Session 3: Addressing violence against women

Moderator: Melissa Alvarado
*Ending Violence Against Women*
UN Women Asia and the Pacific Regional Office

Expert Group Meeting
Implementing Beijing+25 Commitments in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic

16 September 2020 - Virtual
09.00 a.m. – 10.30 a.m.
Agenda

09:05 – 09:15  Introduction and presentation of speakers
09:15 – 09:25  Opening presentation
09:25 – 09:55  Panel presentations
09:55 – 10:25  Interactive discussions
10:25 – 10:30  Closing remarks
Connection information for the session

- We kindly request that participants keep microphones on mute and cameras turned off during the presentations
- Please note that the meeting proceedings will be recorded
- We encourage participation in the discussions
- Please use the Zoom Chat function to write in any questions/comments that you may have
- In case you have any problems with audio, visual, and internet connection, please disconnect and reconnect by clicking again on the link “Zoom Meeting” in the invitation email. If the problem persists, please contact Chookiat Jirapitisajja at: cjirapitisajja@unwomen.org
Bandana Rana is the Vice Chair of the UN CEDAW Committee. Her experience spans three decades of promoting women's rights, gender equality and peace and security in Nepal and globally. She has led numerous advocacy programs linking UN frameworks provided by CEDAW, BPFA and UNSCR 1325. Rana is the recipient of the Woman of Distinction Award 2016 conferred by the NGOCSW Committee, for her contribution to gender equality globally. She was a member of the UN Secretary General's High-Level Advisory Group for the Global Study on UNSCR 1325 and a member of the UN Women Global Civil Society Advisory Group from 2012 to 2015.
Jan Logie is a Green MP and Under-Secretary to the Minister of Justice, responsible for domestic and sexual violence issues. She has campaigned for women’s rights throughout her life, including as the coordinator of Wellington Women’s Refuge and executive director of YWCA Aotearoa New Zealand, and volunteering with Wellington Rape Crisis, Youthline and HELP Sexual Abuse Crisis Line. She championed the Domestic Violence Victims’ Protection Act which provides paid leave and flexible working arrangements for people affected by domestic violence. She is the lead Minister for a whole-of-government Joint Venture to eliminate family violence and sexual violence; oversees the implementation of new family violence legislation; and is working on justice system reforms to improve the experience of victims and survivors in sexual violence cases.
Kitanaka Chisato, 北仲 千里
Executive Director, All Japan Women’s Shelter Network, and Board member of the Asian Network of Women’s Shelters

Director, All Japan Women’s Shelter Network; Associate Professor at Hiroshima University Harassment Consultation Office (Japan), President of the NGO “Sexual violence victim support Hiroshima”, a rape crisis center for Hiroshima. She works as a social worker on university campus dealing with harassment, bullying, discrimination, and violence. Her major research themes are sociological gender theory, violence against women, harassment on campus, academic harassment, and academic misconduct.
Avni Amin
WHO, Department of Reproductive Health and Research

Avni Amin works at the WHO’s Department of Reproductive Health and Research on violence against women. Her primary focus is to support countries – Ministries of Health – in the translation and uptake of WHO’s normative guidelines and tools to strengthen health systems response to violence against women. She has led the development of clinical guidelines for responding to child and adolescent sexual abuse and is a lead author of the WHO global plan of action on strengthening health systems response to addressing interpersonal violence, in particular against women and girls and against children. Avni is a passionate feminist scientist with a fierce commitment to gender equality and women’s health. She is originally from India and considers herself as a global citizen.
WOMEN WHO EXPERIENCE INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE, 2000 - 2020

UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Region

Legend:
- Percentage of women who disclosed experience of physical or sexual violence or both, by an intimate partner in their lifetime.
- Percentage of women who disclosed experience of physical or sexual violence or both, by an intimate partner in the last 12 months.
- Subnational data

Source: Country reports from the most recent surveys conducted with the methodology of the WHO Multi-country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence in 20 Domains Violence module of the Demographic and Health Survey, between 2000-2020.

For more information: asia-pacific.unfpa.org/KNOWYWdata
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The Shadow Pandemic: Violence Against Women and Girls and COVID-19

Globally, **243 million** women and girls aged 15-49 have been subjected to sexual and/or physical violence perpetrated by an intimate partner in the previous 12 months.

The number is likely to **INCREASE** as security, health, and money worries heighten tensions and strains are accentuated by cramped and confined living conditions.

Emerging data shows that since the outbreak of COVID-19, violence against women and girls (VAWG), and particularly domestic violence, has **INTENSIFIED**.

In France, reports of domestic violence have increased by 30% since the lockdown on March 17.

In Cyprus and Singapore, helplines have registered an increase in calls of 30% and 35%, respectively.

