



Photo: UN Women/Sreynich Leng

Making Progress in Prevention Possible

A monitoring framework for the prevention of violence against women and girls in the Asia-Pacific region

Prepared by the Equality Institute for UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
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Abbreviations and acronyms

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CSO	civil society organization
GBV	gender-based violence
IPV	intimate partner violence
LBTQI	lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex
LGBTQI	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VAC	violence against children
VAWG	violence against women and girls
WHO	World Health Organization



Photo: UN Women/Pathumporn Thongking

1. Introduction

Background

Violence against women and girls

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is one of the most widespread violations of human rights worldwide, globally affecting around one in three women in their lifetime.¹

Importantly, what we know about VAWG is informed by survivors of violence themselves. Research with survivors, including prevalence studies, has added to the knowledge of the types of violence women and girls face all over the world and helped to reveal the scale, scope, causes and consequences of the problem. Furthermore, working closely with survivors as well as experts and advocates (oftentimes also survivors themselves), has helped to develop the most effective approaches to response and prevention.

While there is no singular cause, research suggests that factors associated with gender inequality most consistently drive VAWG. Discriminatory and gender-biased attitudes, practices and harmful social norms allow VAWG to occur and remain unchallenged.

An integrated ecological model is often used to illustrate how these norms operate across all levels of society – individual, interpersonal, community, societal and even global levels (see chapter 3).^{2,3}

- 1 K.M. Devries et al. (2013). 'Global health. The global prevalence of intimate partner violence against women'. *Science* 340(6140), pp. 1527–1528.
- 2 E. Fulu and S. Miedema (2015). 'Violence Against Women: Globalizing the Integrated Ecological Model'. *Violence Against Women* 21(12), pp. 1431–1455. doi:10.1177/1077801215596244.
- 3 L. Heise (1998). 'Violence against Women: An integrated, ecological framework'. *Violence Against Women* 4(3), pp. 262–290.

Definition of violence against women and girls

Violence against women and girls is any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women and girls, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.* It encompasses many different types of violence, including violence by an intimate partner, rape, sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence perpetrated by someone other than a partner, forced prostitution, trafficking of women, child sexual abuse, as well as harmful traditional practices such as early/forced marriage, female genital mutilation and honour killing.**

VAWG also cuts across class, ethnicity, geography, sexuality and (dis)ability. VAWG hinders human development and has serious consequences to women and girls, ranging from physical, psychological, health and sexual impacts, often preventing them from fully participating in society. This, in turn, carries enormous economic costs not only for women and their families, but also for businesses, national budgets and economies and societies at large.

* UN (1993). *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*. 20 December 1993.

** García-Moreno et al. (2015). 'Addressing violence against women: a call to action'. *The Lancet* 385(9978), pp. 1685–1695.

Prevention

Despite widespread acceptance and pervasiveness, VAWG is preventable. For the past two decades, researchers and practitioners have designed and piloted interventions to prevent violence before it occurs and mitigate its consequences. There is now enough evidence to

illustrate that not only can VAWG be prevented, but – as long as there is sustained commitment – it can be prevented within programmatic timeframes. Furthermore, thanks to ongoing research on prevention, there is now growing, global agreement on ‘what works’ (both the types of intervention and effective elements) to prevent VAWG.⁴

The intersections of violence against women and violence against children

Violence against women (VAW) and violence against children (VAC) are both internationally recognized as human rights and public health problems. It is estimated that 6 in 10 children globally between the ages of 2 and 14 experience regular physical punishment, while 7 in 10 experience psychological aggression. Approximately 120 million girls under the age of 18 have experienced forced sexual intercourse or other unwanted sexual acts. Studies from around the world also show children experience high levels of neglect and emotional abuse.*

Until recently programmes, policies and research on VAW and VAC have been distinct from one another, being led, funded and guided by different agencies, strategies, terminologies and treaties. Experts in the field have called for more focus on the intersections between the two:

- Shared risk factors;
- Common social norms;
- Cooccurrence of both types of violence in the same family or household;
- Intergenerational effects;
- Common and compounding consequences; and
- Adolescence as a period of elevated vulnerability.

Evidence has highlighted that services and research focussed on one form of violence in isolation may overlook risk factors across multiple forms of violence that occur within families and across the lifespan. For example, experiencing violence in childhood increases the risk of perpetrating or experiencing violence in adulthood. Evidence suggests that consolidating efforts to address shared risk factors may help to prevent both VAW and VAC. This has led to calls for more collaboration across the fields of VAW and VAC, which would see countries achieve and measure progress to ending VAW and VAC in line with commitments to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

* UNICEF (2014). *Hidden in plain sight: a statistical analysis of violence against children*. New York.

** A. Guedes, S. Bott, C. Garcia-Moreno and M. Colombini (2016). *Bridging the gaps: a global review of intersections of violence against women and violence against children*, *Global Health Action* 9(1).

4 A. Kerr-Wilson et al. (2020). *What works to prevent violence against women and girls?: A rigorous global evidence review of interventions to prevent violence against women and girls* Retrieved from Pretoria, South Africa: <https://www.whatworks.co.za/documents/publications/374-evidence-reviewweb/file>.

What is prevention?

Prevention of VAWG tackles the underlying causes of violence, such as gender inequality, and the attitudes that justify, condone, promote or excuse this type of violence. With the aim to change broadly held attitudes, beliefs, practices and norms that drive VAWG, prevention work is carried out at the population level and within systems and structures, rather than at the individual level. It is important that prevention is carried out in conjunction with robust response services; that is, work that is aimed at preventing the recurrence of violence and assists victim/survivors while they are experiencing violence. The work of prevention and response are complementary. Prevention enhances response activity by helping reduce repeated perpetration of violence, and response services and programmes assist survivors and help to hold perpetrators to account.

Ideally, countries should adopt a whole-of-government (or coordinated) approach to prevention and implement prevention activities at scale.⁵ Countries taking a coordinated and sustained whole-of-population approach need a way to measure progress. Significant investments have been made over the past decade in various approaches, frameworks, interventions and infrastructure to support the prevention of VAWG, both globally and in the Asia-Pacific context. Frameworks such as [RESPECT](#)

5 A whole-of-government approach refers to a substantive and cohesive policy framework that operates across all levels of government (local, state, national) and across different government portfolios, to achieve a shared goal. These approaches can be formal or informal. In this case, a whole-of-government approach to prevention would use this approach to address gender inequality as the root cause of VAWG. As a result, a systematic, national commitment is made to transform gender roles and relations at every level of society with the long-term goal of ending VAWG. See Australian Public Service Commission (2021). [The whole of government challenge: Chapter findings](#).

[Women: Preventing violence against women](#)⁶

highlight the need for monitoring progress on prevention at the population level and offer much needed guidance for programming in prevention. There is also an increasing recognition of the importance of gender sensitive data to guide and monitor evidence-based policies that aim to transform the lives of women and girls. Using quality data to monitor prevention supports a more precise tracking of change toward the long-term goal of eliminating VAWG. Furthermore, it increases accountability and shared approaches in national and regional investment in prevention. This document responds to the need for a prevention monitoring framework for the Asia-Pacific region. It provides useful guidance to direct this work.

Asia-Pacific region

The Asia-Pacific region is home to more than half the world's population, and the evidence suggests that VAWG is commonplace in the region. There is substantial variation between countries and forms of violence found there, which highlights the complexity of measuring and eliminating VAWG at different levels across a diverse region.

Asia

Prevalence rates of lifetime experience of intimate partner violence (IPV) across Asia range from 15 per cent in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Japan to more than 50 per cent of ever-partnered women in Bangladesh, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan.⁷ Available data show that South-East Asia has IPV prevalence rates of 37 per cent, and that the combined rate of IPV and non-partner sexual violence is 40 per cent. Among members of the Association of Southeast

6 WHO and UN Women (2019). *RESPECT women: Preventing violence against women*. Retrieved from Geneva: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/05/respect-women-preventing-violence-against-women>.

7 E. Fulu and X. Warner (2019). *Literature review: Ending violence against women and girls*. Canberra. Available at <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/evawg-final-report-nov-19.pdf>.

Asian Nations (ASEAN), between 6 per cent of women in Singapore and 44 per cent of women in Thailand have experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lives. Research shows that exposure to violence is high among women age 15–19 years, suggesting that the experience of violence often starts early in women’s lives.⁸ Rates of non-partner sexual violence are generally found to be lower than in the Pacific, however, it still remains an issue for attention across the region. Other forms of violence particular to the Asian context include early and forced marriage, child abuse, trafficking, dowry-related violence, acid attacks, ‘honour’-related violence, female genital mutilation/cutting and violence on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.



Photo: UN Women/Henriette Bjoerge

8 Ibid.

Pacific

Prevalence rates for the Pacific vary greatly, with the lowest rates found in Palau, where 8 per cent of women have experienced IPV in the past 12 months, and 25 per cent have ever experienced it during their lifetime. At the other end of the spectrum, 68 per cent of women in Papua New Guinea (Bougainville)⁹ and Kiribati have been physically and/or sexually abused by an intimate partner during their lifetime, and 44 per cent of women in Vanuatu have experienced IPV in the past 12 months.¹⁰



Photo: UN Women/Caitlin Clifford

There is also strong evidence that other forms of violence are pervasive across the Pacific, such as, non-partner sexual violence, sorcery-related violence, child abuse, trafficking, early and forced marriage,¹¹ and bride-price related violence.¹² However, there remains a significant lack of reliable and consistent data across

9 G. Krantz and C. Garcia-Moreno (2005). ‘Violence against women’. *Epidemiol Community Health* 59, pp. 818–821. doi:10.1136/jech.2004.022756.

10 *Literature review: Ending violence against women and girls.*

11 Ibid.

12 R. Eves et al. (2018). *Do no harm research: Papua New Guinea.* Available at http://bellschool.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/2018-03/do_no_harm_png_low_res.pdf.

different types of violence in the region. Reasons for this could include, lack of consistency in data collection methods, varying degrees of political will or because, for some practices such as marriage-related violence, including regional characteristics can make practices difficult to identify and quantify.¹³ Currently, only Kiribati has completed more than one prevalence study using the same methodology, which means it is challenging to determine whether VAWG in the Pacific is increasing or decreasing over time.

COVID-19

In times of crisis, women bear the brunt of challenges including increased labour and caring duties, but also increased rates of domestic violence and IPV. The emergence of COVID-19 highlighted existing gender inequalities around the world and exacerbated VAWG. Global pandemics and states of emergency can amplify risk factors that may contribute to violence, such as increased stress and financial insecurity. For example, in Hubei, China, domestic violence reports to police more than tripled in one county during the lockdown in February 2020, from the same time the year before.¹⁴ In many cases, some of the measures to contain the virus, such as staying at home and limiting movement, increased exposure to violence for those already experiencing abusive relationships.¹⁵ Therefore, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more important than ever to focus on VAWG prevention and response.

At the highest levels of the United Nations, VAWG and COVID-19 were acknowledged as top priorities. In April 2020 the United Nations Secretary-General urged Governments to make the response to and prevention of VAWG core

parts of national responses to COVID-19.¹⁶ The United Nations Secretary-General promoted women as the “backbone of recovery” and argued that recovery efforts should:¹⁷

- Include and place women and girls at the center of both response and recovery efforts;
- Designate domestic violence shelters as essential services and move support services online;
- Socioeconomic response plans should intentionally focus on the lives and futures of women and girls; and
- Work towards inclusive and equal economies that take account of unpaid care work, enable women’s increased labour force participation and close the gender pay gap.

