



SAFE AND FAIR

A PRACTICAL GUIDE:

Developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for a Coordinated Response to Violence against Women, including women migrant workers



**Spotlight
Initiative**



A Practical Guide: Developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for a Coordinated Response to Violence against Women, including women migrant workers

This guidance document for SOPs draws on the work of many people and organisations working to prevent and respond to violence against women, including women migrant workers.

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The development of the SOPs guidance is the outcome of in-depth cooperation and consultation with partners across countries in ASEAN and in particular Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. We thank all partners for engaging in in-depth conversations with us and for sharing experiences and lessons learnt. It is their experiences that assisted in the development of this document.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ESP	Essential Services Package for Women Subject to Violence
EU	European Union
GBV	Gender-based Violence
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAPVAW	National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
TIP	Trafficking in Person
TWGG-GBV	Technical Working Group on Gender, Gender-based Violence
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VAW	Violence against Women



Photo: UN Women/Piyavit Thongsaa-Ard

INTRODUCTION

Women in Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries are increasingly migrating for work, which is a crucial source of empowerment for women as they make vital social and economic contributions to their families, communities, countries of origin and the destination countries in which they work.¹ However, throughout the migration cycle, women migrant workers are disproportionately at risk of violence, trafficking, abuse and exploitation.²

Whether migrating through regular or irregular channels, women migrant workers often face the risk of violence and abuse from intermediaries and employers, as well as from partners and others. They experience intersectional forms of discrimination through the job sector that they are in, the socioeconomic strata that they come from, their gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, legal status (or lack thereof), their age, whether or not they are pregnant, marital status and the language that they speak.

Violence against women migrant workers is just a part of the broader spectrum of violence against women and the cultural and gender norms that drive it. Such cultural and gender norms – including the use of gender-specific restrictions and bans that prohibit the migration of women – also impact the opportunities available to women, limiting their ability to access regular migration channels and decent work. Women migrant workers survivors of violence face multiple challenges while seeking justice or accessing essential services. Due to a lack of access to protection and support services, the absence of protection orders, limited referral networks and coordination mechanisms, lack of language interpreters, fear of losing custody of their children, as well as fear of deportation or of losing their jobs, many migrant women suffer in silence.

Violence against women (VAW) is defined as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, the physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women. This includes the threat of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in her public or private life. VAW encompasses but is not limited to physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence occurring within the family sphere, in the general community or violence perpetrated or condoned by governments.³ Gender-based violence (GBV) against women is violence that is directed against a woman simply because she is a woman, or violence that affects women disproportionately.⁴

VAW negatively affects every aspect of survivors' lives, including their health, educational achievement, parenting and economic and political participation. It also has significant detrimental impacts on children, families, communities, and societies at large, including important costs for workplaces and public budgets.⁵

The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women), in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), are currently implementing the Safe and Fair programme in the ASEAN region. *'Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers' rights and opportunities in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region'* aims at reducing the vulnerabilities of women migrant workers to violence and trafficking through improved access to information and well-coordinated, gender-responsive services. The programme is part of the 'Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls', a global, multi-year initiative between the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN).

The aim of the programme is to ensure coordinated responses to VAW are recognised internationally as essential to the development of laws, policies, procedures and services that support victim safety and autonomy, while holding offenders accountable for violence. Coordinated response is a method of systematically identifying gaps between what survivors need and what systems provide. A group of multisectoral organisations – led by both government and civil society organisations – participate in the process of identifying gaps in the response to VAW and in developing strategies, tools and processes that directly address those gaps. One common outcome of a coordinated response is the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) based on knowledge gained from multiple and different methods of inquiry. This guidance provides a roadmap for understanding and applying coordinated responses as an organising method for developing SOPs for VAW that reflect migrant women's actual needs and lived experiences.

As such, Safe and Fair has developed this guidance for Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as an essential tool to make sure a coordinated response to VAW, including women migrant workers, is put in place. Because of the multi-faceted nature of VAW and the specific challenges and needs of women migrant workers, coordinated approaches to addressing it are considered more effective than when different actors work in isolation to address the issue. To be most effective, coordinated approaches to VAW including women migrant workers' responses require clearly defined SOPs in line with global guidance on quality coordinated responses. SOPs should be also in line with international standards and approaches on labour migration including International Labour Standards and the UN Convention of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Family.

The development of the SOPs guidance is the outcome of in-depth cooperation and consultation with partners across countries in ASEAN and in particular Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. This guidance for SOPs is designed for service providers, based on service providers' experiences and lessons learnt and is not meant to be static. It must be regularly updated to ensure the referral pathways are functioning and relevant to the current context and situation of women subject to violence, including women migrant workers. This includes during times of crisis or during pandemics such as COVID-19. In these times the SOPs must be reviewed to ensure services are operational and function regularly.



Photo: UN Women/Staton Winter

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS GUIDANCE

Safe and Fair has prioritised the development of SOPs for coordinated responses to provide quality essential services for women subject to VAW including women migrant workers. Thus, this guidance note focuses on a coordinated response that includes key actors in government and civil society in police and justice, health, essential social services linking with migration actors such as labor ministries, migrant resource organizations, civil society organisations and embassies that can contribute to the improved response to women migrant workers. It does not intend to develop parallel systems, but to ensure that women migrant workers are addressed in a coordinated response. If a coordination mechanism already exists, it can be reviewed and updated to include women migrant workers or other at-risk or marginalised groups. If a new SOP is being developed, it can ensure these groups are included in its development.

While the guidance does not apply to violence against children (such as child abuse), it recognises that many women including migrant workers subject to VAW are parents – and their children’s safety and wellbeing often impact their parenting, decision-making, help-seeking efforts, actions done to address their safety and accessing and participation in services and interventions.

The guidance in this document implements the principles and guidance from the Essential Services Package (ESP) for Women Subject to Violence: Core Elements and Quality Guidelines, a joint tool developed by UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNODC and UNDP, identifying an overall framework for implementing essential services.⁶ Research and practice underlines that the way services are provided has a significant impact on their effectiveness.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

WHAT ARE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES?

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are a formal agreed-upon document that outlines specific procedures and agreements between the different stakeholders participating in a coordinated response to VAW. The SOPs must address all women including women migrant workers.

The content of the SOPs should reflect the roles and responsibilities of the individual organisations involved, the plan of action and essentially should describe how to 'operationalise' a coordinated response in line with the Guiding Principles for Essential Services for Women subject to Violence.⁷ SOPs are critical to establish formal, interagency and institutional agreed ways of working and cooperating in practical terms. They are the essence of working across agencies in safe ways on behalf of survivors. SOPs are the practical infrastructure needed before physical infrastructures are built- such as physical buildings to house crisis response teams, multi-disciplinary teams, etc.

HOW DO WE DEVELOP SOPs?

SOPs are developed using a collaborative and consultative process, involving all partners/relevant actors in the coordinated response. Although time-consuming, the consultative process is important to ensure consensus and shared ownership among coordinated response members and more importantly, to ensure that SOPs respond to the lived experiences of women, including women migrant workers. The process of developing SOPs is as important as the final SOPs product itself. The process itself can be considered an intervention, engaging all relevant actors and requiring collaboration, inter-organisational and inter-sectoral dialogue, knowledge-building, community participation and negotiation, thus increasing all participants' understanding of VAW prevention and response. The following are steps that have been identified as critical in the development of SOPs.⁸

Developing local SOPs in Mae Sot, Thailand

The development and updating of SOPs to address VAW, including women migrant workers, are occurring in Mae Sot Province, Thailand. This process was initiated by a group of key actors including the Provincial Office of Social Development and Human Security including the One Stop Service Center, the Mae Sot Hospital, the Police and Office of the Attorney General, among others. The role of CSOs was identified as critical to providing quality services and to participate in coordination of services. A draft SOP was developed and consulted with key actors and is currently being finalized. It identifies key principles, roles and responsibilities of key actors and a referral pathway. The process is on-going recognizing that: "to get it right takes time."

Table 1: Steps in Developing SOPs

1	Convene a small group of multi-sectoral stakeholders to manage the overall process of developing the SOPs. This small group must include the government body or entity that has the authority for leading the Coordination Mechanism and representatives from key sectors such as health, police and justice, social services, migration from both government and civil society.
2	Set a timeline and parameters for the SOPs development process, including who should be consulted and over what timeframe.
3	Prioritise gathering input from victims/survivors who are migrant women.
4	Develop an initial draft SOPs that outlines the content described below. Developing the draft will require a review of laws, policies, action plans and interviews with key actors.
5	Present/distribute the draft to a wider group of actors participating (or expected to participate) in coordinated response for consultation and discussion.
6	Conduct a series of carefully-managed but inclusive meetings with a wider group of key actors in each of these sectors (government actors such as health, police and justices, shelters, psycho-social support, One-Stop Service Centers, NGOs working on VAW and/or women migrant workers, migrant resource organizations and others) to go through the draft SOPs section by section to discuss each section and reach an agreement. During this process, it is important to be constantly aware of the key principles for quality essential services to ensure these are adhered to in the development of the SOPs.
7	Revise the SOPs after each meeting to reflect agreements reached until the draft is finalised.
8	Mark completion of the process by inviting key actors and stakeholders to a meeting or other event where key actors will sign the document on behalf of their agency/organisation to indicate their commitment.
9	Disseminate copies of the SOPs and information about them to all actors involved in the coordinated response. It is likely that a series of trainings will be required.
10	Monitor implementation of the SOPs using feedback from service providers, victims/survivors to identify gaps between what victims/survivors need from the system and how the SOPs guide service providers to intervene.

WHAT SHOULD AN SOP INCLUDE?

The specific undertakings in the SOPs will vary according to what the precise focus and functions of the coordinated response are. In addition, each coordinated response will discover different gaps in the system of response to VAW, based on local conditions, customs, systems and practices. While the guidance below represents best practices developed in communities around the world, implementation of any practice requires close monitoring and engagement with victims/survivors to ensure that their needs are being fully met. In addition, any new practice should be monitored for unintended consequences that could compromise the safety of victims/survivors.

A strong SOP document should include the following components:⁹

Sample 1: Components of a Strong SOP

1. *Description of the purpose and scope of the SOPs*
2. *Groups and settings the SOPs relates to*
3. *Definitions and explanations of any key terms*
4. *Guiding principles*
5. *Reporting and referral mechanism*
6. *Responsibilities for provision of essential services*
7. *Principles and mechanism for documentation and information sharing*
8. *Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms*
9. *Coordination mechanism for service providers*
10. *Key protocols or forms should be included in the annexes*

Source: Adapted from Establishing Gender-Based Violence Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Multi-Sectoral and Inter-Organisational Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Settings.

The following is a description of each recommended components of an SOP and guidance for the development of that component of the SOPs.

COMPONENT 1: DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE SOPs

In this component, the SOPs will include a description of the purpose and the scope of the SOPs. The purpose will generally be to describe the procedures and roles and responsibilities of the key actors in the coordination mechanisms for responding to VAW including women migrant workers.

The scope of the guidelines will clearly define who is included such as government agencies and departments, community services organisations, or other groups in the main response areas: police and justice, health, essential social services and other key actors in labour and migration, such as embassies, or other sectors. The scope should provide a statement about any standards or guidance nationally or internationally the SOPs are aligned with and/or guided by.

Sample 2: Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure is to describe the clear procedures, roles and responsibilities for each actor involved in the coordinated response to prevention and response of VAW including migrant workers. The SOPs describe the minimum procedures for response and prevention of VAW including which service providers (state and non-state) will be responsible in the main response sectors of Health, Police and Justice and Social Services, migrant services organisations and embassies.

COMPONENT 2: GROUPS AND SETTINGS THE SOPs RELATES

In this component, the group and setting that are specifically targeted by the SOPs must be clearly defined. The settings for the SOPs could be a geographic location, or a population of people. It is important to define these clearly because different service providers and/or resources exist in different settings or communities. It is also important for including the appropriate and available service providers.

Sample 3: Groups and Settings Statement

These SOPs are for X Province specifically focusing on responding to VAW including migrant workers

COMPONENT 3: DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS OF ANY KEY TERMS¹⁰

In this component, the SOPs must include common definitions and any key terms. This helps to identify a common language, guide the groups thinking and provide a foundation for a common understanding of VAW including migrant workers. Following is a list of common terms guided by international definitions. This could be impacted by how they are defined in the laws of the country. In addition to common terms, there are also incident definitions that must be considered in data collection (See Component 7).

Violence against women:

- Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.¹¹
- Violence against women is manifested in a continuum of multiple, interrelated and sometimes recurring forms, encompassing, but not limited to:
- Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women and girls, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation.
- Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and girls and sexual exploitation of women and girls.

