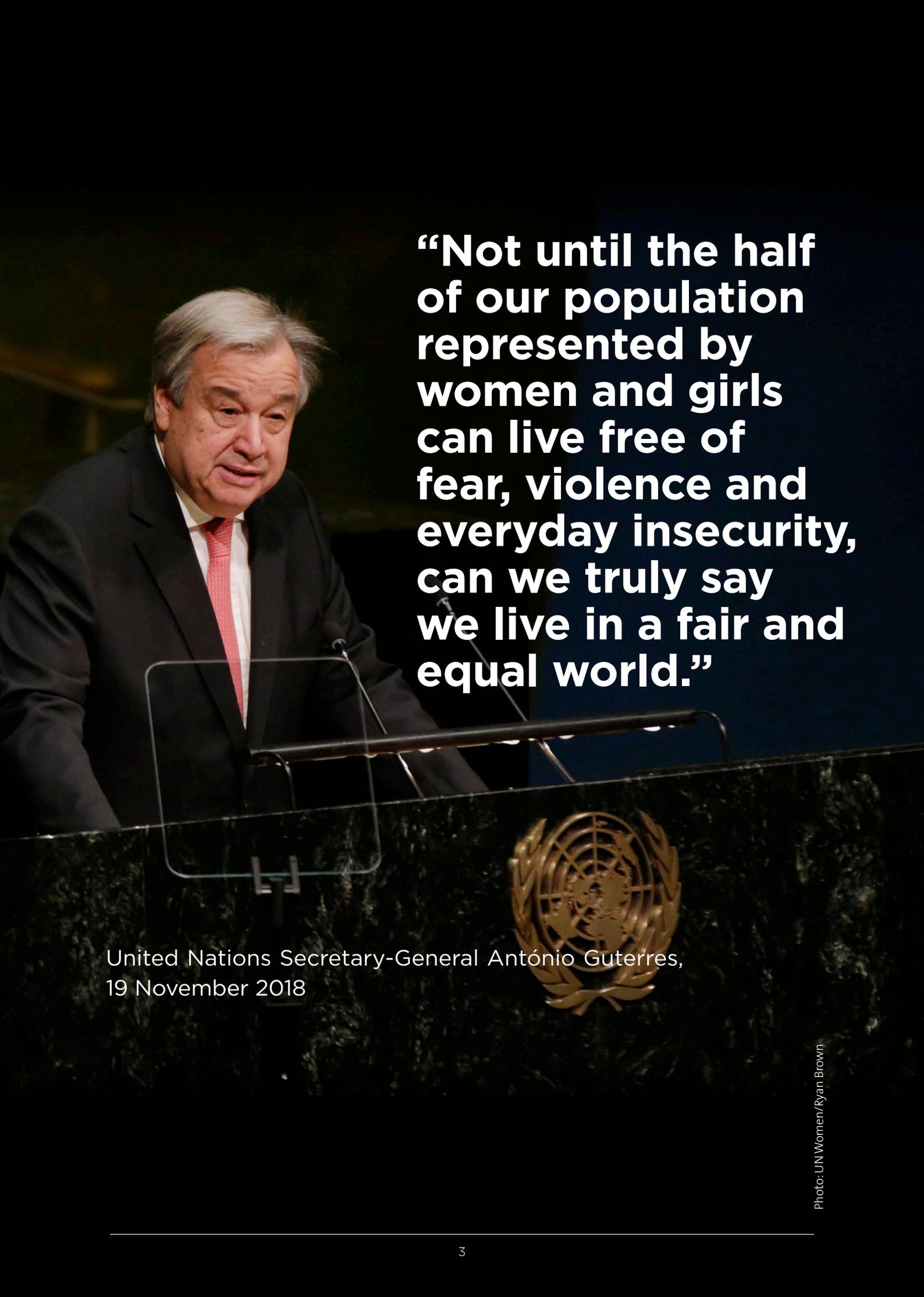




A Resource Book on
**INTIMATE PARTNER
VIOLENCE FOR
UNITED NATIONS
STAFF IN ASIA**

This publication, *A Resource Book on Intimate Partners Violence for UN Staff in Asia*, is based on *A Resource Book on Domestic Violence for UN Staff in the Pacific* (UNCT Pacific 2017) and the booklet *Caring for Us: Dealing with Domestic Violence* (UNICEF 2006). Most of the data focus on violence against women perpetrated by male intimate partners. Sources of these data are existing compilations such as the World Health Organization multi-country study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women (2005), the World Health Organization (WHO) Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women (2013) and the kNOwVAWdata/UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Snapshot (2019).

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A photograph of António Guterres, the United Nations Secretary-General, speaking at a podium. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a red tie. The podium features the United Nations logo. The background is dark and out of focus.

“Not until the half of our population represented by women and girls can live free of fear, violence and everyday insecurity, can we truly say we live in a fair and equal world.”

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres,
19 November 2018

Foreword

Intimate partner violence (IPV), like all kinds of violence, is a violation of human rights. Violence committed by an intimate partner – whether a current or former spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend or dating partner – has devastating physical, emotional, financial and social effects on women, children, families and communities around the world. IPV can happen to anyone. It occurs across all societies, countries, cultures and genders, but women are by far the most at risk. In the worst cases, it can culminate in femicide, or the targeted gender-related murder of women. In addition to its detrimental impacts on survivors’ physical and mental health, IPV impacts their participation in education and work, bringing significant social and economic costs that we cannot afford to ignore.

In Asia, as in other parts of the world, women are most vulnerable to violence behind the closed doors of their own homes. No one is immune to intimate partner violence, including those who are working in the United Nations.

As the United Nations and its partners are working to “significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere” and “eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres” and to realize the Sustainable Development Goal 5 to “Achieve Gender Equality” by 2030, it is equally important that these efforts are implemented internally. UN staff are as much at risk of IPV as anyone else and staff should be able to access

resources and guidance, whether they are victims of IPV or know someone who has experienced violence.

This resource book is designed to support UN staff members and other personnel who encounter IPV either in their own lives or that of colleagues. **Part One** provides an overview of the problem and the regional context. **Part Two** provides practical guidance, from how to recognize IPV to where to seek help.

We encourage any United Nations Agency to distribute this resource book, which features key contacts in Thailand. The first point of contact may be a gender focal point, an operations/HR focal point or the UNDSS in your duty station. For offices outside of Thailand, it is suggested to adapt this resource book to your setting with local service providers listed.

We hope that this resource book can assist those seeking support for any type of IPV, those seeking to support IPV survivors, as well as those who are perpetrators of IPV to understand that any type of IPV is unacceptable, and that everyone has the right to live a life without violence and the fear of violence.

We believe that creating supportive and safe spaces for all is the most effective way to prevent and respond to IPV. This resource book is one step towards making our homes, workplaces and communities into safer places for all.



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We give special thanks the members of the UNiTE Asia-Pacific Working Group who drafted the original version of this resource book. It has been adapted to several country contexts.

Introduction

Part One provides an overview of intimate partner violence and the regional situation.

Most victims of IPV are women and most perpetrators are men; however, IPV can also be committed against men and across all types of intimate partner relationships. The levels of support available vary in different countries and gaps exist, notably in shelter services. This resource book is a resource for staff, consultants, interns and others working closely with the UN system.

As a United Nations staff member, you are encouraged to become informed about the topic of intimate partner violence and, when appropriate, to assist others within your family and in the community and workplace. **If you are experiencing violence**, please remember this:

ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE
ARE UNACCEPTABLE
YOU ARE NOT ALONE
IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT
HELP IS AVAILABLE

Someone you work with or members of local partner organizations or communities could be affected. They may disclose that they are, or have been, a survivor of violence. A person who discloses violence needs to feel believed and supported with compassion. Reassure them that their feelings are valid and that it is not their fault; do not be judgemental. Also, not everyone will be able to share their experience of violence openly, but someone may seek your help via hints, signs or side comments that imply they are experiencing intimate partner violence.

Part Two offers practical guidance and information on where to get help in Asia.

As a UN staff member, you can identify services available in the country or countries where you are working, so that you may provide timely and accurate information. For example, have at hand:

- local hotline number, if available
- contact details for government agencies and offices that can offer immediate protective services to victims
- contact details for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that offer services such as one-stop centres, counselling, medical, paralegal or shelter services

If you are an offender (perpetrator of violence), this resource book will make clear that you need to seek help to address the problem, and that your actions are unacceptable. Perpetrating IPV goes against everything that UN agencies stand for, as laid out in the Code of Conduct for all UN staff. In most Asian countries, committing physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence is a crime, and IPV is a crime. There is no impunity for UN staff, who may be prosecuted in their home country as well as in their duty station.

If you are a manager or are involved with staff welfare issues, this resource book will provide supplementary information that can help you assist individuals in need. This resource book does not replace existing UN guidelines for staff welfare policies and procedures, but aims to complement them as a practical resource.

PART ONE: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Chapter 1: What is intimate partner violence?

DEFINITIONS

Violence against women (VAW) is defined by the United Nations (A/RES/48/104) as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life”.¹

It encompasses, but is not limited to:

- Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation.
- Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution.
- Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.

Domestic violence refers to abusive behaviour (physical, sexual, emotional violence and neglect) that occurs within the private, domestic sphere, generally between individuals who are related through blood or intimacy. In most contexts, “**intimate partner violence**” (IPV) is

the most common type of domestic violence, but in some societies, violence by in-laws is also common.² It may affect domestic workers, children and the elderly, members of the extended family, and those living under a family’s care regardless of their relationship, such as persons with disabilities.

