



Humanitarian Innovation for GBV Response:

Principles, Lessons and Emerging Values from Elrha's GBV Tech Innovation Challenge

LEARNING BRIEF

elrha

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ABOUT ELRHA

Elrha is a global organisation that funds solutions to complex humanitarian problems through research and innovation. The innovations funded through our Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF) identify, nurture and share more effective and scalable solutions to some of humanity's most difficult challenges.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This learning brief presents findings from Elrha's Gender-based Violence (GBV) Tech Innovation Challenge, which ran from 2023 to 2025. Through a competitive funding call our independent Funding Committee selected a cohort of four projects for Elrha to support: using virtual reality for impactful training, using a chatbot to assist community outreach workers faced with disclosures of GBV, and two projects innovating to develop secure ways of delivering remote case management.

This brief tackles the question: *What does it take to design and scale survivor-centred technology in humanitarian crises safely, ethically, and in alignment with global GBV standards?* It distils insights from the projects, project teams and related stakeholders, and technical experts including members of Elrha's GBV Technical Working Group. It is based on nine key informant interviews, two focus group discussions, and a desk review of progress reports, other project documents and relevant literature on technology and GBV in humanitarian emergencies.

It concludes that beyond simply designing more tools, the focus for innovative technology-based GBV programmes should be on building ecosystems that honour survivors' expertise, strengthen community-led solutions and ensure that every technological choice advances safety, dignity and rights.

The insights are relevant to GBV specialists, humanitarian innovators and designers testing new technological tools in crisis settings, and to researchers working in this field, and humanitarian coordinators assessing how digital systems can work together without increasing risk. Equally the findings speak directly to funders shaping the wider innovation landscape, including bilateral and multilateral donors, philanthropic foundations, feminist and community-led funds, and mission-driven technology investors whose decisions influence which ideas are supported, scaled and sustained.

Four overarching principles and four common values emerged through the work, in addition to nine key lessons. These are set out in summary below. In the learning brief, these are complemented by an analysis of ethics and safeguarding considerations, an annotated bibliography, and snapshots of the four projects highlighting key enablers, learning points and additional values at the core of each innovation process.



Four overarching principles

1. Survivor-centred and trauma-informed design
2. Safety-by-design from the outset
3. Interoperability and ecosystem awareness
4. Participation through feminist and decolonial practice



Four common values foundational to the innovation teams:

1. Trust
2. Responsiveness
3. Safety
4. Participatory inclusion



Nine key lessons

1. Innovation must begin with survivor realities, not technology
2. Define the end user and communication method early
3. Safety-by-design must be embedded from the start
4. Interoperability prevents duplication and reduces survivor burden
5. Localisation and language testing are essential: not optional
6. Strengthen local tech capacity and build bridges between humanitarian and technology ecosystems
7. Psychosocial safety for staff is part of ethical tech innovation
8. Longer lead-in periods are required for ethical testing
9. Innovation is the system, not just the product

1. Introduction

As digital tools become increasingly embedded in humanitarian response, the implications for gender-based violence (GBV) programming are significant. Technology can create new avenues for connection, privacy and psychosocial support, but it can also heighten surveillance, increase risk, and expose survivors to new forms of harm. Safe innovation to integrate technology into GBV response therefore requires careful attention to how gender, power and digital ecosystems interact in different crisis settings, and how these dynamics shape safety, meaningful access to support and duty of care.

In 2023, Elrha's Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF) launched the GBV Tech Innovation Challenge. Eligible project proposals were independently reviewed by a team of technical reviewers comprising expertise in humanitarian GBV programming and in using new technology for social and humanitarian innovation. Our independent Funding Committee awarded funding to four projects. Additional non-financial support to grantees included meetings with members of our GBV Technical Working Group (TWG), mentorships to strengthen specific capacities, and guidance from the Elrha team.

The four projects were:

- **British Red Cross (BRC):** Developing a Virtual Reality (VR) training experience to reduce bias and strengthen survivor-centred practice.
- **IsraAID:** Developing a chatbot for outreach workers to strengthen referral pathways.
- **Oxfam and Nawat:** Developing a digital platform on sexual and reproductive health (SRH) advice and service provision for women.
- **Stonewall and ILGA Asia:** Developing safe protocols for phone-based remote casework for lesbian, bisexual and trans women-identifying survivors in Afghanistan.

Across these projects, one key question emerged:

“What does it take to design and scale survivor-centred technology in humanitarian crises safely, ethically, and in alignment with global GBV standards?”

Based on a desk review of project documents, reference to relevant literature on technology and GBV in humanitarian emergencies, and information from nine key informant interviews and two focus group discussions, this learning brief distils insights from the projects, project teams and related stakeholders including technical experts such as members of Elrha's GBV TWG.

The nine Lessons for Practice and Scale (**Section 4**) are underpinned by four Principles for Ethical and Inclusive Design (**Section 2**) and complemented by Considerations for Safeguarding, Ethics and Do No Harm (**Section 5**). **Section 3** sets out the common values identified as driving the innovation projects and provides **snapshots of each innovation** detailing the technology and partnerships in the project, and some project-specific values, enablers and learning points.

