacific region thought to have the world's largest number of women and girls who are victims of sex trafficking);
- political instability (for example, Afghanistan, Cambodia and Myanmar); and
- religious institutional contexts.

The need for locally owned interventions and tools to support local research and learning was also identified.

LISTENING TO HISTORICALLY MARGINALISED GROUPS

Filling in the Picture also demonstrates the importance of understanding the research priorities and perspectives of historically marginalised groups. There were questions that were prioritised by these respondents that did not feature in the top 5 research questions overall. It is also crucial to consider the different priorities of Asia and of the Pacific. For example, respondents in the Pacific prioritised research on the impacts of colonisation more so than other respondents.

AREAS OF COMMON GROUND

It also shows that the priorities of researchers and practitioners do diverge, but that there are also areas of common ground – for example, understanding the effectiveness of interventions that target populations with multiple forms of intersecting discrimination as well as multiple forms of violence.

THE FORMS AND IMPACTS OF VAW IN THE REGION

The priority setting exercise also revealed a need for research that supports understanding the multiple forms of VAW in the region, given new contexts, emerging forms of violence, and ongoing systems of oppression and discrimination. This includes the lived experiences of marginalised groups, such as migrant women and LGBTQIA+ communities, as well as under-researched forms of violence such as femicide and online sexual violence.

There is an emphasis on understanding the different impacts of VAWG, particularly emerging areas such as technology-facilitated violence and under-researched forms of IPV in the region. Understanding deeply entrenched norms on 'honour' and 'purity', which are rooted in religion and/or violent masculinity, was also identified as a priority.

LINKING RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE

Filling in the Picture also reveals an emphasis on linking research with policy and practice. This includes exploring links between sectors and across disciplines, intersections between different forms of violence and responses, evaluating the journeys and impact of policies and legal frameworks on the prevention of VAW, and assessing how research can be used to advocate for effective government action.

Next Steps

Filling in the Picture is a starting point for strategic investment and reveals some important priorities for research on VAW in the Asia and Pacific region.

It should be disseminated broadly across policymakers, research and donor networks; universities and research institutes; advocates and practitioner and grassroots networks; and movements, in order to inform advocacy agendas, research prioritisation and funding decisions. It is hoped alongside wide dissemination, there is also continual learning and updating of Filling in the Picture, specifically informed by:

- an ongoing need to reach out to community-level stakeholders and continue to build on and adapt Filling in the Picture with local knowledge and to respond to changing contexts;
- a focus on engaging with sub-regions, particularly West and Central Asia, which were not represented in the priority setting exercise; and;
- further engagement with activists and researchers in the region from historically marginalised groups to further develop research questions, lead research planning and implementation, and to continue to challenge assumptions held by the VAW movement.

Grappling with bigger questions

There is also a need for us to grapple with some bigger questions as to how research can best meet the diverse needs of the Asia and Pacific region, including:

How we define key terms and use language:

For example, how do countries use and understand the terms VAW and GBV? Do countries recognise the experiences of transwomen and other cultural gender minorities when preventing and responding to VAW?

How we prioritise:

Given limited resources, and a wide variety of possible applications of those resources, what ethical frameworks and tools can we use to determine how resources should be allocated in the region? Should we prioritise issues affecting current populations or adopt a more long-term approach in which we pursue greater understanding of trends in VAW?

How we decolonise:

How can we decolonise funding and management mechanisms for VAWG programming and research? How can the VAW movement drive inclusion and centre indigenous and ancestral modes of being?

How we are guided by feminist research principles:

What are the best methodologies to measure the long-term impacts of violence prevention interventions, including reduction in VAWG and other intended and unintended outcomes?

Get In Touch

To provide feedback on *Filling in the Picture* or to let us know how you have used it, please email: Research@equalityinstitute.org

Annex 1:

Full Ranking of Research Questions Per Domain

Ranking of questions by survey respondents for each domain in order of priority for the Asia and Pacific region.