The United Nations Secretary-General released a political engagement strategy for combatting gender-based violence (GBV) in the context of COVID-19, which aims to, “Accelerate concrete policy responses to gender-based violence in the context of COVID-19 and promote zero tolerance of gender-based violence across all spheres of society everywhere.” The three tactics which will help realize these goals are: activate decision-makers; public mobilization for positive change; and data for results.

[The UN Framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19](#) and its relevant indicators form the basis for monitoring the progress and achievements of United Nations Country Teams in preventing and responding to VAWG/GBV during and after the pandemic. Any population-based monitoring framework should draw on the indicators of the UN Framework and the political engagement strategy for combatting GBV. The present monitoring framework is well aligned with the focus on data collection in this context.

13 Literature review: *Ending violence against women and girls*.

14 H. Zhang (2020). ‘The Influence of the Ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic on Family Violence in China’ in *Journal of Family Violence*, pp. 1–11. doi: [10.1007/s10896-020-00196-8](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-020-00196-8).

15 UN Women (2020). *COVID-19 and ending violence against women and girls*. Geneva. Available at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/04/issue-brief-covid-19-and-ending-violence-against-women-and-girls#view>.

16 UN Women and United Nations Secretariat (2020). *Policy brief: The impact of COVID-19 on women*. Geneva Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/04/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women#view>.

17 United Nations (2020). *United Nations Comprehensive Response to COVID-19 Saving Lives, Protecting Societies, Recovering Better*. September. Available at <https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus/UN-response>.

2. About this framework

Purpose

The primary prevention of VAWG aims to change the social conditions that condone, excuse, justify and promote violence. This monitoring framework adopts a whole-of-population approach. While Governments have a key role in driving this work, everyone has a role to play in preventing VAWG.

The purpose of this monitoring framework is to guide policymakers and practitioners through the key components for building a prevention framework that is contextually relevant to countries in the Asia-Pacific region, and furthermore, to illustrate how to measure change in the short, medium and long term.

The primary intended audiences include:

- Policymakers, practitioners, funders and organizations working at the national or local government level and at the regional Asia-Pacific level; and
- Academics and researchers interested in measuring progress towards the primary prevention of VAWG.

The ultimate goal of primary prevention is that women and girls live free from violence. However, to progress toward this long-term goal, changes must be made in the short and medium term. This includes strengthening the infrastructure that addresses violence and changing attitudes and behaviours that condone and perpetuate it (see chapter 4).

This framework offers guidance to build consistency in monitoring of VAWG prevention; promote comparability of data; and support both shared learning and capacity-building across the Asia-Pacific region. Each country can use this guide to develop and implement their own contextually relevant monitoring framework.

What this framework does

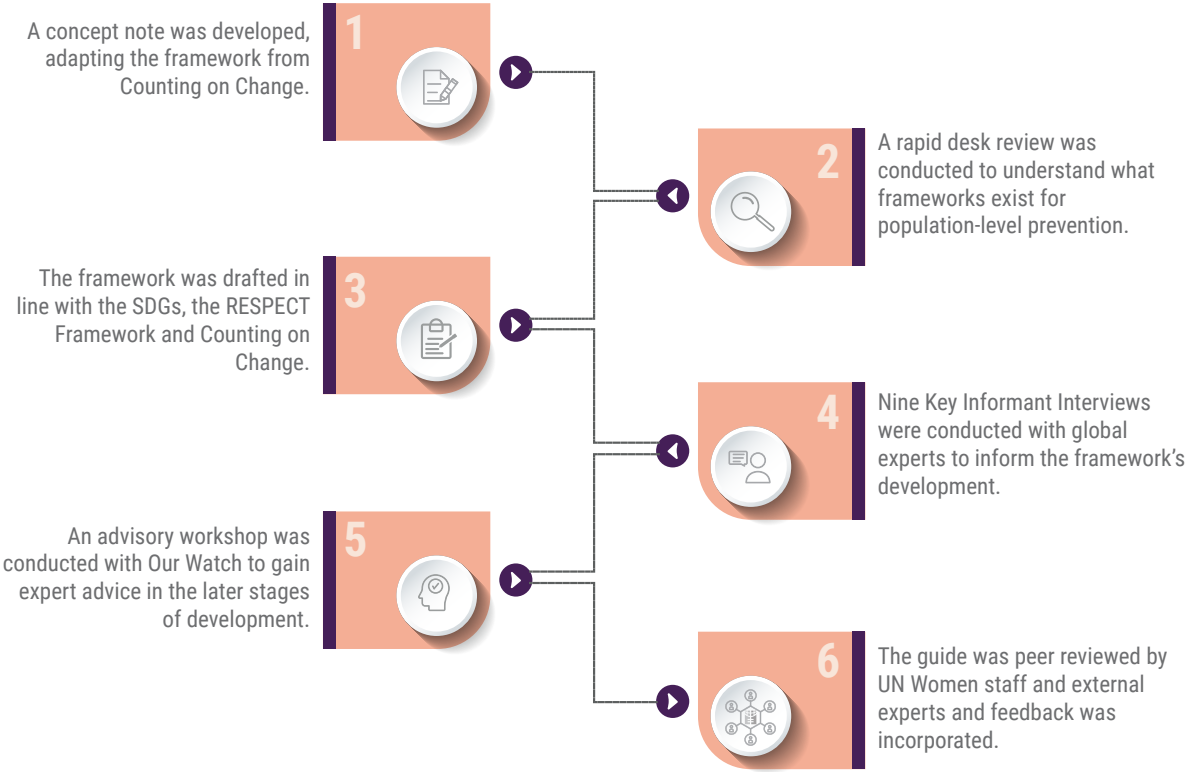
- It provides broad level guidance on monitoring of prevention of VAWG.
- It illustrates the process of change and the domains of indicators that should be used to measure change against the recognized risk and protective factors of VAWG, as identified in the *RESPECT Framework*.
- It provides guidance on how to measure population-level (as opposed to programme-level) progress towards the elimination of VAWG.
- It promotes the benefits of having regional consistency and comparability in VAWG data for prevention, as well as the benefits of collating shared learnings and supportive capacity development approaches.

What this framework does not do

- This guide does not focus on response mechanisms, or after violence has occurred. However, some references to response related indicators will be included, such as those that correspond to establishing adequate infrastructure in the short term and to illustrate attitudes towards VAWG.
- This guide is not aimed at monitoring and/or evaluating individual prevention initiatives.

Methodology for developing the monitoring framework

Figure 1: Methodology for developing the monitoring framework



This guide is an adaptation of the Australian primary prevention monitoring framework, Counting on Change, and its conceptual framework, Change the Story. Research and consultations were conducted to prepare this framework for the Asia-Pacific context. A rapid desk review was conducted to establish a background to the issues, linkages to other frameworks and gaps in the field.

Nine key informant interviews were conducted with experts working in the primary prevention of VAWG, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and population-level data sets to ensure this framework would be useful and user-friendly. Much of the conceptual framework was adapted from Counting on Change and consultations were conducted with Our Watch and associated authors of Change the Story and Counting on Change.

3. Key frameworks for the prevention of VAWG

Prevention of VAWG in the Asia-Pacific region needs to align with other key global and national frameworks. While there are numerous global frameworks and other conventions and protocols for combatting VAWG, there are three principal ones that inform this framework:

1. **The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals;**
2. **The RESPECT Framework; and**
3. **Counting on Change, A guide to prevention monitoring.**

This monitoring framework links to these key frameworks for prevention, in order to leverage the work already being done, as well as strong commitment and buy-in from governments and policy makers. By intersecting with RESPECT and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), common goals and indicators are established to work towards.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

All countries in the Asia-Pacific region are committed to the elimination of VAWG as part of a global commitment made through the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The 17 Goals and 169 targets build on the Millennium Development Goals and seek to achieve human rights for all people.

All United Nations member States, including all nations in the Asia-Pacific region, are required to implement, monitor and report on progress against the SDGs. There are specific targets within Goal 5 for achieving gender equality and eliminating VAWG.

The SDGs provide a global consensus for action through the goal on gender equality, alongside clear targets to end VAWG, specifically:

- 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
- 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation

The indicators for these targets are:

- 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls age 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age.
- 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls age 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.
- 5.3.1 Proportion of women age 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18.
- 5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women age 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age.

Evidence further shows that VAWG intersects with poverty, hunger, poor health and wellbeing, maternal death, poor education, climate change adaptation, energy and environmental burdens, economic hardships, and societal insecurity. Ending VAWG cannot be separated from other actions that help tackle these issues.¹⁸

¹⁸ The Equality Institute (2020). *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Violence against women and girls*. Melbourne, Australia.

The 2030 Agenda encourages member States to regularly conduct country-led and country-driven reviews of progress on the SDGs at the national and subnational levels, according to the Global Indicator Framework for the SDGs. This is a solid framework of indicators and statistical data for countries to monitor progress against the SDGs, inform policy and ensure accountability.

It is important that any population-level monitoring closely aligns with the Global Indicator Framework. This will ensure consistent methodology, data type and collection in the region, which will support continuity, comparability and the meaningful monitoring of progress.

The indicators in this monitoring framework purposefully align with the reported indicators for the SDGs. This is to ensure that the data collection and reporting activities to operationalize this framework will also fulfil SDG reporting requirements while tracking the progress of VAWG prevention in the country context.

RESPECT Framework

In 2019 the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN Women, along with a range of partners,¹⁹ launched RESPECT Women: Preventing violence against women, a framework aimed primarily at policymakers. The framework guides policymakers and programme implementers through action-oriented steps to plan, design, implement, monitor and evaluate VAWG prevention programmes. The seven key strategies of the Framework correspond to each letter of the word “RESPECT”.

¹⁹ Contributing Partners of the RESPECT Women Framework include: the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Government of the Netherlands, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), UK Aid, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank Group.

The RESPECT Women Framework

R **Relationship skills strengthened.** This refers to strategies to improve skills in interpersonal communication, conflict management and shared decision-making.

E **Empowerment of women.** This refers to economic and social empowerment strategies including those that build skills in self-efficacy, assertiveness, negotiation and self-confidence.

S **Services ensured.** This refers to a range of services including health, police, legal and social services for survivors of violence.

P **Poverty reduced.** This refers to strategies targeted to women or the household, whose primary aim is to alleviate poverty.

E **Environments made safe.** This refers to efforts to create safe schools, public spaces and work environments, among others.

C **Child and adolescent abuse prevented.** This includes strategies that establish nurturing family relationships.

T **Transformed attitudes, beliefs and norms.** This refers to strategies that challenge harmful gender attitudes, beliefs, norms and stereotypes.

Source: WHO and UN Women (2019). *RESPECT women: Preventing violence against women*. Geneva. Available at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/05/respect-women-preventing-violence-against-women>.

While the RESPECT Framework outlines programme-level prevention, it is useful to integrate these strategies into population-level change as well, in order to ensure synergy and strengthen prevention efforts.

Risk and protective factors

The RESPECT Framework lays out both risk factors which must be combatted and protective factors that must be leveraged for successful population-level prevention. Various **risk factors** operate at individual, interpersonal, community and societal (including institution/State) levels and intersect to increase the risk of VAWG and, therefore, must be addressed through policy and programming across the social ecology.^{20,21,22,23} Similarly, **protective factors** operate across individual, relationship, community and societal levels and can prevent and reduce VAWG. Both risk and protective factors are illustrated in figure 2.

