

Country Assessment on Violence against Women

YEMEN

RESPONSIBILITIES

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COUNTRY ASSESSMENT ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:

CASE OF YEMEN

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the last 20 years, violence against women (VAW) has been increasingly recognized as a major health, human rights and development issue. The Secretary General's In-depth Study on all forms of VAW (A/61/122/Add.1, and Cor.1) recommends intensified action to eliminate VAW at all levels. The General Assembly's resolution urges United Nations (UN) entities to enhance coordination and intensify their efforts to eliminate VAW in a more systematic, comprehensive and sustained way. It further calls upon UN entities to extend coordinated efforts to assist States in their efforts to eliminate VAW.

In order for this coordinated effort in assistance to States against VAW to become a reality, a pilot program has been initiated in 10 countries. These include Burkina Faso and Rwanda for Africa, Jamaica in the Caribbean, Paraguay and Chile for Central America, Fiji for the Pacific, the Philippines for Asia, Jordan and Yemen for the Middle East, and Kyrgyzstan for Central Asia. The task force will assist States through supporting comprehensive national approaches against VAW. For example in designing and implementing national action plans and other relevant programs. Prior to this, a country assessment on VAW is a priority.

It is within this framework that the country assessment on VAW has been undertaken. The Yemen country assessment on VAW will emphasize the nature and extent of the following issues:

- The forms of violence that exist, who the victims and perpetrators are, and what the consequences entail;
- the relevant policies and laws that exist;
- the stakeholders involved and their respective capacities; challenges and gaps in addressing VAW;
- the identification of priorities for interventions.

1.1 Country profile

1.1.1 Geographical location



Yemen is located in the south west of the Arabian Peninsula, southwest of Asia, in the Middle East. The country covers 527,970 square kilometers. It lies south of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, north of the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden, and west of the Sultanate of Oman. It has an estimated population of 22,230,531 (July 2007 est.).

Percentage of population age groups:

0-14 years: 46.3%	male 5.239.003	female 5.047.301
15-64 years: 51.1%	male 5.781.491	female 5.585.152
64 years and over: 2.6	male 281.121	female 296,463

(2007 est.)

1.1.2 Administrative structure:

The Republic of Yemen was established on 22 May 1990 with the union of North Yemen (Yemen Arab Republic) and South Yemen (People's Democratic Republic of Yemen). Prior to the unification, Northern Yemen became independent from the Ottoman Empire while Southern Yemen became independent from the United Kingdom.

Yemen is administratively divided into 21 governorates and 333 districts. It is characterized by an unequal geographic distribution of the population, with around 76% of people being concentrated in rural areas. The most populated governorates include Sana'a, Taiz, Ibb and Hodeidah. These four governorates are all vulnerable to falling into poverty due to their inability to absorb economic and social shocks. In these areas, there is a strong correlation between poverty and the following factors: living in rural areas,

large family sizes, high dependency rates, families headed by women such as widows or divorcees, low levels of education, vulnerability to drought or floods, and lack of access to remittances from abroad.

1.1.3 Key development indicators:

Yemen was ranked 153 out of 177 countries in the 2007 Human Development Index. The poverty level in Yemen is high (GNI per capita of US\$903 per annum, 16% of population below US\$1 a day and 45% below US\$2 a day¹) and the challenges that the country faces in addressing poverty are great. Examples include female primary school enrolment and completion rates² and adult illiteracy rates,³ among the worst in the world, as are infant and maternal mortality rates.⁴ The fertility rate is also one of the highest in the world.⁵ A lack of access to water contributes to the high poverty level.⁶ The agricultural sector continues to absorb 52% of the labor force and contributes 14.6% to the GDP. Moreover, the national economy is heavily dependent on oil revenues (36.7% of GDP).

1.2 Definition of concepts related to VAW:

Basic concepts that are interrelated and sometimes used interchangeably throughout the document are defined in this section for clarification.

The term **VAW** refers to any act that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual and psychological harm to women and girls, whether occurring in private or in public. VAW is a form of GBV and includes sexual violence.⁷

“GBV is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetuated against a person’s will, and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females. Examples include: sexual violence, including sexual exploitation/abuse and forced prostitution; domestic violence; trafficking; forced/child marriage; and harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, honor killings, widow inheritance, and others.”⁸

Sexual violence, including **exploitation and abuse**, refers to any act, attempt, or threat of a sexual nature that results, or is likely to result, in physical, psychological and emotional harm. Sexual violence is a form of GBV.

II. METHODOLOGY

The following methodology was used to undertake the assessment:

2.1 Data collection consisted of:

¹ Data from World Bank World Development Indicators (2003) unless stated otherwise

² Gross primary enrolment rate in 2000 was 52% for girls compared to 81% for boys, while the retention rate was 33% for girls compared to 68% for boys (Ministry of Education 2002).

³ Illiteracy among adult females is 74.7% compared to 32.5% for males (Global Education for All Monitoring Report 2002)

⁴ Under 5 mortality in 2001 was 107/1000 live births, maternal mortality 850/100,000 in 1995 21 6.2% in 2000 but higher in rural areas (World Bank Development Data 2000)

⁵ 6.2% in 2000 but higher in rural areas (World Bank Development Data 2000)

⁶ Per capita share of water in Yemen is less than 2% of world average. Recoverable water is currently estimated around 2.5 billion m3, but total water usage is around 3.4 billion m3 and rising (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2002)

⁷ USAID and UNICEF: Strategic Framework for the prevention of and response to GBV in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa

⁸ USAID and UNICEF: Strategic Framework for the prevention of and response to GBV in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa.

- **Documentary review of:**
 - Policies and legal frameworks
 - Studies conducted on VAW
 - Other relevant documents.
- **The use of a questionnaire:** To collect data from the UN agencies working in the country.

2.2 Data analysis consisted of:

Using thematic analysis for a critical look at the emerging themes became visible from the above data collection processes.

2.3. Overall Objective:

To identify forms and incidences of VAW in Yemen; to analyze existing policies and laws on VAW; to identify major stakeholders and analyze their interventions to combat VAW; to identify resources available and existing capacities to address issues related to VAW; to propose priorities for action.

Specific Objectives:

- To identify the most common forms of GBV in Yemen;
- to review the legislative framework and national policies to combat GBV, including the relevance of the international framework (CEDAW, the Beijing Platform of Action, and various United Nations Resolutions);
- to identify governmental, non-governmental and international organizations active in combating GBV;
- to identify the institutional capacities of key actors, financial, human and technical resources for the programs on combating GBV;
- to explore opportunities for cooperation and partnership between key actors;
- to identify difficulties and challenges facing stakeholders as they prepare and implement programs to combat GBV;
- to identify the human, technical, and financial capacities required to implement effective programs on combating VAW;
- to identify strategies and interventions needed to develop such capacities.

III. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN YEMEN

3.1 Forms and Incidences of VAW:

Yemen is a traditional society where prevailing cultural attitudes bestow women low status in the family as well as in the community. Women in Yemen are subjected to various forms of violence, including physical and psychological abuse within the family, deprivation of education, early marriage, forced

marriage, exchanged marriage,⁹ exaggerated dowries lead to missed opportunity for marriage, sexual harassment, abuse and violence, restrictions and control over freedom of movement, exclusion from private and public decision-making roles and processes, forced pregnancy, polygamy, denial of inheritance, deprivation of utilizing from health services, and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). It is noteworthy that 94% of FGM/C is not conducted by medical doctors due to ministerial decree issued by the Minister of Health that prohibits FGM/C in the official health centers. , The result is that FGM/C is being conducted in the homes.¹⁰The performance of FGM/C in Yemen is a result of cultural practices, the lack of awareness of the risk associated with this harmful procedure, and lack of law prohibiting this act. In order to convince communities not to abolish this harmful practice, FGM/C has been assigned religious significance. A draft proposal for Safe Motherhood Law that includes prohibiting of FGM/C was submitted to the parliament last year, but the follow up for its approval is ongoing. Moreover, a national plan to reduce FGM/C to 30% by 2012 was initiated in 2008.

Other forms of VAW within Yemeni society are related to a strong preference for male children, as well as tolerance of violent/aggressive behavior amongst boys, male adolescents, and men towards females. Female children are often punished if they attempt to defend themselves against such behavior. These attitudes and practices are prevalent not only in the home, but also in schools, social institutes and workplaces. National and local media tend to encourage and reinforce the tendency for such discriminating acts and behaviors.¹¹

Vulnerable Group subject to violence:

Marginalized, poor and rural women are most susceptible to violence. While conditions of poverty tend to exacerbate forms and incidences of violence against women, rural women are also forced to carry out the bulk of agricultural work and physical labour. Women of the marginalized group, *Akhdam*, are more susceptible to discrimination and violence as this group is stigmatized as a social outcast. However, there is a lack of information on the VAW in this group.

Other vulnerable groups that are more likely to be subject to violence are refugees and prisoners. Some studies and reports on violence against these groups are available and cite the following:

a) VAW Refugees

Refugee women from Somalia, Iraq, Ethiopia, Eritrea and other countries are also among the most vulnerable categories of individuals facing violence in Yemen. The Somali and Ethiopian caseload particularly, are first faced with violence at the point of departure from their country of origin, and further targeted during their boat trip to Yemen. During their stay in Yemen, they are faced with continued discrimination and abuse.