Intimate partner violence usually consists of a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviours, including physical, sexual and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion, by a current or former intimate partner. It can occur within heterosexual or same-sex relationships and does not require sexual relations. Garcia-Moreno et al (2005) define IPV as “behaviour in an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviours.”

An intimate partner is a person with whom has a close personal relationship. Intimate partner relationships include current or former:

- spouses (married, common-law, civil union or domestic partners)
- boyfriends/girlfriends (non-married)
- dating partners
- ongoing sexual partners

1. <https://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>

2. Definitions for domestic violence and IPV are from kNOwVAWdata (2016). UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office. <https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/kNOwVAWdata%20Key%20Terminology.pdf>

POWER AND CONTROL

The common thread in intimate partner violence is that one person is exerting power and control over another. This control can take many forms. While exerting power over the victim, the abuser uses the bonds of closeness and intimacy built over time within that relationship. Bonds of intimacy can be bonds of love and friendship. Any information the abuser knows about the victim can be used to control and violate the victim.

The Power and Control Wheel developed by the Domestic Abuse Interventions Program (DAIP), or the Duluth Model, is used to educate and inform.³ Language in the Wheel and in this resource book often identifies men as the abusers, though neutral terms are also used. Most victims of IPV are women and most perpetrators are men; however, IPV can also be committed against men and across all types of intimate partner relationships.

Figure 1: The Power and Control Wheel



Abuse can be infrequent or escalate at particular times or increase over time. Patterns of abuse will vary. Patterns may be related to substance abuse or alcohol intoxication, which are considered aggravating factors and not the root cause of violence. The root cause is the inequality and power imbalance in intimate partner relationships between men and women. This will be discussed further in the next chapter. What is also known is that abuse normally escalates and the situation becomes more dangerous for the victim/survivor, including (and often especially) once they attempt to leave a violent relationship.

Anyone can be a victim of violence because abuse:

- Happens everywhere –in large cities or rural communities, and in all countries, cultures and societies
- Happens anytime – at the start of a relationship or later on (even after)
- Happens across all social classes and income groups
- Happens regardless of education levels, social status, mental or physical ability or disability
- Happens across all age groups, from the very young to the elderly
- Happens across all ethnic, religious, racial or cultural backgrounds

3. This version of the Power and Control Wheel is adapted from the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, Minnesota, and futures without violence www.futureswithoutviolence.org For more information see the report [Can Work Be Safe When Home Isn't?](#)

Studies on violence against women indicate that women experiencing violence from intimate partners are more at risk to other types of violence, less likely to speak out against sexual violence, less likely to receive support from their networks and more likely to be at a higher risk for health issues such as trauma and depression.⁴ Intimate partner violence reduces a woman's ability to control her life and her health, including her ability to raise concerns or make decisions about negotiating condom use, discussing family planning or raising concerns around sexual and reproductive health, as well as discussing fidelity.

TYPES OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

A great deal of variation occurs in IPV from country to country, and from setting to setting within the same country, e.g., urban versus rural. Many abusers perpetrate more than one type of violence, and the distinctions between them can become quite blurred, as they are often inflicted in combination.

Physical violence refers to the intentional use of physical force with the potential for causing death, injury or harm.⁵

Physical violence is often the most visible type of abuse. It is characterized by the infliction of injury or injuries. Sometimes referred to as battering, physical assaults often start out small – maybe a small shove during an argument, or forcefully grabbing a wrist. Over time, however, physical abuse usually becomes more severe, more frequent and, in some cases, can result in death. Actions may include:

- Slapped someone, or thrown something at someone that could hurt someone
- Pushed or shoved someone
- Hit someone with a fist or something else that could hurt
- Kicked, dragged or beaten someone up
- Choked or burned someone on purpose
- Threatened someone with, or actually used a gun, knife or other weapon against someone



Photo: UN Women/Fahad Katze

Sexual violence refers to any sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act, or unwanted sexual comments or acts that are directed against a person's sexuality using coercion by anyone, regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including at home and at work. Rape is the term that is commonly used for the first type of sexual violence noted above (forced/coerced intercourse). Rape can be defined as non-consensual sexual penetration, however slight, of any part of the body of the victim with a sexual organ, or of the anal or genital opening of the victim with any object or any other part of the body.⁶ Sexual violence may include:

- Being physically forced to have sexual intercourse against someone's will
- Having sexual intercourse because someone is afraid of what their partner might do
- Being forced to do something sexual someone finds degrading or humiliating

Physical and sexual violence are the main types of intimate partner abuse and are often included in international VAW research and national health surveys. Other types of IPV include emotional, psychological and financial abuse.

4. UN Women (2016).

5. UNFPA/kNOwVAWdata (2016).

6. UNFPA/kNOwVAWdata (2016).



Photo: UN Women/Fahad Kaizer

Emotional or psychological violence refers to any act or omission that damages the self-esteem, identity or development of the individual. It includes, but is not limited to, humiliation, threatening loss of custody of children, forced isolation from family or friends, threatening to harm the individual or someone they care about, repeated yelling or degradation, inducing fear through intimidating words or gestures, controlling behaviour and the destruction of possessions.⁷

Emotional abuse serves to degrade and undermine an individual's sense of self-worth and self-esteem while rejecting their opinions and needs. It is designed to further control them by instilling fear and ensuring compliance. Emotional abuse may include:

- Constant and/or extreme criticism
- Humiliation in private and/or public
- Manipulation with lies and contradictions, promoting extreme jealousy as proof of love
- Using religious beliefs as a pressure tactic to continue abuse
- Isolating the survivor from family members, friends, or regular activities (prevented from seeing or talking to others, not allowed to go out)
- Denying the abuse ever happened, shifting responsibility for abuse or using the statement "It's your fault"

- Controlling behaviour – forcing someone to ask permission to undertake normal activities
- Stalking – including harassing phone calls to place of employment, following someone at work or when meeting friends, colleagues or family

Economic violence includes denying access to and control over basic resources (UN General Assembly, 2006). It causes, or attempts to cause, an individual to become financially dependent on another person by obstructing their access to or control over resources and/or independent economic activity. It includes acts such as the denial of funds, refusal to contribute financially, denial of food and basic needs, and controlling access to health care or employment.⁸ Economic violence may include:

- Preventing access to money
- Stopping someone from getting or keeping a job
- Making major financial decisions without consultation
- Controlling all access to money earned, while leaving the victim to pay all household bills
- Undermining a partner's attempts to improve education, training or employment
- Withholding food, clothes, medications and health care or shelter

7. UNFPA/kNOwVAWdata (2016).

8. UNFPA/ kNOwVAWdata (2016).

Box 1: Facts about intimate partner violence

Most victims of IPV are women and most perpetrators are men; however, IPV can also be committed against men and across all types of intimate partner relationships.

1 in 3 women and girls worldwide experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, most frequently by an intimate partner. **Most of this violence is IPV.**⁹

1 in 3 women and girls intentionally killed worldwide, or 82 every day, are killed by someone whom they would normally trust and expect to care for them.¹⁰

While there are a few data on the prevalence of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation, in the United States, **bisexual women experienced significantly higher lifetime prevalence of IPV (61.1%)** when compared to lesbian (43.8%) and heterosexual women (35%).

In some regions, women and girls who have suffered IPV are 1.5 times more likely to acquire HIV than women who have not suffered such violence.¹²

Key findings for Asia:¹³

- By country, the proportion of women who have reported experience of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime ranges from 15 per cent in Japan, Bhutan, Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Philippines, to 59 per cent in Timor-Leste.
- The proportion of women who have reported experiencing physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner in the past 12 months ranges from 4 per cent in Japan to 46 per cent in Afghanistan and Timor-Leste.
- In most countries of the region, women are much more likely to have experienced IPV than to have experienced physical or sexual violence by someone other than a partner.
- At one extreme of the spectrum of violence against women is "femicide" or gender-related killings of women and girls. In Asia, this term also includes so-called "honour" killings, of which the World Health Organization estimates at least 5,000 a year worldwide.¹⁴ It also includes newly married women being killed by in-laws over conflicts related to dowry. The largest number of women and girls killed in Asia are killed by intimate partners or family members.
- 20,000 of the 87,000 women killed worldwide by intimate partners or family members in 2017 were in Asia.¹⁵

9. www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday/

10. UNODC (2018).

11. UNAIDS (2019).

12. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (2010)

13. UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Region/kNOwVAWdata (May 2019).

14. WHO (2012).

15. UNODC (2018).





Photo: UN Women/Youth Leaders

LEGAL RESPONSES

Laws against IPV are important to protect women, and are important signs of commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goal target of ending all forms of violence and harmful practices against women and girls by 2030. Globally, more than 1 billion women lack legal protection against sexual violence by an intimate partner or family member and close to 1.4 billion lack legal protection against domestic economic violence, with little progress over time in both cases (World Bank, 2018).

While legal responses to IPV are steadily improving across Asia, legal solutions may not be an option in some places at this time. Laws in Asia recognize a woman's right to file a case against her husband/partner; however, some individuals within legal systems may not recognize this and may create barriers or block a woman from doing so. Further, some societies in Asia have traditional legal systems headed by tribal leaders that not only fail to protect women, but in some cases are responsible for instigating violence against women and even femicide related to honour killings. It is important to understand the local context and to be aware of sociocultural barriers to women asking for help.