Gender-based violence:

- An umbrella term for violence directed toward or disproportionately affecting someone because of their actual or perceived gender identity.
- The term “gender-based violence” (GBV) is primarily used to underscore the fact that structural, gender-based power differentials around the world place women and girls at risk for multiple forms of violence.
- This includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. While women and girls suffer disproportionately from GBV, men and boys can also be targeted.
- The term is also used by some actors to describe targeted violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) populations, in these cases when referencing violence related to norms of masculinity/ femininity and/or gender norms.¹²

Intimate partner violence (IPV):

- IPV is the most common form of violence experienced by women globally and includes a range of sexually, psychologically and physically coercive acts used against adult and adolescent women by a current or former intimate partner, without her consent.
- Physical violence involves intentionally using physical force, strength or a weapon to harm or injure the woman.
- Sexual violence includes abusive sexual contact, making a woman engage in a sexual act without her consent, and attempted or completed sex acts with a woman who is ill, disabled, under pressure or under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
- Psychological violence includes controlling or isolating the woman and humiliating or embarrassing her. Economic violence includes denying a woman access to and control over basic resources.¹³

Trafficking in persons:

- The act of: recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons; by means of: the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person.
- Trafficking in persons is often conducted for the purpose of exploitation, which includes, at a minimum: the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.¹⁴

Violence and harassment in the world of work:

- A range of unacceptable behaviours and practices, or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm, and includes gender-based violence and harassment.¹⁵

World of work:

Refers to circumstances in the course of, linked with or arising out of work:

- In the workplace, including public and private spaces where they are a place of work
- In places where the worker is paid, takes a rest break or a meal, or uses sanitary, washing and changing facilities
- During work-related trips, travel, training, events or social activities
- Through work-related communications, including those enabled by information and communication technologies
- In employer-provided accommodation
- When commuting to and from work.¹⁶



Survivor:

- Survivor is a term for the individual who is subjected to violence to abuse. Sometimes they may be referred to as victims. The term ‘survivor’ is preferred to the term ‘victim’ to reinforce the agency and empowerment of affected women and girls.¹⁷ The use of the term “victim” should be used however, in legal and court situations.

Perpetrator:

- A person who has perpetrated gender-based violence against women.¹⁸

Migrant Worker:

- A person who is to be, or has been engaged in, a remunerated activity in a state of which he or she is not a national.
- Regular migration is a cross-border movement that takes place within the regulatory norms of the countries of origin, transit and destination. See ‘Documented migration’.

Documented Migrant Worker:

- Also referred to as ‘regular migrant worker’.¹⁹ This term refers to a migrant worker authorised to enter, to stay and to engage in a remunerated activity in the state of employment pursuant to the law of that state and to international agreements to which that state is a party.
- In some cases this refers to a migrant worker having authority to leave her or his country. The rights and permissions afforded document or regular migrant workers may, under certain conditions, be granted to members of their families. See also ‘Undocumented Migrant Worker’.

Undocumented Migrant Worker:

- Also referred to as “irregular-status migrant worker” or “migrant workers in an irregular situation”, this term refers to a migrant worker without authorisation to enter, to stay and to engage in a remunerated activity in the State of employment pursuant to the law of that

State and to international agreements to which that State is a party.

- In some cases, this refers to a migrant worker not having authority to leave her or his country. See also “Documented migrant worker”.²⁰

Stakeholders:

- All government and civil society organisations and agencies that have a role in responding to violence against women and girls at all levels of government and civil society.
- Key stakeholders include victims and survivors and their representatives, social services, health care sector, legal aid providers, police, prosecutors, judges, child protection agencies, and the education sector, among others.²¹
- Other stakeholders are also relevant in the response to violence against women migrant workers, such as migration actors, consular staff and migration resource centers. Those actors have a key role to play in referring cases of violence to specialized VAW actors, but need specialized training to properly and sensitively handle and refer cases of VAW.

Essential services:

- Encompass a core set of services provided by the health care, social service, police and justice sectors. The services must, at a minimum, secure the rights, safety and well-being of any woman or girl who experiences gender-based violence.²²

Multi-disciplinary response teams:

- Groups of stakeholders who have entered into agreements to work in a coordinated manner to respond to violence against women and girls within a community. These teams are focused on ensuring an effective response to the individual.²³

Survivor-centered approach:

- A survivor-centred approach to violence against women seeks to empower the survivor by prioritising her rights, needs and wishes. It means that any engagement (response or prevention) prioritises the safety, autonomous decision-making, consent, and confidentiality of the survivor. Survivor-centered approaches mean consulting survivors as experts throughout the design and implementation of SOPs and their components, from policies to specific forms and tools that may be used with survivors. It also means continually seeking input from survivors (through sensitive and safe interviews, focus groups), about how services are being implemented. It also means ensuring that survivors have access to appropriate, accessible and good quality services including: 1) Healthcare; 2) Psychological and social support; 3) Security, and 4) Legal services.²⁴

VAW referral pathway:

- An agreed framework that facilitates stakeholders to have information on how to respond to VAW cases and to guide survivors of VAW on where to seek assistance and what services are available at different referral points such as medical care, psycho-social support, police assistance and legal/justice support.^{25, 26}



COMPONENT 4: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In this component, the SOPs should clearly define the agreed upon guiding principles. Key to responding to VAW including women migrant workers and maintaining their safety and well-being is to understand the gendered nature of violence, its causes and consequences and providing services within a culture of women's empowerment, assisting women to consider the range of choices available and supporting their decisions.²⁷ The unique experiences of women migrant workers affected by VAW and the specific barriers they face when seeking services must be taken into account. Below are key guiding principles to be applied when essential services are provided to women survivors of violence, including VAW including women migrant workers.

- **A rights-based approach:** Recognises that states have a primary responsibility to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of women. VAW is a violation of women's human rights, particularly her right to a life free from fear and violence. This calls for services that prioritise the safety and well-being of women and treat them with dignity, respect and sensitivity, providing the rights attainable standards of service. It also includes an understanding that women migrant workers have a right to access services and protections, no matter their migration status.
- **Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment:** Gender inequality and discrimination as both a root cause and consequence of VAW. Services must ensure that VAW will not be condoned, tolerated, or perpetuated. Services must promote women's agency where women are entitled to make their own decisions, including decisions that refuse essential services.

- **Culturally and age-appropriate and sensitive:** Essential services must respond to the individual circumstances and life experiences of women considering their age, identity, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity and language preferences and family structure. Essential services must also respond appropriately to women who face multiple forms of discrimination.
- **Victim/survivor centred:** Placing the rights, needs and desires of women at the centre of focus of service delivery. This requires the consideration of the multiple needs of victims and survivors, the various risks and vulnerabilities, the impact of decisions and actions taken and ensures that actions are tailored to the unique requirements of each individual woman and responds to her wishes. For example, women migrant workers must be made aware of any mandatory reporting requirements to police or justice authorities before consenting to services so they understand any consequences and can make an informed decision.
- **Safety is paramount:** Essential services must prioritise the safety and security of women migrant workers affected by VAW and avoid causing further harm. For women migrant workers, this means recognising and addressing risks such as living arrangements near perpetrator, stigma and discrimination from family members or others, laws and policies related to migration and access to justice and any risks because of their migration status in terms of documentation and parenting arrangements that generate or perpetuate danger for migrant women mothers or their children.
- **Perpetrator accountability:** Where appropriate, hold perpetrators accountable. For those victims/survivors who wish to pursue justice in the court system, provide meaningful access, promote her capacity of acting or exerting her agency, while ensuring that the burden or onus of seeking justice is not placed on her but the state. Because not all victims wish to participate in the criminal justice system, other means of safety and accountability are also essential, including easy access to enforceable protection order mechanisms and perpetrator programs aimed at changing belief systems that facilitate violence. Holding perpetrators accountable may require linkages between countries of origin and destination if the victim/survivor has returned home and wants to seek access to justice for VAW in another country where she had migrated to work.

Research and practice suggest how services are delivered have a significant impact on their effectiveness.

The overlapping Guiding Principles must underpin the delivery and coordination of all essential services.²⁸ As SOPs are developed, it must be considered how these principles are operationalised.

PRACTICAL TIPS TO OPERATIONALISE THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Always ensure the safety/security of the victim/survivor and her family

- Survivors need to be safe physically and emotionally. She may be frightened and need re-assurance of her individual safety
- She may also need immediate safety through assistance from community leaders, police, protection agencies or others
- She may need assistance with developing a safety plan to help reduce her risk of further violence
- Women migrant workers that are separated from family and/or support networks might need immediate access to safe, free and secure accommodation for themselves and their children as their perpetrator may be part of her community or workplace
- Consideration of her children's safety and her desire to maintain custody of her children must also be made.

Always respect the privacy and confidentiality of the affected person(s) and their families

- Conduct interviews in private settings
- For female victims/survivors, always try to conduct interviews and examinations with female staff, including interpreters who have been trained to work with cases of violence against women migrant workers
- Information about the victim/survivor can only be shared if she gives her informed and specific consent. Victims/survivors must be the ones to decide what they want to keep confidential
- If she gives consent, share only pertinent and relevant information with others for the purpose of helping the survivor, such as referring her for services. This applies to communications with the victim/survivor when she returns home
- All written information about survivors/victims must be maintained in secure, locked files.

Respect the victim/survivor's choices, wishes, rights and dignity

- Respect the wishes, choices, rights and dignity of the victim/survivor
- Be respectful, maintain a non-judgmental manner. Do not laugh or show any disrespect for the individual or her culture, family, or situation
- Be patient; do not press for more information if the victim/survivor is not ready to speak about her experience
- Ask only relevant questions. (For example, the status of the virginity of the victim/survivor is not relevant)
- Avoid requiring the victim/survivor to repeat the story in multiple interviews
- Do not question what the victim/survivor is saying.

Ensure non-discrimination in all interactions with survivors/victims and in all service provisions

- Provide essential services to all women regardless of their age, identity, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity and language preferences
- Provide services in an accessible format including removing physical barriers, communication barriers and others
- Make available interpretation so that survivors can communicate in the language most familiar to them
- Do not blame the survivor for the violence she has experienced
- Ensure survivors have access to legal services and equal access to justice remedies for survivors and perpetrators are to be held accountable
- Train service providers (health, justice and policing, social services) on culturally appropriate service provision to address the many psychological, physical and social care needs of migrant women survivors of VAWG understanding the unique situations they face
- Provide services in places that are convenient for women migrant workers to reach
- Ensure that hotlines or other communication methods are in multiple languages.

COMPONENT 5: REPORTING AND REFERRAL MECHANISM

In this component, the reporting and referral mechanism for responding to VAW including women migrant workers must be described. A survivor has the freedom and the right to disclose (or not) an incident to anyone. She may disclose her experience to a trusted family member or friend. She may seek help from a trusted individual or organisation in the community. She might choose to seek some form of legal protection and/or redress by making an 'official report' to police, her employer, or others. She may report the violence to a migrant resource organization or an embassy official that is not a specialist in responding to VAW.

To ensure that the first place she chooses to seek help is the 'right door', anyone the survivor talks about her experience has a responsibility to give clear and complete information about services available, the risks and benefits to the services and to support her through the process. If the service provider is not a VAW specialist, it is important for them to refer the survivor to an appropriate service provider subject to her agreement.

This means that service providers must be knowledgeable about available services and have established processes for referrals. The suggested help-seeking method and the referral pathway for a VAW migrant worker response, is illustrated below in the Referral Pathway section.

MANDATORY REPORTING

Mandatory reporting refers to legislation passed by some countries or states that require individual or designated individuals such as healthcare providers to report any incident of actual or suspected domestic violence or intimate partner violence or to report an undocumented worker to immigration authorities. If there are mandatory reporting laws, policies, or other requirements of the country, these should be included here.

In general, it is good practice to separate service delivery and immigration enforcement so victims/survivors are not afraid to seek services; and for adult women to be permitted to make the decision about reporting to police or other authorities except in emergency situations. For survivors of VAW including women migrant workers, it is important to inform the survivor of any reporting requirements (police, immigration, etc.) so she can assess any consequences to her and then she is permitted to decide if she wants to proceed based on full understanding.

If mandatory reporting procedures are in place in the country or your agency, the following steps should be followed:

- Informing affected victim/survivor about the requirement to report (police, immigration, etc.) before she discloses information you are required to report
- Permit her to assess the consequences and decide if she wants to disclose information to you based on this information.

If she decides to disclose to you with a full understanding of the consequences, then you should:

- Make the required report to the relevant authority
- Follow up after the report is made
- Support, assist and keep the survivor informed - including advocating for her through the investigation and other procedures that may take place after the report is made.

