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# Ending Violence against Women in ASEAN Member States

Mid-Term Review of the  
ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the  
Elimination of Violence against Women  
(ASEAN RPA on ERAW 2016-2025)





Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The Mid-Term Review of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women (RPA on EVAW) and the development of this report were led by the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), in collaboration with the UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) and ASEAN Member States. Support to the ACWC and ACW to facilitate the national consultations, synthesize the findings and provide technical inputs on recommendations was provided by UN Women International Consultant, Katherine Marie Belen. Phase 1 of the review process was supported through the regular resources of UN Women.

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## Preface

Mid-Term Review of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women (RPA on EVAW 2016 – 2025)

After the first five years of the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women, this mid-term review was conducted to take stock of the progress of the implementation of the plan so far, highlighting advances among ASEAN Member States to strengthen the prevention of and response to violence against women in the region.

In 2015, when the regional plan was adopted, ASEAN Member States had seen progress in addressing violence against women. National laws and action plans had been dedicated to the issue, and resources were allocated to implement these frameworks. Shelters, hotlines and other support services were strengthened for survivors of violence, and data on violence against women were collected and analysed for evidence-based policies and services. Member States had implemented campaigns to increase awareness about violence against women. Yet, despite the progress and integral efforts to tackle the issue, violence against women remains a pervasive problem and solutions are still being tested and defined to effectively respond to and eliminate violence that work in various contexts.

The ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women was adopted to address the challenges faced by the Member States in eliminating violence against women. The plan outlines concrete actions that guide regional and national implementation of strengthened prevention of and response to violence against women, which covering protection and support services, prosecution and justice system, capacity building, research and data collection, management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation, partnership and collaboration, and review and communications. Through the implementation of the plan, the Member States have strongly committed to the joint goal to eliminate all forms of violence against women in ASEAN by 2025.

Along with the COVID-19 pandemic, however, new challenges emerged, and the pandemic has exacerbated risks and experiences of violence, especially for those who have been confined at home with potential perpetrators due to lockdowns and mobility restrictions. Reports of violence have increased with helplines responding to incidents of violence reporting sharp increases in calls for assistance. Nevertheless, at the same time, many support services have been strained in their operations and women facing violence have found it challenging to seek immediate help and access services due to restrictions in movement and reduced services. Some women are suffering from multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and inequalities, such as women migrant workers and women living with disability have been among the most affected.

In the context of this dynamic, changing and complex environment, this mid-term review, led by ACWC and ACW Thailand with the support of all ASEAN Member States, ASEC and UN Women; illustrates regional-level progress and country-level updates on the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women. Through the two-phased process of data collection and analysis, the review measures the implementation of five national priority areas and eight key strategies and actions, identified as priorities for the first five years. It shares promising practices and lessons learned, and advocates for accelerated action and strengthened evidence on ending violence against women across ASEAN.



The review highlights how all the priority areas are interlinked to each other and how they can be coordinated in all aspects-connecting country and regional initiatives, implementing policy frameworks through standardized quality services, and applying evidence to practice. It draws recommendations to coordinate, monitor and assess the effectiveness of the measures taken, in addition to allocating sufficient resources to implement. The important next step after this mid-term review would be building on the momentum of recognition of the need for laws and national action plans that are in line with the international standards, coordinated quality services to meet the needs of survivors, and evidence generated to be the basis of the further progress, including for the prevention of violence.

The following pages show that notable achievements have occurred towards the objectives of the regional plan so far. Further, stronger steps, however, are urgently needed to truly eliminate violence at all levels. Prevention of violence against women, for example, has enormous potential through testing evidence-based prevention approaches that have proven effective in some contexts, going beyond awareness-raising. Through recommendations and proposed key actions to adjust the implementation and to inform the development of the future work plan, this mid-term review seeks to guide ASEAN Member States in the next phase of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women and offer signposts to mobilize support for the prevention and elimination of violence against women to make ASEAN a safe place for women and girls.



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## Foreword by ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW)

Back in 2015, the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women (ASEAN RPA-EVAW) was adopted by the ASEAN Leaders. As a landmark regional framework, it embodies the collective political stance of ASEAN to eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls. More importantly, it is an expression of commitment of all ASEAN Member States to take concrete actions at the national level.

Upon reaching the mid-point of implementing the ASEAN RPA on EVAW, the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) in partnership with the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), embarked on reviewing the progress achieved thus far, and surface any gaps that need to be addressed, in implementing the regional framework. Through the generous support of UN Women and the ASEAN Secretariat, this mid-term review of the regional framework has been undertaken.

The report indicates that much progress has been achieved at the regional and national levels. Such accomplishments cover the priority actions that have been identified to be pursued in the first five years of implementing the regional framework. From establishing gender-sensitive guidelines and public outreach campaigns at the regional level, to developing and strengthening national action plans on the elimination of violence against women, these achievements serve as a solid foundation to scale-up and intensify our collective work on implementing the regional framework.

Due recognition must be given to the fact that the ASEAN region is not the same as it was when the ASEAN RPA-EVAW was adopted. The socio-economic and political realities faced by women and girls are changing. While various forms of violence persist, emerging forms of abuses are coming into fore. This includes violence arising from migration of women, abuses in the cyber space, and violence that specifically targets women and girls.

As reflected in the report, much remains to be done in the next five years to fully achieve the objectives of the ASEAN RPA on EVAW. And the steps that we will be taking will be alongside ASEAN's trajectory towards realising the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and imagining the post-2025 development vision. Throughout this journey, this report not only provides a baseline but also serves as an anchor: one that enables us to stand on our strengths and work collectively on eliminating violence against women and girls.



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## **Foreword by ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC)**

The completion of the Mid-Term Review of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women (ASEAN RPA-EVAW) and the development of this report is a remarkable achievement as ASEAN fulfils its common resolve under this year's theme, "We Care, We Prepare, We Prosper", particularly in ensuring the well-being and best interest of women and children in the region.

The collaborative work between the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) since the adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Elimination of Violence against Children in 2013 throughout the adoption of the ASEAN RPA-EVAW in 2015 has always been inspired by the rights of women and children to be protected and cared for while recognising their vital role as agents of change and catalysts towards realising gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls in ASEAN.

This report on the Mid-Term Review of the ASEAN RPA-EVAW is a testament to our regional effort in providing robust evidence on how ASEAN Member States, individually or collectively, is progressing in its commitments to end violence against women and children in accordance with the national and regional contexts and circumstances. It underpins the lessons learnt and the remaining challenges, as well as opportunities to fully achieve the ultimate goal of the ASEAN RPA-EVAW to eliminate all forms of violence against women in ASEAN by 2025.

Looking back, the adoption of the ASEAN RPA-EVAW in 2015 may not have been widely informed of how a health pandemic like COVID-19 could enormously affect the lives of people and how such crisis could further deepen the issues on violence against women and children due to physical and social restrictions and setbacks in the livelihoods and economy of the people. However, this ongoing pandemic comes with a silver lining as the Mid-Term Review of the ASEAN RPA-EVAW has been completed in the midst of this health crisis allowing ASEAN to have better stance to place women and children at the heart of the recovery process guided by the findings and recommendations from this report.

Facing the days ahead, the ACWC in close partnership with the ACW together with UN Women and other development and dialogue partners and the ASEAN Secretariat, shall remain fully committed to eliminate all forms of violence against women in ASEAN with renewed and strengthened cooperation amongst relevant stakeholders. Within the purview of ACWC, we shall continue to undertake practical and catalytic actions towards ensuring the full implementation of the ASEAN RPA-EVAW under the ASEAN policy of zero tolerance towards all forms of violence against women in the years ahead.



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## Foreword by UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Violence against women (VAW) is a persistent human rights violation in the ASEAN region and around the world. It is a result of historical and structural inequality between women and men and has a significant impact not only on the women subjected to violence, but also on families, communities and entire societies. VAW is a life-threatening, global health and human rights issue that impedes the full development of women's potential and an obstacle to social and economic development as well as the achievement of the sustainable development goals.

Women have the right to live free from violence as affirmed in international agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the 1993 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. UN Women supports governments and regional partners like ASEAN in adopting and enacting social, legal and policy reforms that address VAW.

With a population of 661.5 million, ASEAN is a culturally diverse and economically dynamic region of 10 countries working together on a number of issues, including human rights and VAW. Individual governments and intergovernmental bodies like ASEAN have obligations to their citizens and UN Women recognizes and commends ASEAN member states for their continued commitment to addressing the scourge of VAW in their countries and in the region. UN Women would also like to thank the ASEAN Secretariat, the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) for partnering in the undertaking of the Mid-term Review of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women (RPA on EVAW) 2016-2025.

This Mid-term Review is an important milestone to take stock, hail successes, but also to identify areas where progress is lagging. For example, we are encouraged by progress in key priority areas, such as the publication and translation into four languages of the ASEAN Regional Guidelines on Violence against Women and Girls Data Collection and Use, and the regional media and communication campaign strategy to end violence against women and combat human trafficking in ASEAN countries, among other successes.

However, more attention is needed to address violence and discrimination among marginalized groups, and accelerate progress on inclusivity, making sure nobody is left behind. Women who suffer from multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and inequalities are especially at risk of experiencing violence, this includes women with disabilities, ethnic minority and/or indigenous women, women living in disaster or conflict-affected areas, refugee and displaced women, documented and undocumented women migrants, including migrant workers, the LGBT population, women living with and affected by HIV and AIDS, older women, women's human rights defenders, and women who are trafficked for forced labour or sexual exploitation.

UN Women congratulates ASEAN member states for the notable work done so far while acknowledging that there is still a lot of work to be done. We encourage ASEAN member states to identify key priorities for action in order to operationalize the RPA on EVAW based on the recommendations in this Mid-term Review to accelerate progress and scale up of the pace of change. Through collaboration, commitment, and the sharing of promising practices and lessons learned, women and girls in the region will be enabled to live lives free of violence and exploitation, and reach their full potential.



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## List of Acronyms

ACWC	ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children
ACMW	ASEAN Committee to Implement the Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers
ACW	ASEAN Committee on Women
AICHR	ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights
AMS	ASEAN Member States
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia
CSO	civil society organization
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DWF	Department of Women's Affairs, Thailand
EVAW	elimination of violence against women
FGM/C	female genital mutilation/cutting
GBV	gender-based violence
GBViE	gender-based violence in emergencies
HRC	Human Rights Council
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LGBTQI	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning and intersex
LGU	local government unit
MoLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Viet Nam
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NAP	national action plan
NAP-VAW	national action plan on violence against women
NGO	non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RPA on EVAW	ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOP	standard operating procedure
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN-OHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
VAW	violence against women
VAWC	violence against women and children
VAWG	violence against women and girls
WHO	World Health Organization



Photo: UN Women/Station Winner

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Globally, about 1 in 3 of women worldwide (30 per cent) have been subjected to violence against women (VAW).<sup>1</sup> Its impact cuts across all the three pillars of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Community— Economic, Political-security and Socio-cultural—and all three pillars are committed to ending such violence.<sup>2</sup>

This Mid-Term Review (MTR) is a joint initiative of ASEAN and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (UN Women) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, conducted with guidance from the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW). It was conducted in two phases: Phase 1 from October to December 2019 and Phase 2 from August 2020 to July 2021.

The overall purpose of the MTR is to take stock of the progress of the 10 ASEAN Member States (AMS) in implementing the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women (RPA on EVAW) 2016-2025. It aims to share promising practices and lessons learned to support AMS in the implementation of the Regional Plan, and also identifies recommendations and ways forward to accelerate progress in this regard.

The report provides a compilation of achievements reported by each of the Member States related to the five National Priority Areas and eight Key Actions that were identified as priorities for the first five years of the RPA on EVAW. It also presents progress in the three Regional Priority Areas achieved through the ACWC and ACW. It highlights the commitment of AMS to address

violence against women as evidenced by the progress made across the National Priority Areas. Key progress includes:

- Completion of the ASEAN Regional Guidelines on Violence against Women and Girls Data Collection and Use, published in 2018 and translated into four languages.
- Launch of a regional media and communication campaign strategy to end VAW and combat human trafficking in ASEAN countries.
- Development of gender-sensitive guidelines for handling women victims/survivors of trafficking, launched in 2019 with a series of workshops for frontline personnel.
- Four AMS have a national action plan (NAP) on EVAW and one is expected to have a NAP in 2021.
- Seven AMS have used national population-based surveys for VAW prevalence data gathering according to international standards, and one has gathered sub-national VAW prevalence data.
- Eight AMS have specific laws on domestic violence and there are significant efforts in all Member States to introduce legal reforms that improve legal protections for VAW victims/survivors and enhance their access to justice.
- There are continued efforts in all AMS to develop and implement national programmes to prevent VAW, address behavioural risk factors, halt harmful practices and eliminate gender stereotypes and sexist language, including in education materials and the media.

1. WHO 2021a.  
2. ASEAN 2016a.

In addition, there have been promising developments in the protection of women migrant workers, including protection from VAW, with several AMS (Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam) advancing their legal and political frameworks and mechanisms to end VAW and/or combat trafficking in persons (e.g., national action plans to end VAW with a specific focus on women migrant workers, national action plans to combat trafficking in persons or legislation to protect and respond to violence against women migrant workers).

- Further actions and sustained efforts are required in the RPA's Priority Areas to achieve the envisaged progress in eliminating violence against women. Specific areas to intensify the effectiveness of interventions include:
  - Reviewing and strengthening the RPA's indicators for the Regional and National Priority Areas in order to reflect clearer targets that are more measurable and specific
  - Developing a clear and standardized monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to measure results from Member States on their implementation of the RPA on EVAW
  - Developing a regional capacity development plan to strengthen the technical capacities of national institutions on evidence-based VAW prevention and response programme design, implementation and evaluation
  - Developing and/or strengthening national action plans focused on VAW in all its forms and establishing government institutional mechanisms to coordinate, monitor and assess the effectiveness of the measures taken, in addition to allocating sufficient resources
  - Increasing efforts to address violence against excluded women who face intersecting forms of discrimination, such as women with disabilities, women living with and affected by HIV and AIDS, girls, older women, ethnic minority and/or indigenous women, women living in disaster or conflict-affected areas, refugee and displaced women; documented and undocumented migrant women, women's human rights defenders/gender equality advocates and women who are trafficked for forced labour or sexual exploitation, among others.

- Gathering high quality data, particularly through population-based VAW prevalence surveys based on an agreed minimum data set to be collected, and analysing those data periodically and at regular intervals to generate comparable data across AMS and across time
- Addressing gaps in laws and policies, in terms of alignment with international frameworks, to better respond to VAW and increase legal protections for all women against all forms of VAW
- Building capacities and mechanisms for government's effective enforcement of VAW laws
- Using and generating evidence of what works to design VAW prevention programmes that target gender transformative change around social norms and behaviours
- Increasing technical capacities in designing VAW prevention programmes that address risk factors for VAW at the individual, relational, community and societal levels and in rigorously evaluating the results of these programmes
- Assessing VAW services based on standards in the UN Essential Services Package, and developing guidelines and standard operating procedures (SOPS) to address gaps and improve service provision for VAW victims/survivors
- Developing roadmaps for the implementation of national guidelines on VAW service provision, and agreeing on minimum standards of VAW victim/survivor care and on the guidelines and SOPs needed to strengthen VAW service provision.

ASEAN Member States are encouraged to amplify their efforts to date and build on the progress they have made in order to implement all of the Key Actions reflected in the Regional Plan of Action in the next five years. The Mid-Term Review process and the learning and ways forward highlighted in this report aim to provide the momentum and framework for action to accelerate the progress and achievement of the RPA's objectives in order to fulfil national and regional commitments made to eliminate violence against women.

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3. UN Women et al. 2015.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Overview

Globally, about 1 in 3 women worldwide (30 per cent) have been subjected to either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence or both in their lifetime, according to World Health Organization (WHO) estimates. The impact of violence against women (VAW) cuts across all the three pillars of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Community—Economic, Political-security and Socio-cultural—and all three pillars are committed to ending such violence. There have been numerous studies in the region on the economic costs of VAW. For example, in **Viet Nam**, direct costs represent 21 per cent of monthly income, and victims/survivors earn 35 per cent less than women not abused. Similarly, VAW impacts political rights and security, with growing attention paid to violence against women in politics, which has been identified as a clear deterrent to women’s political participation, whether in terms of voting, running for or remaining in elected office. It indicates a global backlash designed to roll back the progress made on women’s rights.

VAW is a violation of human rights and negatively affects women’s physical, mental, emotional and sexual well-being, including their reproductive health. Moreover, the issue is not only devastating for victims/survivors of violence and their families but also entails significant social costs. Failure to address this issue also entails a significant cost for the future, with numerous studies showing that children growing up with violence are more likely to become victims themselves or perpetrators of violence in the future.

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the risks of VAW, especially for those confined at home with perpetrators as a result of mobility restrictions, disruptions of support services for victims/survivors, increased unemployment rates and economic insecurity resulting from the pandemic. Research from eight countries in Asia reported domestic violence cases increased during or

immediately after lockdown periods. Women with intersecting vulnerabilities may have more limited access to services and financial resources. For example, women migrant workers face higher risks due to greater difficulty accessing health services and gender-based violence support services because of language and cultural barriers and migrant status.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States are **Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand** and **Viet Nam**.

Recognizing that VAW is a result of gender bias and discriminatory and harmful traditional practices and that it must be eliminated as it impairs the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women, all ASEAN Member States (AMS) have enacted laws and adopted programmes to protect women and children from violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination. In the “Progress Report on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality”, it was found that there are, however, considerable differences across the AMS in their national legal frameworks—for example, marital rape and other forms of sexual violence were not covered in some countries’ legislations. Further, there are also differences in the extent of implementation, monitoring and data collection to support VAW programming. In short, progress has been uneven and several areas were found to still require further attention, including data gaps on the extent and impact of VAW; limited financial and human resources to support the enforcement of laws and the delivery of support services; and the pervasiveness of discriminatory gender norms that condone VAW.

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4. WHO 2021a.
  5. ASEAN 2016a.
  6. Duvvury et al. 2013.
  7. UN Women 2013.
  8. UN Women et al. 2018.
  9. World Bank 2019.
  10. UN Women 2021.
  11. Ibid.; UN ESCAP et al. 2020.
  12. ACWC 2016.
  13. ASEAN 2016a.





Photo: UN Women/Younghwa Choi

## Background and framework

In 2016, the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women (RPA on EVAW) 2016-2025 was finalized in order to guide regional and national implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Elimination of Violence against Children, adopted by Member States' Heads of State/Government at the 23rd ASEAN Summit in 2013.

By translating global commitments into strategies and actions to be undertaken at regional and national levels, the ASEAN RPA on EVAW supports AMS in progressing towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially the goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women (SDG 5).

The ASEAN RPA is an expression of the Member States' joint commitments and was developed based on the following guiding principles:

- (a) Human rights-based approach
- (b) Multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approach
- (c) Evidence-based approach
- (d) Due diligence
- (e) Partnerships and collaboration

The ASEAN RPA on EVAW addresses the identified issues and challenges faced by AMS in tackling VAW through outlining concrete actions to guide regional and national implementation of strengthened VAW prevention and response that can effectively reduce the prevalence of violence. There are a total of eight Priority Areas—three Regional Priority Areas and five National Priority Areas.

The Regional Priority Areas are conducted through: (i) the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), a regional intergovernmental human rights mechanism established in 2010 and composed of two representatives from each AMS (one for women's rights and the other for children's rights); and (ii) the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), a sectoral body established in 1976 with the mandate to implement, coordinate and monitor the implementation of ASEAN's key regional priorities and cooperation on women's issues.

On the following page are the **Eight Priority Areas for the first five years identified in the RPA on EVAW**, along with the indicators of progress.



Priority Areas	Indicators
1. Establish regional guidelines for the collection and analysis of data on VAW.	1a. Establishment of regional guideline on VAW data collection and use. 1b. Adoption of the regional guideline and translation into each Member State's local language.
2. Develop and enhance regional campaigns on EVAW including through the use of video, sports and social media platforms and channels.	2a. Number of countries that have disseminated EVAW campaign materials. 2b. Number of views/visitors/viewers to social media platform with information on EVAW.
3. Develop guidelines for SOPs [standard operating procedures] on performance standards for service providers on gender-sensitive handling of VAW cases, including guidelines for support services for victims/survivors and the administration of justice.	3. Development and adoption of guidelines for SOPs.
4. Develop and/or strengthen national action plans on EVAW through multi-sectoral and interagency mechanisms to coordinate development, implementation and monitoring of these plans.	4a. Number of countries with a national action plan on EVAW. 4b. Number of countries with national multi-sectoral and interagency coordination. 4c. Number of countries with sub-national mechanisms with adequate resources.
5. Collect VAW prevalence data in line with international standards.	5. Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW.
6. Develop and adopt gender-responsive legal frameworks to penalize all forms of VAW in full compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).	6. Number of new/strengthened laws/regulations on EVAW.
7. Develop and implement preventive interventions that address the root causes of VAW, including gender stereotypes and harmful traditional and religious practices. The interventions should promote positive, respectful and non-violent masculinities.	7a. Number of AMS that implement preventive measures. 7b. Number of measures implemented.
8. Develop national guidelines for SOPs on performance standards for service providers on gender-sensitive handling of VAW cases, including guidelines for support services for victims/survivors and the administration of justice.	8. SOP guidelines developed.

## Purpose and objectives of the Mid-Term Review

The ASEAN RPA on EVAW included a provision to review the Priority Areas after five years and present the findings of the review to an ASEAN Ministerial meeting at the regional level. This Mid-Term Review (MTR) is a joint initiative of ASEAN and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, conducted with guidance from the ACWC and ACW.

The overall purpose of the MTR is to take stock of progress to date in the 10 ASEAN Member States on implementing the Regional Plan and share promising practices and lessons learned to support Member States in its implementation. More specifically, the review aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Measure progress in the implementation of the ASEAN RPA on EVAW to ensure that all Member States are on track to achieve its goals, SDG 5 on gender equality and the other VAW-related targets of SDG 11 and 16;
2. Showcase progress in the region on ending VAW;
3. Make recommendations to accelerate progress in AMS on the Regional Plan's Priority Areas and Actions; and
4. Inform the development of the work plans of ACW and ACWC in relation to implementing the ASEAN RPA on EVAW in the period 2021-2025, and advocating for continued and accelerated action on ending VAW.

# Scope and methodology

The MTR was conducted in two phases: Phase 1 from October to December 2019, and Phase 2 from August 2020 to April 2021. See Figure 1 below for the timeline and specific activities.

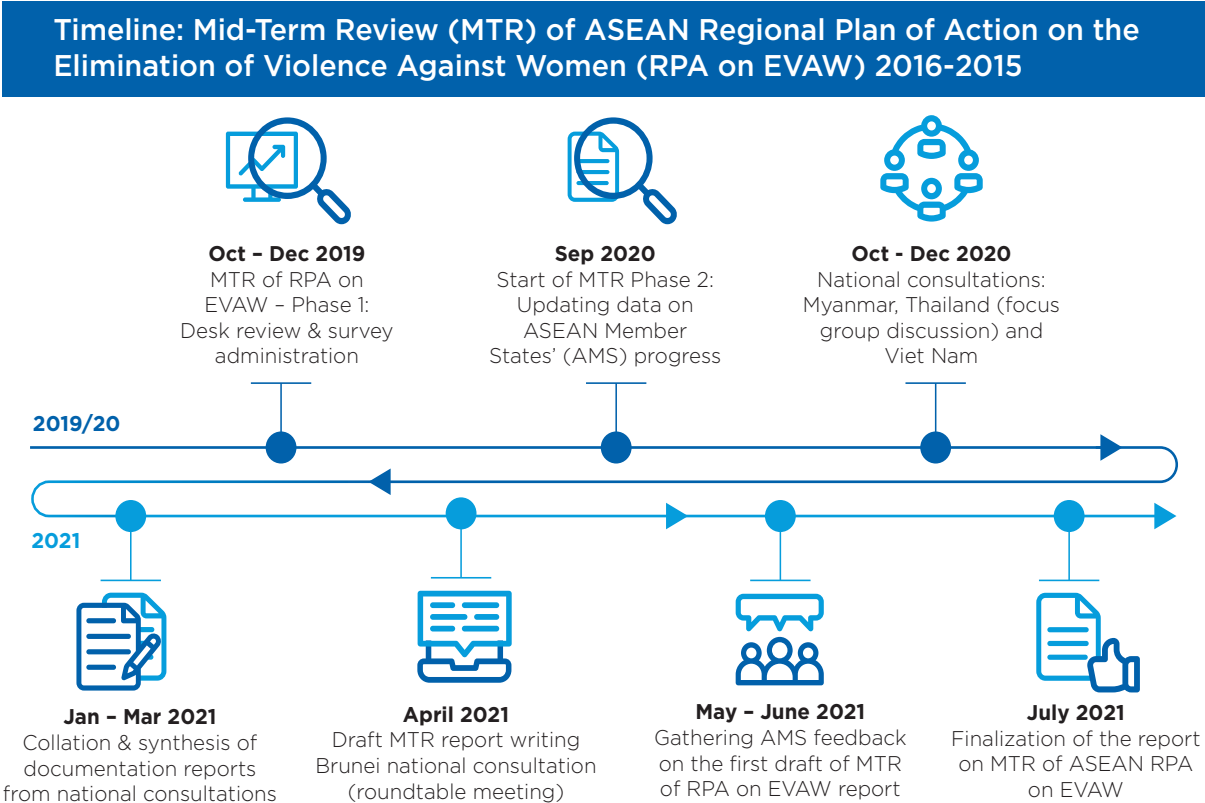


Figure 1. Overview of the Mid-Term Review process (2019 to 2021)

This report focuses on new initiatives of and achievements by each ASEAN Member State (AMS) that were implemented or completed from January 2016 to December 2020. Whenever available, new information and updates on achievements of AMS reported in the first quarter of 2021 have also been included. In some cases, when no newer information or development is available, interventions implemented prior to 2016 were included; however, these are mainly cited in Annex 1 detailing the progress of AMS against each National Priority Area (organized by country). Moreover, while some information regarding actions from civil society—e.g., non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector—is included in the report, especially regarding multi-sectoral approaches, the review specifically aimed to highlight government actions.

The report is a compilation of all updates reported by ACW /ACWC members and reflects the views of the participants in the national consultations.<sup>14</sup> It primarily used qualitative methods in gathering both primary and secondary data. Below is a summary of the data gathering activities conducted in Phases 1 and 2:

### PHASE 1

- 1. Desk review** – A review of reports and programme documents both at regional and national levels. It involved the examination of human rights reports submitted by the AMS to various UN human rights bodies along with committees' general observations and recommendations: the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (UN CEDAW), Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), Universal Periodic Reviews to the UN Human Rights Council (UN HRC), SDG Voluntary National Reviews, etc.

14. The information provided by AMS was not verified and might not be a comprehensive compilation of initiatives undertaken by all stakeholders, especially those by CSOs.

2. **Online research** – The desk review was complemented by an online search of country updates to gather information on government initiatives and programmes relevant to the RPA Priority Areas.
3. **Qualitative survey questionnaire** – Additional information on programmes and policies that had not previously been reported in available human rights reporting documents was gathered through a survey questionnaire in December 2019.
4. **Data consolidation and analysis** – Using structural coding, information from the human rights reports was categorized according to the structure of the RPA on EVAW’s five National Priority Areas. These were analysed and further coded into the RPA’s eight Key Sections. The categorized information per country was then used to draft the desk review report. In addition, some AMS provided feedback on the summary of the desk review report, which resulted in additional information on their respective progress against the various National Priority Areas in the RPA.

## PHASE 2

In August 2020, the ACWC, ACW and UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific<sup>15</sup> initiated the second phase of the MTR process. This aimed to supplement the aforementioned desk reviews and survey questionnaires and devise a set of recommendations regarding how to accelerate progress against the indicators in the RPA on EVAW.

1. **Online research** – A comprehensive online search was again conducted from August to September 2020 to gather updated information on new developments and additional progress made by the AMS on the implementation of the RPA on EVAW since the end of Phase 1.
2. **National consultations** – Following a standard guidance note (see Annex 3), a series of national consultations were conducted in the form of workshops, focus group discussions or round table meetings. The four AMS that conducted consultations from October until April 2021 were:
  - Brunei Darussalam: one round table meeting with government and NGO representatives
  - Myanmar: one multi-sectoral consultation workshop, attended by over 100 government, NGO and UN representatives
  - Thailand: two focus group discussions with government officials, civil society organizations (CSOs) and UN Women, and four key informant interviews with representatives of ACW, CSOs and academics
  - Viet Nam: two multi-sectoral consultation workshops with relevant government agencies, CSOs and UN Women.

3. **Data consolidation and analysis** – The same structural coding described above was conducted to analyse the information from the national consultation reports, which was then categorized according to the structure of the RPA on EVAW’s five National Priority Areas. All of the categorized information was then used to draft this MTR report. Similarly, AMS provided feedback on the report and provided additional information.

In addition to reporting on the RPA’s Priority Areas for the first five years, of particular interest during the national consultations was any new information on the RPA’s 8 Key Actions outlined below; with a focus on how they addressed the needs of specific populations (e.g., women with disabilities, women migrant workers, etc.).

RPA on EVAW 8 Key Actions:

1. Prevention
2. Protection and support services for victims/survivors
3. Legal framework, prosecution and justice system
4. Capacity-building
5. Research and data collection
6. Management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation
7. Partnership and collaboration
8. Review and communications

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15. The second phase of the MTR process was supported through the [EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls](#), within the programme “[Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers’ rights and opportunities in the ASEAN region](#)”, jointly implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UN Women.

# 2. PROGRESS ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL PRIORITIES

## A. Progress on Regional Level Priorities

Within the first five years of the ASEAN RPA, AMS achieved the following progress against the three Regional Priorities Areas through the work of ACWC and ACW.

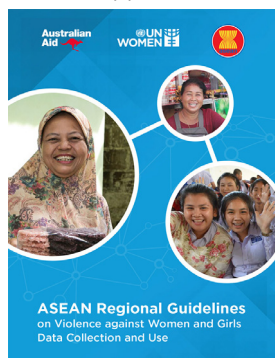
### Priority Area #1: Regional data collection guidelines

ESTABLISH REGIONAL GUIDELINES FOR THE COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA ON VAW

**Indicator:** Establishment and adoption of guidelines based on the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW.  
**Baseline (2016):** No guidelines yet

**Mid-term progress (2021):** One regional guideline developed on VAW data collection and use; four countries reported adoption and translation of the guideline into the local language

- In April 2018, *ASEAN published Regional Guidelines on Violence against Women and Girls Data Collection and Use*.<sup>16</sup> The resource development was led by ACW and ACWC, with technical support from UN Women and funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The Guidelines were launched in Bangkok, **Thailand** in May of the same year.<sup>17</sup>



- The Guidelines bring together leading practice to guide the collection of the three main types of VAWG data: administrative data, prevalence data and costing data. In addition, they provide an overview of the current studies and data available in AMS and information on internationally recognized research and methodologies. Moreover, they underline the ethical and safety considerations surrounding VAWG data collection, including issues of data security and sharing.
- Among the AMS, **Cambodia** reported adopting the guidelines as well as translating them into Khmer during Phase 1 of the Mid-Term Review in 2019. To date, three more countries—**Indonesia, Thailand** and **Viet Nam**—have adopted the guidelines and translated them into the local language.

