

# IMPROVING THE COLLECTION AND USE OF ADMINISTRATIVE DATA ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Global Technical Guidance



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May 2022.

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Recommended citation:

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and World Health Organization (WHO). 2022. Global technical guidance: Improving the collection and use of administrative data on violence against women. New York: UN Women.

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Administrative Data  
and Identify Priorities

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# Acknowledgements

This global technical guidance has been developed by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) through the Joint Programme on Violence Against Women Data and with invaluable advice from an advisory group of experts from UN agencies as well as independent experts.

In particular, UN Women would like to thank the Technical Advisory Board members: Claudia García-Moreno, Avni Amin and LynnMarie Sardinha from WHO; Alexandra Robinson from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); Roberto Murguía Huerta from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); Claudia Cappa from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); Kate Rougvie and Kathryn McCallister from the Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) Global Technical Team; Cristina Fabre from the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE); and Carol Hagemann-White from the University of Osnabrueck. In addition, UN Women thanks Kristin Diemer (University of Melbourne), Melissa Petrangelo Scaia (Global Rights for Women) and Carol Watson Williams (reThink Social Development) for their input.

UN Women colleagues at headquarters, regional and country offices also contributed to the development of the guidance: Melissa Alvarado, Grace Bulenzi Gulere, Maria Teresa Banut Guerra Favela, Khamsavath Chanthavysouk, Zineb Chebihi, Jessamyn Encarnacion, Abigail Erikson, Isiuwa Iyehen, Zamire Kelmendi, Ana Laura Molina Armenta, Beatrice Mulindwa, Vlorá Nushi, Karla Ramirez Ducoing, Sonia Rastogi, Leila Rhiwi, Linda Sanaja-Ukmata, Aymane Saidi, Nayeli Sanchez, Evelyn Selle Letiyo, Rea Jean Tabaco and Kanae Tanaka.

Juncal Plazaola Castaño, Raphaëlle Rafin and Yeliz Osman of the Ending Violence Against Women Section of UN Women coordinated and managed the production of the document with support from Kalliopi Mingeirou.

UN Women also thanks Tamil Kendall, the lead author of the document.

The paper was copyedited by Tina Johnson. Graphic design by Blossom.

This initiative would not have been possible without financial support from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the United Kingdom through the UN Women–WHO Joint Programme on Strengthening Methodologies and Measurement and Building National Capacities for Violence against Women Data (Joint Programme on Violence Against Women Data).

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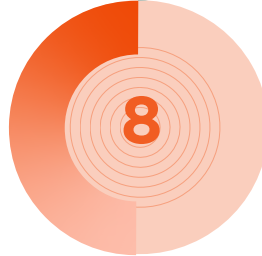
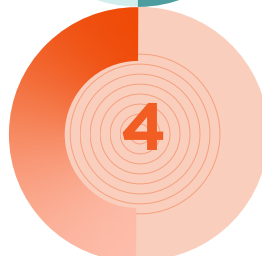
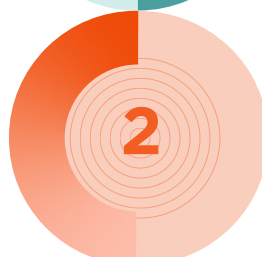
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## Acronyms and abbreviations

**BANEVIM** Banco Estatal de Datos sobre Violencia contra las Mujeres del Estado de Zacatecas

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**CSO** civil society organization

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**EC** emergency contraception

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**EU** European Union

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**GBVIMS** Gender-Based Violence Information Management System

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**INE** National Statistics Institute (Spain)

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**ISP** information-sharing protocol

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**MoU** memorandum of understanding

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**NSO** national statistics office

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**PEP** post-exposure prophylaxis

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**RUCVM** Unified Registry of Cases of Violence Against Women (Argentina)

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**SDG** Sustainable Development Goal

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**SOP** standard operating procedure

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**TOR** terms of reference

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**UN CEDAW** United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Violence against Women

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**UN Women** United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

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**UNODC** United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

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**VAW** violence against women

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**WHO** World Health Organization

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# Introduction

Administrative data are collected by governments and other organizations primarily for administrative purposes, usually during the delivery of a service or as part of internal processes such as budgeting<sup>1</sup>. Administrative data on violence against women (VAW) are (or could be) gathered as part of the provision of services and support to a survivor or the response to an alleged or convicted perpetrator by authorities and different types of service providers, such as the police, prosecutors, courts, social welfare agencies, social services providers, women's shelters, violence hotlines and the health sector. These data can also be derived from the administrative management of such services (e.g., information about employees and budgets). This technical guidance uses the term 'services' to refer a broad range of interventions and interactions with survivors and perpetrators in the health, justice, police and social services sectors.<sup>2</sup>

The United Nations Secretary-General's report *Ending Violence against Women: From Words to Action* emphasizes that VAW administrative data provide valuable information, often not obtainable through surveys, that can:

- provide insight into the number of women utilizing particular services because of VAW;
- help to estimate the need for such services and their costs;
- contribute to understanding sector responses to violence and unmet needs;
- quantify the need for training among service providers; and
- provide information to evaluate programmes and policies and to inform the generation of new or improved legislation, policies and procedures to prevent and respond to VAW<sup>3</sup>.

Countries are increasingly interested in using VAW administrative data to understand, prevent and respond to VAW and are seeking direction and support about how to collect and use such data effectively and ethically. This global technical

guidance was developed to identify key steps and recommendations for intersectoral (e.g., national VAW commissions, statistical bodies) or sectoral (e.g., justice, police, health, social services) coordinating bodies to consider when working to improve the collection and use of VAW administrative data for statistical purposes<sup>i</sup> at the subnational or national level.

The technical guidance is organized in eight steps. Reading it in its entirety is recommended, as many of the steps are interdependent. Moreover, depending on the maturity of intersectoral or sectoral coordination bodies overseeing the collection and management of VAW administrative data and of existing information management and statistical systems, the steps may not be linear. It is also important to stress that these steps are not prescriptive but are intended to serve as guidance to countries in developing their capacity to collect and use VAW administrative data.

## *Eight steps for improving the collection and use of VAW administrative data*

1. Know the appropriate uses of VAW administrative data and identify priorities
2. Create a national or subnational VAW administrative data coordination mechanism
3. Analyse and align with the VAW legislative, policy and data environment
4. Convene a VAW administrative data user-producer dialogue
5. Agree what VAW administrative data will be collected, analysed and reported
6. Create an implementation plan to collect and use VAW administrative data
7. Implement and monitor regular reporting of VAW administrative data
8. Engage in data communication

The technical guidance builds on and complements the international evidence and expert opinion published in UN Women's 2020 Background Paper: "A Synthesis of Evidence on the Collection and Use of Administrative Data on Violence against

<sup>i</sup> VAW administrative data may be used for case-management purposes; however, this purpose is beyond the remit of this technical guidance, which focuses on the production of VAW administrative data for statistical purposes. Unlike many surveys or the census, administrative data were originally collected for administrative rather than statistical purposes.



Women”.<sup>4</sup> Recommendations are made based on existing evidence, guidance and country and regional experience from multiple sectors and expert opinion<sup>ii</sup>.

Many decisions about the collection and use of VAW administrative data are highly context-dependent. In some cases, rather than making recommendations, the guidance identifies the advantages and disadvantages of different options to support the VAW administrative data coordination mechanism (described in Step 2) to make informed decisions. The technical guidance is envisioned as a living document that should be periodically updated as countries use and adapt it to their country-specific contexts and needs.

### **Scope of the global technical guidance: Audience, sectors and types of VAW**

#### **Audience**

Improving the collection and use of VAW administrative data requires expertise in VAW and in the production and use of statistics, as well as in-depth context-specific knowledge of and responsibility for VAW service delivery and related administrative data collection and information management systems. This technical guidance recommends the inclusion of individuals with these different fields of knowledge and respective responsibilities in the VAW administrative data coordination mechanism (Step 2) to provide policy and operational leadership. Once created, the coordination mechanism can use the guidance as a reference.

More broadly, the audience for this technical guidance is national and subnational producers of VAW administrative data. Government and civil society programme managers responsible for providing services to survivors of VAW and interacting with perpetrators, national statistics offices (NSOs) and national and subnational policymakers will find it useful for designing, planning and implementing the collection, management, analysis, reporting and communication of administrative data on VAW. These data producers are also frequently data users who will use VAW

administrative data for service monitoring and as an input for evaluation, service mapping and capacity assessment with the end goal of improving VAW prevention and response (see Step 1 and Figure 1). Data users who are not data producers, such as advocates for ending VAW, civil society organizations (CSOs), including women’s organizations, and data users from academia and research centres may find this technical guidance of interest but are not the primary audience.

#### **Sectors**

The technical guidance was informed by review and consultation with experts from the health, justice, policing, social services and humanitarian sectors about country and regional experiences with the collection and use of VAW administrative data. It focuses on lessons learned that are applicable across multiple sectors and proposes a small number of variables that should be collected by all sectors (minimum data set).

Recognizing that national and subnational sectoral data needs and information systems vary, the technical guidance aligns with and incorporates recommendations from existing sector-specific guidance for health,<sup>5</sup> police and justice<sup>6</sup> and the internationally agreed service standards specified in the *Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence*<sup>7</sup>. This technical guidance envisions that the development and improvement of the subnational or national VAW administrative data system will involve governmental and non-governmental service providers from multiple sectors, depending on the national or subnational ecosystem of VAW service providers. In practice, the involvement of both governmental and non-governmental service providers, multiple sectors and geographic areas may be phased, with work to improve the collection and use of VAW administrative data initially concentrated among service providers, sectors or geographical areas where there is strong leadership, willingness to collaborate and existing capacities for data collection.

ii From 2019 to 2021, UN Women solicited information about country experiences collecting and using VAW administrative data from 62 stakeholders from 20 countries through in-depth interviews about the process of developing sectoral and multisectoral VAW administrative data systems, follow-up email communication and an expert group meeting that presented country and regional experiences. Stakeholders came from health, justice and social services ministries, civil society organizations, women’s machineries, national statistical offices (NSOs), academia and the United Nations. The regions and countries represented were: Africa (Malawi, Uganda, Zimbabwe); Latin America and the Caribbean (Argentina, Belize, Colombia, Jamaica, Mexico); Arab States/ North Africa (Morocco); Asia and the Pacific (Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Philippines, Tonga); and Europe and Central Asia (Georgia, Italy, Kosovo, Moldova, Spain, Tajikistan). The guidance has also been informed by learnings from the Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) experience operating in humanitarian and emergency settings for more than a decade.

### Types of VAW

The minimum data set proposed in this technical guidance includes physical, psychological and sexual violence experienced by women in multiple locations and by different perpetrators<sup>iii</sup>. It focuses primarily on using administrative data to prevent and respond to violence experienced by adult women<sup>iv</sup>. It does not at this juncture include other forms of violence such as trafficking, economic violence or other harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriages and female genital mutilation. However, it is recognized that the principles, steps and recommended variables described in the guidance could be applied to improve the collection and use of administrative data for these and other forms of

violence, if they are deemed priorities by countries. Given parallel work to develop a comprehensive statistical framework for gender-based killings of women (femicide/feminicide), led by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and UN Women, this technical guidance does not include femicide but rather aligns with this statistical framework<sup>8</sup>. Improving collection and availability of the variables recommended in the minimum data set will contribute to understanding, preventing and responding to gender-based killings of women<sup>9</sup> by providing critical information on their gender-related motives by, for example, identifying intimate partner or non-partner physical, psychological or sexual violence prior to the homicide.

#### Box 1

##### Definitions: Physical, psychological and sexual violence<sup>10</sup>

**Physical violence** consists of acts aimed at physically hurting the survivor and include, but are not limited to, acts like pushing, grabbing, twisting the arm, pulling hair, slapping, kicking, biting or hitting with a fist or object, trying to strangle or suffocate, burning or scalding on purpose, or threatening or attacking with some sort of weapon, gun or knife.

**Psychological violence** consists of any act that induces fear or

emotional distress. It includes a range of behaviours that encompass acts of emotional abuse (e.g., being frequently humiliated in public, intimidated or having things you care about destroyed) and controlling behaviours (e.g., being kept from seeing family or friends or from seeking health care without permission).

**Sexual violence** is defined as any sort of harmful or unwanted sexual behaviour that is imposed on someone, whether by use of physical force, intimidation or coercion. It includes acts of abusive

sexual contact, forced sexual acts, attempted or completed sexual acts (intercourse) without consent (rape or attempted rape), non-contact acts (e.g., being forced to watch or participate in pornography) and/or being forced to do something sexual that the woman considers humiliating or degrading. Sexual violence includes sexual harassment, verbal abuse and threats. Rape is defined as engaging in the non-consensual vaginal, anal or oral penetration of a sexual nature of the body of another person with any bodily part or object.

<sup>iii</sup> In designing administrative data, it is important to allow for recording violence experienced by women in multiple locations (e.g., homes, public spaces, work places) and by multiple perpetrators (e.g., intimate partners, family members who are cohabiting or not, neighbours, employers or strangers) (see Annex III). However, it is important to also note that the forms of violence that are most commonly experienced by women worldwide are physical, psychological and sexual intimate partner violence (IPV) and non-partner sexual violence (NPSV). These were selected as the scope for the literature review that informed this technical guidance as these are also the forms about which knowledge and practice—including legislative and policy frameworks (encompassing criminalization) as well as measurement and standards for data collection (mainly for prevalence surveys)—are most developed and robust (Kendall 2020, pp. 10–11). Depending on the context, violence by other perpetrators, be it other family members or in the work place, may also be reported and are useful to record. Although measurement tools and standardized definitions are less developed, recording these can help improve the learning on them.

<sup>iv</sup> Whilst gender-based violence against children and adolescents is a critical issue, this document does not provide specific technical guidance relevant to the legal and policy considerations for the collection and use of VAW administrative data from minors. Strengthening VAW administrative data collection that includes girls and adolescents (minors) is important, and efforts in this regard can be undertaken simultaneously as many of the service providers are the same for adult women and children. However, the data collection and information management systems require additional ethical, safety and consent considerations that need to be followed (see UNICEF 2020).

### Principles to guide the collection and use of VAW administrative data

The following overlapping guiding principles, adapted for the collection and use of VAW administrative data from the **Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence**,<sup>11</sup> must underpin the collection, analysis, sharing and reporting of such data: a human rights-based approach; advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment; cultural sensitivity and age appropriateness; survivor-centred approach; safety; and perpetrator accountability (see Annex I).

The main objectives of collecting and promoting the use of VAW administrative data are to improve policies and programmes to prevent VAW, to support survivors and to hold perpetrators accountable. There is a clear ethical obligation to ensure that collection and use of VAW administrative data benefits survivors and does no harm. Survivor-centred approaches place the rights, needs and safety of women at the centre of both service delivery and administrative data collection and use. Recommendations to prevent potential harms and to make the design and implementation of administrative data systems survivor-centred are summarized in Box 2.

### Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a core characteristic of quality service delivery and ethical collection and use of VAW administrative data. Potential harm associated with violations of confidentiality was a key concern raised by experts during the development of this technical guidance. Confidentiality of personally identifiable information is a central pillar of a human rights-based approach that ensures survivor safety. Breaches of confidentiality—for example, disclosure to a perpetrator or family members that a woman has sought help because of VAW or information leaks that allow a perpetrator to identify the location of a survivor after leaving a violent relationship—can result in negative social consequences for survivors and risks the escalation

of VAW, including lethal violence. Breaches of confidentiality also pose the threat of harm to those who support VAW survivors, including service providers. To seek services and disclose experiences of violence without fear of retaliation from perpetrators or being stigmatized by others, women need to be confident that information about them and their experiences will be kept safe and remain confidential. Ensuring confidentiality is a fundamental principle of statistics<sup>12</sup> as well as a core characteristic for provision of quality essential services to survivors of VAW.<sup>13</sup>

There is an important distinction to be made between potential sharing of personal information for care and management ('case management') with the few duty bearers who are responsible for provision of services and the confidentiality maintained when using VAW administrative data for statistical purposes. Survivors often fear that disclosure of VAW to service providers and institutions, and then further sharing of personal identifying information without their consent, may result in undesired interventions in their lives or the lives of their children and stigmatize them in the community. For care and management purposes, survivors should always be asked for their consent before their personal information is shared with a limited set of duty bearers who need to know in order to provide quality care.<sup>14</sup> If limits to confidentiality exist because of mandatory reporting requirements (i.e., the requirement of health or social service providers to report actual or suspected cases of VAW to police or other authorities),<sup>v</sup> survivors should be informed about this prior to being asked to disclose violence so that they can make informed decisions about what they divulge.<sup>15</sup>

For statistical purposes, information about specific individuals is always kept confidential,<sup>16</sup> and specific individuals should never be identifiable.<sup>17</sup> Different from research, written informed consent is not commonly part of the creation of an administrative

<sup>v</sup> Mandatory reporting refers to legislation passed by some States that requires designated individuals such as health-care providers to report (usually to the police or legal system) any case of actual or suspected domestic violence or intimate partner violence. In many countries, mandatory reporting applies primarily to child abuse and maltreatment of minors, but in others it has been extended to the reporting of some types of VAW. The World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines recommend against mandatory reporting of violence against adult women to relevant authorities such as the police or protection officers. Exceptions to this may be in the case where the law requires mandatory reporting of minors subjected to abuse or where the life of the woman subjected to violence is in immediate danger (WHO 2013.) The Essential Services Package builds on these recommendations to state that mandatory reporting of individual cases between coordinating agencies should be prohibited except in cases of immediate danger, child victims or special vulnerability (UN Women et al. 2015, Module 2, p. 16 and Module 5, p. 15).

record. VAW administrative data collection and management must conform with national and sectoral privacy regulations and with international standards that include informing how personally identifiable information will be used and with whom and under what circumstances information will be shared with third parties.<sup>18</sup> If secondary use of personal data, such as use of administrative data for statistical purposes, is not explicitly consented to at the time of data collection, international guidance is that as well as being legal and ensuring individual privacy, the use must be aligned with institutional mandates and “protect the vital or best interest of an individual(s) or group(s) of individuals” whose personal information is used.<sup>19</sup>

The recommendation of this technical guidance is that during collection of VAW administrative data, individuals are informed about and explicitly consent to the sharing of their information for

care and management, and that they are informed that aggregate data that does not identify them will be used to inform and improve VAW policies and programmes. If they do not consent to their information being recorded, their wishes should be respected without any denial of care or services. Improving VAW administrative data collection is an opportunity to improve confidentiality and data protection in the service delivery site and in data management (see Step 5.4). Policies and procedures must be implemented to protect the confidentiality and personal data of individual survivors and (alleged) perpetrators at every step, from collection to data storage, processing, analysis and data communication. All staff who have a role in documenting and managing VAW administrative data must be trained in these policies and procedures, commit to implementation and be made aware of the sanctions for failure to comply.



**Box 2**  
**Do no harm: Survivor-centred design of VAW administrative data systems**

*The audience for these questions and recommendations is the VAW administrative data coordination mechanism (Step 2) that will oversee the design and implementation of the system for the data collection and use. More details about how to implement these summary recommendations are included throughout this technical guidance.*

**Who governs and coordinates effort to improve VAW administrative data?**

- Include representatives of specialized VAW CSOs in the coordination mechanism to provide expert knowledge and increase awareness of concerns and priorities of

survivors regarding VAW administrative data

- Consult with survivor experts where possible to provide inputs into data collection forms and information management systems.

**What VAW administrative data will be collected?**

High quality service provision is always the priority—documentation/data collection must never represent a barrier to receiving service, and survivors must be able to decline their information being recorded without fear of losing services.

- Prioritize provision of services and care both in sequence and timing over data collection and emphasize survivor autonomy to decline to answer or have information collected in training for VAW service

provision and administrative data collection.