HELP-SEEKING AND REFERRAL PATHWAY

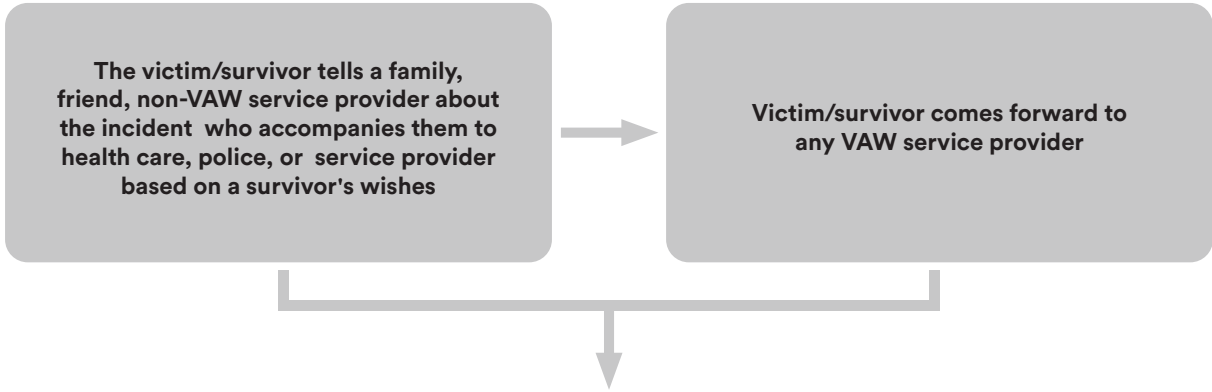
A woman survivor of violence, including a woman migrant worker, may enter the help-seeking system at multiple entry points. To ensure that ‘the first door is the right door’, all service providers must be able to provide supportive firstline support, be aware of their own capacities and understand the roles and responsibilities of other service providers. Applying this approach, it is helpful to identify a referral pathway for survivors of VAW to access different services based on their needs and wishes.

Not all VAW survivors want or need assistance. Many survivors will not need or ask for support. For some, services such as urgent health care, forensic examinations, psycho-social support and other social services such as safe accommodation, economic support, material support will be of benefit.

In the referral pathway, it is important to assess with the woman her immediate and longer-term needs and response. Following is a sample help-seeking and referral pathway for consideration. This is a summary pathway and the roles and responsibilities of the service providers are detailed in Component 6: Responsibilities for Provision of Essential Services. An important companion to the Referral Pathway is a [Service Directory](#) where the detailed information is available with locations, hours, types of services and other information for referrals.

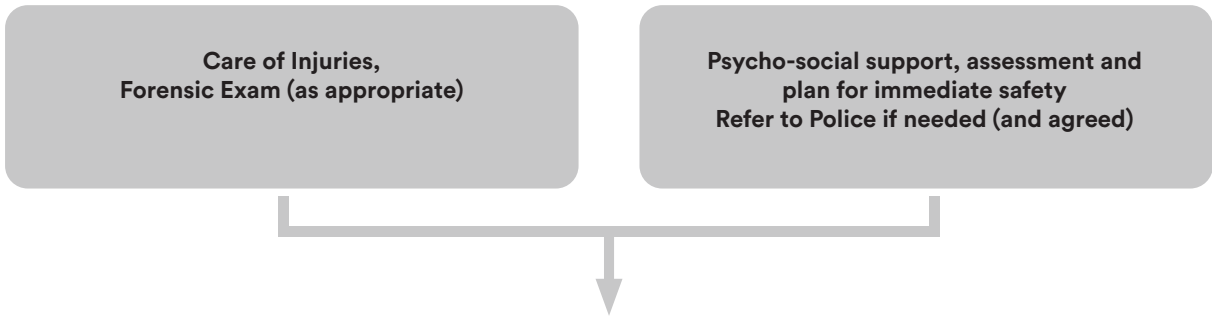
Disclosure of VAW

Telling someone and seeking help



Crisis Information and Immediate Response

The service provider provides a safe, caring environment, identifies the immediate needs, gives clear information about services and options available and makes referrals based on victim/survivors wishes. If you are not a VAW specialist you should communicate sensitively and refer the survivor based on their needs and agreement.



Longer-Term Response

Over time, based on the victim/survivor's individual situation and choices refer to other services based on available services - Service Directory is a good resource!



This is a diagram of the referral pathway. Some **Samples Referral Pathways** are included in **Annex 1**. As noted, an important companion to the Referral Pathway is a Service Directory. A template for a **Service Directory** is included in **Annex 2**.

STEPS IN THE REFERRAL PATHWAY

- **Disclosure of VAW:** The first step in the Referral Pathway is the woman migrant worker that has experienced VAW telling someone and is seeking help. This happens through disclosing VAW to a family member, a friend, or a non-VAW service provider about the incident who then accompanies her to health care, the police or a VAW service provider based on her wishes. The woman migrant worker may also come forward to a VAW service provider on her own.
- **Crisis Information and Immediate Responses:** The service provider provides a safe, caring environment, identifies the immediate needs, gives clear information about services and options available and makes referrals based on victims/survivors' wishes. If you are not a VAW specialist, you should communicate sensitively and refer the survivor based on their needs and agreement.

The first **immediate needs** that must be addressed are health – such as **care of injuries** and a **Forensic Exam** as appropriate. Care of injuries is the priority. If the woman migrant worker has been subject to sexual violence, she must be referred (base on her agreement) for a forensic exam and additional care for sexual assault survivors. The Forensic Exam is a process to collect physical evidence of the assault. Later on in this guide under Roles and Responsibilities, the key actor role responsible for this exam will be defined along with procedures for referrals. Even if the woman chooses not to have the Forensic Exam, she should be made aware of available preventive treatments for pregnancy, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Importantly, these treatments are most effective within 48 to 72 hours of the abuse/attack, so she must be made aware of each available treatment as early as possible.

At the same time, she must be provided **psycho-social support and assessment and plan for immediate safety**. Service providers must be trained in providing firstline support and supportive communications. If her safety is at immediate risk, a plan for her safety such as calling the police or going to a safe location (the residence of a family member or friend), must be considered. The service provider must also be aware of their own safety.

Once her immediate needs are met for health and safety, an assessment can be conducted for her longer-term needs. This assessment should be based on a case management process implemented by trained caseworkers. Her needs should be assessed and services provided or referred based on her individual situation and her choices. The service directory is a key tool to be used at this point. Key areas for assessment are for further psycho-social support, safe, shelter, material support, legal information and support, other health care and any other services she might need such as safe shelter, repatriation, legal documents, etc.

No single service provider can satisfy every woman migrant worker's needs. In some cases, a woman migrant worker that is a victim/survivor of VAW might disclose her experience to a migration resource organization, a recruitment agency or other facility that is not specialised in providing VAW response. If the service provider is not a VAW specialist, it is important to have established procedures for how the victim/survivor is referred to the appropriate VAW specialist (with her consent). However, also important is that all sectors should provide a supportive environment for the woman to disclose, seek immediate first-line support and referral services based on her needs and upon her agreement.

APPLYING A VICTIM/SURVIVORS CENTERED APPROACH TO RESPONSE

This section intends to identify and document procedures for the Referral Pathway while applying a survivor-centered approach. Information about VAW is sensitive and confidential. Sharing information about a VAW incident can have serious and potentially life-threatening consequences for a victim/survivor. Some key procedures to include in the SOPs are as follows.

- **Informed Consent:** There should be a specific process agreed upon for obtaining informed consent and any form to be used, including how mandatory reporting will be handled (see Mandatory Reporting above).

The victim/survivor should be given honest and complete information about possible referrals for services. If she agrees and requests referrals, she must give her informed consent before any information is shared with others. This includes being made aware of any risks or implications of sharing information about her situation. She has the right to place limitations on the type(s) of information to be shared, to refuse services and to specify which organisations can and cannot be given her information.

The victim/survivor must also understand and consent to the sharing of non-identifying data about her case for data collection and security monitoring purposes.

- **Right to Refuse Services:** In general, the person who receives the initial disclosure (report) of a VAW incident from a survivor will act in accordance with the referral mechanism agreed upon which includes opportunities at each stage to *move forward or stop*. The survivor has the freedom to choose whether to seek assistance, what type(s) of assistance and from which organisation(s). For women migrant workers that experience VAW, it is important to take note of the roles of NGO and CSO service providers and peer networks. These resources are often preferred by women migrant workers (over national law enforcement agencies) and can be valuable resources to support women as they navigate the formal systems.

Service providers will inform the victim/survivor of what assistance they can offer and clearly relate what cannot be provided or any limitations to services, to avoid creating false expectations.

All service providers in the referral network must be knowledgeable about the services provided by any actor to whom they refer a victim/survivor.

COMPONENT 6: RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PROVISION OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES

In this component, the unique responsibilities for each sector providing victim/survivor assistance (and participating in the coordination mechanism) are defined. Applying a multi-sectoral approach to coordination means that the sector-specific tasks, roles and goals toward VAW survivors will differ according to the mandate and nature of each service. The description of each should be documented briefly highlighting their responsibilities and commitments for services for women migrant workers subject to VAW.

The Essential Services Package²⁹ outlines common principles and minimum guidance for quality services that can be applied in each setting (health, police and justice, social services and coordination) for quality services for VAW. Other guidance documents are also referenced as appropriate.

In addition to outlining the roles and responsibilities a **service directory** must be developed that includes name of service provider, category of service, location, contact information and other information to facilitate referrals. A **Sample Service Directory is in Annex 2.**

HEALTH

In this section, the responsibilities of the health care sector in responding to VAW will be outlined in context. This should focus on the agreed-upon role of health care providers.ⁱ

Quality health care for survivors of VAW must include identification of survivors of VAW, provision of firstline support, care of injuries and emotional health, mental health assessment and care, access to, additional care as required for survivors of sexual violence,ⁱⁱ documentation of the forensic exam if appropriate and referral to other services based on the needs and agreement of the survivor.

All these services must apply a survivor-centered approach —ensuring the survivor has provided informed consent, prior to any health intervention or referral. Her right to refuse any service must be respected. At this stage, it is important to ensure the woman migrant worker is aware of mandatory reporting requirements as well.

-
- i. For example, the forensic examination is only carried out at some locations that are authorities to conduct the exam.
 - ii. Treatment for survivors of sexual violence must include examination and history taking, treatment of injuries, prevention of disease, including HIV/STIs, prevention of unwanted pregnancy, collection of forensic evidence, psycho-social support, medical documentation, follow-up and referral to other social services.

The health sector interventions must be guided by a protocol that is in line with the global guidance on providing quality health care. Important guidance for quality health services for survivors of VAW is available in these resources:

- Module 2 Health: Essential Services Package for Women Subject to Violence³⁰
- Strengthening health systems response to women subject to intimate partner and sexual violence³¹
- Health care for women subject to intimate partner violence or sexual violence³²

POLICING AND JUSTICE

In this section, the responsibilities of the policing and justice sectors will be outlined. It outlines procedures for enforcement of laws that protect women and hold perpetrators accountable. The ESP recognises that only a minority of cases of VAW are reported to the police, even fewer result in charges and only a fraction of those result in a conviction. Cases under civil, family and/or administrative law can also be expensive, complicated and time-consuming. To respond to all women's diverse needs and experiences, a broad range of justice options in civil, criminal and family law need to be made available to survivors.

This section is intended to cover all the victim/survivor's interactions with the police and justice system. Procedures that might be described in this section are prevention, initial contact, investigation (including victim/survivor interview), pre-trial processes, trial processes, perpetrator accountability and reparations and post-trial processes.³³

A survivor-centered approach to justice and policing service delivery puts the needs and realities of the survivor at the core of any judicial response. Women's safety, empowerment and recovery are prioritised and treats every woman with respect, support, while keeping them informed throughout the judicial process.

For women migrant workers, this includes understanding how justice processes work for women that are not citizens of the country, how they impact on their ability to work in the country and how the process can be continued, even if the woman leaves the country.

To accomplish this, justice providers must understand the inequalities between men and women and gender-specific vulnerabilities such as economic and legal dependency, which impacts women's use of justice services. Police and justice actors should be trained on how to appropriately intervene in cases of VAW including women migrant workers understanding these realities.

Practices that might be outlined in this section are many. A comprehensive response will include how police are accessed 24 hours a day and making available support including professional interpretation, when required. It will include processes to ensure privacy and confidentiality in interviewing through use of a private room, ways to prioritise for safety of survivors and commitments to quality and timely investigations. The minimum training on VAW for justice actors is important along with protocols for referrals to other sectors.

Additionally, victims/survivors must have access to civil, family and administrative law procedures, so any measures to make these accessible through legal aid, or simplified procedures should be described along with systems for collecting and analysing the standardised and disaggregated data on incidents to understand trends of VAW.

In the police and justice sector, survivors should be able to access free or low-cost legal counselling, representation and other court support to women who have been exposed to violence. Authorities should review, reinforce and revise laws that deter violence against women; enforce laws that protect women and hold perpetrators accountable; monitor court cases and judicial processes; provide orders of protection and other legal safety mechanisms for survivors; and monitor perpetrators' compliance with court-ordered rehabilitation (e.g., batterer programs).