Counting on Change: A guide to prevention monitoring

In recent decades, Australia has implemented wide-ranging primary prevention programmes and policies in different contexts. In 2015, Australia launched a whole-of-government approach to prevention articulated in the national prevention framework, *Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence*. A key player in Australian primary prevention is [Our Watch](#), an independent not-for-profit organization established in 2013 by the government of Victoria and the Commonwealth Government. Since then, the governments of all other states and territories have become members of Our Watch. In 2017, Our Watch

released [Counting on Change: a guide to prevention monitoring](#). The guide was developed for the Australian context and identifies indicators of change for the specific drivers and reinforcing factors of violence identified in the national prevention framework. *Counting on Change* identifies available Australian data sets (primarily large, population-representative cross-sectional and longitudinal quantitative surveys) and processes for gathering this information on prevention in Australia.

With *Counting on Change*, Australia became the first country to develop a comprehensive national monitoring framework for measuring population-level progress towards the prevention and ultimate elimination of violence against women and their children. Since 2019, Fiji and Peru began to adapt their own national prevention frameworks. Monitoring frameworks of this kind do not yet exist on a global or regional scale.

Importantly, *Counting on Change* advises that preventing violence against women is a long-term goal and needs to be tackled through a coordinated approach. It provides guidance on how to measure population-level progress in Australia towards the prevention of violence against women and their children.²⁴ Furthermore, it describes domains of change and associated measures and indicators for the short, medium and long term. The domains of change have been adapted for this framework and align with the RESPECT Framework and the SDG indicators.

Applying an intersectional lens to prevention monitoring

Women experience intersecting forms of discrimination and inequality. The framework adopts an intersectional lens in its approach to understanding, communicating and monitoring the prevention of VAWG.

20 S. Bott, A. Morrison and M. Ellsberg (2005). *Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence in Middle and Low-Income Countries: A Global Review and Analysis*.

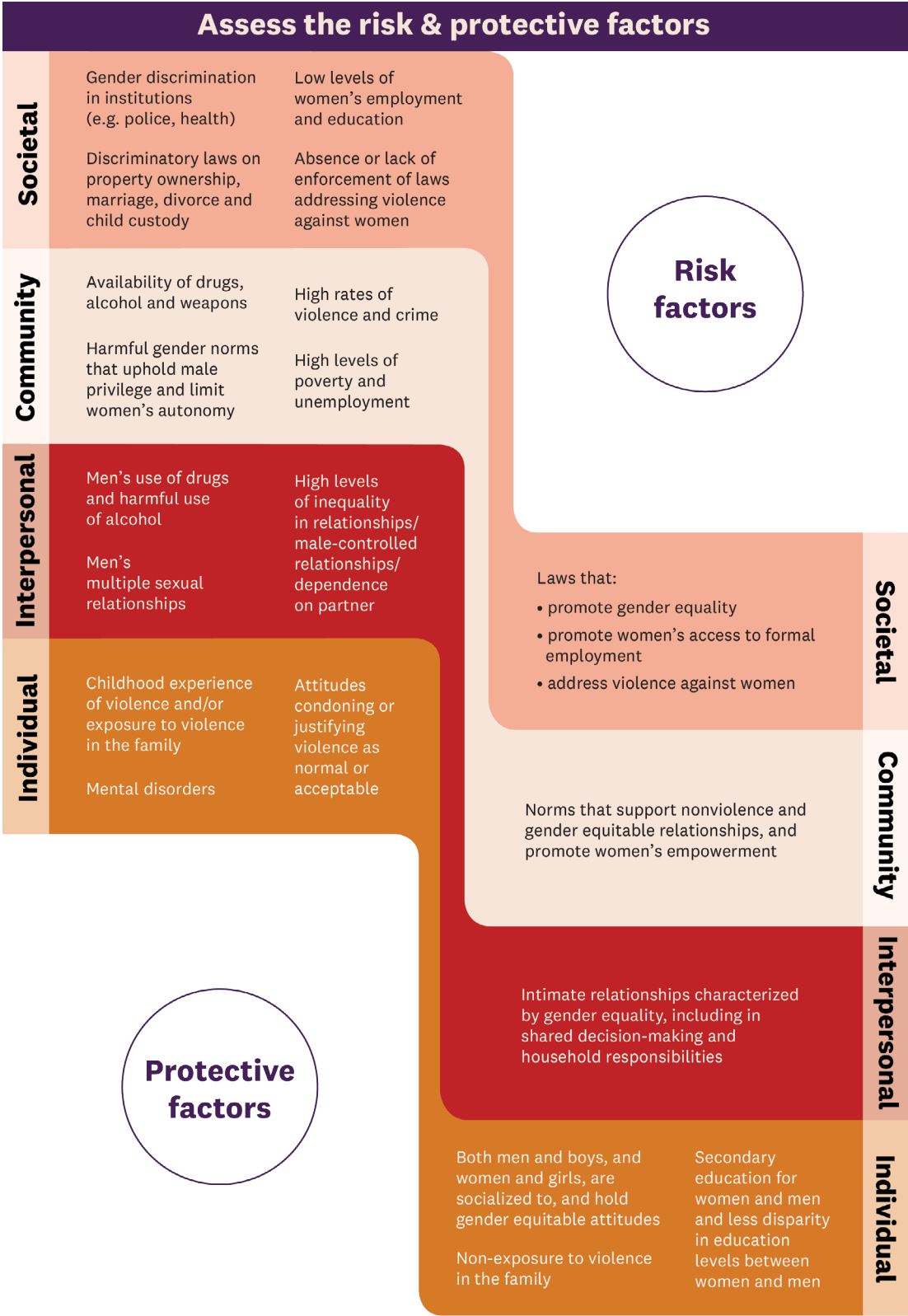
21 E. Fulu and S. Miedema (2015). 'Violence against Women: Globalizing the Integrated Ecological Model'. *Violence Against Women* 21(12), pp. 1431–1455. doi:10.1177/1077801215596244.

22 L. Heise (1998). 'Violence against Women: An integrated, ecological framework'. *Violence Against Women* 4(3), pp. 262–290.

23 WHO and UN Women (2019). *RESPECT women: Preventing violence against women*. Geneva. Available at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/05/respect-women-preventing-violence-against-women>.

24 Our Watch (2017). *Counting on Change: A guide to prevention monitoring*. Melbourne, Australia. Available at <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/resource/counting-on-change-a-guide-to-prevention-monitoring/>.

Figure 2: Risk and protective factors of VAWG



Source: Adapted from the RESPECT Framework.

Intersectionality acknowledges that various identities, experiences, and vulnerabilities – related to race, gender, ability, sexuality, class, etc. – intersect, overlap and impact upon experiences people have. Gender inequality remains at the heart of prevention, however an intersectional approach considers how other structural inequalities and forms of oppression, such as racism, ableism, colonialism, class privilege and homophobia, intersect with sexism to impact people differently. An intersectional analysis also considers how systems of oppression reinforce each other.

Rather than focusing on experiences of violence, an intersectional approach to prevention considers how intersecting structural inequalities drive risk and protective factors. In essence, an intersectional approach requires public policies that address the structural, root causes of violence against *all* women.²⁵

The importance of intersectional data collection

By its very nature, large-scale population-based research focuses on broad trends and the general population. Such research has often been conducted under the belief that all women, regardless of their background and differences, shared similar experiences, views and priorities when it comes to violence.

Large-scale data sets are rarely disaggregated by demographic and identity characteristics. Without sufficient disaggregation, the research and data leave out the distinct experiences of different groups of women, such as indigenous women, ethnic and linguistic minorities, women with disabilities, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex (LBTQI) and non-binary people,²⁶ migrant and refugee women, and low-income women.

While there has been increasing attention to diversity among women and the different ways inequality manifests, it remains a challenge to collect data on the complex experiences and lived realities of women and other specific population groups.

An intersectional analysis requires access to specific information that is rarely collected in the first place. When population data sets are sufficiently large and disaggregated along all pertinent demographic features, it is possible to analyse how these might intersect. Intersectional data helps to tell ‘the whole story’ of change over time. For example, tracking progress can reveal gains in certain domains of gender equality. However, further intersectional analysis might highlight that these gains accrue to women who have other forms of privilege (such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity or educational level). Intersectional analyses are vital to ensure that strategies to support gender equality progress do not reinforce imbalances of power and privilege between different groups of women.

Counting on Change recommends ways to track VAWG prevention progress at the population-level, informed by an intersectional approach.²⁷

1. Create an Intersectionality Advisory Group to oversee progress

Monitoring frameworks that measure population-level progress on VAWG should be directed by an Intersectionality Advisory Group made up of researchers, data experts and stakeholders from diverse organizations, groups and communities, and whose views and experiences represent the diversity of the broader community. This will include indigenous women, culturally and linguistically diverse women, LBTQI and non-binary people and women with disabilities. While it will require more time and resources to establish an Intersectionality Advisory Group, it will help ensure that the design and

25 Ibid.

26 Non-binary people are persons with gender identities outside of the male-female gender binary.

27 Adapted from Our Watch (2017). *Counting on Change: A guide to prevention monitoring*. Melbourne, Australia. Available at <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/resource/counting-on-change-a-guide-to-prevention-monitoring/>.

process of data collection and analysis, as well as the communication of the findings, accounts for different types of intersecting disadvantages and discrimination that can exacerbate VAWG.

2. Collect population group disaggregated data sets and analyse and report on these comprehensively

Analysing data through an intersectional lens does not mean simply 'adding' categories together (for example, gender, race, class, sexuality). Instead, it seeks to identify differences in discrimination and/or inequality that are created when two or more identities intersect. Countries should collect data on different identities to reveal how a change might affect, include or exclude certain groups. Furthermore, countries should investigate other forms of social inequality and how these intersect with gender.

3. Highlight gaps in data on intersectionality

Much of the data that countries need for an intersectional analysis has not been collected yet. Therefore, it is essential to continuously advocate for intersectional approaches to monitoring. This will ensure future data collection includes the experiences of diverse groups and data sets are disaggregated to measure differences.

4. Ask tough intersectionality questions

Asking tough questions can help to eliminate gaps in the data, ensure data sets are representative of populations and progress made, and increase the accountability of processes. When designing and implementing monitoring frameworks to track progress, continuously ask:

1. Who is being compared to whom? Why?
2. What inequalities and discriminations are emphasized by the data collection and analysis? As well as gender inequality, how are other forms of power and inequality analysed?

3. How will commonalities and differences be captured without resorting to false universalism, essentialism or blindness to historical and contemporary inequalities?
4. How can we make sure we are not seeing what we expect (or want) to see in our findings?

Despite the current lack of disaggregated data on VAWG, it is important to 'tell the story' of monitoring prevention. Where data does not exist, this monitoring framework can be used as an advocacy tool to push for the collection of intersectional data across the region. Applying an intersectional lens to population-based monitoring of prevention will further improve the field and allow meaningful progress toward the prevention of violence against all women in the Asia-Pacific region.



Photo: UN Women/Staton Winter

4. The process of change

Evaluations have shown that good practice prevention strategies can reduce the prevalence of VAWG in communities.²⁸ When such strategies are implemented across multiple settings (the environments where people live, work, learn and play) this will lead to lasting reductions in prevalence across whole populations.

