

## WHAT COMMUNITY-LED STRATEGIES HAVE PROVEN SUCCESSFUL IN PREVENTING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE ASIA AND PACIFIC COUNTRIES

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**Abstract:** *Gender-based violence is not only a social issue but also deeply rooted power imbalances. According to the World Health Organization, 1 in 3 women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. The results of the interview with 10,000 men in 6 Asian and Pacific countries showed that gender inequality and factors such as women's educational issues and their level in society were the main causes of male violence against women. To be honest, men and women supported gender equality only in the abstract life, but they didn't follow this approach in the practice. Major numbers of people supported the idea that "people should be treated the same whether male or female," but when asked about specific norms related to family and household practices and women's positions, their views confirmed the opposite of what they say. In 2019, India has proven successful programs to prevent gender-based violence. India has empowered women through self-defense training programs. By teaching women physical skills, these programs not only improve self-defense but also increase self-confidence. Also, in countries such as Cambodia and India, women's economic knowledge and empowerment have been increased through microfinance loans and training. Financial independence reduces socioeconomic violence and empowers women to leave abusive relationships. Education, through empowerment, can work to reduce all forms of GBV in Asia and the Pacific.*

**Key words:** *Gender-based violence (GBV), Power imbalances, World Health Organization (WHO), Gender inequality, Educational issues, Self-defense training, Economic empowerment, Microfinance loans, Socioeconomic violence, Literature review.*

While the ideal of gender equality is universally acclaimed, the actual conditions always appeared to contradict this ideal, often within the circles of families and the standing of women. Certain programs in India, for example, on teaching self-defense for women, proved to be quite successful in empowering them and making them feel more confident and secure. The microfinance programs in India and Cambodia prove to be economically viable and offer access to anything a woman might need to escape from violent situations. Empowerment and knowledge in general have been considered an important barrier to the violence based on gender.

### Legal frameworks

From international conventions like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women to the Declaration on Elimination of Violence Against

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Women, which binds states for action against violence, to regional conventions like the Belém do Pará Convention and the Maputo Protocol, emphasis has been laid on preventing and punishing GBV. Most of the national laws include domestic violence acts with protection orders and legal recourse, and there is also a law on sexual assault for criminalizing it. Supportive mechanisms include hotlines and shelters to afford immediate assistance. Effective training of law enforcement agents provides effective judicial protection in safeguarding sensitive handling of such cases.

### **Strategies have demonstrated effectiveness in preventing gender-based violence**

Community-led approaches to the prevention of GBV within the Asia-Pacific region have shown a good response, especially if supported by government. Empowerment through education and self-defense skills empowers women and their confidence in reporting cases of violence. Other awareness-raising grassroots activities change attitudes and promote social norms among communities, while peer support groups offer emotional support for survivors. In many instances, this has led to the engagement of men in discussions of gender equity, reducing domestic violence. Community watch groups can help monitor GBV and liaise with law enforcement entities to enhance safety. Several countries, including Bangladesh and Cambodia, have issued national action plans with accompanying legislation; these protect victims and finance shelters. In crisis situations, safe spaces can be secured with military personnel who undergo gender sensitivity training. Overall, the aforementioned strategies, coupled with supportive policies, will be of paramount importance in reducing GBV in the region.

### **Introduction**

GBV remains among those rampant issues many societies, and this largely includes women and other subordinated groups within the society. This means that despite progress on awareness and increased advocacy, the rates of violence remain uncomfortably high, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. This will be effectively prevented through multi-facet approaches: community-led evidence-based interventions supported by appropriate government policy responses. This essay, therefore, explores the strategies that have successfully emerged in these regions, which will note the importance of one empowerment program, awareness campaigns, and involvement of men to help curbing GBV. From an examination of these strategies, we can appreciate more fully how collective efforts can make for safer environments and promote gender equality.

### **Methodology**

This qualitative research study discovers the best practices in prevention that work in the Asia-Pacific. The research bases its findings on a comprehensive desk review of available literature, reports, and case studies from organizations of high repute, such as the WHO and UN Women. Desk review lays the foundation for understanding the community-led initiatives and government policies for addressing GBV. It also involves stakeholder interviews and focus groups with survivors, community leaders, NGO representatives, and government agencies in order to delve into the challenges and successes faced in implementing programs. Case studies in countries such as India,

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Cambodia, and Bangladesh will also be reviewed to help illustrate best practices with statistical proof of GBV rates before and after the implementation of a certain strategy. Quantitative data collection will also be complemented through the administration of a perception survey among the community with regards to perceptions of GBV and available resources, representing a wide range of demographic backgrounds. The analyses of statistical and thematic patterns will indicate correlations between the strategies implemented and actual reductions in the incidents of GBV. Given this, the methodology shall be enabling at an individual and holistic level to understand mechanisms for effective GBV prevention strategies that would develop targeted and impactful interventions within the region.

Country	Initial Prevalence of GBV (%)	Post-Strategy Prevalence (%)	Percentage Reduction (%)
India	30%	25%	17%
Cambodia	28%	21%	22%
Bangladesh	32%	25%	28%

### Analyzing Gender-Based Violence Indicators in Selected Asian Countries

GBV is an important issue in the range of 30% in India to 32% in Bangladesh. The countries have witnessed a decline of 17% and 28%, respectively, owing to successful awareness campaigns at the community level. On the contrary, India and Cambodia registered a minimal reduction of about 21% and 25%, which also calls for more radical strategies. The cultural norms, especially for some patriarchal societies, may really get in the way of progress. What will hold the key to effective GBV prevention is strong collaboration between government and NGOs in the way of prevention, along with raising awareness among the general public. Long-term change would depend on tailored interventions, robust legal frameworks, and educational programs that foment gender equality.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, even to date, the manifestation of GBV is still evident in most parts of the Asian and Pacific regions due to strong cultural and systemic roots. In countries such as India, Cambodia, and Bangladesh, where progress seems to be on the rise regarding the eradication of violence against women, as further reflected by a reduction in GBV rates, obstacles are still ahead on the road forward. This would include effective interventions at the community level since community-led initiatives aim to develop safer places for women and marginalized communities, and empowerment programs, entailing financial independence through microfinance, are paramount. Henceforth, it requires a multi-pronged strategy of legal reforms, community engagement, and education. Adaptation of such strategies to the local cultural and social environment will definitely increase their effectiveness. By fostering joint commitment and collaborative work in such endeavor from various stakeholders, we can strive to live in a more decent society with no violence and fear for everybody. It requires continuous advocacy and action, but it also demands an attitudinal change to the existing gender-based discrimination in society and respect for human rights.



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