Important guidance for quality police and justice responses is available in these guidance documents:

- **Module 3 Justice and Policing: Essential Services Package for Women Subject to Violence**³⁴
- Handbook and Training Curriculum on Effective Police Responses to Violence against Women³⁵
- Strengthening Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Response to Violence against Women³⁶
- Training Package for Prosecutors Responding to Violence against Women and Girls in Asia and the Pacific³⁷

SOCIAL SERVICES

In this section, VAW-applicable social services will be described. Social services comprise a range of services that are critical in supporting the rights, safety and wellbeing of women experiencing violence. Service providers can be state or non-state actors providing a range of services (see below). Important elements to essential social services are incorporating risk assessment and management and ensuring appropriately trained staff. Each service provider must also be aware of other available services and have systems for referral based on the victim/survivors' needs and wishes. For women migrant workers, it is important that services are available in convenient places, at convenient times taking into account language. Service providers must have professional knowledge about how to respond appropriately to women migrant workers who have experienced violence. This includes understanding women's fears around her migration status, or any stigma and discrimination she faces.

- **Crisis Information, Crisis Counseling and Help Lines:** Crisis information about victim/survivors' rights and the services available must be provided. Information must be made available in a way that enables women to consider the range and choices available to them and to make their own choices.

Crisis counseling should be available to provide help in achieving immediate safety, making sense of the experience and reaffirm the victim's rights and alleviate any feelings of guilt or shame. Crisis information and crisis counseling should be available day and night and on the weekends. These services can be provided by a range of service providers.

Helplines are one of the ways crisis information and crisis counseling can be provided. A helpline should be free of charge, have trained staff that can provide crisis information, crisis counseling and facilitate referral to services.

- **Safe Accommodation:** For women that need to leave their homes to be safe, they should have timely access to safe accommodation. This can be in the form of women's shelters, safe houses, or other safe spaces. Safe accommodation should be secure, accessible and free of charge. Women migrant workers may require immediate access to safe accommodation as the perpetrators can be part of their community, workplace or family.
- **Legal and Rights Information and Advice:** Victim/survivors of VAW must have accurate and timely information about civil and criminal options/proceedings. Each woman's situation is unique but based on her needs she is entitled to information on divorce/marriage laws, child custody, migration status and any impacts it has on legal options, worker's rights and procedures and assistance to navigate justice and policing response to any type of VAW she has experienced in the home, the workplace or the community. She might also require information about traditional justice systems. For women migrant workers she may need continuing support in finalising ongoing legal processes in the destination country even if the woman returns to her home country.

All legal services provided are with the informed consent of the survivor that includes any requirements such as mandatory reporting of migration status. Information must be available in forms the woman can understand such as in a language she uses. Time and location that is suitable.

- **Psycho-social support and Counseling:** Psycho-social support and counseling is a process of facilitating resilience in individuals to restore well-being. Psycho-social support and counseling can take various forms and ranges from peer support to therapeutic counselling offered in individual or group settings. It should be provided by service providers trained in working with VAW victims/survivors and must be human rights-based and culturally sensitive. However, all front-line service providers who encounter women migrant workers subjected to VAW, must also use supportive communication that is empowering and non-blaming, informing the survivor of her options and referrals when possible and agreed upon. Services must be accessible free of charge. For women migrant workers, considerations are language, time availability and cultural sensitivity.
- **Woman-Centered Support:** Navigating the range of services, options and decisions available can be daunting for women experiencing VAW. Skilled assistance from trained staff can assist women to access the most appropriate services and to make informed choices that have the best opportunity to ensure their safety, empower them and uphold their rights. Service providers must also be trained to understand the barriers to women migrant workers face in accessing services such as language barriers, the fear of deportation, stigma and discrimination upon seeking services when they return to their country of origin.

- **Children’s Services:** While this SOPs guidance does not address violence against children, the effect of experiencing violence directly or indirectly can have a devastating impact on children. Children have the right to access services that are age-appropriate, child-sensitive and child-friendly. If services are available for children of victims/survivors of VAW, they should be referenced in this section.
- **Assistance toward economic independence, recovery and autonomy:** Experiencing violence is known to have long-term consequences for the health and well-being of women and to significantly affect their ability to fully participate in society. Women may require longer-term assistance to support their recovery and to lead productive lives.

For women migrant workers, they may need immediate support in the destination country as they are away from their support system.

Important guidance for quality social services is available in this guidance document:

- Module 4 Social Services: Essential Services Package for Women Subject to Violence³⁸

MIGRATION ACTORS

In this section, the role of migration actors will be defined. Migration actors such as migrant resource organizations, Recruitment Agencies, CSOs working on migration, including labour migration and authorities such as Foreign Service and Consular Officials, border agents, or others working in this sector may come in contact with victim/survivors that disclose violence.

Migration actors have a key role in helping the survivor seek access to justice, psycho-social support, or facilitate a return home. In such cases, these roles should be defined in this section.

These key actors are not specialised VAW service providers, therefore they should not be expected to provide services to address VAW. Nevertheless, they have a key role in providing a supportive environment where the victim/survivor can disclose their experience and receive first emotional support. When a victim/survivor discloses VAW, the migration actor will offer referral to specialised VAW services so the victim/survivor can access quality essential services. It is not the role of migration actors to provide counseling, gather evidence or determine if an allegation is true or not.

COMPONENT 7: PRINCIPLES AND MECHANISMS FOR DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION SHARING

In this component, the principles for documentation and information sharing must be described. Documentation of incidents of VAW, services provided and referred are regularly collected by different service providers in their service delivery and case management processes.

Each sector collecting data on women seeking services or protections for VAW is likely to require some differences in data. For example:

A specialist VAW service provider will likely collect detailed information on the victim/survivor, alleged perpetrator, type of incident, services provided and referred.

A non-VAW specialist service provider, including labour migration organisations will likely only record the report of VAW and referrals made.

Establishing some degree of agreement across sectors, agencies and organisations as to the types of data, data disaggregation and information related to VAW that should be collected to enable compilation and comparability among similar institutions (across shelters or across police stations) will encourage data better data collection and analysis.

Summary reporting of this data is beneficial for analysis of the functioning of the response system and to understand trends in VAW. For example, understanding the number of women migrant workers seeking help from health care providers and/or police can help to understand if there are barriers to them seeking help. Once identified, these barriers can be addressed. Further guidance is in Annex 3 which provides what should be known about administrative data collection on violence against women migrant workers.

PRINCIPLES FOR VAW DATA COLLECTION

The principles of VAW data collection apply to both VAW specialists and non-VAW specialist service providers. Importantly data must not be collected without a purpose and the principle of Do No Harm must be respected. In keeping with the need for confidentiality, all potentially identifying information of the victim/survivor, her family and the perpetrator must not be included in any summary data report. Data on individual cases cannot be shared without the consent of the victim/survivor through a signed release of an informed consent form. For women migrant workers, data on their legal status is not recommended to be collected. And the survivor must have the right to not have her data recorded.

MINIMUM DATA SET FOR SPECIALIST VAW SPECIALIST SERVICE PROVIDERS

A minimum data set can be agreed upon by VAW specialist service providers that includes victim/survivor information, details of the incident, service provision (including referrals) and alleged perpetrator information. This will likely require a process to agree upon the minimum data set including incident definitions (See Incident Definitions below). In addition to these data points, there are key data points that can provide information on women migrant workers without risk to her for safety or deportation. These are included in the Sample Minimum Data Set and described in the next subsection (Specific Considerations for Data Collection for Women Migrant Workers subject to VAW).

Once an agreed upon minimum data set is defined, a timeframe and system for its collection and analysis must be developed. A common data collection form is not required.

Sample 4: Minimum Data Set

- *Type of violence: physical, sexual, emotional/ psychological*
- *Date reported violence occurred*
- *Information about the survivor: sex, age, occupation and survivor-perpetrator relationship, country of birth, country of citizenship*
- *Information about the perpetrator: age group (as reported by the survivor) and sex (as reported by the survivor). If the service provider/administrative system has contact with the perpetrator, actual age of the perpetrator and sex*
- *Registration: date of registry of violence; registering entity/person and their sector (if service provider)*
- *Geographical reference: where violence occurred (e.g., city/village, sub-national if relevant, e.g., state, province)*
- *Location of event: e.g., home, school, work, public space, abroad*
- *Identify if violence was perpetrated using a computer (cybercrime)*
- *Response: services provided (yes/no/not applicable/ survivor declined/survivor decided to come back later); referral (yes/no/not applicable/survivor declined/ referral to which services).*

Source: Adapted from ASEAN Regional Guidelines on Violence against Women and Girls Data Collection and Use

SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR DATA COLLECTION POINTS ON WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS SUBJECT TO VAW

To ensure that data is collected for understanding cases of women migrant workers that have sought help for violence, there are key data points within these sections that should be collected. It is to note that for the survivors' safety, it is never recommended to collect her migration and documentation status. Some data points that could be safely collected, include:

- **Country of Origin:** This provides information on the victim/survivor's country of origin and will help understand if she has migrated to the current country.
- **Country of Citizenship:** This provides information on the woman's current citizenship and will identify if she is a citizen of the country she is residing/working in currently.
- **Geographical Reference:** This identifies where the state, province, country where the violence occurred and will inform if the incident occurred in her country of current residence or another.

In the following pages, a sample case registration/in-take form is provided, including the recommended minimum data set for women migrant workers subject to violence.

- **Relationship of Accused Perpetrator of VAW to the Survivor:** The accused perpetrator and their relationship with the survivor can provide further information in identifying the context of the violence and is useful for understanding violence against women migrant workers.

For example, sexual assault committed by a husband gives us information that this is intimate partner violence; sexual assault committed against an employer gives information that this is workplace violence. That information coupled with the location of the incident and the country of origin helps us understand if the violence was committed against a woman migrant worker. Thus, all data collection systems should include the relationship of the survivor to the accused perpetrator.

INCIDENT DEFINITIONS

When VAW specialized service providers are documenting cases of VAW in their administrative data collection system, they are required to collect and classify VAW-related cases. Establishing agreement across sectors, agencies and organizations on the types of data, data disaggregation and information related to VAW that should be collected will encourage better data collection and analysis.

Using common incident definitions, for instance, helps to collect standardized and comparable data for a better analysis of the types of VAW that are most common among women who seek help in a specific geographical location.

If service providers use different definitions and are recording different types of violence differently, the data collected is not comparable. Each country must agree on the common incident definitions based on the common types of violence and their own laws.

Sample 5: What happens if we use different definitions of physical violence?

The definition of physical violence is violence that is not sexual in nature. Examples include hitting, slapping, cutting, shoving, honor crimes of a physical nature (not resulting in death).

An example of a challenge in data collection is where the police record physical violence only if assaults result in injury, while the shelter in the same location records physical violence as threats, hitting and injuries.

The data gathered by each service provider will not be comparable as they use different definitions. In the same example, if service providers apply their own definition, police cases of reported physical violence seem lower in number, capturing only injuries and shelter cases are higher, capturing injuries, hitting and threats.

A common definition, agreed upon by all service providers based on existing legal and policy frameworks, would allow comparable data collection and better analysis.

Some of the important incident definitions which might be considered are:

Rape: non-consensual penetration of the vagina, anus, or mouth with an object or body part.³⁹

Sexual assault: any form of non-consensual sexual contact/touching that does not result in or does not include penetration. Examples include attempted rape, as well as unwanted kissing, fondling, or touching of genitalia and buttocks.⁴⁰

Sexual harassment: Sexual harassment is a sex-based behaviour that is unwelcome and offensive to its recipient. Sexual harassment may take two forms: 1) Quid Pro Quo, when a job benefit - such as a pay rise, a promotion, or even continued employment - is made conditional on the victim acceding to demands to engage in some form of sexual behaviour; or 2) hostile working environment in which the conduct creates conditions that are intimidating or humiliating for the victim. Behaviour that qualifies as sexual harassment: physical violence, touching, unnecessary close proximity, comments and questions about appearance, lifestyle, sexual orientation, offensive phone calls, wolf-whistling, sexually suggestive gestures, display of sexual materials.⁴¹

Physical assault: physical violence that is not sexual in nature. Examples include hitting, slapping, cutting, shoving, honor crimes of a physical nature (not resulting in death), etc.⁴²

Emotional/Psychological abuse: name-calling, threats of physical assault, intimidation, humiliation, forced isolation by preventing a person from contacting their family or friends.⁴³

Economic abuse: money withheld by an intimate partner or family member, household resources (to the detriment of the family's well-being), prevented by one's intimate partner to pursue livelihood activities, a widow prevented from accessing an inheritance.⁴⁴

Forced marriage: the marriage of individuals against their will (includes 'early marriage').⁴⁵

Female genital mutilation/cutting: cutting healthy genital tissue.⁴⁶

DATA COLLECTION BY NON-VAW SPECIALIST

If you are not a VAW specialist service provider, your role when a woman migrant worker discloses VAW is to provide a supportive response and *refer the survivor to a VAW specialist* that can help her understand her options and develop an intervention plan including safety measures. Only VAW specialist should provide services to VAW survivors. Your role is to support timely identification and referral to VAW specialist. Data should be collected only on the disclosure of VAW including women migrant workers and any referrals made or actions taken. Therefore, it is important for all actors working on migration to understand available resources and referral procedures.