### Priority Area #2: Regional prevention campaigns

DEVELOP AND ENHANCE REGIONAL CAMPAIGNS ON EVAW INCLUDING THROUGH THE USE OF VIDEO SPOTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AND CHANNELS

**Indicator:** 2a. Number of countries that have disseminated EVAW campaign materials  
**Baseline (2016):** 10 partially implemented  
**Mid-term progress (2021):** 10 with implementation underway

**Indicator:** 2b. Number of views/visitors/viewers to social media platform with information on EVAW  
**Baseline (2016):** no baseline information  
**Mid-term progress (2021):** ASEAN social media reach – Facebook: 833,191 followers and 816,354 who like the page; You Tube Channel: 8,560 subscribers; Twitter: 137,500K followers

16. ASEAN 2018.

17. A brief summary video of the launch can be watched here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7KsirBR6gY>.

ASEAN has made significant progress in raising the profile of EAW in the region. In partnership with UN Women, it launched the ASEAN HeForShe Campaign on 30 November 2017 in conjunction with the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (16 Days). The launch aimed to raise awareness on gender equality in the region by encouraging men and boys to be agents of change, to promote a culture of respect for women and girls and to recognize how men and boys can benefit from gender equality and a region free from violence against women.

In 2018, together with the **Thailand** Representative to ACWC, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Asia Foundation (TAF) and UN Women held the “ASEAN Regional Strategic Planning Workshop: Development of ASEAN Campaign in support of the ASEAN RPA on EAW and the Bohol Trafficking-in-Persons Work Plan” (Bangkok, Thailand). Stakeholders from various ASEAN sectoral bodies,<sup>18</sup> the ASEAN CSO Network, UN Agencies and the private sector participated in a workshop on communication for development, which resulted in the development of the campaign concept note and visual sketch for the ASEAN regional campaign to end VAWG and promote the ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP).



A user-centred approach to campaign design was implemented, starting with focus groups and interviews with migrants from **Cambodia, Lao PDR** and **Myanmar** in **Thailand**. The design process used various research methodologies, including empathy mapping in order to develop a deep understanding of the people that the campaign is trying to reach and then design from their perspective. The mapping found that music, almost solely through digital mobile consumption (e.g., TikTok, Facebook) was a prominent part of a migrant’s daily life—with downloading, uploading and listening to music while doing household chores—taking up 50 to 75

per cent of their leisure time on a work day. Based on the analysis, the ‘**Migrants and Music**’ campaign produced knowledge and music for women migrant workers in **Thailand** with key information in its lyrics, including on where to get support, what gender-based exploitation is and what the rights of women migrant workers are. The prototype was launched during the 16 Days campaign on 25 November 2019, both offline and on regional online channels, through the ACWC, its partners and in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security of **Thailand**. The report on the findings and prototype launch highlighted how the use of **electronic dance music (EDM)** with percussion instruments from the ASEAN region resonated with migrants and were used to promulgate information (e.g., hotline numbers) to communities and schools with a large population of migrant workers and their children, as well as at temples and public events. Further information was spread to government and civil society stakeholders during the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+25 Review in 2019, at which ministers and senior officials from relevant line ministries from across the region visited the interactive media campaign booth.



During the 16 Days in 2020, on International Human Rights Day (10 December) and International Migrants Day (18 December), ACWC **Thailand** together with UN Women, IOM, the International Labour Organization (ILO)—and with collaboration from Thailand’s national taskforce<sup>19</sup>—launched a social media campaign **#HelpisHere1300** (in English, Thai, Khmer, Myanmar and Laotian) inviting relevant ministries, CSOs and other key stakeholders to promote contact details of the service providers available to help women migrant workers who are victims/survivors of violence, reaching migrant communities throughout the country as well as aspirant migrants in their countries of origin.<sup>20</sup> Further, the campaign introduced a dance design and competition, followed by the launch of a series of awareness-raising materials.

Through ACWC and ACW collaboration, and with support from the DFAT, the Asia Foundation, UN

18. Such as the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW), ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC), Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD), Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM) and Senior Officials Meeting Responsible for Information (SOMRI).

19. This is an official taskforce endorsed by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security since 2019 that comprises representatives from the government sector whose roles are related to ASEAN sectoral bodies, UN Agencies (UN Women and IOM) and CSOs.

20. The 2019 and 2020 campaign were supported by IOM and UN Women/ILO through the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls, within the programme “Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers’ rights and opportunities in the ASEAN region”.



Women, IOM and Chulalongkorn University, media for the campaign to eliminate violence and combat human trafficking in ASEAN countries were produced—focusing on Thailand as a destination country for ASEAN women migrant workers. In addition, through the Thai Health Promotion Foundation, information and communication about violence against women and sexual harassment were disseminated through the website of the Women and Men Progressive Movement Foundation (WMP) and online media such as Facebook (e.g., [ACWC Thailand – Women’s Rights](#), Women’s Health Plan, [Safe Cities Philippines](#)).

The ASEAN Secretariat has social media platforms such as a Facebook page, a YouTube channel, and a Twitter account. On these platforms, various communication campaigns have been launched and information, education and advocacy materials have been promoted to convey messages on VAW prevention and awareness-raising. For example, in 2015, the Secretariat’s YouTube channel featured an animated video titled, “Violence against Women Throughout the Life Cycle”, which has garnered over 140,000 views to date.<sup>21</sup>

### ASEAN SOCIAL MEDIA REACH IN NUMBERS\*

- Facebook: 833,191 followers and 816,354 who like the page
- YouTube Channel: 8,560 subscribers
- Twitter: 137.5K followers

\*Reach of ASEAN Secretariat’s social media accounts as of June 2021.

The ASEAN YouTube channel also featured several VAW-related videos as part of the ASEAN Spotlight Episodes, such as a video aimed at highlighting the issue of violence against women in **Cambodia**,<sup>22</sup> one in **Viet Nam** on human trafficking<sup>23</sup> and two in **Thailand**, with one focusing on sexual harassment and violence against women in the workplace<sup>24</sup> and the other bringing to light safety issues faced by migrant workers, the majority of whom are women.<sup>25</sup>

During the 2018 commemoration of 16 Days, the ASEAN Secretariat Facebook Page featured a post highlighting ASEAN support for the global campaign to end all forms of violence, with the message:



“ASEAN countries join hands in commemorating the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. Themed ‘Orange the World: #HearMeToo’, this campaign continues the efforts to end violence against women and girls as guided by the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women (<https://bit.ly/2zoidQf>), among others.”

All AMS have been implementing various EAW campaigns, including participation in the UNiTE to End Violence against Women Campaign, launched in 2008 by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. This is a multi-year effort aimed at preventing and eliminating VAWG around the world.

Contributing to Regional Level Priorities, the following actions were reported by ASEAN Member States:

- In **Brunei Darussalam**, JAPEM<sup>26</sup> has initiated several communication campaigns on VAW during celebrations of International Women’s Day, International Children’s Days, International Family Day and International Day for Older Persons. Further, campaigns on raising awareness on the Welfare Helpline 141 and Child Helpline 121 were also launched to encourage the public to use them specifically on VAW-related matters.
- **Cambodia’s** Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWA) continued the Good Men campaign, a five-year national social behaviour-change campaign that was launched in 2011 to raise awareness on positive masculinity in order to reduce VAW. In 2015, it kicked-off the campaign using soldiers and police to promote gender equality and help stop violence against women and children, using the slogan, ‘Good men give value to women’. In Ta Khmao, Kandal province, 450 people came out to celebrate the campaign. In 2014, six provinces held campaign events and over 2,000 people participated. The Ministry also has an active social media presence. Its Facebook page has

21. See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlsdFwCCyRU>

22. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVBgusbJUfo&list=PLt2zoBXVB3p4S38MDRz-JfTnAUqonNOG2>

23. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o4EFDgvVnTU&list=PLt2zoBXVB3p6rVcijlKjiAniNOQs3Wypg>

24. Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvkgxyoxLAE&list=PLt2zoBXVB3p7qAOhU\\_-H37-FGqoyRGK-E&index=9](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvkgxyoxLAE&list=PLt2zoBXVB3p7qAOhU_-H37-FGqoyRGK-E&index=9)

25. Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4hKnGss3ozg&list=PLt2zoBXVB3p7qAOhU\\_-H37-FGqoyRGK-E&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4hKnGss3ozg&list=PLt2zoBXVB3p7qAOhU_-H37-FGqoyRGK-E&index=2)

26. Jabatan Pembangunan Masyarakat (JAPEM), or Community Development Department, under the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.



Photo: Chea Takihiro / Khmer Times, Ministry Promotes Good Men Campaign

91,000 followers and is liked by 90,261 people at the time of writing. On 18 and 19 October 2019, the page featured posts about the recently completed workshop on the media's implementation of the Media Code of Conduct for Reporting on Violence against Women, garnering hundreds of Facebook 'likes' and scores of shares. A video posted there of an interview with the President of the Club of Cambodian Journalists received over 1,400 views within five days.

- **Indonesia** launched programmes to empower youth in the fight against violence and gender-biased mindsets. One is the 'One Student Saves One Family' campaign, which aims to empower youth to advocate for family resilience and empowerment.
- In **Lao PDR**, as a key part of celebrations of International Women's Day and International Day for the Elimination of VAW, the Government conducted activities to disseminate information on the protection of women's and children's rights through television broadcasts, national radio broadcasts, community loudspeakers, newspapers and various websites. Further, various government sectors partnered with development agencies and mass organizations to produce a documentary on the prevention of VAWC.
- **Malaysia** implemented a programme called 'WAJA' (Women Anti-Criminal Programme), including a year-round campaign on EVAW in 2018, and in 2019 the 'Larian Oren' (Orange Run) was held throughout the country on 23 November (in conjunction with the 25 November start of the 16 Days campaign).
- **Myanmar** conducted awareness-raising campaigns during the 16-Day period, focusing on changing social norms towards non-violence and respectful relationships, and informative materials were distributed in the local language in the states and regions. The Department of Social Welfare engaged with celebrities and mass media in raising awareness on GBV and on progress on the RPA on EVAW. The Ministry of Health and Sport, tasked to work on GBV response and prevention in the country, has a Facebook page with over 735,000 likes and over 740,000 followers.
- The **Philippines** celebrates an annual 18-Day Campaign to End VAW and holds nationwide campaigns inspiring the general public to make a personal commitment to end violence against women and children. With a focus on primary prevention of VAW, the 2019 campaign activities included a digital short film competition, 'Orange Your Icon', as part of the country's participation in the UNiTE Campaign, an anti-VAW expo and online advocacy using the hashtag #VAWFreePH. The country's gender machinery, the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) has an active Facebook page with over 60,000 people who like the page and are followers.
- In **Singapore**, the national 'Break the Silence' campaign aims to raise awareness on family violence and encourage help-seeking behaviour. Between 2016 and 2020, six campaign videos received more than 37 million views across free-to-air channels and social media platforms. Community engagement efforts also reached out to over 93,000 people.
- Organized campaign activities were implemented annually from 2016 through 2018 in **Thailand** to address alcohol abuse as a risk factor for sexual violence. The Government organized campaign activities around the theme of 'Happy Songkran, No Alcohol, No Molestation/Sexual Threats' and proposed that government agencies issue policies or have measures to solve the problems. The campaign included a forum, conferences and policy interventions designed to limit alcohol consumption and purchase in certain areas. From 2019-2020,

27. Takihiro 2015.

28. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/mowa.gov.kh/videos/403115537041986/>.

29. In 2006, then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed Proclamation 1172, extending the 16-day campaign to 18 days, thereby including 12 December, a historic date that marks the signing in the year 2000 of the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.





Photo: UN Women/Pathumporn Thongking

- campaigns on ending gender-based workplace exploitation through knowledge and music were virtually launched at Chulalongkorn University on 25 November—in collaboration with government and business sectors, academia, international organizations, the student network and public media—to commemorate the International Day for Elimination of Violence Women and 18 December to commemorate International Migrants Day.
- Viet Nam** has implemented many initiatives to raise public awareness on gender equality and to prevent and respond to VAW since 2016, including annual activities such as the National Action Month on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control in June and the National Day against Trafficking in Persons on 30 June. In addition, several activities enhancing men’s participation have been conducted to encourage them to speak up, make commitments and take action to change GBV. These contribute to building positive social norms, attitudes and behaviours, introducing initiatives to prevent discrimination and VAWG such as ‘Men making homes’, ‘Responsible Father’ competitions and ‘White Ribbon Breakfast’ events.
- During the 2016-2019 period, nearly 50,000 activities were implemented, establishing strong communication campaigns, attracting tens of millions of participants and showing consensus and strong commitment of agencies and organizations to join hands in the fight to eliminate gender inequalities and violence against and abuse of women and children.

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## Priority Area #3: Regional service provider guidelines

### DEVELOP GUIDELINES FOR SOPS ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS ON GENDER-SENSITIVE HANDLING OF VAW CASES, INCLUDING GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

**Indicators:** Guidelines for SOPs developed and adopted.

**Baseline (2016):** Gender-sensitive guideline for handling women victims/survivors of trafficking  
Mid-term progress (2021): Gender-sensitive guideline for handling women victims/survivors of trafficking adapted to Thailand's context launched in 2019 with a series of workshops for frontline personnel

One of the early achievements of ASEAN in the development of guidelines and performance standards, through the ACWC, was the *Gender Sensitive Guideline for Handling Women Victims of Trafficking*.<sup>30</sup> The Guideline is brief and easy to understand in order to aid service providers and practitioners in supporting women victims/survivors of trafficking in a gender-responsive and efficient manner. In early 2019, **Thailand** launched a translated version. Through a joint effort between UN Women Thailand, the ACWC, the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) at the Ministry of Justice and the Asian Research Centre for Migration (ARCM) at the Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, the Guideline and workshop curriculum were adapted to the local context to increase awareness and build competency for key frontline personnel. Some 1,500 local women's groups, officers (including the Anti-Human Trafficking Division of the Royal Thai Police) and key community members in Bangkok, Tak and Chiang Rai are expected to benefit and be reached directly through capacity-building workshops, awareness-raising and advocacy activities.

- AMS should build internal capacities to gather VAW data, especially population-based prevalence studies that are high quality and comparable across the AMS. This is needed to inform VAW prevention strategies and responses, as well as policies and programmes.
- AMS can agree on a minimum data set to be collected by key stakeholders and analyse those data periodically and at regular intervals. This can help generate comparable data across AMS and across time.
- The ASEAN guidelines on VAW data collection and use can be supplemented by evidence briefs that gather, analyse and share promising practices across the region regarding how some AMS collect administrative data, what challenges they have faced and what strategies they have employed to overcome these.
- Policy briefs and shorter guides can be developed to support AMS that do not yet collect VAW prevalence data as the current guidelines do not have a concrete how-to section on this.

## REGIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Recommendations on Regional Priorities #1-3:

#### REGIONAL PRIORITY #1 ON VAW DATA

- With guidelines developed on using and generating VAW data, an important next step is to build on the momentum of growing recognition of the need for good data and enjoin all AMS to gather VAW data according to international standards, both administrative data and population-based prevalence surveys.
- More AMS can localize the VAW data guidelines, contextualize the recommendations and develop local strategies to improve VAW data collection

#### REGIONAL PRIORITY #2 ON REGIONAL COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

- While communication campaigns are important for raising general public awareness, ASEAN can achieve further progress on the RPA on EAW by developing behaviour-change advocacy strategies and materials, on top of public education or information dissemination, that aim for gender transformative change.
- AMS can also expand the reach of the ASEAN campaigns by localizing the regional campaigns developed by the ACWC and ACW. This strategy can complement country-led campaigns while scaling up the impact of ASEAN communication campaigns to eliminate VAW.
- More monitoring of the reach and impact of each AMS' communication campaigns is needed, with these data consolidated at the regional level—for example, on the number of people reached by social media campaigns and the actions prompted (number of shares, number of people who answer polls or follow the campaign, etc.)

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30. ASEAN 2016b.

## REGIONAL PRIORITY #3 ON GUIDELINES AND SOPS

- ASEAN needs to accelerate progress in the development of guidelines and SOPs to raise performance standards for gender-responsive handling of VAW cases according to international best practice in VAW service provision such as those described in the UN Essential Services Package.<sup>31</sup> For example, at the regional level, AMS can agree on the minimum standards of care for VAW victims/survivors and the guidelines and SOPs needed to strengthen VAW service provision.
- More guidelines on providing shelter, psychosocial services and implementing specialized courts and protection orders are needed for the VAW responses to be effective in avoiding revictimization of victims/survivors and for preventing VAW in communities. It would also be helpful for the guidelines and protocols to include guidance on addressing VAW during crisis situations, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic, etc.
- Guidelines are needed on supporting the most vulnerable women and on handling various forms of VAW—including under-recognized forms such as violence against women migrant workers, women in politics, cyberviolence and sexual harassment in public spaces, to name a few examples.
- ASEAN can conduct evaluation conferences to gather learning and promising practices on the RPA on EVAW implementation in the region and share recent achievements related to the three Regional Priority Areas.

## 2. Recommendations on the Implementation and Evaluation of RPA on EVAW:

ASEAN, through the work of the ACWC and ACW, and its Member States have achieved significant and concrete gains in addressing violence against women in the region. On top of the recommendations on the Regional Priority Areas, above, the following are also recommended in order to strengthen the plan's implementation in the next five years.

### 1) Review and enhance the RPA's Indicators for the Regional and National Priority Areas

The indicators for measuring progress against the RPA on EVAW can be reviewed and enhanced to reflect clearer targets that are more measurable and specific. They also need to reflect the growing evidence base on what works to effectively prevent VAW.

- There is a need to increase efforts and investments in primary prevention (i.e., preventing VAW before it occurs), addressing risk factors across the individual, relational, community and societal levels of the socio-ecological framework.<sup>32</sup>
- It has been proven that VAW is preventable through comprehensive programmes that apply social norm change strategies such as community mobilization, family-based interventions and integrating gender sensitivity and GBV prevention trainings with women's economic empowerment interventions.
- A growing number of evidence-based programmes have been tested and proven to reduce VAW as part of the What Works global programme.<sup>33</sup>
- The World Health Organization (WHO) and UN Women "RESPECT Women: Preventing Violence against Women Framework" provides a suite of practical resources and tools to support the implementation support national- and sub-national level policy and programming to prevent VAWG.<sup>34</sup>

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31. UN Women et al. 2015. This provides guidance on a coordinated set of essential and quality multi-sectoral services across health, policing, justice and social services (including shelter services).

32. Based on evidence that no single factor can explain why some people or groups are at higher risk of interpersonal violence, while others are more protected from it, the social-ecological model views interpersonal violence as the outcome of the interaction of many factors at four levels—the individual, the relationship, the community and the societal. See WHO 2021b.

33. The UKAID-funded What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls programme (What Works) was recently completed after six years and £25 million provided to fund the design, testing and evaluation of prevention programmes that focused on changing behaviours, gender inequitable attitudes and social norms. See: <https://www.whatworks.co.za/resources/evidence-reviews>.

34. WHO and UN Women 2019.



Examples of how to reflect these developments in the RPA indicators are demonstrated in the table below:

Current indicators per RPA Priority Area	Suggestions for additional indicators for 2021-2025
<b>Regional Priority Areas</b>	
<p><b>1. Establish regional guidelines for the collection and analysis of data on VAW</b>  <b>Indicators:</b> Establishment and adoption of guidelines based on the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW.</p>	Number of countries that have adopted the regional guidelines
<p><b>2. Develop and enhance regional campaigns on EVAW including through the use of video spots and social media platforms and channels.</b>  <b>Indicators:</b> (1) Number of countries that have disseminated EVAW campaign materials; (2) Number of views/visitors/viewers to social media platform with information on EVAW</p>	Number of countries that have integrated theory-based behaviour-change and social norm communication interventions as part of their campaigns to end VAW
<p><b>3. Develop guidelines for SOPs on performance standards for service providers on gender-sensitive handling of VAW cases, including guidelines for support services for victims/survivors and the administration of justice.</b>  <b>Indicators:</b> Guidelines for SOPs developed and adopted.</p>	Number of countries that developed new guidelines for SOPs in 2021-2025 to strengthen VAW service provision
<b>National Priority Areas</b> At the national level, the AMS will:	
<p><b>4. Develop and/or strengthen national action plans on EVAW through multi-sectoral and inter-agency mechanism to coordinate development, implementation and monitoring of these plans.</b>  <b>Indicators:</b> (1) Number of countries with a national action plan on EVAW; (2) Number of countries with national multi-sectoral and interagency coordination; and (3) Number of countries with sub-national mechanisms with adequate resources</p>	Recommended to maintain the same indicators; however, it is advised to provide clear operational definitions of how multi-sectoral coordination and subnational mechanisms (with adequate resources) can be assessed.
<p><b>5. Collect VAW prevalence data in line with international standard.</b>  <b>Indicator:</b> Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW.</p>	Number of countries gathering VAW prevalence data through population-based prevalence surveys periodically (e.g., every five years)
<p><b>6. Develop and adopt gender-responsive legal frameworks to penalize all forms of VAW in full compliance with CEDAW.</b>  <b>Indicator:</b> Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW.</p>	Number of countries gathering VAW prevalence data through population-based prevalence surveys periodically (e.g., every five years)
<p><b>7. Develop and adopt gender-responsive legal frameworks to penalize all forms of VAW in full compliance with CEDAW.</b>  <b>Indicator:</b> (1) Number of AMS that implement preventive measures; and (2) Number of measures implemented.</p>	Recommended to maintain the same indicators; however, it is advised to provide clear operational definitions of the types of prevention interventions that go beyond awareness-raising and campaigns and address harmful gender and social norms.
<p><b>8. Develop national guidelines for SOPs on performance standards for service providers on gender-sensitive handling of VAW cases, including guidelines for support services for victims/survivors and the administration of justice.</b>  <b>Indicator:</b> SOP guidelines developed.</p>	Number of guidelines for SOPs developed by each AMS in 2021-2025 according to international best practice in VAW service provision such as those described in the UN Essential Services Package. <sup>35</sup>

35. UN Women et al. 2015.

## 2) Develop clear and standardized monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to measure results from AMS' implementation of the RPA on EVAW

In order to assist all AMS in their reporting and tracking of progress, there could be benefit in developing a regional M&E framework to guide the implementation and documentation of learning from RPA implementation at the national level. The framework can include clear operational definitions to guide the interpretation of the indicators, suggestions for methods for the M&E of VAW prevention and response interventions and programming, as well as a clear M&E plan that outlines the key M&E activities, institutions responsible and schedule for the various assessment activities. It can help identify specific ways that each AMS can evaluate the quality of their VAW prevention programming and response services, as well as support the identification and use of programmatic learning to inform how VAW prevention and response can be improved, and identify areas that require greater technical support and resources. AMS can also improve the design and conduct of evaluations of the impact of their VAW prevention and response measures. These include evaluating the impact of their VAW national action plans (NAPs), programmes and policies on VAW, and measuring community level impact (not just behaviour changes at an individual level). AMS can also assess costs and scalability of both prevention and response interventions and implement and evaluate programmes for specific populations.

## 3) Develop a regional capacity development plan to strengthen technical capacities of national institutions on evidence-based VAW prevention programme design, implementation and evaluation

The design and implementation of effective VAW prevention programmes require technical skills and updated knowledge informed by the growing evidence on what works to prevent VAW. It would be strategic for AMS to conduct national capacity assessments to identify the technical capacity and training needs of the various institutions tasked with contributing to the national VAW prevention and response programmes. Institutional capacity development of government agencies is critical in order to accelerate progress towards the successful implementation of the RPA on EVAW and achievement of the specific indicators.

Specific recommendations in the areas regarding VAW NAPs, VAW data, legal frameworks, prevention, and guidelines and SOP development are discussed in each of the National Priority Areas in the next section.



**Table 1. Summary of progress against the National Level Priority Areas (#4-8) for the first five years of the RPA on EVAW implementation**

NATIONAL PROGRESS	Brunei Darussalam		Cambodia		Indonesia		Lao PDR		Malaysia		Myanmar		Philippines		Singapore		Thailand		Viet Nam		
	BL	MT	BL	MT	BL	MT	BL	MT	BL	MT	BL	MT	BL	MT	BL	MT	BL	MT	BL	MT	
4. Develop and/or strengthen national action plans on EVAW through multi-sectoral and inter-agency mechanism to coordinate development, implementation and monitoring of these plans.																					
4a. National action plan on EVAW developed and implemented <sup>36</sup>	○	○	●	●	○	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
4b. National multi-sectoral and interagency coordination established	○	○	●	●	○	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
4c. Sub-national mechanisms developed with adequate resources	○	○	●	●	○	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
5. Collect VAW prevalence data in line with international standards.																					
VAW prevalence data collected in line with international standards	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
6. Develop and adopt gender-responsive legal frameworks to penalize all forms of VAW in full compliance with CEDAW.																					
Laws/regulations on EVAW are strengthened and/or developed to penalize all forms of VAW	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
7. Develop and implement preventive interventions that address the root causes of VAW, including gender stereotypes and harmful traditional and religious practices. The interventions should promote positive, respectful and non-violent masculinities.																					
7a. Preventive measures implemented <sup>37</sup>	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
8. Develop national guidelines for SOPs on performance standards for service providers on gender-sensitive handling of VAW cases, including guidelines for support services for victims/survivors and the administration of justice.																					
SOP guidelines developed.	□	●	●	●	●	●	□	●	□	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	□	●	

- No information available
  - Not yet started
  - Partially implemented or under development/consideration
  - Implementation underway
  - Completed
- BL- Baseline (2016); MT - Mid-Term (2020)

36. Note that only specific NAPs on EVAW are counted in the list, excluding general national action plans on women, promotion of gender equality, women’s rights, etc.  
 37. Progress against indicator 7b. A number of preventive measures are not included in this review due to the absence of information.



## B. Progress on National Level Priority Areas<sup>38</sup>

### Priority Area #4: National action plans

DEVELOP AND/OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ON EVAW THROUGH MULTI-SECTORAL AND INTERAGENCY MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THESE PLANS.

<p><b>Indicator:</b> 4a. Number of countries with a national action plan on EVAW<sup>39</sup>  <b>Baseline (2016):</b> Four completed; six not started.  <b>Mid-term progress (2019-2021):</b> Four completed; one implementation underway; five not started</p>	<p><b>Indicator:</b> 4b. Number of countries with national multi-sectoral and interagency coordination established  <b>Baseline (2016):</b> Six implementations underway; six not started.  <b>Mid-term progress (2019-2021):</b> Five implementations underway; five not started</p>	<p><b>Indicator:</b> 4.c. Number of countries with sub-national mechanisms with adequate resources  <b>Baseline (2016):</b> Four implementations underway; six not started.  <b>Mid-term progress (2019-2021):</b> Five implementations underway; five not started</p>
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#### National action plans on ending VAW

At the beginning of the implementation of the RPA on EVAW in 2016, and at present, four countries—**Cambodia**, **Lao PDR**, **Philippines** and **Viet Nam**—reported having a dedicated national action plan (NAP) on ending violence against women and/or domestic violence.<sup>40</sup> At mid-term, **Thailand** reported that it intends to finalize its draft plan, which will be based on the RPA priorities and Key Actions, in 2021 through cooperation between various agencies and international organizations. In 2021, **Lao PDR** and **Cambodia** officially launched their second and third NAPs, respectively, while **Viet Nam**'s National Plan of Action on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control ended in 2020.

In **Lao PDR**, the Government officially endorsed the Second National Plan of Action on Preventing and Elimination of Violence against Women and Violence against Children (2021-2025) (NPAVAWVAC) and the Fourth National Plan of Action on Gender Equality (2021-2025) (NPAGE) in May 2021. In **Viet Nam**, the National Plan of Action on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control up to 2020 has been implemented since 2014.

#### National multi-sectoral and interagency coordination

In **Cambodia**, in addition to the NAP implementation strategy, multi-sectoral Coordinated Response Mechanism (CRM) networks involving relevant government departments and officials were established in eight provinces in 2016 and 2017 to facilitate effective, efficient and timely responses for victims/survivors of

VAW. These multi-sectoral networks bring police, health-care providers, local authorities and legal and social service providers together to address gaps in services in order to improve referral pathways and the response to VAW. The principle is to build the capacity of all key actors so that 'every door is the right door'. Cambodia is also developing a national standard for the network and will establish this in all provinces in 2021. In addition, a one-stop services centre (OSSC) model is currently being piloted in two provincial hospitals.

In **Lao PDR**, the NAPs are implemented with the support of several national mechanisms such as the National Commission for the Advancement of Women (NCAW)—an inter-ministerial mechanism—and the National Assembly Women's Caucus, which consists of all female members of the Assembly and its secretariat. Their work on combating VAWC is carried out in support of, and coordination with, the Provincial People's Assemblies, Sub-Commissions for the Advancement of Women and the Lao Women's Union, a mass organization with organizational structure at all levels: central, ministerial/organization/provincial, district and village. Currently, the Government is working on project with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to develop the implementation guideline and M&E plan of the five-year National Strategic Plan on EVAW (2021-2025) and to establish a platform for policy dialogue on gender and VAW to strengthen the governance framework and promote women's participation.<sup>41</sup>

38. See summary table on page above.

39. This indicator refers only to specific NAPs on EVAW, excluding general national action plans on women's development or those for the promotion of gender equality, women's rights, etc.

40. UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (2020). "Mapping Study: Legislation, National Action Plan and Prevalence Study on Violence against Women in Asia Pacific Region" (Internal document).

41. UNDP Lao PDR 2020.

### Box 1: A comprehensive national action plan that is migration-sensitive and includes primary prevention focused on social norm change

**Cambodia's Third National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women** (NAPVAW III for 2019-2023) focuses on the prevention and prosecution of VAW and on legal protection and the improvement of service delivery for victims/survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) and their children. It is also migration sensitive. With the 3rd NAPVAW, women, including women migrant workers, will receive better coordinated quality services through established referral guidelines, the review of laws and policies to assess gaps in implementation, and the development of a comprehensive data collection system. It has informed the development of the UN Women-ILO Guidance note to develop migration-sensitive NAPs on VAW.<sup>43</sup> The country has been cited as an example in the UN Women's "Handbook for National Action Plans on Violence against Women" for having a NAP that aims to address "the complex and multiple root causes

of violence against women", including "gender inequality, gendered social constructions and inadequacies in education".<sup>44</sup> The plan reflects the growing knowledge work around VAW prevention, which recognizes that to prevent violence against women requires more than simple awareness-raising, and that it is necessary to work through multiple channels to transform individual attitudes and organizational, social and cultural practices that support, tolerate or excuse violence.

