

# **Terms of Reference Study on Cost of Violence against women & girls (VAWG) in Nepal**

## **1. Background**

Globally, 3 in 10 women and girls are estimated to have experienced physical or sexual, or both, intimate partner violence in their lifetime. For South Asia, the numbers are 35% higher with 19% women and girls experiencing intimate partner violence in the past year<sup>1</sup>. Nepal is no exception in terms of prevailing VAWG issues. The percent of women and girls reporting VAWG actually increased from 23.4% in 2016 to 23.8% in 2022<sup>2</sup>. At least one in four ever-married women have experienced spousal physical, sexual, or emotional violence. Violence against women and girls not only leave deep emotional, mental, physical, and social injure but it prevents most of the survivors to “access proper healthcare, education, employment as well as participate meaningfully in a society”<sup>3</sup>.

Despite various interventions and policy measures, VAWG continues to pose significant social and economic challenges in Nepal. The economic cost of VAWG is substantial, encompassing direct costs like healthcare and justice systems, and indirect costs from lost productivity and wages. Globally, estimates include a \$1.5 trillion cost in 2016<sup>4</sup>, while studies show VAWG can cost countries a significant percentage of their GDP, with the emotional and physical impact on victims being the largest component of this cost. In Europe, a study estimated VAWG cost to be 366 billion Euros each year with 79% of the cost was attributable to violence against women<sup>5</sup>. In Zambia and Bangladesh, the cost of violence equated to 7% and 4% of their GDP<sup>6</sup>, respectively.

## **2. Rationale**

Exploring the economic cost of Violence against women & girls (VAWG) is important because it shifts the perception of VAWG from solely a social or human rights issue to a significant public welfare and economic development problem. This analysis provides a compelling, evidence-based rationale for increased funding and policy action by all stakeholders, including governments, businesses, and the public. By attaching monetary cost to VAWG, it helps to realize the economic burden that VAWG has to various sectors that encompasses individuals, households, families, communities, government and private sectors rendering the VAWG as a priority for the public discourse. This would further help the policy and decision makers to prioritize resource allocation especially

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<sup>1</sup> Sardinha et al., 2022

<sup>2</sup> NDHS, 2022

<sup>3</sup> World Bank, 2022

<sup>4</sup> UN Women, 2016

<sup>5</sup> EIGE, 2021

<sup>6</sup> IEP, 2018

around prevention and support services over managing long-term consequences of violence that would generally incur cost around health, legal services. Eventually, the evidence around cost of VAWG shows the impact of “inaction” and highlighting the need for greater

At the individual level, VAWG often creates economic dependency, trapping victims into abusive relationships as it reduces opportunity to participate in income generating activities. Understanding this link highlights the need for economic empowerment programs (e.g., job training, financial literacy, secure property rights) as a key part of supporting survivors' ability to leave abusive situations and rebuild their lives. In addition, indirect or invisible cost attached with VAWG is often overlooked or missed from traditional cost calculation because of various factors. Thus, estimating indirect costs of VAWG would further assist to highlight impact that could be useful for advocacy and policy solutions.

While the social and psychological consequences of VAWG are well-documented, there is a lack of comprehensive data on its economic impact. This study aims to fill that gap by quantifying the financial burden of VAWG on individuals, households, communities, and the national economy.

### **3. Objectives of the Study**

The primary objective of this study is to estimate the economic cost of VAWG in Nepal. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Assess the direct and indirect costs of VAWG at various levels including individual, household, community, and national.
2. Estimate the costs incurred by public institutions such as health services, law enforcement, and social services in addressing VAWG.
3. Evaluate the economic impact of lost productivity and opportunity costs resulting from VAWG.
4. Provide evidence-based recommendations to inform policy and programmatic interventions including cost savings from preventive measures and survivor support programs.