The principles described above in Principles for VAW Data Collection apply to both VAW specialists and non-VAW specialists such as not collecting data without a purpose, the principle of Do No Harm must be respected, not including identifying information in summary reporting, only sharing information with the consent of the victim/survivor. For women migrant workers, data on their legal status is not recommended to be collected and the survivor must have the right to not have her data recorded and/or to refuse referrals.

COMPONENT 8: MONITORING AND EVALUATION MECHANISMS

In this component, the SOPs should identify the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms applied in the multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms. Monitoring and evaluation are processes for collecting data to measure progress in efforts to end VAW including women migrant workers. These processes assess the extent to which interventions and coordination are meeting the aims set for them. This can occur through a monitoring of ongoing review of practices and process and evaluationⁱⁱⁱ of systematic analysis of the impact and effectiveness of policies, activities and partnerships.⁴⁷ See Annex 4 for a more detailed description of a Coordinated Response to Violence against Women including Women Migrant Workers. Following are some examples of practices for monitoring and evaluation of quality essential services for victim/survivors of VAW including women migrant workers.

iii. Evaluation is typically conducted by an external independent evaluator.

MONITORING THROUGH ANALYSIS OF ROUTINE ADMINISTRATIVE DATA COLLECTED

Periodically understanding the data collected can help to identify trends in types of VAW survivors seeking help, frequency and severity of the types of violence experienced, patterns in access to services to guide further service system improvements. Analysis of this summary data collected from each sector will guide the continuous development of prevention and response actions.

Service providers can analyze data on case reports to understand if the case outcomes have met the needs of survivors, or if changes in services are needed- including improving referral and coordination systems. Cases that have resulted in serious harm can be assessed to determine if steps could be taken to prevent such harm from happening in the future, perhaps through use of risk assessments. In addition to the summary data, qualitative data gathered from Coordination Mechanism members, or from victim/survivors of VAW accessing services.

PERIODIC MONITORING OF QUALITY OF SERVICES

Providing coordinated quality services implies: 1) having a system where services are available in sufficient quantity and quality regardless of migration status, nationality, gender, marital status, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation or any other identity marker of the survivor; 2) having a professional code of conduct on how to respond appropriately to women who have migrated and who experience violence, safeguarding their safety and confidentiality; and 3) being able to link with other sectors and agencies through referral pathways and coordination mechanisms, to respond to the individual needs of the survivor.⁴⁸

Quality of essential services can also be monitored and evaluated based on minimum service standards set by the country or through international standards or guidance documents. Key elements for assessment are if guiding principles are being followed, quality of health care, psycho-social support, justice and legal aid, safety and risk management, case management, referral and other services. Tools can be self-assessment, or an assessment conducted by a body with responsibility for monitoring quality of services.

In Annex 5, a self-assessment tool is presented which can be used by frontline service providers (healthcare, legal, psychosocial support) in response to violence against women migrant workers. The checklist aims to identify the essential services that must be in place to ensure a coordinated quality response to violence against women migrant workers and to help service providers to determine if the services they provide are responding to the needs and rights of women migrant workers.

COMPONENT 9: COORDINATION MECHANISMS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

In this component, the coordination method/mechanism will be described for the service delivery level. Effective prevention and response to VAW requires multisectoral coordinated action between health, police and justice, social services actors and the community. An effective coordination mechanism includes both state and non-state actors and can occur at different levels of government. Annex 4 gives a more detailed guidance on coordinated responses to VAW including women migrant workers.

In this section, it would be prudent to identify and describe membership, meetings, roles and responsibilities of the coordination mechanism. General coordination responsibilities of a multisectoral and community-based approach include:

- Planning
- Gathering data and managing information
- Mobilising resources and ensuring accountability
- Orchestrating a functional division of labour
- Monitoring effectiveness; identifying and resolving challenges
- Providing leadership

Specific coordination activities include:

- Sharing information about resources, guidelines and other materials
- Sharing non-identifying data about VAW incidents
- Discussion and problem-solving about prevention and response activities, including planning these activities and engaging with other relevant coordinating and leadership bodies
- Collaborative monitoring and evaluation
- Identifying programme planning and advocacy needs and sharing those among other actors, coordinating bodies and leadership structures

GBV Working Group

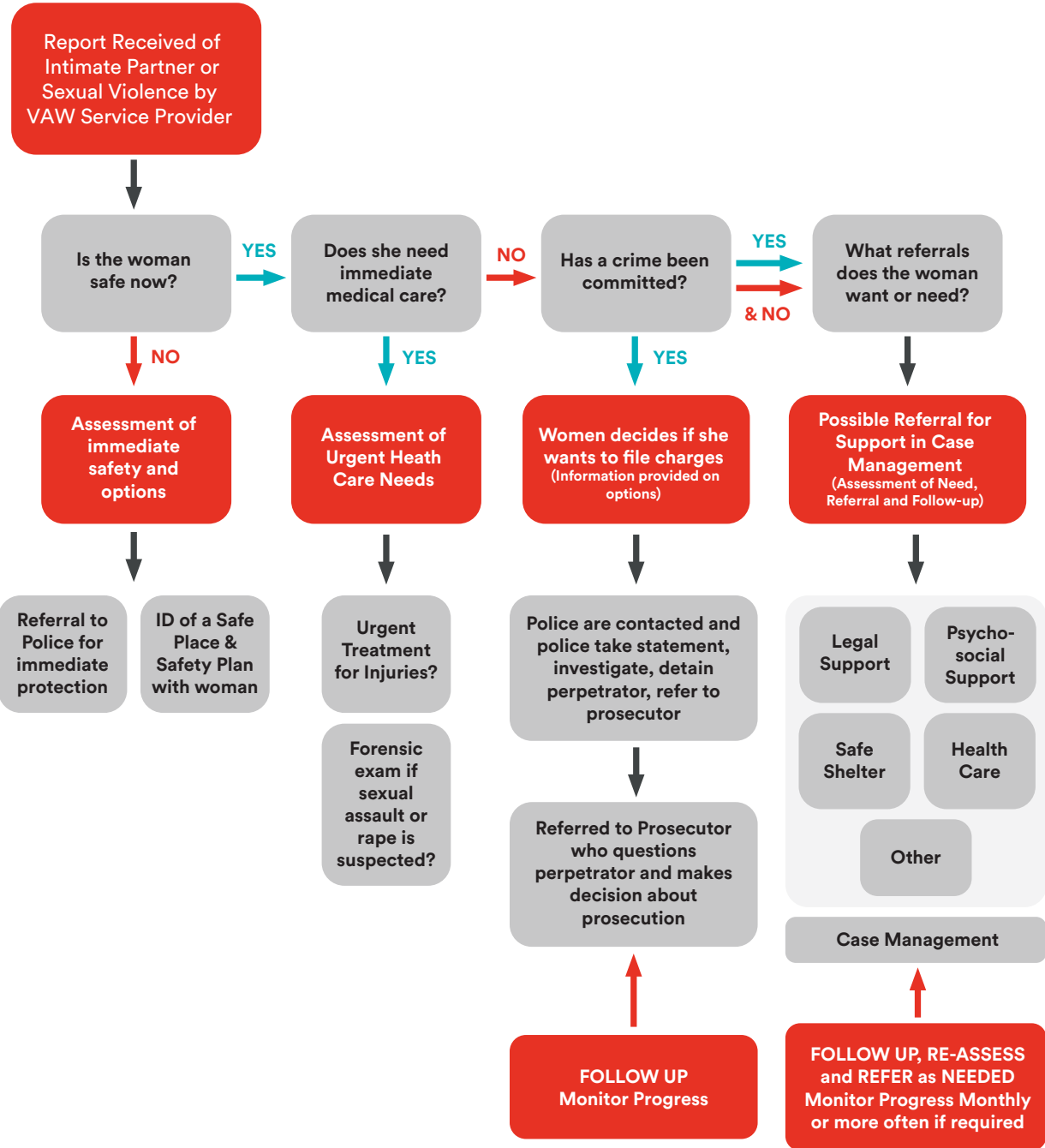
GBV Working Groups are coordination mechanisms being implemented at the District Level in Cambodia to coordinate service delivery. They are a joint committee of Health, Police, Women's Affairs, Social Affairs, Local authorities, NGO service providers. They meet regularly to

- Review difficult cases (with confidentiality)
- Review System Issues and Develop Solutions
- Conduct Joint training on Minimum Standards
- Joint reporting to monitor services provided and referred

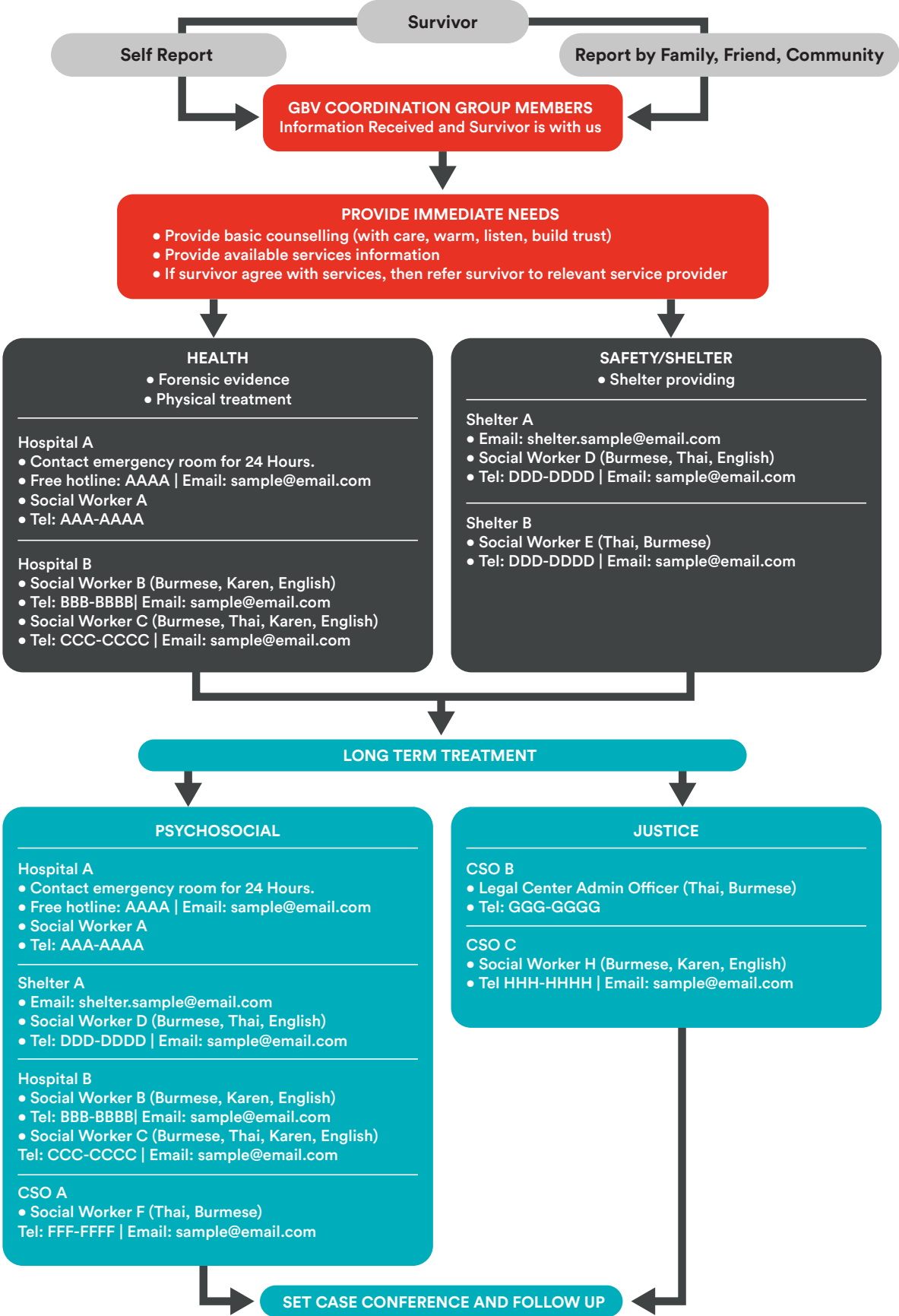
COMPONENT 10: POTENTIAL ANNEXES TO THE SOPs

In this component, the SOPs can include any agreed-upon case management or case registration forms, release of information, referral forms, protocols for data collection, confidentiality policies, referral pathways, or additional guidance.