The ultimate goal established by the 2030 Agenda is to eliminate all forms of VAWG, however, this will take time and progress will not be linear. Prevention is a long-term collaborative effort, and real population-level change will only occur over a sustained period of time. Achieving such change will be challenging and will require the concerted effort of all donors, policymakers and organizations.

It is important to understand if prevention programming is 'heading in the right direction'

towards meeting that goal. Monitoring will help Governments, civil society and other stakeholders to stay motivated and know that their investments are having an impact over time. This requires a series of measures and indicators that can help track changes to complex and interrelated social norms, practices and structures that cause VAWG.

Further, evaluation and continuous improvement mechanisms are necessary in order to learn from the implementation experience and make ongoing adjustments to prevention programming. The issue is complex and multiple indicators are needed to form a complete picture.

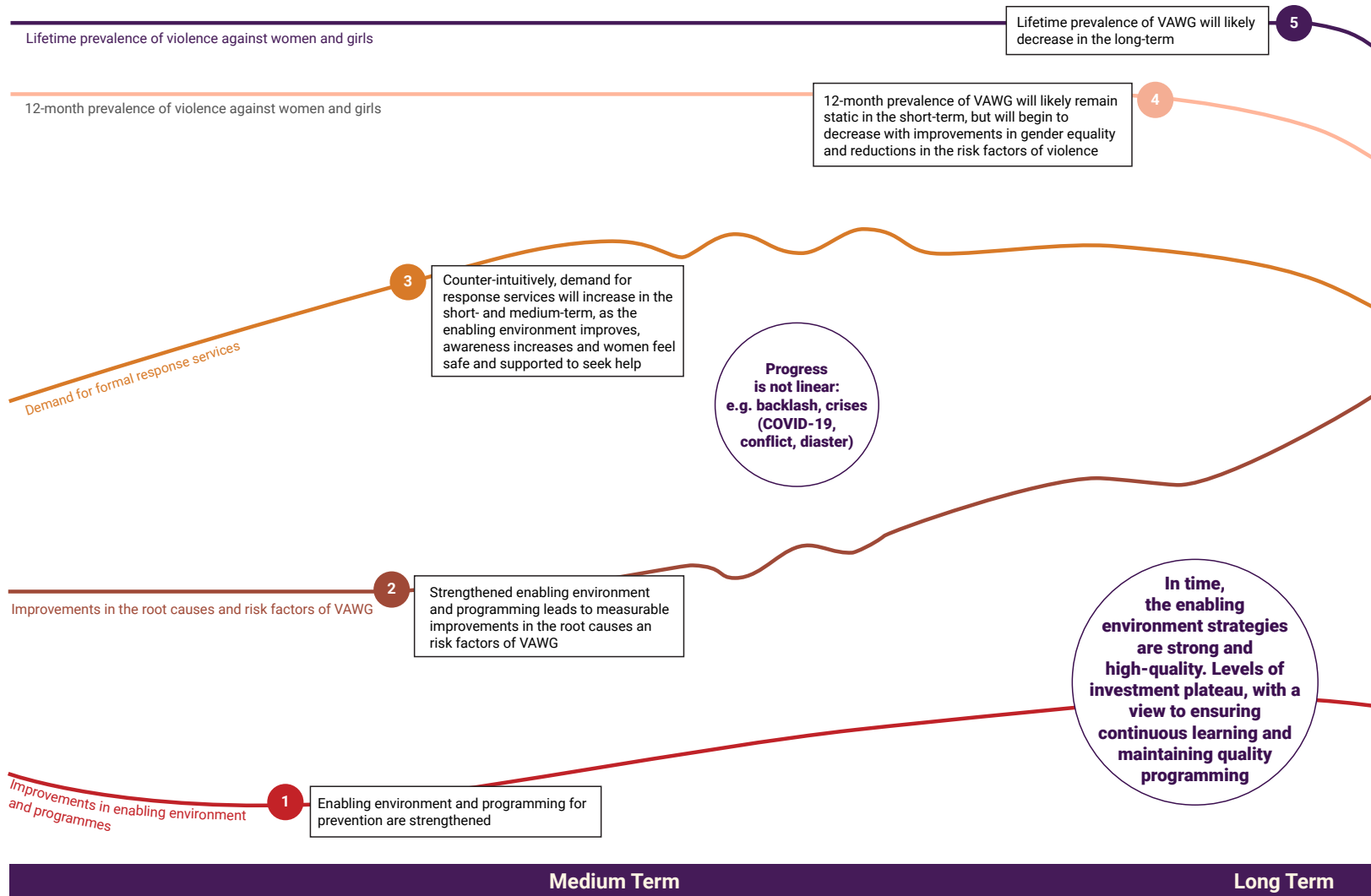
This chapter outlines the expected process of change over time towards a reduction of VAWG and its ultimate elimination.



Photos: UN Women/Caitlin Clifford

28 WHO and UN Women (2019). *RESPECT women: Preventing violence against women*. Geneva. Available at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/05/respect-women-preventing-violence-against-women>.

Figure 3: The expected process of change



The expected process of change

To reduce and ultimately end VAWG, its root causes and risk factors must be addressed. To do this effectively, Governments should implement interventions that have been shown to work, ultimately on a scale that will create impact for the whole country. The process of change therefore begins with the testing, implementation and scaling up interventions, through quality prevention programming that is supported by an appropriate enabling environment (such as an expert workforce and coordination mechanisms). This crucial support work is represented by the **red** line in the figure above.

This work, in turn, will begin to increase gender equality and promote equal and respectful relationships, represented by the gradual upward trajectory of the **brown** line. However, change is not linear, and there will be disruptions, including instances of backlash and crises, such as COVID-19, conflict or natural disasters. Overall, however the general trajectory will be towards improvement.

While it may seem counter-intuitive, demand for formal response services (represented by the **orange** line) is expected to increase in the medium term as the enabling environment and programming improve. These improvements will raise community awareness, challenge attitudes that condone violence and encourage reporting of incidents. As a result, women experiencing violence will be more likely to seek help from formal services.

As more people stand up against violence, as women have greater independence and decision-making power, as gender roles are transformed, and as more people have the skills and desire to create positive, equal and respectful relationships, then – and only then – will a decrease in rates of VAWG be observed.

Twelve-month prevalence rates will demonstrate the earliest positive impacts (shown in the **pink** line above). Lifetime prevalence rates (**dark purple** line) will take much longer to improve, because incidents experienced earlier in people's lives will continue to be included in this measure, long after any prevention strategies have been introduced. However, as subsequent generations of girls grow up where gender equality, respect and non-violence are the norm, then lifetime prevalence rates will start to fall.

The long-term goal: Eliminating violence against women and girls

The targets and indicators for the long-term goal – elimination of VAWG – were established through the 2030 Agenda as outlined in chapter 3.

If conducted properly, with due consideration for quality and ethics, population-based surveys are the best source of data for estimating the

prevalence of VAWG. Surveys can reach nearly all women, regardless of whether or not they have reported violence to the police or sought help from health or social service agencies. Women in the population are interviewed about their experiences of violence and additional information can easily be collected on the circumstances of the violence, its health consequences and the actions they took to seek help.²⁹

²⁹ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2014). Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women. ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/110.

Box 1: Long-term change in prevalence is possible – The case of Nicaragua

The percentage of women and girls in Nicaragua's second-largest city who reported experiencing physical violence by their partners during their lifetimes decreased from 55 per cent in 1995 to 28 per cent in 2016, according to a study published in the journal *BMJ Global Health*. Researchers recorded the decline in a follow-up study conducted on intimate partner violence (IPV) in the city of León 20 years after the initial prevalence study.

The study is the first to measure population-level change in the prevalence of IPV over a 20-year period.

The reduction in violence was not primarily because of demographic shifts, such as increased education or age, but reflected a true decrease in the prevalence of IPV.

It is likely that the transformations in laws and policies, as well as widespread awareness campaigns and programmes to transform social norms, led by the broad-based women's movement, have contributed to the decrease in violence over the period.

The researchers concluded that VAWG is preventable through large-scale, structural interventions undertaken by advocacy groups, CSOs, national Governments, international donors and other sectors.

Source: M. Ellsberg, W. Ugarte, J. Ovince, A. Blackwell and M. Quintanilla (2020). Long-term change in the prevalence of intimate partner violence: a 20-year follow-up study in León, Nicaragua, 1995–2016. *BMJ Global Health* 5(4).

The most reputable and widely recommended methods are the domestic violence module of the [Demographic and Health Survey](#) or the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women.³⁰ These surveys distinguish between different forms of violence (for example, physical and sexual) and different categories of perpetrator (for example, former or current intimate partner, friend, colleague, etc.), and such distinctions are essential to understand the prevalence of VAWG. Data on VAC can also provide insights on VAWG as there is significant overlap in some of the risk factors for VAW. Furthermore, IPV often begins in adolescence. Data sources to draw from include VAC studies, Demographic and Health Surveys and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys.^{31,32}

Prevalence is usually measured in two main ways: lifetime prevalence (the percentage of women who have ever experienced violence in their adult lifetime, usually from the age of 15 years), and 12-month prevalence (the percentage of women who have experienced violence in the past year).

Achieving decreases in the prevalence of VAWG cannot be assumed or expected as the result of any 'inevitable' historical process, or improved responses to violence, alone. Reductions in the prevalence of VAWG can, logically, only be expected if we first achieve reductions in the factors that cause such violence. The example of Nicaragua (Box 1) illustrates the types of changes that are needed to lead to significant long-term decreases in the prevalence of VAWG.

30 See <https://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/24159358X/en/>.

31 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020). *Violence against Children and Youth Surveys*. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/vacs/index.html>.

32 UNICEF (2020). MICS. Available at <https://mics.unicef.org/>.

Box 2: Prevalence indicators versus reporting (and other 'response') indicators

It is important to distinguish between indicators of prevalence (the number of women experiencing violence as measured through broad population surveys) and reporting rates of violence (the number of women who officially report violence to police or services). While prevalence rates are only expected to change in the long term, reporting rates have already shown significant shifts in recent decades.

As the response to violence provided by police, justice systems and services improves, and social norms around the unacceptability of violence are strengthened, women become more confident to seek help. Many countries have seen increased rates of reporting of violence (to police or services) in recent years. This is an indicator of positive change. Indeed, low reporting rates can be considered expressions of the extent to which society condones, trivializes and minimizes VAWG.

As VAWG becomes less acceptable to society, we can expect reporting rates – and other response indicators, such as prosecution rates – to rise. Figure 3 illustrates how reporting rates could approach prevalence rates over the medium to long term, only decreasing when prevalence rates themselves begin to decline.

How to get there: Addressing the causes and risk factors

With the right strategies and supports in place, improvements in the causes and risk factors might be expected to occur over the medium term. As the causes and risk factors of violence manifest at – and often cut across – different levels of the social ecology, a monitoring framework should include indicators that measure change at each level.

The specific causes and risk factors in this guide are informed by decades of research and outlined in the RESPECT Framework. However, this evidence is related primarily to women's experiences of IPV. Different types of violence, among different population groups, will be driven by unique sets of risk factors. Therefore, the framework should be adapted to meet the specific context, type of violence or population if working in particular communities.