Box 2: Laws and policies in Asia

In most Asian countries, physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence is a crime, and IPV is also a crime. There is no impunity for UN staff, who may be prosecuted in their home country as well as in their duty station. In October 2012, Asian leaders signed a Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) region to strengthen regional action to combat and end this human rights violation.¹⁶ Approximately half of the 25 countries in UN Women's Asia and the Pacific region have a national action plan on VAW or gender-based violence (GBV), excluding those with only action plans on human trafficking. Globally, at least 119 countries have passed laws on domestic violence, 125 have laws on sexual harassment and 52 have laws on marital rape.¹⁷

Also, data collection is increasing; for example, 31 of 37 countries included in a UNFPA Asia-Pacific study completed at least one VAW prevalence survey by May 2019.¹⁸

In India, women are not at greater risk than in other parts of Asia; however, recent severe cases have drawn intense public outrage, such as the fatal gang rape of a young woman on a bus in Delhi in 2012, and the rape of the eight-month old girl infant in January 2018. The Government has since revised or introduced new VAW legislation, policies and national action plans.¹⁹

Stronger laws specific to domestic violence have been passed in many Asian countries; however, implementing legislation will take time and many challenges with implementation remain, including the attitudes that perpetuate gender discrimination held by judicial officials, police and other service providers who may not respond appropriately or adequately because of their own biases.

16. View the Declaration online at https://asean.org/?static_post=declaration-on-the-elimination-of-violence-against-women-in-the-asean-region-4

17. Ibid.

18. For a list of countries with VAW data, see: <https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/en/resources/violence-against-women-regional-snapshot-2019-knowvawdatahttps://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/kNOwVAWdata%20regional%20VAW%20map%20July%2026%202018.pdf>

19. New York Times (2012, 2018).

Chapter 2: Causes of intimate partner violence

INEQUALITY

The primary factor leading to IPV is gender discrimination, which results in inequality between men and women. Inequality fuels both a sense of entitlement for men as “head of the household” as well as the need that an abuser has to exert power and control – with women often the targets of this need. Children and other groups are also targeted within homes and communities, including disabled persons, domestic workers, and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities. Violence becomes a way to exert power and entitlement as well as to manipulate and control another person, extract privileges, mask insecurity and dominate decision-making within the family. In some countries, men “discipline women for behaviour they do not approve of”.

Around the world, women’s subordinate position within the home is deeply entrenched in aspects of traditional, legal, religious and social structures. Women and men may be taught that violence is an inevitable part of a relationship, or in some way sanctioned by cultural norms; there may be an emphasis on a women’s obligation to “submit to her husband”. A woman who complains about abuse may face being blamed for “causing” the problem, or be pressured into returning to a dangerous situation for fear of shaming her family.

Intimate partner violence often flourishes in an environment of secrecy, where there may be strong taboos about discussing a “family affair” or “private matter” with outsiders. Unconsciously or consciously, a woman may feel that she deserves to be mistreated for reasons such as refusing to have sex with her partner, or burning dinner.

SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

A “socio-ecological framework” can be used to understand how personal, relational, situational and sociocultural factors interact to produce violent behaviour.

Individual

- The fact that one has a sense of entitlement or privilege or power over the other
- Learned behaviour – witnessing intimate partner violence and/or being abused as a child
- The above factors can be exacerbated by drug or alcohol abuse
- Educational level or employment status

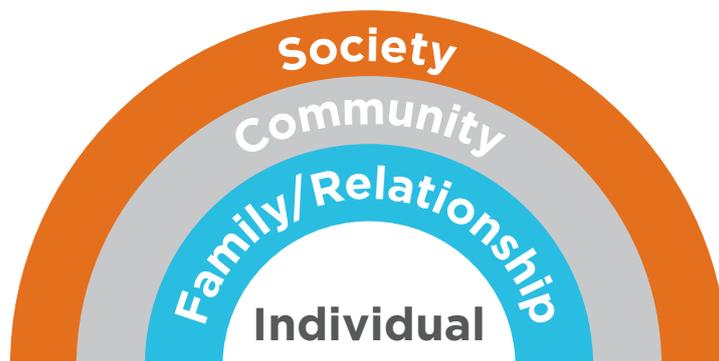
Relationship

- Poor communication skills – no learned negotiation skills
- Male control of wealth and decision-making in the family
- Influence of the extended family
- Economic problems
- Entitlement leading to multiple affairs/extramarital affairs
- Differences in education, age and contribution to the household

Society

- Norms granting male control over female behaviour and decisions
- A culture of “top down” hierarchical decision-making in family, community, church and state
- Acceptance of violence as a way to resolve conflict
- Notion of masculinity linked to dominance, honour or aggression
- Rigid gender roles
- Legal context, lack of implementation of laws, impunity

Figure 2: The individual at the centre of the socio-ecological framework



“WHY DOES SHE STAY?”

Most people ask, “Why does she stay?” They may not realize that the question places the blame on the woman experiencing violence and abuse. A better question is, “**Why does the abuser choose to abuse?**” The reality is that the majority of abused women (or abused partners in same-sex relationships) make heroic efforts to leave, but many are unsuccessful because they face one or more major obstacles:

Fear: The number one reason for not leaving is fear. A woman may have been told over and over again that if she leaves the relationship, terrible things will happen to her or to her children. The abuser may have threatened to take the children away if the partner attempts to leave. The abuser may have convinced the woman that no matter where she goes, he will find her and never leave her alone. He may threaten her children, other family members, her possessions and/or her livelihood.

Gender roles: Women are often taught to be passive and dependent on men. With this socialization, women are taught to bear responsibility for their relationship, knowing they will be blamed by their family, or society in general if the relationship fails or if they decide to leave. Women are often socialized to “respect and obey” their husbands/partners, and failure to do so is viewed as a failure to be a “good” woman. Women may even think that this is “normal” behaviour for a man.

Religious and cultural values and beliefs: These may reinforce the commitment to marriage despite any pain and suffering. Interpretations of some faiths hold that bonds of marriage cannot or should not be broken and that the husband is the head of the family, and it is a wife’s duty to submit to his wishes and to keep harmony in the family. This rationale can be so powerful that a woman will refuse to leave an abusive relationship.



The most dangerous time for a woman who experiences violence and abuse is when she leaves the abusive partner: 75 per cent of domestic violence related homicides occur upon separation and there is a 75 per cent increase of violence upon separation for at least two years.²⁰

20. The Center for Relationship Abuse Awareness.

Lack of economic independence: Some women in abusive relationships have been prohibited to work or earn their own living. This dependence on the husband for livelihoods and fear for the welfare of one's children as well as the responsibility of raising children alone can force women to endure abusive relationships.

Lack of a support system: A major component of abuse can be isolation, even in extended family households. The woman may have no support system because the abuser has undermined her family ties and friendships, leaving her psychologically and financially dependent on him. Poor economic conditions and long distances between the woman and friends/family can lead to isolation.

Lack of resources: A woman may not have the financial resources to leave or the means of obtaining money, shelter, transportation and/or a livelihood, especially if she needs to relocate to get away from her abuser. She may even lack information about where to go for help.

Feelings of guilt: The woman may believe that her partner is "sick" and/or "needs her help". The abuser may fuel this idea, making her believe that he needs her if he is to become better again. The idea of leaving can produce feelings of guilt. She may also blame herself.

Promises of reform: Often the abuser promises that the abuse will never happen again; the woman wants to believe that this is true.

Responses from family members, friends and colleagues: The woman may not be believed or taken seriously. She may also be blamed or judged as a bad wife, partner or mother – or told that she should just put up with the abuse.

Lack of a sense of self-worth: Women who are abused may have been told by their husband/partner or family members repeatedly that they are worthless without him. This can also lead a woman to believe that she is lucky to have her husband despite the abuse, and that she is never going to be loved by anyone else.

Love for partner: Many people enter a relationship for love. That emotion does not simply disappear when faced with difficulties. After violence has occurred, the abuser will often apologize. Because her self-esteem is so low following the incident, a woman may perceive the apologies and promises of reform as the end of the abuse.

WHY DOES HE ABUSE?

The psychological roots of violence in an individual can be very complex. The most common element is the abuser's need for power and control over someone else, and many will continue to repeat patterns of abuse in their present or future relationships. It may also have an element of learned behaviour from the family or cultural context.

Someone in an abusive relationship may have a strong desire to understand why they are being abused or how their partner or husband could do this, and spend many hours trying to figure it out. This can be difficult to do in the context of the relationship itself and perhaps even be self-defeating.

Some common excuses for abusive men include:

- It is his right as the head of the household.
- It is his way of showing how much he loves her.
- He has to discipline her.
- His previous partner hurt him.
- He abuses those he loves the most.
- He holds in his feelings too much.
- He is mentally ill.
- He has an aggressive personality.
- He is afraid of intimacy and abandonment.
- He has low self-esteem.
- His boss mistreats him.
- He has poor communication skills.
- He grew up with abuse in his family.
- He feels victimized.

None of these reasons justify hurting another person, however. There is no justification for violence and these are not valid reasons to perpetuate intimate partner violence.

If you are experiencing violence, the first thing you must do is protect yourself (and not blame yourself).

Chapter 3: The impact of intimate partner violence

IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM IMPACT

Violence against women, including IPV, is a grave violation of human rights. Its impact can be both immediate and long term, and includes physical, sexual and psychological consequences for women, including death. It negatively affects women's sense of self-worth, their general well-being and overall quality of life. Intimate partner violence affects every member of a family; the impacts can be serious and long-lasting. The fallout from abuse also ripples out to harm society at large.

