



House of Commons  
International Development  
Committee

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**Violence Against  
Women and Girls:  
Government Response  
to the Committee's  
Second Report of  
Session 2013–14**

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**Third Special Report of Session 2013–  
14**

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## The International Development Committee

The International Development Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Office of the Secretary of State for International Development.

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The Reports of the Committee, the formal minutes relating to that report, oral evidence taken and some or all written evidence are available in a printed volume.

Additional written evidence may be published on the internet only.

### Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Dr David Harrison (Clerk), Chloe Challender (Senior Adviser), Judy Goodall (Inquiry Manager), Louise Whitley (Inquiry Manager), Rob Page (Committee Specialist), Anita Fuki (Senior Committee Assistant), Annabel Goddard (Committee Assistant), Paul Hampson (Committee Support Assistant) and Hannah Pearce (Media Officer).

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## Third Special Report

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On 13 June 2013 the International Development Committee published its Second Report of Session 2013-14, *Violence Against Women and Girls* (HC 107). On 23 July 2013 we received the Government's Response to the Report. It is reproduced as an Appendix to this Special Report.

## Appendix: Government Response

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The UK Government welcomes the opportunity to respond to the International Development Committee's Report on Violence Against Women and Girls. We appreciate the Committee's commendation of the UK's international leadership and strong policy framework on this issue. We agree that it is imperative to ensure new international commitments and targeted policies are effectively implemented at the country level.

The UK Government is committed to tackling violence against women and girls overseas and the Secretary of State for International Development has made the role of women and girls in development, including tackling violence against women and girls, a top priority for the Department. Lynne Featherstone's role as Ministerial Champion for Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Overseas and the Foreign Secretary's Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative are further examples of the UK's strong commitment to address this issue.

Following the successful agreed conclusions at the 2013 UN Commission on the Status of Women in March, and the endorsement of the G8 Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict in April, the UK Government will continue to drive international momentum to tackle violence against women and girls. Building on the G8 Declaration, the Secretary of State's "Call to Action" on violence against women and girls in emergencies announced in March, will intensify action to protect women and girls from all forms of violence in emergencies. DFID will also work with international partners to ensure that gender equality features prominently in the post 2015 development framework, including a specific target on violence against women and girls, building on the ambition set out in the High Level Panel Report released in June.

DFID will continue to scale up innovative programming to address violence against women and girls at the country level, with an increasing focus on prevention and long-term multi-sectoral approaches. DFID will increase its efforts to transform the social norms, including discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, that are at the root cause of violence against women and girls, and empowering women and girls to reduce their own vulnerability to violence.

DFID will ensure that its programming is informed by robust evidence of "what works", delivered through its new £25 million Violence Against Women and Girls Research and Innovation programme. This programme will deliver evidence to better understand what works in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, including in conflict and humanitarian settings and will also inform policy and programming across the international community. In addition, DFID will continue to drive international efforts to

end female genital mutilation/cutting through its new flagship £35 million programme, and is exploring new research and innovative programming to help end early and forced marriage.

The UK Government is grateful to the Committee for shining a spotlight on this global pandemic of violence against girls and women affecting many millions. The recommendations in the Committee's Report are an important contribution to strengthen our efforts in delivering UK commitments on this agenda.

## Response to the conclusions and recommendations

**Recommendation 1: We welcome DFID's Strategic Vision for Girls and Women, Theory of Change on Violence Against Women and Girls and related programming guidance as a helpful framework for DFID's response to violence against women and girls. We were pleased to see that the number of country programmes with violence against women and girls components has increased. We were particularly pleased to see women's issues become a strategic priority in Afghanistan, as we recommended in our report last year. However, more needs to be done to prioritise violence against women and girls at country level and to bring DFID's programmes in line with the Theory of Change, so that the best practice it highlights is properly implemented. DFID states that 20 countries now have a violence against women and girls component, but actual work on the ground seems thin in a number of country programmes, including Somalia, which has a poor record on women's rights. For countries with high prevalence of violence against women and girls such as DRC, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Sudan and Somalia, DFID should list tackling violence against women and girls as a strategic priority. (Paragraph 13)**

### Agree

DFID welcomes the Committee's commendation of our recent work to strengthen our policy framework to tackle violence against women and girls. We agree that our focus over the next few years should be to ensure this strong policy framework is effectively implemented through our violence against women and girls programmes at the country level.

DFID's recent refresh of country operational plans reflects a significant increase in programming on violence against women and girls at the country level, including in Afghanistan, the DRC, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Sudan and South Sudan and discussions are underway on Somalia. For example, DFID is in the initial phase of a new six year programme in DRC that will reduce girls and women's vulnerability to VAWG through increasing girls' and women's human, social and economic assets, skills and capabilities.

DFID will continue to scale up programming to tackle violence against women and girls at the country level, complementing on-going efforts to deliver our Strategic Reform Plan (SRP) commitment to help ten million women and girls access security and justice services by 2015. We will ensure that the advice and support offered to country offices through the Violence against Women and Girls Helpdesk is strategically aligned with

our Theory of Change and related guidance, so that new programming reflects best practice and value for money.

**Recommendation 2:**

**Furthermore, whilst DFID is gradually increasing the number of violence against women and girls programmes focusing on social norm change, there remains an imbalance towards programmes focusing on security and justice. Addressing the attitudes and behaviours that sustain violence against women and girls is of paramount importance. We recommend that DFID significantly increase its emphasis on changing the social norms that drive violence against women and girls. In order to do this, the Department should undertake an assessment of both the implementation and impact of the Theory of Change, to see where the gaps lie. This process will also help identify the right strategy for addressing social norms, which will vary from country to country. DFID must also ensure it can monitor these changes. We recommend that it put in place systems to enable accurate tracking of the volume and nature of programming on gender equality and violence against women and girls. (Paragraph 14)**

**Agree**

DFID is working to address discriminatory social norms through a number of country programmes including in Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Nepal, Nigeria, OPTs, Pakistan, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. This includes a range of interventions including community conversations, working with men and boys, theatre, radio and other media campaigns. DFID also funds regional work on social norm change including work through the Southern African ‘making every voice count for gender equality programme’. DFID’s new £38m Voices for Change programme in Nigeria (over five years) will focus on the underlying social and cultural norms that discriminate and disadvantage women, including working with adolescent girls and young men to shift attitudes and behaviours to prevent violence against women and girls.