In addition to its NAP, Cambodia addresses other forms of VAWG through, for example, the National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018 (and the update 2019-2023), the Provincial Action Plan to Prevent Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy in Rattanakiri 2017-2021 and the National Strategic Plan for the National Committee for Counter Trafficking.

The **Philippines** implements its VAW national programme through an inter-ministerial mechanism, the Inter-Agency Council on Violence against Women and their Children (IAC-VAWC), mandated by the country's Anti-Violence against Women and Their Children Act 2004. What serves as the country's NAP is the IAC-VAW Strategic Action Plan (2017-2022), along with the National Advocacy and Communication Plan (2017-2022), which aids its implementation.<sup>42</sup> A notable feature of the plan is a key result area in primary prevention, which aims to stop violence before it begins, particularly focusing on changing mindsets and looking at factors that perpetuate VAW and other forms of inequalities. The Council is composed of 12 governmental agencies covering health, justice, social welfare, education, employment and investigation, and all agencies are directed to avail funds from their respective budgets to implement the Act.

In **Viet Nam**, multi-sectoral and inter-agency coordination is specifically addressed in the national programmes and strategies on gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence. At national level, the leading agency of programmes/strategies is the focal point to coordinate implementation and the relevant ministries, agencies, organizations are responsible for performing their assigned tasks to achieve the proposed objectives. At the local level, in order to ensure coordination among all sectors, Provincial People's Committees issue a Provincial Action Plan or establish steering committees to implement the respective programmes/strategies. Decision No. 21/2016/QĐ-TTg, issued by the Prime Minister on 17 May 2016, promulgated the Regulation on inter-sectoral coordination of domestic violence prevention and control. The National Commission for the Advancement of Women had been established as a mechanism to provide coordination and ensure gender mainstreaming within the Government's development plans.

42. IACVAWC 2018.

43. ILO and UN Women 2020.

44. UN Women 2012.

## LEARNING, RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAYS FORWARD

Despite notable achievements in this area, all ASM need to accelerate progress and to develop, adopt and implement comprehensive and multi-sectoral NAPs to combat violence against women. More needs to be done to establish government institutional mechanisms to coordinate, monitor and assess the effectiveness of the measures taken, in addition to allocating sufficient resources. These recommendations have been echoed by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (UN CEDAW)<sup>45</sup> and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN ECOSOC).<sup>46</sup> Moreover, the UN General Assembly has routinely called on Member States to adopt and strengthen NAPs on VAW as an important step in the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of such violence.<sup>47</sup>

- National action plans should ideally have a comprehensive set of interventions that involve multi-sectoral collaboration such as engaging men in the process,<sup>48</sup> enabling meaningful participation of civil society<sup>49</sup> and mobilizing community grass-roots organizations.<sup>50</sup> Addressing VAW requires the active involvement and continual capacity building of stakeholders at various levels as well—from national and municipal to community/village government structures. There should similarly be monitoring mechanisms and bodies that can assess progress made against the NAP.

- In addition, further steps need to be taken by all AMS to allocate sufficient resources to sub-national mechanisms as well as to include more vulnerable women in national violence prevention plans, especially those facing greater discrimination and with little access to services and opportunities for empowerment. For AMS experiencing challenges in resourcing a national roll-out of VAW prevention programming in all localities, an assessment of gaps and needs can help in determining the scope and magnitude of funding and resource gaps as well as in identifying priority areas for development aid.
- NAPs on VAW also need to address violence against women in all its forms. This means that interventions should (i) target different forms of VAWG including violence against women migrant workers, child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) (where relevant to the local context), sexual harassment in public spaces/schools/workplace, violence against women in politics, etc.; and (ii) address the specific needs of different groups, such as women with disabilities, women living with and affected by HIV and AIDS, girls, older women, ethnic minority and/or indigenous women, women living in disaster or conflict-affected areas, refugee and displaced women, documented and undocumented migrant women, women's human rights defenders/ gender equality advocates and women who are trafficked for forced labour or sexual exploitation, among others.

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45. For example, UN General Assembly 2002, para. 332; UN CEDAW 2007, para. 24; UN CEDAW 2008a, para. 20; UN CEDAW 2008b, para. 16; UN CEDAW 2009, para. 26.

46. UN ECOSOC 2009a, para. 22; UN ECOSOC 2009b, para. 20.

47. UN General Assembly 2006, para. 8(p).

48. Council of Europe 2008.

49. UN Women 2012.

50. Fulu et al. 2017.



## Priority Area #5: VAW prevalence data

### COLLECT VAW PREVALENCE DATA IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

**Indicator 5:** Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW<sup>51</sup>

**Baseline (2015-16):** six completed; one implementation underway; three not started

**Mid-term progress (2021):** eight completed; one implementation underway; one not started

At the time of the RPA development, there were six countries that already had prevalence studies on domestic violence and/or violence against women: **Cambodia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand** and **Viet Nam**. **Cambodia** and the **Philippines** used Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) domestic violence modules to conduct their VAWG prevalence surveys; **Thailand** gathered sub-national data (in the capital city, Bangkok, and in a rural town, Nakhonsawan province) when it participated in the WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women (2005); **Indonesia, Lao PDR** and **Viet Nam** replicated the methodology developed for the WHO Multi-Country Study; while Singapore used the International Violence against Women Survey (IVAWS) methodology to conduct its prevalence study.<sup>52</sup>

As of December 2019, eight AMS had completed VAWG prevalence studies<sup>53</sup>—with the addition of **Indonesia** and **Myanmar**—and one, **Malaysia**, had implementation underway. However, not all AMS are collecting VAW prevalence survey data on a periodic basis. It is important to note that, despite the increased risks of domestic violence women face during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not advisable to collect prevalence data or population-based surveys at that time as women's participation in any survey on violence, particularly when at home with their abusers, may result in more violence and/or in poor quality data.<sup>54</sup>

The **Myanmar** DHS 2015-2016 published comprehensive data on domestic violence. In early 2020, the National Women's Life Experience study was started and consists of a population-based survey to document all forms of VAWG and a qualitative component on the conditions surrounding the issues as well as gaps and challenges in addressing them. However, the fieldwork has been postponed to 2021 due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The 2nd DHS Survey was planned for 2020-2021.

**Indonesia** conducted a nationwide survey on violence against women and children in 2016. This survey assists policymakers in understanding the root causes, prevalence, severity and trends on such violence.<sup>55</sup>

#### Box 2: Periodic population-based prevalence surveys allowing for long-term comparison of data

**Cambodia** and the **Philippines** have conducted periodic VAWG prevalence studies every five years, which has allowed the analysis of trends in VAW prevalence and provided insights on the impact of VAW national programming. For example, Cambodia's long-term comparable data, showing a decrease in the proportion of women who experienced physical violence in the 12 months prior to the survey (i.e., current prevalence) vis-à-vis lifetime prevalence, indicates the impact of VAWG programmes, policies and initiatives to reduce violence against women in the country. Cambodia will gather VAW data again as part of the DHS 2021.

In **Viet Nam**, the National Study on Violence against Women was conducted twice: in 2010 and 2019. The studies were managed by MOLISA in collaboration with the General Statistics Office, with technical and financial support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and DFAT. The 2019 study enables an understanding of what has changed since the first study, as well as what has not, and what needs to be in place for strengthening gender equality and ending AWW. Viet Nam is the only country in the world so far that has conducted a second dedicated study specifically using cross-culturally validated methodology developed by the WHO.

51. This indicator specifically refers to population-based VAW prevalence surveys. See Box 3.

52. ASEAN 2018, p. 48.

53. ASEAN 2018.

54. kNOwVAWdata et al. 2020.

55. UN HCR 2017.

## Administrative data

Several AMS also gather administrative VAW data through their hotlines, shelters and other government services.

Although there are no official national statistics on VAW prevalence in **Brunei Darussalam**, administrative data is gathered from different agencies that receive complaints and handle cases either through the national helplines of JAPEM or the police. The Royal Brunei Police Force maintains registers of cases of wife abuse (2007-2009), domestic violence, including maid abuse (2005-2009) and sexual offences (2005-2008), and the Ministry of Health (MoH), through its hospitals, maintains registers of women with regard to health issues and cases of VAW, including against women with disabilities.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, the Disease Control Division (DCD) under the MoH also maintains registers on cases relating to VAW, wife abuse, protection and rehabilitation and elderly women who have been neglected.

Regarding other promising developments in this area, **Indonesia** gathers real-time administrative data to improve the quality and monitoring of services provided. A standard for recording and reporting of VAW was created through the launch of an online application system called Simfoni PPA (ISO-27001 certified). The system has been implemented in 548 service units at provincial level, 419 Integrated Service Centres for the Empowerment of Women and Children (P2TP2A), 427 police units and 337 health-care facilities. The system has improved the availability of up-to-date information on real-time and accurately reported VAW cases, which is accessible to all Women and Children Service Units at provincial and regency/city levels. In addition, the Indonesian National Commission on Violence against Women (Komnas Nasional anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan – Komnas Perempuan) gathers data on sexual violence.<sup>57</sup>

In the **Philippines**, the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), in collaboration with the member agencies of the IACVAWC, is developing a harmonized collection and documentation system of VAW data, including analysis, sharing and management of information. The system is also meant to cover domestic violence and other forms of VAW or GBV, address the double counting of cases and lack of coordination among service providers and avoid re-victimization of victims/survivors. The system comes with standard VAW intake, referral and consent forms that were developed and pilot-tested by service providers in several local government units (LGUs). As of 2021, the user guidelines for the forms are being finalized, including the development of data-sharing agreements and protocols to ensure sensitive information will be kept confidential.<sup>58</sup>

### Box. 3: Sources of VAW data

**Prevalence of intimate partner violence (IPV):** refers to percentage of ever-partnered women who have experienced violence at least once in their lifetime (lifetime prevalence) or in the last 12 months (current prevalence or incidence)

#### Two data sources:

**Administrative data:** records kept by health and social services, hotlines, shelters, legal aid services, courts and police

Prevalence surveys: population-based surveys on violence against women involve interviewing a representative sample of women using a well-designed questionnaire and specially trained interviewers

**Implications for policy and practice:** While administrative data reveal the number of cases or incidents identified by a specific service, and help track the response, allocated resources and referral mechanisms, they cannot help to measure the extent and patterns of violence in a population.

This is why a well conducted, dedicated population-based survey is required to collect data on the prevalence of VAW.

*Source: Jansen 2020.*

**Malaysia** reported that VAW data gathering started as part of research into violence against women and child abuse (in June 2019) and includes domestic violence data from the Royal Malaysia Police (January–September 2019) and the Statistik Kes Keganasan Rumah Tangga Yang Berdaftar<sup>59</sup> from the Social Welfare Department (JKM) (2019).

**Myanmar** has conducted research and surveys, which includes violence and women with disabilities, violence in conflict areas, violence against women, violence service mapping, women's needs assessment and a multi-donor funded assessment of VAW prevention and response services and access. In addition, the police are gathering data on VAW reported to police stations all over the country through their Crime Investigation, Reporting and Analysis System (CIRAS). This includes cases related to forms of gender-based violence such as rape, acts of lasciviousness, photo and video voyeurism and sexual harassment.

56. UN CEDAW 2014a.

57. Indonesian National Commission on Violence Against Women 2016.

58. ACW Philippines Comments on the MTR Report 2021 (Internal document).

59. Direct translation: 'Statistics of Registered Domestic Violence Cases'.

In **Thailand**, administrative data on domestic violence and other VAW has been collected through various agencies under the coordination of the Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development (DWF). The DWF developed a database of violence against children, women and family members to which data on cases of VAWC, including domestic violence, are reported by 15 service providers agencies (both governmental and NGOs).

**Viet Nam** collects data on the prevalence of VAW through administrative data (regularly and periodically collected by public administrations such as the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey), prevalence data (collected from GBV surveys, including demographic and population surveys) and cost data (from cost studies and evaluation models).

## LEARNING, RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAYS FORWARD

- AMS can maximize the use of the *ASEAN Regional Guidelines on Violence against Women and Girls Data Collection and Use*.<sup>60</sup> This highlights the benefits of VAWG prevalence studies, emphasizing that they can not only provide reliable estimates of the prevalence of VAWG within a population but also help identify risk factors for VAWG. The Guidelines also present some resources and promising practices from other regions that AMS can draw learning from.
- AMS can also follow the Guidelines recommendation to “Collect and analyse data on all forms of VAWG, beyond domestic violence and sexual violence such as child and early marriages, trafficking, sexual exploitation, acid violence and femicide and for marginalized women such as migrant women or women with disabilities, among others”.<sup>61</sup>
- AMS can use data that show the history of violence in women's and girl's lives, identify common characteristics of women and girls who have experienced violence, profiles of perpetrators and the factors that align with help-seeking behaviour of VAWG victims/survivors. This will help inform both the primary prevention interventions and the response efforts to ensure more women and girls access the available services.

- Periodic gathering of VAW prevalence data is important in order to be able to compare rates across time. This is a critical component of a monitoring and evaluation framework that can measure the impact of countries' NAP on VAW, policies and any VAW prevention programmes they are implementing.
- More has to be done by AMS to gather data to inform prevention programmes based on the identified factors that increase the likelihood for VAW experience and perpetration, those that decrease this likelihood, as well as the consequences and costs of VAW. This means collecting data about women who suffer from multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and inequalities, making them especially at risk of experiencing violence. They include women with disabilities, women living with and affected by HIV and AIDS, girls, older women, ethnic minority and/or indigenous women, women living in disaster or conflict-affected areas, refugee and displaced women, documented and undocumented migrant women, women's human rights defenders/gender equality advocates and women who are trafficked for forced labour or sexual exploitation among others.

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60. ASEAN 2018.

61. Ibid.

## Priority Area #6: Legal frameworks

### DEVELOP AND ADOPT GENDER-RESPONSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO PENALIZE ALL FORMS OF VAW IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH CEDAW

**Indicator 6:** Number of new/strengthened laws/regulations on EVAW

**Baseline (2015-16):** Eight implementations underway; two partially implemented

**Mid-term progress (2021):** Eight implementation underway; two partially implemented

At baseline (based on the mapping conducted by UN Women in 2015) and at mid-term, eight AMS had legislation on domestic violence and/or other violence against women (see Table 2). This RPA National Priority Area on legal frameworks requires sustained work since countries need to continually review the legal protections of women as new forms of VAW emerge or become more prevalent (e.g., cyberviolence, sexual harassment in public spaces, violence against women in politics, violence against migrant women workers, etc.). Moreover, on top of enacting laws and regulations, strengthening legal protections of women requires continuous strengthening of the capacities of the various actors in the justice system in order to improve delivery of essential policing and justice services for VAW victims/survivors.

#### Domestic violence legislation

**Myanmar** is one of the two countries with no specific laws on domestic violence, although its Customary Law and the Penal Code allow for prosecuting cases of discrimination and violence against women under the sections that address assault and intentional infliction of injury.<sup>62</sup> Nonetheless, the Government has amended some existing laws such as the Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure Codes, etc. to make them more gender-

responsive, along with amendments regarding the age limit of marriage that is associated with child rape.<sup>63</sup> The Government started drafting the Prevention and Protection of Violence against Women Bill (PoVAW) in 2013; however, it has yet to be passed, and victims/survivors of domestic violence still have limited legal recourse.

**Brunei Darussalam** does not have a specific domestic violence law; however, both the Islamic Family Law Act (Cap 217) and the Married Women Act were amended in 2014 to include provisions on domestic violence, and both provide for protection orders and expedited orders that provide for removal of the perpetrator from the home. While domestic violence is not a criminal offence under the law,<sup>64</sup> victims/survivors are entitled to compensation in such cases under the Islamic Family Law Act (sect. 60E).<sup>65</sup> In 2017, the Penal Code was amended to: (i) expand the definition of rape to also include the instance when the perpetrator is in a position of trust or authority (i.e., a person does not consent if the sexual intercourse is induced by a person of trust and authority); and (ii) Increase the penalty for rape committed by someone in a position of trust and the rape of a girl under the age of 14.<sup>66</sup>

**TABLE 2. LIST OF AMS WITH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEGISLATION**

ASEAN Member State	Domestic violence	Year	Recognizes marital rape
Brunei Darussalam	-	-	No
Cambodia	Law on the Prevention of Violence and the Protection of Victims	2005	Partial
Indonesia	Law No. 23/2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence	2004	Yes
Lao PDR	Law on the Prevention of Violence against Women and Children	2015	Yes <sup>67</sup>
Malaysia	Domestic Violence Act	1994	No
Myanmar	-	-	No
Philippines	Anti-Violence against Women and Their Children Act (RA 9262) Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act 9710)	2004/2010	Yes

62. OECD 2014.

63. Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2019.

64. OECD 2014.

65. Ibid.

66. Government of Brunei Darussalam 2021.

67. World Bank 2020, p.14.

ASEAN Member State	Domestic violence	Year	Recognizes marital rape
Singapore	Women's Charter The Penal Code Protection from Harassment Act Vulnerable Adults Act	1961 (amended 2019)* 1871 (amended 2019)* 2014 (amended in 2019) 2018	Yes*
Thailand	Domestic Violence Victim Protection* Act B.E. 2550	2007	Yes
Viet Nam	Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control	2007	Yes

Source: UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (2020). "Mapping Study: Legislation, National Action Plan and Prevalence Study on Violence against Women in Asia Pacific Region" (Internal document) as cited in the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, 2020.

\*Revised with input from the AMS during MTR Process-Phase 2 (2021).

\*\*Although the term 'marital rape' is not found in Malaysian legislation, S.375A of the Penal Code provides punishment for a husband who solicits sex via intimidation and causing hurt to his wife.

Recently, **Thailand** worked on increasing women's protection in its domestic violence legislation. The Act on the Promotion of Family Institution Development and Protection was drafted to better prevent and reduce domestic violence through social measures on family development, welfare protection, preventive measures and remedy and rehabilitation. It also provides for criminal prosecution and protection of women victims/survivors with battered woman syndrome.<sup>68</sup> In addition, the amended sexual assault legislation in respect to the Criminal Code Amendment Act (27th edition) B.E. 2562 includes a revised definition of the term 'sexual assault' to provide more clarity and accuracy based on the nature of the action itself, and some provisions regarding crimes of sexual assault have been revised in order to improve the efficiency of law enforcement.<sup>69</sup>

In **Viet Nam**, besides the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control 2007, the Prime Minister issued Decision No. 125/QĐ-TTg in 2014 approving the National Action Programme on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control to 2020, aiming to raise awareness and enhance the responsibility of authorities at all levels, sectors, families, communities and the entire society in domestic violence prevention and control to reduce the number of cases nationwide. In order to address the limitations of the 2007 law, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism will submit an amendment to the National Assembly, to address domestic violence and those who commit it as well as conflicts between the law and other related legal documents, to strengthen measures to protect and support domestic violence victims/survivors, to improve the quality of reconciliation and educational work and to encourage society in domestic violence prevention and control.

## Marital rape

According to the UN Women mapping exercise, prior to RPA on EVAW implementation, only four AMS were known to have legal provisions recognizing marital rape: **Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand** and **Viet Nam**. To date, these countries have been joined by **Cambodia, Lao PDR** and **Singapore**. In **Cambodia**, spousal rape is not specifically mentioned in the Penal Code, but the underlying conduct can be prosecuted as 'rape', 'causing injury' or 'indecent assault'. Nonetheless, charges for spousal rape under the Penal Code and Domestic Violence Law are rare.<sup>70</sup> In **Lao PDR**, marital rape is excluded from the Penal Code but is criminalized under the Violence Law, which provides for penalties if a husband forces his wife to have sex (art. 79).<sup>71</sup> In **Singapore**, the 2019 amendments to the Penal Code fully repealed marital immunity for rape. Marital rape is not specifically mentioned in the Penal Code but it is defined as the "non-consensual penile penetration of the vagina, mouth or anus of a person".

In **Malaysia**, the term 'marital rape' is nowhere to be found in any legislation, but the Penal Code (Section 375A) provides protection through stating that any husband, who during the subsistence of a valid marriage, causes hurt or fear of death or hurt to his wife or any other person in order to have sexual intercourse with his wife shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years.

68. Government of Thailand 2019.

69. Government of Thailand 2021a.

70. U.S. Department of State 2018.

71. World Bank 2020.



#### Box 4: Reviewing and amending laws to improve and strengthen women's legal protections

Aside from developments on the recognition and criminalization of marital rape, several countries have amended their laws to improve legal protections of women against various forms of gender-based violence. For example, notable progress was achieved by **Indonesia**.<sup>72</sup> In December 2018, the Constitutional Court ruled that the minimum age of 16 years for women to marry, as stipulated in the existing Marriage Law, was unconstitutional. It viewed the minimum age requirement as a form of discrimination since the minimum age for men to marry was 19; thus, it ordered lawmakers to revise the minimum age for women. Another important development was of a fatwa against child marriage

issued after a three-day congress of female clerics in the country. The fatwa, which although not legally binding will be influential, called underage marriage “harmful” and said preventing it was mandatory. The clerics urged the Government to raise the minimum legal age for women to marry to 18. Lastly, although it was implemented before the RPA on EVAW, the Government has introduced several policies aimed at controlling female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), with an end goal to eliminate these harmful practices throughout the country. The Government revoked MoH Regulation No. 1636/2010 on Female Circumcision by issuing MoH Regulation No. 6/2014, which prohibits all medical practitioners from conducting FGM/C procedures.

#### Other forms of VAW

There are also developments in enacting laws on sexual harassment, with the growing recognition that this takes place not only in the workplace or educational institutions but in other public spaces such as public transport, streets, terminals, markets, etc. In **Brunei Darussalam**, the legal framework provides protection from sexual harassment and includes criminal penalties (Penal Code, sect. 509). **Malaysia** is currently developing a bill that aims to improve existing legislation on sexual harassment. Similarly, **Cambodia** reported the completion of the Sexual Harassment at the Workplace Policy and Prevention Package, which is being implemented in garment factories. More recently, **Singapore** also criminalized the distribution of an intimate image or recording of a person and ‘cyber-flashing’—sending unsolicited images of one’s private parts—the latest country to clamp down on sexual offences committed online.<sup>73</sup> Its Protection from Harassment Act (POHA) was also amended in 2019 to provide for enhanced penalties in relation to acts of harassment committed in intimate relationships, and the 2018 Vulnerable Adults Act makes provisions for the safeguarding of vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect.

In **Thailand**, the Ministry of Education enacted a regulation in 2018 requiring academic institutions at all levels to include age-appropriate sex education as part of the curriculum and not only prohibiting the expulsion of pregnant students but also stating that the institution should continue to provide them with appropriate services.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, the Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth) works with the Transport Co., Ltd., to improve the security of tour buses by providing ‘Team Pueak’: employees of the company who have been trained to monitor, prevent and solve problems when passengers are sexually harassed. In addition, the Transport Company Ltd. has announced three measures to deal with the problem of sexual harassment on tour buses: (i) Deterrence by proposing to install CCTV cameras both inside and on the front of the buses that can be used to view past events if such harassment occurred; (ii) Trained staff to be ready and have techniques for dealing with and taking care of passengers and themselves in case of various unsafe incidents; and (iii) Convenient complaint channels for the public.<sup>75</sup>

In **Viet Nam**, a recent government decree (Decree 145/2020/ND-CP, which takes effect from 2021) details and guides the implementation of articles of the Labour Code on working conditions and labour relations. Section 01 focuses on the prevention and combating of sexual harassment in the workplace; the order and procedures for handling sexual harassment at the workplace; and the requirement for employers to have regulations on the prevention and control of sexual harassment.<sup>76</sup>

72. UN CEDAW 2020.

73. AFP 2019.

74. Government of Thailand 2019.

75. Government of Thailand 2021a.

76. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam 2021a.



### Box 5: Strengthening women’s protection against sexual harassment in public spaces

In 2016, the Philippines was among the first nations in Asia to successfully pass city laws increasing penalties for sexual harassment against women and girls in public spaces. The behaviour-change and policy advocacy that led to the passing was a result of the **Safe Cities Quezon City Project** implemented by UN Women Philippines in partnership with the Quezon City Mayor’s and City Administrator’s Office. The project also trained members of the justice system, including public prosecutor’s judges and Women’s Desk police officers in the city, on how to implement the law. The project led to the passing of a similar law

in Manila City with the support of an NGO, Institute of Politics and Governance, and grass-roots women’s rights organizations. The increase in the profile of the issue brought about by the national behaviour change campaign (which reached over 2.5 million people on traditional and social media), and the passing of the city laws contributed to the signing into law of the country’s national Safe Spaces Act in 2019. The law penalizes wolf whistling, catcalling, misogynistic and homophobic slurs, unwanted sexual advances and other forms of sexual harassment on streets, in public places, workplaces and schools as well as in online spaces.

**Cambodia** has reviewed existing laws to strengthen protection against various forms of VAW targeting vulnerable women. For example, key articles and actions to address discrimination and violations against girls in the Juvenile Justice Law of 2016 include article 16 - A search by a police officer must be of the same sex as the suspect person, and article 23 - An apprehended minor must be separated from adults and from minors of the opposite sex. In addition, the 2018 Minimum Wage Law stated that female workers should receive 120 per cent of their salary during their three-month maternity leave. As well as legislation, the country has strategically focused on creating mechanisms and ensuring the functioning of institutions through policies and capacity development in VAW prevention and response. For example, in November 2016, MoWA and MoJ issued a *Prakas*<sup>77</sup> assigning MoWA and the Provincial Department of Women’s Affairs (PDWA) officials as Judicial Police Officers with authority and legal competency over the administrative area of the Domestic Violence Law. A similar development was reported in the **Philippines**, where the Philippine National Police issued General Order Number DPL-15-02 for “Strengthening and Restructuring of the Women and Children Protection Centre” to handle the investigation of both VAWC and trafficking in persons cases.

### Capacity building in implementation of laws on VAW

Capacity building in VAW law enforcement has been a focus for some AMS, which have included this in their NAP VAW. **Cambodia** has set an example in this regard, focusing on this area of intervention in the second and third iterations of its NAP VAW, and the decrease in prevalence of VAW is possible evidence of the effectiveness of this approach. In **Indonesia**, the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection (MoWECP) provides capacity building for field officers

in relevant institutions on handling and reporting VAW, knowledge of legal proceedings and provision of legal assistance, provision of relevant health services and social rehabilitation, reintegration and/or repatriation for the victims/survivors and their families. In addition, 1,928 police officers have received gender-responsive training to increase the capacity in handling cases involving women and children.

The Government of **Myanmar** has conducted several training programmes for law enforcement officers. These have included sessions on CEDAW, guidelines to how to conduct pre-trial interviews and ethics for prosecutors. Training on pre-trial interviews of women who experienced trafficking in persons, for example, was aimed at supporting women through the court process from the beginning. Members of the Supreme Court, the Attorney General’s Office, the Myanmar Police Force, the Ministry of Health and the Department of Social Welfare attended an Inter-Agency Workshop on Coordinating Policing and Justice Responses to Gender-Based Violence in 2018, supported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), to discuss coordination challenges and strategies to improve responses to cases of VAWG.<sup>78</sup>

In **Thailand**, the DWF established collaboration with different stakeholders in 2019 to promote the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act, especially with governmental and non-governmental organizations that have signed MOUs and with related networks. Moreover, the Office of the Attorney General has worked on enhancing the capacity of legal enforcement officials through, for example, training on the roles of attorney in protecting women’s rights during the juridical process for criminal acts, conducted with UN Women and the Thailand Institute of Justice.

77. Prakas No. 165, MoWA and MoJ, November 2016. A Prakas is a proclamation or an executive regulation made at the ministerial level.

78. UNODC 2018.

In **Viet Nam**, based on their areas of responsibility and assigned tasks, each ministry and sector implements specific document development and capacity-building activities to implement relevant policies and laws. For example, while MoLISA has organized training courses to foster knowledge and skills for gender equality officers on supporting services for victims/survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking at social work centres, the Ministry of Health has coordinated with other related agencies to organize training courses for health workers to implement Circular 24/2017/TT-BYT on the procedures of receiving, providing medical care and reporting for patients who are victims/survivors of domestic violence at medical examination facilities and hospitals.

## LEARNING, RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAYS FORWARD

- AMS are encouraged to conduct a policy review/analysis to identify any gaps in terms of alignment with international frameworks, to better respond to VAW and advance progress in this National Priority Area for the next five years.
- AMS are encouraged to have dedicated NAPs for the elimination of VAW. One of the concrete advantages of this approach is that a NAP on VAW clearly outlines interventions needed for the revision and/or enactment of legislation directly addressing different forms of violence against women to align with international law and best practice. This can help address the challenge shared by many AMS in the questionnaire for the MTR of Progress on the RPA on EAW (wherein it was reported that legislative reforms take a long time to advocate for), since having it part of a NAP can provide impetus for legislators to contribute to its achievement and include it in their legislative agenda with a concrete time frame.
- Under this Priority Area, AMS are not only enjoined to have national laws penalizing all forms of VAW but also to conduct reviews on related legislation such as family, immigration and child protection law, to ensure that application of these laws works to protect women and children from violence, decreases the risks for VAW and aligns with international law and effective practices.
- AMS are recommended to align religious rulings, norms or laws with the basic principles and rights enshrined in various international laws related to VAW. Learning can be drawn from **Singapore**, for example, where the Administration of Muslim Law Act (AMLA) and the religious rulings (in the form of fatwas) are regularly reviewed to ensure that the religious practices are suited to the changing context and are better able to address the changing needs of the Muslim community. The Government also reviewed its reservation against CEDAW article 11, paragraph 1 (on equal rights related to employment) and has withdrawn it.
- Another learning that can be drawn from a promising practice is the development and use of administrative or ministerial level policies to complement legislation (for example, Cambodia's Prakas assigning ministry officials with the authority over the administrative area of the Domestic Violence Law).
- On top of having legal protections for women against all forms of GBV, AMS can continually build capacities and mechanisms for government's effective enforcement of VAW laws.



## Priority Area #7: Prevention interventions

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PREVENTIVE INTERVENTIONS THAT ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF VAW, INCLUDING GENDER STEREOTYPES, HARMFUL TRADITIONAL AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. THE INTERVENTIONS SHOULD PROMOTE POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL AND NON-VIOLENT MASCULINITIES.

