

**WORK PLAN TO OPERATIONALIZE THE  
DECLARATION ON THE  
ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE  
AGAINST WOMEN  
IN ASEAN**

**ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW)**

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- D. *ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women*
- E. *Draft timetable of work plan to operationalise the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women*

## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACW	ASEAN Committee on Women
ACWO	ASEAN Confederation of Women's Organizations
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARCPPT	Asia Regional Cooperation to Prevent People
Trafficking	
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATFOANET	ASEAN AIDS Information and Research Reference
Network	
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination
Against Women	
COMMIT	Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking
DEVAW	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against
Women	
GOs	Government Organizations
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
ILO	International Labour Organization
MAP Report	Monitoring of the AIDS Pandemic Report
MDGs	Millenium Development Goals
NASPCP	National AIDS/STD prevention and Control Program
NGOs	Non-government organizations
OSCC	One Stop Crisis Center
PNAC	Philippine National Aids Council
SOMSWD	Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and
Development	
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Emergency
Fund	
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
VAP	Vientiane Action Plan
VSO	Volunteer Service Organization
VWU	Vietnamese Women's Union
WAGE	Work Plan on Women's Advancement and Gender
Equality	
WHO	World Health Organization

## **I. Background**

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW) was signed at the 37th Meeting of ASEAN Foreign Ministers in Jakarta on 13 June 2004 -- a milestone in the regional effort to address the issue of violence against women.

The need to give priority to VAW issues was likewise highlighted at the Third Meeting of the Asian Committee on Women (ACW) on 29 November-1 December 2004, and again at the Fourth ACW Meeting on 22-23 November 2005. Preparatory to the holding of the Fourth ACW Meeting, the ASEAN Secretariat and the Philippines as Meeting host, with support from UNAIDS, agreed to develop a work plan to implement the Declaration. To finalize the draft work plan, UNIFEM offered to finance a one-day workshop and this was held 21 November in Makati City. All member countries participated in both the preparatory activities and the actual deliberations on the proposed strategies. The ASEAN Secretariat provided technical and administrative backstopping.

Preparatory to the workshop, a working document was put together based on reports from ACW meetings, available publications, and information from the Internet. To supplement and update country information, a matrix on related initiatives per area of concern of the DEVAW as linked to the Work Plan on Women's Advancement and Gender Equality (WAGE) was sent to member countries for additional input.

At the regional VAW workshop, countries were requested to do a rapid appraisal of measures taken to implement the Declaration. Participants shared their experiences and other information on policies and strategies, and gave their reaction to the draft working documents. The delegates identified priority regional strategies and agreed that a coordinator should be named for each country. UNIFEM Representative Ms. Jean D'Cunha in a plenary presentation also recommended areas for action and offered UNIFEM's cooperation in the implementation of the action plan.

The work plan was then presented at the Fourth ACW Meeting and was approved in principle, subject to finalization by the consultant incorporating the recommendations of the Meeting. The Meeting also agreed that the Philippines would circulate the final draft for referendum approval prior to endorsement to the ASEAN Secretariat, who in turn will endorse it to the ASEAN Standing Committee for approval.

## **II. Situationer on violence against women**

As do other cultures, ASEAN countries value the family as the foundation of a secure, progressive, and caring society. It is within the family that an individual grows up to become a valuable human resource. The attainment of a wholesome, peaceful and caring family environment is therefore an important social development objective of ASEAN. Mutual respect, equal sharing of decision-making power between husband and wife, and equitable sharing of gains and responsibilities are among the keystones for building a stable family.

Over the past few years, ASEAN has become increasingly concerned with the particular issue of gender-based violence, much of which is happening within the home. Domestic violence involves physical, sexual and even psychological abuse of women in the home, be they wives, daughters or elderly women within the family or within an intimate relationship. Other forms of violence against women are rape, sexual harassment, dowry-related violence, trafficking in women, forced prostitution, female infanticide, and selective feeding resulting in malnutrition among female children. The UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life."

### **The regional situation**

A UNIFEM report<sup>1</sup> says that nearly one in four women could experience sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime. In Cambodia, for example, 16% of women are physically abused by their husbands. Corresponding figures are 30% in the UK, 52% in the West Bank, 29% in Canada, and 22% in the US. Surveys point out that half of women who die from homicides are killed by their current or former husbands or partners.

The high level of violence in Cambodia is said to be linked to the violence of the Khmer Rouge and many years of war.<sup>2</sup> An ILO report on prostitution and trafficking, based on studies in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand, indicates that the "sex industry in Southeast Asia has assumed the dimensions of a commercial sector, contributing substantially to employment and national income in the region. The prostitutes are mainly women, but there are also male, transvestite, and

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.unifem.org/gender\\_issues/violence\\_against\\_women/facts\\_figures\\_2.php](http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/violence_against_women/facts_figures_2.php)

<sup>2</sup> gender violence text p.72 (??)

child prostitutes.”<sup>3</sup> The ILO report also suggests an increase in international trafficking of women for the sex trade. The Human Rights Task Force on Cambodia estimates that 44% of trafficked girls under 18 were sold by intermediaries, 23% by family members, 17% by boyfriends, 6% by employers and 6% by unknown persons.<sup>4</sup>

Violence against women undermines the developmental role of the family because of its long-term and debilitating physical, psychological and economic impact on the victim and on the perpetrator. From the human rights perspective, VAW is closely tied up with the issue of women's reproductive health and rights notably with regards to HIV/AIDS, STDs, family planning (Beijing Platform for Action). Worldwide, the health burden arising from gender-based violence is comparable with other diseases like HIV/AIDS, TB, cancer and cardiovascular diseases. Rape and violence are major causes of disability and death among women. VAW has also been noted to account for one out of every five healthy days lost to women.

### **Violence against women and HIV/AIDS**

ASEAN is equally concerned with the rising incidence of HIV/AIDS in the region and its impact on the health of women and their children. According to the UN,<sup>5</sup> about 37.8 million people are infected worldwide, and 48% of all adults living with HIV are women, up from 35% in 1985. Young women aged 15-24 comprise over half of new HIV infections worldwide. In South and Southeast Asia, more than one-and-a-half million people are infected, over 60% of them women<sup>6</sup>. The risk for women and girls of contracting HIV/AIDS and transmitting this to their children is exacerbated by gender-based violence such as rape, prostitution and sex trafficking which are serious problems in many ASEAN countries. A Volunteer Service Organization (VSO) paper<sup>7</sup> notes two of the key manifestations of gender inequality in relation to HIV and AIDS:

Gender violence is linked to HIV transmission through rape, and reduces the ability of women and vulnerable men to discuss sexual matters with their partners. Because of unequal rights to property, women may be forced out of their homes when widowed or diagnosed with HIV. This increases their vulnerability to illness and the likelihood that they will turn to prostitution in order to survive.

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<sup>3</sup> Lean Lim, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> UNIFEM, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> UN Report on “Women and HIV/AIDS: Confronting the Crisis,” from UNDP press release dated 14 July 2004.

<sup>6</sup> World Bank, Gender Equality and the Millennium Development Goals, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Gendering AIDS: women, men, empowerment, mobilization, p. 6.

