



Global Rights for Women, Australian Women Against Violence Alliance, Basque Institute for Women and the UN Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence present

The importance of a Coordinated Community Response (CCR)¹ in responding to violence against women and girls

Ace Room Theatre, The Westin Hotel, 212 East 42nd Street, New York City (TBC)

14 March 2019, from 2.00 - 4.15 pm

Background

Violence against women and girls ('VAWG') is one of the most serious and universal human rights violations. Country data shows that approximately one third of women globally have reported experiencing physical and/or sexual violence at some point in their lifetime, mainly by their partners.² VAWG has numerous short and long-term impacts for survivors' physical and mental health, well-being and safety. Research has established that women and girls experiencing violence utilize health services more frequently and are more likely to report a worse health status and quality of life than those who do not experience violence³. VAWG also has a ripple effect for families, communities, wider society and the economy. For example, lost employment and productivity (work and school), impede long-term economic growth. If unaddressed, VAWG has serious cost implications and consequences for poverty reduction and development, including hampering efforts to achieve the SDGs and the 2030 sustainable development agenda.

The UN Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence

To eliminate the many different forms of violence requires a multi-disciplinary approach with effective coordination among the different actors. This must also include comprehensive multi-sectoral and mutually reinforcing prevention strategies that address the root causes of violence. Providing access to a set of quality health-care, justice and policing and psycho-social services can enable women and girls to break recurrent cycles of violence and to mitigate its consequences. *The UN Joint Global*

¹Coordinated Community Response (CCR), was first developed in the early 1980's in Duluth, Minnesota as an intervention designed to centralize victim safety in domestic violence cases and to hold men who batter accountable for their violence. The concept of a CCR can be adapted across different cultural contexts giving communities the tools to develop their own interventions. It can also be applied to different forms of violence - including sexual assault. The involvement of each participant in a CCR is guided by the core principles of interventions designed to protect survivors from further harm.

² WHO (2013).

³ Grisso et al. (1999), Kyriacou et al. (1999), Bonomi et al. (2006)

Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls subject to Violence ('the Joint Programme'), a partnership between UNFPA, UN Women, UNODC, WHO and UNDP, is aimed at responding to these critical gaps and challenges. Its focus is to provide guidance on how to implement the global norms on multi-sectoral services and responses, with a focus on the health, police, justice and social services, as well as coordination mechanisms linking these sectors.

Speakers:

Global Rights for Women

Global Rights for Women (GRW)⁴ is dedicated to promoting women's human rights to be free from violence with a focus on achieving effective legal and systems reform internationally. They partner with organizations around the world to develop and enforce laws, create sustainable training initiatives, build local advocacy and public support, and monitor implementation of law, policy and practice. GRW staff has worked in more than 40 countries around the world.

Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA)⁵ is dedicated to ensuring that all women and children are able to live free from all forms of violence and abuse. AWAVA's role is to ensure that women's voices, and particularly those of marginalized women, are heard by Government, amplifying the work of its member organizations.

Emakunde - the Basque Institute for Women⁶, is an autonomous body of the Basque Government which designs, promotes, advises on, coordinates and evaluates equality policies and raises awareness within society in order to achieve the real and effective equality of women and men in the Basque Autonomous Community.

Concept

With the support of the Joint Programme, Global Rights for Women is organizing a two-hour interactive side event during the sixty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women, whose priority theme for 2019 is "Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls."

The side event aims to build capacity of key stakeholders to develop and organize an integrated and Coordinated Community Response (CCR) to violence against women and girls. It will include introductory information about the importance of key aspects of a coordinated community response – having a shared understanding about the causes of VAWG, incorporating the experience and voices of victims through focus groups and interviews, developing criminal justice interventions such as risk assessments and the role of individual agencies in a CCR, such as probation. It will also include examples of effective practices, including those that Global Rights for Women's have partnered on worldwide, as well as presentations by the Australian Women Against Violence Alliance and the Basque Institute for Women.

Effective implementation and enforcement of laws and policies addressing violence against women and girls pose great challenges for many communities worldwide. Where good practices on implementation have been developed in countries where violence against women laws have been in place for many years, having a CCR is proven to be a key component that works. A CCR must be supported by strong governance and coordination structures and take an intersectional approach in

⁴ <http://globalrightsforwomen.org/>

⁵ <https://awava.org.au/>

⁶ <http://www.emakunde.euskadi.eus/english/-/informazioa/english-about-us/>

responding to the diversity of women and children who have experienced violence. The most recent treaty on violence against women, the Istanbul Convention, sets forth clear and comprehensive standards for legislation and its implementation which includes coordination. Also, with the publication of the *Essential Services Package*⁷, the UN agencies participating in the Joint Programme have developed a special module on coordination on multi-sectoral services and responses for women and girls who have experienced violence.

All stakeholders – law and policy makers, legal professionals, civil society organizations, women’s organizations and other advocates – are responsible for improving the implementation and enforcement of laws and policies addressing VAWG. No one sector can do it alone. All sectors must coordinate and collaborate to keep victims safe and hold offenders accountable.

This side event will introduce participants to skills that will allow them to create, organize, and enhance their local integrated and coordinated response to VAWG.

Core content of the side event

Global Rights for Women and partners will present and engage participants in discussion on the following topics, all of which are critical components essential to an effective coordinated community response:

- Having a shared understanding of the causes of VAWG;
- Incorporating the voices of victims to identify the gaps in a CCR and to provide input on criminal justice interventions created. This can be done through organizing and carrying out survivor focus groups or interviews of victims of VAWG;
- Law enforcement response to VAWG;
- Developing criminal justice interventions such as a domestic violence risk assessment tools by a CCR and with input by victims;
- Effective victim-centered prosecutions involving VAWG;
- Utilizing corrections and probation as a response to enhance accountability AND survivor safety;
- Enhancing judicial skills in cases of VAWG;
- Advocacy and essential services for survivors: shelters, hotlines, health care and social services;
- Supervision of violent offenders through probation;
- Organizing and facilitating men’s non-violence programmes;
- Supervised visitation programmes that address the needs of battered women AND children.

When agencies - from emergency response to the courts - work together to interweave policies and procedures, the entire system coordinates to protect survivors more effectively and hold offenders accountable. Each agency has a part in identifying and rectifying gaps that re-victimize or fail to protect those who have experienced violence. Sometimes policies or plans that are developed to keep survivors safe and hold offenders accountable actually cause more harm than good. To avoid this result, a CCR keeps the voices of survivors central to the development of all policies and plans and includes survivors and their advocates at the forefront of decision making.

⁷ <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2015/essential-services-package-module-5-en.pdf?la=en&vs=3759>