

Painting by Santos Medina, 1997



---

**BRIDGING  
RESEARCH  
& ACTION  
FOR CHANGE**

---

The Global  
Women's Institute

---

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

---

---

## The George Washington University's Global Women's Institute is a bold initiative at a premier academic institution.

---



Photo by CARE/Morgana Wingard

Since our launch in 2012, the Global Women's Institute has brought together world-class faculty, researchers, students, practitioners, activists, donors and policymakers to focus on the most critical issues facing women and girls today. We have produced internationally recognized research that activists and policymakers around the world are utilizing to bring about social change. We are supporting the next generation of leaders as they contribute to greater gender equality and make a real difference in the lives of women and girls at home and abroad.

As we strive to ensure that all women can fulfill their potential, our paramount concern has been to offer evidence, education and action so that women and girls can lead safe and productive lives, free from violence—here on campus and around the world. Violence against women and girls happens in every country and is devastating for women and families, destructive for communities and detrimental to the security and prosperity of nations.

In two decades, much has been accomplished globally to improve awareness about why advancing gender equality and ending violence against women and girls are critical priorities for leaders around the world. In 1995 at the United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing, stopping violence against women seemed like a radical goal when activists worldwide united to proclaim that "women's rights are human rights." At the time, there was virtually no reliable evidence to persuade governments to act. Since then, researchers have partnered with activists to produce hundreds of rigorous studies revealing that one in three women around the world will be beaten, raped or otherwise abused during her lifetime. As a result of this work, for the first time the newly adopted UN Sustainable Development Goals include a stand-alone target on ending violence against women and girls with corresponding indicators. The task before us now is to translate these goals into concrete actions and measurable impact.

At GWI we believe that evidence and numbers matter, but so do the individual stories behind the numbers. We are continually inspired by the brave women and men who say NO to violence in their communities and in their own lives. We are committed to standing with these courageous human rights defenders by carrying out research that asks the right questions, that protects the safety and dignity of participants and that provides tools to strengthen advocacy for social change.

We are proud to be a university-wide initiative with a strong international network of leaders who are committed to advancing gender equality globally. Working with our partners on campus, in Washington and around the world, we are expanding our reach and catalyzing change. In just five years, we have come a long way. Working together, we are confident that we can achieve so much more.

*Mary Ellsberg*

**MARY ELLSBERG**  
Founding Director



# WHO WE ARE

The Global Women's Institute (GWI) envisions a world where women and girls have equal rights and opportunities as men and boys and are free of discrimination and any form of violence or coercion.

GWI advances gender equality through research, education and action that can be used to bring about change. By strengthening the global knowledge base on gender issues and being a catalyst for change, we make a difference in the lives of women at home and abroad.

As a university-wide initiative located in the nation's capital, GWI is well positioned to convene faculty and students with local and international researchers, practitioners, activists, donors and policymakers and to prepare the next generation of leaders who will improve conditions for women and girls globally.

“ I've seen firsthand how GWI brings together the experts of today and the young leaders of tomorrow to make lasting change. The Global Women's Institute dares to engage with the difficult conversations and foremost gender issues facing our country and world. ”

**Zinhle Essamuah**  
*GW Graduate Student*

## RESEARCH

We strengthen the case for change by producing quality research, developing a strong knowledge base about the causes of violence and gender inequality and identifying effective solutions to improve conditions for women and girls.

## EDUCATION

We instill change by contributing deep expertise, creating opportunities for learning and tools for training and guiding a new generation to be leaders for gender equality on campus and around the world.