Based on studies conducted in South and Sub-Saharan Africa, UNIFEM, WHO and UNAIDS<sup>8</sup> have issued statements linking gender-based violence to the spread of HIV/AIDS and have called for an end to violence to prevent these illnesses from spreading among vulnerable groups of women and children. As put succinctly by the Executive Director of UNAIDS: "We must eliminate violence against women if we are to stop the spread of AIDS."<sup>9</sup>

According to the studies, women who are beaten up or dominated by their husbands or partners are 48% more likely to be infected. Forced sexual entry and mutilation especially among adolescent women leave wounds or abrasions through which HIV infection can take place. The risk of violence and sexual abuse is also higher among girls orphaned by AIDS, who become more prone to abuse usually by their relatives or to being forced into sex work in order to survive. Fear of violence, among other things, also deters women from testing for HIV or learning the results (please see box). Even in consensual unions, women who suspect that their partners are carriers may not be able to insist on condom use or to refuse unwanted sex. Says the UNAIDS Country Director in the Philippines, "Violence and related issues of gender inequality and disempowerment greatly contribute to women's vulnerability. And, in a vicious cycle, AIDS intensifies the feminization of poverty."<sup>10</sup>

...Being infected with HIV or having an HIV-positive family member can also increase the risk of suffering sexual violence, particularly for women. Because of the stigma attached to HIV and AIDS in many countries, an infected woman may be evicted from her home. In addition, an AIDS-related illness or death in a poor household may make the economic situation desperate. Women may be forced into sex work and consequently be at increased risk for both HIV/AIDS and sexual violence. Children orphaned by AIDS, impoverished and with no care for them, may be forced to live on the streets, at considerable risk of sexual abuse....<sup>11</sup>

Available information on VAW and HIV/AIDS in the region are mostly related to prostitution or commercial sex. A MAP report asserts, "commercial sex between men and women is one of the major drivers of the HIV epidemic in many countries in Asia."<sup>12</sup> While some women claim that they are into commercial sex because this gives them more

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<sup>8</sup> Information culled from press statements and articles from UNIFEM, WHO, UNAIDS and Amnesty International websites.

<sup>9</sup> UNAIDS Press Statement, 10 December 2004 (UNAIDS website).

<sup>10</sup> Dr. Ma. Elena F. Borromeo, in her welcome message during the Workshop to Operationalize the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women in ASEAN, 21 November 2005, Makati, Philippines.

<sup>11</sup> World Report on Violence and Health (Box 6.2), World Health Organization, p.164.

<sup>12</sup> Monitoring of the AIDS Pandemic (MAP) Report, AIDS in Asia: Face the Facts. A comprehensive analysis of the AIDS Epidemic in Asia, 2004, p.32.

income than working in semi-skilled jobs,<sup>13</sup> the majority are victims of economic violence and lack other livelihood alternatives to survive or to support their children. In studies in the Philippines, many of the prostitutes interviewed say they were victims of sexual abuse when they were young.

In Cambodia, it was reported that “one of the major factors in the spread of HIV/AIDS is men visiting prostitutes and then taking the disease back to their wives.”<sup>14</sup> One third of HIV/AIDS cases are among women of childbearing age. In Myanmar, HIV prevalence among sex workers tested in Mandalay increased from 4% in 1992 to 57% in 1999.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Thailand reports that one half of new HIV infections are among women who contracted the disease from their husbands.<sup>16</sup> In Indonesia, HIV prevalence among injecting drug users has reached about 50% in most provinces, with injecting drug users accounting for about 80% of the newly reported HIV cases.

### **III. Addressing violence against women and HIV/AIDS**

#### **International policy framework**

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted 18 December 1979 during the UN Decade for Women, is the first and only international treaty that addresses women's rights comprehensively – that is, within both the civil and political spheres, and in economic, social, cultural and family life.

CEDAW guarantees women's right to protection from violence in Article 6 whereby all State Parties are enjoined to “take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of women.” Further, General Recommendation Nos. 12 and 19 state that “discrimination includes gender-based violence, that is violence that is directed at a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately” and that “includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivation of liberty.”

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted in September 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, emphasizes that “violence against women both violates and impairs or

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<sup>13</sup> In Vietnam, for example, sex workers reported earning up to seven times the average income of the general population in the area where they work. (MAP Report, p.37).

<sup>14</sup> Proceedings of the First National Conference on Gender and Development, Cambodia, September 1999.

<sup>15</sup> UNAIDS/WHO Surveillance figures, 2000.

<sup>16</sup> UN Foundation, UN Wire, 6 July 2000.



nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.” One of its strategic objectives and actions is on violence against women which commits Governments to:

- take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women;
- study the causes and consequences of VAW and the effectiveness of preventive measures; and
- eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking.

The 1993 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women specifically defines violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence occurring in public or private life, resulting in or likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, threats of such acts, coercion and arbitrary deprivation of liberty.”

The eight-point Millennium Development Goals (MDG) has profound implications for women and children. One goal is the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women. However, the concerns for women cut across all the goals particularly those related to the eradication of poverty, achievement of universal education and equal access to primary education particularly for girls, reduction of child and maternal mortality rates, and combating of HIV/AIDS.

There are also international instruments which address certain aspects of VAW, such as the Convention on Transnational Organized Crimes with its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children.

### **Regional policy framework**

Recognition of the importance of women’s active participation in development in the ASEAN region is embodied in the Declaration on the Advancement of Women in the ASEAN Region adopted 5 July 1988. This first milestone is a product of the advocacy of the Sub-Committee on Women established in 1975. Since then, women’s concerns have become part of the agenda of ASEAN summit meetings and various ministerial meetings through the initiative of the ACW.

The Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali II) signed by ASEAN Leaders on 7 October 2003 in Bali, Indonesia adopted specific long-term plans of action for the three pillars of the ASEAN Community (Vientiane Action Programme: 2004-2010). The goal of building an ASEAN community of caring societies includes “promoting equitable

participation of women in the development process by eliminating all forms of discrimination against them.”<sup>17</sup>

In consonance with the 1988 Declaration on the Advancement of Women and the Vientiane Action Programme, the ACW agreed to draft the Work Plan on Women’s Advancement and Gender Equality or WAGE during its first meeting in October 2002. The work plan (2005–2010) was finally adopted by the ACW in its Third Meeting (2004). It identified four priority areas: women’s integration and participation, protection of women, addressing the challenges of globalization, and promoting women’s employability. The adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW) was a priority agenda in the area of protection of women.

There are three ASEAN Declarations directly related to women:

- Declaration on HIV/AIDS adopted on 5 November 2001 at the Seventh ASEAN Summit in Brunei Darussalam. It stresses that “gender equality and the empowerment of women are fundamental elements in the reduction of the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS...” A multi-sectoral response and a comprehensive approach is imperative to combating the HIV/AIDS epidemic. An ASEAN Work Programme on HIV/AIDS was adopted by member countries to ensure implementation of the said Declaration.
- Declaration against Trafficking in Persons Particularly Women and Children adopted 29 November 2004 at the ASEAN Summit in Lao PDR. It emphasizes the importance of continuing dialogue, information exchange and establishment of a regional network to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, particularly women and children. It provides that “victims should be treated humanely and provided with such essential medical and other forms of assistance deemed appropriate by the receiving/recipient country, including prompt repatriation to their respective countries of origin.” Measures to strengthen regional and international cooperation are seen as necessary to prevent and combat trafficking in persons. In pursuit of the Declaration’s objectives, regional meetings continue to be held relative to migration and immigration concerns such as passports and other travel documents, migratory flows, trends and patterns, and border controls and monitoring mechanisms, among others.