DFID’s strategy on changing social norms that drive violence against women and girls is based on our 2012 guidance, ‘A Practical Guide on Community Programming on Violence against Women and Girls’, which identifies a variety of techniques for implementation at the country level. DFID’s new Violence Against Women and Girls Research and Innovation Fund also includes a specific focus on understanding which strategies and interventions are most successful for preventing VAWG, including strategies that promote social norm change. We will ensure that new evidence on social norm change will directly inform related programming at the country level, and update related guidance notes as appropriate.

DFID recognises that in past years, DFID country programmes and the wider international community have focused efforts to address violence against women and girls on delivering effective response services, largely through security and justice programmes. DFID is therefore taking forward targeted work to ensure there is a significant increase in prevention strategies to deliver sustainable reductions in violence

against women and girls. This is demonstrated in both DFID's Theory of Change and specific focus on prevention in the new Violence Against Women and Girls Research and Innovation Fund.

Over the next year, DFID will update its mapping of violence against women and girls programmes against its Theory of Change to assess both its implementation and impact and to address any significant gaps in our country programming, particularly in relation to prevention strategies. We will also commission new work to develop a targeted methodology for data collection on violence against women and girls programme beneficiaries and to increase the number, quality and depth of our VAWG programme evaluations, with interim results expected by the end of 2014. These results will feed into the broader results framework for DFID's Strategic Vision for Girls and Women.

#### **Recommendations 3 and 4:**

**We were pleased to see that the need for multi-sector approaches to violence against women and girls is one of the guiding principles of DFID's Theory of Change. However, we recommend that DFID do more to ensure that sectoral programmes (other than security and justice programmes) address violence against women and girls. Health, education and humanitarian response are briefly mentioned in the Theory of Change, but more detailed analysis and guidance is required on how programmes in these sectors can best address violence against women and girls and how inter-sectoral responses will be implemented. This expertise exists, as the excellent evidence we received attests, and must be used. (Paragraph 18)**

**The water and sanitation sector is omitted entirely from both the Theory of Change and the accompanying guidance notes. This is a major omission, given data that demonstrates the significant risks of violence women face when walking to collect water or use sanitary facilities. We recommend that DFID review the Theory of Change and issue specific guidance on how programmes across key sectors—including health, education and water and sanitation—can and should address violence against women and girls. (Paragraph 19)**

#### **Agree**

DFID's Theory of Change for tackling violence against women and girls recognises that violence against women and girls programmes require co-ordination across a broad range of sectors to have long term impact on the lives of women and girls. We will update this guidance in the next 12 months to reflect new international evidence and lessons learnt across our programmes, where appropriate.

For example, in Ghana, DFID's Girls Unite and Participatory Approaches to Students' Success programme aims to address violence against women and girls through a range of sectors including supporting girls on school councils, supporting girls' and boys' clubs and addressing teenage pregnancy and reproductive health.

We will also ensure this update makes specific reference to the importance of water and sanitation programmes in reducing the vulnerability of women and girls to violence. DFID prioritises women and girls in our existing water and sanitation programmes, for instance by using women's membership of local water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) committees to ensure that their needs for safe facilities are met and their voices in local decision-making are strengthened.

A new DFID guidance note on addressing violence against women and girls in emergencies, due to be published in the autumn, will emphasise that violence against women and girls programmes require investments across all humanitarian sectors, including water and sanitation, health, food security, camp management, security, education, justice and economic development. For example, the guidance will refer to evidence that ensuring locks on latrines and the safe placement of water sources reduces the risk of violence against women and girls.

In addition, DFID has commissioned a series of 10 new guidance notes to be developed through the new Violence against Women and Girls Helpdesk over the next 3 years; we will ensure that addressing violence against women and girls across a range of sectoral programmes are prioritised in this new work.

#### **Recommendation 5:**

**We are pleased that DFID acknowledges the important role played by women's organisations at local, national and international levels to bring about changes in social norms, institutions and policies to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls. However, many women's organisations—especially small community-based organisations—often struggle to get adequate funding. We recommend that DFID review its funding channels and seek to increase funding to women's organisations to work on violence against women and girls at community, national and international levels. This should include both core and programme funding and ensure continuity and stability of funding over time. We recommend DFID explore funding specific women's funds for this purpose. We also recommend that DFID look at the way that it uses women's knowledge and expertise in-country to comment on and 'screen' DFID's gender policies. We understand that DFID uses formal gender advisory panels in some countries. We recommend that such formal gender panels are established in more countries. We also recommend that informal local panels are established so that local women can be involved in developing policy priorities, and to ensure that grassroots organisations secure the funding they need. (Paragraph 23)**

#### **Partially agree**

Centrally, DFID funds women's organisations through our Programme Partnership Agreements (PPA) including with Womankind Worldwide, Oxfam, and Action Aid. A number of DFID country offices also channel funding to smaller women's organisation within their bilateral programmes, including those in Afghanistan (Tawamandi), Bangladesh (Manusher Josho Foundation), Nepal (Social Inclusion Action Programme),

Pakistan (Gender Justice and Protection Programme), Uganda (UN Joint Programme on Gender), and Zimbabwe (National Child Sensitive Social Protection Programme) and we will work through our country offices to consider doing more in this area.

DFID's Strategic Vision for Girls and Women sets out our commitment to strengthen the enabling environment for girls and women. Critical to this is building the leadership and decision making capacity of girls and women. DFID's Leadership for Change programme is supporting girls and women across Africa and Asia to strengthen their leadership abilities and networks. DFID also funds grassroots work with men and boys to change attitudes and behaviour on gender equality and partner violence.

DFID agrees with the importance of drawing on women's and girls' expertise and knowledge in country to help inform our work, but recognises that the most effective ways to do this will vary depending on the country context. Approaches will continue to include formal panels of women and girls and of experts, such as those in Ethiopia, Ghana and Rwanda. They will also include regular, more informal networking and sharing with women and girls and others driving efforts for gender equality and to tackle violence. The use of participatory consultation processes will continue to enable the views of girls and women to be heard. DFID's business processes demand that (i) all business cases include social impact appraisals that covers the local context, opportunities and risks for women and girls and (ii) Annual Reviews include consultation with beneficiaries.