Domain 1: Research to understand VAW in its multiple forms

1. How do different forms of violence cluster in women and girls with greater vulnerability and what are the characteristics to detect those vulnerable women and girls?
2. What is the prevalence of different forms of online and technology-facilitated VAWG, and what are the risk and protective factors for experience and perpetration of these types of violence?
3. What are the impacts (including disability-related impacts) of under-researched forms of IPV on women and girls, including emotional and economic IPV, revenge porn and 'honour'-based violence?
4. How do social networks act as a protective factor for VAWG?
5. What are the cultural, psychological and economic impacts of colonisation on indigenous men and women, and how do these impacts influence their behaviours and experiences in respect to VAW?
6. How do conflict and fragility exacerbate the multiple forms of violence experienced by women and girls?
7. What are the causes and drivers of violence against LGBTQIA+ women?
8. What is the interaction of climate change impacts with the perpetration or experience of VAWG?
9. How are new feminist social movements (e.g., #MeToo, Ni Una Menos) and meninist social movements (men's rights activists, incels, etc.) positively or negatively influencing individual, social and policy perspectives related to the experience and perpetration of violence?
10. What steps can be taken to avoid or mitigate resistance to and backlash against women's rights organisations without compromising the focus and aims of these organisations?

Domain 2: Intervention Research

1. What types of interventions can effectively prevent multiple forms of violence, and why?
2. What types of interventions are most effective for preventing IPV (including 'honour'-based violence) against women facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination (including age, poverty, disability, ethnicity, race, sexuality, etc.)?
3. What interventions or elements of interventions are most effective at preventing violence against adolescent girls, and why?
4. What interventions work to prevent sexual harassment in institutional settings (in-person or online), including in the work place and educational settings, and why?
5. What is the level of intensity needed for social norms change interventions to have sustained impact at the community level, including effectively challenging norms that focus on victim behaviour rather than on the perpetration/choice to use violence?
6. Which interventions are most effective at addressing shared risk factors for VAW and VAC in the family environment, leading to a reduction in both types of violence?
7. In what ways can innovative technologies and interventions be used to detect and prevent online sexual harassment and online IPV?
8. What role can formal and informal justice sector reforms, including restorative justice, play in ensuring justice for survivors of violence?
9. What are the factors underlying successful intervention and prevention programmes aimed at men, including indigenous men and other under-researched populations?
10. What types of interventions are effective in preventing IPV and other forms of violence against LGBTQ+ people?

Domain 3: Improving existing interventions

1. What are some best practices for ensuring agility and adaptability of VAWG interventions, especially those working with marginalised women and girls or operating in complex contexts?
2. How can large-scale sector programmes be adapted to optimise their impact on violence prevention and response, particularly education, health, economic development, infrastructure and social protection programmes?
3. How can social movements and feminist activism contribute to preventing and responding to VAWG at scale?
4. What alternative modalities (besides in-person programming) are effective in VAWG prevention at scale?
- 5a. What types of interventions are most effective in facilitating gender transformative change in men and women at scale?
- 5b. How can we use tech platforms effectively, safely and cost efficiently for violence prevention?
6. In what ways can justice institutions be held to account and capacitated to be survivor centred and hold perpetrators accountable, especially in conflict and post-conflict settings?
7. What kinds of faith-based or community-led VAWG prevention interventions can be adapted to different faiths, communities and regions effectively?
8. How can police response more adequately address the needs of LGBTQIA+ people reporting IPV, non-partner sexual violence and sexual harassment?
9. How can promising VAWG prevention and response interventions from non-emergency settings be adapted to have effect in conflict and humanitarian contexts (e.g. reduced dosage or brevity, different delivery mechanisms, etc.)?
10. Do higher costs in resource-intensive violence prevention interventions represent good value for money when taking into account effectiveness in reduction of VAWG?