<p><b>Indicator:</b> 7a. Number of AMS that implement preventive measures  <b>Baseline (2015-16):</b> Nine implementations underway; one no information  <b>Mid-term progress (2021):</b> 10 implementations underway</p>	<p><b>Indicator:</b> 7b. Number of measures implemented [Not included in the MTR due to lack of available information.]</p>
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Based on the various reports submitted by the countries to UN CEDAW and UN HRC and their Beijing +25 reporting, all AMS conduct various forms of awareness-raising, training and communication campaigns on VAW prevention. However, interventions that sufficiently fulfil the objectives under this Priority Area are challenging to evaluate. It is important to note that general awareness-raising or public information and education campaigns are not sufficient as VAW preventive measures. Gender transformative change is needed through targeted behaviour- and social norm-change interventions that specifically address the root causes of VAW, correct misconceptions, biases and gender stereotypes and halt harmful traditional and religious practices that disproportionately subject women to various forms of violence. Equally important is the duration of the prevention campaign, as growing evidence on what works in VAW prevention has highlighted the need for multi-year and multi-level interventions. This is another area that requires continuous efforts as prevention work is never really completed; rather, it is an ongoing strategy that should be a key component in any country's EVAW action plan. This underlines the regional recommendation regarding the need to review and enhance indicators in order to measure the quality of prevention measures and identify how each AMS is able to integrate social norm change and gender-transformative strategies that have a greater likelihood of effectively preventing VAWG.

A number of AMS have implemented comprehensive VAW prevention campaigns, which specifically target behaviours associated as risk factors, over a longer period than during special days or the annual 16 Days of Activism to End GBV. For example, **Cambodia** has led the way in the region in going beyond awareness-raising campaigns and piloting various behaviour-change programmes and approaches. The 'Good Men' campaign, implemented by MoWA, is a five-year national campaign to raise awareness on positive masculinity that involves soldiers and police to promote gender equality and help stop VAWC, using the slogan 'Good men give value to women.' 'Healthy and Happy Relations' targets young people, using the [Partners for Prevention \(P4P\)](#) methodology which focuses on primary prevention

through community-based interventions with men and boys engagement; the Positive Parenting Strategy and tools were adopted in eight provinces; the Commune Alcohol Notification System was piloted targeting alcohol abuse and violence against women; and the 'Why Stop' Campaign targets sexual harassment. Further, social norm change has been included in training on minimum service standards for state and non-state service providers.

A similar example of empowering the population as change-makers comes from **Indonesia**, which launched programmes to empower youth in the fight against violence and gender-biased mindsets. An example is the 'One Student Saves One Family' campaign, which aims to empower youth to advocate family resilience and empowerment. In **Lao PDR**, various sectors of the Government partnered with development agencies and mass organizations to produce a documentary on the prevention of VAWC. In 2014, the Ministry of Education and Sports and UN Women jointly produced a music video with famous vocal artists to encourage the youth to speak up on VAW.

On stopping harmful practices, **Indonesia** has also taken the necessary first strides towards changing social norms, with the Ministry of Religious Affairs and other relevant ministries conducting research on FGM and early marriage to understand the risk factors surrounding the issues and design prevention measures. With a population composed of 49 ethnic groups, the Government of **Lao PDR** has prioritized discouraging negative attitudes and beliefs and eradicating existing stereotypes and negative cultural practices that lead to VAWC through popular education (e.g., illustrative pamphlets and short plays in ethnic languages) and reaching out to different communities, for instance, the Akha ethnic group in northern Laos.

Some countries, such as **Malaysia** and **Singapore**, take a slightly different approach to prevention, which involves building institutional capacities (i.e., media, education, civil society) in delivering campaigns and VAW prevention messages. For example, the Government of **Malaysia** provides an annual allocation to women's



NGOs and state and parliamentary councils of women for the development of women and families to carry out their programmes and activities such as legal literacy, campaigns on VAW, skills trainings and capacity-building as well as gender-sensitization at grass-roots level. Another notable prevention mechanism is through the education system, where human rights messages are integrated in the formal curriculum and co-curricular activities include campaigns against bullying, harassment and violence in the school or the community.

In **Singapore**, the Break the Silence campaign promotes awareness of family violence and encourages bystanders and victims/survivors of violence to seek help if they encounter abuse. As part of the country's whole-of-community approach to combat family violence, the Ministry of Social and Family Development also works closely with key community partners to strengthen the awareness and detection of family violence. The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) supports programmes that further positive social values. These have included themes related to behavioural risk factors (e.g., early marriage) and gender biases (e.g., gender stereotyping regarding the professions of women and men). Some examples are 'Marry Me', a light-hearted drama that discussed the reasons women chose to marry late or stay single through the stories of three single women; 'Achamillai Achamillai' (Fearless), a talk-show that features local women who have excelled in various fields such as sports, business and the media despite challenges in their personal and work life; and 'Beyond Limits: 8 Singaporean Women', an info-educational series highlighting exceptional Singaporean women who blazed a trail to the top of their traditionally male-dominated fields.

In the **Philippines**, an organization of male advocates known as Men Opposed to Violence Everywhere (MOVE) was established to institutionalize male involvement in the gender and development programmes of the Government, government agencies, local government units (LGUs) and other sectors. The organization aims to expand its advocacy by inviting more men to join, support the creation of more chapters and conduct research on the social impact of VAW. There are 56 MOVE chapters nationwide. The IACVAWC also issued a Council resolution to support MOVE chapters and the creation of similar male organizations espousing the same values and principles in national government agencies, LGUs and other government instrumentalities.

In **Thailand**, a project was conducted to study the elimination of gender stereotypes and sexist language in educational materials at primary and secondary levels in the region, led by ACWC Thailand. This resulted in the collection of best practices of AMS in the elimination of gender stereotypes and sexist languages. The next step is to draft a guideline to integrate a gender perspective into education. ACWC Thailand, together with government agencies, international organizations and CSOs, also produced a campaign to eliminate violence and combat human trafficking in ASEAN countries. In addition, recognizing the gender biases that are also risk factors for VAW, Thailand's Gender and Development Research Institute (GDRI) implemented comprehensive interventions that transform attitudes and social values as well as create new cultural awareness that emphasizes equal human dignity for all women and men. Examples include the 'Media Development for Gender Equality' project, which produces mixed video and animation to disseminate awareness and information on gender equality laws and various trainings on human rights, the rights of persons with disabilities and of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning and intersex (LGBTQI) people, and on gender equality and legal assistance for those who are discriminated against. Thailand also promoted the social values of non-violence, gender equality and refusal to accept VAW through social communication in 2017 under the campaign 'Time to Pueak'. This has been complemented by more recent prevention measures of the Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development (DWF) such as 'New Gen Say No' academic seminars; developing and reviewing prevention interventions implemented as part of public-private partnerships (i.e., through MOUs) with various VAW-related networks; and rolling out a family school curriculum in four provinces, in eight regional learning centers of Women and Family Development Learning Centers (WFDLCN).

A similar promising practice recognizing that national media can be used for promoting positive changes in gender norms and behaviours was reported in **Cambodia**, where the MoWA and Ministry of Information formed a media advisory group to improve media responses to VAW, and a Prakas on the Media Code of Conduct for reporting VAW along with workshops was developed with support from the Club of Cambodian Journalists. This is a critical strategy to correct victim-blaming language on a national scale, with far-reaching and sustainable effects for transforming long-held gender biases that portray women as to blame for experiencing sexual violence or other forms of VAW.



### Box 6: Addressing sexual harassment in the workplaces and public spaces

On the issue of preventing sexual harassment, **Thailand** provided an example where measures/guidelines were prepared in accordance with a Cabinet Resolution on 16 June 2015, so that all personnel, regardless of their status, are treated with respect and dignity and are free from sexual harassment or threats in the workplace. More recently, another campaign targeting risk factors for sexual violence was implemented annually from 2016 through to 2018. Moreover, in November 2019, the ‘Safe Cities for Women’ network launched the ‘First Pin: Pak Mud Jud Pheuk’ (pinpointing spots to beware of sexual harassment) campaign seeking people’s help in identifying areas in Bangkok where women could be at risk of sexual harassment, and for the authorities to implement problem-solving measures. The Government also organized campaign activities with the theme of ‘Happy Songkran, No Alcohol, No Molestation/Sexual Threats’.

In **Brunei Darussalam**, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has included in its pre-marriage courses topics on physical or mental spousal abuse. The family advisory section provides advice, guidance and counselling. In post-marriage courses, representatives from the Royal Brunei Police Force are invited to talk on reporting mechanism of VAW in Syariah Court according to the Islamic Family Law. These initiatives were carried out from 2014 to 2018. Moreover, the Ministry of Education has integrated *Melayu Islam Beraja*<sup>79</sup> in the curriculum, where students are taught good values such as compassion, respect for each other and anti-bullying.

### Box 7: Engaging men in gender transformative strategies and as allies for GBV prevention

In **Viet Nam**, during the 2016-2019 period, nearly 50,000 activities were implemented in response to national campaigns on violence against women such as “National Action Month on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control” and “16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence”, establishing communication campaigns. The campaigns attracted tens of millions of participants and showed consensus and the strong commitment of agencies and organizations to join hands in the fight to eliminate gender inequalities and violence against and abuse of women and children. The initial communication activities primarily aimed to mobilize men and young people to be pioneers

**Indonesia** has implemented a variety of prevention interventions, including: Establishing family development sessions aimed at increasing good practices and encouraging behavioural change among conditional cash transfer beneficiaries of the Hope Family Programme/*Program Keluarga Harapan* (PKH); conducting advocacy programmes and campaigns to engage men aged 15 to 30 in the prevention of domestic violence and empower them to support victims/survivors of violence in reporting cases of domestic abuse; conducting pre-marital advocacy courses on domestic violence for couples; and collaborating with universities around the country in promoting a ‘Gender-responsive Campus’ and engaging academics, as well as youth, in raising awareness about gender equality on campuses and in public spheres. To date, the programme has been conducted in 30 campuses. In addition, campaigns against early forced child marriages include Local Religious Offices refusing to register marriages involving children.

In **Myanmar**, the DSW and the Thingaha Organization jointly conducted positive masculinity/CEDAW gender training for government staff and produced information, education and communication on the need for men to change their behaviour on stereotyping and on discriminating against women and girls, the acceptance of LGBT persons and marginalized groups in Tanintharyi Division. The Gender Equality Network (GEN) conducts campaigns against gender stereotypes and victim blaming through concerts, plays, short awareness documentary films, as well as through social media campaigns (changing Facebook frames and holding quizzes on GBV) during the 16 Days and throughout the year.

to speak up and take action, as part of the solution to eliminate the gender stereotypes that are the root cause of gender-based violence. The initiatives took the following forms: ‘Men making homes’; ‘Responsible Fathers’ competitions; morning coffee meetings; and media conferences on men’s roles, responsibilities and participation in gender equality and EVAW. One of the most prominent communication initiatives aiming to support men’s behaviour change was the Men’s Advocacy Club, which was implemented in Da Nang and Ho Chi Minh City. This initiative has empowered men to initiate their own efforts to prevent VAWG in their communities. In particular, the Viet Nam Women’s Union (Center for Women and Development) has successfully studied and applied the Australian model<sup>80</sup> on mobilizing the participation of male leaders and young men to be pioneers in promoting gender equality and combating gender-based violence.

79. *Melayu Islam Beraja* or Malay Islamic Monarchy is the national philosophy of Brunei Darussalam.

80. Editor’s note: The White Ribbon Campaign in Australia is a national-movement engaging men in the fight to end domestic violence against women.

## LEARNING, RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAYS FORWARD

- AMS can accelerate progress in significantly reducing VAW prevalence by increasing focus and resources towards primary prevention programming or preventing VAW before it occurs. While immediate and long-term responses to VAW are necessary and important to create a supportive environment for victims/survivors, primary prevention interventions—such as social norm change programmes, community mobilization, engagement with men and boys in programmes, and relationship-level interventions—should be implemented in order to lead to measurable reduction of prevalence rates along with a decrease in risk factors (e.g., social acceptability of VAW and justifications for VAW, alcohol abuse, unequal power and decision-making between spouses, etc.).
- VAW prevention programming, especially primary prevention that seeks to prevent violence before it occurs, has seen a growing momentum driven by an increase in donor interest and in the available evidence that evaluates interventions that measurably reduce VAW prevalence in the long term.<sup>81</sup> AMS need to capitalize on the existing knowledge work around VAW prevention, using evidence of what works to design programmes that target gender transformative change around social norms and behaviours. This includes training more government staff on risk factors for VAW based on studies, how these can be integrated when designing VAW prevention programmes, and how to conduct rigorous evaluations of these programmes. This can help accelerate the measurable reduction of VAW prevalence rates in the region.
- One key take-away from the global reports and evidence on what works in VAW prevention is that ‘awareness-raising’ or ‘information campaigns’ are not the same as behaviour-change interventions. They may be part of behaviour-change, but they are not sufficient by themselves because in order to prevent VAW effectively, transformative changes in gender relations, attitudes and social norms are needed to address gender biases that are the root cause of such violence. In relation to this, the growing evidence previously cited is that increasing gender sensitivity or conducting orientations on gender equality and gender mainstreaming are not sufficient on their own to prevent VAW. These need to be strategically targeted towards changing views/attitudes, behaviours and social norms that condone any form of VAW. In each of the AMS, harmful gender unequal views related to VAW perpetration and experience need to be identified (as these are very much context-specific), so that the prevention interventions and activities can be designed to address them.
- Compiling global evidence that is relevant to each AMS’ country context is very useful in designing programmes that focus on preventing VAW before it occurs. On top of the need for multi-sectoral engagement, key characteristics of effective VAW prevention programmes that have been impact evaluated include: (i) having multi-level approaches targeting risk factors at individual, relational, community and institutional/societal levels; (ii) aiming for gender transformative changes based on theories of gender and power and addressing toxic masculinities and harmful social norms; (iii) having long-term programming with dedicated staff and multi-year, substantive and flexible funding; and (iv) being context specific with culturally sensitive interventions. Examples of VAW prevention interventions and evidence of their effectiveness are compiled in the aforementioned WHO and UN Women [RESPECT Framework](#).<sup>82</sup>
- It would be helpful to include a section on prevention in VAW NAPs with key identified national approaches in line with international practice and guidelines and recognizing the specificity of marginalized groups, such as women migrant workers, women with disabilities, etc. So far, initiatives have been uncoordinated and scattered. Moreover, it is important to highlight that prevention interventions are often the same as communication campaigns also tracked under Priority Area 2, so AMS should not count communication campaigns under this Priority Area.
- Given that there continues to be a growing global knowledge pool on what works to effectively prevent VAW, AMS need to integrate capacity building into VAW prevention programme development for government and non-governmental actors in their countries, using the promising practices and evidence that are continually being generated up to the present.
- Collective progress in this area of both using and generating data on what works will multiply ASEAN’s contribution to the global pool of evidence-based VAW prevention, while accelerating the progress on the ASEAN RPA on EAW by reducing VAW prevalence rates with more effective interventions to prevent such violence before it occurs.

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81. Notable examples include: Arango et al. 2014; Kerr-Wilson et al. 2020; and other publications and evidence briefs from the ongoing What Works to prevent Violence Against Women and Girls global programme: <https://www.whatworks.co.za/resources/evidence-reviews>.

82. WHO and UN Women 2019, pp. 12-13.

## Priority Area #8: Guidelines and standard operating procedures (SOPs)

DEVELOP NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SOPs ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS ON GENDER-SENSITIVE HANDLING OF VAW CASES, INCLUDING GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

**Indicator:** SOP guidelines developed.  
**Baseline (2015-16):** Six partially implemented; four no information

**Mid-term progress (2021):** 10 implementations underway

At baseline, prior to the RPA on EVAW, six AMS had some guidelines or performance standards related to the VAW response in place. For example, the Government of **Indonesia** has adopted minimum service standards on integrated services for women and children victims/survivors of violence. Similarly, **Singapore** has standard guidelines that provide a common understanding among agencies on how to handle family violence cases and spells out the protocol, procedures, roles and responsibilities of each agency. As an active member of the ASEAN ACW, **Brunei Darussalam** led the formulation of the “Gender Sensitive Guideline for Handling Women Victims of Trafficking in Persons” when it hosted a workshop in 2014, and this Guideline was then adopted at the 10th ACWC Meeting in 2015. In an effort to strengthen local governance mechanisms, the **Philippines** developed a Barangay VAW Desk Handbook in 2014 to provide barangay (village) officials with a step-by-step guide to establishing and maintaining a Violence

against Women (VAW) Desk. It also contains information on how to efficiently and effectively address VAW cases and outlines the roles and responsibilities of barangay officials as well as VAW desk officers. More recently, the country formulated Guidelines on the Establishment of VAWC Desks in Public and Private Hospitals.

At mid-term, all the AMS have developed various guidelines for VAW service provision. However, similar to the previous two National Priority Areas, this area requires ongoing work as there is still a need for AMS to translate guidelines into practical protocols and SOPs to support VAW service providers to continually improve the delivery of essential services to victims/survivors of VAW, which encompass health, policing, justice and social services.<sup>83</sup>

### Box 8: Multi-sectoral and comprehensive set of guidelines and SOPs for VAW services

Early in the implementation of the RPA on EVAW, **Cambodia** led progress in this area and made significant gains in combatting VAW through concrete guidelines and standards for service providers. Notable examples include the “**2017 Media Code of Conduct for Reporting on Violence against Women**” and the “**2016 Referral Guidelines for Women and Girl Survivors of Gender-Based Violence**”. A notable achievement, apart from developing the guidelines, is that implementation mechanisms were developed for the Referral Guidelines and training on the guidelines was conducted in seven provinces. For service providers, the “**Minimum Standards for Basic Counselling for Women and Girls Survivors of GBV**” has been completed and is being incorporated into the new curriculum at the Royal Police Academy, along with other gender-sensitive

approaches for supporting victims/survivors of VAW. In addition, the “**Minimum Standards for Essential Services for Women and Girl Survivors of GBV**” was drafted in 2017 under NAPVAW II and covers 10 standards, including mediation as part of Legal Protection Services. Mediation Guidelines were subsequently developed, and the “**Book for Judicial Professionals and Mediations Guidelines for Responding to Violence against Women**” has been reviewed to strengthen the legal responses to VAW. Other guidelines developed include the “**National Guideline on Managing Violence against Women and Children in the Health System**” and the “**Clinical Handbook for Responding to Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence**”. Lastly, as part of the country’s 3rd NAP-VAW, three other key guidelines are planned: (i) “Best Practice for Mediation as a Response to VAW”; (ii) “Case Management with Survivors of Gender-Based Violence: A Guide for Service Providers”; and (iii) “Minimum Standards for Essential Services”.

83. As mentioned in the Regional Recommendations, the UN Essential Services Package (ESP) for Women and Girls Subjected to Violence provides guidance on a coordinated set of essential and quality multi-sectoral services across health, policing, justice and social services (including shelter services). See UN Women et al. 2015.

In **Brunei Darussalam**, the Ministry of Health has set guidelines for the management of the Mental Health Helpline 145, and the operators manning the helpline are trained to handle sensitive and confidential calls from the public. Likewise, medical social work officers are posted in each of the four districts of the country to handle gender-sensitive VAW cases following a set of SOPs. In addition, counsellors, therapists and psychologists have access to the medical history/archives for referral of cases and are trained to handle victims/survivors of VAW cases.

Recent progress in this area was reported in 2019 in **Thailand**, where guidelines were developed for staff, volunteers and lawyer networks to help victims/survivors of violence, including initial assistance, case management, group processes, self and group remedies, and writing a petition for justice. More recently, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) and the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) are developing a localized SOP on VAW prevention and protection especially for migrant women, at the regional and national levels. This will lead initially to setting up an EAW committee/task force comprising government and civil society stakeholders in Mae Sot, Tak Province. In the fiscal year 2019, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) established a 'One-Stop Service Centre' located within the Social Assistance Centre, which included all of the Ministry's services including a complaint filing service for domestic violence as another way to access services and assistance. There is a separate confidential consultation room, and the personal information of the users will only be disclosed to the multidisciplinary persons involved in providing assistance.

Recently, **Indonesia** also reported significant gains in the area by producing the "Guidebook for Development of Community Health Centres in Managing the Issue of VAW and Children" and "Service Guidelines and Reference Cases for VAW and Children for Health Officers". They are also conducting capacity building such as case management training, which includes tips for health workers (doctors, midwives, nurses) in primary health-care centres and hospitals as well as the "Curriculum and Training of Trainer (ToT) Module for Facilitators".

### Box 9: Accelerating progress on developing SOPs and protocols, including for integrating VAW in the government COVID-19 pandemic response

In **Myanmar**, the Police Force is working with UNODC with the aim of improving women's and girls' access to justice and strengthening the role of the police in providing gender-responsive services to women. In the last two years, the country has made significant progress in developing SOPs, including the Ministry of Health and Sports (MoHS) "Guideline on Health Care Response for Gender Based Violence (GBV) Survivors" (April 2018); the DSW "Case Management SOP for Child Protection and GBV Survivors", with technical support from UNICEF and UNFPA (December 2019); the "National Safe House Guideline", with the support of UNFPA (mid-2020); and a Psychosocial Support (PSS) Curriculum for DSW case managers to ensure standards for quality PSS provision, with support from UNFPA and UNICEF (2020). Lastly, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MoSWRR), with the support of UNFPA, plans to develop a GBV referral pathway in all states/regions in 2021.

In **Indonesia**, victims/survivors of VAW and human trafficking will be better supported by frontline service providers, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, as a result of the Protocol for Handling Cases for Gender-based Violence and Human Trafficking of Indonesian Women Migrant Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic, newly adopted by the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection and developed with the support of the UN Women and ILO Safe and Fair programme. The Protocol aims to provide practical guidelines for service providers to better support women, including women migrant workers, who have experienced violence during the pandemic.

A similar protocol is being developed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in **Viet Nam**.



In **Viet Nam**, as the focal point for social services for victims/survivors of VAW, MoLISA has developed three guidelines for framework procedures with support from international organizations: (i) A guideline for setting up procedures for providing social service for victims/survivors; (ii) a guideline for minimum standards of shelter; and (iii) a guideline for operating a hotline to support victims/survivors, which serves as a basis for other sectors to develop a service delivery process in their own sectors. The guidelines have been developed based on the UN Essential Services Package and are being currently piloted in the Anh Duong (Sunshine) House Shelter in Quang Ninh for victim/survivors of VAW and some other facilities operated by MoLISA.<sup>84</sup>

## LEARNING, RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAYS FORWARD

- It is recommended that AMS review the global evidence from studies conducted in recent years on responses to VAW and interventions that adequately and appropriately support victims/survivors.<sup>85</sup> They can then adapt the ones most relevant to their respective country contexts and their analysis of VAW prevalence and issues.
- AMS can explore developing roadmaps for the implementation of national guidelines on VAW service provision. An example is the Road Map to implement the Hanoi Declaration on Social Work developed by the **Viet Nam** Government with support from UNICEF and technical inputs from UN Women, UNFPA and partners.<sup>86</sup>
- It is also recommended that AMS accelerate progress towards developing standards and guidelines to increase effectiveness and women's access to counselling, therapy and psychological support, given that there is a significant number of effective practices that can be modelled and adapted by each country.
- Further research can be helpful in determining the areas where VAW service provision needs strengthening in each AMS. Using a women-centred approach, as highlighted in the UN Essential Services Package, it is critical to assess how responsive the VAW services are to the needs of women victims/survivors of violence. For example, AMS can conduct assessments of VAW services based on the standards in the Package or conduct research on how to optimize the impact of shelters and evaluate psycho-therapeutic interventions.
- Based on the results of a VAW service assessment, additional guidelines and SOPs can be developed according to international best practice in VAW service provision such as those described in the [UN Essential Services Package](#).<sup>87</sup>

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84. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam 2021a.

85. See, for example, Jewkes et al. 2015.

86. ASEAN 2020.

87. UN Women et al. 2015.



# ANNEXES

## Annex 1. Information provided by ASEAN Member States on progress and challenges regarding the National Level Priority Areas (i.e., RPA Priority Areas #4-#8)

This annex provides consolidated information on AMS' progress on the RPA on EAW organized by country, as reported in their respective Universal Periodic Review (UPR),<sup>88</sup> reports to UN CEDAW, reviews on BPfA implementation and other international and national reports.

### Brunei Darussalam

Brunei Darussalam has signed the ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Elimination of Violence against Children.<sup>89</sup> Women are given equal opportunities in, among other areas, education, training, health care, employment, ownership of assets, benefits and citizenship.<sup>90</sup>

At the ASEAN level, the country participates in the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion on the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC). Since 2010, the Government has appointed three ACWC Representatives on Women. Additionally, it also participates in the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW). It hosted the 19th ACWC Meeting, the 6th ACW-ACWC Consultation, the 18th ACW and the 11th ACW+3, in the third quarter of 2019, which aimed to further advance regional collaboration on the rights of women and children.<sup>91</sup>

Brunei Darussalam has made progress on the following National Level Priority Areas (i.e., RPA Priority Areas #4-#8 in the RPA on EAW).

#### 4. DEVELOP AND/OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ON EAW THROUGH MULTI-SECTORAL AND INTER-AGENCY MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THESE PLANS.

**Indicators: (1) Number of countries with a NAP on EAW (2) Number of countries with national multi-sectoral and interagency coordination (3) Number of countries with sub-national mechanisms with adequate resources**

- 4.1. Although Brunei Darussalam has no specific NAP on VAW,<sup>92</sup> strategic objectives regarding this issue are incorporated into the National Plan of Action on Family Institution and Women. The implementation of this NAP is monitored and coordinated by the Special Committee on Family Institution and Women, which reports to the ministerial-level National Council on Social Issues (MKIS). The Plan of Action has identified key performance indicators to measure its implementation progress as well as its effectiveness.<sup>93</sup>
- 4.2. The participation of CSOs in government-led activities is ensured. Community grass-roots organizations are tapped through the Majlis Wanita (Women's Council), which has extensive membership nationwide; capacity-building of stakeholders in multi-level structures is carried out; and the inclusion of more vulnerable women such as those with disabilities in national prevention plans is ensured.
- 4.3. There is a centrally based women's machinery, the Department of Community Development (DCD) under the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (MCYS), which is mandated to undertake and coordinate programmes and activities specific to women's affairs. With a population of less than half a million, there is less need to have sub-national mechanisms THAN in other AMS with larger populations.<sup>94</sup>

88. In their UPR, under the auspices of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UN HRC), States declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations.

89. ASEAN 2016a.

90. UN HRC 2019.

91. Ibid.

92. WHO 2014.

93. ASEAN 2016a.

94. ASEAN 2016a.

- 4.4. The Special Committee on Family Institution and Women was established in order to better coordinate national efforts towards promoting and protecting the rights of women and the family, and it includes the Permanent Secretaries of the Ministries of Finance, Education, Health and Religious Affairs, the Royal Brunei Darussalam Police Commissioner, the Director-General of the Civil Service and representatives from the Attorney General's Chambers (AGC), the Shari'ah Court and the Council of Women of Brunei Darussalam (CWBD). This inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral committee implements the Action Plan on Women, which outlines measures to promote and protect the right of women as well as to promote gender equity.<sup>95</sup>

## 5. COLLECT VAW PREVALENCE DATA IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

**Indicator: Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW**

- 5.1 Official national statistics on the prevalence of VAW are not available.<sup>96</sup>
- 5.2 The Royal Brunei Police Force (RBPF) maintains registers of cases of wife abuse (2007-2009), domestic violence, including maid abuse (2005-2009) and sexual offences (2005-2008), and the MOH, through its hospitals, maintains registers of women with regard to health issues and cases of violence against women, including women with disabilities.<sup>97</sup> Moreover, the Disease Control Division (DCD) under the Ministry of Health also maintains registers on cases relating to VAW; wife abuse, protection and rehabilitation; and elderly women who have been neglected.

## 6. DEVELOP AND ADOPT GENDER-RESPONSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO PENALIZE ALL FORMS OF VAW IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH CEDAW.

**Indicator: Number of new/strengthened laws/regulations on EVAW**

- 6.1. Violence against women is enforced through various pieces of legislation including the Islamic Family Law Act (Cap 217), Married Women Act (Cap 190), Women and Girls Protections Act (Cap 120) and Penal Code (Cap 22).<sup>98</sup> Both the Islamic Family Law Act (Cap 217) and the Married Women Act were amended in 2014 to include provisions on domestic violence, and both provide for protection orders and expedited orders that allow for removal of the perpetrator from the home.<sup>99</sup> The domestic violence legislation covers physical, emotional and economical abuse within the family and from former partners. Victims/survivors are entitled to compensation in cases of domestic abuse under the Islamic Family Law Act (sect. 60E).<sup>100</sup>
- 6.2. Brunei Darussalam responded to a concern of UN CEDAW, expressed in its 2014 Concluding Observations, regarding the Syariah Penal Code Order (SPCO) 2013<sup>101</sup> when it provided additional information in 2017, stating that the law was “non-discriminatory in nature” and that it is “necessary to strengthen the current common law relating to crimes”. Further it highlighted that, “for many years now, the SPCO and the common law system have been running in parallel and this is unique to Brunei Darussalam”.<sup>102</sup>
- 6.3. Also, according to the same country report, the Islamic Family Law Act has incorporated provisions that protect women and children in the country and does not in any way dilute or minimize its obligations under the Convention, and efforts to strengthen the protection of women and children are an ongoing process.<sup>103</sup> Moreover, the Women and Child Abuse Investigation Unit (WCAIU) of the RBPF, staffed totally by women officers, was established in April 1997 for the purpose of tackling any form of VAWC.
- 6.4. Under the Penal Code, rape is a criminal offence and is punishable by up to 30 years of imprisonment and a whipping (sect. 376). The law is based on lack of consent and requires proof of penetration (sect. 375). However, the legal definition of rape does not include marital rape and a wife cannot file a complaint (sect. 375). The law stipulates that sexual intercourse between spouses is not considered rape (sect. 375).<sup>104</sup>

95. Ibid.

96. UN Women 2016; OECD 2014.

97. UN CEDAW 2014a.

98. ASEAN 2016a.

99. OECD 2019.

100. OECD 2014.

101. UN CEDAW's Concluding Observations noted grave concern regarding the Sharia Penal Code Order 2013, which imposes the death penalty by stoning for several “crimes”—in particular adultery and extramarital relations (zina). While noting that the same penalties apply to women and men, the Committee was seriously concerned that women would be disproportionately affected by punishment for “crimes” involving sex and at a higher risk of being convicted of adultery and extramarital relations. In particular, it noted with concern that women would face greater difficulty in collecting the evidence necessary to prove rape, meaning that the fear of being accused of zina is likely to prevent women from reporting rape (UN CEDAW 2014a).

