Evaluation of the kNOwVAWdata Initiative

Phase I
(2016-2020)

Summary Report

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kNOwVAWdata
measuring prevalence of violence
against women in asia-pacific

Australian
Aid

Evaluation of the kNOwVAWdata Initiative Phase I (2016–2020)

Summary Report

Ending violence against women:
Building knowledge and skills to produce reliable, ethical, and safe violence against women data

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ABOUT THE kNOwVAWdata INITIATIVE

Meeting the global demand for data

Demand for data on the prevalence of violence against women (VAW) is increasing as countries monitor their progress towards meeting Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and other commitments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Yet, due to limited technical capacities, data on VAW prevalence are often unavailable, underused or collected in unethical, unreliable, and incomparable ways.

To address this void in ethical, reliable, and comparable VAW prevalence data across Asia and the Pacific, the kNOwVAWdata Initiative was launched in 2016 by UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office (APRO) with financial support from the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). With University of Melbourne and Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) as key partners, the kNOwVAWdata Initiative aimed to improve the availability and quality of data to inform more effective policy and programme responses to end VAW.

For more information about the kNOwVAWdata Initiative, see: asiapacific.unfpa.org/knowvawdata.

"The kNOwVAWdata Initiative was a critical driver for improving research on violence against women and girls in Asia and the Pacific, including the ability of countries to report on SDG indicators."

– *Report of the Evaluation of the kNOwVAWdata Initiative Phase I (2016–2020)*

kNOwVAWdata has been a solution for Asia and the Pacific

1

Technical support to
national violence against
women prevalence studies

2

Development,
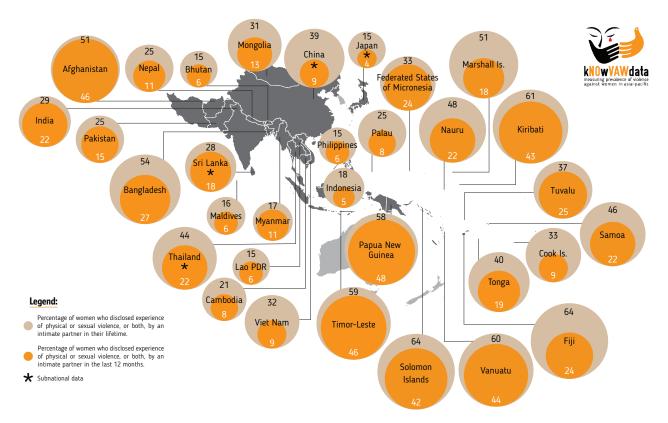implementation, and rollout
of kNOwVAWdata course

3

Forming a network of
violence against women
data professionals

4

Knowledge
capture and
sharing

All leading to a sustainable way to understand how many women experience violence, in which ways, and where; and the ability to monitor SDG 5 and other international commitments.

Images above: 1 & 4 © Dr Henriette Jansen/UNFPA Asia; 2 & 3 © Amanda Mustard/UNFPA Asia

WOMEN WHO EXPERIENCE INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE, 2000 – 2020
UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Region

Map data (lifetime % / last 12 months %):

- Afghanistan 51 / 46
- Nepal 25 / 11
- Bhutan 15 / 6
- Mongolia 31 / 13
- China 39 / * 9
- Japan 15 / * 4
- Federated States of Micronesia 33 / 24
- Marshall Is. 51 / 18
- India 29 / 22
- Pakistan 25 / 15
- Sri Lanka 28 / * 18
- Philippines 15 / 6
- Palau 25 / 8
- Nauru 48 / 22
- Kiribati 61 / 43
- Bangladesh 54 / 27
- Maldives 16 / 6
- Myanmar 17 / 11
- Indonesia 18 / 5
- Tuvalu 37 / 25
- Samoa 46 / 22
- Thailand 44 / * 22
- Lao PDR 15 / 6
- Papua New Guinea 58 / 48
- Cook Is. 33 / 9
- Tonga 40 / 19
- Cambodia 21 / 8
- Viet Nam 32 / 9
- Timor-Leste 59 / 46
- Solomon Islands 64 / 42
- Vanuatu 60 / 44
- Fiji 64 / 24

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 or the Domestic Violence module of the Demographic and Health Survey, between 2000-2020.

