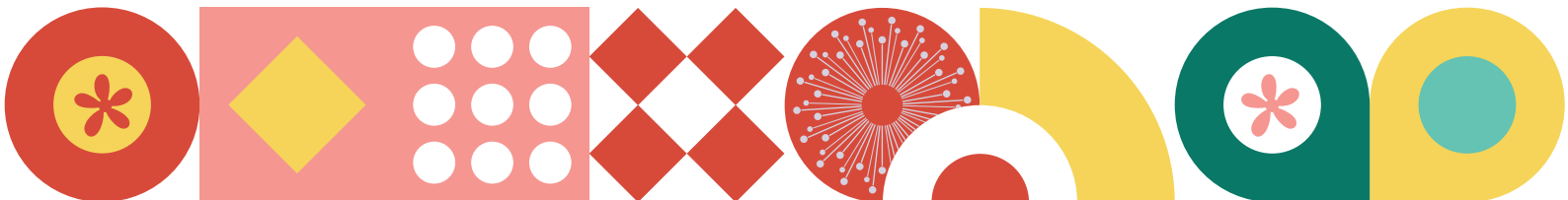
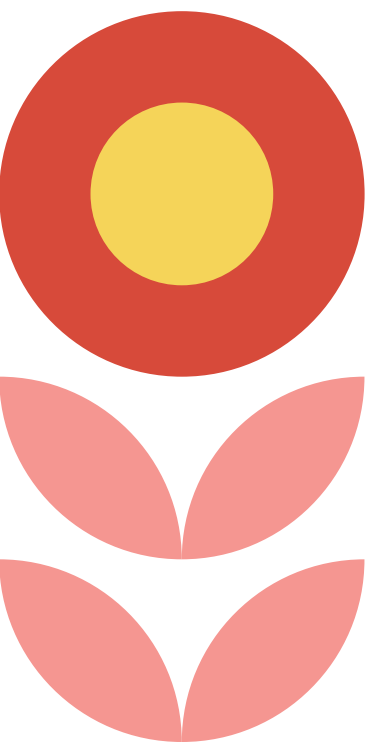


SVRI sexual
violence
research
initiative

THE SVRI:

CHAMPIONING RESEARCH
AND EVIDENCE BUILDING
IN LMICS.







WHY IS RESEARCH IMPORTANT FOR ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

We are all aware of the scale and universality of violence against women (VAW) and violence against children (VAC). Globally 1 in 3 women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, and an estimated 137 women are killed by a family member daily. The profound impact of VAW and VAC on the health and well-being of survivors, on our families and communities can endure across generations. The status of women and the situation of violence faced by women and children is especially acute in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), in conflict situations and among populations facing intersectional forms of discrimination. The substantial economic and development costs of VAW and VAC further widen the gender inequality divide within and across countries and global regions.

To bring stability, development, and equality to countries we must address this complex and brutal social problem – but how? As the well-known phrase says, we cannot fix what we don't understand. Investments in research so far have helped us to understand drivers of VAW and VAC and have produced a handful of interventions and programmatic components that work to reduce violence.¹ But more research is needed to adapt and test these interventions in diverse settings, to ensure that they are replicable and scalable with impactful results in preventing and decreasing VAW and VAC while being relevant to the contexts in which they are implemented.

WE NEED MORE RESEARCH BECAUSE:

No intervention has reduced violence to zero anywhere in the world indicating that more needs to be done to improve the solutions and interventions.

Few interventions have been sustainably taken to scale to fundamentally transform social norms, promote gender equitable societies, and reduce violence.

Knowledge is still limited on the long-term effects of these interventions and what specific mechanisms are driving the changes observed so far.

We know very little about how to effectively integrate violence prevention and response efforts into broader development programmes.



Gaps in evidence are most serious in LMICs- where the capacity and resources for innovative research, quality program implementation and rigorous evaluation is lowest, but the burden of violence is highest.