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<sup>17</sup> Declaration of ASEAN Concord II. ASEAN Knowledge Kit, ASEAN Secretariat. June 2005, p. 55.

- DEVAW adopted at the Foreign Ministers' 37th Meeting. It recognizes that "violence against women both violates and impairs their human rights and fundamental freedoms, limits their access to and control of resources and activities, and impedes the full development of their potential." The work plan on VAW approved at the Fourth ACW Meeting points the way for the Declaration to be put into action.

The DEVAW and WAGE complement each other. WAGE is broader in scope as it addresses a wider range of issues relating to women's empowerment and gender equality, one of which is violence against women. Thus, in implementation, there are significant areas of interfacing between the two, as the summary table below shows:

**Table 1. Links between WAGE and DEVAW**

<b>1. Research and data collection and analysis on the extent, nature and consequences of VAW and the effectiveness of policies and programmes</b> <i>-data disaggregation</i> <i>-data base development</i> <i>-research studies on VAW</i> <i>-inventory of programmes and services</i> <i>-studies on impact or effectiveness of programmes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing a reporting mechanism on the incidence of gender-based violence</li> <li>• Strengthening information management systems on incidence of gender-based violence in all ASEAN countries</li> <li>• Strengthening capacity for research and information gathering, particularly quantitative information that is disaggregated by sex and age and including indicators (IIA)</li> </ul>
<b>2. Response mechanisms in four areas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- providing services for victims</li> <li>- responses to offenders               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>programmes for survivors</i></li> <li>• <i>sharing of best practices</i></li> <li>• <i>programmes for offenders</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>- understanding the nature and causes of VAW</li> <li>- changing societal attitudes and behaviors               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>in-depth studies on the nature, causes and consequences of VAW</i></li> <li>• <i>information /awareness campaigns on VAW and women's issues</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documenting ASEAN experiences/ lessons/best practices in addressing VAW</li> <li>• Regional activities emphasizing and establishing male responsibility in the elimination of VAW</li> <li>• IEC materials on gender-based violence issues for advocacy</li> <li>• Raising awareness to obtain further government commitment</li> </ul>
<b>3. Gender mainstreaming in policies and programmes as well as systems, procedures and processes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- integrating women/VAW concerns in national plans and programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan of action and national declarations on the elimination of VAW</li> <li>• promoting regional awareness and strengthening capacity on gender mainstreaming in general and within relevant ASEAN committees and ASEAN secretariat (IIA)</li> </ul>

<p>4. <b>Enactment or reform of domestic legislation to prevent VAW, <i>improvement of services for victims including investigation and prosecution</i></b>  <i>-review of domestic policies and existing services</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Plan of action and national declarations on the elimination of VAW</li> </ul>
<p>5. Enactment of measures to empower women and strengthen their economic independence and promote and protect their human rights and fundamental freedoms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- promoting women's economic empowerment</li> <li>- increasing women's control of and access to resources</li> <li>- promoting and protecting women's human rights</li> <li>- skills development of women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Supporting formulation of policies and action plans in each country to promote skills training and provide opportunities for self employment and micro-enterprise of women (IID )</li> <li>● Supporting the strengthening of capacities to implement strategies to improve women's access to and participation in micro-credit, information systems, etc.(IICbi)</li> <li>● Putting in place multisectoral programmes to boost livelihood skills and employability of women (IICbii)</li> </ul>
<p>6. Stronger preventive measures, including legislative, educational, information and other support services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- implementation of preventive measures including legislative, education and information services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implementing advocacy and training programmes to enable migrant women workers to be well informed and prepared for work overseas so as to avoid becoming victims of violence, abuse or trafficking (IICbiii)</li> </ul>
<p>7. Stronger regional collaboration for resource mobilization and technical exchange programmes, including sharing of best practices</p>	
<p>8. Supporting NGOs and strengthening collaborative relationships with them</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Intensifying collaboration with ACWO to address important women's concerns including poverty (IIAb)</li> </ul>

### Conceptual framework on violence against women

The ecological model<sup>18</sup> is hereby adopted as a framework in order that the multi-faceted nature of violence might be better understood. Programme developers in particular would find this model helpful in examining the factors and risks that determine violence, to guide them in developing programmes that prevent these determinants. The factors and processes leading to violence may be examined at four levels:

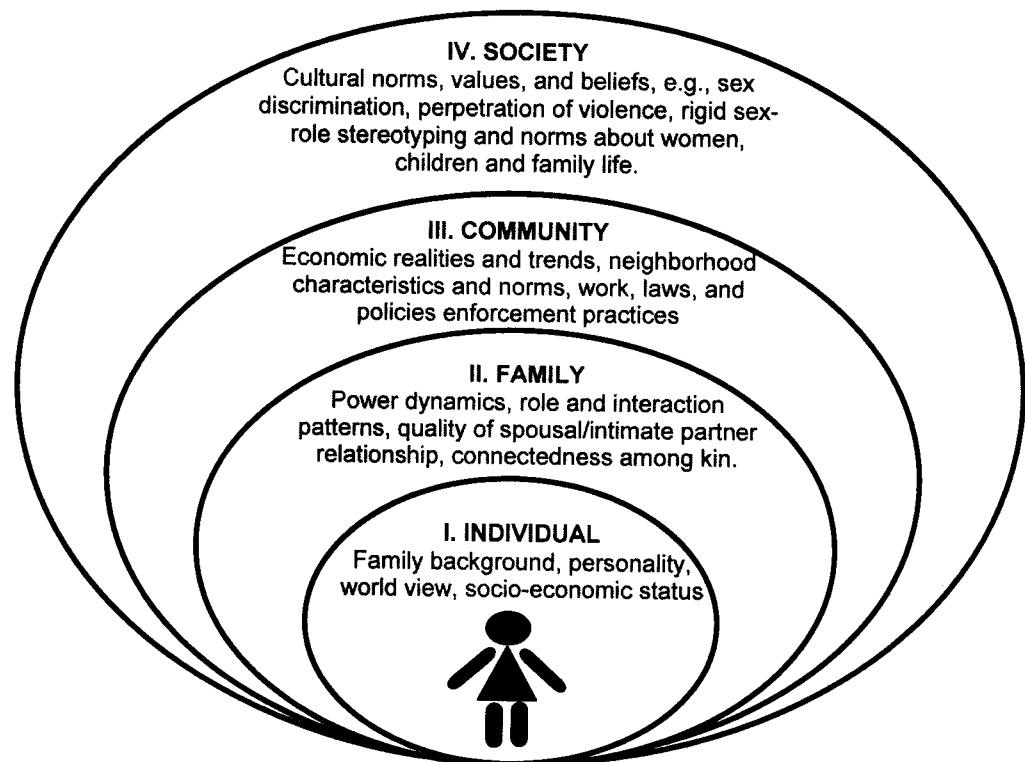
1. On the level of the *individual*, looks at biological and personal history factors that influence how people behave and increases their likelihood of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence;

<sup>18</sup> Krug, Etienne, et.al. ed. World Report on Violence and Health. World Health Organization, Geneva, 2002, p.13.