Worldwide, women whose father beat their mother are significantly more likely to report partner violence than other women.²¹ Similarly, multi-country studies from low and middle-income countries have found that men abused or neglected as children were significantly more likely than other men to report perpetrating physical or sexual violence against women.²² Studies in the region suggest that a man's past experience is a stronger factor in predicting violence than a woman's past experience.²³

ON SURVIVORS

The experience of IPV varies by individual, but the impact commonly includes one or more of the following:

- Physical injuries, including disability
- Isolation
- Chronic depression and other mental health concerns
- Low self-esteem
- Health problems, including sexually transmitted infections and HIV
- Sleep disorders
- Sexual dysfunction
- Suicide attempts
- Chronic fear and uncertainty
- Poor work performance
- An inability to adequately respond to the needs of others including children
- Death

All of these effects can build on each other, spinning a web that may make a woman feel like she is trapped in her situation. If steps are not taken to stop the abuse, however, IPV often becomes more violent and frequent. In too many cases, this leads to serious injury or death.

21. Abramsky, et al. (2011).

22. Fulu, Jewkes, Roselli, & Garcia-Moreno (2013).

23. See for example: <https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/en/publications/why-do-some-women-experience-more-violence-husbands-others-viet-nam-o>

ON CHILDREN

Violence scars children for life. Children who have experienced violence during their childhood are more likely to be either perpetrators and/or targets of violence as adults (UNICEF, 2016). Within families, abusers who target other adults are often violent towards children as well. Even if the abuse is not targeted at children, studies have shown that children witnessing violence also suffer from the effects of the abuse. As targets, children may suffer a range of abuse:

- Physical abuse – beating a child with a belt, shoe, hose pipe, broom or other object; hitting; kicking; shaking
- Sexual abuse: fondling, touching or kissing a child's genitals; oral sex; forced intercourse
- Emotional/psychological abuse: threatening, intimidating, criticizing, humiliating and frightening a child
- Physical neglect: inadequate provision of food, housing or clothing; lack of supervision; denial or delay of medical care; inadequate hygiene
- Emotional/psychological neglect: refusal or failure to provide psychological care; lack of any emotional support and love



In **Viet Nam**, more than half of the women who experienced physical partner violence also report that their children have witnessed this at least once.²⁴

Even when children are not the direct targets of abuse, witnessing intimate partner violence can cause them grave harm. Children who hear or see the abuse of a parent by another parent or partner may:

- Develop social, cognitive, emotional, psychological, physical and/or behavioural problems that affect their development and can continue into adulthood
- Grow up believing violence is a normal part of family life
- Be more likely to be abusive as adults if they are male, and more passive and withdrawn if they are female, increasing the risk that they too will enter an abusive relationship
- Live in daily fear of what to expect at home, and can be filled with confusion, chaos, anger and tension that can lead to lifelong fear and an inability to trust others
- Be isolated by an abusive parent who shuts off the family from outside help or support
- Feel responsible for the abuse and powerless to stop it
- As they develop, children will be more likely to use violence, commit crimes and be abusers of alcohol and drugs

Most national studies using the questionnaire from the World Health Organization multi-country study find evidence that living in a household with IPV affected children's well-being and when exposed to intimate partner violence, they were more likely to experience nightmares and show certain behaviours, such as extreme aggressiveness or timidity.²⁵

DURING PREGNANCY

A recent survey on domestic violence in nine developing countries around the world found that women being abused are more likely to have unwanted pregnancies and to suffer miscarriages, stillbirths and premature deliveries. In many cases, abuse actually increases during pregnancy. Their children are more likely to die before age five compared with children from women who have not experienced such abuse.

24. Vietnam General Statistics Office (2010).

25. WHO (2005).

26. Rutgers WPF (2013).



In **Cambodia** and **Pakistan**, 14–20 per cent among those who had been beaten before and during pregnancy said violence got worse during pregnancy (DHS 2012). In **Pakistan**, it was reported that during pregnancy 47 per cent of women were slapped, hit or beaten by their husbands, with much higher rates of violence during pregnancy found in provinces such as in Jaffarabad, which reached 81 per cent.²⁶

ON WORKPLACES

Intimate partner violence can have significant costs for workplaces, including absenteeism, high staff turnover and reduced productivity. These data underline that IPV generates significant costs to employers due to lost productivity, absence from work and employee turnover. This highlights that while employers must address IPV from an ethical and human rights-based perspective, there will also be economic benefits from investing in responsive and preventative measures.



A recent study in **China** found that almost 45 per cent of respondents who have experienced IPV reported missing work hours or work days due to IPV in the past 12 months.²⁷ The study also found that overall, 71 per cent of survivors reported that domestic violence negatively affected their career advancement due to lowered work performance, poor attendance and career disruption caused by having to change jobs or give up opportunities of professional training and promotion. Further, on average, each survivor missed 15 work days, took 11 days of personal leave, and/or arrived late/left early from work five times in the past 12 months. **China** enacted its first Domestic Violence Act in March 2016.

ON SOCIETY

The high prevalence of IPV drains national expenditures on physical and mental health care, courts and police and cuts into educational achievement and productivity. Economic costing exercises vary, but generally measure costs to: the justice system, health care system, social services, care and counselling, shelter support, individual women's costs of health care, shelter and legal fees, loss of income for the individual/family and nation through decreased productivity, trauma and suffering and the consequent decrease in revenue to the State and potential future, "second generation" costs on children and human capital. Accurate cost calculations are not possible due to the fact that most incidences of violence continue to go unreported. In addition, it is extremely difficult to assess the cost of the impacts of violence on women in the long term as well as their children, noting the evidence that intimate partner violence witnessed as a child is repeated in adulthood.



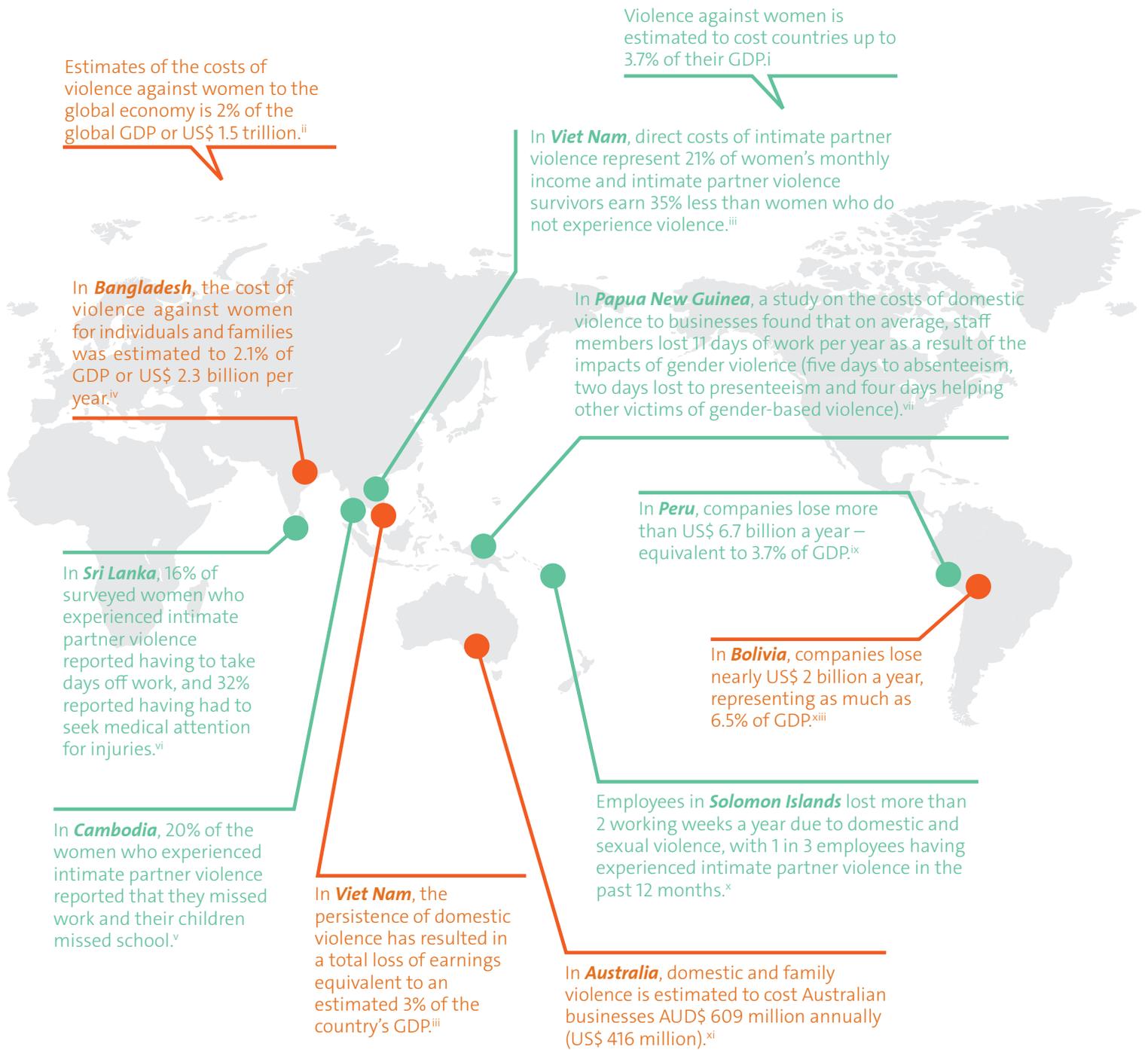
In Asia, several countries such as **Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam** have either started to estimate costs for providing essential VAW services or conducted studies, to develop a costing framework for measuring the economic impact of domestic violence.²⁸

Numerous studies have been undertaken globally that examine the cost of violence to individuals, families and nations' economies. These studies cannot be directly compared as many of them have used different methodologies. Selected samples of the studies are listed in table 1.