A significant proportion of the Somali refugee population (which is the largest refugee population in Yemen) falls into the vulnerable category of single females and single mothers. During the reporting period of **January to September 2008**, UNHCR Yemen (*Aden, Basateen, Kharaz and Sana'a*) have registered 84 GBV cases.

⁹ i.e. a man marries a woman and instead of paying her dowry in full, he allows his in-laws to marry his sister or daughter, in addition to a small amount of money.

¹⁰ Sixth National Report on the Implementation of CEDAW, WNC 2006.

¹¹ Islam and Combating VAW, Women National Committee 2003

The most common type of incident reported to the office are cases of domestic violence targeting female refugees, which account for 40/84 of cases, or 48 % of cases in this 9 month reporting period.

The second most common form of violence reported is rape targeting mostly adult females as well as minors. 27/84 cases or 32 % of cases are rape cases. 10/27 rape cases targeted minors while 16 / 27 cases targeted adult females.

Other forms of violence reported are non gender based reaching 10/ 84 cases reported, or 12% of overall cases.

Early and/or forced marriage, as well as FGM/C are considered a part of culture and tradition, and therefore are not viewed as a form of harmful traditional practice or as a form of violence. These practices are widespread among the refugee communities, especially the Somali refugees. While there is no law against FGM/C in Yemen, a ministerial decree effective January 9, 2001 prohibits the practice of FGM/C in both government and private health facilities. However, a law prohibiting FGM/C would only reinforce the efforts in banning this harmful practice

The UNHCR also conducted a survey on the profile of female Somali new arrivals that arrive to Yemen on boats crossing the Gulf of Aden (a sample of 202 registration forms from the reception centers of Ahwar and Mayafaa were analyzed). The profile of these women is mostly that of single, uneducated individuals, fleeing war, arriving to Yemen often with no family members accompanying them or awaiting them in the country of asylum. About 50 % of the women surveyed, were transiting Yemen and have as an objective to continue to Saudi Arabia. The other 50% percent of the women intended to head to the larger urban areas of Yemen in search of a better life. Traveling through informal routes puts these women in compromising situations where they are subject to violence and abuse. Meanwhile, the perpetrators are left free, unaccountable and unpunished for the crimes committed.

Under reporting (often due to stigma) fear, and lack of general information on the protection mechanisms possible remain an obstacle to the proper identification of such cases. However, with the UNHCR's creation (through implementing partners) of specific social and legal counseling and referral centers in Kharaz camp and Basateen (which contains Yemeni returnees and refugees) in 2008, an increase of cases were reported by the end 2008.

The response and prevention mechanism for survivors of women refugees subjected to violence remains a challenge given the lack of national social services, the absence of an efficient legal and social protection system, and the absence of personal documentation provided by the Yemeni authorities.

b) Female prisoners:

The circumstances of female prisoners have improved following efforts of national and international organizations. Many studies indicate that they remain under substandard conditions, such as a lack of food, health care, basic hygiene facilities, beds, blankets, ventilation, and water supplies. Furthermore, many female prisoners are accompanied by their children, who often go without adequate food, medicine, clothing, and bedding (despite the fact that Article (38) of Prisons Law prohibits the accompaniment of

children with women prisoners). Female prisoners are also deprived of contact with the outside world through the denial of magazines, newspapers, radio, and television.¹²

Moreover, in a study of female prisoner, lawyer Nabela Almufti found that women are often imprisoned without trial and denied access to lawyers once imprisoned.¹³ This is despite Penal Procedure Law No. 9 (1994), which stipulates the right of defense of suspects of a crime, and states that the state should assign lawyers to those individuals who cannot arrange legal defense by their own means. The reality of women's experience in Yemen suggests that this law is often not enforced. This is exacerbated by the fact that many Yemeni women are unaware of their legal rights and do not independently seek legal assistance. Article 11 of Prison Law No. 48 stipulates that women who have served their sentences must be released immediately. However, administrative measures have been shown to undermine that law (as officials do not release women unless they are handed over to family custodians). It is not unusual for families to abandon women once they have been imprisoned in Yemeni society, and therefore many women remain in jail for periods that far exceed their accorded sentences. Abandonment is particularly prevalent in cases of perceived moral offences such as adultery or *Khulwa*, being alone in a public or private place with a non-relative male. There is no legal basis for the penalization of *khulwa* in the Penal Code, yet punishment often occurs under the allegation of perpetrating an 'indecent' or 'obscene' act in public.

According to the statistics of the Ministry of the Interior, there were 134 female prisoners in Yemen in 2007.¹⁴ Of those, 25 were pregnant. That year, 26 children were born in prison, and 47 children accompanied their mothers to prison. Notably, the rate of female imprisonment appears to be decreasing. A 2006 study on the state of women in Yemen recorded a total number of 179 female prisoners, and in 2005 the number of female prisoners reached 234.¹⁵

Women in Yemen are subjected to other forms of violence through the institutionalization of **discriminatory laws**. Article 42 of the Crimes and Punishment Law No. 12 (1994) amounts a woman's blood money (*diyeh*)¹⁶ as half that of a man's, effectively devaluing the female's life to half as much as a man's. Articles 232 of the Crimes and Punishment Law reduced the penalty for a man found guilty of killing his wife/a female relative/his wife's partner in adultery to imprisonment of less than a year or to a monetary fine.

Amendments to other laws in the late 1990s further diminished the status of women in Yemen. This was a result of social and political change in Yemen after unification (and after the conservative and traditional-tribal groups becoming more powerful).

For example, changes to the Personal Status Law in 1998-1999 detracted from the rights of women in marriage. For instance, in the 1992 text of Article 20, second marriages were restricted to certain conditions, such as fertility problems or severe sickness that prevent the maternal life. However,

¹² Violence and Women in Yemeni Community, Part two, Oxfam-GB, 2002, Lawyer Ms. Shaza M. Nasir.

¹³ Rights of Imprisoned Women, Violence and Women in Yemeni Community.

¹⁴ Women Status Report 2007, Women National Committee, Yemen.

¹⁵ Women Status Report 2007, Women National Committee, Yemen.

¹⁶ In the incident of unintended killing, law identifies a compensation for killing a male an amount of one million Yemeni Rial which is around 5000 USD. However, female victims' families are compensated half that amount with only 500000YR which is 2500USD.

amendments to the law have dropped these conditions and vested the second wife with the right of notification of the first marriage, yet denied the reciprocal right to the first wife. Furthermore, whereas the 1992 version of the Personal Status Law clearly identified the minimum age of marriage at 15 years, the 1998 amendment replaced this specification with general terms (which amount to the legalization of marriage contracts for minors). The current law allows for marriage on the provision that the girl or woman is ‘fit for sexual intercourse. Article No. 15 of the Personal Status Law states: “The marriage of a little girl is legally valid but she is not to be wedded until she’s ready for sex, even if she exceeds 15 years old. And marriage of a little boy is not legally valid unless it is proven for the good.” In this regard, the Woman National Committee (WNC) has proposed an amendment to this article as follows:¹⁷

-
1. Marriage of the young child male or female is illegal until 18 years of age or more.
 2. The Judge may reduce the age limit if his estimates are required.
 3. A penalty no more than 6 months and a fine no more than 50,000YR for anyone who testifies the maturity of any of the wedded spouses when knowing that either or both are below 18-years-old.
 4. A penalty of no more than one year and a fine of no more than 100,000YR on anyone who legalizes a marriage while knowing that either or both are below 18-years-old.
-

The ambiguity of the text means that girls under 15 years of age may be forced to marry, if found by someone in a position of power in the family or community to be able to engage in sexual intercourse. It is uncommon for families to consult medical practitioners to confirm a girl’s physical or psychological readiness for sexual intercourse. Furthermore, the law disregards the fact that despite physical or psychological ‘ability’ to engage in sexual intercourse, the decision to do so is a personal choice which should always rest solely with the individual woman. Nevertheless, marriage of minors is widespread in Yemeni society, particularly in rural areas where traditional attitudes and practices encourage such practices. The Personal Status Law does not provide protective measures for health-related dangers faced by girls forced to engage in sexual intercourse at early ages. Hospitals receive many girls who were subjected to severe damages resulting from such practice, yet these incidents are not reported (noting that these practices are incriminated by law). This was confirmed by Dr. Jameela Al-Raebi (Ex-Head of the Pediatrician Section in the Mother and Childhood Hospital and currently Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Health).

As a matter of fact, VAW is rarely addressed in media policies, strategies and programs. The media often avoids addressing such issues, considering it sensitive, with the exception of some local radio stations in the governorates (Hodiedah, Mukala, Seyun and Taiz) that have been involved in the safe marriage age campaign. They broadcast awareness messages on this epidemic regularly. Women issues, including violence, are also addressed in the Population Information and Communication program, funded by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and implemented by the Ministry of Information, Ministry of Public Health and Population, and National Population Council. Also, the media does not help overcome

¹⁷ The Sixth National Report on the Implementation Level of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW 2006), Sana’a, Yemen.

the discriminating circumstances; rather it deepens the stereotyped pattern of women. Furthermore, the media is not conveying repeated message of deep resolve to curb VAW. In fact, the media only covers occasional events on women issues, such as International Women Day on 8 March or events implemented by women organizations sporadically. Apart from that, programs on combating VAW are not an integral part of media strategies and programs.

In addition to being discriminated against in the personal status laws, women in Yemen are excluded and marginalized from government and managerial decision-making posts. They are systematically denied promotion opportunities, and excluded from technical training and financial and moral incentives provided to male employees. Women face overall general maltreatment in the workplace and are often subjected to unjust policies and selection criteria when seeking jobs in both the private and public sectors. Such treatment includes blackmail and sexual harassment. The current Crime and Punishment Law does not incorporate punishment for such incidences of discrimination in the workplace.

The prevailing culture of male superiority in the Yemeni society also has an impact on women's situations in public places. For instance, many public places lack the full range of hygiene facilities for ladies. In addition, although national law stipulates the provision of nurseries and kindergartens for working women, these standards are rarely followed.

In addition to institutional violence, women in Yemen also face serious discrimination at the social and cultural levels. Physical harassment in public places such as modes of transportation, streets, and parks occurs frequently in Yemen. The following statistics on crimes perpetrated against women are from the *Women and Men Statistical Profile of 2007*¹⁸:

Serious crimes	Victims According to Age			Total Females	%	Grand Total
	7 Years	8-14 Years	15-18 Years			
Attempted Premeditated Homicide	1	6	2	9	20	45
Immoral Acts	3	4	5	12	57	21
Inadvertent Abuse	5	1	9	15	12.5	120
Total	9	11	16	36	19	186
Non-serious Crimes						

¹⁸ Women and Men in Yemen – Statistical Portray 2007.

Premeditated Homicide	3	8	3	14	14.4	97
Attempted Murder	8	10	8	26	21.2	212
Severe Intentional Harm	-	3	10	13	4	313
Attempted Rape	2	2	1	5	4.5	11
Attempted Adultery	-	1	1	2	100	2
Rape	2	8	4	14	16.5	85
Abduction	-	2	3	5	35.7	14
Total	15	35	38	88	21	745

The above table demonstrates the rate of serious and non-serious crimes perpetrated against female minors and juveniles in 2005. It is difficult to obtain data and information on VAW in Yemen, particularly domestic violence, because it usually not reported due to the social stigma and women's fear of deteriorating the situation further if they dare to file a case against their relatives (husband, father, brother) who caused them harm.

The most updated data on these issues were available in the Annual Report on the State of Women 2007, published by WNC to assess the progress achieved in women development and identify the gaps and challenges that hinders women's progress. The Annual Report noted that the recent information on VAW is dated to 2003, which included the Heath Survey. This survey focused on domestic violence and demonstrated the following results:

- 5% of married women or those who were previously married (15-49 years) were subjected to beating during the two years prior to the survey;
- more than half of women who were subjected to beating (i.e. 56.4%) claimed that they were beaten by their husbands. Whether their place of residence is in rural or urban areas, the result differs slightly;
- illiterate women were more susceptible to beating than literates;
- 21.5% claimed that the beating was for no reason and 10% for disobedience;
- 17% stated that they received medical treatment;
- 5% reported the incident to the police. This indicates that Yemeni women tend to revert to their relatives, instead of the police, since VAW is considered as a stigma according to the norms and complicates the situation further. In addition women rarely revert to police, since they rarely find benefitting response from police staff. Women that complain against their male family members (husband, father, brother) are seen as disgraceful. Thus, the Annual Report noted that not a single incident of domestic violence has ever been reported at police stations.

For violence taking place outside the family, the Annual Report listed 17 incidents of harassment at workplaces, 35 rape cases of which 13 are against minor females, 33 attempted rapes, and 36 immoral acts of which 10 are against juveniles. The Annual Report, however, did not list violence incidents taking place on the streets, probably because such incidents were not reported to the police. A report, "Violence against Yemeni Women," stated that 90% of a study on random specimen (110 women) of inhabitants in Hadda elite neighborhood and Shuub public neighborhood in Sana'a and (30 men) from different neighborhoods were subjected to street harassments, including abusive words, throwing stones, beating by hand or stick and attempted abduction.¹⁹

Recent report published by Al-Jazeera Center for Human Rights Studies, on the State of Yemeni Women 2006-2007, listed 45 incidents of street violence, 10 of which were foreign females, quoting Mareb Press website. The report also listed specific cases, referring to official and private newspapers, of names of minor and adult females who were subjected to abduction attempts.

The State of Women 2006 report has indicated some of the violence indicators in the Ministry of Interior reports, as follows:

Women Victims of Crimes:

- 143 homicide cases resulted from violence, and 590 injuries;
- 372 female victims of car accidents, and 1280 injuries;
- 100 victims of rape cases, and 186 of adultery;
- 10 cases of abduction;
- 10 escape cases, 4 were returned to their families.

Briefly we can conclude that VAW in Yemen occurs in **private**, which is known as domestic violence and in the **public** which is known as community / institutional violence. All the widespread known forms of VAW in Yemen have been mainly **Physical, Sexual and Psychological**.

Many times one form results to other forms. For example, sexual violence results to physical and psychological violence and vice versa.

3.2 Existing policies and laws on VAW

Prior years 2000-2001, VAW was not addressed publicly, in spite of the commitment announced by the Women National Committee (WNC) a governmental mechanism that was established in 1996 under the supervision of the Prime Minister Office to adopt Beijing outcomes as seen in the preparations and enactment of Women Development Strategy in 2003. The first objective of this strategy is to implement Yemen international obligations according to the Convention to Eliminate all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and Beijing Platform of Action. At the same time, the newly established Women Studies Center at Sana'a University commenced research activities to analyze the status quo of women, problems and challenges that face women development projects funded by the Netherlands. On the other hand, Oxfam-GB, designed a project to promote the role of a group of 14 nongovernmental

¹⁹ Ms. Rana Ghanem, Violence against Yemeni Women, Oxfam-GB

organizations (NGOs) and the WNC to build their capacities in combating VAW. Since there was a lack of information and data, a series of activities were initiated, including preliminary studies and researches on the concept, forms and impacts of VAW, and means of addressing it.

The Joint Programming (JP) on VAW for which this baseline assessment supports, is executed by the UNFPA, and implemented by the different members of the National Network to Combat VAW “SHIMA” and Oxfam-GB. However there was a delay in implementing the JP on VAW. In spite of the UN conventions, resolutions, the existing national policies in the Women development Strategy and the current 5 Year National Plan, involvement of UN agencies and contribution to support the national governmental and NGOs in Yemen started at a late stage, with a short term project for one year 2007-2008 and an additional one year extension to 2009 with German Government funding. The project activities included implementation of a baseline assessment on the epidemic and an assessment of the key actors’ capacities to conduct programs to combat VAW. Women study centers in Sana'a have produced an in-depth analytical study in 6 governorates which is being finalized by the Aden Universities. Oxfam-GB will lead the training activities due to its experience.

Furthermore, although the project was short term, its activities were not limited to research, awareness, advocacy and capacity building, rather it included provision of services, such as shelter houses. Hosting women victims of violence, these shelter houses were responding to a growing need that was not previously addressed, with exception to the Aden center. The project also included the provision of legal protection to women subjected to violence, which is an existing service provided by Oxfam-GB and UNIFEM, and implemented by YWU branches in several governorates, however there is a need for such service to be expanded to other governorates.

UNIFEM, was present with multiple and diversified activities 1998 – 2002. However, the agency diminished and continued with limited activities.

Although international organizations, and particularly UN agencies, did not work directly on combating VAW under a specific goal and outcome oriented program they implemented certain activities relevant to gender and women human rights.

In fact, there are no obstacles that impede national or international partners from working on VAW issues. The operation of the government, national non-governmental mechanisms, and international organizations in Yemen is legitimized by the Yemeni government’s concern with VAW issues as identified in the Women Development Strategy 2006 – 2015, and in the Development and Poverty Alleviation Plan 2006 – 2010. Both which represent a referential framework for all development partners to support, fund and implement with no obvious restrictions. In addition, Yemen has exemplified efforts to achieve its international obligations of the CEDAW and Beijing Platform of Action.

3.2.1 International Measures

The Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979

The CEDAW convention is considered to be the most important international mechanism on the protection of women’s human rights. Yemen ratified the CEDAW on 29 May 1984, with one reservation on Article 29 relating to arbitration.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Endowment and Religious Guidance, Yemen's WNC has developed reference material which looks at CEDAW from the perspective of Islamic law. The reference material points strongly to synergies between women's human rights as spelt out in CEDAW, and Islamic concepts on women's empowerment. Discrimination and VAW remains prevalent in Yemen not as a result of religion per se, but due to patriarchal interpretations of Islamic texts and conservative implementation of pre-modern practices, in addition to the cultural, traditional and tribal practices which often undermine the women status and encourages violence against them.

According to Article 18 of CEDAW, a preliminary report must be submitted to the CEDAW Committee one year after signing the convention, and periodical reports must follow every 4 years to measure the level of progress achieved in national measures to meet CEDAW standards. Yemen has submitted 6 national governmental reports on the implementation of CEDAW, and the seventh report is proceeding. The first and second reports were submitted by the government of Southern Yemen in the late eighties and at the beginning of the nineties, (before unification). The third report was submitted in 1993 (after unification). The fourth report was prepared with the cooperation of UNICEF, and submitted to the CEDAW Committee with the fifth report in August 2002.