ANNEX 1a: SAMPLE REFERRAL PATHWAYS 1



ANNEX 1b: SAMPLE REFERRAL PATHWAY 2



ANNEX 2: SAMPLE SERVICE DIRECTORY TEMPLATE

A service directory is a key tool for documenting referral sources and should be updated regularly. See the service directories for women migrant workers: <https://bit.ly/services4wmw>

Coverage of the service directory

Country: _____

Province: _____

Focal point for the service directory

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Contact: _____

Last updated: Name of Service Provider	Services Provided	Location	Contact Information / Person	Hours/Days
Hotlines				
Police				
Health Services				
Forensic Exam				
Legal Services				
Mediation Centers				
Psycho-social Support				
Economic Support				
Safe Shelter				
Consular or Foreign Service Officers				
Migrant resource organization				
Vocational Training				

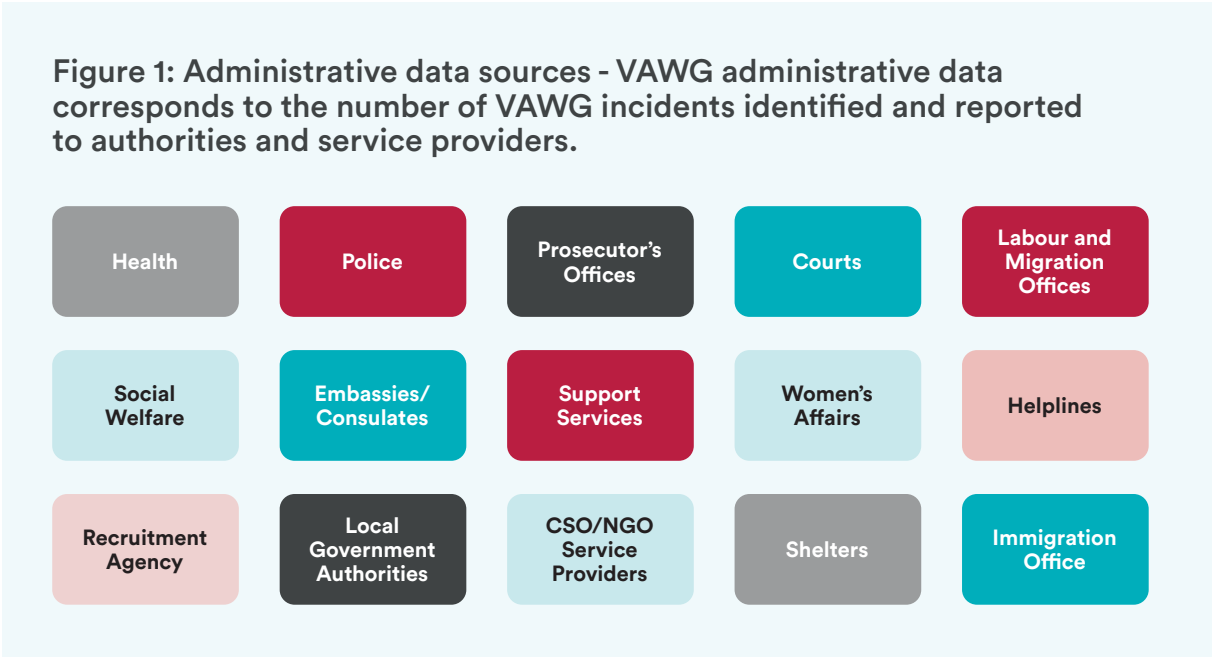
ANNEX 3: WHAT SHOULD ONE KNOW ABOUT ADMINISTRATIVE DATA COLLECTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS?

9 Tips for Safely Collecting Administration Data Collection for Women Migrant Workers subject to VAW

1. **Data should not be collected without a purpose.** We want to understand women migrant workers' experiences of violence in order to better prevent it and to provide services without putting women migrant workers at risk of harm. Administrative data collected should provide information that is relevant to: understanding the well-being of the victim/survivor; developing a service provision plan as part of a standard case management process; holding perpetrators accountable; and identifying gaps between service and response system in place and practice.
2. **Create and clarify reporting requirements.** It is not recommended for VAW service providers to routinely collect information/data regarding migration status (regular or irregular). If the current laws and policies require the mandatory collection and/or reporting of women migrant workers' migration status, this should be clarified. A good practice is to exempt health care providers, education authorities, essential service providers from reporting to police or immigration enforcement authorities to ensure women migrant workers can access their right to service. If existing reporting requirements limit women's access to services and cause harm to women, ensure women are provided information in advance to ensure they are aware of any implications and can make **informed consent** to access services.
3. VAW administrative data should **not link to citizen/national identification numbers.** Such practices can violate VAW survivors' rights to privacy and confidentiality, particularly in countries where access to data management systems and registries are available to multiple users and where there is a lack of protocols to ensure confidentiality and protection of the data.⁴⁹
4. Administrative data collection systems for VAW must result in **greater disaggregation of types of violence and perpetrators.** For example, instead of options for domestic violence and sexual violence by non-related perpetrators only, options for the type of violence could be expanded to include rape, sexual assault, physical assault, psychological or emotional abuse, denial of resources, opportunities, or services for example. It is important to understand the relationship between the victim/survivor and perpetrator. For example, the perpetrator can be the spouse/intimate partner or the employer, public officials, co-workers, other migrants, etc. This helps to better understand the type of violence and the context. The location where the violence takes place such as the home, workplace, community, or detention facility, could also be recorded to expand the context to better understand the experiences of women migrant workers.
5. **Data should be collected based on the service providers' role.** Specialist VAW service providers will collect more comprehensive data than migration actors. The role of migration actors, for example, is likely to be sensitive to VAW, facilitate disclosure and refer to specialist services based on the survivors' wishes.

- 6. **Develop a data collection protocol within each sector** that provides guidance for roles, reporting lines and confidentiality policies internally to ensure procedures are in place and clearly articulated to women migrant workers seeking service to ensure women are able to come forward and claim their right to service and to report crimes. Considering the existence of additional actors (migration-related actors) to usual VAW actors it could be important to consider developing the additional protocol and /or guidance to ensure data safety and WMWs safety.
- 7. For **shared data systems, develop protocols to guide administrative data collection, compilation and sharing.** Data can be safeguarded by regulating the use or restricting access to data, while at the same time enabling data sharing across service providers to ensure effective case management and service delivery. **Instituting firewalls between immigration enforcement and service provision** again prevents women from being prohibited from services and decrease their fear of seeking services. Shared data collection systems will require non-disclosure and confidentiality agreements and well-developed standard operating procedures and training for administrative data management and data sharing.
- 8. Ensure that **data is collected on international referrals** that are common for women migrant workers subject to VAW. This will help to identify the common needs, common services available, gaps and challenges in accessing services and linkages. This will link to protocols for service delivery between countries.
- 9. Ensure that **data collected is analysed** and ensure it is reviewed with a gender and women migrant workers’ ‘lens’ so as to identify areas for improvement in the prevention of VAW and access to services for women migrant workers.

What can administrative data do?



Administrative data is collected routinely by service providers during the course of their work. The data comes from cases of VAW identified or reported by or to authorities and service providers, including the police, prosecutors, courts, health and other social services such as hotlines, shelters, counselors and other providers of services.⁵⁰ Authorities such as consular officers, immigration offices and others may collect information on the number of women migrant workers seeking help.⁵¹

Administrative data on VAW provides information on VAW survivors' access to services, patterns of violence reported, responses made, availability and quality of the services. It provides information on women's experiences of violence, with reference to the number and types of VAW incidents reported. It shows the demand for and access to services, service availability and capacity to respond to the different needs of women and girls facing violence, within a given time period and across sectors, districts, provinces and regions.

In relation to women migrant workers, in particular, improved administrative data could help to:

- Document the types of violence, exploitation or abuse experienced by women migrant workers, to enhance our understanding of the situation/risks of women migrant workers to better be able to respond to their needs since currently there is limited data
- Identify the most common entry points for women migrant workers subject to VAW into the service and response systems, including enhancing additional necessary referrals to and from different actors such as migration, foreign affairs and international referrals;
- Understand the number of women migrant workers seeking help and services in each sector (police and justice, health, social services); and
- Identify the gaps in service providers' response and any specific needs to inform improvements in the information, service provision and referral systems for women migrant workers subject to VAW.

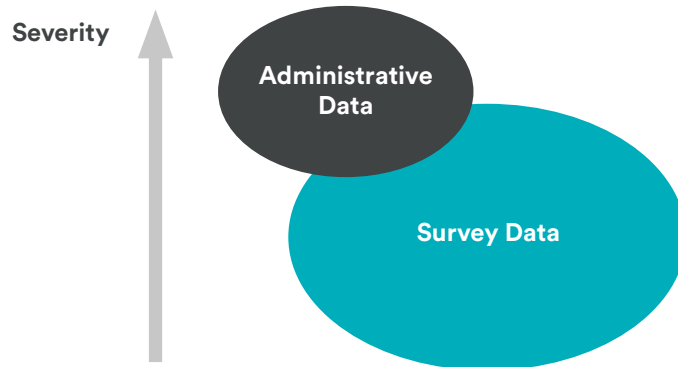
What are the limitations of VAW administrative data?⁵²

Administrative data is an important source of information on incidents of VAW. However, there are common limitations in administrative data that are important to consider and address.

Administrative data is confused with prevalence data

- Administrative data is not representative and data does not reveal the actual prevalence of VAW, since many VAW victims/survivors do not report the violence to front-line service providers (*under-reporting*)
- It is **INCORRECT** to interpret the increased/decreased number of cases reported to the police, justice, health or social actors in a way to understand the increase/decreased prevalence of violence against women, including women migrant workers
- An increase in the cases reported to services does not necessarily mean that violence is increasing but can be an indication that women trust services and that services are accessible.

Figure 2 Administrative data (service records) vs. population-based survey data



Source: Henriette A.F.M. Jansen, UNFPA, kNOwVAW Data (2020).

Administrative data is not always available

- Some agencies do not collect VAW data
- Data is not collected on all relevant types of VAW (for example data is only collected on domestic violence/intimate partner violence)

Administrative data quality and reliability is not adequate

- Only the most severe cases of VAW are reported and registered/recorded
- The quality of data is often weak and inconsistent, as data collection is not the primary role of service providers and criminal justice agencies, so they lack data collection skills and have an inconsistent understanding of VAW
- The sex of the survivor and perpetrator is not recorded, nor the relationship between them
- It is difficult to track VAW cases and referrals across sectors and agencies/organizations.

Administrative data is not comparable across sectors

- Often there are no common definitions and common understanding across the different sectors and levels (different terminologies, reporting formats or indicators used by service providers)
- Data collection is not often coordinated at the national level and lacks homogeneity.

Lack of data management and data sharing procedures

- Service providers and multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms have not developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) or protocols for data sharing and management to ensure procedures that protect the privacy and confidentiality of survivors of VAW and promote the principle of Do No Harm.

What are the barriers to collecting administrative data on violence against women migrant workers?

Health care professionals, school personnel, social workers, labour inspectors, local police officers, embassies and labor attachés and many other professionals come into daily contact with women migrant workers that have experienced VAW. They should be able to serve women migrant workers as members of the community and routinely collect administrative data. Yet women migrant workers are not currently visible in this data. This gap is likely linked to the underreporting of VAW by women migrant workers, the type of data collected and lack of disaggregation.

Women migrant workers who experience VAW may not come forward or seek help due to:

- Culture of silence in reporting VAW
- Fear of reporting the violence because of concerns for arrest and deportation if they are irregular migrants and identified by the immigration enforcement mechanisms in shared data systems or systems with mandatory reporting of migration status
- Fear of being blamed for the violence
- Lack of understanding of service systems in destination countries
- Lack of trust in services
- Lack of language skills
- Fear of retaliation from the abuser, especially if they live in a migrant community with the abuser or the abuser is the employer
- Fear of losing jobs and income.

Administrative data collection systems for VAW in essential service sectors do not adequately capture data on women migrant workers. Some data gaps are:

- Key data points to identify survivors as migrant workers are not collected. This results in women migrant workers' experiences of VAW being invisible
- Types of VAW are limited often to domestic violence or intimate partner violence and do not include violence and abuse in the world of work
- The institution in charge of VAW data may not have a primary responsible/mandate for WMWs issues and this results in insufficient disaggregation and analysis of data on women migration workers
- There are insufficient systems for collecting international data on referrals and services.