102. UN CEDAW 2017a, p. 2.

103. Ibid., p. 3.

104. OECD 2014.



- 6.5. The Penal Code provides legal protection from sexual harassment and includes criminal penalties: imprisonment for up to three years and a fine (sect. 509).<sup>105</sup> Sexual harassment is believed to be prevalent in the workplace, but victims/survivors seldom report cases.<sup>106</sup>
- 6.6. There is no criminal law addressing female genital mutilation (FGM) as a harmful practice. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC) expressed concern in 2016 about the prevalence of FGM.<sup>107</sup> This is admitted in Brunei Darussalam as female circumcision, with the Ministry of Religious Affairs reportedly recognizing it as a religious rite.<sup>108</sup>
- 6.7. On 10 August 2015, Brunei Darussalam withdrew its reservations to paragraphs 1 and 2 of article 20 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which says that children and young people have the right to special protection and help if they cannot live with their family as well as paragraph (a) of article 21 pertaining to the law on adoption.<sup>109</sup>
- 6.8. Additionally, since the adoption of the RPA, Brunei Darussalam has shown further commitment to ensuring the promotion and protection of human rights; for example, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was ratified on 11 April 2016. Moreover, the country acceded to an additional Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict on 17 May 2016. It also became a signatory to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment on 22 September 2015.<sup>110</sup>

## 7. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PREVENTIVE INTERVENTIONS THAT ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF VAW, INCLUDING GENDER STEREOTYPES, HARMFUL TRADITIONAL AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. THE INTERVENTIONS SHOULD PROMOTE POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL AND NON-VIOLENT MASCULINITIES.<sup>111</sup>

### Indicator: (1) Number of AMS that implement preventive measures (2) Number of measures implemented

- 7.1. The Government has put in place a number of mechanisms from prevention to protection to address the issue of domestic violence. An example is the requirement that every Muslim couple that intends to get married undergo pre-marital training to adequately prepare them for married life and its responsibilities. Further, the frequent broadcasting on national television of educational video clips on the issue of domestic violence increases public awareness.<sup>112</sup>
- 7.2. Counselling is also offered to couples with marital problems to encourage reconciliation. Nonetheless, it is reported that judicial staff would not advise wives to reconcile with an abusive spouse and the Shari'ah Courts include abuse as a ground for divorce.<sup>113</sup> Therefore, in the event that a marriage becomes irreconcilable the parties are encouraged to reach a voluntary amicable divorce settlement and not to continue to impose any hardship on the woman.<sup>114</sup>
- 7.3. The country also reported that there are school and college programmes to prevent sexual violence.<sup>115</sup> In 2008, two national level symposiums were organized to specifically address domestic violence with the theme 'Don't be silent, take action'.<sup>116</sup> Moreover, annual awareness campaigns are initiated to educate and raise the public's awareness of VAWC. Awareness campaigns and training for personnel, in particular frontline personnel involved in domestic violence issues, are frequently conducted by government agencies and NGOs. These include medical officers, law enforcement officers, teachers and social workers. Road shows and talks on domestic violence and child abuse are also carried out by relevant agencies throughout the year and also as annual programmes.
- 7.4. The Ministry of Religious Affairs has included in its pre-marriage courses topics on spousal abuse (physical or mental). The family advisory section provides advice, guidance and counselling. In post-marriage courses, representatives from the RBPF are invited to talk on reporting mechanisms for VAW in Shari'ah Court according to the Islamic Family Law. These initiatives were carried out from 2014 to 2018. Moreover, the Ministry of Education has integrated Melayu Islam Beraja<sup>117</sup> into the curriculum, where students are taught good values such as compassion, respect for each other and anti-bullying.<sup>118</sup>

105. Ibid.

106. U.S. Department of State 2016.

107. OHCHR 2016.

108. U.S. Department of State 2016.

109. UN HCR 2019.

110. OHCHR n.d.

111. For all ASM, in cases where information on interventions on VAW prevention were not available, various communication campaigns and awareness-raising activities were presented instead.

112. UN HCR 2019, p. 9.

113. U.S. Department of State 2016.

114. UN HCR 2019.

115. WHO 2014.

116. UN Women 2016.

117. Melayu Islam Beraja or Malay Islamic Monarchy is the national philosophy of Brunei Darussalam.

118. Government of Brunei Darussalam 2021.



## 8. DEVELOP NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SOPS ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS ON GENDER-SENSITIVE HANDLING OF VAW CASES, INCLUDING GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

### Indicator: SOP guidelines developed<sup>119</sup>

- 8.1. A police unit to deal with reports of domestic abuse, composed of female officers, has been put in place.<sup>120</sup> However, cases of domestic violence are under-reported to the authorities due to stigma, reluctance, shame and fear for personal safety by the victims/survivors.<sup>121</sup>
- 8.2. The Married Women Act provides married/unmarried women with the same capacity as married/unmarried men to be sued and to sue (sect. 6). A woman's testimony carries the same evidentiary weight in court as a man's in all types of court cases such as civil, criminal, family court and tribunal (sect. 6). The Shari'ah Courts can hear any proceeding or any part in camera if the Court is satisfied that there is sufficient reason to do so or ask for the anonymity of the witness (Syariah Courts Act, sect. 7A).<sup>122</sup>
- 8.3. For the past two decades, Brunei Darussalam has been operating a 24-hour hotline for both VAW and violence against children (VAC) under the Community Development Department. The setting up of the 141 Welfare Helpline provides an avenue for reporting, lodging complaints, airing grievances and receiving counselling over the telephone.
- 8.4. As an active member of the ASEAN ACW, Brunei Darussalam led the formulation of the "Gender Sensitive Guideline for Handling Women Victims of Trafficking in Persons" when it hosted a workshop in 2014, and this Guideline was then adopted at the 10th ACWC Meeting in 2015.<sup>123</sup>

### Challenges

- (1) The Government acknowledges the challenges it faces, particularly the need for more sex-disaggregated data and for greater capacity building, gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting, policy analysis and advocacy.<sup>124</sup>
- (2) There is a need to further educate women on their rights with regard to domestic violence, especially on accessibility to counselling and other forms of assistance and to enhance public awareness about the unacceptability of such acts.
- (3) Participants at the recent Mid-Term Review of the ASEAN RPA on EVAW cited that key challenges also include:
  - lack of prioritization of developing the NAP on EVAW
  - lack of human resources to look into VAW issues
  - lack of national research on women, specifically on VAW
  - lack of awareness among the public on existing support for victims/survivors of VAW (e.g., national mental health helpline 145).<sup>125</sup>

119. For Brunei Darussalam, as well as with many other ASM, there is limited information regarding national guidelines and SOPs developed. In these cases, available information gathered on response and coordination mechanisms for service provision were outlined and highlighted instead.

120. U.S. Department of State 2016.

121. Musawah 2014.

122. OECD 2014.

123. UN HCR 2019.

124. UN CEDAW 2014.

125. The National Mental Health Helpline 145 (Talian Harapan 145) was launched on 12 February 2019 in the wake of increasing reports of suicide between 2016 and 2017. This helpline is a service provided by the Ministry of Health.

## Cambodia

According to the 2015 study of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), violence against women remains prevalent, with one in five ever-partnered women aged 15-64 having experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, and almost 1 in 3 (32 per cent) reporting emotional abuse by an intimate partner in their lifetime.<sup>126</sup> In the period since the adoption of the ASEAN RPA on EVAW in 2016, Cambodia has achieved significant gains in strengthening its normative framework to increase legal protections of women against VAW, while developing mechanisms to improve the implementation of policies and programmes to prevent and respond to VAW nationwide. During this period, the Royal Government of Cambodia also completed the implementation of the Second National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women 2014-2018 (NAPVAW II), which is the country's key policy framework to end VAWG.

Cambodia has made progress on the following National Level Priority Areas (i.e., #4-#8 in the RPA on EVAW).

### 4. DEVELOP AND/OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ON EVAW THROUGH MULTI-SECTORAL AND INTER-AGENCY MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THESE PLANS.

**Indicators: (1) Number of countries with a NAP on EVAW (2) Number of countries with national multi-sectoral and interagency coordination (3) Number of countries with sub-national mechanisms with adequate resources**

- 4.1. The second National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women (NAPPVAW II) (2014-2018) identified three priorities: (i) domestic violence, (ii) rape and sexual violence and (iii) violence against women with increased risk. It also had five strategic areas: (i) primary prevention; (ii) legal protection and multi-sectoral services; (iii) formulating and implementing policies and laws; (iv) capacity building; and (v) review, monitoring and evaluation.
- 4.2. A Technical Working Group-Gender and Gender-Based Violence sub-group (TWGG-GBV) was established at the national level to lead the implementation and monitor the achievements of NAPVAW II.<sup>127</sup> TWGG-GBV members committed a total of US\$3.7 million for implementation of the plan in 2017.<sup>128</sup> Further, the draft of "Preventing Violence against Women and Girls: A Strategy to Implement Prevention Priorities in the NAPVAW" was developed in 2017 to enhance coordination efforts.<sup>129</sup> At the sub-national level, improving coordinated services includes the establishment of working groups on VAW in eight provinces. These multi-sectoral networks bring police, health-care providers, local authorities, legal and social service providers together to address gaps in services in order to improve referral pathways and the response to VAW. The principle is to build the capacity of all key actors so that 'every door is the right door'.
- 4.3. In addition to the NAP and implementation strategy, multi-sectoral Coordinated Response Mechanism (CRM) networks, involving relevant government departments and officials (health, police, justice, social affairs and local authorities), were established in eight provinces in 2016 and 2017 to facilitate effective, efficient and timely responses for GBV victims/survivors.<sup>130</sup>
- 4.4. In October 2020, Cambodia adopted the Third National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women (NAPVAW III 2019-2023), which consists of four strategies (prevention; legal protection and coordinated services; formulation and implementation of laws and policies; and monitoring and evaluation), 12 sub-strategies, 88 expected outcomes and 131 indicators. It is a road map for ministries, institutions, operators at national and subnational levels, CSOs, the private sector, social media and all stakeholders to implement the prevention work and respond to and address VAWG more effectively and efficiently in order to reduce its incidence in a bid to promote equity and an inclusive society in line with the motto of the SDGs, "Leave no one behind". NAPVAW III was developed through a unique participatory process, with multiple consultations at sub-national level and a number of consultations at national level. This consultative process engaged a wide variety of actors, including line ministries, NGOs, women victim/survivors and CSOs working with groups that are especially vulnerable to violence, such as women with disabilities, women working in the entertainment sector, women engaged in prostitution, women workers in the garment industry and women migrant workers. The diversity of the groups involved in the consultation is reflected in the policy document's recognition that women and girls face particular vulnerability to violence and therefore need targeted interventions. NAPVAW III builds on the lessons learnt from NAPVAW II, which was implemented and monitored through a high-level technical working group, led by the MoWA, which was established in 2012 and includes line ministries, CSOs and international development partners.
- 4.5. Cambodia has also been implementing the second National Plan of Action for Counter Trafficking in Persons 2014-2018 (NPA-CTIP II), which aims to effectively prevent all forms of human trafficking and labour and sexual exploitation,<sup>131</sup> and its Neary Rattanak strategic plan IV 2014-2018 (NR IV), in which one of the six strategic

126. MoWA 2015.

127. DFAT 2017.

128. Hoskins 2016, p. 7.

129. UN CEDAW 2018a, p. 10.

130. UN CEDAW 2018a, p. 14.

- areas include legal protection for women and girls to reduce all forms of VAWG. In October 2019, Cambodia adopted the Third National Plan of Action for Counter-Trafficking in Persons (2019-2023), the key policy and roadmap developed by the National Committee for Counter Trafficking in a joint consultative process involving line ministries, CSOs, development partners and the private sector. The Plan is based on the findings of the assessment of and lessons learnt from the Second Plan of Action. It targets the '4 Ps' (Policy, Prevention, Prosecution and Protection) and sets up six core values for its implementation: (i) government ownership; (ii) human rights-based approach; (iii) gender-based programming; (iv) active civil society and stakeholder participation; (v) integrated multi-sector approach; and (vi) systemic monitoring, evaluation and sustainability.
- 4.6. The Government is currently in the process of formulating two key documents on gender equality in 2019: The National Policy on Gender Equality; and The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategic Plan (2019-2023).<sup>132</sup>

## 5. COLLECT VAW PREVALENCE DATA IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

**Indicator: Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW**

- 5.1. In 2015, Cambodia completed the National Survey on Women's Health and Life Experiences,<sup>133</sup> a nationally representative survey on intimate partner violence (IPV) in the country. This is the first focused study measuring the national prevalence rates for victimization of VAW and its health consequences on women. It was coordinated and supported by the Government, WHO and UN Women Cambodia, with funding from the Australian Government.
- 5.2. MoWA collaborated with the National Institute of Statistics from the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Health and with support from development partners to produce the report "Women's Experience of Domestic Violence and Other Forms of Violence" in September 2016, utilizing secondary data analysis from the Cambodia DHS 2000, 2005 and 2014 as well as information from the report on the above national IPV survey.<sup>134</sup>
- 5.3. Additionally, Cambodia utilizes findings from various studies to inform programme interventions, prevention strategies and national and provincial action plans to prevent VAWG. Examples include qualitative studies of women in indigenous communities and of adolescent fertility and early marriage among indigenous communities. These identified that indigenous women report experiencing all types of VAW, as well as challenges in accessing justice, safe shelter, counselling services and legal support.

## 6. DEVELOP AND ADOPT GENDER-RESPONSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO PENALIZE ALL FORMS OF VAW IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH CEDAW.

**Indicator: Number of new/strengthened laws/regulations on EVAW**

- 6.1. Cambodia enacted the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Protection of Victims in 2005. Laws and policies related to preventing violence against women started through the first NAPVAW 2009-2012. Through the NAPVAW II 2014-2018, the Government prioritized closing the gap between policy and practice by targeted actions for EVAW and the expansion of the culture of non-violence.
- 6.2. It has also strategically focused on creating mechanisms for capacity development in VAW prevention and response. For example, in November 2016, MoWA and the MoJ issued a Prakas<sup>135</sup> assigning MoWA and PDWA officials as Judicial Police Officers (JPOs) with the authority and legal competency to administrate the domestic violence law. MoWA trained the JPOs on legal procedures and multi-sectoral reconciliation processes to legally protect women's rights. They also continued disseminating the law, reaching 2,899 people (1,970 female).
- 6.3. Training on relevant laws has also been incorporated into the curriculum of the Royal Academy of National Police, Judicial Professionals and Royal Military Police. In late 2016, 94 officials (87 female) at the national and provincial level were assigned as JPOs responsible for protecting victims/survivors of VAW and assisting them in seeking justice through the legal system. They received legal training and on-going support for the provision of services through multi-sectoral reconciliation processes.<sup>136</sup>
- 6.4. MoWA, with technical assistance from UN Agencies, will conduct a comprehensive review and assessment of the 2005 domestic violence law starting in 2019.<sup>137</sup>
- 6.5. Other laws cited by Cambodia as having provisions relevant to improving protection against VAW include the Law on Juvenile Justice, 2016; Law on Minimum Wage, 2018; Law on Management of Health-care Professionals, 2016; and Law on Nationality, 2018.

131. MoWA 2019.

132. MoWA 2019, p. 18.

133. MoWA 2015.

134. MoWA 2019.

135. A Prakas is a proclamation or an executive regulation made at the ministerial level.

136. UN CEDAW 2018a, p. 8.

137. UN CEDAW 2019b.

## 7. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PREVENTIVE INTERVENTIONS THAT ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF VAW, INCLUDING GENDER STEREOTYPES, HARMFUL TRADITIONAL AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. THE INTERVENTIONS SHOULD PROMOTE POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL AND NON-VIOLENT MASCULINITIES.

**Indicator: (1) Number of AMS that implement preventive measures (2) Number of measures implemented**

- 7.1. The 'Good Men' campaign, led by MoWA and supported by Paz y Desarrollo and a number of stakeholders, was the largest positive messaging campaign to change broader cultural perspectives of masculinity and male power, targeting men and boys to engage in more respectful and gender-equitable behaviours in relationships and in the domestic sphere. In addition, BBC Media Action has produced a series of multi-media programmes addressing issues faced by the country's youth, including gender relations, and these have had a significant impact on the target audience in terms of belief and behaviour-change.<sup>138</sup>
- 7.2. The Ministry of Information disseminated information on national policies that focus on promoting gender equality and enhancing the role and status of women's rights in public, political, economic, social, cultural and educational programmes through television, radio, newspapers, magazines, newsletters and other communication platforms. The Ministry's Magazine has featured articles on young women entrepreneurs, women's awards, women in sports and the history of women's struggles in education and art.<sup>139</sup>
- 7.3. Recognizing that the media can be used for promoting positive changes in gender norms and behaviours, a media advisory group under the leadership of MoWA and the Ministry of Information was formed to improve media responses to VAW. A Prakas on a media code for reporting on VAW was prepared in 2016 and 2017, with support from the Club of Cambodian Journalists, and the "2017 Media Code of Conduct for Reporting on Violence against Women" was developed to ensure that VAW is reported in a non-stereotyped and non-discriminatory way.<sup>140</sup>
- 7.4. Further, awareness-raising on 'social morality',<sup>141</sup> based on Buddhist teachings, is included in the annual 16 Days and anti-trafficking campaigns. In addition, the National Committee for Upholding Social Morality and Women's and Khmer Family Values is now preparing monitoring tools to gather data and information to better measure the results and evaluate the impact of their campaigns and activities.<sup>142</sup>
- 7.5. Cambodia has led the way in the region in going beyond awareness-raising campaigns and piloting various behaviour-change programmes and approaches including: 'Healthy and Happy Relations' for young people, using Partners for Prevention (P4P) methodology; 'Positive Parenting Strategy' and tools, adopted in eight provinces; the 'Commune Alcohol Notification System', targeting alcohol abuse and VAW; and the 'Why Stop' campaign on sexual harassment. Further, social norm change has been included in training for minimum service standards for state and non-state service providers.

## 8. DEVELOP NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SOPS ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS ON GENDER-SENSITIVE HANDLING OF VAW CASES, INCLUDING GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

**Indicator: SOP guidelines developed**

- 8.1. The Government has made some significant efforts through the creation of concrete guidelines and standards for service providers. Notable examples include: The "2017 Media Code of Conduct for Reporting on Violence against Women" (see 7.3 above) and the 2016 *Referral Guidelines for Women and Girl Survivors of Gender-Based Violence*.<sup>143</sup> "Implementation Mechanisms for the Referral Guidelines" were also completed, and training on the guidelines was conducted in seven provinces.
- 8.2. The Minimum Standards for Basic Counselling for Women and Girls Survivors of GBV has been completed and is being incorporated into the new curriculum at the Royal Police Academy, along with other gender-sensitive approaches for supporting VAW victims/survivors. In addition, both Operational Standards and Codes of Conduct for the police have been implemented, which include ethical codes that are reflective of CEDAW and United Nations Security Council Resolution on women, peace and security (UNSCR 1325).<sup>144</sup>

138. MoWA 2019, p. 39.

139. Ibid.

140. Ibid.

141. The term 'social morality' focuses on three key aspects: Respect, Non-discrimination and Non-violence. This means promoting a society where women, men, boys and girls live with full respect, without discrimination or violence. The term 'Khmer family values' focuses on fostering a society that recognizes women's dignity in their families and the right to receive and manage family income without discrimination.

142. UN CEDAW 2019b.

143. CCHR 2018.



- 8.3. The “Minimum Standards for Essential Services for Women and Girl Survivors of GBV” was drafted in 2017 under NAPVAW II and covers 10 standards, including mediation as part of legal protection services. Mediation Guidelines were developed and the “Book for Judicial Professionals and Mediation Guidelines for Responding to Violence against Women” has been reviewed to strengthen the legal responses to VAW.<sup>145</sup> In addition, provincial and district Working Groups on Multi-Response to Gender-Based Violence were established in eight provinces.<sup>146</sup>
- 8.4. MoWA is reviewing the final draft of “Preventing Violence against Women and Girls in Cambodia: A Strategy to Implement Prevention Priorities in the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women in Cambodia”, and this is expected to be approved in 2019 along with several other key draft guidelines: (i) “Best Practice for Mediation as a Response to VAW”; (ii) “Case Management with Survivors of Gender Based Violence: A Guide for Service Providers”; and (iii) “VAW Prevention Strategy: Cost of Essential Services for Women Subjected to Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence in Cambodia”.<sup>147</sup>
- 8.5. Other important actions for protection of and support services for victims/survivors are the hotline numbers of the Ministry of Interior and police posts; helpline and online legal and psychological counselling of the MoWA; increased budgets for victims/survivors of VAW to access justice; the Australia-Cambodia Cooperation for Equitable Sustainable Services (ACCESS) Program; and the signing of an MOU with the Bar Association of Cambodia and Lawyers Club of Samdech Decho Prime Minister Hun Sen.

### Challenges

- (1) There is lack of capacity for a computer-based data management system, and confidentiality remains a challenge when it comes to sharing information about VAWG cases and victims/survivors.<sup>148</sup> Having paper-based and manually tallied data is both resource-intensive and present a high risk of error.<sup>149</sup> To overcome this issue, MoWA in collaboration with The Asia Foundation is currently piloting a smartphone application data management system in three provinces.
- (2) Funding for essential services present a challenge, especially for shelter services.<sup>150</sup> In 2017, MoWA conducted a costing exercise to identify the costs of a package of essential services for victims/survivors of VAW. This included an assessment of safe accommodation in each province and a system of short-term accommodation in the community. The total three-year cost was estimated at US\$13.8 million and US\$1.8 million, respectively, exclusive of health, counselling and legal services; nonetheless, significant progress has been made to enforce the government directive that forensic examinations of victims/survivors of rape are exempt from charges.<sup>151</sup>
- (3) Cambodia reported to UN CEDAW that strategies to mainstream gender and behaviour-change on gender equality requires more time, and strengthening of monitoring is one of the challenges related to VAW and encountered in the implementation of the National Strategic Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women 2014–2018.<sup>152</sup>
- (4) In the MTR questionnaire, it was noted that Action 3 on the legal framework, prosecution and justice system was challenging because of lengthy court procedures and the limited number of lawyers, particularly in remote areas. Other challenges identified were: the dissemination of policies and laws, which is still limited, especially in remote areas; the shortage of capacities among service providers and government officials; and the limited participation and understanding among the general population of the impact of VAW.

144. UN CEDAW 2018a, p. 10.

145. UN CEDAW 2018a, p. 14.

146. Cambodia Response to MTR Questionnaire on RPA on EVAW (Internal).

147. UN CEDAW 2019b.

148. ASEAN 2018, p. 63.

149. Ibid.

150. UN CEDAW 2019a.

151. UN CEDAW 2019b.

152. Ibid.

## Indonesia

Two in five Indonesian women, or over 41 per cent, have experienced at least one of the four types of violence—physical, sexual, emotional and economic—in their lifetime. Sixteen per cent had experienced one of these types of violence in the last year.<sup>153</sup> Over the past five years, VAW has increasingly been a priority for the Government. In 2016, the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection (MoWECP) launched the flagship 3Ends Programme, which focuses on ending: (i) violence against women and children; (ii) human trafficking; and (iii) barriers to economic justice for women.

At the global level, President Widodo has become one of the HeforShe IMPACT champions and put forward three agendas: improving women representation; reducing maternal mortality; and ending VAW.

Indonesia has made progress on the following National Level Priority Areas (i.e., #4-#8 in the RPA on EVAW).

### 4. DEVELOP AND/OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ON EVAW THROUGH MULTI-SECTORAL AND INTER-AGENCY MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THESE PLANS.

**Indicators: (1) Number of countries with a NAP on EVAW (2) Number of countries with national multi-sectoral and interagency coordination (3) Number of countries with sub-national mechanisms with adequate resources**

- 4.1. As noted above, MoWECP launched the flagship 3Ends Programme in 2016. Under the strategy to end VAWC, actions include: (i) ensuring the accessibility of information on the rights of women and children; (ii) enhancing the capacity of local institutions, including at the village/sub-district level; (iii) enhancing the capacity of local integrated task forces on women and children; and (iv) mobilizing the participation and support of all ministries/agencies, local government and civil society.<sup>154</sup>
- 4.2. The Government has further adapted the values of women's empowerment into the National Medium Term Development Plan or *Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional* (RPJMN). The 2015-2019 RPJMN has three objectives that focus on the issue of women's empowerment: the role of women in development; protection of women against violence; and institutional capacity on gender mainstreaming and the protection of women. Actions conducted include protecting women from discrimination and violence, including human smuggling and trafficking in persons, by establishing a comprehensive task force at both national and local level. Moreover, the Government closely collaborates with national human rights institutions, such as the National Commission on Violence against Women.<sup>155</sup>
- 4.3. The National Strategy on Elimination of Violence against Children 2016-2020 was launched in 2016. This contains systematic, integrated, evidence-based and coordinated actions that include legal aspects, changing social norms and cultural practices, effective interventions, availability of quality support services and improved quality of data. A National Movement on Anti-Sexual Crimes against Children was also initiated in 2014.
- 4.4. MoWECP has a core duty to assist the President in formulating policies and promoting coordination to support women's empowerment and to ensure children's welfare and protection. The Ministry participates in joint programming with other ministries for coordinated delivery of services to women and children and is instrumental in issuing policy guidelines for social protection to subnational counterparts.<sup>156</sup>
- 4.5. National human rights institutions consist of the National Commission on Human Rights, the National Commission on Violence against Women and the National Commission on Child Protection, as well as the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia (ORI) and the Victim and Witness Protection Agency (LPSK).<sup>157</sup>
- 4.6. As of 2016, 527 Women and Children Service Units in police stations and 67 Integrated Crisis Unit in police hospitals have been established across the country. An Integrated Criminal Justice System has also been introduced to improve access to justice for women and children victims/survivors of violence. This system will improve coordination among related government institutions and the effectiveness in handling cases.<sup>158</sup>

153. UNFPA 2017.

154. UN HRC 2017.

155. UN CEDAW 2020.

156. UNICEF 2017.

## 5. COLLECT VAW PREVALENCE DATA IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

**Indicator: Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW**

- 5.1. Indonesia conducted a nationwide survey on VAWC in 2016, which assists policymakers in understanding the root causes, prevalence, severity and trends in this area.<sup>159</sup>
- 5.2. In addition, the Indonesian National Commission on Violence against Women gathers data on sexual violence.<sup>160</sup>
- 5.3. MoWECP collects data on cases registered and recorded by provincial and district level women's empowerment and child protection departments as well as data related to clients, cases, services provided and referrals from the Integrated Service Centres for Protection of Women and Children. It invested significant financial and human resources into establishing and rolling out the Information System for the Protection of Women and Children (SIMFONI PPA), an online data management system to improve the quality and monitoring of services provided and provide a standard for recording and reporting of VAW. Based on data inputs into the system, MOWECP can generate up-to-date, real-time and accurate data on VAWG. The system can overlay VAWG data with province and district population and community data (population data, poverty rate data and unemployment data).<sup>161</sup>
- 5.4. According to statistics obtained from SIMFONI PPA, there were 21,428 cases of domestic abuse registered in 2018, with details of 12,369 child victims/survivors, 8,840 adult female victims/survivors and 992 adult male victims/survivors. Of these, 100 per cent have been followed up. The SIMFONI PPA system has been implemented in 548 Units at provincial level, 419 Integrated Service Centres for Women Empowerment and Child Protection, 427 Police Units and 337 health-care facilities.

## 6. DEVELOP AND ADOPT GENDER-RESPONSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO PENALIZE ALL FORMS OF VAW IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH CEDAW.

**Indicator: Number of new/strengthened laws/regulations on EVAW**

- 6.1. Indonesia has several laws that provide legal protection in relation to violence against women. The Elimination of Domestic Violence Law No. 23 was introduced in 2004, followed in 2006 by the Witness Protection Act No. 13, which includes provisions for temporary protection orders and counselling for victims/survivors.<sup>162</sup>
- 6.2. There are also relevant local government regulation such as the Maluku Province By-Law No. 2/2012 on the Protection of Women and Children from Violence in Maluku, mandating the establishment of a provincial Women and Children Protection Agency offering assistance to victims/survivors in the form of medical, psycho-social and legal assistance. Similar regulations can also be found in Semarang, Batubara Regency, Yogyakarta and other regions.<sup>163</sup>
- 6.3. The draft law on Gender Equality and Justice aims to provide a stronger legal foundation for gender-responsive policies. Once finalized, this bill will reform national and local policies by incorporating relevant elements from internationally agreed frameworks on women.<sup>164</sup>
- 6.4. At the global level, Indonesia consistently reaffirms its call for universal ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW). Within the United Nations, it promotes the protection of migrant workers, especially women migrant workers, including through facilitation of the UN General Assembly's resolution to eradicate violence against women migrant workers.<sup>165</sup>
- 6.5. Although not a party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on Torture, Indonesia has put in place an independent monitoring and inspection mechanism involving national human rights institutions.<sup>166</sup> In 2016—in partnership with various ministries, the police and defence forces—this mechanism launched a three-year programme to monitor and visit detention places in the country. The police and defence forces have also enhanced their efforts to train their officers on the principles of the Convention. The Government has set up a mechanism for individual complaints against police officers so that anyone can file a complaint on violations during arrest and pre-trial detention to be duly processed by the National Police Commission.<sup>167</sup>
- 6.6. UN CEDAW was deeply concerned in 2012 that sexual violence, especially rape, had reportedly been a recurring form of violence against women during conflict, and about the lack of progress in providing women victims/survivors of sexual violence with justice, truth, reparation and rehabilitation.<sup>168</sup>
- 6.7. In 2016, it was reported that an Elimination of Sexual Violence Bill (RUU PKS) was on the priority list of the

157. UN HRC 2017.

158. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

159. UN HRC 2017.

160. Indonesian National Commission on Violence Against Women 2016.

161. UNICEF 2017.

162. OECD 2014.

163. UN CEDAW 2020.

164. UN HRC 2017.

165. *Ibid.*

National Legislative Programme in 2016 and 2017, with the National Commission on Violence against Women pushing for its passing in parliament.<sup>169</sup> Nonetheless, as of September 2019, the Bill has yet to be passed and is facing strong opposition.<sup>170</sup> The issue hit headlines in February 2019 due to the vocal opposition to the bill from Islamic conservatives, who argued that it “promote[s] free sex and deviant sexual behaviour”.<sup>171</sup>

- 6.8. In December 2018, the Constitutional Court ruled that the minimum age of 16 years old for women to marry, as stipulated in the existing Marriage Law, was unconstitutional. The court viewed that the minimum age requirement was a form of discrimination since the minimum age requirement for men to marry was 19; thus, it ordered lawmakers to revise the minimum age for women. Another important development was the issuance of a fatwa against child marriage after a three-day congress of female clerics in the country. Although not legally binding, the fatwa will be influential. The clerics urged the Government to raise the minimum legal age for women to marry to 18. The fatwa called underage marriage “harmful” and said preventing it was mandatory.
- 6.9. Lastly, although it was implemented before the RPA on EVAW, it is also important to note that the Government has introduced several policies aimed at controlling female genital mutilation/circumcision (FGM/C), with an end goal to eliminate these practices throughout the country. The Government revoked Ministry of Health (MoH) Regulation No. 1636/2010 on Female Circumcision by issuing MoH Regulation No. 6/2014, which prohibits all medical practitioners from conducting FGM/C procedures.