1 Sharma V, Scott J, Belen K, Dartnall E, Gevers A. (2022). The IPV- ADAPT+ Framework: How to adapt intimate partner violence prevention programs. Equality Insights Lab and Sexual Violence Research Initiative; Doyle K, Levto V RG, Barker G, Bastian GG, Bingenheimer JB, Kazimbaya S, et al. (2018) Gender-transformative Bandedereho couples' intervention to promote male engagement in reproductive and maternal health and violence prevention in Rwanda: Findings from a randomized controlled trial. PLoS ONE 13(4): e0192756. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0192756>



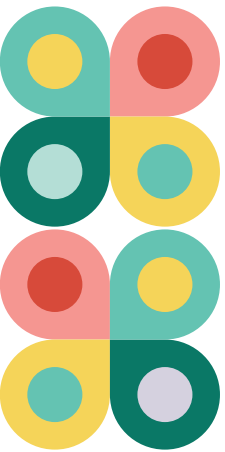
SO WHY DON'T WE DO MORE RESEARCH?

Because only 0.1% of the limited overseas development aid going to address and end violence against women is spent on understanding what is working and what isn't. Furthermore, resources for VAW and VAC research remain concentrated in HICs and when research is done in LMICs, it is often led by HIC researchers who also have control over the agenda and research question setting, perpetuating historic colonial legacies and knowledge hierarchies.² This despite the fact that we know **that giving power, voice, resources, and choices to LMIC researchers increases the likelihood of creating successful solutions and maximizes the potential for them to be taken to scale to positively impact the well-being of vulnerable populations.**

Significantly more energy and investment into research and thus evidence informed programming is needed if we are to meaningfully impact the scale of the problem. Commitment to investing in research in LMICs is the need of the hour to ensure that research and evidence generated is culturally rooted and sustainable.

SVRI AND BUILDING THE EVIDENCE ECOSYSTEM

We are one of a handful of **ethical research funding mechanisms based in a LMIC and led by women**, providing funding using deeply held feminist principles. At the SVRI, we believe we play a critical role in supporting, strengthening, and providing leverage to the field to be stronger, better, and kinder so that longer term structural change is possible and sustainable. We are field builders rooted in a LMIC to build, strengthen but also challenge and disrupt historic colonial legacies and knowledge hierarchies.



Through our work we are addressing key questions:

Whose voices are heard?

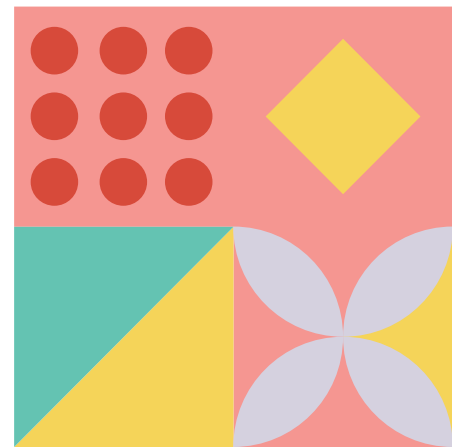
Who controls the resources?

What is being researched, how and where?

Who sets the research agendas?

How are partnerships set up and maintained?

How do we ensure that research is being used to influence policy and practice and positively impact the lives of women and children in LMICs where the burden of violence is highest?



WHY DOES SVRI'S WORK MATTER?

Over the past two decades, the SVRI has confronted these key questions head-on. Through its active engagement in generating a substantial body of evidence in LMICs, the SVRI empowers local researchers and practitioners, amplifies their voices and their work, provides platforms for knowledge sharing and facilitates collaboration among multiple stakeholders to influence policy makers and donors.

The SVRI continuously strives to build the field of evidence generation for VAW and VAC through three primary "levers": 1) Building Evidence for Change; 2) Fostering Collaboration and Capacities for Action; 3) Influencing Structural Change.

2 Charani, E., Abimbola, S., Pai, M., Adeyi, O., Mendelson, M., Laxminarayan, R., & Rasheed, M. A. (2022). Funders: The missing link in equitable global health research?. PLOS global public health, 2(6), e0000583.



1 BUILDING EVIDENCE FOR CHANGE:

We support equitable research and evidence generation on questions that are deemed important and challenging by the research and practice communities for ending VAW and VAC. We do this in ways that openly challenge existing inequities and shift knowledge imbalances.

- We are an equitable grant maker providing direct research grants through open calls to researchers and practitioners in LMICs.

Since
2014
we have on granted USD
9,092,881
to **89** grantees in
53 countries in all regions
of the world.