Intended audience: The insights are relevant to GBV specialists exploring how technology can strengthen safe, survivor-centred programming; humanitarian innovators and digital designers testing new tools in crisis settings; and coordination groups (GBV, Child Protection, Protection, Information Management) assessing how digital systems can work together without increasing risk. They also speak directly to funders shaping the wider innovation landscape, including bilateral and multilateral donors, philanthropic foundations, feminist and community-led funds, and mission-driven technology investors whose decisions influence which ideas are supported, scaled and sustained. Researchers examining technology-facilitated GBV patterns, and local and refugee-led organisations developing contextually grounded solutions will also find clear entry points for further exploration.

Annotated bibliography: This Learning Brief is accompanied by an annotated bibliography directing readers to other important resources for anyone working at the intersection of technological innovation and GBV in humanitarian emergencies.

Building a shared, cross-sector community of practice that brings together GBV practitioners, technologists, data protection specialists and crisis-affected communities will be essential for advancing ethical, inclusive and evidence-informed GBV tech innovation.

2. Principles for Ethical and Inclusive Design

Four overarching principles consistently shaped safer, more inclusive and survivor-centred innovation across the portfolio.

Survivor-centred and trauma-informed design: Technology must adapt to survivors, not the other way around. Successful projects foregrounded individual agency and choice, minimised emotional and digital risks, ensured clarity about how tools function and what data they collect, and designed content that avoided sensationalising GBV.

Safety-by-design from the outset: Risk mitigation cannot be retrofitted. High-risk contexts and displacement settings required proactive strategies to mitigate household surveillance and shared phone use: ensuring that technical features reduced rather than introduced risk, clarifying responsibility when multiple partners were involved, and planning for situations in which access to a device could itself be dangerous.

Interoperability and ecosystem awareness: TWG members consistently noted the risk of humanitarian actors developing new digital products that duplicate existing, trusted tools such as **GBVIMS+/Primero**, the **Pocket Guide** and established hotlines. Innovation was strongest where it complemented existing systems, aligned with GBV coordination mechanisms, and strengthened rather than complicated service pathways.

Participation through feminist and decolonial practice: The most effective projects engaged key stakeholder groups – women and girls, LGBTQ+ people,¹ tech-users (outreach workers, trainers, case managers) – throughout the design cycle, not only during testing. This led to linguistic localisation, inclusion of diverse identities and literacy levels, participatory critique of assumptions embedded in technology, and centring community knowledge alongside technical expertise.

1 Within the Learning Brief we have used the term LGBTQ+ in relation to people who identify as members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and/or Queer communities; this aligns with the language used by Stonewall, one of the four grantees in the GBV Tech cohort. This term describes a broad range of people and is not exhaustive, as indicated by the plus sign. It is not universally used. Within the bibliography we have used acronyms that align with the terminology that is used in the resource being referenced.

3. Values and enablers driving innovation

In addition to underscoring key principles for digital humanitarian innovation, the experience of the innovation teams demonstrated that values, partnerships and relational systems were at the heart of the innovation process. We found that technology is only as safe as the social, political and relational systems in which it is introduced.

In this section we describe findings from each project, including the technology being used, the key enablers, foremost values and project-specific learning points which feed into the generalisable lessons learnt in Section 4.

Collectively, the portfolio demonstrates that safe GBV tech innovation is relational, iterative and inseparable from context.

Common values:

Across settings the strongest potential for positive impact came where these values were foundational to the innovation teams: trust, responsiveness, safety and participatory inclusion. These values shaped the trajectory of each project more significantly than any technical feature.

- **Trust** was foundational: between partners, between caseworkers and survivors, and between organisations and communities.
- **Responsiveness** was essential: every team had to adjust initial assumptions about what was possible or safe.
- **Safety** was a priority: teams valued safety ahead of the scale and the pace of innovation, accepting delays to honour survivor feedback and risk assessments.
- **Participatory inclusion** strengthened relevance: from alignment with local dialects to the provision of accessible instructions for users with lower literacy.



Innovation Project Snapshots

Lead organisation: British Red Cross

- **Technology:** VR and e-learning for gender bias reduction and GBV prevention.
- **Locations:** Developed by teams primarily in UK and Lebanon, piloted in Iraq.
- **Other project participants:** Unform Experiences was the creative agency developing artwork and editing for the scenario. Iraqi Red Crescent Society piloted the training. Survivor Alliance contributed to the development of the scenario.
- **Key enablers:** Survivor feedback, rigorous facilitation, cultural accuracy.

- **Additional values demonstrated:** Empathy, ethical reflexivity.
- **Key Learning:** Immersive tools can shift attitudes but require ethical safeguards, careful scripting and strong facilitation; identifying and engaging with in-country tech-support capacity facilitates effective implementation.