The first steps: Strengthening the enabling environment and programmes

Building such an infrastructure and implementing quality programming is the necessary first step on the journey towards reduced prevalence in the long term – all other changes will depend on it. Measuring progress in the development of and investment in prevention infrastructure and programming is, therefore, an important piece of the puzzle that reveals whether prevention

programming is 'heading in the right direction' to reduce the prevalence of VAWG.

This means that the right systems, programmes, strategies and enabling environment need to be established and implemented. Governments play a leading role, but no single Government or organization can drive such multifaceted and interdependent changes alone. Significant effort and investment are needed from numerous stakeholders – the Government, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and communities – working collaboratively.

Enabling environment

An enabling environment to prevent VAWG refers to a setting which provides a society with the very best chance of success. Building such an environment means building the conditions to fulfil gender equality and sustain violence-free societies. Approaches should aim to enhance a society's institutional capacities at community and national levels, so they are better able to respond to and prevent VAWG. Developing and strengthening VAWG response services will underpin and support change as it occurs.

Strategies should target VAWG prevention at different levels, including:

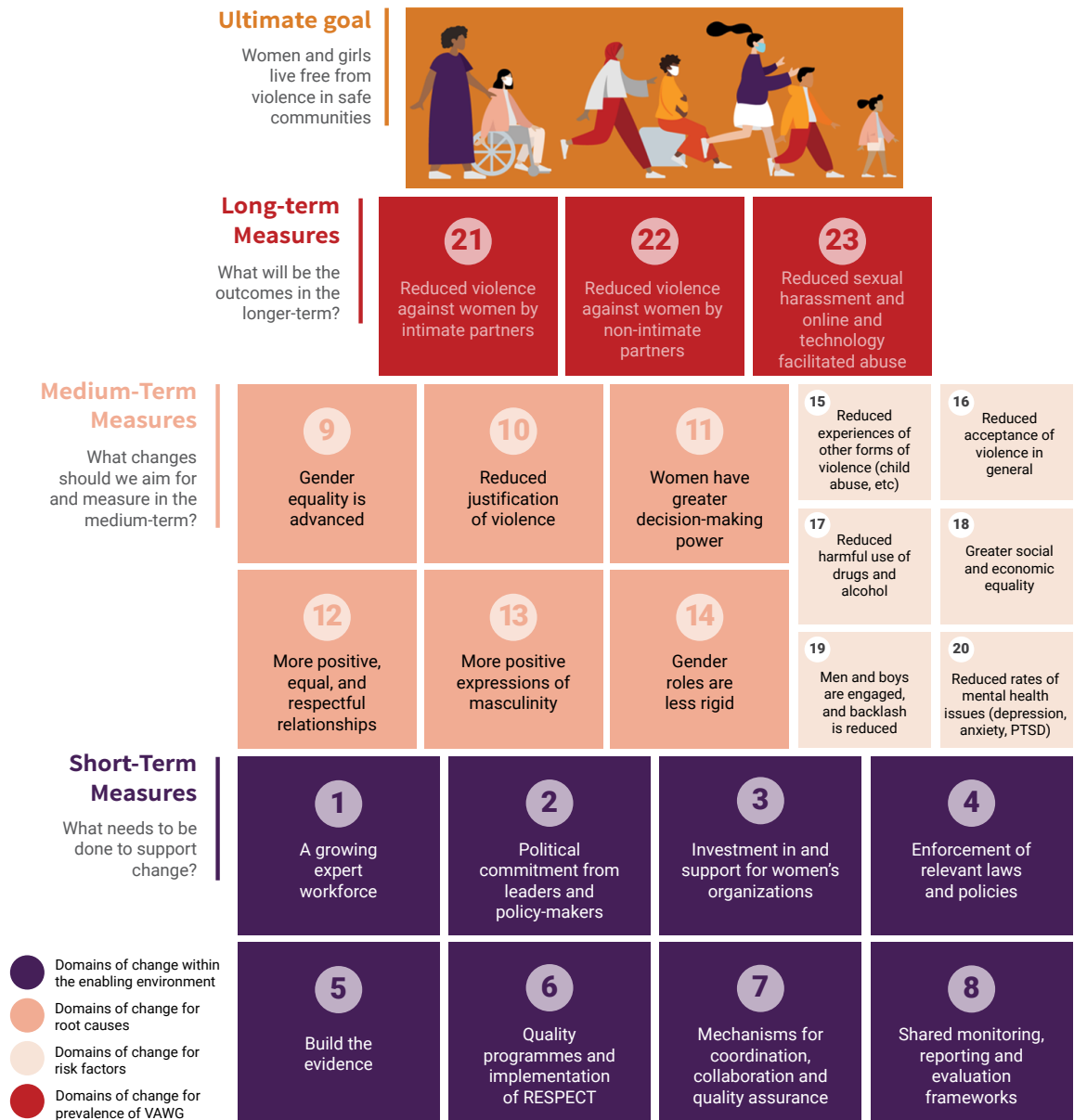
- The provision of laws and policies that promote gender equality, protect survivors and hold perpetrators to account;
- Prioritizing public health and education that feed into and support prevention aims;
- Changing harmful social norms that condone, accept and exacerbate gender inequality and VAWG; and
- Strengthening and implementing a range of response services and programmes that complement prevention efforts.

To create an enabling environment, local actors (including survivors, advocates, researchers, policymakers, etc.) must take the lead in prevention programming. Governments must support the development of local actors and social institutions. Supporting local ownership will build their resilience and capacity to contextually respond to violence.

Domains of change

In order to track the expected process of change, as outlined in Figure 3, short-, medium- and long-term measures are needed. Figure 4 illustrates the connection between the ultimate goal “women and girls live free from violence in safe communities” and the broad domains of change.

Figure 4: Domains of change



It is important to think critically about the relationships between domains, and avoid viewing domains of change in isolation. By looking for progress across all the domains of change it becomes clear how changes are interconnected and impact one another. Progress in one domain may be supported or hindered by progress or inactivity in another domain. Analysis across the domains helps identify these relationships, as shown in Box 3.

Box 3: Case Study: Looking across domains of change – Nepal

Looking across domains of change gives a more holistic picture on progress in prevention. In the political domain, for example, more than 30 per cent of parliamentary seats in Nepal are held by women, and the country has also ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol, and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.¹ Nepal has made necessary legal gains with the 2006 Gender Equality Act and the Domestic Violence (crime and punishment) Act, 2066 (2009). Furthermore, the new Constitution includes article 38 (3) on violence against women, which states ‘no woman shall be subjected to physical, mental, sexual, psychological or other forms of violence or exploitation on the grounds of religion or social or cultural tradition or practice, or on any other grounds.’

Nevertheless, there are gaps in the legislation and many are doubtful of effective implementation at the community level.² Evidence suggests that despite a growing number of VAWG prevention and response programmes in Nepal, many NGOs that run emergency shelters lack the capacity to provide services such as counselling, legal aid, skill training and reintegration.³ The uptake of response services can be hindered by a lack of progress in changing social norms, where social stigma and rigid gender norms prevent women from seeking help.^{4,5}

Gains made in political commitments and legislation alone signifies progress towards gender equality in Nepal, but the picture looks different when considering the enforcement of those laws, the implementation of quality programmes and rigid gender roles. A more coordinated approach is needed for prevention to meaningfully take effect in communities.

- 1 E. Fulu, and X. Warner (2018). *Literature review: Ending violence against women and girls*. Canberra. Available at <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/evawg-final-report-nov-19.pdf>.
- 2 D. Šimonović (2019). *Visit to Nepal: Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences*. Geneva.
- 3 The Asia Foundation (2010). *Nepal: Preliminary Mapping of Gender-based Violence*, Kathmandu.
- 4 L. Kirk et al. (2017). “Effectiveness of secondary and tertiary prevention for violence against women in low and low-middle income countries: a systematic review”. *BMC Public Health* 17, article No. 622.
- 5 A. Ghimire and F. Samuels (2017). *Understanding Intimate Partner Violence in Nepal through a male lens*. London: Overseas Development Institute.

5. Indicators to measure change

The goal of reducing the prevalence of VAWG is long term, but there are measures which can be monitored in the interim to track progress. The previous chapter outlined how change is expected to occur. This chapter goes into greater detail on the proposed domains of change and ways to measure complex change, in the short, medium and long term as well as indicators to monitor gender equality during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This chapter provides illustrative examples of indicators within each of the domains of change. **Detailed indicators should be developed as part of a national process to develop a locally-contextualised framework.** Indicators will aim to measure general progress at the population level, but data should be disaggregated by age, sex, socioeconomic status and urban/rural/remote location, if possible. Additionally, attention should be paid to using such data sets to reduce inequality between different groups of people and the wider community.

Aligning indicators with key global and regional frameworks is desirable for consistency and comparability across the region and over time. In some instances, existing indicators may not be applicable to national circumstances, and in other instances new indicators will need to be developed. The examples of indicators across the domains of change are provided in this chapter as a guide but not as a definitive set. Each country may consider which indicators to add, subtract or develop as needed.

When analysing and interpreting data that show changes in indicators, it is key to do so through a feminist theoretical lens to avoid misinterpreting important information. Technical support or capacity strengthening may be needed.

Short-term indicators: Strengthening the enabling environment and programming

It is vitally important that prevention programming and infrastructure are established and strengthened to maximize the impact of all prevention activities. Building and strengthening the enabling environment is the vital first step for reducing the prevalence of VAWG in the long term, and all other changes will depend on it. As programming and prevention infrastructure improve, comprehensive, population-based prevention as a whole can begin to drive change.

International evidence on what works to prevent violence, as well as Counting on Change have established that programming in isolation is not enough to eliminate VAWG – a coordinated effort across multiple settings (including schools, media, workplaces, etc.) and levels of society (i.e., individual, interpersonal, community, societal) are needed to affect lasting change.

The evidence shows that to be effective, quality prevention programming must:

- Be inclusive;
- Be long-term;
- Be multi-sectoral and multi-component;
- Address the risk and protective factors of violence;
- Implement evidence-based techniques across settings; and
- Be tailored to the audience.

Countries need strong infrastructure to sustain and carry out quality prevention programming.

Box 4: Progress on Goal 5 to date

Globally, there is progression toward some indicators of SDG 5 on gender equality. For example, although overall numbers remain high, there has been a significant decline in the prevalence of female genital mutilation and early marriage. Nevertheless, the achievement of Goal 5 is undermined by insufficient progress on structural issues at the root of gender inequality, such as legal discrimination against women, sexist social norms and attitudes, policies that restrict women's decision-making on sexual and reproductive health and rights and women's low level of political participation.

- Recent data from 106 countries show that 18 per cent of ever-partnered women and girls age 15–49 have experienced physical and/or sexual partner violence in the previous 12 months. The prevalence is highest in least developed countries, at 24 per cent.
- The practice of child marriage has continued to decline around the world, largely driven by progress in South Asia, where a girl's risk of marrying in childhood decreased by about one quarter between 2013 and 2018. In sub-Saharan Africa, levels of child marriage have declined but at a more modest rate.
- At least 200 million girls and women have been subjected to female genital mutilation, based on data from 30 countries where the practice is concentrated and nationally representative prevalence data is available. In these countries, the prevalence of this harmful practice declined by approximately one quarter between 2000 and 2018.

Source: United Nations (2019). Report of the Secretary-General on SDG Progress 2019. Available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/24978Report_of_the_SG_on_SDG_Progress_2019.pdf.

