



Words to Action:

Newsletter on violence against women

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News & Highlights

General Assembly interactive dialogue on “Taking collective action to end human trafficking”, UNHQ New York, 13 May 2009

▪ During the interactive dialogue, speakers emphasized the need for a coordinated, action-oriented and rights-based approach to end trafficking in persons. Panelists discussed existing efforts to address trafficking in persons, as well as the major challenges UN agencies and governments encounter at the national level. Presentations, statements and webcasts are available online.

www.un.org/ga/president/63/interactive/humantrafficking.shtml

▪ In his address to the dialogue, the UN Secretary-General called for bold, decisive, and collective action to criminalize trafficking, prevent victimization, reduce demand, end impunity and protect the victims. He highlighted trafficking as one of the worst forms of violence against women.

www.un.org/apps/sg/sgstats.asp?nid=3840

▪ The background paper of the UN Secretary-General summarizes the views of Member States, international organizations, and civil society on measures to ensure the full and effective implementation of all legal instruments relevant to trafficking in persons, in particular the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children. It also summarizes the views of Member States on the advisability of adopting a Global Plan of Action.

www.un.org/ga/president/63/letters/SGbackgroundpaper.pdf

Side event on “Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Responses to Violence against Women and Girls” during the eighteenth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Vienna, Austria, 16-24 April 2009

The side event, held on 21 April 2009, was co-organized by Bolivia, Finland, Namibia, the Philippines and Thailand, and cosponsored by a number of other Member States. The aim of the event was to discuss recent developments in the field of combating violence against women and to contribute to

closer cooperation in taking the issue forward. Presentations were made on the work of the inter-governmental expert group meeting to update and revise the *Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice*, held in Bangkok in March 2009, as well as on lessons learned through national efforts to address violence against women.

www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/session/18.html

Five UN regional commissions initiate the implementation of the project “Enhancing capacities to eradicate violence against women through networking of local knowledge communities”

On 27 May 2009, representatives of the five UN regional commissions and the UN Division for the Advancement of Women met in Geneva, Switzerland to initiate the implementation of an interregional project which aims to strengthen national and regional capacity to eradicate violence against women by enhancing the production of statistical data and promoting knowledge sharing at the regional and interregional levels. As part of the project, a common methodology for measuring violence against women in the five regions will be developed, based on the interim set of indicators on physical and sexual violence adopted by the Statistical Commission at its last session in New York from 24-27 February 2009.

www.un.org/regionalcommissions/rcwomen.html

New UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences appointed

Ms. Rashida Manjoo was appointed as the new UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, on 18 June 2009. Ms. Manjoo is a longtime women's rights activist from South Africa who previously served as an Advocate of the High Court of South Africa and as a member of the South African Commission on Gender Equality. She replaces Ms. Yakin Ertürk who was the mandate holder from 2004 to 2009.

www.unhchr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/0/2198BF97A8AE4D1DC12575D90036C71C?opendocument



Highlights of the UN Secretary General's Campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women

- The Campaign developed a strategy and business plan to achieve the five outcomes of the Campaign. The plan has been endorsed by the High-Level Steering Committee chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General and shared with various stakeholders, including UN entities, Member States, civil society and the private sector.
- A group of prominent Chilean men have contributed to the Secretary-General's Campaign by committing to eliminate violence against women. The men delivered their commitment in writing to the Minister of Women, Ms. Laura Albornoz, in Santiago, Chile on 15 May 2009. www.sernam.cl/portal/index.php/component/content/article/1-latest-news/261-campana-de-naciones-unidas



For more information on the Campaign, see <http://endviolence.un.org/index.shtml>

Expert group meeting on "Good practices in legislation to address harmful practices against women", Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 25-28 May 2009

The meeting, co-organized by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, focused on identifying good practices in legislation to address forms of violence against women referred to as "harmful practices", including female genital mutilation, so-called "honour" crimes, and early and forced marriage. The outcome of the meeting will be used to supplement the model framework for legislation on violence against women developed at the 2008 expert group meeting, co-organized by UNDAW and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.

www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/v-egms-gplahpaw.htm

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Global Conference on Gender-based Violence. Caracas, Venezuela, 21-22 April 2009

More than 60 UNDP representatives from around the world gathered in Caracas, Venezuela, to discuss strategies to

eliminate violence against women, including addressing gender based-violence in poverty reduction strategies, legal and judicial reform, and community initiatives. A commitment was made to enhance collaboration with various stakeholders, improve access to justice, and help change attitudes on violence against women.

www.pnud.org.ve/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=189&Itemid=1

The Council of Europe begins developing new instrument on violence against women

An Ad Hoc Committee of the Council of Europe on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence met in April and May 2009 in Strasbourg, France to begin developing a legally binding instrument on violence against women.

www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/violence/meetings_en.asp

29th Conference of European Ministers of Justice focus on the theme "Breaking the silence to end domestic violence"