Key Principles in Administrative Data Collection for Women Migrant Workers Subject to VAW

- **Human Rights Approach:** Rights-based approaches recognize that states have a primary responsibility to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of women and girls. Violence against women is a fundamental breach of women's human rights, particularly her right to a life free from fear and violence.⁵³ Human rights instruments recognize that migrants have the same universal human rights and freedoms regardless of their immigration status.⁵⁴ This means to provide access to services to women migrant workers subject to VAW (health care, police and justice, social services) without discrimination. Key data points to identify survivors as migrant workers must be collected so the experiences of women migrant workers are made visible.
- **Victim/Survivor Centered Approach:** A survivor-centered approach places the rights, needs and desires of women and girls at the center of focus of service delivery and data collection. This requires consideration of the multiple needs of victims and survivors, the various risks and vulnerabilities, the impact of the decisions and actions taken.⁵⁵ For women migrant workers and in fact all survivors, this means that any limits to confidentiality are clearly explained prior to a woman's disclosure of violence they have experienced. Understanding these limitations, she can decline to answer any questions or refuse consent to share information. She must not lose access to services as a result of her refusal to share information.
- **Safety and Confidentiality:** The first priority in all services and data collected is the safety of the woman that has been subject to VAW and avoid causing further harm. For women migrant workers, this means applying the survivor-centered approach, ensuring that her rights are protected and that she has access to essential services without sharing information that could cause further harm. This means creating data systems with Firewalls that separate the immigration enforcement activities from public service provision and sharing of addresses.
- **Perpetrator Accountability:** Perpetrator Accountability means holding the perpetrators accountable while ensuring fairness in justice responses. This requires that essential services need to support and facilitate the victim/survivor's participation in the justice process, promote her capacity of acting or exerting her agency, while ensuring that the burden or onus of seeking justice is not placed on her but the state. women migrant workers must have access to all legal remedies and support services regardless of their country of origin or their legal status and these processes must be documented in data collection and management systems.

ANNEX 4: A COORDINATED RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN INCLUDING WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS

What is a Coordinated Response?

Coordinated responses are systematic approaches that emphasise comprehensive, collaborative and where possible integrated service delivery to women subject to VAW including women migrant workers, based on their specific needs. The key assumption of a coordinated approach to VAW is that no single sector can effectively combat it in isolation, so coordinated responses strive to be multi-disciplinary and include all relevant essential services from the public and private sectors. The sectors responding to VAW must be coordinated and governed to respond in a comprehensive way, be survivor-centered and accountable to victims and survivors and each other.

A coordinated response enables government and non-government actors to identify gaps between what survivors need and what organisations provide. For survivors, a coordinated response results in increased safety, by placing them at the centre of any response and intervention. A coordinated response also gives survivors access to increased service delivery based on their specific needs and benefits agencies and organisations and makes them more effective and efficient in providing services to survivors. Coordination with other sectors enhances the criminal justice response to hold perpetrators accountable and ensure the rights of survivors.

The aim of a coordinated response is to ensure that services are delivered applying a survivor-centered approach ensuring that wherever a survivor seeks help, she is provided with the needed services (*“the first door is the right door, providing access to a multisectoral response”* for a woman survivor of violence seeking services). Coordination ensures that response to VAW is comprehensive, multidisciplinary, coordinated, systematic and sustained. It involves a collaborative effort by multi-disciplinary teams, personnel and institutions from all relevant sectors to implement laws, policies, protocols and agreements and communication and collaboration to prevent and respond to VAW applying a survivor-centered approach.

The importance of coordinated response

A coordinated response to violence against women requires coordination of all sectors, public and private that respond to women subject to violence. Key sectors are health, police and justice and social services.

Recognising that diverse groups of women are subject to VAW and have unique and individual needs, key actors in different sectors such as migration, disability and others must be included in the coordination of response to ensure the range women’s needs are fully met.

This guidance does not recommend separate coordination mechanisms, but a coordination mechanism that is inclusive of all women and in particular women migrant workers.

Figure 4: Key Sectors for an Effective Coordinated Response to VAW including women migrant workers



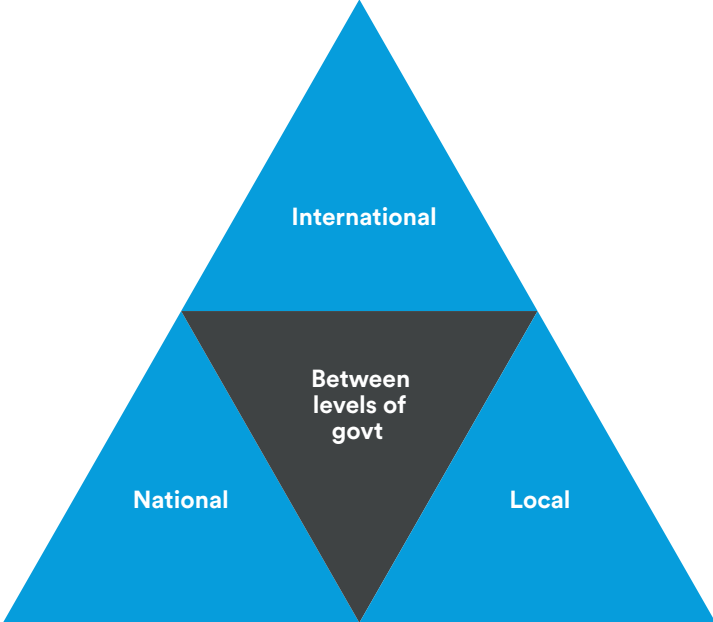
“Every door is the right door”

What is a Coordinated Response addressing violence against women including women migrant workers?

Key sectors for an effective coordinated response to VAW including women migrant workers include both government and civil society actors in health, police and justice, social services and women’s affairs and any others that play a central role in the delivery of VAW services. Other key sectors to ensure women migrant workers’ needs are addressed and rights protected are labor ministries, or ministries responsible for labour migration, recruitment agencies, migrant resource centers, foreign affairs officials and other front-line service providers that come in contact with women migrant workers subject to VAW.

At what level of government should a Coordinated Response to violence against women including women migrant workers occur?

Figure 3: Effective Coordination of Response to VAW Migrant Workers Requires Coordination at all Levels of Government



Coordination is most effective when it is co-led by government and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and occurs systematically at various levels of governments: internationally, nationally and locally to ensure survivor-centered support for women affected by VAW, including women migrant workers.

The mechanisms at the different levels of government must link to ensure reporting lines, to ensure that women’ experiences at the local level inform policy development and that policy implementation is consistent at all levels. At all levels, the coordination mechanism must be guided by the application of the guiding principles including applying a survivor-centered approach so that women are provided options and their choices are respected.

Of particular relevance for women migrant workers, it is to note that survivors’ documentation and migratory status should never be used as a justification to impede a humane and survivor-focused approach to services.

International: Coordination at the international level must occur from government-to-government so as to provide a forum for policy dialogues to build trust, identify gaps and challenges and develop strategies to respond to the needs of women migrant workers subject to VAW. This can occur in the form of memorandums of understandings, bilateral agreements, joint action plans, international referral mechanisms and other actions.⁵⁶

At the service provision level, both government and non-government service providers working in different countries may also require coordination of services to ensure that women subject to VAW (or trafficking), including women migrant workers, receive appropriate quality services and/or support for holding perpetrators accountable. This coordination can be through joint protocols on the provision of services, referrals and support for repatriation and reintegration of women migrant workers. The system for international referrals and linkages is more developed for women survivors of trafficking in persons and must be further developed for women migrant workers.

An Example of International Coordination

An example of international coordination is the development of Memorandums of Understanding to guide procedures between countries for responding to survivors of VAW, trafficking and migration. To guide their implementation, Coordination Mechanisms across countries have been initiated with SOPs to guide protection of victims and their repatriation and reintegration in the country of origin, including prosecution of perpetrators.

National: Coordination at the national level brings together ministries and other key actors under the leadership of one ministry or department mandated to coordinate development and implementation of laws and policies, action plans, SOPs and data collection systems on VAW, all informed by evidence, learning and a clear understanding of gender equality, non-discrimination, human rights and “leave no one behind” approaches. The leadership role includes monitoring the implementation of the above also at the local level and identifying gaps and challenges to inform policy and improve quality, availability and accessibility of services, thus promoting survivor-centered migrant-friendly approaches, survivor safety and perpetrator accountability. Important is also ensuring political will, adequate funding for coordination and essential services and sufficient consultations.

In order to specifically address violence against women migrant workers, at the national level, multi-sectoral coordination must ensure the response to VAW addresses **all forms of violence** and therefore ensures responses are also tailored to specific forms of violence in the context of labour migration. This requires consultations with key actors in labor migration governance at the different coordination stages, from policy development to implementation and anti-trafficking prevention and response. Currently, the VAW, labour migration and anti-trafficking sectors commonly operate separately- in silos under the purview of different ministries or departments, but linkages must be made to ensure a coordinated response to VAW including women migrant workers. For this to happen, institutional mechanisms need to be put in place, capacities for coordinated response need to be strengthened and resources need to be allocated not only among the VAW responders but also among the labour migration governance stakeholders. If this does not happen, the vision of a coordinated response addressing violence against women migrant workers has no means of implementation.

An Example of National Level Coordination

An example of national level coordination is in Cambodia, through the Technical Working Group on Gender Based Violence (TWGG-GBV). Led by the Ministry of Women's Affairs with participation of 17 ministries (including labor), national and international NGOs that represent VAW service providers, migration actors, disability actors and others. This group leads the development and implementation of the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women (NAPVAW) with a joint Annual Work Plan and Reporting Process. NAPVAW priorities have included development of Standard Operating Procedures, Referral Pathways and have identified women migrant workers as a priority group for ensuring an inclusive access to VAW services.

Local Level Coordination: At the local level coordination requires implementation of laws and policies based best practices in responding VAW including women migrant workers. It requires coordination of agencies that address VAW, identifying the specific responsibilities of individual organizations and understanding of the specific barriers to accessing services experienced by women migrant workers.

A local level coordinated response to VAW, including women migrant workers will include: 1) a leading organization with agreement or authority to coordinate 2) participants' agreement on a common understanding of VAW including women migrant workers, 3) participants' agreement on the primary goals of victims' safety and offenders' accountability; 4) formal protocols or memorandums of understanding (MOUs) identifying the roles and responsibilities of each agency involved in a coordinated response. An important component is ensuring participation by under-represented or groups at further risks.

An Example of Local Level Coordination

In the Philippines, the Joint Memorandum Circular no. 2010-1 of the Department of Interior and Local Government, Department of Social Welfare and Development and Department of Justice, establishes local committees on anti-VAW at the provincial and municipal levels. The same circular also establishes anti-trafficking committees at the same level, in a bid to collaboratively address the problems of TIP and VAW at the local level. The local anti-VAW committees have a standard structure and are responsible for ensuring national consistency, including the implementation of the Guidelines for the Establishment and Management of a Referral System on VAW and other relevant guidelines such as the Guidelines for the Establishment of VAW Desk in Every Barangay and a Manual on Gender-Responsive Case Management aimed at fostering coordination and standardization of services provided to survivors of VAW.

In the Philippines, the Joint Memorandum Circular no. 2010-1 of the DILG, DSWD and Department of Justice, establishes local committees on anti-VAW at the provincial and municipal levels. The same circular also establishes anti-trafficking committees at the same level, in a bid to collaboratively address the problems of TIP and VAW at the local level. The local anti-VAW committees have a standard structure and are responsible for ensuring national consistency, including the implementation of the Guidelines for the Establishment and Management of a Referral System on VAW and other relevant guidelines such as the Guidelines for the Establishment of VAW Desk in Every Barangay and a Manual on Gender-Responsive Case Management aimed at fostering coordination and standardization of services provided to survivors of VAW.

Between the different levels of government: Coordination must also occur between the levels of government (international, national and local) to ensure consistency in the implementation of laws and policies and provide evidence-based feedback on successes and challenges in their implementation.

An Example of Coordination between Levels of Government

An example of coordination between levels of government is through the TWGG-GBV and GBV Working Groups in Cambodia. The TWGG-GBV is the national level coordination mechanism and the GBV Working Groups are coordination mechanisms at the Provincial and District Level. In 2021, an assessment was conducted to identify the best ways for vertical coordination between the two groups. Recommendations included training on minimum service standards, annual reports at each level —based on Annual Operational Plans, Annual Reflection Meeting, Annual Monitoring of GBV Working Groups by national level Ministry of Women’s Affairs to ensure quality implementation of essential services including for women migrant workers, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender women, indigenous women and others at increased risk, or those meeting barriers in accessing services.

Key Stakeholders and Important Elements of a Coordinated Response to Violence against Women Migrant workers

Who should participate in a coordinated response to violence against Women Including Women migrant workers?