## ACTION

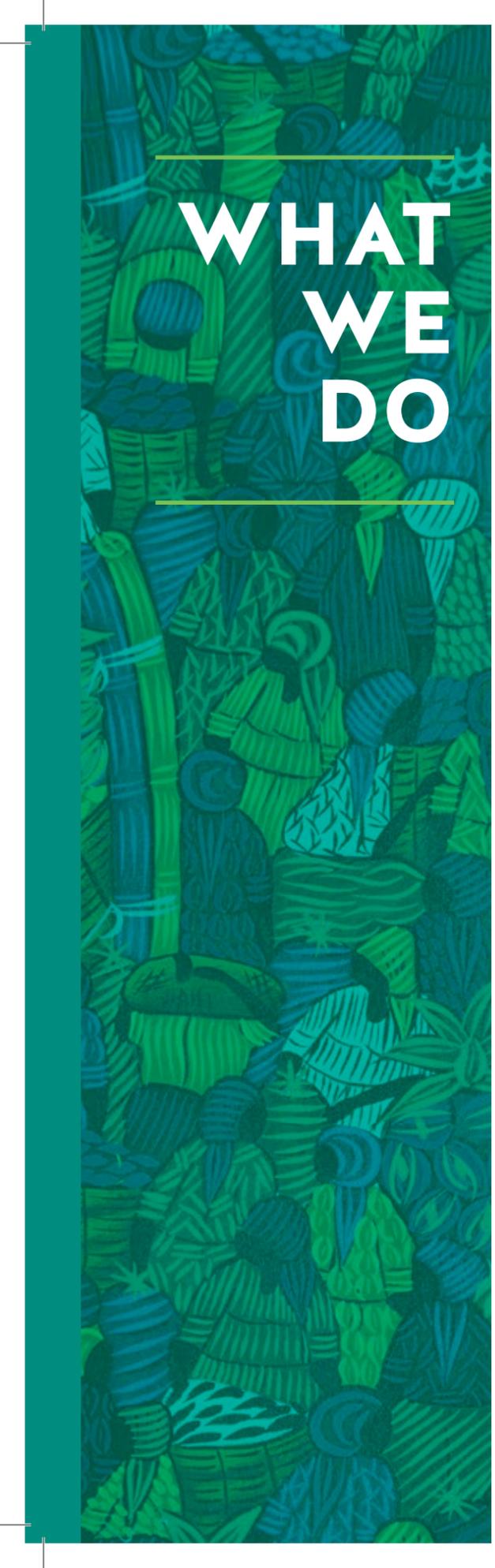
We promote change by standing with social movements and jointly creating evidence to shape policies, effective programming and smart investments that advance gender equality globally.

## CHANGE

We make change happen by identifying and promoting successful approaches, creating better methodologies, enhancing tools and adapting proven programs for use in more regions of the world.



# HOW WE WORK



# WHAT WE DO

**GWI is recognized as a leading global research institution on violence against women and girls.** We find what works and explain why it matters. We believe that research is not an end in itself but is the foundation of well-informed actions that produce positive social change.

**We carried out a groundbreaking comprehensive global review of interventions to prevent violence against women and girls.** The review reached an influential global audience when *The Lancet*, a premier medical journal, published the findings in a special issue. One very significant finding showed that evidence on reducing violence against women and girls is skewed towards high-income countries (80 percent of the studies came from countries representing less than 6 percent of the world's population) with these evaluations focusing mainly on responses to violence instead of prevention. Despite the shortcomings, our research identified several promising programs that measurably reduced violence. Effective models had common elements: most engaged women and also men, addressed underlying gender inequalities, involved community mobilization, and transformed social norms. The authors of *The Lancet* issue produced a *Call to Action* with specific policy recommendations for violence prevention.

“Across different forms of violence, effective programs have common characteristics: they are participatory, engage multiple stakeholders, support critical discussion about gender relationships and the acceptability of violence and support greater communication and shared decision-making among family members, as well as non-violent behavior.”

Mary Ellsberg et. al.,  
*The Lancet*

## INTEGRATE VIOLENCE PREVENTION INTO GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

We used the evidence from *The Lancet* to help incorporate promising approaches to violence prevention in other fields. GWI, with the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the International Center for Research on Women, produced a set of Resource Guides on sector-specific approaches—such as law, justice, citizen security, disaster risk management, education, finance and health—spelling out how to prevent violence and integrate quality services for women and girls.