**Recommendation 6:**

**We were concerned about the impact of Ethiopia's Proclamation on Charities and Societies law on civil society organisations in the country, and particularly on their ability to work on gender-based violence (GBV). We commend DFID's decision in 2012 to commission a study to examine the impact of the proclamation on GBV-related services. We also commend the DFID Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Lynne Featherstone MP for raising the issue with Prime Minister Hailemariam. We hope that the Ethiopian Government will review the human rights implications of the law, and urge it to exempt DFID from the 2009 law on charities and societies, and, indeed to ensure that certain types of work on gender including violence against women and girls—can also be exempted. (Paragraph 27)**

**Partially agree**

DFID is not a charity or society, and as such its activities and funds are not directly governed by the Proclamation on Charities and Societies. However, DFID supports a range of charities and societies which are affected by this law. DFID is currently in dialogue with Government of Ethiopia about the possibility of amending the law to allow civil society organisations to engage in activities that prevent, reduce and respond to Harmful Traditional Practices, including Female Genital Mutilation/ Cutting.

**Recommendation 7:**

**We welcome DFID's new Research and Innovation Fund for violence against women and girls announced in November 2012. Unfortunately it looks unlikely that the research components will be activated until 2014. Whilst we understand the reasons for not rushing the tendering process, DFID needs to be mindful of getting the research fund up and running quickly. This is also true for programmes to address violence against women and girls more widely. DFID must have the milestones in place to ensure new programmes are introduced with a reasonable timeframe. (Paragraph 33)**

**Agree**

DFID's new £25m Violence against Women and Girls Research and Innovation Fund will generate ground-breaking evidence to transform violence against women and girls programming. The Fund will test out new prevention approaches and conduct rigorous evaluation of existing programmes across a range of country contexts, including conflict and humanitarian settings. This is a highly innovative programme designed to fill a critical evidence gap in a complex programming area.

Following the announcement of this Fund by the Secretary of State in November 2012, DFID undertook a detailed quality assurance review to ensure we deliver the most effective research design and best value for money. The tender was issued on 1 May 2013, and we expect contracts for the main two components to be in place by early December 2013. The timetable for the tender process is on schedule for delivery and in line with OJEU Guidelines and other research and development programmes that DFID commissions.

The tender process involves two stages: an initial assessment of expressions of interest, followed by an invitation to shortlisted bidders to develop a full tender proposal. Whilst this two stage process involves a relatively long timeframe, our experience shows that this often leads to a stronger pool of competitive suppliers. We are confident that the detailed planning and analysis that underpinned this tender process will result in the delivery of an internationally renowned research programme, the results of which that will make a real difference in the lives of women and girls around the world.

The effective uptake of results is a priority for the success of this programme, and we agree that evidence of "what works" and "what does not work" should be communicated throughout the course of the programme to directly related policy and programming.

Further response in relation to timeframes for violence against women and girls programming is addressed under recommendation 8 below.

**Recommendation 8:**

**However, there is a balance to be struck. Given the relatively limited evidence about 'what works' to prevent violence against women and girls in different contexts, it is important that the Department does not rush into large-scale violence against**

women and girls programming with unrealistic expectations about timeframes and results. Research into violence against women and girls, as well as programming, needs to have realistic timeframes, in recognition of the time needed to bring about and measure complex social change. We recommend that DFID take a lead internationally by investing in longer-term, flexible and phased programming involving piloting, integrated research and analysis, and gradual scale-up of programmes and evaluation. Programmes to tackle violence against women and girls should have a minimum 5-year timeframe and realistic results frameworks (including using interim and process indicators) in recognition that follow-up phases are likely to be needed and long-term impacts may only be realised after 10-plus years. (Paragraph 34)

### Agree

DFID's Theory of Change emphasises that coordinated interventions across multiple sectors and over multiple time-frames are more likely to have impact tackling violence against women and girls. DFID is committed to long-term approaches to preventing violence against women and girls in recognition that this requires complex social change, including changes in social norms. This commitment is demonstrated by the fact that DFID has five-year investments in violence against women and girls programming in 15 country offices.

DFID recognises that long-term outcomes to address violence against women and girls through complex social change can be extremely difficult to measure, but that this should not become a disincentive to ensuring new programmes are introduced in a reasonable timeframe. DFID's guidance on monitoring and evaluation for programming on violence against women and girls emphasises that programmes should consider short, medium and long-term outcomes to address this challenge.

DFID also recognises the importance of integrating research and analysis to inform programmes. The new VAWG Research and Innovation Fund will support research alongside DFID and other donor funded implementation programmes with the intent that learning from piloting, testing, and wider analysis of what enables programmes to work (or not work) can improve the operations and effectiveness of these programmes.

### Recommendation 9:

**We welcome DFID's announcement of £35 million for programming to "end female genital mutilation in one generation". If this aspiration is to be met, the £35 million funding must see rapid—but careful—investment. DFID's Business Case says that the NGO Tostan's approach on village empowerment, pioneered in Senegal, has probably shown the best results on the ground. Yet we have been told that it is too early to be sure that this approach is the most effective way to reduce FGM. We remind DFID of our earlier recommendation to adopt a phased and flexible approach to programming, and to build the evidence base as it works, rather than to rush into large-scale programming to address violence against women and girls**

**based on a single model where the evidence on alternative models of intervention is incomplete. (Paragraph 40)**

### **Agree**

We appreciate the committee's support for the new programme. We agree that the UK's support to efforts to end FGM/C should be undertaken with care, particularly given the sensitive nature of the issue, as well as based on the best available evidence. We also agree that no single approach will work in every context and that the programme will need to be flexible to respond to new evidence. We have included a major research component in the programme because of the importance of building the global evidence base to inform future policy and programming (not only by the UK but by all actors in this field). This is an integral part of the whole programme which, as set out in the business case, will have four elements: targeted work with communities, work to support enabling policy and legislation and its appropriate implementation, social change communications to build support for change at local, national and global levels, and research.

We also agree with the need for rapid investment. The time is right now to address FGM/C, following the UNGA resolution last December, increasing momentum within Africa to end the practice and rising global awareness of the issue.

The approach developed by the NGO Tostan in Senegal has shown promising results and is presented in the business case as an illustration of applying an understanding of social norms at community level. The DFID programme's support to community-level work will be implemented by the United Nations Joint Programme which works with a range of civil society partners on the ground, and we are encouraging them to diversify their partners further in programme countries.