In Argentina, emergency calls for domestic violence cases have increased by 25% since the lockdown on March 20.

Increasing cases of domestic violence and demand for emergency shelter have also been reported in Canada, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

As stay-at-home orders expand to contain the spread of the virus, women with violent partners increasingly find themselves isolated from the people and resources that can help them.

**87,000 women** were intentionally killed in 2017. The majority of these killings were committed by an intimate partner or family member of the victim.

Violence against women and girls is pervasive but at the same time widely under-reported. Less than **40%** of women who experience violence report these crimes or seek help at any sort.

The global cost of violence against women had previously been estimated at approximately **US$1.5 trillion**. That figure can only be rising as violence increases now, and continues in the aftermath of the pandemic.

Domestic violence shelters are reaching capacity or unable to take new victims due to lockdown and social distancing measures. In other cases, they are being re-purposed to serve as health centers.

The surge in COVID-19 cases is straining even the most advanced and best-resourced health systems to the breaking point, including those at the front line in violence response.

National responses to COVID-19 must include:

- Services to address violence against women and girls, including increased resources to support shelters, hotlines and online counseling. These essential services should be expanded and adapted to the crisis context to ensure survivors' access to support.

- A strong message from law enforcement that impunity will not be tolerated. Police and Justice actors must ensure that incidents of VAWG are given high priority and care must be taken to address the manifestations of violence emerging in the context of COVID-19.

- Psychosocial support for women and girls affected by the outbreak, gender-based violence survivors, frontline health workers and other frontline social support staff must be prioritized.
Ms. Bandana Rana
Vice-Chair of the UN CEDAW Committee
Session Overview
• Violence against women has emerged as a serious threat to women, children and families during COVID.
  • What insights have you drawn from this?
  • What has emerged as critical areas that need attention linked to violence against women and COVID?

• How can governments be better prepared to respond to VAW in the future for such emergencies- noting the lifesaving roles of shelters and frontline service providers, as well as the critical roles of police?
Ms. Bandana Rana
Vice-Chair of the UN CEDAW Committee
Session Overview
Recommendations from the Beijing+25 Asia-Pacific Declaration and Report:

“Freedom from violence, stigma, harmful stereotypes and negative social norms”

• Amending and enforcing legislation - referencing CEDAW, CRC and international human rights obligations - to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres, including in digital contexts

• Implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private, including digital contexts, and ensuring gender-sensitive police response, completed prosecutions, quality support services, and data collection and evidence

• Implementing comprehensive anti-trafficking legal and regulatory frameworks and strategies to combat and eliminate all forms of domestic and cross-border trafficking in persons and exploitation, both online and offline

• Establishing and promoting comprehensive, interdisciplinary services, programmes and responses for all victims of all forms of violence and other forms of abuse, especially migrant women and girls and children

• Strengthening and allocating resources to national machineries for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women
Recommendations from the Beijing+25 Asia-Pacific Declaration and Report:
“Freedom from violence, stigma, harmful stereotypes and negative social norms”

• Transforming negative gender norms, discriminatory social attitudes, and eliminating unequal power relations between women and men through legislation and policies, including through use of media to perpetuate violence against women and girls

• Collaborating with all relevant stakeholders, including civil society organizations, and engaging men and boys and women and girls, to promote non-discriminatory, culturally appropriate and gender-sensitive portrayals of women and men

• Closing the digital gender gap by enhancing women’s participation as users, content creators, employees, entrepreneurs, innovators and leaders, and increasing access of all women and girls to digital technologies
Ms. Jan Logie

Under-Secretary for Domestic and Sexual Violence, New Zealand Government
Guiding questions

• We understand that the New Zealand government has prioritized violence against women services and has boosted funding this year linked with COVID.
  • What informed these decisions to prioritize violence against women?

• COVID-19 has revealed the close associations between women’s economic status, safety and experiences of violence.
  • What potential is there to address women’s economic empowerment associated with ending violence against women—through policies, programmes, workplace approaches, or other interventions?
Ms. Jan Logie

Under-Secretary for Domestic and Sexual Violence, New Zealand Government
Ms. Kitanaka Chisato, 北仲 千里
Executive Director, All Japan Women’s Shelter Network, and Board member of the Asian Network of Women’s Shelters
The Asian Network of Women’s Shelters is a regional body that connects women’s shelters across countries, in this region and globally. During the height of COVID unfolding in this region, ANWS hosted a series of global calls to allow shelters to share challenges and solutions quickly.

What were the key challenges that stood out during this time, and what solutions did the shelters and crisis services develop to respond to VAW in the face of COVID?

Technology-based services, for example, have been getting increased attention.

What lessons are emerging related to violence against women and technology?