- Design data collection forms and information management systems to facilitate survivor non-response. Include ‘declined to answer’ as a response option to distinguish it from missing data.

*Reduce the response burden on survivors.*

- Limit the number of questions asked and collect the minimum data set.
- Avoid framing questions to imply blame or stigmatize survivors.
- Ask questions that might be perceived as invasive or traumatize survivors with empathy and only if needed. The purpose should be explained and survivors should be given the option of not answering.



&gt;&gt;

- Do not document issues that are unnecessary for service provision or could result in prejudice or discrimination against the survivor during service provision or in subsequent legal processes. The police or justice sector may be obliged to collect information on criminal acts by survivors, but these variables do not have to be collected by other sectors or extracted as part of a VAW administrative data set. Seek to protect survivors and avoid revictimization associated with data collection during service provision.
  - Document drug and alcohol use and mental health status only as relevant to provide services. Survivors should not be questioned about their sexual history.
  - The legal framework and social context will determine what socio-demographic variables are safe to collect.
  - The minimum data set recommends collection of a survivor's sex, age and relationship with the perpetrator and where violence occurred (see Step 5). Additional important variables could include: ethnicity, disability status, citizenship/migration status, gender identity and sexual orientation. Additional variables should be safe to collect and relevant to care provision.
- Who has access to VAW administrative data?**
- Limit access to individual records of VAW survivors to those who need to know because they are involved in care provision or responsible for aggregating and reporting data, and ensure confidentiality.
  - In the service delivery site, individuals who are not responsible for providing direct VAW-related care/
- service should not be able to identify survivors of VAW. Supervisors and decision-makers, including those responsible for VAW programmes and policies, should only be able to access aggregate (anonymized) data (statistics as opposed to individual records).
- Data management (data entry, data sharing and data analysis) must follow best practices for data protection and security. If records are associated with unique identifiers, data management including sharing and any linkage should be performed in a secure data environment.<sup>vi</sup>
- What VAW administrative data are made public?**
- Anonymize any information made publicly available (no names, ensure numbers reported are sufficiently large<sup>vii</sup> to prevent identification of individuals based on location or place of residence, age etc.).

<sup>vi</sup> Assuring statistical confidentiality and data security is a principle for the production of statistics. This requires that appropriate standards, guidelines, practices and procedures are in place to ensure statistical confidentiality, that strict protocols to safeguard data confidentiality apply to users with access to microdata, and that microdata is managed in a secure environment (UN DESA, Statistical Division 2019, pp. 23-24, 115).

<sup>vii</sup> Suppressing any cell with less than five observations is a frequent convention. Rules for cell sizes (what is considered sufficiently large) can be based on the specific data set and expert opinion. Specific rules for data suppression will be established as part of protocols for data management and processing (see Step 5) (Klein et al. 2002).

# Step



## Know the Appropriate Uses of VAW Administrative Data and Identify Priorities

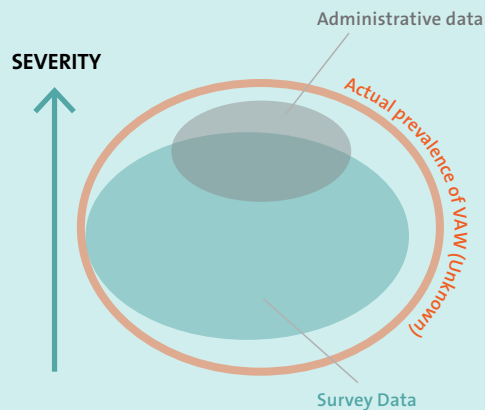
Countries can use VAW administrative data to better understand the types of help sought by survivors, assess the current response to VAW and improve related policies and programmes. In this technical guidance, we identify three priority uses for these data: (1) monitoring VAW service use (based on the minimum data set recommended to be collected by all sectors); (2) monitoring programmes to assess policy implementation and service coverage and quality, which requires additional sector-specific information and analysis beyond the minimum data set; and (3) service mapping to assess service capacity, resource allocation

and costing for system planning, which also requires additional information beyond the minimum data set. See Figure 1 for a summary of the different priority uses of VAW administrative data and the questions each can answer. Understanding the different uses of VAW administrative data and the different information needed to fulfil these (whether the minimum data set or the minimum data set plus additional information) can help guide decisions about priority uses for these data in the national/subnational context. Equally important for identifying priorities is understanding what VAW administrative data cannot tell us (see Box 3).



### Box 3: VAW administrative data cannot represent prevalence

- VAW administrative data cannot be substituted for population surveys to estimate the prevalence of VAW, i.e., the proportion of women and girls in the population who experience violence. For example, VAW administrative data cannot be used to report on Sustainable Development Goal indicators 5.2.1 and 5.2.2.<sup>viii</sup>
- Less than 40 per cent of survivors of VAW seek help of any kind. Those who do mostly seek help from family and friends rather than institutional supports, such as the police or health services. Less than 10 per cent of survivors seeking help go to the police.<sup>20</sup>



Graph courtesy of Dr. Henrica A.F.M. Jansen

- Service-use data tell us how much demand there is for services. It can tell us how many times a service was used and, if the service keeps track of use by new and repeat users, how many survivors sought and received services from an institution in a given time period.
- For further discussion of the different units of count (services delivered or persons who received services), see Step 5.2.
- Increasing knowledge among policymakers, managers and service providers about what VAW administrative data can and cannot tell us is important (see Step 8).

viii Indicator 5.2.1: Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partners in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age. Indicator 5.2.2: Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence (UN DESA, Statistics Division 2015b).



Figure 1: Priority uses of VAW administrative data		
<b>Monitoring service use</b>	<b>Programme monitoring to assess policy implementation, service coverage and quality</b>	<b>Service mapping and system planning</b>
<p><b>Based on the recommended minimum data set (Step 5):</b></p> <p>Number of cases of VAW reported, types of VAW reported, survivor-perpetrator relationship in cases of VAW reported, sex and age of survivors and perpetrators, whether services were provided/referrals made.</p>	<p><b>Requires additional sector-specific information</b> such as variables to measure whether services were provided to VAW survivors and the extent of perpetrator accountability.</p>	<p><b>Requires additional sources of information for assessing service capacity, resource allocation and costing</b></p> <p>such as number and profiles of staff deployed in different services, budgets.</p>
Questions answered by each priority use of VAW administrative data		
<p><b>What VAW services are delivered to survivors and what are the critical characteristics of the survivors, perpetrators and types of VAW experienced?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Which women are seeking what services because of VAW?</li> <li>→ What types of VAW are they experiencing (physical, sexual, psychological)?</li> <li>→ Who is perpetrating this violence?</li> <li>→ Where and when are these acts of violence occurring?</li> <li>→ How many reports of VAW have been made in a given time frame?</li> <li>→ What services and referrals were provided?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Are VAW policies and services implemented to standards?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Does service provision adhere to national/subnational protocols and guidelines? (e.g., how many survivors received care/response that met established minimum quality standards? Did investigation, sentencing and treatment of (alleged) perpetrators conform to established guidelines?)</li> <li>→ Was service provision timely?</li> <li>→ Do VAW services conform to national/international good practice?</li> <li>→ What was the outcome? For health/social services provided, referrals, possible medical/social outcomes;<sup>21</sup> for police/justice complaints, investigation, charges, convictions, sentencing.<sup>22</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>What is the national/subnational capacity to prevent and respond to VAW?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ What is the coverage of service delivery? For example, how many clinics and hospitals are providing VAW services or how many police stations and prosecutors units have trained personnel/specialized units and the necessary material resources to respond to VAW?</li> <li>→ What infrastructure, human and financial resources are currently deployed? E.g., number of shelter beds, number of persons trained, number of persons employed, functions of persons employed, expenditures on wages and salaries, operating costs.</li> </ul>



Monitoring service use	Programme monitoring to assess policy implementation, service coverage and quality	Service mapping and system planning
<b>Purpose: Uses for different types of VAW administrative data</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Summarizes reports of VAW recorded by services/authorities.</li> <li>→ Describes survivors and perpetrators who are interacting with services.</li> <li>→ Information about incidents of violence (case reports) can inform prevention initiatives and service delivery.</li> <li>→ Information from case reports can be compared to population estimates to potentially identify gaps in service seeking or service delivery e.g., 15 per cent of the country's population is ethnic minority but only 1 per cent of VAW reported to police is reported by ethnic minority women.</li> <li>→ If VAW prevalence data are available, more refined comparisons on the types of VAW and socio-demographic characteristics of survivors reporting VAW in surveys and seeking VAW services can be made.</li> </ul> <p><b>See Box 4.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Can identify where effort/action is needed to meet service standards/areas for improvement.</li> <li>→ Monitoring programme delivery using administrative data and providing the results to service providers has been shown to result in greater provision of care to standards.<sup>23</sup></li> <li>→ Sector-specific administrative data are an important input for evaluating programmes and policies.</li> </ul> <p><b>For examples of these uses, see Examples 1 and 2 in Annex II.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Can identify service gaps and be used to allocate resources.</li> <li>→ Service capacity data are key for evaluating the progress of duty bearers, system planning and mobilizing resources.</li> </ul> <p><b>For an example of this use, see Example 3 in Annex II.</b></p>



**Box 4**  
**VAW administrative data's contribution to equity analysis<sup>26</sup>**  
 A core principle of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is to "Leave No One Behind"; the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should be met for all nations, people and for all segments of society, with priority placed on reaching first those who are furthest behind.<sup>27</sup> Equity analysis using VAW administrative data is a direct and important contribution to SDG monitoring. The data can describe who is accessing VAW prevention and response

services and provide information for monitoring the delivery of and outcomes of those services. Information on who is accessing VAW services can provide insights into who is not accessing services by triangulating this information with VAW prevalence data, if available, or census data about the structure of the population.

VAW administrative data cannot be used to report on SDG indicators, which require prevalence data that can only be generated by surveys, but administrative data on service use, service delivery and resource allocation can be used to further inform understanding of

progress towards SDG targets 5.2, 11.7, 16.1, 16.2, 16.3 and 16.6<sup>ix</sup> and whether this progress is equitable. The recommended minimum data set includes age and sex of survivors and survivor-perpetrator relationship (see Figure 3 in Step 5). The additional socio-demographic information that is most important for an equity analysis of service use, service delivery and outcomes using administrative data will be specific to the national and subnational context. The main principles to guide decision-making about the variables to include in VAW administrative data collection are to be survivor-centred and to do no harm.

ix Target 5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation (survivor age, survivor-perpetrator relationship, type of VAW, location of VAW); target 11.7: By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities (location of VAW, survivor age); target 16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere (VAW reported to services); target 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children (VAW reported, age of survivor); target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all (VAW reported, process of investigation and prosecution of justice: complaints, investigation, charges, convictions, sentencing, see also Annex II); target 16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels (UN DESA, Statistics Division 2022). Reporting and data communication (Steps 7 and 8) contribute to improved accountability and transparency of the VAW response at all levels.



## GLOBAL EXAMPLE

## Using VAW administrative data to improve policy and programmatic responses during COVID-19

*“We are constantly increasing our use of the data to improve public policy and services. We can’t do it all, but it contributes, and an example is the catalogue of urgent measures [to prevent VAW during the COVID-19 state of emergency].”*

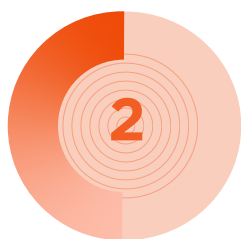
**Government official,  
women’s machinery**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, VAW administrative data gained relevance and prominence around the world as women’s machineries, other government ministries, CSOs and development partners sought ‘real time’ information to guide policy and programmatic responses to VAW. Administrative data about VAW service use and demand, particularly service use data from hotlines and shelters, were foundational for shaping and monitoring national, regional and local emergency responses to VAW during the pandemic and for the allocation of additional resources to support prevention and response.

Countries that increased or prioritized budgets for government or CSO actions to prevent or respond to VAW during the pandemic include Armenia, Australia, Canada, Côte d’Ivoire, Ireland, Latvia, Nepal, New Zealand, Tonga and Ukraine. Most countries with hotlines strengthened coverage, and Angola, Cambodia, Ghana and Sudan introduced new, toll-free hotlines. Many countries, including Albania, Brazil and Mexico, ensured VAW cases were a priority for the courts despite reduced functioning, and that protection orders were automatically extended. Some countries, including Chile, Colombia, Malta and Romania, introduced targeted social protection and economic support for survivors.<sup>24</sup> VAW administrative data frequently contributed to the justification or rationale for these gender-sensitive investments and were also used to monitor implementation.

The “Decision tree: Data collection on violence against women and COVID-19” is a tool to support decision-making about data collection.<sup>25</sup>

# Step



## Create a National or Subnational VAW Administrative Data Coordination Mechanism

**“Without inter-institutional cooperation and coordination between different branches and levels of the government, ministries and regions, it isn’t possible to get the data. That is the basic foundation.”**

**Government official, women’s machinery**

Making progress to begin or to improve the collection and use of VAW administrative data requires leadership and coordination. Within and across sectors, the commitment of data producers, data users and decision-makers at the mid- and upper-management level is necessary to advance the compilation, processing and reporting of VAW administrative data as well as their use to improve policies and programmatic responses.

The creation of a coordination mechanism is an opportunity to define roles and responsibilities for the collection, analysis and reporting of VAW administrative data, to make institutional agreements to improve the quality and use of such data and to catalyse political and operational support for these activities. In the section on “Coordination, monitoring and data collection”, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (UN CEDAW) General Recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women calls on States to “Set up a mechanism or body, or mandate an existing mechanism or body, to regularly coordinate, monitor and assess the national, regional and local implementation and effectiveness of the measures”.<sup>28</sup>

The first consideration when contemplating the creation of a national or subnational coordination mechanism is whether there is an existing national body responsible for the overall VAW response and what responsibilities this body has related to VAW data, and specifically VAW administrative data. It will also be important to identify whether there is a national or subnational body responsible for gender statistics and, if so, whether this body has an already established working group on VAW statistics. Depending on the context, governance for the overall VAW response and VAW administrative data may require two different bodies: the one responsible for the overall VAW response may be more policy-oriented while that responsible for VAW data governance and implementation may require a more technical and operationally oriented coordination mechanism or working group.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE

## Morocco's National Commission for the Care of Women Victims of Violence



Morocco passed a national law to combat violence against women in 2018.<sup>29</sup> Article 12 of the law establishes an independent national commission responsible for: national coordination and facilitating communication between different sectors involved in the prevention and response to VAW; advising, monitoring and evaluating national, regional and local VAW action plans; and annually reporting on outcomes. The National Commission for the Care of Women Victims of Violence was convened in August 2019 under the leadership of retired Judge Zhor El Horr, who was the country's first woman judge and has been at the vanguard of codifying and contributing to the evolution of family law nationally.

During the first year of its existence, the National Commission established a Terms of Reference (Working Guide), which outlines its objectives and tasks, leadership, membership and responsibility for providing secretariat support. The Commission has government representation from the sectors that are responsible for preventing and responding to VAW, including the police, Royal Gendarmerie, justice and health.<sup>30</sup> Secretariat support for the National Commission is provided

by the Ministry of Equality, the national women's machinery.

During its first year of existence, the National Commission undertook a programme of multi-sectoral, interdisciplinary learning about VAW that involved civil society and international development partners and analysed the legal, policy and data environment. This joint learning and diagnosis led to the conclusion that for VAW administrative data, the "lack of a unified dictionary to describe criminal acts committed against women, and the lack of a unified national information system to reduce repetition among stakeholders, make the need to create a unified national database an urgent necessity".<sup>31</sup> The National Commission thus recommended creating unified VAW indicators and definitions, developing an intersectoral VAW administrative data information system, increasing the technical and infrastructure capacity for statistics in specialized units for VAW survivors (health and justice sectors), ensuring alignment with national laws governing the protection of personal data and studying how information can be shared between different sectors for follow-up and secondary prevention.<sup>32</sup>

## 2.1 Select the leadership and membership of the coordination mechanism

### Leadership

- Clarity about the leadership of the coordination mechanism, what institutions should be represented and who is responsible for data processing and reporting can support progress in the field of VAW administrative data. Conflict over leadership or lack of ownership and consequent neglect can be harmful. While there is no one-size-fits-all approach, the following criteria could be considered when selecting the lead institution or institutions:
- **Priority:** Importance attributed to VAW administrative data within the institution.
- **Mandate:** Legal or policy attributions for monitoring of the VAW response and for the generation of statistics.
- **Independence:** Actual and perceived credibility, objectivity and autonomy from political interference.
- **Current functions:** Capitalize on existing capacities, operational efficiencies and avoid duplication of effort.

A co-leadership model between the institution with policy responsibility for VAW and the NSO may be appropriate.

### Membership

Improving the collection and use of VAW administrative data requires a coordination mechanism that has knowledge and expertise in VAW, statistics, information systems and data management (including data protection) and service delivery in the participating sectors. The composition of the coordination mechanism will depend on roles, responsibilities and relevant expertise in the local context, but at a minimum should include the NSO, women's machinery and VAW CSOs.

- The NSO has responsibility for statistical coordination. At the national level, it develops standards for data collection, processing and reporting and provides technical support to increase statistical capacity and coordination among other actors. The NSO may also directly collect and manage VAW data, including administrative data, and disseminate statistics.
- The women's machinery may be the steward for the VAW response, contribute subject matter expertise in VAW and gender statistics and be directly responsible for ensuring delivery of specialized VAW services to survivors.
- CSOs contribute valuable subject matter expertise in VAW. Depending on the context, they may also deliver a significant proportion of specialized VAW services to survivors, making them important data producers and users.



#### Box 5

Using VAW administrative data for monitoring and for quality improvement: Separate functions? At the national or subnational level, it may be appropriate to divide responsibilities so that one body

is responsible for coordination and implementation of VAW policies and measures and a separate, independent body is responsible for monitoring these, including through the analysis of VAW administrative data.<sup>33</sup> At service delivery

sites and within sectors, it is important that managers and decision-makers with responsibility for service delivery review VAW administrative data so that they can implement quality improvement measures.

- All the relevant sectors that are responsible for service delivery should also be engaged (e.g., health, police, justice and social services, including services managed by CSOs). Depending on the local service ecosystem, others may include transport and the humanitarian and emergency sector to mention only two. The design and implementation of administrative data collection systems needs to be informed by a deep understanding of service delivery: workflows, existing documentation and information systems and related opportunities and constraints (see Step 3.2).
- Ideally, the data decision-makers or data stewards from the different sectors who can either take decisions about or substantially influence data collection and the information management system within or across the sector should be members of the coordination mechanism.
- Inclusion of independent VAW experts, including those from academia, can enrich the knowledge and experience available to the coordination mechanism.

## 2.2 Establish terms of reference for the coordination mechanism

The purpose, leadership, members and related roles and responsibilities of the coordination mechanism should be defined in its terms of reference (TOR). This can assign specific tasks to institutions or it can be more general. If the TOR is general, depending on the current state of the VAW administrative data system at the subnational or national level, specific tasks for the preparatory work to analyse the VAW administrative data policy, legal and data environment and to build consensus about the data to be collected (Steps 3 through 5 of the technical guidance) will need to be assigned in an operational work plan approved by the coordination mechanism. Further actions to improve the collection and use of VAW administrative data will be specified in the implementation plan (Step 6) developed and approved by the coordination mechanism.

The term (duration of participation) for leadership and membership in the coordination mechanism should also be specified in the TOR. The country and regional experiences and expert opinion that informed this guidance indicate that improvement of VAW administrative data collection and use is at minimum a three- to five-year endeavour. Convening a coordination mechanism (Step 2), analysing the legal, policy and data environment (Step 3) and agreeing on what VAW administrative data will be collected, analysed and reported (Steps 4 and 5) frequently took 18 to 24 months. Similarly, resource mobilization, training and infrastructure development (Step 6) and

efforts to establish and improve reporting and data communication required commitment over multiple years.