Domain 4: Methodological and measurement gaps

1. What methods can be used to measure the intersection and pathways between different types of violence, including polyvictimisation and intersections between VAW and VAC?
2. What research methodologies are most appropriate to measure social norms change in violence prevention interventions?
3. How to conduct effective, ethical and inclusive research on VAWG using online/virtual/remote methods (including social media) and how should these be adapted to reach marginalised populations?
4. What are the best methodologies to measure the long-term impacts of violence prevention interventions, including reduction in VAWG and other intended and unintended outcomes?
5. What are examples of good practice in addressing recognised ethical challenges of undertaking VAWG research in resource-poor settings and/or with marginalised communities?
6. Which analytical approaches (both quantitative and qualitative) are most appropriate for advancing an intersectional approach to research on VAWG?
7. What methodologies can be used to measure and attribute the impact of multi-component interventions on VAWG prevention, reduction or cessation?
8. How do we ensure our research impacts policy and programmes, and how do we measure that impact?
9. What are the most effective tools to measure harmful traditional practices against women and girls (including female genital mutilation/cutting, early and forced marriage, crimes committed in the name of honour, dowry-related violence and son preference)?
10. In IPV prevention interventions inclusive of women and girls with disabilities, should outcome measures be universal or should some be disability specific?

Annex 2:

Examples of Proposed Missing Questions by Domain

These questions are taken from or draw upon open text answers in the priority setting survey.⁷

Domain 1: Research to understand VAW in its multiple forms

Violence against the LGBTQIA+ community:

- How do non-binary, trans, hijra, khwaja sira and other groups generate social change in the face of patriarchal violence? What are the shared levers between cis-women's movements and more inclusive LGBTQIA+ movements for eliminating gendered violence?
- What forms of violence are gender diverse and experienced by LGBTQIA+ people in the Asia and Pacific region, and what is effective in prevention particularly in contexts where it is illegal to be LGBTQIA+?

Violence against marginalised groups:

- What are the causes and drivers of violence against migrant workers?
- What is the relationship between the presence of faith-based institutions and the presence of multiple forms of violence (gender-based, LGBTQIA+-targeted and sorcery-related violence, or honour killing)?

Other forms of violence:

- What is the incidence of, and risk and protective factors associated with, femicide in the Asia and Pacific region?
- What is the incidence of, and risk and protective factors associated with, child marriage in the Asia and Pacific region?
- How do we define new manifestation and evolutions of types of violence (such as technology-facilitated violence) to include intersectional vulnerabilities and variations?
- How has trafficking in and smuggling of women and girls changed over time (especially after COVID-19)? What are the push-pull factors, and the risk and protective factors in and across the region?

Contextual analysis:

- What can we learn from comparative analysis of the region-based socio-cultural and religious (both positive and not) effects on VAWG?
- What can we learn from the changing social and political contexts in the region and how they influence the cartography of violence?
- How can research best consider the particularities of each country and, within this, different communities including forms of violence that are not visible?
- How does VAW change in the context of climate change, and what are the associated risk and protective factors across the region?

⁷These are examples only. Where the text was not framed as a question, it was adapted to form a research question. Lengthy commentary is not included. Where research questions were included as general comments, they have been placed under the domain that seemed most relevant.

- What are VAW trends in schools, universities and on educational campuses across the region?
- What are the risk factors for VAW in religious institutional settings and how are religious figures held accountable? (from focus group discussion)
- How does language in a particular context promote GBV?

Attitudes towards survivors:

- What are the impacts of women's own attitudes towards women who are survivors of violence?

Domain 2: Intervention Research

Interventions addressing specific forms of violence:

- What are the most successful strategies for countering deeply entrenched norms on 'honour' and 'purity' rooted in religion?
- What are the most effective ways to counter violent masculinity that justifies 'honour' VAWG in contexts marked by insecurity (for example, men conscripted into armed groups of all kinds, ongoing political insecurity)?
- What is the relative success of different interventions to respond to targeted violence (e.g. court process, public hearings, internationalising via media, support from NGOs and women's groups), and how are women resisting this violence?

Multi-sector collaboration:

- How can some types of crimes that overlap with or include VAWG be better addressed jointly, or at least informed by shared analysis and research such as trafficking and online sexual exploitation, and overlaps between IPV, sexual violence and terrorism?
- What is the impact of cross-border/regional collaboration?
- What is the relationship between 'response' and 'prevention' within effective interventions?

Interventions responding to specific contexts:

- What types of interventions can effectively respond to complex contextual conditions (e.g. climate-induced migration/trafficking, political instability)?
- What kinds of interventions are realistic and helpful for victims of violence in a criminalised context (e.g. refugees, undocumented migrants, sex workers)?