After discussing the sixth report in July 2008, the CEDAW Committee raised comments and recommendations to Yemen and expressed its concern for the need of different stakeholders including the UN agencies to increase its efforts to combat VAW.

A series of amendments have been proposed to bring national legislation in line with CEDAW requirements. In March 2003, 5 amendments were approved, including changes to articles in the Labor Law, the Personal Status Law, the Prison Organization Law, the Nationality Law, and the Civil Affairs and Civil Register Law. In March 2008, 4 further amendments were incorporated in the Labor Law, the Civil Service Law, and the Pension Law. Additional proposals for change remain under parliamentary review.

The WNC has also prepared a training manual on understanding CEDAW principles and implementing CEDAW provisions. The training manual is designed for the use of judiciary officials, as well as civil society organizations (CSOs) and representatives of the media. CEDAW training sessions are implemented by the WNC in workshops and seminars.

In cooperation with CSOs focused on human rights and women's issues, the local NGO, Sisters' Arab Form, submitted the shadow report on CEDAW in 2003 and again in 2006. This was facilitated by UNDP funding to the Ministry of Human Rights, and through the Support of National Capacities in Human Rights project. According to SAF chairwoman Amal Basha, "the shadow report identified gaps that the official government submission to the CEDAW Committee did not address." For example, the shadow report highlights the accusation of infidelity and apostasy. The report indicated that such violence is a form of cultural violence that provokes the community against female activists and journalists and call for their execution. The report referred to an incidence where a "quasi official newspaper" Akhbar Al-Yum, published a quote, in the 17th March 2007 issue, of an official in Al-Eman University accusing a human rights activist, Ms. Amal Al-Basha of infidelity and apostasy against Islam. Violence in the form of illegal detention and torture was also highlighted in the report, referring to what happened to Ms. Anisah Al-Shuaibi who was detained along with her 6 year-old son and 9 year-old niece on the accusation

of murdering her ex-husband. In addition, there was an incidence of a woman, Ms. Intisar Al-Siani, who was arrested due to claims of involvement in terrorism acts. There were also mention of women like Ms. Basma Al-Zagheer who was accused of taking drugs and killing her parents. Moreover, there was an incidence of a woman, Hanan Al-Wadee, who was abducted by security personnel from the street and sent to the central jail, under the allegations of entering Iran Embassy in Sana'a.²⁰

Notably, in cooperation with the Ministry of Human Rights, WNC is also advocating for the ratification of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW, which was sent to the Parliament with less hope of acceptance at least in this periodical course, which is the last attempted to the current Parliament since the upcoming election will be held in 27th April 2009.

The Beijing Platform for Action, 1995

Yemen has committed to the Beijing Platform of Action and incorporated its 12 components in national policies and plans, including combating VAW. The government has submitted the following performance reports in this respect, Beijing+5 in February-March 2000 to the UN, New York, and Beijing+10 report to the Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia(ESCWA) in Beirut, July 2004, and in February 2005 to the UN, New York. The new report, Beijing + 15, is in progress. (I am not sure what they mean "in progress"- is it being produced, or is it being reviewed? Confusing)

Beijing Platform of Action Strategic Objective D: VAW

Strategic objective D.1. Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women.

Strategic objective D.2. Study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures.

Strategic objective D.3. Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking.

With respect to clause D.1., the efforts to combat VAW in Yemen, are generally moderate and indirect and not all efforts specifically target VAW, as such projects working on the proposed legislative amendments or training on CEDAW.

With respect to clause D.2., VAW issues have progressively moved into the public sphere. There has been progress in attaining qualitative information through a series of researches, studies and training manuals on VAW that were funded in 2001-2002 by Oxfam-GB and implemented by WNC, Yemeni Women Union, Psychological Health Society in Aden, and Gender Studies Center at Sana'a University.

On clause D.2., the Sixth National Report on CEDAW Implementation 2006, indicated that valid legislations incriminate such acts, and a proposal to amend article (279) of Crimes and Punishment Law is under consideration to intensify the penalty on those who encourages, or perpetuate immoral acts or prostitution with children. Article (269) of the same law incriminated rape.

²⁰ Article by Rasha Jarhum "New Forms of Violence against Yemeni Women and Persisting Discriminative Laws", Yemen Times, Issue: (1074), Volume 15, From 6 August 2007 to 8 August 2007.

Other international conventions

In addition to CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action, Yemen has ratified the following international conventions:

- The Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution (ratified 31 January 1989);
- the Convention on Women's Political Rights (ratified February 1987);
- the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (both ratified 16 December 1986).

3.2.2 National Measures

The Constitution

Article 6 of the national Constitution clearly states that Yemen's commitments to international conventions and agreements, including the commitments to CEDAW and other agreements on the rights of women, must be reflected in national legislation. Articles 40 and 41 state the equality of all Yemeni citizens under the law. Despite this, a study of national laws conducted by the legal team at WNC concluded that 61 legal articles in the national legislation, including Personal Status law of 1999 and its amendments, contain articles that clearly discriminate against women. WNC is currently in consultation with the parliament to enact changes to those articles to bring them into line with international standards on women's rights and gender equality.

During the finalization of this assessment 4 articles in the Personal Status Law were approved on the age of custody (12 Years) for both sexes, which requests the husband to inform his first wife or wives (if he had more than one) of an arrangement to marry another woman. Furthermore, as already stated in the previous law, the new wife is also entitled to the same right, to be informed about the marriage of an ex-wife or wives. Another amendment on the right of women includes to the right of the ex-wife to remain in the maternal house following the divorce during the period of having custody of the children.

Finally, the minimum age of marriage was passed, but continues to face resistance from the conservative opposition that is attempting to take the law back to the plenary session of the Parliament.

The National Strategy for Women Development 2003-2005:

The National Strategy for Women Development 2003-2005 (NSWD) is a strategic vision of goals and measures required to improve women's status and allow them to enjoy basic human rights and freedom to practice their developmental role and participate effectively in all aspects of life. The strategy was prepared by the WNC, and they are responsible for monitoring the NSWD's implementation by the different governmental bodies in addition to the civil society. The NSWD was updated for the time period 2006-2015.

The first strategic goal of the NSWD is to substantiate Yemen's commitment to CEDAW and the Beijing Platform of Action by bringing all national laws into line with international standards on women's rights and gender equality. This goal represents the core of the updated strategy 2006-2015 that was updated to

respond to the national priorities based on Yemen's commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The updated strategy further responds to the requirements and implementation of the CEDAW and the Beijing Platform of Action. NSWD comprises of six major objectives. These include combating all forms of VAW, and ensuring and protecting women's human rights in national legislation and the Sharia code, as defined in international conventions and agreements.

A number of phased-goals created to implement these strategic objectives over the course of 2006 to 2010. This corresponds to the National Plan for Development and Poverty Reduction (see below). The phased-goals include:

- The removal of all discriminatory articles in national laws and by-laws, and the enactment of new legal provisions to protect equal rights for Yemeni women, as well as encourage and facilitate women's empowerment in all spheres of life;
- clear provisions for equal treatment of men and women before the law, and to facilitate women's access to all mechanisms of justice;
- awareness-raising programs on the forms, incidences, and consequences of VAW, as well as strategies and means to combat it;
- awareness-raising amongst men and women on human rights principles;
- the amendment of the educational curricula and media discourse to incorporate human rights discourse, and legal concepts, as well as include texts, ideas and *ijtihad* (re-interpretations of the Holy sources of Islam) that promote women's empowerment and guard against directly and indirect support for inherited discriminatory practices against women;
- the promotion of women in the workplace, and ensure their representation in the judiciary and law enforcement institutions;
- the provision of modern facilities to assist women victims of violence;
- the allocation of sufficient resources in the public budget and donors' assistance to implement activities on combating VAW and advocate for women's empowerment;
- the provision of information and data to indicate women's status and the practice of their rights, as well as the forms and incidences of violence perpetuated against them.

The NSWD outlines procedures to achieve these objectives, as follows:

- Allocate resources to enhance and activate women's role in the decision making process, and include them in the budget of the relevant implementing agencies;
- continue the campaign to remove discriminatory articles from current laws;
- enact new legal provisions to protect women rights and equality and ensures its implementation in practice;
- develop efficient mechanisms with the participation of the civil society to monitor implementation of the laws;
- adopt school and community awareness and sensitizing programs to combat violence and raise awareness with rights and freedoms granted to women and means to protect and enforce them;
- establish specialized units to deal with women at police stations;
- establish specialized units on combating domestic violence at the governorates centers at least;
- establish hotlines services to assist women subjected to violence;
- establish shelter houses and emergency services to host victims of violence among women;

- prepare educational studies on the curriculum that needs amendments to eliminate discriminatory contents and images against women and promotes legal knowledge and human rights;
- introduce VAW phenomenon and its consequences on women as an individual and on development, and target judiciary and senior state's officials;
- establish projects that secure provision of legal assistance to women;
- launch supportive initiatives to facilitate women admission to the Supreme Judiciary Institute, and ensure appointment of practicing female judges at courts;
- launch awareness campaign on women's right of inheritance, and incriminate those who deny them such right;
- develop effective procedural means to protect women from institutional violence that they face at police stations, prisons and other judiciary systems;
- establish accurate and modern database on women's human rights and monitor cases of VAW in all its forms;
- assist NGOs and develop their capacities and partnership with and between them to play a more effective role in combating VAW and provide legal assistance to women;
- implement activities concerned with combating prostitution and all forms of women trafficking;
- implement activities to protect female children from all forms of violence (FGM/C, deprive of education, early marriage, deprive of inheritance, economic exploitation and sexual exploitation);
- initiate procedures to reform the discriminatory laws against female infants;

- allocate necessary resources to combat discrimination and VAW and empower them to practice their human rights, and include them in the budget of the relevant implementing agencies;
- promote partnership with CSOs within the Yemeni Network to Combat VAW SHIMA, and others;
- raise community awareness with the consequences of early marriage and call to identify minimum age for marriage in the law;
- intensify penalties on the perpetrators of ethical crimes on children and female children.