### The TOR should include:

*Purpose:* The coordination mechanism is expected to be task oriented with the broad purpose of improving the collection and use of VAW administrative data. More specific objectives will derive from the priority uses for these data and the priority tasks established by the coordination mechanism.

### *Structure, membership and leadership:*

- **Accountability:** the position or positions (e.g., minister, deputy minister, chair of a multisectoral body) to which the coordination mechanism is accountable and reports
- **Leadership:** responsibility for convening and chairing the coordination mechanism
- **Members of the coordination mechanism**
- **Institution that will provide secretariat support to the coordination mechanism.**

*Decision-making:* The TOR should specify how decisions will be made. This should include:

- Establishing a quorum (how many members must be present during a meeting to take decisions)

- Process for making decisions (e.g., by voting with a simple majority or by consensus)
- If there are voting and non-voting members, this should be specified.

*Roles and responsibilities:* The coordination mechanism will have oversight for improving VAW administrative data collection and use. Specific roles and responsibilities for improving the collection and use of the data can also be assigned to participating institutions. These could include:

- Responsibility for undertaking an analysis of the legal, policy and data environment (Step 3)
- Responsibility for establishing what data will be collected and how they will be managed (Steps 4 and 5)
  - What institution(s) are responsible for data contribution (collection and sharing)?
  - What institution(s) are responsible for data management (aggregation, analysis)?

- Responsibility for developing the implementation plan including resource mobilization (Step 6). Subsequently, the responsibilities of the collaborating institutions for providing resources should be formalized in a memorandum of understanding (MoU).
- Responsibility for reporting (Step 7) and data communication (Step 8).

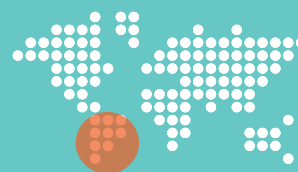
*Expected outputs:* The TOR may specify the expected outputs or these may be specified in the implementation plan (Step 6).

*Meeting schedule and term (duration of participation):*

- How frequently will the coordination mechanism meet?
- How long will the institutions be expected to participate?

REGIONAL EXAMPLE

## One size doesn't fit all: Leadership of multisectoral VAW administrative data mechanisms in Latin America



### COLOMBIA

Ministry of Health + NSO

Integrated Information System on Gender-Based Violence (SIVIGE)

In 2020, Colombia formalized a national coordination mechanism for the response to sex- and gender-based violence, which includes an Information Systems Committee co-led by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and the NSO (DANE).<sup>34</sup> Co-leadership responds to legal mandates and operational efficiencies.

The Committee is responsible for setting priorities for the progressive consolidation of VAW administrative data in SIVIGE, the integrated VAW administrative data system. SIVIGE is managed by the Ministry of Health, based on a legal mandate and because the Health Information Management System provided an existing infrastructure and is a well-established source of administrative VAW data.

The NSO is responsible for working with the different sectors to establish technical standards for VAW administrative data and information-sharing protocols that protect confidentiality. The other committee members must be technical specialists responsible for managing quantitative data at the national institutions responsible for providing services to survivors and responding to perpetrators.<sup>35</sup>

### DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Women's Machinery + NSO

National Information System on Gender-Based Violence (SINAVIG)

In 2021, the Dominican Republic formalized a Women's, Adolescents' and Girls' Cabinet, led by the Women's Ministry, to design, implement and monitor VAW public policies. The multisectoral Cabinet includes the NSO and selected representatives of women's organizations active in VAW.<sup>36</sup>

The Women's Ministry has oversight for delivery of specialized services to VAW survivors. Since 2018, the Women's Ministry Department of Research and Statistics has published administrative data on VAW service use (from the crisis hotline, psychological and legal services), including the number of open cases and results of cases of survivors who have been supported to take legal action. Additionally, the Attorney General's office reports on violence reported to specialized prosecution units (type of VAW and number of cases). The NSO administers a public-facing data portal that integrates VAW administrative and survey data.<sup>37</sup>

### GUATEMALA

NSO

National Information System on Violence Against Women (SNIVCM)

In 2008, Guatemala passed a law to combat femicide and other forms of violence against women. Article 20 specifies that the NSO is responsible for creating a National Information System on Violence Against Women (SNIVCM).<sup>38</sup>

The NSO collects administrative data on services provided to women who experience VAW, on investigatory and judicial processes and on outcomes from the government institutions that are obliged under the law to provide them. These include education, forensic medicine, health, the judiciary, the police, prosecutors (including those specialized in human rights) and legal aid.

The NSO collects this administrative data annually, disaggregated by month of occurrence and geographic districts. Data visualizations, Excel spreadsheets summarizing aggregate data and annual reports that analyse trends, outcomes of legal cases and the populations most affected by different types of VAW are made public through the data portal.<sup>39</sup>



# Step



## Analyse the VAW Legislative, Policy and Data Environment

**“Our national policies should be the main reason that we collect VAW data. [National counterparts say]: ‘We are doing it because we have to report to UNDP, to the UN because someone asked for it.’ NO! You are doing it because you want to reduce rates of rape, because we don’t want to see children being abused.”**

Official, United Nations.

Both the national and subnational legislative and policy framework for VAW administrative data and the current data environment should be analysed. First, legislative and policy framework commitments to ending VAW and those that govern the collection and use of administrative data should be analysed to understand the broad legal, policy and programmatic context for the collection and use of VAW administrative data, the existing monitoring commitments and the outstanding data needs. Second, the data environment, which includes identifying completed monitoring reports and data sources and assessing current administrative data collection and information management systems, should be analysed to provide insights into what VAW administrative data are currently collected, how they are collected and what resources are dedicated to collection and use.

Understanding the existing legal, policy and data environment is necessary to prepare for the data user-producer dialogue (Step 4) and will be foundational for Steps 5 through 7: establishing the minimum data set (Step 5), creating the implementation plan (Step 6) and implementing regular reporting (Step 7). For example, the legal definitions of different types of violence will dictate data collection by the police and justice sector and is likely to influence documentation

in other sectors as well. This needs to be considered in the development of the operational definitions of the minimum data set (see Step 5.2). Similarly, the minimum data set recommends collecting the exact age of the survivor at the time that they make the report of VAW (using date of birth) (Annex III), but if existing data collection forms or information management systems use age ranges (e.g. 20-24 years of age, 25-29 years of age), then the VAW administrative data coordination mechanism will have to make a decision about the relative benefits, costs and feasibility of changing these or aligning the minimum data set with the existing system(s).

Likewise, if policies within sectors mandate data collection by specific cadres of service providers, training implementation will need to take this into account (Step 6). Implementation plans will also need to consider the existing information management system infrastructure and staffing and related roles and responsibilities. Finally, plans to implement reporting of VAW administrative data (Step 7) will depend on the reporting frequencies that exist within sectors. For example, if participating sectors only aggregate and report on administrative data every six months, this would need to be taken into account when establishing the reporting frequency for VAW administrative data.



## 3.1 Analyse laws and policies relevant to VAW and administrative data

### VAW legislation and policy framework

It is important to identify international and regional conventions/commitments on VAW to which the State is party<sup>x</sup> and analyse national/subnational VAW legislation and policy. The latter may have already been completed in response to the UN Women’s questionnaire on SDG target 5.1 “End all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere” (see Box 6).

Questions include:

- Does a national action plan to address VAW exist? Who is responsible for monitoring and reviewing implementation of the plan? Does the national action plan or policy define indicators and establish how frequently they are to be reported? (see also Step 3.2).
- What is the national or subnational legal framework for VAW? Analysis should include legal definitions of different forms of VAW. For example, are rape laws based on lack of consent or do they require proof of physical force or penetration? Does the rape law consider all

penetration (anal, oral, vaginal) inflicted by any body part or object?<sup>40</sup>

The VAW legal framework will affect the recording of types of VAW by the police and justice sector and may also influence documentation by other sectors (see Step 5.2 for further discussion).

Analysis of the legal framework should also identify whether there are laws that are barriers to survivors seeking services or could result in harms to survivors if documented. Examples of legal barriers include failure to criminalize sexual violence within marriage/unions, not providing services to or criminalization of individuals with certain identities (e.g., migrants/displaced people) or who engage in behaviours that are criminalized (e.g., women in the sex industry, women who have sex with other women, women who use drugs). This analysis is relevant both at the national level and within each participating sector.<sup>41</sup> As discussed in Box 2, these laws might impact decisions about what is documented from what population groups and will inform training for service providers on VAW and collection of VAW administrative data.



**Box 6**  
**Sustainable Development Goal Indicator 5.1.1 Questionnaire: Are VAW legal frameworks in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex?**

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 is to “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.” Target 5.1 is to “End all forms of discrimination

against women and girls everywhere”. SDG indicator 5.1.1 assesses “Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex” through a UN Women questionnaire that includes a specific section on VAW asking the following questions<sup>42</sup>:

1. Is there legislation on domestic

violence that includes physical violence?

2. Is there legislation on domestic violence that includes sexual violence?

3. Is there legislation on domestic violence that includes psychological/emotional violence?

4. Is there legislation on domestic violence that includes financial/economic violence?

5. Have provisions exempting

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x At the international level, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) has called on Member States to “improve the collection, harmonization and use of administrative data [...] improving the effectiveness of the services and programmes provided and protecting the safety and security of the victim” (UN ECOSOC 2013). UN CEDAW’s General Recommendation no. 35 also calls on Member States to “Establish a system to regularly collect, analyses and publish statistical data on the number of complaints about all forms of gender-based violence against women...” (2017, article 49). Regional conventions and declarations that require VAW administrative data to monitor and evaluate include: the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará); Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention); Protocol to the African Charter of Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol); and Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children in ASEAN by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

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<p>perpetrators from facing charges for rape if the perpetrator marries the victim after the crime been removed from or never existed in legislation?</p> <p>6. Have provisions reducing penalties in cases of so-called honour crimes been removed from or never existed in legislation?</p> <p>7. Are laws on rape based on lack of consent, without requiring proof of physical force or penetration?</p> <p>8. Does legislation explicitly criminalize marital rape or does legislation entitle a woman to file</p>	<p>a complaint for rape against her husband or partner?</p> <p>9. Is there legislation that specifically addresses sexual harassment?</p> <p>10. Are budgetary commitments provided for by government entities for the implementation of legislation addressing violence against women by creating an obligation on government to provide budget or allocation of funding for the implementation of relevant programmes or activities?</p> <p>11. Are budgetary commitments</p>	<p>provided for by government entities for the implementation of legislation addressing violence against women by allocating a specific budget, funding and/or incentives to support non-governmental organizations for activities to address violence against women?</p> <p>12. Is there is a national action plan or policy to address violence against women that is overseen by a national mechanism with the mandate to monitor and review implementation?</p>
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**Administrative data legislative and policy framework**

National and sectoral legislation and regulations that govern administrative data collection and use will influence the roles and responsibilities of different institutions in the VAW administrative data system. National privacy legislation will determine how personally identifiable information is used and shared, including that contained in administrative data. In many countries, the law governing statistics (National Statistic Acts) includes provisions that allow the NSO to compile, analyse and publish administrative data.<sup>43</sup>

Within government sectors such as health, justice, social services and others, legislation and regulations should specify the authority that is responsible for the administrative data collected within sectors and the purposes for which it can be used. The primary purpose of administrative data collection in the context of service provision is to inform services provided to the individual and record what has been provided. Legislation or policy also frequently specifies additional purposes, including service monitoring,

quality control, programme evaluation, management, system planning and research. The conditions under which administrative data can and cannot be shared beyond the sector (including with other institutions such as the NSO) may also be specified. To illustrate, the national statistics act and sectoral regulations may permit sharing of personally identifiable information with the NSO for statistical purposes but not, for example, allow the health sector to share personally identifiable information with the justice sector. Regulations or legislation governing the collection and sharing of administrative data for statistical purposes from the non-profit and private sector may be less developed than for public sector institutions, but the use of administrative data collected by these sectors must conform with international standards for legitimate and fair use.<sup>xi</sup>

Knowledge of the laws and regulations governing the collection and use of administrative data in different sectors will inform decisions about roles and responsibilities for VAW administrative data management and reporting.<sup>44</sup>

xi Use of personal data should be based on one or more of the following legitimate or fair bases, subject to national legislation and organizational policies including data privacy and data protection: adequate consent from the individual; aligned with the law; furthering organizational mandates; or other legitimate needs to protect the best interest of individuals or groups of individuals (UNDG 2017, p. 4).

## 3.2 Analyse the data environment and existing information systems

**“The first thing that you need to do is to analyse what you have, and what you can get. Because it is beautiful to have a lot of data, but you can’t always get everything you want. It depends on the capacity of the country where you are implementing, what data are available. [...] Not all countries have the same statistical capacity, but you can start, and then do more.”**

Statistical lead, women’s machinery

Preliminary mapping of VAW indicators reported nationally, regionally and internationally should be conducted. This will include reports made to treaty bodies, voluntary national reviews and the national gender statistical framework as well as reporting or monitoring of the VAW national action plan, if one exists. Reports from the health and justice sectors may also include VAW statistics drawn from administrative data.

- What regular reports, if any, are currently produced that include VAW administrative data?
- What statistics are included in these reports and from what sectors/ data sources?
- Which definitions/classifications/indicators/variables are used to produce these existing statistics? What disaggregating variables are reported and/or available (e.g., sex, gender identity, age)? How are data aggregated (e.g., age categories, geographic locations)?

This background information will be fundamental for assessing and then working to increase institutional capacity to collect the recommended variables in the minimum VAW administrative data set (Step 5.2).

Current VAW administrative data collection systems should be assessed within each participating sector<sup>45</sup>: health,<sup>46</sup> justice<sup>47</sup> and social services, which could include civil society and private organizations if they

play an important role in VAW service delivery. The goal of the assessment of the administrative data collection system(s) is to understand:

- What administrative data about VAW are currently collected as part of routine service provision?
- How is VAW information collected and stored at the local level (paper, digital)?
- What information is extracted, possibly aggregated and stored in sectoral or cross-sectoral information systems?
- How does this extraction and aggregation occur? Identify both the process and the related human resources.
  - Is there a national electronic database within the sector (e.g., the health management information system or the crime statistics system) or a cross-sectoral database dedicated to VAW? If electronic databases do not exist at the national level, do they exist at the subnational level or within local institutions/agencies/service providers?
  - At what point does transformation of microdata (individual level records) into macrodata (aggregated records) occur? Where are microdata collected and stored? Is microdata included in institutional/subnational/national databases?

- How frequently does data extraction and aggregation occur and what is the reporting chain (e.g., from local to district to regional to national)?
- Are there written protocols or SOPs in place to ensure confidentiality and data protection during collection, storage, analysis and reporting (see Step 5.3)?
- What processes, if any, are currently used to ensure administrative data quality?<sup>48</sup>  
Are these procedures documented in SOPs?

Making changes to the existing administrative data systems requires significant commitment and investment over time (see Step 6). Assessment of the existing data environment can include an initial assessment on the feasibility of making changes to the current data systems and establishing what is required. An important element of feasibility is the willingness and commitment of data producers to improve the collection and use of VAW administrative data.

#### COUNTRY EXAMPLE

### Mapping the VAW administrative data environment and harmonizing data collection in Uganda



In 2020, with the support of UN Women, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics undertook an in-depth analysis of the legal, policy and data environments for VAW administrative data in the justice, law and order sector. Analysis included review of data collection instruments (registers) and assessment of current information management systems and processes (including existing information system infrastructure and human resources) of data capture and processing by the data-producing institutions. The maturity of data collection processes, aggregation, analysis and level of digitization varies widely between the Uganda police, prosecutor's service and judiciary.

**Police:** The 1,552 police stations across the country complete paper-based registries of crimes, including VAW. Monthly manual (paper-based) tallies of crimes are completed by individual police stations, then summarized at the district level and again at the regional level. At the national level, the information is captured digitally by information management officers, who are responsible for data quality checks, analysis and report writing.

**Prosecutors:** The prosecutorial service has a well-established electronic case management system that, however, has limited coverage. Clerks are responsible for electronic data capture, and there is a senior system administrator who has responsibility for data quality and validation, analysis and dissemination. Written procedures are established for every stage of information management. However, as of November 2020, the electronic case management system was operational in approximately 40 per cent of prosecutors' offices, with the majority depending on manual information systems to record, store and manage information.<sup>49</sup>

**Judiciary:** At the time the information system analysis was undertaken in November 2020, the judiciary was using two different electronic case management systems. Only 18 per cent of the courts' record management was fully computerized. Individual courts that do not have operational electronic systems extract aggregates of key variables and submit them to the Judiciary Statistics Team, which then validates and analyses data that was extracted manually alongside information generated by the

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## Mapping the VAW administrative data environment and harmonizing data collection in Uganda

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### Uganda



electronic case management system. In 2021, the Ugandan judiciary was in the process of implementing a new Electronic Court Case Management Information System.<sup>50</sup>

Analysis of the data environment identified the need to streamline and harmonize VAW data collection in the justice, law and order sector. In response, modified administrative registers for data collection with the recommended VAW minimum data set were drafted and reviewed by focal points from each institution. The registers for data collection were then field tested (by police officers, judicial clerks etc.). The field-tested registers were then revised again based on service providers' feedback. The revised registers were approved by the highest-level responsible authorities in each institution before implementation.

Implementation of the revised VAW data collection registers by the judiciary and police began in 2021. After adapting the VAW data collection tool for gender-based violence criminal and civil cases, the judiciary conducted a census of VAW cases in four High Court Circuits and corresponding Chief Magistrate Courts. In total, the data collection tool was applied to 2,890 VAW criminal case files and 328 civil case files.

Implementation of new VAW data collection tools developed by the police was supported by training 64 data clerks and others responsible for data management on gender statistics concepts and definitions, data collection and management using the revised tools, as well as analysis, reporting and data communication.

As of October 2021, the extent of implementation of the capture and processing of the minimum data set using the new registers corresponds to the maturity and level of digitization of the institutional data management systems of the police, prosecutorial service and the judiciary.

Uganda's experience underlines the importance of thorough assessment of the VAW data environment (Step 3) to inform user-producer dialogues (Step 4) and to establish a VAW administrative minimum data set and processes for data collection and management (Step 5). Understanding the VAW data environment, including the existing information management infrastructure and human and financial resources, is also foundational for developing an implementation plan (Step 6), which includes training and resource allocation.



**Box 7**  
**Collecting VAW administrative data from general services and from specialized VAW services**

Analysis of the VAW administrative data environment and the willingness of the relevant data producers to participate will indicate whether it is immediately feasible for a VAW administrative data system to collect data from all relevant service providers within a sector and/or across sectors, or whether the administrative data system will initially only collect and report on data from specialized VAW service providers. Advantages of focusing on specialized VAW services include that the personnel working in these services have received VAW training and have a clear VAW mandate that can motivate collection and use of VAW administrative data. Specialized services also represent a much smaller group of potential data producers, simplifying implementation of the VAW administrative data system. At the same time, this smaller scope represents a huge loss in describing service use and service needs because it overlooks the survivors who do not come into contact with specialized VAW services. For example, many countries have established specialized family and domestic violence units within their police and/or justice systems.

In practice, these specialized units have limited coverage and will only interact with a small portion of VAW survivors, with many other survivors reporting VAW to members of the general police force and their cases being evaluated and brought forward (or not) by prosecutors who are not part of specialized VAW units.