Barriers to support effective interventions:

- What factors assist or hinder policymakers/governments from supporting effective prevention measures?
- What has been the role of the state in addressing VAWG prevention and intervention, and what government bodies are the most successful or have the best practices in addressing VAWG? (focus group discussion)

Domain 3: Improving Existing Interventions

Access to justice:

- What are examples of transformative practice in the area of access to justice?
- How to ensure that police and other authorities take VAW seriously and do not cause further harm to survivors?

Scaling interventions:

- How can the sector encourage effective cross-learning between local organisations and ministries to facilitate scale up?
- In the context of scaling, how can we support innovations that centre each context (local within local systems), so we are not just adapting between contexts?
- What interventions are most effective in middle-income and lower-middle-income countries with less resources, which are culturally sensitive and affordable? (focus group discussion)

Organisations and movements:

- How can we measure the effectiveness of local women's organisations and what will it take to make them stronger and more effective?
- What are effective programmes/engagement strategies to enhance movement building (women's and LGBTQIA+)?

Interventions focused on other specific issues/groups:

- What methods can be used to analyse the work load pressure and devaluation of women's work at household levels?
- How to take into account the vicarious trauma and burnout among NGO staff and frontline workers, and lack of awareness of the same in donors?
- What are effective tools and available resources for improving interventions on violence against women with disability?

Linking research and policy:

- How can we better understand policy journeys and interactions between programming, advocacy and policymaking? How are activists using these channels to push forward policy agendas?
- What methods can be used to research and evaluate the value, contributions and outcomes of legislation and policies for women?
- How can we influence donors to support long-term projects and core project costs?
- How to ensure that police and other authorities take VAW seriously and do not cause further harm to survivors?
- What mechanisms can facilitate a relationship between activist and scholars/academia to combine their skill and knowledge in researching VAW? (focus group discussion)
- What are the best methodologies to measure the costing of interventions on VAWG in order to better understand and plan for resourcing interventions to end VAWG at national and state levels?

Domain 4: Methodological and Measurement Gaps

Monitoring and evaluation:

- What simplified, practical and feasible learning, monitoring and evaluation tools, approaches and practices can be used to support the documentation of learning and practice from local interventions in low-resource settings?

Gender and language:

- How do we recognise gender and language use as a methodological issue? Does VAW, for instance, account for transwomen or other cultural gender minorities? If not, how do we account for GBV faced by them?
- Are we consistent in language use across countries and regions?

Adolescent girls:

- What are the best ways to ask unmarried adolescent girls in the region about their exposure to different forms of violence, including sexual violence, while still being attentive to cultural taboos regarding premarital sex (particularly in religiously conservative communities)?

Connecting data, programmes and policymaking:

- How can data and other forms of evidence visibly support decision-makers to take focused measures in reducing VAW and VAC considering the cultural and socio-economic factors?
- How do organisations and governments use data (prevalence, administrative and others such as AI, big data) for advocacy and decision-making, and what are the potential of AI and big data for analysis and data collection to improve policy and interventions?
- How do we make the connection between Domain 1 (types of violence) and Domain 3 – measurement (what is 'counted' and how)?

Data accountability:

- What good practices can be shared in holding government data gathering agencies to be accountable and transparent?
- How can public health surveillance of VAWG and VAC in LMICs be improved, including administrative data collection?

Responding to different contexts:

- How can research ethics practices be adapted to meet the needs in different contexts?
- What are the risks associated with research findings being applied across contexts?
- How do we measure the impact of interventions when success has different meanings for different cultural backgrounds? How can we reach social consensus on prevention first?
- What considerations (ethical and effectiveness) are needed when applying research findings to contexts outside the study? How can we assess the 'context-specific-ness' of research?

Participatory research:

- How can we support the use of multiple language and dialects in participatory research, related translation cost and lack of understanding of such requirements among donors?
- How can participatory action research be conducted effectively and promoted as preferred practice?

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FILLING IN THE PICTURE: RESEARCH PRIORITIES ON VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN IN THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION