Invitation to a panel discussion on

“Measuring and exploring prevalence and patterns of violence against women across the Asia-Pacific region”

Date: 22 March 2017
Time 11.30-12.45 pm
Venue: Conference Room A

Background

Violence against women is a human rights violation with serious consequences for the health and well-being of women, their families, and communities. The costs of violence to economies and societies are significant, undermining progress towards sustainable development, peace and security, and the realization of women’s human rights.

One in three women worldwide -- 35 percent -- experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, at the hands of a partner or someone other than a partner. In Asia-Pacific, survey data show that the proportion of women who report having experienced such violence in their lifetime ranges from 15 to 68 percent in different country contexts. While the extent of different forms of violence against women varies across countries, violence against women occurs in every society, at all levels of development, and happens to women of all status and backgrounds.

Reliable and robust evidence about the extent and nature of violence against women is a cornerstone of appropriate response to this challenge both domestically and internationally. Yet, despite growing awareness of the causes, and consequences, of violence against women (VAW), there remains a persistent lack of data on the prevalence of VAW. Further there remains a lack of technical capacity to collect these data. Taken together, this hampers sound programming, monitoring and evaluation.

With the adoption by Member States of Target 5.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to “eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in private and public spheres, including trafficking, sexual exploitation and other types of exploitation”, demand for VAW prevalence data will only grow.

To date, at least 26 countries in the Asia-Pacific region have undertaken national or subnational prevalence studies on VAW. Twenty have used the methodology for the WHO Multi-country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence and 8 have used the Demographic Health Survey Domestic Violence module at least once, while a few other countries used different methods. In 16 of these countries, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) served as a technical partner to governments and National Statistical Offices; Australia supported more than 12 studies in the region, partnering with UNFPA for many of these studies.

In August 2016, the UNFPA Asia-Pacific Regional Office and the Australian Government launched an initiative that will scale up support to countries in the region to measure violence against women and monitor VAW-related SDG goals. Over 3.5 years, until the end of 2019, this initiative will build on work
already being supported by UNFPA to conduct VAW surveys and analysis in the Asia-Pacific region and to strengthen capacities for this.

**Objectives**

This panel discussion will present and discuss VAW prevalence data, as well as the status of measurement of the VAW SDG related indicators, in the Asia-Pacific region and globally. Presentations will address following:

- Presentation of VAW prevalence data from country studies in Asia-Pacific that used the methodology of the *WHO multi-country study on women’s health and domestic violence* or the *DHS-Domestic Violence module* and how prevalence rates vary across the region.
- Current status of measurement of the VAW SDG indicators in Asia Pacific, as well as overall trends and developments in measuring the VAW SDG indicators globally.
- Sharing of specific country experiences with measuring prevalence of VAW using the WHO methodology and/or the DHS DV module.

**Speakers:**

*Opening session:*

- Ms Sarah Goulding, Acting Assistant Secretary and Principal Sector Specialist – Gender Equality, DFAT
- UNFPA – tbc

*Panelists:*

- Dr Henrica (Henriette) AFM Jansen, Technical Adviser VAW Data, UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office
- Ms Juncal Plazaola Castano, Violence Against Women Data Specialist, UN Women
- Ms Ethel Sigimanu, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Women, Youth and Children’s Affairs, Solomon Islands
- Ms Amanda McIntyre, Head of the Office for Women, Australian Government.

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