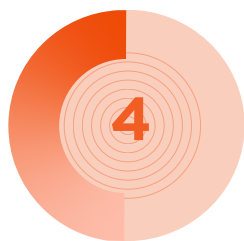
Similarly, in many settings, health systems have specialized sexual assault services; however, collecting VAW administrative data only from these services would overlook survivors who seek health care from non-specialized services. These survivors could seek health care as a consequence of VAW or be identified as experiencing VAW when they come into contact with in-patient or out-patient departments such as obstetrics and gynaecology or the emergency department. In general services, the potential exists to collect data from a larger number of survivors accessing services through different entry points, but quality may be compromised if there are not adequate or dedicated and trained human resources to enter the data. Fewer data may be able to be collected in general services, given the large volume of other information that is required to be collected, and therefore parsimony is key. Focusing on specialized services

further shrinks the already partial group of survivors who are represented in VAW administrative data. While it may be daunting in terms of the scope of service providers to be reached, training to improve understanding of and response to VAW in general services, including the collection of VAW administrative data, represents an important opportunity to contribute to improving services for VAW survivors. Even if general services record few cases at the outset, initiating data collection can make VAW visible within general services and, over time, this will support the improvement of both data collection and the quality of services.

Ideally, VAW administrative data would be collected from both general services that serve VAW survivors and specialized VAW services. Whether such an approach is immediately feasible or a phased approach—which potentially begins only with VAW specialized services with the ambition of expanding to general services in a sector or across sectors in future—is more appropriate will be an important decision for the coordination mechanism to make after review of the VAW administrative data legal, policy and data environment.



# Step



## Convene a VAW Administrative Data User-Producer Dialogue

**“It is important to develop and reinforce a deep relationship between [VAW] data users and data producers to plan and implement data collection and to interpret results.”**

**Statistician, national statistics office**

Institutionalized dialogue that engages key data users and producers can strengthen trust and understanding among stakeholders, improve the production process of statistics, improve data quality, promote a better alignment between what statistics are needed or wanted and what is available and

educate potential users about where and how to find data.<sup>51</sup> As such, data user-producer dialogues can contribute to increasing the use of statistics to improve programmes and policies and also lay the foundation for improved data communication (see Step 8).



### Box 8

#### Data producers and data users

Producers of VAW administrative data include organizations or institutions that document the services that they provide to prevent and address VAW in the health, justice and social services sector (public, non-governmental or private

sector organizations), the ministries and departments responsible for these services and for VAW policy implementation, as well as national statistics offices and international organizations.

Data users come from a wide variety of institutions. They

can include policymakers, managers of governmental and non-governmental services, academics and researchers, the media, civil society organizations, international organizations and the private sector. For VAW administrative data, many institutions are both data producers and data users.

In the context of developing or improving the national or subnational VAW administrative data system, a broad consultation between current and potential data users and data producers can inform the minimum data set and support planning to promote VAW administrative data use and data communication. Holding a data user-producer dialogue does not mean that the minimum data set will include all of the desired information or that the VAW administrative data information system will be able to respond to all of the expressed needs, even in the long term. The purpose is to gather insights into the desires and needs of different current and potential users, identify priorities and strategies for meeting them and begin to build relationships between current and potential data producers and

users. Reporting back and regularly convening data user-producer dialogues after the minimum data set is agreed upon to share results and discuss areas for improvement is important and will further data communication (Step 8). Participation in the user-producer dialogue of data system decision-makers, who may or may not be part of the VAW administrative data coordination mechanism (Step 2), is an opportunity to build support for changes to improve the availability and quality of VAW administrative data.

Inputs from Steps 3 and 4 will be used by the VAW administrative data coordination mechanism to determine the minimum data set, as well as to plan future reporting and data communication activities.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE

## Implementing VAW administrative data user-producer dialogues in Jamaica



*“Every one of us is in our own corner offering our services to victims and survivors of gender-based violence. But how do we come together to collect, analyse and share data to guide us in what we are doing?”*

### Civil society VAW expert

In 2021, data user-producer dialogues on VAW administrative data were convened in Jamaica as part of a collaboration between the Planning Institute of Jamaica and UN Women to strengthen VAW administrative data production and use. This initiative is one of several supported by the European Union (EU)-UN Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls in the country. In total, 11 user-producer dialogues were convened to cover all 14 parishes (geographic divisions), and one special interest dialogue was held with the churches. These were virtual due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions on gatherings. The parish dialogues were multi-sectoral, bringing together local representatives from the health, justice, education and social services sectors, government and non-governmental community development bodies, faith-based organizations and civil society to discuss their experiences providing services for VAW survivors, what VAW administrative data were needed as well as what data are produced by the organizations.

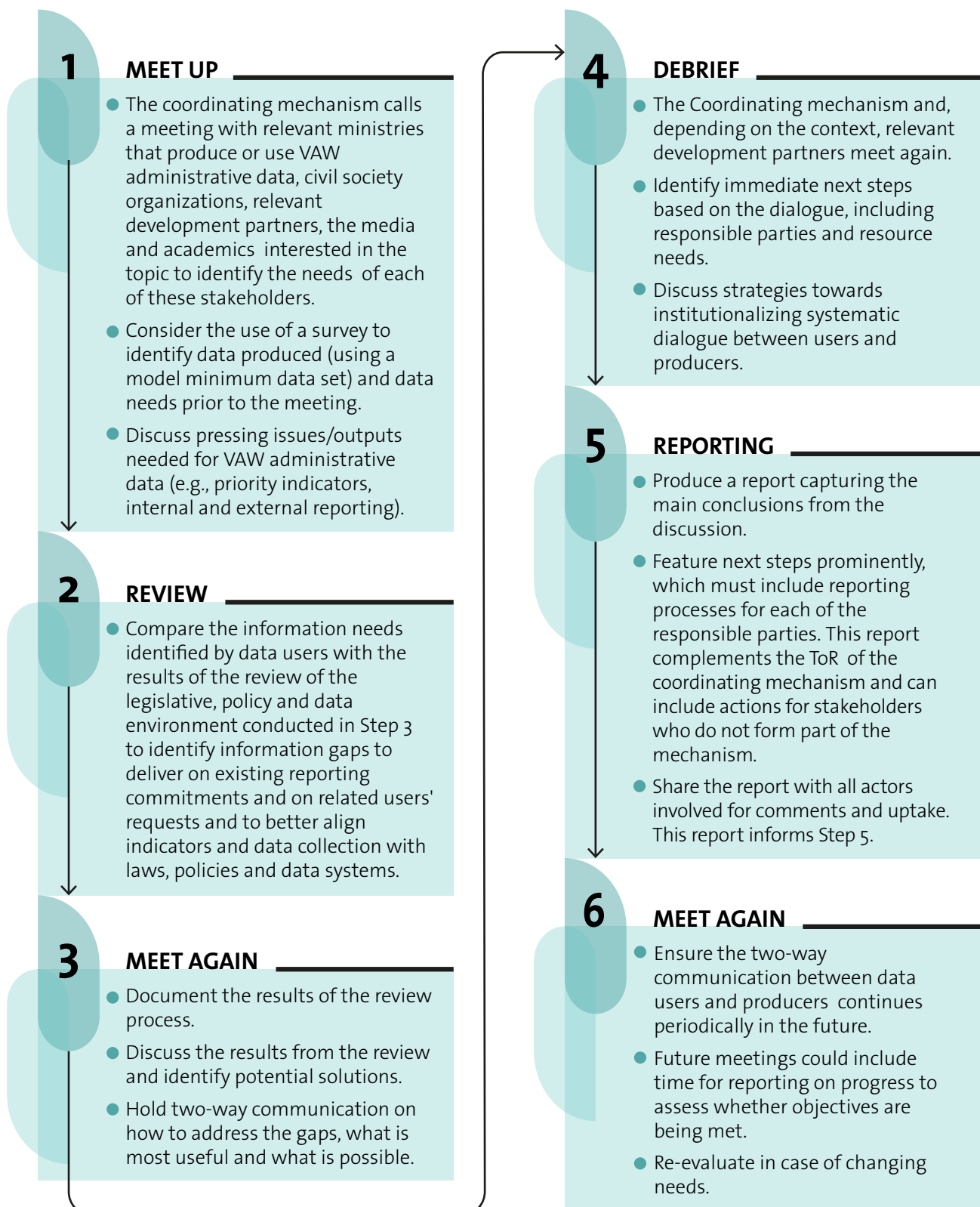
The user-producer dialogues provided insights into the on-the-ground conditions of service delivery and data collection.

For example, intake and initial interview processes in specialized VAW social services by the police and in hospitals revealed valuable information about the different time points at which a survivor might come into contact with the service (immediately after being subject to VAW or a later time) and what information is currently collected. Understanding context is important to design data collection methodologies and a minimum data set that aligns with workflow and procedures in the service-delivery site. User-producer dialogues also identified the extent to which VAW administrative data were being collected, resource and capacity development needs for local data producers and the need for clear information on sharing protocols and ethical guidelines for data collection.

The findings from the user-producer dialogues, alongside an analysis of data collection and statistical capacities of core governmental data producers from the in-depth analysis of the legal, policy and data environment (Step 3), informed the development of a proposed VAW administrative data minimum data set that includes the number, age and gender of survivors and perpetrators, survivor-perpetrator relationship, types of VAW experienced (physical, sexual, psychological, financial), services provided to survivors and the outcomes of applications for protection orders and of VAW reports to the police (proportion of perpetrators investigated, prosecuted and convicted), among other priority indicators.



**Figure 2:**  
Plan a data user-producer dialogue<sup>52</sup>



# Step



## Agree What VAW Administrative Data Will Be Collected, Analysed and Reported

### 5.1 Agree on a minimum data set

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**“All data should be disaggregated by type of violence, relationship between the victim/survivor and the perpetrator, and in relation to intersecting forms of discrimination against women and other relevant socio-demographic characteristics, including the age of the victim/survivor.”**

United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women 2017, article 49

Institutional capacity development for data collection and information management should be oriented towards implementation of the minimum VAW administrative data set agreed to by the coordination mechanism.

The minimum data set in Figure 3 is the set of variables and disaggregation recommended for all sectors to collect: sex and age of the survivor and the perpetrator, the survivor-perpetrator relationship and types of VAW experienced/perpetrated.<sup>53</sup> Sectors documenting VAW only from the perspective of survivors will record information about the perpetrator (age, sex) based on the survivor’s report.

The recommendation is to document all types of VAW reported by the survivor in survivor-facing data collection systems (such as health and social services).<sup>54</sup>

For crime data (police and justice), the recommendation is to document all of the chargeable offences (each type of VAW perpetrated or alleged to be perpetrated) rather than only

recording the offence that is considered to be the most serious (principal offence).<sup>55</sup> Creating the most complete picture possible of the types of VAW experienced by survivors is critical for the design and delivery of comprehensive policies and programmes for prevention and response as well as the provision of comprehensive care. A large proportion of survivors (a third to a half) experience multiple types of VAW (physical, sexual, psychological) inflicted by the same perpetrator.<sup>56</sup>

Collecting a minimum data set that includes the sex and age of the survivor and the perpetrator as well as the survivor-perpetrator relationship and the type of violence experienced allows each sector to monitor service demand and to describe key characteristics of survivors and perpetrators interacting with services, as well as to understand types of VAW for which services are sought. Collecting the survivor-perpetrator relationship, sex and age provides some insight into power dynamics between survivors and perpetrators. Collection of these foundational VAW administrative variables by **all** sectors allows for analysis of similarities

and differences in the types of VAW, survivors and perpetrators, and related power dynamics and potential responses, for which services are being sought and responded to by different sectors. This knowledge can identify strengths and gaps in sectoral and cross-sectoral responses, contributing to more comprehensive prevention and response to VAW at the subnational or national level.

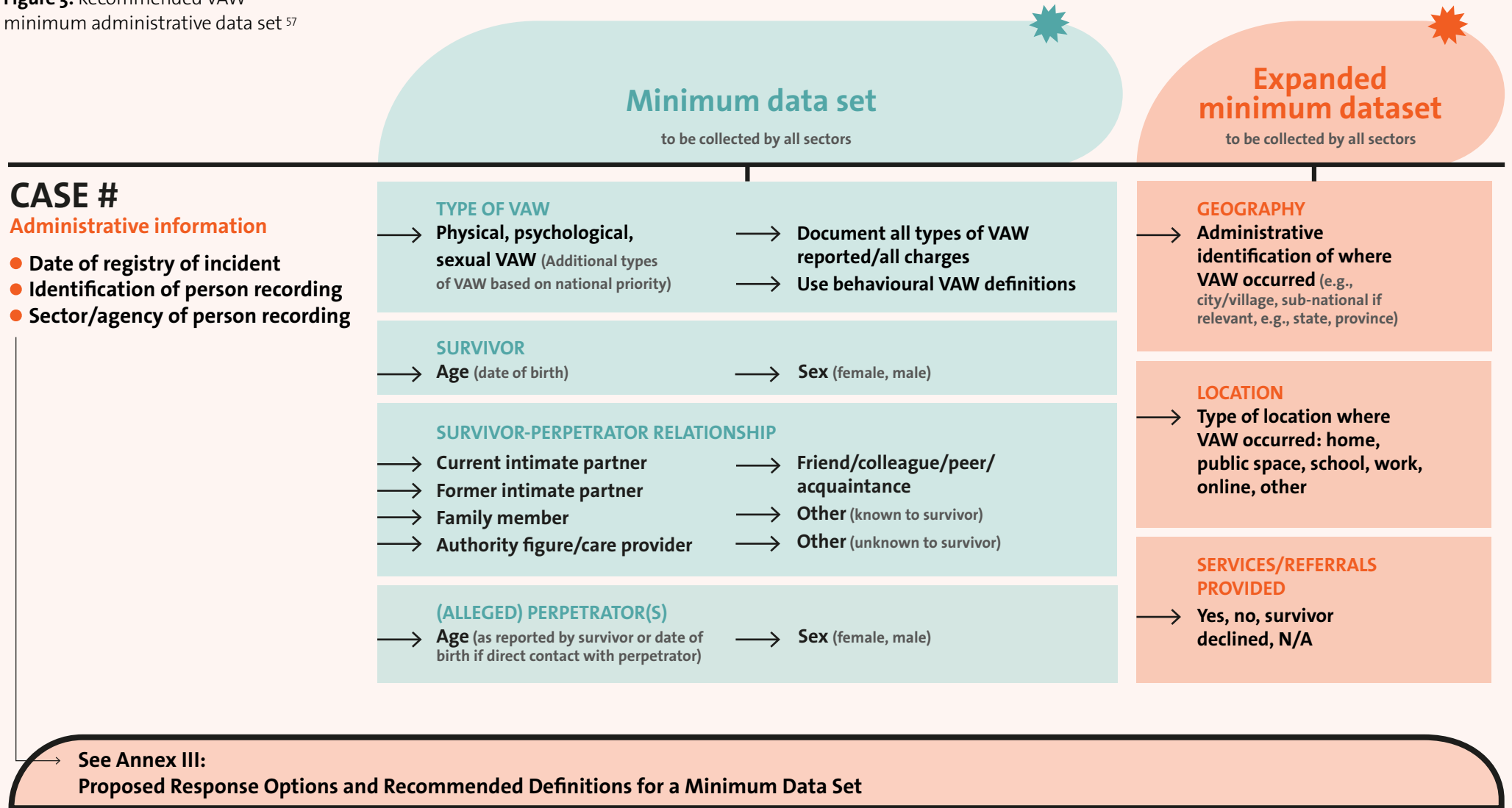
The expanded minimum data set can contribute to further describing service use and service needs. Two of the three additional variables capture information about where the violence occurred. Both the geography and type of location are important for prioritizing areas and institutions for intervention and planning prevention initiatives and service responses. The third data point, services/referrals, is the most basic way to monitor whether or not reports of VAW received a response; sectors may choose to collect additional information (which may also be taken from administrative data) to monitor the components of that response and whether it meets standards.

Depending on national and subnational priorities, additional variables such as gender identity<sup>xii</sup> and sexual orientation, disability status, ethnicity and citizenship/displacement status could be collected for survivors and perpetrators. Being subjected to VAW previously (survivor) and repeat perpetration of VAW (recidivism by perpetrator) may also be high priority variables. Detailed local knowledge of the context is important to assess whether collection of these additional variables could represent a barrier to seeking services and to ensure that data collection does not result in harm.

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xii Most administrative data record systems do not record biological sex and gender identity as separate variables but have only one variable that asks for sex or gender. Therefore, the variable 'female' or 'woman' is assumed to refer to women whose sex and birth (female) corresponds to their gender identity (woman), also known as cisgender women. However, some countries are making progress to identify transgender and non-binary individuals in survey and administrative data collection and international standards for capturing gender identity are evolving (see UNECE 2019; UNODC and UN Women 2022). High rates of gender-based violence experienced by gender minorities underlines the importance of considering how administrative data collection instruments and information systems can be designed to better capture the needs of these survivors and the supports they receive (Blondeel et al. 2016; Wirtz et al. 2020). If safe and legal to do so, documenting gender identity as a separate variable is important; for cisgender, transgender and non-binary response options, see UNODC and UN Women 2022. Also see Country Example: Counting VAW services (case reports) and VAW survivors in Argentina.

**Figure 3:** Recommended VAW minimum administrative data set <sup>57</sup>



**Box 9****Should survivor's perceptions of service quality be collected in routine administrative data?**

An important principle guiding the collection and use of VAW administrative data is to be survivor-centred. This technical guidance promotes the inclusion of CSOs who work closely with survivors and survivors themselves in the design and governance of VAW administrative data systems.

On the issue of regularly asking individual survivors to assess service quality or whether the services met their needs, the laudable goal of including survivors' voices must be balanced with ensuring their safety and access to services. VAW survivors frequently experience a power imbalance with service providers, and services are essential for their well-being. Reports on the quality of and satisfaction with services using standardized exit surveys may not be meaningful for quality improvement because responses tend to be overly positive when asked (a) in the service delivery context and/or (b) by service providers

themselves or representatives of the service-providing organization.<sup>58</sup> To preserve confidentiality and avoid potentially prejudicing survivors' relationships with service providers, instead of seeking to routinely incorporate survivor feedback through administrative data this technical guidance recommends:

**Informing all service users (not just survivors of VAW) about complaints mechanisms and opportunities to provide anonymous feedback through:**

- Ombudspersons or professional oversight bodies that exist within the institution/sector
- An anonymous complaints and compliments box in the service delivery setting, or through an anonymous online website or phone app to identify problems (though a limitation is that very few service users are likely to provide feedback)

**Conducting research on survivor's experiences of services to complement administrative data**

This requires trained and skilled researchers following a research protocol that has been approved by an institutional review board and that specifies informed consent and privacy guidelines.<sup>59</sup>

- Observational research conducted by independent researchers in the service delivery site to assess technical and interpersonal quality of service delivery
- Qualitative research, such as individual and group interviews, implemented with survivors by independent researchers outside of the service-delivery site
- Engaging CSOs as collaborators and co-learners in multi-method rapid assessments or participatory action research on VAW service delivery
- Involving ending VAW advocates, women-serving organizations and survivors' organizations in VAW administrative data coordination mechanisms and in the interpretation of the data.

## 5.2 Establish operational definitions and data management processes

To produce statistics using VAW administrative data, it is critical to understand the context of initial production of the data and to establish written procedures about how to collect, process (including data quality checks<sup>60</sup>), analyse, disseminate and evaluate the outputs.<sup>61</sup> The technical expertise of the NSO can be an important resource for establishing and documenting standards for data collection and management, including the creation of metadata for all variables.

### Creating metadata

Standardized operational definitions for each variable will include the data source, the frequency of reporting (minimum recommendation is annual reporting of service-based data), the response categories and the limitations or caveats of the data. For the indicators prioritized by the coordination mechanism (e.g., number of reports of VAW in a calendar year), the metadata will specify the computational method and the unit of count.