The Conference, held in Norway on 18 June 2009, provided a forum for the Ministers of Justice of the Council of Europe to exchange views on ways to combat domestic violence. In her opening remarks at the Conference, UN Deputy Secretary-General, Dr. Asha Rose-Migiro, congratulated the Ministers for their initiative to address the issue and stated: "This wide-ranging mission will require adopting new laws, enforcing the ones we have and working tirelessly to change the backward mindsets that condone, excuse or ignore violence committed against women."

www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/minjust/mju29/

Remarks of the Deputy Secretary-General:

www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/dsgsm463.doc.htm

The European Parliament adopts Declaration on violence against women, Strasbourg, France, 22 April 2009

The Declaration asks the European Commission to declare, within the next five years, a "European Year on Zero Tolerance on Violence against Women".

www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2009-0259+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

The African Union (AU) Commission launches regional campaign on trafficking in persons

One of the central aims of the AU Commission Initiative against Trafficking (AU.COMMIT) Campaign is to place trafficking at the top of national and regional agendas. It also hopes to raise awareness on and implement the AU Commission's *Ouagadougou Regional Action Plan* on trafficking.

www.africa-union.org/root/UA/Conferences/2009/juin/SA/16juin/sa/aicomite.html



Feature Item: The Joint Programming Initiative of the UN Inter-Agency's Task Force on Violence against Women

Background

Inter-agency collaboration on gender equality and the advancement of women dates back to the First World Conference on Women in Mexico in 1975. In 2001, the UN Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) was established to ensure coordination and cooperation on the promotion of gender equality throughout the United Nations system. The IANWGE is composed of gender focal points in UN offices, specialized agencies, funds and programmes. The Inter-Agency Task Force on Violence against Women is one of the nine issue-specific task forces of the IANWGE. It was established in 2007 to provide leadership in the United Nations system's follow-up to General Assembly resolution 61/143 of 2006 on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, and to enhance support by the entities of the United Nations system to national efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women. The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW) are co-convenors of the Task Force.

Joint programming initiative

In 2008, the Task Force began a joint programming initiative to address violence against women in ten pilot countries: Burkina Faso, Chile, Fiji, Jamaica, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Paraguay, Philippines, Rwanda, Yemen. The initiative brings together all relevant stakeholders at the national level, including Government actors, the UN Country Teams, and civil society stakeholders to harmonize initiatives and budgets, and maximize each stakeholder's comparative advantage, to end violence against women. The ten pilot countries were selected on the basis of a number of factors, including: support from UN entities for programmes on violence against women; evidence of substantial efforts and commitment at the national level to address and eliminate violence against women; existence of baseline data on violence against women; and a geographical balance of the countries represented. Countries in, or emerging from, conflict and Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Achievement Fund grantees were not considered for inclusion among the pilot countries, as UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict is implementing joint programming in the former and the latter are receiving funds for joint programming on violence against women and related initiatives.

Steps in the Joint Programming Initiative

Step 1: A baseline assessment is conducted to determine: existing initiatives addressing violence against women, including in the areas of law, service-provision, prevention, and data collection; stakeholders involved and their respective capacities and strengths; existing data on violence against women; gaps and challenges to addressing this issue in a concerted manner; and identified priorities for action.

Step 2: Based on the baseline assessment, a national multi-stakeholder workshop is held. These workshops are instrumental in developing a multi-sectoral framework that brings together UN system actions in support of national efforts to address violence against women, including in support of the implementation of national action plans on violence against women where such plans exist; or to assist in the development of such plans where they do not yet exist.

Step 3: A joint national committee is formed, consisting of stakeholders from Government, the UN, and civil society.

Step 4: The joint national committee drafts a multi-sectoral joint programme proposal which is submitted to various bodies for funding.

Step 5: Joint programming activities are implemented based on availability of resources.

Step 6: Monitoring and evaluation is undertaken to identify lessons learned and scale up efforts.



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Status of the initiative

Significant progress has been achieved by the joint programming initiative in all ten pilot countries. Baseline assessments have been drafted, national multi-stakeholder workshops have been held, and joint national committees have been formed to develop multi-sectoral joint programming proposals in all ten pilot countries. In seven countries, joint programming proposals have been finalized by the joint national committees, and in two countries (the Philippines and Rwanda) implementation of joint programming activities, led by UNFPA, has commenced.

Countries in Focus

The Philippines: Implementation of joint programming activities has commenced in the Philippines, with a focus on the improvement of data on violence against women, and engaging men and boys to end violence against women. Work is underway to expand an existing data collection system on trafficking in persons to capture data on other forms of violence against women, such as domestic violence and sexual violence, including rape and sexual harassment. The programme is supporting the work of a non-governmental organization, Men Opposed to Violence against Women Everywhere (MOVE), including the opening of MOVE chapters in provinces throughout the countries.

Rwanda: Based on the findings of the baseline country assessment, the joint programming committee in Rwanda noted a dearth of care and referral services for victims of violence. As a result, the Rwandan joint programming proposal calls for the establishment of a One Stop Center to provide medical, social and psychological services to women and children who are victims/survivors of violence in one centralized location. The proposal also calls for training of health professionals on how to identify, counsel, and refer victims of violence.

Activities of the joint programming initiative are linked to the key outcomes of the UN Secretary-General's Campaign "UNiTE to End Violence against Women" at the national level.