The NSWD identifies the following agencies as key actors in the achievement of the programs goals:

- The Parliament, The Shura Council, The Cabinet, The Ministry of Human Rights, The Ministry of Interiors, The Ministry of Legal Affairs, The Ministry of Justice, The Ministry of Endowment and Guidance, The Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, The Ministry of Information, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Academic and Research Centers, The Women's National Committee, CSOs, donor organizations.

Development and Poverty Reduction Plan - Five Year Plan 2006-2010

The Development and Poverty Reduction Plan (DPRP) materializes what is stipulated in the Women Development Strategy and in the Gender Needs Assessment (GNA) of the MDGs .The GNA is a collaborative cross-sectoral analysis and a pre-work to engender the Third National Five year Plan 2006-2010. In an unprecedented step at the national level, the DPRP includes clear policies on women's empowerment, as well as policies to combat VAW. The GNA in the MDGs, based on DPRP has specified the cost of programs on combating VAW till year 2015 at \$.1044.5 million. Specifically, the plan incorporates the following policies:

Combating VAW

Objectives

- Achieve equal treatment for men and women before the law;
- introduce women's rights granted by the Islamic Sharia and legal provisions through media outlets;
- combat forms of violence against women.

Procedures

- Reinforce partnership between CSOs, Ministry of Human Rights and government institutions for the best interest of women's rights;
- improve and increase response of law enforcement apparatus to violence incidents and rehabilitate their victims;
- implement awareness programs on forms of VAW among decision-makers and community segments;
- drive religious and media discourse in favor of women issues;
- develop laws and legislations relevant to family and women to preserve their legitimate rights;
- establish family courts to facilitate ruling on family cases;
- establish alimony fund to ensure women's right following a divorce, in line with other countries experiences;
- establish specialized administration at each governorate to address VAW cases;
- implement studies on VAW in all its forms;
- train health and education workers at penal facilities to deal with women and raise judges' awareness and religious scholars to deepen women legitimate and human rights;
- establish units to handle violence cases at hospitals, schools, police stations and workplaces.

Promoting Legislative and Legal Structures

Objectives

- Amend legal provisions of the valid laws pertinent to women issues and invalidate discriminatory articles;
- activate CEDAW;
- raise awareness among women with the rights stipulated in the laws and legislations.

Procedures

- Follow-up and complete legal amendments, including in labor laws to consider women conditions;
- revise valid laws and invalidate discriminatory articles;
- enact new provisions in the laws to cope with the developments in women's rights;
- amend valid laws in accordance with the agreements that Yemen has ratified;
- amend labor law to ensure equal work opportunities for women and men, and take serious measures against institutions that are practicing discriminatory measures at selection and recruitment process;
- establish mechanisms to ensure effective participation of the CSOs in monitoring implementation of valid laws and in raising awareness with women's rights;
- revise and amend laws and legislations to conform to the constitution and international conventions.

The integration of policies and measures to combat VAW in the DPRP indicates the government's recognition of the existence of the forms of violence and discrimination in Yemen. The DPRP reflects national development priorities and uses the MDGs as key points of reference to set standards and aim towards progress. The DPRP is thus an obligatory tool for all national and international development partners in Yemen, and is considered as the general framework for development interventions in all sectors.

Nevertheless, whilst the DPRP is robust in its execution of gender policies in the health and education sectors; it lacks clear vision on policies related to VAW. The exceptions to this observation are the projects and activities implemented by the WNC, which is mandated specifically to draft development policies concerning women's status, including proposing legal amendments, providing training for partners in combating VAW, engaging in research and case studies, establishing and updating national databases on women, preparing national and international reports on the status of women in Yemen, and advocating for equal rights and women's empowerment.

The involvement and roles of other government institutions to address VAW, such as the Ministry of Interiors, the Ministry of Endowment and Guidance, the Ministry of Human Rights, and the Ministry of Legal Affairs, are unsystematic. The most notable initiatives by these government ministries have been executed by the Ministry of Endowment (MOE). For example, with UNFPA funding, the MOE provided training workshops for mosques, preachers and male and female religious guides on the issue of VAW, including women's reproductive rights.

CSOs are engaged in translating government policies at the grassroots level into projects and programs including specific activities such as awareness rising, training or providing legal protection.

In addition, donor organizations, UN agencies, and international NGOs provide both technical and financial assistance to implement government policies to combat VAW.

Despite this, many national and international CSOs equipped to address the issue of women's status in Yemen tackle the issue of VAW indirectly causing efforts to be insufficient and weak. Furthermore, funding is often insufficient, and initiatives such as training workshops are ad-hoc, rather than part of a sustained, systematic approach.

However, on the other hand, Oxfam-GB, does address VAW in Yemen systematically. Since 2000, the NGO has assisted a group of 17 CSOs in the National Network to Combat VAW (SHIMA, see the following section). This group was formally declared as SHIMA Network in May 2003.

The NGO, Save the Children, indirectly engages in VAW efforts as a part its child protection mandate. UNFPA targets VAW through its activities on, capacity building, advocacy for reproductive and gender issues, and the integration of gender issues in population and development policies. In 2007, UNFPA launched a project devoted to combating VAW. The project consisted of studies and assessments on the forms and incidences of VAW in Yemen, awareness-raising campaigns, advocacy and training activities

that included assistance to the Yemeni Women Union²¹ on legal assistance, and the construction of a shelter for women victims of violence in Sana'a.

Legal Amendments Project, Phase One 2000-2003

To limit VAW and combat institutional violence, WNC has formed a legal team with the World Bank's support in November 2000 to revise the national legal system based on Islamic *Sharia* and the constitution perspective and incorporate 11 other relevant international conventions including the CEDAW. The legal team revised and analyzed 57 laws and concluded that 20 legal provisions in various laws, mostly in the Social Affairs Law, include flagrant discrimination against women. The legal team proposed a set of recommendations to amend, remove or add articles to eliminate such discrimination.

Following enormous efforts and dialogue with MPs and media campaigns, it has been agreed to amend five provisions with a Republican Decree in the Personal Affairs, Citizenship, Prison Organizing, Civil Affairs and Civil Register laws. The amendments are as follows:

- Law No. (24) of 2003: Adding article (10) to the provisions of the Law No. (6) of 1990 on Citizenship, stated that "when a Yemeni woman previously married to a foreigner divorces, and is the breadwinner for their children, or became a breadwinner following the husband's death or insanity, absence or ceased to live with them for a less than a year, these children shall be treated as Yemeni citizens in all aspects, as long as they are under the custody of their mother, till they reach the age of maturity, thereafter they have the right to choose the Yemeni citizenship or join their father's citizenship without any condition";
- Law No. (26) of 2003: To amend article (27) of the Law No. (48) Of 1991 on Organizing Prisons, which stated that, "pregnant imprisoned women shall be provided with needed medical care before, during and after delivery according to the instructions of the concerned person, and the bylaws. The concerned authority shall also provide pregnant or nursing imprisoned women the allotted foodstuff, and in either case the pregnant and nursing women under the provision of this article, shall be exempted from disciplinary measures applied on prisoners according to the provisions of this law";
- Labor Law No. (25) of 2003: Adding article to the provisions of Law No. (5) of 1995, on labor: Amendment No. (45) stated that "public and private institutions that employs 50 female workers or more in one establishment, shall establish or contract a kindergarten to shelter the female workers children, under the conditions and situations determined by the minister";
- Civil Affairs and Civil Register law No. (23) of 2003: Amendment to article (21) to provide for the mother to be one of the persons vested with reporting an infant birth, whereas such right was restricted to the father and his male relatives, then females;

²¹ The Yemeni Women Union (YWU) is the oldest women's organization in Yemen, with roots in the pre-independence era. The present organization was formed in 1990 by combining the northern and southern branches following the unification of Yemen. In the north, the Yemeni Women's Association (YWA) was established in 1965 with branches in the largest towns.

- Law No. (43) of 2003 provided for amendment to article (47) of Law No. (20) of 1992, and its amendments on Personal Status Law , where it has stated for woman's right to request for divorce at instance of occurrence of defect with the husband, whether such defect existed prior marriage or happened after marriage. Such a right was limited to the husband.

Nevertheless, another 15 legal provisions were rejected, including an important provision to identify the minimum age of marriage in the Personal Status Law. These requested amendments were transferred to the proposed legal amendments which are under discussions at the concerned committees in Parliament, and a decision has not yet been reached.