The following list of short-term indicators are recommended for tracking progress. These indicators help support quality programming and infrastructure. They align with strengthening the enabling environment in the RESPECT Framework and incorporate some indicators adapted from Counting on Change:

1. Develop and support an expert workforce;
2. Build political commitment from leaders and policymakers;
3. Invest in, build on the work of and support women's organizations;
4. Enforce laws and policies that address VAWG and promote gender equality;
5. Build the evidence;
6. Allocate resources to quality programmes (including response services) and implement the RESPECT Framework;
7. Ensure mechanisms for coordination, collaboration and quality assurance; and
8. Implement shared monitoring, reporting and evaluation frameworks.

Domain 1: Develop and support an expert workforce

Due to the specialized nature of prevention, countries should engage experts in the field of prevention and VAWG to implement prevention activities so they are implemented safely and effectively. This requires significant investment in capacity development, as well as organizational development and expansion to meet the current demands of prevention programmes, as well as to expand the reach of activities across the country. Countries should invest in the professional development of service providers but also members of women's movements, researchers, activists and other technical experts.

Principles of developing and supporting an expert workforce

9. A specialist and expert workforce of prevention practitioners and policymakers provide leadership, technical assistance, programme development and policy support to stakeholders.
10. Prevention of VAWG specialists have the capacity and skills to design and deliver specific, evidence informed, culturally appropriate and intersectional prevention strategies and develop policies, programmes and initiatives for gender equality.
11. Those working in prevention-related sectors and settings (e.g., women's organizations, health services, schools, faith-based organizations, etc.) have the capacity and skills to undertake quality and effective prevention work.

Possible indicators for domain 1

1. Prevention of VAWG workforce and organizational development is resourced and supported – financially and in-kind – by Governments, workplaces and relevant training institutions.
2. Accredited professional development and pre-service training courses are evaluated for quality and long-term impact.

Domain 2. Build political commitment from leaders and policymakers

It is vital that leaders and policymakers champion gender equality and the elimination of VAWG. Without political willpower, there is no way to sustain prevention and change over the long term. With all levels of leadership demonstrating the importance of prevention, efforts are more likely to be supported and legitimized by the wider society. Leadership can be measured in multiple ways and will require a mixed methods approach to analyse expressions of commitment to prevent VAWG.

Principles of leadership

3. Leadership to prevent VAWG is demonstrated across all levels of government with an active commitment to pursue necessary legislative and policy reform.
4. Leadership to prevent VAWG is demonstrated by civil society organizations (CSOs) and public and private sector institutions.
5. Prevention of VAWG is framed as a human rights obligation, and public support for prevention efforts is expressed by engaging and supporting organizations and stakeholders to participate in prevention efforts.

Possible indicators for domain 2

1. Public statements by political leaders, across the political spectrum and at different levels of government, commit to evidence-based and long-term action addressing the drivers of VAWG.
2. Public statements by CSOs, public and private sector institutions commit to integrating gender equality and the prevention of VAWG into their core business.
3. Public commitments are accompanied by commensurate investment (financial and in-kind) in quality prevention strategies and initiatives (in government, non-government and private sectors).
4. Collective activities are initiated by partnerships between women's organizations and those working on other areas of social justice that drive an intersectional approach to prevention of VAWG.

Domain 3: Invest in, build on the work of and support women's organizations

Evidence suggests one of the most consistent key factors in driving policy change and results to ending VAWG is feminist activism.* Women's organizations are at the front lines of not only response service provision, but also community awareness raising and lobbying, and thus they are vital to prevention. Good leadership must be built, supported and invested in, and their work must be valued. This will help to ensure that women's organizations continue to contribute to the progress of prevention.

* M. Ellsberg, W. Ugarte, J. Ovince, A. Blackwell, and M. Quintanilla (2020). "Long-term change in the prevalence of intimate partner violence: a 20-year follow-up study in Leon, Nicaragua, 1995–2016". *BMJ Global Health* 5(4).
S. Laurel Weldon and Mala Htun (2013). "Feminist mobilisation and progressive policy change: why governments take action to combat violence against women". *Gender & Development* 21(2), pp. 231–247.

Principles for supporting women's organizations

1. Women's organizations are not reliant on precarious funding cycles, nor are their budgets cut for 'cost saving', but instead are fully funded and resourced.
2. Women's organizations are permitted to work freely without interference.

Possible indicators for domain 3

1. Women's organizations and other CSOs are permitted to work independently.³³
2. Governments allocate a particular, ongoing percentage of their budgets to support women's organizations. Donors, multilateral agencies and governments provide core, flexible funding for women's organisations.

³³ Please see Domain 6 below for more indicators on strength of services.

Domain 4: Enforce laws and policies that address VAWG and promote gender equality

Reforming and enforcing laws and policies that address VAWG and promote gender equality are vital for helping drive societal level change, by shifting social norms and reinforcing prevention strategies. They are also key in supporting victims/survivors of violence and holding perpetrators accountable. It is important that gender-impact analysis is included in legal and policy development and reform, ensuring that any differential impacts of laws on men's and women's lives (and on different groups of men and women) are identified and addressed.

Principles for enforcing laws and policies that address VAWG and promote gender equality

1. Government policy development supports a long-term, sustainable, multi-setting and evidence-based approach to ending VAWG, aligned with the SDGs and the RESPECT Framework.
2. Legal reform supports governance structures, policy development and investment decisions that promote gender equality and address the risk and protective factors of VAWG.

Possible indicators for domain 4

1. Governments (national and local) have a dedicated policy for primary prevention of VAWG or have primary prevention of VAWG included as a specific area within a broader policy, aligned with the SDGs and the RESPECT Framework.
2. Such policies are costed, framed as long-term, have multi-party support and clearly articulated governance, implementation and funding mechanisms, to ensure sustainability.
3. Such policies articulate prevention of VAWG and securing gender equality as core human rights obligation of Governments.

Domain 5: Build the evidence

It is important that activities to prevent VAWG are founded on evidence and that programmes and services are professional and ethical and do not add to the risk and vulnerability of women and girls. Evidence is needed to demonstrate which programmes are effective in preventing violence (and why they are effective), as well as to understand how mitigating risk factors (and enhancing protective factors) will minimize the impacts of violence on women, families and communities.

Further evidence is needed on the context-specific causes of VAWG, especially for specific groups of women, such as LGBTQI people, migrant women, women with disabilities, indigenous women and women belonging to ethnic minorities. Evidence on effective practices, toolkits and resources needs to be made available to women's organizations, practitioners, service providers and government policymakers to inform the planning and implementation of activities. Opportunities exist for academic research to explore VAWG and intersecting issues, determinants of VAWG and the effectiveness of programmes for prevention and intervention, particularly for a whole-of-population approach.

Principles for building the evidence

1. Governments, implementers and researchers build and compile rigorous evidence for understanding VAWG more completely, including what are the types of violence, risk and protective factors and what works to prevent VAWG, including costs and benefits.
2. Governments and implementers monitor programmes and use impact evaluation to measure programme effectiveness.
3. Governments, agencies and services continue to work together to improve completeness and accuracy of data collection and access to appropriate methods, measures and standards for reporting VAWG.
4. Governments and other implementers use rigorous evidence to improve programmes, scale what works and redirect funds away from consistently ineffective programmes.
5. Governments and national statistical offices make available population-level data and evidence on the prevalence of VAWG and risk and protective factors in the population.
6. Governments establish partnerships between researchers, women's organizations and other implementers to evaluate evidence-based practices and provide support for programme implementation and quality improvement.

Possible indicators for domain 5

1. Government supports research that widens the understanding of VAWG, including the forms of violence as they are experienced by different communities (such as LBTQI people) as well as emergent types of violence (such as cyberbullying).
2. Budgets are allocated and new and innovative research is produced to widen the understanding of different types of violence, risk and protective factors.
3. The latest evidence is used to inform policy and programming.

Domain 6: Allocate resources to quality programmes (including response services) and implement the RESPECT Framework

It is important that programmes to guide social change are implemented at all levels, and that they are informed by evidence and provide proof or promise of success. Strong response systems are the foundation of prevention because they protect women and girls from further violence, hold perpetrators accountable, and send the message that violence is unacceptable to the wider community. Prevention initiatives can and should lead an increased number of women to seek protection from violence, and so prevention initiatives can increase the level of reporting to support services and police. When developing prevention strategies for a new context, it is vital to link with appropriate response services from the beginning. However, it is important to note that increased uptake in services might not be immediately visible in the short term but start to take effect in the medium term.

Implementing programming based on the RESPECT Framework is strongly recommended. Furthermore, Governments need to fully support quality programming by enacting policy change and making financial commitments.

Principles of supporting quality programming

1. Proven and promising front-line and response services are supported (financially and through policy and systems) for women and girls in need of crisis support.
2. Proven and promising prevention programmes are supported (financially and through policy and systems) for sustainability and scale-up. Importantly, prevention and response interventions are linked.
3. Evidence-building on what works to prevent violence, on emerging issues, and for different groups, is supported through funding streams and mechanisms that emphasize innovation and evaluation.
4. Both proven/promising and new prevention programming adhere to quality principles, and have the following attributes:
 - Inclusive;
 - Long term;
 - Multi-sectoral and multi-component;
 - Address the root causes and risk factors of violence;
 - Implement evidence-based techniques across settings; and
 - Tailored to the audience and context.

Possible indicators for domain 6

1. Proportion of response services are properly funded and staffed, to support the expected increase of service uptake in the medium term.
2. Prevention programmes that have been trialed and evaluated as effective or promising are supported for continuous improvement and scale-up over the long term (i.e., more than five years).
3. Short-term (2–3 year) grants programmes are employed to support evidence building through innovation in new and emerging areas of prevention.
4. Quality standards are progressively developed, and tools provided, to guide prevention programmes across a range of settings, including education institutions, workplaces and industries, health and community services, faith-based contexts, public places and transport, and legal and corrections contexts.

Domain 7: Ensure mechanisms for coordination, collaboration and quality assurance

In order to promote consistency between laws and programming, it is necessary to implement coordination mechanisms to enable collaboration and coordination across multiple settings and levels. Coordination mechanisms provide the necessary support for providing holistic prevention that is mutually reinforcing. Quality assurance mechanisms for policy and programming, such as minimum service standards, can include establishing criteria for programme funding and evaluation, or creating training programmes to ensure skilled practitioners are entering the prevention workforce.

Principles for ensuring coordination mechanisms and quality assurance

1. Overarching coordination and advisory structures guide the design, development and evaluation of prevention policy and programming, with diverse representation from relevant stakeholders across government, civil society and public and private sector agencies.
2. A range of agencies and organizations are engaged in such structures, including but not limited to those for early intervention and response, and those working in other areas of social justice or on related issues.
3. Partnerships for prevention work are guided by an intersectional approach.
4. Criteria exist and are implemented for quality assurance in programme development and funding, including for design, implementation and evaluation.
5. Practice standards are developed, employed and monitored for prevention work across sectors and settings.

Possible indicators for domain 7

1. Coordination and advisory structures exist at different levels (national, state/territory, regional and local), meet regularly, and demonstrate effective communication and partnership practices.
2. Cross-sector partnerships exist to drive prevention work on 'common causes' with relevant sectors (e.g., with the child protection or alcohol/drugs harm minimization sectors).
3. Prevention programmes show evidence of being designed and funded in accordance with the evidence base and is based on alignment with the RESPECT Framework.
4. Prevention programmes show evidence of being implemented and evaluated according to good practice principles (e.g., aligned with the [RESPECT implementation package](#)).