2. On the level of *relationships* such as those with family and intimate partners, looks at how these close relationships increase the risk of becoming a victim or perpetrator;
3. On the level of the *community*, explores the community context in which social relationships occur such as schools, workplaces and neighborhoods, and seeks to identify characteristics of these settings that increase the risk of violence;
4. On the level of *society*, looks at the broad societal factors that help create a climate in which violence is encouraged or inhibited such as cultural norms, values and beliefs, sex-role stereotyping and norms about women, children and family life such as patriarchy, among others.

Figure 1

***DEVAW Ecological Framework***



**National efforts to address VAW and HIV/AIDS**

Cognizant of the deleterious effects of VAW on the family, ASEAN member countries have been undertaking measures, individually and collectively, to study and address the problems of violence, trafficking, and prostitution. At the national level, measures have ranged from legislation and legal reform, formulation of action plans, implementation of programmes and projects along curative, remedial,

and preventive aspects, setting up of referrals and linkages and working closely with nongovernmental organizations. The short survey below provides an overview of these measures. They also highlight the critical role of women's machineries or agencies dealing with women's concerns, as well as the contributions of women NGOs in addressing the problem. The survey also notes the shared problem of trafficking of women and children in five of the 10 member countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam).<sup>19</sup>

### **Brunei Darussalam\*\***

The Women and Girls Protection Act of 1972 of Brunei Darussalam stipulates protection for these two groups against prostitution and trafficking. In December 2004, the Trafficking and Smuggling of Persons Order was introduced, under which any person who engages in people smuggling and trafficking will face a maximum \$1,000,000 fine, imprisonment of not less than four years, and not less than five strokes of whipping. Brunei is currently drafting a Domestic Violence Order to more fully enforce crime prevention measures and protect victims. A Task Force on Child Abuse and Domestic Violence has been set up and three institutions/homes for women and girls, called Taman Nurhidayah, have been established to ensure the safety of victims of violence and exploitation. Brunei provides counseling services and conducts information and education campaigns on programmes and the law.

### **Cambodia**

Cambodia is the first country in the world that has set violence against women as an indicator for national development. VAW elimination has been integrated as a sub-goal of the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals (CMDG). Indicators on VAW include laws combating violence against women, percentage of people who think VAW is unacceptable, and percentage of victims counseled by qualified social workers.

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<sup>19</sup> A project supported by the Australian Government called Asia Regional Cooperation to Prevent People Trafficking (ARCPPT) is being implemented to assist the criminal justice process in combating trafficking, strengthen institutional capacity to respond, facilitate collaboration, and improve support services. The project includes a comprehensive gender strategy to "ensure that every activity is implemented with an informed understanding of the gender perspective of trafficking, including adopting a shared responsibility approach, striving for equity rather than formal equality and integrating gender into training materials, resources and programs." (ASEAN Secretariat Information Paper, Third Meeting of the ACW, 29 November – 1 December, 2004, Yangon).

<sup>20</sup> Country information on measures taken to address VAW and HIV/AIDS, culled from papers submitted during the 2001-2004 meetings of the ASEAN Committee on Women. (ACW was also known previously as ASEAN Women's Programme and ASEAN Subcommittee on Women).

The Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of the Victim was adopted by the lower and upper houses in September and October 2005, respectively, and will begin implementation soon after signing by His Royal Majesty the King. The Law establishes interventions at the local level and mandates the protection of the victim by local authorities and provincial courts. The Ministry of Women's Affairs (whose mandate no longer includes Veteran's Affairs) has already drafted an Implementation Plan focusing on the training of law enforcers and improving services for victims.

To prepare for implementation and gather baseline data for the CMDG, the Ministry of Women's Affairs with GTZ, UNIFEM, and EWMI has prepared a national representative research to investigate attitudes on domestic violence, sexual abuse and rape and determine their prevalence. Moreover, the Ministry of Women's Affairs is preparing the National Domestic Violence Prevention Plan by consulting with the Advisory Board composed of experts from relevant ministries, civil society, Council of Ministers, local government and donors. The Plan will focus on three components: information campaign, help and support for the victims (social and health system), and the legal and justice system. The National Prevention Plan will be finalized at the end of 2005. Cambodia conducts yearly activities to commemorate the 16-day campaign to end violence against women.

Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam share a common problem, that of trafficking of young women and girls across their borders. At least 400 Cambodian children are returned from Thailand every month, many of whom are believed to have been trafficked and sexually abused. MWVA drafted a National Plan on Trafficking which addresses gaps and needs and proposes programmes, including the formation of an MWVA-led National Training Team to promote legal literacy among provincial and local authorities, do advocacy work, and gather data. A Memorandum of Understanding on Bilateral Cooperation for Eliminating Trafficking in Children and Women and Assisting Victims of Trafficking has been signed with Thailand and Vietnam.

### **Indonesia**

Indonesia's policy on VAW is "zero tolerance." This is a national commitment and principle embodied in its laws and other policies, such as the 1999 Declaration of Commitment by the Nation and Society to Eliminate Violence against Women signed by government leaders and various groups. Law No. 23/2004 on the Elimination of Violence in the Family was also passed recently, and a National Action Plan for the Elimination of VAW (NAP-EVAW) is being implemented. Indonesia has established various programmes and mechanisms to implement the Plan, among them: the review of its laws as to gender bias, establishment of focal points in 32 provinces, and setting up of women's desks in police precincts staffed by trained police officers. Indonesia has

also established hospital-based crisis and counseling centers, some of them operated by NGOs, and has set up 38 integrated services centers at police hospitals. The development and dissemination of manuals and other information materials is a regular undertaking. Indonesia created a Woman's Court to handle cases of VAW. The government issued two Presidential Decrees approving two action plans -- to eliminate commercial sexual exploitation of children and to eliminate the trafficking of women and children.

### **Laos**

In the Lao PDR, the 1991 Constitution is the basis of laws affirming women's equal rights in the political, socio-economic and cultural spheres as well as in the family. A National Plan of Action for Women has been prepared. Research on VAW conducted in 2001 in six provinces, 18 districts and 54 villages showed a high incidence of divorce and violence in the country. Based partly on the research findings, a law on VAW was passed and a decree for implementation is being drafted. The government has also established a shelter mainly for counseling women victims of violence, trafficking and those with HIV/AIDS. From assistance extended by Hotline Foundation Center in Thailand, service providers were trained in counseling using a rights-based approach, and a group was sent on a study tour in Thailand in preparation for the establishment of a pilot drop-in center.

### **Malaysia**

At least two important laws protect Malaysian women from violence: the Women and Girls Protection Act of 1973 and the Domestic Violence Act of 1994. The earlier law requires the establishment of shelter homes for victims, the second declares domestic violence a crime with appropriate penalties and provisions for interim protection order. Under the 1994 law, 29 places of refuge have been established as well as a one-stop crisis center in almost all hospitals in Malaysia. The crisis centers provide police and medical assistance in one place, making it possible for victims to give the needed information in just one sitting. A standardized special and self-explanatory rape investigation kit has been devised, reducing the need to train doctors. Acts of violence including child abuse can be reported anytime through a 24-hour hotline called TELEDERA. Several research studies have been conducted, including a needs assessment survey of single women survivors and monitoring of the law on domestic violence.