27. The Asia Foundation (2016).

28. UN Women (2014).

Figure 3: Studies on the cost of intimate partner violence*



*This map is adapted from [Ending Violence is Our Business: Workplace Responses to Intimate Partner Violence in Asia and the Pacific](#), published by UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in 2019.

Sources:

- i. World Bank (2019), "Social development brief: Gender based violence (violence against women and girls)".
- ii. CARE International (2018). "Counting the Cost: The Price Society Pays for Violence Against Women".
- iii. UN Women (2013), *Estimating the cost of domestic violence against women in Viet Nam*.
- iv. CARE Bangladesh (2011), *Domestic Violence against Women: Cost to the Nation*.
- v. UN Women (2013), "The costs of violence: Understanding the costs of violence against women and girls and its response - selected findings and lessons learned from Asia and the Pacific".
- vi. CARE Sri Lanka (2013), *Broadening gender: Why masculinities matter Attitudes, practices and gender-based violence in four districts in Sri Lanka*.
- vii. Emily Darko, William Smith and David Walker (2015), "Gender violence in Papua New Guinea: The cost to business" (ODI report).
- viii. International Finance Corporation (IFC) (2019), *The Impact of Domestic and Sexual Violence on the Workplace in Solomon Islands*, Survey Report.
- ix. Dr. Aristides Alfredo Vara Horna (2015), *The cost of violence against women in formal microenterprises: the case of Peru*.
- x. Dr. Aristides Alfredo Vara Horna (2015), *Violence against women and its financial consequences for businesses in Bolivia*.
- xi. Male Champions of Change (2016). *Playing Our Part, Lessons Learned from Implementing Workplace Responses to Domestic and Family Violence. Australia*.

PART TWO: PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

Chapter 4. Start with recognizing the signs of abuse

This section provides guidance to you, as a UN staff member. What can you do if IPV affects you or someone you know through work? Start with recognizing the signs of abuse.

THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

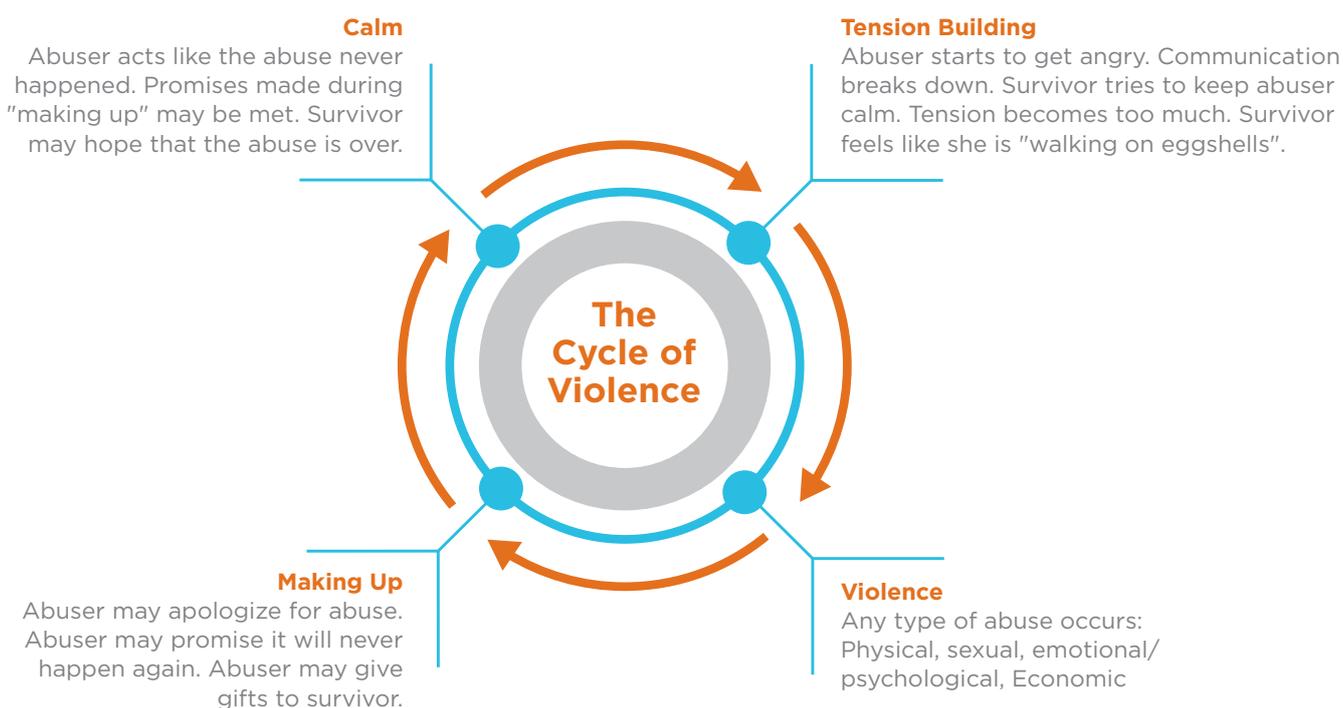
If you are in an abusive relationship, or you suspect that someone you know is in one, you may recognize the following pattern.

The cycle of violence can happen hundreds of times in an abusive relationship. The total cycle can take anywhere from a few hours to a year or more to complete. Typically, each time the abuse occurs, it worsens and the cycle

shortens. Breaking the pattern alone and without help is difficult. **An individual in this situation may need outside support from professionals working with survivors of violence.**

It can help to start defining what forms of behaviour are acceptable, even if it is not possible to convey these limits to the violent partner, who may or may not respect them. Regardless, this exercise will help to clarify rights and expectations, and build the determination to say “no” to additional harm. In the end, leaving the abusive relationship, temporarily or permanently, may be the only way to stop the cycle.

Figure 4: The cycle of violence



IDENTIFY WHAT IS HAPPENING

The first step towards ending a violent relationship is to identify what is happening. This may seem logical, but it can feel overwhelmingly difficult. A survivor of IPV may have terrifying experiences. Confused thoughts and feelings may be brought on by fear and uncertainty.

Abusive relationships generally do not happen overnight. They can build gradually over time, drawing on one person's need for control and the slow breakdown of another person's sense of self. Recognizing the early signs of IPV is not always easy. These may involve hard-to-define forms of emotional or psychological abuse, such as the occasional use of a demeaning nickname. But this kind of behaviour reflects certain feelings or attitudes. Unchecked, it may eventually escalate into more severe emotional, psychological or physical violence.

Even if you know that something is very wrong, you may be unable to acknowledge it. You may deny, minimize or find reasons to explain the situation, all of which are common psychological defences. Unfortunately, the abuser is probably skilled at using these same techniques to convince you that what you are going through is not abnormal or wrong.

Are you or someone you know being abused? These questions may help you decide:

Does your partner...

- Call you names, yell, put you down or constantly criticize or undermine you and your abilities as a wife, partner, mother, professional or person in general?
- Behave in an overprotective way or become extremely jealous?
- Accuse you of having an affair for no reason?
- Always insist he is right, even when he is clearly wrong?
- Blame you for his own violent behaviour, saying that your behaviour or attitudes cause him to be violent?
- Make you feel like you are walking on "eggshells" so as not to make him angry?
- Externalize the causes of his behaviour by blaming his violence on stress, alcohol or a "bad day"?
- Threaten to commit suicide, especially as a way of keeping you from leaving?
- Threaten to hurt you, your children, family members or friends?
- Make it difficult for you to see family or friends, or "badmouth" your family or friends?
- Prevent you from going where you want to, when you want to, and with whomever you want to? Or insist on following you or coming with you?
- Humiliate or embarrass you in front of other people?
- Destroy personal property or throw things around?
- Control all of the finances, force you to account for what you spend, or take your money?
- Prevent you from getting or keeping a job?
- Use intimidation or manipulation to control you and your children?
- Threaten to expose any personal aspect of your life – such as sexuality, your HIV or other health/ personal status?
- Prevent you from taking medications or getting medical care?
- Deny you access to food, drink or sleep?
- Hit, punch, slap, kick, shove, choke or bite – or physically harm you intentionally in any way?
- Force you to engage in sexual acts or have unprotected sex against your will?

These are some of the common tactics used by abusers to control their partners, but are certainly not the only ones. If you answered "yes" to any or a combination of these questions, you may be experiencing intimate partner violence.



REMEMBER!

You are not alone,
it is not your fault,
and help is available.

You can get the support you
need.

Find available resources
such as shelters, hospitals,
counselling services, legal
advisors and NGOs near you.

For those who are based in
Bangkok, the list of services
is available in Chapter 8.

Chapter 5: Getting help in Asia

MORE THAN ONE WAY TO GET HELP

If you or someone you know experiences intimate partner violence or any other kind of gender-based violence, there is more than one way to get help. Appropriate options vary considerably across countries and cultures.