Domain 8: Implement shared monitoring, reporting and evaluation frameworks

A whole-of-population approach to prevention requires a comprehensive, coordinated system for M&E. All stakeholders engaged in implementation, both government and non-government, should have the ability to report on progress, as well as evaluate their efforts against the shared objectives found in the SDGs and RESPECT Framework. Measures and targets should be context-specific, yet still reflect the underlying causes, risk and protective factors of VAWG across multiple levels.

Principles for implementing M&E frameworks

1. Comprehensive and coordinated systems exist for data collection and analysis, monitoring, accountability, reporting and evaluation at all levels (i.e., reporting mechanisms on the SDGs indicators and the RESPECT Framework).
2. All partners implementing prevention activities (governments, civil society and public and private sector institutions and organizations) report on progress and evaluate their efforts against shared short-, medium- and long-term objectives.

Possible indicators for domain 8

1. Agreed M&E frameworks exist with accountabilities articulated for all relevant implementing partners (e.g., different government departments or different regional agencies).
2. Agreed M&E frameworks exist with outcomes and targets that demonstrate alignment with national frameworks and this monitoring framework.
3. Such frameworks are supported (financially, in-kind, and through appropriate mechanisms and systems) by implementing partners and their funders.
4. At the programme level, prevention initiatives demonstrate implementation and monitor and report on progress according to the RESPECT Framework.
5. Governments promote the collection and reporting of sex-disaggregated data.
6. Governments (federal, state/territory and local) regularly report on progress of preventing VAWG strategies and gender equality strategies.

There are no singular, nor established methods for measuring progress across these types of 'process' indicators. The first report on operationalizing Counting on Change, Tracking Progress in Prevention,³⁴ suggests that implementers need to be creative and flexible to measure change across these initial domains of change. They suggest mixed-methods data collection and analysis to for a complete assessment, and the best approach would include analysis on quantitative indicators from existing population level data sets and primary research into the domains of change. This might include the following methods, among others:

- Case studies and/or comparative case studies;
- Policy data analysis;
- Desktop scans of public statements and coding;
- Qualitative and quantitative surveys; and
- Semi-structured interviews with key informants.

³⁴ Our Watch (2020). *Tracking progress in prevention: A national monitoring report on progress towards the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*. Melbourne, Australia.

Medium-term indicators: Addressing root causes and risk factors

This section outlines indicators to measure the impact of prevention efforts against root causes and risk factors of VAWG in the medium term. The proposed measures are adapted from the RESPECT Framework and measure changes in norms, practices and structures across the social-ecological model. These indicators are grounded in international evidence on 'what works' to prevent VAWG.

The relevant data sources to measure these indicators in the Asia-Pacific context are those that are the most suitable and accessible, such as Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women surveys. Countries should seek to align surveys with national SDG indicators and/or develop their own contextually specific indicators where appropriate. Essential criteria for guiding the development of indicators are listed below. Desirable criteria are also suggested in an

effort to further develop international alignment, consistency and best practice in prevention monitoring, as there are existing inconsistencies and gaps in global, regional and national data sets, where data collection methods differ between countries, or data is not collected at all.

The following indicators are for the medium term, which correspond to domains 9–20 in the domains of change (see Figure 4). This chapter draws on the SDG indicators to ensure consistency across the region, yet this list of indicators is not exhaustive. Countries can draw on other relevant indicators and data sources where available and adapt the indicators to their local context. Possible sources include the following, among others:

- Demographic and Health Survey questionnaires;
- The United Nations Multi-Country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence;
- The WHO Nations Multi-Country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence Against Women;
- Personal safety surveys;
- Violence against children surveys;
- Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys;
- Counting on Change (Australia); and
- Other relevant attitude surveys such as the National Community Attitudes Survey (Australia).

Enabling environment

All indicators should be:

- Measurable and relevant for the Asia-Pacific, or more specifically, country context.
- Aligned with the root causes and risk factors of VAWG outlined in RESPECT.
- Expected to shift over time, producing some early improvements over the short and medium term, and substantive change in the long term.

Desirable criteria

Where possible, indicators should also be selected for their adherence to one or more of the following criteria:

- From a reliable source that will continue to produce data in an ethical and wide-ranging manner;
- Able to be measured at the national level and at a range of more refined geographic levels (for example, jurisdictional, urban/rural/remote);
- Able to be disaggregated by population group;
- When collected via questionnaires, aligned with best practice and evidence-based;
- Reflect the experiences of different groups of people, such as indigenous communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, people with disabilities and LGBTIQI people;
- Be based on data collected at least every four years; and
- Target multiple drivers and levels of the ecological model.

Root causes

Domain 9: Gender equality is advanced	
Target 9.1 Equal access to inheritance, marriage, divorce, health care, etc.	
9.1.1	Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, (a) with legally recognized documentation, and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and type of tenure (SDG 1.4.2)
9.1.2	Maternal mortality ratio (SDG 3.1.1)
Target 9.2 Access to sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) – (SDG target 3.7) Universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes.	
9.2.1	Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15–49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods. (SDG 3.7.1)
9.2.2	Adolescent birth rate (age 10–14 years; age 15–19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group. (SDG 3.7.2)
9.2.3	Proportion of women age 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care. (SDG 5.6.1)
9.2.4	Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men age 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education. (SDG 5.6.2)
Target 9.3 Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws. (SDG target 5.a)	
9.3.1	Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure. (SDG 5.a.1)
9.3.2	Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women’s equal rights to land ownership and/or control. (SDG 5.a.2)

Domain 10: Reduced justification of violence	
Target 10.1 Reduced justification of violence.	
10.1.1	Proportion of men and women age 15 years and older who believe a husband is justified in beating his wife under some circumstances.
10.1.2	Proportion of men and women age 15 years and older who agree with at least one response on the rape myth scale.
10.1.3	Proportion of men age 15 years and older who have perpetrated intimate partner violence in the previous 12 months.
Target 10.2 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all. (SDG target 16.3)	
10.2.1	Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms. (SDG 16.3.1)

Domain 11: Women have greater decision-making power	
Target 11.1 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life. (SDG target 5.5)	
11.1.1	Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments. (SDG 5.5.1)
11.1.2	Proportion of women in managerial positions. (SDG 5.5.2)
11.1.3	Proportion of women age 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care. (SDG 5.6.1) Percentage of rural women with access to and decision-making power over credit.
Target 11.2 Ensure women have equal decision-making power in the home.	
11.2.1	Proportion of women who work for an income, who have control over how their income is spent.
Target 11.3 Ensure women and girls have access to effective response services when seeking help for and/or escaping violence.	
11.3.1	Proportion of women and girls experiencing violence seeking formal support services increases over time.

Domain 12: More positive, equal and respectful relationships

Target 12.1 Healthy forms of communication and reduced controlling behaviour in relationships.

12.1.1	Proportion of women age 15 years and older who report experiencing controlling behaviour from an intimate partner in the past 12 months. ³⁵
12.1.2	Proportion of men age 15 years and older who report using controlling behaviour against an intimate partner in the past 12 months. ³⁶
12.1.3	Proportion of women and men who report that they speak regularly to their partners about their problems. ³⁷

Domain 13: More positive expressions of masculinity

Target 13.1 Community norms no longer support the idea that to be a man you need to dominate women, be in control and/or use violence to assert status and resolve disputes.

13.1.1	Proportion of men who score highly gender equitable according to the Gender Equitable Men (GEM) scale.
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Domain 14: Gender roles are less rigid

Target 14.1 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate. (SDG target 5.4)

14.1.1	Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location. (SDG 5.4.1)
14.1.2	Existence of subsidized childcare and parental leave policies.
Target 14.2 Population level attitudes and norms that support traditional gender norms (e.g., the percentage of people who believe a woman's most important role is in the family and home).	
14.2.1	Proportion of the population with gender inequitable attitudes as measured by the DHS/WHO gender attitudes scale.

35 See: https://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/violence/mc_study/en/

36 See: <http://partners4prevention.org/how-to/research>

37 See: https://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/violence/mc_study/en/

Risk factors

Domain 15: Reduced experiences of other forms of violence (child abuse etc.)	
Target 15.1 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms. (SDG target 8.7)	
15.1.1	Proportion and number of children age 5–17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age. (SDG 8.7.1)
Target 15.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. (SDG target 16.2)	
15.2.1	Proportion of children age 1–17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month. (SDG 16.2.1)
15.2.2	Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation. (SDG 16.2.2)
15.2.3	Proportion of young women and men age 18–29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18. (SDG 16.2.3)
Target 15.3 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere. (SDG target 16.1)	
15.3.1	Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age. (SDG 16.1.1)

Domain 16: Reduce acceptance and prevalence of violence in general	
Target 16.1 Reduced acceptance of violence in general.	
16.1.1	Proportion of women who report that their partners have been involved in fights with other men.
16.1.2	Proportion of men who report that they have been involved in gangs or in fights with other men.
16.1.3	Rates of violent crime in the community/state (crime statistics).

Domain 17: Reduced harmful use of drugs and alcohol	
Target 17.1 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol. (SDG target 3.5)	
17.1.1	Coverage of treatment interventions (pharmacological, psychosocial and rehabilitation and aftercare services) for substance use disorders. (SDG 3.5.1)
17.1.2	Alcohol per capita consumption (age 15 years and older) within a calendar year in litres of pure alcohol. (SDG 3.5.2)

Domain 18: Greater social and economic equality	
Target 18.1 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance. (SDG target 1.4)	
18.1.1	Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services. (SDG 1.4.1)
18.1.2	Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, (a) with legally recognized documentation, and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and type of tenure. (SDG 1.4.2)
Target 18.2 Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels. (SDG target 5.c)	
18.2.1	Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment. (SDG 5.c.1)

Domain 19: Men and boys are engaged, and backlash is reduced*	
*see Box 6 for more information on how to measure backlash	
Target 19.1 Reduce the attitudes that justify and condone VAWG.	
19.1.1	Proportion of men and women who hold gender inequitable attitudes as measured by DHS, United Nations multi-country studies and National Community Attitudes Survey (Australia), or attitude surveys – “There are times when a woman deserves to be beaten.”
Target 19.2 Reduce attitudes that minimize or mistrust women's reports of violence.	
19.2.1	For example, population-based attitude survey data that measures attitudes which are linked to the idea that women lie about or exaggerate reports of violence.

Target 19.3 Increase men's participation in gender equitable behaviours, such as parenting and household responsibilities.	
19.3.1	Proportion of men who undertake parental and household responsibilities. (Indicators could include how many men do chores or play with their children and how often).
19.3.2	Proportion of men who took time off after the birth of their child or took parental leave (where applicable).
Target 19.4 Increase in progressive laws and policies that promote gender equity in public and private spheres.	
19.4.1	Measure the proportion and content of laws and policies strengthening women's equality (or inversely, measure gender equality policies which are 'overturned' and 'regress' gender equality).