## ENGAGE WITH GOVERNMENT LEADERS ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

We maintain a visible presence at national and international forums where high-level government officials decide on global priorities, such as the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, the World Bank, the U.S. Congress and the White House. In its first five years, GWI organized or co-sponsored more than 50 public events with outside organizations and facilitated the participation of many student groups.

## ADAPT AND SCALE SUCCESSFUL APPROACHES

We are helping to scale up and adapt successful approaches for changing social norms to end violence against women and girls. For example, SASA! is a highly successful community-based violence prevention model created by Raising Voices in Uganda. GWI is working with Beyond Borders and with local immigrant and refugee communities to adapt and evaluate the success of SASA! in diverse settings from the Washington D.C. area to Haiti.

## COLLABORATE WITH AND EDUCATE LEADERS OF THE NEXT GENERATION

We collaborate across the George Washington University campus to teach courses on how to conduct rigorous and safe research on violence against women and on advocacy techniques and approaches for advancing gender equality.

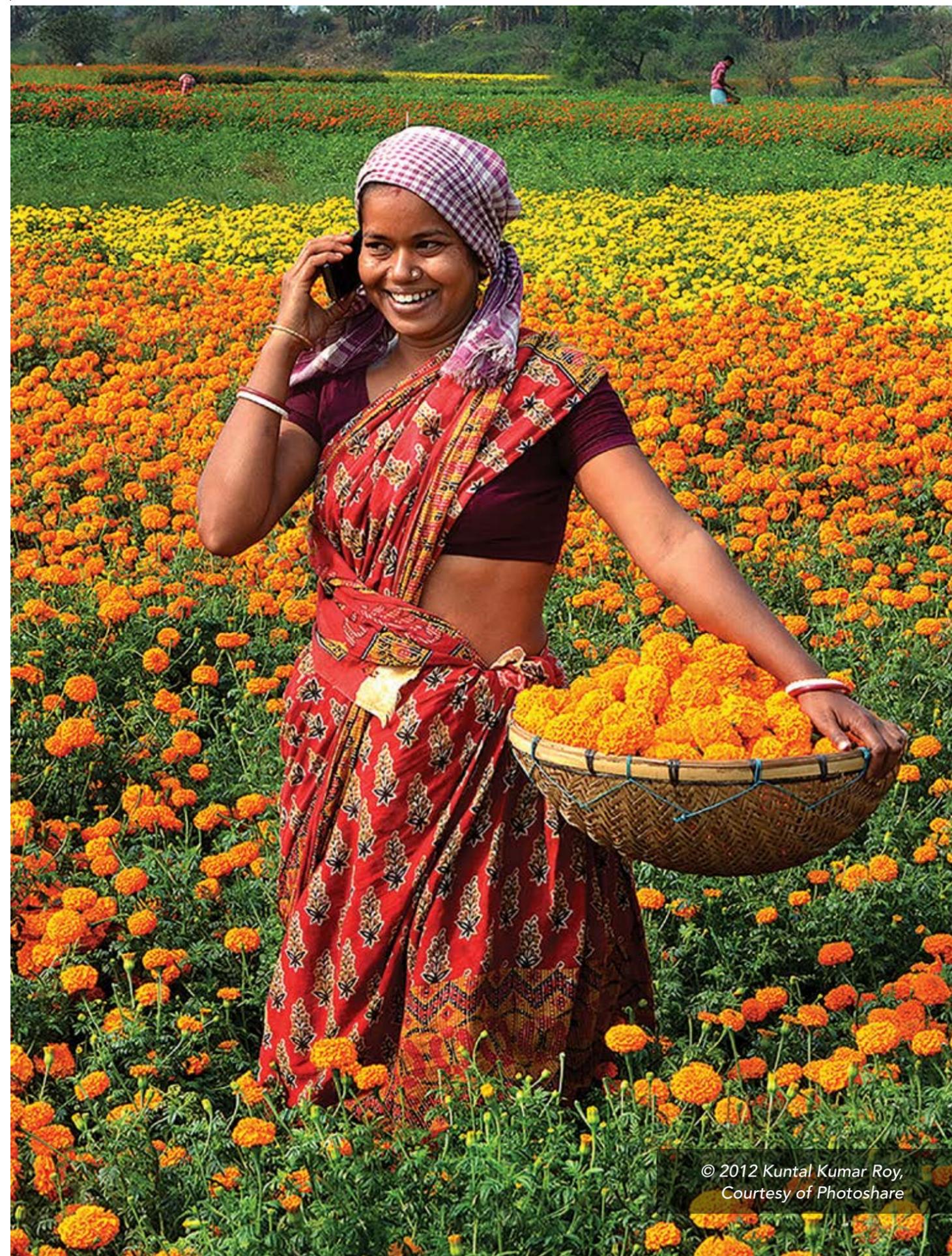
## SHARE & PROMOTE COMMUNICATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE IN OUR GLOBAL COMMUNITIES