Lead organisation: IsraAid

- **Technology:** WhatsApp-based chatbot to guide community outreach workers on referral post-disclosure (initially planned to be SMS-based).
- **Locations:** IDP camps #1 and #3 in Juba, South Sudan.
- **Other project participants:** IsraAid South Sudan.
- **Key enablers:** Early pivots, attention to infrastructure, openness to critique.
- **Additional values demonstrated:** Adaptability, transparency.
- **Key Learning:** Clear communications are essential between in-country implementation teams and HQ, to align how processes are envisaged with how they might play out in practice; technical quality assurance and safe branding decisions can mitigate risk to community members and staff.

Lead organisation: Oxfam

- **Technology:** Digital platform for women and service providers as a tool for humanitarian remote GBV case management.
- **Locations:** Iraq, Palestine and Yemen.
- **Other project participants:** Nawat Health, the digital platform, running as a social enterprise in the Arab region. Humanitarian service provision partners: Baghdad Women's Association, in Iraq; Women Media and Development (TAM), in Palestine; and Field Medical Foundation, in Yemen.
- **Key enablers:** Ongoing user input, linguistic localisation, trust-based partnerships.
- **Additional values demonstrated:** Accessibility, respect, participation.
- **Key Learning:** Repeated user engagement is essential; assumptions about phone ownership can be unsafe; there is significant scope for positive impact when humanitarian non-profit organisations explore innovative partnerships with groups using other business models.

Lead organisation: Stonewall

- **Technology:** Safe, secure, phone-based remote casework.
- **Locations:** Afghanistan.
- **Other project participants:** ILGA Asia – the Asia Region section of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association.
- **Key enablers:** Encrypted devices, diaspora caseworkers, robust delivery protocols.
- **Additional values demonstrated:** Context-based risk awareness, solidarity, dignity.
- **Key Learning:** Safety systems, not tech alone, are the core innovation in high-risk contexts.

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Project-specific lessons

While Section 4 draws generalisable lessons for innovative tech-based GBV programming, we also identified several lessons that relate to specific technologies or to project aims, like remote service delivery.

The VR training enabled practitioners to engage with survivor interactions from an immersive perspective and reflect on bias and decision-making. Participants' responses highlighted both the potential of immersive approaches to support learning and the importance of ethical facilitation, psychological safety measures and structured debriefing when working with simulated GBV content.

Working with chatbot-supported referrals reinforced the importance of clear and carefully tested user journeys. Decisions around platform choice, visibility of organisational branding and the introduction of new communication channels were shown to have direct implications for survivor safety, confidentiality and trust.

Remote casework using encrypted devices demonstrated that survivor-centred innovation could operate even in highly restrictive environments when grounded in trust, secure communication systems and approaches that prioritise the protection of both users and those providing support.

Sustained consultation with women, girls, GBV, SRH and LGBTQ+ service providers and linguistic and cultural experts helped challenge assumptions about community and user realities. This engagement revealed that even well-intentioned design features, such as offline access, may introduce risk in contexts where women do not own their phones or are subject to monitoring. It also demonstrates that meaningful and safe engagement is possible in humanitarian contexts with survivors holding intersectional identities, including LGBTQ+ survivors and survivors with disabilities. This finding is important because it highlights how overly precautionary approaches, when used to avoid engagement altogether, can inadvertently limit access to inclusive, survivor-centred support.

4. Lessons for Practice and Scale

We identified a set of nine lessons from the GBV Tech Challenge (see table). These are grounded not in the technology itself, but in how teams responded when assumptions proved incorrect, community feedback contradicted design intentions, or political and security environments shifted unexpectedly. Partners consistently emphasised that safe innovation is a process of continual adjustment rather than a linear process, and the strongest innovations integrated learning at every stage and treated adaptation as a marker of ethical practice rather than perceived failure. While the nine lessons are presented in the table, these are complemented and elaborated by the analysis below.

People and processes surrounding the innovation: The lessons across the portfolio highlight that responsible GBV tech innovation rests on the processes that surround a tool as much as on the technology itself. Embedding survivor-centred design from the outset ensures that assumptions are tested early, risks are identified before they reach users, and solutions reflect the realities of how women, girls, LGBTQ+ people and other at-risk groups navigate digital spaces. Resourcing participation, working collaboratively with frontline providers, and drawing on feminist, decolonial and trauma-informed approaches helped teams design tools that were grounded, relevant and usable in the settings where they were intended to operate.

Understanding digital access: Applying a GBV lens also means treating safety-by-design as a foundational element of innovation. In many humanitarian contexts, digital behaviour is shaped by household dynamics, surveillance, stigma and unequal access to devices. Early risk assessments and safety prototyping enabled teams to understand how features might expose survivors to monitoring or unintentional disclosure. Testing how tools appear on shared phones, clarifying user journeys, and planning for scenarios where device ownership is unsafe proved essential to reducing harm.

