



The gender-based violence treatment protocol for health care providers was launched in 2014 to commemorate the 16 days of activism against gender-based Violence campaign, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Italian Development Cooperation and the World Health Organization (WHO) announced their partnership to strengthen the health sector's ability to identify and treat survivors of gender-based violence in Afghanistan.

The WHO and the Ministry of Public Health will jointly implement the Gender-based Violence Treatment Protocol Project. USAID will contribute US\$ 4.9 million in funding for the programme. The Italian Government will support the project with one million Euros. The project will train more than 6000 health care providers in all 34 provinces, including doctors, nurses and midwives, on a newly-developed protocol for helping survivors of gender-based violence.

“Gender-based violence often seriously jeopardizes both the mental and physical health of women and girls, including, in many instances, their sexual and reproductive health,” said USAID Mission Director to Afghanistan Herbert Smith. “We must involve and educate men and boys. Gender-based violence is not only a women’s issue, it is a human rights issue.”

“Survivors of gender-based violence need to access social support and safe spaces to participate in public life. Survivors require multi-level assistance from medical, to legal and psychological support, and the treatment protocol represents a key instrument ensuring a more equitable society and tackling the root causes of gender discrimination,” said Italian Ambassador to Afghanistan, Luciano Pezzotti.

“Health care providers are often the first point of contact for these survivors, which is why it is absolutely essential for them to be able to recognize signs of gender-based violence and respond appropriately. This project will not only enhance the capacity of health care providers to provide better quality care for survivors, but also strengthen the overall health system to respond effectively to gender-based violence,” said Dr Richard Peeperkorn, WHO Representative in Afghanistan.

Gender-based violence is an urgent public health priority and a serious human rights violation. Estimates show that a significant number of women in Afghanistan experience at least one form of domestic violence. Although men and boys are also survivors, women are particularly affected by crimes including sexual violence and rape.

[GBV treatment protocol for health care providers in Afghanistan](#)

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