Health, police, legal and social services are available in many parts of Asia, and special VAW services exist in most countries. However, such services do not in every district, town and community. Not all health service providers are trained or experienced in addressing the needs of VAW survivors. Women's organizations, including NGOs, are often much more experienced in working with women and supporting survivors of violence. They have built up extensive support systems over years.

WHY SOME NEVER SEEK HELP

As a UN staff member in Asia, you may be influenced by the environment around you. The rate of women who **never seek help** is high, and this may also affect colleagues from the countries of the region and associates in NGOs and other organizations and communities with whom you work. Most women who experience physical and sexual violence in the region never report this to the police, local or other authorities. Women suffer silently because they feel embarrassed, they believe no one will believe or help them, they are afraid of divorce or further beatings or even worse, or they think that what they are experiencing is simply part of life and part of marriage. Women living outside their country of origin may have more limited support networks and face additional barriers accessing existing services due to language and other factors.

Women who do seek support are much more likely to turn to friends and family than to the authorities. Women do go to the health services, mainly to have their injuries taken care of, seldom if ever report the cause of the injuries to the attending health workers. This reflects in part the long-standing taboos against speaking up against IPV and in part the lack of support services. Fortunately, along with better legislation, the availability and quality of these services is improving.

WHERE TO GO FOR SUPPORT

Relatives, friends, neighbours or colleagues: Identify all the possible people who might be willing and able to help you. It can sometimes be hard to ask for help, but remember that you do not deserve to be abused, and the risks involved in staying in your situation could be life-threatening to you or your children. People in your office who may be able to help, including through the provision of basic information, include peer support volunteers, an ombudsperson, staff association officers, senior managers or trusted colleagues.²⁹

Health services: Health services are among the most common services sought by women who have experienced physical and sexual violence. Women experience a wide range of injuries as a result of the violence, which can be very serious and even life-threatening. Often, health workers might suspect intimate partner violence as the cause of repeated broken bones, concussions and other typical consequences of violence, but many nurses and doctors do not feel comfortable asking about the cause of the injury or have the mistaken belief that this is not of the concern of the health system. Women who have experienced sexual violence urgently need to seek health services in order to address their needs, to prevent pregnancy (by using emergency contraceptives), to prevent HIV infection and other sexually transmitted infections, and to have forensic evidence collected. Across the region, more and more medical staff are being trained to provide quality care to survivors of physical and sexual violence.

Women's organizations and social services. In many countries in Asia, women's organizations have taken the lead in the provision of support and services in the area of IPV. Women's organizations have been at the front-line of changing laws and attitudes about IPV and providing services such as free counselling, legal advice, shelter and medical referrals from trained professionals. Even if they do not directly offer services, some of these organizations will be among the most supportive and sympathetic, and will often know where women can go to find assistance. Please see the resources section for a sample list of services in the region.

Counselling: Counselling with a therapist or psychologist can help survivors of abuse regain their self-esteem and self-confidence, clarify their options and make decisions with regard to the abusive relationship. As noted above, it is always preferable that counselling and support be provided by those

who understand the nature of IPV and gender-based violence and have had experience and training supporting those going through IPV situations.

Lawyers and the police: In almost all countries and states in Asia, domestic violence is a crime, and you can report it to the police. Even where domestic violence is not a specific crime, any form of physical assault is a crime and can be reported. Some countries, recognizing the sensitivities of this issue, now offer special services within police stations to help survivors. You can also consult a lawyer to understand what your legal options are in terms of stopping your abuser.

Religious leaders: If you follow a religion, you may consider approaching people affiliated within the religion that you trust. Where a family attends religious activities together, there may be a chance of getting help for both partners. However, this will only be successful if both partners respect religious authority, and where the religion supports and recognizes the need for interventions in IPV situations. Some religious leaders place reconciliation of a relationship and maintenance of the family unit above the safety of individuals within that relationship. There are many religious leaders in Asia who understand the nature of IPV and provide support and in some cases counselling. It is always preferable that counselling and support is provided by those who support the idea that women have the fundamental right to be free from IPV and gender-based violence, and have had experience and training supporting those going through these situations.

NGOs supporting persons with disabilities: Numerous studies report that persons with disabilities suffer high rates of IPV, and most often lack the support to access help. Women with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence, as well as abuse from the persons who are often their primary caregivers. In Asia, there are disability support groups that work on the intersectionality of women's rights and disability rights who can provide support, counselling and assistance that may be needed.

Contact Women Enabled International to connect you to an NGO in your country that supports women with disabilities. Visit the website: www.womenenabled.org/mapping

29. Some agencies may have more specialized support, such as UNICEF's Staff Well-Being Programme (stress-counsellor@unicef.org). Check with your agency for specific information.

MAKE A SAFETY PLAN

Safety planning enables you to proceed with a pre-determined course of action when you are in a life-threatening situation. Safety planning can help you minimize the harm done by your abuser by identifying people and places you may go temporarily for safety.

If you feel you are in danger, you may want to develop a plan to leave the house and take some or all of the following precautions:

- Have important phone numbers nearby (e.g., neighbours, relatives, friends, police, women’s organizations and shelters).
- Think about how to get out of the house safely. Practise ways to go out during an emergency. If you have children, what will be their role in the escape? If they will not go with you, what are possible arrangements for their care?
- Prepare an emergency bag that includes items you will need when you leave, such as extra clothes, important papers, money and prescription medications. Hide the bag in the home or leave it with a trusted neighbour, friend or relative. **Do not do this if it could put you at further risk. Leave if that is the best option. Your safety and that of your children is the most important consideration.**
- Know exactly where you will go and how to get there, even if you have to leave in the middle of the night.

Keep in mind that abusers may become more violent when “challenged” by a woman’s decision to leave. Remember that the time of leaving is the most dangerous time for a woman and her children in an abusive relationship. Even the discovery that she has read materials on IPV or contacted support services may trigger a response. It may be necessary to take extra precautions to prevent the abuser from knowing your plans in advance, or to ensure that you have the support of other people who can intervene to control the abuser’s behaviour – such as supportive family members or the police.

If you decide to leave, even for a very short time, take your children with you, if that is possible and you can do so without exposing them to harm or risk of harm.

LEGAL SOLUTIONS



Many Asian countries lack a sufficient number of lawyers or legal services that are well versed in domestic violence. Legal Aid offices provide support in some countries while some NGOs, such as women’s crisis centres, also provide free legal aid. These centres are often the best equipped and trained to provide support.

Some typical legal means to stop IPV include the following:

A restraining order, sometimes called a protection order: Restraining or protection orders are issued by magistrates’ courts, village or island courts or the police; in some instances, they are issued by community people who are appointed to issue short-term orders. The orders have conditions that include prevention of contact, further violence, removal of weapons and short-term maintenance and custody orders. You may need to explain that you fear serious results will come from the abuse, based on what has happened in the past. It can help to have evidence that you have been abused, including photos of injuries and any past medical or police reports. You will be able to have an order issued if there is no evidence of harm, but the order will be short term. If the abuser violates the order, he may be arrested. This does not deter some abusers; restraining orders/protection orders can be very helpful, but are not a guarantee against continued violence.

Criminal charges: Some criminal justice systems punish abusers for committing a crime and for injuring you, threatening to injure you or committing other offences, such as damaging your property. The abuser could go to prison, be fined or both. Under many legal systems, charges are filed with the police, who may then arrest the abuser.

Separation: For married couples, a legal separation, filed in court, is usually a temporary measure that may allow orders to be made for maintenance, and residence as well as contact when children are involved. Parties often chose separation orders when they are not yet ready to divorce; this is called a “cooling-off” period. During this time, the couple can decide if it would be better to live apart permanently and perhaps seek counselling. In some jurisdictions, parties who make applications to courts for the dissolution of a marriage

must show to the court that they have attempted to seek counselling and it has not been successful.

Divorce: This permanently dissolves a marriage. If children are involved, apart from the divorce order, there may be orders for residence, contact, maintenance and distribution of matrimonial property. Divorce will usually include a legal decision about their custody and maintenance, as well as legal decisions regarding property and financial settlements.

Civil damages: Under some legal systems, survivors of violence may be able to sue the perpetrator for compensation for medical expenses, damaged property, income loss and/or pain and suffering. The court may then order the perpetrator to pay money to the survivor. This option is probably desirable only if it is clear that the marriage or partnership is going to end or has already ended.

HELP FOR CHILDREN

No matter how caring a parent you are, at some level your partner's violence will hinder your ability to do your best for your children. Yet in this situation, your children are likely to need your care and attention more than ever. Until you can get the help you need to make yourself safe, your children cannot feel safe or happy knowing that their mother is being hurt. Remember that your safety and your children's safety are connected – and violence has lasting impacts on your children's health and well-being.

The following suggestions may assist you in caring for your children and making choices about your situation. Many women's crisis centres in Asia also provide services for children. In some countries, there are children's telephone "help lines" and some countries have specialist care for children.

- Seek the help you need. The resources page at the end of this resource book offers some starting points in Thailand. You or your colleagues may also know about organizations that offer assistance for children.
- Explain to your children what is happening. Even though your children may not have been in the room when violence occurred, they will be able to sense the atmosphere.
- Tell them that the violence is not their fault. No one deserves abuse.
- Try not to make promises that you cannot keep, such as, "This will never happen again" or "I promise no one will ever hurt you."
- Let them know that it is not their role to protect you. Tell them that it is not their job to protect

anyone besides themselves in this situation. Discuss with them "safety" situations where they have responsibility to each other and their friends.