GWI is now the proud steward of the Communications X-Change, a global Internet-based platform for sharing communication materials that was created by Futures Without Violence with support from the Avon Foundation. The X-Change is an innovative approach for building a stronger worldwide movement and sharing local initiatives designed to reduce violence against women and girls, promote gender equality and change social norms. The platform has over 1,500 submissions from more than 85 countries, including campaign materials, videos and mobile apps. Promoting discourse and sharing expertise internationally is critical to ending violence against women and girls in communities globally.

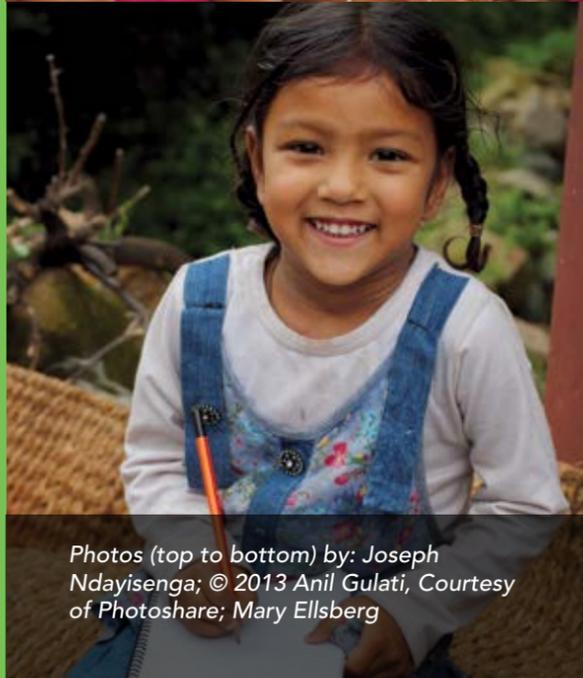
To access the X-Change, visit: [xchange.gwu.edu](http://xchange.gwu.edu)

“The research I engaged in during my internship at GWI helped me to further develop and define the vision for my career...to contribute to the alleviation and prevention of violence against women and girls, as well as equal rights for gender minorities.”

**Rebekah Rollston**  
*GW Graduate Student*



© 2012 Kuntal Kumar Roy,  
Courtesy of Photoshare



# EMPOWER GIRLS

There are 62 million girls missing from classrooms according to the United Nations. Ensuring girls and boys have the same access to education and opportunities for success is critical for achieving gender equality and ending violence against women and girls.

- Girls who complete secondary school are **six times more likely** to not become child brides
- A girl with an extra year of secondary education **can earn 20 percent more**
- Educated mothers are **more than two times as likely** to send their children to school

# GIRL RISING

Girl Rising is a global campaign that uses compelling storytelling and educational tools to raise awareness on the many barriers that girls face for leading a healthy and productive life. In partnership with GWI, Girl Rising is developing a Latin America campaign that will launch in Guatemala where the prevalence of violence against women and girls is among the highest in the world. Working alongside local partners, GWI and Girl Rising are promoting girls' education and assuring better outcomes for the future.