Legal Amendments Project, Phase Two 2003-2008

In the second phase, the legal experts continued their work in revising the national laws and another 46 legal provisions were added to the 15 provisions that were rejected during phase one, to reach a total of 61 provisions that were included in the proposal for amendments at several laws in the national legislations.

In May 2008, another 4 provisions were adopted in the labor and civil service, securities and pension laws. These amendments provided for equal retirement age for women. Also, for women at 60 years, the amendment provided that 55 years as an optional age of retirement for women. Also, they allowed both husband and wife or their families to keep the pension following their death, while in previous civil service law the family was entitled to one pension only, mainly the husband's pension. A maternity leave also increased to 70 days from 60 in the previous law, and both couples were entitled to marriage leave of one month not to be deducted from their annual leave.

When drafting the last version of this assessment the Parliament on 9 February 2009, approved the minimum age of marriage by 17 years for both boys and girls and few influential conservatives strongly attempted to bring the article back to the plenary session for more discussion with intentions to either to eliminate the fixing of the age in the law or to lower the approved age by 15 years as commented by some members in Parliament.

Additional national efforts on combating VAW

First National Conference to Combat VAW March 2004:

In the First National Conference to combat VAW was implemented at a perfect pace in cooperation with Oxfam-GB, WNC, and members of the SHIMA network. The Conference was organized to assess the work and challenges faced. The Conference convened on 8 March 2004, under the auspices of the Prime Minister, the President of Supreme Women Council, who inaugurated the Conference giving the issue recognition at highest official level and reflecting a serious intention to address it. This approach was rarely seen among policy-makers and decision-makers in the Arab region. The Conference resulted in a number of recommendations that urges continuous introduction to the phenomenon, the implementation of deep studies, particularly on domestic violence, the establishing of database on all forms of violence, and the producing of practical and procedural measures to limit this phenomenon in the homes, community, systems and institutions.

3.3 The main stakeholders and their interventions

3.3.1 Government

Women National Committee (WNC)

The WNC was established in 1996, responding to the recommendations of the Fourth World Women in September 1995 to establish national governmental mechanisms concerned with the advancement of women. WNC evolved in 2000 with the establishment of the Supreme Women Council under the presidency of the prime minister, and the establishment of women departments/directorates at the administrative system of the state (Presidency, Cabinet, ministries, other relevant institutions such as National Population Council, Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood...etc). In 2003, the Supreme Women Council was developed with the assignment of 7 ministers represented in the Council, and the heads of WNC represented in the governorates to the membership of the Council.

The WNC based its vision and mission towards the advancement of women, on the constitution, national legislations, international agreements that Yemen has ratified, particularly the CEDAW, as seen in the NSWD.

Combating VAW is one of the priorities of the WNC. They have pursued partnerships and built coalitions with government institutions such the Parliament, Shura Council, Ministry of Endowment and Guidance, Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Interior and others. WNC is also working in partnership on various development issues including violence with 57 CSOs, such as the Yemeni Women Union, Gender and Development Studies Center at Sana'a and Aden Universities, the Sisters' Arab Forum for Human Rights, the Challenge Association for Disabled Women (Altahadi), the Female Media Forum, the Female Journalists without Chain, the Family Care Association and others.

WNC is a founding member of the SHIMA as it is part their mandate to work on women policy-making. Currently, they are focusing on identifying a minimum age of marriage in the Personal Affairs law at 18 years, as opposed to the current status quo of 8 to 15 years of age according to the studies.

The WNC has achieved major activities within its mandate as a policy and strategy maker by mainstreaming gender in development processes and following up by implementing monitoring of such polices particularly in combating VAW. More specifically, these major activities include:

- The Preparation of NSWD with a component on combating VAW and mainstream this component in the General Development Plan 2006-2010;
- proposing legal amendments project 2000-2007, and an ongoing project to revise national legislation in light of the constitution and international convention and propose amendments therein to ensure women their complete rights in the national legislation system;
- preparing annual national reports status of women to identify achievements and loopholes and propose recommendations to the government;
- establishing database on women including on women and violence;

- preparing national reports on the implementation of CEDAW, and the last report was submitted to the 41st session of the UN Combating Discrimination against Women Commission on 1 July 2008;
- preparing reports on the implementation level of the Beijing recommendations, Beijing +5 2000, and Beijing +10 in 2005;
- preparing studies, training manuals and publications focusing mainly on VAW;
- implementing advocacy and networking activities with national and regional organizations and cooperate and coordinate with international organizations to support women's rights.

Ministry of Human Rights

The Ministry of Human Rights was established in 2001 with focus on women's rights. According to the Ministry's bylaws, it is vested with following responsibilities:

- Propose policies, plans and programs that promote and protect women's human rights and implement them in coordination with concerned parties;
- study legislations and laws to assess their conformity with the principles and rules of the agreements and conventions that Yemen has ratified and propose needed amendments therein according to the constitution and valid laws;
- receive complaints and reports from citizens and institutions to study and handle what is within its mandate in coordination with concerned parties;
- raise legal awareness of citizens and direct them to their rights that granted by the constitution and laws and disseminate human rights culture among the society through different awareness means;
- promote cooperation with CSOs in the human rights field;
- contribute to studies and researches on human rights;
- prepare periodical reports on Yemen's international commitments in coordination with concerned parties;
- coordinate and cooperate with international organizations operating in human rights;
- build the capacities and skills of the Ministry's staff through training plans and programs and implement them internally and externally in coordination with concerned parties;
- collect, analyze and document information on human rights and the government policy in this respect, and maintain relations with ministries, institutions and organizations concerned with human rights issues;
- prepare periodical and systematic reports on the Ministry's activities and achievements to the cabinet;
- undertake any responsibilities and tasks in line with its mandate.

Ministry of Human Rights and WNC maintains coordination on similar fields of activities. One of the Ministry's major activities organized concerning women's human rights was the Conference on *Women Rights in the Arab World: From Words to Actions* in December 2005. The Conference discussed many issues on combating discrimination and VAW, and developed a referential material through the Gender Equality project, under National Capacity-building in Human Rights project, funded by UNDP in 2006. In this project, legal provisions in Personal Affairs, Labor, and Civil Service, Securities and Pension laws were collected and simplified in a comprehensible terms for ordinary women. 9 NGOs were selected in Taiz, Hadramout, Aden and Sana'a municipalities and were provided with technical and institutional

support (training, computers, and printers) and vested with the responsibility to raise awareness of women's rights in the family and at workplace.

Furthermore, the Ministry receives complaints related to personal and civil rights from women. According to the State of Women Annual Report 2007, prepared by the WNC, the Ministry received 45 complaints related to women's personal and civil rights. The Ministry has tangible activities in improving prisoners' rights, including female prisoners, and in combating child trafficking.

Ministry of Endowment and Guidance

Religion is the most important cultural and value component impacting and shaping trends and tendencies of people in Yemen. Since 2003, the Ministry commenced an intensified program to mainstream religious discourse and develops preachers' skills to denounce violence, extremism and fanaticism and to follow moderate and modest course, which represent the origin and spirit of Islam. WNC communicated with the religious institutions encouraging them to develop a supportive religious discourse to women's rights, and participated in several training workshops and seminars for male and female preachers and Imams. Some of these activities were funded by UNFPA. WNC solicited assistance from religious scholars and Islamic Sharia jurists for the activities that it has implemented, including studies, and for the preparation of the legal amendments from an Islamic perspective.

Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood

The Council was established in 1998, under the umbrella of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, whereby the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor is the Secretary General of the Council. One of the most significant achievements of the Council in combating violence against children, is the enactment of Child Rights Law, prepare periodical reports on the implementation of Child Rights Convention, series of studies on violence against children such as a comprehensive study on child trafficking, a study on child sexual abuses, and organization of the Second Regional Conference to Protect Children from violence, abuses, and negligence, 18-20 March 2007. The Council also established a national coalition with NGOs and governmental organizations to combat violence against children.

National Population Council

The Council was established in the early nineties and is currently operating under the Ministry of Public Health and Population. The Council is operating under the population policies and programs that have included a gender component with a section on combating VAW. The Council also has a media component in cooperation with the Ministry of Information, through the Media and Population Communication program that has developed and disseminated messages through media outlets on the forms and portraits of discrimination and VAW and girls such as early marriage, and early and repeated pregnancy. However, it is worth noting that some forms of VAW are not always presented using the phrase "VAW" since many official institutions dislike using the term.

Women Access to Justice

Aspect of VAW in the Judiciary System:

Article No. (57) of Judiciary Authority Law No. (1) of 1991, has stipulated the conditions for judges' recruitment, and did not restricted the post to male explicitly, while clause (c) of the same article required holding of Supreme Judiciary Institute certificate as a precondition to occupy judge's post after graduating law colleges. However, the Institute was closed to women and WNC led a campaign to advocate women's rights of employment in judge posts. In 2005, the first group of 3 women was admitted to the Institute to become judges, and women admission continued in the following years. However the number of women judges remains few and between 3 to 4, although women have occupied judges and prosecutor posts in south Yemen before unity in 1990, and their number reached to 32 female judges. In September 2006, the first woman was appointed as a member to the Supreme Court. At present a number of women are occupying posts of heads of juvenile courts and of prosecutors.