Interoperability emerged as another core requirement. In GBV response, fragmented systems and duplicative tools can increase the burden on survivors and complicate access to support. Mapping existing digital pathways, engaging coordination groups, and aligning with established standards helped ensure that new tools strengthened, rather than disrupted, referral routes and service continuity. This approach also supported clearer expectations for practitioners and reduced the need for repeated disclosures.

Necessity of time and flexibility. Ethical engagement with survivors, especially around sensitive topics, requires space for consultation, review and adjustment. Longer lead-in periods allowed teams to integrate feedback, test assumptions under real conditions and adapt to evolving political or security contexts. These timelines also supported more deliberate decision-making around consent, data use and protection measures.

Planning for sustainability helped ensure that tools remained functional beyond pilot phases. Resourcing maintenance, documentation, updates and knowledge transfer enabled organisations to absorb and manage tools over time. This stability is particularly important in GBV programming, where disruptions can affect trust and continuity of care.

Staff wellbeing also proved integral to ethical innovation. Teams involved in GBV-related digital work often engage with distressing content or high-risk situations. Providing structured supervision, reflective spaces and clear boundaries supported safer and more sustainable practice. Recognising this need from the outset strengthened both staff capacity and the quality of engagement with affected communities.

Decisions about scaling must be guided by clear criteria. Expanding tools into new contexts should only occur when they fill a genuine gap, can be implemented safely, and can be supported by local systems over time. Survivors' feedback is central to this assessment, ensuring that solutions remain appropriate and responsive to local realities.

Space for learning: Partners emphasised the importance of creating space for learning. Responsible innovation benefits from honest reflection on challenges, unexpected outcomes and the need for adaptation. Funders who encourage this openness help cultivate an environment where insights are shared, assumptions are reconsidered and innovations evolve in ways that prioritise safety and inclusion.

1

Lesson Theme

Innovation must begin with survivor realities, not technology

Barrier addressed

Mismatch between design and lived experience

Outcome / Example Offline tools had safety issues where phones are shared; branding and visibility choices could expose users.

2

Lesson Theme

Define the end user and communication method early

Barrier addressed

Confusion around who will use the tool and how

Outcome / Example Early pivots from SMS to WhatsApp; clearer facilitator scripts for VR.

3

Lesson Theme

Safety-by-design must be embedded from the start

Barrier addressed

Risk of device seizure, monitoring, digital trace

Outcome / Example Encrypted multi-profile phones; 24-hour data deletion rules; no identifiable data shared with partners.

4

Lesson Theme

Interoperability prevents duplication and reduces survivor burden

Barrier addressed

Multiple overlapping tools causing confusion

Outcome / Example Push toward aligning with Pocket Guide, Primero, SRH platforms.

5

Lesson Theme

Localisation and language testing are essential, not optional



Barrier addressed

Misinterpretation, reduced trust, cultural mismatch

Outcome / Example Adjustments to Arabic phrasing; survivor-driven review of VR scripts.

6

Lesson Theme

Strengthen local tech capacity and build bridges between humanitarian and technology ecosystems



Barrier addressed

Limited in-country technical capacity, weak linkages between humanitarian and tech actors, and reliance on external developers

Outcome / Example Initiatives that invested in building local capacity or partnered directly with local tech actors saw stronger usability, clearer risk mitigation, and more grounded decision-making.

7

Lesson Theme

Psychosocial safety for staff is part of ethical tech innovation



Barrier addressed

Secondary trauma and emotional fatigue

Outcome / Example Regular supervision, scheduled “vent” meetings to debrief, staff support built into grants.

8

Lesson Theme

Longer lead-in periods are required for ethical testing



Barrier addressed

Rushed development, insufficient piloting

Outcome / Example Additional cycles of user feedback strengthened safety and usability.

9

Lesson Theme

Innovation is the system, not just the product



Barrier addressed

Over-focus on tools rather than enabling environment

Outcome / Example Secure delivery systems, diaspora caseworkers, and holistic support were more impactful than devices alone.

5. Considerations for Safeguarding, Ethics, and Do No Harm

Safeguarding and ethical practice emerged not as a discrete workstream, but as the foundation underlying every design choice, technology decision and partnership arrangement. When technology intersects with GBV in humanitarian settings, risks become interconnected. Harm can arise not only from violence itself, but from the devices survivors use, the platforms through which they communicate, assumptions about privacy, and the political structures shaping their lives.

Digital risk was never generic. It was shaped by gender, age, sexuality, disability, household power dynamics, literacy and survivors' proximity to state or non-state actors. In Afghanistan, situations repeatedly arose in which the mere possession of a mobile device could endanger a woman living under close family surveillance. In response, delivery systems prioritised anonymity, introduced multi-profile encrypted phones, removed identifiable data from shared systems, and applied strict data-deletion protocols. In such contexts, the safeguarding system itself became a core innovation.