Photos (top to bottom) by: Joseph Ndayisenga; © 2013 Anil Gulati, Courtesy of Photoshare; Mary Ellsberg

“ I speak not for myself but for those without voice... those who have fought for their rights... their right to live in peace, their right to be treated with dignity, their right to equality of opportunity, their right to be educated. ”

**Malala Yousafzai**  
Student, Education Advocate, and 2014 Nobel Peace Laureate

# I AM MALALA

Malala Yousafzai was shot by the Taliban for advocating girls' education and later awarded the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize for her advocacy. Based on Malala's story and inspiring memoir, *I am Malala*, GWI-affiliated faculty contributed to the creation of a Resource Guide that explores how politics, culture, religion, and violence may affect goals for gender equality. The guide, produced in collaboration with the Malala Fund, was launched at GW with the participation of Ziauddin Yousafzai, Malala's father and member of GWI's Leadership Council. Students share their own experiences and engage with their community using the Resource Guide. GWI also tailored a toolkit with Girl Up!, a program run by the UN Foundation, that after-school clubs in the United States, Latin America, and in Malala's home town in the Swat Valley, are using to spur discussion and take action.



Photo by William Atkins



© 2008 Helen Hawkins, Courtesy of Photoshare

# EXPERIENCES IN CONFLICT & CRISIS

Violence against women and girls is a pervasive problem around the world, and in many cases the causes of this violence are intensified during humanitarian emergencies. In times of conflict, women and girls often are viewed as targets and face significant risk of attack in everyday situations.

GWI is working to adapt and expand successful strategies for ending this violence and bringing applied knowledge to key stakeholders to affect change. We developed an evidence brief on “What Works” to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls in conflict and humanitarian settings, focusing on prevalence and interventions.

## SOUTH SUDAN

GWI is conducting the first large-scale population-based study on violence against women and girls in South Sudan, applying quantitative and participatory qualitative techniques to document the experiences of women and girls in one of the world’s most intractable conflicts. Initial analysis from the prevalence study shows that in some areas as many as 70 percent of women have experienced sexual and/or physical intimate partner violence and one in three women have experienced some form of sexual abuse, including rape and transactional sex. This project forms part of the What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls in Conflict and Humanitarian Settings Consortium funded by the government of the United Kingdom and is a partnership between GWI, the International Rescue Committee and CARE International UK.



Photos by Mary Ellsberg

## 20 YEARS IN NICARAGUA

Two decades ago, Mary Ellsberg conducted the first prevalence study of violence against women in Nicaragua.

The 1995 study, *Candies in Hell*, showed that over 50 percent of women had experienced physical domestic violence in their lives, and one out of four had experienced violence in the 12 months prior to the study. The Nicaraguan Network of Women Against Violence, Umeå University and Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua (UNAN) León, collaborated on this pioneering study in León, Nicaragua.

“After he beat me he would court me and buy me clothes, but my grandma would say to me, ‘Sweetheart, what good are candies in hell?’”

Ana Cristina  
*Candies in Hell, 1995*

The work didn't stop with the numbers.

The research became the proof needed to expose a pervasive crime and demand government action. A few weeks before Nicaragua's national elections, the government passed the first law reforming Nicaragua's Penal Code to make domestic violence a crime. This law became a powerful statement and tool for change. During the ensuing years, many other reforms were implemented, such as specialized police stations for women and children, shelters and crisis centers run by women's organizations and continuous campaigns to raise awareness on violence against women as a critical public health and human rights issue.

GWI is now carrying out a follow-up study in Nicaragua with UNAN-León and the Nicaraguan NGO InterCambios to see whether the programs and policies enacted in the last 20 years have been effective. Preliminary results show a sharp reduction in violence against women and girls in the region as well as much greater awareness among women of their right to be free from violence.

GWI is also working with the Nicaraguan Ministry of Health to apply the lessons learned in León and to test other community-based approaches for preventing violence against pregnant women.



# GWI ON CAMPUS

## VIOLENCE-FREE CAMPUS

Ensuring the campus environment is a safe place for all students is critically important. Across the nation, campus sexual assault is an urgent problem. Building on the White House-led “It’s On Us” campaign to end sexual assault on college campuses, GWI is engaged in and contributing to the national conversation by reviewing promising practices. Through our expertise, we are poised to make a difference on our campus and at colleges nationwide.