## 7. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PREVENTIVE INTERVENTIONS THAT ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF VAW, INCLUDING GENDER STEREOTYPES, HARMFUL TRADITIONAL AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. THE INTERVENTIONS SHOULD PROMOTE POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL AND NON-VIOLENT MASCULINITIES.

**Indicator: (1) Number of AMS that implement preventive measures (2) Number of measures implemented**

- 7.1. Indonesia has launched programmes to empower youth in the fight against violence and gender-biased mindsets. One is the ‘One Student Saves One Family’ campaign, which aims to empower youth to advocate for family resilience and empowerment.<sup>172</sup>
- 7.2. In support of MoH Regulation No. 6/2014 on FGM/C, Indonesia reported that it will continue to conduct awareness programmes among medical and health workers, parents and community and religious leaders to prevent FGM/C practices on the ground. Relevant ministries continue to conduct research and data collection in order to build a clearer picture on the scope and prevalence of the practice in the country.<sup>173</sup>
- 7.3. The Ministry of Religious Affairs, in cooperation with local NGOs, has conducted a study on the implementation of the Marriage Law in seven provinces in order to obtain a better understanding of early marriage and unregistered marriage as well as to identify steps to address both issues. Further, Indonesia has taken measures to address contributing factors to early marriage as a key prevention intervention. Examples include programmes to: (i) improve family welfare and economic resilience; (ii) increase awareness on the health risks of early pregnancies for children and mothers; (iii) implement a 12-year free and compulsory education programme aiming to keep children in school and postpone marriage; and (iv) reduce early marriage and improve the younger generation’s ability to decide on their future, including to overcome social stigmatization. These programmes, carried out by relevant ministries/institutions and at all levels of government, also target the parents who are influential in the decision for early marriage.<sup>174</sup>
- 7.4. Although the legal minimum age to marry is 16 years old for girls, parental consent is required for those under 21 years old. Indonesia will continue its efforts to discourage child marriage on the ground by conducting programmes that address the contributing factors of child marriage.<sup>175</sup>
- 7.5. The Government has implemented specific and targeted strategies to address the issue of VAW by establishing preventive mechanisms, enhancing management of cases and promoting the empowerment of women. Examples of preventive mechanism include among others:
  - i. Encouraging local government to issue by-laws on the protection of women and children against violence such as Yogyakarta City Regulation No. 1/2016 on Child-Friendly Districts/Cities (Kabupaten/Kota Layak Anak; KKLA) and Province of Maluku Regulation No. 2/2012 on the Protection of Women and Children.

166. Established through the signing of MoU involving five NHRI (the National Commission on Human Rights, the National Commission on Violence against Women, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission, the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia and the Victim and Witness Protection Agency).

167. UN HRC 2017.

168. UN CEDAW 2012.

169. Komnas Perempuan 2016; OECD 2014.

170. Davies 2019.

171. Jones and Walden 2019.

172. UN HRC 2017, p. 9.

173. UN HRC 2017.



- ii. Conducting advocacy programmes and campaigns to engage men aged 15 to 30 to participate in the prevention of domestic violence and empower them to support victims/survivors in reporting cases of domestic abuse.
- iii. Conducting pre-marital advocacy courses on domestic violence for couples as part of the pre-material basic course by the MoRA. In addition, campaigns against early forced child marriages are executed where the Local Religious Offices are refrained from registering marriages involving children.
- iv. Collaborating with national universities around the country in promoting a 'Gender-responsive Campus' and engaging academics, as well as youth, in raising awareness on gender equality on campuses and in public spheres; this programme has now been conducted in 30 campuses.
- v. Establishing Family Development Sessions (FDS) that aim to encourage behaviour-change among conditional cash transfer beneficiaries of the Hope Family Programme. These benefits are given to women, as they are more involved in providing health and nutrition, education and parenting, and child protection. Up to 2018, there were 4,648,940 FDS participants in 34 provinces and 278 districts with 21,642 programme facilitators assisting the activities.<sup>176</sup>

## 8. DEVELOP NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SOPS ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS ON GENDER-SENSITIVE HANDLING OF VAW CASES, INCLUDING GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

### Indicator: SOP guidelines developed

- 8.1. By 2017, Indonesia had established 470 Integrated Service Centres for the Empowerment of Women and Child (P2TP2A). These centres are a mechanism for prevention, protection, rehabilitation and reintegration for victims/survivors of violence. They also serve as a platform for coordination among stakeholders and the national task force on anti-trafficking in persons, especially of women and children. As of 2016, 424 Integrated Service Centres and 16 Safety House/Centres for Women and Children have been established.<sup>177</sup> To enhance access and coverage in following up reports and cases of VAW, Women and Child Protection Cars and Women and Child Protection Motorcycles have also been provided to 34 provinces and 278 districts/cities.<sup>178</sup>
- 8.2. The Government allocates funding for these centres and has provided gender-responsive trainings and capacity building for 949, of the projected 2,000, law enforcement officers to increase their capacity in handling cases involving VAWC.<sup>179</sup> As of 2017, 567 Women and Children Service Units in police stations and 67 Integrated Crisis Unit in police hospitals have been established across the country. In line with this, the Government has also created Taskforces on Human Trafficking in 32 provinces and 194 regency/cities.<sup>180</sup>
- 8.3. In addition, the Government has adopted minimum service standards on integrated services for women and children victims/survivors of violence and established more than 400 institutions to handle cases of violence against women at national, provincial and district levels.<sup>181</sup>
- 8.4. To better protect Indonesians abroad, including migrant workers, efforts taken include:
  - Establishing citizen service units (CSU) in 24 Indonesian embassies<sup>182</sup>
  - Providing legal assistance (during 2012–2016) to more than 27,000 Indonesian migrant workers
  - Signing 13 bilateral agreements related to the protection and placement of migrant workers
  - Imposing a moratorium on sending domestic workers to 21 countries
  - Launching MoFA's 'Safe Travel' mobile application.<sup>183</sup>
- 8.5. Indonesia also issued "Guidelines on the Prevention of Sexual Violence at the Workplace", which not only focus on the protection of women against sexual violence but also include a settlement process for victims/survivors and perpetrators. The Guidelines were circulated by the Ministry of Manpower through the District Governments at gubernatorial, regent and mayoral level. Moreover, MoWECP Regulation No. 4/2018 on Guidelines for Establishing a Technical Implementation Unit for the Protection of Women and Children was issued as a means to provide common guidelines and reference for local government on building a system for women's empowerment and child protection that is comprehensive, inclusive and integrative. This ministerial regulation also strengthens the role of P2TP2A at the local level.<sup>184</sup>
- 8.6. The Government ensures the provision of health services for women and girls who are victims/survivors of violence. These efforts include:

174. Ibid.

175. Ibid.

176. UN CEDAW 2020.

177. UN HRC 2017.

178. UN CEDAW 20120.

179. UN HRC 2017.

180. UN CEDAW 2020.

181. UN CEDAW 2012, p.6; OECD, 2014.

- i. Strengthening regulatory mechanisms through the issuance of Government Regulation No. 61/ 2014 on Reproductive Health; MoH Regulation No. 97/2014 on Periodic Health Services Before Pregnancy, Pregnancy, Childbirth, and After Childbirth, Implementation of Contraceptive Services and Sexual Health Services; and MoH Regulation No. 68/2013 on the Obligation of Health Service Providers to Provide Information on Alleged Violence against Children.
- ii. Issuing guidelines on prevention and handling of cases of VAWC, including a “Guidebook for Development of Community Health Centres” in managing the issue of VAWC and “Service Guidelines and Reference Cases for VAW and Children for Health Officers”.
- iii. Conducting capacity building such as case management training, including on trafficking in persons, for health workers (doctors, midwives, nurses) in primary health-care centres and hospitals as well as the curriculum and a training of trainer (ToT) module for facilitators.

### Challenges

- (1) Not all Integrated Service Centres register and record information in the same way. Some rely on paper-based case files and compile data manually, whereas others input case file data<sup>185</sup> into a computer-based data management system that enables them to use software to compile and analyse client and case data. Moreover, while some Centres input data into the system, others are not willing to do so because they have concerns about client confidentiality, data protection and security.
- (2) Even though the Elimination of Domestic Violence Act has been in effect since 2004, a number of issues, including lack of gender awareness within law enforcement agencies, results in its implementation remaining not yet optimal for the protection of female victims/survivors of domestic violence.<sup>186</sup>
- (3) Despite Law No. 8/2016 on Persons with Disabilities that recognizes the vulnerability of women with disabilities to discrimination, there is still a need to address challenges to better respond to cases of violence against women and girls with disabilities. Policies that specifically address those who are vulnerable to multi-layered discrimination are still lacking, especially at the local level.
- (4) Other challenges cited regarding contributing factors to cases of VAW in Indonesia include: (i) Socio-culture barriers, including patriarchal values and unequal social and economic status; (ii) Lack of comprehensive and verifiable data to formulate effective policies; and (iii) Inconsistency in law enforcement, contributing to impunity for perpetrators of violence.<sup>187</sup>



Photo: UN Women/Staton Winter

182. The CSU provide an integrated service that covers 24 hours hotline service, consular services, legal assistance, education and trainings, shelters, and health services.

183. UN HRC 2017. ‘Safe Travel’ is a mobile application to provide protection and services for Indonesians traveling abroad on either a temporary or permanent basis. In the near future, it will be connected with the database of citizens living abroad and in shelters.

184. UN CEDAW 2020.

185. UNICEF 2017.

186. Indonesian National Commission on Violence Against Women 2016.

187. UN CEDAW 2020.

## Lao PDR

Among ever-partnered women, 30.3 per cent have experienced physical, sexual and/or emotional violence, while some 34.8 per cent of ever-partnered women have encountered controlling behaviours by partners.<sup>188</sup> The Government has adopted laws and enforced measures to ensure the effectiveness of a legal framework aimed at protecting the interests of women and preventing violence against women and girls.<sup>189</sup>

The Lao population is composed of 49 ethnic groups that have different cultural traditions and practices, with the ethnic groups that reside in remote areas with difficult access to education still practicing their ancient local beliefs or customs that may put women's and children's rights at risk of violation. According to the Lao Social Indicator Survey (LSIS) 2011-2012, 58 per cent of women and 49 per cent of men reported that VAW was justified if women did not adhere to traditional gender norms, roles and relations. The Government has prioritized combating VAW, discouraging negative attitudes and beliefs and eradicating existing stereotypes and negative cultural practices that lead to such violence. It has employed all possible measures to encourage ethnic communities to discontinue the stereotypes, ancient beliefs and practices that discriminate against women.<sup>190</sup>

Lao PDR has made progress on the following National Level Priority Areas (i.e., #4-#8 in the RPA on EVAW).

### 4. DEVELOP AND/OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ON EVAW THROUGH MULTI-SECTORAL AND INTER-AGENCY MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THESE PLANS.

**Indicators: (1) Number of countries with a NAP on EVAW (2) Number of countries with national multi-sectoral and interagency coordination (3) Number of countries with sub-national mechanisms with adequate resources**

- 4.1. The Government officially agreed to endorse the Second National Plan of Action on Preventing and Elimination of Violence against Women and Violence against Children (2021-2025) (NPAVAWVAC) and the Fourth National Plan of Action on Gender Equality (2021-2025) (NPAGE) at a government meeting in May 2021 chaired by the Prime Minister, H.E. Phankham Viphavanh. The new NPAVAWAC and NPAGE were developed under the leadership of the National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children (NCAWMC),<sup>191</sup> with technical and financial support from UNFPA, as well as financial support from ILO, UN Women and CARE International.<sup>192</sup>
- 4.2. The Government has applied temporary special measures to promote gender in all fields of decision-making from the central to grass-roots level, as reflected in its general, sectoral and specific development programmes, strategies and action plans such as in the VII Five-year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDPP) (2011-2015) and the VII Five-year National Strategy for Advancement of Women (2011-2015).<sup>193</sup>
- 4.3. The National Assembly Women's Caucus, which consists of all female members of the Assembly and has a secretariat to assist in its operation, has set a good example in advocacy and mobilization of the support for women and child-related tasks, especially in combating VAWC.<sup>194</sup>
- 4.4. The Lao National Commission for the Advancement of Women and Mother-Child (NCAWMC) is the inter-ministerial mechanism mandated to assist and support the Government on the promotion of the advancement of women, acting as the national focal point for the implementation of CEDAW as well as the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA). NCAWMC has organized a series of workshops, seminars and training of trainers (TOT) programmes on disseminating and raising awareness of the convention as well as of UN CEDAW's Concluding Observations, publishing and distributing booklets to line ministries and government officials at the central and local levels, members of the National Assembly and Provincial People's Assemblies, prosecutors, judges and the general public.<sup>195</sup>
- 4.5. The Lao Women's Union (LWU) is a mass organization that involves all levels: central, ministerial/organization/provincial level, district and village level. It implements the policies, strategies and guidance of the Government to ensure gender equality and protect the rights of women and children.<sup>196</sup>

188. NCAW and LSB 2015.

189. UN CEDAW 2017b.

190. NCAW and LSB 2015.

191. In 2017, NCAW was restructured by combining NCAW and the National Commission for Mother and Child (NCCM) into one Commission as National Commission for the Advancement of Women and Mother-Child (NCAWMC).

192. UNFPA Lao PDR 2021.

193. UN CEDAW 2017b.

194. Ibid.

195. Ibid.

196. Ibid.

## 5. COLLECT VAW PREVALENCE DATA IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

**Indicator: Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW**

- 5.1. A National Study on Women's Health and Life Experiences 2014 was conducted to collect much-needed evidence to develop an effective policy-making response to VAW. This study, which adopted the methodology of the WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women, was led by the NCAW and the Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB) with support from UNFPA and UN Women.<sup>197</sup>
- 5.2. Data on registered complaints to the courts have been recorded and kept by the courts. Complaints relating to criminal cases involving VAWC from 2010 to 2013 were collected by the Department of Technical Management and Court Statistics.<sup>198</sup>

## 6. DEVELOP AND ADOPT GENDER-RESPONSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO PENALIZE ALL FORMS OF VAW IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH CEDAW.

**Indicator: Number of new/strengthened laws/regulations on EVAW**

- 6.1. Lao PDR is a party to the ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Children. In 2015, it passed a law on the prevention and elimination of VAWC that encompasses domestic and public violence including in educational institutions, workplaces and alternative care settings. This complements the provisions on domestic violence set out in the 2004 Law on the development and protection of women.<sup>199</sup>
- 6.2. The domestic violence law specifies that no custom, tradition or belief can be invoked to justify violence (art. 5), and highlights the multifaceted nature of violent acts (physical, sexual, psychological, economic), listing polygamy and unequal wages as forms of psychological and economic violence towards women, respectively (art. 12-17). Further, most actions listed in the 2015 law as examples of domestic violence are criminalized under the Penal Law.<sup>200</sup>
- 6.3. The law creates a state obligation to support organizations working to combat VAWC through funding, human resources, materials and transport assistance (art. 22). It sets out comprehensive measures to protect and support victims (art. 28-44), and provides for incentives to reward individuals or entities that have contributed to preventing and combatting VAW (art. 74).<sup>201</sup>
- 6.4. Provisions prohibiting child marriage are also in the law. Those responsible for child marriages face one to three years' imprisonment, as well as a fine of 1-3 million Kip.<sup>202</sup>
- 6.5. The National Assembly has adopted a number of new laws and amended legislation to ensure the promotion of gender equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination and VAWC. An amendment to the Law on State Budget 2015, article 6 (11) on the principles of the state budget's expenditure, stipulates that this shall ensure gender equality.

## 7. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PREVENTIVE INTERVENTIONS THAT ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF VAW, INCLUDING GENDER STEREOTYPES, HARMFUL TRADITIONAL AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. THE INTERVENTIONS SHOULD PROMOTE POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL AND NON-VIOLENT MASCULINITIES.

**Indicator: (1) Number of AMS that implement preventive measures (2) Number of measures implemented**

- 7.1. As a key part of prevention interventions, celebrations of International Women's Day and International Day for the Elimination of VAW have been publicized through mass communication channels to appeal to the people to adjust any attitudes and behaviours that are adverse to the advancement of women or any acts of VAWC.<sup>203</sup>
- 7.2. The Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism mainstreams gender into its sector-wide plans to produce media based on the needs and interests of women and girls, safeguard against pornography and promote gender capacity building. These activities also contributed to implementation of the sections of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) related to women and media.<sup>204</sup>
- 7.3. Various development partners, through cooperating with relevant sectors of the government or mass organizations, especially the Lao Women's Union, have created media on gender equality and the prevention of VAWC, such as a documentary produced by NCAW and the National Commission for Mothers and Children (NCCM). Moreover, through various international NGOs, information on CEDAW, as well as laws related to

197. NCAW and LSB 2015.

198. UN CEDAW 2017b.

199. OECD 2014.

200. Ibid.

201. Ibid.

202. Ibid.

203. UN CEDAW 2017b.

204. Ibid.



women's rights, has been disseminated through advocacy tools such as posters and pamphlets with illustrations and short plays in ethnic languages to reach out to the ethnic communities, for instance, Akha ethnic group in northern Laos.<sup>205</sup>

- 7.4. In 2014, UN Women jointly with the Ministry of Education and Sports produced a music video with famous vocal artists to encourage the youth to speak up on VAW.<sup>206</sup>

## 8. DEVELOP NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SOPS ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS ON GENDER-SENSITIVE HANDLING OF VAW CASES, INCLUDING GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

**Indicator: SOP guidelines developed**

- 8.1. Though not limited to addressing VAW, the 2015 amendment to the Constitution provides for the right of the Lao people to lodge complaints and petitions and to propose ideas to the relevant state organizations in connection with issues pertaining to the public interest or to their own rights and interests. Further, according to this law, people who deem that their rights and freedoms have been violated by the acts of state officials or a third party may lodge a request, claim and petition for justice.<sup>207</sup>
- 8.2. Claims can be presented to the judicial organizations composed of the Office of the Supreme People's Prosecutor and the People's Supreme Court and their respective organizational levels. Petitions for justice can also be presented to the National Assembly, which has the duty to receive these, including cases instigated by women.<sup>208</sup>
- 8.3. Especially during the National Assembly sessions, there is a hotline set up for people to express their opinions on various topics for its consideration.<sup>209</sup>
- 8.4. In addition to the formal mechanisms, the Lao Bar Association (LBA) provides advice on access to justice, represents clients in court proceedings and ensures that these proceedings are just. Currently, there are 183 members of the Bar providing free legal aid to people in need. The LBA has members in many provinces and has conducted more than 1,700 cases of pro bono legal assistance.<sup>210</sup>

### Challenges

- (1) Having sufficient resources for comprehensive VAW prevention and response is a challenge. Lao PDR has made it a priority to focus on increased financial investment.
- (2) Lao PDR is also directing efforts to improve legal enforcement with a view to prevent violence and to ensure that appropriate response mechanisms are in place in all sectors.<sup>211</sup>



205. Ibid.  
206. Ibid.  
207. Ibid.

208. Ibid.  
209. Ibid.  
210. Ibid.  
211. KPL News Agency 2016.

## Malaysia

In Malaysia, prevalence estimates for IPV range widely from 8 per cent in a national household survey<sup>213</sup> to 87 per cent in women's shelters.<sup>212</sup> The achievements of women are seen in areas such as legislation, education, health, the economy, decision-making and politics, which are in line with CEDAW and the SDGs.<sup>214</sup> In 2019, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development established the National Women and Family Development Committee Meeting, chaired by the Honourable Minister of Women, Family and Community Development and comprised of executive council members and ministers at the state level who hold portfolios related to women and the family. This meeting is responsible for:

- (i) identifying and discussing current issues related to women and families at the grassroots level;
- (ii) advising the Government on women and family issues; and
- (iii) ensuring the coordination of programmes/ activities implemented at the state level that impact women and families.

Malaysia has made progress on the following National Level Priority Areas (i.e., #4-#8 in the RPA on EVAW).

### 4. DEVELOP AND/OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ON EVAW THROUGH MULTI-SECTORAL AND INTER-AGENCY MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THESE PLANS.

**Indicators: (1) Number of countries with a NAP on EVAW (2) Number of countries with national multi-sectoral and interagency coordination (3) Number of countries with sub-national mechanisms with adequate resources**

- 4.1. Women's empowerment was highlighted as one of the six strategic thrusts under the 11th Malaysia Plan (11th MP) (2016-2020) to enhance inclusiveness towards an equitable society. This includes educating women and girls on the importance of health care and as well as women's rights and protection against violence. Moreover, VAW is one of the 13 strategic thrusts under the National Policy on Women.<sup>215</sup>

### 5. COLLECT VAW PREVALENCE DATA IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

**Indicator: Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW**

- 5.1. In the MTR Questionnaire, Malaysia reported having VAW prevalence data as part of the research on "Violence on Women and Child Abuse" (June 2019) as well as having domestic violence data from the Royal Malaysia Police (January-September 2019) and from Social Welfare Department statistics (2019).

### 6. DEVELOP AND ADOPT GENDER-RESPONSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO PENALIZE ALL FORMS OF VAW IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH CEDAW.

**Indicator: Number of new/strengthened laws/regulations on EVAW**

- 6.1. Some of the crucial legislation regarding marital rape and domestic violence has been amended. For instance, section 375A was inserted in the Penal Code [Act 574] and states that "Any man who during the subsistence of a valid marriage causes hurt or fear of death or hurt to his wife or any other person in order to have sexual intercourse with his wife shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years".<sup>216</sup>
- 6.2. The Domestic Violence Act (Amendment) 2017 expanded the definition of domestic violence (section 2) and added new provisions regarding emergency protection orders (section 3) and rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators. The amendment did not, however, include matters pertaining to intimate partner (including dating partner) violence.
- 6.3. Malaysia supported the ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP), which was signed during the 27th ASEAN Summit on 21 November 2015. It subsequently ratified the convention on 7 September 2017.<sup>217</sup>
- 6.4. The Government is looking into formulating a legal framework/specific legislation on gender equality and sexual harassment as investments for the country on different levels.

### 7. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PREVENTIVE INTERVENTIONS THAT ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF VAW, INCLUDING GENDER STEREOTYPES, HARMFUL TRADITIONAL AND

212. Shuib et al. 2013.

213. WAO 2016.

214. Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development. 2018.

215. Ministry of Economic Affairs 2018.

216. Ibid.

217. UN HRC 2018b.

## RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. THE INTERVENTIONS SHOULD PROMOTE POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL AND NON-VIOLENT MASCULINITIES.

**Indicator: (1) Number of AMS that implement preventive measures (2) Number of measures implemented**

- 7.1. The Government provides an annual allocation to women's NGOs, state and parliamentary councils of women for the development of women and to carry out their programmes and activities such as legal literacy, campaigns on VAW, skills trainings and capacity-building as well as gender-sensitization at grass-roots levels. From 2001 to 2014, the Department of Women Development (DWD) allocated RM 44,361,246.76, which was disbursed to 821 NGOs for organizing various programmes, with 349,285 participants who benefited.<sup>218</sup>
- 7.2. Another notable prevention mechanism is through the education system. In the formal curriculum, human rights elements are grouped and incorporated into themes, issues, perspectives and approaches in subjects, while co-curricular activities include campaigns against bullying, harassment and violence in the school or the community.<sup>219</sup>
- 7.3. Targeting a risk factor for VAW, the Government carries out economic empowerment programmes for women, particularly vulnerable women and those in the bottom 40 per cent income group, single mothers, widows and indigenous groups. "Programmes implemented involved start-up of business through Development of Women Entrepreneurs programme and capacity building for small and medium enterprises, as well as Entrepreneurs Assistance Programme specifically for indigenous women. In addition, indigenous women were given training under the Skills and Career Training Programme to enhance their skills to earn a better income and improve their standard of living. Skills trainings were also conducted for rural women".<sup>220</sup>

## 8. DEVELOP NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SOPS ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS ON GENDER-SENSITIVE HANDLING OF VAW CASES, INCLUDING GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

**Indicator: SOP guidelines developed**

- 8.1. Currently, there are 38 safe places approved under the Domestic Violence Act 1994, and another 10 are expected to be approved within five years from 2021-2025.
- 8.2. Malaysia is a party to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Person, Especially Women and Children. The Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants Act 2007 was amended in 2015 to enhance the protection aspect for victims/survivors of trafficking. For example, victims/survivors are not detained in detention centres but may be placed in shelter homes for protection and rehabilitation services and may be given permission to move freely and to work. They are given any necessary medical assistance by the Government, NGOs and international organizations.<sup>221</sup>
- 8.3. To further support NGOs towards a greater role in protecting the victims/survivors of trafficking, the Government provides financial assistance to those that manage shelter homes. This reflects its continuous commitment to work together with NGOs. The Government also provided physical, psychological and social reintegration assistance, such as shelter, counselling, information, medical services, allowances and employment and basic skill training opportunities.<sup>222</sup>
- 8.4. The Legal Aid (Amendment) Act 2017, which entered into force on 1 December 2017, was expected to streamline the procedure by which legal aid was granted to persons on low incomes.<sup>223</sup> In 2018, Malaysia rebranded the Legal Literacy Seminar as the Legal Clinic, which provides more practical and hands-on assistance regarding legal practices for grass-roots women.

### Challenges

- (1) The Mid-Term Review of the Eleventh Malaysian Plan 2016-2020 cited the challenge that reported VAW cases such as domestic violence, incest and rape as well as child abuse are on the rise, partly due to lack of community support.<sup>224</sup>
- (2) There is also a need to raise the level of awareness on the rights and protection of women and children against violence.<sup>225</sup>
- (3) In the MTR Questionnaire, Malaysia reported that the two actions most challenging to implement from the RPA on EVAW are: Action 3, because to review and amend laws involves many stages of procedures and consumes time and human resources; and Action 6, because in managing and coordinating plans on EVAW, there is a need to ensure involvement and participation from ministries and agencies, which is affected by appointed officers being transferred to other places and lack of resources.

218. UN CEDAW 2016a.

219. UN HRC 2018b.

220. Ibid., pp. 11-12.

221. Ministry of Economic Affairs 2018.

222. UN HRC 2018b.

223. UN CEDAW 2018c.



## Myanmar

In Myanmar's first VAW prevalence survey, it was found that 21 per cent of ever-married women have experienced spousal violence; the most common type of spousal violence is physical violence (15 per cent), followed by emotional violence (14 per cent).<sup>226</sup>

In 2013, the Government launched the first National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (NSPAW) (2013–2022), which includes a commitment to the development of norms and policies to address gender-based and domestic violence.<sup>227</sup> Over the past five years, it has proactively tried to address the issue of VAWG with multiple approaches and at different levels, from policy and law changes, awareness-raising for legal service providers, the police force and right holders (e.g., women and girls and their communities) to establishing and providing service centres to victims/survivors of violence. One of the four national level technical working groups formed for NSPAW implementation focuses on VAW.<sup>228</sup>

Myanmar has made progress on the following National Level Priority Areas (i.e., #4-#8 in the RPA on EVAW).

### 4. DEVELOP AND/OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ON EVAW THROUGH MULTI-SECTORAL AND INTER-AGENCY MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THESE PLANS.

**Indicators: (1) Number of countries with a NAP on EVAW (2) Number of countries with national multi-sectoral and interagency coordination (3) Number of countries with sub-national mechanisms with adequate resources**

- 4.1. The NSPAW 2013-2022, which is guided by the principles of CEDAW and the priority areas outlined in the BPfA, is implemented with the support of four national level technical working groups, with one focusing on the thematic area on VAW. All TWGs are co-chaired and comprised of relevant government agencies, development agencies and civil society organizations.<sup>229</sup> Further, the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) that was adopted on 15 October 2015 integrates gender, including the prevention of sexual VAW.
- 4.2. A Joint Communiqué of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the United Nations on Prevention and Response to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (signed in December 2018) includes key preventive measures such as supporting legal reforms to strengthen the overall rule of law response to sexual violence; training and capacity building of the justice and security sector actors (including the Tatmadaw,<sup>230</sup> Military Police, Border Guards and Myanmar Police Force) particularly on investigation and prosecution of sexual violence; and ensuring effective access to strengthen service delivery for victims/survivors of sexual violence.<sup>231</sup>
- 4.3. In addition, preventive measures have also been taken to prevent any harm and danger to the local people in Rakhine State. Rules of Engagement in printed form that are given to the security forces are in conformity with international human rights law, humanitarian law and the existing laws of the land. The Tatmataw has a zero tolerance policy regarding to human rights violations committed by military personnel against women and girls, including sexual violence, and military personnel of any rank found guilty of committing sexual violence against women is liable to the maximum punishment following a court martial.<sup>232</sup>

### 5. COLLECT VAW PREVALENCE DATA IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

**Indicator: Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW**

- 5.1. Although Myanmar's available statistics on VAW are not complete, the surveys and research conducted so far have revealed that it is a widespread phenomenon in the country and ranges from emotional and economic abuse to sexual harassment and physical assault. The Demographic and Health Survey 2015-2016<sup>233</sup> published comprehensive data on domestic violence in 2017.<sup>234</sup>
- 5.2. Other related research and surveys,<sup>235</sup> conducted by several women's organizations, include VAW, violence and women with disabilities, violence in conflict areas, violence service mapping, women's needs assessments and a multi-donor funded assessment of VAW prevention and response services and access. The Ministry of Health and Sports (MoHS) also contributes to numerous gender-related national data collections.<sup>236</sup>

224. Ministry of Economic Affairs 2018.

225. Ibid.

226. MoHS and ICF 2017.

227. National Committee for Women's Affairs Myanmar 2013; OECD 2014.

228. Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2019.

229. Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2019.

230. The official name of the armed forces.

231. UN CEDAW 2019c.

232. Ibid.



## 6. DEVELOP AND ADOPT GENDER-RESPONSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO PENALIZE ALL FORMS OF VAW IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH CEDAW.