For VAW administrative data, considerations and caveats in the metadata should include information about the context of data production by different institutions and service providers (collection and recording). Understanding the context of data production allows better data interpretation and communication.

Some key issues include:

- The time period of the instance(s) of VAW that the survivor is reporting and the documentation by service providers will differ by institution. For example, police data are likely to be collected about a specific incident of VAW that occurred on a particular date. Specialized services providing advocacy and support services to survivors may be collecting information about VAW that has just occurred or is occurring over a longer period of time or about an incident or incidents that happened in the past.
- For the police, it is important to note the stage in the process of the investigation that the (alleged) crime is recorded to understand both the number

of crimes reported and the types of charges that are recorded: at initial report, when investigation begins, when investigation is completed.

Tools are available to guide the production of metadata for administrative sources.<sup>62</sup> The metadata should provide sufficient information to allow an assessment of the quality of incoming data (raw or aggregate data provided to the body responsible for data management), the quality of data processing and the quality of statistical outputs (see also Step 7.2).<sup>63</sup> For the recommended variables in the minimum VAW administrative data set, this guidance identifies response options and discusses the advantages and disadvantages of establishing the case report or the individual as the unit of count.

### Response options

Sectors generate sector-specific administrative data and have sector-specific needs. For example, the justice sector often collects data on investigation of cases, charges made and conviction of perpetrators that the health or social sectors do not collect. The health sector will also collect data from survivors on presenting health conditions or symptoms, some of which may be important for the police and justice sectors as medico-legal evidence (e.g., injuries, genito-anal symptoms). For the minimum data set, which this guidance recommends be collected by all sectors, agreement on operational definitions and harmonization of response/coding options for the types of VAW and the recommended socio-demographic and contextual variables will ensure that when the same variable is used the information generated responds to the same broad phenomenon.

Standardizing response options across sectors requires analysing existing data and agreeing on classification/coding options or, if new data collection instruments are to be introduced, agreeing on response options. Response options will be based on the data currently collected (alignment with existing classifications and response options) or the willingness of data producers to introduce new categories into existing data collection systems.

→ Given that administrative data are collected for operational rather than for statistical purposes, and that the classification systems or categories of the administrative data collected are different from the statistical classification, the common solution is to construct conversion matrices or correspondence tables to map the categories in the administrative classification to those in the statistical classification.<sup>64</sup> It is particularly relevant to match or align the broad behavioural definitions of types of VAW with legal and health system classifications but this can also be used to harmonize other variables such as age and sex.

→ If data from multiple data sources are aggregated, it is also important to establish a hierarchy of sources to determine which will take precedence if more than one provides the same information (e.g., age).

This technical guidance recommends the following minimum response options for variable disaggregation (see Annex III for definitions and details of proposed response options for the minimum and expanded minimum data set):

Response options	Type of VAW	Age	Sex	Survivor-perpetrator relationship <sup>65</sup>
Recommended	Physical, psychological and sexual violence (including sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment)	Date of birth (calculate specific age, not age range)	Female Male	Intimate partner (current, former) Family member Friend/acquaintance Authority/care relationship Other known Other unknown

**Definition of the types of VAW: Use behavioural definitions**

Operational definitions for physical, sexual and psychological VAW should be established that are based on acts committed by the perpetrator against the survivor (behavioural)<sup>66</sup> (see Annex III).

- Behavioural definitions allow for standardized data categories across settings.
- While behavioural definitions of VAW used to collect data across sectors can be broad and not limited to acts defined in criminal or civil legal codes, this may not be the case for data collected by the police and justice sectors.

→ If recording tools and information systems capture the type of violence (based on a behavioural definition) *and* the survivor-perpetrator relationship according to the minimum data set (minimum disaggregated data), data can be produced even if dedicated laws that criminalize the specific type of VAW do not exist.<sup>67</sup> Marital rape provides an example of how recording the ‘survivor-perpetrator relationship’ can make this form of VAW visible even if it is not criminalized and in this way contribute to the realization of international human rights standards (see Box 10).



- Recording all types of VAW and using behavioural definitions has the goal of contributing to continuous improvement by making more forms of VAW visible and recognized by survivors and service providers and, eventually, improving laws, policies and programmes. An important caveat is that current cultural norms and legal definitions

will influence what types of VAW will be reported by survivors and recorded by services providers, and thus those types that are not well-recognized or criminalized are very likely to be even more under-reported than types of VAW that are culturally and legally recognized.

### Box 10 Aligning VAW behavioural definitions with human rights standards: The case of marital rape

Behavioural definitions should be aligned with normative frameworks and globally agreed international human rights standards. Currently,<sup>68</sup> countries

do not criminalize marital rape.<sup>35</sup> By capturing sexual VAW and the survivor-perpetrator relationship, the minimum data set can identify sexual violence perpetrated by spouses. Although some sectors such as the police and justice are unlikely to record types of VAW that are not criminalized, the minimum data set makes it

possible for other sectors such as health and social services to do so. Country experience indicates that, in the absence of prevalence surveys, identification of VAW through administrative data is an effective measure to make policymakers aware of VAW and to spur improved policy and programmatic responses.

### Unit of count

- The most basic unit of count, or unit of measurement, for the VAW administrative data set is the case report. The case report records an interaction with institutions because of VAW and is the denominator for describing service seeking by survivors and interaction with authorities by perpetrators during a specified time period (e.g., one calendar year).
- Concerns are frequently expressed about ‘double counting’ survivors of VAW when using the case report as the unit of count in administrative data. If the unit of measurement used is the case report rather than the survivor or the perpetrator, administrative data reflect the number of reports made and which services women seek, how often and for what purpose. Survivors are expected to make multiple visits to different services and, as such, these visits do not constitute ‘double counting’. Allaying concerns about double counting among policymakers and other data users is an important aspect of increasing VAW data literacy (see also Step 8).
- Ideally, the site delivering services should be able to identify new and repeat service-users in their information management system in order to report the number of survivors and perpetrators who interacted with services in a specified time period. This requires a unique identifier. This unique identifier may only be used within the service delivery site or it may be used to link data on the same individual across services and sectors.
- Identifying the number of VAW case reports (incidents of VAW reported), the number of survivors and the number of perpetrators by all institutions at each stage in their institutional processes has been described as the minimum necessary to “build a comprehensive framework that facilitates co-operation between relevant agencies”.<sup>70</sup>
- Databases used by multiple sectors and service providers may use unique identifiers to track and collate information about referrals made and services provided. Similarly, sectoral, subnational or national information systems may also find it useful to use these.
- Unique identifiers offer the possibility of linking data sets, offering an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of VAW interventions and outcomes. For example, a linked data set between health and police allows analysis of how many women got referrals in both directions and whether those referred to police from health received medico-legal or forensic services or how many women who went through a forensic examination had cases that progressed to courts and how many convictions were obtained. Linked data sets with the capacity to follow perpetrators and survivors over time, and collect information about perpetrators (protection orders, charges,



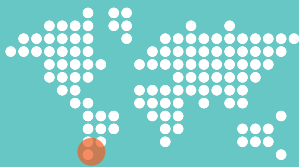
convictions, sentencing, custody), have been used to develop and modify risk assessments and to inform policing policy and practices to prevent subsequent VAW<sup>71</sup>.

For linked data sets to be feasible, the country must have common unique identifiers of

individuals, suitable administrative registers in formats (e.g., electronic) that are easily accessible to statisticians and a high-level of public acceptance of data linking and sharing.<sup>72</sup>

## COUNTRY EXAMPLE

### Counting VAW services (case reports) and VAW survivors in Argentina



Argentina's VAW law states that the Government will "design and implement inter-jurisdictional and inter-institutional registries of violence against women, in which basic indicators approved by all of the relevant Ministries are established".<sup>73</sup> In September 2012, the National Women's Institute (INAM), which is responsible for leading the implementation of the law, signed an agreement with the NSO (National Institute of Statistics and Surveys—INDEC) to collect VAW administrative data from different organizations at the national, provincial and municipal level and to develop statistics. This agreement resulted in the Unified Registry of Cases of Violence Against Women (RUCVM).

The RUCVM collects a minimum data set. For survivors, it collects age, sex, gender identity (which is collected using two variables: biological sex and whether the person self-identifies as trans), unique identifier (from an official document such as a passport), education level, employment, relationship with the perpetrator and whether residing with the perpetrator. The minimum data set includes the type of violence, when and where it occurred, mode or form of violence, frequency and time period. About the perpetrator, it collects age, sex, gender, education level and employment. The service(s) provided to the survivor are

also recorded. The only two obligatory variables for the case to be entered into the database are the age and the gender identity of the survivor.

Initially, the registry used the incident of violence (case report) as the unit of count, and it continues to analyse and report on these data. The reporting form and database also provide the option of collecting a unique identifier for each survivor, which means survivors can be used as the unit of count in those records where this information is collected. In 2018, of the 576,360 registered cases of VAW (2013-2018), 57 per cent include a survivor unique identifier. The unique identifier allows for additional analysis. For example, of survivors for whom a unique identifier was recorded in the database, the vast majority (81 per cent) have only come into contact with a service-provider once because of VAW.<sup>74</sup>

The RUCVM demonstrates the value of using the case report as the unit of count, as well as the value of providing the option to collect a unique identifier to be able to count survivors of VAW for some analyses. It is an example of a database that brings together information from multiple sectors for statistical purposes without being a case-management system or requiring an inter-operational information management system.

## 5.3 Manage the data: From collection to reporting of multisectoral data flows

“When an [information] system begins, it is a huge opportunity. When the systems exist, it is harder to try to patch them or ask that they add a new variable. It is much harder. It is important to make key variables visible from the beginning. Because, afterwards it is hard work.”

Government official, women’s machinery

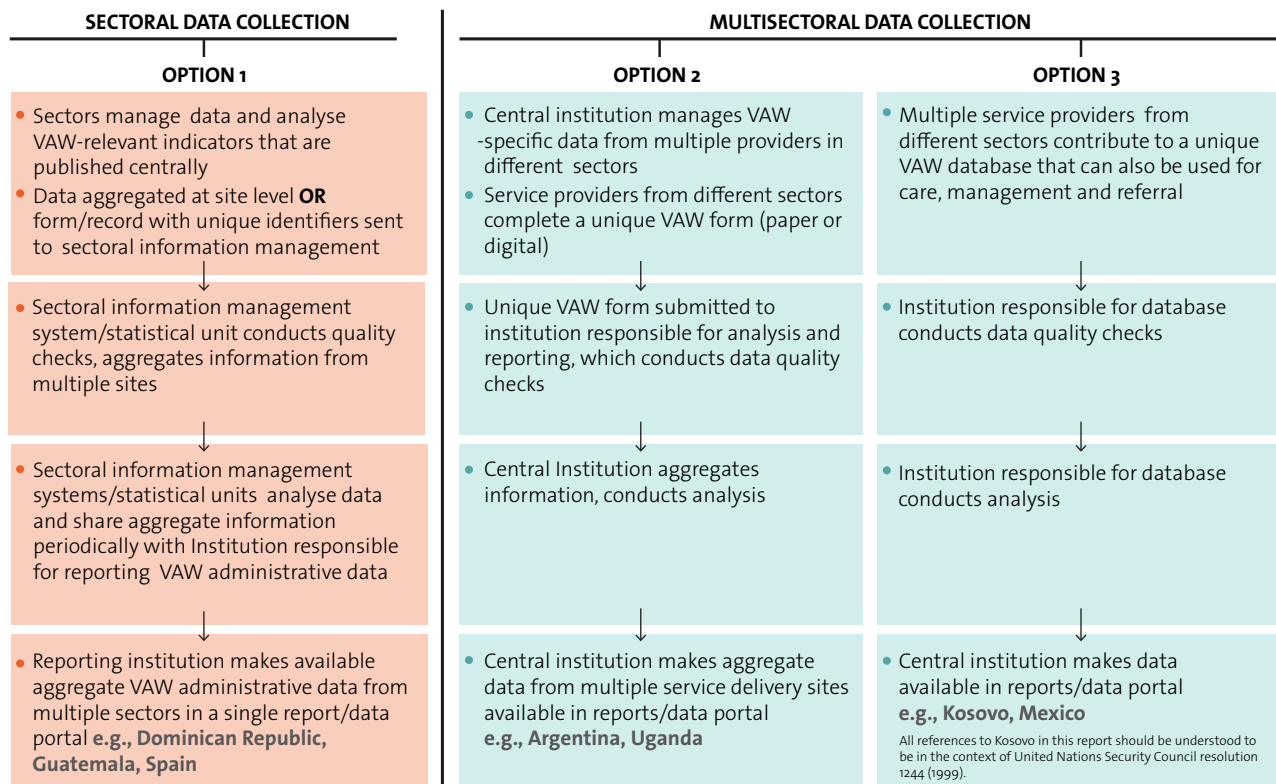
Reporting of multisectoral VAW administrative data from different sectors can be achieved in a variety of ways:

- **Option 1:** Sectoral collection, management and analysis of data that are then shared with a central reporting institution
- **Option 2:** Multisectoral data collection on a single, unique VAW administrative data reporting form that is compiled, analysed and reported on by a central reporting institution

→ **Option 3:** Multisectoral and multi-institutional care, management and referral (‘case management’) that is documented in a unified database.

Figure 4 describes the processes for each of the three models for collection and reporting of VAW administrative data from different sectors.

**Figure 4:** Multisectoral VAW data flows: Collection to reporting



The advantages and disadvantages of each model for bringing together and reporting on VAW administrative data that comes from multiple sectors are considered below.

**Option 1: Sectoral collection, management and analysis of data that are then shared with a central reporting institution.** This guidance identified instances in which women’s machineries, NSOs and ministries of health have each taken the role of reporting on multisectoral national VAW administrative data (see Step 2 for considerations on leadership, roles and responsibilities).

*Advantages include:* Leverages routine processes of documentation and existing information management systems (e.g., health information management system, crime statistics); management of unique identifiers follows sectoral procedures and standards; it is possible to count survivors and perpetrators without sharing unique identifiers beyond the regular chain of information sharing to support operations in interactions with survivors and perpetrators.

*Disadvantages include:* Sectoral information management systems need to be updated to include relevant VAW variables (sex, age, survivor-perpetrator relationship) and coding must conform with recommendations on capturing VAW based on behavioural definitions; data quality and analysis depend on the statistical maturity and strength of sectoral information systems; dependence on existing sectoral information systems may present barriers for integration of some sectors, such as civil society VAW service providers; stand-alone data sets by sector prevent analysis of interaction of survivors and perpetrators with multiple services (this could be mitigated through data linking using unique identifiers, but such analysis would go beyond the scope of information sharing for regular sectoral operations).

**Option 2: Multisectoral data collection on a single, unique VAW administrative data reporting form that is compiled, analysed and reported on by a central reporting institution.** This guidance identified instances in which women’s machineries, NSOs and ministries of health have taken the role of analysing and reporting the results from a national

VAW administrative data reporting form (see Step 2 for considerations on leadership, roles and responsibilities).

*Advantages include:* VAW specific register that only collects variables of interest (agreed minimum data set); easily incorporates any relevant and authorized VAW service provider, including CSOs; does not depend on information management system and statistical departments of multiple institutions and thus may be well-suited to settings where these sectoral institutions are not well-developed.

*Disadvantages include:* Filling out a separate, unique VAW register, in addition to regular documentation, represents an additional workload or ‘double entry’ of data for service providers and institutions, contributing to further under-reporting of the cases of VAW that are reported to services/authorities; cannot identify interactions of survivors and perpetrators with multiple services unless unique identifiers are shared with the centralized reporting agency.

**Option 3: Multisectoral and multi-institutional care, management and referral (‘case management’) documented in a unified VAW database.** This guidance identified the existence of national multisectoral VAW databases stewarded by ministries of justice and ministries of the interior.<sup>xiii</sup>

*Advantages include:* VAW specific register; can mitigate the burden on survivors to ‘tell their story’ multiple times; allows analysis of referrals, service provision and outcomes of cases linked to the socio-demographic and case history information of survivors and perpetrators (e.g., convictions, sentencing); if it is the only record-keeping and case management system, does not represent the burden of ‘double entry’ for service providers and institutions.

*Disadvantages include:* If it duplicates other sectoral record-keeping practices and information management systems, it represents a burden of double entry for service providers and many sectors, notably justice, police and the health sector, are unlikely to participate; inclusion of personally identifiable information for case management demands stringent data security protocols and practices to ensure survivor

<sup>xiii</sup> The Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) has been used by multiple service providers for VAW care and management in humanitarian and emergency settings. Humanitarian and emergency settings are unique in that they involve a specialized set of actors with dedicated funding for service delivery and monitoring, potentially including resources for the creation of needed information management systems. In most other contexts, the majority of sectors have pre-existing information management systems that are supported by general budgets. For more information on GBVIMS, see [www.gbvims.com](http://www.gbvims.com).

privacy, confidentiality and safety, including designing the information system so that survivors can exercise

autonomy over what information is shared with other service providers for care and management purposes.

## 5.4 Establish or strengthen information-sharing protocols and standard operating procedures to protect privacy and confidentiality

**“Programme people need to know about data protection, not only IT people—this is a new proficiency that needs to become a common competency.”**

International NGO, humanitarian sector

When information is transferred between institutions for analysis and reporting, or the information management system involves multiple sectors, information-sharing protocols (ISPs) are a necessary tool to advance the legal and ethical obligation to maintain privacy and confidentiality by establishing an agreed set of principles about how data are collected, what data are shared, how data are managed and how data are reported. An ISP will typically include the following elements:<sup>75</sup>

- Purpose of information sharing: in the technical guidance, this is for statistical purposes not care and management
- Names of all collaborating institutions
- Position/role responsible for ensuring implementation of the ISP in each agency (promotes continuity and accountability when personnel change)
- Roles and responsibilities of participating institutions (which will include the data management processes discussed in Step 5.1), specifying roles in data aggregation, analysis and reporting
- Data to be shared (variables, level of aggregation)
- Analysis and reporting plan (including frequency)
- Required training for those collecting and managing data
- Data security including conditions of data access (recommend role-based access within and across institutions)<sup>xiv</sup>

- Responsibilities and processes for reporting data breaches
- Consequences and sanctions for individuals and institutions if privacy and confidentiality protocols are not followed
- Conditions for data use/sharing with institutions or entities not party to the ISP.

Within institutions and sectors, standard operating procedures (SOPs) for data collection and data management to ensure privacy and confidentiality are needed. The SOPs will include direction on all the issues that are part of an ISP, but instead of identifying data to be shared it will identify data to be collected and reported. Detailed discussion of implementation of confidentiality and data security measures, alongside good practice examples from around the world, can be found in the 2015 *United Nations Fundamental Principles of Statistics: Implementation Guidelines*.<sup>76</sup> See also Step 6 for a further discussion of training for service providers and Annex IV for a site-level privacy and confidentiality checklist from the World Health Organization (WHO).<sup>77</sup>

The United Nations Statistics Division and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data Collaborative on the Use of Administrative Data for Statistical Purposes have also developed guidance and a draft template memorandum of understanding (MoU) to clarify roles and responsibilities, promote data quality and ensure the confidentiality and security of administrative data sharing and reporting for statistical purposes.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>xiv</sup> Role-based data access deals with the need to know or need to access. There are three steps: (1) role assignment (only users with assigned roles can access data/interact with the system); (2) role authentication (to access the system, the user must be authenticated); and (3) action authorization (users can take certain access the system, the user must be authenticated).