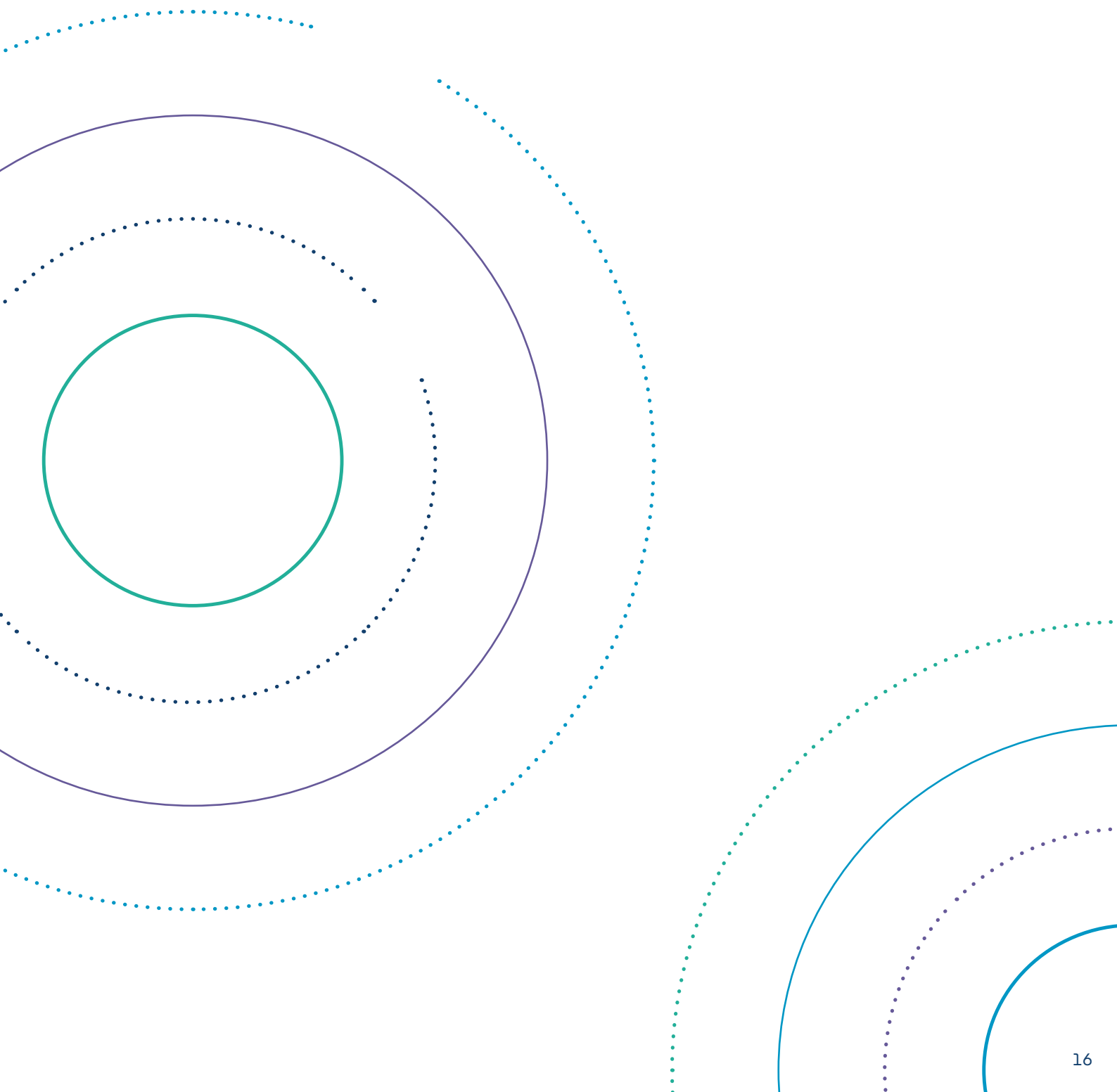
Device-users' security: TWG members' reflections reinforced the need to challenge assumptions about device ownership and household safety. Offline applications, often perceived as lower-risk, were found in some settings to heighten danger, particularly when phones were controlled by husbands or brothers. Chatbot-based referrals similarly raised concerns about digital traces on shared devices. Across projects, a consistent lesson emerged: technology can only be considered safe if the social environment around a survivor allows for its safe use.

Emotional responses: Immersive technologies introduced distinct ethical considerations. VR training created opportunities for empathy-building, but also generated strong emotional responses. Some participants questioned whether the portrayal of the survivor's father was "severe enough", highlighting how immersive simulations can surface assumptions about how violence should appear in order to be recognised as harm. This underscored the need for ethical facilitation, structured debriefing and clear protocols to prevent retraumatisation of both participants and facilitators, and to support learning that centres survivor experience rather than reinforcing thresholds of "credible" violence. VR innovation must therefore be situated within a broader safeguarding framework that anticipates emotional harm alongside technical risk.

Data governance was another critical ethical concern. In contexts where humanitarian databases have previously been seized, standard data protection templates were insufficient. Projects required detailed mapping of data flows, strict access controls and clear accountability arrangements between international organisations, local partners and technology developers. TWG members stressed that funders should require evidence of these systems from the earliest proposal stages, rather than treating data protection as a retrospective compliance exercise.