Correction to para 37 of the report:

'It will also fund "social change communications" (including in the UK) and research'.

To clarify, the programme will not fund communications work in the UK. The social change communications component will work at local, national and global levels. It will also work strategically with diaspora groups in the UK to leverage change in their home countries.

On terminology:

[P20 footnote 44:

The terminology used to describe the practice varies. Within the UK Government, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Department of Health and Home Office use 'FGM' whilst DFID uses Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting. A witness (Efua Dorkenoo of NGO Equality Now, see Ev 71) called cutting "an apologetic term" and highlighted that many multilateral organisations—including the World Health Organisation, European Union, UN Women, Convention of the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination

against Women, Commission on the Status of Women, UN General Assembly and the African Union—and African women activists use the term FGM. We have decided to follow their lead and refer to the practice as female genital mutilation within this inquiry.]

The practice is known as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Female Genital Cutting (FGC) and (with decreasing usage) female ‘circumcision’. The term ‘cutting’ is sometimes used, particularly in international settings, to reflect understanding that the practice is not carried out with the intention of harming girls but because in communities where it is practised, they cannot be married – and would therefore be isolated and stigmatised – without it. This understanding is important in designing successful interventions to end the practice. The term is not intended to question that it is an extremely harmful practice. The term ‘mutilation’ is a purposefully non-neutral term used to describe the severe damage done by the practice and the fact that it is violence against women and girls, which violates girls’ and women’s human rights and bodily integrity. FGM is the term used in the UK and international negotiations. DFID uses FGM/C – which is consistent with the UN Joint Programme (UNICEF and UNFPA) – to reflect our respect for both of the above positions. Practising communities all have their own words for the practice. Ultimately, what is important is not to focus too much on language but to work together to end the practice.

#### **Recommendation 10:**

**We were shocked to discover that there are estimated to be 20,000 girls at risk of female genital mutilation within the UK. Whilst it is beyond our remit to comment on domestic policy, we believe that—as it stands—the UK’s credibility in calling to end the practice overseas is undermined by the failure to tackle the problem at home. Witnesses recommended that the UK must put aside political correctness and adopt a far more robust, cross-agency approach, where the police proactively track girls at risk of female genital mutilation and step in to prevent parents having the procedure performed on their daughter(s). We commend these recommendations and urge the Government to act upon them. We were appalled to discover that, despite 148 referrals of female genital mutilation cases in the past four years, police and social services do not place at-risk girls on the Child Protection Register. This must change. (Paragraph 45)**

#### **Partially agree**

The Government is clear Female Genital Mutilation is an abhorrent crime. It is child abuse and it is illegal. The Government has been equally clear that political or cultural sensitivities must not get in the way of preventing and uncovering this terrible form of criminal activity. The law in this country applies to absolutely everyone.

The Government agrees that FGM is a complex area and needs a coordinated response from a range of professionals – teachers, health professionals, social workers and police. This is why this government launched multi-agency practice guidelines in 2011 for front-line practitioners. The guidelines highlight the risk factors that teachers, nurses,

GPs, police officers and social workers should be looking out for during their work, and set out what action they should take.

In addition, a new NSPCC helpline was launched in June, in partnership with the Government and the Metropolitan Police Service. By 10 July, the helpline had received 43 calls, 16 of which have resulted in a child protection referral. We hope that this will lead to prosecutions, which will help to send out a clear message of the UK's zero tolerance on FGM. But the key to eliminating FGM will be behaviour change amongst practising communities, which is why community groups, local women's advocates and other non-governmental actors are also vital.

**Recommendation 11:**

**There is far greater scope for joint working across Government on tackling female genital mutilation overseas and in the UK, including through engagement with diaspora groups in the UK. We recommend publication of an up-to-date, binding document that requires all service providers—Departments of Health and Education, DFID, the FCO, Home Office, Government Equalities Office, the Metropolitan Police Service, Ministry of Justice, and the Crown Prosecution Service—to play their part. We draw these recommendations to the attention of the relevant select committees. (Paragraph 46)**

**Disagree**

Tackling FGM is already set out as a key commitment in the Government's 'The Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls: Action Plan 2013'. In capturing FGM within a wider approach to tackling VAWG, the Government is taking an integrated approach to tackling FGM which focuses on the guiding principles of prevention; provision of services for victims; partnership working; risk reduction and improved justice outcomes. The implementation of the cross Government action plan is monitored by the Violence Against Women and Girls Inter-Ministerial Group, which is chaired by the Home Secretary.

The joined-up approach that the Government has taken to tackle FGM has been successful in drawing together, coordinating and driving work from the Home Office, Foreign Office, Department for International Development, Ministry of Justice, Department for Education, Government Equalities Office and Department of Health. By looking beyond traditional departmental silos, we have made significant progress in raising awareness of FGM and supporting professionals to intervene.

**Recommendation 12:**

**We were impressed with DFID's Finote Hiwot programme, which is working to end child marriage in the Amhara region of Ethiopia. It is supporting vital community level work that is addressing social norms and helping girls, boys and their communities understand the implications of early marriage, including the serious consequences for maternal health and girls' schooling. We ask DFID to consider where it could roll out similar programmes, and to report back on this in its**

**response to this report. We also urge the UK Government to make a political commitment to ending child marriage internationally, as it has done with female genital mutilation. The two practices are linked, and—as with female genital mutilation—political leadership will be crucial to ending the practice. (Paragraph 51)**

#### **Agree**

DFID has several programmes in the pipeline with an explicit focus on early and forced marriage. In Yemen, DRC and Zambia, new programmes with an explicit focus on early and forced marriage are in the preliminary stages of development. In addition to this there are programmes in Nigeria and Kenya which will look specifically at supporting adolescent girls and will include a long-term focus on early and forced marriage.

DFID is also developing research programmes on early and forced marriage and working with Girls not Brides to develop a Global Theory of Change. This is a vital step to better understand what is needed to end early and forced marriage and to help galvanise resources and commitments internationally.

DFID is committed to doing all we can to end early and forced marriage. The Government was delighted to see a target to ‘end child marriage’ in the High Level Panel’s (HLP) Report on the Post-2015 Framework. We are now focussed on building a strong coalition with others to ensure that HLP language and illustrative goals/targets are reaffirmed and/or advanced.