## COUNTRY EXAMPLE

## Promoting VAW administrative data privacy and security using role-based access in Kosovo



In 2018, with the support of UN Women and the EU, Kosovo<sup>79</sup> established and began to operate an integrated, unified database that collects information about VAW and institutional responses. The creation of the database was part of Kosovo's National Strategy for Protection Against Domestic Violence (2016-2020). The database is housed in the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) under the stewardship of the National Coordinator for Protection from Domestic Violence. In March 2019, under the leadership of the MoJ, the ministers responsible for policing, prosecution, courts and social work centres signed an MoU to provide data to the unified database.<sup>80</sup> Shelters run by CSOs are also able to input data into the integrated database.

The database is a multi-user care and management ('case management') system that uses the individual (survivor or perpetrator) as the unit of count. It is possible to follow the survivor and her case through the system, make referrals and view what services have been provided. The database permits analysis of the timeliness of investigation, prosecution and decision and records interim measures (e.g., protection orders), judges' rulings on criminal or civil charges and sentences.

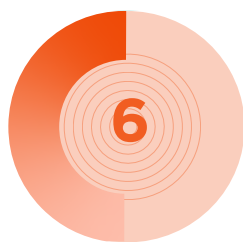
The database promotes data security and privacy of personal information through role-based data access and registration of a limited number of system users. The Kosovo Agency for the Protection of Personal Data

was consulted during its development.

Survivors and perpetrators are identified in the database by their national identification or passport number. The first step in opening a case file is for the user to search for this identification number. Importantly for confidentiality, only the database manager is able to search for a survivor or perpetrator by name while the system users cannot do this. The authorization of the database manager to search the database by name is used to ensure data quality.

Each local service provider (police station, prosecutor's office or court, shelter) has one or more assigned data entry person who has been trained in SOPs for data entry. As of December 2020, 120 service providers had received the required training. Users must be validated to access the system, and their system use is logged. With the exceptions of data entry people from shelters, validated system users can see the history of the case (referrals, services received, outcomes). Each local service provider has a coordinator who can view workflow (how many cases entered and by which assigned data entry person) but cannot view individual cases. The coordinator can make a written request to the database manager to have case information corrected but cannot make such corrections at the site level. On behalf of the National Coordinator for Protection from Domestic Violence, the database manager can conduct analysis to generate aggregate statistics.

# Step



## Create an Implementation Plan to Collect and Use VAW Administrative Data (Training and Resource Needs)

The implementation plan should consider both training and resource planning (human, infrastructure and financial).

### 6.1 Provide training on VAW and VAW administrative data collection

**“Training led to a breaking of the power hierarchies between the doctors and the nurses, and then increased ownership that this is a shared responsibility and everyone needs to respond to VAW.”**

CSO, VAW expert

Institutions and personnel require support and training to gain a shared understanding of VAW and evidence about effective responses.<sup>81</sup>

As discussed in Step 5, training on data management SOPs will be necessary for those responsible for the processing and management of VAW administrative data. Frontline personnel who are providing direct services to survivors or interacting with perpetrators and will be collecting VAW administrative data as part of their work require training on VAW and data collection. Training on the institutional standards for responding to VAW, and the roles and responsibilities of those interacting with survivors and perpetrators, is also an opportunity to train on VAW administrative data collection. This training can improve the capacity of those providing services in government, not-for-profit and private sectors who interact with survivors, including nurses, physicians, police officers, judges, social workers and others to treat survivors in a non-blaming, non-discriminatory manner when providing services and when collecting VAW administrative data.<sup>82</sup> See Box 6 for a discussion of the relative merits of data collection from specialized or general services, which has significant implications for the scope of training efforts.

Training led by a multidisciplinary team is a promising approach. The training team should include:

- VAW experts
- Experts in data collection and management (including information technology experts if the VAW data will be directly entered into an electronic system)
- CSOs or survivors (or ensure that the viewpoints and perspectives of survivors are represented in training)
- When training within sectors, staff members/professionals who are responsible for responding to VAW, documenting and managing VAW administrative data.

It is recommended that the training emphasize how VAW data collection will contribute to achieving the national and sectoral priorities related to VAW as well as the priorities of the personnel who are providing services. It should:

- Understand and explicitly address the service delivery context and multiple demands on service providers



- Demonstrate how data collection can contribute to monitoring and result in service improvements
- Emphasize why particular variables (e.g., sex, and survivor-perpetrator relationship) are important to understand VAW and the service needs, with the objective of motivating personnel to collect administrative data
- Provide job aids and examples of forms and templates and describe how they have been applied using case studies.

Training of personnel in the SOPs and ISPs for managing VAW administrative data (confidentiality and data protection, roles and policies for collection, recording, storage) should:

- Discuss what privacy and confidentiality mean in practice and how to operationalize privacy and confidentiality in the particular settings where women attend services or care (e.g., not discussing violence with them in front of other staff, or leaving records lying around or labelling the file or the top sheet in the file with 'violence')
- Emphasize how service managers can create settings and policies to support privacy and confidentiality for survivor safety and prevent stigma and discrimination
- Ensure trainers understand and are prepared to discuss the potential barriers to privacy and confidentiality in the local context

- Offer opportunities to practice data collection and data entry as relevant. In particular, provide a script and opportunities for role play on the collection of VAW administrative data that addresses how the information provided will be recorded, stored and under what conditions information will be shared (emphasizing survivor consent for information sharing for care and management and protection of confidentiality when data are used for statistical purposes) to increase the confidence of providers and promote empathetic, respectful interactions with survivors that engender trust in the processes in place to ensure privacy and confidentiality.

Implementation plans for training should be developed with the understanding that capacity building to improve VAW services and data collection cannot be effectively achieved in a single training session.

- Building relationships between VAW experts and data experts, such as the NSO, can facilitate ongoing capacity development and sustained support for improving data collection and use.
- Ongoing mentoring and support to resolve problems with data collection, storage and processing and to guide adaptations is important for making and institutionalizing change (see Step 7.2)



COUNTRY EXAMPLE

## Training health-care workers to respond to VAW and collect administrative data in India



*“I just tell relatives that I was counselling a patient about her health and diet. I don’t tell them about actual conversations. Otherwise, they can harm the patient. So, I try my best to maintain confidentiality. This is important; otherwise, the woman will never share her problems with anyone.”*

Physician<sup>83</sup>

In 2018-2019, WHO undertook an implementation study to roll out WHO guidelines and tools for the health sector response to VAW in India.<sup>84</sup> In three tertiary-level hospitals in Maharashtra, training of health-care providers was undertaken to identify domestic or intimate partner violence, offer first-line support and referrals to other sector services and provide other medical care required by survivors. The study assessed the knowledge, attitudes and skills of health-care providers before and after the training. This found that post-training and at a six months follow-up, they had significantly improved their knowledge of how to ask about VAW and provide clinical care and were significantly more likely to report identifying survivors of violence and providing VAW support services (information, discussing options, helping to develop safety plans and referring to support services) than pre-intervention.<sup>85</sup>

The study trained health-care providers to document cases of domestic or partner violence and non-partner sexual violence in one-page facility registers adapted from the WHO manual for health managers on strengthening health systems response to VAW, which included definitions, response

options for documenting type of violence, relationship to the perpetrator, age of the survivor as well as other data relevant for managing and monitoring the health-care response.<sup>86</sup>

An SOP was developed for documenting case reports in the registers in privacy, maintaining registers in locked cabinets and defining who had access to the individual data.<sup>87</sup>

Nurses were assigned the responsibility of maintaining the registers under lock and key. Departmental supervisors reviewed a VAW register, followed up on missing entries and conducted quality checks to ensure that the entries were completed and accurate. During the training of the providers, the importance of privacy and confidentiality was emphasized multiple times. Specifically, it addressed the need to store VAW records securely so that survivors could not be identified, to obtain women’s consent before sharing any information and to ensure that medical records that were taken home did not mention VAW.<sup>88</sup>

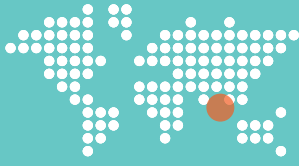
Observation of providers’ practice found that they internalized the importance of keeping confidential the records that documented VAW. For example, while antenatal care registers or other health registers were frequently left out on the examination table, the VAW documentation register was kept under lock and key.<sup>89</sup>

This study identified some challenges for improving VAW documentation in very busy health-care delivery settings.

>>

**Training health-care workers to respond to VAW and collect administrative data in India**

&gt;&gt;

**India**

One was that, because the standard institutional policy was for doctors to fill out all documentation, nurses hesitated to step into this role even though the VAW training taught that both doctors and nurses were able to document. When nurses deferred to the physician to document at a later time rather than documenting immediately, survivors' cases often went unrecorded. Similarly, while a social worker was assigned to provide more in-depth safety planning and referrals for survivors, these records were kept separate from nurse/physician documentation in the survivors' medical file and sometimes lost. These challenges were resolved after the first month through discussions with the administrators in the three hospitals. A total of 531 women

were identified through the documentation over a period of 9 months, of whom 74 per cent reported emotional/psychological violence, 64 per cent reported physical violence and 12 per cent reported sexual violence.<sup>90</sup>

This case study illustrates the importance of high-quality training of those documenting cases and understanding the need for adapting to sector, service and site-specific workflow processes when designing information systems for documentation of VAW. Ideally, such systems can ensure better standardization through digital records as one of the challenges observed in the paper-based system was the difficulty of deciphering handwritten information by providers as well as having to double-check missing values.

## 6.2 Plan for the required human, infrastructure and financial resources

**“[VAW administrative data] requires a type of corporate social responsibility: resources, awareness and cooperation. Either there are material and economic resources—or there is nothing.”**

Government official, women’s machinery

**“Above all, a statistical area needs to be technical, and you need to work as part of a multidisciplinary team with the appropriate profiles. The idea that a computing science technician can do this work has changed—you need to have statistical expertise and thematic expertise.”**

Government official, justice sector

The investments in infrastructure and human resources needed to establish an administrative data system, particularly the initial costs for establishing the system, cannot be overlooked. These initial investments are needed to reap the ongoing cost-savings associated with using administrative data for statistical purposes.<sup>91</sup> Needed resources for training, data management, analysis, reporting and data communication should be identified during implementation planning.

- As part of the analysis of the data environment (see Step 3.2), an initial description of the human and infrastructure resources dedicated to data management within the relevant institutions and sectors will have been completed.
- When developing this guidance, we explored the sizes, roles and responsibilities of teams that were compiling, analysing and publicly reporting VAW administrative data in very different country contexts in Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean and Europe that

have administrative data systems that are at different stages of maturity in terms of overall information management systems and with respect to the production and reporting of VAW administrative data. Teams varied in size from 7 to 19 professionals. These team sizes did not include professionals dedicated to data collection (which is simultaneous with service provision) or data entry.

- Identified roles for teams dedicated to managing the integration of VAW administrative data, maintenance of databases, data quality checks and analysis and reporting included leadership and administration of the VAW or VAW-related administrative data team, which involved establishing ISPs and other agreements to acquire data from different sectors and data quality assurance, analysis and reporting.
- Ensuring that human, financial and infrastructure needs are adequately planned for within budgets and mobilized is a task for the VAW administrative data coordination mechanism.

# Step



## Implement Regular Reporting of VAW Administrative Data

**“From the [national VAW] law until the first bulletins were published, eight years passed. It is a process of building capacity, having the resources and the people and developing specialization.”**

Government official, women’s machinery

Regular reporting incentivizes data production and encourages data use, creating a virtuous cycle. Reporting is a necessary, though not sufficient,

action to increase the use of VAW administrative data and thereby contribute to improved policy and practice.

### 7.1 Identify the institutions that are responsible for reporting

Similar to the process for identifying the leaders and members of the VAW administrative data coordination mechanism, identifying the institutions best positioned to take responsibility for centralized national or subnational reporting of VAW administrative data requires consideration of existing legislation, mandates and operational efficiencies. The NSO or the national women’s machinery, or other body with policy responsibility for VAW prevention and response, may be well positioned to take responsibility for reporting.

After defining which institution is responsible for reporting, the information-sharing protocols and processes to determine how different sector—such as health, justice, police and governmental and non-governmental social services—contribute to centralized reporting must be formalized (see Steps 5.3 and 5.4). These agreements will specify which data will be shared, how they will be shared and how reporting will occur, including the frequency and format of reports and the process for contributing data producers to review and approve data before public release. The VAW administrative data coordination mechanism will have a key function for oversight of implementation of these agreements.

The focus of this technical guidance is building a VAW administrative data system for centralized data reporting that includes information from multiple sectors. This focus does not diminish the importance of sectoral analysis and reporting or the role of administrative data in supporting programme managers and decision-makers in local or regional service delivery sites to design policy and make programme improvements.

This technical guidance recommends the inclusion of CSOs with expertise on addressing VAW in the VAW administrative data coordination mechanism and as data producers, especially in contexts where CSOs provide a large proportion of VAW services to survivors. CSOs should have the opportunity to opt-in or opt-out of providing VAW administrative data for centralized reporting, unless this is a funding requirement between CSOs and government. For CSOs, as for all service providers, efforts must be made to ensure that providing VAW administrative data does not represent a significant additional burden in terms of workload.<sup>92</sup>

## 7.2 Ensure that quality administrative data are collected, aggregated and reported

The metadata and standard operating procedures (SOPs) established in Step 5 will guide the collection and aggregation of VAW administrative data and contribute to data quality. Monitoring, support and ongoing training will be required to build capacity and ensure data quality and continuous improvement as reporting is implemented. Important actions to monitor and promote quality collection, aggregation and reporting of VAW administrative data include:

- Establishing regular oversight of data collected to ensure that all forms, variables and response categories are correctly completed and missing information is obtained
- If paper-based systems are used, ensure that information is legible
- Ensure that all data cells for aggregated information are completed and reported

- Identify missing or incomplete information on a regular basis, including through spot checks
- Discuss with data administrators/ managers any systemic problems that need to be resolved through training, improvements in definitions, mentoring and supervision and updating systems
- Ensure that electronic data systems are backed up regularly on secure central servers.

The staff and managers responsible for data processing and reporting (either within the sector or the centralized body depending on the model for multisectoral data collection, management and reporting adopted, see Step 5.3) can provide technical support for these processes, conduct quality checks of incoming data<sup>93</sup> as well as implement SOPs to monitor the quality of data processing and statistical outputs.<sup>94</sup>

### COUNTRY EXAMPLE

#### Improving and disseminating standard operating procedures for VAW administrative data collection, entry and validation in Moldova



In 2017-2018, UN Women supported the Moldovan Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection, National Bureau of Statistics, National Employment Agency and 35 subnational agencies providing social assistance to VAW survivors to identify and address VAW data gaps and improve data quality by developing methodological guidance and rolling out training. The process brought together government officials, community social assistants and managers of specialized public sector VAW services to make proposals for overcoming challenges to improve data collection, flow and completeness.

These consultations resulted in an improved data sheet that includes calculation formulas that allow the person completing the sheet to identify data entry errors and correct them before submission. Detailed written methodological guidance for collecting, entering and validating data was developed, and a one-day training on the guidance and data entry sheet was rolled-out for 69 employees responsible for data entry and management from the involved subnational service providers and participating ministries.

## 7.3 Establish and make public standards for periodicity, transparency and data availability

### Periodicity

- Compilation and reporting of VAW administrative data should be completed on a set schedule and in a timely fashion, in line with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.<sup>95</sup>
- At minimum, official reports analysing VAW administrative data should be made public annually.

### Transparency and data availability

- Anonymized data must be made available to interested parties within government such as service providers and managers responsible for

planning and delivering VAW services, legislators, policymakers, gender specialists and others who are responsible for the VAW response, as well as to the general public, media, CSOs, development partners and researchers.

- Data availability is critical for ensuring the accountability of duty-bearers.
- Where the data come from (metadata) must be clear.
- Some VAW administrative data portals only publish reports. Others support custom analyses by allowing users to select variables to generate custom reports of aggregate anonymized data (for example, number of calls to a VAW hotline and types of VAW reported during a specified time period).

## 7.4 Ensure that processes for analysis and reporting respect confidentiality

### “If data are anonymized, they are easier to share.”

#### Statistician, NSO

- Data shared within the VAW administrative data coordination mechanism, as well as any data that are publicly reported or made publicly available for analysis, should be anonymized and aggregated to ensure confidentiality.
- Rules should be created and applied to ensure that confidentiality is respected (e.g., all data

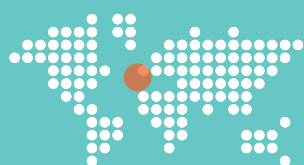
anonymized, suppression of small number count that could lead to easy identification of respondents and limited access to potentially identifying variables such as those based on geography or type of location).

- Only aggregated data (macrodata) are made publicly available.<sup>xv</sup>

<sup>xv</sup> Macrodata are aggregated data that group together individual-level records (microdata). Microdata are data made up of individual-level records—for instance, in survey data sets, there are individual records for each of the survey’s respondents. Access to microdata should only be allowed with strict oversight to, for example, qualified researchers whose research protocols have been through ethics review or data analysts within government who have undergone ethics training and signed confidentiality agreements.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE

## Spain's Gender Violence Portal: A multisectoral public-facing VAW administrative data platform



In 2004, the Government of Spain passed the Organic Law on Comprehensive Protection Measures against Gender-based Violence. The law created the Government Delegation against Gender-Based Violence, with two Sub-directorates General. One of them, the Sub-directorate General for Awareness, Prevention and Studies of Gender-Based Violence, made robust provisions for multisectoral coordination, reporting and knowledge mobilization to improve VAW prevention and response, including by using VAW administrative data to monitor programmes and outcomes. This Sub-directorate General acts as the national coordination mechanism for VAW administrative data, among other functions.<sup>96</sup>The Subdirectorate:

- Provides secretariat functions for the State Observatory on Violence, an inter-ministerial body that includes representatives from the relevant sectors (health, education, justice, police, social services) as well as independent VAW experts from academia and CSOs. The State Observatory has an advisory and oversight role in the standardization of VAW administrative data, preparing studies and reports and making proposals for action to prevent and respond to VAW.
- Collects, analyses and reports administrative and other data from specialized VAW services funded by the national women's machinery (including shelters, hotlines and provision of economic support).
- Coordinates the receipt and publication of statistics based on VAW administrative and

other data sources from multiple sectors (justice, social services, NSO) and different levels of government and Spain's autonomous regions.

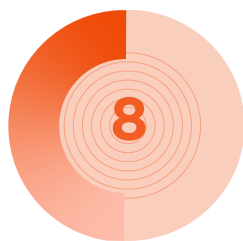
- Manages Spain's Gender Violence Portal. The portal implements good practices for periodicity, transparency and data availability and confidentiality in reporting. It publishes an annual calendar of data releases and an inventory of statistical operations with metadata for each variable developed with the NSO. All data made available through the portal are anonymous and statistics are produced following written standards that guarantee confidentiality and protection of personal data, in alignment with the national statistics law and related confidentiality policy.

The Gender Violence Portal website includes:

- Regularly updated statistics that allow the generation of tables and data visualizations from pre-set indicators from different sectors (police, vital statistics, social services, specialized VAW services)
- Monthly and annual reports on VAW
- Reports and recommendations from the State Observatory on Violence.
- As of October 2021, the Sub-directorate had a team of 12 professionals dedicated to data analysis, reporting and other data communication functions. This included four with administrative functions (leadership, finance and human resources) and eight statisticians.



# Step



## Engage in Data Communication

**“Previously, when we lobbied [the government] on legislation and other issues, they didn’t find it [VAW] a serious issue. Having the numbers [of VAW cases] and being able to say here are the numbers from the Ministry of Justice is helpful because we no longer have to argue about the importance.”**

Official, United Nations

Data communication goes beyond regular reporting of statistical data to develop and use a range of products designed for different data users.<sup>97</sup> To successfully plan for and execute data communication and increase data use, dialogue between data producers and users is needed before and after data production. Efforts are

also needed to improve knowledge of VAW and data literacy among data users. Improving literacy about VAW data and data communication will advance the use of VAW administrative data and contribute to the end goal: to improve VAW prevention and response and ultimately end VAW.

