



National Strategy and Framework of Action on the Elimination of Gender Based Violence (2024-2028)

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National Commission for Women and Children
Royal Government of Bhutan

Gender-based violence is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e. gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty. It also includes violence committed through the use of technology and in online spaces (technology facilitated GBV). These acts can occur in public or in private.”

2 IN 5

WOMEN

in Bhutan has experienced intimate partner violence, and 6.9% reported childhood sexual abuse. More than half of women and girls believe violence against women is justified, reflecting deep-rooted social and cultural norms that perpetuate gender-based violence.



VISION

A Bhutan free from all forms of gender-based violence.

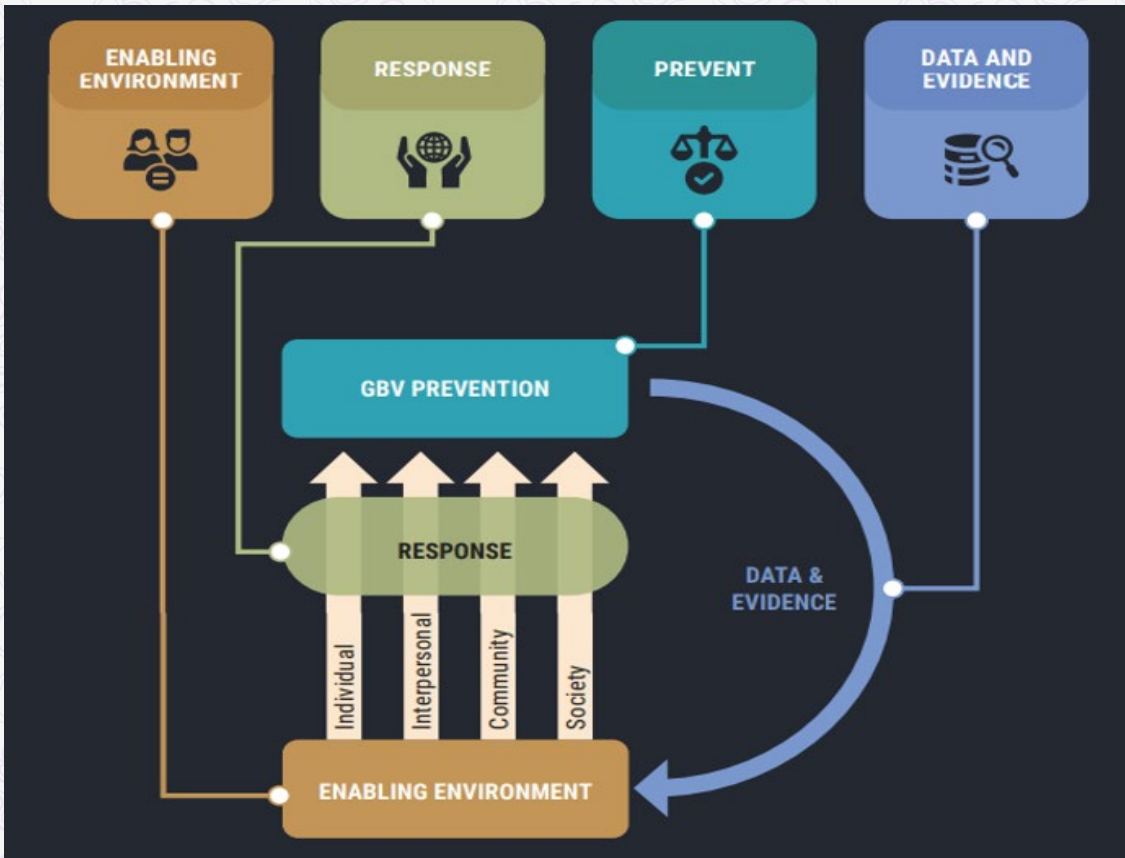


MISSION

To accelerate the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence and any harmful practices through a comprehensive approach that promotes gender equality by transforming social norms, creating an enabling environment, strengthening data and evidence, and providing inclusive and accessible services that empower individuals to exercise their rights to live free from violence.

Four Pillars of the Strategy

The Strategy is organized around four interconnected pillars: (i) Response, (ii) Prevention, (iii) Enabling Environment, and (iv) Data and Evidence.



Response refers to the services and resources provided to mitigate the harm caused by violence. These include policing, case management, counselling, access to justice, shelters, and reintegration programmes. While primarily aimed at reducing immediate harm, response services also play a preventive role by curbing early signs of violence, preventing recurrence, and minimizing long-term impacts.

Prevention focuses on stopping GBV before it occurs by addressing the root causes, such as gender inequality and other drivers of violence, across all levels of the social ecology. It is a long-term goal that requires efforts across the population to challenge norms, practices, and societal structures that perpetuate GBV.

Enabling Environment consists of the laws, policies, and systems that facilitate both prevention and response. It operates across individual, interpersonal, community, and societal levels, ensuring that structural and institutional mechanisms are in place to support GBV interventions.

Data and Evidence are essential for understanding the scope of GBV and measuring the effectiveness of interventions. The primary sources of information come from the systematic monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes implemented to address GBV. However, generating data alone is not enough; robust systems must be in place to ensure that relevant insights are fed back to policymakers and programme designers, enabling continuous improvement of laws, policies, and initiatives.

