

kNOwVAWdata: Project Overview



BACKGROUND: Violence Against Women is a Violation of their Human Rights



One in three women worldwide has reported experiencing physical or sexual violence in her lifetime, most often at the hands of an intimate partner, in particular her husband. In the Asia-Pacific region, survey data show that the proportion of women who report ever having experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner ranges from 15 to 68 percent among countries.

Violence against women (VAW) is an expression of persistent, deep-rooted gender inequalities and discrimination against women, and it is a violation of the human rights of women and girls. As defined by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, violence against women is a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women's ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on an equal basis with men. It both grows out of, and helps to perpetuate, women's subordinate status and unequal power relations between women and men. VAW has very serious consequences for the health and wellbeing of VAW survivors, their children and their families. This violence is finally being recognized as a public policy priority.

Yet despite growing awareness of the causes, and consequences, of VAW, there remains a persistent lack of data on the prevalence of VAW. Reliable, comparable data on VAW prevalence are essential to inform and to monitor effective prevention and response efforts and are also an essential part of a comprehensive approach to ending all forms of violence against women and girls. However, there remains a lack of technical capacity to collect VAW data. Taken together, this lack of data and capacity are major obstacles to developing appropriate and context-specific VAW policies, and they hamper sound programming, monitoring and evaluation.

Against this backdrop, there is a growing call for reliable and comparable prevalence data on VAW. In 2011, the United Nations Statistical Commission adopted nine standard indicators for measuring violence against women. And with the adoption by Member States of Target 5.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to "*eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in private and public spheres, including trafficking, sexual exploitation and other types of exploitation*", demand for VAW prevalence data will only grow.





Goal 5: “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.”

Target 5.2: “Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation”



Indicator 5.2.1. Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner, in the last 12 months, by form of violence and by age group.



Indicator 5.2.2. Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner, in the last 12 months, by age group and place of occurrence.



In light of this growing demand for more accurate and reliable measurement of VAW prevalence, and building on its track record supporting VAW data collection in the region, UNFPA, with support from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), is undertaking an initiative to support and strengthen sustainable regional and national capacity to measure VAW.

Over three-and-a-half years, from mid-2016 through the end of 2019, the kNOwVAWdata initiative will build on work already being supported by UNFPA to conduct VAW surveys and analysis in the Asia-Pacific region. The initiative will also ensure sustainability, including by strengthening capacities of national institutions to collect and analyze data, in particular by using internationally recognized, best practice survey methodologies, such as the methodology developed for the WHO Multi-country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence and the Domestic Violence module of the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS).

¹ For more details on these methodologies, please refer to the leaflet on survey methodology.

Key features of the kNOwVAWdata initiative include:



Capacity building for conducting national prevalence studies. UNFPA will identify and subsequently partner with a qualified institution to develop a high-quality curriculum on measuring VAW, building on existing materials and resources, and updating these with the latest methodological approaches and experiences from the field.



Pilot and recurrent trainings by the partner institution, targeting staff of national statistical offices, government partners, researchers and other experts. Over the life of the project, the roll-out of training will be extended to other institutions through twinning or partnership arrangements.



Knowledge capture and sharing. UNFPA will develop a repository of key reference materials for practitioners, data and resources from country VAW prevalence studies, training materials, and methodological guidance. In addition, UNFPA will tell the story of research on prevalence of VAW through audio-video vignettes, infographics and social media.



Technical assistance on national VAW data collection in countries will be provided by the partner institution. A network of trained professionals who have participated in the course will become available to support country-level work. The institution will also play a role in mentoring participants and partnering with governments and national institutions to support data collection and analysis in countries.

Training will integrate course work, hands-on learning and practical experience:

- It will focus on developing the skills of practitioners to measure international indicators for VAW, including under SDG Target 5.2.
- Capacity development will be linked with practical technical support to data collection efforts at country level.
- It will be embedded in on-going course work at partner institutions.
- Training activities will be supported by mentoring.

A technical advisory committee (TAC) for this initiative will be comprised of experts on the collection, analysis and use of data on violence against women at the country, regional and global levels. The TAC will help to guide development and roll-out of the curriculum, will provide advice on monitoring and evaluation of the project, and will ensure that experience and learning from this project are shared with other initiatives on VAW data, including at the global level.

UNFPA'S Proven Leadership In Collecting Data On Violence Against Women

UNFPA is at the forefront globally in measuring, responding to and preventing violence against women, and to date has provided technical support on collection of data to 16 countries in the Asia-Pacific region. For the past five years, UNFPA APRO has been investing in initiatives to build skills among government staff and researchers in the region and the lessons learned have been incorporated into training materials and capacity building efforts. UNFPA also has a long-standing and trusted relationship with government statistical bodies worldwide on population data initiatives - including on national censuses - as well as a network of partners who are engaged in its work in this area.

To date, at least 26 countries in the Asia-Pacific region have undertaken national or subnational prevalence studies on VAW. Twenty have used the methodology for the WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence and eight have used the DHS Domestic violence module at least once, while a few other countries used different methods. In 16 of these countries, Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Samoa and Solomon Islands, UNFPA served as a technical partner to governments and National Statistical Offices. UNFPA helped to ensure ethical and sound data collection, analysis and interpretation of VAW data, in line with international standards. These studies have provided an evidence base for policy advocacy, legal reform and programme development.

Australia and UNFPA in partnership

Australia has supported more than 12 violence prevalence studies in the region, partnering with UNFPA for many of these studies. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has supported studies in Timor-Leste and Cambodia in South East Asia, and studies in Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Tonga, Fiji, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru and Palau in the Pacific. Australia also supported the United Nations Multi-Country Study on Men and Violence in Asia and The Pacific, which collected data on men's violence against women at nine sites in six countries in the region (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea).

DFAT's contribution will be supplemented by UNFPA financial and in-kind resources, staff capacity and expenses.

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