Although women are legally competent to appear before courts, they face major obstacles to gain justice within a judiciary system dominated by men. Most police and courts staff views women suspiciously, due to the social stigma attached to the presence of women in courts, according to the previously referenced study "Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa." In Yemen women are not recognized as fully competent people in the courts, where two women testimony equals one man's, further article (45) of Evidence Law No. (21) of 1992, prohibits woman's testimony at adultery, slander or sodomy cases. Generally, woman's testimony should be supported with a man's testimony to be accepted. However, woman's testimony is accepted in financial rights cases and at instances where a man's presence is not possible for cultural reasons such as baby delivery instance."²² In fact such restriction has legal reference in the Quran "*O ye who believe! When ye deal with each other, in transactions involving future obligations in a fixed period of time, reduce them to writing Let a scribe write down faithfully as between the parties: let not the scribe refuse to write: as Allah Has taught him, so let him write. Let him who incurs the liability dictate, but let him fear His Lord Allah, and not diminish aught of what he owes. If they party liable is mentally deficient, or weak, or unable Himself to dictate, Let his guardian dictate faithfully, and get two witnesses, out of your own men, and if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as ye choose, for witnesses, so that if one of them errs, the other can remind her....*"²³.

On the other hand, Dr. Abdulhakim Atroush argues that Islam calls for gender equality. In his research on, *Women's Rights in Yemeni and International Legislations*, Dr. Atroush takes into account article (15) clause (1) of CEDAW and states that, "Islam calls for equality between men and women in civil rights. Women can perform all financial transactions, such as selling, purchasing, granting lending, mortgage, deputize and warranting. Women may also delegate others or being delegated. Women are free to use their money the way they wish similarly to men. The husband is not allowed to take anything from his wife without her consent." Therefore, he argues that social norms and traditions are the restraining forces that keep women from exercising their civil rights.

Though the Penal Procedures Law No. (13) of 1994, exists, it is not always applied. Women suspected of committing a criminal act, have rights according to law,²⁴ however, there are cases of women abused in custody. Women are forced into immoral acts, intimidated or blackmailed during interrogations. Refugee

²² Discrimination against Women in Laws, Ahmed Al-Wade'e, Sisters' Arab Forum

²³ Verse 282, Surat Al Baqara, the Quran.

²⁴ Women's Rights in Yemeni Legislations, Lawyer Basim Al-Fageer.

women from Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea and other countries and Yemeni women who are suspects or accused of immoral crimes are more susceptible to such practices.

Women living in rural areas that are accused of committing a non-serious crime are often detained in the homes of tribes, sheikhs or dignitaries. Instances of serious crimes, they are deported to central prison in the capital. However, women prisons and men share the same prison that are administrated and supervised by male staff.

3.3.2 Non-Governmental Parties

National Network to Combat VAW (SHIMA)

SHIMA consists of 17 NGOs in addition to WNC.

Founding Members of the Network:

- WNC, Sana'a;
- Yemeni Women Union branches in Aden, Abyan, Taiz and Hardihood at the beginning and followed by the Executive Board in Sana'a and the two other branches in the Sana's and Hodida; Yemeni Mental Health Association in Aden; Human Rights Information and Training Center, Taiz; Arab Foundation for Human Rights, Sana'a; Women Supporting Center / MADA, Sana'a; Women Forum for Research and Training, Taiz; Yemeni Guiding Girl Association, Sana'a; Yemeni Scout Association, Sana'a; Arab Sisters Forum for Human Right (SAF).

In 2002, SAF and Women Forum for Research and Training withdrew from the SHIMA. In 2003, Gender Studies and Development Center at Sana'a University joined the SHIMA and conducted a field study with Ibhara Childhood Foundation, Arab Organization for Human Rights, Young Leaders Foundation and Arab Foundation for Women and Juveniles on early marriage in Hadramout and Hodiedah governorates.

Since its establishment, SHIMA received institutional and technical assistance from Oxfam-GB, and the Danish Agency for Development (DANIDA) who provided more than one million dollars in grants to the project *Community and Individual Behavior towards Early Marriage and Change of Policies on Minimum Age of Marriage*.

In addition to SHIMA, there are other NGOs such as Female Journalists without Chains, Female Journalists Forum, Democratic School, Women Studies and Researches Center in Aden University working on human rights, women's rights, research and/or advocacy fields. However, most of these activities are not a part of a strategic programme or project with set outcomes, but irregular and sporadic.

3.3.3 International Organizations

Numerous UN agencies have presence in Yemen such as WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, WB, UNHCR, WFP, and ILO, and most of them, if not all, have recently shown interest in working on gender issues. However, at the time of writing this paper, these agencies did not have direct projects combating VAW. Some of them provided institutional and technical support to scattered activities that are not included in women or gender issues that specifically tackle VAW. However, UNFPA supported a Women

Empowerment project in which the second phase was implemented by the WNC. The second phase included a legal amendments project, preparation of the women status annual reports, which highlights the gender gap in the various fields of the development process, and updating the database on women, and preparation of the national report on the implementation level of CEDAW. Although these activities addressed VAW, they do not specifically combat VAW and do not directly correspond to the UN resolutions and recommendations on VAW. However, with the recent initiation of the joint programme on VAW, the UN agencies have taken a “delivering as one” approach, which helps foster ownership and has increased the accountability and transparency.

At present and in response to the recommendations of the UN system (32 agencies) led by UNIFEM, the UNFPA received a one million dollars grant from the government of Germany to a project concerned with combating VAW. This project includes 5 components:

- Conducting a Baseline Assessment on GBV, addressing most significant forms and images of violence in the Yemeni community based on the previous studies and level of coordination between partners operating in this field. The assessment identifies the legal framework and relevant policies and the major actors, institutional and technical capacities they possess and future vision;
- conducting quantity and quality study on VAW by the Gender and Development Studies Center at Sana’a and Aden Universities;
- conducting advocacy activities by WNC focusing on the legal amendments to the discriminatory provisions and targets policy and decision makers and media outlets;
- creating legal protection activities for female prisoners by Yemeni Women Union branches;
- conducting awareness activities by SHIMA members, except other members who implement other components under this project such as WNC and YWU;
- conducting training activities by Oxfam-GB.

Despite the late involvement of UN agencies in combating VAW, the JP of UNIFEM and UNFPA project is a positive indicator of future interventions working to eliminate VAW in the Yemeni community.

UNICEF is also operating through child protection focus and currently implementing the project, *Basic Education and Gender Equality – Abolition of Corporal Punishment, in Prevention of FGM/C and Harmful Practices*. The Fund is also conducting awareness raising activities on the consequences of early marriage. UNFIM has also provided limited support to the legal protection of women (project of the YWU) with an EU grant, and contributed in the past by offering capacity building to the WNC from 1999-2001.

In respect to diplomatic missions in Yemen, the Netherlands embassy is notable for its assistance to women and gender issues, where WNC, Women and Gender Studies Center at Sana’a and Aden Universities, and some CSOs received assistance on capacity and institutional building. Also the UK government gave a grant to Yemen through DIFD, for work in judiciary reform, which touched on a gender component to some extent. DANIDA also provided funding as part of its human rights grants to women economic empowerment and a safe marriage age program implemented by Oxfam and SHIMA. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has limited activity in this field which includes a grant to publish the training manual on reproductive health and gender from an Islamic perspective.

Lastly UN agencies, under the United Nation Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and through the gender sub-group work jointly to combat VAW.

Point 1.5 of the UNDAF Action Plan states "Increased national and community level action to eliminate VAW supported by UNFPA, WHO, UNDP, UNICEF and UNHCR."

UNHCR works with the refugee community (shelter , training , awareness raising and counseling) and WHO works with Ministry of Public Health and Population(surveillance system in 10 hospitals in 5 governorates , patient checklist to identify the cases of violence , training materials , training doctors on identifying violence).

Oxfam-GB

Oxfam-GB has been operating in Yemen since 1983, in the development and humanitarian fields. In 2000, Oxfam-GB commenced an unprecedented step to develop a plan of action to combat VAW with the support of a group of NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs), and the WNC to develop the governmental and national mechanism concerned with women development policy-making. This work led to the creation of SHIMA. This program included three basic projects as follows:

- advocacy and public campaigns on VAW project in Yemen;
- capacity building for the partners to combat VAW project;
- information gathering and service providing to the women victims of violence projects.

The objectives of this program are to:

- Encourage a civil society movement to work to combat VAW through the reinforcement of the capacities of these organizations, NGOs, CBOs, academia, and media and to raise awareness and facilitate exchange of information, advocacy and public mobilization on VAW;
- raise awareness among governmental institutions (policy-makers, police, judiciary, and line ministries) with VAW issues and their respective roles in addressing this problem;
- collect information and data on violence targeting women and promote gender-based analysis, and conduct researches to direct policies and programs initiatives;
- provide services to women victims of violence and raise their awareness with their legal rights.

3.4 Resources available

There is insufficient information on the size of resources and funds available for combating VAW activities. Furthermore, a questionnaire was given to collect further information and very few interviewed responded. The results are as follows:

- Poverty Reduction and Specifying Safe Marriage Age supervised by Oxfam-GB and implemented by some members of SHIMA, with DANIDA grant of 1,289,950 euro, about \$.3 million. Started in January 2005 and ends on December 2008.
- Project supervised by UNFPA with the government of Germany grant of \$.1 million, for one year, and expected to end by first quarter of 2009, and implemented by SHIMA and Oxfam-GB.
- WNC received in year 2000 a grant of \$.10 thousand to conduct the legal revision to the national legislations in light of CEDAW. The production of relevant studies and training manuals cost ranged between \$.6 to \$.10 thousand conducted with SHIMA.