- Respect and accept that children may have conflicting feelings about their parents. A child may love the abusive parent, resent the woman for "being weak" or for not protecting them, or feel guilty for not protecting their mother.
- Help children make safety plans. Brainstorm with them about exit routes, safe places to seek shelter and emergency phone numbers.
- Give children the opportunity to talk about their feelings with a trustworthy, sympathetic adult such as a professional counsellor, relative or friend.
- Seek counselling and support groups for yourself and your children.
- If you plan on filing for a separation or divorce, tell your children of your plans for the future (if it is safe to do so).
- If you leave your home, try and take some favourite toys and some of your children's other treasured belongings, but only if it is safe to do so.
- Seek legal advice about the custody of your children.
- Teach conflict resolution skills. Show your children that violence is not the way to solve problems. Encourage your children to interact with other children.

HELP FOR THE ABUSER

A perpetrator of abuse can step outside the cycle of violence, but this requires a process of self-examination to understand why he reacts in such a way and to acknowledge how devastating his actions can be to other people. He will need to change patterns of behaviour based on relating to others through the exertion of power and control or violence. Most importantly, he will need to let go of his sense of entitlement.

Some perpetrators can benefit from counselling, which can help them understand why they are violent and teach them how to control their anger. Change does not come quickly or easily, however. Even when abusers say that they want to stop and they get help, it does not guarantee that they will stop abusing. Under all circumstances, the proof must be in actions, not just words.

Many countries have counselling services for perpetrators of violence. It is critical when discussing violence that men and boys are engaged in these discussions. Solutions will require positive actions from all family, community and society members.

Getting help in Thailand

If you are a UN staff member:

For any UN staff members with any nationalities, you can contact the UN Security & Safety team and the UN emergency team. The Security team is able to:

- help you receive medical treatment and report the case to the police;
- assist you in communicating with the police in Thai language, if necessary; and
- provide you a HIV PEP kit, if necessary

Contact: Saranya Chuenvichitr (Gender focal point in the Security Team | Email: chuenvichitr.unescap@un.org)

UN Security & Safety : 02-288-1102 (24 hours)

UN Emergency : 02-288-1100 (24 hours)

If you are not a Thai-national:

For foreign nationals in Thailand, you may wish to contact your Embassy in the first instance. An alternative option could be the Tourist Assistance Centre who can act as a first responder to not only tourists, but foreign nationals working/living in Thailand. Your Embassy may be able to:

- help you receive medical treatment and report the offence to the police;
- provide you with the contact information of local doctors and lawyers; and
- provide you with the contact information of a crisis care centre

If you want to proceed a police investigation*:

If you choose to report violence, including rape, try to do so as soon as possible, so forensic evidence can be retained. Washing yourself or your clothes may make it difficult for the police to obtain forensic evidence. If you change your clothes, think about taking those you were wearing to the police. You may wish to preserve evidence by retaining items such as condoms, toothbrushes, or texts.

When you file your report, there is no guarantee that a female officer will be available or that you will be given somewhere private to wait. Very few police officers speak English. An interpreter can be made available but you may have to wait for one to arrive.

For a police investigation, a forensic doctor must carry out the medical examination for evidential purposes. Survivors must go to a public hospital if the survivor has an intention going through the police to have the offender prosecuted, as private hospitals do not have the same authority as the public hospitals have.

Police General Hospital:

Hotline : 1300 (One Stop Crisis Centre; OSCC, English service available yet limited)

Location: [492 1 Rama I Rd, Pathum Wan, Pathum Wan District, Bangkok 10330](#)

If you want medical care but not sure if you want to proceed a police investigation:

In Bangkok, the go-to place is Police General Hospital who will accept survivors from all areas. The OSCC has medical care, medication, and forensic examination services. There is no requirement to have a police referral report to be treated there and the OSCC will follow the wishes of the survivor if they do not want police involvement. They will also offer to collect forensic evidence to store in case the survivor changes her mind in the future. the OSCC will keep the evidence for 20 years with certain exceptions in relation to marital rape. Otherwise you can go to any of the private hospitals in Thailand.

If you need counselling services:

For UN Staff members based in Thailand, UN offers an external counsellor who is trained by the UN Critical Incident Stress Management Unit. The service is on a fee-levying basis.

Contact: Dr. Saovane Bigg, PSI Psychological Services International

9/2 Sukhumvit Soi 43 Bangkok 10110, E-mail: saovaneen@gmail.com

If you need legal assistance:

The United Nations is not in a position to recommend any law firm. Instead, you may refer to the "[List of English Speaking Lawyers in Thailand](#)" on the website of the British Embassy in Bangkok, as one resource.

More resources are available in page 33

* Adapted from [the Guidance : Information for Survivors of Rape and Sexual Assault, Thailand, the British Embassy in Thailand](#)

Chapter 6: I think someone is being abused. How can I help?

How can you know if someone is being abused? One common myth about abused women is that they do not want to talk about their experience. In fact, many make efforts to hide the abuse because they fear being embarrassed, their partner finding out, being blamed, not being believed or being pressured to do something they are not ready or able to do.

If you are concerned about a friend or colleague, one option is to find a private space to talk, in a non-judgemental manner and without pressure, about whether or not they are in danger and need help. However, you must keep in mind you have to be very careful in approaching colleagues regarding this matter at the workplace as this is a very private, delicate matter that most people would not want to discuss with colleagues, as they may also fear that this information is shared with others at the workplace. In many cultural contexts, women may only feel comfortable being approached about this issue by another woman.

Also be mindful that in some Asian cultures, various forms of violence are condoned according to tradition and community beliefs. These social and cultural norms may result in additional barriers to disclosing abuse. Fear of gossip, disclosure to relatives and family members (extended) and fear of judgement inhibit women from seeking help.

If there are specific observations that are the source of your concern, such as visible bruises or frequent absenteeism, you might say something like, "I noticed 'x, y and z'. I am concerned about you, and wonder if there is something I can do to help." Or, "It seems like you are stressed out and unhappy. If you want to talk about it now or some other time, I will keep it between us."

The employer can also assist by providing leaflets with information about available services, including counselling for survivors of IPV and other forms of VAW in the restrooms or have experienced women's organizations come to the office and organize sessions about violence against women to the staff.

BE PREPARED TO RESPOND SUPPORTIVELY IF SOMEONE DISCLOSES

Educate yourself about IPV and other forms of violence: Read this resource book, and understand what IPV is and how you can recognize it. Find out about what services are available to help survivors.

Let go of any expectations you have that there is a quick fix to IPV or to the obstacles a survivor faces. Understand that inaction may very well be their best safety strategy at a given time. On average, a survivor of violence will attempt to leave a relationship six to eight times before they are finally able to leave.

Challenge and change any inaccurate and biased attitudes and beliefs that you may have about survivors of IPV. They are not abused because there is something wrong with them. Instead, they have become trapped in a relationship by their partners' use of violence and coercion. The better able you are to recognize and build on the resilience, courage, resourcefulness and decision-making abilities of those who are abused, the better you will be to help them.



Photo: UN Women

Box 4: How can I help?

If someone chooses to confide in you about their experiences of IPV:

Let her know that her feelings are normal, that it is safe to express them and that she has a right to live without violence and fear. Validating

another's experience means letting the person know that you are listening attentively, that you understand what she is saying and that you believe what she says without judgement or conditions.

Important things that you can say:

- "It is not your fault."
- "You are not to blame."
- "It is okay to talk."
- "Help is available."
(Say this only if it is true.)
- "What happened has no justification or excuse."
- "No one deserves to be hit by their partner in a relationship."
- "You are not alone. Unfortunately, many other women have faced this problem, too."
- "Your life, your health, you are of value."
- "Everybody deserves to feel safe at home."
- "I am worried that this may be affecting your health."³⁰

Important things that you should NOT say:

- "Why are you not leaving him/her?"
- "But he/she loves you anyway."
- "It will go away if you just bear it."
- "I don't think that's something I should be involved in. It is your personal matter."
- "All families have the same issue. You should deal with it."
- "You should not leave your family just like that."
- "But have you tried to change your behaviour?"

30. www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/vaw-clinical-handbook/en/

THINGS TO DO WHEN PROVIDING HELP

Believe the survivor. Tell them that you believe them. If you know their partner, remember that abusers most often behave differently in public than they do in private.

Listen to what they tell you. If you actively listen, ask clarifying questions and avoid making judgements, you will most likely learn directly what help is needed.

Help them build on their strengths. Based on the information they give you and your own observations, actively identify the ways in which they have developed coping strategies, solved problems and exhibited courage and determination, even if these efforts have not been completely successful.

Validate their feelings. It is common for survivors to have conflicting feelings – love and fear, guilt and anger, hope and sadness. Let them know that their feelings are normal and reasonable.

Avoid victim-blaming. Tell them the abuse is not their fault. Reinforce that the abuse is their partner's problem and his responsibility but refrain from bad-mouthing him.

Take their fears seriously. If you are concerned about their safety, express your concern without judgement by simply saying, "Your situation sounds dangerous, and I am concerned about your safety."

Offer help. As appropriate, offer specific forms of help and information. If they ask you to do something you are willing and able to do, do it. If you are not, say so and help them identify other ways to meet their needs. Then look for other ways that you can help.

Support their decisions. Remember, there are risks attached to every decision an abused individual makes. If you truly want to be helpful, be patient and respectful of their decisions.