#### **Recommendation 13:**

**We were pleased to see that DFID has recently commissioned a review of evidence on partner violence, given that domestic violence is the most widespread form of violence against women and girls suffered by women and girls worldwide. It is important that DFID’s programmes seek to tackle domestic violence, and that they are targeted at household level, given that social norms and behaviours are largely formed here. The review also indicates that DFID should seek better to integrate violence with its work with children and social protection programmes. In its response to this report, DFID should report back on its plans for programming in this area in follow-up to the review. (Paragraph 55)**

#### **Agree**

DFID recognises that intimate partner violence (“domestic violence”) is the most prevalent form of VAWG and that globally, at least one in three women is beaten or sexually abused by an intimate partner in her lifetime. DFID is scaling up its work to address intimate partner violence across a number of our programmes.

For example, it is envisaged that a substantial part of the new £25m VAWG Research and Innovation Fund will be directed at addressing both intimate partner violence and sexual violence, given the large scale and extensive consequences of these offenses. In conflict and humanitarian contexts, the Fund is also likely to focus on other forms of

physical and sexual violence, such as human trafficking, transactional sex, and sexual exploitation and abuse, depending on evidence of what forms of violence are most prevalent in different contexts.

In South Africa, where an estimated 42% of men admit to committing violence against their partner, DFID has prioritised preventing all forms of gender-based violence, including intimate partner violence and is working with partners to deliver an innovative new £4 million programme. By working at three levels (national, province-wide and community level), this programme aims to support government to address the root causes of violence and mobilise communities for prevention. This includes support for child-friendly schools and youth clubs, outreach through weekly radio broadcasts, and working with men and boys and traditional leaders to champion change.

DFID-supported social protection programmes vary in objective and therefore design, according to differing needs and context at the national level. Where appropriate, violence prevention is integrated with work with children and social protection programmes. For example in Zimbabwe, the DFID-supported Child Protection Fund combines cash transfers targeted at labour-constrained and food-poor households with a package of child protection support. DFID is also conscious of the risk of intra-household conflict as a result of resource transfers into households. It seeks to minimise this risk through context specific design and implementation, and robust monitoring and evaluation of its programmes.

DFID will set out new guidance on integrating violence against women and girls and child and social protection programmes as part of the series of 10 new guidance notes to be developed through the new Violence against Women and Girls Helpdesk over the next 3 years.

**Recommendation 14:**

**We welcome the Secretary of State for International Development’s Call to Action to address violence against women and girls in humanitarian situations, and her decision to hold a summit in Autumn 2013. There is emerging evidence that tolerance of violence against women and girls makes countries more prone to conflict. This makes tackling the acceptance of violence against women and girls all the more important. We repeat our earlier recommendation that DFID significantly increase its focus on social norms. Further, whilst the focus on sexual violence in conflict is important, it must also be recognised that women and girls also suffer from many other forms of violence in conflict and humanitarian settings—including higher rates of intimate partner violence, child abuse, and child marriage. DFID should ensure that any new programming resulting from its Call to Action is sufficiently broad to include the full range of abuses that women and girls experience in crisis settings and that it addresses prevention in addition to response, by tackling the root causes of violence—including underlying gender inequalities and discriminatory social norms. (Paragraph 63)**

### **Agree**

An explicit objective of the Call to Action on violence against women and girls in emergencies, and the associated High-Level Event to be held later this year, is to draw attention to all forms of violence against women and girls, in both natural disasters and conflict-related emergencies.

At this event, the UK will seek commitments from UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent and from key donors to ensure the fulfilment of existing commitments and mandates relating to (i) reduction of risk for women and girls, (ii) prevention of all forms of gender-based violence and (iii) provision of comprehensive services to survivors of violence.

Representatives of key donors and agencies will be encouraged to prioritise these activities as life-saving interventions from the first phase of an emergency and to explore further, innovative programming to reduce risks for women and girls affected by crisis and respond to their needs. This includes, where possible, addressing underlying gender inequalities and discriminatory social norms.

### **Recommendation 15:**

**Levels of violence against women and girls, especially sexual violence, are particularly high during humanitarian emergencies. Yet the evidence shows that despite international guidelines—vital preventative and emergency responses to violence against women and girls are not accorded enough priority by donors at the onset of humanitarian crises. DFID must make tackling violence against women and girls a central part of its humanitarian programming, highlighting the importance of focusing on violence against women and girls in the immediate onset of an emergency, and advocating the delivery of lifesaving services (such as sexual and reproductive healthcare) to survivors of violence as well as preventative measures such as safely situated water and sanitation facilities, firewood patrols, distributing stoves and the creation of safe spaces. (Paragraph 69)**

### **Agree**

The UK Government's humanitarian policy makes a commitment to preventing and responding to violence against women and girls in emergencies.

DFID has committed to ensuring assessments of violence against women and girls are undertaken for all new and existing UK humanitarian programmes and appropriate action taken. We are currently rolling out guidance to support field staff to implement this commitment. All humanitarian advisers received a half-day training on violence against women and girls in emergencies in June 2013; technical guidance for advisers is in final stages of drafting; a help-desk function is now in place, from which advisers can request specialist programming support on violence against women and girls in emergencies.

To build the global evidence base on what works in addressing violence against women and girls in conflict-affected and humanitarian contexts DFID has allocated £5m from the new £25m Violence against Women and Girls Research and Innovation Fund.

We agree that the delivery of life saving services as well as the preventative services mentioned, are critical. We recognise that the provision of sexual and reproductive health services in humanitarian settings has often been inadequate. We are committed to doing more to support improved sexual and reproductive health services through our wider humanitarian work.

The UK support to the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Jordan provides survivors of sexual and gender based violence with psychosocial support and medical referral services in IRC supported clinics, reproductive health services for women and girls, cash assistance and dignity kits for women. We are also supporting UNICEF in Jordan to provide 15,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian children and their caregivers (12,000 children and 3000 caregivers) living in host communities with access to appropriate psychosocial and other child protection services through the creation of 16 child and family protective places. We are supporting UNICEF to establish 16 Community Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPCs) in host communities to identify and prevent child protection and gender based violence cases, including early marriage.

