

kNOwVAWdata: Project Overview



Yearly update: June 2019



One in three women worldwide has experienced physical and/or sexual violence in her lifetime, most often at the hands of an intimate partner, in particular her husband. Among the 31 countries in Asia and the Pacific that have completed a violence against women prevalence survey, 15 to 68 percent of women have disclosed experiencing physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner.



Background: Violence against women is a violation of their human rights

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

Yet, despite growing awareness of the causes and consequences of VAW, limited data on its prevalence exists. Reliable, comparable data on VAW prevalence are critical to inform and monitor effective prevention and response efforts, and are also an essential part of a comprehensive approach to ending all forms of violence against women and girls. However, technical capacities to collect VAW data are lacking. Taken together, this lack of data and capacity is a major obstacle to developing appropriate and context-specific VAW policies, and it hampers sound programming, monitoring and evaluation.

In 2011, the United Nations Statistical Commission adopted nine standard indicators for measuring VAW. This, with the adoption by Member States of Target 5.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—see below—has given rise to a growing call for reliable and comparable VAW prevalence data.



SDG 5: "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls."

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

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

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



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AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION FOR WOMEN'S SAFETY
to Reduce Violence against Women & their Children

Why kNOwVAWdata?

In light of this increasing demand for more accurate, reliable and comparable VAW prevalence data, the kNOwVAWdata initiative launched in 2016. kNOwVAWdata builds on a long history of support from Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and UNFPA to countries conducting VAW prevalence studies throughout Asia and the Pacific. These efforts combined to form the kNOwVAWdata initiative, which provides technical support and capacity building, enabling countries to undertake VAW prevalence studies in an ethical and scientifically robust way.

A hallmark of this flagship DFAT-UNFPA initiative is the partnership with the University of Melbourne and Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS). Under this partnership, UNFPA and the University of Melbourne have developed and piloted a standard 4-week curriculum for capacity building to measure the prevalence of VAW and improve data literacy.

The current Australia-funded phase of kNOwVAWdata runs from mid-2016 to mid-2020.

Key features of kNOwVAWdata

High quality technical assistance on national VAW data collection and use

The kNOwVAWdata team at UNFPA and the University of Melbourne, together with a growing network of trained professionals who participate in kNOwVAWdata's course on the measurement of VAW, continues to support countries undertaking national VAW surveys in Asia and the Pacific. This ensures that data are collected in a robust and ethical way, keeping participants safe and their personal information confidential, and that data are analysed, interpreted and used properly and effectively.

Capacity building for conducting national VAW prevalence studies

UNFPA and the University of Melbourne developed and piloted a 4-week curriculum to build the capacity of national statistical office and other government representatives, researchers and academics to conduct and analyse VAW surveys in Asia and the Pacific. The course also teaches participants how to use VAW data effectively. kNOwVAWdata utilises internationally recognised, best practice survey methodologies, such as that of the World Health Organization (WHO) Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence, and the Domestic Violence module of the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS). The kNOwVAWdata curriculum builds on existing materials and resources, and leverages the latest methodological approaches and experiences from the field.

Sustainability as part of a long-term vision

Sustainability is central to ensuring long-term, quality capacity building and country support. To this end, the kNOwVAWdata curriculum was developed using a participatory process, and it is an open source resource that will be co-branded with other UN agencies and partners working on measuring VAW prevalence regionally and globally. To ensure sustainability of the initiative going forward, UNFPA and the University of Melbourne are currently exploring opportunities for additional universities in the region to co-deliver the course. The University of Melbourne is offering the course using a short course modality in 2019, and also plans to incorporate it in degree programmes in the future.

Knowledge capture and sharing

kNOwVAWdata's website provides a repository of resources for researchers and practitioners working to measure and end VAW. The website offers regional data visualisations and key reference materials from national VAW prevalence studies, training tools and methodological guidance as well as powerful multimedia stories of individuals and research teams involved in conducting VAW surveys in Asia and the Pacific. kNOwVAWdata regularly updates and produces new knowledge products and stories, and communicates the importance of measuring VAW prevalence through social media, speaking engagements, media coverage and other awareness-raising activities.

“Thank you for this study, because I can share very sad things, which until now I saved in my heart.”