For more information: asiapacific.unfpa.org/kNOwVAWdata
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Above: *Regional Violence against Women Snapshot 2020*, an example of a signature knowledge product developed by kNOwVAWdata to enable comparisons of VAW prevalence.

23

of countries kNOwVAWdata supported with VAW data prevalence activities

- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- Cambodia
- China
- Fiji
- Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- Indonesia
- Islamic Republic of Iran
- Kiribati
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mongolia
- Myanmar
- Nepal
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Papua New Guinea
- Philippines
- Samoa
- Tonga
- Sri Lanka
- Thailand
- Viet Nam

OVERVIEW OF THE kNOwVAWdata PHASE I INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

In October 2020, UNFPA APRO commissioned an independent evaluation of kNOwVAWdata Phase I (2016 – 2020). The aim was to:

● Assess the relevance and effectiveness of the Initiative in strengthening national capacities to conduct ethical and rigorous national VAW prevalence studies in the Asia-Pacific region while ensuring high levels of national ownership of the process and the data;

● Assess the impact and sustainability of the Initiative with regards to increasing awareness and knowledge, and influencing policy and advocacy work on VAW prevention and response through utilisation of VAW prevalence data; and

● Draw lessons learnt and give strategic recommendations for future investments focused on strengthening capacities for the measurement of VAW prevalence in the Asia-Pacific region.

The evaluation was conducted remotely using a mixed-methods approach of qualitative key informant interviews and a quantitative online survey.

41 Relevant documents reviewed

27 Key informants interviewed from 11 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and the US

50 Online survey respondents representing 18 countries across Asia and the Pacific

MAIN FINDINGS

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1
Effective

Effective in supporting ethical and rigorous VAW prevalence surveys while ensuring high levels of national ownership

The evaluation found that by strengthening national capacities to measure VAW prevalence, kNOwVAWdata was effective in supporting the conduct of ethical and rigorous VAW prevalence surveys in the Asia-Pacific region while ensuring high levels of national ownership of the process and the data.

It was the combination of a four-week Course on the Measurement of Violence against Women, technical support provided to countries, and the knowledge and communications products that ensured effectiveness.

The technical support – delivered in a personalised, nuanced, collaborative, and detail-oriented way, and on a continuous basis – provided opportunities for personal and professional reflection, stimulating transformative effects among receipients of the technical support. The approach also led to increased awareness of and attention to the issue of VAW, national ownership of the survey process and data, and willingness among government stakeholders to make policy and programmes that address VAW.

A particularly powerful and influential component of the kNOwVAWdata Initiative is its four-week capacity building course on VAW measurement, especially the diverse, multisectoral, and multinational community of course participants, and ongoing opportunities for face-to-face interaction among them.[1]

Additionally, the kNOwVAWdata Initiative's knowledge and communications products that used innovative data visualisation and use of simple, clear, and consistent language are considered by national-level partners, governments, and NGOs as highly appropriate, context-specific, relevant, and useful.[2]

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[1] For more information on the kNOwVAWdata course, visit: knowvawdata.com
[2] Visit UNFPA Asia and the Pacific's kNOwVAWdata webpage for an interactive data visualisation, a repository of kNOwVAWdata communications products, and social media handles: asiapacific.unfpa.org/knowvawdata

MAIN FINDINGS

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2
Complementary

Complements global initiatives for better data on VAW and supports UNFPA's mandate

kNOwVAWdata has complemented the global knowledge base on prevalence of VAW, as well as the wider dissemination of ethical measurement methodologies and best practice use.

The delivery of high-quality and comprehensive knowledge and practical skills to a diverse target audience that focused on filling the gaps in knowledge and skills was shown to be complementary to other existing programmes of similar nature and/or ongoing efforts to measure VAW prevalence in Asia and the Pacific.

