



Mawazo and her husband advocate against GBV in the DRC. (Paul Jeffrey for Corus)

TECHNICAL OVERVIEW

ADDRESSING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Corus International is committed to preventing, mitigating and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) globally. GBV is not only a violation of human rights that undermines the safety and dignity of individuals, but it is a public health crisis that destabilizes the economic stability and security of communities and nations.

Corus understands the magnitude of GBV and its profound impact on families, communities and development outcomes. By embedding evidence-based approaches into program design and implementation, we work to reduce community tolerance to violence while decreasing the vulnerability of households and individuals, especially women and girls. This technical document describes our approach and considers recommended strategies to address GBV.

THE CORUS EFFECT

Corus International is an ensemble of global leaders in international development and humanitarian assistance. The Corus family includes public health agency IMA World Health, global aid organization Lutheran World Relief, technology for development company CGA Technologies, impact investing fund Ground Up Investing, and direct trade company Farmers Market Brands. Our organizations operate as permanent partners, integrating disciplines, approaches and resources to deliver the holistic, lasting solutions needed to end extreme poverty.



BACKGROUND

Definition

GBV refers to any harmful act against an individual or group based upon their sexual or gender identity. Disproportionately affecting women and girls, GBV can include sexual, physical, mental and economic harm carried out in public or in private. Although GBV can occur at any point in a person’s life, the risk increases considerably during humanitarian crises and in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

GBV Includes¹

Sexual Assault	Child, Early and Forced Marriages
Intimate Partner Violence	Female Genital Mutilation
Denying Access to Economic Resources	Sex Trafficking
Psychological and Emotional Abuse	Stalking

IMPACT

The patterns and persistence of GBV are interwoven into social norms and power relations. GBV is not only a fundamental violation of human rights, but it leaves deep scars on societies across the globe. GBV may impact survivors’ immediate sexual, physical, emotional and psychological health, and contributes to an elevated risk of future health problems.

OUR APPROACH

Corus addresses GBV through a three-pronged approach:

PREVENTION

By increasing community awareness and employing social and behavior change strategies, we prevent GBV and challenge harmful practices.

MITIGATION

By establishing effective redressal systems and adopting Do No Harm (DNH) policies, we mitigate the risks of GBV with safe programming.

RESPONSE

By strengthening the capacity of national and community-based health systems and enabling survivors to access comprehensive care through improved referral pathways, we respond to GBV and promote community resilience.

The Problem

1 IN 3 WOMEN experiences GBV in their lifetime.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, **1 in 2 women** report that they or a woman they know have experienced violence.

200 MILLION WOMEN have experienced female genital mutilation or cutting.

Globally, as many as **38% of murders of women** are committed by an intimate partner.

1 For expanded definitions of gender-based violence, please refer to [UN Women FAQs: Types of violence against women and girls](#)

GBV has broader repercussions for economic security and development. It contributes to food insecurity and constrains the ability of agricultural initiatives to maximize efficiencies and outcomes. The economic costs of lost productivity due to domestic violence conservatively range from 1.2 to 2 percent of GDP, according to the World Bank.

With these three pillars of prevention, mitigation and response as the foundation of our GBV programming, Corus has

developed the following technical framework to facilitate safe programming and effective interventions.



Prevention, mitigation and response are all required for an integrated, comprehensive approach to addressing GBV and its root causes. GBV endures because of restrictive gender norms and behaviors alongside imbalanced power structures inside homes, within communities and across systems. In order to address these structural factors, we challenge harmful practices through social and behavior change strategies while adopting Do No Harm (DNH) policies to mitigate GBV risks. By

strengthening local capacity and supporting health systems, Corus adopts a survivor-centered approach that prioritizes safety, respect, nondiscrimination and confidentiality. All interventions to address GBV must be contextually relevant, and programming should be designed and implemented in consultation with participants, local partners and institutional stakeholders in a manner that prioritizes gender equality and social inclusion.

LEARNING AGENDA

The groundwork is laid for the Corus family to further advance interventions to address GBV through an integrated approach that considers prevention, mitigation and response. Effective programming requires ongoing risk assessments, mitigation planning, allyship with men and boys, and the advancement of women's leadership. Appropriate response to GBV demands multisectoral collaboration, health systems strengthening and comprehensive care for survivors that addresses their legal, medical, economic and psychosocial needs.

Moving forward, we must continue to cultivate organizational accountability and address GBV proactively throughout all phases of project design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. As we champion gender equality and social inclusion throughout our programming, we must continually consider the distinct needs, identities and capacities of marginalized groups, including members of the LGBTQI+ community, people with disabilities and Indigenous individuals.

We believe that strengthening local capacity, mobilizing communities, sensitizing health service providers, and embedding strong response mechanisms into communities and health systems can lead to resilient, healthy environments that are free from violence.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Corus family consists of organizations with extensive histories of commitment to gender equality and capacity strengthening. **Corus organization IMA World Health is our technical lead on combatting GBV**, having integrated interventions to address GBV and social behavior change communication around women's empowerment into broader health programs for more than a decade. From strengthening market access for women entrepreneurs and supporting youth changemakers to advancing girls' education and building social protection systems, Corus organizations Lutheran World Relief and CGA Technologies are also on the frontlines of advancing gender equality. The following section highlights some of our programming:

IMA World Health

MOMENTUM Integrated Health Resilience – Global

IMA World Health leads the five-year, USAID-funded MOMENTUM Integrated Health Resilience project, which is part of a suite of innovative MOMENTUM awards designed to holistically strengthen quality voluntary family planning (FP), reproductive health (RH), and maternal, newborn, and

child health (MNCH) in host countries around the world. While addressing GBV through community-based, gender-responsive approaches, the project's focus on health resilience reduces chronic vulnerabilities and promotes more inclusive health development by addressing risks and responses to shocks and stresses.

Counter-Gender Based Violence Program (Tushinde Ujeuri) – Democratic Republic of Congo

Funded by USAID and implemented by IMA World Health, the Counter-Gender Based Violence Program (known locally as Tushinde Ujeuri) is implemented in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where years of insecurity and conflict alongside deeply rooted gender inequities have contributed to high rates of GBV. The project's holistic approach to addressing GBV incorporates social and financial recovery, in addition to medical care and psychosocial support. The Tushinde project has also developed a unique expertise in advocating for protection through a human rights-based approach for marginalized groups including LGBTQI+ individuals.

Lutheran World Relief

Learning for Gender Integration – India, Nicaragua and Uganda

Lutheran World Relief developed the Learning for Gender Integration initiative to incorporate gender into its work to address inequality around the world and ensure that all genders have equal opportunities to benefit from our work. Lessons from the initiative have since been incorporated into programming in other projects worldwide and continue to combat unequal gender power relations, one of the root causes of GBV.

CGA Technologies

Girls' Education South Sudan 1 (GESS) – South Sudan

CGA Technologies created and led the South Sudan Schools' Attendance Monitoring System (sssams.org), cash transfer and capitation grants components of GESS, an inclusive education program. With CGA Technologies support, GESS strengthened the capacity of most vulnerable households by providing cash transfers directly to girls, resulting in increased enrollment and retention. Such outcomes decrease girls' vulnerability, as education has a direct impact on reducing the incidence of GBV and especially child, early and forced marriages. Over seven years of GESS, total enrollment in South Sudan tripled and girls' enrollment quadrupled.