Staff wellbeing: Safeguarding also extended to staff wellbeing. Remote caseworkers supporting LGBTQ+ survivors – who were facing severe violence and displacement – reported significant emotional strain. Integrating psychosocial supervision, structured check-ins and clear boundaries around availability was essential for ethical duty of care and for sustaining safe, high-quality service delivery. Trauma-informed innovation therefore needed to apply equally to those delivering support as to those receiving it.

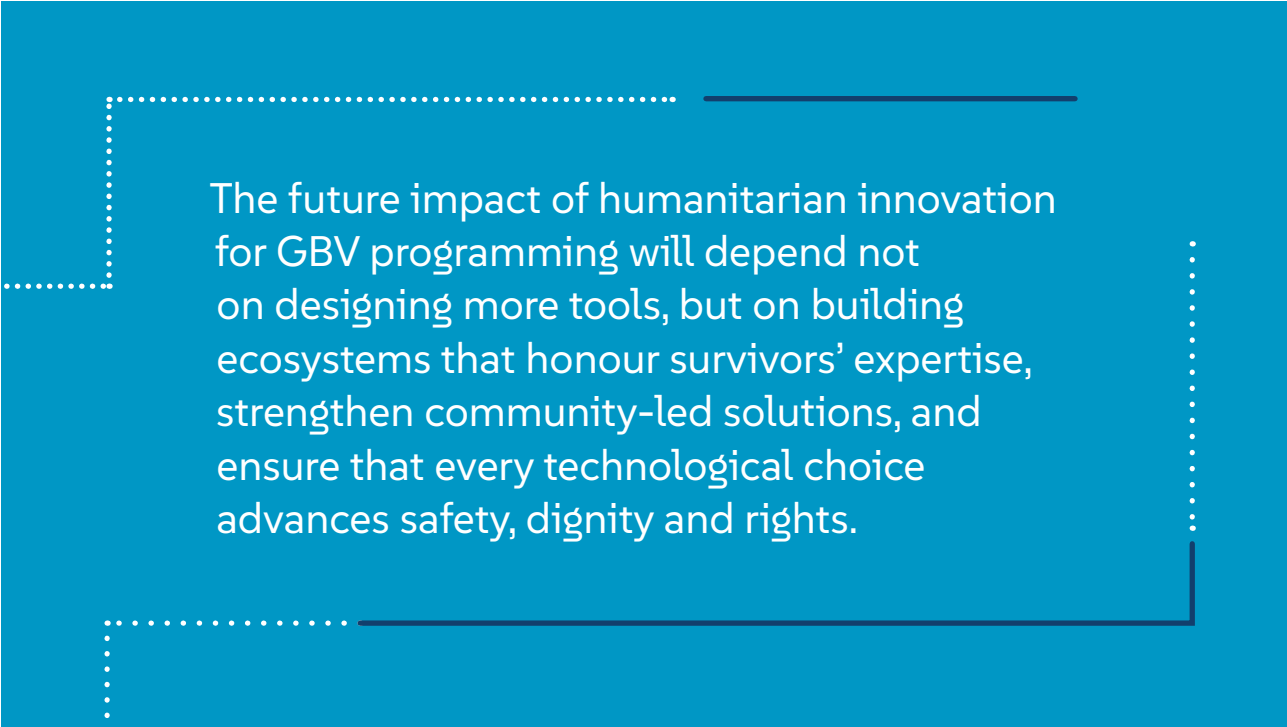
Taken together, the Challenge demonstrated that ethical GBV innovation requires continuous reflexivity. Safeguarding decisions evolved as contexts shifted, risks emerged and assumptions were challenged. The strongest projects treated ethics not as compliance, but as an ongoing, shared responsibility that recognises survivor agency and seeks to anticipate harm before it occurs.



6. Conclusion

The GBV Tech Innovation Challenge demonstrates that meaningful innovation in GBV response is both possible and necessary, but only when grounded in dignity, participation and safety. Technology can support survivors, strengthen practitioner capacity and expand safe access to information. However, without robust risk mitigation, deep contextual awareness and sustained community partnership, technology can also reinforce harm.

Across the portfolio, a consistent message emerged: innovation is not defined by the novelty of a tool, but by the survivor-centred approaches, collaboration and contextual understanding through which it is developed. Safe, survivor-centred GBV tech innovation requires courageous listening, cross-sector collaboration, transparency about risk, readiness to adapt, and commitment to inclusion at every stage.



The future impact of humanitarian innovation for GBV programming will depend not on designing more tools, but on building ecosystems that honour survivors' expertise, strengthen community-led solutions, and ensure that every technological choice advances safety, dignity and rights.