The focus on data visualisation in knowledge and communications products as an alternative way to present, explain, and compare national trends in VAW, as well as the financial and human resources invested in disseminating these products, further complemented and expanded the global knowledge on VAW prevalence.

The number of surveys completed during the life of the project (2016–2020) and the high number of online and offline speaking engagements and presentations led by kNOwVAWdata served as key elements of the complementarity and contribution of the kNOwVAWdata Initiative to the global knowledge base on prevalence of VAW.

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"By bringing insights and providing clarifications in how and what to measure (VAW prevalence), the kNOwVAWdata Initiative complemented what was already happening in the Government."

– Key informant interview

MAIN FINDINGS

3
Relevant

Relevant to national needs by improving capacity to collect, analyse, interpret, understand, disseminate, and use VAW data

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kNOwVAWdata has fulfilled the needs of governments and local-level partners engaged in measurement of VAW through the following:

- **Conducting or planning national VAW prevalence surveys;**
- **Analysing, interpreting, understanding, explaining, and disseminating VAW data; and**
- **Effectively using such data to influence VAW policy and programme development.**

The evaluation found that the kNOwVAWdata Initiative met the urgent and important needs of governments and partners engaged in the measurement of VAW. While all core aspects of the Initiative contributed to meeting these needs, it was the four-week course that played a particularly important role in this process.

In addition, the evaluation found that the kNOwVAWdata Initiative was a critical driver for improving research on VAWG in Asia and the Pacific, including the ability of countries to report on SDG indicators. This is because data collection for the SDG indicators 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 was central to the kNOwVAWdata Initiative and key for the countries engaged.

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"The Initiative provided a full package complementing the missing skills and knowledge in understanding and effectively using VAW data to influence decision makers."

– Key informant interview

MAIN FINDINGS

Fosters sustainability through an open-source curriculum and by nurturing a robust network of trained data collection experts