Response

Response is the first pillar of the Strategy to eliminate GBV and harmful practices. It aims to ensure universal access to GBV services while upholding service quality in line with international best practices. The Strategy seeks to develop a system-wide approach, engaging key sectors and agencies to deliver an inclusive, comprehensive and coordinated response to GBV survivors.

Objective 1: By 2028, ensure accessible, high-quality, and comprehensive response services for all survivors of GBV.

Strategy 1: Develop/strengthen and sustain integrated and inclusive services including case management, healthcare, mental health and psycho-social support, justice and protection, and shelters, ensuring they are widely accessible and fully prepared to address the diverse needs of GBV survivors.

The strategy will be achieved through following key interventions:

-  Develop agency specific service standards for GBV cases to be adhered to by all relevant GBV service providers, including health centres, justice, and legal services.
-  Improve accessibility to comprehensive support services for all GBV survivors including survivors with disabilities and LGBT+.
-  Improve the availability of GBV services for all sections of the population including through appropriate reporting and referral mechanisms for these services.
-  Improve and expand empowerment and livelihood programmes for GBV survivors.
-  Enhance institutional capacities for service providers to provide timely, appropriate, and inclusive GBV services.
-  Enhance mechanism for uninterrupted, appropriate and timely services for GBV survivors during emergencies.

Prevention

Prevention is the second pillar of the Strategy. It focuses on addressing the root causes of GBV and harmful practices such as social and cultural norms and practices and their consequences through education and advocacy targeted at key population groups, including policymakers, communities, media, and youth. It further seeks to prevent GBV by reducing the vulnerability of at-risk populations and enhancing the conditions that foster safety and security for everyone at all times, including during emergencies.

Objective 2: By 2028, achieve a cultural and societal shift towards zero tolerance for GBV and harmful practices through education, awareness, and community engagement.

Strategy 2: Launch targeted education and awareness campaigns for communities and specific population groups, while integrating GBV prevention into all education and training programmes to achieve a societal shift toward zero tolerance for GBV and harmful practices.

The strategy will be achieved through the following interventions:

- 01 Create awareness of the various forms of GBV and harmful practices and their consequences amongst the policy makers, community leaders, religious personalities, other influencers, and the general population.
- 02 Engage local government officials as partners in preventing GBV and harmful practices at the community level.
- 03 Foster partnership with the media to advocate for GBV prevention among different sections of the society.
- 04 Equip youth, both in and out of schools and learning institutes to recognize various forms of GBV and harmful practices and are aware of how and where to seek help when encountering such situations.
- 05 Implement measures that focus on child and adolescent abuse.
- 06 Create awareness among the population on risks of online harassment, technology-facilitated GBV (TFGBV), and other emerging digital threats, and available measures.
- 07 Improve and scale up empowerment and livelihood programme for Women in Difficult Circumstances.
- 08 Mainstream measures to prevent and respond to GBV in emergencies in the National Disaster Management Plan and Local Disaster Management and Contingency Plans

Enabling Environment

Enabling the Environment is the third pillar of the Strategy. This pillar focuses on strengthening national laws, policies, institutions, and systems to ensure coordinated and cohesive actions for addressing GBV and harmful practices.

Objective 3: By 2028, strengthen and maintain a supportive policy, legal, and institutional environment that prevents GBV and harmful practices.

Strategy 3: Identify and address the gaps, loopholes and contradictions in existing laws and policies and amend those provisions that do not align with established international practices to ensure a cohesive and effective legal and policy framework for preventing and responding to GBV and harmful practices.

The strategy will be achieved through the following interventions:

- 01 Build institutional capacity of NCWC in proposing new legislation or amend existing legislation, formulate rules and regulations, develop policies and strategies, monitor programmes, and provide guidance to stakeholders relating to GBV and harmful practices.
- 02 Improve Coordination amongst the service providers to facilitate seamless service experience amongst the GBV survivors.
- 03 Strengthen national laws including the Penal Code, DVPA and Information Communication and Media Act of Bhutan(ICMA) and other relevant laws to align with best practices for addressing GBV and harmful practices within the national context.
- 04 Enhance Enforcement of laws and policies.
- 05 Enhance Government financing for GBV prevention and response and to address underlying issues.





Data and Evidence

Data and evidence form the fourth pillar of the Strategy, aiming to strengthen the information systems necessary for making informed decisions regarding programmes and services that address GBV and harmful practices in Bhutan.

Objective 4: By 2028, establish a robust data collection and analysis system to inform and enhance programmes for preventing and responding to GBV and harmful practices.

Strategy 4: Create a secure, standardized, nationwide data collection framework and analytical tools to continuously monitor, evaluate, and guide GBV prevention and response efforts with evidence-based insights.

The strategy will be achieved through the following interventions:

-  Strengthen GBV data collection and analysis across the key agencies.
-  Operationalize GBV Central Case Management Information system (CMIS) to be used by The PEMA and RENEW.
-  Establish a system of continuous knowledge development on GBV and harmful practices to guide policies and programmes.
-  Institute a system for disseminating information on the status of GBV and harmful practices in Bhutan to inform stakeholders and the general public.

**If you experience any forms of gender based violence,
help is available at :**



Pema Secretariat - 1098

RENEW - 17126353

Police - 113