Future activities of the initiative

Based on the lessons learned during the joint programming pilot initiative, work on a manual/guidelines on joint programming on violence against women is being initiated. In 2010, a global event bringing together key partners from the 10 pilot countries will be held to share good practices and lessons learned on the planning, implementation and monitoring of the joint programming initiative.

For further information, visit the website of the Task Force:

http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge/taskforces/tf_vaw.htm



Database Update

Since its launch on 5 March 2009, the Secretary-General's database on violence against women has been updated. As at 9 July 2009, 78 Member States had submitted their responses to the questionnaire, which constitutes the primary source of information for the database. United Nations Country Teams have provided support, at the request of the Governments, in compiling responses to the questionnaire. Member States who have not yet submitted their responses are invited to do so at their earliest convenience, and all Member States are encouraged to continue to submit new and additional information and documents for inclusion in the database, as and when they become available.

The database represents a major step forward in capturing the global response to violence against women. It contains information on a multitude of initiatives, including:

- legislative measures undertaken by almost 160 Member States
- national action plans/strategies adopted by over 40 Member States
- institutional mechanisms established by over 40 Member States, including seven parliamentary committees
- awareness-raising initiatives undertaken by over 50 Member States
- specific surveys undertaken on violence against women in over 20 Member States
- the establishment of specialized courts, prosecutors, police and other officials in almost 30 countries.

The database is available online at: <http://www.un.org/esa/vawdatabase>

Member States: to update information in the database, please send an email to vawdatabase@un.org

Feature Resources

New Special Series on Social Norms and Harmful Practices, UNICEF Innocenti Research Center (IRC), May 2009

This new series of publications by the Innocenti Research Center provides a detailed description and analysis of the process of positive social change that has led to the abandonment of female genital mutilation and other harmful practices against children in various settings.

Three working papers have been published in the series to date:

- (1) Social dynamics of abandonment of harmful practices: a new look at the theory;
- (2) Ethiopia: a comparative analysis of the social dynamics of abandonment of harmful practices in four locations; and
- (3) Sudan: an in-depth analysis of the social dynamics of abandonment of FGM/C

The working papers define and examine key common elements in the process of abandonment so that they can be applied in programmes to initiate positive change and monitor progress.

UNICEF's Innocenti Working Papers series seek to disseminate research on social, economic and institutional aspects of the realization of the human rights of children. For more information, see http://www.unicef-irc.org/article.php?id_article=114

Other resources:

Model Law against Trafficking in Persons, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), July 2009. The model law was developed to assist States in the implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children. It contains provisions that States are required or recommended to introduce into their domestic legislation by the Protocol, including with regard to the criminalization of trafficking in persons and related offences; recommended services for victims of trafficking; and cooperation among various stakeholders in addressing the issue. Each provision is followed by a detailed commentary, and examples of good practices.

www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/UNODC_Model_Law_on_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf





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- *Background paper and expert papers prepared for the Expert Group Meeting on good practices in legislation to address harmful practices against women*, co-organized by UNDAW and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in May 2009. The background paper prepared by UNDAW sets out the international and regional legal and policy framework with regard to the forms of violence against women referred to as “harmful practices” as well as selected national legislative responses. Each expert paper prepared for the meeting provides a detailed analysis of legislation on harmful practices in a particular regional or national context: www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/v-egms-gplahpaw.htm
- *Bringing Security Home: Combating Violence Against Women in the OSCE Region. A Compilation of Good Practices*, Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE), 2009. This compilation documents more than 95 good practices for the prevention of violence against women, protection of survivors, prosecution of perpetrators, and efforts to engage young people and men in combating violence against women. http://www.osce.org/gender/item_11_38013.html
- *Combating Trafficking in Persons: A Handbook for Parliamentarians*, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2009. This *Handbook* sets out practical ways in which Parliamentarians can develop and promote comprehensive legislative frameworks to address trafficking in persons. www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/UN_Handbook_engl_core_low.pdf

Upcoming Events

- 2-3 July 2009:** Expert Meeting on Human Rights and the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in Countries of Prevalence and among Immigrant Communities. Organized by the United Nations Children’s Fund. Geneva, Switzerland.
- 13-14 July 2009:** Fifth Annual Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament. Day one dedicated to the issue of addressing violence against women. Organized by the National Council of Austria and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Vienna, Austria. <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/mws09.htm>
- 20-22 July 2009:** Technical Consultation on Medicalization of Female Genital Mutilation. Organized by the World Health Organization, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children’s Fund. Nairobi, Kenya.
- 19-21 August 2009:** Regional seminar for Latin-American Countries on “Combating violence against women: from legislation to its effective enforcement”. Organized jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Chamber of Deputies of Argentina. Buenos Aires, Argentina. <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/buenosaires09.htm>
- 9-10 September 2009:** International Conference on Violence against Women. Organized by the Government of Italy during its Presidency of the G8. Rome, Italy.

About Words to Action

Words to Action is a newsletter produced by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women. It disseminates information on actions undertaken by Member States and UN entities to address violence against women. The Division for the Advancement of Women in Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat supports the work of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

For more information, see <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/>

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