**4
Sustainable**

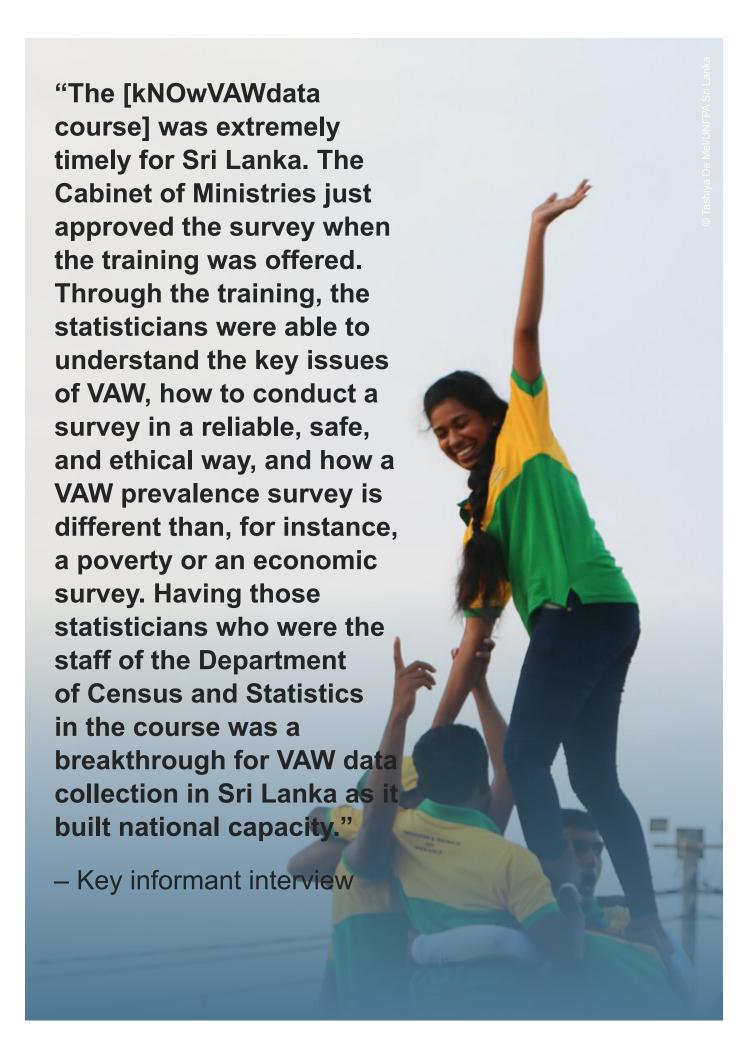© Dr Henriette Jansen/UNFPA Asia-Pacific

The initiative was designed to support sustainable capacity development in VAW data. Efforts such as developing and co-branding the four-week course curriculum as an open-source resource and nurturing a robust network of trained VAW data collection experts have been fundamental factors in ensuring sustainability.

The evaluation found that overall the kNOwVAWdata Initiative ensured long-term, quality, ongoing capacity-building in data collection and data literacy. Through provision of specific, contextualised knowledge and practical skills to measure VAW prevalence, as well as the development of confidence in measuring VAW, the ability to explain VAW data to others, and a sense of local ownership of VAW prevalence study results, there is a high likelihood of sustained benefits from the kNOwVAWdata initiative.

An online repository of knowledge and communications products maintained, frequently updated, and regularly disseminated through the diligent and continuous efforts of the kNOwVAWdata Initiative team among a broad regional and global audience further contributes to the Initiatives' sustainability.

The Initiative has sparked worldwide interest and created opportunities for several recipients of its technical support to become local, regional, and even global experts in VAW measurement. Several of the recipients have noted positive personal attitudinal transformations and a renewed commitment to carry this work forward.

"The [kNOwVAWdata course] was extremely timely for Sri Lanka. The Cabinet of Ministries just approved the survey when the training was offered. Through the training, the statisticians were able to understand the key issues of VAW, how to conduct a survey in a reliable, safe, and ethical way, and how a VAW prevalence survey is different than, for instance, a poverty or an economic survey. Having those statisticians who were the staff of the Department of Census and Statistics in the course was a breakthrough for VAW data collection in Sri Lanka as it built national capacity."

– Key informant interview

MAIN FINDINGS

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5
Influential

Influences
policy and advocacy for
prevention and response
through informed use
of VAW prevalence data
in Bhutan, Indonesia,
Mongolia, Pacific Islands
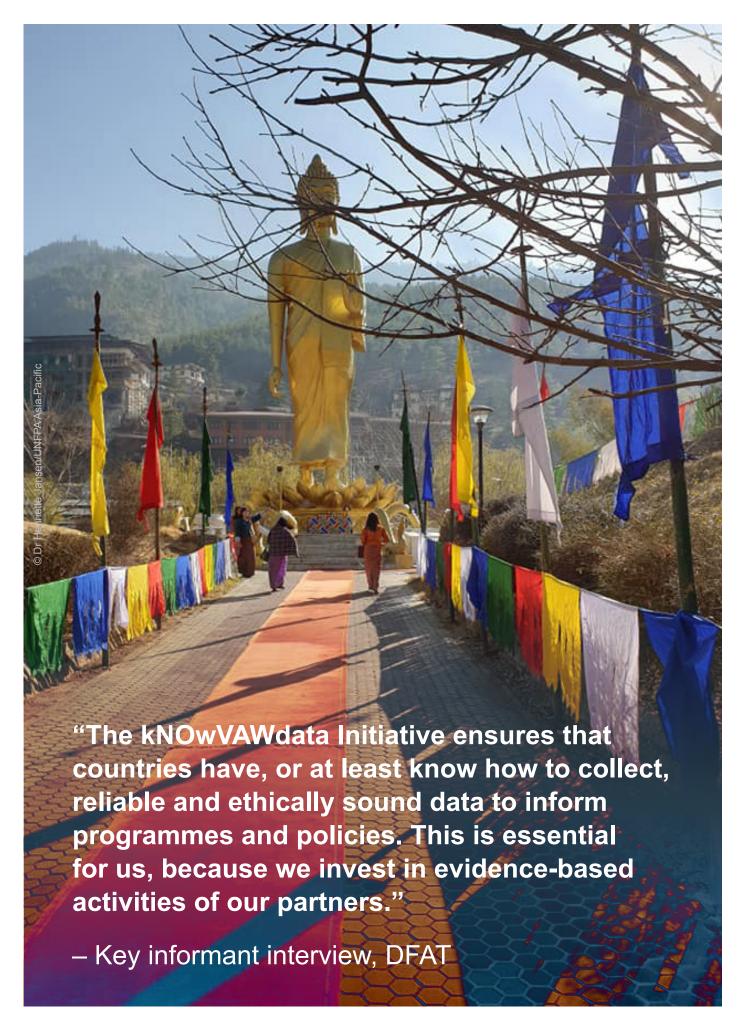and Territories, and
Viet Nam