Domain 20: Reduced rates of mental health issues (depression, anxiety, post traumatic stress disorder)	
Target 20.1 By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being. (SDG target 3.4)	
20.1.1	Suicide mortality rate. (SDG 3.4.2)
Target 20.2 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol. (SDG target 3.5)	
20.2.1	Coverage of treatment interventions (pharmacological, psychosocial and rehabilitation and aftercare services) for substance use disorders. (SDG 3.5.1)
20.2.3	Gender and age disaggregated data for alcohol per capita consumption (age 15 years and older) within a calendar year in litres of pure alcohol. (SDG 3.5.2)

Box 5: Qualitative research

Existing frameworks, such as the SDGs, identify quantitative indicators for measuring population-level change, which is important for tracking progress. However, all forms of quantitative data should be read alongside qualitative research and analysis. Ideally, quantitative survey data and qualitative measures should be included in a comprehensive assessment of prevention progress for the following reasons:

- It helps to understand *how* change occurs. Fully understanding the changes that have been identified through quantitative measures, provides an opportunity to refine and replicate strategies, as well as build the evidence.
- It also helps to understand *why* prevalence is falling. Quantitative data will show reductions in rates of violence, but it will not show why they occur. Robust qualitative analysis will help to understand what is working or not working and why.
- It is useful for the development of quantitative tools that will measure indicators or adapt indicators to specific contexts.
- It helps to document positive examples of change in more detail. Monitoring can help motivate Governments to keep up good work, as well as keep up investment.

The challenge for this component is there is not yet any robust, comprehensive qualitative data framework that deals with measuring change qualitatively at the population level. However, thinking creatively about how to complement quantitative data collection with robust qualitative data on prevention progress should be encouraged and could include the following methods, among others:

- Small-scale qualitative studies, with in-depth and key-informant interviews;
- Case studies;
- Rapid content analyses;
- Desk and literature reviews;
- Ethnographic studies; and
- Qualitative data collection used from programme-level prevention M&E.

Furthermore, qualitative data could prove vital for understanding change across different domains where data is more nuanced and requires more analysis, for example, data on backlash or the lived experiences of women who experiencing intersecting forms of inequality and discrimination. Once data is collected it is key to qualitatively analyse findings across a suite of indicators to form a holistic assessment of progress.

Box 6: Measuring backlash

Strong feelings can be provoked when social norms are challenged. Backlash refers to any form of resistance towards progressive social change. Backlash can take the form of aggressive, sometimes explicit and violent resistance, or sometimes resistance to change is implicit and covert when rigid gender roles and stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity are challenged.

Backlash is most likely to come from the people who benefit from the status quo. In efforts to build gender equality, resistance is more common from men, but it can also come from women.* Backlash is expected to occur and increase when interventions and policies begin to take effect, and it is often a clear indication that prevention work is gaining traction. Oftentimes, backlash can be at its greatest when existing structures are threatened.

Indicators of backlash can encompass many themes and operate across domains of change, though many are related to attitudes and behaviours that resist change in gender roles. It can be related to women's increasing access to leadership and public roles, independence and freedoms. Conversely, it can be related to men's increased participation in spheres traditionally associated with women, such as increased caring responsibilities or household chores. Backlash can reveal mistrust toward or minimization of women's experiences, including beliefs that women exaggerate or lie about violence and assault. Possible indicators of institutional backlash in public spheres could include the status of progressive or regressive policies related to gender equality (for example, the repeal of policies on women's access to sexual and reproductive health care).

Any prevention monitoring strategy should include regular collection of data and feedback to not only identify expressions of backlash, but also from whom backlash is coming. Establishing regular feedback loops that provide continual data for monitoring processes is a good strategy that can bolster programming and response work.

While measuring backlash to gender equality across different domains is important, there are no data points that are consistently used or validated, and no indicators or tools for it in VAWG prevention. Indicators of backlash that are relevant to the context must be adapted from multiple sources, and quantitative and qualitative studies must be conducted to fully understand why and how change is occurring. Government may wish to adapt and pilot indicators from the following quantitative instruments:

- Men's Questionnaire for the United Nations [Multi-country Study on Men and Violence](#);
- Women's Questionnaire for the United Nations [Multi-country Study on Men and Violence](#);
- Questionnaire for the [WHO multi-country study on women's health and life events \(Annex 4\)](#);
- [Counting on Change: A Guide to Prevention Monitoring \(Australia\)](#); and
- [National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey: Methodology report appendices \(Australia\)](#).

* VicHealth (2018). (En)countering Resistance: Strategies to respond to resistance to gender equality initiatives. Melbourne, Australia: Government of Victoria.

Long-term indicators: Reducing prevalence of violence against women and girls

The long-term domains of change are reduced violence against women by intimate partners, reduced violence against women by non-intimate partners and reduced sexual harassment and online trolling. The key indicators for measuring long-term change in prevalence rates should be adopted from the SDG indicators. Countries in the region have already committed to work towards those goals and aim to achieve them by 2030.³⁸

COVID-19 indicators

According to the United Nations Secretary-General political engagement strategy for COVID-19, it is vital that United Nations Country Teams work collaboratively with Governments to collect data during and after the pandemic. [The UN Framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19](#) includes relevant indicators for measuring VAWG and gender inequality as they relate to human rights issues, such as the rights to health and life, gender-specific intervention and protection, and leaving no one behind. It is crucial to collect this data and disaggregate it by gender as well as other intersectional identities in order to understand the impacts of measures being taken during and after the pandemic. Some relevant indicators from the framework are included in the table below (for the extensive list, see the full resource here).

Selected targets and indicators of gender equality in the 2030 Agenda

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	
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	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 partner 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 incident location (e.g., school, street, etc.)
Target 5.3: Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation	Indicator 5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18
	Indicator 5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age

³⁸ For ease of reference, see more detailed guidance on the SDGs, including the metadata for each indicator: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>.

Human rights issues		Indicators
Rights to health and life	Use maximum available resources at national and international levels to ensure availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of health care to all who need it and including for conditions other than COVID-19 infection; and ensure that the right to life is respected throughout.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proportion of adopted/implemented COVID-19 Country Preparedness and Response Plans containing systematic mapping of most vulnerable and marginalized groups and special measures for their protection and access to health services/equipment (including older persons, persons with disabilities, migrants, people in detention, indigenous people and ethnic minorities, LGBTQI people, women and girls who are pregnant or who have given birth). 2. Number/proportion of United Nations Country Teams having carried out a rapid human rights impact assessment of country preparedness and response to COVID-19, including comprehensive mapping of vulnerable/marginalized groups and gender analysis; identification of measures to mitigate negative impact on these groups; and assessment of policy and resources gaps for implementing these mitigation measures. 3. Scale, depth and nature of impact in countries where the health system has been impacted by COVID-19 and is impeding access to other essential health services by the public, including women's access to sexual and reproductive health (for instance, birth, pre- and post-natal care) and/or children immunization (e.g., DTP3) compared to the situation before the pandemic. 4. Number of recorded cases of physical, sexual or psychological violence against women, girls and boys, elderly and LBTQI people, including offline and online violence and violence by intimate partners, during the COVID-19 pandemic, and proportion of these victims that have access to appropriate services and interventions.
Gender	Ensure gender-specific intervention and protection. Mitigate impact of the crisis on women and girls, including on their access to sexual and reproductive health/rights, protection from domestic and other forms of GBV, financial resources, decision-making and access to an effective remedy.	

Note: LGBTQI stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex.

6. Guidance on national implementation

While this framework offers guidance based on global frameworks and examples from the region, ultimately, a prevention strategy must be adapted to the national context. This section offers broad principles to guide adaptation, covering four key areas:

- Developing a national level strategy for prevention;
- Stakeholder engagement;
- Alignment with other mechanisms; and
- Ongoing M&E.

Developing a national-level strategy

Many countries have national action plans (NAPs), policies and frameworks, which respond to VAWG (although not all have a strong focus on prevention). In this case, it makes sense to strengthen existing strategies and ensure that policies are aligned with a prevention framework.

An alternative is to adopt a whole-of-government approach to prevention. This entails developing and implementing a cohesive and substantive prevention policy framework across all levels of government, with multiple strategies to address gender inequality as the root cause of VAWG.

Regardless of the approach, it is important to develop a comprehensive strategy that is fit for purpose. The tools to support this process can be found in the [RESPECT implementation package](#).

The process of developing a national strategy takes time and should be informed by extensive consultation with stakeholders who have expertise in this field.

Stakeholder engagement and establishing partnerships

Communicating with key stakeholders is one of the most important factors for successful prevention monitoring and needs to occur at multiple levels throughout the process of implementation. Stakeholder engagement offers real insights into the needs, opportunities and barriers to implementing this framework. These insights can help to identify and mitigate unforeseen problems. The RESPECT implementation package has points to consider for multi-stakeholder engagement related to strategy development.

Effective communication will ensure stakeholders have a strong understanding of the context and needs. It will also maintain greater community support and buy-in, and mutual understanding of shared objectives. Building innovative and collaborative approaches to stakeholder engagement - which should include feminist organisations that reflect women in all their diversity – will help to develop a broader understanding of the context and how to gather data from both quantitative and qualitative sources that are relevant to prevention. Countries may have existing mechanisms within relevant departments or agencies to seek stakeholder views that could be used for engagement and should be expanded upon.

It will be important to begin with building a core group of key influential actors who have a strong capacity and understanding of prevention to help underpin the longer-term development of the strategy. Developing partnerships with national statistical offices and CSOs will be key in this area. These partnerships will help to understand:

- What data is most meaningful and available in a particular context;
- What can feasibly be collected (or whether new forms of data can be collected);
- How data can be collected; and
- Where data can be collected and from whom.

Effective stakeholder engagement takes time and effort, and adequate time needs to be accounted for when planning to involve stakeholders in relevant points of the strategy.

Alignment with other mechanisms

A key strength of this framework is its alignment with RESPECT Framework and the SDG indicators, which builds consistency across the Asia-Pacific region in what is measured and how. The successful implementation of the SDGs has relied upon their inclusion and mainstreaming into national policies, plans and strategies, while taking into account national realities and contexts. Many nations have adopted national SDG plans and are collecting data against localized SDG indicators developed in each country (in 2018 134 countries had development plans in place).³⁹ Where these national priority indicators are in place this monitoring strategy should be carefully aligned with those processes.

Ongoing monitoring

Monitoring of progress should be planned and integrated into strategies from the beginning. It is important for Governments to have a long-term vision for developing strategies and to take incremental steps towards that vision. An initial task should be to establish a baseline which would help identify and fill gaps in data, as well as offer a critical reference point for assessing changes and impact over time.

³⁹ Admos O. Chimhowu, David Hulme and Lauchlan T. Munro (2019). 'The 'New' national development planning and global development goals: Processes and partnerships', *World Development* 12, pp. 76–89.

A monitoring and/or evaluation plan should clearly set out:

- What is being measured;
- The methods being used to collect and analyse data;
- A plan for when evaluations will be delivered;
- Who will be responsible for M&E;
- What resources will be needed; and
- Plans for dissemination of findings.

Evidence suggests that many countries lack uniform, robust systems and mechanisms to continuously collect comprehensive and accurate data.⁴⁰ As such, there should be a plan for developing and strengthening the systems in which consistent, disaggregated data can be collected throughout the prevention strategy, and plans should align with existing global ethical guidelines of data collection. Developing and strengthening national data systems to collect disaggregated data on VAWG should include:

- Prevalence data in line with indicators;
- Risk and protective factors associated with VAWG;
- Cost and impact of all forms of VAWG;
- Accessibility to services for victims/survivors;
- Quality of services and client satisfaction; and
- VAWG in disaster and conflict situations (national level).

⁴⁰ ASEAN Secretariat (2016). *ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women*, Jakarta.



Photo: UN Women/Fahad Kaizer