Malaysia has been conducting awareness campaigns. A WAVE (Women against Violence) campaign in 2001 sought to: raise awareness and deter perpetrators; establish networking among GOs, NGOs, women and mass media; formulate preventive and rehabilitative measures; and organize training courses for core trainers. The country has also been addressing the issue of sexual harassment in the work place through a



Code of Practice on the Prevention and Eradication of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, targeting both public and private sectors. As do other countries, Malaysia works closely with NGOs, particularly in the implementation of service programmes for victims of violence.

### **Myanmar**

Myanmar passed an Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law in September 2005 and coordinated the Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT). It has also done a number of research studies on violence against women. These studies show that VAW incidence is relatively low, thanks in part to preventive measures taken by the government to ensure that the problem does not worsen. Consultations on VAW, seminars on trafficking in persons and other information activities are held as part of advocacy campaigns. Counseling centers in states/divisions/ provinces have been established, and mobile teams of service providers go around the country to give victims support.

Like Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam, Myanmar has a serious problem in human trafficking, with 388 cases of trafficking reported in 2002-2004 involving 1,055 victims, about half of them women and girls. A working committee was set up to work out interventions on prevention, protection, prosecution and reintegration. Thus, education and information campaigns utilizing all forms of media are in place, and a multi-disciplinary mobile team of trainers on human trafficking has been going around, equipped with training manuals and information materials. It has to date trained over 400 service providers, towards the goal of complete eradication of trafficking in women and children.

The Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs leads in the information campaign and in the implementation of poverty alleviation measures such as credit and loans and income generating activities.

### **Philippines**

The Philippines recently passed two laws, one on anti-trafficking and another on anti-violence against women. It has previously passed laws against rape and sexual harassment. The government constituted national interagency councils to ensure implementation of the laws on violence and trafficking and the provision of support services to victims. A coordinating committee for VAW drafted a national plan to eliminate VAW focused on setting standards for quality VAW services, case documentation, improving access, awareness and education, and strengthening participatory mechanisms. The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) has been in the forefront of the various committees and technical working groups. With financial assistance from UNFPA, the NCRFW is currently implementing a project in cooperation with frontline service agencies to implement two of the objectives of the action plan, that is, to establish a standard

documentation system on VAW cases and establish benchmarks for performance standards for VAW services. The Philippines has developed a set of core messages on VAW which will be integrated into the basic education curriculum and the training programmes of frontline service agencies.

Some of the measures already in place are the women and children protection desks in police precincts, government hospitals and barangay human rights action centers; issuance of protection orders; shelters and substitute homes operated by government and NGOs; and training of judges, prosecutors, law enforcers and service providers including NGOs. As in other countries, NGO and community-based support services play a significant role in information and education campaigns and in assisting victims.

### **Singapore**

Singapore's "Many Helping Hands" approach promotes a violence-free environment – safe, stable and supportive. A system for the integrated management of family violence is in place, where, in accordance with a strengthened Women's Charter, programmes and services are rendered in a coordinated fashion, involving social workers, the police, the courts and other relevant agencies and some NGOs. A dialogue group facilitates work processes among concerned agencies, coordinates public education and develops new areas of collaboration. Partners are guided by A Manual on Integrated Management of Family Violence Cases in Singapore, which spells out protocols and procedures for each partner. In addition, a National Family Violence Networking System provides synchronized and multiple access points for victims to obtain help. Training of frontline workers and joint training of police and social workers helps clarify roles and responsibilities, policies and procedures on case handling. Singapore implements a strong and coordinated public education program that utilizes print media for various audiences, as well as public forums, stage plays and other venues on such as matters as dating violence, and has set up a website to provide online information ([www.familytown.gov.sg](http://www.familytown.gov.sg)) on where to get help. Singapore's programme gives special attention to offenders as well as to elderly and child victims.

A dedicated intake section in Singapore's Family Court provides a range of services for victims. Applicants for personal protection order (PPO) receive counseling and, as needed, are referred for medical, legal and crisis interventions. PPOs are issued based on the "principle of balance of probability" rather than "beyond reasonable doubt" that violence has occurred or is likely to occur. The court can also order the perpetrator, victim and/or family members to go into mandatory counseling or a rehabilitation programme. Where warranted, it can attach to the PPO a grant of exclusive right of occupation of shared residence. It is believed that this coordinated programme has resulted in

a gradual decline in the number of applicants for PPOs, from 2,861 in 2000 to 2,783 in 2003.

### **Thailand**

Thailand's 1997 Constitution addresses the issue of violence in Section 53 which says: "Children, youth and family members shall have the right to be protected by the government from violence and unfair treatment." Other domestic laws relating to human trafficking issues include the Prostitution Prevention and Suppression Act of 1996, Criminal Witness Protection Act of 2003, Compensation for Crime Victim Act 2001, and the Child Protection Act of 2003. A Cabinet Resolution on the National Policy and Plan on the Prevention and Suppression of Domestic and International Trafficking in Children and Women was passed in 2003. Recently, the Legal Advisory Sub-Committee of the National Commission of Women's Affairs (currently the Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development) appointed an ad hoc committee to draft a law on domestic violence.

Some of the programmes and services for victims of abuse are the following: a) establishment of Operation Centers on Human Trafficking, operating at the national and provincial levels and at Thai missions abroad; b) setting up of a Command Unit specifically handling Offences against Children and Women; c) setting up in several hospitals of a One-Stop Crisis Center (OSCC) that provides medical treatment whether for physical or emotional problems, and consultations on social welfare and legal matters for victims; and d) a 24-hour Hotline Center called "1300 or Prachabodi Center" at the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSD) to provide counseling services and handle grievances and complaints.

The whole month of November has been named "the month to end violence against women". The celebration includes a white ribbon campaign and family counseling activities.

In addressing cross-border problems on trafficking and migration, Thailand works with its neighbors through such mechanisms as the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Trafficking (COMMIT), and signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation against Trafficking in Person in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region with five other nations, namely the Kingdom of Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, the Lao PDR, the Union of Myanmar and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

### **Viet Nam**

The Vietnamese Constitution provides for the protection of women and girls from discrimination and violence and safeguards their rights. This protection is fleshed out in other legal documents including criminal and administrative

laws. Recent legal amendments include longer prison terms for prostitution, trafficking and buying, selling, seizing or fraudulently exchanging children, and sexual and physical abuse. Another amendment provides for the prosecution of family members. The government established a National Committee for the Prevention of AIDS, Drugs and Prostitution, with member agencies mandated to prepare annual plans and budgets for implementation. The Vietnamese Women's Union (VWU) is a member of the executive and local committees.

VWU has been leading the campaign to end violence against women. It has conducted research studies on incidence and causes, held workshops to prevent and address the problem, and produced information materials. It has also been supporting the establishment of hotlines, shelters and advisory services. Viet Nam proposed the development of a domestic violence law, and has integrated the elimination of violence into its five-year development plan. Recognizing that the root of women's exploitation is poverty, the government has been allocating funds for women's economic reintegration through vocational training, soft loans and job recruitment.