kNOwVAWdata has increased awareness and knowledge of VAW prevalence data. This has influenced policy and advocacy work on prevention and response through utilisation of VAW prevalence data in several countries.

The evaluation's desk review of project documents and the online survey results both suggest that the kNOwVAWdata Initiative raised awareness and knowledge, and influenced VAW policy and programme development in several countries in the region through technical support in data analysis and utilisation.

Given that policy development is often lengthy and iterative, the complete extent to which the technical capacity building provided by kNOwVAWdata and the subsequent collection of VAW prevalence data influenced policy advocacy is yet to be fully examined.

"The kNOwVAWdata Initiative ensures that countries have, or at least know how to collect, reliable and ethically sound data to inform programmes and policies. This is essential for us, because we invest in evidence-based activities of our partners."

– Key informant interview, DFAT

"Before [the VAW survey, which was supported by the kNOwVAWdata Initiative], people thought there is no VAW in Bhutan; and if there is, they accepted it and said it was just a small issue. But the kNOwVAWdata Initiative helped us to raise awareness of the problem of VAW in Bhutan, show that it is a real issue, that it is not a cooked-up story. It allows us to advocate for doing something about VAW. Now when we present the survey findings, stakeholders believe VAW is a real issue in Bhutan. They have a 'wow moment'. They also go and sensitise local communities. In fact, we can see an increase in reports of VAW/GBV in Bhutan at the moment. This is because of the Initiative, that we have the survey findings, that we have reliable data that speak for itself. This means we have the confidence to speak about VAW, and people are receptive to it."

- Key informant interview

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kNOwVAWdata facilitated a "transformation of attitudes among national-level partners, including governments and NGOs, e.g. a willingness to address and consequently break down the social barriers to discussing VAW openly, acknowledging the scale of the problem, and having confidence to speak out against VAW."

– *Report of the Evaluation of the kNOwVAWdata Initiative Phase I (2016–2020)*

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

✚ Opportunities for beneficiaries of kNOwVAWdata's technical support to become the next generation of local, regional, and global influencers on safe and ethical measurement of VAW.

✚ New professional networks and working relationships developed among recipients of kNOwVAWdata's technical support which go beyond the scope of the Initiative.

✚ Increased worldwide interest and global focus on strengthening reliable, safe, and ethical VAW data.

✚ Life-changing and personal attitudinal transformation in favour of more gender-equitable and VAW-sensitive perspectives, among those who received capacity building and technical support.

✚ Advancement of best practices in measuring VAW prevalence, including work on other types of violence and in other contexts.