**Recommendation 16:**

**DFID must also get tough with multilateral aid agencies which, we hear, continue to ignore basic measures for safeguarding women in refugee camps and other displacement sites. DFID must send a clear message to the major relief agencies that its funding of them is contingent on violence against women and girls being pushed to the top of the list of emergency measures in crisis response. DFID should also include gender and violence against women and girls as key strategic priorities for the reform processes of UN humanitarian and relief agencies. We recommend that accountability to gender-based violence guidelines should be key criteria for DFID when channelling and disbursing humanitarian funds, including via pooled funds. We recommend that DFID include violence against women and girls in its next multilateral aid review. (Paragraph 70)**

**Agree**

The central objective of the high-level event on violence against women and girls in emergencies being held by the Secretary of State in the autumn is to mobilise global leadership—including from the humanitarian agencies—to accelerate change within the humanitarian system, so that prevention of and response to violence against women and girls is prioritised from the first phase of an emergency as a life-saving intervention.

DFID is working to ensure that multilateral humanitarian agencies prioritise actions to prevent gender based violence and this includes plans to incorporate this into some of our core funding agreements with agencies. In addition, within DFID's humanitarian

response funding guidelines for NGOs, DFID asks partners to assess whether the risks of violence against women and girls has been identified and addressed.

We are in the process of reviewing our methodology for the next MAR. We are working with other donors to learn lessons to improve the assessment of our gender component. We will explore how best to include violence against women and girls in order to support multilaterals in addressing this issue more effectively.

**Recommendation 17:**

**We welcome the Foreign Secretary's Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative. As the Initiative progresses from its initial inception phase, we recommend a broadening in scope to include: first, more emphasis on prevention (rather than response); secondly, a greater focus on survivor support services in addition to work on formal investigations and prosecutions; and finally, ensuring a link to wider work on different forms of violence against women and girls, addressing root causes of violence. We recommend that, in the Government's Response to this report, it sets out how it might broaden the Initiative in the future to include these points. (Paragraph 75)**

**Partially agree**

The focus of the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI) is to tackle the culture of impunity for sexual violence committed in conflict and to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions.

The Foreign Secretary has said on a number of occasions that this is the area where there is the most glaring lack of political will and where an increased effort by the UK, using all its diplomatic muscle is therefore essential. PSVI focuses on improving the capacity of national institutions to deliver justice. It does this by building support for a more coherent international approach and by providing the tools required to conduct rigorous investigations.

We believe that the deterrent effect of prosecuting perpetrators and supporting the development of visible and effective judicial systems is an important aspect of prevention. Three of the five UK Team of Expert deployments to date have focused on prevention, including scoping missions to support national reforms and training for national militaries. We will continue to strengthen our focus on upstream prevention through the Team of Experts and increasingly focus on building national capacity.

Other longer term developmental work to address root causes and behavioural change is not an explicit part of PSVI. However, FCO fully recognise that DFID's work on this issue is essential and mutually supportive and work closely with DFID to maximise synergies. We recognise that attitudinal change and shifting social norms are an important part of the change that is needed to address violence against women and girls.

The G8 Declaration on PSVI sets out a number of specific commitments related to DFID country programming, including:

- Ensuring national security sector and justice reform programmes in conflict settings are designed to address and reduce VAWG;
- Increasing funding to prevention and response to VAWG from the first phase of humanitarian emergencies; and
- Ensuring UN agencies and others meet agreed standards on VAWG in humanitarian emergencies.

DFID is leading on implementing these commitments. A new guidance note on addressing VAWG in security and justice programmes will be launched in September to help country programmes with implementation. See the answer to recommendation 18 for further details.

The commitments to improving international coherence and to providing increased levels of financial support to protect the most vulnerable in conflict and humanitarian crisis are clearly reflected in the objectives of the Call to Action to address Violence Against Women and Girls in Emergencies announced by Justine Greening on 4 March. DFID and FCO are committed to working very closely on the Call to Action high level event in the autumn so that both departments fully maximise the opportunities provided by our complementary agendas in this area of work. DFID and FCO officials meet weekly to review progress on the commitments and to prepare for the high level event. DFID is developing a shared cross Whitehall communications plan on the Call to Action to ensure that our external messaging is a clear and consistent.

The UK Government's broader work on Violence Against Women and Girls overseas (VAWG) – led by DFID – supports a broad range of survivor support services, depending on country context. For example, in the DRC DFID's contribution has ensured that survivors of sexual violence receive support, including medical, psycho-social support and economic reintegration assistance.

In the context of the Initiative FCO have also supported since 2011, the International Criminal Court's (ICC's) Trust Fund for Victims with £1.5million to directly address and respond to victims' physical, psychological, or material needs. The development of the new International Protocol on the investigation and documentation of sexual violence in conflict also takes a survivor centred approach and has specific chapters dedicated to the issue of protecting victims and witnesses.

**Recommendation 18:**

**Access to justice is vital for women and girls suffering violence, including access to legal advice. We credit DFID for seeking to provide access to justice for 10 million women by 2015. The PSVI has concentrated on prosecutions, but in addition it is important to talk about ways of facilitating women's access to justice. We urge the UK Government to ensure that the PSVI supports women to access justice as well as**

**increasing prosecutions. We look forward to the forthcoming publication of DFID's Theory of Change on using security and justice programming to tackle violence against women and girls, and recommend this document spells out in detail DFID's approach to this crucial workstream. (Paragraph 76)**

### **Agree**

The UK Government strongly agrees that access to justice is vital for women and girls suffering violence. DFID is currently on track to meet its target of helping 10m women and girls to access security and justice services by 2015. This target demonstrates a strong commitment to putting the interests of women and girls at the heart of our security and justice programming.

DFID's forthcoming guidance on Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls in Security and Justice Programmes will support DFID country offices to improve our programming in this area through establishing a set of principles and best practice examples.

This guidance will also provide a practical tool to support the UK in delivering related commitments in the G8 Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict. Notably, it will support addressing VAWG in security and justice programming in both conflict and non-conflict settings; will include a broad definition of VAWG, including but not limited to sexual violence; and will promote the full participation of women.

UN Security Council Resolution 2106, adopted on 24 June and led by the PSVI, is helpful in this instance as it underlines "the important roles that civil society organisations, including women's organisations, and networks can play in enhancing community-level protection against sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and supporting survivors in accessing justice and reparations".