Over **30%** of
our research grants are
awarded in the Africa region,
followed by
**Latin America and
Caribbean (22%),
Asia (24%), MENA (12%) and
Europe and Central Asia (8%).**

The majority
(72 out of 89)
of our research grant
partners are researchers
from universities in LMICs
and NGO practitioners.

- **We shift the power in agenda setting** ensuring that people closest to the problem get a say in defining the research agenda.
 - We are involved in facilitating [research priority setting processes](#) which specifically aim to ensure that voices from the most impacted regions and groups are integral to setting research questions and agendas through participatory processes that are both region and topic specific.
 - These include the Global and African Shared Research Agenda processes and the priority setting process for VAW and VAC
- **We build capacity of researchers and practitioners in LMICs** for impactful, ethical, and rigorous evidence building to ensure that research undertaken answers a policy imperative – in other words - research that has the potential to make a difference in the lives of women and girls.
 - We provide a collaboratively designed workshop series with grantees, addressing specific skill enhancement needs and mentoring of SVRI grantees and the field.
 - We provide [free online training courses](#) on issues including research uptake, measurement of VAC and self and collective care.



2 FOSTERING COLLABORATION AND CAPACITIES FOR ACTION:

The SVRI is a powerful convener of conversation and collaboration. We provide space and resources for researchers, practitioners, decision-makers, and funders to debate ‘sticky issues’ and develop/identify new ideas, create partnerships, share knowledge, and develop solutions.

- **We organize and host the biannual [SVRI Forum](#)** – the world’s key abstract driven event on VAW and VAC evidence and practice.
 - We have held 7 international Forums, growing from 194 delegates in 2009, to 1021 in Mexico in 2022.
- **We disseminate knowledge via [SVRI knowledge platforms](#)** including the SVRI website, SVRI Forum websites social media platforms and the SVRI Update – our weekly newsletter. The SVRI Update **reaches a steadily growing network of 10,000 plus members from all regions in the world** who are the first people to receive the latest news and information on VAW and VAC research, projects, funding opportunities, resources, job opportunities and many more related materials via the SVRI Update and SVRI Special Update newsletters.
- **We produce the [Sexual Violence Research Podcast](#)** a series of treasured, open and frank conversations with our network of researchers, policy makers, activists and donors about the issues they are grappling with day in day and day out, work towards their collective vision, a world free from violence.
 - At the last count, episodes had been downloaded more than 8000 times.
- **We organize webinars at regional and global levels and cultivate communities of practice** dedicated to topical issues like technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV), or the intersections of VAC and VAW.
 - Between 2022-23 we held 38 webinars that were open to the field on research and innovation, ethics, methodologies and tools.

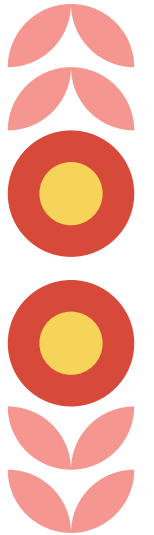
3 INFLUENCING STRUCTURAL CHANGE:

We champion the imperative for increased and enhanced funding that acknowledges complexity, encourages collaborative and equitable solutions, and is rooted in a long-term vision for sustainable transformation.

- **We have created an [advocacy toolkit](#)** that we use to expand the discourse on what [ethical funding](#) for research looks like, how we can ensure that it is inclusive and equitable to researchers in LMICs and who is [funding research](#) on VAW and VAC in low- and middle-income countries.
- **We are strengthening our learning and capacity** for feminist grant-making, monitoring and evaluation, and ethical and equitable consortium building- and will be documenting and disseminating lessons to the field.
- **We emphasize the significance of self and collective care and create tools to facilitate these practices.** This ensures the sustainability of the field, attracting, nurturing, and retaining talent, and fostering an environment conducive to innovation and high-quality work.



SVRI envisages a different future, one in which research and knowledge building is an essential part of development. One in which we devote adequate resources to ensuring that interventions, services, and policies reflect a nuanced, evidence-based approach and do no harm. This is a world in which countries and researchers that suffer the greatest burden of VAW and VAC have access to the research resources and capacities needed to build evidence based on their own contexts, need and realities - evidence that allows us to reduce and ultimately end violence in every country, context, and community. Support us, stand with us and fund us to help us make this vision a reality.





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