> "The Initiative really helps DFAT by informing our work in the prevention and response area."
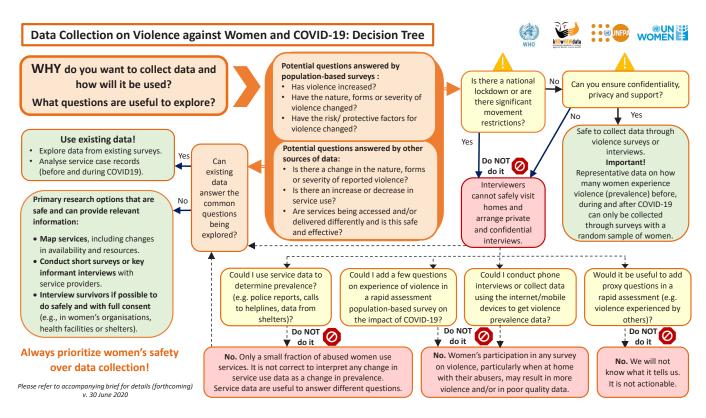>
> – Key informant interview, DFAT

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ADAPTATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the kNOwVAWdata Initiative turned attention from assisting planned prevalence surveys to building understanding and capacity for data collection and use that ensures women's safety as a top priority in the context of the pandemic and its impact on violence against women, as well as on safe and proper survey implementation. It did so by developing new knowledge and communications products, conducting webinars, blogs, and working directly with international organisations working on the same topic to ensure consistency in messaging.

The 2020 Decision Tree on Data Collection on Violence against Women and COVID-19 is a key product developed in partnership with World Health Organization and UN Women. The Decision Tree recommends that instead of collecting new prevalence data, focus should shift to exploring existing data sources and alternative safe research options that help ensure appropriate services are available for survivors.
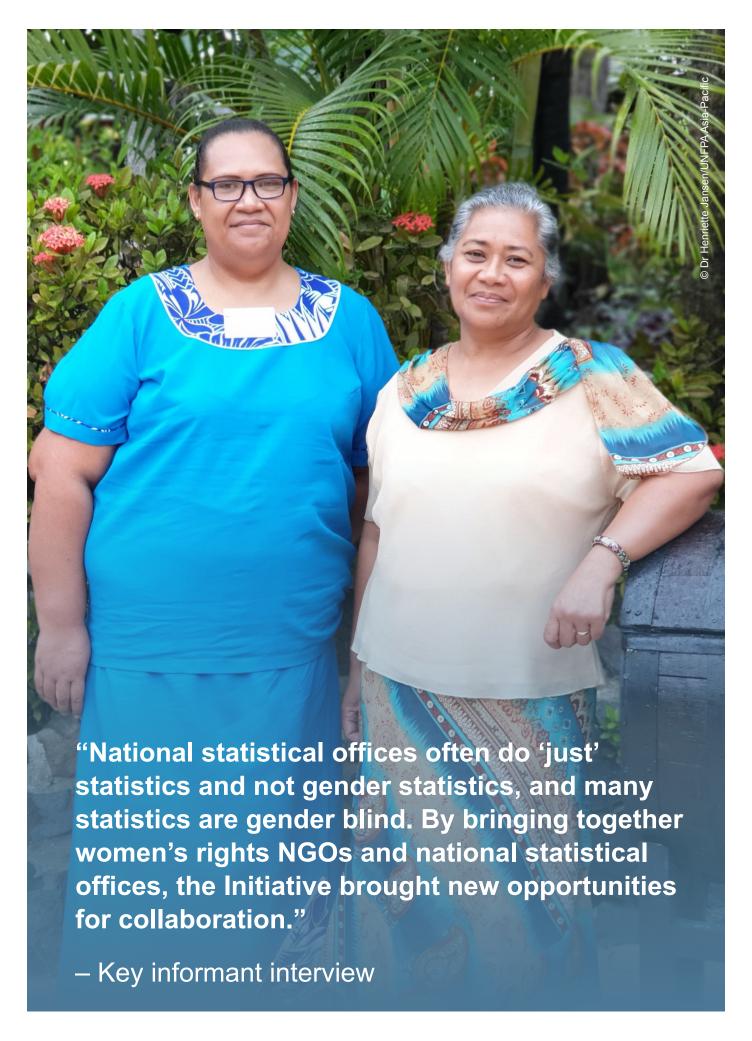

Data Collection on Violence against Women and COVID-19: Decision Tree

WHY do you want to collect data and how will it be used?