Annotated bibliography

The Uli Dataset (Arora et al., 2023). *An exercise in experience-led annotation of online GBV (oGBV) in Hindi, Tamil, Indian English*. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2311.09086> (arXiv)

Summary & Key Findings: This research offers a dataset annotated by survivors and community-members (women and LGBTQIA+ persons) capturing gender-based abuse in non-English languages: highlighting how tech-facilitated abuse manifests in linguistic, cultural and regional contexts often invisible to Anglophone research. It centres survivor/community voice in annotation and data creation.

Strengths: Survivor/community-led; culturally and linguistically inclusive; advances decolonial research practice; supports development of detection tools that reflect real lived experiences beyond Global North. **Relevance:** Critical for ensuring global inclusivity and equity in tech-GBV research; useful for projects aiming to build tools or monitoring systems that work across languages and contexts. **Limitations:** Focuses on online abuse detection (not full-service GBV response); technical dataset: may need ethical protocols if used operationally; offline GBV and humanitarian-specific contexts not covered directly.

CARE International GBV Sector Brief (2021). *Technology-accessible: Technology, digital inclusion and gender-based violence: Sector Brief*. <https://makingcents.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CARE-GBV-Sector-brief-Technology-accessible.pdf> (Making Cents International)

Summary & Key Findings: This brief analyses how digital inclusion (or exclusion) intersects with risks and prevention of GBV in development and humanitarian contexts. It emphasises that lack of access to devices, connectivity, or digital literacy – often along gender, age, displacement, economic status lines – may increase vulnerability to both offline and online GBV, and prevent survivors from accessing support. It advocates for digital-inclusion measures (equitable access, safe spaces, affordability, literacy) as part of GBV response.

Strengths: Intersectional awareness (gender, digital divide, socio-economic inequalities), survivor-centred framing; places access as key to meaningful support. **Relevance:** Critical for planning tech-based GBV interventions, especially in humanitarian or low-resource contexts: ensuring equity and inclusion, avoiding exacerbating existing inequalities.

Limitations: More policy/advocacy-oriented; limited empirical data about which digital-inclusion measures effectively reduce GBV or improve service access in crises.

GBV AoR Helpdesk Guidance Note (2021). *Harnessing Technology to Prevent, Mitigate and Respond to Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies* <https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2022-02/gbv-aor-helpdesk-harnessing-technology-14122021.pdf> (gbvaor.net)

Summary & Key Findings: This guidance note reviews how digital technologies (mobile phones, tablets, apps, remote case-management systems, hotlines, data mapping, digital referral systems) have been or can be used in humanitarian, displacement or emergency settings to support GBV prevention, mitigation, and response. It aggregates lessons learned from field practitioners, emphasising the importance of confidentiality, digital safety, adaptation to context (connectivity, literacy), and survivor-centred design. It underscores that technology is a means to strengthen survivor access to support, especially where physical services are disrupted.

Strengths: Explicit humanitarian focus; practical, grounded in field experience; considers real-world constraints (connectivity, displacement, mobility). **Relevance:** Core for any tech-GBV work in crises or emergencies. **Limitations:** As a guidance/grey-literature document rather than peer-reviewed research, impact data are limited; documentation of outcomes (e.g., how many survivors accessed services, sustained safety, long-term psychosocial outcomes) is not systematic.

GBV Stats Initiative: *Global Landscape Analysis (2023). Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence: Preliminary Landscape Analysis.* https://www.sddirect.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-03/tfgbv-learning-brief-3_20092021.pdf (sddirect.org.uk)

Summary & Key Findings: This learning brief from the humanitarian/GBV research community outlines key trends, risks and gaps in TF-GBV across contexts: including among displaced populations, marginalised groups, young women/girls, women with disabilities, and other intersectional identities. It highlights that technology-based violence disproportionately affects those already marginalised, and calls for intersectional, survivor-led, and inclusive approaches to prevention and response.

Strengths: Focus on intersectionality, inclusion, marginalised voices; offers recommendations for humanitarian actors, donors, and tech industry. **Relevance:** Anchors programming in a survivor-led, inclusive, rights-respecting framing; helps design safe and context-sensitive interventions. **Limitations:** Focus on mapping and analysis; fewer tested interventions with documented outcomes; data gaps remain.

Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security: Literature Review (2024). *Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence in Conflict, Humanitarian and Peace Settings*. <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/resource/technology-facilitated-gender-based-violence/> (giwps.georgetown.edu)

Summary & Key Findings: This report, based on a desk review of TFGVB literature, analyses how digital and information technologies are used in conflict, humanitarian, and post-conflict environments to perpetrate, amplify or respond to gender-based violence. It situates tech-GBV within peace, protection and humanitarian frameworks, emphasising that interventions must account for systemic inequalities, intersectional vulnerabilities (gender, displacement status, age, race/ethnicity), and human rights.

Strengths: Conflict & humanitarian context; intersectional; combines protection, GBV, technology, peace & security lenses. **Relevance:** Valuable for considering inclusion in programming, helpful for framing policy, programme, and research implications.

Limitations: More analytical / advocacy-focused; fewer empirical intervention evaluations; may lack granular data on specific tech interventions' outcomes.