### **Responses to the HIV/AIDS problem**

National efforts to address HIV/AIDS focus on prevention and control of the disease. Most countries have nationwide educational campaigns that reach out to young and adult women and men in urban and rural areas. National committees and task forces are created to plan and lead the campaign and the implementation of programmes. GOs, NGOs and the mass media are widely involved. Creative multi-media approaches and the local dialect are used so messages would be more easily understood. In Indonesia and Lao PDR, counseling and training courses are conducted for volunteers and workers.

Brunei Darussalam reports taking special measures to protect the nation's blood supply, and conducts surveillance of high-risk groups. Cases are managed through the provision of anti-retroviral treatment.

Cambodia has established a national authority on HIV/AIDS and a multi-sectoral response mechanism, to prevent the spread of the disease and mitigate its impact.

In 1998, Malaysia implemented a national programme to prevent HIV transmission from mother to baby. All expectant mothers were screened for the virus and those found positive were provided anti-retroviral treatment, thereby reducing the danger for their babies. This reduced the transmission rate to 11.4%, as compared with 25-30% if untreated. Malaysia also launched PROSTAR in 1996, a programme for a healthy life without AIDS, as a campaign among adolescents to enlist their help in prevention and information.

To address concerns on HIV/AIDS, Myanmar has been conducting intensive information/education campaigns among the youth both in school and out of school, and among workers under the SHAPE program being implemented with support from UNICEF. The campaign started with 400 schools from 30 townships in 1998 and has expanded in 2004 to 40,000 schools in 122 townships. Distribution of IEC materials on HIV/AIDS is being planned for colleges and universities. Coordination workshops are being held to enhance collaboration and coordination. The Women's Affairs Division also conducted advocacy meetings at the central level and awareness training workshops at all the state division levels to enhance information leading to behavioral change and adoption of healthy lifestyles. Workshops are also being conducted in 342 townships, covering about 35,000 women's affairs federation members who will in turn share the information with their communities.

The Philippines has worked through three medium term plans (MTP) to address HIV/AIDS (1988-1993, 1994-2002, 2002-2004). The Philippine National AIDS Council (PNAC) was established as a result of MTPI, 12 policy guidelines on HIV infection/AIDS prevention were issued, and a National AIDS/STD Prevention and Control Program (NASPCP) was created. MTPII resulted in the passage of Republic Act 8504, called the Philippine AIDS Prevention and Control Act and the integration of HIV/AIDS education in all schools nationwide, among others. The PNAC coordinates and directs the implementation of RA 8504, under which it established local AIDS councils and a network of sentinel surveillance sites in 10 local government units that provide the most reliable set of information on the status of HIV infection and the level of risks.

Vietnam has approved a national strategy on HIV/AIDS prevention called Vision 2010. A law on HIV/AIDS is also being discussed in Congress. The Vietnam Women's Union is encouraging the use of condoms by marketing these nationwide at socialized prices.

### **Problems and issues in implementation**

Country reports do not contain enough information on measures related to violence against women and how VAW is directly linked with HIV/AIDS infection. Given this information gap, the proposed work plan has to focus initially on VAW with the expectation that reducing the incidence of VAW will reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS infection directly related to it. It is also expected that the action plan would be updated periodically to ensure that developments in the situation of women as they are affected by violence and HIV/AIDS would be considered in the implementation of measures at national and regional levels.

The survey on national efforts to address VAW, though not exhaustive, shows the attention and resolve with which member countries are responding to VAW. Many of the initiatives described could serve as models or at least offer lessons and direction. At the same time, problems in implementation have surfaced which could be learning points for all, especially since many of the problems are common to several members. The approaches to these problems could also point to possibilities for regional cooperation.

Following are some of these problems/issues:

- Difficulty in changing social attitudes that regard violence in the family as a private matter to be kept hidden at all cost; women's ignorance of their rights and reluctance to seek help from the police and the courts; women's tolerance of abuse because of their economic dependency or sense of shame or guilt. These show the need for intensified education campaigns aimed at changing the mindsets of both sexes, empowering women, upholding the human rights of women and girls, and informing the community of social and legal services for victims. Existing IEC materials will need to be revised in terms of content, perspective, target audience and what media will have the most impact.
- Lack of understanding of the problem -- why it persists, its root causes, its recurrent or cyclical nature. This has prevented policymakers and service providers from addressing the problem at a deeper level, or extending more meaningful help to victims as well as offenders.
- Poor law enforcement; need to improve services to victims/survivors; need to improve protection measures, network of services
- Need for statistical indicators and data bases; need for documentation and research to facilitate situational analysis, including needs analysis of victims, responses and competencies
- Need for (additional) measures to address offenders, mostly men, and how they can be helped to manage their violent tendencies
- Need for effective economic measures to minimize victimization of poor women and children
- Need to strengthen awareness and the resolve of victims to report the abuse and pursue their case in court. Often, cases have been withdrawn due to economic dependence on the offending

partner, fear, insecurity, delays in prosecution, and loss of interest especially after the partner has apologized. In Malaysia for example, it was reported that only 6.6% of the 205 cases filed in 2002 were prosecuted.<sup>21</sup>

- Problem of human trafficking at their respective borders shared by Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. This is partly being addressed by the Asia Regional Cooperation to Prevent People Trafficking (ARCPPT), and through a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the affected countries.

National and regional efforts to address VAW do not as yet consider the links between gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS infection. This is observed in the lack of intersectoral collaboration in plans of action to address the twin concerns.

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<sup>21</sup> Malaysian country paper for the Workshop on community-based strategies on the prevention and rehabilitation of domestic violence, Manila, Philippines, 20-29 October 2003. Paper was written by Halimah bt. Kawaluddin of the Malaysian Royal Police Force and Siti Darmawan bt. Amaruddin of the Department of Social Welfare, Malaysia.

#### **IV. The DEVAW work plan**

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The work plan to operationalize the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the ASEAN Region moves forward the priorities of ACW's Work Plan on WAGE, and integrates all relevant priorities and measures into a consolidated action plan for ACW on VAW and HIV/AIDS. The plan, which proposes goals, outcomes, activities and strategies for resource mobilization, is targeted for implementation from 2006 to 2010. The plan builds on existing national efforts and supports the regional objective of promoting more collaborative measures to address the problem.

##### **Goal and objectives**

One of the goals of ASEAN, as reiterated in the Vientiane Action Programme, is to build and attain a community of caring societies. The goal of the work plan is the removal of all discriminatory practices against women and the elimination of all forms of violence against them, to enable them to participate equitably in the development process and for them to benefit equitably from the fruits of development.

The work plan objectives are:

1. To increase public awareness of the problem of violence against women and its nature, causes and consequences, at national and regional levels;
2. To increase women's awareness of their human rights, to enable women to participate fully in development and in building just and caring societies in ASEAN;
3. To ensure more gender-responsive policies and better coordinated delivery of services for VAW victims and offenders by governments and NGOs;
4. To increase the availability of information and data on violence against women, including its link to HIV/AIDS;
5. To strengthen institutional mechanisms and capacity to handle VAW and to monitor its occurrence, and to evaluate policies and programmes on the elimination of VAW; and
6. To promote stronger regional, bilateral and international cooperation in the implementation of measures to address VAW.