What questions are useful to explore?

Potential questions answered by population-based surveys :
- Has violence increased?
- Have the nature, forms or severity of violence changed?
- Have the risk/ protective factors for violence changed?

Potential questions answered by other sources of data:
- Is there a change in the nature, forms or severity of reported violence?
- Is there an increase or decrease in service use?
- Are services being accessed and/or delivered differently and is this safe and effective?

Is there a national lockdown or are there significant movement restrictions?

Can you ensure confidentiality, privacy and support?

Safe to collect data through violence surveys or interviews.
Important!
Representative data on how many women experience violence (prevalence) before, during and after COVID-19 can only be collected through surveys with a random sample of women.

Do NOT do it 🚫
Interviewers cannot safely visit homes and arrange private and confidential interviews.

Use existing data!
- Explore data from existing surveys.
- Analyse service case records (before and during COVID19).

Can existing data answer the common questions being explored?

Primary research options that are safe and can provide relevant information:
- **Map services**, including changes in availability and resources.
- **Conduct short surveys or key informant interviews** with service providers.
- **Interview survivors if possible to do safely and with full consent** (e.g., in women's organisations, health facilities or shelters).

Always prioritize women's safety over data collection!

Please refer to accompanying brief for details (forthcoming) v. 30 June 2020

Could I use service data to determine prevalence? (e.g. police reports, calls to helplines, data from shelters)?

Could I add a few questions on experience of violence in a rapid assessment population-based survey on the impact of COVID-19?

Could I conduct phone interviews or collect data using the internet/mobile devices to get violence prevalence data?

Would it be useful to add proxy questions in a rapid assessment (e.g. violence experienced by others)?

Do NOT do it 🚫
No. Only a small fraction of abused women use services. It is not correct to interpret any change in service use data as a change in prevalence. Service data are useful to answer different questions.

Do NOT do it 🚫
No. Women's participation in any survey on violence, particularly when at home with their abusers, may result in more violence and/or in poor quality data.

Do NOT do it 🚫
No. We will not know what it tells us. It is not actionable.

Above: *Data Collection on Violence against Women and COVID-19: Decision Tree*.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASE II OF THE KNOWVAWDATA INITIATIVE

- Consider additional capacity building opportunities to convene VAW data experts and professionals already trained through the kNOwVAWdata Initiative.

- Encourage higher representation of senior-level government officials as beneficiaries of the kNOwVAWdata Initiative.

- Support sustainability by preserving and further expanding the multi-stakeholder character of the kNOwVAWdata Initiative. Continue to invest in existing and new partnerships with other United Nations agencies and multilateral partners, including outside the Asia-Pacific region.

- Continue strong financial and human resource investment in communications, dissemination and outreach.

- Provide more support in connecting the use of VAW prevalence data with the development of policies and programmes. Also focus on how the use of correctly collected VAW prevalence data can address and shift underlying harmful social and gender norms that enable and sustain VAW.

- Capitalise on the worldwide interest and transform the Asia-Pacific focussed kNOwVAWdata Initiative into a UNFPA global flagship activity, investing full technical and financial resources into it.

- Based on UNFPA's long tradition and experience in the safe and ethical measurement of VAW, consider the kNOwVAWdata Initiative as "a low hanging fruit" for global scale up.

"When we [government and other organisations] now use the VAW data, people are undergoing personal transformations. They have the 'wow' moment. This is because the prevalence of VAW in the region is very high and everyone has a family member who is touched by violence. This brings them closer to the issues, they feel compelled to do something about it."

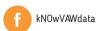– Key informant interview, gender expert in the Pacific

"National statistical offices often do 'just' statistics and not gender statistics, and many statistics are gender blind. By bringing together women's rights NGOs and national statistical offices, the Initiative brought new opportunities for collaboration."

– Key informant interview

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