Potential key actors participating a coordinated response

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Consular Officers and Foreign Affairs Officials
- Bodies or Ministries designated for international coordination
- NGOs working internationally
- Ministry of Justice, Women's Affairs, Health, Social Affairs, Information, Labor, Religion, Statistics
- NGO Service Providers
- NGO/CSOs representing groups of women subject to VAW
- Health care providers
- Police & Justice Actors
- Hotlines
- Crisis Counseling
- Social Service Providers providing:
 - Safe Shelter
 - Legal Aid
 - Economic Empowerment
 - Material Aid
 - Migrant resource organizations

A coordinated response requires a multi-disciplinary team, personnel and institutions from all the relevant sectors that come together to implement laws, policies, protocols and agreements to prevent and respond to violence against women migrant workers in line with the Guiding Principles for Essential Services for Women.

Relevant sectors will include key actors *in government and non-government organisations* that are policy makers and direct service providers. They will represent health care, police and justice, social services, labour migration and other relevant stakeholders. Additional stakeholders that are identified as important in improving response to VAW must also be included, such as key actors that respond to groups of women that are at increased risk of violence or have specific barriers in accessing services. For example, additional key actors relevant to women migrant workers to consider are trade unions, recruitment agencies, employers, other intermediaries.

The body responsible for coordination may take the form of

- A women's advocacy organisation such as a shelter or crisis center (typically local)
- An independent body or specialist agency whose role is coordinating (typically local)
- A coalition of agencies who meet regularly, also known as a council, committee, or task force^{vi} (either national or local)
- A high-level body including ministers and/or executives (typically national)

What are the key elements to a coordinated response to Violence against women including Women migrant workers?

This section describes several key elements which contribute to a successful coordinated response.

Prioritising Victim/Survivor Safety, Wellbeing and Autonomy

A coordinated response places the needs of survivors at the center of its work. All too often, problems are defined in terms of how they impact institutions and practitioners, instead of how they impact victim safety, wellbeing and autonomy. Consequently, it is important to learn about how VAW and existing institutional practices affect women migrant workers; how policies and procedures contribute to or undermine women migrant workers' day-to-day work-life and family functioning; how formal and informal responses to VAW address safety for women migrant workers and accountability for offenders, practitioners and institutions; and how well formal and informal responses to VAW meet the actual needs of women migrant workers, as they themselves define them.⁵⁷

ENSURING PRIORITIES ARE INFORMED BY VICTIMS/Survivors

A quality coordinated response must respond to the needs of victims/survivors. It is important for mechanisms to be put in place to ensure that victim/survivor voices and experiences guide the work of a coordinated response. Victim/survivor input can be gathered in many ways – through direct participation in meetings, interviews, focus groups, surveys, comment periods, review and feedback sessions, etc. – as well as indirectly through advocates, proxies, case file reviews, investigative reports, literature reviews, research, database reviews and other relevant methodologies. It is encouraged to include those gathered inputs into laws, coordination and referral systems, policies, procedures and even intake forms that have direct impact on the survivors. Given that victim/survivor voices and experiences can be quite different it is important to have different mechanisms where victims/survivors' input is gathered that are safe, reliable, sufficiently broad, comprehensive and diverse.⁵⁸

Using a Systemic Analysis

A coordinated response relies upon a systemic analysis to inform, design, implement and track the impact efforts. This means: (1) identifying problems in the system's response to VAW including women migrant workers that decrease safety and accountability; (2) organising with a multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral team to solve those problems using women migrant workers' experience as a starting point; and (3) tracking the impact of whatever solutions are implemented to determine whether the results match up with the desired intent of the changes. It involves organising interventions that prioritise safety and accountability, ensuring that all institutional policies, procedures and practices align with the Guiding Principles for Essential Services for Women Subject to VAW; investigating potential unintended consequences for women migrant workers subject to VAW; accounting for the social, cultural, religious and political contexts in which women migrant workers experience VAW; and respecting women migrant workers' choices, as well as practitioner discretion, in meeting women migrant workers' individualised needs.⁵⁹

Engaging Constructively to Achieve a Common Goal

A coordinated response is a model for engagement. The idea is to make VAW including women migrant workers visible at every point in the coordination system by building tools to help workers identify, contextualise and document VAW including women migrant workers; analyse and document risk information; and implement remedies and responses, as appropriate, that meet people's actual needs as they themselves define them. This also means doing this in a way that provides for respectful communication amongst each agency.⁶⁰



Photo: UN Women Viet Nam/Quang Ba Hai

ANNEX 5: CHECKLIST FOR QUALITY COORDINATED SERVICES FOR WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS

This checklist is a self-assessment tool to be used by frontline service providers (Health, legal, psychosocial support) responding to violence against women, including women migrant workers. The checklist aims to identify the essential services that must be in place to ensure a coordinated quality response to violence against women and to help service providers to determine if the services they provide are responding to the needs and rights of women, especially women migrant workers.

Providing coordinated quality services implies 1) having a system where services are available in sufficient quantity and quality regardless of migration status, nationality, gender, marital status, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation or any other identity marker of the survivor; 2) having a professional code of conduct on how to respond appropriately to women who have migrated and who experience violence, safeguarding their safety and confidentiality; and 3) being able to link with other sectors and agencies through referral pathways and coordination mechanisms, to respond to the individual needs of the survivor.⁶¹

This checklist was developed based on the “Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence: Core Elements and Quality Guidelines (ESP)” and the , responding to the specific needs of women migrant workers. The ESP is a joint tool developed by UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNODC and UNDP, identifying a core set of principles of care and services provided by the health, social services, police and justice sectors and coordination actors to guide multi-sectoral response to violence against women and girls (VAWG).

	Met	In process	Not met	Comments
Survivor Centered Approach				
Do you provide women migrant workers who have experienced violence (hereafter “survivors”) with adequate information on options, risks and available support?				
Do you / does your organization give the survivors the time and possibility to choose among the available options, without interfering with her choice? (Survivors need to have information and time to consider the range of choices available)				
Is mandatory reporting required to the immigration about the survivor’s migration status?				
↳ If so, do you inform the survivor, ensuring she understands the risks and consequences of reporting?				
Do you / your staff deliver services based on informed consent that includes agreement to services and understanding of service options and risks?				
↳ If so, do you / your staff inform the survivor about consent in the first language of the survivor?				
↳ If so, do you clearly inform the survivor that she has the right to not to proceed if she does not agree or does not feel comfortable, in the first language of the survivor?				
Have you consulted with survivors and advocates for survivors of VAW in the development of this protocol/procedure/policy?				
Accessibility and Availability of Services				
Does your organization have female service providers who are trained to provide gender-sensitive and survivor centered services to survivors?				
Is your staff / Are you trained to understand the multiple and in-tersecting forms of discrimination women migrant workers face and, therefore, the heightened risk of violence they experience, including related to different types of occupation, marital and mi-gration status, employment contract, religion, nationality, ethnici-ty, gender identity, sexual orientation and disability?				

	Met	In process	Not met	Comments
Is your staff / Are you trained to recognize signs of violence against women, including physical, sexual, psychological and economic?				
Is your staff / Are you trained to facilitate disclosure of cases of violence against women in a sensitive manner?				
Is your staff / Are you trained to understand the additional challenges often faced by women migrant workers when they seek help, such as discrimination and stigma against migrants, fears around deportation, or fears of job loss?				
If you are operating in a country of origin, is your organization disseminating information on the available services you provide, in places where women migrant workers gather before departing or upon return, such as in communities with high migration rate, migrant resource centers, recruitment agencies, NGO service providers?				
If you are operating in a country of destination, does your organization provide services available at times convenient for women migrant workers such as weekends-both Saturdays and Sundays-or after work (considering care responsibilities)?				
If you are operating in a country of destination, does your organization provide women migrant workers with information on available services they can contact to seek help in case of violence, in common languages spoken by migrants?				
↳ If so, are services provided in the common languages spoken by migrants/ is interpretation available?				
If you are operating in a country of destination, is your organization disseminating information on the available services you provide, in places where women migrant workers gather, such as markets, places of employment, airport, temples/churches/mosques, NGOs and work-related housing settings, in the common languages spoken by migrants?				

	Met	In process	Not met	Comments
Interpretation and Language				
Is verbal interpretation provided through a female interpreter who is fluent in both languages (languages of the countries of destination and languages of the survivors) to not cause any misunderstanding due to interpretation?				
Are the interpreters trained to be culturally sensitive and to re-frain from 'victim blaming' language?				
Cultural Sensitivity				
If you are operating in a country of destination, are you / your staff allowing women migrant workers to have a support person with them, at least during the initial data gathering / interview?				
If you are operating in a country of origin, are you / your staff trained on prevention of stigma, discrimination and on barriers which prevent women migrant workers returnees from reporting experiences of violence?				
If you are operating in a country of destination, are you / your staff trained on culturally appropriate service provision (different religion or social norms)?				
Coordination and Referral				
Do you / your organization have updated Standard Operating Procedures and Referral Pathways?				
↳ If so, do they define principles of service provision, key definitions, roles and responsibilities of service providers and establish protocols on referral and information sharing for coordinated services for women migrant workers subject to violence?				
↳ If so, do you have an updated list of contact details of other service providers part of the referral pathway?				
Have you / Has your organization established linkages with stakeholders in countries of origin or destination, so to refer cases of violence against women migrant workers abroad?				

	Met	In process	Not met	Comments
Health				
Do you / your staff ensure access to urgent health care, preventive treatments, sexual and reproductive health care and medio-legal exams for survivors, regardless of their migration status, in a timely manner and without discrimination (through service provision or referral)?				
Police and Justice - Legal Support				
Is verbal interpretation provided through a female interpreter who is fluent in both languages (languages of the countries of destination and languages of the survivors) to not cause any misunderstanding due to interpretation?				
Are the interpreters trained to be culturally sensitive and to re-frain from 'victim blaming' language?				
Are you / your staff aware of contact details of organizations you could refer the survivor to, depending on her needs, such as health, social services and those that provide focused support services for women migrant workers?				
Do you / your staff provide legal information on how to collect overdue wages and assistance with legal documentation?				
If you are operating in a country of destination, do you / your staff provide survivors with information on legal rights / legal options / justice processes (such as filing a complaint), informing on any differences for non-resident women and any implications if her status is dependent on the perpetrator?				
Social Services				
If you operate in a country of destination, do you / your staff provide emergency support to respond to the individual immediate needs when violence happens such as emergency transport, food and clothing, without charging a fee to women migrant workers?				
If you operate in a country of destination, do you / your staff provide immediate access to emergency safe and secure accommodation for the survivor and her children, without charging a fee?				

	Met	In process	Not met	Comments
Social Services				
If you operate in a country of destination, do you / your staff support survivors with connecting them to services in their respective country of origin, if needed, as appropriate, with their consent, respecting their confidentiality (only release information with their consent)?				
↳ If so, do you have a list of available services in countries of origin that can be handed over to survivors?				
↳ If so, are you in contact with those organizations?				
Do you/ your staff support survivors with linking them with their family in their country of origin (respecting their confidentiality) through phone calls or other supports?				
Do you/ your staff organize support groups / provide other psycho-social support targeting specifically women migrant workers survivors of violence?				
Data collection				
If you are a violence against women specialized agency, do you / your organization collect a Minimum Data Set on the case of violence, including survivor's country of birth, survivor's country of origin, country where the violence occurred?				
Does your organization have a protocol for data collection and sharing ensuring the survivors' privacy and confidentiality?				
Does your organization require information on the migration status (THIS IS NOT RECOMMENDED)? If you do so, does your organization ensure confidentiality and inform survivors of the risks they face when disclosing their migration status?				
Does your organization conduct periodic analysis of the data collected, to identify help-seeking patterns and inform any modification/improvement in the service provision system?				

ANNEX 6: LINKS TO SAMPLE SOPs

Fiji National Service Delivery Protocol for Responding to Cases of Gender Based Violence

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR GENDER BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND

RESPONSE National Commission for Women and Children Royal Government of Bhutan

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR PREVENTION OF AND RESPONSE TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE In Kurdistan Region of Iraq

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR PREVENTION OF AND RESPONSE TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE in Syria



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Developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for a Coordinated Response to Violence against Women, including women migrant workers

The Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers' rights and opportunities in the ASEAN Region Programme, is part of the Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls by 2030, a global, multi-year initiative between the European Union (EU) and United Nations (UN). Safe and Fair focuses on ASEAN countries and is implemented through a partnership between the ILO and UN Women, in collaboration with UNODC, and is delivered at both local and national levels through governments, trade unions, employer organizations, civil society organizations and women's organizations, and at the regional level through ASEAN institutions.

The Spotlight Initiative is a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls by 2030. It is the world's largest targeted effort to end all forms of violence against women and girls. Launched with a seed funding commitment of €500 million from the European Union, the Spotlight Initiative represents an unprecedented global effort to invest in gender equality as a precondition and driver for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. As a demonstration fund for action on the Sustainable Development Goals, the Spotlight Initiative is demonstrating that a significant, concerted and comprehensive investment in gender equality and ending violence can make a transformative difference in the lives of women and girls.

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