



7. Accountability in action: Addressing gender-based violence through the HIV response

WHAT TO DO?

- Despite consensus on the intersection of HIV and gender-based violence (GBV) and recognition of the vulnerability of women and young women, there are often gaps in the meaningful engagement of young women in efforts to prevent and respond to GBV.
- Consultation on a burden especially experienced by young women should be foundational and the norm, not the exception. This is especially critical as violence against women and girls is recognized as a global epidemic.
- For efforts to address GBV to be accountable to and effective for women, they should be engaged in consultation throughout the planning and delivery of services and initiatives.

WHY DO IT?

- This process offers an opportunity for contextualized, real-time feedback.
- The consultative process can reach across and beyond HIV issues.
- To understand women's lived realities of GBV and HIV and to seek their insight, perspectives and guidance for recommendations to address barriers and to offer solutions.
- To inform policy, programs and campaigns so they are effective in addressing the needs of women and young women.
- To ensure that local realities and contexts are understood and addressed. GBV is a global phenomenon but its roots, manifestations and effective means of addressing it will vary from place to place.

WHO BENEFITS?

- Women, including young women, and their communities
- Governments, donors, and policy makers

STEP-BY-STEP

1. Gender-based violence can be a sensitive and challenging topic to discuss, so working with an existing consultation group can help to make participation feel safer and easier. Use an existing #WhatWomenWant group, or other forum such as an in-person support group, or list-serv.
2. Invite women to participate in a focused discussion on GBV, ensuring that you have clear aims and structure for the discussion. Explain that it will be a discussion about experiences, but that no one will be required to share personal experiences unless they choose to.
3. Recruitment information should highlight the focus of the group. This will help participants to have clear expectations of the focus of the group. It will also allow them to decide if the group's focus is in line with their interest. For example, that it is open to all AGYW interested in issues of HIV and GBV prevention.
4. Moderate an interactive session.
 - Share the focus and agenda for the discussion. Have a series of questions planned to use, and introduce them with plenty of time for different people to respond.

- Ask participants to be respectful of each other, and to treat contributions made to the discussion as confidential.
- Keep on topic and steer the dialogue.
- Allocate plenty of time for Q&A – select moments to pause and open up space for questions at different points in the session.
- Respond to individual comments, thanking participants for their inputs, and in particular, acknowledge any contribution that recounts personal experiences of GBV. Ensure that participants are comfortable, and discourage follow up questions if they are inappropriate.
- To close, recap what's been discussed, describe how the consultation will be used and thank participants for their contributions.



IN ACTION: ENGAGING YOUNG WOMEN AROUND HIV AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Using the #WhatWomenWant focus group, a discussion was facilitated on the linkages between GBV and HIV. Participants were asked to think about GBV, and the integration of services to address GBV with other services, what support was available for adolescent girls and young women experiencing GBV, and what more could be done.

The participants put forward the following recommendations:

- Greater policy attention and harmonization of laws and legislation to on the ground programs
- Targeted, responsive and accessible support
- Innovative ways to acknowledge the diversity of GBV experiences
- Increasing institutional capacity for preventing and responding to GBV
- Build provider's skills to respond
- Educate and mobilize communities
- Target social norms
- Engage women and young women as agents of change
- Integrate GBV into sex education curriculum
- Address women's empowerment (including economic empowerment)

The discussion revealed some very important insights into the reality of how policies, legislation, programs, and initiatives translate into the lives of adolescent girls and young women.

The responses highlight the need for consultation of women and young women to understand their lived realities of GBV and HIV and to seek their guidance for recommendations to address barriers and offer solutions.