CLINICAL SIGNS OF IPV³¹

- Symptoms of depression, anxiety, PTSD, sleep disorders
- Suicidality or self-harm
- Alcohol and other substance use
- Unexplained chronic gastrointestinal symptoms
- Unexplained reproductive symptoms, including pelvic pain, sexual dysfunction
- Adverse reproductive outcomes, including multiple unintended pregnancies and/or terminations, delayed pregnancy care, adverse birth outcomes
- Unexplained genitourinary symptoms, including frequent bladder or kidney infections
- Repeated vaginal bleeding and sexually transmitted infections
- Chronic pain (unexplained)
- Traumatic injury, particularly if repeated and with vague or implausible explanations
- Problems with the central nervous system – headaches, cognitive problems, hearing loss
- Repeated health consultations with no clear diagnosis
- Intrusive partner or husband in consultations

If someone you know has these signs, tell them you are concerned, and let them know you are available for support if they want any. Your helping hand can change someone's life.

31. WHO (2013b). Adapted from Black, MC. *Intimate partner violence and adverse health consequences: implication for clinicians.* American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine, 2011. 5:428-439.

WHAT CAN UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES DO?

The resources available in individual UN offices will differ by country. Senior managers; operations staff, including those working on human resources; and staff association officers should check their organization's policies for details. Consider options in the following general areas.

Legal support: The office may be able to help staff with access to legal support, in the form of referral advice or access to a known lawyer that works in this area.

Financial support: The cost of dealing with IPV can be high for an individual. Expenses can include legal advice, counselling, a possible change in residence and so on. Flexible salary advances or local staff association loan programmes may be sources of extra funds.

Flexible leave and flexitime arrangements: Staff may be called suddenly to their home, court and meetings with lawyers. They may need personal time off to spend with family and friends in coping with their situation. Flexitime arrangements might suit staff members who have had to relocate and need to be home for a short time. Working out a plan with staff for flexible working arrangements or leave where there is a mutual understanding of responsibilities is very useful in these situations.

Health and sick leave: Staff members going through intimate partner abuse may need support with sick leave arrangements. Consider sick leave for staff members going through emotional/psychological stress in order to address mental health issues. IPV is a health and safety issue, and should be treated as such when considering leave arrangements.

Workload: A staff member suffering from IPV will carry a huge burden of stress, may be distracted and emotionally depressed and may not sleep or eat adequately. They will probably not be able to cope as effectively as usual in their work. This is especially true if the person becomes embroiled in a protracted legal battle or the relationship is particularly violent. The staff member may need to explore with their supervisor whether it is possible to lighten their workload or reassign them temporarily.

Personal and office security: If a relationship has turned unpredictable and violent for either the staff member or one of their registered dependents, it may be possible for the office to advise on personal security until the threat diminishes.

Office security plans: For all offices, a security plan should ensure that all staff are safe. Harassment at the office may include constant telephone calls, visits and interruptions at work as part of the abuse cycle. The office can put in place a security plan that blocks out this form of harassment.

Counselling: Most offices have established referral systems for basic counselling. Counselling options that focus specifically on IPV can be added, including those services that may have links to legal advice and law enforcement.

Access to transport: Mobility can be an important component of dealing with IPV. Survivors may need transport to seek counselling or legal support, or to move to another location temporarily or permanently. Since transportation systems can be unreliable or costly as well as time-consuming for the staff member (and organization), the office may consider offering transport when it does not affect programme activities.

Information: A referral list of resources for survivors of intimate partner violence can be made available and possibly posted on a staff bulletin board or in a common area. Other documents in the office, including this resource book, may also assist staff in better understanding the issue of intimate partner violence. Such resources should be part of staff orientation programmes, and publicly pointed out so that all staff are aware of them. Please see an example of a country-specific resources list in the next section of this resource book.

Chapter 7: Recovery

If you are a survivor of intimate partner violence who has begun to address your situation, you are on the road to recovery.

The process of reorientation to life without abuse takes a different course for each individual. Most survivors can expect to pass through a period not only of physical changes, such as moving to a new home, but of strong psychological and emotional challenges as well. Some survivors experience flashbacks to traumatic events that they were not able to mentally integrate when they took place. There may be waves of anger, grief, shame and fear. These are normal reactions. As long as they diminish over time, they are signs that healing is taking place and that you are leaving the past behind.

As you pass through this period, you can do many things to support yourself. Start or continue counselling, if that is appropriate, especially if you are feeling “stuck” and unable to move on. Look for a support group of other people who have had similar experiences, or read materials on IPV so that you can begin to understand the phenomenon and know you are not alone. Many resources are now available on the Internet.

Try to maintain routines and structures in your daily life, including through regular hours for eating, sleeping and working. Set achievable personal goals and work towards them, in the process rebuilding your confidence and self-esteem. Nurture and care for yourself and give yourself time to sort through the many confusing and damaging messages your abuser may have left with you.

CULTIVATE NEW WAYS OF THINKING

These reminders, adapted from *Stopping Wife Abuse* by Jennifer Baker Fleming, may help:

I am not to blame for being abused.

**I am not the cause of another’s irritation,
anger or rage.**

**I deserve a life free from violence,
fear and pain.**

I can say no to what I do not like or want.

I do not have to take abuse.

**I have a right to a life of
security and dignity.**

I am an important human being.

I am a worthwhile person.

I deserve to be treated with respect.

I have power over my own life.

**I can use my power to
take good care of myself.**

**I can decide for myself
what is best for me.**

I can make changes in my life if I want to.

I am not alone;

I can ask others to help me.

I am worth working for and changing for.

**I deserve to make my own life
safe and happy.**

**I can count on my creativity and
resourcefulness.**

Annex: Resources

This section provides a list of resources to learn more about IPV and to inform learning and training activities. A table of resources available in Thailand is provided as an example. **UN staff members in other countries in Asia are urged to develop their own lists with detailed information services available in their community, country and the region – and to update and circulate this list regularly.** UN offices at the country level may seek the support of GBV Technical Staff in conducting service mapping (to identify which services are safe, accessible, staffed, etc.).

If you would like to add resources available in your duty station to this publication, please contact: asia-pacific.unite@unwomen.org

Please note that a survivor may wish to keep communication with these services private or secret, as abusers may be monitoring phone or Internet activities.

Table 1: Resources in Thailand

Type of service	Name	Details	Contact information
Referral, language support	UN Security and Safety Team Contact: Saranya Chuenvichitr (Inspector)	For UN staff members only. English service available	ESCAP Headquarters 1st floor, Secretarial Bldg. UN Security & Safety Tel: 02-288-1102 (24 hrs) UN Emergency Tel: 02-288-1100 (24 hrs) E-mail: chuenvichitr.unescap@un.org
Mediation, referral support	Ombudsman Office Contact: Susan John	For UN staff members only. English service available	ESCAP Headquarters Ground floor, UNCC United Nations Building Rajadamnern Nok Avenue Bangkok 10200 E-mail: john5@un.org Tel: +66 2 288 1276
Counselling	Dr. Saovanee Bigg	For UN staff members only. An external counsellor trained by the UN Critical Incident Stress Management Unit. Fee levying basis. English service available	PSI Psychological Services International 9/2 Sukhumvit Soi 43 Bangkok 10110 E-mail: saovaneen@gmail.com
Counselling, physical treatment, court and legal support	One-Stop Crisis Centre (Police General Hospital)	Governmental mechanism operating nationwide with thousands of centres and mobile units. English service available yet limited	Hotline 1300 (24 hrs) Location: 492 1 Rama I Rd, Pathum Wan, Pathum Wan District, Bangkok 10330

Type of service	Name	Details	Contact information
Hotline services, shelter, case referral and legal support	Foundation for Women	English service available	PO Box 47 Bangkoknoi Bangkok 10700 Tel: +66 2 433 5149 Fax: +66 2 434 6774
Hotline services, case referral and legal support	Friends of Women Foundation	English service available	386/61-62 Ratchadapisek 42, Ratchada Road Latyao, Jatuchak Bangkok 10900 Tel: +66 2 513 1001 (Hotline 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mon–Fri) Fax: +66 2 513 1929
Hotline services and case referral	The Women and Men Progressive Movement Foundation (WMP)	Primarily Thai language	50/6 Ratchadaphisek Road 42-44, Chan Kasem, Chatuchak, Bangkok 10900 Tel +66 2 513 2889 (Hotline Wed–Fri) Fax: +66 2 513 2856 E-mail: info@wmp.or.th
Health, counselling, hotline services, legal support, LGBTI+	Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand	Violence against LGBTI+ Primarily Thai language	Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand No. 1 and 3, Soi Ramkhamhaeng 97/2, Ramkhamhaeng Rd. Bangkok 10240 Tel. 02-731-6532-3 ext 202 (Fax) 02-731-6534 https://www.rsat.info/
Counselling, referral support, LGBTI+	UN GLOBE: Contact: Matthew Perkins (Asia)	For UN staff member only. English service available.	E-mail: perkinsm@un.org Global focal point: http://www.unglobe.org/about-us-1

ONLINE RESOURCES

Resources in Nepal

<https://un.org.np/reports/%E2%80%99responding-domestic-violence-resource-guide-un-personnel-nepal>

Violence against women

www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November)

www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday/

UNiTE to End Violence against Women

www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/take-action/unite

End VAW Now

www.endvawnow.org

Stand with Us

<http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/focus-areas/end-violence-against-women/take-action>

Guidance, Thailand: information for survivors of rape and sexual assault

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rape-and-sexual-assault-in-thailand-information-for-victims/thailand-information-for-survivors-of-rape-and-sexual-assault>

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