“Whether GWI is promoting and co-sponsoring events, collaborating and sharing insights on potential community education or even lending their precious time and expertise to guide us, the incredible staff at GWI have been a true partner to students at GW.”

**Kirsten Dimovitz,**  
*GW Student and Member of Students  
Against Sexual Assault*

## STUDENT ACTIVISM

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Violence is an annual time of global action to raise awareness about gender-based violence. GWI joins with student organizations and affiliated faculty across disciplines to stimulate awareness and learn about solutions through workshops, street theater, panel presentations, film screenings, local service projects and social media campaigns.

## ARTS FOR GENDER JUSTICE

GWI values collaboration across campus as a great way to design innovative approaches for learning about gender equality and violence against women and girls. For example, Arts for Gender Justice links students on campus and around the globe and uses art to cultivate awareness about issues of women’s empowerment and social norms. Art speaks to our humanity in ways that surpass logic and reach our deepest thoughts. GWI Senior Fellow and Professor Leslie Jacobson of the Theatre and Dance Department curates this initiative and created the original theater production of “DC Seven” and “This Is My Calling: Women’s Journeys Into Activism.”



“ GWI orchestrates many cross-department and cross-community conversations and projects that would not otherwise occur. Anyone who becomes involved in GWI is enriched in their work and their thinking. ”

**Phyllis Goldfarb**

*Jacob Burns Foundation Professor of Clinical Law, Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, GW Law School, and GWI Affiliated Faculty member*

## FACULTY AFFILIATES

**GWI works with more than fifty Affiliated Faculty who are active in a variety of disciplines, centers and institutes across campus.** We work together creating opportunities to exchange knowledge, enhance scholarship, improve collaboration and inspire joint initiatives. By connecting faculty and students with local and international leaders, researchers, practitioners, activists and policymakers, we facilitate learning and enhance students’ understanding to become gender-sensitive leaders of tomorrow.

## FACULTY RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

**GWI research fellowships are awarded annually to GW faculty from various disciplines.** The fellowship provides financial and technical support for research on topics relating to gender and women’s issues. These fellowships have been awarded to faculty across campus, including from the Columbian College of Arts and Science, the Graduate School of Education and Human Development, the Milken School of Public Health, the School of Nursing and the Women’s Leadership Program.

**The Knapp Global Women’s Fellowship** is a new award that enables an outstanding leader to contribute expertise, conduct research and engage students and faculty on issues relating to gender equality and prevention of violence against women and girls. This fellowship acknowledges President Steven Knapp’s role in creating the Global Women’s Institute and dedicating university resources to advancing gender equality globally.

**The Inaugural Knapp Fellow is Yeganeh Rezaian**, an Iranian journalist who will devote her fellowship to delve into the conditions women journalists experience in Muslim countries. Rezaian and her husband Jason Rezaian, former Washington Post Bureau Chief in Iran, were arrested in 2014. Rezaian was released on bail after 10 weeks but lived in fear of re-arrest while advocating for her husband who remained incarcerated for 543 days—the longest detention of any western journalist in Iran.



Photo by William Atkins



Photo by Zachary Marin

# OUR TEAM

We benefit from a talented team of staff, students and affiliated faculty who enable us to be effective across the university and around the world.

For detailed information about our staff, visit: [globalwomensinstitute.gwu.edu/staff](http://globalwomensinstitute.gwu.edu/staff)

## FACULTY ADVISORY COUNCIL

GW's Faculty Advisory Council is a distinguished group of GW faculty from diverse fields that provide advice on how best to realize GW's interdisciplinary mandate and work closely with GWI staff on a breadth of cross-disciplinary projects.