**Indicator: Number of new/strengthened laws/regulations on EVAW**

- 6.1. The customary law and the Penal Code allow for prosecuting cases of discrimination and VAW under the sections that address assault and intentional infliction of injury.<sup>237</sup>
- 6.2. Some laws, such as the Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure Codes, etc., have been amended to make them more gender-responsive, along with amendments regarding the age limit of marriage and that associated with child rape.<sup>238</sup>
- 6.3. Myanmar started to develop a Prevention and Protection of Violence against Women Law (POVAW Law) in 2013 to penalize all forms of VAWG. The bill was submitted to Parliament in January 2020 and it is expected to be approved in 2021. If passed, the legislation would criminalize domestic violence and marital rape.<sup>239</sup>
- 6.4. Currently, rape is prohibited under the Penal Code and defined as sexual intercourse with a woman either without her consent, against her will, with consent obtained by fear or threat of injury or death, with consent obtained through deception, or if the woman is younger than 14 (art. 375-376).<sup>240</sup>
- 6.5. In order to protect sex workers and their rights, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MoSWRR), along with women advocates, worked to amend the Suppression of Prostitution Act—wherein any women involved in sex work or “loitering with intent to solicit” could be prosecuted, and even the possession of condoms has been perceived as evidence of being involved in sex work.<sup>241</sup>
- 6.6. UNODC is working with the Myanmar Police Force with the aim of improving women’s and girl’s access to justice and strengthening the role of the police in providing gender-responsive services to women.<sup>242</sup>
- 6.7. Myanmar has enacted the Anti Trafficking in Person Law, which includes a chapter called “Special Protection of Trafficked Victims, Women Children and Youth”. A dedicated police task force, called the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division (ATIPD), was established and is expected to include 25 per cent women. Trainings and workshops concerning gender equality and non-discrimination are conducted with the members of the task force.<sup>243</sup>
- 6.8. A policy on sexual and reproductive health and rights has been drafted at the ministerial level but it needs to be discussed by Parliament. In that policy, Gender and VAW is one of six thematic areas.

## 7. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PREVENTIVE INTERVENTIONS THAT ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF VAW, INCLUDING GENDER STEREOTYPES, HARMFUL TRADITIONAL AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. THE INTERVENTIONS SHOULD PROMOTE POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL AND NON-VIOLENT MASCULINITIES.

**Indicator: (1) Number of AMS that implement preventive measures (2) Number of measures implemented**

- 7.1. The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) is working on the MyJustice programme,<sup>244</sup> which strengthens prevention approaches by working with women and girls to increase their awareness of their rights around sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and to improve their access to services. IDLO launched a series of trainings for community-based organizations to learn how to support women and girls more effectively in their communities through SGBV awareness-raising initiatives.<sup>245</sup>
- 7.2. The National Committee on Women is implementing prevention programmes as part of the NSPAW 2013-2022.
- 7.3. As a key part of prevention, the Union Attorney General’s Office, in cooperation with UNODC, held a National Workshop on Access to Legal Aid to increase awareness of legal aid. Moreover, a Legal Aid Bill is being drafted in accordance with the UN Principles and Guidelines.<sup>246</sup>
- 7.4. A total of 52 state and other level workshops and seminars have been organized for law enforcement agencies since 2011. These were on the rule of law and human rights, promoting the awareness and responsibility of military and law enforcement officers, and on improving domestic legislation and justice.<sup>247</sup>

233. MoHS and ICF 2017.

234. Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2019.

235. See GEN 2018; NSPAW mapping analysis report, MNCW, 2016; EI and AJAR 2015.

236. Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2019.

237. GEN 2018; OECD 2014.

238. Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2019.

239. Stahl 2018.

240. OECD 2014.

241. Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2019.

242. Ibid.

243. Ibid.

## 8. DEVELOP NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SOPS ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS ON GENDER-SENSITIVE HANDLING OF VAW CASES, INCLUDING GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

### Indicator: SOP guidelines developed

- 8.1. The Department of Social Welfare (DSW) has endorsed the Case Management Standard Operating Procedures for children and for women victims/survivors of VAW. Currently, the Department of Public Health, under the Ministry of Health and Sport (MoHS), is developing guidelines for VAW.
- 8.2. DSW has also established One Stop Women Support Centres that provide psychosocial counselling and other services for women who are affected by and/or vulnerable to violence. Temporary shelters for victims/survivors of human trafficking have also been established and provide direct assistance (in the form of cash transfers) to victims/survivors of VAW, case management, hotline/helpline services as well as awareness-raising, trainings and dialogues with different government agencies.<sup>248</sup>
- 8.3. The MoHS has also been mobilized to work on gender-based violence response and prevention. It provides health services to victims/survivors of violence and support for forensic examinations when needed.<sup>249</sup>
- 8.4. Increased interagency coordination between the MoSWRR, DSW, MoHS and the Police Department is leading to the development of SOPs for VAWG cases.<sup>250</sup>
- 8.5. The MoSWRR, in cooperation with the relevant ministries, has a 24-hour Helpline service in order to effectively investigate and address any complaints—including crimes relating to sexual violence, human trafficking, domestic violence, etc.—for the entire country.<sup>251</sup> The Ministry is also currently providing cash assistance to enable victims/survivors to attend legal and court hearings as well as for rehabilitation and livelihood support.<sup>252</sup>
- 8.6. Another mechanism to support the implementation of laws that protect women's rights is a complaint mechanism. The Myanmar Women Affairs Federation receives written complaints of all types of VAW, including domestic violence. One can file a complaint in person at various Counselling Centres.<sup>253</sup> Further, complaints concerning human rights violation including sexual VAW can be lodged at the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission and DSW.<sup>254</sup>
- 8.7. The Government has conducted several trainings, especially targeting law enforcement. Training on pre-trial interviews of women who experienced trafficking in person by the International Commission of Jurists targeted prosecutors. Since most women do not understand the court process, the training aimed to ensure that a trained person would support them from the beginning of the process. Training comprises sessions on CEDAW, guidelines on pre-trial interviews and ethics. In 2018, with the support of UNODC, 40 prosecutors undertook training of trainers (TOT) training on “Effective Prosecution Responses to Violence against Women”.<sup>255</sup>

### Challenges

- (1) No gender-based budgeting is allocated.
- (2) Since Myanmar is home to more than 100 ethnicities, there are many cultural and traditional norms that are issues for EVAW.<sup>256</sup>
- (3) In the MTR Questionnaire, Myanmar reported that it has limited resources for case managers, and the DSW has specific challenges with prosecution and the justice system. Further, the SOP for the PoVAW Bill is still being developed with the support of international organizations.
- (4) Since the PoVAW Law has not yet been enacted, there has not been a specific mechanism to build government capacities to enforce VAW-related laws.

244. Funded by the European Union and implemented by the British Council.

245. Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2019.

246. UN HRC 2015a.

247. Ibid.

248. Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2019.

249. Ibid.

250. Ibid.

251. UN CEDAW 2019c.

252. MTR Phase 2 Country Feedback Process – 24 June 2021. (Internal document)

253. UN HRC 2015a.

254. MTR Phase 2 Country Feedback Process – 24 June 2021. (Internal document)

## Philippines

Based on the preliminary findings of the 2017 National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), one in four (26 per cent) ever-married women aged 15-49 has ever experienced physical, sexual or emotional violence by their husband or partner. Within the past year, 15 per cent of ever-married women have experienced spousal violence. One in five (20 per cent) women has ever experienced emotional violence, 14 per cent have ever experienced physical violence and 5 per cent have ever experienced sexual violence by their current or most recent husband or partner.<sup>257</sup>

The Philippines has passed several laws aimed at the protection of women's physical integrity, covering VAWC, domestic abuse, rape, sexual harassment and reproductive rights.<sup>258</sup> In 2004, the country passed the Anti-Violence against Women and Their Children Act (Republic Act 9262), which was signed into law by then-President Gloria M. Arroyo on 8 March 2004. It aims to address VAW by current or former intimate partners. Moreover, the 2009 Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act 9710) spells out protection of women from all forms of violence—physical, emotional, economic and political—including by the state.

As in other countries, VAW is considered to be one of the most pervasive social problems in the country. It is linked to unequal power relationships between women and men and societal norms that dictate that “men are the leaders, pursuers, providers, and take on dominant roles in society while women are nurturers, men's companions and supporters, and take on subordinate roles in society”.<sup>259</sup>

The Philippines has made progress on the following National Priority Areas (i.e., #4-#8 in the RPA on EVAW).

#### 4. DEVELOP AND/OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ON EVAW THROUGH MULTI-SECTORAL AND INTER-AGENCY MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THESE PLANS.

**Indicators: (1) Number of countries with a NAP on EVAW (2) Number of countries with national multi-sectoral and interagency coordination (3) Number of countries with sub-national mechanisms with adequate resources**

- 4.1. The Philippines implements its VAW national programme through an inter-ministerial mechanism, the Inter-Agency Council on Violence against Women and their Children (IACVAWC), mandated by the Republic Act 9262 on VAWC. The IACVAWC Strategic Action Plan (2017-2022) serves as the country's NAP, along with the National Advocacy and Communication Plan (2017-2022) that aids its implementation.<sup>260</sup> The IACVAWC is composed of 12 governmental agencies covering health, justice, social welfare, education, employment and investigation. All agencies are directed to avail funds from their respective budgets to implement Republic Act 9262.<sup>261</sup>
- 4.2. The National Advocacy and Communication Plan was developed in 2017 in support of the overall goal of the IACVAWC Strategic Plan. It addresses priority issues under primary prevention, which include the limited delivery of advocacy programmes to reach women in the marginalized and vulnerable sectors, Muslim women and young girls.
- 4.3. All concerned departments, including their attached agencies, offices, state colleges and universities, government-owned and/or -controlled corporations and local government units (LGUs) are expected to prioritize the use of their gender and development budget for services and programmes for VAWC victims/survivors as well as in its prevention (Rule XII, Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act 9262).

#### 5. COLLECT VAW PREVALENCE DATA IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

**Indicator: Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW.**

- 5.1. The Philippines is one of the eight AMS that have completed VAWG prevalence studies. It uses DHS domestic violence modules to conduct its VAWG prevalence surveys and has replicated the DHS studies over time as part of its 2008, 2013 and 2017 NDHS.<sup>262</sup>
- 5.2. The IACVAWC has developed standardized VAW intake, referral and consent forms. These include the types of violence, characteristics of victims/survivors and perpetrators and services needed and accessed. The forms were pre-tested by select VAW service providers in Cebu City in 2019 and also pre-tested in 2020 in Valenzuela City and Region 4-B, with additional comments from Region 4-A. Results and recommendations from the pre-tests served as the basis for enhancing the standard intake forms. A client code is being developed to ensure client confidentiality and easier monitoring of each case.
- 5.3. The Philippine National Police also gathers data on VAW reported to police stations all over the country through

255. Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2021.

256. ASEAN 2016a.

257. PSA and ICF 2018.

258. OECD 2014.

259. PCW 2019a.

260. IACVAWC 2018.

261. OECD 2014.

the Crime Investigation, Reporting and Analysis System (CIRAS). This includes cases under Republic Act 9262 and forms of gender-based violence such as rape, acts of lasciviousness, photo and video voyeurism and sexual harassment, among others.

## 6. DEVELOP AND ADOPT GENDER-RESPONSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO PENALIZE ALL FORMS OF VAW IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH CEDAW.

**Indicator: Number of new/strengthened laws/regulations on EVAW**

- 6.1. Republic Act 9262 takes a comprehensive approach to VAW, providing for investigation, prosecution and punishment of the perpetrator, as well as protection and support for victims/survivors. It covers physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse and acknowledges ‘battered woman syndrome’. The law also recognizes VAW as a ‘public crime’ and provides the possibility for any citizen with knowledge of the crime to file a complaint.
- 6.2. Strong coordination between key implementing agencies and CSOs has led to sustained actions in eliminating VAWC. For example, the Philippine National Police issued General Orders Number DPL-15-02 for “Strengthening and Restructuring of the Women and Children Protection Centre” to handle the investigation of both VAWC and trafficking in persons cases.<sup>263</sup>
- 6.3. The Philippines is an established leader in migration governance. It has sponsored and supported key United Nations resolutions on upholding the rights of migrants and refugees, particularly women and girls, and in addressing trafficking in persons.<sup>264</sup>
- 6.4. In order to strengthen local government accountability in implementing Republic Act 9262, VAWC was integrated in developmental seminars for village officials to improve their skills and prepare them for their mandated tasks and responsibilities.<sup>265</sup>
- 6.5. In 2019, the Safe Spaces Act was signed into law along with its Implementing Rules and Regulations. The law penalizes wolf whistling, catcalling, misogynistic and homophobic slurs, unwanted sexual advances and other forms of sexual harassment in streets, public places, workplaces and schools as well as in online spaces. This law thus expands the definition of sexual harassment from the limited concept of sexual harassment in the workplace and education and training institutions, as defined in the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995.



## 7. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PREVENTIVE INTERVENTIONS THAT ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF VAW, INCLUDING GENDER STEREOTYPES, HARMFUL TRADITIONAL AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. THE INTERVENTIONS SHOULD PROMOTE POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL AND NON-VIOLENT MASCULINITIES.

**Indicator: (1) Number of AMS that implement preventive measures (2) Number of measures implemented**

- 7.1. The Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), in coordination with IACVAWC, leads the annual 18-Day Campaign to End VAW and holds nationwide campaigns inspiring the general public to make a personal commitment to end VAWC. With a focus on primary prevention of VAW, the 2019 campaign activities included: a digital short film competition, ‘Orange Your Icon’ as part of the country’s participation in the UN Secretary-General’s UNiTE to End VAW Campaign, an Anti-VAW expo and online advocacy using the #VAWFreePH.<sup>266</sup> The Philippines also has a policy called “Enjoining LGUs to Conduct Activities in the Observance of the 18-Day Campaign to End VAW”.<sup>267</sup>
- 7.2. The PCW sustains public awareness campaigns on anti-VAW through partnerships with the private sector, such as advertising agencies. Its #KnockOutDomesticViolence Campaign won the 2016 Asia Pacific Tambuli Bronze Award for the Integrated Media Category.<sup>268</sup>
- 7.3. Strengthening and expanding the network of men opposed to violence against women, men involved in reproductive health and shared parenting responsibilities to boost the achievement of gender equality.<sup>269</sup>
- 7.4. A key prevention strategy is strengthening the vocational/technical training needs of women, particularly in traditionally male-dominated courses. Females have slowly outnumbered male enrollees in certain courses, expanding their employment opportunities in such jobs as welding, refrigeration and automotive repair. More and more, women are also enrolled in non-school-based settings or community-based training, a strategy that allows them greater flexibility to attend training.<sup>270</sup>

262. ASEAN 2018.

263. PCW 2019b.

264. Ibid.

265. Ibid.



## 8. DEVELOP NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SOPs ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS ON GENDER-SENSITIVE HANDLING OF VAW CASES, INCLUDING GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

**Indicator: SOP guidelines developed.**

- 8.1. The Philippines reported in the MTR Questionnaire that it has drafted a revised version of the “Guidelines on the Development of a VAW Referral System at the Local Level”, which will be validated through a workshop with various VAW service providers at the national and local levels in the second quarter of the 2020 financial year. There is also a plan to review and update the existing performance standards and assessment tools for VAW that were developed in 2008 with support from UNFPA. These standards are for the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) for the services of LGUs; the Philippines National Police (PNP) for investigation and police services; the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) for psychosocial counselling services; the Department of Justice (DOJ) for prosecution services; and the Department of Health (DOH) for women and children protection units and health services. Moreover, the Women and Children Protection Centre (WCPC) of the PNP is now in the process of developing a “Manual on Crimes and Offences against Women and Children”.
- 8.2. The DSWD provides protective services to victims/survivors of abuse and exploitation including prostitution to enable their rehabilitation, social integration and economic empowerment, through centre-based and community-based interventions. It supports 42 temporary shelters that provide treatment and rehabilitation, group life and home care, health and nutrition, productivity and skills training.<sup>271</sup>
- 8.3. A number of support service mechanisms for victims/survivors of VAWC are being strengthened. For example, LGUs have established Local Committees on Anti-Trafficking and Violence against Women and Their Children (LCAT-VAWC); local gender and development codes were developed and passed in 696 LGUs; VAW desks were established in nearly 90 per cent of the 42,044 barangays nationwide; 94 functional Women and Children Protection Units (WCPUs) have been established in DOH-retained hospitals, and health providers are being trained on recognizing, recording, reporting and referring (4Rs) VAWC in 597 LGUs; and 1,918 Women and Children Desks (WCPDs) have been established in municipal/city police stations, provincial and regional offices and in five national operating units nationwide.<sup>272</sup>
- 8.4. The IACVAWC, through the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) has issued Memorandum Circular No. 2020-006: “Guidelines in Monitoring the Functionality of LCAT-VAWCs”. This is intended to assess the performance of LCAT-VAWCs to serve as the basis for policy and capacity development to strengthen their capability in combating trafficking in persons and eliminating VAWC.
- 8.5. The Philippines has also formulated “Guidelines on the Establishment of VAWC Desks in Public and Private Hospitals”, and it conducts monitoring of the establishment and functionality of Barangay VAW desks and Local Councils for the Protection of Children (LCPCs).<sup>273</sup>
- 8.6. Continuous capacity building for frontline direct service providers—village and local officials, police, social workers, health workers, prosecutors and the judiciary—will be conducted on gender-responsive handling of VAW cases.<sup>274</sup>

### Challenges

- (1) In view of the challenges identified during the pilot testing of the National VAW Documentation System (VAWDocS)—including the high turnover of personnel, resulting in the recurring need to train new staff—its implementation was put on hold. Insufficient training may also cause incorrect or incomplete accomplishment of the standardized forms. Moreover, significant budget and technical resources are needed to implement and sustain the VAWDocS.
- (2) “The Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines (CHRP), civil society organizations, as well as independent international human rights bodies, have expressed concern over the rising and pervasive sexism and violence against women committed by high ranking officials”.<sup>275</sup>
- (3) “Moreover, rampant killings in relation to the war on drugs give another form to gender-based violence. CHRP has documented how the killings affected women and children. It burdens women economically and psychologically, and stigmatized them in communities and from government services. Justice remains elusive for them due to fear or inability (economically or otherwise) to pursue the cases”.<sup>276</sup>
- (4) There is a need to deepen the knowledge and understanding on gender-based violence in emergencies (GBViE) and its impact on the lives of vulnerable persons in armed conflict situations—for example, identifying GBViE considerations and gender-responsive approaches in the context of the conflict in the city of Marawi.<sup>277</sup>
- (5) In the MTR Questionnaire, the Philippines noted that there is still a need to strengthen and deepen collaboration and partnership efforts with CSOs and the private sector in ending VAW.

266. PCW 2019a.

267. PCW 2019b.

268. Ibid.

269. Ibid.

270. UN CEDAW 2015.

271. Ibid.

272. PCW 2019b.

## Singapore

As a member of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), Singapore adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Elimination of Violence against Children in ASEAN in October 2013, underscoring its commitment to eliminate VAWC. Singapore took the lead in establishing the ACWC Network of Social Service Agencies, which facilitates training and partnership of social service agencies among the AMS in preventing, protecting and helping victims/survivors of VAWC. Singapore does not tolerate any form of violence against women and tackles this through a four-pronged strategy: robust legislative framework; multi-stakeholder approach; training and professional competency; and public education and awareness.

Singapore has made progress on the following National Priority Areas (i.e., #4-#8 in the RPA on EVAW).

### 4. DEVELOP AND/OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ON EVAW THROUGH MULTI-SECTORAL AND INTER-AGENCY MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THESE PLANS.

**Indicators: (1) Number of countries with a NAP on EVAW (2) Number of countries with national multi-sectoral and interagency coordination (3) Number of countries with sub-national mechanisms with adequate resources**

- 4.1. Singapore does not have a dedicated NAP on VAW or domestic violence; however, it has an inter-agency mechanism in the Family Violence Dialogue Group, established in 2001 and jointly headed by the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) and the Singapore Police Force (SPF). This comprises the Family Justice Courts (FJC), Singapore Prison Service (SPS), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Education (MoE), Chairpersons of Regional Family Violence Working Groups, National Council of Social Service and social service agencies. It is a strategic development and planning policy group that facilitates work processes among the agencies providing services for families affected by violence. It also coordinates public education efforts and develops new areas for collaboration on family violence.<sup>278</sup> In February 2020, Singapore established a high-level, multi-agency Taskforce on Family Violence. Co-chaired by Ministers of State from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and MSF, this comprises members from government agencies, the courts and community partners. It looks into the challenges faced by various groups experiencing violence and identifies ways the Government can work with community partners to empower victims/survivors and perpetrators alike to break the cycle of violence. The Taskforce also examines how to better create awareness of family violence and enhance delivery of both upstream and downstream services to victims/survivors and perpetrators. The Taskforce will prepare a set of recommendations aimed at tackling family violence by end-2021.<sup>279</sup>

### 5. COLLECT VAW PREVALENCE DATA IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

**Indicator: Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW**

- 5.1. Data on prevalence of intimate partner violence (IPV) is available through the “International Violence against Women Survey: Final Report on Singapore 2013”.<sup>280</sup>

### 6. DEVELOP AND ADOPT GENDER-RESPONSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO PENALIZE ALL FORMS OF VAW IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH CEDAW.

**Indicator: Number of new/strengthened laws/regulations on EVAW**

- 6.1. Under the Women’s Charter, a victim/survivor of family violence may apply to the Court for a personal protection, expedited or domestic exclusion order. The breach of any such order is a criminal offence. The Charter protects the victim and her/his children from a violent family member; in certain cases, the violent family member can be removed from the home.<sup>281</sup>
- 6.2. VAW within and outside a family context is also covered under the Penal Code. This criminalizes acts that cause death and physical assault, sexual violence and wrongful confinement, words or gestures that insult the modesty of the women, all of which carry penalties of a minimum of two years up to ten years of imprisonment and caning, increased to a minimum of three years for committing these crimes against a person under the age of 14.<sup>282</sup>
- 6.3. The Penal Code 2020 criminalizes rape, punishable by a maximum of 20 years’ imprisonment and caning of not less than 12 strokes. Amendments were made to the Penal Code to repeal marital immunity for rape. The full, unqualified repeal of marital immunity for rape will equally protect all women from sexual abuse, whether in a marital relationship or not.

273. Ibid.

274. Ibid.

275. Ibid., p. 8.

276. Ibid.

277. Ibid. This conflict is between the Philippines army and Islamic insurgents.

- 6.4. The Vulnerable Adults Act (2018) protects vulnerable adults who are incapable of protecting themselves from abuse, neglect and self-neglect due to physical or mental disability.<sup>283</sup>
- 6.5. Singapore takes a serious stand against sexual harassment, including workplace sexual harassment. The Protection from Harassment Act (POHA) came into force in November 2014 and provides a legal framework for standards on socially acceptable behaviour within and outside the workplace. In May 2019, amendments were passed to POHA to enhance protection for victims/survivors of harassment. Penalties for offences committed against vulnerable persons and those in intimate partner relationships were enhanced. On 1 June 2020, a dedicated and specialist Protection from Harassment Court (PHC) came into operation. The PHC hears all criminal and civil matters under POHA.<sup>284</sup>
- 6.6. Singapore also reviewed its reservation against CEDAW article 11, paragraph 1 on discrimination in employment and has withdrawn it.<sup>285</sup>

## 7. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PREVENTIVE INTERVENTIONS THAT ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF VAW, INCLUDING GENDER STEREOTYPES, HARMFUL TRADITIONAL AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. THE INTERVENTIONS SHOULD PROMOTE POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL AND NON-VIOLENT MASCULINITIES.

**Indicator: (1) Number of AMS that implement preventive measures (2) Number of measures implemented**

- 7.1. Agencies under the Dialogue Group and Working Groups conduct annual public education initiatives on family violence. Such initiatives aim to raise awareness on family violence and encourage help-seeking behaviour, which is in line with the UN CEDAW recommendation at paragraph 24(c) of the Concluding Comments.<sup>286</sup>
- 7.2. The Infocomm Media Development Authority of Singapore supports programming that furthers positive social values. These have included themes related to behavioural risk factors (e.g., early marriage) and gender biases (e.g., gender stereotyping regarding the professions of women and men). Some examples are “Marry Me”, a light-hearted drama that discussed the reasons women chose to marry late or stay single through the stories of three single women; “Achamillai Achamillai” (Fearless), a talk-show that featured local women who have excelled in various fields such as sports, business and the media despite challenges in their personal and work life; and “Beyond Limits: 8 Singaporean Women”, an info-educational series, which featured exceptional Singaporean women who had blazed a trail to the top of their traditionally male-dominated fields.<sup>287</sup>
- 7.3. The Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore also discourages sex stereotyping by prohibiting the portrayal of any person as a commodity or an object. It also stipulates that all persons (regardless of gender) should be portrayed in a manner that respects their dignity and ensures that all advertisements are legal, decent and truthful.<sup>288</sup>

## 8. DEVELOP NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SOPs ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS ON GENDER-SENSITIVE HANDLING OF VAW CASES, INCLUDING GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

**Indicator: SOP guidelines developed.**

- 8.1. Singapore reportedly has many reporting channels in place for VAWG, including formal and informal channels. These include, for example, the school system and the police. There is also a network of organizations that addresses all types of violence.<sup>289</sup>
- 8.2. Complementing workshops on sexual harassment in the workplace, a handbook was released in January 2011 by the Tripartite Alliance for Fair and Progressive Employment Practices (TAFEP) to guide employers through the grievance-handling process.<sup>290</sup>
- 8.3. Singapore has standard guidelines that provide a common understanding among agencies on how to handle family violence cases and spells out the protocol, procedures, roles and responsibilities of each agency.
- 8.4. Judicial officers are supported by a pool of trained psychologists, social workers and counsellors who give immediate counselling and other necessary support to victims/survivors of family violence. These support staff undergo continuing training and regular supervision. Police officers are trained to be sensitive to the trauma suffered by the victims/survivors of VAW, and there are specific guidelines for them to help those in distress.<sup>291</sup>
- 8.5. Judicial Officers in the Family Justice Courts have a broad range of experience in the areas of law over which they preside, including application of legal provisions on violence against women. They also receive comprehensive continuing judicial education and knowledge management support.<sup>292</sup>

278. UN CEDAW 2016b,

279. Comments on MTR Report, 2021. (Internal document)

280. Bouhours et al. 2013.

281. UN CEDAW 2016b.

282. Ibid.

283. UN HRC 2015c.

284. Ibid.

285. UN CEDAW 2016b.

286. Ibid.

287. Ibid.

288. Ibid.

289. ASEAN 2018.

290. UN CEDAW 2016b.

291. Ibid.

292. Ibid. Singapore’s approach to dealing with victims of family violence is consistent with the recommendations at paragraph 24(b) of the Concluding Comments to provide mandatory training for judges, prosecutors and the police when dealing with cases of violence against women.

## Thailand

The Government of Thailand places great emphasis on addressing violence against women and girls as it is one of the most persistent issues in the country. A recent study, which examined the prevalence of intimate partner violence in four regions by using a standardized questionnaire from the WHO multi country study on women's health and domestic violence, found that 15 per cent of respondents had experienced psychological, physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, which suggests that one in six Thai women have faced intimate partner violence (IPV).<sup>293</sup> Of the 15 per cent of women who reported IPV within the past 12 months, psychological violence was the most common (60–68 per cent), followed by sexual violence (62–63 per cent) and physical violence (52–65 per cent).<sup>294</sup>

Thailand joined other ASEAN Member States in the adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Elimination of Violence against Children in ASEAN in October 2013. It also served as the lead country in drafting the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action of Elimination on Violence against Women, adopted at the 27th ASEAN Summit in November 2015.<sup>295</sup> Currently, it is preparing to enact the Promotion of Family Institution Development and Protection Act as a replacement for the Domestic Violence Victim Protection Act of 2007 in order to address the gaps that have been identified in the previous law.

Thailand is a country coordinator for the strategic development of ASEAN campaigns to eliminate violence against women (EVAW) and its links to the prevention of trafficking in persons (since 2018 – present). (Figure 2)

The country has made progress on the following National Priority Areas (i.e., #4-#8 in the RPA on EVAW).

#### 4. DEVELOP AND/OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ON EVAW THROUGH MULTI-SECTORAL AND INTER-AGENCY MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THESE PLANS.

**Indicators: (1) Number of countries with a NAP on EVAW (2) Number of countries with national multi-sectoral and interagency coordination (3) Number of countries with sub-national mechanisms with adequate resources**

- 4.1. Thailand is in the process of drafting the National Action Plan (NAP) for VAW. The Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development (DWF) under the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) is the coordinating agency for the development of this plan and has conducted a consultation with key agencies and stakeholders. It plans to finalize the draft in 2021 through cooperation between various agencies in the country, including international organizations, and based on the priorities and Key Action Areas as identified in the RPA.<sup>296</sup>
- 4.2. The Twelfth Women Development Strategy (2017-2021) is complemented by The Twelfth Women Development Action Plan (2020–2022). The Plan is currently used as the main guideline for women's development along with the fourth National Human Rights Plan (2019-2023).
- 4.3. The Strategy, developed by the MSDHS, sets out goals, objectives and targets in the area of gender equality that will be steering tools for effective budget allocations.<sup>297</sup> The fourth National Human Rights Plan emphasizes changing social attitudes on gender, promoting integrated utilization of resources for women's welfare and family development to address domestic violence and human trafficking, and developing mechanisms to monitor VAW.<sup>298</sup> Actions include: (i) changing mindsets to eliminate gender stereotypes and promote gender equality through, for example, awareness-raising campaigns and social media and providing training courses for government officials and the public; (ii) empowering women in political and economic participation; (iii) developing laws, policies and measures to mainstream a gender perspective, for example, the development of a handbook on gender-responsive budgeting; (iv) providing protection and assistance for women, especially survivors of VAW; and (v) strengthening mechanisms for promoting gender equality and empowering women.

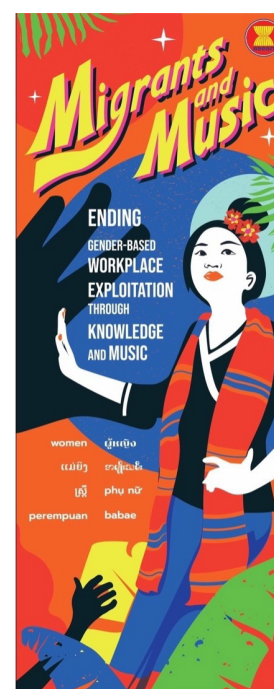


Figure 2. The post of the ASEAN Campaigns to Eliminate Violence against Women and its Links to the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons

293. Chuemchit et al. 2018.

294. Ibid.

295. UN HRC 2016.

296. Government of Thailand 2021a.

297. UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific n.d.

298. Government of Thailand 2019.



- 4.4. In the MTR Questionnaire, Thailand reported that it has formed a subcommittee to formulate an action plan for the elimination of VAW and domestic violence. The envisioned NAP on EVAW will involve the cooperation of government, the private sector and related agencies, including international organizations.
- 4.5. In terms of national mechanisms, the DWF serves as a policy body responsible for the formulation of policy and NAPs as well as support and follow-up of activities initiated under the policy and action plan, including the implementation of monitoring work by competent officer and investigators.<sup>299</sup> It has provided support in terms of budget, knowledge and personnel in the prevention and resolution of violence by building the capacities of domestic violence practitioners—including a multidisciplinary team, investigation officers and family welfare protection system officers—in the targeted areas in order to reduce domestic violence at the provincial and local levels.