### **Recommendation 19:**

**It is imperative that the UK Government stands by its commitment to sustain momentum on the PSVI beyond the 2013 G8 Presidency. However, to be taken forward effectively, the Initiative must include a clearer articulation of DFID's role so that the Department's expertise is fully utilised. The FCO, whilst providing admirable leadership, does not have the mandate or knowledge to undertake programming to address violence against women and girls and delivery of women's services on the ground—it is DFID that possesses this expertise. We anticipate that the DFID Secretary of State's recent 'Call to Action' and her planned autumn summit on violence against women and girls in humanitarian settings will provide opportunities for embedding the PSVI within DFID's work. We recommend that, in its response, the Government spell out specific details of DFID's future involvement in the PSVI, including details of budgets and staffing. (Paragraph 78)**

**Agree**

DFID is leading on the implementation of several PSVI commitments, as detailed in the response to recommendation 17. DFID's leadership in these areas will ensure the momentum on the PSVI is maintained beyond the 2013 G8 Presidency through long-term country programming, building the global evidence base through the research and innovation fund, and international leadership through the Call to Action.

DFID's PSVI-related programmes will be part of wider multi-sectoral programmes and are therefore not easily disaggregated to provide details of budgets. A senior DFID staff member was seconded to the PSVI team last August. DFID are now recruiting to extend the secondment.

**Recommendation 20:**

**We recommend that the UK Government continue to lobby at the UN for peacekeepers to be properly trained in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, and for any peacekeepers that commit abuses to be held to account. Further, we believe that the UK should also strengthen the training on violence against women and girls it provides its own troops, and to the peacekeeping forces that the MOD helps train. In the reply to this report, the Government should state what steps the Secretary of State for Defence is taking to deliver effective training in respect of violence against women and girls. (Paragraph 79)**

**Partially agree**

The UK Government continues to lobby at the UN for peacekeepers to be properly trained in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, and for any peacekeepers that commit abuses to be held to account. UNSCR 2106 on Sexual Violence in Conflict was adopted as part of the UK's Presidency of the Security Council in June 2013. This resolution, through the UK's leadership, calls upon the Secretary General to ensure comprehensive gender training including on sexual and gender based violence, which also takes account of the distinct needs for children, for all relevant peacekeeping, policing and civilian personnel. The same resolution also requests that the Secretary General continues to strengthen efforts to implement the policy of zero tolerance on sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel and urges concerned Member States to ensure full accountability, including prosecutions, in cases of such conduct involving their nationals.

MOD understands that protection of women and girls is an important issue. Targeting of the civilian population is prohibited under international humanitarian law, which separates civilians and combatants and contains specific protections for women and children. Training delivered to the Armed Forces through Mandatory Annual Training Tests reinforces this principle. MOD notes the recommendation to strengthen military training and, while MOD has not been presented with clear evidence that training needs to be strengthened now, remains fully supportive of the underlying principle. Military training therefore remains under continual review.

MOD supports the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) that addresses women, peace and security issues including violence against women and girls. Defence policy implementation on UNSCR 1325 is detailed in the UK National Action Plan, in which the MOD has a number of actions. Actions include the development of doctrine, the provision of cultural (including gender) advice for the Armed Forces, military equality policy and leadership training of female officer cadets at the Afghan National Army Officer Academy.

**Recommendation 21:**

**Certain donor agencies continue to restrict the use of their funds for the purposes of abortions for women raped during conflict. DFID has stated that the lifesaving care promised under the Geneva Conventions may sometimes include the provision of abortions to women raped in conflict if deemed medically necessary. However, this position has yet to be incorporated into the relevant DFID policies. We recommend that DFID issue a clear policy statement spelling out the extent and limits of its support for abortion for women raped in war. We also recommend that DFID engage in serious dialogue with donors that restrict the use of their funds for abortion—notably the US Government—to ensure that women raped in humanitarian conflict settings can access the services they need, including abortion. DFID should work with its counterparts in the US, and with agencies affected by the US ban, such as the ICRC, to ensure that women raped in humanitarian conflict settings can access the services they need, including abortion. (Paragraph 82)**

**Agree**

On access to abortion services, UK policy is clear: UK aid can be used to provide safe abortion care where necessary, and to the extent allowed by national laws. US regulations on the provision of abortion services have no influence on UK funding. In conflict situations UK-funded medical care is provided through humanitarian organisations. These organisations work according to humanitarian principles including the provision of non-discriminatory aid, provided according to need and need alone. We continue to have good dialogue with US counterparts. The UK remains one of only a handful of international donors willing to tackle this highly sensitive issue.

**Recommendation 22:**

**We support DFID’s continued core funding of UN Women, which is an important way of ensuring predictability and continuity at the country level, especially with regard to the regular funding it enables UN Women to give to women’s organisations. We agree with UN Women’s suggestion that DFID should establish a longer-term, closer collaboration on violence against women and girls with the agency, including the development of a joint violence against women and girls strategy. This would help DFID to capitalise on the technical expertise and country level experience on violence against women and girls within UN Women, at a time when its own ability to employ extra staff is limited. (Paragraph 87)**

**Partially agree**

DFID welcomes the Committee's recognition of UK support to UN Women. We note the recommendations about closer collaboration. We agree there is a need to ensure that we maximise our overall impact, taking into account our respective strengths, reach and areas of expertise.

Looking ahead, we are in the process of completing an update to the 2011 Multilateral Aid Review assessment for UN Women and will confirm future levels of core funding to UN Women once that process is complete. We note that UN Women expect to have a new Executive Director and an updated strategic plan for 2014-2017 in the coming months. In our view, that would be the most appropriate moment for considering whether there need to be further changes in how we work together.