##### **Priority areas of action**

Based on the analysis of experiences and issues that surfaced, the following priority areas of action were identified to put the DEVAW into operation.



1. Improvement of data collection and reporting on the incidence of VAW and sharing of country information on incidence and strategies for action
2. Research and information dissemination so VAW including its links to HIV/AIDS could be better understood and prevented
3. Improvement of service delivery for victims
4. Response to offenders
5. Women's political and economic empowerment to reduce their vulnerability to exploitation and uphold their human rights
6. Gender mainstreaming policies and programmes
7. Reform of laws and policies to address VAW in programmes and projects
8. Cooperation among GOs and NGOs at the national and regional level

### **Regional implementation plan**

As recommended by member countries at the VAW workshop<sup>22</sup> and as adopted by the Fourth ACW Meeting, the following regional priority projects will be developed and implemented by the corresponding country coordinator(s).

1. **Regional study on cross-country data collection systems on VAW**

*Lead country: Cambodia in collaboration with Indonesia*

An important tool in understanding and addressing violence against women is data and yet data gathering is often neglected and put aside. This is due in part to lack of appreciation of the importance of statistics by concerned authorities and to scarcity of resources. The situation is made worse by the lack of uniform standards and methodologies used in generating data.

Basically, the study will cover variations in definitions and indicators, data collection systems or strategies, or documentation formats used for interviewing and recording information on victims and, to the extent possible, their perpetrators. Specific country strategies in establishing an integrated documentation system among the frontline service providers that other countries could adopt will also be studied. Results of the study will be analyzed at the national and regional levels, to serve as basis for proposing measures for action towards enhancing the systematic availability of data on VAW.

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<sup>22</sup> Annex F.1 contains the results of the workshop as summarized and presented in plenary.

It should be noted that differences in the various agencies' data collection and even classification methodologies contribute significantly to the lack of objective and accurate data on the extent of VAW. This situation has hampered the formulation of effective anti-VAW policies and measures.

**2. Development of a VAW information page in the existing ASEAN or UNIFEM website or a separate STOP VAW website**

*Lead country: Cambodia and Indonesia*

The website will be one of the mechanisms for sharing effective responses and strategies, including relevant publications and tools. Legislation on domestic violence will be a main feature, to inspire similar action among member countries. Also to be given prominence are implementation strategies that work and other success stories.

In establishing the website, the ASEAN Clearinghouse on Women in Development, which had been very active in the sharing of information on women among member countries, could be tapped. In fact, the national clearinghouse (or the information center) of the ACW Focal Agency in all member countries could provide technical assistance in developing and operating the website. Member countries may also consider developing their own VAW websites and have it linked with other sites, or they can incorporate VAW concerns in their existing websites.

**3. In-depth research on the nature and causes of violence against women**

*Lead country: Philippines*

Research will consider the various cultural, social, legal/administrative and economic characteristics of ASEAN member countries, including the links between VAW and HIV/AIDS infection. The research will look specifically into the following aspects of VAW:

- Factors that increase or decrease the incidence of violence, including factors that might be modified through interventions
- Factors that increase the risk of being subjected to violence or the likelihood of committing violence
- Effectiveness of violence prevention programmes in each member country
- Magnitude and impact of violence

Data from the research will be especially useful in the designing of interventions to prevent violence, and in exploring ways for more effective implementation of anti-VAW programmes and their monitoring and evaluation.

In preparing the research design, the country coordinator may want to consider the ecological model for understanding violence. This was used by the World Health Organization in its report on violence and health which says, "violence is the result of the complex interplay of individual, relationship, social, cultural and environmental factors". The human rights framework may also be considered for the study.

**4. Regional/ASEAN Conference on Gender-Based Violence and HIV/AIDS**

*Lead country: Philippines, in collaboration with Malaysia and Cambodia*

While member countries may share experiences and effective strategies in addressing VAW by exchanging publications or going online, these are usually not as effective as holding a workshop. Workshops enable participants to interact more dynamically, get immediate clarification on difficult points, and come up with ideas that often emerge only in such settings. Networking is also facilitated and strengthened.

Thus, an ASEAN conference on gender-based violence was identified at the VAW workshop as one of the regional priority projects for 2006-2010. The conference will share information on measures taken and IEC strategies and materials used in addressing VAW. The conference will also invite networks of HIV-positive women to speak on how they demanded their rights and entitlements. VAW experts may also be invited to further enrich the sharing of strategies and ideas.

**5. Development of a mechanism and tools for sharing effective responses and strategies**

*Lead country: Philippines*

These will include case management, coordination, documentation, referral systems and networks among service providers. A publication on good practices in addressing VAW could be developed, to include an analysis of why these practices work and how they can be replicated in other settings. The publication may also be featured in the planned STOP VAW website.

6. **Regional workshop on gender-sensitive and coordinated VAW services**

*Lead countries: Thailand and Lao PDR*

Over the years, ASEAN member countries have accumulated rich experiences in providing various gender-sensitive services for VAW victims as well as offenders. Given this, it will be a good move to conduct a regional workshop that will bring together concerned service providers particularly in the areas of medical, psychosocial, investigation and legal services. Participants will have a lot to share with and learn from their counterparts in other countries.

The workshop will be focused on one-stop crisis centers in hospitals that provide not just medical care for physical and emotional injuries but also counseling services. Good practices will be spotlighted – how these centers operate, their networks with police and NGOs, and so on.

The workshop could be designed with a series of cross-country training of service providers as follow-up activity. Aimed primarily at expertise-sharing, this will involve social workers, health providers, police investigators, and prosecutors. A module on enhancing the gender sensitivity and capability of service providers may be included.

7. **Regional workshop with male advocates and HIV/AIDS networks**

*Lead country: Philippines with Brunei Darussalam*

This activity is intended to promote men's participation in activities and interventions designed to correct gender inequality and reduce gender-based violence, with a view to minimizing the impact on HIV/AIDS incidence in the ASEAN region. After the workshop, it is expected that participants will help intensify the campaign to end VAW in their respective countries. It has been observed that men can be more effective than women in motivating other men to do their part in curbing violence against women.

As pointed out by Wendy Guthens-Benazerga of AIDSCAP PVO, "You can't have a program for women unless you also work to change the behavior of the other half."

Together with male advocates and HIV/AIDS networks, high school children will be involved in the workshop to find out how

they regard VAW and what they understand about it and the gender issues surrounding it. An effort will be made to correct misconceptions in these young minds and present them with positive values and attitudes. For their part, networks will talk about their work particularly successful strategies employed and how they responded to specific problems or situations. For example, the Coalition Against Trafficking of Women (CATW) in the Philippines has done excellent consciousness raising with youth and high school students on such matters as aggressiveness, sexuality, rape, prostitution and the like

The feasibility of establishing an ASEAN Network of Male GAD Advocates may also be included in the workshop agenda. This could be a venue for sharing information on successful strategies and projects at the national level.