### **4. Scope of Work**

The study will encompass various forms of VAWG including physical, sexual, psychological, economic, and structural violence such as child, early and forced marriage and harmful social norms. It will be conducted at the national and sub-national level, ensuring representation from urban, rural, and marginalized communities. Key stakeholders such as survivors, service providers, government agencies, NGOs, and

community leaders will be engaged to provide comprehensive insights. Along with this, the study will include a systematic desk review with analysis of secondary information to generate estimates of cost of violence in Nepal. Furthermore, synthesis of information will be used to

## **5. Methodology**

The study will primarily be based on exploration and analysis of secondary data and information (including desk review) supported by a field level primary data collection confined in one or two CARE Nepal's intervention municipalities. The target population for the study will be national, sub-national (province), and specific communities. The methodology will follow following steps; however, the applicant is expected to provide details of methods that they would apply to achieve the objectives of this task:

- Determine the analytical framework of estimating cost of VAWG based on proven approaches used previously by other organizations (such as World Bank) to estimate cost of VAWG. Capture, analyse, and compare (across regional/global benchmarks) cost based on type of costs such as:
  - o tangible direct costs (such as healthcare, legal and police services, social services);
  - o tangible indirect costs (lost productivity, reduced earnings, missed opportunities, hindering progress towards SDGs or other national priorities); and
  - o intangible costs (emotional and physical pain, psychological impact; intergenerational impacts or trauma; quality of life of self and other family members; political participation; creative engagements).
- Identify data collection methods: For secondary data, list down the major sources of information including the type of information required. For primary data collection, prepare data collection tools and approaches for different type of respondents such as survivors (mostly quantitative), government officials, health workers, legal entities (qualitative- FGD, KII).
- Ensure steps to validate findings are incorporated into the methodology
- Determine most reliable and accurate calculation/modeling methods to estimate the cost.
- Ensure ethical considerations are given the highest priority given the sensitive nature of the study by assuring safety, security, confidentiality, and privacy of the respondents. Provide details on how this will be ensured.

## **6. Deliverables**

The consultant will be responsible for the following deliverables:

1. Inception Report detailing the methodology, work plan, and ethical considerations.
2. Data Collection Tools and protocols for ethical data gathering.
3. Undertaking data collection including desk review, collation and analysis of secondary and primary data
3. Draft Report presenting preliminary findings and analysis.
4. Validation Workshop to present findings and gather stakeholder feedback.
5. Final Report with policy recommendations and a 4-page summary.

## **7. Duration and Timeline**

The study is expected to be completed within two months from the date of contract signing. A detailed timeline including key milestones and deadlines will be developed during the inception phase.

## **8. Qualification and Experience**

### **Education, Training, Experience and Skills**

- A master's or Ph.D. degree in Economics, Development Economics, Gender Studies, Public Health, Sociology, or a related social science discipline.
- Proven expertise in methodologies for economic valuation, cost-benefit analysis, cost-of-illness studies, and econometric modeling.
- Strong command of both quantitative and qualitative research methods, including survey design (e.g., using DHS VAWG modules), data collection strategies, and statistical analysis using software like SPSS, Stata, or R.
- Experience in processing and analyzing complex datasets, including administrative data from multiple sectors (health, justice, social services).
- In-depth understanding of the dynamics, causes, consequences, and context of VAWG. This includes knowledge of relevant national and international frameworks and policies (e.g., SDGs, CEDAW).
- Prior experience working on the design, implementation, or evaluation of VAWG prevention and response programs is highly beneficial to understand practical data sources and limitations.
- Demonstrable experience in conducting or contributing to studies on the economic cost of VAWG or related complex social issues.
- A strong understanding and proven application of ethical guidelines and safety protocols for conducting sensitive research on violence and trauma.
- Ability to work effectively with diverse stakeholders, including government officials, service providers, survivors, and community members.

- Excellent writing skills to produce clear, accessible reports that translate complex economic findings into actionable policy recommendations for various audiences.
- Experience with academic writing, donor reports, or journal publications is highly preferred

## **9. Reporting and Supervision**

The consultant will report to Coordinator- Program Quality and Impact at CARE Nepal.

## **10. Confidentiality and Copyright**

All data and information gathered will remain the property of CARE Nepal. The consultant/team must maintain strict confidentiality and obtain written permission before disseminating any project information externally.

## **11. Application procedure and requirements**

Nepal-based individual consultant(s) are encouraged to apply with

- A cover letter.
- A technical proposal especially highlighting framework of methodology for meeting the objectives (not exceeding 10 pages).
- An updated CV of the consultant.
- A brief financial proposal including travel cost and remuneration.
- Mandatory official documents (Copy of VAT Registration certificate, copy of Latest tax clearance certificate and Copy of Company Registration Certificate).

The applicants are requested to send these documents via email to [npl.carenepal@care.org](mailto:npl.carenepal@care.org). The deadline for submission of the documents and proposals is 15 December 2025.