**Recommendation 23:**

**We are pleased that DFID, together with the Government Equalities Office and the FCO, played an active role in securing what was generally considered a positive outcome to the UN Commission on the Status of Women earlier this year (CSW 57). We urge the UK Government to now focus on following up the event. Key priorities should be to support implementation of conclusions, particular at country level, and to engage in early preparatory work for CSW 58 in 2014, which will focus on the post-2015 framework to replace the MDGs. Whilst we have not had time to carry out a detailed analysis of the report of the High Level Panel (HLP) on Post-2015, we were very pleased to note that its "illustrative goal framework" includes a stand-alone gender goal. We very much welcome the inclusion of the targets to end violence against women and prevent child marriage. We were also pleased to see that the HLP heeded our calls for gender equality to be integrated across all of the goals. We urge the UK Prime Minister and Secretary of State for International Development to push for these "illustrative goals and targets" to be retained in the final post-2015 framework at all costs. (Paragraph 93)**

**Agree**

We agree that it is vital that agreements reached at CSW 57 are implemented. DFID is working to do this through our country programmes and international advocacy. We are also engaging in early preparatory work for CSW 58. The UK supports a standalone goal on gender equality and girls' and women's empowerment as well as mainstreaming these issues throughout the goals. The UK is pleased with the illustrative goal and targets in the HLP's report. The standalone goal covers economic, social and political empowerment, going well beyond Millennium Development Goal 3 (MDG3) in its scope. Illustrative targets include tough political issues such as violence against girls and women, child marriage and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). There is a radical commitment to disaggregate data for all targets by social and economic groups, and to only consider targets as 'achieved' if they are met for all these groups (including girls and women).

DFID is building a strong coalition with others to ensure that gender equality features prominently in the framework that is eventually agreed by UN member states. Our objective is to secure a strong message on these themes that matches or goes beyond the ambition of the High Level Panel. We recognise that we are in the early stages of the UN process and anticipate extensive consultation and negotiation in advance of the framework being finalised.

**Recommendation 24:**

**We welcome the UK Government’s establishment of the role of Ministerial Champion for Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Overseas, the first of its kind internationally. The role offers the chance to improve policy coherence across departments—especially DFID, the FCO and the MOD—and to reinforce the UK’s international strategy on violence against women and girls. However, in order to do this the role must be properly resourced. We recommend the creation of a small unit, adequately staffed, and the introduction of an annual Parliamentary reporting cycle, that together will formalise the role and enhance its strength. (Paragraph 97)**

**Partially agree**

We are grateful for the Committee’s support of the work of the UK’s Ministerial Champion for Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Overseas. In this role, Lynne Featherstone is driving forward international progress towards eliminating violence against women and girls and coordinating activity and messaging on violence against women and girls across HMG.

The role is supported by a cross-Whitehall steering group, chaired by DFID, with representatives from FCO, MoD, Home Office and the Government Equalities Office. DFID has embedded support to the Champion role within its violence against women and girls team and increased staffing to coordinate this work. Staffing levels to support the role will be kept under review by DFID, for as long as the role remains in the department. Should the role move to another department in the future, the support mechanisms will need to be reviewed across government.

We agree that regular reporting will be valuable to update parliamentarians on the Ministerial Champion role and work across Government to tackle violence against women and girls. We will introduce a cycle of quarterly written statements to Parliament on this issue from autumn 2013

**Recommendation 25:**

**We believe that, in order to sustain its impressive international leadership on violence against women and girls, DFID must address its staffing and knowledge base. DFID should keep the both the size, and the location of its violence against women and girls team, under review to ensure that its resources are appropriately matched to the increasing focus on violence against women and girls within the Department. DFID should consider re-activating its Gender Equality Action Plan—dropped in 2010—as a useful tool for ensuring that staff across the organisation in**

**Headquarters and country offices have strong knowledge and capacities to work on gender and issues connected with violence against women and girls. (Paragraph 102)**

**Partially agree**

DFID will keep the size and the location of its violence against women and girls team – and its technical capacity more widely - under review to ensure that its resources are appropriately matched to the increasing focus on violence against women and girls within the Department.

DFID does not have any plans to reinstate the GEAP. DFID's Gender Equality Action Plan ended, rather than was dropped, in 2010. A review was carried out and critical lessons were used to inform the subsequent Strategic Vision for Girls and Women (2011-2015).

The Strategic Vision has elevated the importance of delivering transformational changes in the lives of girls and women and has prioritised the prevention of violence against women and girls as one of DFID's core priorities for achieving gender equality. Delivering the Strategic Vision is one of the priorities of DFID's current Business Plan.

Every office reports on its delivery of relevant results. These are captured alongside relevant results delivered through multinational organisations and used to report progress against the targets in the Strategic Vision in both the DFID Annual Report and Annual Strategic Vision Progress Report. Central coordination mechanisms oversee delivery of the Strategic Vision across the Department, led and championed by a Director General, reporting to DFID's Executive Management Committee. Staff, whether technical experts or others, continue to develop their skills and knowledge and to share, including through a series of linked internal 'themesites,' regular updates from central teams, mechanisms for sharing expertise across the Department, and the addition of specific support on violence against women and girls. We are currently reviewing what could be strengthened as we seek to step up our efforts further.

**Recommendation 26:**

**We welcome DFID's efforts to expand its technical capacity on violence against women and girls via the new helpdesk, but this is no substitute for strengthening the in-house capacity of staff. It is especially important to increase the capacity of country programme staff, who are responsible for the actual implementation of programmes to address violence against women and girls. Training and guidance must go beyond box-ticking to be a real priority for all DFID staff. We agree with witnesses that DFID should consider a minimum training on violence against women and girls before staff can be deployed overseas. (Paragraph 103)**

**Partially agree.**

DFID prioritises the strengthening of knowledge and skills of all staff, and the professional development of its technical specialists, including those working in country offices. This includes skills in women's and girls' empowerment and gender equality, and tackling violence against women and girls.

Key technical staff are recruited for their relevant knowledge and skills; for example, new Social Development advisers are explicitly tested for competencies in Gender including Violence Against Women programming at their Assessment Centre. Opportunities for both continued professional development and lesson learning across Country Offices in these areas are actively promoted and encouraged.

Before deployment, all new advisers regardless of specialism, receive an introductory training session in Gender and the Strategic Vision.

Skills are built through different approaches. When surveyed in 2011, staff indicated a strong demand for programming information and lesson sharing in order to better deliver the Strategic Vision. This continues to be actioned through a series of linked internal 'themesites,' regular updates from central teams, mechanisms for sharing expertise across the Department, and the addition of specific technical support on violence against women and girls.

As part of our efforts to further step up our delivery of the Strategic Vision across the Department, including on violence against women and girls, we are currently reviewing what additional efforts might be required. This includes furthering the skills of technical advisers leading the programmes which need to build in action against violence (e.g. health, humanitarian, governance, conflict, water, education), and other programme staff.



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