8. **Women's economic empowerment through micro-social enterprises**

Globalization has widened the opportunities for women in the upper echelons of the workforce. However, it has limited the options for marginalized and poor women, particularly those in developing countries, who cannot compete in a globalized economy. A challenge for ACW members is to collectively address this growing problem in the region via the creation of an environment that gives women access to skills training, credit facilities, and job opportunities. Without economic independence, women would find it difficult to protect and enjoy their rights as human beings, particularly reproductive rights and freedom from sexual violence.

*Lead country: Singapore*

8.1 Regional workshop on poverty eradication through micro and social enterprises  
(Singapore Council of Women's Organizations)

8.2 Workshop on micro and social enterprises in an urban setting  
(Singapore government)

9. **Women's political empowerment project**

*Lead country: Cambodia with Lao PDR*

Without knowledge of their rights and entitlements, women are more vulnerable to exploitation and violence. Lack of access to resources and decision making processes further handicaps

them. In this situation, they are less able to participate in elections either as candidate or voter.

As pointed out by Ms. Jean D'Cunha, there is a need to build women's ability to regard themselves as human beings on an equal footing with men and with the same human rights. This entails building in them conviction that they should claim their right, while informing them of what rights are being violated.

Modern communication technologies notably print and broadcast media have made it easier to educate the public on women's human rights, including freedom from violence. In addition, workshops or assemblies tackling women's rights as individuals, mothers, workers, and members of the community may be held. The topic can also be made part of school curricula at all levels. Some studies show that it is more effective to introduce gender concepts among elementary school students than those in the high school and college levels.

10. **High-level meeting on gender mainstreaming**

*Lead country: Indonesia and Lao PDR with the Philippines*

This meeting intends to bring together women's ministries, together with the planning and finance ministries, to talk about gender mainstreaming in the context of CEDAW, BPFA, MDG concerns and VAW in national plans, policies and the gender budget.

11. **Meeting of elected women officials in ASEAN**

*Lead country: Lao PDR*

It has been observed that elected women officials will not automatically promote the protection and fulfillment of women's rights in their governance agenda. Unless they have been trained and exposed to gender issues, they could not be expected to advance the cause.

One way to ensure espousal of gender issues by elected women officials is to convene them in a meeting precisely to promote the inclusion of women's rights and entitlements, including elimination of violence against women and HIV/AIDS infection (plus provision of care for victims), in their political agenda. Given the often stiff opposition from male colleagues, women lawmakers in particular can be encouraged in their efforts to

push for legislation on gender issues by learning from the experiences of advocates in other countries.

**12. Regional workshop on domestic violence legislation**

*Lead country: Philippines in collaboration with Vietnam*

To be implemented in 2007 with support from UNIFEM, this workshop will be focused on the review of national laws, how they were formulated and passed, identification of gaps and bottlenecks in implementation, and good practices and successful implementation strategies.

The workshop will also be the venue for sharing and learning from good practices of ASEAN member countries in addressing all forms of violence against women.

**13. Establishment of an ASEAN Regional Network or an ASEAN Task Force on VAW**

*Lead shepherd: ASEAN Secretariat*

The network, which will be under the ASEAN Secretariat, shall serve as a multi-stakeholder mechanism to strengthen GO-NGO-private sector-religious- academe cooperation on VAW.

An electronic network similar to the ASEAN AIDS Information and Research Reference Network (ATFOANET) can also be developed. Information exchange on best practices at the country level and sharing of technical expertise on VAW can be a priority agenda of the network. The network could also serve as a partner of the ASEAN Secretariat and the ACW in sensitizing girls and boys, women and men to the personal and detrimental effects of violence in the family, community and society.

Moreover, this mechanism could function as the ASEAN VAW Monitor, specifically of government compliance, and as a channel for the distribution of information to the international community.

The ASEAN Secretariat will also assist in coordinating with the Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) to include VAW Focal Points in country delegations to the ASEAN-GO-NGO Forum on Social Welfare and Development)

14. **Development of a cooperative program between ACW and ACWO in addressing poverty**

*Lead country: Vietnam*

Considering that one of the contributing factors to VAW is poverty, supporting poor women's economic empowerment through poverty programmes is one of the concerns of WAGE. In the tradition of ACW and ACWO partnership, a cooperative programme will be developed to support women victims of violence. The program will benefit especially from the experiences of ACWO members, many of whom are from the business sector. It could also benefit from the lessons learned from successful cooperative programmes in other countries.

**Strategies for resource mobilization**

In determining resources to implement activities, ACW will be guided by the policies articulated in Vientiane Action Plan, which are: a) direct contributions from members; b) cost sharing, c) pooled resources; and d) external funding. The ASEAN Secretariat will assist in mediating fund support within ASEAN or other possible sources.

For approved proposals, country coordinators, in coordination with the ASEAN Secretariat, may directly negotiate with bilateral and multilateral donors for financial support for both country level and regional component activities, for example, in implementing the following projects which UNIFEM has committed to support:

- 1) Regional/ASEAN conference on gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS;
- 2) Research on migrant workers; their numbers, the work they do, origins and destinations, policies on migrant workers in both sending and receiving countries, information on violation of their rights and others;
- 3) High level meeting of women's ministries including planning and finance ministries to discuss gender mainstreaming, CEDAW, BPA and MDG concerns on VAW in national plans, policies and the gender budget;
- 4) Development of a publication on good practices in addressing VAW; analysis of why these practices work and recommendations for country level application;
- 5) Development of a publication looking at indicators on VAW, analysis of sex-based data and formulation of forward-looking strategies (Cost-shared).

Thus, Philippines, Malaysia and Cambodia, who will work together on the regional conference on gender-based violence, can coordinate



directly with UNIFEM and with ASEAN Secretariat in the development of the proposal to ensure that the details and format required by UNIFEM are complied with.

Some country level activities may also be integrated into existing country programmes and projects, which are funded locally or from external sources. Where possible, participation of other ASEAN members in country level activities will be explored, subject to agreement of implementing country and funding agency.

### **Monitoring of DEVAW work plan implementation**

Reports on the implementation of the work plan will be included in the agenda of the annual meeting of the ACW. Coordinators will be requested to prepare report updates on the status of project implementation including problems encountered. An evaluation of the implementation of the work plan is suggested for 2010.

### **Responsibilities of country project coordinator/proponent**

The country coordinators shall have the following tasks and responsibilities.

1. Develop a Concept Paper/Terms of Reference (TOR) for the proposed activities with the following outline:
  - Objectives
  - Outputs
  - Proposed Activities
  - Possible linkages to other related international activities
  - Schedule of implementation
  - Description of the participants (age, occupation, expertise, scope of responsibilities, for example)
  - Administrative arrangements (including cost sharing arrangements, and what expenses participating countries are expected to shoulder)
  - Papers and inputs to be prepared by participating countries (provide paper outline and identify topics to be addressed)
2. Support organising cost (venue rental, local hospitality, lunches, coffee break, airport pick-up) [participating countries provide their airfares].
3. Send invitations directly to member countries, with copy to the ASEC, at least one month before activity.
4. Prepare a summary report highlighting recommendations.

4. Conduct an evaluation of the completed activity to determine the impact of the project and its benefit.
5. Identify other activities as follow-up activities.
6. Arrange for publicity and press coverage for the activity (including preparation of a press release).

*Note: Please refer to Annex F draft timetable of work plan to operationalise the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*