Irish Consortium on Gender-Based Violence: Policy Brief (2023). *Technology and Gender-Based Violence: Risks and Opportunities*. <https://www.gbv.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/CSW67-Technology-and-Gender-Based-Violence-Risks-and-Opportunities.pdf> (gbv.ie)

Summary & Key Findings: This policy brief explores how technology is both a potential enabler of violence (online harassment, coercion, digital stalking) and a means for prevention, support, and empowerment (hotlines, reporting platforms, digital safe spaces, e-learning, remote support). It emphasises the importance of survivor-centred design, consent, data protection, and intersectional inclusion (e.g., marginalised genders, disabilities, socio-economic status), especially in low-resource or crisis-affected settings.

Strengths: Balanced view (not techno-utopian), strong attention to rights, ethics, inclusion; survivor-centred language; focus on structural inequalities and digital context. **Relevance:** Useful for drawing out ethical, risk-aware frameworks: essential for responsible tech-GBV innovation. **Limitations:** Conceptual/policy-oriented rather than empirical; specific intervention data limited.

Augmented Voices: Academic Analysis (Khatri, 2024). *An augmented reality experience highlighting the social injustices of gender-based violence among South-Asian diaspora women.* <https://arxiv.org/abs/2404.15239> (arXiv)

Summary & Key Findings: This creative, participatory project uses augmented reality (AR) to centre survivors' narratives, allowing women (particularly those from marginalised South-Asian diasporic communities) to "reclaim space" and visibility, confront social stigma, and share experiences of GBV through digital storytelling. It is survivor-centred, feminist, and consciously intersectional (in terms of diaspora, race, gender, culture).

Strengths: Innovative use of technology for empowerment, voice and activism; survivor-led storytelling; culturally specific; challenges stigma and invisibility.

Relevance: Broadens "innovation" beyond service delivery to activism, visibility, community healing; valuable for humanitarian/development programming with cultural sensitivity and rights-based approach. **Limitations:** Early-stage; not a large-scale intervention; limited evidence on impact; may not directly address protection, but focuses on awareness/empowerment.

Addressing TF-GBV: Journal Publication (Kluge, 2025). *On misuse of digital health & technology tools and implications for GBV responses.* <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666776225002091> (ScienceDirect)

Summary & Key Findings: This peer-reviewed article argues that digital health or tech tools – even those intended for support – can be weaponised to perpetrate violence: surveillance, misuse of data, breach of privacy, coercion. It emphasises that any innovation must prioritise survivor safety, data ethics, consent, and robust protections, especially in fragile or crisis contexts.

Strengths: Critical, rights-based, grounded in evidence; warns against technological determinism; advocates for careful, ethical design. **Relevance:** Key for shaping responsible tech-GBV interventions; ensures innovations do not inadvertently cause harm. **Limitations:** Conceptual and analytical rather than a detailed empirical study of particular humanitarian interventions.

UN Women & World Health Organization (WHO): Evidence review (2023).

Technology-facilitated violence against women: Taking stock of evidence and data collection. <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-04/Technology-facilitated-violence-against-women-Taking-stock-of-evidence-and-data-collection-en.pdf> (UN Women)

Summary & Key Findings: This global report offers a comprehensive review of what is known about technology-facilitated violence against women (TF-VAW / TF-GBV): it provides definitions, maps different forms of abuse (online harassment, image-based abuse, stalking, doxxing, digital coercion), and highlights data gaps: especially affecting adolescents, racialised and minoritised groups, migrant women, LGBTIQ+/gender-diverse persons, women with disabilities, and displaced populations. It calls for improved data collection methods that are inclusive, disaggregated and sensitive to intersectional vulnerabilities.

Strengths: Authoritative; sets global standards and definitions; strongly intersectional lens; emphasises data/measurement issues: crucial for survivor-centred, evidence-based programming. **Relevance:** Provides conceptual and evidence-base foundation; useful for framing definitions and ensuring inclusion of marginalised voices.

Limitations: Broad global scope: fewer concrete, context-specific case studies; limited to what is published/available; does not detail specific tech-interventions in humanitarian settings.

UN Women: Global Policy Report (2024). *Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence: Developing a Shared Research Agenda.* <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2024/09/technology-facilitated-gender-based-violence-developing-a-shared-research-agenda> (UN Women)

Summary & Key Findings: This report, developed via global consultation, lays out priority research areas for TF-GBV, with emphasis on filling key evidence gaps especially in low-resource, crisis-affected, and marginalised settings. It highlights the need for survivor-informed research design, inclusion of diverse voices (women, girls, LGBTIQ+ people, people with disabilities, displaced, migrants), and intersectional data collection.

Strengths: Survivor-centred and inclusive; forward-looking; sets out research priorities relevant to humanitarian contexts; advocates for intersectional research and data justice. **Relevance:** Provides a roadmap for future empirical work and programme evaluation. **Limitations:** It is an agenda-setting document, not empirical evidence itself.

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