- Violence against women survey interviewee, Timor-Leste

Technical advisory committee

The kNOwVAWdata technical advisory committee (TAC) consists of experts on the collection, analysis and use of VAW data at the country, regional and global levels. The TAC helps guide the development and rollout of the kNOwVAWdata curriculum, provides advice on monitoring and evaluation, and ensures that experience and learning from this project are shared with other regional and global VAW data initiatives.

kNOwVAWdata training course highlights

- Focuses on developing the skills of practitioners to understand and measure international indicators for VAW, including those under SDG Target 5.2.
- Integrates course work and hands-on, practical learning experiences; for example, participants have opportunities to provide technical support to their countries' VAW surveys underway, as applicable, including data collection and analysis.
- Is embedded in ongoing course work at the University of Melbourne and potential future partner institutions.
- Supplements training activities with ongoing mentoring for participants who have completed the course.
- Learn more at: kNOwVAWdata.com/course

kNOwVAWdata key achievements: 2016 – 2018

- Provided technical support and capacity building for collection, analysis and communication of VAW survey results to countries undertaking VAW surveys in Asia and the Pacific, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam.
- Developed and implemented a monitoring and evaluation framework for the kNOwVAWdata initiative.
- UNFPA and implementing partner the University of Melbourne, with ANROWS, developed a 4-week curriculum for the measurement of VAW prevalence that was successfully piloted in Bangkok and Melbourne in 2018.
- Built a new website with data visualisations showing the prevalence of VAW throughout Asia and the Pacific, as well as resources on VAW data collection, analysis and use.
- Created and updated a set of knowledge products, including Key Terminology, Survey Methodologies, Six Golden Principles for Interviewing Women Who May Have Experienced Violence, Lessons Learned from the Implementation of a Violence against Women Survey in Palau, Regional Snapshot, and this Project Overview.
- Boosted social and traditional media engagement, including through a multi-media story, The Journey: Collecting Data on Violence against Women in Mongolia; six short videos on the 2018 kNOwVAWdata course participants' work; and 16 Days of Activism social media campaigns highlighting stories of measuring VAW prevalence.
- Won a 'gender data impact story' contest held by Data2X and Open Data Watch, highlighting the 2010 Viet Nam VAW prevalence survey and its impact; this resulted in international recognition via a series of Devex stories and op-eds and a panel discussion at the UN World Data Forum in Dubai.
- Represented kNOwVAWdata in regional and global fora, including the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (New York, 2017), the SVRI Forum (Rio de Janeiro, 2017), the UN World Data Forum (Dubai, 2018), the Global Forum on Gender Statistics (Tokyo, 2018), and other events.

Australia's support to VAW prevalence studies

As of 2019, Australia has supported more than 13 VAW prevalence studies in the region—Timor-Leste, Cambodia and Viet Nam in Southeast Asia; and Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Tonga, Fiji, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru and Palau in the Pacific—partnering with UNFPA for many of these studies. Australia also supported the United Nations Multi-country Study on Men and Violence in Asia and the Pacific. This study collected data on men's perpetration of VAW at nine sites in six countries in the region: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea.

UNFPA's proven leadership in collecting data on VAW

UNFPA is at the global forefront in measuring, responding to and preventing VAW, and has provided VAW data collection technical support to more than 20 countries in Asia and the Pacific. For the past decade, UNFPA's Asia Pacific Regional Office has been investing in initiatives to build skills among government staff and researchers in the region; the lessons learned have been incorporated in kNOwVAWdata's training materials and capacity building efforts. UNFPA also has long-standing and trusted relationships working on population data initiatives with government statistical bodies worldwide—including on national censuses—as well as a network of partners engaged in UNFPA's work to end VAW. As of June 2019, at least 31 countries in the Asia-Pacific region had undertaken national or subnational prevalence studies on VAW. The methodology for the WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence has been used by 26 countries, and at least 15 have used the DHS Domestic Violence module at least once, while a few other countries used different methodologies. In 21 countries—Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Samoa and Solomon Islands—UNFPA served as a technical partner to governments and national statistical offices carrying out VAW prevalence surveys. Specifically, UNFPA helped ensure ethical and sound VAW data collection, analysis and interpretation, in line with international standards. These studies provide an evidence base for policy advocacy, legal reform and programme development.

University of Melbourne's commitment to building capacity to measure violence against women and children


The University of Melbourne has a clear commitment to population health and equity, which aligns with UNFPA's mandate to attend to the gender and human rights dimensions of population problems. In addition, the University has demonstrated research expertise and strong commitment to ending VAW through provision of support to the Melbourne Research Alliance to End Violence against women and their children (MAEVe), and a long history of engagement and capacity building on ending VAW in Asia and the Pacific.

ANROWS' expertise in research and policy to reduce violence against women and children

ANROWS is an independent, not-for-profit research organisation established by the Commonwealth and all state and territory governments of Australia. Its primary role is to produce, disseminate and assist in applying evidence in policy and practice to achieve a significant and sustained reduction of violence against women and their children.

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 knowvawdata@unfpa.org

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United Nations Population Fund

Asia and the Pacific Regional Office
4th Floor, UN Service Building
Rajdamnern Nok Avenue
Bangkok, Thailand 10200
Tel: (662) 687 0100

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