For the full list go to: [globalwomensinstitute.gwu.edu/faculty-advisory-council](http://globalwomensinstitute.gwu.edu/faculty-advisory-council)

## LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Moving into the next five years, we are proud to launch the Global Women's Institute Leadership Council, which brings together eminent leaders and scholars from different countries and professions who share a long-term commitment to advancing women's equality. The members of the Leadership Council will offer high-level expertise, advice, and influence to GWI's Founding Director and enable the Global Women's Institute to realize its full potential and strategic goals.

For the full list go to: [globalwomensinstitute.gwu.edu/leadership-council](http://globalwomensinstitute.gwu.edu/leadership-council)



## SENIOR LEADERSHIP

**Mary Ellsberg**  
Ph.D., Founding Director

**Manuel Contreras-Urbina**  
Ph.D., Director of Research

**Janine Moussa**  
J.D., Director of Policy and Outreach

**Marianne Makar**  
M.A., Operations Manager

# FUNDING

## REVENUE IN THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

The Global Women's Institute was created with seed funds from the George Washington University and went on to raise additional external funding through:

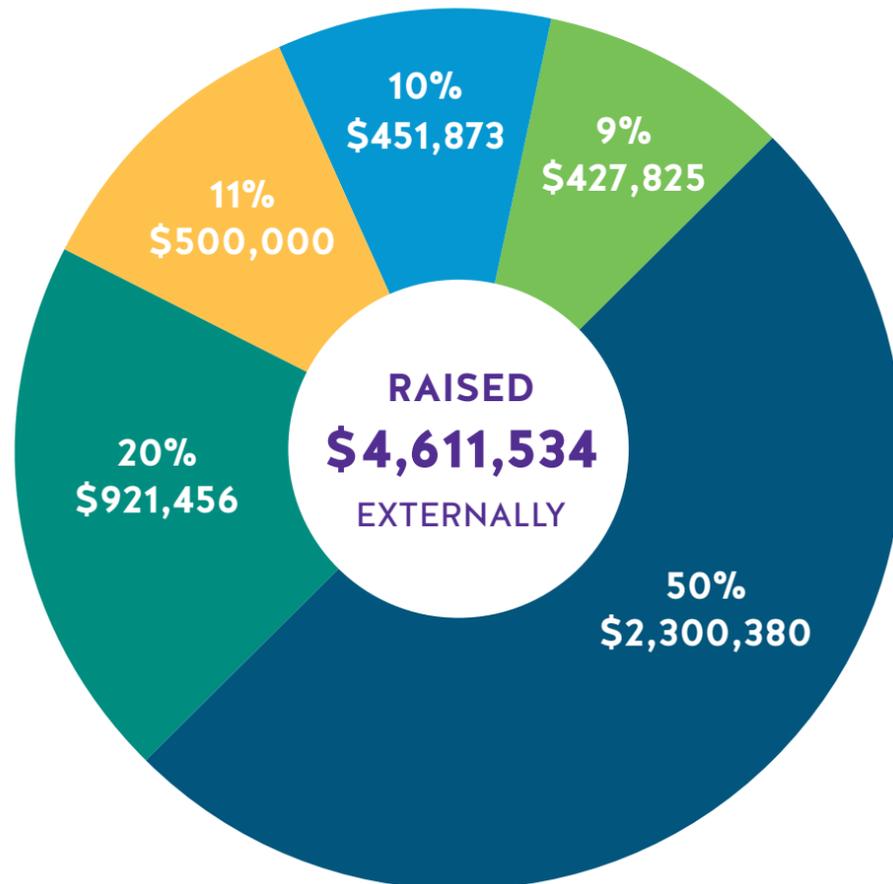
US GOVERNMENT FUNDS

FOREIGN GOVERNMENT FUNDS

MULTI-LATERAL INSTITUTIONS

PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS

OTHER PRIVATE DONATIONS



# THANK YOU

To our donors for their generous and continued support and to our long-term partners and friends.



---

The Global  
Women's Institute

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

2140 G ST NW  
WASHINGTON DC 20052  
(202) 994-7177

[GLOBALWOMENSINSTITUTE.GWU.EDU](http://GLOBALWOMENSINSTITUTE.GWU.EDU)

---