### 8.1 Improve data literacy

Further efforts are needed to build the capacity of the media, legislators (politicians) and other data users to understand and appropriately communicate VAW statistics. Fortunately, these efforts can be supported by existing materials that have been developed to increase VAW data literacy.<sup>98</sup> For VAW administrative data, improving capacity to interpret and ‘speak to’ (present) and contextualize the data is a priority. Key points to improve data interpretation are:

- The number of cases of VAW reported in administrative data can be expected to increase if service delivery or recording improves. The media and government colleagues need preparation to understand and explain why

increased programmatic efforts to address VAW and better VAW administrative data collection can result in increased reporting of cases. It is important to increase understanding that this corresponds to improvements that lead women to seek services that they need or improvements in recording and is not necessarily a sign that the number of VAW cases or numbers of survivors of VAW are increasing.

- Contextual factors can also change the demand for services and patterns of service use.

To illustrate:

- Increased public awareness and consciousness about VAW after incidents

that are highly visible in the media and to the public can influence the number of individuals seeking services and increase reported numbers.

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, in some settings and sectors, reported cases of VAW increased (e.g., calls to hotlines or women seeking services from shelters) whereas cases reported to health services decreased because of lockdowns and general avoidance of health facilities.
- As previously noted, administrative data cannot be used to estimate prevalence. Training on how to present data from multiple sources (e.g., survey data and administrative data) and explain discrepancies is needed. When presenting administrative data, care must always be taken to explain that these only capture the number of cases reported and cannot be equated to trends in the actual number of cases or survivors.
- Variations in reported data must be explained when communicating data to different audiences. For example, when data are

aggregated by time periods, cases of VAW reported after that time period has already been analysed and reported will change the numbers in subsequent reports.

- The confidentiality of the identity of individual survivors or perpetrators in statistics, including statistics created using administrative data, may need to be explained to members of government, human rights actors and media outlets. Spokespeople responsible for interpreting VAW administrative data should be prepared to speak about their ethical and legal obligations to maintain privacy and confidentiality.
- It is important to remind data users that behind the numbers are stories of human suffering and resilience of women subjected to violence. Where possible—and without offering identifying information about individuals—stories of survivors can serve as a powerful message to societies about the burden of violence against women and could be used after seeking the consent of survivors and ensuring anonymity is safeguarded.

## 8.2 Advance data communication to bridge the data production-use gap

For all data communication products, it is important to consider the data user's level of knowledge about VAW and data needs to determine what information is provided and how it is presented. The foundation for

data communication is laid during the user-producer dialogue (Step 4), which provides information about what potential data users need.

Figure 5: Attention to data users' needs can improve VAW administrative data use<sup>99</sup>



As described in Box 11, it is good practice to include both quantitative information (numbers) and qualitative information (anonymized short stories) in data communication products. Stories can effectively increase the audience’s perception of

the issues’ importance, foster support for related policies or programmes and spur greater action than communication products that present numbers or facts alone.<sup>100</sup>



**Box 11: Meeting data users needs in data communication products <sup>101</sup>**

Data user	Type of information and presentation
General public	Key figures, trends, data visualizations, short stories
Media	Summary tables, charts, trends, data visualizations, short stories
Policymaker	Summary tables, charts, trends, data visualizations, short stories
Development practitioners/CSOs/gender specialists	Summary and disaggregated data, analysis of results over time, metadata
Data analyst, researcher	Complete, raw, row-level data (without names)

Implementing data communication takes effort and expertise. The following actions can increase capacity for data communication and help to bridge the data production-use gap:

Dedicating human resources to data communication during resource planning

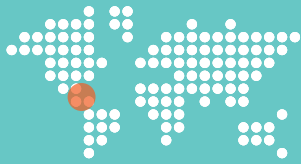
- Creating alliances for data communication with champions among policymakers, service providers, academics, journalists and influencers (building on relationship begun through the data user-producer dialogue)
- Ensuring data flow and communication are multidirectional, going from service providers to policymakers but also flowing back to service providers who can improve services in real time
- Taking advantage of the possibilities provided by technology. An example is designing information

systems to create preformed reports using automated analysis at the press of a button. Easy availability of reports can increase use by programme managers and by decision-makers at all levels (at the individual site level, within sectors and for the overarching subnational or national VAW response).

Data-driven dialogue, which includes both quantitative and qualitative data, is a promising practice to advance government responses to VAW.<sup>102</sup> In preparing for such dialogues, administrative data are not the whole story. Placing administrative data in a comprehensive context and seeking to triangulate with additional data sources (from academics and from qualitative inquiry with service providers and survivors) prior to identifying and communicating policy options is good practice.

## COUNTRY EXAMPLE

## Communicating data to improve the VAW response in Zacatecas, Mexico



In 2007, Mexico's federal Government decreed the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence that mandates the creation of a National Data and Information Bank on Violence Against Women to "evaluate the efficiency of the measures developed to prevent, treat, punish and eradicate all types of violence".<sup>103</sup>

Mexico is a federation with 32 states, so each state subsequently passed or amended a VAW law that included the creation of a state VAW databank. While the legal framework in each state is distinct, 29 of them use the information technology infrastructure provided by the National Databank. One of these is Zacatecas' BANEVIM (Banco Estatal de Datos sobre Violencia contra las Mujeres).

The BANEVIM public portal is updated on a monthly basis. The publication and data-updating schedule is published on the webpage, contributing to transparency. The portal includes 12 standard indicators that include type of VAW, information about survivors and perpetrators (age, sex, survivor-perpetrator relationship) and where and when the violence occurred, among others. BANEVIM also publishes quarterly and semi-annual reports and infographics in the online portal.<sup>104</sup>

In addition, it has implemented other actions to improve the accessibility of information available on the web platform, such as creating specialized VAW modules on, for example, sexual violence.

BANEVIM undertakes additional analysis and related data communication activities. Examples of data communication include providing a statistical summary four times a year to mayors of municipalities where there has been an observed increase in reported cases of VAW, incorporating additional data from the NSO and the Office for Social Crime Prevention to conduct spatial analyses to identify geographic 'hotspots' and analysing data about survivors' reported needs and barriers to seeking services. The latter analysis identified that transportation was a barrier for survivors to continue to seek support services and to pursue legal cases through the court system. In response, the Women's Justice Centre of the Attorney General's Office created a state-wide programme to provide pre-paid tickets for public transportation to support survivors to access specialized VAW services and pursue legal remedies.<sup>105</sup>

## Concluding Summary

VAW administrative data are collected in the context of day-to-day service delivery and operations. When analysed, reported and communicated to service providers, programme managers and decision-makers, administrative data provide timely and relevant information for monitoring service use and for planning to improve VAW policies, programmes and services. They can also, through equity analyses, provide critical insights into who is being excluded from service delivery and thereby support national and subnational efforts to achieve one of the central promises of the Sustainable Development Goals: to leave no one behind.

The value of VAW administrative data was further highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic. In many settings, administrative data from telephone helplines, shelters and reports to police recorded increased demand for these VAW services. This information was crucial for global and local advocacy and provided intelligence that guided countries to include actions to prevent and respond to VAW in their COVID-19 response and recovery plans. While the visibility of administrative data was heightened during COVID-19, the characteristics and potential priority uses of these data for monitoring service use, identifying gaps, evaluating service quality, tracking outcomes and giving direction to service planning are always relevant. Administrative data provide invaluable information for developing, monitoring and strengthening policies and programmes to prevent and respond to VAW.

The country and regional experiences that informed the development of this technical guidance show that improving VAW administrative data collection and use requires a multi-year commitment and dedicated resources. Leadership and the contribution of expertise from the institutions with policy responsibility for VAW and for statistics, as well as commitment from the sectors that provide services to survivors and interact with perpetrators, are needed

to make progress. Civil society experts and survivors themselves have important contributions to make and should be consulted and included in the governance systems established to lead the development and implementation of VAW administrative data information systems. The corollary of this level of mobilization, coordination and commitment is that taking the steps described in the guidance to strengthen VAW administrative data collection and use has benefits that go beyond the generation of information alone.

Improving VAW administrative data collection is intertwined with improving the understanding of VAW and responses among service providers. Training on data collection in the context of VAW service provision is crucial. This training can increase non-discriminatory, empathetic communication and respect for confidentiality. The process of data collection, including the forms that are used, can also promote improvement of quality by providing a means for monitoring implementation over time.

Analysis, reporting and communication of administrative data enable its use to improve VAW prevention and response. Reporting and data communication can create the conditions for informed dialogue and be used to hold duty bearers to account. Strengthening VAW administrative data strengthens the foundation for dialogue within governments and between government representatives and other actors, such as CSOs, researchers, the United Nations system and others, to catalyse improvements. Regional and country experiences show that inter-institutional coordination and prioritization of capacity building to support improvements in VAW administrative data collection, reporting and communication have mobilized political will and resources not only for improving VAW administrative data systems but also for prevention of and responses to VAW.

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# ANNEX I: Guiding Principles<sup>106</sup>

## Human rights-based approach

Rights-based approaches to the delivery of quality essential services recognize that States have a primary responsibility to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of women and girls. Violence against women is a fundamental breach of women's rights, particularly their right to a life free from fear and violence. A human rights approach means that the collection and use of administrative data will prioritize the safety and well-being of women and treat them with dignity, respect and sensitivity. It also calls for the highest attainable standards of health, social, justice and policing services—services of good quality, available, accessible and acceptable to women. The achievement of quality, availability, accessibility and acceptability of services for survivors must be at the heart of this approach.

## Advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment

The centrality of gender inequality and discrimination, as both a root cause and a consequence of violence against women, requires that services ensure gender-sensitive and gender-responsive policies and practices are in place. Service-based data collection and use of VAW administrative data must promote women's agency, where women are entitled to make their own decisions—including to refuse that their report be recorded in the data systems or to refuse referrals—without this affecting their ability to receive care or services.

## Cultural sensitivity and age appropriateness

Survivors of violence have a multiplicity of individual circumstances and life experiences, are of diverse ages, identities, cultures, sexual orientations, gender identities and ethnicities and speak different languages. Considerations about VAW administrative data to be collected should take this into account, and one aspect

of analysis should be understanding the service use (or lack of use) by groups of women who are most at risk. Administrative data can contribute to illuminating the service experiences and needs of women who face multiple forms of discrimination not only because they are women but also because of their race, ethnicity, caste, sexual orientation, religion, disability, marital status, occupation or other characteristics or because they have been subjected to violence.

## Survivor-centred approaches

Survivor-centred approaches place the rights, needs and desires of women at the centre of both service delivery and VAW administrative data collection and use. This requires consideration of the multiple needs of survivors, their various risks and vulnerabilities and the impact of decisions and actions taken, which are critical to ethical data collection, analysis, sharing and reporting. Administrative data collection should respect survivors' wishes, and the analysis, sharing and reporting should involve survivors as appropriate and possible and always make their safety and well-being the central concern.

## Safety

The safety of women and girls is paramount when collecting, analysing and reporting administrative VAW data. Data collection and use must prioritize the safety and security of survivors and avoid causing further harm. One aspect of this is that data on women's experiences of violence must not be solicited by service providers (health, police, justice, social services) unless services are available to support them. Women who disclose violence should immediately receive WHO-recommended first-line support, using the LIVES approach: 'Listen, Inquire about needs and concerns, Validate, Enhance Safety, Support'. Those providers who offer services to survivors should be trained on how to deliver first-line support.<sup>107</sup>

### Perpetrator accountability

Perpetrator accountability requires that VAW administrative data collection can effectively analyse whether perpetrators are being held accountable and whether justice (or other relevant) responses are proportional to the acts committed. In collecting and using administrative data, the data-related rights of alleged and convicted perpetrators must be respected and SOP and ISPs aligned with national and subnational privacy legislation as well as international standards. With respect to survivors' participation in perpetrator

accountability, the Essential Services Package states that the goal is to “support and facilitate the survivor’s participation with the justice process, promote her capacity of acting or exerting her agency, while ensuring that the burden or onus of seeking justice is not placed on her but on the State”.<sup>108</sup> In the collection of administrative data, it is critical that survivors are made aware before they disclose if disclosure may result in them being involved with the police, justice or other institutions so that they can make informed choices about the information that they divulge.

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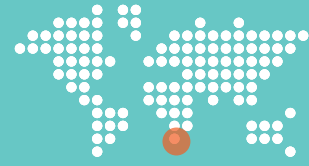
## ANNEX II: Country and Regional Examples of Priority Uses of VAW Administrative Data (Programme Monitoring and Service Mapping)

This technical guidance identifies three priority uses for VAW administrative data: (1) monitoring service use, (2) programme monitoring: policy implementation, service coverage and quality and (3) service mapping and system planning. The discussion of the recommended minimum data set refers primarily to variables for monitoring service use that are relevant across all sectors. Below are examples of additional sector-specific

programme monitoring that may be included as part of the agreed upon VAW administrative data to be collected at the subnational or national level in the health sector (example 1) and justice sector (example 2). Example 3 illustrates service mapping to assess the capacity of VAW services in comparison to regional standards, which is critical information for planning, resource allocation and costing.

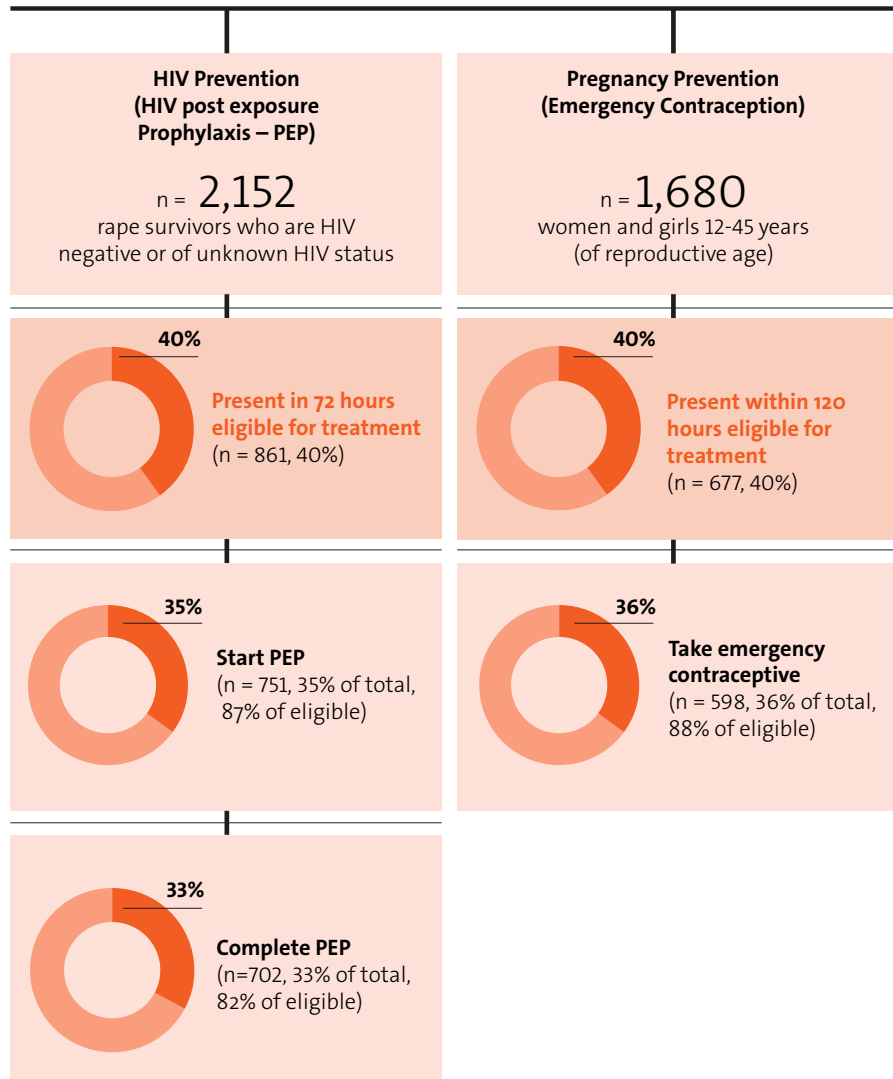
EXAMPLE 1

## Sector-specific programme monitoring Health-care provision in accordance with national standards: Care for rape survivors in Zimbabwe



Zimbabwe has incorporated international standards for the provision of medical care after rape into its national standards for service provision. This example demonstrates how administrative data were used to monitor the implementation of medical care for rape at a single specialized health clinic in Mbare. The standards monitored were provision of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for HIV prevention within 72 hours and emergency contraception (EC) within 120 hours. This analysis using administrative data shows that in more than 80 per cent of cases, rape care is completed to these standards for those who are eligible. It also shows that the majority of rape survivors were not eligible for PEP and EC because they did not present at the clinic in time for treatment to be effective.<sup>109</sup>

SERVICES PROVIDED TO 2,242 RAPE SURVIVORS WHO ATTENDED A SEXUAL VIOLENCE CLINIC IN MBARE, ZIMBABWE



EXAMPLE 2

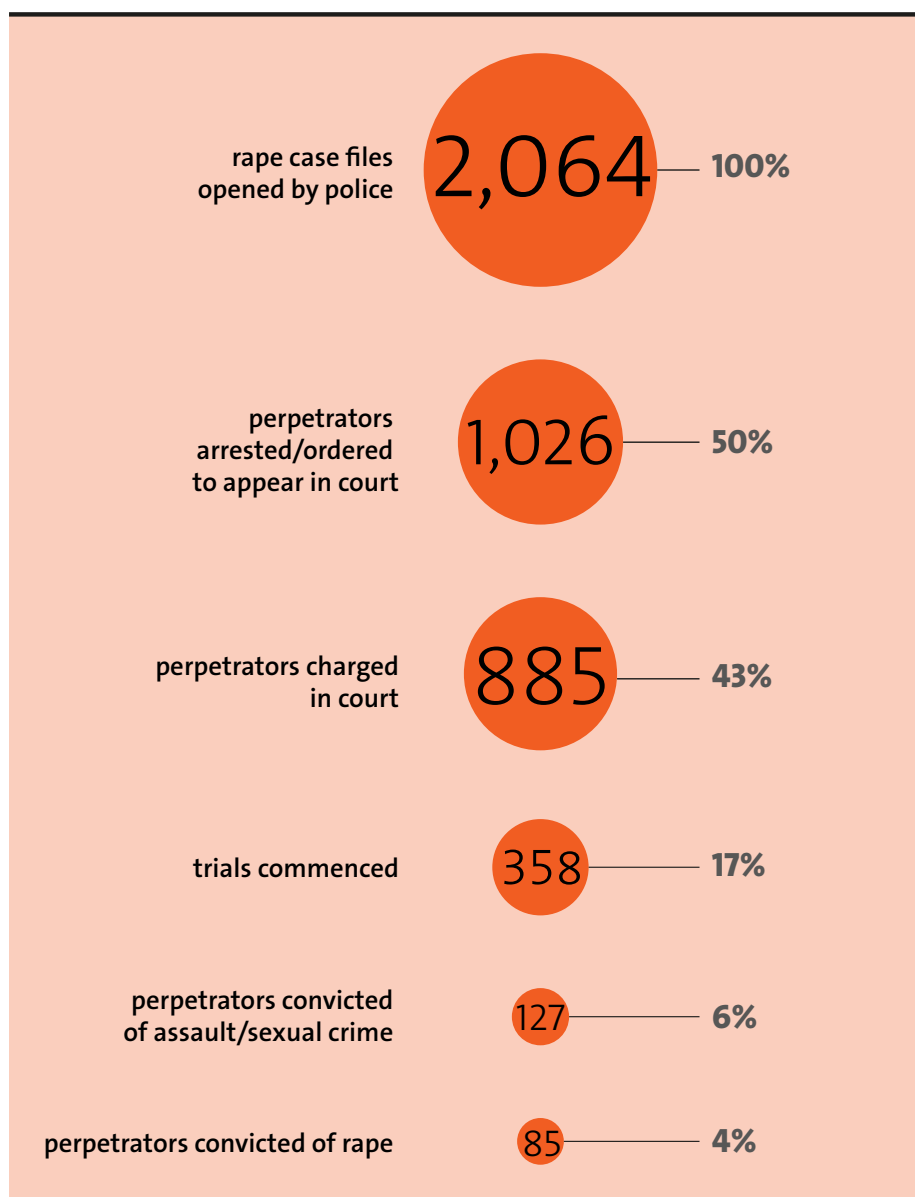
## Sector specific programme monitoring Assessing the justice sector response to rape survivors in South Africa<sup>110</sup>



A key component of monitoring the effectiveness of the response of the police and justice sector to VAW using administrative data is to be able to trace the process of a VAW complaint made by a survivor through to resolution of the legal case.<sup>111</sup>

In every region of the world, analysis of administrative data has demonstrated that a large proportion of sexual violence complaints are dismissed/not investigated, and that of the small number of sexual violence cases that are prosecuted, even fewer result in convictions of perpetrators.<sup>112 113 114 115</sup> This South African example from a randomly selected sample of registers from police stations in Gauteng province identified that a very small proportion of rape complaints made to police resulted in convictions of alleged perpetrators.