- Funds of programs implemented by UNICEF during 2007-2011 reached \$.552 thousand.
- In an interview with the chairwomen of Women Studies Centers in Sana'a and Aden Universities, on the funding granted to the two centers, chairwoman of Sana'a Center indicated that the study on early marriage reached \$.40 thousand while other studies on sexual abuses, for instance received \$.5 thousand grant, while Aden Center has conducted few studies in this field with cost ranged between \$.5 to \$.6 thousand.
- No project or program on VAW was funded by the government, whereas WNC budget is mostly an operational budget. However since the fiscal year 2007, a limited budget at YR.8 million (\$.42 thousand) was allocated to small projects on capacity building and gender advocacy activities. Proposed projects were submitted by the WNC to combat VAW, and although such policy is adopted in the Five Year Plan, the reference document to approve budgets, the Ministry of Finance refused to fund these projects proposed under VAW.

It was challenging to collect information and data on the size of funds allocated for activities on combating VAW. Nonetheless, the gathered information is a clear indication the types of funds, noting that the abovementioned projects and programs are the largest ones working on VAW. Apart from these projects and programs there are limited and scattered activities, therefore there is a crucial and urgent need for comprehensive projects with greater technical and financial support. It is worth noting that the mid-term revision to the Five Year Plan and Investment program to fund the FYP's programs and projects, did not show ample funding to cover programs and projects on combating VAW.

On the other hand, UN agencies are operating in their respective mandates, i.e. WFP is supporting girls' education and providing food for impoverished pregnant and nursing women and their infants; UNICEF is operating in protecting motherhood and childhood programs which are indirectly falls under combating VAW and girls. However, the study on child trafficking and children sexual abuses in cooperation with the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood could be the most significant achievement by UNICEF, in addition to the focus on FGM/C.

3.5 Capacities to address issues related to VAW

Oxfam-GB has long experience in this field and established institutional and technical capacities. Oxfam-GB is the leading organization and has a clear vision and pursued to support its national partners in addition to SHIMA, WNC, YWU and its branches in the targeted governorates, Gender Studies Center in Sana'a University. SHIMA members were trained and training manuals were prepared and used in the training activities for the target groups. Nevertheless, SHIMA members, in a self-assessment, indicated that they still require capacity building programs and trainings, particularly on preparing project proposals, planning, reporting, advocacy, networking, negotiation, communication, and managing anti-violence campaigns and other skills to lead and implement programs on combating VAW.

Due to Oxfam-GB's distinguishable experience and capacities they offered their support to a UNFPA VAW project and led training on basic components.

3.6 Priorities for Action

IV CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

- Addressing VAW and children as an epidemic started 2000 with a series of studies conducted by Oxfam-GB and its local partners in the government, NGOs and independent researchers.
- In spite of the availability of studies and data in the national reports, establishing and updating a database on VAW and identifying indicators will serve as an essential tool for stakeholders and enable them to assess the size of the violence, its dimension and the interventions required to address it. The database will also enable stakeholders to measure progress achieved and outcomes of such interventions.
- There are certain forms of violence that were not addressed in the available studies, such as violence amongst marginalized groups, *Akhdam*, refugees and housemates, and amongst religious minorities such as Jews.
- There are national policies combating VAW and they are the constitution, Women Development Strategy, Poverty Reduction and Development Plan. These policies provide a conducive environment to operate in however; they do not translated into programs, projects and activities among government or non-government parties.
- These policies are also not interpreted in the investment program projects that specify financial costs of these sectoral development programs and projects. Thereby, the funds allocated to combating VAW activities are very minimal and do not correspond to the size of the problem and the interventions required.
- National legislations generally ensure women's human rights, however deep revisions to 61 laws revealed some loopholes and discrimination against women comes. Legal amendments have been proposed and are currently under parliament considerations.
- The SHIMA was established in 2001 and declared in May 2003. The network members were trained on necessary skills namely on advocacy, however, SHIMA is in need of advanced capacity building as was expressed in an evaluation report conducted in 2004.
- Although the SHIMA members have good institutional capacities as an independent unit, they face many challenges as a network, and this could be attributed mainly to the dominating culture in the community. The approach of working within a group or a network is new to the Yemeni society.
- Priorities of VAW issues have been identified as early marriage and women in prison as agreed upon by all partners. Two projects were designed on legal protection and on community and individual behavior towards early marriage and change of policies relevant to minimum age of marriage, 2004-2008.
- The media plays a limited role in disseminating messages on VAW and on the religious discourse both which have a great impact on society.
- Oxfam-GB was one of the most significant stakeholders that has initiated and prepared a specific program with clear objectives to combat VAW. UNFPA activities on gender, women empowerment, legal amendments and updating database on women (support to the Annual Reports on the State of Women, in addition to reports on CEDAW) are considered indirect activities. Also UNICEF has activities particularly on violence against children including female children with a focus on FGM/C. UNCHR works with refugee communities, tackles the issue of GBV reports, and provides counseling and services such as the safe house for women refugees subject to violence.
- Countries and international organizations also provided institutional and financial assistances to national organizations for activities relevant to gender and women's human rights issues, such

assistance indirectly combating VAW, i.e. Netherlands assistance to promote the institutional capacity and capacity building of the WNC and Gender Studies Centers, as well as UNICEF assistance in 1998 to the WNC to prepare the fourth National Report on the Implementation Level of CEDAW, in addition to its work with the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood in child protection, with Ministry of Health on motherhood care, and with Ministry of Education on girls' education. Also, UNFPA support in institutional building in reproductive health and gender to governmental and non-governmental parties. In addition, UNDP supported limited activities on gender issues. The World Bank also provided a small grant in 2000 to revise national legislations in light of international conventions.

- Efforts to eliminate VAW remain limited and minimal. Efforts are implemented sporadically without an integrated approach.
- Recommendations that came out of the 1st National Conference to Combat VAW were not taken seriously and interpreted into action plans and activities. The WNC and SHIMA do not intend to organize another conference to assess the past four years or identify a future framework.
- The UN agencies' role is nearly unnoticed and does not correspond with the international resolutions and recommendations that call for the elimination of VAW, which urges member states to combat the epidemic and commit to providing financial, technical and institutional support to the states in this respect.
- Combating VAW does not represent a priority in the policies and agenda of technical assistance agencies such as the UN agencies or the donor community. These parties direct their donations for the implementation of the Development and Poverty Reduction Plan 2006-2010. However the funds are not directed to implement chapter ten in the Plan relevant to women empowerment and more specifically to combat VAW. This could also be attributed to the inefficiency of the national stakeholders who did not present specific proposals to implement this component in the plan.
- The unavailable database limits cooperation and coordination and often leads to duplication.
- Lack of services for the victims.
- Lack of coordination and sharing of the information.
- Lack of financial and technical resources.

4.2 Recommendations

- Conduct comprehensive studies on the epidemic with focus on domestic violence and violence in the workplace, which are not yet addressed due to cultural and social considerations.
- Adopt a strategy with specific goals and objectives to combat VAW and based on the public policies in the Women Development Strategy and attain approval it by the government in order to materialize it in the plans, programs and projects of the government, NGOs, private sector and the donors.
- Conduct studies on the violence targeting marginalized women, women refugees, house maids and Akhdam women who are subjected to multiply violence, domestic and community violence due to social isolation.
- Continue to work with and promote efforts to eliminate VAW with partners such as the Parliament, Ministries of Endowment and Guidance, of Information, Health, Education, Human Rights, Interior, and the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood and with NGOs and international agencies working in the country.
- Establish a database on all forms of VAW to be utilized as a tool for drafting policies, mobilization, and advocacy activities.
- Promote working with media and religious institutions on VAW issues due to their massive impact on society.

- Promote the existing work achieved by SHIMA with Oxfam-GB support and continue building the network's capacity and funding. SHIMA members also need capacity building in networking, advocacy, drafting proposals, plans and reporting skills.
- Enhance the SHIMA and establish branches at the governorates where women are vulnerable to violence according to the recommendations of the first Conference to Combat VAW.
- Design a comprehensive national program to combat VAW based on the Development and Poverty Reduction Plan 2009-2011, where the priorities shall be identified such as legislation amendments, capacity building of partners, consultative services, care and legal protection to women victims of violence, and provision of required resources either from government or donors.
- Call upon UN agencies, international organizations, and donor community to direct their technical, institutional and financial support to materialize component three in chapter ten of the Five Year Plan, on combating VAW.
- Taken into consideration CEDAW and CRC recommendations.
- More attention should be paid to some the services such as shelters for the victims with a rehabilitation program to reintegrate them into their families and society. Hotlines or help lines could be another proactive, consultative service to those ashamed of reporting on the domestic violence.
- More coordination is needed between the key actors in the government, NGOs, donors, private sectors and others, which would include sharing of information on the ongoing efforts to avoid overlapping or duplication between different partners.
- More financial and technical support is needed to cover the programs and projects to combat VAW.

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