## 5. COLLECT VAW PREVALENCE DATA IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

**Indicator: Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW**

- 5.1. Thailand participated in the 2005 WHO Multi-Country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence against Women.<sup>300</sup>
- 5.2. A data information system on violence against children, women and others in the family has been developed as part of a centralized web-based database and dashboard on gender statistics. The DWF, the Social Assistance Centre (Hotline 1300) and the MSDHS also collect and report on the situation and trends of VAW data. Furthermore, in this regard, there has been an attempt to put in place systematic data collection from different organizations involved, such as the Police, the Office of the Attorney-General, the Office of the Judiciary and the Operating Centre for the Protection of Domestic Violence, so that these data can be utilized for further studies and analysis.<sup>301</sup>
6. The DWF collaborated with Thammasat University to create the “User Manual for the Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Violence Database” for system administrators, users at all levels and staff of operations centres for the prevention of domestic violence, both in the central and provincial areas, which have the duty to record incidents of violence within the area.
- 6.1. In 2019, the Social Assistance Centre compiled administrative data from 2016–2019, including statistics on requests for assistance by victims/survivors of violence both within and outside the family.<sup>302</sup>

## 7. DEVELOP AND ADOPT GENDER-RESPONSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO PENALIZE ALL FORMS OF VAW IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH CEDAW.

**Indicator: Number of new/strengthened laws/regulations on EVAW**

- 7.1. Thailand is party to seven of the nine core international human rights treaties and has joined a number of international and regional instruments on the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment, including CEDAW, the BPfA and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.<sup>303</sup> It has also carried out comprehensive reviews of the country’s progress in implementing international laws, such as the national review of the implementation of the BPfA (Beijing +25) 2019 and reports to UN CEDAW.
- 7.2. A new Act on the Promotion of Family Institution Development and Protection—which aims to prevent and reduce domestic violence through social measures on family development, welfare protection, preventive measures and remedy and rehabilitation—has been drafted to improve resources and capabilities on VAW prevention and response. The draft Act also provides for criminal prosecution and protection of women victims/survivors with battered woman syndrome (BWS).<sup>304</sup> While the DWF is developing the readiness of officials to implement the new Act, the Domestic Violence Victims Protection Act B.E. 2550 (2007) is still being enforced.
- 7.3. Other developments also include the Amendment to Article 397 of the Penal Code regarding the punishment of acts involving sexual harassment or intimidation both in public and domestic realms (effective in February 2015) and the measures to prevent and address sexual violations and harassment in the workplace (approved by the Cabinet in June 2015).<sup>305</sup> Subsequently, government agencies have developed internal guidelines to address sexual harassment, including internal complaints procedures, and raised awareness on the issue. Results of the implementation have to be reported annually to the Committee for the Promotion of Gender Equality. The Cabinet further tasked the Ministry of Labour to work towards promoting the adoption and application of such measures in the private sector.

299. Government of Thailand 2014.

300. ASEAN 2018.

301. Government of Thailand 2014; 2019.

302. DWF 2019.

303. Government of Thailand 2019

304. Ibid.

305. UN HRC 2016.

- 7.4. The Criminal Code Amendment Act (27th edition) B.E. 2562 includes a revised definition of the term ‘sexual assault’ to provide more clarity and accuracy based on the nature of the action. Also, some provisions regarding those guilty of sexual assault have been revised in order to improve the efficiency of law enforcement. Lectures about the law on the protection of children, youth and victims/survivors of domestic violence have been given approximately 50 times for 5,000 officials, and presented to investigators three times a year for a total of about 250 people to date.<sup>306</sup>
- 7.5. Thailand reported additional developments in the MTR questionnaire. For example, the Labour Protection Act (No.7) B.E. 2562 (2019) requires the employer to pay the same wage to female and male employees where the work performed is of the same nature, quality and quantity or of equivalent value (equal pay for equal work). The Act also extends maternity leave from 90 days to 98 days, in line with the standards under ILO Convention No.183 on Maternity Protection.
- 7.6. In 2016, the Cabinet extended the duration of stay for migrants who are victims and witnesses for human trafficking cases from one year to two years and granted them permission to work in the country.
- 7.7. The Islamic Committee of Thailand issued new regulations on marriage for people under 17 years, which require the mosque committee to ask that prospective spouses under that age have a letter of approval from the court or judges in Islamic law and/or an approval letter from parents. Further, there must be at least one woman among the three members of the committee.

## **8. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PREVENTIVE INTERVENTIONS THAT ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF VAW, INCLUDING GENDER STEREOTYPES, HARMFUL TRADITIONAL AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. THE INTERVENTIONS SHOULD PROMOTE POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL AND NON-VIOLENT MASCULINITIES.**

### **Indicator: (1) Number of AMS that implement preventive measures (2) Number of measures implemented**

- 8.1. The draft fourth National Human Rights Plan (2019-2023) has an emphasis on changing social attitudes on gender. In addition, Thailand has continued to educate people on their legal rights by providing services through Legal Aid Clinics run by the Ministry of Justice and the Office of People’s Rights Protection and Legal Aid of the Office of Attorney-General.<sup>307</sup>
- 8.2. The measures/guidelines to prevent and solve the problem of sexual harassment or threats in the workplace, prepared in accordance with a Cabinet Resolution on 16 June 2015, are intended to ensure that all personnel regardless of their status are treated with respect and dignity and are free from sexual harassment or threats in the workplace. These have been complemented by more recent prevention measures of the DWF, such as “New Gen Say No” academic seminars; developing and reviewing prevention interventions implemented as part of public-private partnerships (i.e., through MOUs) with various VAW-related networks; and rolling out a family school curriculum in the eight regional learning centres for women and families.<sup>308</sup>
- 8.3. Campaign activities were implemented annually from 2016 through to 2018 to address alcohol abuse as a risk factor for sexual violence. “Happy Songkran, No Alcohol, No Molestation/Sexual Threats” included a forum, conferences and policy interventions designed to limit alcohol consumption and purchase in certain areas, and government agencies were instructed to issue policies or develop measures to solve the problem. Recognizing the gender biases that are also risk factors for VAW, the Gender and Development Research Institute (GDRI) implemented comprehensive interventions to transform attitudes and social values as well as create new cultural awareness that emphasizes equal human dignity for all women and men. Some examples include the “Media Development for Gender Equality” project, which produced knowledge sets in the form of mixed video and animation to disseminate awareness and information on gender equality laws, and various trainings on human rights, on the rights of persons with disabilities and LGBTQI persons and on gender equality and legal assistance for those who are discriminated against. Other interventions involve integration of gender, sexuality education and life skills in the formal education curriculum. Thailand has also made significant progress with initiatives related to Safe Cities and addressing sexual harassment in public transport and on the streets.<sup>309</sup>
- 8.4. The Government seeks to eliminate negative language implying gender stereotypes in academic settings. Accordingly, textbooks used in schools and other academic institutions have been revised for the academic year 2019 to be more gender-sensitive. In addition, a concept note has been published as a guideline for the revision of relevant primary school textbooks.<sup>310</sup>

306. DWF, Thailand 2019.

307. Government of Thailand 2019.

308. DWF, Thailand 2019.

309. Ibid.

310. Government of Thailand 2019.

## 9. DEVELOP NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SOPS ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS ON GENDER-SENSITIVE HANDLING OF VAW CASES, INCLUDING GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

### Indicator: SOP guidelines developed.

- 9.1. Further to the above progress on legal rights, the Ministry of Justice, through provincial Justice Offices and Community Justice Centres, receives complaints and provides primary assistance and referrals for incidents of domestic violence, human trafficking or other cases relating to children, women and the elderly.<sup>311</sup>
- 9.2. Several policies have been developed and measures taken to protect people in vulnerable situations, for example, the establishment of One Stop Crisis Centres (OSCC) with hotline services in 2013 to provide immediate assistance to children, women, the elderly and persons with disabilities who confront problems such as human trafficking, child labour, domestic violence and unplanned pregnancy. In addition, community-based hospital centres have also been set up to provide similar assistance in the community.<sup>312</sup>
- 9.3. There is a service model in the health service for the highland ethnic groups in Pang Mapha Hospital, Mae Hong Son Province, which consists of SOPs for hospital staff to provide services that are sensitive to the cultural and gender dimensions.<sup>313</sup>
- 9.4. Thailand developed various guidelines in 2018 such as those for volunteers in the community to help prevent violence against women and family members through knowledge, skills and understanding. In 2019, it also upgraded the working system and social services by pilot community mechanisms and multidisciplinary teams to protect the welfare of family members and to end violence against children, women and families. In addition, guidelines were developed for the staff, volunteers and lawyer networks who help victims/survivors of violence, including initial assistance, case management, group processes, self and group remedies and writing a petition for justice.
- 9.5. DWF has developed the potential of the Family Development Centre in the Community to be a centre for domestic violence prevention at sub-district level in order to provide surveillance, prevention, initial assistance and home visits for victims/survivors of domestic violence in the area.<sup>314</sup>
- 9.6. DWF has worked in close cooperation with the Safe and Fair Programme through UN Women, the Officer of the Attorney-General's Department of Juvenile and Family Litigation and civil society partners. The aim is to strengthen knowledge, skills and multi-sectoral coordination among service providers from both governmental and non-governmental agencies for quality service delivery to VAW victims/survivors, with special attention to migrant women workers. Workshops on Coordinated Quality Services for Ending Violence against Women provided an extensive overview on existing services and data collection mechanisms in the field of VAW, labour migration and trafficking in persons in order to support the conduct of VAW prevalence survey piloting in provinces where there is a large migrant population.

### Challenges

- (1) Thailand reported that VAW is one of the most persistent challenges it faces, due mainly to the prevailing negative attitudes towards women in parts of Thai society, where women are perceived as the primary caregiver in charge of household tasks and men are considered to have better decision-making abilities than women do.<sup>315</sup>
- (2) Although the MSDHS maintains a website with VAW data from various sources, one of the challenges is the standardization of data collection by different sources.<sup>316</sup>

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311. Ibid.

312. UN HCR 2016.

313. DWF, Thailand 2019.

314. Ibid.

315. ASEAN 2017.

316. Government of Thailand 2019.

## Viet Nam

Viet Nam contributed to ASEAN's adoption of the Regional Action Plan on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children (2015), the ASEAN Consensus on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers (2017), the Joint Declaration on Women, Peace and Security (2017) and finalization of the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2018). VAW, including domestic violence, has gradually been addressed to reduce the incidence. According to a review report on the 10-year implementation of the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control, the number of reported cases is decreasing. Further, preliminary findings of the 2019 national survey on violence against women in Viet Nam show that physical violence decreased from 31.5 per cent in 2010 to 26.1 per cent in 2019, while emotional violence fell from 53.6 per cent in 2010 to 47.0 per cent in 2019.

Viet Nam has made progress on the following National Priority Areas (i.e., #4-#8 in the RPA on EVAW).

### 4. DEVELOP AND/OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ON EVAW THROUGH MULTI-SECTORAL AND INTER-AGENCY MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THESE PLANS.

**Indicators: (1) Number of countries with a National Action Plan on EVAW; (2) Number of countries with national multi-sectoral and interagency coordination; (3) Number of countries with sub-national mechanisms with adequate resources**

- 4.1. Ministries, sectors and localities are implementing VAW prevention and response interventions based on the following legal documents and policies:
  - Decision 2232/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister dated 28 December 2020 on approving the programme "Prevention of and response to GBV for the period 2021-2025" (Programme 2232), which is led by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA), specifically the Department of Gender Equality (DGE).
  - Decision 1863/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister dated 23 December 2019 on approving the National Action Plan (NAP) on Prevention and Control of Violence and Abuse against Children 2020-2025 (NAP 1864), led by MoLISA (Department of Child Affairs).
  - Decision No. 622/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister dated 10 May 2017 on promulgating the NAP to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including targets 5.10 and 16 related to the protection of women and girls (NAP 622), led by the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI).
  - Decision No. 1464/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister dated 22 July 2016 on approving the "National Thematic Project Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response from 2016 to 2020 with a Vision to 2030" (Project 1464), led by MoLISA (DGE).
  - Decision No. 2546/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister dated 31 December 2015 on approving the Human Trafficking Prevention and Combat Programme for 2016-2020 (Programme 130/CP), led by the Criminal Police Department (CO2) in the Ministry of Public Security (MPS).
  - Decision No. 215/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister dated 6 February 2014 on approving the National Action Programme on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control up to 2020 (NAP 215), led by the Department of Family in the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MoCST).
  - Decision No. 235/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister dated 14 February 2015 on approving the Project "Reducing domestic violence in rural areas of Viet Nam in the period 2015-2020", led by the Central Viet Nam Farmers' Union (VFU).
  - Decision No. 468/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister dated 23 March 2016 on approving the project to control sex imbalance at birth for the period 2016-2025, led by the Ministry of Health (MoH).
  - Resolution No. 28/NQ-CP of the Government dated 3 March 2021 on promulgating the 2021-2030 National Strategy on Gender Equality.
- 4.2. The National Plan of Action on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control up to 2020 (NAP 215) was intended to boost the quality and effectiveness of domestic violence prevention and control activities; to generate fundamental changes in domestic violence prevention and control work; to protect and support victims/survivors of domestic violence; and to gradually minimize domestic violence incidents nationwide. This National Action Plan aims at the effective implementation of domestic violence prevention and control activities in Viet Nam.<sup>317</sup>
- 4.3. The National Thematic Project on GBV prevention and response (Project 1464) has the aim of: improving the

317. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam 2014, p. 21.



- mechanisms and policies for the prevention of and response to GBV; enhancing law enforcement; and ensuring that services for the prevention of and response to GBV are implemented simultaneously across the country, to move in the direction of a safe, equal and non-violent society by 2030.<sup>318</sup>
- 4.4. Funds for implementation of the Project are to be allocated from the state budget in the annual budget estimates of the ministries and agencies from the central and local levels. The target programme is to develop the social assistance system for 2016–2020 in accordance with the State budget Law, international aid and assistance and funds mobilized from the communities and other legal sources.<sup>319</sup>
  - 4.5. MoLISA is assigned by the Prime Minister to develop plans for the implementation and coordination of the Project activities and guidance to other ministries, the relevant agencies and the People’s Committees of the provinces and centrally-run cities in steering the implementation of the Project.<sup>320</sup>

## 5. COLLECT VAW PREVALENCE DATA IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

**Indicator: Number of countries that collect VAW prevalence data in line with the identification of international standards jointly agreed by ACWC and ACW.**

- 5.1. Viet Nam collects data on the prevalence of VAW with all three types of data mentioned in the ASEAN Regional Guidelines on VAWG Data Collection and Use. These include: administrative data (regularly and periodically collected by public administrations), prevalence data on violence (collected from GBV surveys) and data on the economic cost of violence (from cost studies and evaluation models).
- 5.2. In 2019, Viet Nam conducted a second national survey on violence against women with the total responses of almost 6,000 women from 63 provinces and cities directly under the central government. Viet Nam is the first country in the world to have conducted a second survey on VAW.<sup>321</sup>
- 5.3. The Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) in collaboration with MoLISA and other relevant agencies has conducted studies, surveys and released publications and statistics on gender. Implementing the Statistical Law, in 2019, MPI issued Circular No.10/TT-BHKDT regulating the national set of statistical indicators for gender development with 78 indicators, which include indicator groups on VAW and social safety. The new statistics indicators will make the collection and reporting on gender equality implementation more feasible than the previous period, thus meeting the current needs for using gender-related data in Viet Nam.<sup>322</sup>
- 5.4. The Vietnam Women’s Union (VWU) has established three Peace House Shelters and ten counselling rooms in ten provinces and cities across the country. It has consulted the ASEAN Regional VAW Data Guidelines to complete a data management software system for cases of VAWC, including modules on domestic violence, sexual abuse and migrant labour. This software is integrated with the data of the hotline and with other social services, serving as a basis for advising VWU in its advocacy for VAW-related issues.<sup>323</sup>

## 6. DEVELOP AND ADOPT GENDER-RESPONSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO PENALIZE ALL FORMS OF VAW IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH CEDAW.

**Indicator: Number of new/strengthened laws/regulations on EVAW**

- 6.1. Following the Gender Equality Law (2006) and the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control (2007) as well as other relevant legal documents, the contents regarding acts of VAW have been incorporated into the Civil Code, the Civil Procedure Code, the Penal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code (2015), the Ordinance on Handling of Administrative Violations and Resolution of the Council of Judges of the Supreme People’s Court.
- 6.2. The Criminal Procedure Code, amended in 2015, provides for some important changes in the protection of victims/survivors of VAW as well as others involved in the proceedings, such as Chapter XXXIV on protection of denunciators of crimes, witnesses, victims/survivors and other participants in legal proceedings. In 2015, the Ministry of Justice conducted a policy review related to the prosecution of sexual violence cases.<sup>324</sup>
- 6.3. The Labour Code (2012) stipulates that “abuse and sexual harassment against workers in the workplace are prohibited”, and employers are also strictly prohibited from mistreating or sexually harassing domestic workers. The revised Labour Code (2019) provides a definition of sexual harassment and prohibited sexual harassment in the workplace. Decree 145/2020/ND-CP also defines the responsibilities of employer and employee in preventing and responding to sexual harassment in the workplace.

318. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam 2019.

319. UN CEDAW 2018d.

320. Ibid.

321. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam 2019.

322. Ibid.

323. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam 2021a.

324. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam 2019.

## 7. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PREVENTIVE INTERVENTIONS THAT ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF VAW, INCLUDING GENDER STEREOTYPES, HARMFUL TRADITIONAL AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. THE INTERVENTIONS SHOULD PROMOTE POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL AND NON-VIOLENT MASCULINITIES.

**Indicator: (1) Number of AMS that implement preventive measures (2) Number of measures implemented**

- 7.1. The Family Development Strategy of Viet Nam to 2020, vision 2030, requires raising awareness on the roles, positions and responsibilities of families and the community in adequately implementing the instructions, guidelines, policies and laws on marriage and the family, gender equality and prevention and control of domestic violence, especially violence against women. In the National Strategy on Gender Equality for 2011-2020, the prevention of GBV is one of the goals to ensure gender equality within the family.<sup>325</sup>
- 7.2. In 2016, the Prime Minister signed Decision No. 21/2016 stipulating multi-sectoral coordination in domestic violence prevention and control. The Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (MoCST), MoLISA, the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Public Security issued an inter-ministerial circular to guide the implementation of activities in educational institutions to promote behaviour-change in the family, including the prevention and control of domestic violence, under the aegis of the national educational system, and regulate the roles and responsibilities of service providers related to domestic violence.<sup>326</sup>
- 7.3. From 2016 to the present, the Government has adopted several initiatives to raise awareness about gender equality and the prevention of and response to VAW. These include the National Action Month on Domestic Violence Prevention and Response, held by the MoCST each June, and the Action Month on Gender Equality and Gender-based Violence, led by MoLISA from 15 November to 15 December every year. The interventions taken through these initiatives include awareness-raising campaigns for the people, local leaders and policymakers, as well as formulating educational and communication materials and intensifying the inspection and supervision of the implementation of gender equality programmes. As a result, local awareness of GBV prevention and control activities in the localities has increased. In particular, people are now more aware of the roles and responsibilities of individuals in its prevention and control.<sup>327</sup>
- 7.4. The Male Advocate Club project,<sup>328</sup> which was implemented in Da Nang City from August 2015 to November 2016, and the model of pioneer men's clubs for gender equality in Ho Chi Minh City, have engaged men's participation in efforts to prevent VAWG in their communities.

## 8. DEVELOP NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SOPS ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS ON GENDER-SENSITIVE HANDLING OF VAW CASES, INCLUDING GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

**Indicator: SOP guidelines developed**

- 8.1. National SOPs: As the focal point for social services for VAW victims/survivors, MoLISA has received assistance from international organizations to develop three materials: (i) Guideline on a procedure framework for providing social service for GBV victims; and (ii) Guideline for minimum standard of shelter; (iii) Guideline for operating a hotline to support GBV victims. These documents will be piloted at selected units before their completion and national-wide application. The materials have been developed based on the UN Essential Services Package (ESP).
- 8.2. Sectoral SOPs: The circular 24/2017/TT-BYT of the Ministry of Health stipulates procedures for receiving or providing medical care and statistical work, as well as for reporting by patients who are victims of domestic violence at health facilities; Decision No. 1814/QĐ-LTBXH dated 18 December 2018 regulated the Interim Standard on Minimum Conditions of Reliable Addresses - Community Shelter (CTC-NTL); Guidelines of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs deal with providing supportive services for overseas Vietnamese who are victims of gender-based violence and/or human trafficking; and Ministry of Justice has developed training materials for legal aid providers on legal aid for domestic violence victims/survivors, a standard risk assessment procedure and other related procedures in the judicial sector.
- 8.3. As of June 2019, the Hotline for National Child Protection and Human Trafficking Prevention (Call Centre 111) had received and provided counselling for 764 human trafficking cases, along with helping to rescue 16 victims/survivors. The authorities have made records and conducted procedures to support returned victims of trafficking in line with regulations and have verified, rescued and received 137 cases of trafficked victims. All these cases received initial support, safe accommodation arrangements, psychological counselling, health care and legal assistance when required. They were reunited with their families and referred to victim support facilities in a safe manner.<sup>329</sup>

<sup>325.</sup> Ibid.

<sup>326.</sup> Ibid.

<sup>327.</sup> Ibid.

<sup>328.</sup> The project was part of the Partners for Prevention (P4P) programme, which was a regional joint programme for the prevention of violence against women and girls (VAWG) in Asia and the Pacific. It was supported by UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and United Nations Volunteers, with financial support from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

## Challenges

- (1) Viet Nam is encountering several challenges in ensuring gender equality and empowering women.
- (2) The number service providers engaged in this work is insufficient and limited in capacity, funding is also limited, and sanctions appear to be ineffective. People's awareness of gender-based violence is limited.<sup>330</sup>
- (3) The Code of Conduct on Sexual Harassment at the Workplace was endorsed by MoLISA and relevant stakeholders but only encouraged for implementation in a few enterprises. Viet Nam does not yet collect data on sexual harassment at work.<sup>331</sup>
- (4) Compiling information and statistics for reporting is still very difficult due to the lack of a sex-disaggregated database and because gender is still not fully mainstreamed into every sector. Systematic collection of comprehensive data on VAW at the national and local levels is also still limited, which is compounded by the lack of support and recovery services for victims/survivors of violence.<sup>332</sup>
- (5) In general, however, the collection of administrative data in general and GBV-related data and EAW implementation in Viet Nam is still limited due to the lack of standard data collection tools and human resources to implement. Viet Nam has no national data on violence among groups of vulnerable women, such as women migrant workers, women with disabilities, elderly women, LBTs, and especially sexual violence in public places; and the situation of women and girls committing suicide or being killed by GBV.<sup>333</sup>
- (6) During the Mid-Term Review of the RPA on EAW National Consultation, some shortcomings in the response to DV were identified including: i) Current medical examination and treatment facilities do not have contingency funds to support DV survivors, and medical staff have not yet received professional training in healthcare for DV survivors. ii) The current social protection facilities are also facing a similar situation with limited policies on finance and human resources training for such kind of facilities iii) Up to now, the government policies on reliable addresses in the community have not been carried out in a synchronous manner by localities.<sup>334</sup>
- (7) In addition, with the current functions and tasks division, there is an overlap in the implementation of activities on prevention and response to domestic violence and gender-based violence between the two ministries: MOLISA is responsible for state management on gender/GBV and main responsibility in implementing related GBV programs and projects while MOCST is responsible for state management of family issues including DV and plays a key role in DV programs and schemes (specifically NPA 215). This makes it difficult to coordinate activities and can lead to overlapping of resources.<sup>335</sup>
- (8) (1) Although Viet Nam's law-making has been fairly well done with many positive features, the enforcement of the law is still limited due to the existing "gender stereotypes" that are quite common even at the community level (including gender stereotypes from victims, perpetrators, recipients of the report and providing initial handling/response) as well as the process of enforcement, applying the law of the judicial branch.



329. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam 2019.

330. Ibid.

331. Ibid.

332. Ibid.

333. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam 2021a.

334. MOCST, Viet Nam 2020.

335. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam 2021a.

## Annex 2 Survey Questionnaire

### Mid-term review of progress on the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women (RPA on EVAW)

Explanatory note: Over the past months, we have gathered information on each country's progress on the implementation of the ASEAN RPA on EVAW through a desk review of available data online. This questionnaire aims to supplement that desk review to gather up-to-date information that may not yet be available online. We are especially interested in any new information you can share regarding initiatives, interventions and achievements against the RPA on EVAW's Priority Areas for the First Five Years that (1) have not yet been previously reported in submissions to CEDAW or as a part of the UPR and BPFA+25; and/or (2) those that were implemented after the RPA on EVAW took effect, up to the present (i.e., between January 2016 and November 2019).

Thank you for taking the time to share all the valuable information that can support us in evaluating and accelerating our collective progress on the RPA on EVAW.

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and designation of person completing the questionnaire: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions	Options
<p><b>A. Progress on Priority Areas (please refer to Section X. Priority Areas for the First Five Years - (b) National Level in the RPA on EVAW)</b></p> <p>1. Do you have a National Action Plan on EVAW? Kindly provide links to the website or documents whenever available.</p> <p>If yes, please specify the title and duration of the latest plan (ex: 2016-2020):            _____            _____            _____</p> <p>If no, please specify when one is expected to be developed:            _____            _____            _____</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p>2. Are you collecting nationally representative VAW prevalence data? Kindly provide links to the website or reports whenever available.</p> <p>If yes, please specify the title and the latest year it was collected:            _____            _____            _____</p> <p>If no, please specify when it is expected to be collected:            _____            _____            _____</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>



Questions	Options
<p>3. Please list all <i>new</i> gender-responsive laws to penalize all forms of VAW in full compliance with CEDAW that have been developed and/or amended after the development of the RPA on EVAW; <i>only those</i> between <b>January 2016 and November 2019</b>. Kindly provide links to the website or policies whenever available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>	
<p>4. Please list all preventive interventions that address the root causes of VAW (ex: transforming gender stereotypes; halting harmful traditional and religious practices; promoting positive, respectful and non-violent masculinities) implemented after the development of the RPA on EVAW; <i>only those</i> between <b>January 2016 and November 2019</b>. Also include behavior change communication campaigns conducted during this period. Kindly provide links to the website or materials whenever available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>	
<p>5. Please list all new national guidelines for SOPs on performance standards for service providers on gender-sensitive handling of VAW cases (ex: guidelines for support services for victims/survivors; administration of justice) developed after the development of the RPA on EVAW; <i>only those</i> between <b>January 2016 and November 2019</b>. Kindly provide links to the website or materials whenever available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>	

B. Progress on Key Actions		Actions completed		
6.	Regarding <b>Action 1: Prevention</b> , kindly select which Key Actions from number 1 to 14 have been undertaken in the period since the RPA on EVAW implementation from January 2016 to November 2019. Please share details below.  _____  _____  _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> 13 <input type="checkbox"/> 14
7.	Regarding <b>Action 2: Protection and Support Services for Victims/Survivors</b> , kindly select which Key Actions from number 15 to 23 have been undertaken in the period since the RPA on EVAW implementation from January 2016 to November 2019. Please share details below.  _____  _____  _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 <input type="checkbox"/> 16 <input type="checkbox"/> 17 <input type="checkbox"/> 18	<input type="checkbox"/> 19 <input type="checkbox"/> 21 <input type="checkbox"/> 22 <input type="checkbox"/> 23	
8.	Regarding <b>Action 3: Legal Framework, Prosecution and Justice System</b> , kindly select which Key Actions from number 24 to 37 have been undertaken in the period since the RPA on EVAW implementation from January 2016 to November 2019. Please share details below.  _____  _____  _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 <input type="checkbox"/> 26 <input type="checkbox"/> 27 <input type="checkbox"/> 28	<input type="checkbox"/> 29 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 <input type="checkbox"/> 31 <input type="checkbox"/> 32 <input type="checkbox"/> 33	<input type="checkbox"/> 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 <input type="checkbox"/> 36 <input type="checkbox"/> 37
9.	Regarding <b>Action 4: Capacity Building</b> , kindly select which Key Actions from number 38 to 43 have been undertaken in the period since the RPA on EVAW implementation from January 2016 to November 2019. Please share details below.  _____  _____  _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 38 <input type="checkbox"/> 39 <input type="checkbox"/> 40	<input type="checkbox"/> 41 <input type="checkbox"/> 42 <input type="checkbox"/> 43	
10.	Regarding <b>Action 5: Research and Data Collection</b> , kindly select which Key Actions from number 44 to 48 have been undertaken in the period since the RPA on EVAW implementation from January 2016 to November 2019. Please share details below.  _____  _____  _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 <input type="checkbox"/> 46 <input type="checkbox"/> 47 <input type="checkbox"/> 48		

<p>11. Regarding <b>Action 6: Management, Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation</b>, kindly select which Key Actions from number 49 to 55 have been undertaken in the period since the RPA on EVAW implementation from January 2016 to November 2019. Please share details below.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 49 <input type="checkbox"/> 50 <input type="checkbox"/> 51 <input type="checkbox"/> 52	<input type="checkbox"/> 53 <input type="checkbox"/> 54 <input type="checkbox"/> 55	
<p>12. Regarding <b>Action 7: Partnership and Collaboration</b>, kindly select which Key Actions from number 56 to 61 have been undertaken in the period since the RPA on EVAW implementation from January 2016 to November 2019. Please share details below.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 56 <input type="checkbox"/> 57 <input type="checkbox"/> 58	<input type="checkbox"/> 59 <input type="checkbox"/> 60 <input type="checkbox"/> 61	
<p>13. Regarding <b>Action 8: Review and Communications</b>, kindly select which Key Actions from number 62 to 66 have been undertaken in the period since the RPA on EVAW implementation from January 2016 to November 2019. Please share details below.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 62 <input type="checkbox"/> 63 <input type="checkbox"/> 64	<input type="checkbox"/> 65 <input type="checkbox"/> 66	

### C. Learning and Ways Forward

14. What has worked in your efforts to implement the RPA on VAW? i.e., what are some promising practices and approaches you employed to achieve results on the RPA on EVAW?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
15. Which one/s out of the 8 categories of Key Actions in the RPA on EVAW have been more difficult to implement? Why?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
16. What are other outstanding challenges to implementation (other than regarding financial resources)?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
17. Please list some key actions taken to decrease the acceptability of VAW among the country's general population, thus reducing one of the main risk factors for VAW.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_





## Annex 3.

# Guidance Note for the National Consultations for Mid-term Review of the Progress on the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Ending Violence against Women and Girls (RPA on ERAW)

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