SURVIVORS' REPORT OF RAPE TO POLICE TO PERPETRATORS' CONVICTION  
IN GUATENG, SOUTH AFRICA





EXAMPLE 3

**Service mapping  
Assessing the  
capacity of social  
services to meet  
the needs of sexual  
assault survivors in  
Europe (2018)**



The Council of Europe recommends standards for the coverage of specialized VAW services to meet the obligations acquired through ratification of the Istanbul Convention,<sup>116</sup> based on population size. The Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) Network conducts a questionnaire of civil society focal points across Europe to estimate the coverage and capacity of the VAW response in the region. The Convention

establishes that there should be one rape crisis or sexual violence referral centre, with trained staff that can provide medical care, forensic examinations, trauma support, information and guidance in possible legal cases, for every 200,000 inhabitants. This mapping of existing services from 2018 identifies the dramatic gap between the recommended service standards and actual service delivery.<sup>117</sup>

	Total population	Needed number of rape crises centres/sexual violence referral centres to meet Convention standards	Actual number of rape crises centres/sexual violence referral centres	Number of missing services
Europe (46)	840,919,693	4,205	357	3,848 (92%)
European Union (EU) Member States and United Kingdom (28)	512,379,225	2,562	338	2,224 (87%)
European countries that have never been members of the EU (18)	328,540,468	1,643	19	1,624 (99%)

## ANNEX III: Proposed Response Options and Recommended Definitions for Minimum Data Set<sup>xvi</sup>

Minimum data set		
Variable	Response options	Definitions
	All categories must include a non-response option.	Definitions should be agreed by the coordination mechanism based on national/subnational context and specificities.
Case #	All cases must be given a number Administrative information such as date of record, individual recording and sector can be noted.	
Survivor sex	Female/male	Sex is based on biological attributes (female/male) rather than the social gender identity. Response options are female/male.
Survivor age	Date of birth	Recommendation: Date of birth Alternatively: Year of birth Exact response is preferred to a categorical variable; categories can be created during analysis
Survivor-perpetrator relationship (complete for each perpetrator)	Current intimate partner Former intimate partner Family member Friend/colleague/peer or acquaintance Authority figure/care provider Other—known to survivor Other—unknown to survivor	Current intimate partner: Intimate partner includes spouse or cohabitating partner, non-cohabitating partner (boyfriend/girlfriend/dating partner but not married). <sup>xvii</sup> Former intimate partner Family member → Blood relative: child, parent, sibling, other blood relative; blood relatives are further categorized as cohabitating or non-cohabitating. → Other household member or relative by marriage or adoption (parent-in-law, child-in-law, stepson/stepdaughter, adopted child, other relative by marriage) Friend/colleague/peer or acquaintance Authority figure/care provider: health-care provider, caregiver, education authority, safety and security provider, public official/clergy (non-health, education or security-related), employer/supervisor, other authority/care relationship worker, police, teacher, employer etc. Other perpetrator known to survivor Perpetrator unknown to the survivor
Perpetrator sex	Male/female	As reported by survivor If identity of perpetrator is confirmed by police/justice system, these records take precedence. Where it is possible and relevant, recommend capturing perpetrator gender in addition to sex.

<sup>xvi</sup> Minimum data to be collected, according to UN CEDAW's General Comment 35 (2017), include type of violence and survivor/victim relationship, with the perpetrator relationship and other socio-demographic characteristics as relevant including the age of the victim/survivor (article 49).

<sup>xvii</sup> Aligned with variables proposed for intimate partners and family members in UNODC and UN Women 2022.

Perpetrator age	Date of birth (preferred)	<p>As reported by survivor if service does not interact with the perpetrator</p> <p>If identity of perpetrator is confirmed by police/justice system, these records take precedence.</p> <p>Recommended: Date of birth</p> <p>Alternatively: Year of birth or year of birth based on estimate of age by survivor</p> <p>Exact response preferred to a categorical variable; categories created during analysis</p>
<p>Type of VAW</p> <p>In survey research, it is most effective to ask about specific acts committed by the perpetrator against survivor. Service providers should be trained to ask non-judgmental questions to identify VAW.</p>	Physical VAW	<p>Physical violence consists of acts aimed at physically hurting the survivor and include, but are not limited to, acts like pushing, grabbing, twisting the arm, pulling hair, slapping, kicking, biting or hitting with a fist or object, trying to strangle or suffocate, burning or scalding on purpose, or threatening or attacking with some sort of weapon, gun or knife.<sup>118</sup></p> <p><i>In criminal codes: assault</i></p>
	Sexual VAW	<p>Sexual violence is defined as any sort of harmful or unwanted sexual behaviour that is imposed on someone, whether by use of physical force, intimidation or coercion. It includes acts of abusive sexual contact, forced sexual acts, attempted or completed sexual acts (intercourse) without consent (rape or attempted rape), non-contact acts such as being forced to watch or participate in pornography, etc. In intimate partner relationships, sexual violence is commonly operationally defined in surveys as: being physically forced to have sexual intercourse, having sexual intercourse out of fear for what the partner might do or through coercion and/or being forced to do something sexual that the woman considers humiliating or degrading.<sup>119</sup> Sexual violence includes sexual harassment, verbal abuse, threats and exposure.<sup>120</sup></p> <p>Rape is defined as engaging in the non-consensual vaginal, anal or oral penetration of a sexual nature of the body of another person with any bodily part or object, including through the use of physical violence and by putting the victim in a situation where she cannot say no or complies because of fear.<sup>121</sup></p> <p><i>In criminal codes: sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment</i></p>
	Psychological VAW	<p>Psychological violence consists of any act that induces fear or emotional distress. It includes a range of behaviours that encompass acts of emotional abuse (e.g., being frequently humiliated in public, intimidated or having things you care for destroyed) and controlling behaviours (e.g., being kept from seeing family or friends or from seeking health care without permission).<sup>122</sup> Psychological violence frequently coexists with acts of physical and sexual violence by intimate partners but is an act of violence in itself.<sup>123</sup></p> <p><i>In criminal codes: harassment, threats, defamation</i></p>

### Expanded minimum data set

Geography	Administrative description of where violence occurred	City/village Subnational if relevant, e.g., state, province
Location <sup>124</sup>	Home Public School Institution (prison, penal, correctional) Institutional care setting Work Online Other	Home: private residential premises; consider identifying home of survivor vs. home of perpetrator). Public (street, open area, public transport, public toilets, forest/jungle, park, beach, other) School (or other educational setting) Prisons, penal institutions or correctional institutions Institutional care setting: hospitals, psychiatric facilities, residential care, etc. Work/employment Online <sup>125</sup> Other (open text box or specific to context)
Service/referrals	Response/services or referrals provided	Services provided (yes/no/not applicable/survivor declined/survivor decided to come back later) If services provided are documented, the recommendation is to provide defined response options (check boxes or drop-down menu). For service provision purposes, data collection form can include an open text box for additional comments/details. Referral (yes/no/not applicable/survivor declined) Consider also documenting the services referred to; if services referred to are documented, the recommendation is to have pre-determined response options (check boxes, drop-down menu).

## ANNEX IV: Example of a Checklist for Privacy and Confidentiality in Documentation<sup>126</sup>

### Privacy and confidentiality in documentation

Confidential documentation and recordkeeping are vital to the safety of patients experiencing intimate partner or sexual violence. Records may take the form of paper, external computer hard drives or CDs, or they may be network-based. Regardless of format, all types of files must be secured.

This checklist will help you make sure that records are secure.

#### How can we create secure records in practice?

- All staff members understand the importance of confidentiality and secure recordkeeping, and staff members who routinely care for women subjected to violence have been trained to keep records secure.
- Identifying information about a woman, including her name and contact information, is not visible or accessible to those not caring for this patient.
- Staff members do not leave documents where a patient (unless requested), those accompanying the patient or anyone else might see them. Staff members do not carry charts open or lay them on shared desks or counters.
- When documenting information from women about their experience of violence, staff members avoid asking for or writing this information on records in a public place.
- Staff members do not write a notation indicating intimate partner violence or sexual violence on the first page of a record, which is more likely to be seen if flipped open.

- Staff members use a code, such as an abbreviation or symbol, to indicate cases of intimate partner violence or sexual violence on charts (recommended option). They do not write 'DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SUSPECTED' or 'RAPE' or other explicit wording in large print across the chart. Some countries (such as Malaysia) use a colour coding system on medical records that is known only to the relevant health staff.
- Any sensitive information that needs to be destroyed is shredded by an authorized staff member.

#### How can we create secure records in storage?

- There is a secure site to store files.
- Documents are locked up at all times.
- Only a limited number of designated staff members have access to patient records.
- Staff members who need access to records have received training on record confidentiality and storage practices.
- Staff members authorized to access stored files have a means of access that is not available to others. (As the setting allows, this may be a key to a room, an electronic password or a security code to enter a room, or another method of obtaining access to a restricted area.)

## Endnotes

1. UNECE 2021.
2. UN Women et al. 2015.
3. United Nations 2006.
4. Kendall 2020.
5. WHO 2017a.
6. UNODC 2015. See also [www.eige.eu](http://www.eige.eu) for VAW administrative data.
7. UN Women et al. 2015.
8. UNODC and UN Women 2022.
9. UN General Assembly 2021.
10. See Annex III for full definitions. Definitions are from UN DESA, Statistics Division 2014, p. 16, and 2021.
11. UN Women et al. 2015.
12. UN General Assembly 2014.
13. UN Women et al. 2015, Module 1, p. 16.
14. Ibid.
15. Kendall 2020, p. 19.
16. UN DESA, Statistics Division 2015a, pp. 51-59.
17. CEB (Undated).
18. UNHCR 2015.
19. UNDG 2017.
20. UN DESA, Statistics Division 2015b.
21. WHO 2017a, pp. 105-106.
22. UN CEDAW 2017, article 49; UNODC (Undated); EIGE 2021.
23. Banerjee 2018.
24. UN Women and UNDP 2021.
25. KnowVAWdata et al. 2020.
26. UN Women and UN SIAP 2020, Module 7, pp. 10-12.
27. UN DESA, Statistics Division 2016.
28. UN CEDAW 2017, article 52.
29. Government of the Kingdom of Morocco 2018.
30. In total, there are 19 high-level ministerial representatives on the National Commission from: Human Rights, Interior, Foreign Affairs, Justice, Islamic Affairs, Finance, Education, Higher Education, Health, Youth, Culture and Communication, Women, Labour, Civil Society, Immigration, High Court, National Security, Prosecutor's Office and Royal Gendarmerie.
31. National Commission for the Care of Women Victims of Violence 2020, p. 63.
32. Ibid., pp. 79-80.
33. Brankovic 2021, p. 9.
34. Government of Colombia 2020, article 21.
35. Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Information Technology and Communication, National Planning Department, Prosecutor General (Fiscalía General de la Nación), Presidential Council of Women's Equality, Presidential Council on Human Rights, Colombian Institute for Family Wellbeing (ICBF), the National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences, National Health Institute, High Council of the Judiciary, Migration Colombia, National Police, Agency for Normalization and Reincorporation, the People's Ombudsperson (Defensoría del Pueblo). The delegated representative of the Attorney General (Procurador General de la Nación) is an ex-officio member (permanent guest).
36. President of the Dominican Republic 2021.
37. National Office of Statistics, Dominican Republic undated.
38. Government of Guatemala 2008.
39. National Institute of Statistics, Guatemala 2019.
40. EIGE 2021.
41. For the health sector, see WHO 2017a, pp. 61-62.
42. Data collection began in 2018 and will be compiled every two years. The first data release was in the first quarter of 2019. Assessment of this indicator is conducted by national counterparts including NSOs and/or national women's machineries and legal practitioners/researchers on gender equality, using a questionnaire comprising 45 yes/no questions under four areas of law: (i) overarching legal frameworks and public life; (ii) violence against women; (iii) employment and economic benefits; and (iv) marriage and family. The areas of law and questions are drawn from the international legal and policy framework on gender equality, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which has 189 States parties, and the Beijing Platform for Action. The data compilers are the World Bank Group, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development

- Centre and UN Women. For additional details, see <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>.
43. UNECE 2011, p. 10.
  44. UN DESA, Statistics Division 2022b.
  45. An overview of tools—including the Eurostat ‘Snapshot’, which has been used by several countries to analyse gender statistics capacity and VAW administrative data capacity—is available in PARIS21 2018.
  46. WHO 2017a.
  47. NODC undated.
  48. UN DESA, Statistics Division 2019. This manual includes guidance and tools for assessing the quality of administrative data. See also UNECE 2011, pp. 37-42.
  49. Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2020.
  50. The Independent 2021.
  51. UN Women and SIAP 2020, Module 4, pp. 4-6.
  52. Figure adapted from UN Women and UN SIAP 2020, Module 4.
  53. These variables were agreed on by an Expert Group Meeting on VAW Administrative Data, convened by UN Women on 24-26 September 2019 in New York. See UN Women 2019.
  54. WHO 2017a, p. 150.
  55. EIGE 2020, p. 8.
  56. WHO 2006, pp. 32-38; Carney and Barner 2012.
  57. UN Women 2019.
  58. Simmons and Elias 1994.
  59. WHO 2001.
  60. Daas et al. 2009.
  61. UN DESA, Statistics Division 2015a, pp. 86-88.
  62. Statistics New Zealand 2020.
  63. UNECE 2011, pp. 37-42.
  64. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-26. The mapping of administrative data classifications/codes to statistical classifications may be one to one (one administrative data code corresponds to one statistical classification, 1 to 1 correlation), many administrative data codes correspond to a single statistical classification or vice versa (many to one or one to many), or many administrative codes correspond to many statistical classifications (many to many). See also EIGE 2021; UNODC undated.
  65. UNODC and UN Women 2022.
  66. The recommendation to use behavioural definitions is aligned with the guidance from WHO and UNODC. See, for example, UNODC 2015, 2017.
  67. EIGE 2020, p. 9.
  68. UNFPA 2021, p. 48.
  69. ASEAN 2018.
  70. Waldby 2016, p. 10.
  71. Gonzalez Alvarez et al. 2018.
  72. UNECE 2011, pp. 75-76.
  73. Government of Argentina 2009, article 9 (k, l).
  74. INDEC 2019.
  75. Adapted from GBVIMS undated.
  76. UN DESA, Statistics Division 2015a, pp. 51-67.
  77. WHO 2017a.
  78. UN DESA, Statistics Division and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data 2022.
  79. All references to Kosovo in this report should be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).
  80. UN Women Eastern and Central Asia 2019.
  81. UN Women et al. 2015, Module 5, Chapter 3.
  82. *Ibid.*, Module 1; WHO 2021, Module 11.
  83. WHO India et al. 2021, p. 14.
  84. WHO 2017a, 2017b.
  85. Arora et al. 2021.
  86. WHO 2017a.
  87. Gadappa et al. 2022.
  88. WHO 2017a. See Annex III as an example
  89. Amin 2019.
  90. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
  91. Experience from using administrative data for official statistics in Europe reveals that set-up costs for using administrative sources to produce statistical outputs can be as high as the set-up costs for a statistical survey or a census, but the running (or ongoing) costs are usually significantly lower. For example, the cost-per head of the 2000-2001 population census in Austria using a traditional paper questionnaire was 6.9 euros per person, as compared with Finland where the census is based completely on administrative sources and cost 0.2 euros per person (UNECE 2011, pp. 7-8).
  92. Kendall 2020, p. 30.
  93. Daas et al. 2009.
  94. For a discussion of criteria and process of administrative data quality management that includes quality of incoming data, quality of data processing and quality of statistical inputs, see UNECE 2011, pp. 37-42.
  95. UN General Assembly 2014.
  96. Government of Spain 2004, undated; INE 2014.



- 97.** For detailed guidance, see UN Women and UN SIAP 2020.
- 98.** Key resources, among others, include UN Women's Women Count Programme; the UN Women Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence Against Women and Girls, especially those resources focused on data collection and monitoring and evaluation ([www.endvawnow.org](http://www.endvawnow.org)); UNFPA Asia Pacific's kNOW VAW data initiative (<https://knowvawdata.com/>); EIGE's work on VAW administrative data in Europe (<https://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/data-collection>); and the guidance and templates made available through GBVIMS ([www.gbvims.com](http://www.gbvims.com)). Sector-specific resources include those produced by WHO (health) and UNODC (police and justice) to guide administrative data collection, aggregation and analysis.
- 99.** Adapted from UN Women and UN SIAP 2020, Module 10, p. 7.
- 100.** Oschatz et al. 2021.
- 101.** Adapted from UN Women and UN SIAP. 2020, Module 10, p. 9
- 102.** Englehart and Miller 2014; Hagemann-White 2008.
- 103.** Government of Mexico 2007, article 1 and article 38, items IX, X.
- 104.** See <https://banevim.zacatecas.gob.mx/Banevim/>.
- 105.** Dena Herrera 2021.
- 106.** Adapted from UN Women et al. 2015, Module 1, Chapter 2.
- 107.** WHO 2021.
- 108.** UN Women et al. 2015.
- 109.** Harrison et al. 2017.
- 110.** Vetten et al. 2008, pp. 8, 52.
- 111.** UN CEDAW 2017.
- 112.** Skinnider et al. 2017.
- 113.** Brankovic 2021, pp. 13-14.
- 114.** MESECVI 2021.
- 115.** Daly and Bouhours 2010.
- 116.** Council of Europe 2011.
- 117.** WAVE 2019.
- 118.** UN DESA, Statistics Division 2021. See also UN DESA, Statistics Division 2014, pp. 15-16.
- 119.** UN DESA, Statistics Division 2021. See also UN DESA, Statistics Division 2014, p. 17.
- 120.** UN DESA, Statistics Division 2014, p. 16.
- 121.** Ibid.
- 122.** UN DESA, Statistics Division 2021.
- 123.** UN DESA, Statistics Division 2014, p. 16.
- 124.** See also UNODC 2015, p. 99.
- 125.** Ibid. The ICCS includes a 'tag' for cybercrime-related (Cy) with the following response options: cybercrime-related, non-cybercrime related, not applicable, not known.
- 126.** From WHO 2017a, p. 155.

